



Anna Karenina
LEO TOLSTOY

Translated by Marian Schwartz Edited and with an Introduction by Gary Saul Morson

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*Anna
Karenina*

LEO TOLSTOY

TRANSLATED FROM THE RUSSIAN BY MARIAN SCHWARTZ

EDITED WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY GARY SAUL MORSON

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Vengeance is mine, I will repay

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INTRODUCTION

The Moral Urgency of *Anna Karenina*

Gary Saul Morson

The First Sentence

Often quoted but rarely understood, the first sentence of *Anna Karenina* — “All happy families resemble one another; each unhappy family is unhappy in its own way” — offers a paradoxical insight into what is truly important in human lives. What exactly does this sentence mean?

In *War and Peace* and in a variant of *Anna Karenina*, Tolstoy quotes a French proverb: “Happy people have no history.” Where there are dramatic events, where there is material for an interesting story, there is unhappiness. The old curse — “May you live in interesting times!” — suggests that the more narratable a life is, the worse it is.

With happy lives and happy families, there is no drama to relate. What are you going to say: they woke up, breakfasted, didn’t quarrel, went to work, dined pleasantly, and didn’t quarrel again?

Happy families resemble one another because there is no story to tell about them. But unhappy families all have stories, and each story is different.

Love and Fate

We tend to think that true life is lived at times of high drama. When Anna Karenina reads a novel on the train, she wants to live the exciting incidents described, and both high literature and popular culture foster the delusion that ordinary, prosaic happiness represents something insufferably bourgeois. It may seem like a suspension of real living. Forms as different as romantic drama, adventure stories, and tragedies suggest that life is truly lived only in moments of great intensity. Tolstoy thought just the opposite.

The dramatic understanding of life that Tolstoy rejected has, if anything, grown still more powerful. Today few people question that “true love” is the grand and glorious feeling that consumes one’s very being, as in *Romeo and Juliet* and countless debased imitations. By contrast, Tolstoy wants us to recog-

nize that romantic love is but one kind of love. It is an ideology of love we do not recognize as such. Kitty at first prefers the dashing and romantic Vronsky to the kind and staid Levin because she has assumed, as most of us do, that she should marry the one she “loves”; and she has been told that “love” is romantic rather than prosaic. She does not yet recognize that what she feels for Levin is also a form of love, and that she has a real choice. Which love does she really want?

Over time she comes to recognize that in addition to romantic love there is also intimate love. Only intimate love is compatible with a family. Tolstoy wants his readers to be aware that this choice exists for them as well.

The myth embodied in great romances tells us that love envelops our whole being. Romantic love presses upon us with irresistible intensity. It transcends all ordinary prosaic conditions and lifts lovers to a realm of resplendent meaning. All-consuming, it allows no room for anything else. Lovers love not so much each other as love itself.

What is more, we do not choose such love, it befalls us. We “fall in love,” we do not jump in love. Such love is a “passion,” not an action. It is something we suffer, an idea figured in medieval literature by love potion and in modern thought by unconscious forces overwhelming the will.

For this reason, romantic love feels like fate, and an ideology of amoral fatalism often accompanies it. The lovers live in a realm beyond good and evil. After all, good and evil depend on choice, and where fate governs, choice is out of the question. No matter how much pain the lovers cause, one cannot condemn them. Adultery becomes as noble as revolution, and only narrow moralists worry about the pain caused the betrayed spouse or abandoned children.

That is the story Anna imagines she is living. As one of her friends observes, she resembles a heroine from a romance. But Anna’s story is not Tolstoy’s. He places his romantic heroine not in a romance, where her values would be validated, but in the world of prosaic reality, where actions have consequences and the pain we inflict matters.

Many besides Oprah Winfrey have read *Anna Karenina* as a celebration of its heroine and of romantic love, but that is to get the book exactly wrong. It is to mistake Anna’s story of herself for Tolstoy’s. As Anna Karenina imagines herself into the novel she reads, such readers imagine themselves as Anna or Vronsky. They do not seem to entertain the possibility that the values they presume are the ones Tolstoy wants to discredit.

Perhaps such readers simply presume that no great writer would take the side of all those shallow moralists. Would a great writer endorse what we dismiss as bourgeois living? But in an unexpected way, that is what Tolstoy does. He shows with unprecedented psychological subtlety why if any view is shallow, it is the romantic one.

Anna's story illustrates the dangers of romantic thinking. As she gives herself to an adulterous affair, she tells herself that she had no choice, but her loss of will is willed. Returning by train to Petersburg with Vronsky in pursuit, she experiences a sort of delirium:

She was constantly beset by moments of doubt as to whether the car was going forward or back or standing still altogether. Was it Annushka beside her or a stranger? "What is this on my arm, a fur or a beast? And is this me here? Am I myself or someone else?" She was terrified of surrendering to this oblivion. But something was drawing her into it, and she could surrender or resist at will. (part I, chapter 29)

The relativism of motion she experiences feels like the delirious moral relativism she is falling into. Though she will later insist she could not have done otherwise, "she could surrender or resist at will." Her fatalism is a choice.

Later, when Dolly comes to visit her, Anna pleads inevitability to excuse her affair, the pain she has caused her husband, and the abandonment of her son. She argues that choice is an illusion and so blame is never appropriate. "But I was not to blame," she tells Dolly. "And who was to blame? What does it mean to be to blame? Could it really have been any other way? Well, what do you think? Could it have happened that you did not become Stiva's wife?" (part VI, chapter 23).

Omens

Anna feels that fate has marked her out for a special destiny, perhaps tragic but surely exalted. When we first see her at the station in part I, a trainman is accidentally crushed. With a shudder Anna tells Stiva: "It's a bad omen," and she means, "a bad omen for me" (part I, chapter 18). This comment, in other words, proceeds not only from fatalism but also from narcissism. After all, even if the event were an omen, how does she know it refers specifically to her among all the countless people present?

An omen is a sign from the future. A later event sends a sign of its approach to an earlier time, and so omens involve backward causation. For a future event to have such causative power, it must already in some sense exist. It is somehow already there, the way a place we are traveling to, but cannot yet see, is already there.

If there are omens, then the world resembles a literary work with foreshadowing, which also entails backward causation. The very term "foreshadowing" derives from a spatial metaphor for time. If we are walking down a curved path, we may see the shadow of an object before we see the object casting the shadow, and so the sign precedes its cause. Omens and foreshadowing treat time in

this way. They treat the future as not dependent on present choices but already given.

Anna repeatedly experiences a terrifying dream of a peasant with a sack saying incomprehensible French words. She takes this dream for another omen. On one occasion she wakes from this dream into another, in which she is told that the inner dream means she will die in childbirth. When Vronsky tries to persuade her to take some step to alter their position, Anna replies that there is no need to do anything since she is fated to die in childbirth. For Anna, fatalism excuses not only her actions but also her inactions.

The fact that Anna survives childbirth does not in the least shake her faith in omens and fatalism. In part VII, when she is in despair at the train station, the sight of a peasant reminds her of her dream. And “suddenly, recalling the man who was crushed the day she first met Vronsky, she realized what she had to do” (part VII, chapter 31). It is crucial to understand this passage. Anna’s decision results not from fate but from her own fatalism. The omen is fulfilled only because she chooses to fulfill it.

Tolstoy is not using foreshadowing here, a device he avoided as incompatible with realism. The agency for Anna’s death is not the author’s but the character’s. It results from her mistaken view of the world.

What We Do Not See

Anna interprets the dream of the hideous peasant as a sign from the future, but Tolstoy shows us that it results from ordinary causality operating from the past. The images of the dream derive either from previous dreams or from events connected with meeting Vronsky. Some occur at the train station, where she first sees him, others on the train ride home. They become fused with her feeling that she is doing something terribly wrong. Her guilt fuels the dream’s sense of terror. But why doesn’t she recognize the source of the dream’s images?

The answer reflects Tolstoy’s sense of how the mind works. We see much more than we remember seeing. Events happening at the periphery of our attention and scarcely noticed may recur to us without our awareness of their source. When the train stops, passengers get out:

The dashing conductor, giving a whistle while still moving, jumped down, and behind him impatient passengers began getting off one by one: a Guards officer holding himself erect and looking around sternly; a restless merchant carrying a valise and smiling cheerfully; a peasant with a sack over his shoulder. (part I, chapter 17)

Anna’s dream incorporates and transforms this peasant, but of course she will never remember that she saw him. Neither does the reader. What she sees but

does not notice, we read and do not remember. I have taught this novel to more than ten thousand students, and not one has ever noticed this passage or remembered reading it; so far as I know, the same is true of the critics as well. But unless they were skimming, they must have.

The crucial difference between Anna's experience and the reader's is that the reader can go back and check. We can reread earlier portions of a novel as we cannot reexperience earlier moments of our lives. This novel encourages us to grasp how often we miss things right before our eyes.

Tolstoy is always showing us: we do not see the world, we overlook it. He wants to reeducate us to perceive the world differently, so that we are capable of understanding what passes before our eyes hidden in plain view.

Tiny Alterations

In an essay about *War and Peace*, Tolstoy evokes the image of a man seeing nothing but treetops on a distant hill and concluding fallaciously that the hill contains nothing but trees. Of course, had he actually visited the hill and seen it up close, countless houses and people might have presented themselves. In much the same way, historians conclude that in bygone times only dramatic events were taking place since those are the only ones people bother to record. In short, we tend to think of life as consisting primarily of noticeable events precisely because those are the ones we notice.

In Tolstoy's view, that view is precisely wrong. Life consists primarily of the countless ordinary events always occurring. In one of his later essays, he retells the story of the painter Bryullov, who corrected a student's sketch. "Why you only changed it a tiny bit, but it is quite a different thing," the student exclaimed. Bryullov replied: "Art begins where that 'tiny bit' begins." Tolstoy explains:

That saying is strikingly true not only of art but of all life. One may say that true life begins where the tiny bit begins—where what seem to us minute and infinitesimally small changes occur. True life is not lived where great external changes take place—where people move about, clash, fight, and slay one another—it is lived only where these tiny, tiny, infinitesimally small changes occur.¹

Better than anyone else who ever lived, Tolstoy traces the infinitesimally small changes of consciousness. That, perhaps, is the key to the impression of so many readers that his works feel not like art but like life, that if the world could write directly, it would write like Tolstoy.

There are only two passages in world literature that make Christian love—love not just for one's neighbors but for one's enemies—psychologically plausible. One occurs in *War and Peace*, when Prince Andrei loves his enemy Anatol

Kuragin, and the other in *Anna Karenina*, when Karenin, who has hated Anna and wished her dead, is moved to genuine Christian love and forgiveness. Even Dostoevsky was never able to do more than assert the existence of such love. How does Tolstoy make it truly believable?

Briefly put, Tolstoy breaks the process of consciousness into finer and finer pieces. Where most good writers would see the movement from one state of mind to another as a single step, Tolstoy identifies many more steps along the way. When we read his descriptions, we recognize that we have experienced such infinitesimally small steps even if we would not otherwise remember them. We grant the plausibility of each small step he describes and so find ourselves at the final one.

For Tolstoy, art worthy of the name requires learning to notice details easily overlooked. Mikhailov, the painter we meet in part V of *Anna Karenina*, no longer notices such noticing because it has become habitual: “He himself did not notice how, approaching them, he seized upon and assimilated this impression, just as he had the jaw of the merchant who had sold the cigars, and hid it away to be brought out when the need arose” (part V, chapter 10). Acquiring this habit of perception is the real work of the artist. Vronsky and Golenishchev attribute the quality of Mikhailov’s art to “technique,” but Mikhailov himself is aware that he is not especially gifted that way. “If what he saw had been revealed to a small child or to his cook, she would have been able” to paint as he did (part V, chapter 11).

Open Camouflage

As if to demonstrate how we often overlook key facts right before our eyes, Tolstoy often places them in subordinate clauses of long sentences or in the middle of paragraphs primarily about something else. Having forgiven Anna, Karenin dotes on her daughter, and in the middle of a long paragraph we read, but easily miss, something immensely important:

At first from a feeling of compassion alone he took an interest in the rather weak newborn girl who was not his daughter and who had been abandoned during her mother’s illness and who surely would have died had he not taken an interest in her — and himself did not notice how he had come to love her. Several times a day he went to the nursery and sat there for long stretches of time so that the wet nurse and nurse, who at first were shy in front of him, became accustomed to him. (part IV, chapter 19)

“Who would surely have died if he had not taken an interest in her”: the little girl owes her life to Karenin. He is the only character in this novel who saves a

life. And yet this remarkable fact appears in the fourth of five clauses—the least prominent position possible—and the next sentence deals with something else. I know of no critic who has remarked on this passage, yet surely it should make an enormous difference in our evaluation of Karenin.

Anna will repeatedly say how horrible her marriage was, but we are given ample evidence to the contrary. In part II, Karenin tries to talk with Anna about her ostentatious flirtation with Vronsky, but she fends off all attempts at conversation with a feigned “cheerful bewilderment” about what he could possibly mean. Anna “was herself surprised, listening to herself, at her ability to lie. . . . She felt as if she were wearing an impenetrable armor of falsehood.” The next paragraph begins:

Her look was so simple, so cheerful, that anyone who did not know her as her husband did would never have noticed anything unnatural in the sounds or the sense of her words. But to him, knowing her, knowing that when he went to bed five minutes later than usual she noticed and asked the reason, to him, knowing that she immediately informed him of any joy, happiness, or grief, to him to see now that she did not want to remark on his state, that she did not want to say a word about herself, meant a great deal. (part II, chapter 9)

When he went to bed five minutes later than usual, she noticed and asked the reason; she shared any joy, happiness, or grief with him: surely this was a marriage as good as or better than most! Yet readers and critics repeatedly miss this information and accept Anna’s later false memories as accurate.

Time and again, Tolstoy uses this technique of open camouflage. He does so, I think, so that we learn not to equate noticeability with importance and so that we acquire, bit by tiny bit, the skill of noticing what is right before us.

Gold in Sand

Anna Karenina interweaves two major stories—Anna’s and Levin’s—but it is the novel’s third story, concerning Dolly and Stiva, that offers the book’s moral compass. If by the hero or heroine of a novel we mean not the one who occupies the most dramatic space but the one who best embodies the author’s values, then the real hero of *Anna Karenina* is Dolly. Her everyday goodness, her ceaseless efforts for her children, and her fundamental decency attract little attention, but they are, from Tolstoy’s perspective, the most meaningful possible activities. Here, as in many other works, Tolstoy teaches that we do not notice the really good people among us.

If a life well lived is one without major events, how does one write a novel about it? Tolstoy’s solution is to put the life based on mistaken values—Anna’s—

in the foreground, while Dolly's virtues and troubles remain in the background, where they can easily be missed. Readers, critics, and filmmakers often treat Dolly as nothing more than a boring housewife—merely a good mother, as Stiva thinks of her—but for Tolstoy nothing is more important than a good mother. Life's most important lessons are acquired in childhood or not at all. Vronsky will always remain a shallow individual because, as Tolstoy explains, he never had a family life. Parenting truly matters.

Perhaps the novel's key moment belongs to Dolly. She finds herself in the country with her children in a house that Stiva has promised but neglected to make suitable for them. At last, she manages to get things in order,

and for Darya Alexandrovna her expectations were being fulfilled of a comfortable, if not peaceful, country life. Peaceful with six children Darya Alexandrovna could never be. . . . But in addition, however hard it might be for a mother to bear the fear of illnesses, the illnesses themselves, and the grief at the sight of signs of bad tendencies in her children, the children themselves were even now repaying her sorrows with small joys. These joys were so small they passed unnoticed like gold in sand, and in bad moments she saw only the sorrows, only the sand; but there were good moments, too, when she saw only the joys, only the gold.
(part III, chapter 7)

Gold in sand: that is what true happiness is like. It occurs at ordinary moments and does not call attention to itself, much as Dolly does not call attention to herself. And yet it is moments like these that make a life meaningful.

If one were to offer a plot summary of the novel, this scene would probably not appear. It, too, is openly camouflaged.

Stiva

If Dolly represents what goodness is, then her husband Stiva represents what evil—most, if not the worst, evil—truly is. And the first thing to notice about evil is that it is not as ugly as sin but as attractive as pleasant company. That is why there is so much of it. We have met the enemy and he is us. Evil is not alien, but resembles ourselves, because we are most responsible for it.

Stiva is immensely charming, and so everyone likes being with him. What's more, he does not have a shred of malice. Tolstoy wants us to appreciate that most evil results not from active hostility but from mere neglect, something like criminal negligence. It is largely negative, an absence, a forgetting. It is caused primarily by what we don't do. And so we can easily be responsible for it while thinking well of ourselves. When Stiva forgets to fix up the country house for

Dolly, Tolstoy remarks: “No matter how hard Stepan Arkadyevich tried to be a concerned father and husband, he never could remember that he had a wife and children” (part III, chapter 7).

Stiva is the perfect hedonist, totally immersed in the pleasures of the moment. When he is with Levin, he encourages his pursuit of Kitty with some German verses, and only a few pages later he encourages Vronsky’s pursuit of Kitty with the very same verses. In doing so, Stiva is not exactly lying, if by lying we mean telling a conscious falsehood. It is simply that when he is with Levin, he sincerely sympathizes with him, and when he is with Vronsky, he sincerely sympathizes with him. The dishonesty lies in what he does not do: he does not check his memory to find the discrepancy. Stiva can sincerely think of himself as truthful because for him each present moment is entirely discrete. It binds him to nothing. When he sees Dolly’s misery over his affair, his heart goes out to her, but that will not preclude him from endless future affairs.

It is not exactly that Stiva has a bad memory. Rather, he has an excellent forgettery. Appreciating that guilt, regret, and other unpleasant memories distract from the pleasures of the moment, he has taught himself to banish them from his mind. As the novel proceeds, we watch his progress in forgetting. He keeps selling off Dolly’s property to indulge his pleasures while she tries harder and harder to fend for the children he forgets about.

Self-Deception

Families in Tolstoy’s novels are not collections of individuals who happen to be related but distinct miniature cultures. Each family appreciates the world in its own way. The Shcherbatskys understand the world in terms of family life. The Oblonskys are quite different, and the first thing to understand about Anna is that she was born Anna Oblonskaya.

Like Stiva, Anna commands an amazing receptiveness to the people in front of her. When she wants to, she can make herself the perfect listener, which is how she manages to persuade Dolly to forgive Stiva for his affair. Her manipulation is both skillful and deliberate.

Stiva is anything but weighed down with remorse, much less repentant. The novel opens with him waking from pleasant dreams about feasts and women, and he calls himself honest because he is incapable of feeling any guilt over what he has done. Yet Anna tells Dolly just the opposite: “He is wretched, remorse is killing him.” Dolly is dubious: “Is he capable of remorse?” she asks. Anna replies:

“Yes, I know him. I could not look at him without pity. We both know him. He is good but he is proud, and now he is so humiliated. What

touched me most”—and here Anna divined the main thing that could touch Dolly—“he’s tormented by two things: he’s ashamed for the children’s sake, and while loving you . . . yes, yes, while loving you more than anything in the world . . . he hurt you, destroyed you.” (part I, chapter 19)

“Here Anna divined what would touch Dolly most”: her guesses at such moments are unerring, and she says what she needs to. That, indeed, is why Stiva has summoned her to patch up the quarrel.

But Anna differs from Stiva in one important respect. She has a conscience. She feels terrible guilt for her affair and the pain it causes her husband. Her response to this guilt constitutes one of the book’s most remarkable psychological studies.

To escape from conscience, Anna practices an elaborate process of self-deception. So insightful is Tolstoy’s description of this process that this novel could well be the touchstone for any study of lying to oneself. How is it possible both to know something is true and yet to convince oneself that it is false? Wouldn’t the falsehood be palpable and thus unbelievable? We are so familiar with self-deception, and we all practice it so often, that we often forget how perplexing a phenomenon it is.

Self-deception takes time. One cannot just command oneself to believe something one knows is untrue. Rather, one accomplishes the process in tiny steps. At any given moment, one can see another person in a small range of ways, depending on whether one focuses on his attractive or unattractive qualities and on whether one chooses to see him generously or ungenerously. Within that range, one can choose how to direct one’s attention. That choice matters. By constantly focusing on the person’s worst qualities, one can gradually shift the range so that what was once at the extreme of hostility comes to lie in the middle. If one repeats the process long enough and often enough, one can come to see the person more and more unfavorably without any obvious sense of lying. To be sure, at any point one could make an effort to check one’s current impressions against earlier more favorable views. But that is an effort the self-deceiver refrains from making.

Because Anna feels guilty for hurting her husband, she convinces herself that he cannot feel. She knows better, and is well aware that although he cannot express his feelings, he nevertheless experiences them. He suffers horribly from jealousy. But she makes sure not to see his suffering.

Tolstoy tells us that Anna “schooled herself to despise and reproach him” (part III, chapter 23). She maintains of him that “this is not a human being, this is a machine” (part II, chapter 23). Since Tolstoy cannot show countless acts of hostile looking, he depicts actions that imply them: on two occasions, Anna

mimics Karenin's gestures and speech perfectly. How much hostile looking does it take to do that?

Karenin has set one condition for Anna to continue her affair with Vronsky, that she not meet her lover in their house. That condition hardly seems especially arduous, but Anna violates it anyway, and Karenin encounters Vronsky in the doorway. When Vronsky describes what happened, Anna responds with practiced mockery:

“And he bowed to you like this?”

She made a long face, and half-closing her eyes, quickly changed the expression of her face and folded her hands, and Vronsky suddenly saw in her handsome face the very expression with which Alexei Alexandrovich had bowed to him.

Vronsky wonders, “How can he bear this situation? He's suffering, that is obvious,” but Anna denies that he is capable of suffering at all:

“He?” she said with a grin. “He's perfectly content.” . . .

Again she could not help but mimic him. “Anna, *ma chère*, Anna dear!

“He's not a man, not a human being, he's a puppet!” (part IV, chapter 3)

Anna's pretense breaks down when she thinks she is dying in childbirth. Apparently at the point of death, she renounces all her falsifications and admits to having deliberately altered her impressions of her husband. Before she realizes Karenin has arrived, she says of him: “He is good, he himself does not know how good he is. . . . You're just saying he won't forgive me because you don't know him. No one knew him. Only I do, and it was hard even for me” (part IV, chapter 17).

When at last Anna sees Karenin, she describes her negative views of him as an effort at falsity:

“Yes, yes, yes. Here is what I wanted to say. Don't be surprised at me. I'm still the same. . . . But there is another woman inside me, and I'm afraid of her—she loved the other man, and I wanted to hate you and couldn't forget the woman who had been before. I'm not her. Now I'm the real one.” (part IV, chapter 17, ellipsis in text)

When Anna recovers and again wants to take up with Vronsky, she can no longer call her husband heartless, especially after his Christian conversion and his unqualified forgiveness of her. In that state of mind, he offers her a divorce

and more. Under Russian law, the only grounds for divorce was adultery, and the adulterous party could not remarry. Karenin offers to plead that he is the adulterer so that Anna can marry Vronsky. He also offers her custody of both children. Later, Anna will say that she had to choose between her lover and her son, but that statement is palpably untrue, another sign of a memory repatterning the past. When readers accept that assertion, is their memory playing the same trick?

Anna herself makes it crystal clear why she refuses Karenin's amazingly generous offer. She explains to Vronsky: "Stiva says *he* has agreed to everything, but I cannot accept *his* generosity" (part IV, chapter 23). She does not wish to be indebted to him, to acknowledge his moral superiority. One might well ask how much she can love her son if that is the reason she chooses to leave him behind.

Views

Unlike the book's other educated characters, Levin thinks for himself. Instead of just adopting approved enlightened opinions, he actually learns both sides of an issue. When the progressive theories he adopts to modernize his farm and improve the peasants' lot fail, he does not, like his friend Sviyazhsky, change the subject or seek some ad hoc justification of progressivism. Rather, he admits his mistake and seeks some other solution, however unconventional it may be. How many intellectuals can ever admit their critics were right? In Tolstoy's view, Levin's intellectual honesty is vanishingly rare.

Most intellectuals resemble Stiva, who first decides which camp to join and then makes sure to learn only the arguments on that side.

Stepan Arkadyevich took and read a liberal newspaper. . . . And even though neither science nor art nor politics held any particular interest for him, he firmly maintained the same views on all these subjects that were maintained by the majority and by his paper, and he changed them only when the majority changed them, or, better put, he did not change them at all; they imperceptibly changed within him. (part I, chapter 3)

His views seem to change by themselves because Stiva never really thinks: he just arranges to believe what a liberal is supposed to believe. When liberal positions shift over the years, so do his, but without any of the agonized confrontation with disconfirming evidence that marks an authentic thinker like Levin.

Levin far prefers to exchange views with a landowner much more conservative than he because the landowner "obviously spoke his own original thought, something that rarely happens, and a thought to which he had been brought not by a wish to occupy an idle mind, but a thought that had grown up out of

the conditions of his life, which he had considered in his rural solitude and had thought over in its every aspect” (part III, chapter 27).

Here and elsewhere, Tolstoy is concerned with *how* intellectuals think. Can they really be concerned with helping the poor peasants if they do not bother to consider whether their reforms will actually work? If they really cared about their professed aims, wouldn't they learn to consider contrary evidence and to invite criticism? Could it be that instead of helping the poor, their real concern is to think well of themselves? In focusing on the inauthenticity of the educated, Tolstoy disturbed intellectuals of his day—and ours.

Daily Miracles

Levin's experience, and the book he is writing, teach him that in the social and moral worlds, abstract thought tends to mislead. One must give precedence not to theory, as intellectuals typically do, but to what might be called the wisdom of practice. Theory properly serves as a sort of mnemonic device, a set of provisional generalizations from experience.

The same is true of conventional narratives. The stories we routinely tell about life typically leave out all those messy contingencies that characterize real experience. Levin comes to appreciate that the neater an account of experience, and the more it resembles a well-made story, the farther it departs from reality.

Levin has presumed an idyllic story of marriage. But Kitty, who understands the intimate love of good families, knows that story is as false as romance. In intimate love one's spouse is a less than ideal person whose thoughts and feelings are hard to appreciate. Such intimacy takes work and, until the couple come to know each other, it occasions quarrels.

Contrary to common opinion, the early days of a marriage are likely to be the hardest. Levin, with his idyllic views of marriage straight out of storybooks, is surprised at the prosaic truths that Kitty has known all along, but here, as elsewhere, he eventually comes to value Shcherbatsky wisdom:

Levin had been married nearly three months. He was happy, but not at all in the way he had expected to be. . . . Levin was happy, but having embarked upon family life, he saw at each step that it was not at all what he had imagined. At each step he experienced what someone would experience who, having admired the smooth, happy progress of a little boat across a lake, should then actually get into that boat. He saw that it was not enough to sit there evenly without rocking; that one had to think, too, without forgetting for a moment where one was going, that beneath one's feet was water, and that one must row, and that his unaccustomed hands would hurt, and that it was only easy to look at, but doing it, though quite joyful, was also quite difficult. (part V, chapter 14)

Difficult delight resulting from constant hard work: that is what family love demands. The reward is knowledge of each other almost from within.

In part VIII, Levin falls into despair because he cannot answer the existential questions about death that trouble him. He reads the great philosophers, but they offer no help in his search for meaning in the face of all-devouring death. Tolstoy's description of Levin's state of mind—which had also been his own—remains one of his great triumphs.

Levin finds his way out of despair when he realizes that he must trust not to theory but to practice. “He had been living rightly but thinking wrongly” (part VIII, chapter 12). He needed to look not into the distance but at what he was already doing.

Levin lives rightly because he focuses not on Humanity or Russia or any other remote abstraction but on the people immediately around him. He tends to what is, as he says, incontestably necessary. He cares for the peasants, for the property of his sister, and for his immediate family. He could no more fail to do so than he could fling down a baby in his arms. There are some things we know more surely than we could justify theoretically; and anyone who needed a theory to tell him why he should not fling down a baby would be lacking something fundamental.

In his daily work, Levin comes to appreciate the importance of the ordinary and prosaic. If one lives rightly moment by moment, and trusts that daily practice has its own wisdom, then the questions troubling Levin are not exactly answered, but they disappear. When Levin recognizes these Tolstoyan truths, he is overcome with joy:

“I was looking for miracles, regretting that I had not seen a miracle that might convince me. But here is a miracle, the sole miracle possible, existing continuously, surrounding me on all sides, and I didn't notice it! . . . I have discovered nothing. I have only recognized what I already knew. . . . I have been freed from falsity, I have found the Master.” (part VIII, chapter 12)

In his time, Tolstoy was known as a *nyetovshchik*—one who says no (*nyet*) to what almost all educated people believe. If anything, his views are even more at odds with educated opinion today. In this novel's rejection of romantic love; in its challenge to the inauthentic ways intellectuals think; in its trust in practice over theory; and above all, in its defense of the prosaic virtues exhibited by Dolly—in all these ways, *Anna Karenina* challenges us today with ever-increasing urgency.

TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

Marian Schwartz

Anna Karenina has captivated English readers at least since Constance Garnett's much-loved translation of 1901. Tolstoy's work, considered one of the supreme novels, is especially beloved for its psychological and spiritual insight into the human condition, as applied to some of the most vivid characters in world literature. Many existing translations have conveyed these aspects with some success.

What English translations have yet to address effectively, however, is Tolstoy's literary style, which can be both unconventional and unsettling. Beginning with Garnett, English translators have tended to view Tolstoy's sometimes radical choices as "mistakes" to be corrected, as if Tolstoy, had he known better, or cared more, would not have broken basic rules of literary language.

When I reread *Anna Karenina* fifteen years ago, I was struck by the exact opposite: Tolstoy clearly meant every one of his "mistakes." He used language to convey meaning, to express his spiritual and moral concerns, and to show what he believed to be beautiful. I found the so-called roughness so widely remarked upon both purposeful and exciting, and I was eager to re-create Tolstoy's style in English.

The *how* of writing meaningfully in Russian was much on Tolstoy's mind at precisely the time he was beginning *Anna Karenina*.

On March 22, 1872, Tolstoy wrote to his editor, N. N. Strakhov, asserting that the Russian writer was "unfree," calling literary Russian "repulsive." Tolstoy abhorred affectation on moral as well as aesthetic grounds and sought to express what was true, rejecting the conventional in literary Russian and embracing what was "specific, clear, beautiful, and temperate"—language he associated positively with the peasant and negatively with "society." Tolstoy's language became an instrument of his worldview. Although these concepts were played out more explicitly in later works, they are amply represented in *Anna Karenina*.

I thus produced my translation in the firm belief that Tolstoy wholly intended to bend language to his will, as an instrument of his aesthetic and moral convictions. Eschewing the predictable metaphors, idioms, and descriptions, he put repetitions, stripped-down vocabulary, and long sentences to brilliant

effect to meet his higher literary and philosophical ends. Tolstoy's characters speak—and think—in language all too true to their nature.

Tolstoy's use of style to relate pointed moral observations begins at the very beginning, with the famous opening sentence: "All happy families resemble one another; each unhappy family is unhappy in its own way." The first half of this now famous saying is often translated using the word "alike." The sentence thus rendered becomes aphoristic: "All happy families are alike; each unhappy family is unhappy in its own way." It is a tidy package, but not the package Tolstoy wrote. Tolstoy said not that happy families are "alike" (*odinakovye*) but rather that they "resemble" one another (*pokhozhi drug na druga*). By not using the expected word in that first half, Tolstoy makes the reader take a second look and points to a more complicated opinion about those happy families. "Alike" here is pat, almost dismissive, whereas "resemble" requires additional verbiage ("one another") and a more subtle interpretation. Tolstoy's phrasing is deliberately dense, forcing the reader to pause and introducing nuance.

If the first sentence eases us into our subject, the second sentence is the book's moral and stylistic cornerstone — on which English translators have heretofore stumbled.

The Russian sentence is short and elegant: *Vsë smeshalos' v dome Oblonskikh* (word for word: "Everything was confused in the house of the Oblonskys"). In Russian, this is a lovely, rhythmic line employing a concise reflexive verb form. It bluntly states Tolstoy's underlying premise that the pain and suffering brought upon the characters in the book arise from "confusion" (perhaps not coincidentally, this same verb is used in the Bible in connection with the aftermath of the Tower of Babel). The Oblonsky house is in tumult. Stiva's actions have violated the proper order of things, gravely wounding those closest to him.

Translators of this sentence have been betrayed by a misguided loyalty to preservation of word order, a loyalty that leads in English to a clumsy passive construction and a sentence unworthy of launching this monumental work. A word-for-word translation explains only the Russian syntax and ignores the effect the sentence achieves through concision and rhythm, yielding two consecutive prepositional phrases in English and nearly doubling the word count of the original sentence. The solution lies in writing an *English* sentence that is similarly concise and rhythmic and has the same taut vigor as the Russian: "The Oblonsky home was all confusion."

These are just the first two sentences of a very long book full of intriguing sentences and innovative devices.

Anna Karenina is replete with repetitions of words and phrases. Tolstoy deliberately limited his vocabulary, avoiding the "elegant variation" that conven-

tional literary language advocates. Often it is quite ordinary words that appear over and over, but this is also true of phrases, sentences, and even roots. These repetitions form a fine web of connections between people and events that is progressively cast over the full length of the novel, but the repetitions begin at the very outset.

In the first long paragraph, Tolstoy practically bludgeons the reader with his insistence on the consequences of Stiva's actions when he repeats (with slight variations) the same phrase three times in the space of two sentences, twice back to back:

This had been the state of affairs for three days now, and it was keenly felt not only by the spouses themselves but by *all the members of the family and the servants as well*. *All the members of the family and the servants* felt that there was no sense in their living together and that travelers chancing to meet in any inn had more in common than did they, *the Oblonsky family members and servants*.

Why does Tolstoy commit this apparent faux pas? The existing translations treat it as a mistake; none repeat it in exactly this way. Before we go "fixing" Tolstoy, however, let us first view the positive effect of this device, which is to provide emphasis in a striking and pointedly unconventional way. This repetition slows the reader down, makes the reader dwell on this point of consequence simply by giving him more words to read and in this way making him spend more time on this idea. Tolstoy says with pointed understatement that the situation was "keenly felt," but does not say outright that Stiva is bad, or that he has sinned. Instead, he emphasizes that Stiva's violation of the proper order of things has brought misery down upon the very people to whom he owes happiness. Their suffering far outweighs Stiva's personal failings in importance because they are innocent.

Tolstoy also uses repetition globally, insisting, for example, on a number of key words throughout the text. For example, there is a striking frequency of the adjective *vesëlyi* and related words with the same root: *vesëlost'* (noun), *veselit'sia* (verb), and so on. When possible, I've used "cheerful" for this because it has similar grammatical variations and broader semantic application than any other choice. Of course, the substitution cannot be automatic because the "same" two words in different languages will always have different ranges of meaning; there were times when the translation had to be "gay" because that was the meaning. In all, Tolstoy uses *vesëlyi* and its variants 316 times, and as the repetitions build, it begins to take on ominous associations. The reader begins to wonder just how cheerful anyone really is.

Stiva, to whom the adjective is first applied, almost always appears of good cheer, but his moral character decidedly does not shine. As Professor Gary Saul Morson writes in “Prosaics and *Anna Karenina*,” “Stiva is the villain of the book, its representation of what evil is. And the first thing to note about evil is that it is quite congenial—as is the devil in *Karamazov*. Both Dostoevsky and Tolstoy had it in mind to dispute the notion that evil is grand, satanic, ugly, and alien; on the contrary, it is the most familiar thing in the world. We have met the enemy, and he is us.”¹

Vesëlyi and its variants even appear in the kind of close quarters repetition mentioned above, as in the following: “It was as if something *cheerful* happened after the doctor’s departure. The mother *cheered up* when she returned to her daughter, and Kitty pretended to *cheer up*” (part II, chapter 1).

Over and over again, previous translators have balked at reproducing this kind of repetition, thus depriving the reader of what should be an arresting effect.

A wonderful example of the use of repetition to create connections and inject meaning comes in part VIII, when Kitty summons Levin to the nursery to admire their infant son, who sees his father and “smile[s] radiantly.” Four short paragraphs later, as Levin is leaving, Kitty “smile[s] radiantly” at him, too. The wording, save for the grammatical subject, is identical. Instantly, Tolstoy demonstrates rather than states the visceral bond between mother and son and sets up an identity in their relationship to Levin.

The consistent failure of previous English translations to repeat this one construction diminishes the moment’s intense emotional poignancy.

Anna Karenina abounds in counterintuitive devices beyond repetition. Tolstoy strips his vocabulary. He rarely uses synonyms (a variation on the repetition device), particularly within paragraphs, a practice ordinarily considered just as deplorable in standard Russian as it is in standard English. Routine physical descriptions and lyrical descriptive passages are few. Tolstoy does not routinely describe characters or places, and what visual memories he creates attach to key moments, such as Stiva’s pampered self, Anna and Kitty at the ball, Levin mowing the fields, Vronsky’s horserace, and Nikolai Levin’s squalor. He wields the cliché, usually the nemesis of good writing, with irony and often humorously.

We know that Tolstoy produced many drafts of this novel, so there are no grounds for considering such rule-breaking mere carelessness. With this translation, I have endeavored to honor Tolstoy’s concern about “false” language. But the way he used language in *Anna Karenina* to convey his beliefs and ideas must also be seen as intrinsically bound to his notion of beauty. At the time, he

believed that literary Russian was “spineless” and could not be beautiful. With *Anna Karenina* he created language that could be beautiful because it was not false.

This translation has been more than a decade in the making, and inevitably I owe thanks to a few people in particular who have helped along the way: Sergei Task, for his unerring insights and unwavering collegial support; Peter Sawyer, my agent, who has cheerfully navigated the real world for me; and Gary Saul Morson, whose visceral understanding of this text—and his readiness to collaborate—have made this the most exciting translation ride of my life.

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LIST OF CHARACTERS

Characters are listed by ease of reference and so as not to spoil the plot

The Oblonskys

Stiva (Stepan Arkadyevich Oblonsky), Dolly's husband and Anna Karenina's brother

Dolly (Darya Alexandrovna Oblonskaya, née Shcherbatskaya), his wife

The Oblonsky children include Tanya, Grisha, Lily, and Masha

Oblonsky Relatives

Princess Varvara, Stiva and Anna's aunt

Princess Katerina Pavlovna, her sister, the aunt who brought up Anna

Prince Peter Oblonsky, a dissolute relative and friend of Stiva's

Members of the Oblonsky Household

Matvei, Stiva's valet

Matryona Filimonovna, nurse to the Oblonsky children and Dolly's friend

Princess Marya Borisovna, Kitty's godmother

Stiva's Colleagues

Mikhail Stanislavich Grinevich, Stiva's colleague at work

Filipp Ivanovich Nikitin, Stiva's colleague at work

Zakhar Nikitich, Stiva's secretary

The Shcherbatskys

The old prince (Alexander Dmitrievich) and princess, parents of one son, dead as the novel begins, and of three daughters:

Dolly (Darya Alexandrovna), married to Stiva

Natalie (Natalya Alexandrovna), married to Arseny Lvov, a diplomat

Kitty (Katerina Alexandrovna), single as the novel begins

Nikolai Shcherbatsky, cousin to the Shcherbatsky sisters

Friends and Associates of the Shcherbatskys

Mademoiselle Linon, former nurse to the Shcherbatskys
Countess Nordston, Kitty's married friend
Countess Bohl, a family friend
Madame Stahl, a philanthropic lady
Mademoiselle Varenka (Varvara Andreyevna), Madame Stahl's ward and
Kitty's friend
Turovtsyn, friend of the Shcherbatskys and Oblonskys
Petrov, a patient
Anna Pavlovna Petrova, his wife

The Karenins

Alexei Alexandrovich Karenin, a high government official and Anna's husband
Anna Arkadyevna Karenina (née Oblonskaya), Karenin's wife and Stiva's sister
Seryozha (Sergei Alexeyevich Karenin), their son

Employed by the Karenins

Annushka, a longtime servant of Anna's
Kapitonich, servant of the Karenins
Kornei, butler
Mikhail Vasilyevich Slyudin, Karenin's secretary
Vasily Lukich, Seryozha's tutor

Miscellaneous Associates of the Karenins

Countess Lydia Ivanovna, a friend and philanthropic lady
Stremov, Karenin's political rival
Hannah, an English girl

The Vronskys

Count Alexei Kirillovich Vronsky, an officer
Count Alexander Kirillovich Vronsky, his brother
Varya, Alexander Vronsky's wife
Count Kirill Ivanovich Vronsky, Vronsky's father, long dead as the novel
begins
Countess Vronskaya, Vronsky's mother, once notorious for her many affairs

Princess Betsy and Her Circle

Princess Betsy (Elizaveta Fyodorovna) Tverskaya, Vronsky's cousin
Tushkevich, Betsy's lover

Princess Myahkaya, member of Betsy's circle
Liza Merkalova, member of Betsy's circle
Sappho Stolz, member of Betsy's circle

Vronsky's Friends and Acquaintances

Petritsky, officer and friend of Vronsky
Baroness Shilton, friend of Petritsky
Yashvin, Vronsky's friend, given to gambling
Prince Serpukhovskoi, a general and Vronsky's old friend
Golenishchev, Vronsky's old friend

The Levins

Kostya (Konstantin Dmitrievich Levin)
Nikolai Dmitrievich Levin, Levin's brother
Sergei Ivanovich Koznyshev, Levin's half-brother
Levin's sister, older than Levin

Associates of the Levins

Agafya Mikhailovna, Levin's former nurse, then his housekeeper
Kuzma, Levin's servant
Masha (Marya Nikolaevna), mistress of Nikolai Levin, former prostitute
Nikolai Ivanovich Sviyazhsky, Levin's friend, a liberal landowner
Stepan Vasilyevich, a conservative landowner
Fyodor Vasilyevich (or Mikhail Semyonovich) Katavasov, professor of natural science and Levin's friend
Chirikov, Moscow magistrate and Levin's friend
Mikhail Stepanovich Snetkov, nobleman and provincial marshal
Peter Ivanovich Metrov, a Petersburg scholar
Titus, a peasant on Levin's estate

Miscellaneous Other Characters

Mikhailov, a painter
Madame Mikhailova, his wife
Vasenska Veslovsky, a jovial fop
Nevedovsky, a provincial nobleman
Jules Landau (Count Bezzubov), a clairvoyant
Princess Sorokina, young friend of Vronsky's mother
Masha Chibikova, a dancer under Stiva's patronage

Children Born during the Novel

Annie

Mitya

Animals

Krak, Stiva's dog

Laska, Levin's dog

Pava, Levin's cow

Frou-Frou, Vronsky's horse

Gladiator, horse racing against Frou-Frou

Anna Karenina

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I

1

All happy families resemble one another; each unhappy family is unhappy in its own way.¹

The Oblonsky home was all confusion. The wife had found out about her husband's affair with the French governess formerly in their home and had informed her husband that she could not go on living in the same house with him. This had been the state of affairs for three days now, and it was keenly felt not only by the spouses themselves but by all the members of the family and the servants as well. All the members of the family and the servants felt that there was no sense in their living together and that travelers chancing to meet in any inn had more in common than did they, the Oblonsky family members and servants. The wife would not leave her rooms, and the husband had not stayed home for three days. The children raced through the house like lost souls; the English governess quarreled with the housekeeper and wrote a note to a friend asking to find her a new position; the cook had walked off the premises the day before, during the midday meal; the scullery maid and the coachman had given notice.²

Three days after the quarrel, Prince Stepan Arkadyevich Oblonsky—or Stiva, as he was called in society—awoke at his usual hour, that is, at eight o'clock in the morning, not in his wife's bedroom but in his study, on his morocco sofa.³ He rolled his plump, pampered body over on the sofa springs, as if hoping to fall back into a long sleep, while vigorously hugging the pillow tight and pressing it to his cheek; but then he jumped up, sat on the sofa, and opened his eyes.

"Ah yes, now how did that go?" he thought, trying to recall his dream. "Ah yes, how did that go? Yes! Alabin was giving a dinner in Darmstadt; no, not Darmstadt, something American. Yes, but then Darmstadt was in America. Yes, Alabin was giving a dinner on glass tables, yes—and the tables were singing *Il mio tesoro*—no, not *Il mio tesoro*, something even better, and there were tiny decanters, and they were women, too," he recalled.⁴

Stepan Arkadyevich's eyes twinkled, and he lapsed into reverie, smiling. "Yes, that was fine, very fine. And there were so many more excellent things to it,

even awake you could never put it all into words and ideas.” Noticing the strip of light coming through alongside one of the curtains, he gaily swung his legs off the sofa and felt with his feet for the slippers his wife had embroidered on gold morocco (a gift for his birthday last year), and out of old habit of nine years, still seated, he reached for where his dressing gown hung in the bedroom. Only then did he suddenly remember how and why he came to be sleeping not in his wife’s bedroom but in his study. The smile vanished from his face, and his brow furrowed.

“Oh, oh! Oh!” he groaned, recalling all that had transpired. His mind called up once again each and every detail of the quarrel with his wife, the full desperation of his position, and most agonizing of all, his own guilt.

“No, she will never—can never—forgive me. And what is even more horrible is that it is all my fault—all my fault, yet I am not to blame. That is the whole tragedy,” he thought. “Oh, oh!” he moaned in despair as he recalled the impressions from this quarrel that were the hardest to bear.

Most unpleasant of all was that first moment when, returned from the theater, cheerful and content, carrying an enormous pear for his wife, he failed to find his wife in the drawing room; to his surprise, he did not find her in her sitting room, either, but at last did see her in her bedroom holding the unlucky note, which revealed all.

She, Dolly, in his eyes a fretful, fussy, and far from bright woman, was sitting perfectly still, clutching the note, and giving him a look of horror, despair, and anger.⁵

“What is this? This?” she asked, pointing to the note.

And at that memory, as often happens, what pained Stepan Arkadyevich most was not so much the event itself as how he had responded to these words of his wife.

In that moment something happened to him that tends to happen to people caught out in something that is altogether too shameful. He had no time to prepare his face for the position in which he now stood before his wife upon the discovery of his guilt. Instead of taking offense, disavowing it, justifying himself, begging forgiveness, even feigning indifference—anything would have been better than what he did do!—his face, quite involuntarily (“the reflexes of the brain,” thought Stepan Arkadyevich, who was fond of physiology), suddenly, and quite involuntarily, broke into his usual good-natured, and thus foolish, smile.⁶

That foolish smile he could not forgive himself. When she saw this smile, Dolly shuddered, as though from physical pain, and with her characteristic temper unleashed a torrent of harsh words and ran from the room. She had refused to see her husband ever since.

“That foolish smile of mine is to blame for everything,” thought Stepan Arkadyevich.

“What am I to do, though? What am I to do?” he mumbled to himself in despair, but found no answer.

2

Stepan Arkadyevich was always truthful with himself. He was incapable of lying, of persuading himself that he repented of his deed. He could not now repent that he, a handsome, amorous man of thirty-four, was not in love with his wife, the mother of five living and two dead children, who was only a year younger than he. He repented only that he had not done a better job of concealing this fact from his wife. Nonetheless, he was sensible of the full gravity of his position and felt sorry for his wife, his children, and himself. Perhaps he could have done a better job of concealing his sins from his wife if he had anticipated this news affecting her in this way. Clearly he had never thought the matter through, but he had vaguely imagined that his wife had suspected long ago that he was unfaithful to her and that she was simply turning a blind eye. It had even seemed to him that she, a worn-out, aging, no longer beautiful woman who was in no way remarkable, the simple, merely good-natured mother of his family, ought to have indulged him, simply out of a sense of fairness. It had turned out just the opposite.

“Oh, it’s awful! Oh, my! Simply awful!” Stepan Arkadyevich repeated over and over to himself, but he could conceive of no remedy. “And how fine everything was before this, how well we lived! She was content and happy with the children, and I never interfered in the slightest way, I left her to manage the children and the household as she pleased. True, it was not good that *she* had been a governess in our own house. Not good at all! There is something common, vulgar even, about making love to one’s own governess. But what a governess! (He enthusiastically recalled Mademoiselle Roland’s mischievous black eyes, and her smile.) It is true, though, that as long as she was in our house, I never took any liberties. Worst of all, she’s already . . . You’d think it was all on purpose! Oh my, oh my! But what, what am I to do?”

There was no answer other than the general answer that life offers to all the most complicated and insoluble problems. That answer is that one must live for, that is, lose oneself in, the demands of the day. He could not lose himself in sleep now, or at least not until the night, and he could not return to the music sung by the decanter-women; consequently, he would have to lose himself in the dream of life.

“Then we shall see,” Stepan Arkadyevich told himself, and rising, he put on his gray dressing gown with the blue silk lining and tied the tassels in a knot, filling his broad chest with air. His turned-out feet bore his plump body as effortlessly and confidently as ever to the window; he raised the blind and rang loudly. At his ring, his old friend and valet Matvei entered, carrying his clothes, his boots, and a telegram. The barber followed Matvei in with his shaving kit.

“Any papers from the office?” asked Stepan Arkadyevich, picking up the telegram and seating himself at the mirror.

“On the table,” replied Matvei, looking solicitously at his master, and after a brief pause, added with a cunning smile: “They’ve come from the stable owner.”

Stepan Arkadyevich said nothing in reply, only glanced at Matvei in the mirror, but from the glance in which their eyes met in the mirror it was obvious how well they understood each other. Stepan Arkadyevich’s glance seemed to ask: “Why are you saying this? Don’t you know?”

Matvei put his hands in his jacket pockets, drew one foot to the side, and regarded his master silently and good-naturedly, barely smiling.

“I told them to come this Sunday and not to disturb you or themselves for no reason before then.” It was a statement he had evidently prepared in advance.

Stepan Arkadyevich realized that Matvei was trying to be funny and attract attention. Ripping open the telegram, he read it, trying to piece together the typically garbled words, and his face brightened.

“Matvei, my sister Anna Arkadyevna will be here tomorrow,” he said, momentarily halting the sleek, plump hand of the barber, who had cleared a pink pathway between his long, curly whiskers.

“Praise God,” said Matvei, showing by this response that, like his master, he appreciated the significance of this arrival, that is, that Anna Arkadyevna, Stepan Arkadyevich’s beloved sister, might be able to effect a reconciliation between husband and wife.

“Alone or with her husband?” inquired Matvei.

Stepan Arkadyevich could not say because the barber was working on his upper lip, so he raised one finger. Matvei nodded into the mirror.

“Alone. Ready the room upstairs?”

“Inform Darya Alexandrovna. Wherever she instructs.”

“Darya Alexandrovna?” Matvei echoed, as if dubious.

“Yes, inform her. And here, take the telegram, give it to her, and do as she says.”

“You mean to give it a try,” Matvei thought, but he said only: “Yes, sir.”

Stepan Arkadyevich was already washed and combed and was preparing to dress when Matvei, stepping slowly in his creaky boots, returned to the room with telegram in hand. The barber had left.

“Darya Alexandrovna instructed me to inform you that she is going away. ‘He’ — that is, you — ‘may do whatever he pleases,’” he said, laughing only with his eyes, and putting his hands in his pockets and cocking his head to one side, he fixed his eyes on his master.

Stepan Arkadyevich did not respond immediately. Then a good-natured and rather pathetic smile appeared on his handsome face.

“Eh, Matvei?” he said, shaking his head.

“It’s all right, sir, things will shapify,” said Matvei.

“Shapify?”

“I’m certain of it, sir.”

“You think so? Who’s there?” asked Stepan Arkadyevich, hearing the rustle of a woman’s dress outside his door.

“It’s me, sir,” said a woman’s firm and pleasant voice, and from behind the door poked the stern, pockmarked face of Matryona Filimonovna, the nurse.

“Well, what is it, Matryona?” asked Stepan Arkadyevich, walking toward her.

Even though Stepan Arkadyevich was wholly to blame before his wife and was himself sensible of that fact, nearly everyone in the household, even the nurse, Darya Alexandrovna’s principal ally, was on his side.

“Well, what is it?” he said dolefully.

“You must go to her, sir, and apologize again. Perhaps God will see to it. She’s in agony, it’s a real shame to look at her, and you know very well the whole household is a shambles. You must take pity on the children, sir. Apologize, sir. What can you do! It’s time to pay the piper.”

“But she won’t see me.”

“You have to do your part. God is merciful, pray to God, sir, pray to God.”

“All right, run along then,” said Stepan Arkadyevich, suddenly blushing. “Well, let’s get dressed, shall we?” he said to Matvei, and he flung off his dressing gown.

Matvei, puffing at an invisible speck, was already holding the readied shirt like a horse collar, and with obvious satisfaction he slipped it over his master’s pampered body.

3

Once dressed, Stepan Arkadyevich sprayed himself with eau de cologne, tugged at the sleeves of his shirt, and in an accustomed gesture deposited his cigarettes, wallet, matches, and watch with the double chain and seals into his various pockets, gave his handkerchief a quick snap, and feeling clean, fragrant, healthy, and physically cheerful, despite his misfortune, and with a slight spring

in his step, went into the dining room, where waiting for him was his coffee and, next to the coffee, the letters and papers from his office.

Stepan Arkadyevich sat down and read the letters. One was quite unpleasant—from the merchant who was buying a wood on his wife's estate. The wood had to be sold; but now, until he and his wife were reconciled, there could be no question of this. Even more unpleasant here was the fact that this interjected his financial interest in the pending transaction into the reconciliation with his wife. The thought that he might be guided by this interest, that for the sake of selling this wood he might seek a reconciliation with his wife—the very idea was offensive.

When he had finished with the letters, Stepan Arkadyevich drew the papers from his office closer, read rapidly through two files, made several comments with a large pencil, and pushing the files aside, began drinking his coffee; over his coffee he unfolded the still damp morning newspaper and began to read it.

Stepan Arkadyevich took and read a liberal newspaper, not a radical one, but one advocating the viewpoint maintained by the majority. And even though neither science nor art nor politics held any particular interest for him, he firmly maintained the same views on all these subjects that were maintained by the majority and by his paper, and he changed them only when the majority changed them, or, better put, he did not change them at all; they imperceptibly changed within him.

Stepan Arkadyevich had chosen neither his own viewpoint nor his own opinions; rather these viewpoints and opinions came to him on their own, just as he did not choose the style of his hat or coat but chose those which were being worn. For him, living as he did in a certain society, and given his need for some mental activity, such as develops ordinarily in one's mature years, possessing opinions was just as essential to him as possessing a hat. If he had any reason for preferring the liberal to the conservative viewpoint, to which many others of his circle held, then that happened not because he found the liberal viewpoint more sensible but because it was a better fit with his way of life. The liberal party said that in Russia everything was bad, and indeed, Stepan Arkadyevich did have many debts, and money was decidedly in short supply. The liberal party said that marriage was an outmoded institution in need of restructuring, and indeed, family life afforded Stepan Arkadyevich little pleasure and forced him into lies and hypocrisy, which were so repellent to his nature. The liberal party said, or, rather, implied, that religion was merely a check on the barbarous segment of the populace, and indeed, Stepan Arkadyevich could not stand through even a short service without his legs aching, and he failed to comprehend what purpose all those terrifying high-flown words about the other world served when it

could be so very cheerful to live in this one. At the same time, Stepan Arkadyevich, who loved a good joke, occasionally enjoyed confounding a humble soul by pointing out that if one was going to take pride in one's lineage, one should not stop at Rurik and deny our very first ancestor—the ape.⁷ And so this liberal viewpoint had become habit for Stepan Arkadyevich, and he liked his newspaper, as he did his cigar after dinner, for the light haze it produced in his head. He read the lead article, which explained that in our day it was utterly pointless to raise a hue and cry about radicalism supposedly threatening to swallow up all conservative elements and the government supposedly being obliged to take measures to crush the revolutionary hydra, that quite to the contrary: “In our opinion, the danger lies not in any imaginary revolutionary hydra but in hide-bound tradition, which impedes progress,” etc. He read another article, too, a financial article that alluded to Bentham and Mill and made some insinuations about the ministry.⁸ With his characteristic quick mind, he caught the implications of each and every insinuation: by whom, at whom, and on what occasion it had been aimed, and this, as always, afforded him a certain satisfaction. Today, however, this satisfaction was poisoned by the memory of Matryona Filimonovna's advice and by the fact that his household was in such a bad way. He also read about Count Beust, who was rumored to have traveled to Wiesbaden, and about the fact that gray hair was a thing of the past, and about the sale of a light carriage, and about a certain young person seeking a position; however this information did not afford him his usual understated, ironical satisfaction.⁹

Having finished his newspaper, his second cup of coffee, and his buttered roll, he stood up, brushed the crumbs off his waistcoat, and squaring his broad chest, smiled radiantly, though not because he had anything particularly pleasant in his heart—his radiant smile was evoked by his excellent digestion.

This radiant smile immediately reminded him of everything, though, and he lapsed into thought.

Two children's voices (Stepan Arkadyevich recognized the voices of Grisha, his youngest boy, and Tanya, his eldest girl) could be heard outside his doors. They had been pulling something that had tipped over.

“I told you not to put passengers on the roof!” the girl scolded him in English. “Now pick them up!”

“All confusion,” thought Stepan Arkadyevich. “There the children go racing about unsupervised.” He went to the door and called to them. They abandoned the box that had been serving as a train and went to their father.

The girl, her father's pet, ran up boldly, threw her arms around him, and dangled from his neck, laughing, as always, and reveling in the familiar scent of cologne that came from his whiskers. Kissing him, finally, on his face, which

was flushed from his bent posture and which beamed with tenderness, the girl let go and tried to run off, but her father detained her.

“How is Mama?” he asked, passing his hand over his daughter’s soft, smooth neck. “Hello there,” he said, smiling at the little boy’s greeting.

He was conscious of loving the boy less and so always endeavored to be even-handed, but the boy sensed this and did not respond to his father’s cold smile with a smile of his own.

“Mama? She’s up,” replied the girl.

Stepan Arkadyevich sighed. “Which means she didn’t sleep again all night,” he thought.

“Well, is she cheerful?”

The little girl knew that there had been a quarrel between her father and mother, and that her mother could not be cheerful, and that her father must know this, and that he was pretending, inquiring about this so lightly. She blushed for her father. He realized this straightaway and blushed as well.

“I don’t know,” she said. “She didn’t tell us to study our lessons, but she did tell us to take a walk with Miss Hull to Grandmama’s.”

“Well then, run along, my little Tanya. Oh yes, just a moment,” he said, detaining her nonetheless and stroking her soft little hand.

He took a box of candies from the mantelpiece, where he had put it yesterday, and gave her two, selecting her favorites, a chocolate and a fondant.

“For Grisha?” said the girl, pointing to the chocolate.

“Yes, yes.” And stroking her little shoulder one more time, he kissed the roots of her hair and her nape and let her go.

“Your carriage is ready,” said Matvei. “And there is a lady petitioner,” he added.

“Has she been here long?” asked Stepan Arkadyevich.

“About half an hour.”

“How many times have I instructed you to inform me at once!”

“I had to let you finish your coffee,” said Matvei in that amiably gruff tone at which it was impossible to be angry.

“Well, show her in quickly,” said Oblonsky, frowning with annoyance.

The petitioner, the widow of Staff Captain Kalinin, was asking for something not only impossible but incoherent; nonetheless, Stepan Arkadyevich, as was his custom, had her sit down and paid close attention to all she had to say, without interrupting, and then gave her detailed advice about whom she should apply to and how, and readily and coherently even dashed off a note for her in his handsome, sprawling, and precise hand to someone who might be of assistance. After dismissing the captain’s widow, Stepan Arkadyevich picked up his hat and stopped to think whether he had forgotten anything. It turned out

that he had forgotten nothing except the one thing he would have liked to forget—his wife.

“Ah, yes!” He bowed his head, and a miserable expression came over his handsome face. “Should I go or not?” he said to himself. An inner voice told him that there was no point in going, that this could only mean hypocrisy, that fixing, mending their relations was impossible because it was impossible to make her attractive and desirable once more or to make him an old man incapable of love. Other than hypocrisy and lies, nothing could come of it now; and hypocrisy and lies were repellent to his nature.

“But I have to do it sometime; after all, things cannot go on as they are,” he said, trying to bolster his courage. He squared his chest, took out a cigarette, lit it, took two puffs, dropped it into a mother-of-pearl ashtray, and with quick steps passed through the dark drawing room and opened the other door, to his wife’s bedroom.

4

Darya Alexandrovna, wearing a bed jacket and with the braids of her now thin but once thick and magnificent hair pinned to the nape of her neck, and with a pinched face so gaunt as to make her large, frightened eyes start out, was standing in front of an open chest of drawers amid items of clothing strewn about the room, from which she was trying to choose. When she heard her husband’s footsteps, she stopped, looked toward the door, and attempted in vain to give her face a stern and scornful expression. She sensed that she was afraid of him and afraid of the impending interview. She had just been attempting to do what she had attempted to do ten times these past three days: make a selection of the children’s things and her own to take to her mother’s—and once again she had not been able to bring herself to do it; even now, as on previous occasions, she kept telling herself that things could not go on this way, that she had to undertake something, punish him, put him to shame, take revenge for at least a small portion of the pain he had caused her. She was still telling herself she would leave him, but sensed that this was impossible; impossible because she could not break herself of the habit of considering him her husband and loving him. Besides, she sensed that if here, in her own home, she was barely managing to look after her five children, then it would be all the worse for them wherever she might go with them all. Just in the past three days, the youngest had taken ill after being fed spoiled broth, and the rest had almost gone without their dinner yesterday. She sensed that leaving was impossible, but in an attempt to deceive herself, she kept selecting things and pretending she would leave.

When she saw her husband, she put her hands in a dresser drawer, as if searching for something, and looked around at him only when he was standing right next to her. But her face, which she had wanted to give a stern and determined expression, expressed just how lost she felt and how she had suffered.

“Dolly!” he said in a quiet, timid voice. He drew his head into his shoulders and tried to look pathetic and meek, but he exuded freshness and health.

With a quick glance she surveyed from head to foot this figure which radiated so much freshness and health. “Yes, he is happy and content!” she thought, “while I? . . . And this repulsive good nature that makes everyone love and praise him so: I detest this good nature of his,” she thought. Her mouth pursed, and a muscle in her cheek twitched on the right side of her pale, nervous face.

“What do you want?” she said in a brisk, husky voice unlike her own.

“Dolly!” he repeated with a quiver in his voice. “Anna is arriving today.”

“So, and what is that to me? I can’t see her!” she cried.

“But you must, still, Dolly . . .”

“Get out, get out. Get out!” she cried, not looking at him, as if this cry had been provoked by physical pain.

Stepan Arkadyevich could be perfectly calm when he thought of his wife, he could hope that everything would *shapify*, as Matvei put it, and he could go calmly about reading his newspaper and drinking his coffee; but when he saw her agonized, exhausted face, heard this sound of her voice, resigned to fate and desperate, it took his breath away, a lump rose in his throat, and his eyes glittered with tears.

“My God, what have I done! Dolly! For the love of God! After all . . .” But he could not continue for the sobs which caught in his throat.

She slammed the drawer shut and looked at him.

“Dolly, what can I say? Just one thing: forgive me, forgive me. Think back. Can’t nine years of life redeem a moment, a moment . . .”

She lowered her eyes and listened, waiting for what he would say, as if exploring him, somehow, to dissuade her.

“A moment . . . a moment of passion . . .” he began and would have continued, but at that word, as if from physical pain, she again pursed her lips and the muscle in her right cheek again twitched.

“Get out! Get out of here!” she cried even more shrilly. “And don’t talk to me about your passions and your abominations!”

She meant to walk out, but she tottered and grabbed onto the back of a chair to steady herself. His face went slack, his lips puffed out, and his eyes filled with tears.

“Dolly!” he said, sobbing now. “For the love of God, think of the children,

they aren't to blame. I'm to blame, so punish me, order me to redeem my guilt. Whatever I can do, I'm prepared to do anything! I'm to blame, words cannot say how much I'm to blame! But Dolly, forgive me!"

She sat down. He listened to her hard, labored breathing, and he felt inexpressibly sorry for her. Several times she attempted to speak but couldn't. He waited.

"You think about the children when it comes time to play with them, but I think about them and know that they are done for," she said, this being evidently one of the sentences she had repeated to herself more than once over the past three days.

She had used the familiar "you" with him, and he gave her a look of gratitude and would have taken her hand, but she shrank back in revulsion.¹⁰

"I think about the children and therefore would do anything in the world to save them; but I myself don't know how to save them: whether by taking them away from their father or by leaving them with a depraved father—yes, a depraved father. Well, you tell me, after what . . . after what has happened, can we go on living together? Is that possible? Tell me, is that possible?" she repeated, raising her voice. "After my husband, the father of my children, has taken his own children's governess as his mistress?"

"But what am I to do? What am I to do?" he said in a pitiful voice, not knowing what he was saying, his head dropping lower and lower.

"I find you repulsive, revolting!" she cried, now more and more heatedly. "Your tears are water! You never loved me; you have neither heart nor honor! You are vile to me, repulsive, a stranger—yes, a stranger!" It was with pain and hatred that she uttered this word which so horrified her: "stranger."

He looked at her, and the rage expressed in her eyes frightened and shocked him. He had no idea how much his pity infuriated her. She saw sympathy for herself in him, but not love. "No, she despises me. She will never forgive me," he thought.

"This is awful! Awful!" he said.

At that moment, in another room, a child cried out, most likely having fallen; Darya Alexandrovna listened closely, and all at once her face softened.

It evidently took her several seconds to pull herself together, as if she did not know where she was or what she was to do, but then rising quickly, she moved toward the door.

"She does love my child," he thought, noticing the alteration in her face at the child's cry. "My child. How then could she hate me?"

"Dolly, one more word," he said, following her.

"If you follow me I'll call the servants and the children! I'll let everyone

know what a scoundrel you are! I'm going away presently, and you may live here with your mistress!"

And she walked out, slamming the door.

Stepan Arkadyevich heaved a sigh, wiped his face, and with quiet steps walked out of the room. "Matvei says everything will shapify, but how? I don't see even a possibility. Oh, oh, what horror! And how vulgarly she shouted," he told himself, recalling her cry and her words: "scoundrel" and "mistress." "The maids might well have heard! Horribly vulgar. Horribly!" Stepan Arkadyevich stood there alone for several seconds, wiped his eyes, sighed, and squaring his chest, left the room.

It was Friday, and the German clockmaker was winding the clock in the dining room. Stepan Arkadyevich recalled his own joke about this punctual, bald clockmaker, that the German "had been wound up to wind clocks his whole life," and he smiled. Stepan Arkadyevich liked a good joke. "And perhaps things will shapify! A fine turn of phrase: *shapify*," he thought. "I must repeat that one."

"Matvei!" he shouted. "You and Marya get everything ready in the sitting room for Anna Arkadyevna," he said when Matvei appeared.

"Yes, sir."

Stepan Arkadyevich put on his fur coat and went out on the front steps.

"You won't be dining at home?" asked Matvei, seeing him out.

"That depends. Here, take this for housekeeping," he said, giving him ten rubles from his wallet. "Will that suffice?"

"Whether it will or no, evidently we'll have to make do," said Matvei, shutting the door and climbing back up the steps.

Darya Alexandrovna meanwhile had calmed the child, and realizing from the sound of the carriage door that her husband had left, she returned to her bedroom. This was her sole refuge from the domestic cares that besieged her the moment she emerged. Even now, in the brief time she had gone out to the nursery, the English governess and Matryona Filimonovna had managed to put several questions to her that would not suffer delay and to which she alone could respond: What shall I have the children wear for their walk? Shall I give them milk? Shouldn't I send for another cook?

"Oh, leave me. Leave me alone!" she said, and returning to her bedroom she sat back down exactly where she had spoken with her husband, and wringing her hands, so thin her rings slipped down her bony fingers, she began going over their entire conversation in her mind. "He's gone! But has he ended it with *her*?" she thought. "Can he be seeing her still? Why didn't I ask him? No, no, we cannot reconcile. And if we do remain in the same house — we will be strangers. Strangers for all time!" she repeated, with special emphasis on this word she found so terrible. "And how I loved him, my God, how I loved him! How I loved

him! And now, have I truly ceased to love him? Don't I love him more now than ever? Most terrible of all . . ." She began but did not complete her thought because Matryona Filimonovna poked her head in at the door.

"You'll want me to send for my brother," she said. "He can get dinner ready. Or it will be like yesterday and six o'clock before the children eat."

"All right then, I'll come out presently and give instructions. Have you sent for fresh milk?"

So Darya Alexandrovna plunged into the cares of the day and drowned her grief in them for a time.

5

In school, Stepan Arkadyevich had been a good student thanks to his fine abilities, but he was lazy and naughty and so had come out among the last. But in spite of his always dissolute life, though, as well as his inferior rank and his relative youth, he held an esteemed position with a good salary as an official in a Moscow office. He had obtained this position through the husband of his sister Anna, Alexei Alexandrovich Karenin, who held one of the most important positions in the ministry to which the office belonged; however, had Karenin not got his wife's brother this position, Stiva Oblonsky, through any of a hundred other people — brothers, sisters, cousins, uncles, and aunts — would have obtained this position or another just like it and the six thousand in salary he needed, since his affairs, despite his wife's substantial property, were in disarray.

Half of Moscow and Petersburg were family or friends of Stepan Arkadyevich. He was born among those people who were and are the powerful of this world. One third of the men of state, the older men, had been friends of his father and had known him in a gown; another third were on familiar terms with him; and the third third were close acquaintances; consequently, the dispensers of earthly goods in the form of positions, rents, concessions, and the like were all his friends and could not have overlooked one of their own. Oblonsky did not have to make any special effort to obtain a lucrative post; he needed only not to refuse, envy, quarrel, or take offense, something he, due to his inherent good nature, could never have done. He would have thought it ridiculous had he been told he would not get a position with the salary he required, particularly since he had not demanded anything excessive; all he wanted was to be given what his peers had been given, and he was no less capable of filling a post of this type than anyone else.

Stepan Arkadyevich was loved by all who knew him not only for his good and cheerful temperament and unquestioned honesty but also because in him,

in his handsome, fair appearance, shining eyes, black brows and hair, in the whiteness of his face and the pink of his cheeks, there was something that had a friendly and cheerful physical effect on the people who came into contact with him. "Aha! Stiva! Oblonsky! Here he is!" was what people almost always said with a delighted smile whenever they met him. If it also happened occasionally that after a conversation with him it turned out that nothing particularly delightful had occurred, still the next day, or the day after that, everyone delighted in precisely the same way again at meeting him.

In the more than two years since he had taken up his post as head of one of the offices in Moscow, Stepan Arkadyevich had gained, in addition to their love, the respect of his colleagues, subordinates, superiors, and everyone who had business with him. The principal qualities of Stepan Arkadyevich which had earned him this general respect in service were, first, his extraordinary indulgence toward people, based on his awareness of his own shortcomings; second, his perfect liberalism, not the kind he read about in the newspapers but the kind that was in his blood and that made him treat all men perfectly equally and identically, regardless of their estate or calling; and third—and this was the most important—his perfect disinterest in the business at hand, as a consequence of which he never got carried away or made mistakes.

Upon arriving at his place of service, Stepan Arkadyevich, escorted by the deferential hall porter carrying his briefcase, walked into his small private office, put on his uniform coat, and walked into the central room. The clerks and attendants all rose, bowing cheerfully and deferentially. Stepan Arkadyevich walked quickly to his seat, as always, shook his colleagues' hands, and sat down. He joked and chatted exactly as much as was polite, and then the work began. No one knew better than Stepan Arkadyevich where the line ran between freedom, simplicity, and the official tone required for the pleasant conduct of his affairs. Cheerfully and deferentially, like everyone in Stepan Arkadyevich's office, a secretary approached carrying the papers and spoke in the easy liberal tone that had been introduced by Stepan Arkadyevich.

"We have obtained information from the Penza provincial administration. Here, would it not do well—"

"Received at last?" said Stepan Arkadyevich, placing a finger on the paper. "Well then, gentlemen." And so the business of the day began.

"If only they knew what a naughty boy their chairman was just half an hour ago!" he thought, tilting his head with a significant look as he listened to the report. His eyes laughed as the report was read. Business was supposed to continue until two o'clock without interruption, and at two o'clock there would be a break and lunch.

It was not yet two o'clock when the large glass doors of the office's waiting room suddenly opened and someone walked in. All the officials under the portrait and behind the looking glass, delighted at the distraction, looked around at the door; however, the attendant standing by the door immediately chased out the intruder and closed the glass door behind him.¹¹

When the case had been read through, Stepan Arkadyevich stood up, stretched, and giving the liberal tone of the day its due, took out a cigarette right there and went into his private office. Two of his colleagues, Nikitin, an old hand, and Chamberlain-Junker Grinevich, joined him.

"We should be able to finish up after lunch," said Stepan Arkadyevich.

"Indeed we should!" said Nikitin.

"This Fomin must be a proper rogue," said Grinevich about one of the individuals involved in the case they were examining.

Stepan Arkadyevich frowned at Grinevich's words, in this way letting him feel that it was improper to form an opinion prematurely, and did not respond.

"Who was that who came in?" he asked the attendant.

"Someone slipped in without permission, Your Excellency, the moment I turned my back. He was asking for you. I said, 'When the members come out, then —'"

"Where is he?"

"Maybe he went back to the front hall, but here he comes. That's the one," said the attendant, pointing to a strongly built, broad-shouldered man with a curly beard who was running up the worn steps of the stone staircase quickly and lightly, still wearing his sheepskin cap. One of the scrawny officials going downstairs with a portfolio stopped, looked with disapproval at the running man's feet, and then shot a questioning glance at Oblonsky.

Stepan Arkadyevich was standing at the top of the stairs. His good-natured face, beaming above the embroidered collar of his uniform, beamed even more when he recognized who had run up.

"Why, here he is! Levin, at last!" he said with an amiable, amused smile as he surveyed Levin approaching. "How is it you did not disdain looking for me in this *den*?" said Stepan Arkadyevich, and not content with a handshake, he kissed his friend. "Have you been here long?"

"I only just arrived and I very much wanted to see you," replied Levin shyly, at the same time looking around angrily and uneasily.

"Well, let's go into my office," said Stepan Arkadyevich, who knew his friend's prideful and resentful shyness, and taking his arm, he pulled him along as if he were steering him through hazards.

Stepan Arkadyevich used the familiar "you" with nearly everyone he knew,

from old men of sixty to boys of twenty, with actors, ministers, merchants, and adjutants general, so that very many of those who were on familiar terms with him were at the two extreme ends of the social ladder and would have been very surprised to learn they had something in common through Oblonsky. He was on familiar terms with everyone he drank Champagne with, and he drank Champagne with everyone, and therefore, in the presence of his subordinates, whenever he met up with his *disreputable* “familiar,” as he called many of his friends in jest, he could, with his characteristic tact, diminish the distastefulness of this impression for his subordinates. Levin was not a disreputable familiar, but Oblonsky, with his innate tact, sensed that Levin thought that in front of subordinates he might not wish to reveal their intimacy and so he swept him into his office.

Levin was practically the same age as Oblonsky and was on familiar terms with him not due to Champagne alone. Levin had been his friend and companion since their early youth. They loved each other, despite the difference in their characters and tastes, as only men who have been friends since early youth sometimes do. However, despite this, as often happens between men who have chosen different sorts of occupations, although each of them, in discussion, would defend the other’s occupation, in his heart of hearts he despised it. Each felt that the life he himself was leading was the only true life and that the life his friend was leading was but a phantom. Oblonsky could not refrain from a slight smile of amusement at the sight of Levin. Countless times he had seen him newly arrived in Moscow from the country, where he did something, but what precisely Stepan Arkadyevich had never been able to understand very well, not that he took any real interest. Levin always arrived in Moscow in a state of agitation and haste, the least bit embarrassed and irritated at this embarrassment and for the most part with an absolutely new and unexpected view of things. Stepan Arkadyevich both laughed at and liked this. In exactly the same way Levin in his heart of hearts despised his friend’s city way of life and his service, which he considered trivial, and laughed at it. The difference, however, was that in doing what everyone else did, Oblonsky laughed with confidence and good nature, whereas Levin laughed without confidence and at times in anger.

“We’ve long been expecting you,” said Stepan Arkadyevich, entering his office and dropping Levin’s arm, as if to demonstrate that there were no more hazards. “I’m very very glad to see you,” he continued. “Well, what have you been up to? How have you been? When did you arrive?”

Levin said nothing as he looked at the unfamiliar faces of Oblonsky’s two colleagues and in particular at the hand of the elegant Grinevich, with its slender and very white fingers, very long yellow nails that curved under at the tip,

and very large shiny cuff links; for these hands were evidently consuming all his attention and would not allow him to think. Oblonsky noticed this at once and smiled.

“Ah yes, allow me to introduce you,” he said. “My colleagues: Filipp Ivanovich Nikitin and Mikhail Stanislavovich Grinevich” —and turning to Levin: “a member of the district council, a new *zemstvo* member, a gymnast who can lift five poods with one hand, a cattle breeder and a hunter, and my friend, Konstantin Dmitrievich Levin, the brother of Sergei Ivanovich Koznyshev.”¹²

“A pleasure,” said the old man.

“I have the honor of being acquainted with your brother, Sergei Ivanovich,” said Grinevich, extending his slender hand with the long fingernails.

Levin frowned, shook the hand coldly, and turned immediately to Oblonsky. Although he had great respect for the man with whom he shared a mother, a writer known throughout Russia, he could not bear being addressed as the brother of the celebrated Koznyshev rather than as Konstantin Levin.

“No, I am no longer a district councilor. I quarreled with them all and no longer attend meetings,” he said, addressing Oblonsky.

“So quickly!” said Oblonsky with a smile. “But how did this happen? And why?”

“It’s a long story. I’ll tell you someday,” said Levin, but he began telling him immediately. “Well, to make it short, I became convinced that there cannot be any proper business for a district council,” he began, as if someone had just insulted him. “On one hand, it’s a toy, they’re playing at parliament, but I’m not young enough, or old enough, to be entertained by toys. And on the other” —he stammered — “hand, it’s a way for the district *coterie* to add to their gains. In the past we had trustees and courts, and now we have the district council . . . not in the form of bribes, but in the form of an undeserved salary,” he said so heatedly you would have thought someone present was disputing his opinion.

“Oho! I can see you’re in a new phase again, a conservative phase,” said Stepan Arkadyevich. “Though, later about this.”

“Yes, later. But I had to see you,” said Levin, staring with hatred at Grinevich’s hand.

Stepan Arkadyevich smiled barely perceptibly.

“What was that you said about never putting on European clothes again?” he said, surveying his friend’s new garment, obviously from a French tailor. “So! I see: a new phase.”

Levin suddenly blushed, not the way adults blush — lightly, himself unaware of it — but the way boys blush when they sense that they are ridiculous in their shyness, and as a consequence are even shyer and blush even more, nearly to the

point of tears. So strange was it to see this intelligent, manly face in this childish state that Oblonsky stopped looking at it.

“Yes, where can we meet? You see I must, simply must speak with you,” said Levin.

Oblonsky appeared to ponder:

“Here’s what we’ll do. We’ll go to Gurin’s for lunch and we can talk there. I’m free until three.”

“No,” answered Levin after considering it. “I need to go somewhere else first.”

“Fine, then, we’ll have dinner together.”

“Dinner? But you see I don’t have anything special, just a few words to say, to ask, and we can have a talk later.”

“So say your few words now, and we’ll have our conversation over dinner.”

“Here are my few words,” said Levin; “actually, it’s nothing special.”

His face suddenly took on an angry expression that stemmed from his effort to overcome his shyness.

“What are the Shcherbatskys doing? Is everything as it was?” he said.

Having known for a long time that Levin was in love with his sister-in-law, Kitty, Stepan Arkadyevich smiled barely perceptibly, and his eyes began to dance.¹³

“You said ‘a few words,’ but I can’t answer in a few words because . . . Excuse me for a minute.”

In came his secretary; with that accustomed deference and certain modest awareness, common to all secretaries, of his superiority to the official in his knowledge of matters, he walked up to Oblonsky with the papers and began explaining, in the guise of a question, a certain complication. Without hearing him out, Stepan Arkadyevich gently put his hand on the secretary’s sleeve.

“No, do it the way I told you,” he said, softening his remark with a smile, and after briefly explaining how he understood the case, pushed the papers away and said, “So do it that way, please. Please, that way, Zakhar Nikitich.”

The flustered secretary retreated. Having recovered fully from his embarrassment during the consultation with the secretary, Levin stood with both elbows resting on the chair, and on his face was a look of bemused attention.

“I don’t understand. I don’t,” he said.

“What don’t you understand?” said Oblonsky, smiling as gaily as ever and taking out a cigarette. He was expecting some strange outburst from Levin.

“I don’t understand what it is you do,” said Levin, shrugging. “How can you take this seriously?”

“Why ever not?”

“Well, because there’s nothing to it.”

“That’s what you think, but we’re flooded with work.”

“Paperwork. Well yes, you do have a gift for that,” added Levin.

“That is, you think I’m lacking in some way?”

“Maybe I do,” said Levin. “Still, I admire your grandeur and I’m proud to have such a great man for a friend. You haven’t answered my question, though,” he added making a desperate effort to look straight into Oblonsky’s eyes.

“Well, all right, all right. Just wait a bit and you’ll get to this, too. It’s wonderful the way you have three thousand *desyatinas* in Karazin District, and those muscles, and the freshness of a girl of twelve—but you’ll soon be joining us as well.¹⁴ Now, as to what you were asking about: there has been no change, but it’s a shame you’ve been away so long.”

“What’s happened?” Levin asked in fright.

“Oh, nothing,” replied Oblonsky. “We’ll talk. So why in fact have you come?”

“Oh, we can talk about that later as well,” said Levin, again blushing to his ears.

“Well, all right. I understand,” said Stepan Arkadyevich. “You see how it is: I would invite you to my house, but my wife is not entirely well. Here’s the thing, though: if you want to see them, they’re more than likely at the Zoological Garden today, from four to five. Kitty is ice skating. You go there, and I’ll drive by for you, and then we’ll go somewhere together to dine.”

“Marvelous. Good-bye then.”

“Watch out, though. You see, I know you. You’ll forget all about it and suddenly go back to the country!” Stepan Arkadyevich called out, laughing.

“No, that’s certain.”

And not remembering until he was already in the doorway that he had forgotten to bow to Oblonsky’s companions, Levin left the office.

“He must be a very energetic gentleman,” said Grinevich when Levin had gone.

“Yes, old man,” said Stepan Arkadyevich, shaking his head, “there you see a lucky man! Three thousand *desyatinas* in Karazin District, everything ahead of him, and so much freshness! Not like our kind.”

“Why ever should you complain, Stepan Arkadyevich?”

“Yes, things are nasty, very bad,” said Stepan Arkadyevich with a heavy sigh.

6

When Oblonsky asked Levin why in fact he had come, Levin had blushed and raged at himself for blushing because he couldn’t say to him: “I’ve come to propose marriage to your sister-in-law,” though he had come for this and this alone.

The Levin and Shcherbatsky families were old, noble Moscow families and had always had close and friendly relations. This connection had become even stronger during Levin's student years. He had prepared for and matriculated at the university with young Prince Shcherbatsky, Dolly and Kitty's brother. In those days Levin was often a guest in the Shcherbatsky house, and he had fallen in love with the Shcherbatsky family. Strange though it may seem, it was the family that Konstantin Levin fell in love with, particularly the feminine half of it. Levin himself could not remember his own mother, and his only sister was older than he, so it was in the Shcherbatsky house that he saw for the first time the milieu of an old, noble, cultivated, and honorable family, the family he had been cheated of by the death of his father and mother. All the members of this family, especially the feminine half, seemed to him shrouded by a mysterious, poetic veil, and not only did he see no shortcomings in them whatsoever, but he inferred under this veil covering them the loftiest emotions and every conceivable perfection. Why exactly these three young ladies needed to speak French and English on alternate days; why they took turns at certain times playing the piano, whose sounds could always be heard in their brother's room upstairs, where the students studied; why these teachers of French literature, music, drawing, and dancing came to the house; why at certain times all three young ladies went for a drive in the carriage with Mademoiselle Linon to Tverskaya Boulevard wearing their satin pelisses—Dolly a long, Natalie a midlength, and Kitty one so short that her shapely little legs in their tightly stretched red stockings were in full view; why, accompanied by a footman with a gold cockade in his hat, they had to walk down Tverskaya Boulevard—all this and much else that was done in their mysterious world he did not understand, but he knew that everything done there was wonderful, and he was in love specifically with the mysteriousness of what transpired.

During his student years he nearly fell in love with the eldest, Dolly, but she was soon married to Oblonsky. Then he began to fall in love with the second. It was as if he sensed that he needed to fall in love with one of the sisters, he simply could not figure out precisely which one. No sooner had she appeared in society, though, than Natalie, too, was married, to the diplomat Lvov. Kitty was still a child when Levin left the university. Young Shcherbatsky joined the navy and drowned in the Baltic Sea, and Levin's dealings with the Shcherbatskys, despite his friendship with Oblonsky, became increasingly rare. However, when this year, early in the winter, Levin had come to Moscow after a year in the country and seen the Shcherbatskys, he had realized with which of the three he was indeed destined to fall in love.

One would think nothing could be simpler than for him, a man of good family, richer rather than poorer, thirty-two years old, to propose marriage to

Princess Shcherbatskaya; there was every likelihood he would have been immediately deemed a good match. Except that Levin was in love, and therefore Kitty seemed to him perfection in every respect, a creature so far above all that was earthly—and he was just such an earthly and vile creature—that there could be no thought that others or indeed she herself might deem him worthy of her.

After spending two months in Moscow in a kind of daze, seeing Kitty nearly every day in society, where he went in order to meet her, Levin suddenly decided that this could never be and left for the country.

Levin's conviction that this could never be was based on the fact that in his own eyes he was an undesirable, unworthy match for the lovely Kitty, and so Kitty could not possibly love him. In her family's eyes he had no regular, definite career or position in society, whereas his companions, now that he was thirty-two years old, had already made something of themselves. One was a colonel and aide-de-camp, another a professor, yet another a respected bank and railroad director or president of a board, like Oblonsky; he, on the other hand (he knew very well what he must seem like to others) was a landowner busy with his cattle breeding, his snipe shooting, and his building projects, that is, a talentless fellow nothing ever had come of who, in society's lights, was doing exactly what people do who never amount to anything.

The mysterious and lovely Kitty herself could not love someone as ugly as he felt himself to be and, above all, someone so ordinary, who had never distinguished himself in any way. Moreover, his previous attitude toward Kitty, the attitude of an adult toward a child, as a consequence of his friendship with her brother, seemed to him yet another barrier to love. A good but ugly man such as he considered himself to be might be loved as a friend, he thought, but to be loved with the same love he himself felt for Kitty he would have had to be a handsome and, most important, special man.

He had heard that women often do love ugly, ordinary men, but he did not believe this because he judged on his own example, since he himself could love only beautiful, mysterious, and special women.

After spending two months alone in the country, however, he was convinced that this was not one of those infatuations he had experienced as a young man; that this emotion had not given him a moment's peace; that he could not live without resolving the issue of whether or not she would be his wife; and that his despair stemmed only from his imagination, that he had no proof whatsoever that he would be rejected. So he had come to Moscow now with the firm resolve to propose and to marry, if they would accept him. Or . . . He could not think what would become of him if he were rejected.

7

Levin had arrived in Moscow by the morning train and was staying with Koznyshev, his older brother on his mother's side, and after changing clothes he went into his brother's study, intending to tell him immediately why he had come and to ask his advice; however, his brother was not alone. Sitting in his study was a famous professor of philosophy who had come from Kharkov expressly to clarify a misunderstanding that had arisen between them on a philosophical problem of the utmost importance. The professor had been waging a heated polemic against the materialists, and Sergei Koznyshev had been following this polemic with interest, and after reading the professor's latest article, he had written him a letter stating his own ideas; he had reproached the professor for excessive concessions to the materialists. So the professor had come immediately in order to talk this over. Under discussion was a fashionable question: is there a boundary between psychological and physiological phenomena in human action, and if so, where does it lie?

Sergei Ivanovich greeted his brother with the same kind but cool smile he had for everyone and, after introducing him to the professor, resumed the conversation.

The little yellow man with the spectacles and the narrow brow tore himself away from the discussion for a moment to exchange greetings with Levin and then resumed his speech, paying Levin no attention. Levin sat down to wait for the professor to leave, but he soon got caught up in the subject of their discussion.

Levin had encountered in journals the articles they were discussing, and he had read them, taking an interest in them as a development of the foundations of natural science with which he was familiar, having studied the natural sciences at the university, but he had never connected these scientific conclusions on the animal origins of man, on reflexes, on biology and sociology, to questions of the meaning of life and death for himself personally, questions that had been occurring to him more and more often of late.¹⁵

Listening to the discussion between his brother and the professor, he noticed that they were connecting scientific to spiritual questions, and several times they came very close to these questions, but each time, as soon as they came close to what seemed to him the crux of the matter, they retreated in haste and again delved into the sphere of subtle distinctions, qualifications, citations, allusions, and references to authorities, and he had a hard time understanding what they meant.

"I cannot allow," said Sergei Ivanovich, with his usual clarity and precision of expression and his elegant diction, "I cannot in any case agree with Keiss that

my entire concept of the external world derives from my sense impressions. The most fundamental concept of *being* has not come to me through sensation, for there is no special organ for conveying such a concept."

"Yes, but Wurst, Knaust, and Pripasov, they would all tell you that your consciousness of being stems from the totality of your sensations, that this consciousness of being is the result of sensations.¹⁶ Wurst even says so outright, that if there is no sensation then there is no concept of being."

"I would argue to the contrary," began Sergei Ivanovich.

At this, however, Levin again thought that, having come close to the crux of the matter, they were again backing away, so he resolved to pose a question to the professor.

"If so, then, if my senses are destroyed, if my body dies, then there can be no existence of any kind, correct?" he asked.

With annoyance and apparent mental anguish at the interruption, the professor looked around at the odd inquirer, who resembled a bargeman more than a philosopher, and shifted his eyes to Sergei Ivanovich, as if to ask, "What can one say?" But Sergei Ivanovich, who was speaking with far from the same ardor and one-sidedness as the professor and who had enough breadth of mind to be able to answer the professor and at the same time understand the simple and natural point of view from which the question had been asked, smiled and said:

"We do not yet have the right to address that question."

"We do not have the data," confirmed the professor, and he continued with his arguments. "No," he said, "I would point out that if, as Pripasov explicitly states, perception is based on sensation, then we must distinguish strictly between these two concepts."

Levin did not listen anymore and waited for the professor to leave.

8

Once the professor had left, Sergei Ivanovich turned to his brother.

"I'm very pleased you've come. For long? How is farming?"

Levin knew farming was of little interest to his older brother and so, aware that he was only making a concession to him by inquiring, he answered only about wheat sales and money.

Levin had meant to tell his brother of his intention to marry and to ask his advice, he had even resolved firmly to do so; but when he saw his brother, listened to his discussion with the professor, and when he then caught the unintentionally patronizing tone with which his brother questioned him about farm matters (their maternal estate was undivided, and Levin had taken charge of

both shares), Levin felt for some reason that he could not begin to speak with his brother about his decision to marry. He sensed that his brother would not look on this in the way in which he would have liked.

“Well, and how’s that council of yours doing?” asked Sergei Ivanovich, who took an active interest in the district council and ascribed great significance to it.

“To be honest, I don’t know.”

“How’s that? Aren’t you a member of the board?”

“No, not anymore. I resigned,” replied Konstantin Levin, “and I don’t attend meetings anymore.”

“Pity!” Sergei Ivanovich intoned, frowning.

Levin, to justify himself, began recounting what went on at the meetings in his district.

“There, it’s always that way!” Sergei Ivanovich interrupted him. “We Russians are always that way. This may even be a good trait of ours—the ability to see our shortcomings—but we go too far, we console ourselves with irony, which is always on the tip of our tongue. All I can tell you is that if you were to give rights like our council institutions to another European nation, the Germans and English would extract their freedom from them, whereas all we can do is ridicule.”

“But what can be done?” said Levin guiltily. “This was my last effort. I gave it my best effort, but I can’t. I’m incapable of it.”

“Not incapable,” said Sergei Ivanovich, “you’re not looking at the matter properly.”

“That could be,” responded Levin dolefully.

“But you know, our brother Nikolai is here again.”

Nikolai was Konstantin Levin’s full older brother and Sergei Ivanovich’s half-brother, a ruined man who had squandered the greater part of his inheritance, who circulated in the strangest and worst society, and who had quarreled with his brothers.

“What did you say?” cried Levin in horror. “How do you know?”

“Prokofy saw him on the street.”

“Here, in Moscow? Where is he? Do you know?” Levin rose from his chair as if prepared to go immediately.

“I regret having told you this,” said Sergei Ivanovich, shaking his head at his younger brother’s agitation. “I sent to find out where he is staying and sent him his promissory note to Trubin, which I paid. Here is what he replied.”

And Sergei Ivanovich handed his brother a note that had been under a paper-weight.

Levin read what had been written in the strange but to him dear handwriting: "I humbly beg you to leave me in peace. This is the one thing I ask of my gracious brothers. Nikolai Levin."

Levin read this and, without raising his head, holding the note, stood in front of Sergei Ivanovich.

The desire to forget his unlucky brother now and the awareness that doing so would be base contended in his heart.

"He obviously means to insult me," Sergei Ivanovich continued, "but he can't, and I would wish with all my heart to help him, but I know this can't be done."

"Yes, yes," echoed Levin. "I understand and appreciate your attitude toward him, but I'm going to see him."

"Go ahead, if you like, but I don't advise it," said Sergei Ivanovich. "That is, as far as I'm concerned, I'm not afraid of it, because he can't set you against me; however, for your sake, I would advise you not to go. You can't help. But do as you please."

"Perhaps I can't, but I have the feeling, especially at this moment—well, yes, that's something else—I have the feeling that I could not be at peace."

"Well, that I don't understand," said Sergei Ivanovich. "The one thing I do understand," he added, "is that this is a lesson in humility. I have begun to view what is called baseness otherwise and more compassionately since our brother Nikolai has become what he is. You know what he did—"

"Oh, it's horrible. Horrible!" echoed Levin.

After obtaining his brother's address from Sergei Ivanovich's footman, Levin prepared to leave immediately, but after thinking it over he decided to put off his visit until the evening. First of all, if he was to have any peace of mind, he needed to resolve the matter that had brought him to Moscow. Levin left his brother and went to Oblonsky's office, and having received news of the Shcherbatskys, he went where he had been told he might find Kitty.

9

At four o'clock, feeling his heart pounding, Levin got down from the cab at the Zoological Garden and followed the path toward the ice hills and skating rink, knowing for certain that he would find her there because he had seen the Shcherbatskys' carriage by the entrance.

The day was clear and frosty. Carriages, sleighs, cabbies, and policemen were lined up at the entrance. A well-turned out crowd, their hats gleaming in the bright sunshine, was teeming near the gate and along the swept paths, among

the Russian cottages with their gingerbread trim; the shaggy old birches of the garden, all their branches bowed under snow, looked as if they had been decked out in new holiday vestments.

He took the path to the rink and told himself over and over: "Don't get excited, calm down. What are you doing? What's wrong with you? Be quiet, silly," he addressed his heart. The more he tried to calm himself, the harder it was to breathe. He met an acquaintance, who called out to him, but Levin didn't even recognize him. He approached the "Russian hill," where the toboggans' chains clanked going down and up and the sleds rumbled downhill and jolly voices rang out. He walked a few more steps and saw the rink before him, and immediately among the skaters he recognized her.

He recognized she was there by the joy and terror that gripped his heart. She was standing, talking with a lady, at the far end of the rink. Seemingly, there was nothing particular about her clothing or her pose; but Levin recognized her in that crowd as easily as a rose among nettles. She lit up everything. She was a smile shining on everything around her. "Can I really go down there, onto the ice, and approach her?" he thought. The spot where she stood seemed to him an unapproachable shrine, and there was a moment when he nearly left, so frightened was he. He needed to master himself and to reason that all kinds of people were walking near her, that he too could come here and skate. He walked down, avoiding looking at her for as long as he could, as he would the sun, but he saw her, as he would the sun, without looking.

On that day of the week and at that time of day, people of a certain set, all of whom knew one another, gathered on the ice. There were master skaters here showing off their art, learners holding onto chairs, making timid, clumsy movements, little boys, and old people skating for health purposes; to Levin they all seemed the happy select because they were here, close to her.¹⁷ All those skating seemed to chase and overtake her with perfect indifference; they even spoke with her and amused themselves completely independently of her, enjoying the excellent ice and fine weather.

Nikolai Shcherbatsky, Kitty's cousin, wearing a short jacket and narrow trousers, was sitting on a bench with his skates on, and catching sight of Levin called out to him:

"Hey, Russia's ace skater! Been here long? Excellent ice. Put on your skates."

"I don't have my skates," replied Levin, marveling at this daring and familiarity in her presence and not losing sight of her for a second, though he wasn't looking at her. He could feel the sun drawing closer. She was in the corner, and after awkwardly putting down her slender feet in their high boots, clearly visibly shy, she skated toward him. A boy wearing a Russian shirt, desperately swing-

ing his arms and bent low, overtook her. She did not skate quite steadily; taking her hands out of her small muff, which hung on a cord, she held them at the ready, and looking at Levin, whom she had recognized, she smiled at him and at her own fright. When she had made the turn, she gave herself a push with a resilient foot and skated straight toward Shcherbatsky; grabbing onto him with one hand, and smiling, she nodded at Levin. She was even more beautiful than he had pictured her.

When he had thought of her, he could vividly imagine her in her entirety and in particular the charm of her small curly blond head, with its expression of childlike clarity and goodness, set so freely on her shapely girlish shoulders. The childishness of the expression on her face in combination with the delicate beauty of her figure made up her special charm, which he well remembered; however, as always, what caught him by surprise was the expression of her eyes, timid, serene, and truthful, and in particular her smile, which always transported Levin to a magical world where he felt moved and filled with tenderness, such as he could recall himself on rare days in his early childhood.

“Have you been here long?” she said, giving him her hand. “Thank you,” she added when he picked up the handkerchief that had fallen from her muff.

“I? I only just arrived, yesterday, I . . . that is, today,” replied Levin, suddenly failing to understand her question, he was so agitated. “I wanted to see you,” he said, and immediately recalling his intention in seeking her out he grew embarrassed and blushed. “I didn’t know you skated, and you skate beautifully.”

She looked at him closely, as if wishing to penetrate the cause of his embarrassment.

“Your praise is worth a great deal. There’s a legend maintained here that you’re the very best skater,” she said, brushing off with her little hand the needles of frost that had fallen on her muff.

“Yes, there was a time when I skated with a passion; I wanted to reach perfection.”

“It seems you do everything with passion,” she said, smiling. “I would like so very much to see you skate. Put on skates and let’s skate together.”

“Skate together! Is that really possible?” thought Levin, looking at her.

“I’ll put them on at once,” he said.

And he went to put on skates.

“You haven’t been to see us in a long time, sir,” said the rink attendant, supporting Levin’s foot and screwing on the heel. “Since you, there’s not an ace among the gentlemen. Will that be all right?” he said, tightening the strap.

“Fine, fine, quickly, please,” replied Levin, barely restraining a smile of happiness from coming over his face. “Yes,” he thought, “this is life, this is happi-

ness! *Together*, she said. *Let's skate together*. Speak to her now? But that's exactly why I'm afraid of saying I'm happy now, happy at least with the hope. . . . But then? . . . I must, though! I must, must! Weakness begone!"

Levin got to his feet, took off his coat, and scampering across the rough ice by the changing shed, ran out onto the smooth ice and skated effortlessly, as if by will alone speeding up, slowing down, and veering. He approached her shyly, but once again her smile reassured him.

She gave him her hand, and they set off side by side, quickening their pace, and the faster they went, the harder she pressed his hand.

"I would learn faster from you because I have confidence in you," she told him.

"And I have confidence in myself when you are leaning on me," he said, but immediately took fright at what he had said and blushed. Indeed, no sooner had he uttered these words than suddenly, like the sun going behind the clouds, her face lost all its kindness, and Levin recognized the familiar play of her face that signified an effort at thought: a tiny wrinkle furrowed her smooth brow.

"Nothing unpleasant has happened to you, has it? Not that I have the right to ask," he said quickly.

"Why do you ask? No, nothing unpleasant has happened," she replied coolly and added immediately, "You haven't seen Mademoiselle Linon, have you?"

"Not yet."

"Go over to her, she loves you so."

"What's this? I must have grieved her. Lord, help me!" thought Levin, and he raced toward the old Frenchwoman with the gray ringlets, who was sitting on a bench. Smiling and showing her false teeth, she greeted him as an old friend.

"Yes, you see we are growing up," she told him, indicating Kitty with her eyes, "and growing old. *Tiny Bear* is big now!" continued the Frenchwoman, laughing, and she reminded him of the joke about the three young ladies, whom he used to call the three bears, from the English fairy tale. "Do you remember how you sometimes used to say that?"

He definitely did not remember this, but she had been laughing at that joke for ten years and liked it.

"Well go on, go skate. Our Kitty skates well now, doesn't she?"

When Levin raced back to Kitty, her face was no longer stern, and her eyes watched him just as truthfully and tenderly, but it seemed to Levin that her tenderness had a special, purposely serene tone about it. And that made him sad. After talking about her old governess and her quirks, Kitty asked him about his life.

"You really aren't bored in the country in winter?" she said.

"No, I'm not bored, I'm very busy," he said, feeling her subduing him with

her serene tone, which he was powerless to fight, just as he had been early in the winter.

“Have you come for long?” Kitty asked him.

“I don’t know,” he replied, not thinking about what he was saying. The thought occurred to him that if he submitted to this tone of calm friendship of hers then he would go away again without having decided anything, and he resolved to rebel.

“What do you mean you don’t know?”

“I don’t know. It depends on you,” he said, and was immediately horrified at his own words.

Whether she had not heard his words, or had not wanted to hear them, she stumbled a little, tapped her foot twice, and quickly skated away from him. She skated up to Mademoiselle Linon, told her something, and headed for the changing shed, where the ladies were taking off their skates.

“My God, what have I done! Lord God of mine! Help me, teach me!” said Levin, praying and, at the same time, feeling a need for vigorous movement, racing off and tracing inner and outer circles.

At that moment one of the young men, the best of the new skaters, a cigarette in his mouth, skates on, came out of the coffeehouse and raced down the steps, picking up speed as he went, clattering and leaping. He flew down and skated across the ice without even altering the relaxed position of his hands.

“Ah, that’s a new trick!” said Levin, and he immediately ran up the stairs to try this new trick.

“Don’t kill yourself. It takes practice!” Nikolai Shcherbatsky shouted to him.

Levin went up the steps, took a running start, and raced down, maintaining his balance in this unaccustomed movement with his arms. On the last step he tripped and grazed the ice with his hand before giving a vigorous push, straightening up, and skating off, laughing.

“So wonderful and dear,” thought Kitty at that moment, as she emerged from the changing shed with Mademoiselle Linon, and she gazed at him with a smile of quiet tenderness, as she would at a favorite brother. “Am I really to blame? Have I really done anything so awful? They say it’s flirting. I know it’s not him I love, but I still have such fun with him, and he’s so wonderful. Only why did he say that?” she thought.

Catching sight of Kitty leaving, and her mother, who had met her on the steps, Levin, flushed after the rapid movement, stopped and thought. He removed his skates and caught up with mother and daughter at the garden entrance.

“I’m very happy to see you,” said the princess. “Thursdays, as always, we are at home.”

“Today then?”

“We shall be very happy to see you,” said the princess dryly.

This dryness distressed Kitty, and she could not resist the desire to smooth over her mother’s coldness. She turned her head and said with a smile:

“Until we meet again.”

At that moment, Stepan Arkadyevich, his hat cocked and his face and eyes shining, entered the garden like a cheerful conqueror. Approaching his mother-in-law, however, he answered her questions about Dolly’s health with a mournful, guilty face. After speaking softly and sadly with his mother-in-law, he threw back his shoulders and took Levin by the arm.

“Well then, shall we go?” he asked. “I’ve been thinking about you the entire time, and I’m very glad you’ve come,” he said, giving him a significant look.

“We shall, we shall,” responded a happy Levin, who had not ceased to hear the sound of the voice that had said, “Until we meet again,” or to see the smile with which it had been said.

“To the Anglia or the Hermitage?”

“It’s all the same to me.”

“Well, how about the Anglia,” said Stepan Arkadyevich, who chose the Anglia because he owed more there, at the Anglia, than at the Hermitage. Which was why he felt it improper to avoid this hotel. “Do you have a cab? Well, that’s fine, since I let my carriage go.”

The friends were silent all the way there. Levin was thinking about what the change of expression on Kitty’s face meant and vacillated between reassuring himself that there was hope to despairing and clearly seeing that his hope was insane, but meanwhile he felt like a completely different man, unlike the man he had been before her smile and her “until we meet again.”

Stepan Arkadyevich spent the ride composing their *menu*.

“You are fond of turbot, aren’t you?” he asked Levin as they drew up.

“What?” Levin queried. “Turbot? Yes, I’m *awfully* fond of turbot.”

10

When Levin walked into the hotel with Oblonsky, he could not help but notice the certain peculiarity of expression, like a restrained glow, on the face and entire figure of Stepan Arkadyevich. Oblonsky removed his overcoat and proceeded to the dining room with his hat tilted to one side, giving orders to the attentive Tatars with their tailcoats and napkins over their arms. Bowing to the right and left at familiar faces who here, as everywhere, greeted him with delight, he walked up to the buffet, took a sip of vodka and a bite of fish, and said

something to the painted Frenchwoman, all ribbons, lace, and ringlets, who was sitting behind the counter that made even this Frenchwoman laugh sincerely. Levin refused the vodka only because he found this Frenchwoman—all composed, it seemed to him, of false hair, *poudre de riz*, and *vinaigre de toilette*—loathsome.¹⁸ He hurried to get away from her as he would from somewhere dirty. His heart was overflowing with the memory of Kitty, and a smile of triumph and happiness shone in his eyes.

“This way, Your Excellency, if you please. You will not be disturbed here, Your Excellency,” said a white-haired old Tatar who was especially attentive and whose very broad hips made his coattails gap. “If you please, your hat, Your Excellency,” he said to Levin, as a sign of respect for Stepan Arkadyevich, looking after his guest as well.

Whipping a fresh tablecloth over the tablecloth that already covered the round table under the bronze sconce, he pushed in their velvet chairs and stood in front of Stepan Arkadyevich with a napkin over his arm and a menu in his hands, awaiting instructions.

“If you so instruct, Your Excellency, a private room will be free very soon. Prince Golitsyn and a lady. Fresh oysters have come in.”

“Ah! Oysters.”

Stepan Arkadyevich pondered:

“Shouldn’t we change our plan, Levin?” he said, resting his finger on the menu. His face expressed serious perplexity. “Are the oysters good? Take care!”

“Flensburg oysters, Your Excellency. None from Ostend.”

“Flensburg it will have to be then, but are they fresh?”

“They came in yesterday, sir.”

“What do you think, how about we begin with oysters and then we’ll change our entire plan? Eh?”

“It’s all the same to me. I’d prefer cabbage soup and kasha, but I can’t have that here, of course.”¹⁹

“Kasha *à la russe* for you, sir?” said the Tatar, like a nanny to a child, leaning over Levin.

“No, joking aside, whatever you choose, that will be fine. I had a good run on my skates, and I’m hungry. And don’t think,” he added, noticing the dissatisfied expression on Oblonsky’s face, “that I don’t appreciate your selection. It would be a pleasure to eat well.”

“But of course! I don’t care what anyone says, it is one of life’s pleasures,” said Stepan Arkadyevich. “Well then, my good man, give us a couple—no wait, that’s not enough—make that three dozen oysters, then a soup with vegetables—”

“*Printanière*?” the Tatar chimed in. But Stepan Arkadyevich clearly did not want to give him the satisfaction of calling the dishes by their French names.

“With root vegetables, you know? Then turbot with a thick sauce, and then . . . roast beef, and make sure it’s good. And then capon perhaps and fruit com-pote.”

Recalling Stepan Arkadyevich’s way of not naming dishes from the French menu, and rather than repeating after him, the Tatar gave himself the satisfac-tion of repeating the entire order according to the menu: “*Soupe printanière, turbot sauce Beaumarchais, poulard à l’estragon, macédoine de fruits . . .*” And then instantly, as if on springs, he put down one bound menu and picked up another, the wine list, and offered it to Stepan Arkadyevich.

“What shall we drink?”

“Whatever you like, only just a little, Champagne,” said Levin.

“What? To start? Though actually, you’re probably right. Do you like the white seal?”

“*Cachet blanc*,” the Tatar chimed in.

“Well, then give us that brand with the oysters, and then we’ll see.”

“Yes, sir. What table wine will you take?”

“Give us the Nuits. No, better the classic Chablis.”

“Yes, sir. Will you have *your* cheese?”

“Oh yes, Parmesan. Or do you prefer something else?”

“No, it’s all the same to me,” said Levin, no longer able to suppress a smile.

And with his tails flapping over his broad hips, the Tatar ran off and five min-utes later flew back with a platter of opened oysters in their mother-of-pearl shells and a bottle between his fingers.

Stepan Arkadyevich rumbled his starched napkin, tucked it into his waist-coat, and resting his hands calmly on the table, set to the oysters.

“Not bad,” he said as he stripped the slippery oysters from their mother-of-pearl shells with a tiny silver fork and swallowed one after the other. “Not bad,” he repeated, casting his moist and shining eyes first at Levin and then at the Tatar.

Levin ate the oysters as well, though he would have found white bread and cheese more to his liking. Nonetheless, he admired Oblonsky. Even the Tatar, after he had removed the cork and poured the sparkling wine into the delicate shallow glasses, and with a perceptible smile of pleasure straightening his white tie, looked at Stepan Arkadyevich.

“Aren’t you very fond of oysters?” said Stepan Arkadyevich, draining from his glass. “Or are you worried? Eh?”

He wanted Levin to be cheerful, and it wasn’t that Levin wasn’t cheerful, rather he was ill at ease. With what he had in his heart, he found it painful and awkward to be in a restaurant, amid private rooms where men were dining with ladies, in the midst of this rushing about and fuss; this setting of bronzes, mir-

rors, gaslight, and Tatars—he found all of it offensive. He was afraid of sullyng that which had filled his heart to overflowing.

“I? Yes, I’m worried, but besides, all this makes me ill at ease,” he said. “You can’t imagine how it is for me, a country dweller, all this is as savage as the fingernails of the gentlemen I saw in your office.”

“Yes, I saw how intrigued you were by poor Grinevich’s nails,” said Stepan Arkadyevich, laughing.

“I can’t help it,” replied Levin. “You should try, just imagine you’re me and take a country dweller’s point of view. In the country, we try to keep our hands in a state that makes them handy to work with; so we trim our nails and sometimes roll up our sleeves. But here people let their fingernails grow as long as they can stand it on purpose, and they wear cuff links like saucers so that they can’t do anything with their hands.”

Stepan Arkadyevich smiled gaily.

“Yes, it’s a sign that he doesn’t need to do rough labor. His mind does the work.”

“Perhaps. But I still find it savage, just as I find it savage now that we country dwellers try to eat our fill as quickly as we can so that we can go about our business, while you and I try to take as long as we can to eat our fill, and for that reason we eat oysters.”

“Well, naturally,” chimed in Stepan Arkadyevich. “That’s the whole point of cultivation, though: to make everything a pleasure.”

“Well, if that is the point, then I prefer to be savage.”

“And savage you are. All you Levins are savages.”

Levin sighed. He thought of his brother Nikolai, and he felt guilty and pained, and he frowned; but Oblonsky started talking about a subject that distracted him immediately.

“Well then, will you be coming this evening to see us, the Shcherbatskys, that is?” he said, pushing away the rough empty shells and bringing the cheese closer, his eyes flashing significantly.

“Yes, I shall go, certainly,” replied Levin. “Though the princess seemed reluctant to invite me.”

“What are you talking about! Such nonsense! That’s just her manner. . . . Well, let’s have at it, my friend, the soup! It’s just her manner, the *grande dame*,” said Stepan Arkadyevich. “I’d come, too, except that I must go to Countess Banina’s for a rehearsal. Don’t you see what a savage you are? How do you explain the fact that you vanished so suddenly from Moscow? The Shcherbatskys kept asking me about you, as if I should know. But I only know one thing: that you always do what no one else does.”

“Yes,” said Levin slowly and with emotion. “You’re right, I am a savage. Only

what makes me savage is not the fact that I left but that I've come now. I've come now . . ."

"Oh, and what a lucky man you are!" Stepan Arkadyevich chimed in, looking Levin in the eye.

"Why is that?"

"A spirited steed I can tell by its brand, and a young man in love by his eyes," declaimed Stepan Arkadyevich.²⁰ "You have everything before you."

"And do you really have everything behind?"

"No, perhaps not behind, but you have a future, whereas I have a present, and the present is, well, spotty."

"What is it?"

"Oh, things could be better. But I don't want to talk about myself, and anyway I can't explain it all," said Stepan Arkadyevich. "So, why did you come to Moscow? . . . Hey, take this!" he called to the Tatar.

"Can you guess?" replied Levin, not taking his eyes, which glowed from deep within, off Stepan Arkadyevich.

"I can, but I can't be the one to bring it up, and for just this reason you can see whether or not I have guessed correctly," said Stepan Arkadyevich, looking at Levin with a faint smile.

"Well, then what would you tell me?" said Levin in a trembling voice, and feeling all the muscles on his face trembling. "What's your view of it?"

Stepan Arkadyevich slowly drained his glass of Chablis, not taking his eyes off Levin.

"I?" said Stepan Arkadyevich. "I could wish for nothing else. Nothing. It's the best thing that could happen."

"But mightn't you be mistaken? Do you know what we're talking about?" said Levin, drilling his eyes into his companion. "Do you think it's possible?"

"I do. Why wouldn't it be?"

"No, do you really think it's possible? No, tell me everything you're thinking! Well, and what if, what if a refusal awaits me? I'm even certain—"

"Why would you think that?" said Stepan Arkadyevich, smiling at his emotion.

"That's how it seems to me sometimes. After all, that would be horrible for me and for her."

"Well, in any case, there's nothing horrible in it for a young woman. Any young woman takes pride in a proposal."

"Yes, any young woman, but not she."

Stepan Arkadyevich smiled. He well knew this feeling of Levin's, he knew that for him all the young women in the world were divided up into two sorts: one sort was all the young women in the world save her, and these young women

had every human weakness and were very ordinary; the other sort was she alone, who had no weaknesses of any kind and was superior to everything human.

“Stop, take some sauce,” he said, restraining Levin’s hand, which was pushing the sauce away.

Levin obediently took some sauce but would not let Stepan Arkadyevich eat.

“No, stop. Stop,” he said. “You must understand that for me this is a matter of life and death. I’ve never spoken to anyone about this. Nor could I ever speak to anyone about it the way I do with you. You see, you and I are different in every possible way: different tastes, opinions, everything; but I know you love me and understand me, and for that reason I love you very much. But for God’s sake, be perfectly frank.”

“I’m telling you what I think,” said Stepan Arkadyevich, smiling. “But I’ll tell you something else: my wife is the most amazing woman.” Stepan Arkadyevich sighed when he recalled his relations with his wife, and after a moment’s pause he continued. “She has the gift of prophecy. She can see straight through people; but that’s not all, she knows what’s going to happen, especially when it comes to marriages. For instance, she predicted that Shakhovskaya would marry Brenteln. No one would believe it, but that is what happened. And she is on your side.”

“What do you mean?”

“I mean that not only does she love you, she says that Kitty is certain to be your wife.”

At these words Levin’s face beamed with a smile that was close to tears of emotion.

“She says that!” exclaimed Levin. “I’ve always said she was lovely, your wife. Well, but that’s enough, enough talk of this,” he said, rising from his chair.

“Fine, but sit down. Here is the soup.”

Levin could not sit, though. He trod firmly around the cage of a room twice, blinking to hide his tears, and only then sat back down at the table.

“You must understand,” he said, “that this isn’t love. I’ve been in love, but that’s not what this is. This isn’t my emotion but an outside force of some kind that has taken hold of me. I did go away, you see, because I’d decided this could never be, you understand, this is a happiness the likes of which does not happen on earth, but I’ve struggled with myself and can see that without this there is no life. So it must be decided.”

“Then why did you ever leave?”

“Oh, stop! I have so many thoughts! So much I need to ask! Listen to me. You know, you can’t imagine what you’ve done for me by what you said. I’m so happy I’m even disgusting; I’ve forgotten everything. . . . I only just learned that my brother Nikolai . . . he’s here, you know . . . I’d even forgotten about him. I

think he too is happy. It's like a madness. One thing is horrible, though. . . . Here, you're married, you know this feeling. . . . What's horrible is that we are old and already have a past . . . not of love, but of sins . . . and all of a sudden we come so close to a pure, innocent creature; it's loathsome, and this is why I can't help but feel myself unworthy."

"Well, your sins are very few."

"Ah, but still," said Levin, "still, 'reading with disgust the life I've led, I tremble and I curse, and I bitterly complain.'²¹ Yes."

"What can you do? That is how the world is made," said Stepan Arkadyevich.

"My one consolation is like that prayer I've always loved, asking forgiveness 'not according to my deserts but according to Thy loving-kindness.'²² That is the only way she can ever forgive me."

11

Levin drained his glass and they sat in silence.

"There is one more thing I ought to tell you. Do you know Vronsky?" Stepan Arkadyevich asked Levin.

"No, I don't. Why do you ask?"

"Give us another," Stepan Arkadyevich instructed the Tatar, who had refilled their glasses and was circling around them at exactly the moment he was not needed.

"Why should I know Vronsky?"

"You should know Vronsky because he is one of your rivals."

"Who is this Vronsky?" said Levin, and his face, which had worn a childishly ecstatic expression that Oblonsky could only admire, suddenly became angry and unpleasant.

"Vronsky is one of the sons of Count Kirill Ivanovich Vronsky and one of the finest examples of Petersburg's gilded youth. I first met him in Tver, when I was on official business there, and he came for the levy of recruits. Terribly rich, handsome, first-rate connections, an aide-de-camp and yet—a very sweet and decent fellow. But much more than simply a decent fellow. As I've come to know him better here, he is both cultivated and quite clever; this is a man who will go far."

Levin frowned but remained silent.

"Well, he showed up here soon after you left, and as I understand it, he's head over heels in love with Kitty, and you realize that her mother . . ."

"Excuse me, but I don't understand any of this," said Levin, frowning grimly. Then he remembered his brother Nikolai and how vile he, Levin, was for forgetting him.

“Wait, wait,” said Stepan Arkadyevich, smiling and touching his arm. “I’ve told you what I know and I repeat that, as far as I can tell, in this delicate and tender matter, I think the odds are in your favor.”

Levin leaned back in his chair; his face was pale.

“I would advise you, however, to decide the matter as soon as possible,” continued Oblonsky, topping off his glass.

“No, thank you very much, I can’t drink any more,” said Levin, pushing away his glass. “I’ll be drunk. . . . So, how are you getting on?” he continued, evidently wishing to change the topic.

“One more word: no matter what, I advise you to decide the matter as quickly as possible. I don’t advise you to speak today,” said Stepan Arkadyevich. “Go there tomorrow morning, in the classic manner, and make your proposal, and may God bless you.”

“Haven’t you been wanting to visit me and go hunting? Why don’t you come this spring?” said Levin.

Now he regretted with all his heart that he had ever broached this topic with Stepan Arkadyevich. His *special* feeling had been sullied by this discussion of the rivalry of some Petersburg officer and Stepan Arkadyevich’s assumptions and advice.

Stepan Arkadyevich smiled. He understood what was going on in Levin’s heart.

“I’ll come one day,” he said. “Yes, my friend, women are the pivot upon which everything turns. My case, too, is bad, you see, very bad. And all because of women. You must tell me frankly,” he continued, taking out a cigar and keeping one hand on his glass. “You must give me your advice.”

“But what is the matter?”

“Just this. Suppose you’re married, and you love your wife, but you’re attracted to another woman.”

“Excuse me, but I definitely do not understand this, it’s as if. . . . I don’t understand this any more than how now, after eating my fill, I could walk by a bread shop and steal a bun.”

Stepan Arkadyevich’s eyes glittered more than usual.

“Why not? Sometimes a bun smells so good, you can’t help yourself.”

Himmlisch ist’s, wenn ich bezwungen
 Meine irdische Begier;
 Aber noch wenn’s nicht gelungen,
 Hatt’ich auch recht hubsch Plaisir!²³

Saying this, Stepan Arkadyevich smiled faintly. Levin could not help smiling, either.

“Yes, but joking aside,” Oblonsky continued. “You must understand that the woman is a dear, meek, loving creature, poor and lonely, and she has sacrificed everything. Now that the deed is done—you understand me—how can I abandon her? Let’s say we do part for the sake of my family life. How can I not take pity on her, see that she is properly settled and her situation eased?”

“Well, you must excuse me. You know, for me all women are divided up into two sorts . . . I mean, no . . . rather: there are women and there are . . . I have never seen lovely fallen creatures, nor shall I, and those like the painted Frenchwoman at the counter, with the ringlets—to me, they are vipers, and all fallen women are exactly the same.”²⁴

“What about the one in the Gospels?”

“Oh, stop it! Christ would never have spoken those words had he known how people would abuse them.²⁵ Out of all the Gospels, all anyone remembers are these words. Actually, I’m saying what I feel, not what I think. I have a loathing for fallen women. You’re afraid of spiders, and I of those vipers. You see, you’ve probably never studied spiders and don’t know their ways. It’s the same with me.”

“It’s fine for you to talk this way: it’s just like that gentleman in Dickens who tosses all the difficult questions over his right shoulder with his left hand.²⁶ But denying a fact is not an answer. What am I to do, tell me that. What am I to do? Your wife is aging, but you are full of life. Before you can even look around you feel you cannot love your wife with that kind of love, no matter how much you respect her. And then, suddenly, love comes your way and you’re lost. Lost!” Stepan Arkadyevich said with melancholy despair.

Levin grinned.

“Yes, I’m lost,” Oblonsky continued. “But what am I to do?”

“Don’t steal buns.”

Stepan Arkadyevich burst out laughing.

“Oh, you moralist! But you must understand, there are two women; one is merely insisting on her rights, and these rights are your love, which you can’t give her; whereas the other is sacrificing everything for you and asking for nothing in return. What should you do? How should you act? There is a terrible tragedy in this.”

“If you want my confession about this, then I’ll tell you that I don’t believe there is any tragedy here, and here’s why. In my opinion, love . . . both loves—which Plato defined, as you remember, in his *Symposium*—both loves serve as a touchstone for men.²⁷ Some men understand only one, others the other, and those who understand only non-Platonic love speak of tragedy in vain. That kind of love admits of no tragedy. ‘I humbly thank you for the pleasure, my

respects'—there's the whole tragedy. But with Platonic love there can be no tragedy because in that kind of love everything is clear and pure, because . . .”

At that moment Levin recalled his own sins and the inner struggle he had endured, and out of the blue he added, “Actually, though, you may be right. You may well be right. But I don't know, I just don't know.”

“There, you see,” said Stepan Arkadyevich. “You're all of a piece. That is your strength and your shortcoming. Your nature is all of a piece, and you want all of life to be composed of phenomena that are of a piece, too, but that doesn't happen. Here you go looking with contempt on a career in public service because you would like the deed to correspond consistently to the goal, but that doesn't happen. You also want a man's career always to have a purpose, for love and family life always to be one. But that doesn't happen. All the variety, all the charm, all the beauty of life is composed of shadow and light.”

Levin sighed and said nothing in reply. He was thinking his own thoughts and not listening to Oblonsky.

And suddenly both men felt that, though they were friends, and though they had dined together and drunk wine, which ought to have brought them even closer, each was thinking only of himself and neither had a thought for the other. Oblonsky had experienced this extreme divergence occurring, rather than a greater closeness, after a meal before, and he knew what needed to be done in these instances.

“The bill!” he exclaimed, and he went into the next room, where he immediately ran into an aide-de-camp he knew and fell into conversation with him about an actress and her protector. This conversation with the aide-de-camp immediately gave Oblonsky a sense of relief and relaxation after his conversation with Levin, who always roused him to excessive mental and emotional tension.

When the Tatar appeared with a bill for twenty-six rubles and change and with an added tip, Levin, who at any other time, as a country dweller, would have been horrified by his share of the bill of fourteen rubles, now paid no attention to this, settled, and went home in order to change his clothes and go to the Shcherbatskys', where his fate would be decided.

12

Princess Kitty Shcherbatskaya was eighteen years old. She had come out this winter. Her successes in society had been greater than both her older sisters' and greater than even her mother the princess had anticipated. Not only were nearly all the young men dancing at Moscow's balls in love with Kitty, but that

first winter two serious matches had presented themselves: Levin and, immediately after his departure, Count Vronsky.

Levin's appearance at the beginning of the winter, his frequent visits and obvious love for Kitty, led to the first serious conversation between Kitty's parents about her future and to arguments between the prince and princess. The prince was on Levin's side; he said that he could wish nothing better for Kitty. The princess, however, with her feminine habit of skirting an issue, said that Kitty was too young, that Levin had done nothing to demonstrate his serious intentions, that Kitty felt no attachment to him, and other points; but she did not say what was uppermost in her mind, that she was anticipating a better match for her daughter, she did not find Levin likable, and she did not understand him. When Levin had left precipitously, the princess was pleased and told her husband in triumph: "You see, I was right." When Vronsky appeared, she was even more pleased, confirmed in her opinion that Kitty should make not simply a good but a brilliant match.

For the mother there could be no comparison between Vronsky and Levin. The mother did not like in Levin either his strange and harsh judgments or his social awkwardness, which was founded, as she believed, on pride, or what she took to be his rather savage life in the country, where he dealt with his livestock and peasants; nor did she have much of a liking for the fact that he, while being in love with her daughter, called at their home for six weeks as if he were waiting for something, scrutinizing them, as if he were afraid he would be doing them too great an honor by making a proposal of marriage and did not understand that by calling at the home of an eligible young girl he was under an obligation to clarify his intentions, and then, suddenly, he left, without clarifying anything. "It's a good thing he is so unattractive that Kitty never fell in love with him," thought the mother.

Vronsky satisfied the mother's every desire. He was wealthy, clever, and high-born, a charming man on his way to a brilliant career in the military and at court. She could have wished for nothing better.

At balls, Vronsky openly courted Kitty, danced with her, and called on her at home, and there appeared to be no reason to doubt the seriousness of his intentions. Despite this, however, the mother had spent the entire winter in a state of terrible unease and agitation.

The princess herself had married thirty years before, through the match-making efforts of an aunt. Her suitor, about whom everything was known in advance, arrived, got a look at his future bride, and they at him; her matchmaking aunt ascertained and conveyed their mutual impressions; their impressions were good; then on the appointed day the anticipated proposal of marriage was made to her parents and received the anticipated acceptance. Everything

had come about quite easily and simply. At least so it had seemed to the princess. With her own daughters, however, she had felt just how far from easy and simple this seemingly ordinary matter of marrying off daughters could be. So many frights suffered and thoughts weighed, so much money spent, so many clashes with her husband over marrying off their two older daughters, Darya and Natalia! Now, as she brought out her youngest, she had suffered the very same frights, the very same doubts, and even more quarrels with her husband than over the older girls. Like all fathers, the old prince was especially scrupulous when it came to the honor and purity of his daughters; he was unreasonably jealous over his daughters, and especially Kitty, who was his favorite, and he made a scene with the princess at every step for compromising his daughter. The princess was used to this from their first two daughters, but now she had the feeling that the prince's scrupulousness had more grounds. She saw that much had changed of late in the ways of society and that a mother's obligations had become even more difficult. She saw that Kitty's contemporaries formed certain clubs, attended certain courses, spoke freely with men, rode unescorted through the streets, many did not curtsy and, above all, they were all firmly convinced that the choice of a husband was their business, and not their parents'.²⁸ "Nowadays they don't give you away like they used to," all these young women thought and said, as did all their elders. But how people did marry their daughters off, the princess could not learn from anyone. The French custom — when the parents decide their children's fate — was no longer accepted, it was condemned. The English custom — complete freedom for the young girl — was also not accepted and impossible in Russian society. The Russian custom of matchmaking was considered disgraceful in some way, and everyone mocked it, including the princess herself. But how a girl was to come out and be married, no one knew. Everyone the princess had occasion to discuss this with told her the same thing: "For goodness' sake! In our day it's time to leave that old world behind. It's the young people who are entering into marriage, after all, not their parents; so we should leave the young people to arrange their lives as they see fit." It was fine for those who had no daughters to talk like that; but the princess realized that given close enough contact her daughter could fall in love, and, what's more, fall in love with someone who would not want to marry her, or someone who would not make a good husband. No matter how they reassured the princess that in our day the young people ought to arrange their own fate, she could not bring herself to believe this, just as she could not bring herself to believe that loaded pistols were ever the best toys for children five years old, no matter what the era. And so the princess was more anxious over Kitty than she had been over her older daughters.

Now she was afraid that Vronsky would confine himself simply to flirting

with her daughter. She could see that her daughter was already in love with him, but she consoled herself with the fact that he was an honorable man and so would not do this. At the same time, though, she knew how easy it was, given the freedom of manners of the day, to turn a girl's head and how lightly men regarded this crime in general. The week before, Kitty had related to her mother her conversation with Vronsky during the mazurka. This conversation had reassured the princess in part, but she could not be completely reassured. Vronsky had told Kitty that they, both brothers, were so accustomed to obeying their mother in everything that they would never undertake anything important without consulting her. "And now, as a special happiness, I'm awaiting my dear mother's arrival from Petersburg," he had said.

Kitty related this without attaching any significance to these words. But her mother understood them otherwise. She knew the old lady was expected any day, and she knew that the old lady would be pleased by her son's choice, and it was strange that he, fearful of offending his mother, had not made a proposal; however, she so wanted not only the marriage itself but, more than anything, reassurance for her anxieties, that she believed this. However bitter it was for the princess to see the unhappiness of her eldest daughter Dolly, who was about to leave her husband, the princess's agitation over her youngest daughter's as yet undecided fate had consumed all her emotions. This day, with Levin's appearance, had only added new anxiety. She was afraid that her daughter, who seemed to have harbored feelings for Levin at one time, out of excessive honesty, might refuse Vronsky, and in general that Levin's arrival would spoil everything—delay the matter so near to its conclusion.

"Did he arrive long ago?" said the princess about Levin when they had returned home.

"Today, *Maman*."

"I want to say one thing," the princess began, and from her grave and animated face Kitty guessed what it would be.

"Mama," she said blushing and turning quickly toward her, "please, please, don't say anything about that. I know, I know everything."

She wanted exactly what her mother wanted, but the motives behind her mother's desire hurt her.

"I only want to say that, having given one man hope—"

"Mama, darling, for the love of God, don't say anything. It frightens me so to talk about that."

"I won't, I won't," said her mother, seeing the tears in her daughter's eyes. "Just one thing, my precious: you promised you would have no secrets from me. You won't, will you?"

“Never, Mama, none,” answered Kitty, who turned red and looked directly into her mother’s face. “But I don’t have anything to say now. I . . . I . . . if I wanted to, I don’t know what to say or how . . . I don’t know.”

“No, she could never tell me a falsehood with those eyes,” thought the mother, smiling at her agitation and happiness. The princess was smiling at how tremendous and significant what was going on in her soul now seemed to the poor girl.

13

Between dinner and dusk, Kitty experienced an emotion similar to what a young man experiences before battle. Her heart was beating hard, and her thoughts could not fix on anything.

She sensed that this evening, when the two met for the first time, must decide her fate. She kept picturing them over and over, first each separately, then both together. When she thought about the past, she dwelt with pleasure and tenderness on the memory of her relations with Levin. Memories of her childhood and memories of Levin’s friendship with her dead brother lent a special poetic charm to her relations with him. His love for her, of which she was sure, was both flattering and delightful. It was easy for her to think of Levin. Her memory of Vronsky, on the contrary, was mixed with something awkward, though he was sophisticated and poised to the highest degree; as if whatever was false lay—no, not in him, he was very simple and nice—but in her, while with Levin she felt perfectly simple and clear. On the other hand, as soon as she thought about a future with Vronsky, a brilliant and happy prospect rose up before her; with Levin her future seemed cloudy.

As she went upstairs to dress for the evening and looked in the mirror, she noted with pleasure that she was having one of her good days and was in full possession of her powers, and this was what she needed so for what was to come: she had a sense of her composure and the free grace of her movements.

At half past seven, just as she came down to the drawing room, the footman announced: “Konstantin Dmitrievich Levin.” The princess was still in her room, and the prince had not yet emerged. “So this is it,” thought Kitty, and all the blood rushed to her heart. She was horrified at her pallor when she looked in the mirror.

Now she knew for certain that he had come early in order to find her alone and to make his proposal of marriage. Only now, for the first time, did she see the entire matter from a completely different and new perspective. Only now did she realize that the matter affected not her alone—whom she would be

happy with and whom she loved—but that this very minute she was going to have to hurt a man she loved. And hurt him cruelly. And why? Because he, the dear man, loved her, was in love with her. There was nothing to be done for it, though, it was what she needed and had to do.

“My God, is it really I who must tell him?” she thought. “And what am I going to tell him? Am I really going to say I don’t love him? That would be untrue. What shall I tell him? Shall I tell him I love another? No, that is impossible. I’m leaving, leaving.”

When she reached the doors she heard his steps. “No! That is dishonest. What am I afraid of? I’ve done nothing wrong. What will be, will be! I shall tell the truth. For nothing could be awkward with him. Here he is,” she told herself when she saw his entire powerful and shy figure and his shining eyes aimed directly at her. She looked him straight in the face, as if imploring him for mercy, and gave him her hand.

“This isn’t the right time, I guess, I’m early,” he said, looking around the empty drawing room. When he saw that his hopes had come to pass, that nothing was preventing him from speaking up, his face became grim.

“Oh no,” said Kitty, and she sat down at the table.

“But this is exactly what I wanted, to find you alone,” he began, not sitting down and not looking at her, so as not to lose his nerve.

“Mama will be out in a moment. She was very tired yesterday. Yesterday . . .”

She was talking, herself not knowing what her lips were saying and not taking her imploring and caressing gaze off him.

He looked at her; she blushed and fell silent.

“I told you I didn’t know whether I’d come for long . . . that this depended on you.”

She bowed her head lower and lower, not knowing herself what she would reply to what was at hand.

“That this depended on you,” he repeated. “I meant to say . . . I meant to say . . . I came for this . . . for . . . Be my wife!” he blurted out, not knowing what he was saying, but feeling that the most terrifying thing had been said, and he stopped and looked at her.

She was breathing hard but not looking at him. She was ecstatic. Her heart was overflowing with happiness. She had never anticipated that his declared love would make such a strong impression on her. This lasted only a moment, though. She remembered Vronsky. She raised her light, truthful eyes to Levin, and when she saw his desperate face, she quickly replied:

“It cannot be . . . forgive me.”

How close she had been to him a moment before, how important for his life! And how alien and distant she was to him now!

“It could not have been otherwise,” he said without looking at her. He bowed and started to leave.

14

At that very moment, though, the princess came out. Her face expressed horror when she saw them alone and their distraught faces. Levin bowed to her and said nothing. Kitty was silent and would not raise her eyes. “Thank God, she refused him,” thought the mother, and her face beamed with the usual smile she used to greet her guests on her Thursdays. She sat down and began to question Levin about his life in the country. He sat down again, awaiting the arrival of the guests in order to slip away.

Five minutes later Kitty’s friend, who had married the previous winter, the Countess Nordston, walked in.

She was a sallow, plain woman with flashing black eyes, sickly and nervous. She loved Kitty, and her love for her, as always with married women’s love for unmarried girls, was expressed in her desire to marry Kitty off according to her own ideal of happiness, and so she wished to marry her off to Vronsky. Levin, whom she had met here often early that winter, she had always found distasteful. Her constant and favorite occupation when she met him consisted in making fun of him.

“I love it when he looks down on me from the height of his magnificence. Either he ends his intelligent conversation with me because I am stupid or else he condescends. I’m very fond of that: he *condescends* to me! I’m very glad he can’t stand me,” she said about him.

She was correct, for indeed Levin could not stand her and despised her for what she took pride in and counted as her merit—her nerves and her refined contempt and indifference for everything coarse and earthy.

Between Nordston and Levin there came to be a relationship encountered not infrequently in society, when two people, while remaining outwardly on friendly terms, despise each other to such a degree that they cannot even treat each other seriously or even insult each other.

Countess Nordston pounced upon Levin immediately.

“Ah! Konstantin Dmitrievich! You’ve returned to our degenerate Babylon,” she said, extending her tiny, sallow hand and recalling his words, uttered sometime in early winter, about Moscow being Babylon. “What, has Babylon turned over a new leaf, or have you turned rotten?” she added, looking around at Kitty with a grin.

“I’m very flattered, Countess, that you remember my words so well,” replied

Levin, who managed to recover and entered straightaway, out of habit, into his hostile joking attitude toward Countess Nordston. "They must have a powerful effect on you."

"Oh, they do! I write it all down. Well then, Kitty, have you been skating again?"

And she began talking with Kitty. Awkward though it was for Levin to leave now, it was easier than staying for the entire evening and seeing Kitty, who glanced at him from time to time and avoided his gaze. He was about to get up when the princess, noticing his silence, turned to him.

"Have you come to Moscow for long? You're involved with the district council, I thought, so you can't be away for very long."

"No, Princess, I'm not involved with the council any longer," he said. "I've come for a few days."

"There's something odd about him," thought Countess Nordston, searching his stern, grave face. "He's not getting drawn into his usual arguments. I'll bring him out, though. It's such fun making a fool of him in front of Kitty, and I will."

"Konstantin Dmitrievich," she said to him, "explain to me, if you would, what this means—you know all this—in our Kaluga countryside all our peasants and all their women have drunk up everything they had and now they aren't paying us. What does this mean? You are always praising the peasants so."

At that moment another lady entered the room and Levin stood up.

"Forgive me, Countess, but truly, I know nothing and have nothing to tell you," he said, and he looked around at the officer entering behind the lady.

"This must be Vronsky," thought Levin, and to convince himself of this, he glanced at Kitty. She managed to look at Vronsky and looked around at Levin. From just this look in her eyes, which could not keep from shining, Levin realized that she loved this man, realized it as surely as if she had told him in so many words. But what sort of man was he?

Now, for good or ill, Levin had no choice but to stay; he had to find out what the man she loved was like.

There are people who, upon meeting their lucky rival in whatever it is, are ready to turn their back immediately on everything good in him and see only the bad; there are people who, on the contrary, want nothing more than to find in this lucky rival the qualities he used to conquer and so find in him, with an ache in their heart, only the good. Levin was one of these people. Not that it was hard for him to find what was good and attractive in Vronsky. It struck him right away. Vronsky was a sturdily built, dark-haired man, not very tall, with a good-natured and handsome, extremely calm and resolute face. Everything about his

face and figure, from his close-cropped black hair and freshly shaven chin to his loosely fitting, brand-new uniform, was simple but elegant. Allowing the lady entering to pass, Vronsky went over to the princess and then to Kitty.

As he walked toward her, his handsome eyes sparkled with a special tenderness, and bowing to her with a barely noticeable, happy, and modestly triumphant smile (or so it seemed to Levin), respectfully and cautiously, he held out his own small but broad hand.

Having greeted and said a few words to everyone, he sat down without once looking at Levin, who did not take his eyes off him.

“Allow me to introduce you,” said the princess, indicating Levin. “Konstantin Dmitrievich Levin. Count Alexei Kirillovich Vronsky.”

Vronsky rose and, looking Levin amiably in the eye, shook his hand.

“I was supposed to have dined with you this winter, I believe,” he said, smiling his simple and open smile, “but you left unexpectedly for the country.”

“Konstantin Dmitrievich despises and detests the city and us, its inhabitants,” said Countess Nordston.

“My words must have a powerful effect on you for you to remember them so well,” said Levin, and recalling that he had said this before, he blushed.

Vronsky looked at Levin and Countess Nordston and smiled.

“And are you always in the country?” he asked. “I should think it’s boring in winter?”

“It’s not boring if you have something to do, and it’s never boring being by yourself,” replied Levin brusquely.

“I love the country,” said Vronsky, noticing and pretending not to notice Levin’s tone of voice.

“I do hope, however, Count, that you would never agree to live in the country all the time,” said Countess Nordston.

“I don’t know, I’ve never tried it for very long. I did experience a strange feeling,” he continued. “I’ve never longed for the countryside, the Russian countryside, complete with bast sandals and peasants, anywhere the way I did when I spent a winter in Nice with my dear mother. Nice itself is quite boring, you know. And Naples and Sorrento, they’re only good for a short time. It’s there that one recalls Russia especially vividly, and the countryside in particular. They are just like—”

He spoke, addressing both Kitty and Levin and shifting his calm and amiable gaze from one to the other. He obviously was saying whatever came to mind.

Noticing that Countess Nordston was about to say something, he stopped without completing what he had begun and listened attentively to her.

The conversation did not subside for a minute, so that the old princess, who

always had two big guns—classical versus modern education and universal military service—in reserve in the event of a want of topic, had no occasion to bring them out, and Countess Nordston had no occasion to taunt Levin.

Levin wanted to enter into the general conversation but could not; he kept telling himself, “Leave now,” but he didn’t, as though he were waiting for something.

The conversation turned to table rapping and spirits, and Countess Nordston, who believed in spiritualism, began recounting the miracles she had seen.²⁹

“Oh, Countess, you simply must take me, for goodness’ sake, take me to see them! I’ve never seen anything extraordinary, though I’ve searched everywhere,” said Vronsky, smiling.

“Fine, next Saturday,” replied Countess Nordston. “But what about you, Konstantin Dmitrievich, do you believe in it?” she asked Levin.

“Why do you ask me? You know what I’ll say.”

“But I want to hear your opinion.”

“My opinion,” Levin replied, “is just that this table rapping proves that so-called educated society is not superior to the peasants. They believe in the evil eye, and the wasting disease, and love spells, whereas we—”

“You mean you don’t believe in it?”

“I cannot believe in it, Countess.”

“But what if I’ve seen it myself?”

“The peasant women talk about seeing house spirits themselves, too.”

“So you think I’m telling an untruth?”

And she gave a mirthless laugh.

“Oh no, Masha, Konstantin Dmitrievich is saying he can’t believe in it,” said Kitty, blushing for Levin, and Levin saw this and, even more irritated, was about to reply, but Vronsky with his open and cheerful smile rushed to the aid of the conversation, which was threatening to become unpleasant.

“Do you rule out the possibility entirely?” he asked. “Why is it we allow for the existence of electricity, which we don’t know? Why can’t there be a new force as yet unknown to us that—”

“When electricity was discovered,” Levin quickly interrupted, “it was only the phenomenon that was discovered, and what we didn’t know was where it came from or what it produced, and centuries passed before people devised an application for it. The spiritualists, on the other hand, started with tables writing to them and spirits coming to them and only then did people start saying this was an unknown force.”

Vronsky was listening attentively to Levin, as he always listened, obviously interested in what he was saying.

“Yes, but the spiritualists say that now we don’t know what kind of force this is but there is a force, and here are the conditions under which it operates. Let the scientists sort out what the force consists of. No, I don’t see why this can’t be a new force if it—”

“It can’t,” Levin interrupted again, “because with electricity, every time you rub resin on wool, a known phenomenon occurs, but here it does not happen every time, so it’s not a natural phenomenon.”

Sensing, probably, that the conversation was taking an excessively serious turn for a drawing room, Vronsky did not object, but trying to change the subject, he smiled cheerfully and turned to the ladies.

“Let us try it out now, Countess,” he began, but Levin wanted to finish saying what he was thinking.

“I think,” he continued, “that this attempt by spiritualists to explain their miracles by some new force could not be more futile. They speak directly about the power of spirits and want to subject it to material experiment.”

Everyone was waiting for him to finish, and he could sense this.

“And I think that you would be an excellent medium,” said Countess Nordston. “There is something ecstatic about you.”

Levin opened his mouth and was about to say something, but he turned red and did not.

“Please, let’s try out the tables now,” said Vronsky. “Princess, with your permission?”

Vronsky rose, looking around for a small table.

Kitty rose from her table, and as she walked by, her eyes met Levin’s. She pitied him with all her heart, especially since she pitied him an unhappiness of which she herself was the cause. “If you can forgive me, then do,” her look said. “I am so happy.”

“I hate everyone, and you, and myself,” his look replied, and he picked up his hat. But it was not his fate to leave. No sooner had they decided to arrange themselves around the table, and Levin to leave, than the old prince walked in, and after greeting the ladies, turned to Levin.

“Ah!” he began delightedly. “Been here long? I didn’t know you were here. I’m very glad to see you.”

With Levin, the old prince went back and forth between the familiar and the formal “you.” He embraced Levin, and speaking with him failed to notice Vronsky, who had stood up and was calmly waiting for the prince to address him.

Kitty sensed how, after what had happened, her father’s kindness was hard on Levin. She noticed as well how coldly her father responded, at last, to Vronsky’s bow and how Vronsky with amiable perplexity looked at her father, trying

to understand, but not understanding, how and why he might be ill disposed toward him, and she turned red.

“Prince, let us have Konstantin Dmitrievich,” said Countess Nordston. “We want to perform an experiment.”

“What kind of an experiment? Table rapping? Well, you’ll excuse me, ladies and gentlemen, but in my opinion it’s more fun to play the ring game,” said the old prince, looking at Vronsky and guessing that he was behind this.³⁰ “At least the ring game makes sense.”

Vronsky’s resolute eyes looked at the prince with astonishment. Smiling faintly, Vronsky immediately began talking with Countess Nordston about the grand ball coming up the next week.

“I hope you will be there?” he turned to Kitty.

As soon as the old prince turned away, Levin slipped out, and the final impression he took away from this evening was the smiling, happy face of Kitty answering Vronsky’s question about the ball.

15

When the evening had ended, Kitty recounted for her mother her conversation with Levin, and despite all the pity she felt for Levin, she rejoiced in the thought that she had received a *proposal*. She had no doubt that she had acted properly. In bed, though, she could not fall asleep for a long time. One impression pursued her relentlessly. This was Levin’s face, with his furrowed brow and his kind eyes looking at her in grim dejection, and how he stood listening to her father while looking at her and Vronsky. She felt so sorry for him that tears welled up in her eyes. But immediately she thought about the man she had chosen instead. She vividly recalled that courageous, resolute face, the noble calm and the goodness toward everyone that illuminated everything; she recalled the love for her of the man she loved, and once again she felt joy in her heart, and with a smile of happiness she lay her head upon her pillow. “It’s too bad, it is, but what can I do? I’m not to blame,” she told herself, but an inner voice told her otherwise. Whether she regretted having misled Levin or having refused him she didn’t know. But her happiness was poisoned by doubts. “Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy!” she repeated to herself until she fell asleep.

Meanwhile, downstairs, in the prince’s small study, the parents were playing out one of those oft-repeated scenes over their beloved daughter.

“What? Here’s what!” shouted the prince, waving his arms about and then rewrapping his squirrel-lined robe. “The fact that you have no pride, no dig-

nity, that you are sullyng, ruining our daughter with your vulgar, idiotic match-making!”

“Have mercy, for the love of God himself, Prince. What have I done?” said the princess, nearly in tears.

Happy and content after her conversation with her daughter, she had gone to the prince to say good night as usual, and although she had not intended to speak to him of Levin’s proposal and Kitty’s refusal, nonetheless she did hint to her husband that she thought the matter with Vronsky quite settled and that it would be decided as soon as his mother arrived. At that, at these words, the prince exploded and started shouting abuse.

“What have you done? Here’s what. First of all, you’ve been trying to lure a suitor, and all Moscow is going to be talking, and for good reason. If you’re going to have parties, then invite everyone, not just select suitors. Invite all those young *pups* (which is what the prince called Moscow’s young men), engage a piano player, and let them dance. Don’t do it the way you are now, with the suitors and the matching up. I find it vile, vile to watch, and you’ve succeeded, you’ve turned the girl’s head. Levin is a thousand times the better man. And that Petersburg dandy, they’re made by machine, all from the same pattern, and they’re all good for nothing. A prince of the blood he may be, but my daughter doesn’t need anyone!”

“But what have I done?”

“Why you’ve . . .” the prince shouted angrily.

“I do know that if I listen to you,” the princess interrupted, “we will never marry off our daughter. If that is the case, then we should leave for the country.”

“Better we do.”

“Wait just a minute. Have I really been trying to ingratiate myself? Not one bit. But a young man, and a very fine young man at that, has fallen in love, and I think she—”

“Yes, you do think! But what if she has in fact fallen in love and he has as much a need to marry as I do? Oh! I wish I’d never seen it! ‘Ah, spiritualism. Ah, Nice. Ah, the ball . . .’” And the prince, imagining himself to be imitating his wife, curtseyed at each word. “But what we’re going to do is bring misery upon our Katya, and she is in fact going to get ideas.”

“And what makes you think so?”

“I don’t think, I know; we have eyes in our head for that and women don’t. I see a man who has serious intentions, that’s Levin; and I see a peacock, like this featherhead who is only out to entertain himself.”

“Well, now it’s you who’s getting ideas.”

“You just remember this when it’s too late, like with our Dasha.”³¹

“Fine then, fine. We won’t talk about it,” the princess stopped him, recalling her unfortunate Dolly.

“That’s just marvelous. Good night!”

Making the sign of the cross over one another and exchanging a kiss, but sensing that each had been unmoved, the spouses parted.

The princess had at first been firmly convinced that this evening had decided Kitty’s fate and that there could be no doubt of Vronsky’s intentions, but her husband’s words had disturbed her. Returning to her room, facing the unknown of the future with dread, she, like Kitty, repeated several times in her soul: “Lord have mercy. Lord have mercy. Lord have mercy!”

16

Vronsky had never known family life. His mother, in her youth, had been a brilliant society lady who, during her marriage, and particularly afterward, had had many affairs well known to all society. He scarcely remembered his father and had been educated in the Corps of Pages.³²

Leaving school as a very young and brilliant officer, he immediately fell in with wealthy Petersburg officers. Although he did make sorties into Petersburg society from time to time, all his love interests had been outside society.

In Moscow, for the first time since his luxurious and crude life in Petersburg, he had experienced the charm of intimacy with a sweet and innocent young woman of society who was fond of him. It never occurred to him that there could be anything untoward in his relations with Kitty. At balls he danced primarily with her; he visited them in their home. He said to her what people in society usually say, all kinds of nonsense, but it was nonsense to which he unintentionally lent special meaning for her. In spite of the fact that he said nothing to her that he could not have said in front of everyone, he felt that she was becoming more and more dependent on him, and the more he felt this, the more he liked it, and the more tender his feeling for her became. He did not know that his manner of action with regard to Kitty had a specific name, that this was the enticing of young ladies without intention to marry, and that this enticing was one of those bad deeds quite common among brilliant young men such as he was. He thought he was the first to discover this pleasure, and he was enjoying his discovery.

If he could have heard what her parents were saying that evening, if he could have looked on matters from her family’s point of view and learned that Kitty would be unhappy if he did not marry her, he would have been astonished and refused to believe it. He could not believe that something which afforded him

and, above all, her, such great and fine satisfaction, could be bad. Even less could he have believed that he should marry.

Marriage had never seemed a possibility to him. Not only did he have no fondness for family life, but in a family, and in particular in a husband, according to the view commonly held in the bachelor world in which he lived, he imagined something alien, hostile, and most of all—ridiculous. However, although Vronsky did not suspect what her parents were saying, as he left the Shcherbatskys' that evening he felt that the secret, spiritual connection that existed between himself and Kitty had been affirmed so strongly that evening that he must undertake something. What he could and should undertake, though, he could not conceive.

"It is charming," he thought as he returned from the Shcherbatskys', taking away from them, as always, both a pleasant sense of purity and freshness, which stemmed in part, too, from the fact that he had not smoked all evening, and at the same time a new feeling of tenderness at her love for him. "It is charming that neither she nor I said a word, but we understood one another so well in this unseen conversation of looks and intonations that now it is clearer than ever it was that she's told me she loves me. How dear, simple, and, most important, trusting! I myself feel better, purer. I feel that I have a heart and that there's much that is fine inside me. Those dear, enamored eyes! When she said, *Very much . . .*'

"Well, and what of it? Nothing. I'm enjoying myself and so is she." And he pondered where he would finish the evening.

He reviewed in his mind's eye the places he could go. "The club? A game of bezique and Champagne with Ignatov?"³³ No, I'm not going there. The Château des Fleurs? I'll find Oblonsky there, songs, the cancan. No, that bores me. This is precisely why I love the Shcherbatskys, because I myself become a better person. I'll go home." He proceeded directly to his room at Dussault's, ordered supper served in his room, and later, after undressing, the moment his head touched the pillow, fell into a sound sleep, as serene as always.

17

The next day, at eleven o'clock in the morning, Vronsky went to the Petersburg Railway station to meet his mother, and the first person he came across on the central staircase was Oblonsky, who was expecting his sister by the same train.

"Ah! Your Excellency!" exclaimed Oblonsky. "Who are you here for?"

"I'm here for my dear mother," replied Vronsky, smiling as did everyone who

met Oblonsky, shaking his hand and ascending the stairs with him. "She should be arriving shortly from Petersburg."

"I waited for you until two o'clock. Where did you go after the Shcherbatskys'?"

"Home," answered Vronsky. "I must confess, I felt so good yesterday after the Shcherbatskys' that I didn't feel like going anywhere."

"A spirited steed I can tell by its brand, and a young man in love by his eyes," declaimed Stepan Arkadyevich, just as he had previously to Levin.

Vronsky smiled with a look which said he was not denying this, but he immediately changed the subject.

"And whom are you meeting?" he asked.

"I? I'm meeting a very pretty woman," said Oblonsky.

"You don't say!"

"Honi soit qui mal y pense!³⁴ My sister Anna."

"Ah, Madame Karenina, you mean?" said Vronsky.

"Surely you know her?"

"I think I do. Or no . . . To be honest, I don't remember," replied Vronsky absentmindedly, at the name Karenina vaguely calling to mind something stiff and tedious.

"But surely you know Alexei Alexandrovich, my illustrious brother-in-law. The whole world knows him."

"That is, I know him by reputation and by sight. I know that he's clever, learned, and spiritual in some way. But you know, it's not . . . *not in my line*," said Vronsky.³⁵

"Yes, he's quite a remarkable man, rather conservative, but a splendid man," noted Stepan Arkadyevich, "a splendid man."

"Well, all the better for him," said Vronsky, smiling. "Ah, you're here," he turned to his mother's tall old footman, who was standing at the door. "Come here." Lately Vronsky, apart from the usual pleasure Stepan Arkadyevich afforded everyone, had felt attached to him as well by the fact that he was linked in his imagination to Kitty.

"What do you say, shall we have supper on Sunday for the *diva*?" he said, smiling and taking him by the arm.

"Definitely. I'll take up a collection. Ah, did you make the acquaintance of my friend Levin yesterday?" asked Stepan Arkadyevich.

"Of course. But he left quickly for some reason."

"He's a splendid fellow," Oblonsky continued. "Don't you think?"

"I don't know why," replied Vronsky, "all Muscovites—present company excepted, naturally," he interjected jokingly, "have something brusque about

them. For some reason they get on their high horses, they get angry, as if they only wanted to make you feel something.”

“There is that, true, there is,” said Stepan Arkadyevich, laughing cheerfully.

“What, is it soon?” Vronsky turned to the attendant.

“The train has signaled,” replied the attendant.

The train’s approach had been marked by the increasing bustle of preparations at the station, the running of porters, the appearance of policemen and attendants, and those meeting the train. Through the frosty steam one could see workers in sheepskin jackets and soft felt boots crossing the rails of the curving tracks. One could hear the steam engine’s whistle on the distant rails and the movement of something heavy.

“No,” said Stepan Arkadyevich, who very much wanted to tell Vronsky of Levin’s intentions toward Kitty. “No, you’ve misjudged my Levin. He is a high-strung man and can be unpleasant, it’s true, but on the other hand sometimes he can be very dear. His is such an honest, truthful nature, and a heart of gold. But yesterday there were special reasons,” Stepan Arkadyevich continued with a significant smile, utterly forgetting the sincere sympathy he had felt just yesterday for his friend and now experiencing the same feeling, only now for Vronsky. “Yes, there was a reason why he might have been either particularly happy or particularly unhappy.”

Vronsky halted and asked outright:

“What are you saying? Or did he propose to your *belle-soeur* yesterday?”³⁶

“Perhaps,” said Stepan Arkadyevich. “Or so I thought yesterday. Yes, if he left early and was out of sorts, then that’s it. He’s been in love for so long, and I feel very sorry for him.”

“You don’t say! I think, actually, that she could count on a better match,” said Vronsky, and squaring his chest, he began walking again. “Actually, I don’t know him,” he added. “Yes, it’s a tough situation! That’s exactly why most men prefer associating with Claras.³⁷ There a failure only proves you don’t have enough money, whereas here, your dignity is in the balance. Here’s the train, though.”

Indeed, a locomotive whistled in the distance. A few minutes later the platform began to shake, and gushing with steam being churned up below from the frost, the locomotive rolled in with the lever of the middle wheel being raised and lowered slowly and evenly and with the waving, muffled up, frost-covered engineer, and behind the tender, slower and slower, shaking the platform more and more, the baggage car, a yelping dog inside, came passing by; and finally, shuddering before it came to a halt, the passenger cars rolled up.

The dashing conductor, giving a whistle while still moving, jumped down,

and behind him impatient passengers began getting off one by one: a Guards officer holding himself erect and looking around sternly; a restless merchant carrying a valise and smiling cheerfully; a peasant with a sack over his shoulder.

Standing next to Oblonsky, Vronsky surveyed the cars and the arrivals and forgot all about his mother. What he had just learned about Kitty excited and delighted him. He squared his chest without knowing it, and his eyes flashed. He felt like a conqueror.

“Countess Vronskaya is in this compartment,” said the dashing conductor, approaching Vronsky.

The conductor’s words roused him and forced him to remember his mother and the impending meeting with her. In his heart he did not respect his mother, and without admitting as much to himself, he did not love her, although according to the notions of the set in which he lived, and in line with his upbringing, he could not imagine behavior toward his mother of any kind other than supremely obedient and respectful, and the more obedient and respectful he was outwardly, the less he truly respected and loved her.

18

Vronsky followed the conductor to the car and stopped at the compartment door in order to let a lady who was getting out pass. From one glance at the appearance of this lady, Vronsky, who had the instinct of a man of the world, determined that she belonged to the highest society. He begged her pardon and was about to go into the car, but he felt a need to look at her one more time—not because she was so very beautiful, and not because of the elegance and modest grace that were evident in all her figure, but because there was something especially kind and gentle in the expression on that endearing face when she passed by him. When he looked around, she too turned her head. Her shining gray eyes, which seemed dark because of her thick eyelashes, rested amiably and attentively on his face, as if she were acknowledging him, and immediately shifted to the approaching crowd, as if searching for someone. In this brief glance, Vronsky had time to remark the checked vivacity that played on her face and flitted between her flashing eyes and the faint smile that curved her rosy lips. It was as if an excess of something had so overflowed her being that against her will it was expressed first in the flash of her glance and then in her smile. She deliberately extinguished the light in her eyes, but it shone against her will in her barely perceptible smile.

Vronsky entered the car. His mother, a withered old lady with black eyes and ringlets, squinted as she looked at her son and smiled slightly with thin lips.

Rising from the bench and handing her bag to her maid, she gave her son her small, withered hand, and raising his head from her hand, kissed his face.

“Did you receive my telegram? Are you well? Thank God.”

“Did you have a pleasant journey?” said the son, sitting beside her and listening, without intending to, to the woman’s voice outside the door. He knew it was the voice of the lady he had met coming in.

“All the same, I can’t agree with you,” the lady’s voice was saying.

“It is the Petersburg view, madam.”

“Not the Petersburg view, simply the woman’s,” she replied.

“Well then, allow me to kiss your hand.”

“Good-bye, Ivan Petrovich. Would you please see whether my brother is here and send him to me?” the lady said at the door and returned to the compartment.

“Well, have you found your brother?” said Vronskaya, addressing the lady.

Vronsky remembered now that this was Madame Karenina.

“Your brother is here,” he said, standing up. “Forgive me, I didn’t recognize you, and in any case our acquaintance was so very brief,” said Vronsky, bowing, “that you doubtless do not remember me.”

“Oh no,” she said, “I would have recognized you because your dear mother and I seem to have spoken of nothing but you the entire journey,” she said, allowing, at last, the animation that was begging to come out to be expressed in her smile. “But my brother is still not here.”

“Call him, Alyosha,” said the old countess.³⁸

Vronsky went out onto the platform and shouted:

“Oblonsky! Here!”

But Madame Karenina did not wait for her brother. Catching sight of him, she stepped out of the car with a light but firm step, and as soon as her brother walked up to her, she made a movement that astonished Vronsky for its decisiveness and grace, throwing her left arm around her brother’s neck, quickly pulling him toward her, and kissing him soundly. Not taking his eyes off her, Vronsky observed and smiled without himself knowing why. Remembering that his mother was waiting for him, though, he went back into the car.

“Isn’t it true, she’s very charming?” the countess said, referring to Madame Karenina. “Her husband seated her with me, and I was very pleased. She and I talked the entire journey. Well, and you, they say . . . *vous filez le parfait amour. Tant mieux, mon cher, tant mieux.*”³⁹

“I don’t know what you are hinting at, *Maman*,” the son replied coldly. “So, *Maman*, shall we go?”

Madame Karenina came back into the car to say good-bye to the countess.

“There, you see, Countess? You have met your son and I my brother,” she said gaily. “And we’ve run out of stories; there would have been nothing more to tell.”

“Oh no, my dear,” said the countess, taking her hand. “I could go around the world with you and not get bored. You are one of those dear women with whom it is a pleasure both to speak and to sit in silence. And please, don’t give your son a thought. It is not possible never to be apart from him.”

Madame Karenina stood very still, holding herself extremely erect, and her eyes smiled.

“Anna Arkadyevna,” said the countess, explaining to her son, “has a little boy eight years old, I believe, and she has never been apart from him, and she is in agony over having left him.”

“Yes, the countess and I talked the entire time, I of my son and she of hers,” said Madame Karenina, and again a smile lit up her face, a gentle smile meant for him.

“You must have found that very boring,” he said, immediately catching the ball of flirtation she had tossed him. She evidently did not want to continue the conversation in this vein, however, and turned to the old countess.

“I’m very grateful to you. I barely noticed the day pass yesterday. Good-bye, Countess.”

“Good-bye, my friend,” answered the countess. “Let me kiss your pretty little face. I’m telling you frankly because I’m an old lady that I’ve become very fond of you.”

As formulaic as this phrase was, Madame Karenina evidently sincerely believed and delighted in it. She blushed, leaned over slightly, presented her face to the countess’s lips, straightened up again, and with the same smile rippling between her lips and eyes, gave Vronsky her hand. He pressed the proffered little hand and rejoiced as at something special at the energetic squeeze with which she firmly and boldly shook his hand. She went out with a quick step that bore her rather full body with a strange lightness.

“Very charming,” said the old lady.

Her son was thinking the very same thing. He followed her with his eyes until her graceful figure was out of sight, and the smile remained on his face. Through the window he saw her walk up to her brother, link arms with him, and start telling him something in a lively fashion, evidently about something that had nothing to do with him, Vronsky, and this he found annoying.

“Well, then, *Maman*, are you quite well?” he repeated, turning to his mother.

“Everything is fine, marvelous. Alexandre has been very sweet. And Marie has grown very pretty. She’s quite interesting.”

And she began once again to tell him about what interested her most, the

christening of her grandson, for which she had made the trip to Petersburg, and the sovereign's special favor toward her elder son.

"Here is Lavrenty," said Vronsky, looking out the window. "We can go now, if you like."

The old butler who had traveled with the countess appeared in the car to report that all was ready, and the countess rose to leave.

"We can go, there are very few people now," said Vronsky.

The maid took a bag and the lap dog, the butler and porter the other bags. Vronsky gave his mother his arm; but as they were coming out of the car several men suddenly ran by with frightened faces. The stationmaster ran by as well, wearing a service cap of an unusual color. Something untoward had happened, evidently. The crowd from the train was running back.

"What? . . . What? . . . Where? . . . Jumped! . . . Crushed!" These words were heard among those passing. Stepan Arkadyevich with his sister on his arm, also looking frightened, had gone back, and paused by the door to the car to avoid the crowd.

The ladies went into the car, while Vronsky and Stepan Arkadyevich followed the crowd to learn the details of the accident.

A guard, whether drunk or too muffled against the bitter frost, had failed to hear the train backing out and had been crushed.

Before Vronsky and Oblonsky could return, the ladies had learned these details from the butler.

Oblonsky and Vronsky had both seen the mangled corpse. Oblonsky was obviously suffering. He frowned and looked as if he were about to cry.

"Oh, how horrible! Oh, Anna, if you had seen it! Oh, how horrible!" he kept repeating.

Vronsky said nothing; his handsome face was grave but utterly calm.

"Oh, if you had seen it, Countess," said Stepan Arkadyevich. "And his wife is here. . . . It was horrible to see her. . . . She threw herself on the body. They say he was the sole provider for a large family. What a horror!"

"Can't something be done for her?" said Madame Karenina in an agitated whisper.

Vronsky took one look at her and left the car.

"I'll be right back, *Maman*," he added, turning around in the doorway.

When he returned a few minutes later, Stepan Arkadyevich was already chatting with the countess about a new singer and the countess was glancing impatiently over her shoulder at the door, waiting for her son.

"Now we can go," said Vronsky, entering.

They went out together. Vronsky walked in front with his mother. Behind

walked Madame Karenina and her brother. At the exit the stationmaster caught up with Vronsky.

“You gave my assistant two hundred rubles. Would you kindly indicate who it is meant for?”

“The widow,” said Vronsky, shrugging his shoulders. “I don’t see what there is to ask.”

“You gave that?” Oblonsky exclaimed from behind, and squeezing his sister’s arm, he added: “Very kind, very kind! A splendid fellow, isn’t he? My respects, Countess.”

He and his sister stopped, looking for her maid.

When they emerged, the Vronsky carriage had already left. The people leaving were still discussing what had happened.

“There’s a horrible death for you!” said one gentlemen passing by. “Cut in two, they say.”

“On the contrary, I think it’s the easiest of all. Instantaneous,” noted another.

“How is it they don’t take measures?” said a third.

Madame Karenina got into the carriage, and Stepan Arkadyevich was amazed to see that her lips were quivering and she could barely hold back her tears.

“What’s wrong, Anna?” he asked when they had driven a few hundred sazhen.⁴⁰

“It’s a bad omen,” she said.

“What nonsense!” said Stepan Arkadyevich. “You’ve come, that’s the main thing. You can’t imagine how I’m counting on you.”

“Have you known Vronsky long?” she asked.

“Yes. You know, we are hoping he will marry Kitty.”

“Yes?” said Anna quietly. “Well, let’s talk about you now,” she added, giving her head a good shake, as if she wanted physically to drive out something that was superfluous and bothering her. “Let’s talk of your affairs. I received your letter and here I am.”

“Yes, all my hopes are on you,” said Stepan Arkadyevich.

“Well, tell me everything.”

And Stepan Arkadyevich began to tell his story.

When they drove up to the house, Oblonsky helped his sister out, sighed, squeezed her hand, and headed for his office.

When Anna entered, Dolly was sitting in the small drawing room with a chubby little towhead, who already resembled his father, listening to his French reading lesson. As the boy read he kept twirling and trying to tear off a jacket button that was hanging by a thread. His mother moved his hand away several times, but the chubby little hand found its way back to the button. His mother tore the button off and put it in her pocket.

“Keep your hands still, Grisha,” she said, and she picked up her blanket again, a project of long standing that she always picked up in difficult moments. She knitted nervously, winding the yarn around with her finger and counting the stitches. Although she had sent word yesterday to tell her husband that it was none of her concern whether his sister did or didn’t come, she had been preparing for and nervously awaiting her sister-in-law’s arrival.

Grief was killing Dolly, swallowing her whole. Nonetheless, she remembered that Anna, her sister-in-law, was the wife of one of the most important figures in Petersburg and a Petersburg *grande dame*. Thanks to this circumstance, she did not do what she had assured her husband she would, that is, she did not forget that her sister-in-law was coming. “Yes, in the end, Anna is not to blame for anything,” thought Dolly. “I know nothing but the very best about her, and I have seen nothing but kindness and friendship from her.” True, as far as she could recall her impression from Petersburg with the Karenins, she had not liked their house; there was something false about the whole makeup of their family life. “But why should I not receive her? Just so she doesn’t try to console me!” thought Dolly. “All the consolations, and admonitions, and Christian prayers—I’ve thought through all that a thousand times, and it’s all useless.”

All these past days Dolly had been alone with the children. She did not want to talk about her grief, and with this grief in her heart she could not talk about anything else. She knew that one way or another she would tell Anna everything, and she was both gladdened by the thought that she would tell her everything and infuriated at the necessity of speaking of her humiliation with her, his sister, and hearing from her stock phrases of admonition and consolation.

As often happens, while looking at the clock, awaiting her at any moment, she missed the exact moment when her guest did arrive and did not even hear the bell.

When she did hear the sound of a dress and light steps already in the doorway, she looked around, and her anguished face unwittingly expressed not delight but amazement. She stood up and embraced her sister-in-law.

“What, you’re already here?” she said, kissing her.

“Dolly, how glad I am to see you!”

"I am, too," said Dolly, smiling weakly and trying from the expression on Anna's face to find out whether or not she knew. "I suppose she does," she thought, noting the sympathy on Anna's face. "Well, let's go, I'll see you to your room," she went on, trying to stave off the moment of explanation as long as possible.

"Is this Grisha? Heavens, how he's grown!" said Anna, and kissing him but not taking her eyes off Dolly, she stopped and blushed. "No, please, let's not go anywhere."

She removed her scarf and hat, and catching it on a lock of her black hair, which curled every which way, she shook her head and freed her hair.

"And you radiate happiness and health!" said Dolly, almost with envy.

"I do? Yes," said Anna. "Heavens, Tanya! The same age as my Seryozha," she added, turning to the little girl who had run in.⁴¹ She took her in her arms and kissed her. "A delightful little girl, a delight! Show me all of them."

She named all the children and recalled not only their names but how many years and months old they were, and all their personalities and illnesses, and Dolly could not but appreciate this.

"Well, then let's go to their room," she said. "It's a pity Vasya is sleeping now."

After seeing the children, they sat down, alone now, in the drawing room, over coffee. Anna reached for the tray and then pushed it back.

"Dolly," she said, "he's told me."

Dolly looked coldly at Anna. She waited for the saccharine words of sympathy now, but Anna said nothing of the kind.

"Dolly, dear!" she said. "I'm not going to try to speak for him or console you, that's impossible. No, dear heart, I'm simply so sorry, sorry for you with all my heart!"

Tears suddenly appeared behind the thick eyelashes of her shining eyes. She moved closer to her sister-in-law and took her hand with her own small, energetic hand. Dolly did not pull away, but her face did not change its dry expression.

She said, "You can't console me. All is lost after what's happened. It's a disaster!"

The moment she said this, the expression on her face suddenly softened. Anna lifted Dolly's thin, withered hand, kissed it, and said, "But Dolly, what is to be done, what is to be done? What is the best way to act in this horrible situation? That's what must be considered."

"It's all over, and there's nothing else," said Dolly. "And worst of all, you must understand, is that I can't leave him. There are the children, and I'm tied. But I can't live with him, either. Seeing him is torture for me."

“Dolly, darling, he told me, but I want to hear it from you. Tell me everything.”

Dolly looked at her inquiringly.

Unfeigned concern and love were visible on Anna’s face.

“If you insist,” she said suddenly. “But I will start at the beginning. You know how I married. The way *Maman* brought me up, I was not only innocent, I was stupid. I knew nothing. I know people say that husbands tell their wives about their past life, but Stiva” — she corrected herself — “Stepan Arkadyevich told me nothing. You won’t believe it, but up until now I thought I was the only woman he had ever known. That is how I lived for eight years. You must understand that not only did I not suspect him of infidelity, I considered it impossible, and here, imagine, with notions like that, to learn suddenly the full horror, the full vileness. . . . You must understand me. To be wholly assured of one’s happiness, and suddenly” — Dolly continued, holding back her sobs — “getting a letter . . . his letter to his lover, my governess. No, it’s too horrible!” She hastily pulled out her handkerchief and hid her face in it. “I can understand an infatuation,” she continued after a brief silence, “but to deceive me deliberately, sneakily . . . and with whom? To continue being my husband as well as her . . . it’s horrible! You can’t understand.”

“Oh yes, I do understand! I do, dear Dolly, I do,” said Anna, pressing her hand.

“And do you think he understands the full horror of my position?” Dolly continued. “Not a bit! He’s happy and content.”

“Oh no!” Anna quickly broke in. “He is wretched, remorse is killing him —”

“Is he capable of remorse?” Dolly broke in, carefully examining her sister-in-law’s face.

“Yes, I know him. I could not look at him without pity. We both know him. He is good but he is proud, and now he is so humiliated. What touched me most” — and here Anna divined the main thing that could touch Dolly — “he’s tormented by two things: he’s ashamed for the children’s sake, and while loving you . . . yes, yes, while loving you more than anything in the world” — she hastily cut off Dolly, who was about to object — “he hurt you, destroyed you. ‘No, no, she cannot forgive me,’ he keeps saying.”

Dolly looked past her sister-in-law thoughtfully, listening to her words.

“Yes, I understand that his position is horrible; it’s always worse for the guilty than the innocent,” she said, “if he feels that all his unhappiness is his fault. But how can I forgive him? How can I be his wife again after her? Living with him now will be agony, and precisely because I loved him as I did, I loved my past love for him —”

Sobs cut her words short.

But as if intentionally, each time she softened she began once again to talk about what had vexed her.

“She is young, you see, and pretty,” she continued. “Do you understand, Anna, that my youth and beauty have been taken, and by whom? By him and his children. I have served him well, and all I had went into this service, and now, naturally, he prefers a fresh, vulgar creature. They’ve probably talked about me together or, even worse, said nothing. Do you understand?” Once again, hatred was kindled in her eyes. “And after this he is going to tell me . . . Do you think I’m going to believe him? Never. No, it’s all over, all that was once my consolation, the reward for my labor and agonies. . . . Would you believe it? I was just teaching Grisha. This used to be a joy, and now it’s torture. What am I trying, working so hard for? What are the children for? What is horrible is that all of a sudden my soul has been turned inside out and instead of love and tenderness, all I feel for him is malice, yes, malice. I could kill him and—”

“Dearest Dolly, I do understand, but don’t torture yourself. You have been so insulted, so provoked, that you are seeing many things the wrong way.”

Dolly quieted down, and for a couple of minutes the pair were both silent.

“What can I do? Think, Anna, help me. I’ve thought it all through and I see nothing.”

Anna could think of nothing, but her heart responded directly to every word, every expression on her sister-in-law’s face.

“I’ll say one thing,” Anna began. “I’m his sister, and I know his nature, this capacity for forgetting everything, everything” — she made a gesture in front of her brow — “this capacity for getting completely carried away, but then for complete remorse as well. He cannot believe, cannot understand now how he could have done what he did.”

“No, he does understand, and he did before!” Dolly interrupted. “But I . . . you’re forgetting me. Does this make it any easier for me?”

“Just wait. When he was talking to me, I admit, I still didn’t realize the full horror of your position. All I saw was him and the fact that the family was in disarray. I felt sorry for him, but now that I’ve spoken with you, I, as a woman, see something different. I see your sufferings, and I can’t tell you how sorry I am for you! But Dolly, dearest, I fully understand your sufferings, only there’s one thing I don’t know. I don’t know . . . I don’t know how much love you still have in your heart for him. This only you know — whether there is enough of it for you to be able to forgive. If there is, then forgive him!”

“There isn’t,” began Dolly, but Anna interrupted her, kissing her hand once more.

“I know society better than you,” she said. “I know these men, like Stiva, how

they look on this. You say he talked about you with *her*. That did not happen. These men commit indiscretions, but their hearth and wife—these are sacred for them. Somehow they hold these women in contempt and don't let them interfere with their families. They draw an inviolate line between their family and this. I don't understand it, but that's the way it is."

"Yes, but he kissed her."

"Dolly, dear Dolly, please stop. I saw Stiva when he fell in love with you. I remember the time he came to see me and cried, talking about you, and what poetry and what a paragon you were for him, and I know that the longer he has lived with you, the higher you have risen in his eyes. There were times, you know, when we laughed at him for adding to every word he said: 'Dolly is an amazing woman.' You have always been a goddess for him, and this infatuation does not come from his heart."

"But what if this infatuation is repeated?"

"It can't be, as I understand it."

"Yes, but could you forgive him?"

"I don't know, I can't judge. . . . Yes, I can," said Anna, and after giving it some thought and grasping the situation with her mind and weighing it on her internal scales, added: "Yes, I can, I can, I can. Yes, I could forgive him. I couldn't be the same, no, but I could forgive him, and forgive him in such a way as if it had never happened, never happened at all."

"Well, of course," Dolly interjected quickly, as if she were saying what she had thought many times, "otherwise it would not be forgiveness. If you are to forgive someone, then it must be completely, completely. Let's go, I'll take you to your room," she said, standing, and as they went Dolly gave Anna a hug. "My dear, I'm so happy you've come. I feel better, much better."

20

Anna spent that entire day at the house, that is, at the Oblonskys', and received no one, although several of her acquaintances had already learned of her arrival and had come that same day. Anna spent the entire morning with Dolly and the children. She merely sent a note to her brother telling him he must dine at home. "Come, God is merciful," she wrote.

Oblonsky did dine at home. The conversation was general, and the wife addressed him using the familiar "you," which had not happened previously. There was the same alienation between husband and wife, but there was no more talk of separation, and Stepan Arkadyevich could see the possibility of explanation and reconciliation.

Immediately after dinner Kitty arrived. She knew Anna Arkadyevna, but very slightly, and she was now coming to see her sister not without some trepidation at how this Petersburg society lady whom everyone so praised would receive her. But Anna Arkadyevna took a liking to her—that she could see right away. Anna obviously admired her beauty and youth, and before Kitty knew it, she felt herself not only under Anna’s influence but a little in love with her, the way young women can fall in love with married and older ladies. Anna did not resemble a society lady or the mother of an eight-year-old son, but rather resembled a girl of twenty in the agility of her movements and the freshness and vivacity of her face, which came out either in her smile or her look, and the, if not grave, then sometimes mournful expression of her eyes, which struck and drew Kitty to her. Kitty felt that Anna was perfectly simple and was hiding nothing, but that she had some other higher world of complicated and poetic interests inaccessible to her.

After dinner, when Dolly went to her room, Anna quickly rose and walked over to her brother, who was lighting a cigar.

“Stiva,” she said to him, winking gaily, making the sign of the cross over him, and indicating the door with her eyes. “Go, and may God help you.”

Understanding her meaning, he threw down the cigar and disappeared through the door.

When Stepan Arkadyevich left, she returned to the sofa, where she sat surrounded by the children. Whether it was because the children saw that their mother loved this aunt, or because they themselves sensed the special charm in her, the older two, and the younger ones in their wake, as often happens with children, had latched onto their new aunt before dinner and would not be separated from her, and between them something like a game was invented that consisted in sitting as close to their aunt as possible, touching her, holding her little hand, kissing it, and playing with her ring, or at least touching the flounce on her dress.

“Come, come, as we were sitting before,” said Anna Arkadyevna, sitting in her place.

And once again Grisha slipped his head under her arm and leaned his head on her dress and beamed with pride and happiness.

“Now when is the ball?” she turned to Kitty.

“Next week, and it’s a lovely ball. One of those balls where you always have a good time.”

“You mean there are some where you always have a good time?” said Anna with a gentle scoffing.

“It’s strange, but there are. I always have a good time at the Bobrishchevs’,

and the Nikitins', too, but it's always boring at the Mezhkovs'. Haven't you ever noticed?"

"No, my dear, for me there is no such thing as a good time at a ball," said Anna, and in her eyes Kitty glimpsed a special world that was not open to her. "For me there are only the kind that are less trying and boring."

"How could *you* be bored at a ball?"

"Why would *I* not be bored at a ball?" asked Anna.

Kitty saw that Anna knew what answer would follow.

"Because you're always prettier than everyone else."

Anna had the ability to blush, which she did, and said, "First of all, I never am, and second of all, even if that were so, what do I care about that?"

"Will you go to this ball?" asked Kitty.

"I don't think I can avoid it. Here, take this," she told Tanya, who was pulling the loose-fitting ring off her white, tapered finger.

"It would please me very much if you would go. I would so like to see you at a ball."

"At the very least, if I must go, I will be consoled by the thought that it gives you pleasure. . . . Grisha, don't pull, please, it's all undone as it is," she said, tucking back the loose lock of hair Grisha had been playing with.

"I imagine you at the ball in lilac."

"Why lilac necessarily?" asked Anna, smiling. "Now, children, go on, go on. Do you hear? Miss Hull is calling you to tea," she said, plucking the children off and sending them to the dining room.

"And I know why you're asking me to go to the ball. You're expecting a great deal of this ball, and you want everyone to be there to have a part in it."

"How do you know? Yes."

"Oh! How fine it is to be your age," Anna continued. "I remember and know that light blue haze, like what you see in the mountains in Switzerland. The haze that blankets everything in this blissful time when childhood is just ending and out of this enormous circle, happy and cheerful, the path grows steadily narrower, and it's cheerful and awful to enter this suite of rooms, although it seems both bright and beautiful. Who hasn't experienced this?"

Kitty smiled silently. "But how did she experience this? How I wish I could know her entire romance," thought Kitty, recalling the unpoetic appearance of Alexei Alexandrovich, her husband.

"I know a thing or two. Stiva told me, and I congratulate you, I like him very much," continued Anna. "I met Vronsky at the train station."

"Oh, was he there?" asked Kitty, blushing. "What did Stiva tell you?"

"Stiva gave it all away. And I would be very glad. I traveled yesterday with

Vronsky's mother," she continued, "and his mother talked about him incessantly; he's her favorite; I know how partial mothers are, but —"

"What did his mother tell you?"

"Oh, many things! And I know he's her favorite, but still it was obvious, he's a knight. . . . Well, for instance, she told me that he had wanted to give his entire legacy to his brother, that as a child he had done something else extraordinary, he'd rescued a woman from the water. In short, a hero," said Anna, smiling and recalling the two hundred rubles he had given at the station.

She did not tell the story of those two hundred rubles, however. For some reason she did not like thinking about that. She sensed that it had something to do with her, something that should not be.

"She urged me to visit her," continued Anna, "and I'm happy to go see the old lady and tomorrow I shall pay her a visit. Thank goodness, though, Stiva has been with Dolly in her room for a long time," Anna added, diverting the conversation and standing up, displeased with something, as it seemed to Kitty.

"No, me first! No, me!" shouted the children, who had finished their tea and were running to their Aunt Anna.

"Everyone all together!" said Anna, and laughing, she ran toward them, put her arms around them, and brought the whole heap of swarming children tumbling down, shrieking with delight.

21

Dolly emerged from her room for tea with the adults. Stepan Arkadyevich did not. He must have left his wife's room by the back door.

"I'm afraid you will be cold upstairs," remarked Dolly, turning to Anna. "I want to move you downstairs, and we'll be closer."

"Oh, please, don't worry about me," replied Anna, looking into Dolly's face trying to determine whether there had or had not been a reconciliation.

"It will be lighter for you here," replied her sister-in-law.

"I'm telling you, I can sleep anywhere and anytime, like a baby."

"What's this about?" asked Stepan Arkadyevich, emerging from his study and addressing his wife.

From his tone, both Kitty and Anna realized immediately that there had been a reconciliation.

"I want to move Anna downstairs, but I have to rehang the curtains. No one else can do it, I shall see to it myself," replied Dolly, addressing him.

"God knows whether they reconciled completely," thought Anna, hearing Dolly's tone, cold and calm.

“Oh, enough, Dolly, always making things difficult,” said the husband. “If you like, I’ll do it all.”

“Yes, they must have reconciled,” thought Anna.

“I know how you’ll do it all,” Dolly replied. “You’ll tell Matvei to do what can’t be done and you yourself will leave and he’ll get it all mixed up.” And her habitual teasing smile furrowed the corners of Dolly’s lips as she said this.

“Complete, complete reconciliation, complete,” thought Anna, “thank God!” And rejoicing in the fact that she had been the cause of this, she went up to Dolly and kissed her.

“Not at all. Why do you despise Matvei and me so?” said Stepan Arkadyevich, smiling barely perceptibly and addressing his wife.

All evening, as usual, Dolly was slightly mocking toward her husband, and Stepan Arkadyevich was content and cheerful, but only enough to show that he, while having been forgiven, had not forgotten his crime.

At half past nine, an especially joyous and pleasant family conversation at the Oblonskys’ tea table was disturbed by what was evidently the simplest of events, but this simple event for some reason struck everyone as odd. Having begun talking about mutual Petersburg acquaintances, Anna quickly rose.

“I have her in my album,” she said, “and, oh yes, I’ll show you my Seryozha,” she added with a proud maternal smile.

Just before ten o’clock, the time when she ordinarily said good night to her son and often tucked him in herself before going out to a ball, she felt sad at being so far away from him; and no matter what they spoke of, she couldn’t keep her thoughts from returning to her curly-headed Seryozha. She wanted to look at his picture and talk about him. Seizing the first pretext, she stood up and with her light, firm step went to get the album. The stairs to her room let out onto the landing of the large, heated, central staircase.

As she was leaving the drawing room, the bell rang in the front hall.

“Who could that be?” said Dolly.

“It’s too early to come for me, and too late for anyone else,” Kitty remarked.

“Someone with papers, probably,” added Stepan Arkadyevich, and as Anna walked past the staircase, a servant ran up to announce the visitor, and the visitor himself stood by a lamp; glancing down, Anna immediately recognized Vronsky, and a strange feeling of satisfaction and at the same time dread suddenly stirred inexplicably in her heart. He was standing there still in his coat, taking something out of his pocket. In that moment when she came even with the middle of the staircase, he looked up and saw her, and something shameful and frightened passed across his face. Tilting her head slightly, she walked on and behind her heard Stepan Arkadyevich’s loud voice inviting him up, and Vronsky’s quiet, low, and calm voice refusing.

By the time Anna returned with the album he was gone, and Stepan Arkadyevich told her that he had stopped by to inquire about the dinner they were giving tomorrow for a visiting celebrity.

“He would not come up for anything. He is rather strange,” added Stepan Arkadyevich.

Kitty blushed. She thought she alone realized why he had stopped by and why he had not come up. “He went to our house,” she thought, “and didn’t find me there, so he thought I’d be here. But he didn’t come up because he thought it was late and Anna was here.”

Everyone exchanged glances, not saying anything, and started looking at Anna’s album.

There was nothing unusual or strange in the fact that a man had dropped by to see a friend at half past nine to learn the details of an upcoming dinner and refused to come in; nonetheless, it did seem strange to everyone. It seemed strange and untoward to Anna most of all.

22

The ball had only just begun when Kitty and her mother stepped onto the grand staircase, which was flooded with light, flowers, and footmen in powdered wigs and long red tunics. From the ballroom came a hum of movement as steady as a beehive’s, and while they fixed their hair and dresses in front of the mirror on the landing between the trees, from the ballroom they heard the cautious but distinct sounds of the orchestra’s violins, which had begun the first waltz. A little old man in civilian dress who had just straightened his gray curls in front of the other mirror and who smelled strongly of perfume, bumped into them on the staircase and stepped aside, obviously admiring Kitty, whom he did not know. A beardless youth, one of those society youths whom the old Prince Shcherbatsky called *pups*, wearing an extremely open waistcoat and straightening his white tie as he walked, bowed to them and, after running past, returned to ask Kitty for the quadrille. The first quadrille had already been given to Vronsky, so she had to give this youth the second. An officer, buttoning a glove, stepped aside at the door and smoothing his mustache, admired the rosy Kitty.

Although her gown and hair and all her preparations for the ball had cost Kitty much effort and thought, now, in her elaborate tulle dress over a pink slip, Kitty made her entrance to the ball so freely and simply it was as if all those rosettes and lace, all the details of her gown had not cost her or her maids a moment’s attention, as if she had been born in this tulle and lace, with her hair piled high and a rose with two leaves on top of it all.

When before entering the ballroom the old princess had wanted to straighten the twisted ribbon of her sash, Kitty had gently declined. She sensed that everything ought to be fine and graceful on her as it was and that nothing needed fixing.

Kitty was having one of her happy days. The dress was not tight anywhere, the lace *berthe* did not droop anywhere, and the rosettes were not crushed or torn; the pink slippers on high curved heels did not pinch but gladdened the foot. The thick rolls of blond hair hugged her petite head as if they were her own. All three buttons had closed without tearing off on her long glove, which encased her arm without altering its shape. Her locket's black velvet ribbon encircled her neck especially softly. This velvet was lovely, and at home, looking at her neck in the mirror, Kitty had sensed what this velvet said. There might still be some doubt about everything else, but the black velvet ribbon was lovely. Kitty smiled here, too, at the ball, when she looked at it in the mirror. Kitty's bared shoulders and arms felt like cold marble, a feeling she especially liked. Her eyes sparkled, and her rosy lips could not help but smile at the awareness of how attractive she was. Before she could enter the ballroom and reach the crowd of ladies, all tulle, ribbon, lace, and flowers, who were awaiting invitations to dance (Kitty never lingered in that crowd), she had been asked to waltz, and asked by the best partner, the premier partner in the ball hierarchy, the famous ball director and master of ceremonies, a married, handsome, and stately man, Egorushka Korsunsky. Having just left Countess Banina, with whom he had danced the first round of the waltz, surveying his realm, that is, the few pairs who had joined the dancing, he caught sight of Kitty entering and hurried up to her with that special, loose-jointed amble characteristic only of ball directors, bowed, and without even asking whether or not she wanted to, raised his arm in order to place it around her slender waist. She looked around for someone to whom she could hand her fan, and the hostess, smiling at her, took it.

"How wonderful that you came on time," he told her, embracing her waist. "What kind of manners is it to be late?"

She placed her bent left hand on his shoulder, and her tiny feet in their pink slippers moved quickly, lightly, and rhythmically over the slippery parquet in time with the music.

"One is refreshed, waltzing with you," he told her, plunging into the first slow steps of the waltz. "Splendid, so light on your feet, such *précision*," he told her, as he told nearly all the pretty women he knew.

She smiled at his praise and over his shoulder continued to survey the ballroom. She was not someone newly out for whom all the faces at a ball blur into one magical impression; nor was she a young woman who had been dragged

from ball to ball and for whom all the faces at the ball were so familiar as to be boring; rather, she was in between those two. She was excited but at the same time sufficiently self-possessed that she could observe. In the left corner of the ballroom she saw the cream of society had gathered. There was the beauty Lydie, Korsunsky's wife, impossibly bared; there was the hostess; there was Krivin with the shiny bald spot who was always to be found wherever the cream of society was; this was where young men looked without daring to approach; and there her eyes found Stiva and then caught sight of the lovely figure and head of Anna, who was wearing a black velvet dress. And *he* was there. Kitty had not seen him since the evening she had refused Levin. With her farsighted eyes, Kitty immediately recognized him and even noticed that he was looking at her.

"What do you think, another turn? You're not tired?" said Korsunsky, who was a little out of breath.

"No, thank you."

"Where shall I take you?"

"Madame Karenina is here, I think. Take me to her."

"Wherever you say."

Korsunsky waltzed her directly toward the crowd in the left corner of the ballroom, steadily moderating his step, and repeating, "*Pardon, mesdames, pardon, pardon, mesdames,*" and navigating through the sea of lace, tulle, and ribbon, without snagging a single feather, he turned his lady sharply, exposing her slim legs in their openwork stockings, and so that her train fanned out, covering Krivin's knees. Korsunsky bowed, straightened his broad shirtfront, and gave her his arm to escort her to Anna Arkadyevna. Kitty blushed, removed her train from Krivin's knees, and her head spinning a little, looked around in search of Anna. Anna was surrounded by ladies and gentleman, conversing. Anna was not wearing lilac, as Kitty had urged, but a black, low-cut velvet dress that exposed her full, finely molded shoulders and bosom, which looked like they had been chiseled of old ivory, and her rounded arms and slender, tiny wrists. The entire dress was trimmed in Venetian lace. On her head, in her dark hair, which was all her own, was a small garland of pansies and the same garland on the black ribbon threaded through the white lace at her waist. Her hair did not attract attention. The only thing that did attract attention, adorning her, were those short, willful tendrils of curly hair that kept escaping at her nape and temples. Around her finely molded, strong neck was a string of pearls.

Kitty saw Anna every day and was in love with her and invariably pictured her in lilac. But now, seeing her in black, she felt she had not understood the full extent of her charm. She now saw her as quite new and surprising. She now realized that Anna could not wear lilac and that her charm lay specifically in the

fact that she always transcended her gown, that her gown could never be conspicuous on her. The black dress with the luxurious lace was not conspicuous; it was merely a frame, and she was all one saw—simple, natural, elegant, and at the same time animated and cheerful.

She was standing, as always, extremely erect, and when Kitty approached this cluster, Anna was talking with their host, her head turned slightly toward him.

“No, I am not casting stones,” she replied to something he had said, “although I don’t understand it,” she continued, shrugging her shoulders, and immediately, with a tender, protective smile, she turned to Kitty.⁴² Glancing quickly at Kitty’s gown, Anna made a slight movement of her head, but one Kitty understood, approving of her gown and her beauty. “You even entered the ballroom dancing,” she added.

“This is one of my most faithful helpers,” said Korsunsky, bowing to Anna Arkadyevna, whom he had not yet seen. “The princess helps make the ball cheerful and beautiful. Anna Arkadyevna, a waltz?” he said, bowing.

“But are you acquainted?” asked the host.

“With whom are we not acquainted? My wife and I are like white wolves. Everyone knows us,” replied Korsunsky. “A waltz, Anna Arkadyevna?”

“I don’t dance whenever it’s possible not to,” she said.

“But tonight it isn’t,” replied Korsunsky.

At that moment Vronsky walked up.

“Well, if it is impossible not to dance tonight, then we shall,” she said, ignoring Vronsky’s bow, and she quickly raised her hand to Korsunsky’s shoulder.

“Why is she displeased with him?” thought Kitty, noting that Anna had intentionally not responded to Vronsky’s bow. Vronsky went up to Kitty, reminded her of the first quadrille and expressed his regret that he had not had the pleasure of seeing her all this time. Kitty watched and admired the waltzing Anna and listened to him. She was waiting for him to ask her to waltz, but he didn’t, and she looked at him in astonishment. He blushed and hastily asked her to waltz, but as soon as he had put his arm around her slender waist and taken the first step, the music suddenly ended. Kitty looked into his face, which was at such a short distance from her, and for a long time afterward, years later, this love-filled look she had given him then and to which he had not responded, cut her heart with agonizing shame.

“*Pardon, pardon!* A waltz, a waltz!” exclaimed Korsunsky from the other end of the ballroom, and grabbing the first young lady he encountered, he himself began to dance.

23

Vronsky and Kitty took several turns of the waltz. After the waltz, Kitty went over to her mother and had barely exchanged a few words with Nordston when Vronsky came for her for the first quadrille. During the quadrille nothing significant was said. They carried on an intermittent conversation first about the Korsunskys, husband and wife, whom Vronsky described in very amusing detail as sweet children of forty, then about the proposed public theater, and only once did their conversation touch her to the quick, when he asked about Levin, whether he was there, and added that he had liked him very much.⁴³ But Kitty had not expected more from the quadrille. She was waiting with a sinking heart for the mazurka. For her, the mazurka would decide all. The fact that during the quadrille he did not ask her for the mazurka did not worry her. She was certain she would dance the mazurka with him, as she had at previous balls, and she turned down five others for the mazurka, saying she was already dancing. For Kitty the entire ball, up until the last quadrille, was an enchanted dream of joy-filled colors, sounds, and movements. She did not dance only when she felt too tired and asked for a respite. But dancing the last quadrille with one of the boring young men whom she could not refuse, she happened to be *vis-à-vis* with Vronsky and Anna. She had not been near Anna since her arrival, and now suddenly she saw her again as quite new and surprising. She saw in her a trait so very familiar to her: elation over her success. She saw that Anna was intoxicated with the wine of the admiration she excited. Kitty knew this feeling and knew its signs, and she saw them in Anna—she saw the trembling, flashing gleam of her eyes and the smile of happiness and elation that unconsciously curved her lips and the distinct grace, assuredness, and ease of her movements.

“Who is it?” she asked herself. “Everyone or one man?” And without trying to help the young man with whom she was dancing and who was in agony in the conversation, whose thread he had dropped and could not pick up, outwardly obeying the cheerfully loud and imperious cries of Korsunsky sending everyone into a *grand rond*, and then a *chaîne*, she watched and her heart sank more and more. “No, it isn’t the approval of the crowd that’s intoxicated her, it’s the admiration of one man. Is it this one man? Could it really be *he*?” Each time he spoke to Anna, a delighted gleam flashed in her eyes, and a smile of happiness curved her rosy lips. It was as if she were making an effort not to let these signs of her delight show, but they appeared on her face of their own accord. “But what of him?” Kitty looked at him and was horrified. What Kitty had clearly seen in the mirror of Anna’s face, she saw in him. What had become of his ever calm, firm manner and the carefree, calm expression of his face? No, now each time he turned toward her, he ducked his head as if wishing he could drop down be-

fore her, and in his gaze the only expression was of submission and fear. "I do not mean to offend you," his gaze seemed to be saying each time, "but I do want to save myself, and I don't know how." On his face was an expression such as Kitty had never seen before.

They were speaking of mutual acquaintances, conducting the most trifling of conversations, but it seemed to Kitty that each word they uttered was deciding her fate and theirs. What was strange was that although they were indeed talking about how ridiculous Ivan Ivanovich was with his French, and about how a better match could be found for the Eletskaia girl, at the same time these words held significance for them, and they felt it just as much as Kitty did. The entire ball, all the world, everything in Kitty's soul became shrouded in fog. Only the strict school of upbringing through which she had passed supported her and forced her to do what was required of her, that is, dance, answer questions, speak, even smile. Before the mazurka began, however, when they had already begun rearranging chairs and some couples had moved from the small rooms to the large ballroom, a moment of despair and horror descended upon Kitty. She had refused five and now was not dancing the mazurka. She had no hope of being asked precisely because she had had too great a success in society, and it could not have occurred to anyone that she had not yet been asked. She needed to tell her mother that she was ill and go home, but she lacked the strength even for that. She felt beaten.

She went to the far end of the small drawing room and sank into an armchair. The gossamer skirt of her gown billowed around her slender torso; one bared, skinny, soft and maidenly arm dropped feebly and drowned in the folds of her pink tunic; the other held a fan and was fanning her flushed face with short, quick movements. Despite looking like a butterfly that had just alit on a blade of grass and was about to take flight and spread its rainbow wings, a terrible despair was crushing her heart.

"But might I have been mistaken, might this not have happened?"

And once again she recalled all that she had seen.

"Kitty, whatever is this?" said Countess Nordston, approaching her noiselessly over the carpet. "I don't understand this."

Kitty's lower lip trembled and she quickly rose.

"Kitty, you're not dancing the mazurka?"

"No, no," said Kitty in a voice trembling with tears.

"He asked her to dance the mazurka right in front of me," said Nordston, knowing that Kitty would understand who "he" and "she" were. "She said, 'But aren't you dancing with Princess Shcherbatskaya?'"

"Oh, I don't care!" replied Kitty.

No one other than she herself understood her position; no one knew that she had yesterday refused a man whom she may have loved and refused him because she had trusted another.

Countess Nordston found Korsunsky, with whom she had danced the mazurka, and told him to ask Kitty.

Kitty danced in the first pair and fortunately for her she did not have to speak because Korsunsky was constantly rushing about issuing instructions to his realm. Vronsky and Anna were sitting nearly opposite her. She saw them with her farsighted eyes, saw them close up as well when they met in the pairs, and the more she saw them, the more she was convinced that her misfortune had come to pass. She saw that they felt alone in this crowded ballroom, and on Vronsky's face, always so resolute and independent, she saw that lost and submissive expression that had stunned her before, like the expression of a clever dog when it has done something wrong.

Anna smiled, and her smile was conveyed to him. She paused to think, and he became grave. Some supernatural power drew Kitty's eyes to Anna's face. She was splendid in her simple black dress, splendid were her full arms with the bracelets, splendid was her firm neck with its string of pearls, splendid were her curls, which had wreaked havoc on her coiffed hair, splendid were the light, graceful movements of her small feet and hands, splendid this handsome face in its animation; but there was something terrible and cruel about her charm.

Kitty admired her more than ever, and suffered more and more. Kitty felt crushed, and her face expressed this. When Vronsky saw her, meeting her in the mazurka, at first he didn't recognize her, so much had she changed.

"Marvelous ball!" he said to her, in order to say something.

"Yes," she replied.

In the middle of the mazurka, while repeating a complicated figure newly invented by Korsunsky, Anna stepped into the middle of the circle, chose two partners and called out to one lady and to Kitty. Kitty looked at her in fright as she approached. Narrowing her eyes, Anna looked at her and smiled, pressing her hand. But noticing that Kitty's face responded to her smile with only a look of despair and astonishment, she turned away and began talking gaily with the other lady.

"Yes, there is something alien, demonic, and charming about her," Kitty told herself.

Anna did not want to stay for supper, but her host implored her.

"That's enough, Anna Arkadyevna," Korsunsky began, gathering her bared arm under the sleeve of his evening coat. "What an idea I have for a cotillion! *Un bijou!*"

And he moved along a little, trying to draw her with him. Their host smiled approvingly.

“No, I’m not going to stay,” replied Anna, smiling, but despite her smile, both Korsunsky and her host realized from the decisive tone of her reply that she would not stay.

“No, as it is I’ve danced more at your one ball in Moscow than in an entire winter in Petersburg,” said Anna, looking around at Vronsky, who was standing by her side. “I must rest before I travel.”

“Are you determined to go tomorrow?” asked Vronsky.

“Yes, I think so,” Anna replied, as if wondering at the daring of his question; however, the irrepressible, trembling gleam in her eyes and her smile scorched him as she said this.

Anna Arkadyevna did not stay for supper and left.

24

“Yes, there is something offensive, repulsive, about me,” thought Levin upon leaving the Shcherbatskys’ and setting out on foot to his brother’s. “I am unfit for other people. It’s pride, they say. No, I have no pride. If I had any pride, I wouldn’t have put myself in this position.” And he pictured Vronsky, happy, good-natured, clever, and calm, who had probably never found himself in the horrible position in which Levin did this evening. “Yes, she had to choose him. That is how it had to be, and I have no one and nothing to complain of. It’s my own fault. What right did I have to think she would want to join her life to mine? Who am I? What am I? A nobody no one needs for anything.” He recalled his brother Nikolai and dwelt with joy on this memory. “Isn’t he right that everything in the world is bad and vile? We’ve scarcely judged our brother Nikolai fairly. Naturally, from the point of view of Prokofy, who saw him in a tattered coat and drunk, he is a contemptible man; but I know him otherwise. I know his soul and know that he and I are alike. But instead of going to seek him out, I came here to dine.” Levin walked up to a street lamp, read his brother’s address, which he had kept in his wallet, and hailed a cab. All the long way to his brother’s, Levin vividly recalled all the events he knew from his brother Nikolai’s life. He recalled how his brother at the university and a year after the university, despite the ridicule of his classmates, had lived like a monk, strictly performing all the religious rites, services, and fasts and shunning pleasures of every kind, especially women; and then how he had suddenly broken loose, consorted with the vilest of men, and descended into the most dissolute debauchery. He recalled then the story of the boy he had taken from the countryside to raise

and had beaten in a fit of rage so that he was charged with assault. He recalled then the story of the cardsharp to whom he had lost money, given a promissory note, and against whom he himself had lodged a complaint, trying to prove that he had been tricked. (This was the money Sergei Ivanovich had paid.) Then he recalled how he had spent the night in jail for disorderly conduct. He recalled the shameful proceedings Nikolai had initiated against his brother Sergei Ivanovich for not paying him his share from their mother's estate; and the last matter, when he had gone to the Western District to serve and there had been taken to court for beatings inflicted on a village elder. All of this had been terribly vile, but it did not seem quite as vile to Levin as it must have to those who did not know Nikolai Levin, did not know his entire story, did not know his heart.

Levin recalled how, while Nikolai was in his period of piety, fasts, monks, and church services, when he was searching in religion for assistance, for a check on his passionate nature, not only did no one support him, but everyone, including he himself, had laughed at him. They had teased him, called him Noah, a monk; and when he broke loose, no one had helped him, rather everyone turned away in horror and disgust.

Levin sensed that, in his soul, at the very base of his soul, and despite all the chaos of his life, his brother was no more wrong than the people who despised him. He was not to blame for being born with his uncontrollable nature and somehow constrained mind. But he had always wanted to be good. "I'll tell him everything, I'll make him tell me everything and show him that I love him and so understand him," Levin decided privately, as after ten o'clock he approached the hotel indicated in the address.

"Up top, twelve and thirteen," the porter answered Levin's question.

"Is he in?"

"Must be."

The door to room 12 was ajar, and from it, in the strip of light, issued the thick smoke of bad and weak tobacco and a voice Levin did not know; but Levin immediately knew that his brother was there; he heard his coughing.

When he went in the door, the unfamiliar voice was talking.

"It all depends on how sensibly and consciously the matter is conducted."

Konstantin Levin glanced in the doorway and saw that the speaker was a young man with a huge shock of hair, wearing a jerkin, and that a young pock-marked woman wearing a woolen dress without cuffs or collar was sitting on the sofa. He could not see his brother. Konstantin's heart sank painfully at the thought of his brother living among strangers. No one had heard him, and Konstantin, removing his galoshes, was listening to what the gentleman in the jerkin was saying. He was talking about some enterprise.

“Oh, to hell with the privileged classes,” said his brother’s voice, coughing. “Masha! Get us something to eat and give us some wine, if there’s any left, or else go get some.”

The woman stood up, walked around the screen, and saw Konstantin.

“There’s some gentleman, Nikolai Dmitrievich,” she said.

“Who does he want?” Nikolai Levin’s voice said angrily.

“It’s me,” replied Konstantin Levin, stepping into the light.

“Who’s *me*?” Nikolai’s voice repeated even more angrily. He could be heard standing up, stumbling over something, and before him Levin saw in the doorway his brother’s enormous, thin, stooped figure, so familiar and nonetheless astonishingly savage and sickly, with his large startled eyes.

He was even thinner than three years before, the last time Konstantin Levin had seen him. He was wearing a short coat. Both his arms and his broad hands seemed even larger. His hair was thinner, he had the same straight mustache over his lips, and the same eyes looking strangely and naïvely at the person who had walked in.

“Ah, Kostya!” he said suddenly, when he had recognized his brother, and his eyes lit up with delight. At the very same instant, though, he looked over his shoulder at the young man and made a convulsive movement of his head and neck so familiar to Konstantin, as if his cravat were choking him; and a very different, savage expression full of suffering and cruelty was left on his haggard face.

“I wrote you and Sergei Ivanovich that I don’t know you and don’t want to know you. What do you want? What do you need?”

He was not at all the way Konstantin had imagined him. What was worst and most difficult in his character, what made it so hard to be with him, Konstantin Levin had forgotten when he thought of him; but now, seeing his face, in particular the convulsive turning of his head, he remembered all that.

“I’m not here to see you because I need anything,” he replied shyly. “I just came to see you.”

His brother’s shyness evidently softened Nikolai. His lips twitched.

“That’s it?” he said. “Well, come in, sit down. Do you want supper? Masha, bring three portions. No, wait. Do you know who this is?” he asked his brother while indicating the gentleman in the jerkin. “This is Mr. Kritsky, my friend from back in Kiev, quite a remarkable man. Naturally, the police are looking for him because he’s not a scoundrel.”

As was his habit he looked around at everyone present in the room. When he saw the woman standing in the doorway make a move to go, he shouted to her. “Wait, I said.” And with the same conversational ineptitude and incoherence

Konstantin knew so well, looking around at everyone once again, he began telling his brother Kritsky's story: how he had been drummed out of the university for founding a relief society for poor students and Sunday schools, and how then he had joined a peasant school as a teacher, and how he was drummed out of there as well, and how later he was tried for something.⁴⁴

"You were at Kiev University?" Konstantin Levin said to Kritsky, in order to break the awkward silence that ensued.

"Yes, I was," Kritsky said angrily, glowering.

"And this woman," Nikolai Levin interrupted him, pointing to her, "is my life's companion, Marya Nikolaevna. I took her out of a brothel"—and he jerked his neck as he said this. "But I love and respect her and I ask everyone who wants to know me," he added, raising his voice and scowling, "to love and respect her. She's no different from my wife, no different at all. So now you know with whom you're dealing. And if you think you're demeaning yourself, then good-bye and good riddance."

Again his eyes scanned everyone defiantly.

"Why would I be demeaning myself? I don't understand."

"All right, Masha, tell them to bring supper: three portions, some vodka and wine. . . . No, wait. Never mind. Go."

25

"So you see," Nikolai Levin continued, frowning with the effort and twitching. He was obviously having a hard time figuring out what to say and do. "There, do you see"—he pointed to some iron bars tied up with string in the corner—"do you see that? It's the start of a new business we're going into. The business is a production cooperative. . . ."

Konstantin was barely listening. He was staring into his brother's sickly, consumptive face and feeling more and more sorry for him, and he could not make himself listen to what his brother was saying about the cooperative. He could see that this cooperative was only an anchor to save him from self-contempt. Nikolai Levin continued talking.

"You know that capital oppresses the worker. Our workers, the peasants, bear the entire burden of labor and are so placed that no matter how hard they work, they can't escape their cruel situation. All the profits from the wages they might use to improve their situation, to afford themselves some leisure and, as a consequence of that, education, all the surplus value is taken away from them by the capitalists. Society is arranged so that the more they work, the more the merchants and landowners profit, whereas they are always going to be beasts of

burden. This order has to be changed," he concluded and looked at his brother questioningly.

"Yes, naturally," said Konstantin, looking at the flush that had emerged under his brother's prominent cheekbones.

"So we are setting up a locksmiths' cooperative, where all the production, and the profits, and most important, the means of production, everything will be in common."

"Where will the cooperative be?" Konstantin Levin asked.

"In the village of Vozdrem, in Kazan Province."

"But why in a village? It seems to me there's plenty to do in villages as it is. Why a locksmiths' cooperative in a village?"

"Because now the peasants are just as much slaves as they were before, and that's why you and Sergei Ivanovich find it so unpleasant that people want to deliver them from this slavery," said Nikolai Levin, irritated by the objection.

Konstantin Levin sighed, looking around during this time at the room, which was dark and dirty. This sigh seemed to irritate Nikolai even more.

"I know the aristocratic outlooks you and Sergei Ivanovich have. I know he uses all the powers of his mind to justify the existing evil."

"But why are you saying this about Sergei Ivanovich?" said Levin, smiling.

"Sergei Ivanovich? Here's why!" Nikolai Levin shouted suddenly at Sergei Ivanovich's name. "Here's why . . . But what's the point? There's just one thing . . . Why did you come to see me? You despise this, and that's just fine with me! Get out and good luck to you. Get out!" he shouted, rising from his chair. "Get out, get out!"

"I don't despise it one bit," said Konstantin Levin shyly. "I'm not even arguing."

At this moment Marya Nikolaevna returned. Nikolai Levin looked at her angrily. She walked over to him quickly and whispered something.

"I'm unwell. I've grown irritable," Nikolai Levin said, calming down and breathing hard. "Later you can tell me about Sergei Ivanovich and his article. It's such drivel, such lies, such self-deception. What can someone write about justice who doesn't know anything about it? Have you read his article?" he addressed Kritsky, sitting back down at the table and sweeping away the half-scattered cigarettes in order to make room.

"No, I haven't," said Kritsky gloomily, obviously not wanting to join the discussion.

"Why not?" Nikolai Levin now addressed Kritsky with irritation.

"Because I don't feel I need to waste my time on it."

"That is, permit me, but why do you know you'd be wasting your time? The article is over many people's heads, that is, above them. But for me it's different, I see right through his ideas and know why it's weak."

Everyone fell silent. Kritsky slowly rose and reached for his cap.

“You don’t want supper? Well, good-bye. Bring the locksmith by tomorrow.”

As soon as Kritsky had gone out, Nikolai Levin smiled and winked.

“He’s bad, too,” he said. “I do see, after all.”

But at that moment Kritsky called to him from the doorway.

“What else do you need?” he said, and he joined him in the hall. Left alone with Marya Nikolaevna, Levin turned to her.

“Have you lived with my brother long?” he asked her.

“It’s been over a year now. His health’s got very bad. He drinks a lot,” she said.

“What do you mean he drinks?”

“He drinks vodka, and that hurts him.”

“Is it really so much?” whispered Levin.

“Yes,” she said, looking shyly at the door, where Nikolai Levin appeared.

“What were you talking about?” he said, scowling and shifting his startled eyes from one to the other. “What?”

“Nothing,” replied Konstantin, embarrassed.

“If you don’t want to say, then don’t. Only you and she have nothing to talk about. She’s a wench and you’re a gentleman,” he said, jerking his neck.

“I can see you’ve figured everything out and judged it and pity me my errors,” he began again, raising his voice.

“Nikolai Dmitrievich, Nikolai Dmitrievich,” Marya Nikolaevna whispered again, stepping closer to him.

“Fine, then, fine! So what about our supper? Ah, here it is,” he said, seeing the waiter with the tray. “Here, put it here,” he said angrily and immediately picked up the vodka, poured a glass, and drank it down greedily. “Like a drink?” he turned to his brother, having cheered up at once. “Well, enough about Sergei Ivanovich. I’m glad to see you nonetheless. No matter what, we aren’t strangers. Have a drink. Tell me, what have you been doing?” he continued, greedily chewing a piece of bread and pouring another glass. “How are you getting on?”

“I live alone in the country, as I did before. I’m farming,” Konstantin replied, staring with horror at the greed with which his brother ate and drank and trying to hide his notice.

“Why don’t you get married?”

“It hasn’t come up,” Konstantin replied, turning red.

“Why not? It’s all over for me! I’ve ruined my life. I said it and I’ll say it again, that if they’d given me my share then, when I needed it, my whole life would have been different.”

Konstantin Dmitrievich hastened to divert the conversation.

“Did you know your Vanyushka is a clerk with me at Pokrovskoye?” he said.

Nikolai jerked his neck and became thoughtful.

“Come, tell me, what’s happening at Pokrovskoye? Is the house still standing, and the birches, and our schoolroom? What about Filipp the gardener, is he really alive? How I remember the gazebo and sofa! Now, watch you don’t change anything in the house. Get married as quickly as you can and set things up the way they used to be. Then I’ll come visit you, if your wife’s nice.”

“Why don’t you come see me now?” said Levin. “What a fine time we’d have!”

“I would if I knew I wouldn’t find Sergei Ivanovich there.”

“You won’t. I live quite independently of him.”

“Yes, no matter what you say, though, you have to choose between him and me,” he said, looking shyly into his brother’s eyes. This shyness touched Konstantin.

“If you want to know my full confession in that respect, I’ll tell you that I don’t take one side or the other in your quarrel with Sergei Ivanovich. You’re both wrong. You’re wrong in a more outward way, and he more inwardly.”

“Ah, ah! You see that? You see?” Nikolai cried out joyfully.

“But personally, if you want to know, I treasure your friendship more because—”

“Why, why?”

Konstantin couldn’t say he treasured it more because Nikolai was unfortunate and in need of friendship. But Nikolai saw that this was precisely what he was about to say, and frowning, he reached for the vodka again.

“Enough, Nikolai Dmitrievich!” said Marya Nikolaevna, extending her chubby bare arm toward the decanter.

“Let me go! Don’t interfere! I’ll beat you!” he shouted.

Marya Nikolaevna smiled a meek and good-natured smile that was conveyed to Nikolai as well and took the vodka.

“Do you think she doesn’t understand anything?” said Nikolai. “She understands all this better than any of us. Isn’t it true there’s something fine and sweet about her?”

“Have you never been in Moscow before, Marya Nikolaevna?” Konstantin said to her in order to say something.

“Don’t speak so formally to her.⁴⁵ It frightens her. No one except the magistrates when they were trying her for attempting to leave the brothel, no one has ever addressed her that way. My God, what idiocy there is in the world!” he suddenly exclaimed. “These new institutions, these magistrates, the district council, what an outrage!”

He began recounting his clashes with the new institutions.

Konstantin Levin listened to him, and he found the denial of there being any sense in all the public institutions, a denial he shared and often expressed, unpleasant now coming from his brother's mouth.

"In the next world we'll understand all this," he said, joking.

"The next world? Oh, I don't like that world! I don't," he said, fixing his wild, frightened eyes on his brother's face. "And you'd think it would be good to get away from all the vileness and confusion — other people's and my own — but I'm afraid of death, I'm terribly afraid of death." He shuddered. "Come on, drink something. Would you like some Champagne? Or we could go somewhere. Let's go see the Gypsies! You know, I've taken a great liking to Gypsies and Russian songs."

His tongue was starting to get tied up, and he started jumping from subject to subject. With Masha's help, Konstantin talked him out of going anywhere and put him to bed quite drunk.

Masha promised to write Konstantin in case of need and to try to talk Nikolai Levin into coming to stay with his brother.

26

In the morning Konstantin Levin left Moscow, and by evening he was home. En route, in the train car, he discussed politics and the new railways with his neighbors, and just as in Moscow, he was overcome by a welter of notions, displeasure with himself, and shame at something. When he disembarked at his station, though, and saw his one-eyed coachman Ignat with his caftan collar turned up, when he saw in the dim light falling from the station windows his carpeted sleigh and his horses with their braided tails, in a harness trimmed with rings and tassels, and when his driver Ignat, while stowing his luggage, told him the village news — the contractor had arrived, and Pava had calved — he felt that welter dissipate little by little and his shame and displeasure with himself pass.⁴⁶ He felt this at just the sight of Ignat and the horses, but when he put on the sheepskin coat brought for him, sat in the sleigh all muffled up, and set out, contemplating his next instructions in the village and admiring his outrunner, saddled in its day, an overtaxed but spirited Don horse, he began to see what had happened to him in a completely different way. He felt like himself and had no desire to be anyone else. He now wanted only to be better than he had been before. First of all, he decided from that day on not to hope again for unusual happiness, such as marriage should have brought him, and consequently not to disdain the present so. Second, he would never again allow himself to get carried away by base passion, the memory of which tormented him so when he

was preparing to propose. Then, recalling his brother Nikolai, he resolved that he would never allow himself to forget him again but would keep track of him and not let him out of his sight, so as to be ready to help when things went badly for him. This would be soon, he sensed that. Then, even his brother's talk of communism, which he had treated so lightly at the time, now gave him pause. He considered the refashioning of economic conditions nonsense; however, he had always felt the injustice of his abundance in comparison with the poverty of the people and now decided privately that, in order to feel fully in the right, although prior to this he had worked very hard and had not lived luxuriously, he would now work even harder and allow himself even less luxury.⁴⁷ All this seemed so easy to do that he spent the entire journey in the pleasantest of day-dreams. With invigorated hope for a new and better life, he pulled up to his house sometime after eight o'clock.

From the windows in the room of Agafya Mikhailovna, his old nanny, who had taken on the role of housekeeper, light fell on the snow on the patch of ground in front of the house. She was not yet asleep. Kuzma, whom she had awakened, ran out onto the front steps, sleepy and barefoot. Laska, a setter bitch, nearly knocked Kuzma off his feet when she leaped out and started whining, rubbing up against Levin's knees, standing up, and wanting but not daring to put her forepaws on his chest.

"You're back early, sir," said Agafya Mikhailovna.

"I missed this, Agafya Mikhailovna. It's fine being a guest, but being home is better," he replied, and he went to his study.

The study was gradually lit up by the candle that was brought in. Familiar details were brought out: the stag horns, the shelves of books, the surface of the stove with the vent, which should have been repaired long ago, his father's sofa, the big table, and on the table an open book, a broken ashtray, and a notebook with his handwriting. When he saw all this, he was assailed for a moment by doubt as to the possibility of starting the new life he had dreamed of en route. All these traces of his life seemed to grab hold of him and say, "No, you won't leave us and you won't be any different. You'll be just the same as you were before, with your doubts, your perpetual dissatisfaction with yourself, your vain attempts to improve, and your failings and perpetual anticipation of happiness, which has not come to you and never will."

This is what his things were saying; however, another voice inside him was saying that he did not have to submit to that past and that he could make anything of himself. Listening to this voice, he walked over to the corner, where he kept two dumbbells, a pood each, and started lifting them gymnastically, trying to raise his spirits. Steps creaked outside the door. He hurriedly put down the dumbbells.

He walked his steward, who said that all, thank God, was well, but reported that the buckwheat had been a little scorched in the new drying kiln. This news irritated Levin. The new kiln had been built and invented in part by Levin. The steward had always been opposed to this kiln and now with concealed triumph announced that the buckwheat had been scorched. Levin was firmly convinced that if it was scorched, then that was only because the measures that he had ordered hundreds of times had not been taken. He was annoyed, and he gave the steward a dressing-down. There was one important and joyous event, though: Pava, his best and most valuable cow, bought at exhibition, had calved.

“Kuzma, get me my sheepskin. And tell them to bring a lantern. I’m going to have a look,” he told the steward.

The barn for the most valuable cows was right behind the house. Walking across the yard past the snowdrift by the lilac, he approached the barn. It smelled of warm steam rising from dung when he opened the frozen door, and the cows, surprised at the unaccustomed light of the lantern, stirred on their fresh straw. He caught a glimpse of the smooth, broad, black-and-white back of a Dutch cow. Berkut the bull was lying with a ring through his nose and was about to stand up but thought better of it and only snorted a couple of times when they walked by. Pava, a red beauty big as a hippopotamus, her back turned, was blocking the visitors’ view of the calf and sniffing it.

Levin went into the stall, looked Pava over, and lifted the red-and-white calf onto its long, spindly legs. Uneasy, Pava would have lowed, but she calmed down when Levin moved the calf closer to her, and with a heavy sigh, she began licking her with her rough tongue. The calf, searching, poked her nose under her mother’s groin and swished her tail.

“We need light here, Fyodor, bring the lantern here,” said Levin, examining the calf. “Just like her mother! Too bad the color is like the father. Very fine. Long and broad in the haunch. Vasily Fyodorovich, isn’t she fine?” he addressed the steward, forgiving him entirely for the buckwheat under the influence of his joy over the calf.

“Who could it take after and look bad? But Semyon the contractor came the day after you left. You have to reach a deal with him, Konstantin Dmitrievich,” said the steward. “I reported to you before about the machine.”

This one matter led Levin back into all the details of the farm, which was large and complex. He went straight from the barn to his office, and after speaking with his steward and with Semyon the contractor, he went home and straight upstairs to the drawing room.

27

The house was large and old-fashioned, and although Levin lived alone, he heated and occupied the entire house. He knew that this was foolish, knew that this was even bad and contrary to his new plans, but this house was an entire world for Levin. It was the world in which his father and mother had lived and died. They had lived a life that for Levin seemed the ideal of any perfection and that he dreamed of resuming with a wife and a family of his own.

Levin could scarcely remember his mother. The idea of her was a sacred memory for him, and in his imagination his future wife had to be an echo of that magnificent, holy ideal of woman such as his mother had been for him.

Not only could he not imagine love for a woman outside marriage, but he had pictured to himself first a family and only afterward the woman who would give him that family. His notions of marriage, therefore, did not resemble the notions of most of the men he knew, for whom marriage was one of life's many ordinary matters; for Levin it was the main business of life, on which his entire happiness depended, and now he had to give this up!

When he entered the small drawing room, where he always had his tea, and sat down in his armchair with a book, and Agafya Mikhailovna brought him his tea and with her usual, "I'll just sit, sir," sat down on the chair by the window, he felt, strange as it may seem, that he had not parted with his dreams and that without them he could not live. Whether with *her* or with another, they would come true. He read his book and thought about what he was reading, stopping now and again to listen to Agafya Mikhailovna, who chattered on relentlessly; and at the same time various pictures of the farm and his future family life arose disjointedly in his mind. He felt that deep down in his soul something had begun to establish itself, subsided, and been stored away.

He listened to Agafya Mikhailovna's talk about how Prokhor had forgotten God and used the money Levin had given him to buy a horse to drink nonstop and had beaten his wife almost to death; he listened and read his book and recalled the entire progression of thoughts aroused by his reading. It was Tyndall's book on heat.⁴⁸ He recalled his own condemnations of Tyndall for his smugness at the cleverness of his experiments and for the fact that he lacked a philosophical view. Suddenly he had a joyous thought: "In two years I'll have two Dutch cows in the herd, Pava herself may still be alive, there will be twelve Berkut daughters, and adding on these three — it's a miracle!" He went back to his book.

"Fine, then, electricity and heat are the same thing, but in an equation to solve a problem can you substitute one quantity for the other? No. So what is this? Your instinct tells you there is a connection between these forces of nature anyway. . . . It's especially nice that Pava's daughter is going to be a red-and-

white cow, and the entire herd to which these three get added . . . Excellent! My wife and guests and I will go out to meet the herd. My wife will say, ‘Kostya and I looked after this calf like a child.’ ‘How can all this interest you so?’ a guest will say. ‘Everything that interests him interests me.’ But who is *she*?’ And he recalled what had happened in Moscow. . . . “So, what am I to do? It’s not my fault. Now everything is going to start anew, though. It’s nonsense that life won’t allow what the past won’t allow. I must endeavor to live better, much better.” He raised his head and lapsed into thought. Old Laska, who had still not completely digested the joy of his arrival and who had run out to bark in the yard, returned, wagging her tail and bringing with her the smell of the air, came up to him and thrust her head under his hand, whining plaintively and demanding that he pet her.

“She all but speaks,” said Agafya Mikhailovna. “A dog . . . she does understand, though, that her master’s come and is in low spirits.”

“Why low spirits?”

“You think I don’t see, sir? I should know gentlemen by now. I grew up among gentlemen from a small child. Don’t worry, sir. As long as you have your health and your conscience is clear.”

Levin stared at her, amazed at how she understood his thoughts.

“Shall I bring you some more tea?” she said, and taking the cup, she went out.

Laska was still trying to thrust her head under his hand. He petted her, and she curled up right at his feet, resting her head on one hind paw. To signify that all was well and good now, she opened her mouth a little, smacked her lips, and rearranging her sticky lips around her old teeth, settled into a blissful serenity. Levin attentively followed this last movement of hers.

“Exactly like me!” he told himself. “Exactly like me! It’s all right. All’s well.”

28

After the ball, early in the morning, Anna Arkadyevna sent her husband a telegram informing him of her departure from Moscow that same day.

“No, I must go. I must,” she explained her change of plans to her sister-in-law in such a tone as if she had just remembered more matters to attend than you could count. “No, it’s really better I go today!”

Stepan Arkadyevich was not dining at home, but he promised to come see his sister off at seven o’clock.

Kitty did not come either, sending a note that she had a headache. Dolly and Anna dined alone with the children and the English governess. Whether

it was because children are inconstant or very sensitive and sensed that Anna that day was not quite the same as she had been the other day, when they had been so fond of her, and that she was no longer so interested in them, in any case, they suddenly ended their game with their aunt and their love for her, and they did not care at all that she was leaving. Anna was busy all morning preparing for her departure. She wrote notes to her Moscow acquaintances, recorded her accounts, and packed. All in all it seemed to Dolly that she was not in calm spirits but rather in that spirit of concern which Dolly well knew from herself and which, not without reason, finds, and for the most part conceals, a displeasure with oneself. After dinner Anna went to her room to dress and Dolly followed her.

“How strange you are today!” Dolly said to her.

“I? Do you think so? I’m not strange, but I am bad. Oh, this happens with me. I feel like crying all the time. It’s very foolish, but it will pass,” Anna said quickly, and she leaned her flushed face over the tiny bag in which she was packing her nightcap and her batiste handkerchiefs. Her eyes glittered in an odd way and she was constantly blinking back tears. “How reluctant I was to leave Petersburg, and now I don’t feel like leaving here.”

“You came here and did a good deed,” said Dolly, examining her closely.

Anna looked at her with tear-stained eyes.

“Don’t say that, Dolly. I didn’t do anything, I couldn’t do anything. I often wonder why people conspire to spoil me. What have I done and what could I do? You found enough love in your heart to forgive.”

“Without you, God knows what would have happened! What a lucky woman you are, Anna!” said Dolly. “Everything in your heart is clear and fine.”

“Everyone has their own *skeletons*, as the English say.”⁴⁹

“What kind of *skeletons* could you have? Everything is so clear with you.”

“I have them!” Anna blurted, and surprisingly after her tears, a sly, mocking smile puckered her lips.

“Well, then they’re very funny ones, your *skeletons*, not gloomy at all,” said Dolly, smiling.

“No, they’re gloomy. Do you know why I’m leaving today rather than tomorrow? It’s a confession that has been weighing on me, and I want to make it to you,” said Anna, decisively leaning back in her chair and looking Dolly straight in the eye.

To her amazement, Dolly saw Anna blush to her ears, to the curling black rings of hair on her neck.

“Yes,” Anna continued. “Do you know why Kitty didn’t come for dinner? She is jealous of me. I spoiled . . . I was the reason this ball was an agony for her

rather than a joy. But truly, truly, I'm not to blame, or only a little to blame," she said, her delicate voice stretching out the word "little."

"Oh, how like Stiva you said that!" said Dolly, laughing.

Anna was offended.

"Oh no, oh no! I'm not Stiva," she said, frowning. "I'm telling you this because I won't allow myself a moment of self-doubt," said Anna.

But the moment she spoke those words she felt that they were wrong; not only did she doubt herself, she was disturbed at the thought of Vronsky and was leaving sooner than she had intended only so that she would not see him again.

"Yes, Stiva told me that you and he danced the mazurka and that he—"

"You can't imagine how silly it was. I had only been thinking of match-making, and suddenly everything changed. Perhaps against my will I—"

She blushed and stopped short.

"Oh, they sense that immediately!" said Dolly.

"But I would be in despair if there had been anything serious in this on his part," Anna interrupted her. "And I'm certain that it will all be forgotten and Kitty will stop hating me."

"Nonetheless, Anna, if truth be told, I'm not very happy about this marriage for Kitty. Better that they part if he, Vronsky, could fall in love with you in a single day."

"Oh, heavens, that would be so foolish!" said Anna, and again a deep flush of satisfaction appeared on her face when she heard the thought that occupied her put into words. "So you see, I am leaving, having made an enemy of Kitty, of whom I had become so fond. Oh, how dear she is! But you'll fix this, Dolly? Right?"

Dolly could barely restrain a smile. She was fond of Anna, but she enjoyed seeing that she had her weaknesses.

"An enemy? That cannot be."

"I would so wish for you all to love me as I love you, but now I love you even more," she said with tears in her eyes. "Oh, how foolish I am today!"

She wiped her handkerchief across her face and began dressing.

Immediately before her departure, a delayed Stepan Arkadyevich arrived, his face red and cheerful, and smelling of wine and cigar.

Anna's deep feeling had been communicated to Dolly as well, and when she embraced her sister-in-law for the last time, she whispered:

"Remember, Anna, I'll never forget what you've done for me. And remember that I have always loved you and I always will, as my best friend!"

"I don't see why," said Anna, kissing her and hiding her tears.

"You have always understood me. Farewell, my lovely!"

“Well, that’s all over, and thank God!” was the first thought that occurred to Anna Arkadyevna when she had said good-bye for the last time to her brother, who blocked the way into the car until the third bell. She took her seat next to Annushka and looked around in the half-dark of the sleeping car. “Thank God, tomorrow I shall see Seryozha and Alexei Alexandrovich, and my life, my good and ordinary life, will go back to the way it was.”

Still in the same spirit of anxiety in which she had been all that day, Anna prepared herself with pleasure and care for her journey; with her small deft hands she unlocked and locked her red bag, took out her pillow, placed it on her lap, and neatly wrapping a rug around her legs, calmly got settled. An invalid lady had already tucked herself in to sleep. Two other ladies began a conversation with her, and a fat old woman wrapped her legs up and made a comment about the heating. Anna replied to the ladies in a few words, but not anticipating any interest from the conversation, asked Annushka to get her a lamp, attached it to the arm of her seat, and out of her handbag took a paper knife and an English novel. At first she didn’t feel like reading. The comings and goings disturbed her; then, once the train got moving, she couldn’t help listening to its sounds; then the snow that beat against the window on her left and stuck to the glass, and the sight of the conductor walking by, muffled up and covered in snow on one side, and the conversations about what a terrible snowstorm it was outside, distracted her attention. Everything continued without change; the same shaking and knocking, the same snow out the window, the same quick alternations from steam heat to cold and back again to heat, the same glimpses of the same faces in the half-dark and the same voices, and Anna began reading and understanding what she was reading. Annushka was already dozing, her broad hands, in gloves, one of which was torn, holding the red bag on her knees. Anna Arkadyevna read and understood, but she found it unpleasant to read, that is, to follow the reflection of other people’s lives. She herself wanted too much to live. If she read about the novel’s heroine tending to a patient, she wished she could take silent steps around the patient’s room; if she read about a member of Parliament giving a speech, she longed to be giving that speech; if she read about Lady Mary riding to the hounds and taunting her sister-in-law and amazing everyone with her daring, she longed to do this herself.⁵⁰ But there was nothing she could do, and running her small hands over the smooth little knife, she forced herself to read.

The novel’s hero had nearly achieved his English happiness, a baronetcy and an estate, and Anna was wishing she could ride with him to this estate, when suddenly she felt he should be ashamed and that she was ashamed of this very

thing. But what did he have to be ashamed of? "What have I to be ashamed of?" she asked herself in indignant surprise. She put down the book and leaned back in her seat, firmly grasping the paper knife in both hands. There was nothing to be ashamed of. She sorted through all her Moscow memories. They were all good, pleasant. She recalled the ball, she recalled Vronsky and his submissive, infatuated face, she recalled all her relations with him: there was nothing to be ashamed of. Yet her sense of shame intensified at these memories, as if some inner voice right now, as she was thinking of Vronsky, was telling her: "Warm, very warm, hot." "What is this, then?" she said to herself decisively, shifting in her seat. "What does this mean? Can I truly be afraid to look this straight in the eye? What is it then? Could any other relations exist between me and this boy officer than those one has with everyone one meets?" She grinned disdainfully and again picked up her book but now definitely could not understand what she was reading. She ran the paper knife across the glass, then pressed its smooth cold surface to her cheek and nearly laughed out loud from the joy that came over her for no reason at all. Her nerves felt like strings, stretching tauter and tauter on screw pegs. She felt her eyes opening wider and wider, her fingers and toes twitching nervously, and inside something pressing on her breathing, and all these images and sounds in this shifting half-dark stunned her with their extraordinary vividness. She was constantly beset by moments of doubt as to whether the car was going forward or back or standing still altogether. Was it Annushka beside her or a stranger? "What is this on my arm, a fur or a beast? And is this me here? Am I myself or someone else?" She was terrified of surrendering to this oblivion. But something was drawing her into it, and she could surrender or resist at will. She stood up to clear her head, threw off the lap robe, and detached the pelerine from her warm dress. For a moment her head cleared and she realized that the skinny peasant who had entered and who was wearing a long nankeen coat missing some buttons was the stoker, that he was looking at the thermometer, and that wind and snow had burst in through the door behind him; but later all was confusion. This peasant with the long waist began to gnaw on something in the wall, the old woman began stretching her legs the full length of the compartment, filling it like a black cloud, then something strange started creaking and banging as if someone were being torn to pieces; then a red light blinded her eyes, and then everything was blocked by a wall. Anna felt herself being swallowed up. But she found it not frightening but cheerful. The voice of a well-muffled, snow-covered man was shouting something into her ear. She stood up and her head cleared; she realized they had arrived at the station and that this was the conductor. She asked Annushka to hand her the pelerine she had removed and her shawl, put them on, and headed for the door.

"Will you be going out?" asked Annushka.

“Yes, I feel like a breath of air. It’s very hot here.”

She opened the door. The storm and wind rushed at her and wrestled with her over the door, and she found this cheerful, too. She opened the door and went out. The wind seemed to have only been waiting for her; it gave a joyous whistle and tried to pick her up and whisk her away, but she grabbed onto the cold handrail, and holding her skirts, descended to the platform and walked behind the car. The wind had been strong on the steps, but on the platform, behind the cars, it was calm. With relish, she took a deep breath of the snowy, frosty air, and standing alongside the car, surveyed the platform and the illuminated station.

30

The terrible storm came tearing and whistling from around the corner of the station between the wheels of the cars and from post to post. The cars, posts, and people, everything she could see, were being covered more and more with snow to one side. For a moment the storm would subside, but then again swoop down in such bursts that it seemed impossible to withstand. Meanwhile, some people were running, chatting gaily, creaking across the boards of the platform and constantly opening and closing the big doors. The stooped shadow of a man slipped underfoot, and she heard the sound of a hammer on iron. “Give me the dispatch!” an angry voice broke through the stormy gloom from the other side. “This way, please! No. 28!” other voices shouted, and muffled men covered with snow ran by. Two gentlemen with lit cigarettes in their mouths walked past her. She took one more deep breath, to get her fill of air, and was already taking her hand out of her muff to grab on to the handrail and enter the car when another man in a military overcoat alongside her blocked out the flickering light of the lamp. She looked around and instantly recognized Vronsky’s face. Touching his visor, he bowed to her and asked whether she needed anything, whether he could be of service to her. Making no reply, she stared at him for rather a long time, and despite the shadow in which he was standing, she saw, or thought she saw, the expression of his face and eyes as well. It was once again that expression of respectful admiration that had so affected her the day before. She had told herself more than once these past few days and just now that for her Vronsky was one of the hundreds of young men one meets everywhere, who are always the same, and that she would never allow herself to think of him, but now, at the first instant of her meeting with him, she was gripped by a joyous pride. She did not need to ask why he was there. She knew it as surely as if he had told her that he was here in order to be where she was.

"I didn't know you were traveling. Why are you traveling?" she said, dropping her hand, which had been about to grab the handrail. Irrepressible joy and animation shone on her face.

"Why am I traveling?" he echoed, looking straight into her eyes. "You know I am traveling in order to be where you are," he said. "I cannot do otherwise."

At that very moment, as if having overcome some obstacle, the wind showed snow down from the roof of the car, rattling a loose sheet of metal, and up ahead the engine's thick whistle howled mournfully and gloomily. The full horror of the storm now seemed to her even more wonderful than before. He had said exactly what her soul had wished but her reason had feared. She said nothing in reply, and on her face he saw a struggle.

"Forgive me if you find what I said distasteful," he began humbly.

He spoke so courteously and respectfully, yet so firmly and doggedly, that for a long time she could say nothing in reply.

"This is wrong, what you're saying, and I beg of you, if you are a good man, forget what you've said, as I will forget, too," she said at last.

"I shall never forget a single word of yours, a single movement of yours, nor could I."

"Enough, enough!" she cried, vainly trying to lend a stern expression to her face, which he was looking into so greedily. Taking hold of the cold handrail, she went up the steps and quickly entered the train corridor. She stopped, however, in this corridor, mulling over in her imagination what had just happened. Without recalling either her own words or his, she realized instinctively that this moment's conversation had brought them terribly close; and she was both terrified and happy at this. She stood there a few seconds, walked into their compartment, and took her seat. That magical, intense state that had tormented her at first not only revived but intensified, until it reached the point that she was afraid something pulled too tight would break at any moment. She did not sleep all night. However, there was nothing unpleasant or dark in the tension and dreams that filled her imagination; on the contrary, there was something joyous, glowing, and exhilarating. Toward morning, Anna dozed off sitting up, and when she awoke it was already white and light, and the train was approaching Petersburg. Immediately thoughts of home, her husband, her son, and her concerns for the coming day and those to follow clustered around her.

In Petersburg, no sooner did the train stop and she get out than the first face that caught her eye was her husband's. "Oh, my God, where did he get those ears?" she thought, looking at his cold and imposing figure and especially at the cartilage of his ears, which now amazed her and which propped up the brim of his round hat. Seeing her, he moved toward her, arranging his lips in his usual

amused smile and looking straight at her with his large, weary eyes. An unpleasant feeling pinched her heart when she met his dogged and weary gaze, as if she were expecting to see him different. In particular she was amazed by the displeasure with herself that she experienced upon meeting him. This was a long-standing feeling, a familiar feeling similar to the state of pretense she experienced in her relations with her husband; but she had not noticed this feeling before, and now she was clearly and painfully cognizant of it.

“Yes, as you see, your tender husband, as tender as in his first year of marriage, was burning with desire to see you,” he said in his slow, reedy voice, the same tone he almost always used with her, a tone of bemusement at anyone who would in fact speak that way.

“Is Seryozha well?” she asked.

“And this is all the reward I get,” he said, “for my ardor? He’s well, he’s well.”

31

Vronsky did not even attempt to sleep that night. He sat up, either looking straight ahead or glancing at the people coming in and out, and if before he had amazed and upset people who did not know him with his look of unshakable calm, then now he seemed even prouder and more self-possessed. He looked at people as if they were things. A nervous young man, a clerk in a district court who was sitting across from him, hated him for this look. The young man even kept asking him for a light, and trying to start up a conversation with him, and even pushing him to make him feel he was a person, not an object, but Vronsky kept looking at him as he would a street lamp, and the young man grimaced, sensing he was losing his composure under the pressure of this refusal to recognize him as a man, and because of this he was unable to fall asleep.

Vronsky saw nothing and no one. He felt like a tsar, not because he believed he had made an impression on Anna—he did not yet believe that—but because the impression she had made on him had filled him with happiness and pride.

What would come of all this he did not know and was not even thinking. He felt that all his previously dissipated, scattered powers had been concentrated and aimed with terrible energy at one blissful goal, and this made him happy. He knew only that he had told her the truth, that he was going wherever she was, that all life’s happiness, the sole meaning in life, he now found in seeing and hearing her. When he got out of the car at Bologoye in order to have a glass of seltzer water and caught sight of Anna, involuntarily the first word he said to her was precisely what he had been thinking. He was glad he had told her this, that she now knew and was thinking about this. He did not sleep all night. Back

in his car, he kept running through all the positions in which he had seen her, her every word, and pictures of a possible future raced through his imagination, making his heart stand still.

When in Petersburg he emerged from the car, he felt invigorated and fresh after his sleepless night, as after a cold bath. He stopped by his car, awaiting her exit. "I'll see her once more," he told himself, and could not help but smile, "I'll see her walk, her face; she'll say something, turn her head, look, smile perhaps." But before he saw her, he saw her husband, whom the stationmaster was deferentially escorting through the crowd. "Ah, yes! The husband!" Only now for the first time did Vronsky clearly realize that her husband was someone connected to her. He had known she had a husband, but he had not believed in his existence, and believed in him fully only when he saw him, with his head and shoulders, and legs in black trousers, and especially when he saw this husband calmly take her by the arm with a proprietary air.

Seeing Alexei Alexandrovich with his Petersburg-fresh face and sternly self-assured figure, wearing his round hat, and with his slightly hunched back, Vronsky did believe in him and experienced an unpleasant emotion similar to that which a man would experience who was tormented by thirst and had reached a spring but had found in this spring a dog, sheep, or pig that had drunk and muddied the water. Alexei Alexandrovich's gait, the way he swung his entire pelvis, and his flat feet especially offended Vronsky. He recognized only his own undoubted right to love her. She, however, was just the same, and her look, physically invigorating, stirring his soul, filling it with happiness, acted upon him in just the same way as ever. He told his German valet, who had run to him from second class, to take his things, and he himself approached her. He saw this first meeting between husband and wife and noted with the perspicacity of a man in love the mark of slight constraint with which she spoke to her husband. "No, she does not, cannot love him," he decided to himself.

As he approached Anna Arkadyevna from behind, he was thrilled to note that she sensed his approach and looked around, and when she recognized him she turned back to her husband.

"Did you pass the night well?" he said, bowing to her and her husband together and calling upon Alexei Alexandrovich to take this bow as referring to him and to recognize him or not, as he saw fit.

"Quite well, thank you," she replied.

Her face seemed tired, and it did not have that play of animation that came out in a smile or in her eyes; but for one instant, in her glance at him, something flickered in her eyes, and even though this fire had now gone out, in that instant he was happy. She glanced at her husband to find out whether he knew Vronsky.

Alexei Alexandrovich looked at Vronsky with displeasure, faintly recalling who this was. Vronsky's calm and self-assurance here had met their match in the cold self-assurance of Alexei Alexandrovich.

"Count Vronsky," said Anna.

"Ah! We are acquainted, I believe," said Alexei Alexandrovich casually, extending his hand. "You rode there with the mother and back with the son," he said, enunciating clearly, doling out each word like a ruble. "You are doubtless back from leave?" he said, and without waiting for an answer turned to his wife in his joking tone. "So, were very many tears shed in Moscow at your parting?"

By addressing his wife, he was letting Vronsky sense that he wished to be alone, and turning back toward him, he touched his hat; but Vronsky addressed Anna Arkadyevna:

"I hope to have the honor of calling on you," he said.

Alexei Alexandrovich looked at Vronsky with weary eyes.

"I would be delighted," he said coldly. "We are at home on Mondays." Then, dropping Vronsky altogether, he said to his wife, "And how good it is that I had just half an hour to meet you and could demonstrate to you my fondness," he continued in the same joking tone.

"You put too much emphasis on your fondness for me to value it highly," she said in the same joking tone, involuntarily listening to the sounds of Vronsky's steps, who was walking behind them. "But what does this matter to me?" she thought, and she began asking her husband how Seryozha had spent the time without her.

"Oh, marvelously! Mariette says that he was very sweet and . . . I must disappoint you . . . he did not miss you, not as much as your husband did. But once again, *merci*, my friend, for giving me a day. Our dear Samovar will be delighted. ('Samovar' was what he called the celebrated Countess Lydia Ivanovna, because she was always bubbly and excited about everything.) She has been asking about you. And you know, if I dare advise, you should go see her today. You know she takes everything to heart. Now, in addition to all her other cares, she is anxious about the Oblonsky's reconciliation."

Countess Lydia Ivanovna was a friend of her husband's and the center of a certain circle of Petersburg society with which Anna was very closely connected through her husband.

"But you know I wrote her."

"But she needs to hear all the details. Pay her a visit, if you're not too tired, my friend. Well, Kondraty is bringing your carriage around, and I'm on my way to my committee. Once again, I will not be dining alone," Alexei Alexandrovich continued, no longer in his joking tone. "You cannot imagine how I've grown

used to . . .” Pressing her hand for a long time, he seated her in the carriage with a special smile.

32

The first person to greet Anna at home was her son. He leaped down the stairs to her, despite the cry of his governess, and shouted with desperate joy, “Mama, Mama!” He ran to her and hung on her neck.

“I told you it was Mama!” he shouted to the governess. “I knew it!”

And her son, just like her husband, produced in Anna a feeling resembling disappointment. She had imagined him better than he was in reality. She had to descend to reality in order to take pleasure in him the way he was. And the way he was, was splendid with his blond curls, blue eyes, and plump, graceful little legs in their tight-fitting stockings. Anna experienced an almost physical pleasure at his proximity and caress and a moral serenity when she met his simple-hearted, trusting, and loving glance and heard his naïve questions. Anna took out the gifts Dolly’s children had sent and told her son about how there was a little girl Tanya in Moscow and how this Tanya knew how to read and even taught the other children.

“You mean she’s nicer than me?” asked Seryozha.

“I think you’re the nicest in the world.”

“I know that,” said Seryozha, smiling.

Anna had not yet finished her coffee when Countess Lydia Ivanovna was announced. Countess Lydia Ivanovna was a tall, stout woman with an unhealthily sallow face and marvelous pensive black eyes. Anna was fond of her, but right now she seemed to be seeing all her shortcomings for the first time.

“Well then, my friend, did you bring them the olive branch?” asked Countess Lydia Ivanovna as soon as she walked into the room.

“Yes, all that’s over, but it never was as serious as we’d thought,” replied Anna. “Generally speaking, my *belle-soeur* is too resolute.”

But Countess Lydia Ivanovna, who took an interest in everything that had nothing to do with her, had the habit of never listening to what did interest her; she interrupted Anna.

“Yes, there is a great deal of grief and evil in the world, and I am so weary today.”

“What is it?” asked Anna, trying to suppress a smile.

“I’m beginning to tire of this breaking lances and sometimes I am completely undone. The matter of the Little Sisters (this was a religious, patriotic, philanthropic institution) would have gone beautifully, but one can do nothing

with these gentlemen," added Countess Lydia Ivanovna with mocking submission to fate. "They have taken hold of the idea, distorted it, and are now discussing it quite pettily and inconsequentially. Two or three people, your husband included, do understand the full significance of this matter, but the others are only discrediting it. Yesterday, Pravdin wrote me."

Pravdin was a well-known Pan-Slavist abroad, and Countess Lydia Ivanovna recounted the contents of his letter.

Then the countess recounted other vexations and intrigues against the cause of unifying the churches and left in haste, since that day she also had to be at a meeting of one society and at the Slavic Committee.⁵¹

"There was all this before, after all, but why didn't I notice it before?" Anna told herself. "Or am I just very irritated today? But in fact, it is funny: her goal is virtue and she is a Christian, but she is constantly furious, she always has enemies, and they're all enemies in the name of Christianity and virtue."

After Countess Lydia Ivanovna, a friend stopped by, a chief secretary's wife, and told her all the news of the city. At three o'clock she too left, promising to return for dinner. Alexei Alexandrovich was at the ministry. Left alone, Anna used the time before dinner to be present at her son's dinner (he dined separately), to put her things in order, and to read and respond to the notes and letters that had piled up on her desk.

The sense of unwarranted shame that she had felt on her journey, as well as her agitation, had vanished completely. In the familiar circumstances of her life, she once again felt firm and irrefragable.

She recalled her state yesterday with amazement. "What was that? Nothing. Vronsky said something foolish to which I can easily put a stop, and I responded just as I should have. I neither need to nor can tell my husband about this. Telling him about this would mean ascribing to it an importance it does not have." She recalled how she had related what amounted to a declaration made to her in Petersburg by a young subordinate of her husband and how Alexei Alexandrovich had replied that, living in the world, any woman may be subjected to this, but that he had complete confidence in her tact and would never allow himself to demean her and himself to the point of jealousy. "Does this mean there's no point in telling him? Yes, thank God, there is nothing to tell," she told herself.

33

Alexei Alexandrovich returned from the ministry at four o'clock; however, as often happened, he did not have time to go in to see her. He proceeded to his study to receive waiting petitioners and to sign several papers that had been

brought over by his chief secretary. Coming for dinner (a few people always joined the Karenins for dinner) was Alexei Alexandrovich's old cousin, the chief secretary of his department and his wife, and one young man who had been recommended to Alexei Alexandrovich for the ministry. Anna went out to the drawing room to receive them. At precisely five o'clock, before the bronze Peter I clock had struck five times, Alexei Alexandrovich came out wearing a white tie and an evening coat with two stars, as he had to leave immediately after dinner. Each minute of Alexei Alexandrovich's life was taken and accounted for. In order to accomplish all that each day brought him, he held himself to the strictest precision. "Without haste and without rest" was his motto.⁵² He entered the dining room wiping his brow, bowed to everyone, and quickly sat down, smiling at his wife.

"Yes, my solitude is over. You cannot believe how awkward it is" — he stressed the word "awkward" — "to dine alone."

At dinner he spoke with his wife about Moscow matters and with an amused smile inquired about Stepan Arkadyevich; however, the conversation was general for the most part, about official and public Petersburg affairs. After dinner he spent half an hour with his guests, and again, with a smile, pressed his wife's hand, went out, and left for the council. This time Anna did not go to see Princess Betsy Tverskaya, who, upon learning of her arrival, had invited her that evening, nor did she go to the theater, where she now had a box. She did not go primarily because the dress she had been counting on was not ready. On the whole, turning to her wardrobe after her guests' departure, Anna was quite vexed. Before leaving for Moscow, she, who was generally a master at dressing well but not too expensively, had given her seamstress three dresses to alter. The dresses had to be altered in such a way that they could not be recognized, and they were supposed to have been ready three days before. Two dresses were not ready at all, and one had been altered but not in the way Anna had wanted. The dressmaker herself came to explain, asserting that this way would be better, and Anna had gone into such a towering rage that afterward she felt ashamed recalling it. In order to calm herself completely, she went to the nursery and spent the entire evening with her son, put him to bed herself, made the sign of the cross over him, and tucked him in. She was glad she had not gone anywhere and had spent this evening so well. She felt so easy and calm, she saw so clearly that everything that had seemed so significant to her on her rail journey was merely one of those common, insignificant instances in society life and that she had nothing to be ashamed of before anyone else or herself. Anna sat down by the fire with her English novel and waited for her husband. At precisely half past nine, she heard his ring and he came into the room.

“You’re here at last!” she said, holding her hand out to him.

He kissed her hand and sat beside her.

“I see that your trip was a success on the whole,” he said to her.

“Yes, quite,” she replied, and she began telling him all about it from the beginning: her journey with Madame Vronskaya, her arrival, the accident on the rails. Then she recounted her impression of compassion, first for her brother, then for Dolly.

“I do not suppose one can excuse such a man, even if he is your brother,” said Alexei Alexandrovich sternly.

Anna smiled. She realized he had said that precisely in order to show that family considerations could not prevent him from stating his sincere opinion. She knew and liked this trait in her husband.

“I am glad that it all turned out for the best and that you have come home,” he continued. “Well, and what are they saying there about the new statute I got approved by the board?”

Anna had heard nothing about this statute, and she felt guilty that she could have forgotten so easily about something so important to him.

“Here, on the contrary, it made quite a sensation,” he said with a self-satisfied smile.

She could see that Alexei Alexandrovich wanted to tell her something he found pleasant, about this matter, and she led him by her questions to his story. With the same self-satisfied smile he told her about the ovations there had been for him as a result of this successful provision.

“I was very, very glad. This proves that we are finally beginning to establish a sensible and firm view of this matter.”

Finishing his second cup of tea with cream and his bread, Alexei Alexandrovich rose and started for his study.

“But you did not go anywhere. You must have been bored, am I right?” he said.

“Oh no!” she replied, standing up after him and seeing him through the dining room to his study. “What are you reading now?” she asked.

“I’m now reading the Duc de Lille, *Poésie des enfers*,” he replied.⁵⁵ “Quite a remarkable book.”

Anna smiled as people smile at their loved ones’ weaknesses, and putting her arm in his, saw him to the door of his study. She knew his habit, which had become a necessity, of reading in the evening. She knew that despite the official duties that swallowed up nearly all his time, he considered it his duty to keep up with everything noteworthy that appeared in the intellectual sphere. She knew also that he was truly interested in political, philosophical, and theologi-

cal books, that art was utterly alien to his nature, but that despite this, or rather because of this, Alexei Alexandrovich never missed anything that made a sensation in this sphere and considered it his duty to read everything. She knew that in politics, philosophy, and theology, Alexei Alexandrovich had his doubts and questions, but in matters of art and poetry, and especially music, of which he had absolutely no understanding, he had the most definite and firm opinions. He liked to talk about Shakespeare, Raphael, and Beethoven and about the meaning of the new schools of poetry and music, all of which he had categorized with a very clear logic.

“God bless you,” she said at the door of his study, where his candle lamp had been made ready for him and there was a carafe of water by his chair. “I shall write to Moscow.”

He pressed her hand and kissed it again.

“He really is a fine man, truthful, good, and remarkable in his own sphere,” Anna told herself when she had returned to her room, as if defending him to someone who had accused him and said that he could not be loved. “But why do his ears stick out so oddly? Or did he have his hair cut?”

At exactly twelve, when Anna was still sitting at her desk finishing her letter to Dolly, she heard even steps in slippers, and Alexei Alexandrovich, washed and combed, with a book under his arm, came in to see her.

“It’s time, it’s time,” he said, smiling in a special way, and he went into the bedroom.

“What right did he have to look at him in that way?” thought Anna, recalling Vronsky’s glance at Alexei Alexandrovich.

She undressed and went into the bedroom, but on her face not only was there none of that animation that had splashed so from her eyes and smile in Moscow; on the contrary, the fire now seemed extinguished in her, or hidden somewhere far away.

34

Departing Petersburg, Vronsky had left his large apartment on Morskaya to his friend and favorite comrade Petritsky.

Petritsky was a young lieutenant, not especially aristocratic, and not only not wealthy but swamped with debts; by evening he was always drunk and often landed in the guardhouse over diverse and ridiculous scandals, but he was loved by his comrades and superiors alike. Driving up to his apartment from the train after eleven, Vronsky saw a familiar carriage at his front door. Inside, at his ring, he heard a man’s laugh and the French babble of a woman’s voice and Petrit-

sky's shout: "If it's one of those scoundrels, don't let him in!" Vronsky would not allow the orderly to announce him, and he stole into the first room. Baroness Shilton, Petritsky's lady friend, shimmering in a lilac satin dress and her peaches-and-cream complexion, and like a canary filling the room with her Parisian chatter, was sitting at a round table brewing coffee. Petritsky in his coat and Captain Kamerovsky in full uniform, probably straight from duty, were sitting on either side of her.

"Bravo! Vronsky!" cried Petritsky, jumping up and scraping his chair. "The master himself! Baroness, coffee for him from the new coffee pot. We weren't expecting you! I hope you're satisfied with the adornment of your study," he said, indicating the baroness. "You have been introduced, am I right?"

"I should say so!" said Vronsky, smiling merrily and shaking the baroness's small hand. "Of course! An old friend."

"You're home from a journey," said the baroness, "so I shall be on my way. Oh, I'll leave this minute if I'm in the way."

"You are at home right where you are, baroness," said Vronsky. "How do you do, Kamerovsky," he added, coldly shaking Kamerovsky's hand.

"See, you never know how to say such pretty things," the baroness turned to Petritsky.

"Why not? After dinner I'll tell you something at least as good."

"But there's no merit in it after dinner! Come, I'll give you your coffee, you go get washed and off with you," said the baroness, sitting back down and carefully turning the screw on the new coffee pot. "Pierre, give me the coffee," she turned to Petritsky, whom she called Pierre, from his surname, Petritsky, making no effort to conceal her relationship with him. "I shall add some."

"You'll spoil it."

"No, I won't! Well, and your wife?" the baroness said suddenly, interrupting the conversation between Vronsky and his comrade. "We married you off here. Did you bring your wife?"

"No, baroness. I was born a Gypsy and a Gypsy I shall die."

"All the better, all the better. Give me your hand."

And the baroness, refusing to let Vronsky go, began telling him, interspersed with jokes, her latest plans for her life and asking his advice.

"He still doesn't want to give me a divorce! So what am I to do?" "He" was her husband. "I want to begin proceedings now. What would you advise me? Kamerovsky, keep an eye on the coffee—it's boiling away. You see, I'm very busy! I want a lawsuit because I need my fortune. Do you understand this foolishness, that because I have been unfaithful to him," she said with contempt, "he wishes to profit from my estate."

Vronsky listened with pleasure to the cheerful babble of this pretty woman, he kept telling her yes and giving her half-joking advice, and in general immediately adopted his usual tone in addressing this type of woman. In his Petersburg world, all people were divided into two directly opposite sorts. The first, baser sort consisted of vulgar, stupid, and, above all, ridiculous people who believed that one man was supposed to live with the one wife he had married, that a young woman was supposed to be innocent, a woman modest and a man courageous, restrained, and firm, that children were to be raised, money earned, and debts paid—and various similar idiotic notions. This was the old-fashioned and ridiculous sort. There was another sort of people, though, the real sort to whom they all belonged, in which one was supposed to be, above all, elegant, handsome, generous, bold, and cheerful, to surrender to any passion without blushing, and to laugh at all the rest.

Vronsky had been overwhelmed only in the first minute from the impressions of a completely different world that he had brought back from Moscow, but the instant he slipped his feet into his old slippers, he entered his former cheerful and pleasant world.

The coffee never was brewed, it simply splashed all over everyone and boiled away and produced precisely what was needed, that is, a pretext for noise and laughter, and spilling on an expensive carpet and the baroness's dress.

“Well, good-bye now, or else you will never wash, and the worst crime of a decent man will be on my conscience—slovenliness. So do you advise a knife to his throat?”

“Without fail, and make sure the handle is closer to his lips. He shall kiss your hand and all will end well,” replied Vronsky.

“Today at the Français, then!”⁵⁴ And with a rustle of her dress, she vanished.

Kamerovsky rose as well, and Vronsky, not waiting for him to leave, shook his hand and went to his dressing room. While Vronsky was washing, Petritsky described to him in brief his situation, so much had it changed since Vronsky's departure. His money was gone, all of it. His father had said he would not give him any or pay his debts. The tailor wanted to put him in jail, and someone else was also threatening to have him jailed for certain. The colonel of his regiment had announced that if these scandals did not cease, he would be forced to resign. He was sick and tired of the baroness, especially the fact that she kept wanting to give him money, but there was one girl, he'd show her to Vronsky, a wonder, a charm, in the strict Oriental style, “the genre of the slave girl Rebecca, you see.”⁵⁵ He had quarreled with Berkoshev yesterday, and he wanted to send seconds, but nothing would come of it, naturally. All in all, everything was splendid and extremely cheerful. Without letting his comrade go into the details of

his situation, Petritsky plunged into telling him all the news he found interesting. Listening to these all too familiar stories of Petritsky's in the all too familiar surroundings of his apartment of three years, Vronsky experienced the pleasant sensation of returning to his usual carefree Petersburg life.

"That can't be!" he exclaimed, stepping on the pedal of the washstand where he had been washing his ruddy neck. "That can't be!" he exclaimed at the news that Laura had made up with Mileyev and thrown over Fertingof. "Is he still just as stupid and smug? Well, and what about Buzulukov?"

"Ah, there was a whole story with Buzulukov—splendid!" exclaimed Petritsky. "You know his passion is balls, and he never misses a single ball at court. He was on his way to a great ball wearing his new helmet. Have you seen the new helmets? Very fine, lighter. Only he's standing there . . . No, you have to listen to this."

"I am listening," Vronsky replied, drying himself with a Turkish towel.

"A grand duchess is passing with some ambassador, and to his misfortune their conversation had turned to the new helmets. The grand duchess wanted to show him the new helmet. . . . They saw our dear boy standing there. (Petritsky showed him standing there with his helmet.) The grand duchess asked him to give her his helmet—but he wouldn't. What's this? Everyone was winking, nodding, and frowning at him. Hand it over. He wouldn't. He was absolutely silent. You can imagine. . . . Only this one . . . he wanted to take his helmet away from him . . . he wouldn't give it to them! The other snatched it away and handed it to the grand duchess. "Here is the new helmet," said the grand duchess. She turns the helmet over, and you can imagine what came out. Crash! Pears, candies, two pounds of candies! He'd been collecting them, the dear boy!"

Vronsky shook with laughter. For a long time afterward, while talking of other things, he would shake with hearty laughter, showing his strong, close-set teeth, when he recalled the helmet.

When he had learned all the news, Vronsky, with his valet's help, put on his uniform and went to report. After reporting, he intended to stop by to see his brother and Betsy and to make several calls in order to begin traveling in that society where he might encounter Madame Karenina. As always in Petersburg, he left home with no thought of returning until late that night.

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II

1

Late that winter there was a consultation at the Shcherbatsky house to determine the state of Kitty's health and what should be undertaken to restore her failing strength. She had been ill, and with the approach of spring her health had taken a turn for the worse. The family doctor had given her cod liver oil, then iron, then nitrate of silver; however, neither the one, nor the other, nor the third had helped, and since he had advised them to go abroad to avoid the spring, a renowned doctor had been called in to attend. The renowned doctor, a comparatively young man and quite handsome, asked that he be allowed to examine the patient. He seemed to take special satisfaction in insisting that her maidenly modesty was only a remnant of barbarism and that there was nothing more natural than a comparatively young man touching a young naked girl. He found this natural because he did it every day and felt nothing when he did so and did not think, or so it seemed to him, anything bad, and therefore he considered modesty in a young girl not only a remnant of barbarism but also an insult to himself.

They had to submit since, in spite of the fact that all doctors were trained at the same school and from the very same books and knew the same science, and in spite of the fact that some people said that this renowned doctor was a bad doctor, in the princess's house and in her set it was generally felt for some reason that this renowned doctor alone had special knowledge and alone could save Kitty. After a careful examination and prodding of the embarrassed and distraught patient, the renowned doctor, having vigorously washed his hands, stood in the drawing room and spoke with the prince. The prince frowned, and coughing, listened to the doctor. As a man who knew something of life and who was neither stupid nor ill, he did not believe in medicine and inwardly raged at the whole farce, especially as he alone perhaps had fully understood the reason for Kitty's illness. "Isn't he the windbag," he thought, listening to his dithering about his daughter's symptoms. Meanwhile, the doctor was having difficulty restraining an expression of contempt for this laughable old gentleman and difficulty lowering himself to his level of understanding. He realized there was no

point talking with the old man and that the mother was the head in this house. He intended to scatter his pearls before her. At that moment the princess walked into the drawing room accompanied by the family doctor. The prince left, trying not to let on how ludicrous he found this whole farce. The princess was upset and did not know what to do. She felt guilty about Kitty.

“Well, doctor, decide our fate,” said the princess. “Tell me everything.” “Is there hope?” is what she wanted to say, but her lips began to tremble, and she could not utter the question. “Well then, doctor?”

“One moment, Princess, I shall talk it over with my colleague and then I shall have the honor of delivering to you my opinion.”

“Shall we leave you alone then?”

“If you would be so kind.”

The princess sighed and went out.

When the doctors were left alone, the family doctor timidly began setting forth his opinion, which consisted in the fact that they had here the beginnings of the tubercular process, however . . . and so on. The renowned doctor listened to him and in the middle of his speech looked at his large gold watch.

“Yes,” he said. “But . . .”

The family doctor stopped short respectfully in the middle of his speech.

“As you know, determining the onset of the tubercular process is something we cannot do; until the appearance of cavities, there is nothing definite. We may, however, have our suspicions. And there is indication: poor nourishment, nervous excitement, and so forth. The question stands as follows: given suspicion of the tubercular process, what should be done in order to encourage nutrition?”

“You do know, though, that there are always moral and spiritual causes hidden here,” the family doctor took the liberty of interjecting with a thin smile.

“Yes, that goes without saying,” replied the renowned doctor, glancing again at his watch. “I’m so sorry, but tell me, has the Yauza Bridge been finished, or must one still go around?” he asked. “Ah, it’s finished! Yes, well then I can be there in twenty minutes. So we have said that the matter stands as follows: encourage nutrition and rectify the nerves. One in connection with the other, one must act on both sides of the circle.”

“And the trip abroad?” asked the family doctor.

“I am an enemy of trips abroad. Please note: if this is the onset of the tubercular process, something we cannot know, then a trip abroad will not help. What is essential is a means to encourage rather than discourage nutrition.”

And the renowned doctor laid out his plan of treatment with Soden waters, the principal purpose of which, evidently, consisted in the fact that they could do no harm.

The family doctor listened attentively and respectfully.

"In favor of the trip abroad, though, I would put forth the change of habit, and the distance from conditions that give rise to recollections. And then the mother would like it," he said.

"Ah! Well, in that case, why not, let them go, only those German charlatans will do her harm. . . . They must obey . . . Well, then, let them go."

He glanced again at his watch.

"Oh! It's time," and he started for the door.

The renowned doctor announced to the prince (prompted by his sense of decency) that he needed to see the patient once more.

"What! Examine her once more!" the mother exclaimed with horror.

"Oh no, I need a few details, Princess."

"If you please."

And the mother, accompanied by the doctor, went into the drawing room to see Kitty. Thin and flushed, with a peculiar glitter in her eyes as a result of the shame she had endured, Kitty was standing in the middle of the room. When the doctor walked in, she flushed, and her eyes filled with tears. Her entire illness and treatment seemed to her such a stupid, even ridiculous thing! Her treatment seemed to her just as ridiculous as putting the pieces of a broken vase back together. Her heart was broken. Why did they want to treat her with pills and powders? She could not offend her mother, though, especially since her mother considered herself to blame.

"If you would be so kind as to sit down, Princess," said the renowned doctor.

He sat down opposite her with a smile, took her pulse, and again began asking tedious questions. She answered him and then suddenly got angry and stood up.

"Excuse me, doctor, but this truly will lead nowhere. You have asked me the same thing three times."

The renowned doctor was not offended.

"Nervous irritability," he told the princess when Kitty went out. "Actually, I have finished."

And the doctor scientifically determined the princess's condition for the old princess, as he would for an exceptionally clever woman, and concluded with his instruction about the waters she did not need. To the question of whether they should go abroad, the doctor pondered for a moment, as if deciding a difficult question. His decision, at last, was issued: go but do not trust the charlatans and turn to him in everything.

It was as if something cheerful happened after the doctor's departure. The mother cheered up when she returned to her daughter, and Kitty pretended to cheer up. Often now, almost always, she had to pretend.

"It's true, *Maman*, I'm well. But if you want to go, let's go!" she said, and in an attempt to demonstrate that she was interested in the upcoming trip, she began to discuss the preparations for their departure.

2

Immediately following the doctor, Dolly arrived. She knew there was supposed to be a consultation that day, and although she had only recently risen from her bed since the delivery (she had given birth to a little girl in the late winter), although she had many sorrows and cares of her own, she left her nursing infant and an ill daughter and went to learn of Kitty's fate, which had today been decided.

"Well, what is it?" she said as she entered the drawing room without removing her hat. "You're all cheerful. Is it true, is it good?"

They tried to tell her what the doctor had said, but it turned out that although the doctor had spoken very coherently and at length, they simply could not convey what he had said. The only interesting thing was that it had been decided to go abroad.

Dolly could not help but sigh. Her best friend, her sister, was leaving. And her life was not cheerful. Since the reconciliation, her relations with Stepan Arkadyevich had become humiliating. Anna's wedding had proven unstable, and the family accord had broken again in the same place. Nothing definite had happened, but Stepan Arkadyevich was hardly ever home, there was also hardly ever any money, either, and suspicions of infidelity were a constant torment to Dolly, and she was already trying to drive them away, afraid of the familiar pangs of jealousy. The first outburst of jealousy, once experienced, could no longer return, and even the discovery of infidelity could no longer have the same effect on her as the first time. Such a discovery now would only deprive her of her familial habits, so she allowed herself to be deceived, despising him and herself most of all for this weakness. On top of this, the concerns of a large family were a constant worry: first she had not been able to nurse the baby, then the nurse left, and then, as now, one of the children had fallen ill.

"So, how are yours?" her mother asked.

"Ah, *Maman*, we have sorrow enough of our own. Lily has fallen ill, and I'm afraid it's scarlet fever. I've come now to learn the news because I may be stuck at home if, God forbid, it is scarlet fever."

After the doctor's departure, the old prince had also come out of his study, and after presenting his cheek to Dolly and saying a few words to her, he turned to his wife:

“So, have you decided? Are you going? Well, and what do you want to do with me?”

“I think you should stay here, Alexander,” said his wife.

“As you like.”

“*Maman*, why doesn’t Papa come with us?” said Kitty. “It would be more cheerful for him and for us.”

The old prince stood up and stroked Kitty’s hair. She raised her face and, forcing a smile, looked at him. It always seemed to her that he, better than anyone else in the family, understood her, although he did not say much to her. As the youngest, she was her father’s pet, and it seemed to her that his love for her gave him insight. Now, when her glance met his kind blue eyes, which were looking at her so intently from his wrinkled face, he seemed to look right through her and understand everything bad that was going on inside her. Blushing, she stretched toward him, expecting a kiss, but he only patted her hair and said:

“These idiotic chignons! You can’t get to your real daughter, you’re petting the hair of dead peasants. Well then, Dolly dear,” he turned to his older daughter, “what is your swell up to?”

“Nothing, Papa,” replied Dolly, understanding that he meant her husband. “He’s always away, I almost never see him,” she could not help but add with a mocking smile.

“What, he hasn’t gone to the country again to sell that wood, has he?”

“No, he’s still making plans.”

“Indeed!” said the prince. “Should I be making plans, too? Yes,” he addressed his wife, sitting down. “But here’s what I have to say to you, Katya,” he added to his youngest daughter. “One day, one fine day, you will wake up and tell yourself: Yes, I am quite well and cheerful, and Papa and I shall once again go out early in the morning to walk through the frost. Eh?”

What her father said seemed so simple, but at these words, Kitty became confused and distraught, like a criminal caught red-handed. “Yes, he knows everything, he understands everything, and with these words he’s telling me that although it is shameful, one must get over one’s shame.” She could not summon the spirit to make any reply. She was about to begin when she suddenly burst into tears and ran from the room.

“You and your jokes!” the princess came down hard on her husband. “You’re always . . .” and she launched a string of reproaches.

The prince listened for quite some time to the princess’s reproaches without saying anything, but he frowned more and more.

“She’s so pathetic, the poor thing, so pathetic, and you aren’t sensitive to how painful she finds any hint at the reason for this. Ah! To be so wrong about

people!" said the princess, and from the change in her tone Dolly and the prince realized that she was speaking about Vronsky. "I don't understand how there can be no laws against such vile, ignoble men."

"Oh, I can't listen to this!" the prince said gloomily, getting up from his armchair as if wishing to go but stopping in the doorway. "There are laws, Mother, and if you have provoked me to this, I will tell you that this is all your fault, yours and yours alone. There have always been laws against blackguards like this! Yes, if there hadn't been what there never should have been—well, I'm an old man, but I would have shown him the door, that dandy. Yes, and now you're seeking a cure, bringing around these charlatans."

The prince apparently had a great deal more to say, but as soon as the princess heard his tone, as always in serious matters, she immediately acquiesced and repented.

"*Alexandre, Alexandre,*" she whispered, moving toward him, and she began to weep.

As soon as she began to weep, the prince, too, grew quiet. He went over to her.

"There, there! It's been hard for you, too, I know. What can we do? It's not such a great calamity. God is merciful . . . be grateful . . ." he said, not knowing himself what he was saying, and responding to the princess's wet kiss, which he felt on his hand. And he left the room.

As soon as Kitty had left the room in tears, Dolly, with her maternal, familial habit, immediately discerned that this was a woman's job, and she prepared to do it. She removed her hat, and morally rolling up her sleeves, prepared to act. During her mother's attack on her father she had attempted to restrain her mother, insofar as her daughterly deference would permit her to do so. During the prince's outburst she was silent; she felt ashamed for her mother and tender toward her father for his goodness, which returned immediately; but when her father left, she got ready to do what most needed doing—to go to Kitty and console her.

"I've been wanting to tell you for a long time, *Maman*: did you know that Levin meant to propose to Kitty when he was here the last time? He spoke to Stiva."

"And so? I don't see . . ."

"So could it be that Kitty refused him? She didn't say anything to you?"

"No, she said nothing about one or the other; she is much too proud. But I do know that it is all because of this . . ."

"Yes, you imagine that if she had not refused Levin—and she would not have refused him if it hadn't been for that one, I know. . . . And that one led her on so horribly."

It was too terrible for the princess to think of how guilty she was before her daughter, so she became furious.

“Oh, I don’t understand anything anymore! These days people insist on living by their own wits, they don’t tell their mothers anything, and then you have . . .”

“*Maman*, I’m going to her.”

“Go then. Am I stopping you?” said her mother.

3

Entering Kitty’s sitting room, a pretty little pink room with *vieux saxe* bric-a-brac, a room as fresh, pink, and cheerful as Kitty herself had been just two months before, Dolly recalled how together they had decorated this room the year before, with what gaiety and love.¹ Her heart went cold when she saw Kitty sitting on the low chair closest to the door, her lifeless eyes fixed on a corner of the carpet. Kitty glanced at her sister, and the cold, rather stern expression of her face did not change.

“I’m leaving now to confine myself at home and you won’t be able to visit me,” said Darya Alexandrovna, sitting beside her. “I’d like to talk with you.”

“What about?” Kitty asked quickly, raising her head in fright.

“What, if not your grief?”

“I have no grief.”

“Enough, Kitty. Do you really think I could fail to know? I know everything. And believe me, this is so insignificant . . . We’ve all been through this.”

Kitty said nothing, and her face had a stern expression.

“He’s not worth you suffering over him,” Darya Alexandrovna continued, getting right down to business.

“Yes, because he spurned me,” Kitty said in a trembling voice. “Don’t speak! Please, don’t speak!”

“And who told you that? No one said that. I’m certain he was in love with you and still is in love with you, but . . .”

“Oh, the worst for me are these consolations!” cried Kitty, suddenly furious. She turned in her chair, her face flushed, and she began fidgeting with her fingers, squeezing the buckle of her belt, which she was holding, with one and then the other hand. Dolly knew this habit of her sister’s of clasping and unclasping her hands when her impulsiveness was taking over; she knew that in a heated moment Kitty was capable of forgetting herself and saying many excessive and unpleasant things, and Dolly wanted to calm her down; but it was too late.

“What, what would you have me feel, what?” said Kitty quickly. “That I was in love with a man who wanted to have nothing to do with me and that I’m

ding of love for him? And this is my sister telling me this, my sister, who thinks that . . . that . . . that she is being sympathetic! . . . I want nothing of these consolations and pretenses!"

"Kitty, you're being unfair."

"Why are you torturing me?"

"Why I, on the contrary . . . I can see you're in pain . . ."

But in her fever Kitty did not hear her.

"I have nothing to grieve or be consoled over. I have enough pride that I would never allow myself to love someone who did not love me."

"Why, I'm not saying . . . One thing—tell me the truth," Darya Alexandrovna said, taking her hand. "Tell me, did Levin speak to you?"

The mention of Levin apparently drained Kitty's last scrap of self-control. She jumped up from her chair, and throwing the buckle to the ground and making quick gestures with her hands, began to speak:

"What does Levin have to do with this? I don't understand why you need to torture me. I said and I repeat that I have my pride and I would never, *never* do what you're doing—go back to the man who deceived you, who loved another woman. I don't understand, I don't understand this! You may, but I can't!"

And saying these words, she glanced at her sister, and seeing that Dolly was silent, her head bowed mournfully, Kitty, instead of walking out of the room as she had intended, sat down by the door and hiding her face in her handkerchief, bowed her head.

The silence lasted a couple of minutes. Dolly was thinking about herself. Her humiliation, which was always with her, told especially painfully in her when her sister mentioned it. She had not anticipated such cruelty from her sister, and she was angry with her. Suddenly, however, she heard a dress and instead of the sound of sobs that had been held back too long, someone's hands embracing her around the neck from below. Kitty was kneeling in front of her.

"Dolly dear, I am so very unhappy!" she whispered guiltily.

And her dear, tear-stained face hid in Darya Alexandrovna's skirts.

As if tears were the essential lubricant without which the machinery of communication between the two sisters would not run properly, the sisters after the tears began talking in earnest not about what was on their minds but, even while talking about extraneous matters, they understood one another. Kitty understood that the words she had spoken in a fit of temper about a husband's infidelity and about humiliation had stricken her poor sister to the bottom of her heart but that she forgave her. Dolly, for her part, understood everything she had wanted to know; she was convinced that her guesses had been correct, that the grief, Kitty's inconsolable grief, consisted precisely in the fact that Levin had proposed to her and she had refused him, while Vronsky had led her on, and that

she was prepared to love Levin and despise Vronsky. Kitty had not said a word of this; she had spoken only of her emotional state.

"I have no grief of any kind," she said when she had calmed down, "but can you understand how vile, repulsive, and crude everything has become to me, and myself above all. You can't imagine what vile thoughts I have had about everything."

"And what kinds of vile thoughts could you have?" asked Dolly, smiling.

"The very most vile and crude ones; I can't even tell you. It's not melancholy or tedium but much worse. It's as though everything that was good in me, all of it has been hidden away, and only the very vilest remains. Oh, how can I tell you?" she continued, seeing the perplexity in her sister's eyes. "Papa was talking to me just now. . . . It seems to me he thinks I only need to marry. Mama takes me to a ball, and it seems to me she's only taking me to marry me off as soon as possible and be rid of me. I know that's not true, but I can't drive these thoughts away. I can't bear to see any so-called suitors. It seems to me they're taking my measure. Before, going anywhere in a ball gown was pure pleasure for me, I would admire myself; now I feel ashamed and awkward. And as if that weren't enough! The doctor . . . Well . . ."

Kitty hesitated; she was about to say that ever since this change had come over her, Stepan Arkadyevich had become unbearably unpleasant to her and that she could not see him without the crudest and ugliest pictures filling her head.

"Oh yes, everything appears to me in its crudest and vilest form," she went on. "This is my disease. Perhaps it will pass . . ."

"But you mustn't think . . ."

"I can't. I only feel good with the children, only at your house."

"It's too bad you can't stay with me."

"No, I will come. I've had scarlet fever, and I'll beg *Maman*."

Kitty insisted and moved in with her sister and all through the scarlet fever, which did in fact come, she nursed the children. Both sisters brought all six children through it successfully, but Kitty's health did not improve, and at Lent the Shcherbatskys went abroad.

4

The highest circle of Petersburg society was essentially one; everyone knew everyone else, they even visited one another. However, this large circle did have its subdivisions. Anna Arkadyevna Karenina had friends and close ties in three different circles. One circle was her husband's official, ministerial circle, which

consisted of his fellow officials and subordinates, who were tied and divided in social terms in the most diverse and capricious way. Anna now could scarcely recall the feeling of almost pious admiration she had had for these people at first. Now she knew them all as people know one another in a district town; she knew who had which habits and weaknesses, whose shoes were too tight; she knew their relations with one another and toward the center of power; she knew who stuck by whom and how and why and who agreed and disagreed with whom on what; however, this circle of governmental, masculine interests had never, in spite of Countess Lydia Ivanovna's admonitions, been able to interest her, and she avoided it.

Another small circle close to Anna was the one through which Alexei Alexandrovich had made his career. At the center of this circle was Countess Lydia Ivanovna. This was a circle of old, unattractive, virtuous, and pious women and clever, cultivated, and ambitious men. One of the clever men belonging to this circle had called it "the conscience of Petersburg society." Alexei Alexandrovich prized this circle highly, and Anna, who knew how to get along with everyone, made friends in this circle, too, early on in her Petersburg life. Now, since her return from Moscow, this circle had become intolerable for her. She felt that both she and all of them were pretending, and she found it so boring and awkward in this society that she visited Countess Lydia Ivanovna as infrequently as possible.

The third circle where she had ties, finally, was society itself—the society of balls, dinners, brilliant gowns, the society that held on with one hand to the court so as not to descend to the demimonde, which members of this circle thought they despised but whose tastes were not only similar but identical. Her tie with this circle was maintained through Princess Betsy Tverskaya, her cousin's wife, who had an income of one hundred twenty thousand and who ever since Anna first appeared in society had taken a special liking to her, who looked after her and drew her into her circle, laughing at the circle of Countess Lydia Ivanovna.

"When I am old and ugly I will be exactly like her," said Betsy, "but for you, for a young, attractive woman, it's too soon to join that almshouse."

Anna at first avoided this society of Princess Tverskaya as much as she could, since it entailed expenditures beyond her means, and in her heart of hearts she preferred the first; however, since her trip to Moscow the situation had reversed itself. She avoided her moral friends and went out into high society. There she met Vronsky and experienced a disturbing joy at these meetings. She met Vronsky especially often at Betsy's, who was born a Vronskaya and was his cousin. Vronsky was everywhere he might meet Anna, and he spoke to her whenever he could of his love. She gave him no encouragement, but each time she and

he met, her soul burned with the same feeling of animation that had descended upon her that day in the train car when she had seen him for the first time. She herself could feel the delight shine in her eyes at the sight of him and her lips furrow into a smile, and she could not suppress the expression of this delight.

At first Anna sincerely believed that she was displeased with him for allowing himself to pursue her; however, soon after her return from Moscow, upon arriving at a party where she thought she might but did not meet him, she distinctly realized from the disappointment that came over her that she had been deceiving herself, that not only did she not find this pursuit unpleasant, but it constituted the entire interest of her life.

A famous singer was singing a second time, and all society was at the theater. Seeing his cousin from his seat in the first row, Vronsky, without waiting for the entr'acte, went to her box.

"Why didn't you come for dinner?" she said to him. "I'm amazed at lovers' clairvoyance," she added with a smile so that he alone could hear: "*She wasn't there*. But come after the opera."

Vronsky looked at her inquiringly. She nodded. He thanked her with a smile and sat down by her side.

"Ah, how well I remember your jeers!" continued Princess Betsy, finding particular satisfaction in following the success of this passion. "What has become of all that! You are caught, my dear."

"I want nothing more than to be caught," replied Vronsky with his calm, good-natured smile. "If I have any complaint it is only that I am too little caught, truth be told. I'm beginning to lose hope."

"And what hope might you have?" said Betsy, offended for her friend. "*Entendons nous . . .*"² But tiny flames were flickering in her eyes which said she realized all too well, precisely as well as he did, what kind of hope he might have.

"None whatsoever," said Vronsky, laughing and showing his close-set teeth. "Excuse me," he added, taking the opera glass from her hand and undertaking to survey past her naked shoulder the row of boxes opposite. "I fear I'm becoming ridiculous."

He knew very well that in the eyes of Betsy and all society people he was at no risk of being ridiculous. He knew very well that in the eyes of these people the role of the unlucky lover of a young girl or any free woman might be ridiculous; but the role of a man pursuing a married woman who had staked his life on drawing her into adultery no matter what, that this role had something handsome and grand about it and could never be ridiculous, and therefore with a

proud and cheerful smile playing under his mustache, he lowered the opera glass and looked at his cousin.

“And why didn’t you come for dinner?” she said, admiring him.

“That’s something I must tell you. I was busy, and with what? I could give you a hundred, a thousand guesses, you could not guess. I was reconciling a husband with a man who had insulted his wife. Yes, it’s true!”

“Well, and did you?”

“Nearly.”

“You must tell me about it,” she said, standing up. “Come during the next entr’acte.”

“I can’t; I’m on my way to the Français.”

“Because of Nilsson?”³ Betsy asked with horror. Nothing could make her differentiate between Nilsson and any other chorus girl.

“What can I do? I have an appointment there, all on this matter of my peacemaking.”

“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be saved,” said Betsy, recalling something similar she had heard from someone.⁴ “Well, then sit down, and tell me, what is this about?”

And she sat back down.

5

“This is rather indiscreet, but so sweet that I’m dying to tell someone,” said Vronsky, looking at her with laughing eyes. “I’m not going to name names—”

“But I’m going to guess, even better.”

“Listen then. Two merry young men are out riding . . .”

“Officers from your regiment, naturally?”

“I’m not saying officers, simply two young men who have had lunch together . . .”

“Translate: had a drink.”

“Perhaps. They’re on their way to a friend’s for dinner and are in the merriest of spirits. And they see a very pretty woman overtake them in a coach, look around, and, so it seems to them at least, nod to them and laugh. Naturally, they take off after her. They’re galloping full tilt. To their amazement, the beauty stops at the entrance to the very house where they are going. The beauty runs up to the top floor. They see only her rosy lips under her short veil and her magnificent little feet.”

“You tell this with such feeling that it makes me think you yourself are one of the two.”

“And what were you just telling me? Well, the young men go into their friend’s home, he’s giving a farewell dinner. Here, to be sure, they do drink, perhaps too much, as always at farewell dinners. And at dinner they ask him who lives upstairs in this house. No one knows, and only the master’s servant says to their question as to whether any *mademoiselles* live upstairs, he replies, but there are a great many of them. After dinner the young men go into their host’s study and write the stranger a letter. They write a passionate letter, an avowal, and take the letter upstairs themselves in order to clarify anything that might not prove intelligible in the letter.”

“Why are you telling me such loathsome things? Well?”

“They ring. A maid comes out, they give her the letter and assure her that both of them are so in love that they are going to die right there at the door. In disbelief, the girl tries to negotiate. Suddenly a gentleman appears with side whiskers like little sausages, red as a crab, and announces that no one lives in the house but his wife and he chases them both out.”

“Why do you know he had whiskers like sausages, as you put it?”

“Just listen. I’ve just been to make peace between them.”

“Well, and what happened?”

“This is the most interesting part. It turns out that this is a happy couple, a titular councilor and the titular councilor’s wife.⁵ The titular councilor is lodging a complaint, and I’m taking on the part of mediator, and what a mediator! I assure you, Talleyrand has nothing on me.”

“Where does the difficulty lie?”

“Just listen. . . . We offered a proper apology. ‘We are in despair, we beg you to forgive us the unfortunate misunderstanding.’ The titular councilor with the little sausages starts to melt but wishes to express his feelings, too, and as soon as he begins expressing them, he starts getting angry and speaking crudely, and once again I have to put all my diplomatic talents in motion. ‘I agree that their deed is not very pretty, but I beg you to keep in mind the misunderstanding and their youth; and then the young men had only just had their lunch. You understand. They repent with all their heart and beg you to forgive their transgression.’ Again the titular councilor softens. ‘I agree, Count, and I am prepared to forgive, but you must understand that my wife, my wife, an honest woman, has been subjected to the pursuits, vulgarities, and impudences of these scalawags, these scoun- . . .’ And you understand, this scalawag is right there, and I have to make peace between them. Once again I put my diplomacy into motion, and once again, just as the entire matter should be concluded, my titular councilor gets angry, turns red, the little sausages pop up, and once again I’m drowning in diplomatic subtleties.”

“Oh, he must tell you this!” Laughing, Betsy turned to the lady who had entered her box. “He has amused me so.”

“Well, *bonne chance*,” she added, holding out to Vronsky a finger freed from holding her fan, and with a movement of her shoulders lowering the bodice of her gown, which had come up, in order to be fully and properly naked, when she emerged out front, into the gaslight, and all eyes turned to her.⁶

Vronsky left for the Théâtre Français, where he truly did need to see his regimental commander, who did not miss a single performance at the Théâtre Français, in order to speak with him about his peacemaking, which had kept him busy and entertained for several days. Mixed up in this matter was Petritsky, of whom he was fond, and another great guy who had recently joined up, an excellent fellow, the young Prince Kedrov. But above all, the regiment’s interests were involved.

Both were in Vronsky’s squadron. The official, titular councilor Wenden, had come to see the regimental commander with a complaint against his officers, who had insulted his wife. His young wife, as Wenden explained—he had been married half a year—had been at church with her mother and, suddenly feeling unwell as a result of her interesting condition, could not stand any longer and went home in the first coach she happened upon. At this the officers took after her, she became frightened, and feeling increasingly unwell, ran up the stairs home. Wenden himself, upon returning from his office, heard the bell and voices, came out, and when he saw the drunken officers with their letter, pushed them out. He was asking for harsh punishment.

“Say what you like,” the regimental commander told Vronsky, whom he had asked to come see him, “Petritsky is becoming impossible. Not a week passes without some incident. This clerk is not about to drop the matter, he will press it.”

Vronsky saw just how unseemly the matter was and that there could be no duel here, that all steps had to be taken to mollify this titular councilor and hush up the incident. The regimental commander had called Vronsky in precisely because he knew him to be a noble and clever man and, most important, a man who cherished the regiment’s honor. They talked it over and decided that Petritsky and Kedrov had to go with Vronsky to see this titular councilor and apologize. The regimental commander and Vronsky both realized that Vronsky’s name and aide-de-camp rank should do much to mollify the titular councilor. And indeed, these two means did prove partly effective; the result of the reconciliation, however, remained in doubt, as Vronsky had recounted.

When he arrived at the Français, Vronsky retired to the foyer with the regimental commander and related to him his success or lack of success. After thinking everything over, the regimental commander decided to leave the mat-

ter as it stood, but then for his own satisfaction began questioning Vronsky about the details of his meeting and for a long time could not stop laughing, listening to Vronsky's story about the titular councilor calming down and then suddenly getting angry again when recalling the details of the incident, and how Vronsky, at the merest hint of reconciliation, maneuvering to withdraw, pushed Petritsky out in front of him.

"It's a miserable story, but hilarious. Kedrov couldn't possibly fight this gentleman! Did he get that terribly angry?" he asked again, laughing. "And how do you find Claire today? A marvel!" he said about the new French actress. "No matter how many times you see her, every day she's new. Only the French are capable of that."

6

Princess Betsy left the theater without waiting for the final act. No sooner had she entered her dressing room and sprinkled her long, pale face with powder, blotted it, fixed her hair, and ordered tea in the large drawing room, than one carriage after another began pulling up to her enormous house on Bolshaya Morskaya. Her guests emerged at the broad entrance, and the stout porter, who had a habit in the mornings of reading the newspapers out loud from behind the glass door, for the edification of passersby, opened this huge door without a sound and let the new arrivals pass inside.

Entering at nearly the exact same moment were the hostess, with her freshened coiffure and freshened face, through one door, and her guests through the other, into the large drawing room with its dark walls, luxurious carpets, and brightly lit table, where the candles made the white of the tablecloth, the silver of the samovar, and the translucent porcelain of the tea service all sparkle.

The hostess seated herself at the samovar and removed her gloves. Chairs were shifted with the help of discreet footmen, and the company took their seats, dividing into two groups: by the samovar with the hostess and at the far end of the drawing room—around a beautiful woman dressed in black velvet who had sharp black eyebrows, the wife of an ambassador. As always in the first few minutes, the conversation in both groups kept vacillating, interrupted by meetings, greetings, and offers of tea, as if probing where it might come to rest.

"She is exceptionally fine as an actress; you can tell she has studied Kaulbach," said a diplomat in the circle around the ambassador's wife.⁷ "You noticed how she fell . . ."

"Oh, please, let's not talk about Nilsson! There is nothing new one can say about her," said a fat, red-faced woman who lacked both eyebrows and chignon,

a fair-haired lady wearing an old silk dress. This was Princess Myahkaya, who was famous for the simplicity and bluntness of her statements and was referred to as an *enfant terrible*. Princess Myahkaya was sitting in the middle, between the two groups, and listening, taking part in first one and then the other. “Three people now have told me the exact same thing about Kaulbach, as if they were in cahoots. They’ve taken such a fancy to it, though I don’t know why.”

The conversation was terminated by this comment, and they had to come up with a new topic again.

“Tell us something entertaining but not malicious,” said the ambassador’s wife, a great master of elegant conversation, what in English is called *small talk*, turning to the diplomat, who did not know where to begin now, either.⁸

“They say that’s very hard to do, that only the malicious is amusing,” he began with a smile. “But I’ll try. Give me a topic. It’s all a matter of topic. If the topic has been set, then it’s easy to embroider upon it. I often think that the famous talkers of the past century would now be hard pressed to speak cleverly. We are so sick of everything clever.”

“That was said long ago,” the ambassador’s wife interrupted him, laughing.

The conversation began agreeably, but precisely because it was excessively agreeable, it again ground to a halt. There was nothing for it but to resort to the tried and true — malicious gossip.

“Don’t you find that there’s something of Louis XV in Tushkevich?” he said, indicating with his eyes a handsome, fair young man standing by the table.

“Oh, yes! He is in exactly the same taste as the drawing room, which is why he is here so often.”

This conversation was kept up since they were hinting at precisely what could not be spoken of in this drawing room, that is, Tushkevich’s relationship to the hostess.

Around the samovar and hostess, meanwhile, the conversation, which vacillated for some time in exactly the same way among three inevitable topics — the latest civic news, the theater, and condemnation of their neighbor — also settled on the last topic, that is, malicious gossip.

“Have you heard? Maltishcheva — the mother, not the daughter — is having a gown sewn for herself in *diable rose*.”⁹

“Impossible! No, that’s too marvelous!”

“I’m amazed at how, with her mind — she is, after all, far from stupid — she fails to see how ludicrous she is.”

Everyone had something to say in condemnation and ridicule of the unfortunate Maltishcheva, and the conversation crackled as merrily as a roaring bonfire.

Princess Betsy's husband, a stout, good-natured man and a passionate collector of engravings, seeing that his wife had guests, stopped into the drawing room on his way to his club. No one heard him walk over the soft carpet to Princess Myahkaya.

"How did you like Nilsson, Princess?" he said.

"Oh, my! How can you sneak up like that? You gave me such a fright!" she replied. "Please, do not speak to me of opera, you understand nothing of music. Better I descend to your level and speak with you of your majolica and engravings. So, what treasure have you bought lately at auction?"

"Would you like me to show you? But you know nothing about it."

"Show me. I learned from those, what do they call them . . . bankers . . . they have marvelous engravings. They used to show us."

"What, have you been at the Schützbergs'?" the hostess asked from her place at the samovar.

"Yes, *ma chère*.¹⁰ They invited my husband and myself to dine, and they told me that the sauce at this dinner cost a thousand rubles," Princess Myahkaya said loudly, sensing that everyone was listening to her, "and a disgusting sauce it was, something green. I had to invite them, and I made a sauce for eighty-five kopeks, and everyone was quite satisfied. I cannot make thousand-ruble sauces."

"She is one of a kind!" said the ambassador's wife.

"Amazing!" said someone.

The effect produced by Princess Myahkaya's speeches was always identical, and the secret of the effect she produced consisted in the fact that she always said simple things that, if not entirely to the point, as now, made sense. In the society in which she lived, such words produced the effect of the wittiest joke. Princess Myahkaya could not understand why this worked so well, but she knew that it did and took advantage of this fact.

Since during Princess Myahkaya's speech everyone was listening to her and the conversation around the ambassador's wife stopped, the hostess wanted to unite the entire company and so addressed the ambassador's wife.

"Are you sure you wouldn't like some tea? You should join us."

"No, we're doing quite well here," the ambassador's wife replied with a smile, and she resumed their conversation.

The conversation was very pleasant. They were condemning the Karenins, wife and husband.

"Anna is very much changed since her Moscow trip. There's something odd about her," said an acquaintance of hers.

"The chief change is the fact that she brought back the shadow of Alexei Vronsky," said the ambassador's wife.

“And what if she did? Grimm has a tale about a man without a shadow, a man who loses his shadow. And this is a punishment for something. I could never understand where the punishment lay. But a woman must find it unpleasant to be without a shadow.”

“Yes, but women who have shadows usually end badly,” said Anna’s acquaintance.

“Keep your trap shut,” said Princess Myahkaya suddenly, hearing these words. “Madame Karenina is a marvelous woman. I don’t like her husband, but I like her very much.”

“Why don’t you like her husband? He’s such a remarkable man,” said the ambassador’s wife. “My husband says there are very few men of state like that in Europe.”

“My husband tells me the same thing, but I don’t believe it,” said Princess Myahkaya. “If our husbands didn’t say anything, we would see what really is, and in my opinion Alexei Alexandrovich is simply a fool. I say this in a whisper. . . . Doesn’t that make everything much clearer? Before, when they told me to find him clever, I kept searching and finding that I was the stupid one for not seeing his cleverness, but as soon as I said, *He’s a fool*, but in a whisper—everything became so clear, don’t you think?”

“How wicked you are today!”

“Not a bit of it. I have no other solution. One or the other of us is a fool. Well, you know one can never say that about oneself.”

“No one is ever satisfied with his own condition, but everyone is satisfied with his own mind,” the diplomat recited a French verse.

“That’s it precisely,” Princess Myahkaya turned to him hastily. “The problem is, though, that I won’t give Anna up to you. She is so lovely and dear. Is it her fault if everyone is in love with her and they follow her about like shadows?”

“I have no intention of judging her,” Anna’s acquaintance said in self-defense.

“If no one is following us like a shadow, that does not prove that we have the right to judge.”

And, having put Anna’s acquaintance in her proper place, Princess Myahkaya rose and she and the ambassador’s wife joined the group at the table, where a general discussion was in progress about the king of Prussia.

“What were you being so spiteful about?” asked Betsy.

“The Karenins. The princess was giving us her characterization of Alexei Alexandrovich,” replied the ambassador’s wife, smiling as she sat down at the table.

“It’s a pity we could not hear,” said the hostess, glancing periodically at the door. “Ah, there you are, at last!” she said, smiling, to Vronsky as he entered.

Not only did Vronsky know everyone, but he saw everyone he met here every day, and so he entered with the same calm manner with which people enter a room to see people they have only just left.

“Where have I come from?” he replied to the question of the ambassador’s wife. “What’s to be done, I must confess. From the *bouffe*.¹¹ It must be the hundredth time, and always with fresh pleasure. Charming! I know I should be ashamed, but I sleep through the opera, while at the *bouffe* I stay in my seat until the very last minute and have such a cheerful time. Today . . .”

He named a French actress and was about to tell a story about her when the ambassador’s wife interrupted him in mock horror:

“Please, tell us no stories about that horror.”

“I won’t then, especially since everyone knows these horrors.”

“And everyone would go there if only it were as acceptable as the opera,” chimed in Princess Myahkaya.

7

There were steps at the door, and Princess Betsy, knowing this was Madame Karenina, glanced at Vronsky. He was watching the door, and his face bore a strange new expression. He joyfully, intently, and at the same time shyly watched the woman entering and slowly rose to his feet. Anna entered the drawing room. Holding herself extremely erect as always, with her quick, firm, and light step, which distinguished hers from the step of other society women, and without changing the direction of her gaze, she took those few steps that separated her from her hostess, pressed her hand, smiled, and with this smile looked around at Vronsky. Vronsky bowed low and offered her a chair.

She responded with a mere inclination of her head, blushed, and frowned. Immediately, however, quickly nodding to friends and shaking extended hands, she turned to her hostess.

“I was at Countess Lydia’s and wanted to come earlier but stayed on. She had Sir John there. A very interesting man.”

“Ah, is that the missionary?”

“Yes, very interesting, he told stories about Indian life.”

The conversation, which had been interrupted by her arrival, again sputtered, like the flame of a lamp being blown out.

“Sir John! Yes, Sir John. I saw him. He speaks well. Vlseva is thoroughly infatuated with him.”

“Is it true that the younger Vlseva is marrying Topov?”

“Yes, they say it’s all decided.”

"I'm amazed at the parents. They're saying it's a love match."

"Love? What antediluvian ideas you have! Who nowadays speaks of love?" said the ambassador's wife.

"What can one do? That foolish old fashion has yet to be dispensed with," said Vronsky.

"So much the worse for those who cling to this fashion. I know happy marriages only based on convenience."

"Yes, but then how often does the happiness of convenient marriages scatter like dust, precisely because that very passion they would not admit does turn up," said Vronsky.

"But what we call marriages of convenience are those when both have already sown their wild oats. It's like scarlet fever, one must get past that."

"Then we need to learn how to inoculate artificially against love, like small-pox."

"In my youth I was in love with a deacon," said Princess Myahkaya. "I don't know whether that was any help to me."

"No, joking aside, I think that in order to recognize love one needs to make a mistake and then correct it," said Princess Betsy.

"Even after marriage?" said the ambassador's wife playfully.

"It's never too late to repent," the diplomat recited the English saying.

"Precisely," Betsy chimed in. "One must make a mistake and correct it. What do you say to this?" she turned to Anna, who was listening to the conversation in silence with a barely perceptible but firm smile on her lips.

"I think," said Anna, playing with the glove she had removed, "I think . . . there are as many minds as heads and as many kinds of love as hearts."

Vronsky had been looking at Anna and waiting with a sinking heart for what she would say. He sighed as if a danger had passed when she spoke these words.

Anna suddenly turned to him.

"I have had a letter from Moscow. They write that Kitty Shcherbatskaya is quite ill."

"Really?" said Vronsky, frowning.

Anna looked at him sternly.

"This doesn't interest you?"

"On the contrary, it does very much. What exactly do they write, if I may inquire?" he asked.

Anna rose and walked over to Betsy.

"Give me a cup of tea," she said, stopping behind her chair.

While Princess Betsy was pouring her tea, Vronsky walked over to Anna.

"What have they written?" he repeated.

"I often think that men do not realize what is noble and ignoble, though they are constantly talking about it," said Anna without answering him. "I've long been meaning to tell you," she added, and taking a few steps, sat down at a corner table with albums.

"I don't quite understand the meaning of your words," he said, handing her a cup.

She looked at the sofa beside her and he immediately sat down.

"Yes, I have been meaning to tell you," she said without looking at him. "You behaved badly, very badly."

"Do you think I don't know I behaved badly? But who was the cause of me acting in this way?"

"Why are you saying this to me?" she said, looking at him sternly.

"You know why," he replied boldly and joyfully, meeting her glance and not looking away.

She, not he, became flustered.

"This proves only that you have no heart," she said. But her look said that she knew he did have a heart and this was why she was afraid of him.

"What you were just speaking of was a mistake, not love."

"You remember that I forbade you to speak that word, that vile word," said Anna, shuddering; but immediately she sensed that with this one word, "forbade," she had shown that she was asserting certain rights over him and by so doing was encouraging him to speak of love. "I have been meaning to tell you this for a long time," she continued, looking him square in the eye, her face scorched by a fiery blush, "and today I have come on purpose knowing I would meet you here. I have come to tell you that this must end. I have never blushed before anyone before, but you have forced me to feel that I am guilty of something."

He looked at her and was stunned by the new spiritual beauty of her face.

"What do you want of me?" he said, simply and gravely.

"I want you to go to Moscow and beg Kitty's forgiveness," she said, and a light flickered in her eyes.

"That is not what you want," he said.

He saw that she was saying what she was forcing herself to say, not what she wanted to say.

"If you love me as you say," she whispered, "then do this to give me peace."

His face glowed.

"Don't you know that you are all of life for me; peace is something I do not know, though, and I cannot give it to you. My entire self, love . . . yes. I cannot think of you and of myself separately. For me, you and I are one. And I do not

foresee the possibility of peace either for myself or for you. I see the possibility of despair and unhappiness . . . or I see the possibility of happiness, what happiness! Can it not be possible?" he added with just his lips, but she heard.

She harnessed all her strength of mind to say what she ought to, but instead of this she rested her gaze on him, a gaze full of love, and said nothing.

"Here it is!" he thought with rapture. "When I had already despaired, when it seemed there would be no end—here it is! She loves me. She is admitting it."

"Then do this for me, never speak those words to me, and we shall be good friends," she said with her words, but her gaze said something completely different.

"Friends we shall never be, you know that yourself. But whether we are the happiest or unhappiest of people—that is in your power."

She was about to say something, but he interrupted her.

"You see, I'm asking only one thing, I'm asking for the right to hope, to suffer, as now; but if even this cannot be, then order me to disappear and I will. You will not see me if my presence pains you."

"I have no wish to drive you away."

"Then change nothing. Leave everything as it is," he said in a trembling voice. "Here is your husband."

And indeed, at that moment Alexei Alexandrovich, with his calm, clumsy walk, was entering the drawing room.

He glanced around at his wife and Vronsky and went over to his hostess, and sitting down over a cup of tea, he began speaking in his unhurried, always audible voice, in his usual joking tone, chaffing at someone.

"Your Rambouillet is in full conclave," he said, surveying the entire company. "The Graces and the Muses."¹²

But Princess Betsy could not stand this tone of his, this *sneering*, as she called it, and as a clever hostess immediately engaged him in a serious discussion of universal military service.¹³ Alexei Alexandrovich was immediately drawn into the discussion and began defending the new decree in earnest to Princess Betsy, who attacked it.

Vronsky and Anna remained sitting at the small table.

"This is becoming indecent," whispered one lady, her eyes indicating Madame Karenina, Vronsky, and her husband.

"What did I tell you?" replied Anna's acquaintance.

But it was not only these ladies, who were almost always in the drawing room, even Princess Myahkaya and Betsy herself had cast several glances at the two, who had detached themselves from the general circle, as if it were disturbing them. Only Alexei Alexandrovich never once glanced in that direction and was not distracted from the interest of the newly begun conversation.

Noticing the unpleasant impression being made on everyone, Princess Betsy slipped someone else into her place to listen to Alexei Alexandrovich and she herself went over to Anna.

"I am always amazed at the clarity and precision of your husband's expressions," she said. "The most transcendent concepts become accessible to me when he speaks."

"Oh yes!" said Anna, glowing with a smile of happiness and understanding not one word of what Betsy was saying to her. She moved over to the big table and joined in the general discussion.

Alexei Alexandrovich stayed half an hour, went over to his wife, and suggested that they ride home together; but without looking at him she replied that she would stay for supper. Alexei Alexandrovich bowed and went out.

Madame Karenina's driver, a fat old Tatar wearing a glossy leather coat, was having trouble holding back the chilled gray horse on the left that had been rearing up by the entrance. A footman was holding the carriage door open. The porter was standing, holding the front door. Anna Arkadyevna was freeing the lace of her sleeve from her coat hook with her small, quick hand, and, head bowed, listening raptly to what Vronsky, who was seeing her out, was saying.

"You have not said anything; let's just say I am asking nothing," he said, "but you know very well I have no need of friendship. There is one possible happiness for me in life, this word you dislike so much . . . yes, love."

"Love," she echoed slowly, in an inner voice, and suddenly, just as she freed the lace, she added: "The reason I don't like that word is that it means too much to me, much more than you could possibly understand." And she looked him in the face. "Good-bye!"

She gave him her hand and with a quick resilient step walked past the porter and disappeared into the carriage.

Her glance and the touch of her hand had burned right through him. He kissed his palm on the very spot she had touched, and he went home, happy in the awareness that this evening he had come closer to achieving his goal than he had in the past two months.

8

Alexei Alexandrovich found nothing odd or improper in the fact that his wife was sitting with Vronsky at a separate table and discussing something in animated fashion; however, he did notice that to the others in the drawing room

this did seem in some way odd and improper, and for this reason it seemed improper to him as well. He decided he had to speak of this to his wife.

Returning home, Alexei Alexandrovich went into his study, as he usually did, and sat down in his reading chair, opening to the place in the book on the papacy that he had marked with his paper knife, and read until one o'clock, as he usually did; only from time to time he rubbed his high brow and gave his head a shake, as if he were chasing something away. At his usual hour, he rose and made his evening toilet. Anna Arkadyevna was still not there. With his book under his arm, he went upstairs; but this evening, instead of his usual thoughts and ideas about official matters, his thoughts were filled with his wife and something unpleasant connected with her. Contrary to habit, he did not go to bed but proceeded to pace back and forth from room to room, his hands clasped behind his back. He could not go to bed, feeling that first he must think through the newly arisen circumstance.

When Alexei Alexandrovich had decided privately that he needed to talk things over with his wife, this seemed like a very easy and simple thing to do; now, though, as he began thinking through this newly arisen circumstance, it seemed to him quite complicated and difficult.

Alexei Alexandrovich was not jealous. According to his conviction, jealousy insulted one's wife, and one must have trust in one's wife. Why one must have trust, that is, full confidence, in the fact that his young wife would always love him, he did not ask himself; however, he did not feel mistrust because he did have confidence and told himself he ought to have it. Now, although his conviction that jealousy was a shameful emotion and that one must have confidence was not shattered, he did feel that he was standing face to face with something illogical and incoherent, and he did not know what he should do. Alexei Alexandrovich was standing face to face with life, with the possibility of love in his wife for someone other than himself, and this seemed to him quite incoherent and incomprehensible because this was life itself. All his life, Alexei Alexandrovich had lived and worked in official spheres, dealing with reflections of life. And each time he came into contact with life itself, he shrank away. Now he was experiencing an emotion similar to that which a man would feel who was calmly crossing a chasm by bridge and suddenly saw that the bridge had been dismantled and there was an abyss. This abyss was life itself, and the bridge was that artificial life which Alexei Alexandrovich had lived. For the first time, questions came to him of the possibility of his wife falling in love with someone, and at this he was horrified.

Without undressing, he paced with his even step back and forth over the resonant parquet of the dining room, which was illuminated by a single lamp,

across the carpet of the darkened drawing room, where light was reflected only on the large, recently done portrait of him that hung over the sofa, and through her sitting room, where two candles were burning, casting light on the portraits of her relatives and friends, and on the pretty, long intimately familiar bric-a-brac on her writing desk. Through her room he walked as far as the bedroom door and turned around again.

On each stretch of his walk, and mostly on the parquet of the well-lit dining room, he would stop now and again and tell himself: "Yes, I must decide and put a stop to this and express my view of this and my decision." And he would turn back. "But express what? What decision?" he said to himself in the drawing room, and found no answer. "And when you come right down to it," he would ask himself before the turn into her sitting room, "what did happen? Nothing. She spoke with him for a long time. And so? Is there any harm in a woman in society speaking with someone? And then, to be jealous is to demean both myself and her," he told himself as he entered her sitting room; but this reasoning, which previously had held such weight for him, now weighed and meant nothing. And he would again turn away from the bedroom door and go back toward the drawing room; but as soon as he went back into the darkened drawing room, a voice told him that this was not the case and that if others noticed this, then that meant there was something. And once again he told himself in the dining room: "Yes, I must decide and put a stop to this and express my view . . ." And again in the drawing room before the turn he asked himself, "Decide it how?" And then he asked himself, "What had happened?" And he answered, "Nothing," and he recalled that jealousy was an emotion that demeans a wife, but again in the drawing room he was convinced that something had happened. His thoughts, like his body, kept coming full circle without landing on anything new. He noticed this, rubbed his brow, and sat down in her sitting room.

Here, looking at her desk with the malachite blotter lying on top and a note she had started, his thoughts suddenly changed. He began thinking about her, about what she thought and felt. For the first time he vividly imagined her private life, her thoughts, her desires, and the thought that she might and must have her own separate life seemed to him so terrible that he hastened to drive it away. This was that abyss into which he was afraid to look. Trying to imagine the thoughts and feelings of another being was an emotional exercise alien to Alexei Alexandrovich. He considered this emotional exercise harmful and dangerous fantasizing.

"What is most horrible of all," he thought, "is that now, as my work is drawing to its conclusion"—he was thinking about the project he was overseeing now—"when I need all the tranquility and strength I can muster, now I am

being inundated with this senseless worry. What else can I do, though? I'm not one of those people who suffers upset and alarm and lacks the strength to look them in the face."

"I must think this through, come to a decision, and set it aside," he said out loud.

"Questions of her feelings, of what has and might come to pass in her soul, that is none of my affair, it is the affair of her conscience and falls under religion," he told himself, feeling relief at the awareness that he had found the set of statutes under which the newly arisen circumstance fell.

"And so," Alexei Alexandrovich told himself, "questions of her feelings and so forth constitute questions for her own conscience, which is none of my affair. My duty is clearly defined. As head of the family, I am the individual obligated to guide her, and so I am in part the responsible party; I must point out the danger I see, avert it, and even exercise my authority. I must tell her all this."

And in Alexei Alexandrovich's mind, everything he would now tell his wife composed itself clearly. Thinking through what he would say, he regretted having to put his time and mental energy to such inconspicuous domestic use, but in spite of that, in his mind the form and sequence of his impending speech was composing itself as clearly and distinctly as a report. "I must say and express the following: first, an explanation of the importance of public opinion and propriety; second, the religious explanation of the significance of marriage; third, if necessary, indication of the possible misfortune that could befall our son; fourth, a pointing out of her own unhappiness." And interlacing his fingers, palms facing down, Alexei Alexandrovich pushed, and his knuckles cracked.

This gesture, this bad habit of clasping his hands and cracking his knuckles, always calmed him and gave him the sense of precision he so needed now. The sound of a carriage driving up was heard at the front door. Alexei Alexandrovich stopped in the middle of the room.

A woman's steps started up the stairs. Alexei Alexandrovich, prepared for his speech, stood clasping his folded hands, waiting to see whether the knuckles would crack again. One knuckle did.

From the sound of her light steps on the stairs, he could sense her approach, and although he was satisfied with his speech, he was frightened at the impending explanation.

9

Anna was walking with her head bowed and playing with the tassels of her hood. Her face gave off a vivid glow, but this was not a cheerful glow; it was like

the frightful glow of a fire in the midst of a dark night. Seeing her husband, Anna raised her head, and as if waking up, smiled.

“You’re not in bed? There’s a wonder!” she said, and she tossed back her hood and, without stopping, kept walking toward her dressing room. “It’s late, Alexei Alexandrovich,” she said from the other room.

“Anna, I must speak with you.”

“With me?” she said, surprised, and she came out of the room and looked at him. “But what is it? What’s this about?” she asked, sitting down. “All right, let’s talk, if it’s so necessary. But it would be better to sleep.”

Anna was saying whatever came to her lips and was herself surprised, listening to herself, at her ability to lie. How simple, how natural her words were, and how much it seemed as if she were simply sleepy! She felt as if she were wearing an impenetrable armor of falsehood. She felt as if some invisible power were aiding and abetting her.

“Anna, I must warn you,” he said.

“Warn me?” she said. “Of what?”

Her look was so simple, so cheerful, that anyone who did not know her as her husband did would never have noticed anything unnatural in the sounds or the sense of her words. But to him, knowing her, knowing that when he went to bed five minutes later than usual she noticed and asked the reason, to him, knowing that she immediately informed him of any joy, happiness, or grief, to him to see now that she did not want to remark on his state, that she did not want to say a word about herself, meant a great deal. He saw that the depth of her soul, formerly open to him, was now closed. Not only that, from her tone he could see that she was not even embarrassed by this, but might just as well have told him, Yes, it’s closed, and this is how it must and will be from now on. Now he experienced an emotion like that experienced by a man who has returned home and found his house locked. “But perhaps the key will yet be found,” thought Alexei Alexandrovich.

“I want to warn you,” he said in a quiet voice, “that by your indiscreet and careless behavior, you may give society grounds for talking about you. Your excessively animated conversation today with Count Vronsky (he pronounced this name firmly and with deliberate calm) attracted attention.”

He spoke and watched her laughing eyes, whose impenetrability now frightened him, and as he spoke he sensed the utter uselessness and futility of his words.

“You’re always like this,” she replied, as if not understanding him at all, and from all that he said intentionally understanding only the last part. “Either you don’t like it that I’m bored, or you don’t like it that I’m cheerful. I wasn’t bored. Does that offend you?”

Alexei Alexandrovich shuddered and bent his hands to crack his knuckles.

“Oh, please, don’t crack them, I dislike it so,” she said.

“Anna, is this you?” said Alexei Alexandrovich quietly, making an effort to contain himself and the movement of his hands.

“And what is this?” she said with the same sincere and comic surprise. “What do you want of me?”

Alexei Alexandrovich was silent for a moment and rubbed his brow and eyes with his hand. He saw that instead of doing what he had wanted to do, that is, warn his wife against an error in the eyes of society, he had upset himself unintentionally about something that concerned her conscience and had been struggling against a wall of his own imagination.

“This is what I had intended to say,” he continued coldly and calmly, “and I beg of you to hear me out. As you know, I admit jealousy to be an offensive and demeaning emotion and would never allow myself to be guided by this emotion; however, there are well-known laws of propriety that cannot be transgressed with impunity. Today not I, but, judging from the impression that was produced on the company, everyone, remarked that you were acting and behaving not quite as one would desire.”

“I understand absolutely none of this,” said Anna, shrugging her shoulders. “He doesn’t care,” she thought, “but society noticed, and that disturbs him.” “You are unwell, Alexei Alexandrovich,” she added, and she rose and was about to go through the door, but he took a step forward, as if wishing to stop her.

His face was unattractive and dark, such as Anna had never seen it. She stopped, and leaning her head back and tilting it to one side, began pulling out hairpins with a quick hand.

“Well, sir, I’m listening for what comes next,” she said in a calm, amused voice. “I’m listening with interest even, because I wish to understand what is the matter.”

She spoke and wondered at the naturally calm and confident tone in which she spoke, and at the choice of words she used.

“I have no right to go into all the details of your emotions, and generally speaking I consider this useless and even harmful,” Alexei Alexandrovich began. “Digging around in our souls, we often dig up something that would have lain there unremarked. Your emotions are a matter for your own conscience; however, I am obliged to you, to myself, and to God, to point out to you your obligations. Our lives are bound, and bound not by people but by God. Only a crime can sunder this bond, and a crime of this sort would entail grave punishment.”

“I understand nothing. Oh, heavens, how terribly sleepy I am!” she said, quickly combing her hand through her hair and searching for the remaining hairpins.

“Anna, for God’s sake, don’t talk like this,” he said abruptly. “Perhaps I’m wrong, but believe me that what I say I say as much for myself as for you. I am your husband and I love you.”

For an instant her face fell, and the amused spark in her eye was extinguished, but the word “love” roused her indignation again. She thought: “Love? Can he really love? If he’d never heard that there is such a thing as love, he would never use this word. He doesn’t even know what love is.”

“Alexei Alexandrovich, I really do not understand,” she said. “Define for me what it is you find . . .”

“If you please, allow me to finish speaking. I love you. But I’m not talking about myself; the principal individuals here are our son and you yourself. It may very well be, I repeat, that my words will seem utterly futile and inappropriate to you; perhaps they are provoked by an error on my part. In that case, I beg you to forgive me. However, if you yourself sense that there is even the slightest foundation, then I beg of you to think and, if your heart speaks, to tell me . . .”

Without noticing it himself, Alexei Alexandrovich was saying exactly what he had prepared not to say.

“I have nothing to say. Yes and” — she said quickly all of a sudden, restraining a smile with difficulty — “really, it’s time to go to bed.”

Alexei Alexandrovich sighed and, without saying another word, headed for the bedroom.

When she entered the bedroom he was already lying down. His lips were sternly compressed, and his eyes were not looking at her. Anna lay down on the bed and expected him to start speaking to her at any moment. She was both afraid he would start talking and also wanted him to do so. But he was silent. She waited for a long time, motionless, and forgot about him. She was thinking of someone else; she saw him and at this thought felt her heart fill with excitement and an illicit joy. Suddenly she heard an even and calm snoring. For the first minute Alexei Alexandrovich seemed to startle at his own snoring and stopped; but after two more breaths his snoring began again with a calm new evenness.

“It’s late, it’s late, it’s late now,” she whispered with a smile. She lay there motionless for a long time with open eyes whose sparkle she thought even she could see in the darkness.

10

From that evening on, a new life began for Alexei Alexandrovich and for his wife. Nothing special happened. Anna, as always, went into society, was particularly often at Princess Betsy’s, and met Vronsky everywhere. Alexei Alexan-

drovich saw this but could do nothing. To all his attempts to make her explain she erected an impenetrable wall of some sort of cheerful bewilderment. From the outside, it was the same, but their inner relations changed utterly. Alexei Alexandrovich, such a powerful man in affairs of state, here felt himself powerless. Like a bull meekly lowering his head, he waited for the ax, which, he could feel, had been raised over him. Each time he began thinking about this, he felt he needed to make one more attempt, that with kindness, tenderness, and conviction there was still hope of saving her, of making her come to her senses, and every day he intended to talk to her. But each time he began talking to her, he could feel this spirit of malice and deceit that had seized hold of her seize hold of him as well, and he talked to her in anything but the tone in which he had intended. Without meaning to, he talked to her in his usual tone, which mocked anyone who would speak in that way. And in this tone there was no saying to her what demanded saying.

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11

That which had constituted for nearly an entire year the one exclusive desire in Vronsky's life and had replaced for him all former desires; that which for Anna was an impossible, terrible, and thus bewitching dream of happiness—this desire was fulfilled. Pale, his lower jaw trembling, he stood over her and begged her to calm herself, not knowing himself why or how.

“Anna! Anna!” he said in a trembling voice. “Anna, for God's sake!”

But the louder he spoke, the lower she dropped her once proud, cheerful, now mortified head, and her entire body crumpled and she fell from the sofa on which she had been sitting, onto the floor, at his feet; she would have fallen on the carpet had he not held her up.

“My God! Forgive me!” she said, sobbing, pressing his hands to her breast.

She felt so criminal and guilty that there was nothing left for her but to humiliate herself and beg forgiveness; and since in life now, she had no one but him, so it was to him that she addressed her prayer for forgiveness. Looking at him, she felt her humiliation physically and could say nothing more. He felt what a murderer must feel when he sees a body he has deprived of life. This body he had deprived of life was their love, the first period of their love. There was something horrible and loathsome in his memories of what had been paid for at this terrible price of shame. Shame at her spiritual nakedness was crushing her and was being communicated to him. Despite the full horror of the murderer

before the dead body, though, this body had to be cut to pieces and hidden, advantage had to be taken of what the murderer had gained by murder.

And with an animosity akin to passion, the murderer throws himself on this body, drags it away, and cuts it up; thus did he cover her face and shoulders with kisses. She held his hand and did not stir. Yes, these kisses were what this shame had bought. Yes, and this one hand, which will always be mine, is the hand of my accomplice. She raised this hand and kissed it. He dropped to his knees, trying to see her face; but she hid it and said nothing. At last, as if making an effort over herself, she rose and pushed him away. Her face was as beautiful as ever, but even more, it was pitiful.

“It’s all over,” she said. “I have nothing but you. Remember that.”

“I can’t help but remember that which is my life. For a moment of this happiness . . .”

“Happiness!” she said with revulsion and horror, and the horror was unwittingly communicated to him. “For God’s sake, not a word, not another word.”

She rose quickly and moved away from him.

“Not another word,” she repeated, and with an expression of cold despair on her face that he found strange, she parted from him. She felt that at this moment she could not express in words her shame, joy, and horror at this entrance into a new life and did not want to speak of it, to debase this feeling with inexact words. But even after, the next day and the day after that, she not only could not find words in which she might express the full complexity of these feelings, she could not even find the thoughts to think through privately everything that was in her heart.

She kept telling herself, “No, I can’t think about this now; later, when I’m calmer.” But this calm for thinking never came; each time the thought of what she had done, and what would happen to her, and what she ought to do, did come to her, horror would descend upon her and she would drive these thoughts away.

“Later, later,” she would say, “when I’m calmer.”

On the other hand, in her sleep, when she had no power over her thoughts, her situation appeared to her in all its monstrous nakedness. She had the same dream nearly every night. She dreamed that both of them were her husbands, that both were lavishing their caresses on her. Alexei Alexandrovich wept, kissing her hands, and said, “How fine it is now!” And Alexei Vronsky was right there, too, and he was her husband as well. And she, amazed at what had previously seemed impossible, was explaining to them, laughing, that this was much simpler and that they both now were happy and content. But this dream weighed on her like a nightmare, and she would wake up terrified.

12

At first after his return from Moscow, when Levin shuddered and blushed each time he recalled the disgrace of his rejection, he would tell himself: "I blushed and shuddered exactly the same way, counting myself lost, when I received a one in physics and stayed back in my second year; I considered myself just as lost after I spoiled the business my sister had entrusted to me.¹⁴ And so? Now that the years have passed, I recall it and am amazed at how this might have distressed me. The same will happen with this grief as well. Time will pass, and I will grow indifferent to it."

But three months passed and he did not grow indifferent, and it was just as painful to recall it as it had been in those first few days. He could not be calm because he who had dreamed of family life for so long and who had felt that he had matured for it was nonetheless not married and was farther than ever from marriage. He himself felt keenly, as did everyone around him, that it was not good at his age for a man to be alone.¹⁵ He remembered how before he left for Moscow he once told his cowherd Nikolai, a naïve peasant he liked to talk to: "Well, Nikolai! I mean to marry," and how Nikolai quickly replied as if it were a matter about which there could be no doubt: "And it's high time, Konstantin Dmitrievich." But marriage was now farther out of his reach than ever. The place was taken, and when he now tried to imagine any other of the young women he knew in that place, he felt that this was utterly impossible. Moreover, the memory of his rejection and of the role he had played in it tormented him with shame. No matter how much he told himself that he was not to blame for anything, this memory, on a par with other shameful memories of this kind, made him shudder and blush. In his past, as in any man's, there were acts he recognized as bad and for which his conscience should have tormented him; but the memory of bad acts did not torment him nearly as much as these insignificant but shameful memories. These wounds would not heal. And on a par with these memories there was now the rejection and that pathetic position in which he must have appeared to others that evening. But time and labor did their work. His difficult memories were becoming more and more obscured for him by the unseen but important events of country life. With each week he thought of Kitty less and less often. He waited impatiently for the news that she had married or would marry soon, hoping that this news, like the extraction of a tooth, would cure him completely.

Meanwhile, spring came, beautiful and friendly, with none of spring's anticipations and deceptions, one of those rare springs in which plants, animals, and people alike rejoice. This beautiful spring roused Levin even more and confirmed him in his intention to reject everything past so that he could put his

solitary life on a firm and independent footing. Although he had not carried out many of the plans with which he had returned to the country, nonetheless he had observed what was most important, the purity of life. He did not experience the shame that usually tormented him after a fall, and he could boldly look people in the eye. In February he had received a letter from Marya Nikolaevna saying that his brother Nikolai's health was deteriorating but that he did not want to be treated, and as a result of this letter Levin traveled to Moscow to see his brother and was able to convince him to consult with a doctor and to go abroad for the waters. He was so successful at convincing his brother and lending him money for the trip without irritating him, that in this respect he was content with himself. Apart from the farm, which demanded special attention in the spring, apart from reading, Levin had begun this winter as well to compose a work on farming, the plan for which consisted in accepting the characteristics of the worker as an absolute given, like the climate and the soil, in order that, consequently, all the tenets of the science of farming be derived not merely from facts about the soil and climate but from facts about the soil, the climate, and the known, immutable characteristics of the worker. So that, despite his seclusion, or as a consequence of his seclusion, his life was extraordinarily full, and only from time to time did he have an unsatisfied urge to communicate the thoughts roaming around in his mind to someone other than Agafya Mikhailovna, although even with her he often had occasion to discuss physics, agricultural theory, and in particular philosophy, philosophy being Agafya Mikhailovna's favorite subject.

Spring was a long time coming. The last weeks of Lent the weather was clear and frosty. In the afternoon, there was thawing in the sun, but at night it dropped seven degrees below freezing; the thin crust of ice was such that they traveled in sledges without roads. Easter there was snow. Then suddenly, a week after Easter, a warm wind blew up, the clouds gathered, and for three days and three nights a warm and stormy rain fell. On Thursday the wind died down and a thick gray fog moved in, as if to hide the secrets of the changes that had taken place in nature. Water began to flow in the fog, the sheets of ice cracked and began to drift, the cloudy, foamy streams moved faster and faster, and on Krasnaya Gorka, in the evening, the fog broke, the clouds scattered like lambs, it cleared up, and real spring was revealed.¹⁶ In the morning, the bright sun rose and ate up the thin ice that coated the water, and all the warm air trembled from the exhalations of the reanimated earth that filled it. The old grass was turning green and sending out new shoots, buds had swelled on the guelder rose and currants, the sticky birches were swollen with sap, and a circling bee hummed on the willow sprinkled with gold flowers. Unseen larks trilled above the velvety

greenery and the ice-caked stubble field, lapwings sobbed above the bottomland and marshes inundated by a storm of standing water, and cranes and geese flew overhead with their springtime honking. Cows still bald in patches lowed in the pastures, bowlegged lambs gamboled around their bleating mothers that were losing their wool, fleet-footed children ran down the drying paths, leaving prints of their bare feet, peasant women's cheerful voices chirred over their linen at the pond, and the peasants' axes rang in every yard as they repaired their plows and harrows. Real spring had arrived.

13

Levin put on his big boots and, for the first time, not his fur coat but a cloth jacket and set out to make a tour of the farm, striding across streams, which hurt his eyes as they glittered in the sun, stepping on a patch of ice one minute and in sticky mud the next.

Spring is the season of plans and intentions. Coming out into the yard, Levin, like a tree in spring that does not yet know where or how its young shoots and branches, contained in rain-swollen buds, will grow, did not know very well which enterprises he would now take up on his beloved farm, but he felt full of the very best plans and intentions. First, he proceeded to the cows. The cows had been let out into the pen, their smooth, newly shed coats shone, and as they warmed up in the sun, they lowed, asking to go into the field. After admiring the cows, which he knew down to their smallest details, Levin ordered them driven into the field and the calves let into the pen. The herder cheerfully ran off to get ready to go to the field. The dairy maids, gathering up their homespun skirts, their bare, still white, not yet browned feet trudging through the mud, chased after the lowing calves, which were crazed with springtime joy, with switches, driving them into the yard.

After admiring the year's increase, which was exceptionally good—the earlier calves were as big as a peasant's cow, Pava's daughter, now three months, was the size of a yearling—Levin ordered the trough brought to them outside and hay thrown over the racks. But it turned out that in the pen, which was not used all winter, the racks made the previous autumn were broken. He sent for the carpenter, who should have been working on the threshing machine. But it turned out that the carpenter was repairing the harrows, which should have been repaired before Lent. Levin found this very annoying. It was annoying to see repeated this perpetually slipshod farming practice, against which he had struggled so hard for so many years. As he found out, the racks, not needed in winter, had been moved into the working stables, where they had broken, since

they had been made to be light, for calves. Moreover, because of this, the harrows and all the agricultural implements that he had ordered inspected and repaired during the winter and for which he had purposely hired three carpenters had not been repaired and the harrows repaired haphazardly only when it was time to do the harrowing. Levin sent for his steward, but set out immediately in search of him himself. The steward, glowing just like everything else that day, and wearing a lamb-trimmed sheepskin coat, was walking from the threshing barn, twisting a straw in his hands.

“Why isn’t the carpenter working on the threshing machine?”

“I was going to report to you yesterday. The harrows need repairing. It’s plowing time after all.”

“And what about during the winter?”

“What was that you wanted the carpenter for?”

“Where are the racks from the calf yard?”

“I ordered them put back. You can’t give these people orders!” said the steward, with a wave of his hand.

“Not these people, but this steward!” said Levin, lashing out. “What do I keep you for!” he shouted. Remembering, though, that this would not help, he stopped halfway through his speech and merely sighed. “Well, can we sow?” he asked after a pause.

“Past Turkino we can tomorrow or the day after.”

“And the clover?”

“I sent Vasily and Mishka, they’re sowing. I just don’t know if they’ll make it through: it’s swampy.”

“How many desyatinas?”

“Six.”

“Why not all?” exclaimed Levin.

The fact that they were sowing only six desyatinas in clover and not twenty, this was even more annoying. According to theory and his own experience, sowing clover was good only when it was done as early as possible, nearly in snow. And Levin could never get this done.

“There isn’t anyone. What do you want me to do with these people? Three never came. Then there’s Semyon . . .”

“Well, you could have taken them away from the thatching.”

“Yes, I already did that.”

“Where is everyone?”

“Five are making compote (he meant compost). Four are turning the oats; so they don’t spoil, Konstantin Dmitrievich.”

Levin well knew that “so they don’t spoil” meant that the English oat seed was already spoiled — once again, they hadn’t done what he had ordered.

“But I told you back at Lent, the pipes!” he shouted.

“Don’t worry, we’ll get it all done in time.”

Levin waved his hand angrily and went to the granaries to take a look at the oats and then returned to the stables. The oats hadn’t spoiled yet. But the workers were using shovels when it could be dumped directly into the lower granary, so having given orders for this and taken two workers to sow the clover, Levin calmed down from his annoyance over the steward. The day was so fine, he couldn’t stay angry.

“Ignat!” he shouted to the driver, who had rolled up his sleeves and was washing the carriage by the well. “Saddle me up . . .”

“Which do you want?”

“Oh, make it Kolpik.”

“Yes, sir.”

While the horse was being saddled, Levin again called over his steward, who was hovering about to make peace with him, and began telling him about the upcoming spring works and his plans for the farm.

Start carting the manure earlier in order to be finished before the early mowing. Till the far field with plows without a break in order to let it lie fallow. Clear the meadows not for half-shares but with hired workers.

The steward listened closely and was evidently making an effort to approve his employer’s proposals; but nonetheless he had the same hopeless, despondent look that Levin knew so well and that always irritated him so. The look said, “This is all well and good, but as God wills.”

Nothing grieved Levin as much as this tone. But this tone was shared by all stewards, no matter how many he had had. They had all had the same attitude toward his proposals, and so now he no longer got angry but merely grieved and felt even more roused to battle with this somehow elemental force which he could not call otherwise than “as God wills,” and which was constantly ranged against him.

“We’ll see how we manage, Konstantin Dmitrievich,” said the steward.

“Why shouldn’t you manage?”

“We have to hire another fifteen or so workers. You see they don’t come. They were just here, they’re asking seventy rubles for the summer.”

Levin did not reply. Again this force was ranged against him. He knew that no matter how they tried, they could not hire more than forty—thirty-seven, thirty-eight workers more likely—for a real price; forty had been hired, but there weren’t any more. Nonetheless, he couldn’t help but struggle.

“Send to Sury and to Chefirovka if they don’t come. We have to look.”

“Sending’s all very well,” said Vasily Fyodorovich dolefully. “But you see the horses are weak.”

“We’ll buy more. I do know,” he added, laughing, “you always say everything’s less and worse, but this year I’m not going to let you have your way. I’ll do everything myself.”

“You don’t seem to get enough sleep as is. We have a better time of it when we’re under the master’s eye.”

“So they’re sowing clover past Birch Dale? I’ll go take a look,” he said, mounting the small sorrel Kolpik, which the driver had led up.

“You won’t get across the stream, Konstantin Dmitrievich,” shouted the driver.

“Then I’ll go by the woods.”

And riding his good, spirited, ambling nag, which had been left standing too long and was snorting over the puddles and begging for the rein, Levin set out through the mud of the yard, past the gates, and into the field.

If Levin enjoyed himself in the cattle and animal yards, he enjoyed himself even more in the field. Swaying rhythmically to the amble of his good little mount, taking in the warm, fresh smell of snow and air as he passed through the woods over the remains of the crumbly snow that lingered here and there in patches, leaving melting tracks, he rejoiced at each of his trees, the moss that had come to life on the bark, and the swollen buds. When he rode out beyond the woods, spread out before him, over an enormous expanse, was an even, velvety carpet of green, without a single bald patch or puddle, only in a few places were there spots of melting snow in the dips. He was not angered by the sight of a peasant horse and foal trampling his young shoots (he told the peasant he met to drive them off) or by the derisive and foolish reply of the peasant Ipat, whom he met and asked: “What about it, Ipat, sowing soon?” “First you have to till, Konstantin Dmitrievich,” Ipat replied. The farther he rode, the more he enjoyed himself, and plans for the farm kept presenting themselves to him, one better than the last: to plant all the fields in willow along the southern edges to keep the snow from lying too long beneath them; to cut it up into six fields of arable and three reserve in fodder; to build a cattle yard at the far end of the field and dig a pond; and for fertilizer, to set up movable barriers for the cattle. And then three hundred desyatinas in wheat, one hundred in potatoes, and one hundred and fifty in clover, and not a single desyatina depleted.

With these dreams, cautiously steering his horse along the verges so as not to trample his own young shoots, he rode up to the workers, who were sowing clover. The cart with the seed stood not on the edge but in the plowed field, and the winter wheat had been rutted by the wheels and dug up by the horse. Both workers were sitting on the verge, probably sharing a pipe. The earth in the cart with which the seed was mixed was not broken up but had clumped together or

frozen in clods. Seeing their master, Vasily the worker walked toward the cart, and Mishka set to sowing. This wasn't good, but Levin rarely got angry at his workers. When Vasily walked up, Levin told him to take the horse to the edge of the field.

"It's all right, sir, it'll pop back up," replied Vasily.

"Please, don't argue," said Levin, "and do as you're told."

"Yes, sir," replied Vasily, and he took the horse by the head. "And that sowing, Konstantin Dmitrievich," he said, trying to ingratiate himself, "it's first-rate. Only it's awful to walk on! You drag a pood on each sandal."

"But why don't you have the earth sifted?" said Levin.

"Oh, we're breaking it up," replied Vasily, gathering up some seed and crushing the earth in his palms.

It was not Vasily's fault that they were spreading unsifted earth, but it was annoying nonetheless.

Having profitably tested more than once a specific remedy he knew for dampening his frustration and everything he found bad and making it good again, Levin now employed this remedy again. He looked to see where Mishka was stepping, shaking off the great clods of earth that stuck to each foot, dismounted, took Vasily's seed basket, and began spreading seed.

"Where did you stop?"

Vasily pointed to a spot with his foot, and Levin began, as best he could, to sow the earth with seed. Walking was difficult, like walking through a swamp, and when Levin finished a row he had worked up a sweat and stopping, gave back the basket.

"Well, sir, come summer, mind you don't scold me for this row," said Vasily.

"Why is that?" said Levin cheerfully, already feeling the effectiveness of the remedy employed.

"You just take a look come summer. It will be different. You take a look at where I sowed last spring. What a sowing job! You see, Konstantin Dmitrievich, I think I tried as hard as I would for my own father. I don't like doing a bad job myself and never tell others to. If the master's happy, so are we. Take a look over there," said Vasily, pointing to the field. "Makes your heart glad."

"It's a fine spring, Vasily."

"Why, even the old men can't remember a spring like this. I was home and our old man there sowed three *osminniks* in wheat, too.¹⁷ He says you can't tell it from the rye."

"Has it been long since you started sowing wheat?"

"Why, it's you taught us year before last. You gave me two measures. We sold a quarter and sowed three *osminniks*."

“Well, mind you break up those clods,” said Levin, walking up to his horse, “and keep an eye on Mishka. If the sprouting’s good, you’ll have fifty kopeks a desyatina.”

“Our humble thanks. We’re well content with you as is.”

Levin mounted his horse and rode off to the field where last year’s clover was and to the field the plow had prepared for the spring wheat.

The clover crop in the stubble field was marvelous. It had survived and turned dark green among the broken stalks of last year’s wheat. The horse sank in up to its pasterns, and each foot squelched as it was pulled out of the half-thawed earth. The plowed land was quite impassable: only where there was a patch of ice did it hold, and in the thawed furrows its leg sank above the pastern. The plowing was superb; in a couple of days they could harrow and sow. All was wonderful, all was cheerful. On his way back, Levin crossed the stream, hoping the water had subsided. And indeed, he crossed and startled two ducks. “There should be woodcock as well,” he thought, and at the turn home he met up with the forest keeper, who confirmed his assumption about the woodcocks.

Levin trotted home to be in time for dinner and to ready his gun for that night.

14

Riding up to the house in the most cheerful of spirits, Levin heard a bell coming from the side of the main entrance.

“Why, that’s someone coming from the railroad,” he thought, “it’s just about time for the Moscow train. . . . Who could it be? What if it’s my brother Nikolai? He did say, ‘Maybe I’ll go away for the waters, or maybe I’ll come visit you. . . .’” Fear and distaste gripped him in that first minute at the thought of his brother Nikolai’s presence disturbing his happy springtime spirits. But he was ashamed at this feeling, and he immediately opened his spiritual arms, so to speak, and with touching joy awaited and desired now with all his heart that this be his brother. He spurred his horse on, and emerging past the acacias, caught sight of a troika sleigh driving up from the station and a gentleman in a fur coat. It was not his brother. “Oh, if only it were someone pleasant with whom to converse,” he thought.

“Ah!” Levin let out a cry of joy, raising both hands above his head. “What a welcome guest! Oh, how glad I am to see you!” he exclaimed when he recognized Stepan Arkadyevich.

“Now I’ll find out for certain whether or when she is getting married,” he thought.

And on this beautiful spring day he felt that the memory of her was not at all painful.

“What, you weren’t expecting me?” said Stepan Arkadyevich, climbing out of the sleigh, with a spatter of mud on the bridge of his nose, his cheek, and his brow, but beaming with good cheer and health. “I came to see you, that’s one,” he said, embracing and kissing him, “to do some shooting, that’s two, and to sell the wood at Ergushovo—that’s three.”

“Wonderful! And what a spring! How was your ride in the sleigh?”

“It’s even worse in a wagon, Konstantin Dmitrievich,” replied the driver, whom Levin knew.

“Well, I’m very, very glad to see you,” said Levin, sincerely smiling his delighted, childlike smile.

Levin led his visitor to the guest room, where Stepan Arkadyevich’s things were brought—a bag, a gun in its case, a cigar pouch—and leaving him to wash up and change his clothes, went into his office to give orders about the plowing and clover. Agafya Mikhailovna, who was always very concerned with the honor of the house, met him in the front hall with questions about dinner.

“Do as you please, only make it quick,” he said, and he went off to see the steward.

When he returned, Stepan Arkadyevich, washed, combed, and with a beaming smile, came out his door and together they went upstairs.

“Well, I am very pleased I found my way to you! Now I shall understand what those mysteries you perform here consist of. But no, truly, I envy you. What a house, how glorious it all is! So light and cheerful,” said Stepan Arkadyevich, forgetting that it was not always spring nor the days clear as they were now. “And your old nurse, how charming! A pretty little maid in an apron would be more to my taste; but it goes very well with your monasticism and rigorous style.”

Stepan Arkadyevich recounted all sorts of interesting news and the news particularly interesting for Levin that his brother Sergei Ivanovich was planning to visit him in the country this summer.

Stepan Arkadyevich did not say a single word about Kitty or the Shcherbat-skys in general; he only conveyed his wife’s greetings. Levin was grateful to him for his delicacy and was very happy to see his guest. As always, in the time of his seclusion, he had accumulated a mass of thoughts and feelings that he could not convey to those around him, and now Stepan Arkadyevich was the recipient of an outpouring on the poetic joy of spring, his failures and plans for the farm, and his thoughts and comments on the books he had read, and in particular the idea of his own writing, the basis of which, although he himself did not remark on this, consisted of a criticism of all the old writing on farming. Stepan Arkadyevich, always kind, understanding everything at the slightest hint, on this visit

was especially kind, and Levin noticed in him a flattering new feature of respect and almost tenderness toward himself.

The efforts of Agafya Mikhailovna and the cook to make the dinner especially fine had as their consequence only the fact that both starving friends, sitting down to appetizers, filled themselves on bread and butter, smoked goose and salted mushrooms, and also in Levin instructing that the soup be served without the *piroziki* with which the cook had hoped especially to impress their visitor.¹⁸ But Stepan Arkadyevich, although accustomed to other dinners, found everything superb: the herb vodka, the bread, the butter, and especially the smoked goose, the mushrooms, the nettle soup, the chicken in white sauce, and the Crimean white wine—everything was superb, marvelous.

“Excellent, excellent,” he said as he lit a fat cigarette after the roast. “I feel as if I’ve stepped off a steamer, after all the noise and shaking, onto your quiet shore. So you say the very element of the worker must be studied and used to guide in the selection of farming methods. I am a layman when it comes to this, but it seems to me that the theory and its application would have an effect on the worker as well.”

“Yes, but wait. I’m not talking about political economy, I’m talking about the science of farming. It should be like the natural sciences and observe the given phenomena and the worker with his economic and ethnographic . . .”

At that moment Agafya Mikhailovna came in with preserves.

“Well, Agafya Mikhailovna,” Stepan Arkadyevich said to her, kissing the tips of her chubby fingers. “What smoked goose you have, and what a fine herb vodka! . . . But now, isn’t it time, Kostya?” he added.

Levin looked out the window at the sun setting behind the wood’s bared treetops.

“It is, it is,” he said. “Kuzma, harness the trap!” And he ran downstairs.

Stepan Arkadyevich, going downstairs, himself neatly removed the canvas cover from a varnished box, and opening it, began assembling his expensive gun, the latest style. Already sensing a large tip, Kuzma would not leave Stepan Arkadyevich’s side and put on his stockings and boots for him, which Stepan Arkadyevich willingly left him to do.

“Give orders, Kostya, if the merchant Ryabinin comes—I told him to come today—to receive him and have him wait. . . .”

“Are you really selling Ryabinin the wood?”

“Yes, you mean you know him?”

“Of course I know him. I’ve dealt ‘positively and decisively’ with him.”

Stepan Arkadyevich laughed. “Decisively and positively” were the merchant’s favorite words.

“Yes, he does have an amazingly funny way of speaking. She’s figured out

where her master is going!" he added, petting Laska, who, whining, was curling around Levin and licking first his hand and then his boots and gun.

The trap was already by the steps when they came out.

"I ordered it harnessed, though it's not far, or shall we go on foot?"

"No, better we ride," said Stepan Arkadyevich, walking up to the trap. He got in, wrapped his legs in a tiger-skin rug, and lit a cigar. "How is it you don't smoke? A cigar is not just a pleasure, but the crown and mark of satisfaction. This is the life! How fine! This is how I would like to live!"

"And who's keeping you from it?" said Levin, smiling.

"No, you are a lucky man. Everything you love, you have here. You love horses, you have them; dogs, you have them, hunting, you have it, a farm, you have it."

"Maybe it's because I take delight in what I do have and don't grieve over what I don't," said Levin, thinking of Kitty.

Stepan Arkadyevich understood, and looked at him, but said nothing.

Levin was grateful to Oblonsky for noticing, with his ever-present tact, that Levin feared a conversation about the Shcherbatskys and so did not mention them; but now Levin was anxious to find out what had tormented him so, but he did not dare speak first.

"So, how are your affairs?" said Levin, thinking that it was wrong on his part to think only of himself.

Stepan Arkadyevich's eyes twinkled merrily.

"But you don't admit that one can like buns when one has one's own ration—according to your lights, that is a crime—but I don't agree that there is life without love," he said, understanding Levin's question in his own way. "What can I do? That's how I was created. And really, it does so little harm to anyone, and gives so much pleasure."

"What then, is there something new?" asked Levin.

"There is, brother! Here you see, you know the Ossianic type of woman . . . the kind of woman you dream of. . . Well, one comes across these women in real life as well . . . and these women are terrible.¹⁹ A woman, you see, is the kind of subject that, no matter how much you study her, she will always be completely new."

"You'd be better off not studying her at all."

"No. Some mathematician said that pleasure lies not in discovering the truth but in searching for it."

Levin listened in silence, but despite all his efforts, he simply could not put himself in his friend's place and understand his feelings or the charm of studying such women.

15

Their hunting spot was not too far distant, above a stream in a small aspen wood. When they had driven up to the woods, Levin climbed down and led Oblonsky to the corner of a mossy, boggy clearing that was already free of snow. He himself turned toward the other side, toward a twin birch, and leaning his gun against the fork of a dry lower branch, removed his long coat, rebuckled his belt, and tested his arms' freedom of movement.

Old gray Laska, who had been following behind him, sat down cautiously facing him and pricked up her ears. The sun was setting behind the large wood, and in the light of sunset the birches scattered through the aspen wood were distinctly outlined with their hanging branches and swollen buds about to burst.

From the dense woods, where there was still snow, he could just make out the gurgle of the narrow, twisting rivulets of water. Tiny birds twittered and flew past occasionally, from tree to tree.

In the intervals of utter quiet he could hear the rustle of last year's leaves, stirring with the earth thawing and the grass growing.

"Imagine! I can hear and see the grass growing!" Levin told himself, having noticed a wet aspen leaf the color of slate shifting under a blade of young grass. He stood there listening and looking down at the wet, mossy earth, at sharp-eared Laska, at the sea of bare treetops spread over the slope below, at the dimming sky masked with white bands of clouds. A hawk, lazily flapping its wings, crossed high above the distant woods; another crossed in exactly the same way, in the same direction, and was lost from view. The birds chirped more and more loudly and restlessly in the thicket. Not far away, an owl hooted, and Laska, shuddering, took a few cautious steps, cocked her head to one side, and listened closely. There was a cuckoo beyond the stream. It cuckooed twice with its usual cry but then became raspy, rushed, and tangled.

"Imagine! It's a cuckoo!" said Stepan Arkadyevich, emerging from behind a bush.

"Yes, I hear it," replied Levin, displeased to be breaking the quiet of the woods with his own voice, which he himself found unpleasant. "It won't be long."

The figure of Stepan Arkadyevich again stepped behind the bush, and Levin saw only the bright flame of a match, followed immediately thereafter by the red ash of a cigarette and dark blue smoke.

Click! Click! Stepan Arkadyevich cocked his trigger.

"What is that cry?" asked Oblonsky, drawing Levin's attention to a protracted crowing that sounded like a colt neighing, playfully, in a reedy voice.

"Ah, you don't know that? It's the male hare. Enough talk! Listen, one's coming!" Levin nearly shouted, cocking his trigger.

There was a distant, reedy whistle, and after exactly the right interval, so familiar to the hunter, two seconds later, a second, a third, and after the third whistle a guttural cry.

Levin cast his eyes to the right and to the left, and there before him in the cloudy blue sky, above the tender entwining shoots of the aspen treetops, a flying bird appeared. It was coming straight toward him: he heard the close sounds of the guttural cry, like the even tearing of taut fabric, right over his ear; now he could see the bird's long beak and neck, and at that moment, as Levin was taking aim, behind the bush where Oblonsky was standing, there was a red flash; the bird dropped like an arrow and then shot back up. Another flash followed by a report; and flapping its wings as if trying to stay in the air, the bird stopped, hung there for a moment, and fell with a thud to the boggy earth.

"You mean I missed?" cried Stepan Arkadyevich, who could not see because of the smoke.

"There it is!" said Levin, pointing to Laska, who, one ear straight up and wagging the tip of her fluffy tail high, stepping quietly, as if wishing to prolong the satisfaction, and as if smiling, brought the dead bird to her master. "Well, I'm happy you got it," said Levin, at the same time though feeling envious that he had not been the one to kill this woodcock.

"A nasty miss from the right barrel," replied Stepan Arkadyevich, loading his gun. "Ssh. . . one's coming."

Indeed, there were piercing whistles, following quickly one after the other. Two woodcocks, playing and chasing one another and only whistling, but not crying, were flying right toward the hunters' heads. Four shots rang out, and like swallows, the woodcocks made a quick turn and disappeared from view.

The flight was wonderful. Stepan Arkadyevich killed two more pieces and Levin two, one of which he could not find. It started growing dark. Clear silver Venus, low in the west, was already shining through the birches with her gentle gleam, and dark Arcturus's red lights were cascading high in the east.²⁰ Overhead, Levin kept catching and losing the stars of the Great Bear. The woodcocks had stopped flying; but Levin decided to wait a little longer, until Venus, which he could see below a birch branch, rose above it and the stars of the Great Bear were clear everywhere. Venus had risen above the branch, the Great Bear's chariot and shaft were fully visible in the dark blue sky, but he still waited.

"Isn't it time?" asked Stepan Arkadyevich.

It was quiet in the wood now, and not a single bird stirred.

"Let's stay a little longer," replied Levin.

"As you like."

They were now standing about fifteen paces apart.

“Stiva!” Levin spoke suddenly. “Won’t you tell me whether your sister-in-law has married already or when she will?”

Levin felt so strong and calm that no answer, he thought, could upset him. But he had never expected what Stepan Arkadyevich said in reply.

“She hasn’t and isn’t contemplating it, and she is quite ill, and the doctors have sent her abroad. They even fear for her life.”

“What is that you say?” cried Levin. “Quite ill? What’s wrong with her? How did she . . .”

While they were saying this, Laska, her ears pricked up, was looking up at the sky and then reproachfully at them.

“What a time they’ve found to talk,” she thought. “And it’s coming. . . . There it is, that’s it. They’re missing it. . . .” thought Laska.

But at that very instant both men suddenly heard the piercing whistle, which seemed to lash them on the ears, and both suddenly grabbed their guns, and two bursts flashed, and two reports were heard at the exact same instant. The high-flying woodcock instantly folded its wings and fell into the thicket, bending the slender shoots.

“That’s excellent! A share!” shouted Levin, and he and Laska ran into the thicket to find the woodcock. “Oh yes, what was it that was so unpleasant?” he recalled. “Yes, Kitty is ill. . . . What can I do? I’m very sorry,” he thought.

“Ah, you found it! Good dog,” he said, taking the warm bird out of Laska’s mouth and placing it in his nearly full game bag. “I found it, Stiva!” he exclaimed.

16

Returning home, Levin inquired into all the details of Kitty’s illness and the Shcherbatskys’ plans, and although he would have been ashamed to admit it, what he learned pleased him. It pleased him both because there was still hope and, even more, because she was hurt, she who had hurt him so. But when Stepan Arkadyevich began talking about the reasons for Kitty’s illness and mentioned Vronsky’s name, Levin interrupted him.

“I have no right to know family details, and to tell the truth, I’m not interested, either.”

Stepan Arkadyevich smiled barely perceptibly, catching the instantaneous and so familiar alteration in Levin’s face, which was now as dark as it had been cheerful a moment before.

“Are you completely finished with Ryabinin about the wood?” asked Levin.

“Yes, I am. The price is wonderful, thirty-eight thousand. Eight in advance,

and the rest over six years. I've been dealing with this for a long time. No one was offering more."

"That means you gave the wood up for nothing," said Levin gloomily.

"What do you mean, for nothing?" said Stepan Arkadyevich with a good-natured smile, knowing that now Levin would find something wrong with everything.

"Because the wood is worth at least five hundred rubles a desyatina," replied Levin.

"I like these farm owners!" said Stepan Arkadyevich jokingly. "This tone of contempt of yours for your city cousin! No matter how a matter is handled, we can always handle it better. Believe me, I've calculated it all out," he said, "and the wood has been sold quite profitably, so that I'm afraid he might even refuse. This is a young wood, after all," Stepan Arkadyevich said, hoping with the word "young" to convince Levin completely of the unfairness of his doubts, "if it were good timber it would be more. It won't yield more than thirty sazhen per desyatina, and he gave me two hundred rubles each."

Levin smiled contemptuously. "I know," he thought, "this is not just his manner, it's the same for all city folk who have been in the country twice in ten years and taken note of a few country words, employ them every which way, firmly convinced that they now know everything. 'Young,' 'yield,' 'thirty sazhen.' He says the words but he himself doesn't understand a thing."

"I'm not going to try to teach you what to write there in your office," he said, "but if need be, then I would ask you. But you're so certain you understand all there is to know about a wood. That's hard. Have you counted the trees?"

"How can you count the trees?" said Stepan Arkadyevich, laughing, still hoping to bring his friend out of his bad spirits. "'A higher mind the grains of sand, the planets' rays might count . . .'"²¹

"Well, Ryabinin's higher mind could. No merchant would buy without counting unless someone were selling it for nothing, as you are. I know your wood. I'm there every year hunting, and your wood is worth five hundred rubles cash, while he's given you two hundred in installments. That means you've given him a present of about thirty thousand."

"Enough of this enthusiasm," said Stepan Arkadyevich piteously. "Why didn't anyone offer that then?"

"Because he's in league with the other merchants; he's bought them off. I've done business with them all, I know them. These aren't merchants, they're speculators. He would never agree to a deal for ten or fifteen percent, he waits to buy for twenty kopeks on the ruble."

"Enough! You're out of sorts."

“Not a bit,” said Levin gloomily, as they rode up to the house.

Pulled up at the front steps was a buggy fitted in iron and leather, with a sleek horse tightly harnessed with wide traces. Sitting in the buggy was the blood-engorged, tightly belted steward who served as Ryabinin’s driver. Ryabinin himself was already in the house and met the friends in the front hall. Ryabinin was a tall, gaunt man of middle age with a mustache, a prominent shaved chin, and cloudy bulging eyes. He was dressed in a long-tailed dark blue coat with buttons low on the back and high boots that bunched around the ankles and fit smoothly over the calves, over which he wore big galoshes. He wiped his handkerchief in a circle over his face, and rewrapping his coat around him, though it already hung quite well, greeted the arrivals with a smile, holding his hand out to Stepan Arkadyevich, as if hoping to catch something.

“So you have come,” said Stepan Arkadyevich, shaking his hand. “Wonderful.”

“I dared not fail to abide by Your Excellency’s instructions, although the road was very bad. I went on foot absolutely the entire way, but arrived in time. Konstantin Dmitrievich, my respects,” he turned to Levin, trying to catch his hand as well. But Levin scowled, pretending not to notice his hand, and started taking out the woodcocks. “You have indulged in the pleasures of the hunt? These would be what kind of birds then?” added Ryabinin, contemptuously regarding the woodcocks. “So they must be tasty.” And he shook his head disapprovingly, as if seriously doubting that this game was worth the candle.

“Would you like to go into my study?” said Levin to Stepan Arkadyevich in French, scowling gloomily. “Go on into the study, you can discuss your business there.”

“Very kind, wherever you like,” said Ryabinin with contemptuous dignity, as if wishing to let it be felt that others might have difficulties knowing how to go about things and with whom, but for him there could never be difficulties in anything.

Entering the study, Ryabinin looked around out of habit, as if searching for the icon, but when he found it, he did not cross himself. He surveyed the cabinets and bookshelves and with the same doubt as he had had with regard to the woodcocks, smiled contemptuously and shook his head disapprovingly, unwilling to allow that this game might be worth the candle.

“So, did you bring the money?” asked Oblonsky. “Sit down.”

“We are not going to be held up over money. I came to visit with you and discuss the matter.”

“What is there to discuss? Please, sit down.”

“Very kind,” said Ryabinin, sitting and in for him the most agonized fashion leaning back in his chair. “One must make concessions, Prince. It would be a

sin. But the money is entirely ready, down to the last kopek. There will be no delay over the money.”

Levin, having placed his gun back in the cabinet, was walking out the door, but when he heard the merchant’s words he stopped.

“As it is, you’ve got the wood for nothing,” he said. “He came to me too late, or I would have set the price.”

Ryabinin stood up and silently looked Levin up and down, a smile on his face.

“How very stingy you are, Konstantin Dmitrievich,” he said smiling, turning to Stepan Arkadyevich. “One can never buy anything from you. I tried to make a deal for your wheat, I was offering good money.”

“Why should I give you what is mine for nothing? It’s not as if I found it on the ground or stole it.”

“Pardon me, but there is positively no way of stealing nowadays. Everything nowadays finally is a public legal proceeding, everything nowadays is dignified; there’s no question of stealing. We were speaking in all honesty. The price for the wood is too high, the calculations do not come out. I beg you to concede just a little.”

“Is your deal made or isn’t it? If it’s made, there’s no point haggling, but if it’s not,” said Levin, “I’m buying the wood.”

The smile suddenly vanished from Ryabinin’s face. A hawkish, predatory, and cruel expression settled on it. With quick bony fingers he unbuttoned his coat, revealing his shirt, which he wore outside his trousers, the brass buttons of his vest, and his watch chain, and quickly took out an old but thick wallet.

“If you please, the wood is mine,” he pronounced, quickly crossing himself and extending his hand. “Take the money, it’s my wood. This is how Ryabinin deals, not counting coins,” he began, frowning and waving the wallet.

“In your place I wouldn’t be in any hurry,” said Levin.

“Mercy!” said Oblonsky in amazement. “I did give my word.”

Levin left the room, slamming the door. Looking at the door, Ryabinin shook his head, smiling.

“It’s all youth, perfect childishness, nothing more. After all, I am buying it, believe me, on my honor, that is, only for the glory that Ryabinin here, and no one else, has bought a woods from Oblonsky. God grant the accounts work out. Believe in God. If you would be so kind. Sign the title . . .”

An hour later the merchant, neatly wrapping his overcoat around himself and fastening the hooks, with the title in his pocket, stepped into his snugly fitted buggy and went home.

“Oh, these fine gentlemen!” he said to the steward. “A subject all their own.”

“That’s how it is,” replied the steward, handing him the reins and fastening his leather apron. “And your little purchase, Mikhail Ignatich?”

“Well, well . . .”

17

Stepan Arkadyevich, his pocket bulging with the notes the merchant had given him for three months, went upstairs. The matter of the forest was concluded, the money was in his pocket, the shooting had been marvelous, and Stepan Arkadyevich was in the best of spirits, and so he especially wanted to dispel the bad mood that had come over Levin. He wanted to end the day at supper just as pleasantly as it had begun.

Indeed, Levin was out of sorts, and notwithstanding all his desire to be kind and gracious with his dear guest, he could not control himself. The tipsiness induced by the news that Kitty had not married gradually began chipping away at him.

Kitty was not married and was unwell, unwell due to her love for someone who had spurned her. It was as if this insult had been inflicted on him. Vronsky had spurned her, and she had spurned him, Levin. Consequently, Vronsky had a right to despise Levin and so was his enemy. However Levin was not thinking all this. He had the vague feeling that there was something insulting in this for him and now he was not angry at what had upset him but rather found fault with everything that presented itself. The foolish sale of the wood, the trap Oblonsky had fallen into and that had transpired in his own home, irritated him.

“Well, have you finished?” he said, meeting Stepan Arkadyevich upstairs. “Would you like supper?”

“I won’t say no. What an appetite I have in the country, it’s marvelous! Why didn’t you offer Ryabinin something to eat?”

“Oh, to hell with him!”

“Still, the way you treat him!” said Oblonsky. “You didn’t even shake his hand. Why didn’t you shake his hand?”

“Because I don’t shake hands with a footman, and a footman is a hundred times better.”

“My, what a reactionary you are! What about the merging of the estates?” said Oblonsky.

“Whoever enjoys merging—I wish them well, but I find it loathsome.”

“I see you are definitely a reactionary.”

“You know, I’ve never given a thought to what I was. I’m Konstantin Levin, nothing more.”

“And a Konstantin Levin who is very out of sorts,” said Stepan Arkadyevich, smiling.

“Yes, I am out of sorts, and you know why? Forgive me, but it’s your foolish sale . . .”

Stepan Arkadyevich frowned good-naturedly, like someone who has been innocently insulted and upset.

“Enough now!” he said. “When has it ever happened that someone sold something without being told immediately after the sale, ‘It’s worth much more’? Though when they’re trying to sell it, no one’s offering. . . . No, I see you have it in for this unfortunate Ryabinin.”

“Maybe I do. And do you know why? You’ll call me a reactionary again, or some other terrible word; nonetheless, I find it annoying and insulting to see this impoverishment that is happening all around to the nobility, to which I belong, and to which, the merging of the estates notwithstanding, I am quite happy to belong. And this impoverishment is not the result of luxury—that would be all right; living like a lord is for the nobility to do, the way only noblemen know how. Now the peasants around us are buying up land—and that does not offend me. The lord does nothing, and the peasant works and squeezes out the idle man. That is as it should be. I’m very glad for the peasant. What I find offensive, though, is to watch this impoverishment out of some—I don’t know what to call it—innocence. Just over here a Polish tenant bought a marvelous estate for half its worth from a young lady who lives in Nice. Here they’re leasing to a merchant for a ruble a desyatina of land that is worth ten rubles. Here, you, for no reason at all, made this swindler a gift of thirty thousand.”

“So what am I to do? Count every tree?”

“Certainly count them. You see, you didn’t count them, but Ryabinin did. Ryabinin’s children will have means for their livelihood and education, while yours may well not!”

“Well, you must forgive me, but there is something petty in this counting. We have our occupations, they have theirs, and they need their profits. And anyway, the deal is done, and that’s the end. Whereas here we have fried eggs, my very favorite kind. And Agafya Mikhailovna is going to give us this marvelous herb vodka . . .”

Stepan Arkadyevich sat down at the table and started joking with Agafya Mikhailovna, assuring her that he had not eaten a dinner and supper like this in a long time.

“You at least offer praise,” said Agafya Mikhailovna, “but Konstantin Dmitrievich, no matter what you give him, a crust of bread it could be—he eats it and goes.”

No matter how hard Levin tried to control himself, he was gloomy and taciturn. He needed to put one question to Stepan Arkadyevich, but he couldn't make up his mind and couldn't find the form or the moment, how or when to ask it. Stepan Arkadyevich had already retired to his room downstairs, undressed, washed up again, arrayed himself in a pleated nightshirt, and got into bed, and Levin was still dawdling in his room, talking about all kinds of trifles and unable to ask what he wanted to know.

"How marvelously they make soap," he said, examining and unwrapping the scented soap that Agafya Mikhailovna had prepared for their guest but that Oblonsky had not used. "You must look, this is really a work of art."

"Yes, all manner of improvement has affected everything now," said Stepan Arkadyevich, yawning moistly and blissfully. "The theaters, for instance, and the entertainments . . . a-aah!" he yawned. "Electric light everywhere . . . a-aah!"

"Yes, electric light," said Levin. "Yes. Well, and where is Vronsky now?" he asked, suddenly putting down the soap.

"Vronsky?" said Stepan Arkadyevich, stifling a yawn. "He's in Petersburg. He left shortly after you did and has not been in Moscow once since. And you know, Kostya, I'll tell you the truth," he continued, resting his elbows on the table and in his hand his handsome ruddy face, from which his sensual, good, and sleepy eyes shone like stars, "You have only yourself to blame. You let a rival frighten you off. But as I told you at the time, I don't know whose side had the greater chance. Why didn't you persevere, obstacles be damned? I told you at the time that . . ." — he yawned with just his jaws, not opening his mouth.

"Does he or doesn't he know that I proposed?" thought Levin, looking at him. "Yes, there is something cunning and diplomatic, in his face," and feeling himself blush, he looked straight into Stepan Arkadyevich's eyes, not saying anything.

"If there was anything on her part then, it was an infatuation with appearances," Oblonsky continued. "That one, you know, is perfect aristocratism and his future position in society influenced not her but her mother."

Levin scowled. The insult of the rejection he had suffered struck his heart as if it were a fresh, newly incurred wound. He was at home, though, and at home the walls help.

"Hold on, hold on," he said, interrupting Oblonsky. "You say 'aristocratism.' But allow me to ask you what Vronsky's aristocratism, or anyone else's for that matter, consists of—the kind of aristocratism that could spurn me? You consider Vronsky an aristocrat, but I don't. A man whose father was an intriguer who crawled out of nothing and whose mother has been linked with God knows who. . . . No, you must excuse me, but I consider myself and people like me aris-

toocrats, people who in the past can point to three or four honorable generations of family at the highest degree of education (talent and intelligence are another matter), and who have never groveled before anyone, who have never needed anyone, as my father and my grandfather lived. And I know many such men. It seems mean to you that I count the trees in the wood, yet you are making Ryabinin a present of thirty thousand; but you will have rents and I don't know what else, and I won't and so I treasure what comes from my family and my labor. . . . We are aristocrats, not those who can exist only on sops from the powerful of this world and who can be bought for twenty kopeks."

"But whom are you attacking? I agree with you," Stepan Arkadyevich said sincerely and cheerfully, although he sensed that by those who could be bought for a coin Levin meant him as well. He sincerely liked Levin's animation. "Whom are you attacking? Although much of what you say about Vronsky is untrue, that's not what I'm talking about. I'm speaking to you frankly, in your place I would return to Moscow with me and . . ."

"No, I don't know whether you know or not but I don't care. And I'll tell you—I proposed and was rejected, and Katerina Alexandrovna for me is now a hard and shameful memory."

"But why? What nonsense!"

"Let's not talk, though. Forgive me, please, if I've been rude to you," said Levin. Now, having said his piece, he was once again the way he had been that morning. "You're not angry with me, Stiva? Please, don't be angry," he said, and smiling, he took his hand.

"Oh no, not a bit, there's nothing to be angry about. I'm happy we cleared things up. But you know, a morning shoot can be fine. Shall we go? I wouldn't sleep at all but go straight from the shoot to the station."

"Splendid."

18

Although Vronsky's entire inner life was filled with his passion, his outward life rolled, relentless and unchanged, down the old familiar tracks of society and regimental connections and interests. Regimental interests held an important place in Vronsky's life, both because he loved his regiment, and even more because the regiment loved him. The regiment not only loved and respected Vronsky, they took pride in him, took pride in the fact that this man, tremendously wealthy, with a marvelous education and abilities, with an open road to all kinds of success for both his ambition and his vanity, had spurned all this and of all his vital interests had taken closest to heart the interests of his regiment

and of fellowship. Vronsky was cognizant of this view of himself on the part of his fellows, and not only did he love this life, he felt obligated to maintain the established view of him.

It goes without saying that he spoke with none of his fellows about his love, did not let it slip even during their most serious drinking parties (actually, he was never so drunk as to lose his self-control), and he shut up any of his careless fellows who tried to hint at his liaison. However, even though his love was known to the whole town—everyone had more or less accurately guessed about his relations with Madame Karenina—the majority of young men envied him for precisely what was most difficult in his love: Karenin's high position and the consequent high visibility of this liaison for society.

The majority of young women who envied Anna and who had long grown tired of people calling her *righteous* rejoiced in what they assumed, and awaited only confirmation of the turn in public opinion before crushing her with the full weight of their contempt. They had been readying those clumps of mud they would throw at her when the time came. Most of the older people and highly placed people were ill pleased with this impending public scandal.

Vronsky's mother, upon learning of his liaison, was at first content—both because nothing, according to her lights, lent a young man such a final polish as a liaison in high society and because Madame Karenina, whom she had liked so much and who had spoken so much about her own son, was after all just like every other beautiful and proper woman, according to Countess Vronskaya's lights. Of late, however, she had learned that her son had refused a position important for his career merely in order to remain in his regiment, where he could see Madame Karenina, learned that highly placed individuals were ill pleased with him, and she changed her opinion. She also disliked the fact that according to everything she had learned about this liaison, this was not that brilliant, gracious, society liaison of which she could have approved but some desperate, Wertheresque passion, as she was told, that could lead him into foolishness.²² She had not seen him since his abrupt departure from Moscow and through her older son demanded that he come see her.

The older brother was ill pleased with the younger as well. He could not figure out what sort of love this was, great or small, passionate or cool, depraved or not depraved (he himself, while having children, kept a dancer and so was lenient toward this); however, he knew that this was a love that did not please those who needed to be pleased, and so he did not approve of his brother's conduct.

Apart from the occupations of service and society, Vronsky had one other—horses, for which he was passionately keen.

This year, an officers' steeplechase had been arranged. Vronsky signed up for the race, bought a blooded English mare, and despite his love, was passionately, although somewhat reservedly, caught up in the upcoming races.

These two passions did not preclude one another. On the contrary, he needed this occupation and distraction, independent of his love, where he could be refreshed and relax from his extremely disturbing impressions.

19

On the day of the Krasnoye Selo races, Vronsky came earlier than usual to eat a steak in the regimental officers' mess. He did not need to keep himself in strict check, since his weight exactly equaled the correct four and a half poods; but he could not gain any weight either, and so he avoided starches and sweets. He was sitting with his coat unbuttoned over his white vest, with both elbows on the table, and while waiting for the steak he had ordered, was looking at the French novel lying on his plate. He was looking at the book only so as not to get into conversation with the officers coming and going, and he was thinking.

He was thinking about how Anna had promised to give him a rendezvous today after the races. But he had not seen her for three days and, as a result of her husband's return from abroad, did not know whether this would be possible today or not, and he did not know how to find this out. He had last seen her at his cousin Betsy's dacha. He went to the Karenins' dacha as rarely as possible. Now he wanted to go there and was considering how he might accomplish this.

"Of course, I shall say that Betsy sent me to ask whether she was coming to the races. Of course, I shall go," he decided privately, raising his head from his book. And vividly imagining the happiness of seeing her, his face shone.

"Send around to my house for them to harness the troika as quickly as possible," he told the waiter who had served him his steak on a sizzling silver platter, and pulling the platter toward himself, he began to eat.

In the adjoining billiards room he heard the balls striking, the talk and laughter. Two officers appeared at the main door: one, quite young, with a weak, delicate face, who had recently joined their regiment from the Corps of Pages; the other, a chubby old officer with a bracelet on his wrist and bloated little eyes.

Vronsky looked at them, frowned, and as if not noticing them, glancing at his book, began to eat and read at the same time.

"What? Fortifying yourself for your work?" said the chubby officer, sitting down beside him.

"You see," replied Vronsky, frowning, wiping his mouth and not looking at him.

“Aren’t you afraid of getting fat?” said the other, turning a chair around for the fresh-faced officer.

“What?” said Vronsky angrily, grimacing in revulsion and showing his close-set teeth.

“Aren’t you afraid of getting fat?”

“Waiter, some sherry!” said Vronsky without responding, and moving his book to the other side, he continued to read.

The chubby officer took the wine list and turned to the fresh-faced officer.

“You choose what we’ll drink,” he said, giving him the list and looking at him.

“Please, a Rhine wine,” said the young officer, shyly glancing at Vronsky and trying to finger his barely grown mustache. Seeing that Vronsky was not turning around, the young officer stood up.

“Let’s go to the billiards room,” he said. The chubby officer rose obediently, and they headed for the door.

At that moment the tall and stately Captain Yashvin entered, and nodding contemptuously at the two officers, walked over to Vronsky.

“Ah! Here he is!” he exclaimed, thumping Vronsky’s epaulette with his large hand. Vronsky looked around angrily, but immediately his face brightened with his characteristic calm and steady fondness.

“Wisely done, Alyosha,” said the captain in his loud baritone. “Now eat and drink one small glass.”

“I don’t really feel like eating.”

“Look at the inseparables,” added Yashvin, with an amused look at the two officers, who were leaving the room just then. And he sat down beside Vronsky, bending his legs, which were encased in tight riding breeches and which were too long for the height of the chairs, at sharp angles. “Why didn’t you stop by the Krasnoye Selo theater yesterday? Numerova was not at all bad. Where were you?”

“I stayed too long at the Tverskoys’,” replied Vronsky.

“Ah!” Yashvin responded.

Yashvin, a gambler and fast liver not merely without principles but with immoral principles—Yashvin was Vronsky’s best friend in the regiment. Vronsky loved him both for his exceptional physical strength, which he demonstrated mostly by being able to drink like a fish, go without sleep, and not show the effects, and for his great moral influence, which he demonstrated in his relations with his superiors and his fellows, commanding fear and respect, and in his gambling, which he did for tens of thousands and always, despite the wine he had drunk, with such subtlety and assurance that he was considered the ace gambler at the English Club. Vronsky admired and loved him in particular because he sensed that Yashvin loved him not for his name and wealth but for

himself. Of all men, with him alone would Vronsky have liked to speak of his love. He sensed that Yashvin alone, even though he seemed to despise all emotion—he alone, it seemed to Vronsky, could appreciate the powerful passion that now filled his entire life. Moreover, he was sure he would certainly find no satisfaction in gossip and scandal but would understand this emotion properly, that is, he would know and believe that this love was not a joke or a game but something more serious and important.

Vronsky had not spoken to him of his love, but he knew that he knew and understood everything properly, and it felt good to see this in his eyes.

“Ah, yes!” he said, in reply to the fact that Vronsky had been at the Tverskoys’, and his black eyes flashed, and he twirled his left mustache and began putting it in his mouth, a bad habit.

“Well, and what did you do yesterday? Did you win?” asked Vronsky.

“Eight thousand. But three don’t count, he’s hardly going to pay.”

“Well then, you can lose for me like that, too,” said Vronsky, laughing. (Yashvin had placed a large bet on Vronsky.)

“I’m not losing for anything.”

“Makhotin is the only threat.”

And the conversation moved on to expectations for the day’s races, which was all Vronsky could think of now.

“Let’s go, I’m finished,” said Vronsky, and standing, he walked toward the door. Yashvin stood also, stretching his tremendously long legs and back.

“It’s too early for me to dine, but I need a drink. I’ll be right there. Hey, some wine!” he shouted in his thick voice famous in the command for making windows rattle. “No, no need,” he shouted again immediately after. “You’re on your way home, so I’ll go with you.”

And he and Vronsky left.

20

Vronsky was standing in his spacious and clean Finnish hut, which was partitioned in two. Petritsky lived with him at camp, too. Petritsky was sleeping when Vronsky and Yashvin walked into the hut.

“Get up, you’ve slept enough,” said Yashvin, going behind the partition and prodding on the shoulder a disheveled Petritsky, who had buried his nose in his pillow.

Petritsky jumped up onto his knees and looked around.

“Your brother was here,” he told Vronsky. “He woke me up, damn his eyes, said he’d come back.” And pulling the blanket back up, he threw himself at

his pillow. "And leave me alone, Yashvin," he said, angry at Yashvin, who had pulled the blanket off him. "Leave me alone!" He turned over and opened his eyes. "You'd do better telling me what to drink; I have this nasty taste in my mouth . . ."

"A little vodka's best of all," boomed Yashvin. "Tereshchenko! Vodka for the gentleman and a cucumber," he shouted, evidently enamored of the sound of his own voice.

"Vodka you think? Eh?" asked Petritsky, frowning and rubbing his eyes. "Will you have a drink? Together, then, let's drink! Vronsky, will you have a drink?" said Petritsky, standing up and bundling his tiger-skin blanket around him under his arms.

He came through the partition door, lifted his arms, and started singing in French: "There was a king in Thu-u-ule, . . ."²³ Vronsky, will you have a drink?"

"Get out," said Vronsky, putting on the coat his servant was holding for him.

"Where to?" Yashvin asked him. "Here's your troika," he added, seeing the carriage drive up.

"The stables, and I also need to see Bryansky about the horses," said Vronsky.

Vronsky had indeed promised to go to Bryansky's, about ten *versts* from Peterhof, and to bring him the money for the horses, and he wanted to have some time there as well.²⁴ But his fellows understood immediately that he was not going only there.

Petritsky, still singing, winked and pouted, as if to say, "We know which Bryansky that is."

"Mind you're not late!" was all Yashvin said, and to change the subject: "What about my roan, serving you well?" he asked, looking out the window, about the shaft horse he had sold him.

"Wait!" Petritsky shouted to Vronsky, who was already departing. "Your brother left you a letter and a note. Wait, where are they?"

Vronsky stopped.

"Well, where are they?"

"Where are they? That is the question!" Petritsky pronounced solemnly, pointing his index finger upward from his nose.

"Speak then, this is silly!" said Vronsky, smiling.

"I didn't feed the fire. They're here somewhere."

"Well, enough nonsense! Where's the letter?"

"No, I really did forget. Or did I dream it? Wait, wait! Nothing to get angry about! If you'd drunk four bottles a head yesterday like I did, you'd forget where you were, too. Wait, I'll remember!"

Petritsky went behind the partition and lay down on his bed.

"Wait! I was lying like this, he was standing like that. Yes, yes, yes . . ."

Here it is!" And Petritsky pulled the letter out from under the mattress, where he'd hidden it away.

Vronsky took his brother's letter and note. It was exactly what he had been expecting—a letter from their mother reproaching him for not coming to see her and a note from his brother that said they needed to talk. Vronsky knew it was all about the same thing. "What business is it of theirs?" thought Vronsky, and crumpling the letters, he stuffed them in between the buttons of his coat, in order to read them through carefully en route. In the hut's inner porch he was met by two officers, one from their own and the other from another regiment.

Vronsky's quarters were always the haunt for all the officers.

"Where to?"

"Peterhof, I must."

"Did the horse come from Tsarskoye?"

"Yes, but I still haven't seen her."

"They're saying Makhotin's Gladiator's gone lame."

"Rubbish! Only how are you going to race through this mud?" said the other.

"Here are my saviors!" exclaimed Petritsky when he walked in and saw the new arrivals. His orderly was standing in front of him with vodka and pickles on a tray. "Here Yashvin's telling me to drink to revive myself."

"Well, you did give us what for yesterday," said one of the arrivals, "and you didn't let us sleep all night."

"No, and how we finished up!" Petritsky recounted. "Volkov climbed on the roof and said he felt sad. I said, Let's have some music, a funeral march! He fell asleep just like that, on the roof, to the funeral march."

"Drink, you must drink some vodka, and then some seltzer water and plenty of lemon," said Yashvin, standing over Petritsky like a mother trying to make her child take his medicine, "and then just a tad of Champagne—a small bottle."

"Now that's clever. Wait, Vronsky, let's have a drink."

"No, good-bye, gentlemen, I'm not drinking today."

"Why, are you gaining weight? Well, then we're on our own. Let's have some seltzer and lemon."

"Vronsky!" someone shouted when he had already gone on the porch vestibule.

"What?"

"You should cut your hair, otherwise it's going to be too heavy, especially on your bald spot."²⁵

Vronsky had indeed started to lose his hair prematurely. He burst into cheerful laughter, showing his close-set teeth, and placing his cap on his bald spot, he went out and got into his carriage.

"To the stables!" he said, and was about to get out the letters in order to read

them but then thought better of it, so as not to be distracted before examining the horse. "Later!"

21

A temporary stable, its stalls made of boards, had been built alongside the racecourse itself, and it was here that his horse was supposed to have been brought yesterday. He had yet to see her. These past few days he himself had not gone out to exercise her but had instructed the trainer and now had no idea what state the horse had arrived in or was now. Scarcely had he emerged from the carriage when his groom, the so-called stable boy, having spotted his carriage a long way off, summoned the trainer. The lean Englishman, wearing tall boots and a short jacket, with just a tuft of hair left under his chin, and with a jockey's awkward gait, his elbows jutting out, and rocking from side to side, came out to meet him.

"Well, how's Frou-Frou?" Vronsky asked in English.

"*All right sir*—all right, sir"—the Englishman's voice came from somewhere deep in his throat.²⁶ "You'd better not go in," he added, raising his hat. "I put on the muzzle, and the horse is agitated. You'd better not go in, it alarms the horse."

"No, I'm going in. I want to have a look."

"Let's go," said the Englishman, frowning and still barely opening his mouth. Still swinging his elbows, he lurched ahead.

They entered the small yard in front of the stable. The attendant, wearing a clean jacket, a sprightly boy smartly dressed, broom in hand, greeted the visitors and followed them in. In the stable were five horses in the different stalls, and Vronsky knew that his chief rival, Makhotin's sixteen-hand chestnut Gladiator, ought to have been brought in and be standing here right now. Even more than his own horse, Vronsky wanted to see Gladiator, whom he had never seen; but Vronsky knew that according to horseracing etiquette, not only could he not see it, but it was even improper to inquire about him. As he was walking down the passage, the boy opened the door to the second stall on the left, and Vronsky saw a large chestnut with white legs. He knew this was Gladiator, but feeling like someone turning away from someone else's opened letter, he turned and approached Frou-Frou's stall.

"This horse belongs to Ma-k . . . Ma-k . . . I never can pronounce that name," the Englishman said over his shoulder, pointing a large dirty fingernail at Gladiator's stall.

"Makhotin? Yes, he's my one serious rival," said Vronsky.

"If you were riding him," said the Englishman, "I'd bet on you."

"Frou-Frou's more high-strung, he's stronger," said Vronsky, smiling at the praise of his riding.

“With the steeplechase, it’s all a matter of riding and *pluck*,” said the Englishman.²⁷

Pluck, that is, energy and daring—Vronsky not only felt he had enough of it but, what was much more important, he was firmly convinced that no one in the world could have more of this *pluck* than he.

“Are you sure more *hard exercise* wasn’t necessary?”

“It wasn’t,” the Englishman replied. “Please, don’t speak loudly. The horse is agitated,” he added, nodding at the locked stall in front of which they were standing, where they could hear hooves shifting on straw.

He opened the door, and Vronsky entered the stall, which was weakly lit by one small window. In the stall, shifting her feet over the fresh straw, stood a dark bay wearing a muzzle. Looking around in the half-light of the stall, Vronsky once again involuntarily embraced with one full look all the points of his favorite horse. Frou-Frou was a horse of average size and far from irreproachable on her points. She was narrow-boned all over; although her breastbone did jut forward prominently, her chest was narrow. Her hind quarters dropped a little, and in her fore and especially her hind legs she toed in significantly. The muscles of her hind and forelegs were not especially large; however, the horse was exceptionally broad of girth, which was particularly striking now, given her endurance and lean belly. The bones of her legs below the knee seemed no thicker than a finger, viewed from the front, but then they were exceptionally broad viewed from the side. Except for her ribs, she looked all squeezed in from the sides and stretched out in depth. But what she possessed in the highest degree was a quality which made one forget all her shortcomings; this quality was her blood, the *blood that tells*, as the English expression goes.²⁸ The sharply defined muscles under the net of veins stretched across her fine, quivering, satin-smooth skin seemed as strong as bone. Her lean head and protruding, gleaming, merry eyes broadened at the muzzle into flaring nostrils lined with a blood-red membrane. Her entire figure and especially her head had a definite energetic and at the same time gentle expression. She was one of those animals that seem not to speak only because the mechanical arrangement of their mouth does not allow them to do so.

To Vronsky, at least, she seemed to understand everything that he now, looking at her, felt.

As soon as Vronsky went in to her, she took a deep intake of air and slanting her prominent eye such that the white filled with blood, she looked from the other side at those who had entered, giving her muzzle a shake and springing from foot to foot.

“Well, you see there how agitated she is,” said the Englishman.

“Oh, darling! Oh!” said Vronsky, approaching the horse and reassuring her.

But the closer he got, the more agitated she became. Only when he approached her head did she suddenly quiet down, and the muscles twitched under her fine, soft coat. Vronsky stroked her powerful neck, put back a lock of her mane that had fallen to the other side of her angular withers, and brought his face toward her flared nostrils, as fine as a bat's wing. She inhaled noisily and released the air from her tensed nostrils, then shuddering, she lay down a pointed ear and stretched her strong black lip toward Vronsky, as if wanting to catch him by the sleeve. Remembering the muzzle, though, she gave it a shake and again began shifting one of her finely chiseled feet and then the other.

"Calm down, darling, calm down!" he said, stroking her flank again, and with the joyful awareness that his horse was in the very best condition, he left the stall.

The horse's agitation had communicated to Vronsky as well; he felt the blood rushing to his heart and that he, just like the horse, felt like moving, biting; it was both frightening and cheerful.

"Well, I'm relying on you," he told the Englishman. "Be there at six thirty."

"Very well," said the Englishman. "But where are you going, milord?" he asked, unexpectedly using this term of address, *my-Lord*, which he almost never did.²⁹

Vronsky raised his head in surprise and looked, as he knew how, not in the Englishman's eyes but at his forehead, surprised at the audacity of his question. But when he realized that the Englishman, in posing this question, was looking on him not as an employer but as a jockey, he replied:

"I need to see Bryansky, I'll be home in an hour."

"How many times have I been asked that question today!" he asked himself, and he blushed, a rare occurrence with him. The Englishman regarded him closely. And as if he knew where Vronsky was going, he added:

"The first thing is to stay calm before a ride," he said. "Don't get out of sorts and don't let anything upset you."

"All right," answered Vronsky, smiling, and jumping into his carriage, he told the driver to go to Peterhof.³⁰

Barely had he gone a few paces when a cloud, which had been threatening rain since morning, moved in and unleashed a downpour.

"This is bad!" thought Vronsky, raising the carriage's hood. "It was muddy as it was, and now it will be a perfect swamp." Sitting alone in the closed carriage, he took out his mother's letter and his brother's note and read them through.

Yes, it was all one and the same. Everyone, his mother, his brother, everyone felt they should interfere in the affairs of his heart. This interference stirred malice in him—an emotion he rarely experienced. "What business is it of theirs? Why does everyone consider it his duty to worry about me? And what makes

them think they can badger me? It's because they see that this is something they can't understand. If this were an ordinary vulgar society liaison, they would leave me in peace. They sense that this is something different, that this isn't a game, this woman is dearer to me than life. And it's this that's incomprehensible and so annoys them. Whatever our fate, we have made it, and we are not complaining of it," he said, in the word "we" uniting himself and Anna. "No, they must teach us how to live. They have no notion of what happiness is, they don't know that, for us, without this love, there is neither happiness nor unhappiness—there is no life," he thought.

He was angry at everyone for interfering precisely because he sensed deep down that they, all of them, were right. He sensed that the love that bound him and Anna was not a fleeting infatuation that would pass, as society liaisons do, leaving no other traces in the life of either one but pleasant or unpleasant memories. He sensed the full agony of his and her position, the full difficulty, given that they were in such prominent view of the entire world in which they found themselves, of concealing their love, of lies and deception; lies, deception, dissembling, and constantly keeping others in mind when the passion that bound them was so strong that they both forgot everything else but their love.

He vividly recalled all the frequently repeated instances of the need for lies and deception, which were so contrary to his nature; he recalled especially vividly the shame, which he had remarked in her more than once, over this need for deception and lies. And he experienced a strange emotion, which would descend upon him ever since his liaison with Anna. This was the emotion of loathing for something, be it Alexei Alexandrovich, himself, all of society—he did not quite know. But he was always driving away this strange emotion. And now, having shaken it off, he continued his train of thought.

"Yes, she was unhappy before, but proud and calm; whereas now she cannot be calm and dignified, although she tries not to show it. Yes, this must end," he decided privately.

And for the first time the clear thought occurred to him that this lie must stop, and the sooner the better. "She and I can give up everything and hide away somewhere alone with our love," he told himself.

22

The downpour was brief, and while Vronsky was driving his shaft horse at a full trot, pulling along the trace horses galloping through the mud trailing their reins, the sun peeked out again, and the roofs of the dachas and the old lindens in the gardens on either side of the main road glistened wetly, and water dripped

gaily from the branches and ran off the roofs. He was no longer thinking about how this downpour would spoil the racecourse but rather rejoicing that thanks to this rain he would probably find her at home and alone, since he knew that Alexei Alexandrovich, recently returned from taking the waters, had not moved out from Petersburg.

Hoping to find her alone, Vronsky got out before crossing the little bridge, as he always did in order to attract the least attention, and proceeded on foot. He did not go up to the front steps from the street but entered through the yard.

“Has your master arrived?” he asked the gardener.

“Not at all, sir. The lady is at home. But go up the front steps, if you please; there are servants there, they’ll open up,” replied the gardener.

“No, I’ll go through the garden.”

And convinced that she was alone, and wishing to catch her unawares, since he had not promised to be here today and she probably was not expecting him to come before the races, he set out, holding onto his saber and cautiously stepping over the sand of the path, which was planted with flowers on either side, toward the terrace, which let out onto the garden. Vronsky now forgot everything he had been thinking on the way about the burden and difficulty of his position. He was thinking of one thing, that now he would see her not just in his imagination but alive, all of her, as she was in reality. He was already going in, stepping on his whole foot so as not to make noise, across the terrace’s shallow steps, when he suddenly recalled what he always forgot and what constituted the most agonizing aspect of his relations with her—her son, with his quizzical look, which Vronsky found so hostile.

More often than anyone else, this boy was an obstacle to their relations. When he was there, neither Vronsky nor Anna allowed themselves to speak of anything they could not have repeated in front of anyone, let alone allow themselves to hint at anything the boy would not understand. They had not discussed this; it had come about of its own accord. They would have considered it an insult to themselves to deceive this child. In front of him they spoke together as acquaintances. However, despite this caution, Vronsky often saw the child’s attentive and perplexed gaze aimed at him and the strange shyness and unsteadiness, first kindness then coldness and timidity, toward himself on the part of this boy. It was as if the child sensed that between this man and his mother there was some important relation whose significance he could not understand.

Indeed, the boy did sense that he could not understand this relation, and he strained but could not clarify for himself the feeling he should have for this man. With a child’s keenness for the manifestation of emotion, he clearly saw that his father, governess, and nurse—all not only did not like Vronsky but viewed him

with loathing and fear, although they never said anything about him, and that his mother regarded him as her best friend.

“What does this mean? Who is he? How should I love him? If I don’t understand, it’s my fault, I’m either stupid or a bad boy,” thought the child; and from this stemmed his searching, quizzical, partly hostile expression, as well as both the shyness and unsteadiness that so constrained Vronsky. The presence of this child always and invariably stirred in Vronsky that strange feeling of unwarranted loathing that he had been experiencing of late. The presence of this child stirred in Vronsky and in Anna a feeling similar to that of a navigator who sees from his compass that the direction in which he is quickly moving deviates greatly from the proper one but that he is incapable of stopping the movement, that each minute takes him farther and farther off the proper course, and that admitting his deviation would be tantamount to admitting his demise.

This child, with his naïve view of life, was a compass that was showing them the degree of their deviation from what they knew but did not want to know.

This time Seryozha was not at home. She was all alone and sitting on the terrace, awaiting the return of her son, who had gone for a walk and been caught in the rain. She had sent a servant and maid to find him and was sitting, waiting. Wearing a white dress with a broad band of embroidery, she was sitting in a corner of the terrace behind the flowers and had not heard him. Her curly black head bowed, she was pressing her brow to the cold watering can perched on the railing, and holding the watering can with both her beautiful hands, with the rings he knew so well. The beauty of her entire figure, head, neck, and arms stunned Vronsky every time, like a surprise. He halted, gazing at her, enraptured. However, just as he was about to take a step toward her she sensed his approach, pushed the watering can away, and turned her flushed face toward him.

“What’s wrong? Are you unwell?” he said in French, walking up to her. He wanted to run to her, but remembering that there might be bystanders, he looked around at the balcony door and blushed, as he blushed every time he felt he should be afraid and circumspect.

“No, I’m well,” she said, rising and pressing his extended hand. “I wasn’t expecting . . . you.”

“My God! What cold hands!” he said.

“You frightened me,” she said. “I’m alone and waiting for Seryozha. He went for a walk, and they’ll come in this way.”

Even though she was trying to be calm, her lips were trembling.

“Forgive me for coming, but I couldn’t let the day pass without seeing you,” he continued in French, as he always did, avoiding Russian’s formal “you,” which was impossible between them, and its dangerous informal “you.”

“But what is there to forgive? I’m so glad!”

“But you are unwell or distressed,” he continued, not letting her hands go and leaning over her. “What were you thinking about?”

“Always about the same thing,” she said with a smile.

She was speaking the truth. No matter when, at what moment, she might be asked what she was thinking about, she could reply without error: the same thing, my happiness and my unhappiness. She had been thinking about this now, precisely when he found her: she had been wondering why it was that for others, for Betsy, for example (she knew of the liaison with Tushkevich, which Betsy hid from society), all this was easy, whereas for her it was so agonizing. Today this thought was particularly agonizing, for several reasons. She questioned him about the race. He answered her, and seeing that she was upset, trying to distract her, he began recounting to her in the simplest tone the details of the race preparations.

“Shall I tell him or not?” she thought, looking into his calm, loving eyes. “He is so happy, so caught up in his race, he wouldn’t understand it properly, wouldn’t understand the full significance of this event for us.”

“But you didn’t say what you were thinking about when I came in,” he said, interrupting his story. “Please, tell me!”

She did not reply, and bending her head a little, she looked up at him inquiringly with her shining eyes from behind long eyelashes. Her hand, which had been playing with a torn leaf, trembled. He saw this, and his face expressed the submission, the slavish devotion, that had so won her over.

“I can see that something has happened. How can I be at peace for a moment knowing that you have a sorrow which I do not share? Tell me, for God’s sake!” he repeated, imploringly.

“Yes, I won’t be able to forgive him if he doesn’t understand the full significance of this. Isn’t it better not to speak? Why test him?” she thought, still looking at him and feeling her hand with the leaf trembling more and more.

“For God’s sake!” he repeated, taking her hand.

“Shall I?”

“Yes, yes, yes . . .”

“I’m pregnant,” she said softly and slowly.

The leaf in her hand began trembling even harder, but she did not take her eyes off him, wishing to see how he would take this. He paled, was about to say something, but stopped, let go of her hand and dropped his head. “Yes, he has understood the full significance of this event,” she thought, and she pressed his hand gratefully.

But she was wrong in thinking he understood the significance of the news in the way that she, a woman, understood it. At this news he felt with tenfold force an attack of this strange feeling of loathing for someone descending upon

him; at the same time, however, he understood that the crisis he had been desiring was now coming, that there could be no more hiding from her husband and that one way or another this unnatural situation would have to be ended and quickly. But beyond this, her agitation was conveyed to him physically. He looked at her with a touching, submissive gaze, kissed her hand, rose, and silently paced the terrace.

“Yes,” he said, approaching her decisively. “Neither you nor I has looked upon our relationship as a game, and now our fate has been decided. We must put an end,” he said, looking around, “to the lie we have been living.”

“An end? What kind of an end, Alexei?” she said softly.

She was calmer now, and her face shone with a tender smile.

“Leave your husband and unite our lives.”

“They are united as it is,” she said, barely audibly.

“Yes, but completely, completely.”

“But how, Alexei, teach me, how?” she said with a doleful mocking of the hopelessness of her position. “Is there really a solution to this situation? Am I not my husband’s wife?”

“There is a solution to every situation. We must put our mind to it,” he said. “Anything is better than the situation in which you are living. I can see how you agonize over everything—society, your son, your husband.”

“Ah, only not my husband,” she said with a simple grin. “I don’t know him, I don’t think about him. He doesn’t exist.”

“You’re speaking insincerely. I know you. You’re agonizing about him as well.”

“And he doesn’t even know it,” she said, and suddenly vivid color covered her face; her cheeks, brow, and neck flushed, and tears of shame came to her eyes. “But don’t let’s speak of him.”

23

Vronsky had already attempted several times, though not as decisively as now, to lead her into a discussion of her situation and each time had run into that superficiality and frivolity of judgments with which she now responded to his appeal. It was as if there were something in this which she could not or would not make clear to herself, as if as soon as she began speaking of this, she, the real Anna, retreated somewhere into herself and out came another, strange woman, alien to him, whom he did not love but feared and who rebuffed him. Now, though, he resolved to tell her everything.

“Whether he knows or not,” said Vronsky in his customarily firm and calm tone, “whether he knows or not, that is of no matter to us. We cannot . . . you cannot remain like this, especially now.”

“What should I do then, in your opinion?” she asked with the same light, frivolous tone. She who had been so afraid he would not easily accept her pregnancy was now annoyed that from this he had concluded the necessity of undertaking something.

“Tell him everything and leave him.”

“Very well, let’s say I do that,” she said. “Do you know what will come of it? I can tell you everything in advance” — and a malicious light ignited in her eyes, which had been gentle a minute before. “Ah, so you love another and have entered into a criminal liaison with him? (In presenting her husband, she put the stress on the word “criminal,” precisely as Alexei Alexandrovich did.) I warned you of the consequences in the religious, civil, and domestic respects. You did not heed me. Now I cannot admit to the disgrace of my name” — “or my son’s,” she was about to say, but she could not joke about her son — “the disgrace of my name, and something more in that vein,” she added. “In general, he will say with his official manner, and with clarity and precision, that he cannot let me go but he will take the measures incumbent upon him to halt a scandal. And he will do what he said calmly and neatly. That is what will come of it. This is not a human being, this is a machine, and a spiteful machine when he gets angry,” she added, recalling at this Alexei Alexandrovich and all the details of his figure, his manner of speaking, and his character, and blaming him for everything she could find in him that was bad, refusing to forgive him for the terrible wrong she had done him.

“But Anna,” said Vronsky in a soft, persuasive voice, trying to calm her, “you are going to have to tell him in any event, and then be guided by what he undertakes.”

“What, run away?”

“And why not run away? I don’t see the possibility of continuing this. And not for myself — I see that you are suffering.”

“Yes, run away and become your mistress?” she said spitefully.

“Anna!” he said in gentle reproof.

“Yes,” she continued, “become your mistress and completely ruin . . .”

She was about to say it again, “my son,” but she could not utter the word.

Vronsky failed to understand how she, with her strong, honest nature, could endure this situation of deceit and not wish to escape it; but he had not guessed that the chief reason for this was the word “son,” which she could not utter. When she thought about her son and his future relations with the mother who had abandoned his father, she was overwhelmed by such terror at what she had done that she could not reason, but as a woman, she tried only to console herself with false reasoning and words, so that everything would remain as of old and so as to forget the frightening question of what would happen with her son.

"I beg of you, I implore you," she said suddenly in a completely different, sincere and gentle tone, taking his hand, "never speak to me of this!"

"But Anna . . ."

"Never. Grant me this. I know the full baseness, the full horror of my situation, but this is not as easily resolved as you think. So grant me this and obey me. Never speak to me of this. Do you promise me? . . . No, no, promise!"

"I promise everything, but I cannot be calm, especially after what you have said. I cannot be calm when you cannot be calm. . . ."

"I!" she echoed. "Yes, I am tormented sometimes, but this will pass if you never speak to me of this. When you speak to me of this, only then does this torment me."

"I don't understand," he said.

"I know," she interrupted him, "how hard it is for your honest nature to lie, and I am sorry for you. I often think how you have ruined your life for me."

"I was just thinking the same thing," he said, "how could you have sacrificed everything for me? I cannot forgive myself the fact that you are unhappy."

"I, unhappy?" she said, drawing near to him and gazing at him with the ecstatic smile of love. "I'm like a starving man who has been given something to eat. Perhaps he is cold, and his clothes are tattered, and he is ashamed, but he is not unhappy. I, unhappy? No, this is my happiness. . . ."

She heard the voice of her returning son, and casting a quick glance at the terrace, rose abruptly. Her gaze began to burn with a fire he well knew, and with a quick movement she raised her beautiful, beringed hands, held him by the head, looked at him with a long gaze, and bringing her face close with smiling, parted lips, she quickly kissed his mouth and both eyes and pushed him away. She wanted to go, but he detained her.

"When?" he said in a whisper, gazing at her ecstatically.

"Today, at one," she whispered, and with a deep sigh, she stepped lightly and quickly toward her son.

The rain had caught Seryozha in the big garden, and he and his nurse had sat it out in the gazebo.

"Well, good-bye," she said to Vronsky. "You must go quickly to the races. Betsy promised to stop by for me."

Looking at his watch, Vronsky rushed off.

24

When Vronsky looked at his watch on the Karenins' balcony, he was so shaken and preoccupied that he saw the hands on the dial but could not tell

what time it was. He went out to the road and headed off, stepping cautiously through the mud, for his carriage. He was so overflowing with emotion for Anna that he did not give a thought to what time it was or whether he still had time to see Bryansky. As often happens, he retained only the outward faculty of memory, which points out what it has been decided to do after what. He walked up to his driver, who was dozing in his box in the slanting shadow of a thick linden, admired the swirling columns of midges pulsating above the sweaty horses, and waking the driver, jumped into the carriage and ordered him to Bryansky's. Only when he had gone about seven versts did he recover sufficiently to look at his watch and realize that it was half past five and he was late.

There were several races that day: the Life Guards', then the officers' two-verst, the four-verst, and the race he was racing. He could make his race, but if he went to see Bryansky then he would arrive only just in time, and arrive when the entire court was already there. That was not good. But he had given Bryansky his word to visit and so he decided to continue, ordering the driver not to spare the troika.

He arrived at Bryansky's, spent five minutes with him, and raced back. This fast drive calmed him down. Everything hard in his relations with Anna, all the uncertainty that remained after their conversation, it all passed from his mind; he thought with pleasure and excitement now about the race, about how he would still make it on time, and from time to time the anticipation of the happiness of their rendezvous that night blazed like a bright light in his imagination.

The emotion of the upcoming race began exercising more and more of a hold over him as he rode farther and farther into the racing atmosphere, overtaking carriages that had come from the dachas and Petersburg for the races.

There was no one left in his quarters; everyone was at the races, and his servant was waiting by the gate. While he changed clothes, his servant reported that the second race had already begun, that many gentlemen had come by asking for him, and the stable boy had run over twice.

Changing without haste (he never hurried and never lost his self-possession), Vronsky ordered the coachman to drive to the stable. From the stable he could see the sea of carriages, people on foot, and soldiers surrounding the racecourse and the pavilions seething with people. The second race was probably in progress because as he was walking into the stable he heard a bell. Approaching the stables, he encountered Makhotin's white-legged chestnut Gladiator, which was decked out in an orange-and-dark blue saddlecloth and had what looked like huge, blue-edged ears, being led to the racecourse.

"Where is Cord?" he asked the stable boy.

“In the stable, saddling up.”

In the open stall, Frou-Frou was already saddled. They were getting ready to lead her out.

“I’m not late?”

“*All right! All right!* It’s all right, it’s all right,” said the Englishman, “don’t get excited.”³¹

Vronsky cast one more glance at the superb, beloved lines of his horse, whose entire body was quivering, and barely tearing himself away from this spectacle, he left the stable. He drove up to the pavilion at the most propitious time for not attracting anyone’s attention. The two-verst race was just ending, and all eyes were aimed at the Horse Guards officer in front and the hussar behind, who were straining their horses and approaching the post. From the middle and outside the circle everyone was crowding toward the post, and a group of Horse Guards soldiers and officers were expressing in loud cries their joy at the anticipated triumph of their officer and comrade. Vronsky slipped unnoticed into the middle of the crowd at nearly the exact moment the bell rang at the finish, and the tall, mud-spattered Horse Guards officer who had come in first and had dropped back into his saddle, let go the reins on his gray, sweat-darkened, heavily breathing stallion.

The stallion, making an effort to straighten his legs, shortened the rapid pace of his large body, and the Horse Guards officer, like someone who had just awakened from a deep sleep, looked around and forced a smile. A crowd of friends and strangers surrounded him.

Vronsky intentionally avoided the select, high-society crowd that was moving with aplomb and chatting in front of the pavilions. He learned that both Madame Karenina and Betsy were there, as was his brother’s wife, and intentionally, to keep from breaking his concentration, he did not approach them. But the acquaintances he was constantly meeting kept stopping him, recounting the details of the previous races, and inquiring why he was late.

While the racers were being called to the pavilion to receive their prizes and everyone turned their attention in that direction, Vronsky’s elder brother Alexander, a colonel with aiguillettes, short of stature, just as thickset as Alexei but handsomer and ruddier, with a red nose and a drunken-looking, open face, walked up to him.

“Did you get my note?” he said. “You are never to be found.”

Despite a life of debauchery, and drinking in particular, for which he was well known, Alexander Vronsky was the consummate courtier.

Now, while speaking with his brother about something so distasteful to him and knowing that the eyes of many might be aimed at them, he maintained an

amenable appearance, as if he were joking about something inconsequential with his brother.

“I did, indeed, but I don’t understand what *you* are worried about,” said Alexei.

“I’m worried about the fact that it has been remarked to me that you weren’t here and that on Monday you were seen in Peterhof.”

“There are matters that pertain only to those with a direct interest in them, and the matter about which you are so concerned, is so . . .”

“Yes, but in those cases people don’t serve, don’t . . .”

“I’m asking you not to interfere, nothing more.”

Alexei Vronsky’s frowning face paled, and his jutting jaw trembled, something that rarely happened to him. Being a man with a very good heart, he rarely got angry, but when he did and his chin trembled, then, as Alexander Vronsky well knew, he was dangerous. Alexander Vronsky smiled gaily.

“I merely wanted to pass along our dear mother’s letter. Reply and don’t get upset before your ride. *Bonne chance*,” he added, smiling, and he moved away.

But right after him another friendly greeting brought Vronsky to a halt.

“You don’t want to know your friends! Hello, *mon cher!*” Stepan Arkadyevich began, even here, amid this Petersburg glamour, no less than in Moscow, his rosy face and glossy combed whiskers gleaming. “I arrived yesterday, and I’m very pleased that I’ll be witnessing your triumph. When shall we meet?”

“Stop by the mess tomorrow,” said Vronsky, and excusing himself, he squeezed the sleeve of Oblonsky’s coat and walked to the middle of the racecourse, where the horses had been brought for the big steeplechase.

The sweaty, exhausted horses that had finished racing were being led home by the stable boys, and one after another, the new ones appeared for the next race, fresh, for the most part English horses wearing hoods, their bellies cinched, and resembling strange enormous birds. The lean beauty Frou-Frou, who was stepping on her resilient and rather long pasterns as if she were on springs, was being led on the right. Not far from her the saddlecloth was being removed from lop-eared Gladiator. The large, splendid, perfectly regular lines of the stallion, with his marvelous hindquarters and unusually short pasterns, which sat right above his hooves, could not help but capture Vronsky’s attention. He wanted to go up to his own horse, but he was detained once again by a friend.

“Ah, here’s Karenin!” the friend with whom he was talking told him. “Looking for his wife, but she’s in the middle of the pavilion. Haven’t you seen her?”

“No, I haven’t,” replied Vronsky, and without even looking around at the pavilion where Madame Karenina was being pointed out to him, he walked over to his horse.

Vronsky had barely managed to examine the saddle, which he needed to give instructions about, when the racers were summoned to the pavilion to draw numbers and starting positions. With serious, stern, often pale faces, the seventeen officers converged on the pavilion and drew numbers. Vronsky drew number seven. They heard: "Mount up!"

Sensing that he and the other racers constituted the center on which all eyes were aimed, Vronsky, in the tense state in which he ordinarily became deliberate and calm in his movements, walked over to his horse. In honor of the race, Cord had put on his formal suit: a black-buttoned coat, stiffly starched collar that poked into his cheeks, and round black hat and jackboots. He was, as always, calm and dignified and himself held the horse by both reins, standing in front of her. Frou-Frou continued to tremble as if in a fever. Her eye, full of fire, looked sideways at Vronsky when he approached. Vronsky slipped his finger under the saddle girth. The horse looked at him even harder, bared her teeth, and lay her ear back. The Englishman puckered his lips in what was intended as a smile at the fact that his saddling was being checked.

"Mount up, you'll be less agitated."

Vronsky looked around at his rivals for the last time. He knew that during the ride he would no longer see them. Two were already riding ahead toward the spot where they were supposed to start. Golitsyn, Vronsky's friend and a dangerous rival, was fussing around his bay stallion, which was not letting him mount. A short hussar in tight-fitting jodhpurs was galloping, curled over the withers like a cat, out of a desire to imitate the English. Prince Kuzovlyov was sitting pale on his thoroughbred mare, from the Grabovsky stud, and an Englishman was leading her by the reins. Vronsky and all his fellows knew Kuzovlyov and his characteristic "weak" nerves and terrible ambition. They knew he was afraid of everything, afraid of riding a front-line horse; but now, precisely because it was frightening, because people broke their necks and a doctor, an ambulance with a cross sewn on, and a nurse stood by each hurdle, he had decided to race. Their eyes met, and Vronsky gave him a kindly and encouraging wink. There was only one he did not see, his main rival, Makhotin on Gladiator.

"Don't rush," Cord told Vronsky, "and remember one thing: don't hold her back at the obstacles or urge her on, let her choose how she wants to take it."

"Fine, fine," said Vronsky, taking the reins.

"If you can, lead the race, but don't lose heart until the last minute, even if you're behind."

The horse had barely moved when Vronsky, with a deft and powerful movement, stood in his notched steel stirrup and lightly but firmly set his body back into the creaking leather of the saddle. Taking the stirrup with his right foot, in a familiar gesture he evened the double reins between his fingers, and Cord let go.

As if not knowing which foot to step with first, pulling on the reins with her long neck, Frou-Frou bounded off, as if on springs, rocking her rider on her supple back. Picking up the pace, Cord walked behind him. The agitated horse, trying to trick her rider to this side and then that, tugged at the reins, and Vronsky tried in vain with his voice and hand to calm her.

They were already nearing the dammed-up stream, heading for the spot where they were supposed to start. Many of the racers were ahead, many behind, when Vronsky suddenly heard behind him through the mud of the course the sounds of a horse's gallop, and Makhotin overtook him on his white-legged, lop-eared Gladiator. Makhotin smiled, displaying his long teeth, but Vronsky gave him an angry look. He did not like him in general and now considered him his most dangerous rival, and it irritated him that he had galloped past and enflamed his horse. Frou-Frou threw out her left foot to gallop and took two leaps, and angry at the tight reins, switched to a bumpy trot, trying to throw her rider. Cord frowned as well and nearly ran after Vronsky at a trot.

25

There were seventeen officers racing in all. The races were supposed to be held in the large four-verst elliptical track in front of the pavilion. Nine obstacles had been erected on this track: a stream, large, two *arshins* wide; a blind barrier directly in front of the pavilion; a dry ditch; a ditch filled with water; a slope; an Irish bank (one of the most difficult obstacles), which consisted of a mound stuck with brushwood, beyond which, out of sight of the horse, was another ditch, so that the horse had to jump both obstacles or be killed; then another two ditches with water and one dry ditch—and the race ended opposite the pavilion.³² However, the race was not beginning from the ring but rather a hundred sazhen to one side of it, and in this stretch was the first obstacle—a dammed river three *arshins* wide, which the riders could choose to jump or wade across.

The riders lined up three times, but each time someone's horse nosed ahead, and they had to ride around to the start again. The start expert, Colonel Sestrin, was beginning to get angry when, at last, for the fourth time, he shouted: "They're off!" and the riders started.

All eyes, all binoculars, were aimed at the colorful cluster of riders while they were lining up.

"They're off! The race is on!" was heard on all sides after the hush of anticipation.

Both clusters and solitary people on foot began running from spot to spot in

order to see better. In the first minute the bunched cluster of riders spread out, and it could be seen how they approached the river in twos, in threes, and one by one. To the spectators they all seemed to be racing together, but to the riders there were seconds' difference, which had for them great significance.

The agitated and very high-strung Frou-Frou lost the first moment, and several horses started before she did, but even before he had reached the stream, Vronsky, using every ounce of his strength to hold back the horse, who was straining at the bridle, easily went around three and ahead of him remained only Makhotin's chestnut Gladiator, whose hindquarters were beating away evenly and easily directly in front of Vronsky, and ahead of them all, the superb Diana carrying Kuzovlyov, who was more dead than alive.

In the first moments Vronsky had not yet mastered either himself or his horse. Before the first obstacle, the stream, he had not been able to guide the horse's movements.

Gladiator and Diana approached it together and at nearly one and the same moment — one-two — they rose over the stream and flew across to the other side; imperceptibly, as if flying, Frou-Frou trailed behind them, but at the very moment when Vronsky felt himself in the air, he suddenly saw, almost under his horse's hooves, Kuzovlyov, who had tumbled off Diana on the other side of the stream (Kuzovlyov had let go of the reins after the jump, and he and the horse had flown head over heels). These details Vronsky learned much later; now he saw only that directly underfoot, where Frou-Frou was supposed to step, Diana's leg or head might fall. But Frou-Frou, like a falling cat, had made an extra effort in the jump with her legs and back and having passed over the horse, carried herself beyond.

"Oh, darling!" thought Vronsky.

After the stream, Vronsky gained full mastery of his horse and began holding her back, intending to cross the big barrier behind Makhotin and then, on the next, obstacle-free stretch of two hundred or so sazhen, attempt to go around him.

The big barrier was directly in front of the tsar's pavilion. The sovereign, the entire court, and the crowds of people — everyone was looking at them — at him, and at Makhotin — one length ahead, as they approached the devil (as the blind barrier was called). Vronsky felt those eyes aimed at him from all sides, but all he saw were his horse's ears and neck, the ground rushing up, and the withers and white legs of Gladiator, which were beating fast and rhythmically ahead of him and remaining the exact same distance apart. Gladiator rose up, hitting nothing, swished his short tail, and vanished from Vronsky's view.

"Bravo!" said a lone voice.

At the same instant, before Vronsky's eyes, right before him, flashed the boards of the barrier. Without the slightest alteration in her movement his horse coiled beneath him; the boards were hidden from view, and only behind him did something strike. Enflamed by Gladiator's lead, the horse had risen too early before the barrier and had struck it with her back hoof. But her pace did not change, and Vronsky, getting a clod of mud in the face, realized that he was once again the same distance from Gladiator. Again he caught sight up ahead of his withers and short tail, and again those quickly moving white legs, which were getting no farther away.

At the very instant when Vronsky thought he should now go around Makhotin, Frou-Frou herself, understanding what he had thought, without any encouragement, significantly picked up the pace and began closing in on Makhotin from the most advantageous side, the rope side. Makhotin would not cede the rope. Vronsky had merely thought about how he could also go around the outside when Frou-Frou changed foot and began going around precisely that way. Frou-Frou's shoulder, which was already beginning to darken from sweat, came even with Gladiator's withers. They galloped a few lengths side by side. But before the obstacle they were approaching, Vronsky, in order not to have to take the outer circle, began working his reins and quickly, right at the incline, went around Makhotin. He caught a fleeting glance of his face, spattered with mud. He even thought he smiled. Vronsky went around Makhotin but he felt him now behind him and heard right behind his back the relentless, even drumming of hooves and the staccato, still perfectly fresh breathing from Gladiator's nostrils.

The next two obstacles, the ditch and barrier, were easily crossed, but Vronsky could hear Gladiator breathing heavily and galloping closer. He spurred his horse on and was thrilled to feel her easily pick up the pace, and the sound of Gladiator's hooves could be heard again at the same distance as before.

Vronsky was in the lead—exactly as he had wanted to be and as Cord had advised him—and was now confident of success. His excitement, joy, and tenderness for Frou-Frou only intensified. He wanted to look back, but he didn't dare and tried to calm himself and not spur the horse on, in order to save a reserve in her equal to what he sensed was left in Gladiator. There remained just one obstacle, the most difficult; if he crossed it ahead of the others, he would come in first. He galloped toward the Irish bank. He and Frou-Frou had seen this bank from far back, and together they both, he and the horse, had a moment's doubt. He noted the indecision in the horse's ears and raised his whip but immediately sensed that his doubt was groundless: the horse knew what was needed. She picked up the pace and evenly, precisely as he had contemplated, coiled, and

pushing off from the ground yielded to the force of inertia that carried her far across the ditch; and in the exact same rhythm, effortlessly, on the same foot, Frou-Frou continued the race.

“Bravo, Vronsky!” he could hear the voices from the cluster of people—his regiment and friends, he knew—who were standing by this obstacle; he could not help but recognize Yashvin’s voice, but he did not see him.

“Oh, my lovely!” he thought to Frou-Frou, listening to what was happening behind him. “He’s jumped!” he thought, hearing Gladiator’s gallop behind him. There remained the one last ditch with water, two arshins wide. Vronsky hadn’t even looked at it, but desiring to come in first well ahead, he began working the reins loop fashion, raising and lowering the horse’s head in time with the gallop. He felt the horse going for all she was worth; not only were her neck and shoulders wet, but on her mane, head, and pointed ears, there were drops of sweat, and her breathing was sharp and quick. He knew, though, that she had more than enough reserve to last the remaining two hundred sazhen. Only because he felt himself closer to the ground and from the special gentleness of the movement did Vronsky know how much speed his horse had added. She flew across the ditch as if she hadn’t noticed it. She flew across it like a bird; but at that very instant Vronsky, to his horror, felt himself not keeping up with the horse’s movement and, not understanding how himself, made a foul, unforgivable movement, dropping back into the saddle. All of a sudden his situation changed and he realized something horrible had happened. Before he could account for what had happened, the white legs of the chestnut stallion flashed alongside him, and Makhotin passed him at a fast gallop. Vronsky grazed the ground with one foot, and his horse stumbled on that foot. He had barely managed to free his foot when she fell on one side, wheezing heavily, and in an effort to rise, making vain efforts with her slender, sweaty neck, she quivered on the ground at his feet, like a wounded bird. The awkward motion Vronsky had made had broken her back, but he realized this only much later. Now he saw only that Makhotin had pulled quickly ahead, while he, reeling, was standing alone on the muddy, motionless ground, and in front of him, breathing heavily, lay Frou-Frou, her head bent around toward him, looking at him with her splendid eye. Still not understanding what had happened, Vronsky pulled the horse by the rein. Again she began beating her entire body like a fish, flapping her saddle, and freed her forelegs, but too weak to raise her hindquarters, she immediately tired and again fell on her side. His face distorted by passion, pale, his jaw quivering, Vronsky kicked her in the belly with his heel and again began pulling on the reins. She didn’t move, though, and poking her nose into the ground, she merely looked at her master with her eloquent gaze.

“Agh!” moaned Vronsky, clutching his head. “Agh! What have I done!” he

cried. "And the lost race! And it's my fault! Shameful, unforgivable! And this unfortunate, dear, ruined horse! Agh! What have I done!"

A crowd, a doctor and a medic, the officers from his regiment, ran toward him. To his misfortune, he felt he was whole and unharmed. The horse had broken her back and the decision was made to shoot her. Vronsky could not answer questions, could not speak to anyone. He turned around, and without picking up the cap that had slipped from his head, he walked away from the racecourse, not knowing where he was going. He was bereft. For the first time in his life he had suffered the gravest misfortune, an irreparable misfortune, for which he himself was to blame.

Yashvin, cap in hand, caught up with him and saw him home, and half an hour later Vronsky came to his senses. But the memory of this race lingered in his heart for a long time as the most difficult and agonizing memory in his life.

26

Alexei Alexandrovich's outward relations with his wife were just as they had been. The sole difference consisted in the fact that he was even busier than before. As in previous years, with the coming of spring he went abroad to take the waters for his health, which suffered each year with his strenuous winter labor, and as usual, he returned in July and immediately, with renewed energy, resumed his usual work. And as usual, his wife moved to the dacha, while he remained in Petersburg.

Since that conversation after the evening at Princess Tverskaya's he had never spoken to Anna of his suspicions and jealousy, and his habitual tone of mocking someone who might do so could not have been more convenient for his current relations with his wife. He was somewhat colder toward his wife. He merely seemed to bear a slight dissatisfaction with her for that first nighttime conversation, which she had repulsed. There was a hint of annoyance in his relations with her, but nothing more. "You didn't want to talk to me," he seemed to be saying, addressing her mentally, "all the worse for you. Now you're going to be the one begging me, but *I* won't talk to you. All the worse for you," he said mentally, like someone who has tried in vain to put out a fire, gotten angry at his vain efforts, and said: "You're in for it! You can burn for that!"

He, this clever man, so subtle in official matters, did not understand the full madness of this attitude toward his wife. He did not understand this because it was too frightening for him to understand his true position, and in his heart he had shut, locked, and sealed the box in which his feelings for his family, that is, for his wife and son, were kept. He, an attentive father, had become since the

end of this winter especially cold toward his son and had an even more teasing attitude toward him than toward his wife. "Ah! Young man!" he addressed him.

Alexei Alexandrovich thought and said that in no year had he ever had so much official business as in this; what he was not admitting, though, was that he had himself invented work for himself this year, that this was one of his ways of not opening that box where his feelings for his wife and family and his thoughts of them lay, becoming more frightening the longer they lay there. Had anyone had the right to ask Alexei Alexandrovich what he thought of his wife's conduct, the meek, mild Alexei Alexandrovich would not have answered but would have become very angry at the person who had inquired. It was because of this that there was in the expression on Alexei Alexandrovich's face something proud and stern when he was asked about his wife's health. Alexei Alexandrovich did not want to think, and indeed, did not think, about his wife's conduct and feelings.

Alexei Alexandrovich's permanent dacha was in Peterhof, and usually Countess Lydia Ivanovna spent the summer there as well, as Anna's neighbor, and in constant relations with her. This year Countess Lydia Ivanovna had refused to stay in Peterhof, had not paid a single visit to Anna Arkadyevna, and had hinted to Alexei Alexandrovich at the awkwardness of Anna's increasing intimacy with Betsy and Vronsky. Alexei Alexandrovich cut her off sternly, expressing the thought that his wife was above suspicion, and ever since then he had begun to avoid Countess Lydia Ivanovna. He did not want to see and so did not see that in society many were already looking askance at his wife; he did not want to understand and so did not understand why his wife had insisted particularly on moving to Tsarskoye Selo, where Betsy lived, which was not far from the camp of Vronsky's regiment. He had not allowed himself to think of this and so he had not; but at the same time, in the depth of his soul, while never expressing this even to himself and without having the slightest proof of this but only suspicions, he knew for a certainty that he was a deceived husband, and because of this he was profoundly unhappy.

How many times during his eight years of happy life with his wife, looking at other unfaithful wives and deceived husbands, had Alexei Alexandrovich said to himself: "How can this be permitted? How can they fail to undo this hideous situation?" Now that the calamity had befallen him, though, he not only did not think of how to undo the situation but had no desire whatsoever to know it, did not want to know it precisely because it was too horrible, too unnatural.

Since his return from abroad, Alexei Alexandrovich had been to the dacha twice. One time he had dined, the other he had spent the evening with guests, but not once had he spent the night, as had been his wont in previous years.

Race day had been a very busy day for Alexei Alexandrovich; however, having drawn up his schedule for the day in the morning, he had decided that he would

proceed straight from an early dinner to the dacha to see his wife and from there to the races, where the entire court would be present and where he should be as well. He would stop by to see his wife because he had decided privately to visit her once a week for the sake of propriety. Moreover, that day he needed to make a transfer of money to his wife before the fifteenth, according to their established arrangement, for expenses.

With his usual mastery over his own thoughts, having considered all this about his wife, he did not allow his thoughts to go beyond what concerned her.

That morning Alexei Alexandrovich's office had been very busy. The evening before, Countess Lydia Ivanovna had sent him a pamphlet from a famous man who had traveled in China and who was staying in Petersburg, along with a letter asking him to receive this traveler, an extremely interesting and necessary man for various reasons. Alexei Alexandrovich had not managed to read the pamphlet through that evening and had finished it in the morning. Then petitioners arrived, and there began the reports, interviews, appointments, removals, distribution of awards, pensions, and salaries, the correspondence—the day-to-day business, as Alexei Alexandrovich referred to it—that took up so much of his time. Then there was a personal matter, a visit from the doctor and his chief secretary. His chief secretary did not take up a lot of time. He merely gave Alexei Alexandrovich the money he needed and a brief report on the state of his affairs, which was not altogether good, since it had happened that this year as a result of frequent entertainments, more had been spent, and there was a shortfall. However, the doctor, a celebrated Petersburg doctor who was on friendly terms with Alexei Alexandrovich, took up a great deal of time. Alexei Alexandrovich had not been expecting him that day and was surprised at his arrival and even more surprised that the doctor questioned Alexei Alexandrovich very closely about his condition, listened to his chest, poked and squeezed his liver. Alexei Alexandrovich did not know that his friend Lydia Ivanovna, having noticed that Alexei Alexandrovich's health this year had not been good, had asked the doctor to come and examine the patient. "Do this for me," Countess Lydia Ivanovna had said to him.

"I will do it for Russia, Countess," replied the doctor.

"A priceless man!" said Countess Lydia Ivanovna.

The doctor was very dissatisfied with Alexei Alexandrovich. He found his liver significantly enlarged, his digestion reduced, and no effect whatsoever from the waters. He prescribed as much physical movement and as little mental strain as possible, and, above all, no distress, that is, precisely what for Alexei Alexandrovich was as impossible as not breathing; and he left, leaving Alexei Alexandrovich with the unpleasant awareness that something was wrong inside and that it could not be fixed.

As he emerged from Alexei Alexandrovich's office, the doctor ran into Slyudin, Alexei Alexandrovich's chief secretary, whom he knew well, on the front steps. They had been friends at university, and although they met but rarely, they respected one another and were good friends, and this is why the doctor would not have expressed his frank opinion of the patient to anyone but Slyudin.

"I'm so glad you came to see him," said Slyudin. "He's not good, and it seems to me . . . What is it?"

"Just this," said the doctor, waving over Slyudin's head to his driver to pull around. "Just this," said the doctor, grabbing a finger of his kid gloves in his white hands and tugging at it. "It's hard to tighten strings and not break them—very hard; but if you tighten them as much as you can and apply the weight of a finger to the tightened string—it will break. And with his diligence, his conscientiousness toward his work, he has been tightened to the utmost; and there is pressure—very serious pressure—from without," concluded the doctor, raising his eyebrows significantly. "Will you be at the races?" he added, lowering himself into his carriage, which had pulled up. "Yes, yes, naturally, it takes a lot of time," the doctor replied to something Slyudin had said that he had misheard.

Right after the doctor, who had taken up so much time, the famous traveler appeared, and Alexei Alexandrovich, putting to good use the pamphlet he had just read and his prior knowledge of this subject, astounded the traveler with the depth of his knowledge of the subject and the breadth of his enlightened view.

The traveler was announced at the same time as a provincial marshal of the nobility who had come to Petersburg and with whom Alexei Alexandrovich needed to talk.³³ After the marshal's departure, Alexei Alexandrovich needed to finish up his day-to-day business with his chief secretary and also to see a certain important individual on a serious and important matter. Alexei Alexandrovich did not return until five o'clock, his dinner hour, and having dined with his secretary, he invited him to accompany him to the dacha and the races.

Alexei Alexandrovich would not admit it to himself, but he was now looking for an occasion to have a third party present at his meetings with his wife.

27

Anna was standing upstairs in front of her mirror pinning the final bow to her dress with Annushka's help when she heard the sound of wheels over gravel in the drive.

"It's too early for Betsy," she thought, and glancing out the window she saw a carriage, a black hat poking out of it, and the all too familiar ears of Alexei Alexandrovich. "How unwelcome. He's not spending the night, is he?" she

thought, and everything that might come of this seemed so horrible and frightening to her that without giving it a moment's thought, she went out to meet him with a cheerful, beaming face, and sensing inside herself the presence of the spirit of lies and deceit already familiar to her, immediately surrendered to this spirit and began talking, not knowing herself what she would say.

"Oh, how sweet this is!" she said, giving her husband her hand and greeting Slyudin, who was like one of the family, with a smile. "You're spending the night, I hope?" was the first thing the spirit of deceit suggested to her. "And now we can go together. Only it's a pity I promised Betsy. She's stopping by for me."

Alexei Alexandrovich frowned at Betsy's name.

"Oh, I'm not about to separate the inseparables," he said in his usual joking tone. "Mikhail Vasilyevich and I shall go together. The doctors have ordered me to walk. I'll stroll down the road and imagine I am at the spa."

"Please don't rush off," said Anna. "Would you care for some tea?" She rang.

"Serve tea and tell Seryozha that Alexei Alexandrovich has arrived. Well then, how is your health? Mikhail Vasilyevich, you haven't visited me here, look how fine it is on my balcony," she said, turning first to one, then the other.

She spoke very simply and naturally, but too much and too quickly. She herself felt this, especially since in the curious glance Mikhail Vasilyevich cast at her she noticed that he seemed to be observing her.

Mikhail Vasilyevich immediately went out on the terrace.

She sat down beside her husband.

"You don't look entirely well," she said.

"Yes," he said, "the doctor paid me a visit today and took up an hour of my time. I have the feeling one of my friends sent him, so precious is my health."

"But no, what did he say?"

She inquired about his health and occupations and tried to convince him to take a rest and stay with her.

She said all this gaily, quickly, and with a particular gleam in her eyes; but Alexei Alexandrovich no longer ascribed any significance to this tone. He heard only her words and gave them only the direct meaning they had. And he answered her simply, albeit jokingly. There was nothing special about the entire conversation, but never afterward could Anna recall this brief scene without an agonizing pain of shame.

Seryozha came in, preceded by his governess. If Alexei Alexandrovich had allowed himself to observe, he would have noted the shy, lost look Seryozha cast first at his father and then at his mother. But he did not want to see anything and so did not.

"Ah, the young man! He's grown. It's true, he's becoming quite the man. How do you do, young man?"

And he gave the frightened Seryozha his hand.

Seryozha, who even before had been shy toward his father, now, ever since Alexei Alexandrovich had started calling him “young man” and his mind had been beset by the puzzle of whether Vronsky was friend or foe, kept away from his father. As if pleading for protection, he looked around at his mother. Only with his mother did he feel good. Meanwhile Alexei Alexandrovich, now speaking with the governess, was holding his son by the shoulder, which was so agonizingly awkward for Seryozha that Anna saw he was about to cry.

Anna, who had blushed the moment her son walked in, having noticed that Seryozha was ill at ease, quickly jumped up, lifted Alexei Alexandrovich’s hand from her son’s shoulder, and kissing her son, led him onto the terrace and came right back.

“But it’s time now,” she said, glancing at her watch. “Why is it Betsy hasn’t come!”

“Yes,” said Alexei Alexandrovich, and rising, he folded his hands and cracked his knuckles. “I also came by to bring you money, since nightingales do not feed on fairy tales,” he said. “You must need it.”

“No, I don’t . . . yes, I do,” she said, not looking at him and blushing to the roots of her hair. “I suppose you’ll be stopping by after the races.”

“Oh yes!” replied Alexei Alexandrovich. “And here we have the glory of Peterhof, Princess Tverskaya,” he added, looking out the window at the English carriage that had pulled up, the blinders and tiny box set extremely high. “Quite a display! Charming! Well, we should be going as well.”

Princess Tverskaya did not get out of her carriage. Her footman alone, wearing laced boots, a cape, and a black hat, jumped out at the front door.

“I’m off, good-bye!” said Anna, and kissing her son, she walked over to Alexei Alexandrovich and gave him her hand. “It was very sweet of you to come.”

Alexei Alexandrovich kissed her hand.

“Well, good-bye then. You’ll come by for tea, that’s wonderful!” she said, and she went out, beaming and cheerful. The moment he was out of her sight, however, she felt the spot on her hand that his lips had grazed, and she shuddered with revulsion.

28

When Alexei Alexandrovich appeared at the races, Anna was already seated next to Betsy in the pavilion, the same pavilion where all of high society had gathered. She caught sight of her husband from afar. Two men, her husband and her lover, were for her the two centers of her life, and without aid of her exter-

nal senses she could sense their proximity. She had sensed her husband drawing closer from far away and involuntarily followed his progress through those waves of the crowd between which he was moving. She saw him approach the pavilion, now responding condescendingly to ingratiating bows, now amicably and absentmindedly greeting his equals, now strenuously awaiting a glance from the powerful of this world and removing his large round hat, which squeezed the tips of his ears. All these ways of his she knew, and they all were repugnant to her. "Nothing but ambition, nothing but the desire to succeed — that's all there is in his soul," she thought, "and the lofty ideals, the love of enlightenment, religion, all these are just so many tools to advancement."

From his glances at the ladies' pavilion (he was looking directly at her, but he didn't recognize his wife in the sea of muslin, tulle, ribbons, hair, and parasols), she realized he was looking for her, but she intentionally failed to notice him.

"Alexei Alexandrovich!" Princess Betsy called out to him. "You must not see your wife; here she is!"

He smiled his cold smile.

"There is so much brilliance here, I was dazzled," he said, and he entered the pavilion. He smiled at his wife the way a husband should smile when he meets a wife whom he has only just seen and greeted the princess and other acquaintances, giving each his due, that is, jesting with the ladies and exchanging greetings with the men. Below, alongside the pavilion, stood an adjutant general whom Alexei Alexandrovich respected and who was well known for his intelligence and culture. Alexei Alexandrovich struck up a conversation with him.

It was the interval between races, and so nothing interrupted their conversation. The adjutant general was condemning the races. Alexei Alexandrovich was objecting, defending them. Anna heard his even, reedy voice, not missing a single word, and each word of his seemed false to her and grated on her ear painfully.

When the four-verst steeplechase began, she leaned forward, and without lowering her eyes, watched Vronsky as he approached and mounted his horse, while at the same time she heard her husband's loathsome, incessant voice. She was in an agony of fear for Vronsky, but she was in even greater agony from what seemed to her the incessant sound of her husband's reedy voice with its familiar intonations.

"I'm a bad woman, I'm a ruined woman," she thought, "but I don't like to lie, I can't stand lies, while lies are what *he* (her husband) feeds on. He knows everything, sees everything; what must he feel if he can speak so calmly? If he were to kill me, if he were to kill Vronsky, I would respect him. But no, he needs only lies and propriety," Anna told herself, not considering what precisely she wanted from her husband, how she would have liked to see him. Nor did she

understand that this special loquacity of Alexei Alexandrovich today, which so irritated her, was merely an expression of his inner alarm and unease. Just as a beaten child leaps up and puts his muscles in motion to deaden the pain, so for Alexei Alexandrovich, intellectual movement was essential in order to deaden the thoughts about his wife which in her presence and Vronsky's, and with the constant repetition of Vronsky's name, were clamoring for his attention. And just as it is natural for a child to leap up, so it was natural for him to speak well and cleverly. He was saying:

"Danger is an essential condition in military races, cavalry races. If England can point in its military history to the most brilliant feats of cavalry, then it is only because it has historically developed for itself this force in animals and men. Sport, in my opinion, has great significance, and, as always, we see only what is most superficial."

"Not superficial," said Princess Tverskaya. "One officer, they say, broke two ribs."

Alexei Alexandrovich smiled his smile, which revealed his teeth but said nothing more.

"We can assume, Princess, that this is not superficial," he said, "but internal. That is not the point, however," and he turned back to the general, with whom he spoke gravely. "Do not forget that it is officers who are racing, men who chose this career, and you will agree that any calling has a reverse side to its coin. This is a direct part of an officer's duties. The disgraceful sport of fisticuffs or of the Spanish toreadors is a mark of barbarity. But a specialized sport is a mark of development."

"No, I won't come another time; it upsets me too much," said Princess Betsy. "Isn't that right, Anna?"

"It upsets me, but I can't tear myself away," said another lady. "If I'd been a Roman woman, I wouldn't have missed a single circus."

Anna said nothing, and, without lowering her binoculars, stared at one spot.

At that moment a tall general was passing through the pavilion. Breaking off his speech, Alexei Alexandrovich rose hastily but with dignity and bowed deeply to the passing officer.

"You're not racing?" the officer joked with him.

"My race is harder," replied Alexei Alexandrovich respectfully.

And although the reply meant nothing, the officer pretended he had received a clever word from a clever man and fully understood *la pointe de la sauce*.³⁴

"There are two aspects to this," Alexei Alexandrovich resumed, as he sat down, "the performers and spectators; and love for these spectacles is the surest mark of low development for the spectators, I agree, however . . ."

“Princess, your bet!” the voice of Stepan Arkadyevich addressing Betsy was heard from below. “Who are you betting on?”

“Anna and I are betting on Prince Kuzovlyov,” Betsy answered.

“I’m for Vronsky. A pair of gloves?”

“You’re on!”

“But it’s so beautiful, don’t you think?”

Alexei Alexandrovich paused while the people around him were talking, but he resumed immediately.

“I agree, but manly games . . .” he was about to continue.

But at that moment the riders were started, and all conversation came to a halt. Alexei Alexandrovich fell silent as well, and everyone stood up and turned toward the stream. Alexei Alexandrovich had no interest in the races and so was not looking at the riders but began absentmindedly scanning the spectators with weary eyes. His gaze rested on Anna.

Her face was pale and stern. She evidently saw nothing and no one except one man. Her hand was grasping her fan convulsively, and she wasn’t breathing. He looked at her and hastily turned away, surveying the other faces.

“Yes, but there’s this lady and the others, too, are very agitated; it’s quite natural,” Alexei Alexandrovich told himself. He wanted not to look at her, but his gaze was drawn to her involuntarily. He again took a good look at this face, trying not to read what was so clearly written on it, and against his will, horrified, he read on it what he had not wanted to know.

Kuzovlyov’s first fall at the stream upset everyone, but Alexei Alexandrovich clearly saw on Anna’s pale, triumphant face that the one she had been following had not fallen. When, after Makhotin and Vronsky jumped the big barrier, the next officer fell on his head in that very spot and was crushed as if to death and a ripple of horror passed through the entire public, Alexei Alexandrovich saw that Anna had not even noticed this and was having a hard time understanding what people had started saying around her, but he began to stare at her more and more often and with increasing intensity. While wholly swallowed up by the spectacle of the racing Vronsky, Anna felt the gaze of her husband’s cold eyes aimed at her from the side.

She glanced around for an instant, looked at him inquiringly, frowned briefly, and turned back around.

“Oh, I don’t care,” she seemed to say to him and did not look at him again even once.

The race was unlucky, and of the seventeen men, more than half fell and were badly hurt. By the end of the race, everyone was upset, a feeling magnified even more by the fact that the sovereign was ill pleased.

29

Everyone loudly expressed their disapproval, everyone repeated the phrase someone had said: "All we need now is a circus and lions." The horror was felt by everyone, so that when Vronsky fell and Anna gasped loudly, there was nothing unusual about it. But immediately thereafter a change came over Anna's face that was decidedly improper. She became completely undone. She began struggling like a captured bird: first she wanted to get up and go somewhere, then she turned to Betsy.

"Let's go, let's go," she said.

But Betsy didn't hear her. She had leaned over to speak with a general who had approached her.

Alexei Alexandrovich walked over to Anna and courteously offered her his arm.

"We can go, if you like," he said in French; but Anna was listening to what the general was saying and didn't notice her husband.

"He broke his leg, too, they say," the general said. "This is beyond anything."

Anna, not responding to her husband, raised her binoculars and looked at the spot where Vronsky had fallen; however, it was so far away and there were so many people crowding around that she could make out nothing. She lowered the binoculars and made to go, but just then an officer galloped up and reported something to the sovereign. Anna strained forward, listening.

"Stiva! Stiva!" she cried out to her brother.

But her brother did not hear her. Again she wanted to get out.

"I am offering you my arm again, if you want to go," said Alexei Alexandrovich, reaching out to touch her arm.

She shied from him with revulsion, and without looking him in the face replied:

"No, no, leave me, I shall stay."

She now saw that an officer was running from the spot of Vronsky's fall, across the track, toward the pavilion. Betsy waved her handkerchief at him.

The officer brought the news that the rider was not hurt but the horse had broken its back.

Hearing this, Anna quickly sat down and covered her face with her fan. Alexei Alexandrovich saw that she was crying and could not hold back not just her tears but the sobs that were making her breast heave. Alexei Alexandrovich shielded her with his body, giving her time to regain control.

"For the third time I am offering you my arm," he said after a little while, addressing her. Anna looked at him and did not know what to say. Princess Betsy came to her aid.

“No, Alexei Alexandrovich, I brought Anna here, and I promised to bring her back,” Betsy intervened.

“Excuse me, Princess,” he said, smiling politely, but looking sternly into her eyes, “but I see that Anna is not entirely well, and I wish her to ride with me.”

Anna looked around, frightened, rose submissively, and put her arm on her husband’s.

“I’ll send word to him, find out, and send word to you,” Betsy whispered to her.

At the exit from the pavilion, Alexei Alexandrovich, just as always, spoke with those he met, and Anna, just as always, was supposed to respond and speak; however, she was not herself and walked arm in arm with her husband as if in a dream.

“Was he killed or not? Is it true? Will he come or not? Shall I see him today?” she thought.

She sat silently in Alexei Alexandrovich’s carriage and rode silently out of the crowd of carriages. Despite all he had seen, Alexei Alexandrovich still could not allow himself to think about his wife’s real situation. He saw only the outward signs. He saw that she was behaving improperly and considered it his duty to tell her so. But it was very hard for him not to say more, but to say only this. He opened his mouth to tell her that she had behaved improperly, but involuntarily said something completely different.

“How fond we all are, though, of these cruel spectacles,” he said. “I have noticed . . .”

“What? I don’t understand,” said Anna disdainfully.

He took offense and immediately began saying what he had wanted to say.

“I am obliged to tell you,” he pronounced.

“Here it is, the explanation,” she thought, and she became frightened.

“I am obliged to tell you that you have behaved improperly today,” he told her in French.

“How have I behaved improperly?” she said loudly, quickly turning her head toward him and looking him straight in the eye, now without the gaiety she once used to conceal something but rather with a decisive look which barely concealed the terror she was feeling.

“Do not forget,” he told her, pointing to the open window opposite the coachman.

He rose slightly and raised the glass.

“What did you find improper?” she repeated.

“The despair which you were unable to conceal at the fall of one of the riders.”

He waited for her to object, but she remained silent, looking straight ahead.

"I have already asked you to behave in society in such a way that malicious tongues can have nothing to say against you. There was a time when I spoke about our private relations; now I am not speaking of these. Now I am speaking of your outward relations. You were behaving improperly, and I would prefer that this not be repeated."

She did not hear half his words; she was terrified of him and thought about whether it was really true that Vronsky had not been killed. Had it been he they were saying was unhurt, and the horse had broken its back? She merely smiled in a feigned mocking way when he finished and said nothing in reply because she had not heard what he had said. Alexei Alexandrovich had begun speaking boldly, but when he realized clearly what he was talking about, the terror she was experiencing was conveyed to him. He saw that smile, and a strange delusion came over him.

"She is smiling at my suspicions. Yes, she is just about to say what she told me that time: that there are no grounds for my suspicions, that this is laughable."

Now, when the revelation of everything hung over him, he desired nothing but that she, just as before, would reply to him mockingly that his suspicions were ridiculous and groundless. So terrifying was what he knew that now he was prepared to believe anything. However the expression on her face, frightened and dark, now did not promise even deceit.

"Perhaps I am mistaken," he said. "In that case, I beg you to forgive me."

"No, you are not mistaken," she said slowly, looking desperately at his cold face. "You are not mistaken. I was and cannot help but be in despair. I'm listening to you and thinking about him. I love him, I am his lover, I cannot bear you, I'm afraid of you, and I despise you. . . . Do what you like with me."

And leaning back into the corner of the carriage, she burst into sobs, covering her face with her hands. Alexei Alexandrovich neither stirred nor changed the forward direction of his gaze. But his entire face suddenly acquired the solemn rigidity of a corpse, and this expression did not change throughout the ride to the dacha. As they were drawing up to the house, he turned his head toward her still with the same expression.

"Very well! Nonetheless I demand observance of the outward terms of propriety until such time" — his voice began to shake — "as I take measures to safeguard my honor and inform you of them."

He got out first and helped her out. In front of the servant he silently pressed her hand, got back in the carriage, and left for Petersburg.

Immediately afterward a footman arrived from Princess Betsy bringing Anna a note:

"I sent to Alexei to learn of his health, and he writes me that he is well and unhurt, but in despair."

“So *he* will come!” she thought. “How well I did in telling him everything.”

She glanced at the clock. Three hours remained, and her memories of the details of their last meeting set her blood on fire.

“My God, how light it is! It is terrifying, but I love to see his face and love this fantastic light. . . . My husband! Ah, yes. . . . Well, and thank God it’s all finished with him.”

30

As in all places where people gather, so it was at the small German spa where the Shcherbatskys went that there occurred the usual crystallization of society, if it can be put that way, which defined a specific and unalterable place for each of its members. Just as definitely and unalterably a drop of water in the cold acquires the specific form of a snowflake, so precisely each new face that arrived at the spa was immediately established in its own proper place.

Fürst Shcherbatsky, *sammt Gemahlin und Tochter*, because of the apartments they occupied, and because of their name, and because of the friends they found there, immediately crystallized in their definite and proper place.³⁵

At the spa this year there was a genuine German *Fürstin*, as a consequence of which society’s crystallization was even more energetic.³⁶ The princess was determined to present her daughter to the German princess and on the second day accomplished this ritual. Kitty curtsied low and gracefully in her *very simple*, that is, very elegant, summer dress, which had been ordered from Paris. The German princess said, “I hope the roses will soon return to this pretty little face,” and for the Shcherbatskys fixed paths were immediately and firmly established from which they could no longer stray. The Shcherbatskys became friendly with the family of an English lady, and with a German countess, and with her son, who had been wounded in the last war, and with a Swedish scholar, and with M. Canut and his sister.³⁷ However, the Shcherbatskys’ principal society inevitably consisted of a Moscow lady, Marya Evgenyevna Rtishcheva, and her daughter, whom Kitty did not like because she had fallen ill just as she, Kitty, had from love, and a Moscow colonel whom Kitty had seen and known since childhood in his uniform and epaulettes and who here, with his beady little eyes and open neck in a colorful cravat, was especially ridiculous and tedious because one could not get away from him. When all this was so firmly set, Kitty grew very bored, especially since the prince had gone to Carlsbad and she was left alone with her mother. She was not interested in those she knew, sensing that there would be nothing new from them. Her principal heartfelt interest at the spa consisted now of observation and speculation about those whom she did

not know. By dint of her nature, Kitty had always assumed the very best about people, especially those whom she did not know. And now, speculating about who was who, what sorts of relations existed between them, and what kind of people they were, Kitty imagined the most astonishing and wonderful personalities and found confirmation in her observations.

Of these individuals she was especially taken with one Russian girl who had come to the spa with an ailing Russian lady, Madame Stahl, as everyone called her. Madame Stahl belonged to high society but was so ill that she could not walk, and only on rare fine days did she appear at the spa in a wheelchair. But it was a matter more of pride than of illness, as the princess explained, that Madame Stahl was not acquainted with any of the Russians. The Russian girl looked after Madame Stahl and, moreover, as Kitty noticed, gravitated toward all the seriously ill, of whom there were so many at the spa, and looked after them in the most natural manner. This Russian girl, according to Kitty's observations, was not a relation of Madame Stahl but at the same time was not hired help. Madame Stahl called her Varenka, but others called her Mademoiselle Varenka. To say nothing of the fact that Kitty was intrigued by her observations of this girl's relations toward Madame Stahl and other people she did not know, Kitty, as often happens, felt an inexplicable sympathy for this Mademoiselle Varenka and sensed from exchanged glances that she liked her as well.

It was not that this Mademoiselle Varenka was not in her first youth but rather that she was a being without youth: you might have put her age at nineteen or thirty. If you examined her features, she was more good-looking than bad, notwithstanding her sickly complexion. She would have had a good figure had it not been for its excessive meagerness and the disproportionate head for her average height; however, she would not have thought to be attractive to men. She resembled a marvelous flower still full of petals, but already without color or scent. Moreover, she could not be attractive to men for the additional reason that she lacked what Kitty had so much of—the fire of life held in check and an awareness of her own attractiveness.

She seemed always occupied with something of which there could be no doubt and so, it seemed, could not be interested in anything extraneous. Kitty found this contrast to herself particularly attractive. Kitty felt that in Varenka, in Varenka's way of life, she would find a model for what she was now agonizingly seeking: interests in life, a dignity of life—beyond the social relations between young women and men, which Kitty found repugnant and which now seemed to her like a shameful display of goods awaiting buyers. The more Kitty observed her unknown friend, the more she was convinced that this girl was that most perfect being she had imagined and so wished to make her acquaintance even more.

Both young women met several times a day, and at each meeting Kitty's eyes said, "Who are you? What are you? Are you really that splendid being I imagine you to be? But for the love of God don't think"—her look added—"that I would allow myself to force my friendship on you. I simply admire and like you." "I, too, like you, and you are very, very dear. I would like you even more if I had the time," replied the unknown girl's gaze. And indeed, Kitty saw that she was always busy: either she was taking the children from a Russian family home from the spa, or she was carrying a lap robe for an invalid and tucking it in, or she was trying to distract an irritable patient, or she was selecting and purchasing biscuits for coffee for someone.

Shortly after the Shcherbatskys' arrival at the morning waters, two other individuals appeared who attracted general and unfriendly attention. These were a very tall, rather stooped man with very large hands who wore a short and old coat that did not fit him and who had black, naïve, and at the same time frightening eyes, and a lightly pockmarked, sweet-faced woman who was dressed quite badly and tastelessly. Recognizing these individuals as Russians, Kitty began composing a marvelous and touching novel about them in her imagination. However, the princess, when she learned from the *Kurliste* that this was Nikolai Levin and Marya Nikolaevna, explained to Kitty what a bad person this Levin was, and all her dreams of these two individuals evaporated.³⁸ Not so much because of what her mother had told her as because this was Konstantin's brother, and for Kitty these people suddenly seemed supremely unpleasant. This Levin, with his habit of jerking his head, aroused in her now an insurmountable revulsion.

His large, frightening eyes, which relentlessly followed her, seemed to express hatred and ridicule, and she tried to avoid meeting him.

31

It was an inclement day, it had been raining all morning, and the invalids were milling around in the gallery with their umbrellas.

Kitty was walking with her mother and the Muscovite colonel, who was flaunting his European coat, bought ready-made in Frankfurt. They were walking down one side of the gallery, trying to avoid Levin, who was walking down the other. Varenka, in her dark dress and black hat with the brim turned down, was walking with a blind Frenchwoman the full length of the gallery, and each time she met Kitty, they exchanged a friendly glance.

"Mama, may I speak to her?" said Kitty, watching her unknown friend and noticing that she was approaching the spring and that they might meet up there.

“Yes, if you want it so much, I’ll find out about her first and approach her myself,” replied her mother. “What do you find so special in her? A companion, doubtless. If you like, I will introduce myself to Madame Stahl. I knew her *belle-soeur*,” added the princess, proudly lifting her head.

Kitty knew that the princess was offended by the fact that Madame Stahl seemed to have avoided being introduced to her. Kitty did not insist.

“Marvelous, how sweet she is!” she said, watching Varenka hand the Frenchwoman a glass. “Everything done so simply and sweetly.”

“I find your *engouements* terribly funny,” said the princess.³⁹ “No, let’s go back instead,” she added, noticing Levin with his lady and the German doctor to whom he was saying something loudly and angrily, coming toward them.

They turned around to go back when suddenly they heard not loud speaking but shouting. Levin had stopped and was shouting, and the doctor, too, was getting excited. A crowd gathered around them. The princess and Kitty beat a hasty retreat, but the colonel joined the crowd in order to find out what this was about.

A few minutes later the colonel overtook them.

“What was that?” asked the princess.

“Disgrace and shame!” replied the colonel. “You fear but one thing—and that is meeting Russians abroad. That tall gentleman quarreled with the doctor, had the impudence to tell him he was not treating him properly, and waved his cane about. Simply a disgrace!”

“Oh, how unpleasant!” said the princess. “Well, and how did it end?”

“At that point, thank you, that woman intervened . . . that woman in the mushroom hat. A Russian, I believe,” said the colonel.

“Mademoiselle Varenka?” asked Kitty, delighted.

“Yes, yes. She found her way more quickly than anyone else, and she took this gentleman by the arm and led him away.”

“There, Mama,” Kitty told her mother. “And you wonder that I admire her.”

Beginning the next day, observing her unknown friend, Kitty noticed that Mademoiselle Varenka already enjoyed the same relations with Levin and his woman as she did with her other *protégés*. She would walk over to them, begin talking, and act as interpreter for the woman, who could not speak any foreign language.

Kitty began pleading with her mother even more to allow her to be introduced to Varenka. And, unpleasant though the princess found it to take the first step in the wish to be introduced to Madame Stahl, who had indulged herself in pride over something, she made inquiries about Varenka, and when she learned the details about her, which allowed her to conclude that there was nothing

amiss, although there was little good, in this friendship, she approached Varenka first and introduced herself.

Choosing a moment when her daughter had gone to the spring and Varenka had stopped opposite the bakery, the princess approached her.

“Allow me to make your acquaintance,” she said with her dignified smile. “My daughter is in love with you,” she said. “You may not know me. I am . . .”

“The feeling is more than mutual, Princess,” Varenka answered hastily.

“What a good deed you did yesterday for our pitiable countryman!” said the princess.

Varenka blushed.

“I don’t recall, I don’t think I did anything,” she said.

“What do you mean? You saved this Levin from trouble.”

“Yes, *sa compagne* called for me, and I tried to calm him down.⁴⁰ He is very ill and was dissatisfied with the doctor. And I have the habit of looking after these invalids.”

“Yes, I heard that you live in Menton with your aunt, I believe, Madame Stahl. I knew her *belle-soeur*.”

“No, she is not my aunt. I call her *Maman*, but I am not kin to her; I have been raised by her,” Varenka replied, blushing again.

This was said so simply, and the truthful and open expression on her face was so sweet, that the princess understood why Kitty had taken a liking to this Varenka.

“Well, and what about this Levin?” asked the princess.

“He is leaving,” replied Varenka.

At that moment, beaming with joy at the fact that her mother had introduced herself to her unknown friend, Kitty walked up from the spring.

“Ah, here you are, Kitty, your powerful desire to be introduced to Mademoiselle . . .”

“Varenka,” prompted Varenka, smiling, “that is what everyone calls me.”

Kitty blushed with delight and pressed the hand of her new friend, who did not return the gesture but let her hand lie still in Kitty’s. The hand did not respond to the pressure, but Mademoiselle Varenka’s face beamed with a quiet and joyous, albeit somewhat mournful smile, revealing her large but splendid teeth.

“I myself have wished this for a long time,” she said.

“But you are so busy . . .”

“Oh, not at all, I’m not busy with anything,” replied Varenka, but at that very moment she had to leave her new friends because two little Russian girls, the daughters of an invalid, ran up to her.

“Varenka, Mama’s calling!” they cried.
And Varenka followed them.

32

The details which the princess learned about Varenka’s past and her relationship to Madame Stahl and indeed about Madame Stahl herself were the following.

Madame Stahl, about whom some said that she had tormented her husband and others said he had tormented her with his immoral behavior, was a perpetually ailing and ecstatic woman. When she gave birth, having already separated from her husband, to her first child, this child died immediately, and Madame Stahl’s relatives, knowing her sensitivity and fearing the news would kill her, substituted for her a child who had been born the same night and in the same house in Petersburg, to the daughter of a chef at court. This was Varenka. Madame Stahl learned subsequently that Varenka was not her daughter, but she continued to raise her, especially since soon thereafter Varenka had no relatives remaining.

Madame Stahl had spent more than ten uninterrupted years abroad, in the south, without ever getting out of bed. Some said that Madame Stahl had made herself a social position as a philanthropic, highly religious woman; others said that at heart she was the most moral of beings, living only for the good of her neighbor, as she made herself out to be. No one knew what her religion was, Catholic, Protestant, or Orthodox; one thing was without a doubt, however: she enjoyed friendly ties with the highest-ranking persons in all churches and confessions.

Varenka lived with her permanently abroad, and everyone who knew Madame Stahl also knew and loved Mademoiselle Varenka, as everyone called her.

Having learned all these details, the princess found nothing to preclude her daughter’s greater intimacy with Varenka, especially since Varenka had the very best manners and upbringing: she spoke excellent French and English and, what was most important, conveyed Madame Stahl’s regrets that due to her illness she was deprived of the satisfaction of making the princess’s acquaintance.

Once she had been introduced to Varenka, Kitty was increasingly attracted by her friend and each day discovered new virtues in her.

The princess, having heard that Varenka sang well, asked her to come to their home in the evening to sing.

“Kitty plays, and we have a piano, not a good one, it’s true, but you would

give us great pleasure," said the princess with her feigned smile, which Kitty now found especially unpleasant because she had noticed that Varenka did not wish to sing. But Varenka did come that evening nonetheless and brought her music notebook. The princess invited Marya Evgenyevna and her daughter and the colonel.

Varenka seemed completely indifferent to the fact that there were unfamiliar faces here and immediately walked over to the piano. She could not accompany herself, but she read the music beautifully with her voice. Kitty, who played well, accompanied her.

"You have an exceptional talent," the princess told Varenka after she had sung the first song beautifully.

Marya Evgenyevna and her daughter thanked and praised her.

"Take a look," said the colonel, glancing out the window, "at the audience that has gathered to hear you." And indeed, a rather large crowd had gathered just under the windows.

"I'm very pleased that this gives you pleasure," Varenka replied simply.

Kitty watched her friend with pride. She admired her art, her voice, and her face, but most of all she admired her manner, the fact that Varenka obviously thought nothing of her singing and was utterly indifferent to praise; she seemed to ask only, Need I sing again or is that enough?

"Had it been me," Kitty thought privately, "how proud I would have been of this! How I would have rejoiced to see this crowd under the windows! But she does not care at all. She is moved only by the desire not to refuse *Maman* and to do something nice for her. What is it in her? What gives her this power to disdain everything, to be independently serene? How I would like to know this and learn this from her," Kitty thought, gazing at this calm face. The princess asked Varenka to sing again, and Varenka sang another song just as evenly, distinctly, and well, standing beside the piano and tapping the rhythm on it with her dark, thin hand.

The next piece in the notebook was an Italian song. Kitty played the prelude and looked around at Varenka.

"Let's skip this one," said Varenka, blushing.

Startled and wondering, Kitty rested her eyes on Varenka's face.

"Well then, the next one," she said hurriedly, turning the pages and immediately realizing that there was something linked to this piece.

"No," replied Varenka, placing her hand on the music and smiling, "No, let's sing this one." And she sang it just as calmly, coolly, and well as before.

When she had finished, everyone again thanked her and went to drink tea. Kitty and Varenka stepped out into the small garden alongside the house.

“Is it true you have a certain memory linked to that song?” said Kitty. “You don’t have to say what,” she added hastily, “just tell me, is it true?”

“No, why not? I’ll tell you,” said Varenka simply, and without waiting for a reply, she continued. “Yes, there is a memory, and at one time it was difficult. I loved someone, and I used to sing this piece for him.”

Moved, Kitty looked at Varenka silently with wide open eyes.

“I loved him, and he loved me; but his mother did not approve, and he married another. Now he lives not far from us, and I see him sometimes. Didn’t you think I might have had a romance, too?” she said, and that spark which, Kitty sensed, had once lit all of her now barely glimmered in her handsome face.

“Why wouldn’t I think so? If I were a man, I couldn’t love anyone after I had known you. Only I can’t understand how he could forget you to please his mother and make you unhappy; he had no heart.”

“Oh no, he is a very good man, and I’m not unhappy; on the contrary, I’m very happy. So shall we not be singing any more today?” she added, heading toward the house.

“How fine you are, how fine!” exclaimed Kitty, and stopping her, gave her a kiss. “If I could only be the least bit like you!”

“Why should you be like anyone? You’re fine just as you are,” said Varenka, smiling her gentle, weary smile.

“No, I’m not fine at all. So tell me. . . . Wait, let’s sit a while,” said Kitty, drawing her back down on the bench alongside her. “Tell me, do you really not mind that a man disdained your love, that he didn’t want it?”

“But he didn’t disdain it; I believe he loved me, but he was a dutiful son. . . .”

“Yes, but what if it was a matter of his own will and not his mother’s?” said Kitty, feeling that she had given away her own secret and that her face, burning with the flush of shame, had already exposed her.

“Then he would have acted badly and I would not have regretted him,” replied Varenka, obviously realizing that they were now talking about Kitty and not her.

“But the insult?” said Kitty. “One cannot, cannot forget the insult,” she said recalling her own look at the last ball, during a lull in the music.

“Where is the insult? It wasn’t you who acted badly, was it?”

“Worse than badly—shamefully.”

Varenka shook her head and put her hand on Kitty’s.

“What is shameful about it?” she said. “You couldn’t have told a man who is indifferent to you that you loved him, could you?”

“Of course not. I never said a single word, but he knew. No, no, there are glances, there are ways. If I live a hundred years, I won’t forget it.”

“So what is it? I don’t understand. It’s all a matter of whether you love him now or not,” said Varenka, calling everything by its name.

“I despise him. It’s myself I can’t forgive.”

“For what?”

“The shame, the insult.”

“Oh, if only everyone were as sensitive as you,” said Varenka. “There isn’t a young girl alive who hasn’t experienced this. And it’s all so unimportant.”

“But what is important?” asked Kitty, gazing with curious surprise into her face.

“Oh, a great deal,” said Varenka, smiling.

“Yes, but what?”

“Oh, a great deal,” replied Varenka, not knowing what to say. But at that moment the princess’s voice was heard from the window:

“Kitty, it’s cool! Either get a shawl or come inside.”

“True, it is time!” said Varenka, standing. “I still have to stop by Madame Berthe’s; she asked me to.”

Kitty held her by the hand and with passionate curiosity and entreaty let her look ask: “What, what is this most important thing, what gives you this serenity? You know. Tell me!” But Varenka did not understand even what Kitty’s gaze was asking her. All she could remember was that she had to stop by Madame Berthe’s today and be home in time for *Maman’s* tea, by twelve o’clock. She went into the rooms, gathered her music, and saying good-bye to everyone, prepared to leave.

“Allow me, I shall escort you,” said the colonel.

“Yes, how can you go alone at night now?” agreed the princess. “I will at least send Parasha.”

Kitty saw that Varenka was having a hard time restraining a smile when they said she needed an escort.

“No, I always go about alone, and nothing ever happens to me,” she said, picking up her hat. And kissing Kitty once more without ever having said what was important, with a lively step, her music under her arm, she was lost in the twilight of the summer night, carrying away the secret of what was important and what gave her this enviable serenity and dignity.

33

Kitty was introduced to Madame Stahl, and this acquaintance, along with her friendship for Varenka, not only had a powerful effect on her but also consoled her in her grief. She found this consolation in the fact that thanks to this

acquaintance an entirely new world was opened to her, a world that had nothing to do with her past, a lofty, beautiful world from whose heights one could look on this past calmly. It was revealed to her that apart from the instinctive life to which Kitty had given herself until now, there was a spiritual life. This life was revealed by religion, but a religion that had nothing to do with the one Kitty had known since childhood and which was expressed in the Mass and vespers at the Widow's Home, where one could meet one's friends, or in memorizing the Slavonic texts with the priest; this was a lofty, mysterious religion connected with many beautiful ideas and feelings which one could not only believe because one was told to do so but which one could love.

Kitty learned all this not from words. Madame Stahl spoke with Kitty as you would with a sweet child you admire, as a reminder of her own youth, and only once did she mention the fact that in all human sorrows only love and faith yield consolation, and that there were no insignificant sorrows for Christ's compassion for us, and immediately she changed the conversation to something else. But in each movement, each word, each heavenly (as Kitty called them) view of hers, especially in the entire story of her life, which Kitty knew through Varenka, in all this Kitty recognized "what was important" and what she had not before known.

But however lofty Madame Stahl's character, however touching her entire story or lofty and kind her speech, Kitty could not help but note traits that disturbed her. She noted that, in inquiring about Kitty's family, Madame Stahl smiled disdainfully, which ran counter to Christian goodness. She noted, too, that when she found the Catholic priest with her, Madame Stahl assiduously kept her face in the shadow of the lamp and smiled in a peculiar way. However inconsequential these two observations were, they disturbed her, and she had her doubts about Madame Stahl. On the other hand, Varenka, all alone, without family or friends, with a sad disappointment, who desired nothing and regretted nothing, was that perfection of which Kitty could only dream. In Varenka, Kitty realized that one had only to forget oneself and love others and one would be calm, happy, and noble. And this is what Kitty wanted to be. Having clearly realized now what was *most important*, Kitty could not be content with admiring this but immediately devoted herself wholeheartedly to this new life that had been revealed to her. From the stories Varenka told about what Madame Stahl and others she mentioned had done, Kitty had already composed for herself a happy plan for her future life. Like Madame Stahl's niece, *Aline*, about whom Varenka told her so much, Kitty, no matter where she lived, would seek out the unfortunate, help them as much as she could, distribute the Gospels, and read the Gospels to the sick, criminals, and the dying. The idea of reading

the Gospels to criminals, as *Aline* did, especially charmed Kitty. But these were all secret dreams, which Kitty did not express either to her mother or to Varenka.

Actually, in anticipation of the time when she would execute her plans on a large scale, Kitty even now, at the spa, where there were so many ill and unfortunate people, easily found occasion to apply her new principles, emulating Varenka.

At first the princess noticed only that Kitty was under the powerful influence of her *engouement*, as she called it, for Madame Stahl and for Varenka in particular. She saw that Kitty not only was emulating Varenka in her activities but was unconsciously emulating her in her manner of walking, talking, and blinking. But later on the princess noticed that, quite independent of this enchantment, a serious spiritual turnabout was taking place in her daughter.

The princess saw that in the evenings Kitty was reading the French Gospels Madame Stahl had given her, something she had not done previously; that she was avoiding her society acquaintances and spending time with the invalids under Varenka's protection, and especially with the poor family of the ill painter Petrov. Kitty obviously took pride in the fact that she was carrying out the duties of a sister of mercy in this family. All this was fine, and the princess had no objection to this, especially since Petrov's wife was a perfectly decent woman and the German princess had remarked on Kitty's activities and praised her, calling her an angel of consolation. All this would have been very good had it not been overdone. But the princess saw that her daughter was going to extremes, which is what she told her.

"Il ne faut jamais rien outrer," she told her.⁴¹

But her daughter did not reply; she merely thought deep down that one cannot speak of extremes in the matter of Christianity. What kind of extreme could there be in following a teaching in which one is commanded to turn the other cheek when one has been smitten and to give one's cloak when one's coat has been taken?⁴² But the princess did not like this extreme, and even more she did not like the fact that she sensed Kitty's reluctance to reveal her soul to her. Indeed, Kitty was hiding her new views and feelings from her mother. She was hiding them not because she did not respect and love her mother but only because this was her mother. She would have revealed them to anyone sooner than she would her mother.

"I wonder why Anna Pavlovna has not been to see us for so long," the princess said once about Madame Petrova. "I invited her. But she seemed to be displeased about something."

"No, I haven't noticed, *Maman*," said Kitty, blushing.

"Have you been to see them recently?"

“Tomorrow we’re planning to take a hike into the mountains,” replied Kitty.

“Well then, go,” replied the princess, gazing into her daughter’s blushing face and trying to guess the cause of her embarrassment.

That same day Varenka came for dinner and reported that Anna Pavlovna had changed her mind about going to the mountains tomorrow. And the princess noticed that Kitty again turned red.

“Kitty, has there been some unpleasantness between you and the Petrovs?” said the princess when they were alone. “Why did she stop sending her children and coming to see us?”

Kitty replied that nothing had happened between them and she decidedly did not understand why Anna Pavlovna seemed displeased with her. Kitty was telling her the absolute truth. She did not know the reason for the change in Anna Pavlovna’s attitude toward her, but she could guess. She guessed something she could not tell her mother, something she could not tell even herself. This was one of those things which you know but which you cannot tell even yourself, so terrifying and shameful would it be to err.

Again and again she sorted through her memory for all her relations with this family. She recalled the naïve delight expressed on Anna Pavlovna’s round, good-natured face at their meetings; she recalled their secret talks about the patient, their conspiracies to distract him from his work, which he had been forbidden, and to take him out for walks; the attachment of the smallest boy, who called her “my Kitty” and would not to go to bed without her. How fine all this was! Then she recalled Petrov’s very skinny figure and his long neck in his brown coat, his thinning, curling hair, his searching blue eyes, which Kitty had found so frightening at first, and his painful efforts to seem hale and hearty in her presence. She recalled her own initial effort to overcome the revulsion she experienced for him, as she did for all the tubercular patients, and her efforts to come up with things to tell him. She recalled the timid, touching way he looked at her and the strange feeling of compassion and awkwardness and later the awareness of her own virtue which she had experienced at this. How fine this all was! But all this was at first. Now, a few days ago, everything had suddenly been spoiled. Anna Pavlovna met Kitty with feigned graciousness and observed her and her husband continuously.

Could this touching joy of his at her approach indeed be the cause of Anna Pavlovna’s cooling?

“Yes,” she recalled, “there was something unnatural in Anna Pavlovna and completely unlike her goodness when the day before yesterday she said with annoyance: ‘Here he’s been waiting for you the whole time and would not drink his coffee without you, though he’s become terribly weak.’

“Yes, she may not have liked it when I gave him the lap robe. All this is so

simple, but he took it so awkwardly, went on thanking me at such length, that even I felt awkward. And then this portrait of me, which he did so well. And most of all—that look, embarrassed and tender! Yes, yes, that’s it!” Kitty repeated to herself with horror. “No, this cannot, must not be! He is so pitiful!” she told herself immediately afterward.

This doubt poisoned the charm of her new life.

34

Before his course of treatment was through, Prince Shcherbatsky, who after Carlsbad had gone to Baden and Kissingen to visit Russian friends and get his fill of the Russian spirit, as he said, returned to his family.

The prince’s and princess’s views of life abroad were exactly opposite. The princess found everything marvelous, and despite her firm position in Russian society, tried abroad to resemble a European lady, which she was not—because she was a Russian lady—and so was affected, which she found somewhat awkward. The prince, on the contrary, found everything abroad vile and European life a burden, kept to his Russian habits and purposely tried to display himself abroad as less of a European than he was in reality.

The prince returned thinner, with sagging pouches of skin on his cheeks, but in the most cheerful of spirits. His cheerful disposition was intensified when he saw Kitty thoroughly recovered. The news of Kitty’s friendship with Madame Stahl and Varenka and the observations conveyed by the princess of some change that had taken place in Kitty upset the prince and aroused his usual jealousy toward everything that fascinated his daughter other than him and his fear that his daughter had slipped from his influence into regions inaccessible to him. This unpleasant news was drowned, however, in the sea of good nature and cheer which were always in him and had been especially intensified by the Carlsbad spa.

The day after his arrival, the prince, wearing his long coat, with his Russian wrinkles and puffy cheeks, his standing starched collar, and in the most cheerful of spirits, accompanied his daughter to the spa.

The morning was marvelous: tidy, cheerful houses with small gardens, the sight of the red faces and red hands of the cheerfully working, beer-filled German attendants, and the bright sun gladdened his heart; but the closer they came to the spa, the more frequently they met invalids, and the sight of them seemed all the more lamentable amid the usual conditions of the well-ordered German life. Kitty was no longer shocked by this contrast. The bright sun, cheerful gleam of greenery, and sound of music were for her the natural setting for

all these familiar faces and changes for the better or worse, which she followed; for the prince, though, the light and gleam of the June morning and the sounds of the orchestra, which was playing a cheerful, fashionable waltz, and in particular the sight of the robust attendants seemed somehow indecent and monstrous, in combination with these despondently moving corpses who had gathered from all the corners of Europe.

Despite the pride he experienced and the seeming return of his youth when his favorite daughter walked with him arm in arm, he now felt rather awkward and guilty for his powerful gait and his large, fat-layered limbs. He almost felt like a man going about in society unclothed.

"Introduce me, introduce me to your new friends," he told his daughter, pressing her arm with his elbow. "I even took a liking to that vile Soden of yours because he made you so well. Only it's sad, so sad here. Who is this?"

Kitty named for him all the people they met, some of whom she knew and some of whom she didn't. Right at the entrance to the garden they met blind Madame Berthe and her companion, and the prince rejoiced in the tender expression on the old Frenchwoman's face when she heard Kitty's voice. She immediately addressed him with typically exaggerated French courtesy, praising him for having such a wonderful daughter, and praising Kitty to the skies and calling her to her face a treasure, a pearl, and an angel of consolation.

"Well, then she's angel number two," said the prince, smiling. "She calls *Mademoiselle Varenka* angel number one."

"Oh, *Mademoiselle Varenka*. There is a true angel, *allez*," chimed in Madam Berthe.

In the gallery they met Varenka herself. She was hurrying toward them, carrying an elegant red bag.

"Look, Papa has come!" Kitty told her.

Varenka made a movement halfway between a bow and a curtsy, simply and naturally, as she did everything, and immediately began speaking with the prince, as she did with everyone, simply and without constraint.

"Naturally I know you, I know you very well," the prince told her with a smile, from which Kitty realized with delight that her father liked her friend. "Where are you off to in such a hurry?"

"*Maman* is here," she said, addressing Kitty. "She did not sleep all night, and the doctor has advised her to leave. I'm bringing her her work."

"So that is angel number one!" said the prince when Varenka had gone.

Kitty saw that he wanted to tease her about Varenka but there was no way he could do it because he had liked Varenka so much.

"Well, now we shall see all of your friends," he added, "even Madame Stahl, if she will deign to recognize me."

“But you mean you knew her, Papa?” asked Kitty with fear, noticing the fire of ridicule ignite in the prince’s eyes at the mention of Madame Stahl.

“I knew her husband and her slightly, back before she signed up with the Pietists.”⁴³

“What’s a Pietist, Papa?” Kitty asked, now afraid because what she had valued so highly in Madame Stahl had a name.

“I don’t very well know myself. All I know is that she thanks God for everything, for every misfortune, and also for the fact that her husband died, she thanks God. Well, and that’s rather funny because they didn’t get on well. Who is this? What a pitiful face!” he asked noticing a short invalid sitting on a bench wearing a brown coat and white trousers, which formed odd folds on the bones of his legs, which had lost their muscle.

This gentleman raised his straw hat above his thinning, curly hair, revealing a high forehead that was painfully red from his hat.

“That is Petrov, the painter,” answered Kitty, blushing. “And this is his wife,” she added, indicating Anna Pavlovna, who, as if on purpose, just as they were approaching, went after her child, who had run away down the path.

“How pitiful he is, and what a kind face he has!” said the prince. “Why didn’t you go over to him? Wasn’t he about to say something to you?”

“All right, let’s go,” said Kitty, turning decisively on her heel. “How is your health today?” she asked Petrov.

Petrov rose, leaning on his cane, and looked shyly at the prince.

“This is my daughter,” said the prince. “Allow me to introduce myself.”

The painter bowed and smiled, revealing oddly gleaming white teeth.

“We were expecting you yesterday, Princess,” he said to Kitty.

He tottered as he said this, and by repeating this movement, he tried to show that he had done so on purpose.

“I was planning to come, but Varenka said that Anna Pavlovna had sent word that you were not going.”

“What do you mean not going?” said Petrov, blushing and taken by a fit of coughing, seeking his wife out with his eyes. “Annetta, Annetta!” he said loudly, and the thick veins stretched like cords on his thin white neck.

Anna Pavlovna came over.

“Why did you send word to the princess that we were not going?” he whispered to her in irritation, having lost his voice.

“Hello, Princess!” said Anna Pavlovna with a feigned smile so unlike her former manner of address. “I’m very pleased to meet you,” she turned to the prince. “You have been long awaited, Prince.”

“Why did you send word to the princess that we were not going?” the painter whispered hoarsely once again and even more angrily, obviously irritated even

more by the fact that his voice was betraying him and he could not give his speech the expression he would have liked.

“Oh, heavens! I thought we were not going,” his wife replied with annoyance.

“How, when . . .” he began coughing and waved his hand. The prince raised his hat and walked away with his daughter.

“Oh!” he sighed heavily. “Oh, the unfortunate people!”

“Yes, Papa,” replied Kitty. “But you have to know that they have three children, no one for a servant, and are practically without funds. He receives something from the Academy,” she recounted with animation, trying to dampen the agitation that had arisen inside her as a result of the strange change in Anna Pavlovna’s attitude toward her.⁴⁴

“And here is Madame Stahl,” said Kitty, indicating the wheelchair where, cosseted by pillows, wearing something gray and blue, under a parasol, lay something.

This was Madame Stahl. Behind her stood the morose, robust German worker who pushed her. Alongside stood a blond Swedish count, whom Kitty knew by name. A few invalids were lingering around the wheelchair, looking at the lady as something out of the ordinary.

The prince walked up to her. And immediately in his eyes Kitty noticed a spark of mockery that embarrassed her. He walked up to Madame Stahl and began speaking in that excellent French which so few now speak, extremely courteously and kindly.

“I don’t know whether you remember me or not, but I must remind you of myself in order to thank you for your kindness to my daughter,” he said, removing his hat and not replacing it.

“Prince Alexander Shcherbatsky,” said Madame Stahl, lifting to him her heavenly eyes, in the expression of which Kitty noticed dissatisfaction. “I’m very pleased. I’ve become so fond of your daughter.”

“Is your health still poor?”

“Yes, I am used to it by now,” said Madame Stahl, and she introduced the prince to the Swedish count.

“But you’ve changed very little,” the prince told her. “I have not had the honor of seeing you for ten or eleven years.”

“Yes, the Lord gives us a cross and gives us the strength to bear it. One often wonders what this life drags on for. . . . The other way!” she addressed Varenka with annoyance because she was tucking the lap robe around her legs the wrong way.

“To do good, probably,” said the prince, laughing with his eyes.

“That is not for us to judge,” said Madame Stahl, noting the shade of expres-

sion on the prince's face. "So, will you send me that book, dear Count? I would be most grateful to you," she addressed the young Swede.

"Ah!" exclaimed the prince, catching sight of the Moscow colonel standing nearby. Bowing to Madame Stahl, he and his daughter walked off with the Moscow colonel, who joined them.

"That's our aristocracy, Prince!" said the Moscow colonel, wishing to make fun of Madame Stahl, against whom he held the fact that he had not been introduced to her.

"She's just the same," replied the prince.

"But did you know her before her illness, Prince, that is, before she took to her bed?"

"Yes. She took to her bed in my day," said the prince.

"They say she hasn't stood up for ten years."

"She hasn't stood up because she's short-legged. She's very badly put together."

"Papa, that can't be!" Kitty cried out.

"Wicked tongues say so, my little friend. And your Varenka has to put up with it," he added. "Oh, these ailing ladies!"

"Oh, no, Papa!" Kitty hotly objected. "Varenka adores her. And then she does so much good! Ask anyone you like! Everyone knows her and *Aline Stahl*."

"Perhaps," he said, pressing her arm with his elbow. "But it's better when people act so that no matter whom you ask, no one knows."⁴⁵

Kitty fell silent not because she had nothing to say, but because she did not want to reveal her secret thoughts to her father. But it's a strange thing: although she had been preparing herself not to yield to her father's view, not to allow him access to her shrine, she felt the divine image of Madame Stahl which she had carried in her heart for an entire month vanishing irrevocably, just as a figure made by a cast-off dress disappears when you realize that it is nothing but a dress lying there. All that remained was one short-legged woman who lay there because she was badly put together and who tormented the meek Varenka because she had tucked her lap robe in the wrong way. And no effort of her imagination could now restore the Madame Stahl of old.

35

The prince conveyed his cheerful disposition to his family, his acquaintances, and even the German landlord where the Shcherbatskys were staying.

After returning from the spa with Kitty and inviting the colonel, Marya Evgenyevna, and Varenka all for coffee, the prince ordered a table and chairs

carried out into the garden, under the chestnut tree, and lunch served there. Both the landlord and the servant sprang to life under the influence of his good cheer. They knew his generosity, and half an hour later the ill Hamburg doctor who was staying upstairs looked out the window with envy at this merry company of healthy Russians gathered under the chestnut. In the shade of circles of trembling leaves, at a table spread with a white cloth and set with pots of coffee, bread, butter, cheese, and cold game, sat the princess wearing a tall hat with lilac ribbons and passing out cups and open-faced sandwiches. At the other end sat the prince, eating heartily and conversing loudly and cheerfully. The prince had set out his purchases beside him, the carved chests, spillikins, and paper knives of all kinds which he bought such a pile of at all the spas and gave out to everyone, including Lieschen, the servant girl, and the landlord, with whom he joked in his comically bad German, assuring him that it was not the spa that had cured Kitty but his excellent food, especially his prune soup. The princess made fun of her husband for his Russian habits but was animated and cheerful such as she had not been for all their stay at the spa. The colonel, as always, smiled at the prince's jokes; but concerning Europe, which he was studying closely, or so he thought, he took the princess's side. Good-natured Marya Evgenyevna was rolling with laughter over everything funny the prince said, and Varenka was limp from the weak but contagious laughter the prince's jokes aroused in her, something Kitty had never seen before.

All this cheered Kitty, but she could not help but be preoccupied. She could not solve the riddle her father had involuntarily posed with his lighthearted view of her friends and the life she had so come to love. Added to this problem was also the change in her relations with the Petrovs, which had today expressed itself so obviously and unpleasantly. Everyone was so cheerful, but Kitty could not be cheerful, and this was all the more agonizing. She was experiencing an emotion similar to that which she had experienced as a child when, by way of punishment, she was locked in her room and listened to her sisters' cheerful laughter.

"Well, who did you buy this pile for?" said the princess, smiling and serving her husband a cup of coffee.

"You go out walking and, well, you go up to a stall, and they ask you to buy something: *Erlaucht, Excellenz, Durchlaucht*."⁴⁶ Well, once they say *Durchlaucht* I can't help it: ten thalers are gone."

"That's only out of boredom," said the princess.

"Naturally out of boredom. Such boredom, my dear, that you don't know what to do with yourself."

"How can one be bored, Prince? There is so much of interest now in Germany," said Marya Evgenyevna.

“Yes, I know everything interesting: I know prune soup, and I know pea sausage. I know everything.”

“No, say what you like, Prince, their institutions are interesting,” said the colonel.

“And what’s so interesting? They’re all as content as shiny coins: they’ve conquered everyone. What do I have to be content about? I haven’t conquered anyone. Take off your own boots and set them outside the door yourself. Get up in the morning, dress straightaway, go into the dining room and drink foul tea. It’s different at home! You get up in leisurely fashion, you get cross over something, you grumble, you recover nicely, and think everything through, all in leisurely fashion.”

“But time is money, you’re forgetting that,” said the colonel.

“What time? There’s the kind of time you’d give fifty kopeks for a month of, and there’s the kind you wouldn’t take half an hour of for any money. Isn’t that so, Katenka?⁴⁷ What makes you so glum?”

“I’m all right.”

“Where are you going? Sit some more,” he turned to Varenka.

“I must go home,” said Varenka, standing, and she bubbled with laughter again.

Straightening her dress, she said her farewells and went into the house to get her hat. Kitty followed her. Even Varenka seemed different now. She wasn’t worse, but she was different from the way she had imagined her before.

“Oh, I haven’t laughed like that in such a long time!” said Varenka, gathering her parasol and bag. “What a dear man, your papa!”

Kitty was silent.

“When will we see each other?” asked Varenka.

“*Maman* wanted to stop in at the Petrovs’. Won’t you be there?” said Kitty, testing Varenka.

“I will,” answered Varenka. “They’re getting ready to leave, so I promised to help them pack.”

“Well, then, I’ll come, too.”

“No, why should you?”

“Why not? Why not? Why not?” Kitty began, opening her eyes wide, grabbing Varenka’s parasol so as not to let her go. “No, stop, why not?”

“Look; your papa has arrived, and then you embarrass them.”

“No, you must tell me, why don’t you want me to be at the Petrovs’ often? You don’t want me to, do you? Why?”

“I didn’t say that,” Varenka said calmly.

“No, please, tell me!”

“Tell you everything?” asked Varenka.

“Everything, everything!” Kitty said.

“It’s nothing special, it’s only that, before, Mikhail Alexeyevich (that was the painter’s name) wanted to leave as soon as possible, but now he doesn’t want to,” said Varenka, smiling.

“Well? Well?” Kitty hurried her, staring gloomily at Varenka.

“Well, for some reason Anna Pavlovna said that he doesn’t want to because you’re here. Naturally, that’s beside the point, but because of that, there was a quarrel over you. And you know how irritable these invalids are.”

Kitty was frowning more and more, and Varenka spoke alone, trying to mollify and soothe her and seeing a gathering outburst, she did not know of what—tears or words.

“That’s why it’s better you don’t go. . . . And you understand, you mustn’t take offense.”

“It serves me right, it serves me right!” Kitty began quickly, grabbing the parasol out of Varenka’s hands and looking past her friend’s eyes.

Varenka felt like smiling, observing her friend’s childish fury, but she was afraid of hurting her.

“Why does it serve you right? I don’t understand,” she said.

“It serves me right because it was all pretense, because this is all invented and not from the heart. What business did I have with a stranger? And now it turns out that I am the cause of a quarrel and that I did something no one asked me to do. Because it is all pretense! Pretense! Pretense!”

“But what would be the purpose of pretending?” said Varenka softly.

“Oh, it’s so stupid, so vile! I had no need. . . . It’s all pretense!” she said, opening and closing the parasol.

“But what would be the purpose?”

“To appear better to people, to myself, to God, to deceive everyone. No, I’m not going to give in to this anymore! Be bad but at least not false, not a deceiver!”

“But who is a deceiver?” said Varenka reproachfully. “You’re speaking as if . . .”

But Kitty was in her fit of temper. She would not let her finish.

“I’m not talking about you, I’m not talking about you at all. You are perfection. Yes, yes, I know that you are all perfection, but what can I do if I’m bad? This wouldn’t have happened if I weren’t bad. So let me be as I am, but I am not going to pretend. What do I care about Anna Pavlovna! Let them live as they please, and I’ll live as I please. I can’t be different. . . . And all this is wrong, wrong!”

“But what is?” said Varenka, perplexed.

“Everything. I can’t live any other way than according to my heart, but you live according to principles. I loved you simply, but you probably only did so to save me, to teach me!”

“You’re being unfair,” said Varenka.

“But I’m not talking about others, I’m talking about myself.”

“Kitty!” her mother’s voice could be heard. “Come here, show Papa your coral necklace.”

With a proud look, unreconciled with her friend, Kitty picked up her coral necklace in its box from the table and went to her mother.

“What’s wrong with you? Why are you so red?” said her mother and father in unison.

“It’s nothing,” she replied. “I’ll be right back,” and she ran back.

“She’s still here!” she thought. “What will I tell her, heavens! What have I done, what have I said? Why did I offend her? What am I to do? What will I tell her?” thought Kitty, and she halted by the door.

Varenka in her hat was sitting next to the table examining the spring on her parasol, which Kitty had broken. She looked up.

“Varenka, forgive me, forgive me!” whispered Kitty as she approached her. “I don’t remember what I said. I . . .”

“I didn’t mean to grieve you, it’s true,” said Varenka smiling.

Peace had been concluded. But with her father’s arrival this entire world in which she had been living changed for Kitty. She did not renounce everything she had learned, but she realized that she was fooling herself thinking that she could be whatever she wanted to be. It was as if she had awakened, sensed the full difficulty of staying at that height to which she had wanted to rise without pretense or bragging; moreover, she sensed the full weight of this world of sorrow, illness, and the dying in which she had been living; she saw as torturous the exertions she had made in order to love it; and she longed to get out in the fresh air as quickly as possible, to go to Russia, to Ergushovo, where, as she learned from a letter, her sister Dolly and the children had already moved.

But her love for Varenka did not weaken. Saying farewell, Kitty implored her to visit them in Russia.

“I shall come when you get married,” said Varenka.

“I never shall.”

“Well then, I shall never come.”

“Well then, I shall get married just for that. Mind you remember your promise!” said Kitty.

The doctor’s predictions had been vindicated. Kitty returned home, to Russia, cured. She was not as carefree and cheerful as before, but she was at peace, and her Moscow sorrows were but a memory.

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III

1

Sergei Ivanovich Koznyshev had wished to rest from his intellectual labor, but instead of recuperating abroad, as was his habit, he went at the end of May to see his brother in the country. According to his convictions, the very best life was the country life. He had come to see his brother now to enjoy this life. Konstantin Levin was very glad, especially since he was no longer expecting his brother Nikolai that summer. For all his love and respect for Sergei Ivanovich, though, Konstantin Levin felt awkward in the country with his brother. It was awkward, even unpleasant, for him to see his brother's attitude toward the countryside. For Konstantin Levin, the country was the place of life, that is, joys, sufferings, and labor; for Sergei Ivanovich, the country was, on one hand, rest from labor, and on the other, a useful antidote to corrupt influences, which he took with satisfaction and an awareness of its benefit. For Konstantin Levin, the country was good because it offered an arena for labor that was undoubtedly useful; for Sergei Ivanovich, the country was especially good because one could and should do nothing there. Moreover, even Sergei Ivanovich's attitude toward the common people dismayed Konstantin somewhat. Sergei Ivanovich said that he loved and knew the people and often conversed with peasants, that he knew how to do that well, without pretense or condescension, and out of each such conversation he would deduce general facts in the people's favor and as proof that he knew the people. Konstantin Levin did not care for this attitude toward the people. For Konstantin, the people were merely the main participant in the common labor, and in spite of all his respect and vital love for the peasant, which he had probably imbibed, as he himself used to say, with his peasant wet nurse's milk, he, as a participant with the peasant in a common good who was sometimes enraptured by the power, humility, and righteousness of these men, very often, when their common good demanded other qualities, became embittered at the people for their fecklessness, slovenliness, drunkenness, and lying. Had he been asked whether he liked the people, Konstantin Levin would decidedly not have known how to reply. He did and didn't like the people, just as he did and didn't like men in general. Naturally, being a good man, he loved

men more than not, and so too he did the common people. But like or not like the people as something distinct he could not because not only did he live with the people, not only were all his interests tied to the people, but he considered himself to be a part of the people, did not see between himself and the people any distinctive qualities or shortcomings, and could not contrast himself to the people. Moreover, although he had lived for a long time in the closest of relations with the peasants as employer and arbitrator and, most of all, adviser (the peasants trusted him and would come from as far as forty versts for advice), he did not have any definitive opinion of the people, and he would have been as hard put to answer the question of whether he knew the people as the question of whether he liked the people. For him to say that he knew the people would have been the same as saying that he knew men. He was continually observing and learning about all kinds of men, including peasants, whom he considered fine and interesting men, and he was constantly noticing in them new traits, adjusting his former opinions about them, and formulating new ones. Sergei Ivanovich was just the opposite. Exactly as he loved and praised country life in contrast to the life he did not like, so too he loved the people in contrast to the class of men whom he did not like and so too he knew the people as something opposite to men in general. In his methodical mind, distinct forms of popular life took shape clearly, deduced in part from popular life itself but primarily from its opposite. He never altered his opinion about the people or his sympathetic attitude toward them.

In the disagreements that arose between the brothers in their opinion of the people, Sergei Ivanovich always defeated his brother precisely because Sergei Ivanovich did have definite ideas about the people, their nature, characteristics, and tastes; Konstantin Levin had no definite and unwavering idea, so that in their disputes Konstantin was always caught contradicting himself.

For Sergei Ivanovich, his younger brother was a fine fellow, with a heart that was *in the right place* (as he expressed himself in French) but with a mind that, while fairly quick, nonetheless was subject to the impressions of the moment and so filled with contradictions. With the condescension of an older brother he sometimes explained to him the meaning of things, but he could find no pleasure in arguing with him because he was too easily defeated.

Konstantin Levin regarded his brother as a man of tremendous intellect and culture, noble in the highest sense of the word, and endowed with an ability to work for the common good. But in the depths of his soul, the older he became and the better he came to know his brother, the more and more often it occurred to him that his capacity for working for the common good, of which he felt himself utterly lacking, might not be a quality but, on the contrary, a lack

of something—not a lack of good, honest, and noble desires and tastes, but a lack of life force, of what is called heart, of that striving which drives a man, of all the innumerable life paths offered, to select and desire that one alone. The better he came to know his brother, the more he remarked that Sergei Ivanovich as well as many other figures acting for the common good had not been led by the heart to this love for the common good but had reasoned with their mind that engaging in this was right and for this reason only engaged in it. Levin was confirmed in this assumption as well by the observation that his brother did not take the common welfare and the immortal soul any more to heart than he did a game of chess or the clever design of a new machine.

Besides this, it was awkward for Konstantin Levin with his brother in the country also because in the country, especially in the summer, Levin was constantly busy with the farm and there was not enough of the long summer day to get done everything that needed doing, whereas Sergei Ivanovich was relaxing. But although he was relaxing now, that is, not working on his writing, he was so accustomed to mental activity that he loved expressing in elegant, concise form the thoughts that did occur to him, and he loved to have someone listen. His most usual and natural listener was his brother, and so, in spite of the amiable simplicity of their relations, Konstantin felt awkward leaving him alone. Sergei Ivanovich loved to lie down in the grass in the sun and rest that way, basking, and jabbering lazily.

“You wouldn’t believe what a pleasure this backwoods idleness is for me,” he told his brother. “Not a thought in my head. You could roll a ball around in there.”

But Konstantin Levin found it boring to sit and listen to him, especially because he knew that without him they were carting manure to an as yet unplowed field and would dump it God only knew how if he wasn’t there to watch; and they wouldn’t screw the shares onto the plows but would take them off and then say that the plows were a useless invention, nothing like the old wooden plow, and so on.

“Enough of you pacing in the heat,” Sergei Ivanovich was telling him.

“No, I must run to my office for a minute,” said Levin, and he dashed off to the fields.

2

In the first few days of June, the old nurse and housekeeper, Agafya Mikhailovna, while taking a jar of mushrooms she had just salted to the cellar, slipped, fell, and sprained her wrist. The young, talkative district doctor, who had just

completed his studies, arrived. He examined the wrist, said that it was not dislocated, applied compresses, and, staying for dinner, evidently enjoyed his conversation with the renowned Sergei Ivanovich Koznyshev and told him, in order to display his own enlightened view of things, all the district gossip, complaining of the bad situation with the district council. Sergei Ivanovich listened closely, questioned him, and aroused by a new listener, got to talking and expressed several pointed and weighty comments, which were respectfully appreciated by the young doctor, and arrived at that lively state of mind, familiar to his brother, at which he usually arrived after a brilliant and lively discussion. After the doctor's departure, Sergei Ivanovich expressed a desire to take his fishing rod to the river. He liked to fish and seemed to take pride in the fact that he could enjoy such a foolish occupation.

Konstantin Levin, who needed to get to the plowing and the meadow, offered to take his brother in the cabriolet.

It was that time, the turning point of summer, when this year's crop is already assured, when concerns arise about the next year's sowing, and the reaping approaches, when the rye is formed but grayish-green, not yet full, and still waves its light spike in the wind, when the green oats, clumps of yellow grass scattered among them, droop unevenly due to the late sowings, when the early buckwheat is already bursting, covering the ground, when the fallow lands trampled to stone by cattle that have left paths too hard for the wooden plow have been half-plowed over, when the loads of manure carted in have dried and the smell mingles with the honey grasses at dawn and in the lowlands awaiting the scythe is a solid sea of preserved meadows and blackening piles of weeded sorrel stalks.

It was that time when there is a brief lull in the farmwork before the start of the harvest, which is repeated every year and every year calls for all the people's strength. The harvest was marvelous, and there were clear hot summer days and short, dewy nights.

The brothers had to cross a wood in order to reach the meadows. Sergei Ivanovich spent the entire time admiring the beauty of the woods choked with leaves, pointing out to his brother on the dark and shady side an old linden tree with gaudy yellow stipules about to bloom, and then to the young shoots, gleaming like emeralds, of this year's trees. Konstantin Levin did not like to talk or hear about the beauty of nature. Words robbed him of the beauty of what he saw. He nodded to his brother but unconsciously began thinking about something else. When they had passed through the wood, his entire attention was swallowed up by the view of the fallow field on the slope—where it was yellow from the grass, where it had been knocked down and cut up in patches, where it was dotted with piles, and where it was plowed. A string of carts was crossing the field. Levin counted the wagons and was satisfied that everything would be

carted out that needed to be, and his thoughts shifted at the sight of the meadows to the matter of the mowing. He always experienced something that especially touched him to the quick in the harvesting of the hay. Riding up to the meadow, Levin brought his horse to a halt.

There was still morning dew left on the thick undergrowth of the grass, and Sergei Ivanovich, so his feet would not get wet, asked to be driven across the meadow in the cabriolet to the brittle willow bushes where they caught perch. As much as Konstantin Levin regretted crushing his grass, he drove into the meadow. The tall grass softly wound itself around the wheels and the horse's legs, leaving its seed on the wet spokes and hubs.

His brother sat down under a bush after he had sorted out his fishing rods, and Levin led the horse away, tied it up, and stepped into the vast gray-green sea of the meadow, which was unstirred by the wind. The silky grass with its ripening seeds came up nearly to his waist where the ground had been flooded.

Cutting across the meadow, Konstantin Levin came out on the road and met an old man with a swollen eye carrying a beehive.

"What's this? Did you catch that, Fomich?" he asked.

"What do you mean catch it, Konstantin Mitrich! I wish I could just hold on to our own. This here's the second time one's gone. . . . Thanks be, the boys ran 'em down. They're plowing at your place. Unhitched the horse and ran 'em down."

"Well, what do you say, Fomich, mow or wait a while?"

"Well there! Our way's to wait 'til St. Peter's Day. But you always mow before. Oh well, please God, we've got good grass. Plenty of room for the cattle."

"And the weather, what do you think?"

"That's God's doing. Maybe the weather'll hold."

Levin walked up to his brother. Sergei Ivanovich wasn't catching anything, but he wasn't bored and seemed in the most cheerful of spirits. Levin saw that, stirred up by his conversation with the doctor, he was in a mood to talk. Levin, on the contrary, wanted to get home as quickly as possible to give orders about summoning the mowers for tomorrow and to resolve his doubts about the mowing, which had him seriously concerned.

"How about it, shall we go?" he said.

"What's the rush? Let's sit. But you're soaked through! They may not be biting, but it's fine here. Any expedition is fine because you're in touch with nature. How splendid this steel-gray water is!" he said. "These meadow banks," he continued, "have always reminded me of a riddle. Do you know it? The grass says to the water: but we sway and sway."

"I don't know that riddle," Levin responded dolefully.

3

“You know, I’ve been thinking about you,” said Sergei Ivanovich. “It’s like nothing on earth what’s going on here in the district, as the doctor was telling me; he’s a far from stupid young man. I’ve always told you, it’s not good that you don’t go to the assemblies and that you distance yourself from district affairs in general. If decent men are going to distance themselves, of course it’s all going to go God only knows how. We pay money, and it goes for salaries but not for schools, medics, midwives, pharmacies, none of that.”

“I did make an effort, though,” replied Levin quietly and reluctantly. “I just can’t! What am I to do?”

“What do you mean you can’t? I confess, I don’t understand. I don’t admit your indifference or inability. It couldn’t be simple laziness, could it?”

“Neither the one nor the other nor the third. I made an effort and I see that I can accomplish nothing,” said Levin.

He was not listening very closely to what his brother was saying. Gazing across the river at the plowed field, he distinguished something black but couldn’t tell whether it was a horse or his steward on horseback.

“Why can’t you accomplish anything? You made an attempt and it didn’t succeed, in your opinion, so you’ve resigned yourself. Where is your self-respect?”

“Self-respect,” said Levin, cut to the quick by his brother’s words, “I don’t understand. If they told me at the university that others understood integral calculus but I didn’t, that’s self-respect. But here one must first be convinced that one must have certain abilities for these matters and, mainly, that all these matters are very important.”

“What? This isn’t important?” said Sergei Ivanovich, cut to the quick that his brother found what interested him unimportant, and in particular that he was obviously barely listening to him.

“I don’t find it important, it just doesn’t interest me, what do you want?” replied Levin, having figured out that what he had seen was the steward and that the steward had probably released the peasants from plowing. They were turning their plows over. “Could they really be through plowing?” he thought.

“Listen to me, though,” said his older brother, his handsome, clever face frowning, “there are limits to everything. It’s all well and good to be an eccentric and a sincere man and to dislike hypocrisy, I know all that; but you know, what you’re saying either makes no sense or makes very bad sense. How can you find it unimportant that the common people you love, as you assure me . . .”

“I never assured him that,” thought Konstantin Levin.

“. . . are dying without aid? That ignorant peasant women are letting their children starve to death, and the people are stagnating in ignorance and held in

thrall by the village scribe, while you have been handed the means to remedy this, and you aren't helping because in your opinion it's not important."

Thus Sergei Ivanovich posed a dilemma for him: either you are so undeveloped that you can't see all you might do, or else you don't want to forgo your tranquility, your vanity, your I don't know what, in order to do this.

Konstantin Levin sensed that he was left with no choice but to surrender or admit an insufficiency of love for the common good, and this both insulted and upset him.

"It's both," he said decisively. "I don't see how I could have —"

"Why not? Couldn't you put up the money and provide medical assistance?"

"That's impossible, it seems to me. For the four thousand square versts of our district, with our spring thaws, our storms, our working season, I don't see the possibility of offering medical assistance everywhere. And I don't really believe in medicine anyway."

"Excuse me, that's unfair. I can cite thousands of examples. Well, what about schools?"

"What good are schools?"

"What do you mean? Can there be any doubt of the benefit of an education? If it's good for you, then it's good for anyone."

Konstantin Levin felt himself backed up against the wall morally and so became worked up and involuntarily expressed the main reason for his indifference to the common good.

"Maybe it's good, but why should I bother about instituting dispensaries that I shall never use, or schools where I shall never send my children, where the peasants don't want to send their children, and I also don't know for a certainty that they should be sent?" he said.

Sergei Ivanovich was momentarily stunned by this unexpected insight into the matter, but he immediately formulated a new plan of attack.

He said nothing for a moment, pulled out a fishing rod, cast it, and smiling, turned to his brother.

"Well, excuse me. In the first place, dispensaries are needed. We ourselves just sent for the district doctor for Agafya Mikhailovna."

"Well, I think the wrist will stay crooked."

"That's an open question. And then you need and value a literate peasant as a worker more."

"No, I don't care who you ask," Konstantin Levin replied firmly, "as a worker, a literate man is much worse. He can't repair the roads; and as soon as bridges go up, they're stolen."

"Actually," said a frowning Sergei Ivanovich, who did not like contradic-

tions and in particular the kind that were constantly jumping from one thing to another and raising new arguments that lacked any connections, so that you couldn't know what to respond to, "actually, that's not the point. Excuse me, do you admit that education is a good for the people?"

"I do," said Levin in despair, and immediately thought he had not said what he actually thought. He sensed that if he admitted this he would have it proved to him that he was speaking inanities that made no sense. How this would be proved to him he did not know, but he did know without a doubt that this would be proved to him logically, and he awaited this proof.

The argument ended much more simply than Konstantin Levin had anticipated.

"If you admit it's a good," said Sergei Ivanovich, "then you, as an honest man, cannot fail to love and sympathize with this cause and so desire to work for it."

"But I still don't admit this cause is good," said Konstantin Levin, turning red.

"What? But you just said —"

"That is, I don't admit it's either good or possible."

"You can't know that without making an effort."

"Well, let's just suppose," said Levin, although he did not think this at all, "let's just suppose that it's so. I still don't see the point in me concerning myself with it."

"What do you mean?"

"No, now that we've started this conversation, then explain it to me from the philosophical standpoint," said Levin.

"I don't understand what philosophy has to do with it," said Sergei Ivanovich in a tone, Levin thought, that made it seem as if he did not recognize his brother's right to discuss philosophy. This irritated Levin.

"Here's what!" he began, fuming. "I think that the engine of all our actions is, after all, personal happiness. Now, in the district institutions, I as a nobleman see nothing that might add to my well-being. The roads are no better and can be no better; and my horses take me over bad roads. I don't need doctors or dispensaries, and I don't need a justice of the peace — I have never appealed to him and never will. Schools are not only unnecessary for me, they are even harmful, as I have told you. For me, the district institutions mean simply the obligation to pay eighteen kopeks on the desyatina, travel to town, sleep with bedbugs, and listen to all kinds of nonsense and vile things, and it does not arouse my personal interest."

"Excuse me," Sergei Ivanovich interrupted with a smile, "but personal interest did not arouse us to work for the peasants' emancipation, yet we did."

"No!" interrupted Konstantin, fuming even more. "The peasants' emancipa-

tion was a different matter. Here there was personal interest. We wanted to cast off this yoke which was crushing us, all good men. But to be a town councilor, to discuss how many valves are needed and how to install drains in a town where I don't live; to be a juror and judge a peasant who stole a ham, and spend six hours listening to the defense and prosecution go on and on inane and as the presiding officer ask my old Alyoshka the Fool, 'Do you admit, Mr. Defendant, the fact of the ham's abduction?' 'How's that?'"

Konstantin Levin was now quite carried away and began imagining the presiding officer and Alyoshka the Fool; to him this all seemed very much to the point.

But Sergei Ivanovich shrugged his shoulders.

"So what are you trying to say?"

"I'm merely trying to say that those rights which I . . . which affect my interest I will always defend with all my powers; that when they conducted a search among us students and the gendarmes read our letters, I'm ready to defend these rights with all my powers, to defend my rights to an education and freedom. I understand the military obligation that affects the fate of my children, my brothers, and myself; I'm prepared to discuss what concerns me; but to judge where to distribute the forty thousand of the district's money, or pass judgment on Alyoshka the Fool—that I don't and cannot understand."

Konstantin Levin spoke as if the dam holding back his words had burst. Sergei Ivanovich smiled.

"But say you're to be tried tomorrow. Would you prefer to be judged in the old criminal chamber?"

"I'm not going to be tried. I'm not going to knife anyone, and I don't need this. Really now!" he continued, again leaping over to something completely irrelevant, "our institutions and all this—they're like the birch trees we used to stick in the ground on Trinity Sunday, so that it would look like a forest that grew by itself in Europe, and in my heart of hearts I can't believe in these birches!"¹

Sergei Ivanovich merely shrugged his shoulders, with this gesture expressing his amazement at where these birches had come from that had now popped up in their debate, although he immediately understood what his brother was trying to say.

"Forgive me, but one cannot reason that way," he commented.

But Konstantin Levin felt like justifying this shortcoming he knew in himself, his indifference toward the common welfare, and so he continued.

"I think," said Konstantin, "that no activity can be lasting unless it has a basis in personal interest. This is a general truth, a philosophical truth," he said, repeating with decisiveness the word "philosophical," as if wishing to show that he too had the right, like anyone else, to speak of philosophy.

Sergei Ivanovich smiled again. “He has some philosophy of his own there, too, in the service of his own inclinations,” he thought.

“Oh, stop going on about philosophy,” he said. “Philosophy’s main task throughout the ages has consisted specifically in finding the essential connection that exists between the individual and the common interest. But that’s beside the point, and what is to the point is that I just need to correct your comparison. The birches aren’t stuck in, rather some are planted and some are sown, and you must treat these more carefully. Only those nations have a future, only those peoples can be called historical that have an instinct for what is important and significant in their institutions and treasure them.”

Sergei Ivanovich had shifted the issue to a historical-philosophical sphere that was beyond Konstantin Levin’s reach and showed him just how incorrect his view was.

“As for the fact that you don’t like it, that, excuse me, is our Russian laziness and arrogance, and I’m certain that this is a temporary delusion in you and will pass.”

Konstantin did not reply. He felt beset on all sides, yet at the same time he felt that his brother had not understood what he had wanted to say. He just didn’t know why he hadn’t. Was it because he was unable to state clearly what he meant, or was it because his brother didn’t want to understand him—or couldn’t? He did not dwell on these thoughts, however, and raising no objections to his brother, became lost in thought about an entirely different, personal matter of his own.

Sergei Ivanovich reeled in his last line, Konstantin unhitched the horse, and they drove off.

4

The personal matter that had occupied Levin during his conversation with his brother was the following. The previous year, after arriving at the mowing one day and becoming very angry with the steward, Levin had employed his own personal means for calming himself—he had taken a scythe from a peasant and begun mowing.

He had liked this work so much that he had taken up mowing several times; he had mown the entire meadow in front of his house and this year had been devising a plan for himself since spring—to spend entire days mowing with the peasants. Since his brother’s arrival he had been contemplating whether or not he should mow. He felt guilty about leaving his brother alone for an entire day at a time, and he was afraid that his brother might ridicule him for this. As he

was crossing the meadow, though, he had recalled his impressions from mowing and he had nearly decided that he would. After the irritating conversation with his brother, he recalled this intention once again.

“I need physical movement or else my temper is definitely spoiled,” he thought, and he decided to mow, regardless of how awkward this might be in the eyes of his brother and the people.

Before evening fell, Konstantin Levin went to his office to give instructions about work and to send to the villages for mowers tomorrow to mow Kalinov meadow, his biggest and best.

“And send my scythe to Titus, please, and have him sharpen it and bring it around tomorrow; I may do some mowing myself as well,” he said, trying not to get embarrassed.

The steward smiled and said, “Yes, sir.”

That evening at tea Levin told his brother, too.

“The weather seems to have settled in,” he said. “Tomorrow I’ll be starting to mow.”

“I like that work very much,” said Sergei Ivanovich.

“I like that work awfully well. I’ve mown myself occasionally with the peasants and I mean to spend all day tomorrow mowing.”

Sergei Ivanovich raised his head and looked at his brother with curiosity.

“How’s that? On an equal footing with the peasants, all day?”

“Yes, it’s very pleasant,” said Levin.

“It’s marvelous as physical exercise, but you’re scarcely going to be able to stand it,” said Sergei Ivanovich without the slightest ridicule.

“I’ve tried it. At first it’s hard, but then you get drawn in. I don’t think I’ll lag behind.”

“Fancy that! But tell me, how do the peasants regard this? They must have a good laugh about the master being a crackpot.”

“No, I don’t think so. Anyway it’s such delightful and yet hard work that there’s no time to think.”

“But how are you going to have your dinner with them? It would be a little awkward for you to have a Lafite and roast turkey sent there.”²

“No, at the same time as their rest I’ll just come home.”

The next morning Konstantin Levin arose earlier than usual, but the instructions for the farm detained him, and when he arrived at the mowing the mowers were already moving down the second row.

As he came down the hill a view opened up of the shaded, already mown portion of the meadow with graying rows and black piles of the cuttings the mowers had removed at the spot where they had started the first row.

Due to the way he was approaching, the view that opened up to him was of

peasants following one after the other, strung out in a line and differently swinging their scythes, some wearing their caftans, some in shirts alone. He counted forty-two men.

They were moving slowly across the meadow's uneven bottomland, where there was an old weir. Levin recognized several of his men. Here was Ermil wearing a very long white shirt, bent forward swinging his scythe; here was the young fellow Vaska, who had been a driver for Levin, taking in each row with a single sweep. Here too was Titus, Levin's teacher in mowing, a skinny little peasant. He walked in the lead without bending, as if he were playing with the scythe, cutting down his own broad row.

Levin dismounted, tied his horse up by the road, and fell in step with Titus, who had retrieved a second scythe from the bushes and handed it to him.

"It's ready, master. It shaves, mows all by itself," said Titus, removing his cap with a smile as he handed him the scythe.

Levin took the scythe and began trying to get the feel of it. The sweating and cheerful mowers who had finished their rows came out on the road one after the other and, laughing, greeted the master. They all watched him, but no one said anything until a tall old man with a wrinkled and beardless face and wearing a sheepskin jacket came out on the road and addressed him.

"Look out, master, now you've started, there's no laggin'!" he said, and Levin heard the stifled laughter among the mowers.

"I'll try not to," he said, standing behind Titus and waiting for the time to begin.

"Look out," the old man repeated.

Titus made room, and Levin started off behind him. The grass was low along the shoulders, and Levin, who had not mown in a long time and was embarrassed by the glances cast at him, for the first few minutes mowed badly, although he had a powerful swing. He could hear voices behind him:

"Not hafted right, handle's too tall, see, he's got to bend," said one.

"Press more on your heel," said another.

"All right, that's enough. He'll get the feel," the old man went on. "See, he's off. Take a row too wide and you tire yourself out. The master, he doesn't have to, he's trying for himself! But see, the missed edge! One of us'd catch it good for that."

The grass got softer, and Levin, listening but not responding and trying to mow as well as possible, followed Titus. They went about a hundred paces. Titus was still going, not stopping or showing the slightest weariness; Levin, however, was already afraid he wouldn't make it: he was that tired.

He felt he'd been swinging for all he was worth and decided to ask Titus to stop. But right then Titus himself stopped, bent over, picked up some grass,

wiped his scythe, and began to sharpen it. Levin straightened up and with a deep sigh looked around. Coming along behind him was a peasant and he too was obviously tired because right then, before he reached Levin, he came to a halt and started sharpening. Titus sharpened his own scythe and Levin's and they continued.

On the second pass it was the same. Titus moved swing after swing, without stopping or tiring. Levin moved along behind him, trying not to lag, and it kept getting harder and harder: the moment would come when he felt he had no strength left, but at that very moment Titus would stop and sharpen.

And so they finished the first row. And this long row seemed especially hard to Levin, but then, when the row was over, Titus, tossing his scythe over his shoulder, taking slow steps, went back to retrace the prints his heels had left through the mowing, and Levin started down his own mowing in exactly the same way. Although the sweat was pouring off his face and dripping from his nose and his entire back was as wet as if he had been doused with water, he felt very good. In particular, he was pleased by the fact that he now knew he would last.

His satisfaction was poisoned only by the knowledge that his row was not good. "I'll swing my arm less and my whole torso more," he thought, comparing the row Titus had cut, straight as a line, with his own scattered row lying unevenly.

The first row, as Levin had noticed, Titus had walked especially quickly, probably wishing to test the master, and the row had been a long one. The next rows were easier, but Levin still had to exert all his strength so as not to fall behind the peasants.

He thought nothing and desired nothing other than not to lag behind the peasants and do the best work he could. He heard only the clanging of the scythes and in front of himself saw the erect figure of Titus pulling ahead, the semicircular mown swath, the grass and the blossoms near the blade of his scythe bending in slow waves, and ahead of himself the end, the road, where his rest would come.

Without understanding what it was or where it had come from, in the middle of working he suddenly experienced a pleasant sensation of cold across his hot, sweaty shoulders. He glanced at the sky while they were sharpening the scythes. A low, lumbering cloud ran up and rain came pouring down. Some of the peasants went for their caftans and put them on; others like Levin merely shrugged their shoulders in delight under the pleasant refreshment.

They did another row and another. They did long rows and short, with good grass and bad. Levin lost all awareness of time and could not have said whether it was late or early now. A change was beginning to come about in his work now

that afforded him tremendous pleasure. In the middle of his work moments came over him when he forgot what he was doing and it became easy for him, and during those very minutes his row came out almost as evenly and well as Titus's. However, as soon as he remembered what he was doing and started trying to do better, he immediately felt just how difficult his labor was and the row came out badly.

Finishing up yet another row, he was about to start another, but Titus stopped, walked up to the old man, and said something to him quietly. They both looked at the sun. "What are they talking about and why aren't they starting the row?" thought Levin, not guessing that the peasants had been mowing without letup for at least four hours and it was time for their lunch.

"Lunch, master," said the old man.

"You mean it's time? Well then, lunch it is."

Levin gave Titus back the scythe and along with the peasants, who had headed off toward their caftans for their bread across the lightly rain-spattered rows of the long, mown expanse, went to his horse. Only here did he realize that he had misjudged the weather and that the rain was wetting his hay.

"It will spoil the hay," he said.

"It's all right, master, mow in the rain, rake when it's fine," said the old man.

Levin unhitched his horse and went home to drink his coffee.

Sergei Ivanovich had only just arisen. After drinking his coffee, Levin left to return to the mowing before Sergei Ivanovich could dress and come out into the dining room.

5

After lunch Levin ended up in a row not where he had been before but between an old joker who invited him to be neighbors and a young peasant who had just married in the autumn and who had gone to mow his first summer.

The old man, holding himself erect, walked ahead, moving his outturned feet evenly and widely, and with a precise and even movement that did not seem to cost him more effort than swinging his arms as he walked, as if he were playing, turned down a tall, identical row. It was not exactly he but rather his sharp scythe itself that cut a swath through the succulent grass.

Behind Levin came young Mishka. His sweet young face circled by a braid of fresh grass wound over his hair strained from his effort; but whenever anyone glanced at him, he smiled. Clearly he would have died rather than admit that it was hard for him.

Levin went between them. In the worst heat the mowing was not so very hard

for him. The sweat pouring down cooled him off, and the sun, which burned his back, head, and arm bared to the elbow, lent fortitude and resolution to his work; and more and more often he experienced those moments of that unconscious state when you don't have to think about what you're doing. The scythe cut by itself. These were happy moments. Even more joyous were the moments when, as they neared the stream where the rows ended, the old man wiped his scythe with thick wet grass, rinsed its steel in fresh stream water, dipped his tin cup, and offered some to Levin.

"Here you go. My kvass!³ Not bad, eh?" he said, winking.

Indeed, Levin had never drunk a beverage like this warm water with the floating bits of greenery and the rusty taste from the tin cup. Immediately after this there was a slow, blissful walk with his hand on his scythe when he could wipe away the streaming sweat, fill his lungs with air, and look around at the whole extended string of mowers and at what was happening around him, in the woods and in the field.

The longer Levin mowed, the more often he felt these moments of oblivion when it wasn't his arms swinging the scythe but the scythe itself bringing along his body, which was fully aware of itself and full of life, and as if by magic, without him thinking about it, correct and precise work performed itself. These were the most blissful moments of all.

It was only hard when he had to halt this now unconscious movement and think about how he should mow around a hummock or unweeded sorrel. The old man did this easily. As a hummock approached, he would alter his motion and using either his heel or the end of his scythe crop the hummock on either side with short strokes. As he did this, he was constantly examining and observing what was coming up ahead; or else he was picking a stalk of sorrel, eating it or offering it to Levin, or else he was flinging a twig aside with the tip of his scythe, or examining a quail's nest after the hen had flown out right from under the scythe, or catching a viper that had landed in his path, and lifting it with his scythe as if on a fork, he would show Levin and toss it aside.

Both Levin and the young fellow behind him found these changes in their movement difficult. After settling into one strenuous movement, they both got caught up in the work and were unable to change their motion and at the same time observe what was in front of them.

Levin did not notice the time pass. Had he been asked how long he had been mowing, he would have said half an hour—though it was approaching dinner-time. As he started down a row, the old man drew Levin's attention to the little girls and boys, barely visible, coming toward the mowers from different directions through the tall grass and along the road, carrying bundles of bread that dragged down their little arms and pitchers of kvass stoppered with rags.

“See the little bugs a-crawlin’!” he said, pointing to them and shielding his eyes with his hand as he looked at the sun.

They did two more rows and the old man stopped.

“Well, master, dinner!” he said decisively. Walking to the stream, the mowers headed across the rows toward their caftans, where, awaiting them, sat the children, who had brought their dinners. The peasants gathered—the distant ones under a cart, the close ones under a willow bush where they had tossed grass.

Levin sat down with them; he didn’t feel like leaving.

Any embarrassment in front of the master had evaporated long before. The peasants were getting ready for dinner. Some were washing; the young men were bathing in the stream; others were setting up a place to rest, untying their bundles of bread and unstoppering their pitchers of kvass. The old man crumbled some bread in his mug, crushed it with the handle of his spoon, added water from the dipper, broke up some more bread, and after sprinkling it with salt, said a prayer facing east.

“Here you go, master, some of my *tyurka*,” he said, leaning on his knees in front of his mug.

The *tyurka* was so tasty that Levin changed his mind about going home for dinner. He ate with the old man and got to talking with him about his domestic affairs, taking the liveliest interest in them, and informed him about all his affairs and all the circumstances that might interest the old man. He felt closer to him than to his brother and couldn’t help but smile at the affection he felt for this man. When the old man stood up again, said a prayer, and lay down right there under the bush, putting some grass down for a headrest, Levin did the same, and in spite of the sticky flies so obstinate in the sun, and the bugs tickling his sweaty face and body, he fell asleep instantly and did not wake up until the sun had crossed to the other side of the bush and reached him. The old man had been awake for a long time and was sitting sharpening the young boys’ scythes.

Levin looked around and did not recognize the place, so much had everything changed. The huge expanse of the meadow had been mown and gleamed with a special, new gleam, its rows now fragrant, in the slanted evening rays of the sun. The bushes cut down by the river, and the river itself, which had not been visible before but now gleamed like steel in its bends, and the moving and rising people, the steep wall of grass where the meadow had not been mown, and the hawks circling over the bared meadow—all this was completely new. When he was fully awake, Levin began calculating how much had been mown and how much could yet be done that day.

A tremendous amount had been completed for forty-two men. The entire large meadow, which had taken thirty scythes two days to mow under the corvée, had already been mown.⁴ Yet to be mown were the corners with short rows.

But Levin wanted to mow as much as possible this day and was irritated at the sun for setting so soon. He felt no weariness, he only wanted to finish as much and as quickly as possible.

“How about it, could we mow the Mashkin Upland? What do you think?” he said to the old man.

“God willing, the sun’s not high. Some vodka maybe for the boys?”

At midday, when they had sat down again and the smokers had started smoking, the old man had promised the boys, “Mow the Mashkin Upland, and there’ll be vodka.”

“Why not now! Come on, Titus! Let’s swing lively! Eat your fill tonight. Come on!” Voices rang out, and the mowers finished their bread and got started.

“Hey, boys, steady!” said Titus, and he nearly galloped off in front.

“Go on, go on!” said the old man, keeping up with and easily overtaking him. “I’ll slice you! Look out!”

Young and old tried to outdo each other mowing. But no matter how they hurried, they didn’t spoil the grass, and the rows were laid down just as neatly and precisely. The little corner remaining was knocked down in five minutes. The last mowers were coming to the end of their rows as the lead mowers were slinging their caftans over their shoulders and crossing the road toward the Mashkin Upland.

The sun was already setting toward the trees when, clattering their whetstone boxes, they entered the small wooded ravine of the Mashkin Upland. The grass was waist high in the middle of the low area, and wild pansies dotted the burdock, both tender and soft, here and there through the woods.

After a quick consultation—whether to go the long way or across—Prokhor Ermilin, another famous mower, a swarthy giant of a peasant, started in the lead. He went down the row, turned back, and pushed off, and everyone started drawing even behind him, going downhill across the low area and uphill to the very edge of the woods. The sun set behind the woods. The dew was already falling, and only on the knoll were the mowers in the sun, while in the bottomland, where mist was rising, and on the other side, they walked in fresh, dewy shade. The work was in full swing.

The grass, cut down with a juicy sound and a spicy scent, lay in tall rows. The mowers were hemmed in on all sides on the short rows, clattering their boxes and making noise with the clashing of scythes or the whistle of the whetstone on a scythe as it was sharpened, or chasing each other with cheerful shouts.

Levin kept moving between the young fellow and the old man. The old man had put on his sheepskin jacket and was just as cheerful, jocular, and free in his movements. In the woods, they were constantly coming across brown mushrooms, which had swelled in the succulent grass and which they cut with their

scythes. But when the old man came across a mushroom, each time he bent over, picked it, and put it in his shirt. "Another treat for my old woman," he would say.

As easy as it was to mow wet, weak grass, it was hard going up and down the steep slopes of the ravine. This did not trouble the old man, though. Swinging his scythe just the same, with the small but firm step of feet shod in large bast shoes, he climbed slowly to the top, and though his entire body and trousers below his shirt were shaking, he did not miss a single blade in his path or a single mushroom and kept up his joking with the peasants and Levin. Levin followed behind him and often thought he would surely fall as he ascended with his scythe up a knoll so steep it would be hard to climb even without a scythe; but he made the climb and did what was needed. He felt some external force moving him.

6

They mowed the Mashkin Upland, finished the last rows, put on their coats, and cheerfully headed home. Levin mounted his horse and, parting regretfully with the peasants, went home. From the hill he looked back; he could not see them for the fog rising from the bottomland; he could only hear their cheerful, coarse voices, their laughter, and the sound of their clanking scythes.

Sergei Ivanovich had had his supper long before and was drinking water with lemon and ice in his room and looking through the newspapers and journals that had just been received in the post when Levin, his hair messy and stuck to his forehead with sweat, his back and chest wet and dark, burst into his room with cheerful talk.

"We finished the whole meadow! Oh, it was fine, amazing! How have you been?" said Levin, completely forgetting their unpleasant conversation of the day before.

"Gracious! What you look like!" said a disgruntled Sergei Ivanovich surveying his brother in that first moment. "And the door, shut the door!" he exclaimed. "You must have let in a full dozen."

Sergei Ivanovich could not stand flies and in his room opened the windows only at night and painstakingly kept the doors closed.

"Really and truly, not a one, and if I did, I'll catch them. You won't believe what a pleasure it was! How did you spend the day?"

"Very well. But did you really mow all day? You must be as hungry as a wolf. Kuzma has everything prepared for you."

"No, I don't feel like eating. I ate there. But I will go wash up."

“Run along, then, run along, and I’ll come to your room shortly,” said Sergei Ivanovich, shaking his head and looking at his brother. “Run along, run along quickly,” he added with a smile, and gathering up his books, he prepared to go out. He himself suddenly felt cheerful and did not want to be parted from his brother. “Well, and during the rain, where were you then?”

“What rain? It barely drizzled. I’ll be right back. So you spent the day well? That’s excellent, then.” And Levin went to dress.

Five minutes later the brothers met in the dining room. Although Levin had thought he wasn’t hungry, he did sit down to dinner so as not to offend Kuzma, and when he started to eat, the dinner seemed exceptionally delicious to him. Sergei Ivanovich, smiling, watched him.

“Oh yes, there’s a letter for you,” he said. “Kuzma, bring it downstairs, please. But mind you shut the door.”

The letter was from Oblonsky. Levin read it out loud. Oblonsky was writing from Petersburg, “I have a letter from Dolly. She is at Ergushovo and she is having trouble. Go see her, please, and help with advice. You know everything. She will be so happy to see you. She is quite alone, poor thing. My mother-in-law is still abroad with everyone.”

“This is excellent! I will certainly pay them a visit,” said Levin. “Why don’t we go together? She is a marvelous woman. Isn’t she?”

“Are they very far?”

“Thirty versts or so. It may actually be forty. But it’s an excellent road. We’ll have an excellent trip.”

“I’d be very happy to,” said Sergei Ivanovich, still smiling.

The sight of his younger brother directly disposed him to good cheer.

“That’s quite an appetite you have!” he said, looking at his ruddy, sunburnt face and neck bent over his plate.

“It’s excellent! You can’t believe how beneficial this regime is for any kind of foolishness. I want to enrich medicine with a new term: *Arbeitscur*.”⁵

“Well, it doesn’t look like you need it.”

“Yes, but for all sorts of nervous patients.”

“Yes, that must be tested. You know, I wanted to come to the mowing to watch you, but the heat was so unbearable I got no farther than the wood. I sat there a while and passed through the wood to the village, met your old nurse there, and sounded her out about the peasants’ view of you. As I understand it, they don’t approve of this. She said, ‘It’s not a gentleman’s business.’ All in all, I think that in the popular idea the requirements for ‘gentlemanly’ activities, as they put it, are very firmly defined, and they do not allow for gentlemen stepping out of the framework defined by their idea.”

“Perhaps, but it is a satisfaction the likes of which I have never experienced

in all my life. And there isn't anything bad in this, after all. Is there?" responded Levin. "What can I do if they don't like it? Anyway, I think it's all right. Eh?"

"All in all," Sergei Ivanovich continued, "I can see you are content with your day."

"Quite content. We mowed the whole meadow. And what an old man I befriended there! You can't imagine how splendid it was!"

"So you are content with your day. As am I. First of all, I solved two chess problems, and one is very sweet—it opens with a pawn. I'll show you. Then I thought about yesterday's conversation."

"What? Yesterday's conversation?" said Levin, blissfully blinking and breathing heavily after his dinner was finished and definitely in no condition to recall what yesterday's conversation had been.

"I will admit that you are in part correct. Our disagreement consists in the fact that you make personal interest the engine, whereas I think that each man standing at a certain degree of education must have an interest in the common welfare. You may be correct that materially interested activity would be more desirable. All in all, you are too *prime-sautière* a nature, as the French say.⁶ You want passionate, energetic activity or none at all."

Levin listened to his brother and understood absolutely none of it, nor did he care to. He was only afraid that his brother might ask him a question that would make it obvious that he had heard nothing.

"So, my friend," said Sergei Ivanovich, touching him on the shoulder.

"Yes, of course. Naturally! I'm not insisting," replied Levin with a guilty, childish smile. "What was I supposed to be arguing about now?" he thought. "Of course, I'm right and he's right, too, and everything is marvelous. Only I need to go to the office to give orders." He stood up, stretching and smiling.

Sergei Ivanovich smiled, too.

"If you want to take a walk, we can go together," he said, not wanting to part from his brother, who positively exuded freshness and vigor. "Let's go, we'll stop by your office, too, if you need."

"Good gracious!" Levin exclaimed so loudly that he frightened Sergei Ivanovich.

"What, what's wrong?"

"What about Agafya Mikhailovna's hand?" said Levin, striking himself on the head. "I forgot all about her."

"It's much better."

"Still, I'm going to drop by to see her. I'll be back before you can put on your hat."

And he ran down the stairs, his heels clacking like a rattle.

7

While Stepan Arkadyevich had come to Petersburg to perform the most natural and necessary of duties known to all public servants, incomprehensible though they may be to those who are not, duties without which there is no possibility of serving the public—to remind the ministry of his existence—and having performed this duty and having taken nearly all the money from the house, was spending his time cheerfully and pleasantly at the races and at various dachas, Dolly and the children moved to the country in order to reduce expenses to the bare minimum. She moved to her dowry village of Ergushovo, the very one where the wood had been sold in the spring, which was fifty versts from Levin's Pokrovskoye.

The big old house at Ergushovo had fallen into disrepair long ago, and the prince had had the annex refurbished and enlarged. Twenty years before, when Dolly was a child, the annex had been spacious and comfortable, although, like all annexes, it stood sideways to the drive and faced south. Now, though, this annex was old and rotting. Back when Stepan Arkadyevich had made the trip to sell the wood in the spring, Dolly had asked him to look over the house and order any necessary repairs. Stepan Arkadyevich, like all guilty husbands, was very solicitous about his wife's comfort, and he had looked over the house personally and given orders about everything that was to his lights necessary. To his lights, all the furniture needed to be upholstered in cretonne, curtains hung, the garden weeded, a footbridge made for the pond, and flowers planted; he forgot many other essential things, however, whose lack later tormented Darya Alexandrovna.

No matter how hard Stepan Arkadyevich tried to be a concerned father and husband, he never could remember that he had a wife and children. He had bachelor tastes, which were his only guide in considering anything. When he returned to Moscow, he proudly announced to his wife that all had been readied, that the house would be a plaything, and that he strongly advised her to go. Stepan Arkadyevich found his wife's departure for the country quite agreeable in all respects: it was healthy for the children, expenses were reduced, and he had more freedom. Darya Alexandrovna considered the move to the country for the summer essential for the children, especially for the little girl, who had never fully recovered from her bout of scarlet fever, and finally, in order to be rid of the petty humiliations and petty debts to the firewood, fish, and shoe merchants who wearied her. On top of this, she found the departure pleasant also because she dreamed of luring her sister Kitty, who was supposed to return from abroad midsummer and who had been prescribed bathing, to the country. Kitty wrote from the springs that nothing made her smile so much as the thought of

spending the summer with Dolly at Ergushovo, which was filled with childhood memories for them both.

At first, country life was very hard on Dolly. She had lived in the country in her childhood, and she retained the impression that the country meant salvation from all the cares of the city, that life there might not be handsome (Dolly made her peace with this easily), but it was inexpensive and convenient: she had everything, everything was cheap, she could get anything, and the children were happy. Now, though, having come to the country as mistress of the house, she saw that it was not all quite as she had thought.

The day after their arrival, there was a torrential rain, and in the night there were leaks in the hallway and nursery, so the little beds were moved into the drawing room. There was no scullery maid; of the nine cows that remained, according to the dairymaid, some were about to calve, others had just calved, still others were old, and the rest had hard teats; even for the children there was no butter or milk. There were no eggs. They could not get a hen; they roasted and stewed old, purplish, stringy roosters. They could not get women to wash the floors; everyone was at the potato fields. They could not go for rides because one horse had a tendency to stumble and bolt in the shaft. There was nowhere to go bathing because the entire riverbank had been trampled by cattle and was open to the road; there wasn't even anywhere to go for walks because the cattle got into the garden through a broken fence, and there was one terrifying bull that bellowed and so probably butted. There were no cupboards for clothes. Those there were would not stay shut and opened up when anyone walked by. There were no iron or earthenware pots; nor was there a kettle for the laundry or even an ironing board for the maid's room.

At first, instead of peace and rest, Darya Alexandrovna, having fallen upon what from her point of view were terrible calamities, was in despair: she made tremendous efforts, felt the desperation of her situation, and every minute held back the tears that welled up in her eyes. The steward, a former cavalry sergeant major whom Stepan Arkadyevich had taken a liking to and appointed from the porters for his handsome and respectful appearance, took no part whatsoever in Darya Alexandrovna's calamities, and said respectfully, "Quite impossible; the common people are so vile," and did nothing to help.

The situation seemed hopeless. But in the Oblonsky household, as in all families, there was one inconspicuous but very important and useful individual—Matryona Filimonovna. She calmed her mistress, assured her that everything would *shapify* (this was her word; Matvei had taken it over from her), and on her own, without hurry or fuss, set to work.

She immediately made friends with the steward's wife and the very first day had tea with her and the steward under the acacias and discussed all their prob-

lems. Soon Matryona Filimonovna's club had been instituted under the acacias, and here, through this club, which consisted of the steward's wife, the village elder, and the office clerk, they began, little by little, sorting out the difficulties of life, and a week later everything had indeed *shapified*. The roof had been repaired, a cook, the elder's chum, had been hired and chickens purchased, the cows began giving milk, the garden had been fenced with stakes, the carpenter had made a mangle and attached hooks to the cupboards, so they no longer opened arbitrarily, and an ironing board, covered in army cloth, lay between the arm of a chair and the dresser, and the maid's room smelled of a hot iron.

"There now! And you were so worried," said Matryona Filimonovna, pointing to the board.

They even rigged a bathing area using straw mats. Lily began bathing, and for Darya Alexandrovna her expectations were being fulfilled of a comfortable, if not peaceful, country life. Peaceful with six children Darya Alexandrovna could never be. One might fall ill, another might be about to fall ill, a third needed something, a fourth exhibited signs of bad character, and so on and so forth. Rarely, rarely, were there brief periods of peace. But these troubles and worries were for Darya Alexandrovna the sole possible happiness. Were it not for them, she would have been left alone with her thoughts of her husband, who did not love her. But in addition, however hard it might be for a mother to bear the fear of illnesses, the illnesses themselves, and the grief at the sight of signs of bad tendencies in her children, the children themselves were even now repaying her sorrows with small joys. These joys were so small they passed unnoticed like gold in sand, and in bad moments she saw only the sorrows, only the sand; but there were good moments, too, when she saw only the joys, only the gold.

Now, in the seclusion of the countryside, she began more and more often to be aware of these joys. Often, looking at them, she made every possible effort to convince herself that she was mistaken, that she, as a mother, was biased in favor of her children; all the same, she could not help but tell herself that she had splendid children, all six of them, all of different sorts, but such as one rarely comes across — and she was content with and proud of them.

8

In late May, when everything was more or less in order, she received a reply from her husband to her complaints about her rural discomforts. He wrote her, begging forgiveness for not thinking of everything, and promising to come at the first opportunity. This opportunity had not presented itself, and Darya Alexandrovna lived alone in the country until early June.

On St. Peter's, a Sunday, Darya Alexandrovna went to Mass so that all her children could take communion. In her intimate philosophical discussions with her sister, mother, and friends, Darya Alexandrovna very often amazed them with her freethinking with regard to religion. She had her own strange religion of metempsychosis, in which she firmly believed, little concerned about the dogmas of the church.⁷ In her family, however, she—and not only to set an example but with all her heart—strictly carried out all the church's demands, and the fact that her children had not been to communion for nearly a year disturbed her very much, and with Matryona Filimonovna's full approval and sympathy, she decided to accomplish this now, this summer.

A few days beforehand, Darya Alexandrovna thought out how to dress all the children. Dresses were stitched, made over, and laundered, seams and flounces let out, buttons sewn on, and ribbons readied. One dress for Tanya which the English governess had agreed to make over caused Darya Alexandrovna no end of heartache. In resewing it, the governess put the seams in the wrong place, took the sleeves up too far, and utterly ruined the dress. Tanya's shoulders were so constricted, it was a painful sight. But Matryona Filimonovna figured out how to insert gussets and make a little cape. The matter was set right, but there was nearly a quarrel with the governess. By morning, however, everything had sorted itself out and by nine o'clock—they had asked the priest to wait until then with his Mass—beaming with joy, the well-turned out children were standing on the steps by the carriage waiting for their mother.

Harnessed to the carriage, due to Matryona Filimonovna's intercession, instead of the stumbling Raven, was the steward's Brownie, and Darya Alexandrovna, detained by concerns over her own attire, wearing a white muslin dress, came out to take her seat.

In her excitement, Darya Alexandrovna took great pains with her hair and dress. Previously she had dressed for herself, in order to look handsome and please others; later, the older she became, the more she disliked dressing; she could see how her looks had faded. But now she again dressed with pleasure and excitement. Now she was dressing not for herself, not for her own beauty, but so that she, as the mother of these splendid children, would not spoil the overall impression, and, taking one last look in the mirror, she was pleased with herself. She was pretty. Not as pretty as she had once wanted to be at a ball, but pretty for the purpose which she now had in mind.

There was no one in the church except peasants, servants, and their women. But Darya Alexandrovna saw, or imagined she saw, the admiration she and her children inspired. The children were not only handsome in their elegant outfits but also sweet because they behaved so well. Alyosha, true, did not stand en-

tirely well; he kept turning around trying to see the back of his jacket; still, he was unusually sweet. Tanya stood like the big sister she was and watched over the little ones. But the youngest, Lily, was enchanting with her naïve amazement at everything, and it was hard not to smile when, after communion, she said, “*Please, some more.*”⁸

Returning home, the children could sense that something solemn had taken place, and they were very quiet.

All went well at home, too, but at lunch Grisha began whistling, and what was worse, he would not obey the English governess and was sent away without his dessert pie. Had she been there, Darya Alexandrovna would not have gone as far as punishment on such a day; however, she had to support the Englishwoman’s authority, and she upheld her decision that Grisha was to have no dessert pie. This put something of a damper on the general delight.

Grisha cried, saying that Nikolenka had whistled, too, but he had not been punished, and that he wasn’t crying over the pie—he didn’t care—but because they had been unfair. This was just too sad, and Darya Alexandrovna decided, after talking it over with the governess, to forgive Grisha and so went to see him. But there, as she was passing through the drawing room, she saw a scene that filled her heart with such joy that tears came to her eyes, and she herself forgave the culprit.

The punished boy was sitting in the drawing room at a corner window; and next to him stood Tanya with a plate. Under the pretext of wishing to feed her dolls, she had asked the governess for permission to bring her portion of pie to the nursery and instead had brought it to her brother. While continuing to cry over the unfairness of the punishment he had suffered, he ate the pie brought to him and through his sobs kept saying, “You eat some, let’s eat it together . . . together.”

Tanya had been moved at first by pity for Grisha, then by an awareness of her own good deed, and she too had tears in her eyes; but she did not refuse and ate her share.

When they saw their mother they became frightened, but when they looked at her face they realized that they were doing a good thing, and they began laughing and with mouths full of pie started wiping their smiling lips and smearing their beaming faces with tears and jam.

“My goodness! Your new white dress! Tanya! Grisha!” said their mother, trying to rescue the dress, but she had tears in her eyes and was smiling a blissful, ecstatic smile.

The new outfits were taken off, and instructions were given to put blouses on the girls and old jackets on the boys and to harness the trap again, to the

steward's grief, with Brownie—in order to go mushroom hunting and bathing. A clamor of ecstatic whoops went up in the nursery and did not subside until they had left to go bathing.

They picked an entire basket of mushrooms; even Lily found a birch mushroom. Before, Miss Hull would find one and show it to her, but now she found the big brown cap herself, and there was a general ecstatic cry, "Lily found a mushroom!"

Then they rode down to the river, left the horses under the birches, and went to their bathing spot. Terenty the driver, after hitching the horses to a tree, where they flicked away the gadflies, lay down in the shade of a birch, flattening the grass, and smoked his shag, and from the bathing spot came the children's incessant and cheerful shrieks.

Although it was a lot of trouble to watch after all the children and put a stop to their pranks, and although it was hard to remember and not mix up all the little stockings, breeches, and shoes from the different feet and to untie, unfasten, and then refasten the laces and buttons, Darya Alexandrovna, who herself had always loved bathing and considered it beneficial for the children, took no greater pleasure in anything than in this bathing with all her children. To run her fingers over all these plump little legs while pulling on their stockings, to gather up in her arms and dip these little naked bodies and hear their delighted or terrified squeals, to see the gasping faces and frightened and cheerful, wide-open eyes of these splashing cherubs of hers was a great pleasure for her.

When half the children were already dressed, several peasant women in their holiday best who were out gathering angelica and milkwort walked over to the bathing area and stopped shyly. Matryona Filimonovna called out to one to pass her a sheet and shirt that had dropped in the water to dry them out, and Darya Alexandrovna struck up a conversation with the women. The women, who at first giggled into their hands and did not understand her question, soon gathered their nerve and began talking, immediately winning Darya Alexandrovna over with the sincere admiration they showed for her children.

"Oh, what a beauty, so white, like sugar," one said, admiring Tanechka and shaking her head. "But so skinny."

"Yes, she's been ill."

"Look at you, goodness knows they've been bathing you, too," said another about the infant.

"No, he's only three months old," replied Darya Alexandrovna with pride.

"You don't say!"

"And do you have any children?"

"I had four, two are left: a boy and a girl. I weaned her last Shrovetide."

"And how old is she?"

“Oh, going on two.”

“But why did you nurse her for so long?”

“It’s our custom: three fasts.”⁹

The conversation became the most interesting possible for Darya Alexandrovna. How had she given birth? What was the matter with the boy? Where was her husband? Does that happen often?

Darya Alexandrovna could not tear herself away from the women, so interesting was her conversation with them and so utterly identical their interests. Nicest of all for Darya Alexandrovna was the fact that she could clearly see how all these women admired most of all how many children she had and how fine they were. The women made Darya Alexandrovna laugh and offended the English governess for being the cause of this laughter she could not understand. One of the young women took a good close look at the governess, who was dressing after everyone else, and when she had put on a third skirt, the woman could not keep from commenting, “Look at that, she keeps wrapping and wrapping. She’ll never wrap it all!” she said, and everyone roared with laughter.

9

Surrounded by all her bathed children and their wet heads, Darya Alexandrovna, a kerchief on her own head, was already riding up to the house when the driver said, “There’s some gentleman coming, from Pokrovskoye, I think.”

Darya Alexandrovna glanced ahead and rejoiced at the sight of the familiar figure of Levin, who was wearing a gray hat and gray coat and who was walking toward them. She was always glad to see him, but now she was especially glad that he would see her in all her glory. No one could understand her grandeur and what it consisted of better than Levin.

When he saw her, he found himself looking at one of the pictures of the family life he imagined for himself in the future.

“You are the perfect brood hen, Darya Alexandrovna.”

“Oh, how glad I am to see you!” she said, holding her hand out to him.

“You’re glad, but you didn’t let me know. My brother has been staying with me, and now I receive a note from Stiva that you’re here.”

“From Stiva?” Darya Alexandrovna asked in surprise.

“Yes, he writes that you’ve moved here and thinks that you will permit me to assist you in some way,” said Levin, and having said this, he was suddenly embarrassed, and breaking off, he continued walking silently alongside the trap, tearing off linden shoots and chewing on them. He was embarrassed based on his assumption that it would be unpleasant for Darya Alexandrovna to find help

coming from an outsider in a matter that ought to have been taken care of by her husband. Indeed, Darya Alexandrovna did not like this manner of Stepan Arkadyevich's of foisting his family affairs on others, and she immediately realized that Levin understood this. Darya Alexandrovna loved Levin for this subtlety of understanding, this delicacy.

"I realize, of course," said Levin, "that this only means that you want to see me, and I'm very glad. Of course, I can imagine that you, a city matron, find it quite wild here, and if you need anything, I am entirely at your service."

"Oh no!" said Dolly. "At first it was uncomfortable, but now everything is wonderfully arranged thanks to my old nurse," she said, indicating Matryona Filimonovna, who understood that they were talking about her and smiled cheerfully and cordially at Levin. She knew him and knew that this was a good suitor for the young lady, and she wished the matter settled.

"Please, sit down. We shall make room," she told him.

"No, I'll walk. Children, who will race the horses with me?"

The children did not know Levin at all well, they didn't remember ever having seen him, but they didn't manifest toward him that odd reticence and revulsion that children so often do toward adults who pretend, often causing them pain. Pretense may fool the most clever and perceptive adult, but even the most limited child will recognize it and turn away, however artfully it is concealed. Whatever Levin's shortcomings, there was not the slightest sign of pretense in him, and so the children showed him the same amiability that they found on their mother's face. At his invitation the two eldest immediately hopped down and ran off with him as simply as if they had run off with their nurse, Miss Hull, or their mother. Lily, too, began asking to go to him, and her mother handed her to him; he put her on his shoulder and ran with her.

"Never fear, never fear, Darya Alexandrovna!" he said, smiling cheerfully at the mother. "I could not possibly hurt or drop her."

Watching his deft, strong, cautiously solicitous and overly tense movements, the mother was reassured and smiled gaily and approvingly, watching him.

Here, in the country, with the children and with Darya Alexandrovna, whom he found so amiable, Levin felt those childish good spirits that often descended upon him and which Darya Alexandrovna especially liked in him. While running with the children, he taught them gymnastics, made Miss Hull laugh with his bad English, and recounted to Darya Alexandrovna his occupations in the country.

After dinner, sitting alone with him on the balcony, Darya Alexandrovna broached the subject of Kitty.

"Did you know? Kitty is coming here to spend the summer with me."

“Really?” he said, flustered, and immediately, in order to change the subject, said, “So, shall I send you two cows? If you want, you may pay me five rubles a month, if you aren’t ashamed.”

“No, thank you, you’re very kind. We’re all set.”

“Well then, I’ll take a look at your cows and, if you will permit me, give instructions on how to feed them. It’s all a matter of their feed.”

Levin, in order to keep the conversation diverted, expounded for Darya Alexandrovna his theory of dairy farming, which consisted of the fact that a cow is simply a machine for processing feed into milk, and so forth.

He was saying this while passionately wishing to hear details about Kitty and at the same time fearing exactly that. He was terrified that the peace he had won at such pains would be disrupted.

“Yes, but who is going to look after all this?” Darya Alexandrovna replied reluctantly.

She now arranged her household through Matryona Filimonovna, and she had no wish to change anything about it; and she did not really trust Levin’s knowledge of agriculture. His arguments that a cow is a machine for making milk seemed to her dubious. It seemed to her that arguments like these could only hinder farming. To her, it was all much simpler. All she needed, as Matryona Filimonovna explained, was to give Spotty and Whiteside more feed and mash and to keep the cook from taking the slops from the kitchen for the laundress’s cow. That was clear. But arguments about meal and grass feed were dubious and vague. Most of all, she wanted to talk about Kitty.

10

“Kitty writes me that she wants nothing so much as seclusion and peace,” said Dolly after silence ensued.

“What, has her health improved?” Levin asked, agitatedly.

“Thank goodness, she is quite recovered. I never believed she had anything wrong with her chest.”

“Oh, I’m very glad!” said Levin, and Dolly thought she saw something touching and helpless in his face as he said this and looked at her in silence.

“Listen, Konstantin Dmitrievich,” said Darya Alexandrovna, smiling her good and somewhat amused smile. “Why are you angry at Kitty?”

“Me? I’m not angry,” said Levin.

“Yes, you are. Why didn’t you stop by to see us, or them, when you were in Moscow?”

“Darya Alexandrovna,” he said, blushing to the roots of his hair, “I am even

astonished that you, with your goodness, do not feel this. Why you simply don't pity me when you know."

"What do I know?"

"You know that I proposed and was refused," Levin continued, and all the tenderness he had felt for Kitty a moment before was replaced inside him by a feeling of anger over this insult.

"Why do you think I know that?"

"Because everyone knows it."

"In that you are mistaken. I did not know that, although I did guess."

"Ah! Well, now you do."

"I only knew that something had happened, but what it was, I could never learn from Kitty. I could see only that something had happened, that she suffered terribly, and that she asked me never to speak of it. And if she did not tell me, then she did not tell anyone. But what did happen between you? Tell me."

"I told you what happened."

"When?"

"The last time I visited you."

"And you know what I would tell you?" said Darya Alexandrovna. "I feel terribly, terribly sorry for her. It is only your pride that has suffered . . ."

"Perhaps," said Levin, "but—"

She interrupted him:

"But she, poor darling, I'm so terribly, terribly sorry for her. Now I understand everything."

"Well, Darya Alexandrovna, you must forgive me," he said, rising. "Farewell! Good-bye, Darya Alexandrovna."

"No, wait," she said, catching him by the sleeve. "Wait, sit down."

"Please, please, let us not speak of this," he said, sitting down and at the same time sensing that what had seemed to him a buried hope was rising and stirring in his heart.

"If I did not love you," said Darya Alexandrovna, and tears came to her eyes, "if I did not know you as I do . . ."

The feeling he had thought dead was now reviving more and more, rising and capturing Levin's heart.

"Yes, now I understand everything," continued Darya Alexandrovna. "You could not understand this. It's always so clear to you men, free as you are and used to choosing whom you love. But a young girl in a state of anticipation, with this feminine, maidenly shame, a young girl who sees you men from afar and takes everyone at their word—a young girl might well feel that she does not know whom she loves and does not know what to say."

"Yes, if her heart does not speak—"

“No, her heart does speak, but just think: you men get to view the girl, you visit her home, you get closer, you take a good look, you bide your time, and should you find that you love her, then, when you are certain that you do love her, you propose.”

“Well, that’s not quite how it is.”

“That doesn’t matter. You propose when your love has matured or when the odds shift in favor of one of the two you have selected. But the girl does not get to ask. They want her to do the choosing, but she cannot choose. She can only answer yes or no.”

“Yes, the choice between me and Vronsky,” thought Levin, and the corpse that had come back to life inside him died again and merely weighed agonizingly on his heart.

“Darya Alexandrovna,” he said, “that is how one chooses a dress or I don’t know what purchase, but not love. The choice has been made, and so much the better. . . . There can be no second time.”

“Oh, pride and more pride!” said Darya Alexandrovna, as if despising him for the baseness of this feeling in comparison with that other feeling which women alone know. “While you were proposing to Kitty, she was in precisely that position when she could not answer. There was a hesitation in her. A hesitation: you or Vronsky? She saw him every day, she had not seen you for a long time. Had she been older, let’s say—for me, for example, in her place there could have been no hesitation. I always found him offensive, and there it would have ended.”

Levin remembered Kitty’s reply. She had said, “No, *it cannot be*.”

“Darya Alexandrovna,” he said dryly, “I value your confidence in me, but I think you are mistaken. Whether I am right or wrong, though, this pride, which you so despise, makes it such that for me any thought of Katerina Alexandrovna is impossible—you understand, utterly impossible.”

“I will say just one thing more. You realize I am speaking about my sister, whom I love like my own children. I am not saying she should love you, I merely mean to say that her refusal at that moment proves nothing.”

“I don’t know!” said Levin, jumping up. “If you knew how badly you’re hurting me! It’s exactly as if you had had a baby die and people said to you, Oh, he might have been such and such, and he might have lived, and you would have taken such delight in him. But he’s dead, dead, dead.”

“How funny you are,” said Darya Alexandrovna with sad amusement, in spite of Levin’s agitation. “Yes, now I understand more and more,” she continued thoughtfully. “Won’t you come see us when Kitty is here?”

“No, I won’t. Of course, I am not going to avoid Katerina Alexandrovna, but when I can, I will try to relieve her of the burden of my presence.”

“You are very, very funny,” repeated Darya Alexandrovna, looking tenderly into his face. “All right, fine, let’s pretend we said nothing of this. Why have you come, Tanya?” said Darya Alexandrovna in French to the girl who had walked in.

“Where is my shovel, Mama?”

“I’m speaking French, so you should do the same.”

The girl had wanted to, but she had forgotten the French for shovel; her mother prompted her and then told her in French where to look for the shovel, and Levin found this unpleasant.

Now everything in Darya Alexandrovna’s home and in her children seemed much less sweet than before.

“What does she speak French with her children for?” he thought. “How unnatural and false it is! And the children sense that. Learn French and unlearn sincerity,” he thought privately, unaware that Darya Alexandrovna had turned all this over in her mind twenty times and still, even at the expense of sincerity, found it essential to teach her children by this means.

“But must you go? Sit a little longer.”

Levin stayed until tea, but his good cheer had vanished completely, and he felt awkward.

After tea he went into the front hall to order his horses brought around, and when he returned he found a distraught Darya Alexandrovna with a distraught face and tears in her eyes. While Levin was out, an incident had occurred for Darya Alexandrovna that suddenly destroyed all her day’s happiness and pride in her children. Grisha and Tanya had been fighting over a ball. Hearing a cry in the nursery, Darya Alexandrovna ran out to find them in a terrible state. Tanya was holding Grisha by the hair, and he, his face contorted with anger, was beating her with his fists wherever he could. Something in Darya Alexandrovna’s heart broke when she saw this. It was as if a pall had descended upon her life. She realized that these children of hers, in whom she took such pride, were not only the most ordinary but even the worst, most ill-bred children, malicious children with crude, bestial tendencies.

She could neither speak nor think of anything else, nor could she relate to Levin her unhappiness.

Levin saw that she was unhappy and tried to console her, saying that this did not prove anything bad, that all children fight; but as he said this, deep down Levin thought, “No, I am not going to put on airs and speak French with my children, but I will not have children like this. One must simply not spoil, not distort children, and they will be splendid. No, I will not have children like this.”

He said good-bye and left, and she did not try to detain him.

11

In mid-July, the elder from Levin's sister's village, which was located twenty versts from Pokrovskoye, came to report on their progress and on the haymaking. The principal income from his sister's estate came from the water meadows. In years past, the peasants' mowing had brought in twenty rubles per desyatina. When Levin took the estate under his management, he surveyed the haymaking and found that it was worth more and set a price per desyatina of twenty-five rubles. The peasants would not pay that price and, as Levin suspected, discouraged other buyers. Then Levin went there himself and ordered the meadow cleared in part for wages, in part for shares. His peasants resorted to every means to hamper this innovation, but the business got under way, and in the very first year the meadow earned nearly twice as much. In the third and previous year, the peasants had kept up the same resistance, and the clearing had proceeded in the same way. This year the peasants took all the hay for a third of the crop, and now the village elder had come to announce that the hay had been gathered and that he, fearing rain, had called in the estate clerk and, in his presence, divided the hay up and raked eleven stacks for the master. From the vague answers to his question about how much hay there had been in the main meadow, from the elder's haste in dividing up the hay without asking, indeed, from the peasant's whole tone, Levin realized there was something wrong about this division and decided to go there himself to check into the matter.

Arriving in the village at dinnertime and leaving his horse with an old man he knew, the husband of his brother's wet nurse, Levin went to see the old man at his apiary, wishing to learn from him the details of the haymaking. A loquacious, fine-looking old man, Parmenych greeted Levin with delight, showed him his entire operation, and recounted all the details about his bees and this year's swarming, but to Levin's questions about the mowing he spoke vaguely and reluctantly. This confirmed Levin even more in his surmises. He went to the mowing and surveyed the stacks. There could not have been fifty loads in each stack, so in order to establish the peasants' guilt, Levin ordered the carts that carried the hay summoned and one stack lifted and moved to the barn. The stack yielded only thirty-two loads. Despite the elder's assurances as to the hay's fluffiness and about how it settled in the stacks, and despite his swearing that everything had been on the up and up, Levin insisted that they had been divided without his orders and because of that he did not accept this hay at fifty loads a stack. After long argument the matter was decided with the peasants taking those eleven stacks, counted at fifty loads apiece, for their share, and the master's share being apportioned anew. These negotiations and the division of haystacks went on until midafternoon. When the last hay had been ap-

portioned, Levin, assigning the remaining oversight to the clerk, sat down on a haystack marked by a stamen of willow and admired the meadow, which was teeming with people.

In front of him, at a bend in the river beyond a small marsh, their clear voices ringing gaily, moved a colorful line of peasant women, and winding gray mounds of strewn hay quickly stretched out over the bright green stubble field. In the women's wake came the peasants with their pitchforks, and from the mounds grew wide, tall, fluffy haystacks. From the left, across the already cleared meadow, clattered the wagons, and one after another the haystacks disappeared, served up in huge pitchforksful, and in their place heavy loads of fragrant hay hung over the horses' hindquarters.

"What weather for a harvest! There'll sure be hay!" said the old man as he sat down beside Levin. "Tea, not hay! Like throwing grain to ducks, the way they pick it up!" he added, pointing to the rising haystacks. "Taken away a good half since dinner. Last one, is it?" he shouted to a boy who, standing at the front of his wagon and waving the ends of the hemp reins, was riding by.

"Last one, Father!" shouted the boy, holding back the horse, and smiling, he looked around at a cheerful, also smiling, rosy woman sitting in the cart, and he drove them on.

"Who is that? Your son?" asked Levin.

"My littlest," said the old man with a gentle smile.

"What a fine lad."

"Not a bad boy."

"Married already?"

"Yes, it'll be three years at St. Filipp's."¹⁰

"What, does he have children?"

"What children! For a whole year he didn't understand a thing, and he was shy," answered the old man. "Oh, what hay! Real tea!" he repeated, wishing to change the subject.

Levin took a close look at Ivan Parmenov and his wife. They were stacking hay not far from him. Vanka was standing on the load, receiving, spreading out, and stamping down the huge piles of hay his young beauty, his wife, was deftly passing to him, first in armfuls, then in forkfuls.¹¹ The young woman was working easily, cheerfully, and deftly. Getting the coarse, packed hay on the pitchfork took some doing. First she gathered it up and stuck the pitchfork in, and then with a quick, lithe movement she brought the full weight of her body to bear on it and quickly, bending her back wound round with a red girdle, she straightened, and thrusting out her full breast under her white smock, with a deft grasp, took hold of the fork and tossed her bundle high on the load. Hurriedly, obviously trying to relieve her of even a moment's extra exertion, Ivan caught hold of

her armful, opening his arms wide, and spread it out on the load. After she had passed the last hay with a rake, the woman shook out the hay dust on her neck, and straightening the red kerchief that had slipped down her white, untanned brow, crawled under the wagon to secure the load. Ivan was teaching her how to fasten it to the crosspiece, and he began laughing loudly at something she said to him. On their faces was an expression of powerful, young, newly awakened love.

12

The load was tied down. Ivan jumped off and led the good, well-fed horse by the bridle. The woman tossed the rakes onto the load and with a bold step, swinging her arms, went to join the circle of women dancing. Riding out onto the road, Ivan joined the line of other loads. The women, rakes on their shoulders, sparkling with vivid colors and chattering in cheerful, ringing voices, were walking along behind the loads. One rough, wild woman's voice began a song and sang it to the repeat, and then amiably, all together, half a hundred different hearty voices, rough and delicate both, joined in on the same song from the beginning.

The peasant women and their song were coming closer to Levin, and it seemed to him that a cloud with the thunder of good cheer was advancing on him. The cloud drew near and grabbed him, and the haystack he was lying on, and the other haystacks, and the cartloads, and the entire meadow and the distant field—everything began moving and swaying to the measures of this wild, abandoned song with its yelps, whistles, and claps. Levin became envious of this hearty good cheer and wished he could take part in expressing this joy of life. There was nothing he could do but lie there, though, and watch and listen. When the people and their song had dropped out of sight and hearing, a heavy melancholy at his own loneliness, his own bodily idleness, and his own animosity toward this world gripped Levin.

Some of those very peasants who had argued the most with him over the hay, those whom he had offended, or those who had tried to deceive him, those very peasants bowed to him cheerfully and obviously did not and could not bear any ill will toward him, let alone any repentance or even memory of the fact that they had hoped to deceive him. All this had drowned in the sea of cheerful common labor. God gave them the day, and God gave them the strength, and the day and the strength had been consecrated to labor, which was its own reward. And who was the labor for? What would be the fruits of this labor? These were irrelevant and insignificant considerations.

Levin had often admired this life and had often felt envious toward the

people living this life, but now for the first time, especially under the impression of what he had seen in the relations between Ivan Parmenov and his young wife, the thought occurred to Levin clearly for the first time that it was up to him to exchange the very burdensome, idle, artificial, and private life he lived for this pure and shared, splendid life of labor.

The old man who had been sitting with him had gone home long since and the people had all dispersed. Those who lived nearby had gone home, and those who lived farther away had gathered for supper and a night's sleep in the meadow. Unremarked by the people, Levin continued to lie on the haystack and watch, listen, and think. The people who had stayed to spend the night in the meadow barely slept the whole brief summer night. First he could hear general cheerful talk and laughter at supper, then more songs and laughter.

The entire long day of work had left in them no trace but good cheer. Just before dawn, all fell quiet. All you could hear were the nighttime sounds of the frogs croaking without cease in the marsh and of the horses snorting in the meadow in the mist that rose before morning. Opening his eyes, Levin rose from his haystack and, surveying the stars, realized that the night had passed.

"So what am I going to do? How am I going to do it?" he asked himself, trying to express for himself all that he had thought and felt on this brief night. All that he had thought and felt could be divided into three separate lines of thought. One was his renunciation of his old life, his useless knowledge, and his education, which did no one any good. This renunciation afforded him pleasure and was easy and simple for him. His other thoughts and notions concerned the life he wished to live now. He clearly felt the simplicity, purity, and legitimacy of this life and was convinced that in it he would find the satisfaction, reassurance, and dignity whose absence he so painfully felt. But the third line of thought turned on the question of how to make this transition from the old life to the new, and here he could picture nothing clear. "Have a wife? Have a job or a need to work? Leave Pokrovskoye? Buy land? Join a commune? Marry a peasant girl? But how would I do that?" he asked himself again and found no answer. "Actually, I haven't slept all night, and I can't give myself a clear accounting," he told himself. "I'll clear this up afterward. One thing is for certain, this night has decided my fate. All my former dreams of family life are rubbish, wrong," he told himself. "All this is much simpler and better. . . ."

"How handsome!" he thought, looking at the strange mother-of-pearl shell of fleecy white clouds that had come to a halt directly overhead, in the middle of the sky. "How splendid it all is on this splendid night! And when did this shell form? I was just looking at the sky, and there wasn't anything in it—only two white bands. Yes, and just as imperceptibly my views on life have changed!"

He walked out of the meadow and started down the highway toward the vil-

lage. A light breeze had come up, and it was now gray and gloomy. A moment of gloom had come, such as usually precedes a dawn full of the victory of light over darkness.

Huddling against the cold, Levin walked quickly, looking at the ground. "What's this? Someone's coming," he thought when he heard bells, and he lifted his head. Forty paces off, coming toward him, down the same grassy sward as he, was a carriage harnessed to a team of four. The horses were pressing close to the shaft to avoid the ruts, but the deft driver, sitting sideways on the box, was keeping the shaft aligned with the rut, so that the wheels ran over the smooth.

This was all Levin noticed, and not thinking about who this might be traveling, absentmindedly glanced at the carriage.

Dozing in the corner of the carriage was an old woman, but by the window, evidently having only just awakened, sat a young girl holding the ribbons of her white cap with both hands. Fair and pensive, filled with an elegant and complex inner life alien to Levin, she was looking past him at the sunrise.

The very instant this vision was disappearing, her truthful eyes looked at him. She recognized him, and astonished delight lit up her face.

He could not be mistaken. There was only one pair of eyes in the world like that. There was only one being in the world capable of concentrating for him the entire light and meaning of life. It was she. It was Kitty. He realized that she was on her way to Ergushovo from the railway station, and all that had made Levin so restless that sleepless night, all the decisions he had made, all of that suddenly vanished. He recalled with disgust his dreams of marrying a peasant girl. Only there, in that quickly receding carriage, now crossing to the other side of the road, only there was the possibility of solving the puzzle of his life, which had weighed on him so agonizingly of late.

She did not look out again. The springs could no longer be heard, and the little bells heard only faintly. The barking of dogs indicated that the carriage had gone past the village as well—and there remained around him the empty fields, the village up ahead, and he himself, lonely and estranged from everything, a lonely man walking down a deserted highway.

He glanced at the sky, hoping to find there the shell he had been admiring, which embodied for him the entire course of his past night's thoughts and feelings. There was nothing more resembling a shell in the sky. There, in the remote heights, a mysterious change had come about. There was no trace of the shell, and there was an even carpet of tinier and tinier fleecy clouds spread across an entire half of the sky. The sky had turned blue and shone, and with the same tenderness, but also the same remoteness, it responded to his inquiring gaze.

"No," he told himself, "I don't care how fine this life is, simple and hardworking, I cannot return to it. I love *her*."

13

None but those closest to Alexei Alexandrovich knew that this to all appearances supremely cold and sensible man had one weakness that contradicted his general cast of character. Alexei Alexandrovich could not bear to hear or see the tears of a child or a woman. The sight of tears put him in a state of great distress, and he lost the ability to think. His head clerk and secretary knew this and forewarned lady petitioners that they were by no means to cry if they did not want to spoil their case. "He will get angry and will not listen to you," they would say. Indeed, in those instances, the emotional distress produced in Alexei Alexandrovich by tears was expressed in impatient fury. "There is nothing I can do, nothing. Would you kindly get out!" he usually shouted in those instances.

When, after returning from the races, Anna informed him of her relationship with Vronsky and immediately afterward covered her face with her hands and began to cry, Alexei Alexandrovich, despite the anger provoked in him, at the same time felt a surge of that emotional distress which tears always produced in him. Knowing this, and knowing that an expression of his feelings at this moment would be inappropriate to the situation, he tried to refrain from any show of life and so did not stir or look at her. It is this that brought about the strange, deathlike expression on his face that had so struck Anna.

When they rode up to the house, he helped her out of the carriage and, making a great effort, said good-bye to her with his usual civility and pronounced those words which did not obligate him to anything: he said that he would inform her of his decision tomorrow.

His wife's words, which had confirmed his worst suspicions, produced a cruel ache in Alexei Alexandrovich's heart. This pain was made even worse by that strange physical pity for her which her tears had produced in him. Once he was alone in the carriage, though, Alexei Alexandrovich, to his own amazement and delight, felt perfect liberation both from his pity and from the suspicions and pangs of jealousy that had tormented him of late.

He experienced what a man feels who has had a tooth pulled that has been aching for a long time. After the terrible pain and the sensation of something huge, large, bigger than his own head, being pulled from his jaw, the patient suddenly, not believing his own good fortune, feels that what had poisoned his life for so long, what had riveted all his attention to itself, no longer existed and that once again he might live, think, and take an interest in something other than his tooth. This is the feeling Alexei Alexandrovich experienced. The pain had been strange and terrible, but now it had passed; he felt he could live again and think about something other than his wife.

"Without honor, heart, or religion. A corrupt woman! I always knew it and

always saw it, though I tried, taking pity on her, to deceive myself," he told himself. It truly did seem to him that he had always seen this; he dredged up details of their past life which previously had not struck him as bad in any way—and now these details clearly showed him that she had always been corrupt. "I made a mistake in linking my life with her; however, there is nothing bad in my mistake, and so I cannot be unhappy. It's not I who am to blame," he told himself, "it's she. But she's no business of mine. For me, she doesn't exist."

Everything that would affect her and their son, toward whom his feelings had changed, just as they had for her, ceased to interest him. The only thing that interested him now was the matter of the very best, most decent, most convenient for himself, and so most just manner of shaking off the mud she had splattered on him in her fall and continuing to follow his path of an active, honest, and useful life.

"I cannot be unhappy because a despicable woman has committed a crime; I merely must find the best solution to the difficult situation in which she has placed me, and find it I shall," he told himself, frowning more and more. "I am neither the first nor the last." And to say nothing of historical examples, beginning with Menelaus, kept freshest of all in his memory by *La Belle Hélène*, a whole series of modern infidelities committed by high-society wives against their husbands arose in Alexei Alexandrovich's imagination.¹² "Daryalov, Poltavsky, Prince Karibanov, Count Paskudin, Dram . . . Yes, even Dram . . . such an honest and practical man . . . Semyonov, Chagin, Sigonin," Alexei Alexandrovich recalled. "Admittedly, some unreasonable *ridicule* falls upon these men, but I have never seen in this anything but misfortune and have always sympathized with it," Alexei Alexandrovich told himself, although this was untrue, and he had never sympathized with misfortunes of this sort, but rather had valued himself even more highly the more often he encountered examples of wives betraying their husbands. "This is a misfortune that might befall anyone. And this misfortune has befallen me. It is merely a matter of how best to suffer through the situation." And he began sorting through the details of how men who found themselves in this same situation as he had acted.

"Daryalov fought a duel. . . ."

When he was young, duels had especially attracted Alexei Alexandrovich's thoughts precisely because he was a physically timid man and knew it well. Alexei Alexandrovich could not without horror think of a pistol being pointed at him and had never in his life wielded any kind of weapon. From his youth this horror had compelled him to think about duels and to try to imagine himself in the position of having to expose his own life to danger. Having achieved success and a firm position in life, he had long forgotten this feeling; however, the

habit of the emotion took over, and fear of his own cowardice even now proved so strong that for a long time Alexei Alexandrovich considered it from every angle and consoled himself with the matter of a duel, even though he knew in advance that in no case would he fight.

“Without a doubt, our society is still so savage (not like England) that there are quite a few” —and these few included some whose opinion Alexei Alexandrovich particularly valued—“who would look on the duel from the positive side; but what result would be attained? Let’s say I challenge him to a duel,” Alexei Alexandrovich continued to himself, and vividly imagining the night he would spend after the challenge and the pistol aimed at him, he shuddered and realized he would never do it. “Let’s say I challenged him to a duel. Let’s say I am taught how to shoot,” he went on thinking, “and I squeezed the trigger,” he was talking to himself with his eyes shut, “and it turned out I’d killed him,” Alexei Alexandrovich said to himself and shook his head to drive out these foolish thoughts. “What sense does it make to murder a man in order to define one’s relations to a culpable wife and her son? I would still have to decide in precisely the same way what I should do with her. No, what is much more likely and certainly will happen is I would be killed or wounded. I, a blameless man, a victim — killed or wounded. Which makes even less sense. But not only that; a challenge to a duel on my part would be a dishonest deed. Don’t I know in advance that my friends would not permit me to go as far as a duel — would not permit the life of a man of state, whom Russia needs, to be exposed to danger? What would happen? What would happen is that, knowing in advance that the matter would never reach the point of danger, I would be hoping to use this challenge merely to lend myself a certain false glamour. This is dishonest, this is false, this is a deception of others and myself. A duel is unthinkable and no one expects it of me. My goal lies in securing my reputation, which I require for the unhampered pursuit of my activities.” His official activities, which previously in Alexei Alexandrovich’s eyes had held great significance, now seemed to him particularly significant.

Having thoroughly considered and rejected a duel, Alexei Alexandrovich turned to divorce — another solution chosen by some of the men he recalled. Sorting through in his memory all the known instances of divorce (they were quite numerous in the very highest society he knew so well), Alexei Alexandrovich did not find one where the purpose of the divorce was that which he had in mind. In all these instances the man had ceded or sold an unfaithful wife, and that very party which, because of her guilt, did not have the right to enter into a new marriage, entered into a counterfeit, hastily legitimized relationship with a new spouse. In his case, Alexei Alexandrovich saw that the achievement

of a legitimate divorce, that is, the kind where only the guilty wife is repudiated, was impossible. He saw that the complicated conditions of the life in which he now found himself did not allow for the possibility of those crude proofs which the law demanded for the exposure of the wife's culpability; he saw that a certain refinement of this life did not allow for the application of these proofs, were there any, and that the application of these proofs would reduce him even more than her in public opinion.

To attempt a divorce could only lead to a scandalous trial, which would be a boon for his enemies, for gossip, and for lowering his high position in the world. His main purpose—to define his position with the least distress—could not be attained through divorce. Moreover, in a divorce, even the attempt to divorce, it was obvious that the wife had broken off relations with the husband and had united with her lover. But in Alexei Alexandrovich's soul, in spite of his now utter, as he thought, and contemptuous indifference toward his wife, there remained in his attitude toward her a single emotion—an unwillingness to let her be united unimpeded with Vronsky, for her crime to be so much to her advantage. This one thought so irritated Alexei Alexandrovich that merely imagining this made him groan from his inward pain, rise slightly, and shift his position in the carriage, and after this, scowling, he spent a long time tucking the fluffy lap robe around his chilled and bony legs.

“Other than formal divorce, one could also act as Karibanov, Paskudin, and that good Dram did, that is, separate from one's wife,” he continued thinking after he had calmed down; even this measure, though, presented the same inconveniences of disgrace as in divorce, and most important—precisely like a formal divorce—it threw his wife into Vronsky's arms. “No, this is impossible, impossible!” he began loudly, again setting about tucking in his lap robe. “I cannot be unhappy, but neither should she nor he be happy.”

The jealousy that had tormented him during the period of uncertainty had passed the moment the tooth was pulled so painfully by his wife's words. But this feeling had been replaced by another: the desire for her not only not to triumph but also to suffer revenge for her crime. He would not admit to this feeling, but in his heart of hearts he wished her to suffer for violating his peace of mind and his honor. After going through once again the conditions of a duel, divorce, and separation, and after rejecting them once again, Alexei Alexandrovich was convinced there could be only one solution—to keep her with him, concealing what had happened from the world and employing all necessary measures to put an end to the liaison and, most important—something he was not admitting even to himself—to punish her. “I must announce my decision that, having thought through the difficult position in which she has placed the

family, all other solutions would be worse for both parties than an outward *status quo*, and such I agree to observe, but on strict condition that she for her part obey my will, that is, put an end to her relationship with her lover." In confirmation of this decision, when it had finally been made, Alexei Alexandrovich had one more important thought. "Only by this solution am I acting in accordance with religion," he told himself, "only by this solution am I not rejecting a culpable wife but rather giving her an opportunity of amendment and even—however hard this will be for me—I will devote a portion of my powers to improving and saving her." Even though Alexei Alexandrovich knew full well that he could not bring any moral influence to bear on his wife, that nothing but hypocrisy would ever come of this whole attempt at amendment, and even though while living through these difficult moments he had not given a single thought to seeking guidance in religion, now that his decision coincided with what seemed to him the requirements of religion, this religious sanction for his decision gave him full satisfaction and, in part, consolation. He was glad to think that in such an important life matter no one could say that he had not acted in accordance with the rules of that religion whose banner he had always held high amid the general coolness and indifference. As he thought through all the further details, Alexei Alexandrovich did not even see why his relations with his wife could not remain exactly as they had been formerly. Without a doubt, he would never be able to return her his respect, but there was not, nor could there be, any reason for him to upset his life and suffer as a consequence of the fact that she was a bad and unfaithful wife. "Yes, time will pass, all-healing time, and our former relations will be restored," Alexei Alexandrovich told himself, "that is, restored to the extent that I shall not feel any disturbance in the course of my own life. She must needs be unhappy, but I am not to blame and so cannot be unhappy."

14

As he approached Petersburg, Alexei Alexandrovich not only adhered to his resolve but also composed in his head the letter he would write his wife. Entering the porter's room, Alexei Alexandrovich looked through the letters and papers that had been delivered from the ministry and ordered them brought to him in his study.

"Unharness the horses and receive no one," he said to the porter's inquiry with a certain satisfaction, which served as a mark of his good spirits, stressing the words "receive no one."

Alexei Alexandrovich walked up and down his office twice and stopped at

his enormous desk, where his valet had already lit six candles in advance. He cracked his knuckles and sat down, rearranging his writing implements. Resting his elbows on the table, he cocked his head to one side, thought for a moment, and began to write, not stopping for one second. He wrote without a greeting and in French, using the formal “you,” which did not have the same coldness it did in Russian.

At our last conversation I expressed to you my intention to inform you of my decision with regard to the topic of this conversation. Having given everything careful thought, I am writing now for the purpose of keeping this promise. My decision is as follows. Whatever your actions were, I do not feel I have the right to sunder those ties with which we have been bound by a higher authority. A family cannot be destroyed by the whim, the will, or even the crime of one of the spouses, and our life must continue as before. This is essential for me, for you, and for our son. I am fully confident that you have repented of serving as the occasion for the present letter and that you will assist me in eradicating the cause of our dissension and in forgetting the past. Otherwise you yourself can guess what awaits you and your son. All this I hope to speak of in detail at a private audience. Since the dacha season is coming to a close, I would ask you to move to Petersburg as soon as possible, no later than Tuesday. All the necessary instructions will be given for your move. I ask you to note that I ascribe particular significance to the fulfillment of this request of mine.

A. Karenin

p.s. Enclosed with this letter is money, of which you may have need for your expenses.

He read the letter through and was satisfied with it, especially with the fact that he had remembered to enclose money. There was no harsh word, no reproach, but there was also no indulgence. Most of all, there was a golden bridge for return. After folding the letter, smoothing it with his massive ivory paper knife, and putting it into an envelope with the money, he, with the satisfaction that his well-made writing implements always afforded in him, rang the bell.

“Give this to the courier and tell him to take it to Anna Arkadyevna at the dacha tomorrow,” he said, and he stood up.

“As you wish, Your Excellency. Would you have me bring your tea to the study?”

Alexei Alexandrovich instructed that his tea be served in his study, and playing with the massive knife, he walked toward his armchair, beside which a lamp and the French book he had begun about the Eugubine Tables had been

readied.¹³ Above the chair hung an oval portrait of Anna, in a gilt frame, beautifully executed by a famous artist. Alexei Alexandrovich glanced at it. Impenetrable eyes regarded him with derision and impudence, as on that last evening of their interview. The sight of the black lace on her head, her black hair, and her beautiful white hand with a middle finger covered with rings, all done so excellently by the artist, had an unbearably impudent and provocative effect on Alexei Alexandrovich. After studying the portrait for a minute, Alexei Alexandrovich shuddered so that his lips trembled and made a br-ring sound, and he turned away. Hurriedly sitting down in the armchair, he opened his book. He made an attempt at reading but could not seem to restore his once quite lively interest in the Eugubine Tables. He looked at the book and thought of something else. He thought not of his wife but of a complication that had arisen recently in his affairs of state, which at that time constituted the chief interest of his service. He felt that he had penetrated more deeply than ever now into this complication and that in his mind there had formed a capital idea—he could say this without boasting—that should untangle the entire matter, elevate him in his official career, damage his enemies, and so bring the greatest benefit to the state. As soon as the footman had laid out his tea and left the room, Alexei Alexandrovich rose and walked to his desk. Moving the portfolio with his current files to the middle, he took a pencil out of the stand with a barely perceptible smile of self-satisfaction and plunged into reading the complex file he had requested concerning the impending complication. The complication was this. What made Alexei Alexandrovich so special as a statesman, the feature characteristic of him alone, which every rising functionary possesses and which combined with his dogged ambition, restraint, honesty, and self-assurance had made his career, was his disdain for official paper, his abbreviated correspondence, his direct treatment of the actual matter, insofar as was possible, and his economy. It had happened that at the famous Commission of June 2nd a case had been brought up concerning irrigation of the Zaraisk Province fields, which fell under Alexei Alexandrovich's ministry and presented a drastic example of the futility of the expenditures and red tape spent on the case. Alexei Alexandrovich knew that this was fair. The matter of irrigating the fields of Zaraisk Province had been initiated by the predecessor of Alexei Alexandrovich's predecessor. Indeed, a great deal of money had been and was being spent on the matter and all to absolutely no avail, and this entire matter would obviously lead nowhere. When Alexei Alexandrovich accepted his position, he immediately realized this and would have liked to get his hands on this case; but in the beginning, when he did not yet feel secure, he knew that this impinged upon too many interests and was imprudent; later, busy with other cases, he simply forgot about the case. Like all cases, it had a life of its own, by force of inertia. (Many

people were fed on this case, especially one very moral and musical family in which all the daughters played string instruments. Alexei Alexandrovich knew this family and had been the sponsor when one of the older daughters wed.) The raising of this case by a hostile ministry was dishonest, in Alexei Alexandrovich's opinion, because each ministry had its own cases like this which no one would raise, due to well-known official etiquette. Now that the gauntlet had been thrown down to him, however, he picked it up boldly and demanded the appointment of a special commission to study and verify the labors of the commission on the irrigation of the Zarsk Province fields; but on the other hand he had given those gentlemen no quarter. He had demanded the appointment of a special commission on the treatment of native populations.¹⁴ The matter of the treatment of native populations happened to have been raised in the Commission of June 2nd and actively supported by Alexei Alexandrovich as admitting of no delay due to the lamentable status of the native populations. In the committee, this case had served as occasion for dispute with several ministries. A ministry hostile to Alexei Alexandrovich had tried to prove that the status of the native populations was highly flourishing and that the proposed rearrangement might wreck their future flourishing, and if there was something bad, then that stemmed only from the failure of Alexei Alexandrovich's ministry to implement the measures prescribed by law. Now Alexei Alexandrovich was determined to demand, first of all, that a new commission be constituted and instructed to investigate the status of the native populations *in situ*; second, if it turned out that the status of the native populations was indeed such as it was based on the official information in the committee's hands, then another, new, scientific commission should be appointed to investigate the causes for this blighted status of the native populations from the a) political, b) administrative, c) economic, d) ethnographic, e) material, and f) religious standpoints; third, that information be demanded from the hostile ministry about those measures taken in the past decade by that ministry to avert these untoward conditions in which the native populations now found themselves; and fourth, finally, that an explanation be demanded from the ministry as to why, as was evident from reports nos. 17015 and 18308 supplied to the committee and dated December 5, 1863, and June 7, 1864, respectively, the ministry had acted directly contrary to the sense of the fundamental and organic law, vol. . . . , art. 18, and the footnote to article 36. High color spread across Alexei Alexandrovich's face as he jotted down a summary of these thoughts for himself. After covering the piece of paper, he stood up, rang, and sent a note to his chief secretary about obtaining the necessary reports for him. Standing up and pacing around the room, he again glanced at the portrait, frowned, and smiled contemptuously. He read a little more of the book on the Eugubine Tables, and his interest in them having revived, Alexei

Alexandrovich at eleven o'clock went to bed, and when, as he lay in bed, he recalled the incident with his wife, he no longer saw it in quite so gloomy a light.

15

Although Anna contradicted Vronsky with persistence and exasperation when he told her that her position was untenable and tried to convince her to tell her husband everything, in her heart of hearts she did feel that her situation was false and dishonest and with all her heart wished to change it. When she returned from the races with her husband, in a moment of agitation, she had told him everything; despite the pain she had experienced at doing so, she was glad of it. After her husband left her, she told herself she was glad that now everything would be settled, and at least there would be no lie or deceit. She thought beyond a doubt that now her situation would be settled for good. It might be bad, this new situation, but it would be settled, and there would be no obscurity or lie in it. The pain she had caused herself and her husband when she spoke those words would be rewarded now by everything being settled, she thought. That evening she saw Vronsky, but she did not tell him what had transpired between her and her husband, although, in order for her situation to be resolved, she would have to tell him.

When she awoke the next morning, the first thing she conjured were the words she had spoken to her husband, and these words seemed to her so horrible that she could not now understand where she had found the nerve to utter those strange, crude words and could not imagine what would come of it. But the words had been spoken, and Alexei Alexandrovich had left without saying anything. "I saw Vronsky and didn't tell him. Just as he was leaving I was about to bring him back and tell him, but I changed my mind, because it was strange why I hadn't told him the first moment. Why on earth didn't I tell him, though I wanted to?" In answer to this question the hot color of shame covered her face. She understood what had held her back; she understood that she was ashamed. Her situation, which had seemed clarified yesterday evening, suddenly seemed to her not only not clarified but hopeless. She became terrified of the disgrace, to which she had before not given a thought. The mere thought of what her husband would do to her gave rise to the most terrifying thoughts. It occurred to her that the steward might arrive at any moment and drive her out of the house, that her disgrace would be announced to the whole world. She asked herself where she would go when she was driven out of the house, and she found no answer.

When she thought of Vronsky, it seemed to her that he did not love her, that he was already beginning to weary of her, that she could not offer herself

to him, and she felt hostility toward him as a result. It seemed to her that the words which she had spoken to her husband and had repeated in her mind over and over, she had said to everyone and everyone had heard them. She could not bring herself to look the people she lived with in the eye. She could not bring herself to call the maid, let alone go downstairs and see her son and his governess.

The maid, who had been listening at her door for a long time, took it upon herself to go into her room. Anna looked her into her eyes inquiringly and blushed from fright. The maid apologized for coming in, saying that she thought she had rung. She brought her dress and a note. The note was from Betsy. Betsy was reminding her that this morning Liza Merkalova and Baroness Stolz were to come to her house with their admirers, Kaluzhsky and the old man Stremov, for a game of croquet. "Come if only to watch, as a study in manners. I am expecting you," she finished.

Anna read the note and sighed deeply.

"I need nothing, nothing," she told Annushka, rearranging the scent bottles and brushes on her vanity. "Wait a moment. I'll dress right away and come out. I need nothing, nothing."

Annushka went out, but Anna did not begin dressing; rather, she sat in the same position, her head and arms dropped, and from time to time her entire body shuddered, as if wishing to make some gesture, to say something, and again subsiding. She kept repeating, "My God! My God!" But neither "God" nor "my" had any meaning for her. The idea of seeking assistance for her situation in religion, even though she had never had any doubts about the religion in which she had been raised, was for her as alien as seeking assistance from Alexei Alexandrovich himself. She knew in advance that religion's assistance was possible only on condition that she renounce what for her constituted the entire meaning of life. Not only was this hard for her, but she was beginning to fear her new emotional state, something she had never before experienced. She felt everything inside her begin to double, the way objects sometimes double in weary eyes. Sometimes she didn't know what she feared or what she desired. Whether she feared or desired what had been or what would be, and what precisely she did desire, she didn't know.

"Oh, what am I doing!" she told herself, suddenly feeling pain on both sides of her head. When her head cleared, she saw that she was clutching her hair at the temples with both hands. She jumped up and started pacing.

"The coffee is ready, and Mademoiselle and Seryozha are waiting," said Annushka when she came back and again found Anna in the same position.

"Seryozha? What about Seryozha?" asked Anna, suddenly coming to life, recalling for the first time all morning her son's existence.

"He's been naughty, I think," Annushka replied, smiling.

"Naughty how?"

"You had peaches lying in the corner cupboard. I think he snuck one and ate it."

The mention of her son suddenly roused Anna from the hopeless situation in which she found herself. She remembered that partially sincere, although in many ways exaggerated, role of mother living for her son which she had taken upon herself in the past few years and felt with joy that in the condition in which she found herself she did have support independent of her position with respect to both her husband and Vronsky. This support was her son. In whatever position she might be, she could not abandon her son. Let her husband disgrace her, drive her out, let Vronsky grow cold toward her and continue to lead his independent life (she thought of him again, with bile and reproach), she could not abandon her son. She had a purpose in life, and she needed to act, to act to secure her position with her son, so that he could not be taken away from her. Soon, as soon as possible, she had to act, before they took him away from her. She had to take her son and leave. That was the one thing she needed to do now. She needed to calm down and solve this agonizing situation. The thought of immediate action binding her to her son, and of going away with him right away, calmed her.

She dressed quickly, went downstairs, and walked with a firm step into the drawing room, where, as usual, she was awaited by coffee and Seryozha and his governess. Seryozha, dressed all in white, was standing by the table under the mirror and, his back and head bent over, with an expression of intense attention she well knew in him and in which he resembled his father, was doing something with the flowers he had brought in.

The governess wore an especially stern look. As often happened with him, Seryozha exclaimed piercingly, "Ah, Mama!" and he hesitated. Should he go up to his mother and say hello and abandon the flowers, or should he finish the wreath and bring her the flowers?

The governess greeted her and began delivering a long and detailed account of Seryozha's misdeed, but Anna was not listening to her; she was thinking about whether she would take her along. "No, I won't," she decided. "I'll leave alone, with my son."

"Yes, that is very bad," said Anna, and taking her son by the shoulder, and with a shy rather than stern expression that confused and delighted the boy, looked at him and kissed him. "Leave him with me," she told the surprised governess, and without letting go of her son's arm, she sat down at the table laid for coffee.

“Mama! I . . . I . . . didn’t . . .” he said, trying to understand from her expression what awaited him for the peach.

“Seryozha,” she said as soon as the governess had left the room. “This is bad, but you won’t do it again, will you? Do you love me?”

She felt tears coming to her eyes. “How could I not love him?” she told herself, peering into his frightened and at the same time delighted gaze. “Could he really join with his father in order to punish me? Would he really not take pity on me?” Tears were already running down her face, and in order to hide them, she jumped to her feet and nearly ran out onto the terrace.

After the stormy rains of the past few days, the weather had turned cold and clear. Even with the bright sun slicing through the washed leaves, it was cold outside.

She shuddered from the cold and from the inner horror that had seized her with new force in the clean air.

“Run along, run along to *Mariette*,” she told Seryozha, who was about to follow her, and she began pacing up and down the terrace’s straw matting. “Will people really fail to forgive me, fail to understand how all this could not have been different?” she told herself.

Halting and glancing at the tops of the aspens waving in the wind, their washed leaves gleaming vividly in the cold sun, she realized that people would not forgive her, that everything and everyone would now be as pitiless toward her as this sky and this greenery. Once again she felt the doubling begin inside her. “I mustn’t think, I mustn’t,” she told herself. “I must get ready to go. Where? When? Whom should I take along? Yes, to Moscow, on the night train. Anushka and Seryozha, and only the most essential items. But first I must write them both.” She quickly went into the house, to her sitting room, sat down at her desk, and wrote her husband:

“After what has happened, I can no longer remain in your house. I am leaving and taking my son with me. I do not know the laws and so do not know with which of his parents our son is supposed to be; however, I am taking him with me because I cannot live without him. Be magnanimous, leave him to me.”

So far she had been writing quickly and naturally, but the appeal to his magnanimity, which she did not admit in him, and the need to close the letter with something touching brought her up short.

“Of my guilt or my repentance I cannot speak because . . .”

Again she was brought up short, not finding the connection in her thoughts. “No,” she told herself, “I need nothing,” and tearing up the letter, she rewrote it, excluding the mention of magnanimity, and sealed it.

The other letter she had to write to Vronsky. “I have told my husband,” she

wrote and sat for a long time, incapable of writing further. It was so crude, so unfeminine. "And then, what can I write him?" she told herself. Again the color of shame covered her face, she recalled his equanimity, and a feeling of annoyance at him made her tear the page with the phrase written on it into small bits. "I need nothing," she told herself, and folding her blotting pad, she went upstairs, told the governess and servants she was going to Moscow today, and immediately set to packing her things.

16

Porters, gardeners, and footmen were walking in and out of all the rooms of the dacha, carrying things out. The cupboards and dressers had been opened wide; twice they had run to the store for string; there was newspaper strewn about on the floor. Two trunks, satchels, and bundled lap robes had been brought down to the front hall. The carriage and two cabs were standing by the front steps. Anna, having forgotten her inner alarm during her work packing, was packing her traveling bag, standing in front of the desk in her sitting room, when Annushka drew her attention to the rattle of an approaching carriage. Anna looked out the window and saw Alexei Alexandrovich's courier standing on the front steps, ringing at the front door.

"Go find out what it is," she said, and with calm readiness for anything, folding her hands in her lap, she sat down in an armchair. A footman brought a thick packet inscribed in Alexei Alexandrovich's hand.

"The courier was instructed to bring back a reply," he said.

"Fine," she said, and as soon as the man left, with trembling fingers, she tore open the letter. A bundle of unfolded notes in a glued wrapper fell out. She freed the letter and began reading it from the end. "I have made preparations for your move, and I ascribe particular significance to the fulfillment of this request of mine," she read. She ran ahead, and back, read it all, and again read the entire letter from beginning to end. When she had finished, she felt cold and that a terrible misfortune such as she had not anticipated had come crashing down on her.

She had repented that morning of what she had told her husband and wished only one thing, that these words had somehow not been said, and here this letter deemed the words unsaid and gave her precisely what she had wished for. But now this letter seemed more horrible to her than anything she might have imagined.

"He's right! He's right!" she kept repeating. "Naturally, he's always right, he's a Christian, he's magnanimous! Yes, a base and vile man! And no one but I

can or could understand this, and I cannot explain it. They say he's a religious, moral, honest, clever man; but they don't see what I have seen. They don't know how he has been smothering my life for eight years, smothering everything alive in me, that he never once gave a thought to the fact that I'm a living woman who needs love. They don't know how he has insulted me at every step and how pleased with himself he has been. Didn't I try, didn't I make every effort, to find a justification for my life? Didn't I attempt to love him and to love my son when I could no longer love my husband? The time came, though, when I realized I could no longer deceive myself, that I am alive, that I am not to blame, that God made me so that I need to love and live. And now what? If he had killed me, if he had killed him, I would have endured anything, I would have forgiven anything, but no, he . . .

"How was it I never guessed what he would do? He is going to do what is characteristic of his base nature. He is going to remain in the right and ruin me, though I am already dead, will ruin me more, even worse. . . . 'You yourself can guess what awaits you and your son,'" she recalled the words from his letter. "That's a threat to take away my son, and according to their stupid law he probably can. But don't I know why he is saying this? He doesn't believe in my love for my son or else despises it (as he always used to ridicule it), despises this feeling of mine, yet he knows I will not abandon my son, I cannot abandon my son, that without my son there can be no life for me even with the one I love, but that by abandoning my son and running away from him I would be acting as the most disgraceful, the vilest of women—he knows this and knows that I will not be capable of this.

"Our life must continue as before," she recalled another phrase from the letter. "This life was a torture even before, and it has been terrible of late. What will it be now? And he knows all this, knows that I cannot repent for the fact that I breathe, that I love; he knows that nothing but lies and deceit will come of this, but he must continue torturing me. I know him! I know that he swims like a fish in water and takes pleasure in lies. But no, I will not afford him that pleasure. I will tear asunder this web of lies in which he hopes to entangle me. What will be will be. Anything is better than lies and deceit!

"But how? My God! My God! Was there ever a woman so unhappy as I am?

"No, I'll tear it asunder, asunder!" she exclaimed, jumping up and holding back her tears. She went to her desk to write him another letter. But in the depths of her soul she already felt that she would not be strong enough to break anything asunder or to extract herself from this former position of hers, however false and dishonest it might be.

She sat down at her desk, but instead of writing, she folded her hands on the desk, lay her head on them, and began to weep, sobbing, her entire chest heav-

ing, the way children weep. She wept over the fact that her dream of clarifying and defining her position had been destroyed for good. She knew beforehand that everything would go on in the old way, and even much worse than the old way. She felt that the position she enjoyed in society, which in the morning had seemed so insignificant, that this position was precious to her, that she would not be strong enough to exchange it for the disgraced position of a woman who has abandoned her husband and son and joined her lover, that however much she tried, she would not be stronger than herself. She would never experience freedom in love but would remain forever a culpable wife, under threat of exposure at any moment, who had deceived her husband for a disgraceful liaison with a man apart and independent, with whom she could not live one life. She knew this was how it would be, and at the same time this was so horrible that she could not imagine even how it would end, and she wept, holding nothing back, the way punished children weep.

The footman's steps she heard forced her to collect herself, and hiding her face from him, she pretended to be writing.

"The courier is asking for your reply," the footman reported.

"My reply? Yes," said Anna. "Let him wait a bit longer. I'll ring."

"What can I write?" she thought. "What can I decide on my own? What do I know? What do I want? What do I love?" Again she felt the doubling begin inside of her. She was frightened again by this feeling and snatched at the first pretext of doing something that presented itself to her and that might distract her from thoughts of herself. "I must see Alexei!" — that's what she called Vronsky in her thoughts — "he alone can tell me what I should do. I'll go to Betsy's, and perhaps I shall see him there," she told herself, utterly forgetting that yesterday, when she told him she was not going to Princess Tverskaya's, he had said that, in that case, he would not go either. She went to her desk and wrote to her husband. "I have received your letter. A." She rang and gave it to the footman.

"We are not going," she told Annushka when she entered.

"Not going at all?"

"No, don't unpack until tomorrow, and keep the carriage. I'm going to see the princess."

"Which dress shall I prepare?"

17

The croquet party which Princess Tverskaya had invited Anna to join had been supposed to consist of two ladies and their admirers. These two ladies were the chief representatives of a select new Petersburg circle who called them-

selves, in imitation of some imitation, *les sept merveilles du monde*.¹⁵ These ladies belonged to a high circle, it's true, but one utterly hostile to the one which Anna frequented. In addition, old Stremov, one of the most influential men in Petersburg and Liza Merkalova's admirer, was Alexei Alexandrovich's enemy in the ministry. For all these reasons Anna had not wanted to go, and it was to this that the hints in her note to Princess Tverskaya had referred. Now, in hopes of seeing Vronsky, Anna decided she did want to go.

Anna arrived at Princess Tverskaya's before the other guests.

As she was entering, Vronsky's footman, with combed side-whiskers that made him look like a gentleman of the bedchamber, was walking in as well. He stopped at the door and, removing his cap, allowed her to pass. Anna recognized him and only then remembered that Vronsky had said yesterday that he would not come. Probably he was sending a note to say so.

While she was removing her coat in the front hall, she listened to the footman, who pronounced his *r* exactly as would a gentleman of the bedchamber, say, "From the count for the princess," and deliver the note.

She wanted to ask where his master was. She wanted to go back and send him a letter telling him to come see her, or to go to him herself. She could not do one, the other, or the third, though; she could already hear the bell announcing her arrival, and Princess Tverskaya's footman was already standing sideways at the opened door, waiting for her to pass through to the inner rooms.

"The princess is in the garden. They will tell her now. Would you kindly step into the garden?" announced another footman in the next room.

Her position of indecision and uncertainty was identical to her position at home; even worse, because she could not undertake anything, she could not see Vronsky, and she had to remain here, in an alien society so contrary to her mood. But she was dressed in a manner which was, she knew, becoming; she was not alone, around her was the familiar grand circumstance of idleness, and she felt more comfortable than at home; and she did not have to devise what she should do. Everything took care of itself. Greeting Betsy when she walked in dressed with stunning elegance in white, Anna smiled at her, as always. Princess Tverskaya was walking with Tushkevich and a young relative who, to the great happiness of her provincial parents, was spending the summer with the renowned princess.

There must have been something unusual about Anna because Betsy noticed it immediately.

"I slept poorly," Anna replied, staring at the footman who was walking toward them and, as she supposed, carrying Vronsky's note.

"How happy I am you've come," said Betsy. "I'm tired and was just going

to drink a cup of tea before they came. But you should go”—she turned to Tushkevich—“and test the croquet ground with Masha, where they mowed it. You and I have time for a heart-to-heart over tea, *we’ll have a cozy chat*, won’t we?”¹⁶ She turned to Anna with a smile, squeezing her hand, which was holding a parasol.

“Especially since I can’t stay long but must pay a call on old Madame Wrede. I’ve been promising for a hundred years,” said Anna, for whom lying, alien as it was to her nature, not only had become simple and natural in society but even afforded her pleasure.

To what end she had said this, something she had not been thinking a moment before, she would have been at pains to explain. She said it out of the simple consideration that since Vronsky would not be there, she had to secure her own freedom and attempt to see him somehow. But why she mentioned specifically old Fraulein Wrede, to whom she did owe a visit, as she did so many others, she would not have been able to explain, and at the same time, as it later turned out, in trying to come up with the cleverest means for meeting Vronsky, she could have devised nothing better.

“No, I won’t let you go for anything,” Betsy replied, scrutinizing Anna’s face carefully. “In fact, I would be insulted if I didn’t love you. One would think you were afraid my society might compromise you. Please, tea for us in the small drawing room,” she said, squinting as she always did when addressing a footman. Taking the note from him, she read it. “Alexei has made us a false leap,” she said in French.¹⁷ “He writes that he cannot come,” she added in such a natural and simple tone of voice, as if it could never occur to her that Vronsky held some meaning for Anna other than as a croquet player.

Anna knew that Betsy knew everything, but listening to her speak of Vronsky in her presence, she was always convinced for a moment that she knew nothing.

“Ah!” said Anna nonchalantly, as if taking little interest in this, and she continued to smile. “How could your society compromise anyone?” These word games, this hiding of secrets, held great charm for Anna, as for all women. It was not the necessity of hiding, or the purpose of the hiding, but the very process of hiding itself that fascinated her. “I can’t be more Catholic than the Pope,” she said. “Stremov and Liza Merkalova are the *crème de la crème* of society, and then they are received everywhere, while I”—she put special emphasis on the “I”—“have never been strict or intolerant. I simply don’t have the time.”

“No, is it perhaps that you don’t want to encounter Stremov? He and Alexei Alexandrovich may cross swords in committee, that does not concern us. In society, he is the most gracious man I have ever known, and a passionate croquet player. Wait and see. And despite his ridiculous position as an old man in love

with Liza, you must see how he tries to extricate himself from this ridiculous position! He is very dear. Sappho Stolz you don't know? This is a new, utterly new tone."

Betsy was saying all this, but meanwhile, her cheerful and clever look assured Anna that she understood her position in part and was trying to devise something. They were in her small sitting room.

"However, I must write to Alexei," and Betsy sat down at her desk, wrote a few lines, and put the note in an envelope. "I'm writing him to come for dinner. I have one lady more for dinner and need a man. Take a look, is it convincing? I'm sorry, I must leave you for a minute. Please, seal it and send it off," she said from the door. "I must give instructions."

Without a moment's thought, Anna sat down at the desk with Betsy's letter, and without reading it, added below, "I must see you. Come to Madame Wrede's garden. I shall be there at six o'clock." She sealed it, and after Betsy came back, she returned the letter in her presence.

Indeed, over tea, which was brought to them in the small drawing room on a tray table, the two women did have their *cozy chat* before her guests' arrival, just as Princess Tverskaya had promised. They gossiped about those who were expected and the conversation dwelt on Liza Merkalova.

"She is very sweet, and I've always found her quite likable," said Anna.

"You should like her. She raves about you. Yesterday she came up to me after the races and was in despair to have missed you. She says that you are a genuine heroine out of a novel and that if she were a man she would commit a thousand foolish deeds for you. Stremov tells her that she does that anyway."

"Please tell me, though, I could never understand," said Anna after a brief pause, and in a tone that clearly showed she was not asking an idle question but that what she was asking was for her more important than it ought to be. "Please tell me, what is her relationship to Prince Kaluzhsky, Mishka, as he is called? I don't run into them very often. What is it exactly?"

Betsy smiled with her eyes and looked closely at Anna.

"It's the new way," she said. "They've all chosen this way. They've tossed their bonnets over the windmills.¹⁸ But there are ways and ways of tossing them."

"Yes, but what is her relationship to Kaluzhsky?"

Betsy burst into cheerful and irrepressible laughter, something that rarely happened with her.

"Now you're encroaching on Princess Myahkaya's sphere. That is the question of a terrible infant," and Betsy evidently tried but could not keep from bursting into the infectious laughter of people who rarely laugh.¹⁹ "You must ask them," she said through tears of laughter.

“No, you’re laughing,” said Anna, who could not help being infected with laughter as well, “but I could never understand. I don’t understand the husband’s role here.”

“The husband? Liza Merkalova’s husband walks behind her carrying her lap robes and is always at her service, and what happens afterward, no one wants to know. You know, in good society one does not talk or even think about certain details of one’s attire. So it is with this.”

“Will you be at the Rolandaki fête?” asked Anna, to change the subject.

“I don’t think so,” replied Betsy, and not looking at her friend, she cautiously began pouring the perfumed tea into small, translucent cups. Moving a cup toward Anna, she took out a cigarette, placed it in a silver holder, and lit it.

“There, you see? I am in a fortunate position,” she began, not laughing now, having picked up her cup. “I understand you and I understand Liza. Liza is one of those naïve natures who, like children, don’t understand what is good and what is bad. At least she didn’t when she was very young, and now she knows that this incomprehension suits her. Now she may deliberately fail to understand,” said Betsy with a thin smile. “Nonetheless, it suits her. You see, one can look on one and the same thing tragically and make an agony of it, or one can look simply and even cheerfully. You may be inclined to look on things too tragically.”

“I wish I could know others the way I know myself,” said Anna gravely and pensively. “Am I better than others or worse? Worse, I think.”

“Terrible infant, terrible infant,” Betsy repeated. “But here they are.”

18

They heard steps and a man’s voice, then a woman’s voice and laughter, and after this the expected guests entered: Sappho Stolz and a young man who was called Vaska and who glowed with a superfluity of health. You could see that a diet of rare beef, truffles, and Burgundy had done him good. Vaska bowed to the ladies and looked at them, but only for a second. He followed Sappho into the drawing room and through the drawing room behind her, as if he were tied to her, and did not drop his shining eyes from her, as if he wished to devour her. Sappho Stolz was a blonde with black eyes. She entered taking tiny, springy steps, wearing high-heeled slippers, and shook the ladies’ hands firmly, like a man.

Anna had not met this new celebrity, and she was struck by her beauty, by the extreme to which she had taken her attire, and by the boldness of her manners. On her head, her own and artificial hair of a soft golden color had been styled

into a kind of scaffolding, which made her head equal in size to her shapely, prominent, and very exposed bust. Her forward momentum was such that every moment revealed under her dress the shape of her knees and the upper portion of her leg, and one could not help but wonder where, in this contrived, wobbly mountain, her real body, small and slender, so bare on top and so concealed behind, actually ended.

Betsy hurried to introduce her to Anna.

“Imagine, we nearly ran over two soldiers,” she launched right into a story, winking, smiling, and jerking her train back when she had swung it too far to one side. “I was riding with Vaska. . . . Ah yes, you haven’t met.” And giving his last name, she introduced the young man and blushed, laughing sonorously at her mistake, that is, at having referred to him as Vaska to a stranger.

Vaska bowed to Anna once more but said nothing to her. He turned to Sappho.

“The bet is lost. We arrived first. Pay up,” he said, smiling.

Sappho laughed even more cheerfully.

“Not now,” she said.

“I don’t care, I’ll collect later.”

“Fine, fine. Ah yes!” she turned suddenly to her hostess. “I’m a fine one. I forgot. I brought you a guest. Here he is.”

The unexpected young guest whom Sappho had brought and whom she had forgotten was, however, such an important guest that, despite his youth, both ladies rose to greet him.²⁰

This was a new admirer of Sappho’s. Now he, like Vaska, trailed at her heels.

Soon afterward, Prince Kaluzhsky and Liza Merkalova arrived with Stremov. Liza Merkalova was a thin brunette with a lazy, Oriental sort of face and splendid—what everyone called inscrutable—eyes. The character of her dark gown (Anna immediately noticed and appreciated it) was perfectly in keeping with her beauty. Liza was as soft and dissolute as Sappho was smart and shapely.

To Anna’s taste, though, Liza was much more attractive. Betsy had said to Anna that she feigned the tone of an unknowing child, but when Anna saw her she sensed that this was not true. She certainly was an unknowing and spoiled, but also a kind and mild woman. True, her tone was exactly like Sappho’s tone, and, like Sappho, she had two admirers trailing after her as if they were attached, devouring her with their eyes, one young, the other an old man. But there was something about her that was superior to what surrounded her—she had the sparkle of a diamond of the purest water among bits of glass. This sparkle shone from her splendid, truly inscrutable eyes. The weary and at the same time passionate glance of these darkly ringed eyes was stunning for its perfect sincerity.

When he looked into those eyes, each man thought he had learned everything about her and having learned this could not help but love her. At the sight of Anna, her entire face lit up with a delighted smile.

“Oh, how happy I am to see you!” she said, approaching her. “Yesterday at the races I was just about to come over to you, but you had left. I so wanted to see you yesterday especially. Really, wasn’t it horrible?” she said, looking at Anna with a gaze that seemed to lay bare her whole soul.

“Yes, I never anticipated it would be so exciting,” said Anna, blushing.

At that moment the company rose to go into the garden.

“I’m not going,” said Liza, smiling and sitting with Anna. “You aren’t either, are you? What’s this desire to play croquet!”

“No, I like it,” said Anna.

“There, how do you keep from being bored? One look at you—and it’s cheerful. You’re alive, and I am bored.”

“What do you mean you’re bored? Yours is the most cheerful set in Petersburg,” said Anna.

“Perhaps those not of our set are even more bored; but we—I know this for a certainty—are not cheerful but rather horribly horribly bored.”

Sappho lit a cigarette and went into the garden with her two young men. Betsy and Stremov remained at the tea table.

“What, you’re bored?” said Betsy. “Sappho says they had quite a cheerful time at your house yesterday.”

“Oh, what melancholy that was!” said Liza Merkalova. “We went to my house after the races, and all the people are the same, they’re all the same! Everything is the same. We spent the entire evening lounging about on sofas. What’s so cheerful about that? No, what do you do to keep from being bored?” she again addressed Anna. “One has only to look at you to see—here is a woman who might be happy, or unhappy, but she is not bored. Teach me, how do you do it?”

“I don’t do anything,” replied Anna, blushing at these importunate questions.

“There you have the best way,” Stremov interjected into the conversation.

Stremov was a man of about fifty, graying, still fresh, very ugly, but with a face full of character and intelligence. Liza Merkalova was his wife’s niece, and he spent all his free hours with her. When he met Anna Karenina, he tried, as Alexei Alexandrovich’s enemy in the ministry and a worldly and clever man, to be particularly gracious with her, the wife of his enemy.

“I don’t do anything,” he repeated, smiling thinly. “This is a superior being. I told you long ago”—he turned to Liza Merkalova—“that in order to keep from being bored, one must not think that one is going to be bored. It’s exactly the

same as not worrying one will not fall asleep if one fears insomnia. This is precisely what Anna Arkadyevna has told you.”

“I would be very happy if I had said that because it is not only clever, it is true,” said Anna, smiling.

“No, you must tell me, why is it one cannot fall asleep and one cannot keep from being bored?”

“In order to fall asleep, one must work, and in order to enjoy oneself, one must also work.”

“Why should I work if no one needs my work? I am neither willing nor able to pretend.”

“You are incorrigible,” said Stremov, not looking at her, and again he turned to Anna.

As he rarely encountered Anna, he could say nothing but banalities to her, but he said these banalities—about when she was moving to Petersburg, about how she was loved by Countess Lydia Ivanovna—with an expression which showed that he desired with all his heart for her to find him pleasant and to show his respect and even more than that.

In walked Tushkevich, who announced that the entire company was awaiting the croquet players.

“No, don’t leave, please,” begged Liza Merkalova when she found out that Anna was going, and Stremov joined in.

“It’s too great a contrast,” he said, “to go from this company to see old Madame Wrede. And then you will give her occasion to gossip, whereas here you only arouse other feelings, the very best feelings directly to the contrary of gossip,” he told her.

This gave Anna a moment’s pause. The flattering speeches of a clever man, the naïve, childish sympathy Liza Merkalova had expressed for her, and all this familiar social circumstance—all this was so easy, whereas what awaited her was so difficult that for a moment she hesitated as to whether to remain, whether to postpone the difficult moment of explanation a little longer. However, when she recalled what awaited her alone at home if she did not take some decision, when she recalled that gesture so terrible to remember of clutching her hair with both hands, she said her good-byes and left.

Despite his apparently frivolous social life, Vronsky was a man who despised disorder. Even as a young man, in the Corps, he had experienced the humiliation of a refusal when, having got himself entangled, he had asked for

the loan of money, and ever since he had not once allowed himself to be put in that position.

In order to keep his affairs always in order, he, more or less often, about five times a year, depending on the circumstances, went into seclusion and brought clarity to all his affairs. He referred to this as his reckoning, or *faire la lessive*.²¹

Vronsky awoke late the day after the races, and without shaving or bathing, he put on his high-collared jacket, lay his money, accounts, and letters out on the desk, and set to work. Awakening to see his friend at his desk, and knowing that in this situation he could be irritable, Petritsky dressed quietly and went out without disturbing him.

Anyone who knows the full complexity of the conditions surrounding him down to the tiniest details involuntarily supposes that the complexity of these conditions and the difficulty of clarifying them is his personal, chance peculiarity alone and never thinks that others are surrounded with the same complexity in their personal conditions as he is. So it seemed to Vronsky as well. He thought not without an inward pride and not without justification that anyone else would have become entangled long ago and been forced to act improperly, had he found himself in such difficult conditions. But Vronsky felt that now in particular it was essential that he take stock and clarify his position so that he did not get entangled.

The first matter Vronsky took up, as the easiest, was his finances. After writing out all that he owed in his minuscule handwriting on a sheet of notepaper, he drew a sum and found that he owed seventeen thousand plus several hundred, which he dropped for clarity. Counting up his money and his bank book, he found that he had one thousand eight hundred rubles left, with no prospect of receiving more before the New Year. Vronsky reread his list of debts and rewrote it, dividing it into three categories. The first category was for debts that had to be paid immediately or, in any event, that he had to have ready money to pay so that upon demand there would not be a moment's delay. Such debts came to about four thousand: one thousand five hundred for a horse and two thousand five hundred as security for his young comrade Venevsky, who had lost this money to a cardsharp in Vronsky's presence. At the time, Vronsky had wanted to pay the money (which he had with him), but Venevsky and Yashvin had insisted that they pay, not Vronsky, who had not been playing. That was all splendid, but Vronsky knew that in this dirty affair, even though his only part in it was that he pledged a guarantee for Venevsky, he had to have the two thousand five hundred in order to throw it at the rogue and have no further conversation with him of any kind. And so, for this first and most important category he needed to have four thousand. In the second category, eight thousand, were less impor-

tant debts. These were debts primarily for the racing stables, the supply of oats and hay, the Englishman, the harness maker, and so on. A couple of thousand had to be paid on these debts as well in order to be perfectly at peace. The final category of debts—to stores, hotels, and the tailor—were the kind one did not have to consider. And so he needed at least six thousand for current expenses, whereas he had about one thousand eight hundred. For a man with an income of one hundred thousand, as Vronsky's full estate had been valued, debts like these seemingly should have posed no difficulty. But in point of fact he had much less than these hundred thousand. His father's immense estate, which brought in from one to two hundred thousand in annual income, had been left undivided between the brothers. When his older brother, having a stack of debts, had married Princess Varya Chirkova, the daughter of a Decembrist who lacked any fortune, Alexei had yielded to his brother the entire income from their father's estates, setting aside for himself only twenty-five thousand a year.²² Alexei had told his brother at the time that this would be enough money for him until he married, something that would probably never happen. His brother, who commanded one of the most expensive regiments and had only just married, had no choice but to accept this gift. Their mother, who had her own separate estate, apart from the stipulated twenty-five thousand, gave Alexei annually another twenty thousand or so, and Alexei spent it all. Of late, his mother, who had quarreled with him over his liaison and departure from Moscow, had stopped sending him money. As a consequence of this, Vronsky, who had already made a habit of a life on forty-five thousand and who had received this year only twenty-five thousand, now found himself in some difficulty. To extricate himself from this difficulty he could not ask his mother for money. Her latest letter, which he had received the previous day, had irritated him in particular by the fact that in it were hints that she was prepared to help him achieve success in society and service but not for a life that had scandalized all of good society. His mother's desire to buy him offended him to the depths of his soul and cooled him even more toward her. However, he could not go back on the magnanimous word once spoken, although he now felt, vaguely envisioning certain eventualities in his liaison with Madame Karenina, that this magnanimous word had been spoken rashly and that he, an unmarried man, might need the entire hundred thousand in income. He could not renege, however. He had only to recall his brother's wife, to recall how this sweet, glorious Varya, at every convenient chance, reminded him that she remembered his magnanimity and appreciated it, in order to realize the impossibility of taking back what had been given. It was as impossible as beating a woman, stealing, or lying. He could and should do just one thing, upon which Vronsky decided without a moment's

hesitation: borrow money from a money lender, ten thousand, which should pose no difficulty, cut his expenses in general, and sell his racehorses. Once he had decided this, he immediately wrote a note to Rolandaki, who had sent to him more than once with an offer to purchase his horses. Then he sent for the Englishman and the money lender and distributed among the accounts the money he did have. Having finished with these matters, he wrote a cold and brusque reply to his mother's letter. Then, taking Anna's three notes out of his wallet, he reread them, burned them, and recalling his yesterday's conversation with her, became lost in thought.

20

Vronsky's life was especially happy because he had a code of principles which defined without question everything that should and should not be done. This code of principles covered a very small circle of contingencies. On the other hand, the principles were never in question, and Vronsky, who never left this circle, never experienced a moment's hesitation in doing what he should. These principles said that one must pay a cardsharp but need not pay a tailor, that one must not lie to men but one might to women, that one could not deceive anyone but might a husband, that one must not forgive insults but might insult others, and so on. All these principles might be unreasonable and not good, but they were not subject to question, and by following them Vronsky could be at peace and carry his head high. Only quite recently, concerning his relations with Anna, had Vronsky begun to feel that his code of principles did not fully cover all contingencies and that in the future difficulties and doubts might present themselves in which Vronsky could no longer find the guiding thread.

His present relations with Anna and her husband were for him simple and clear. They were clearly and precisely defined in the code of principles that guided him.

She was a respectable woman who had bestowed her love upon him, and he loved her, and because of this she was for him a woman worthy of the same and even more respect than a lawful wife. He would have let his hand be cut off before permitting himself by a word, or a hint even, to fail to show her the respect a woman could simply assume, let alone insult her.

His relations toward society were also clear. Everyone might know or suspect, but no one dared speak of this. Otherwise he was prepared to force the speakers to be silent and respect the nonexistent honor of the woman he loved.

His relations toward the husband were clearest of all. From the moment

Anna fell in love with Vronsky, he had considered his sole right to her inalienable. The husband was a superfluous and bothersome individual. Doubtless he was in a pathetic position, but what was to be done? The only thing the husband had a right to demand was satisfaction with weapon in hand, and for this Vronsky had been prepared from the very first.

Lately, however, new, private relations had arisen between him and her whose lack of definition frightened Vronsky. Only yesterday she had announced to him that she was pregnant, and he felt that this news and what she expected of him demanded something that was not fully defined by that code of principles by which he had been guided in life. Indeed, he had been taken unawares, and in the first moment when she had announced her condition his heart had prompted him to demand she leave her husband. He had said this, but now, thinking it over, he saw clearly that it would be better to avoid that; yet, at the same time, as he was telling himself so, he feared he might be wrong.

“If I told her to leave her husband, that would mean uniting with me. Am I prepared for this? How would I take her away now, when I have no money? Let’s say I could arrange it. . . . But how could I take her away when I’m in the service? If I say this, then I must be prepared to do it, that is, have the money and resign.”

He lapsed into thought. The question of whether or not he should resign led him to another secret interest, known only to him and virtually the principal, if hidden, interest of his entire life.

Ambition was the old dream of his childhood and youth, a dream which he would not admit in himself but which was so compelling that even now this passion battled his love. His first steps in society and the service had been successful, but two years before he had made a serious mistake. Wishing to demonstrate his independence and to advance, he had turned down a position offered him in hopes that this refusal would increase his value; it turned out, however, that he had been too bold and he was passed over; having willy-nilly given himself the status of an independent man, he bore it, carrying himself very subtly and cleverly, as if he were not angry at anyone, did not consider himself insulted by anyone, and desired only to be left in peace because he found that cheerful. In essence, ever since last year, when he had left for Moscow, he had ceased to find life cheerful. He felt this independent position of a man who could do anything but wanted nothing already beginning to pall, that many were beginning to think that he could do nothing other than be an honest and good fellow. His liaison with Madame Karenina, which had made so much noise and attracted general attention, lending him new glamour, soothed for a time the worm of ambition that had been eating away at him, but a week ago this worm had been awakened with new force. Serpukhovskoi, his childhood friend, from the same

set, the same wealth, his comrade in the Corps, who had graduated with him and with whom he had competed in class, in gymnastics, in mischief, and in dreams of glory, a few days before had returned from Central Asia, where he had risen two ranks and won a distinction rarely given such young generals.

No sooner had he arrived in Petersburg than people began talking about him as about a newly rising star of the first magnitude. The same age as Vronsky and his schoolfellow, he was a general and anticipated an appointment that might influence the course of affairs of state, whereas Vronsky, independent, brilliant, and beloved of a splendid woman though he was, was merely a captain who could afford to be as independent as he pleased. "Naturally I do not envy Serpukhovskoi, nor could I; however, his promotion shows me that it is worth biding one's time, and the career of someone like me can be made very rapidly. Three years ago he was in the same position as I am. By resigning, I would be burning my boats. By remaining in service, I lose nothing. She herself has said she does not wish to change her status. And I, with her love, cannot envy Serpukhovskoi." Slowly twirling his mustache, he rose from the table and began pacing around the room. His eyes glittered especially brightly, and he experienced that firm, serene, and joyous condition of spirit that always descended upon him after a clarification of his situation. As after his previous accountings, all was clean and clear. He shaved, dressed, took a cold bath, and went out.

21

"I've come for you. Your washing has taken a long time today," said Petritsky. "So, is it done?"

"Yes," replied Vronsky, smiling with his eyes and twirling the tips of his mustache very cautiously, as if after putting his affairs in such order any excessively bold and rapid movement might wreck it.

"You always seem fresh from the bathhouse after this," said Petritsky. "I've just come from Gritsko's" — that's what they called the regimental command — "and you're expected."

Vronsky, not replying, looked at his friend while thinking of something else.

"Yes, is the music in his quarters?" he said, listening to the familiar sounds of the bass trumpets, the polkas and waltzes, that were reaching him. "What's the occasion?"

"Serpukhovskoi's come."

"Ah!" said Vronsky. "I didn't know."

The smile of his eyes glittered even more brightly.

Once he had decided privately that he was happy with his love, to it he sac-

rificed his ambition. Having at least adopted this role, Vronsky could no longer feel either envy for Serpukhovskoi or annoyance at him for having come to the regiment without coming to see him first. Serpukhovskoi was a good friend, and he was pleased to see him.

“Ah, I’m very pleased.”

The regimental commander, Demin, occupied a large manor house. The entire party was on the spacious lower balcony. In the courtyard, the first thing that came to Vronsky’s attention were the singers in high-collared jackets standing near a small barrel of vodka and the cheerful, hale figure of the regimental commander surrounded by his officers; as he mounted the first step of the balcony, shouting loudly over the music, which was playing an Offenbach quadrille, he pointed to something and gestured at the soldiers standing to one side. A handful of soldiers, cavalry sergeant majors, and a few noncommissioned officers walked with Vronsky toward the balcony. Returning to his table, the regimental commander came back out on the porch with his glass and proclaimed a toast, “To the health of our former comrade and brave general, Prince Serpukhovskoi. Hurrah!”

Behind the regimental commander, glass in hand, smiling, came Serpukhovskoi.

“You keep getting younger and younger, Bondarenko,” he turned to a dashing, red-cheeked sergeant major in his second tour of duty who was standing directly in front of him.

Vronsky had not seen Serpukhovskoi in three years. He had become manlier and let his whiskers grow, but he was just as slender, striking not so much for his good looks as for the gentleness and nobility of his face and figure. One change which Vronsky did note in him was the quiet, pervasive glow that establishes itself on the face of men who have known success and are confident of everyone’s recognition of this success. Vronsky knew this glow and immediately noted it in Serpukhovskoi.

As he descended the stairs, Serpukhovskoi caught sight of Vronsky. A smile of delight lit up Serpukhovskoi’s face. He jerked his head up and raised his glass, greeting Vronsky and showing by this gesture that he had had no choice but to first approach the sergeant major, who had straightened up and was already putting his lips together for a kiss.

“Well, so here he is!” exclaimed the regimental commander. “But Yashvin told me you were in gloomy spirits.”

Serpukhovskoi kissed the moist, fresh lips of the dashing sergeant major and walked over to Vronsky, wiping his mouth with his handkerchief.

“Well, I am very pleased!” he said, shaking Vronsky’s hand and drawing him aside.

"You take care of him!" the regimental commander shouted to Yashvin, indicating Vronsky, and he went downstairs to join the soldiers.

"Why weren't you at the races yesterday? I thought I'd see you there," said Vronsky, surveying Serpukhovskoi.

"I did come, but late. It's my fault," he added, and he turned to his adjutant. "Please, tell him to pass this out, however much it comes to per man."

Quickly, he took three hundred-ruble notes from his wallet and blushed.

"Vronsky! Do you want anything to eat or drink?" asked Yashvin. "Hey, bring the count here something to eat! Here, drink this."

The drinking at the regimental commander's went on for a long time.

They drank a great deal. They swung Serpukhovskoi and tossed him in the air several times. Then they swung the regimental commander. Then Petritsky and the regimental commander himself danced in front of the singers. Afterward the regimental commander, rather drained by now, sat down on a bench outside and began trying to prove to Yashvin Russia's superiority over Prussia, especially in a cavalry attack, and the drinking abated for a moment. Serpukhovskoi went into the house, to the washroom, to wash his hands, and there found Vronsky; Vronsky was splashing himself with water. Having removed his jacket and put his hairy red neck under the tap, he was rubbing it and his head with his hands. When he had finished washing, Vronsky joined Serpukhovskoi. They both sat down on the small sofa and between them began a conversation that was very interesting for both.

"I heard all about you from my wife," said Serpukhovskoi. "I'm pleased you've seen her so often."

"She's friendly with Varya, and these are the only Petersburg women I find it pleasant to see," replied Vronsky, smiling. He smiled because he foresaw the theme to which the conversation would turn, and he found it pleasant.

"The only ones?" Serpukhovskoi questioned him, smiling.

"Yes, and I knew of you, but not only from your wife," said Vronsky, by the stern expression of his face forbidding this suggestion. "I was very pleased at your success and not surprised in the slightest. I expected even more."

Serpukhovskoi smiled. He obviously enjoyed this opinion of himself, and he saw no need to conceal it.

"I, on the contrary, frankly admit I expected less. Though I'm pleased, very pleased. I'm ambitious. That is my weakness, and I admit it."

"Perhaps you wouldn't admit it if you weren't successful," said Vronsky.

"I don't think so," said Serpukhovskoi, smiling again. "I won't say life wouldn't be worth living without it, but it would be boring. Of course, I could be wrong, but it seems to me that I have some abilities in my chosen sphere of activity and

that in my hands power, of whatever kind it may be, so long as it's there, it would be better than it would in the hands of many others I know," said Serpukhovskoi with the beaming consciousness of his success. "And so, the closer I come to this, the more content I am."

"That may be the case for you, but it isn't for everyone. I used to think the same, but here I am living and finding it is not worth living for this alone," said Vronsky.

"There it is! There it is!" said Serpukhovskoi, laughing. "Didn't I begin by saying I'd heard about you, about you turning down . . . Of course, I approved of you. But there is a way of going about everything. I think that the deed is fine in itself, but you did not do it as you should have."

"What's done is done, and you know, I will never renounce what I've done. And then for me it's splendid."

"Splendid—for a time. But you won't be content with it. I'm not saying this to your brother. He's a sweet child, just like our host. There he is!" he added, listening to the cry of "Hurrah!" "He's having a good time, but that won't satisfy you."

"I'm not saying it should."

"And that's not the only thing. Men like you are needed."

"By whom?"

"By whom? Society. Russia needs men, it needs a party, otherwise everything does and will go to the dogs."

"What do you mean by that? Bertenev's party against the Russian communists?"

"No," said Serpukhovskoi, frowning in annoyance that he was suspected of such stupidity. "*Tout ça est une blague.*²³ That has always been and always will be. There are no communists. But men of intrigue must always come up with a harmful, dangerous party. It's an old trick. No, we need a party of power made up of independent men like you and me."

"But why?" Vronsky named several men in power. "Why aren't they independent men?"

"Simply because they have never in their lives had the estate, the name, the proximity to the sun into which we were born. They can be bought either with money or with flattery, and if they are to hold on, they need to come up with a political tendency. They forward some idea, some tendency, in which they themselves do not believe and which does harm; and this whole tendency is merely a way to have an official house and a certain income. *Cela n'est pas plus fin que ça*, when you look at their cards.²⁴ I may be worse or stupider than they, though I don't see why I should be worse. But you and I have one important

advantage, that we are harder to buy. Men such as that are needed now more than ever.”

Vronsky listened attentively, but it was not so much the actual content of the words that interested him as it was the attitude taken toward the matter by Serpukhovskoi, who was already contemplating a struggle with power and who had his own sympathies and antipathies in this world, while for him service involved only the interests of his company. Vronsky also realized how powerful Serpukhovskoi could be with his undoubted ability to weigh and understand things, with his intelligence and a gift of speech very rarely encountered in the circles in which he lived, and guilty as he felt over it, he envied him.

“Nonetheless, I lack one important thing for this,” he replied. “I lack the thirst for power. I had it, but it’s passed.”

“Pardon me, but that’s not true,” said Serpukhovskoi, smiling.

“No, it is true, it is! Now,” added Vronsky, in order to be sincere.

“Now, it’s true, that’s another thing; but this *now* won’t last forever.”

“Perhaps,” replied Vronsky.

“You say *perhaps*,” Serpukhovskoi went on, as if he had guessed his thoughts, “and I’m telling you *for certain*. That’s why I wanted to see you. You acted just as you should have. I understand that, but you should not *persevere*. I’m only asking you for *carte blanche*. I’m not your protector. Though why shouldn’t I be? You’ve protected me so many times! I hope our friendship rises above that. Yes,” he said gently, like a woman, smiling at Vronsky. “Give me *carte blanche*, leave the regiment, and I shall bring you on imperceptibly.”

“But you must see, I need nothing,” said Vronsky, “except for everything to be as it was.”

Serpukhovskoi rose and stood facing him.

“You say everything should remain as it is. I understand what that means. Listen, though: we are the same age, and you may have known more women than I.” Serpukhovskoi’s smile and gestures told Vronsky not to worry, that he would touch his sore spot gently and cautiously. “But I am married, and believe me, once you have known your one wife (as someone once wrote), whom you love, you know all women better than if you had known thousands of them.”

“We’ll be right there!” Vronsky shouted to an officer who had glanced into the room and summoned them to the regimental commander.

Vronsky now wanted to hear him out and learn what he would tell him.

“Here is my opinion of you. Women are the main stumbling block in a man’s career. It’s hard to love a woman and accomplish anything. For this there is one means for loving comfortably and without hindrance — and that is marriage. I’d like, I’d like to find a way to tell you what I’m thinking,” said Serpukhovskoi,

who loved comparisons. “Wait, wait! Yes, the only way you can carry a *fardeau* and do anything with your hands is when the *fardeau* is strapped to your back—and that’s marriage.²⁵ That’s what I felt when I got married. Suddenly my hands were freed. But without marriage, dragging this *fardeau* around—your hands would be so full you couldn’t do anything. Look at Mazankov and Krupov. They destroyed their careers over women.”

“What women!” said Vronsky, recalling the Frenchwoman and the actress with whom the two men named had been linked.

“It’s even worse the more secure the woman’s position in society, even worse. That’s like not just dragging the *fardeau* in your hands but tearing it away from someone else.”

“You have never loved,” said Vronsky softly, looking straight ahead and thinking of Anna.

“That may be. But remember what I told you. And something else: women are much more materialistic than men. We make something tremendous of love, while they are always *terre-à-terre*.²⁶ Coming, coming!” he told the footman who had entered. However the footman had not come to summon them again, as he had thought. The footman had brought Vronsky a note.

“A man brought you this from Princess Tverskaya.”

Vronsky broke the letter’s seal and turned bright red.

“I’ve got a headache. I’m going home,” he told Serpukhovskoi.

“Well, good-bye then. Do you give me *carte blanche*?”

“We’ll talk later. I’ll find you in Petersburg.”

22

It was past five already, and so in order to arrive in time and at the same time not take his own horses, which everyone knew, Vronsky got into Yashvin’s hired carriage and ordered the driver to go as fast as he could. The old hired four-seater was spacious. He sat in the corner, propped his feet on the front seat, and began to think.

His vague awareness of the clarity at which his affairs had arrived, his vague recollection of the friendship and flattery of Serpukhovskoi, who considered him a man who was needed, and most of all, the anticipation of a rendezvous—all this combined to create the general impression of a joyous sense of life. This sense was so strong that he smiled in spite of himself. He lowered his feet, crossed one leg over the other knee, and grasping it with one hand, felt his resilient calf, which he had bruised yesterday in his fall, and leaning back, took several deep breaths, filling his chest.

"Fine, very fine!" he told himself. Often before, too, he had experienced this joyous awareness of his own body, but never had he loved himself, his own body, as he did now. He enjoyed feeling the mild pain in his strong leg, enjoyed the muscular sensation of his chest moving when he took a breath. That very clear and cold August day which had had such a hopeless effect on Anna seemed to him excitingly rousing and refreshed his face and neck, now cooled after being splashed with water. The smell of the brilliantine on his mustache seemed to him especially pleasant in this fresh air. Everything he saw out the carriage window, everything in this cold, clean air, in this pale light of sunset, was just as fresh, cheerful, and strong as was he himself: the roofs of the houses shining in the rays of the setting sun, the sharp outlines of the fences and corners of buildings, the figures of the infrequent pedestrians and carriages, the still greenery of the trees and grass, the fields with precisely furrowed rows of potatoes, and the slanting shadows falling from the houses, trees, bushes, and even the rows of potatoes. Everything was beautiful, like a pretty little landscape just completed and coated with varnish.

"Get a move on! Get a move on!" he told the driver, poking his head out the window, and taking a three-ruble note out of his pocket, he thrust it upon the driver, who had glanced back. The driver's hand groped for something by the lamp, the whistle of the whip was heard, and the carriage rolled swiftly down the even highway.

"I need nothing, nothing but this happiness," he thought, looking at the ivory bell knob in the space between the windows and picturing Anna as she was the last time he saw her. "The farther I go, the more I love her. Here's the garden of Madame Wrede's official dacha. Where could she be here? Where? How? Why did she set a rendezvous here and write in Betsy's letter?" he thought only now, but there was no more time to think. He stopped the driver before he reached the path and, opening the little door, jumped out of the carriage while it was still moving and set off down the path leading to the house. The path was deserted, but when he looked to the right, he saw her. Her face was covered by a veil, but his joyous gaze seized upon the special movement, characteristic of her alone, of her walk, the slope of her shoulders, and the set of her head, and instantly it was as if an electric shock had passed through his body. He felt aware of himself with fresh force, from the resilient movements of his legs to the movement of his lungs as he breathed, and something tickled his lips.

As they met, she squeezed his hand hard.

"You're not angry that I sent for you? I had to see you," she said; and the grave and severe set of her lips which he saw under her veil immediately altered his mood.

“I, angry? But how did you get here? Where are you going?”

“It doesn’t matter,” she said, placing her hand in his. “Let’s walk, I need to discuss something.”

He realized that something had happened and that this rendezvous would not be joyous. In her presence he lost his will. Without knowing the reason for her alarm, he already felt that this alarm had unintentionally been conveyed to him as well.

“What is it? What?” he asked, squeezing her arm with his elbow and trying to read her thoughts in her face.

She continued for several steps in silence, summoning her nerve, and suddenly halted.

“I did not tell you yesterday,” she began, breathing fast and hard, “that when I returned home with Alexei Alexandrovich I told him everything. I told him that I could not be his wife, that . . . and I told him everything.”

He had been listening to her, leaning over her without realizing it, as if wishing thereby to soften for her the burden of her position. But as soon as she said this, he suddenly straightened up, and his face took on a proud and stern expression.

“Yes, yes, this is better, a thousand times better! I realize how difficult it was,” he said.

But she was not listening to his words, rather she was reading his thoughts from the expression on his face. She could not know that the expression on his face referred to the first thought that had occurred to Vronsky—the inevitability now of a duel. The thought of a duel had never occurred to her, and therefore she explained this fleeting expression of sternness differently.

Once she had received her husband’s letter, she had known in the depths of her soul that everything would go on in the old way, that she would not have the strength to scorn her position, abandon her son, and unite with her lover. The morning spent with Princess Tverskaya had confirmed her in this still more. But this meeting was still extremely important for her. She was hoping that this meeting would alter their position and save her. If at this news he would say to her decisively, passionately, without a moment’s hesitation, “Abandon it all and run away with me!” she would abandon her son and go away with him. But this news did not produce in him what she had anticipated. He merely seemed offended by something.

“It wasn’t at all difficult for me. It happened all of its own accord,” she said irritably. “Here . . .” She took her husband’s letter from her glove.

“I see, I see,” he interrupted her, and he took the letter but did not read it and attempted to reassure her. “I have wanted just one thing, I have asked for

just one thing—to have done with this situation in order to devote my life to your happiness.”

“Why are you telling me this?” she said. “Have I ever doubted it? Had I doubted—”

“Who’s coming?” said Vronsky suddenly, indicating the two ladies coming toward them. “They might know us,” and he hastily turned, pulling her behind him, down a side path.

“Oh, I don’t care!” she said. Her lips began to tremble, and her eyes seemed to be looking at him from under the veil with a strange anger. “I’ve been telling you that that’s not the point, I can’t doubt that; but here is what he writes me. Read it.” Again she halted.

Again, as in the first moment, at the news of her break with her husband, Vronsky, reading the letter, involuntarily yielded to the natural impression that his attitude toward the insulted husband provoked in him. Now that he was holding the letter in his hands, he could not help but imagine the challenge which he was likely to find at home today or tomorrow and the duel itself, during which he, with the same cold and proud expression that was on his face even now, having fired in the air, would take the fire of the insulted husband. At this he thought fleetingly of what Serpukhovskoi had just told him and what he himself had been thinking that morning—that it was better not to encumber himself—and he knew that he could not convey this thought to her.

After reading the letter, he looked up at her, and there was no resolve in his gaze. She realized immediately that he had already thought about this privately. She knew that no matter what he told her, he would not tell her all he was thinking, and she realized that her last hope had been disappointed. This was not what she had expected.

“You see what sort of man this is,” she said in a trembling voice. “He—”

“Forgive me, but I rejoice at this,” Vronsky interjected. “For God’s sake, let me finish,” he added, begging her with his gaze to give him time to explain his words. “I rejoice because this cannot, simply cannot be left as he proposes.”

“Why not?” said Anna, holding back her tears, obviously no longer attaching any importance to what he would say. She felt her fate had been decided.

Vronsky had meant to say that after what he considered the inevitable duel, this could not go on as before, but he said something else.

“It can’t go on this way. I hope that now you will leave him. I hope”—he became flustered and blushed—“that you will allow me to arrange and contemplate our life. Tomorrow—” he was about to begin.

She would not let him finish.

“And my son?” she cried. “Do you see what he writes? I must leave him, but I neither can nor want to do that.”

“But for God’s sake, what is better? To leave your son or to continue this degrading situation?”

“Degrading for whom?”

“For everyone and for you most of all.”

“You say degrading . . . you mustn’t say that. Those words have no meaning for me,” she said in a trembling voice. She did not want him to speak an untruth now. All she had left was his love, and she wanted to love him. “You must understand that for me ever since the day I came to love you, everything changed. For me, the one and only thing is your love. If it is mine, then I feel so noble, so secure, that nothing can be degrading for me. I am proud of my situation because . . . I’m proud of the fact that . . . proud . . .” She could not finish saying what she was proud of. Tears of shame and despair choked her voice. She halted and began to sob.

He too felt something rising in his throat, tickling his nose, and for the first time in his life felt he was about to cry. He could not have said what precisely had touched him so; he felt sorry for her, he felt he could not help her, and at the same time he knew that he was to blame for her unhappiness, that he had done something that was not good.

“Is divorce really impossible?” he said feebly. Without answering, she shook her head. “You mean you can’t take your son and leave him after all?”

“Yes; but it all depends on him. Now I must go see him,” she said dryly. Her presentiment that all would go on in the old way had not deceived her.

“On Tuesday I’ll be in Petersburg and everything will be decided.”

“Yes,” she said. “But let’s not speak of it anymore.”

Anna’s carriage, which she had sent away and which she had ordered to drive to the Wrede garden gate, pulled up. Anna said good-bye and went home.

23

On Monday there was the regular session of the Commission of June 2nd. Alexei Alexandrovich entered the conference room, greeted the members and chairman, as usual, and took his seat, placing his hand on the papers readied in front of him. Among these papers lay the reports he needed and an outlined synopsis of the statement he intended to make. In point of fact, he had no need of the reports. He remembered everything and considered it unnecessary to go over in his mind what he would say. He knew that when the time came and he saw before him the face of his opponent trying in vain to assume an expression of indifference, his speech would flow effortlessly, better than anything he could now prepare. He felt that the content of his speech was so grand that each word

would have significance. Meanwhile, listening to an ordinary report, he had the most innocent, inoffensive look on his face. No one would have thought, looking at his white hands with the swollen veins, their long fingers so gently touching both edges of the piece of white paper in front of him, and with his head tilted to the side and an expression of weariness, that words were about to flow from his lips that would produce a terrible storm and cause the members to shout and interrupt one another and the chairman to demand that they come to order. When the report was over, Alexei Alexandrovich announced in his quiet, reedy voice that he had several ideas of his own to report concerning the matter of the settlement of the native populations. The attention turned to him. Alexei Alexandrovich coughed a couple of times, and without looking at his opponent, but rather selecting, as he always did in delivering speeches, the first face sitting before him—a small and meek old man who had never had an opinion of any kind on the commission—began setting forth his ideas. When the matter reached the point of fundamental and organic law, his opponent jumped up and started to object. Stremov, also a member of the commission and also cut to the quick, started trying to defend himself, and generally it was a stormy session; but Alexei Alexandrovich triumphed, and his proposal was approved; three new commissions were appointed and the next day in a certain Petersburg circle all the talk was of this session. Alexei Alexandrovich's success was even greater than he had anticipated.

The next morning, Tuesday, Alexei Alexandrovich awakened and recalled with satisfaction the previous day's victory and could not help but smile, although he did wish to appear nonchalant when the secretary of the chancellery, wishing to flatter him, reported the rumors that had reached him about what had transpired at the commission.

Occupied as he was with the chancellery secretary, Alexei Alexandrovich completely forgot that today was Tuesday, the day he had appointed for Anna Arkadyevna's arrival, and he was amazed and unpleasantly surprised when a servant came to inform him of her arrival.

Anna had arrived in Petersburg early that morning; after her telegram a carriage had been sent to pick her up, so Alexei Alexandrovich might know of her arrival. But when she did arrive, he did not meet her. She was told that he had not yet emerged and was busy with the chancellery secretary. She instructed them to tell her husband that she had arrived, proceeded to her sitting room, and busied herself sorting through her things, expecting him to come to her. But an hour passed, and he did not come. She went to the dining room on the pretext of giving orders and intentionally spoke loudly, expecting him to come; however, he did not come out, although she heard him see the chancellery secretary to his study door. She knew that, according to his habit, he would soon

leave for the office, and she wanted to see him before that, so that their relations could be defined.

She proceeded through the hall and with determination went to see him. When she entered his study, he was wearing his uniform, evidently prepared for his departure, sitting at a small table on which he had rested his elbows and looking dolefully straight ahead. She saw him before he saw her, and she realized that he was thinking about her.

Seeing her, he was about to rise, thought better of it, then his face turned bright red, which Anna had never before seen, and he quickly rose and walked toward her, looking not into her eyes but higher, at her brow and hair. He walked up to her, took her hand, and invited her to sit down.

"I am very glad you've come," he said, sitting beside her and, evidently wishing to say something, he stammered. Several times he was on the verge of speaking, but he kept stopping.

In spite of the fact that, while preparing for this encounter, she had schooled herself to despise and reproach him, she did not know what to say to him, and she pitied him, and so the silence lasted for rather a long time. "Is Seryozha well?" he said, and without waiting for an answer added, "I will not be dining at home today, and right now I must go."

"I wanted to go to Moscow," she said.

"No, you did very, very well in coming," he said, and again he fell silent.

Seeing that he himself did not have the strength to begin speaking, she herself did.

"Alexei Alexandrovich," she said, looking at him and not dropping her eyes under his gaze, which was fixed at her hair, "I am a culpable woman, I am a bad woman, but I am the same woman I was, as I told you then, and I have come to tell you that I cannot change anything."

"I did not ask you about that," he said, suddenly and with hatred looking her straight in the eye. "That is as I assumed." Under the influence of his fury, he evidently had once again fully mastered all his faculties. "However, as I told you at the time and wrote," he began in his harsh, reedy voice, "I am now repeating that I am not obliged to know this. I am ignoring it. Not all wives are so kind as you to hasten to inform their husbands of such *pleasant* news." He laid special stress on the word "pleasant." "I am ignoring it until such time as society learns it, until my name is besmirched. Therefore I am merely warning you that our relations must be just what they have always been, and only in the case that you *compromise* yourself shall I be obliged to take measures to protect my honor."

"But our relations cannot be as they have always been," Anna began in a timid voice, looking at him fearfully.

When she saw again those calm gestures, heard that piercing, childish, and

mocking voice, revulsion for him crushed her former pity, and she was simply frightened, but no matter what happened she wanted to clarify her situation.

“I cannot be your wife when I—” she tried to begin.

He laughed a nasty, cold laugh.

“The type of life you have chosen has probably affected your ideas. So much do I respect or despise them both . . . I respect your past and despise your present . . . that I was far from the interpretation you have given my words.”

Anna sighed and dropped her head.

“Actually, I do not understand how you, while having so much independence,” he continued, getting heated, “while announcing directly to your husband your infidelity and finding in this nothing reprehensible, apparently, you do find reprehensible your fulfillment of a wife’s obligation with respect to her husband.”

“Alexei Alexandrovich! What do you want of me?”

“I want you not to meet that man here and to behave in such a way that neither *society* nor a *servant* could reproach you . . . not to see him. That does not seem like very much. And in exchange for this you will enjoy the rights of an honest wife, while not fulfilling her obligations. That is all I have to say to you. Now it is time for me to go. I am not dining at home.”

He rose and headed for the door. Anna rose as well. Bowing silently, he allowed her to pass.

24

The night Levin spent on the haystack did not pass in vain: farming as he had conducted it repulsed him and had lost all interest for him. In spite of a superb harvest, never had there been, or at least never did there seem to him to have been, so many failures and so many hostile relations between him and the peasants as there had been this year, and the reason for these failures and this hostility was now perfectly understandable to him. The charm he had experienced in the work itself, the intimacy with the peasants that had come about as a consequence, the envy he felt toward them and their life, the desire to adopt that life, which that night had been for him not merely a dream but an intention, the details of whose implementation he had thought through—all this so changed his views on how he had managed the farming that he simply could not take his former interest in it and could not help seeing the distasteful attitude toward the workers that had been the basis for the entire business. The herd of improved cows, ones like Pava, all the fertilized land plowed with iron plows, the nine equal fields bordered by willow bushes, the ninety desyatinas of

manure plowed under, the seed drills, and so forth—all this would have been marvelous had it been done only by Levin himself or by him and his fellows, men sympathetic to him. But he now clearly saw (his work on a book about agriculture in which the principal element of the farm was supposed to be the worker had helped him greatly in this), he now saw clearly that the way he had been farming had been merely a cruel and persistent battle between him and the workers in which on one side, his side, there was a constant and intense desire to remake everything on what was considered the best model, while on the other side there was the natural order of things. In this struggle he saw that, given the greatest exertion of forces on his side and without any effort or even intention on the other, all that had been achieved was that the farming had not been to anyone's liking and that marvelous tools, marvelous cattle and land, had been spoiled to utterly no end. Most important, not only had the energy directed at this business been spent to utterly no end, but he could now not help feeling, when the significance of his way of farming was laid bare for him, that the aim of his energy had been the unworthiest possible. In essence, what had his struggle consisted of? He had fought for every kopek he had (which he could not help but do, because all he had to do was ease up and he would not have had enough money to pay his workers), while they were merely fighting to work calmly and pleasantly, that is, as they were accustomed to. It had been in his interests for each worker to work as much as possible, and in the process keep his mind on his work, and try not to break the winnowing machines, the horse rakes, and the threshers, and for him to think about what he was doing; the worker, though, tried to work as pleasantly as possible, with time for rest, and most of all—carelessly and heedlessly, without giving a thought to anything. This summer Levin had seen this at every step. He had sent them to mow clover for hay, choosing poor desyatinas overgrown in grass and wormwood and useless for seed—and they had time and again mowed instead the best seed desyatinas, defending themselves by saying that the steward had told them to and consoling him that the hay would be excellent; but he knew that this had happened because these desyatinas were easier to mow. He had sent a machine to pitch the hay, and they had broken it in the very first rows because a peasant gets bored sitting in a seat with blades swinging over his head. They had told him, "Nothing to worry about, the women will give it a good pitching." The plows proved unsuitable because it never occurred to the worker to lower the raised blade, and by forcing it down, he tortured the horses and spoiled the land; and they asked him to stay calm. The horses were let loose in the wheat because not one worker wanted to be a night watchman, and despite orders not to do this, the workers took turns standing watch, and Vanka, who had worked the whole day, fell asleep and confessed his sin, saying, "Do what you want with me." They

misfed his three best calves by letting them into the clover after-grass without allowing them to drink, and they simply did not want to believe that the clover had made them swell up but said in consolation that their neighbor had had one hundred twelve head fall in three days. All this was done not because anyone wished Levin or his farm any harm; on the contrary, he knew that he was well liked and considered a simple gentleman (the highest praise); rather, this was done only because they wanted to work cheerfully and without a care, and his interests were not merely alien and incomprehensible to them but fatally contrary to their most just interests. Levin had long felt dissatisfaction with his attitude toward his farm. He had seen that his boat was leaking, but he had neither found nor sought the leak, perhaps purposely deceiving himself. Now, though, he could deceive himself no longer. He found the way he had been farming not only uninteresting but repulsive, and he could pursue it no longer.

Added to this was the presence thirty versts away of Kitty Shcherbatskaya, whom he wanted to but could not see. Darya Alexandrovna Oblonskaya, whom he had been to see, had invited him to visit—in order to renew his proposal to her sister, who, as she had let him sense, would now accept him. Levin himself, having seen Kitty Shcherbatskaya, realized that he had not ceased to love her; however, he could not go to the Oblonskys' knowing she was there. The fact that he had proposed to her and she had rejected him had raised an insuperable barrier between him and her. "I cannot ask her to be my wife merely because she could not be the wife of the man she wanted," he kept telling himself. The thought of this made him feel cold and hostile toward her. "I wouldn't have the strength to speak to her without a feeling of reproach or to look at her without anger, and she would merely come to hate me even more, as well she should. And then, how can I now, after what Darya Alexandrovna has told me, visit them? How can I keep from showing that I know what she told me? And I would be coming out of benevolence—to forgive, to pardon her. I, standing before her in the role of the man forgiving her and worthy of her love! Why did Darya Alexandrovna have to tell me this? I might have seen her by accident, and then everything would have taken care of itself, but now this is impossible, impossible!"

Darya Alexandrovna sent him a note requesting a lady's saddle from him for Kitty. "I am told you have a saddle," she wrote him. "I hope you will bring it yourself."

This was more than he could bear. How a clever, delicate woman could demean her sister in that way! He wrote ten notes and tore them all up and sent the saddle without any reply. He could not write that he would come because he could not come; he could not write that he could not come because something was preventing him or because he was going away—that was even worse.

He sent the saddle without a reply and with the awareness that he had done something shameful, and the next day, having handed over the entire hateful farm to his steward, he departed for a distant district, to see his friend Sviyazhsky, who lived amid marvelous marshes filled with snipe and who had recently written him asking him to make good on his long-standing intention to spend some time with him. The snipe marshes in the Surovsk District had long tempted Levin, but he had kept putting off this trip over farm affairs. Now he was happy to leave the vicinity of the Shcherbatskys and, most of all, his farm, and for the specific purpose of hunting, which served him as the best consolation in all sorrows.

25

There was neither rail nor post road to the Surovsk District, so Levin rode in his own tarantass.²⁷

Halfway there, he stopped to eat in the home of a wealthy peasant. The bald, fresh-faced old man, with a broad ginger beard graying at the cheeks, opened the gates and pressed up against the post to let the troika through. Pointing out an area to the driver under an overhang in the large, clean, and tidy new yard with its charred wooden plows, the old man invited Levin into his parlor. A cleanly dressed young woman wearing overshoes on bare feet was bent over scrubbing the floor in the new entry. She was startled by the dog that ran in behind Levin and cried out, but then she laughed at her fright when she found that the dog was not going to touch her. She pointed out the parlor door to Levin with an arm in a rolled-up sleeve, bent over again, and hid her handsome face, continuing to scrub.

“Get the samovar?” she asked.

“Yes, please.”

The parlor was large and had a Dutch stove and a partition. Under the icons stood a table painted with a design, a bench, and two chairs. Next to the door was a china cabinet. The shutters were closed, the flies were few, and it was so clean that Levin was concerned lest Laska, who had run along the road and splashed in puddles, dirty the floor, and he sent her to a corner by the door. After surveying the room, Levin went out into the backyard. The comely young woman in overshoes, swinging the empty buckets on her yoke, had run out ahead of him to the well for water.

“Step lively!” the old man shouted cheerfully to her and he walked over to Levin. “What is it, sir, are you on your way to see Nikolai Ivanovich Sviyazhsky? They stop by to see us, too,” he began, leaning his elbows on the porch railing, eager to talk.

In the middle of the old man's tale of his friendship with Sviyazhsky, the gates creaked again, and into the yard rode the workers from the field with their wooden plows and harrows. The horses harnessed to the plows and harrows were sleek and big. The workers evidently belonged to the household: two were young and wore cotton shirts and peaked caps, two others were hired and wore hempen shirts — one old man and another young fellow. Moving away from the porch, the old man went over to the horses and began removing their harnesses.

"What were they plowing?" asked Levin.

"Potatoes. We keep a little land, too. You, Fedot, don't let the gelding out, but put her by the trough and we'll harness another one."

"Hey, father, what about the plowshares I told them to get, did they ever bring them?" asked a tall, hearty fellow, obviously the old man's son.

"Over there . . . in the shed," replied the old man, winding the reins he'd removed and tossing them on the ground. "Put 'em on while we're having our dinner."

The comely young wife passed through to the entry carrying full buckets that pulled her shoulders down. Other women appeared from somewhere — young and handsome, middle-aged, and old and ugly women, with children and without.

The samovar started whistling through its chimney; the workers and members of the family had put up the horses and gone to eat. Levin took his own provisions out of his carriage and invited the old man to have his tea with him.

"Well, I did just have some," said the old man, obviously accepting the offer with pleasure. "A little something for company's sake."

Over tea Levin learned the whole story of the old man's farm. The old man had leased one hundred twenty desyatinas from a lady ten years before, and the past year he had bought them and leased another three hundred from a neighboring landowner. A small portion of the land, the worst of it, he had rented out, but about forty desyatinas he plowed in the field himself with his family and two hired workers. The old man complained that business was going badly. But Levin realized he was only complaining to be polite and that his farm was flourishing. Had it been going badly, he wouldn't have bought land at a rate of a hundred and five rubles, would not have married off three sons and a nephew, would not have rebuilt twice after fires, and each time better and better. In spite of the old man's complaints, it was obvious that he was justly proud of his prosperity, proud of his sons, nephew, daughters-in-law, horses, and cows, and especially that he had managed to hold onto this whole farm. From his conversation with the old man Levin learned that he was not opposed to innovations, either. He sowed a lot of potatoes, and his potatoes, which Levin had seen driving up, had already finished flowering and begun setting, whereas Levin's had

only just started to flower. He plowed his potatoes with a plow borrowed from a landowner. He sowed wheat. The small detail about how, when the old man weeded the rye, he fed the weeded rye to his horses particularly amazed Levin. How many times had Levin, seeing this marvelous feed going to waste, wanted to gather it; but this had always proved impossible. The peasant did do this, and he could not praise this feed enough.

“What’s for the women to do? They carry the piles to the road, and the cart pulls up.”

“We landowners are having a hard time indeed with the hired workers,” said Levin, serving him a glass of tea.

“Thank you,” replied the old man, taking the glass, but he refused sugar, pointing to what was left of the lump he had gnawed. “Where does anyone rely on workers?” he said. “Nothing but ruination. Just look at Sviyazhsky’s. We know what land that is, but the harvest’s nothing to boast of. No one’s looking after it!”

“Yes, but look, aren’t you farming with workers?”

“This is a peasant farm. We can do everything ourselves. Someone’s bad—and he’s out; and we can handle things ourselves.”

“Father, Finogen told me to get some tar,” said the woman in overshoes coming in.

“That’s the way it is, sir!” said the old man, standing. He took his time crossing himself, thanked Levin, and went out.

When Levin entered the dark hut in order to summon his driver, he saw the entire family of men at the table. The women were serving, standing. The young and hearty son, his mouth full of kasha, was telling a funny story, and everyone was laughing, and the woman in overshoes, who was ladling cabbage soup into a bowl, was having an especially good time.

It may very well be that the comely face of the woman in overshoes did a great deal to foster the impression of well-being which this peasant home made on Levin, but this impression was so strong that Levin could not seem to shake it, and all the way from the old man’s to Sviyazhsky’s he found himself recalling this farm again, as if something in this impression demanded his special attention.

26

Sviyazhsky was the marshal of the nobility in his district. He was five years older than Levin and long since married. In his home lived his sister-in-law, a young woman whom Levin found quite attractive. Levin knew that Sviyazhsky

and his wife wanted very much to marry this girl off to him. He knew this without a doubt, the way young men, so-called suitors, always know this, although they could never bring themselves to say it to anyone, and he knew also that although he did want to marry, and although by every token this highly attractive young woman ought to make a splendid wife, he could as little marry her, even if he were not in love with Kitty Shcherbatskaya, as he could fly off into the sky, and this knowledge poisoned the pleasure he hoped to have from his visit to Sviyazhsky.

When he had received Sviyazhsky's letter inviting him to hunt, Levin immediately thought of this, but decided that this view Sviyazhsky had of him was only his entirely unfounded assumption and so he would go all the same. Besides, in the depths of his soul he wanted to test himself and come face to face with this young woman again. The Sviyazhskys' domestic life was exceedingly pleasant, and Sviyazhsky himself, the very best type of a district council figure Levin had ever known, was for Levin always extremely interesting.

Sviyazhsky was one of those men Levin always found amazing, men whose convictions, always consistent if never independent, went along of their own accord, while his life, extremely well defined and firm in its direction, also went along of its own accord, but utterly independent of and almost always contrary to his convictions. Sviyazhsky was an extremely liberal man. He despised the nobility and considered the majority of noblemen secret supporters of serfdom, only keeping silent about it out of cowardice. He considered Russia a lost country, like Turkey, and Russia's government so dreadful that he would never even allow himself to criticize the government's actions seriously, nonetheless he served that government and was a model marshal of the nobility and when he traveled always wore his peak cap complete with cockade and red band.²⁸ He felt that human life was possible only abroad, where he went to stay at the first opportunity, and yet in Russia he kept up a very complicated and improved farm and followed everything in Russia with extreme interest and knew everything that was going on. He regarded the Russian peasant as a transitional step from ape to man, and yet in the district council elections he shook hands with peasants more eagerly than anyone and listened to their opinions. He believed in neither heaven nor hell but was very concerned with the issue of improving the life of the clergy and the reduced number of parishes, and he took special care to see that his village retained a church.

On the woman question he was on the side of the radical supporters of complete freedom for women and in particular their right to work; however, he and his wife lived in such a way that everyone admired their amiable, childless family life, and he arranged the life of his wife so that she did not and could not

do anything but share her husband's concern that they spend their time as well and as cheerfully as possible.

If Levin had not had the characteristic of explaining people to himself in the best light possible, Sviyazhsky's character would not have presented any difficulty or question for him. He would have told himself that he was a fool or a fraud, and all would have been clear. But he could not say he was a *fool* because Sviyazhsky was undoubtedly not only intelligent but also a well-educated man who wore his education without pretension. There was not a subject he did not know; but he displayed his knowledge only when forced to. Even less could Levin say that he was a fraud because Sviyazhsky was an undoubtedly honest, good, and clever man who conducted his business—highly valued by all around him—with good cheer, vitality, and perseverance, and who probably never consciously could or would do anything base.

Levin tried to understand him and could not understand him, and he always looked at him and his life as at a living enigma.

Levin and he were friendly and so Levin would allow himself to question Sviyazhsky on his views, to try to get to the very foundation of his view of life, but it was always in vain. Each time Levin attempted to penetrate beyond the antechamber doors of Sviyazhsky's mind open to everyone, he noticed that Sviyazhsky became slightly embarrassed; there was a barely perceptible fright expressed in his look, as if he were afraid that Levin was going to understand him, and he would give him a good-natured and cheerful rebuff.

Now, since his disenchantment with farming, Levin found it especially pleasant to spend time with Sviyazhsky. Apart from the fact that the sight of these happy lovebirds, who were so content with themselves and everyone else, and of their comfortable nest, had a cheering effect on him, he now wanted, since he felt such discontent with his own life, to get at that secret in Sviyazhsky which gave him such clarity, decisiveness, and good cheer in life. Besides, Levin knew that at Sviyazhsky's he would see the neighboring landowners, and he was now especially interested in talking about and listening to those very discussions of the harvest, the hiring of workers, and so forth, which, Levin knew, were usually considered vulgar for some reason but which now for Levin seemed the one important thing. "This might not have been important under serfdom or important in England. In both cases the conditions themselves are well defined; but here now, when all this has been turned on its head and is only now being set straight, the question of how these conditions will be set is the one important question in Russia," thought Levin.

The hunting proved worse than Levin had anticipated. The marsh had dried up, and there were no snipe at all. He spent an entire day at it and brought in

only three pieces. However, he did bring in, as he always did after hunting, an excellent appetite, excellent spirits, and that aroused mental condition that always accompanied strenuous physical exertion for him. And during the hunt, when he seemed not to be thinking of anything at all, suddenly he would find himself recalling the old man and his family, and this impression seemed to demand not only his attention but also the solution of something related to it.

In the evening, at tea, in the presence of two landowners who had come on some business about a guardianship, the most interesting discussion Levin could ever have expected began.

Levin was sitting next to his hostess at the tea table and was supposed to engage her and her sister, who was sitting across from him, in conversation. His hostess was a round-faced, fair-haired woman, not very tall, who positively beamed dimples and smiles. Levin was trying through her to tease out an answer to one important enigma for him which her husband had posed; however, he did not have full freedom of thought because he felt agonizingly awkward. Agonizingly awkward because across from him sat the sister-in-law in what seemed to him a dress worn especially for him, with a special low neckline, cut in the shape of a rectangle, on her white breast; although her breast was very white, or especially because it was very white, this square neckline deprived Levin of his freedom of thought. He imagined, erroneously no doubt, that this low neckline had been made on his account, and he did not feel he had the right to look at it and tried not to look at it; but he felt guilty merely for the fact that the neckline had been made. It seemed to Levin that he was misleading someone, that he ought to explain something, but that there was no way he could explain and so he was constantly blushing; he was uneasy and awkward. His awkwardness was conveyed to the pretty sister-in-law as well. His hostess seemed not to notice, though, and purposely tried to draw her into conversation.

"You say," his hostess continued the conversation that had begun, "that my husband cannot find all these Russian things interesting. On the contrary, he can be cheerful abroad, but never as he is here. Here he is in his element. He has so much to do, and he has the gift of taking an interest in everything. Ah, you haven't been to our school?"

"I saw it. Is that the little ivy-covered house?"

"Yes, that is Nastya's doing," she said, indicating her sister.

"Do you yourself teach?" asked Levin, trying to look past the neckline, but feeling that no matter where he looked in that direction, he would see the neckline.

"Yes, I myself have always taught, but we have a wonderful teacher. We've even introduced gymnastics."

“No, thank you, I don’t care for any more tea,” said Levin, and sensing that he was committing a discourtesy but powerless to continue this conversation, blushing, he stood up. “I hear a very interesting conversation,” he added, and he walked over to the other end of the table, where his host sat with the two landowners. Sviyazhsky was sitting sideways, resting his elbow on the table and twirling his cup with one hand and with the other gathering his beard into his fist, holding it to his nose, and then letting go, as if he were sniffing it. His shining black eyes were looking directly at the excited landowner with the gray mustache and evidently he found his speeches entertaining. The landowner was complaining about the common people. It was clear to Levin that Sviyazhsky knew an answer to the landowner’s complaints that would destroy the entire point of his speech but that due to his position he could not state this reply and was taking a certain pleasure in listening to the landowner’s comic speech.

The landowner with the gray mustache was obviously an inveterate proponent of serfdom and a country dweller of long standing, a passionate farmer. Levin saw signs of this both in his dress—an old-fashioned, worn frock coat to which the landowner was obviously unaccustomed—and in his intelligent, scowling eyes, and in his well-turned Russian, and in his authoritative tone, obviously mastered through long experience, and in the decisive gestures of his large, handsome, sunburnt hands with the single old wedding band on his ring finger.

27

“If only it weren’t such a shame to give up what’s been started . . . so much effort went into it . . . I’d wave good-bye to it all, sell everything, go away, like Nikolai Ivanovich . . . to hear *Hélène*,” said the landowner, a pleasant smile lighting up his clever old face.²⁹

“Yes, but I don’t see you giving up,” said Nikolai Ivanovich Sviyazhsky, “so there must be some advantage.”

“The only advantage is that I live at home, nothing bought, nothing rented. And you still keep hoping that the people will come to their senses. Meanwhile, whether you believe it or not—it’s drunkenness and depravity! They keep dividing things up, so there’s not a single horse or cow left. He may be on the verge of starving to death, but if you hire him on as a worker, he’ll figure out a way to spoil it for you and go to the justice of the peace to boot.”

“Then you’ll go complain to the justice of the peace, too,” said Sviyazhsky.

“Me complain? Not for anything in the world! The way they get to talking, it makes you sorry you complained! There in the mill—they took their advances

and left. And the justice of the peace? He acquitted them. The only thing holding it all together is the communal court and the village elder. He'd give him an old-fashioned thrashing. If it weren't for that—give up! Run to the ends of the earth!"

The landowner was obviously teasing Sviyazhsky, but not only did Sviyazhsky not get angry, he evidently was amused by it.

"But you see we run our farm without these measures," he said, smiling, "I, Levin, they."

He pointed to the other landowner.

"Yes, Mikhail Petrovich is getting along, but have you asked how? Is that really rational farming?" said the landowner, evidently flaunting the word "rational."

"My farming's simple," said Mikhail Petrovich. "I thank God. I manage it all just to make sure the money's there for the autumn assessments. The peasants come to me, 'Father, please, help us out!' Well, the peasants, they're all my neighbors, I feel sorry for them. Well, you give them for the first third, only you say, Remember, fellows, I helped you out, and you help me when there's need—sowing the oats, making hay, the harvest, well, and you say how much from each household. Sure, some of them have no conscience."

Levin, long familiar with these patriarchal methods, exchanged glances with Sviyazhsky and interrupted Mikhail Petrovich, turning again to the landowner with the gray mustache.

"So, what do you think?" he asked. "How should one run a farm now?"

"Why, just the way Mikhail Petrovich does, either go halves or let it to the peasants. You can do that, only that's just what destroys the state's total wealth. Where I had land under serf labor and good management it yielded nine to one, going halves it yields three to one. The Emancipation has ruined Russia!"³⁰

Sviyazhsky looked at Levin with smiling eyes and even made a barely perceptible sign of mockery to him, but Levin did not find the landowner's words absurd; he understood them better than Sviyazhsky did. Much of what the landowner went on to say, trying to prove why Russia had been ruined by the Emancipation, Levin even found quite accurate, new to him, and irrefutable. The landowner obviously spoke his own original thought, something that rarely happens, and a thought to which he had been brought not by a wish to occupy an idle mind, but a thought that had grown up out of the conditions of his life, which he had considered in his rural solitude and had thought over in its every aspect.

"The point, if you'll be so kind and see, is that progress can only be made by authority," he said, obviously hoping to show that he was not alien to culture. "Take the reforms of Peter, Catherine, and Alexander."³¹ Take European history.

Especially progress in agricultural life. Even the potato—they had to force that on us. We didn't even always use a wooden plow, either. They introduced that, too, maybe under the appanage, but certainly by force. Now, in our day, we landowners, under serfdom we ran our farm with improvements; dryers, winnowers, dung carting—and all the implements—we introduced it all on our own authority and the peasants resisted at first, but eventually imitated us. Now, with the abolition of serfdom, they've taken away our authority, and our farms, where they'd been raised to a high level, they've ended up reverting to the most savage, primitive state. That's how I see it."

"But why? If it's rational, then you can run it like that by hired labor," said Sviyazhsky.

"But there's still no authority. Who am I going to tell what to do, if I may ask?"

"Here it is, the workforce, the principal element of agriculture," thought Levin.

"The workers."

"The workers don't want to work well or work with good implements. Our worker knows just one thing—drink like a pig, and when he's drunk, wreck everything you give him. He'll overwater the horses, break a harness, take off a wheel and sell it for drink, and drop a pin into the thresher to break it. It makes him sick to see anything that's not his way. That's what's lowered farming's whole level. Lands have been abandoned, overgrown with wormwood, or carved up among the peasants, and where there used to be a million quarter sections in production, now there were hundreds of thousands of bushels; the total wealth is diminished. If they'd done the same thing, but figuring . . ."

He began expounding his own plan for the emancipation, under which all the disadvantages would have been eliminated.

This did not interest Levin, but when he had finished, Levin returned to his first position and turning to Sviyazhsky, tried to provoke him into expressing his own serious opinion. "The fact that the level of farming is dropping and that given our relations toward the workers there is no possibility of running a farm rationally, this is perfectly fair," he said.

"I do not find that," Sviyazhsky objected, now strenuously. "I see only that we do not know how to run a farm and that, on the contrary, the farming we did under serfdom was by no means extremely high but rather extremely low. We don't have machines, or good work animals, or real management, and we don't know how to keep accounts. Ask the owner—he doesn't know what is and isn't to his profit."

"Italian bookkeeping," said the landowner ironically.³² "No matter how you keep accounts, they'll spoil everything for you and there'll be no profit."

"Why will they spoil everything? A good-for-nothing thresher, that Russian

treadmill of yours, they'll break that, but they won't my steam engine. That breed of horse — how was that? — the dragging kind you have to drag by the tail, they'll spoil that for you, but bring in Percherons or even good Russian cart horses and they won't. And that's it. We have to raise farming to a higher level."

"Don't I wish we could, Nikolai Ivanovich! It's fine for you, but I have a son to support at university and little ones to educate in the gymnasium, so I'm not going to be buying any Percherons."

"That's what banks are for."

"So that every last thing can be sold under the gavel? No, thank you!"

"I don't agree that the level of farming should or could be raised even higher," said Levin. "I've been studying this, and I have the means, and I haven't been able to do anything. I don't know who banks are useful for. I at least have been spending money on things at my farm, and everything is a loss: livestock are a loss, machines are a loss."

"That's the truth," confirmed the landowner with the gray mustache, who actually began laughing with pleasure.

"And I'm not alone," Levin continued. "I can cite all the owners running rational operations; all, with rare exceptions, are running their operation at a loss. Well, would you say your farm is profitable?" said Levin, and immediately in Sviyazhsky's glance Levin noted the fleeting look of fear he had remarked upon when he had tried to penetrate beyond the antechambers of Sviyazhsky's mind.

Besides, this question on Levin's part was not quite in good faith. At tea his hostess had just told him that this summer they had invited a German from Moscow, an expert in bookkeeping, who for a five hundred-ruble fee had taken stock of their farm and found that it was bringing in a loss of three thousand-odd rubles. She did not recall exactly how much, but apparently the German had figured it to a quarter of a kopek.

At the mention of the profits of Sviyazhsky's farm the landowner smiled, evidently aware what profits his neighbor and marshal of the nobility might have.

"Perhaps it is unprofitable," Sviyazhsky replied. "That only goes to prove either that I'm a bad owner or that I'm spending capital to increase my rents."

"Ah, your rents!" Levin exclaimed in horror. "Maybe there are rents in Europe, where the land has improved from the labor invested in it, but here all the land is getting worse from the labor invested, that is, they're exhausting it, so in all likelihood there are no rents."

"What do you mean no rents? It's a law."

"But we're outside that law. Rents will explain nothing for us; they'll only confuse us. No, you tell me how the theory of rents might —"

“Would you care for some clabber? Masha, send in some clabber or the raspberries,” he turned to his wife. “The raspberries are holding on marvelously late this year.”

And in the most pleasant of spirits, Sviyazhsky rose and walked off, evidently assuming the conversation had ended right where Levin thought it was only beginning.

Deprived of his conversation partner, Levin continued his discussion with the landowner, trying to prove to him that all the difficulty arose from the fact that we didn’t want to know the characteristics and habits of our worker, but the landowner, like all men who think originally and in isolation, was deaf to any understanding of another person’s idea and especially partial to his own. He insisted that the Russian peasant was a pig and loved his piggery, and pulling him out of his piggery took authority, which we didn’t have, it took the stick, but we had become so liberal that we had suddenly replaced the stick used for a millennium with all sorts of lawyers and imprisonments where worthless, stinking peasants were fed good soup and allocated cubic feet of air.

“Why do you think,” said Levin, trying to return to the issue, “that it’s impossible to find an attitude toward labor under which work would be productive?”

“This will never happen with the Russian people without the stick! We have no authority,” replied the landowner.

“What kind of new conditions are to be found?” said Sviyazhsky, who had eaten his clabber, lit a cigarette, and was again approaching the debaters. “All the possible attitudes toward labor have been defined and studied,” he said. “What’s left of barbarism—the primitive commune with its collective guarantee—is falling apart of its own accord, serfdom has been abolished, all that remains is free labor, and its forms have been defined and readied and we must adopt them. The farmhand, the day laborer, the farmer—and that’s something you can’t get out of.”

“But Europe is dissatisfied with these forms.”

“Dissatisfied and looking for new ones. Which it will find, more than likely.”

“That’s all I’ve been talking about,” replied Levin. “Why shouldn’t we look for some for our part?”

“Because it’s like coming up with a new way of building railroads. They’re set, they’ve been thought of.”

“But what if they don’t suit us, what if they’re foolish?” said Levin.

Again he noted the look of fright in Sviyazhsky’s eyes.

“Just this: we’re tossing our hats in the air because we’ve found what Europe’s been looking for! I know all that, but pardon me, do you know everything that’s been done in Europe on the issue of organizing workers?”

“No, very little.”

“This issue is now being studied by the best minds in Europe. There’s the Schulze-Delitzsch movement. . . . Then this entire tremendous literature on the worker question, the very liberal Lassalle movement. . . . The Mülhausen system, that’s already a fact, as you must know.”³³

“I have a notion, but it’s very vague.”

“No, you’re just saying that. You must know all this no worse than I do. I’m no sociology professor, of course, but I was interested in this, and it’s true, if you’re interested, you study.”

“But what did they conclude?”

“Excuse me. . . .”

The landowners rose and Sviyazhsky, having once again halted Levin in his unpleasant habit of looking into what lies past the antechamber of his mind, escorted his guests out.

28

Levin was excruciatingly bored that evening with the ladies. He was disturbed as never before by the thought that the dissatisfaction with his farming which he was now feeling was not only his situation but the general condition of the matter in Russia, that organizing any kind of relations with the workers, no matter where they were working, as with the peasant halfway here, was not a dream but a problem to be solved, and it seemed to him that one could and should try to solve this problem.

Having said good night to the ladies and promised to spend another entire day tomorrow so that they could go riding to view an interesting gap in the state forest, Levin, before going to sleep, stopped by his host’s study in order to borrow the books on the worker question which Sviyazhsky had offered him. Sviyazhsky’s study was a large room furnished with shelves of books and two tables—one massive desk that stood in the middle of the room, and another round table laid with the latest issues of newspapers and journals in various languages fanned out around a lamp. Next to the desk was a stand of drawers categorized with gilt labels and containing various files.

Sviyazhsky took down the books and sat in his rocking chair.

“What’s that you’re looking at?” he said to Levin, who had stopped by the round table and was looking through the journals. “Ah, yes, this here is a very interesting article,” said Sviyazhsky about the journal Levin was holding. “It turns out,” he added with cheerful animation, “that the principal culprit in the partition of Poland was not Frederick at all.³⁴ It turns out . . .”

And with his characteristic clarity he related in brief these new, very important, and interesting discoveries. Although Levin was now interested more than anything else in the idea of farming, as he listened to his host he kept asking himself, "What's eating at him? And why, why is he interested in the partition of Poland?" When Sviyazhsky had finished, Levin couldn't keep from asking, "So what then?" But there wasn't anything else. What was interesting was merely that it had "turned out to be so." But Sviyazhsky did not explain, nor did he find it necessary to explain, why he found it interesting.

"Yes, but I took great interest in the angry landowner," said Levin with a sigh. "He's clever and said much that was true."

"How can you say that! Secretly he's an inveterate proponent of serfdom, like all of them!" said Sviyazhsky.

"And you're their marshal."

"Yes, only I'm marshaling them in the other direction," said Sviyazhsky, laughing.

"Here's what interests me so much," said Levin. "He's right that what we do, I mean rational farming, isn't going well, that only the moneylending business is going well, like with that silent type, or the simplest farm. Who's to blame for that?"

"We ourselves, naturally. Yes, and then, it's not true that it's not going well. It is for Vasilchikov."

"A factory . . ."

"But I still don't know what amazes you so. The common people are at such a low level of material and moral development, it's obvious they have to resist everything alien to them. In Europe, rational farming works because the common people are educated; it follows that we need to educate the people — that's all."

"But how do you educate the people?"

"In order to educate the people, you need three things: schools, schools, and schools."

"But you yourself said that the people are at a low level of material development. How can schools help?"

"You know, you remind me of the joke about the advice given a patient: 'You should try a purgative.' 'We did: it's worse.' 'Try leeches.' 'We did: it's worse.' 'Well, then, you can only pray to God.' 'We did: it's worse.' It's the same with you and me. I say political economy, and you say it's worse. I say socialism, and you say it's worse. Education — it's worse."

"Yes, but how can schools help?"

"They can give them other needs."

“Here is what I’ve never understood,” Levin objected heatedly. “In what way will schools help the people improve their material condition? You say schools, education, will give them new needs. All the worse, because they’ll be incapable of satisfying them. And in what way knowing addition and subtraction and the catechism will help them improve their material condition I have never been able to understand. The day before yesterday, in the evening, I met a peasant woman with a nursing infant and asked where she was going. She said, ‘I went to the wise woman, colic got the boy, so I brought him to her to heal.’ I asked her how the wise woman heals colic. ‘She puts the child on the roost with the chickens and recites a spell.’”

“Well there, you said it yourself! In order to keep her from taking him to a roost to be treated for colic, that requires . . .” said Sviyazhsky, smiling cheerfully.

“Oh, no!” said Levin, annoyed. “For me, this healing is just a simile for healing the people with schools. The people are poor and ignorant. We can see that just as surely as the peasant woman sees the colic because her baby is screaming. But why schools are going to help this evil of poverty and ignorance is just as incomprehensible as why chickens on a roost will help heal colic. You have to help what makes them poor.”

“Well, in that you at least are in agreement with Spencer, whom you dislike so.³⁵ He too says that education can be the result of greater prosperity and a comfortable life, frequent ablutions, as he says, but not of the ability to read and figure.”

“Well then, I’m very pleased, or just the opposite, very displeased, to be in agreement with Spencer, only I’ve known this for a long time. Schools won’t help. What will help is a kind of economic arrangement under which the people are richer and have more leisure—then there will be schools, too.”

“Throughout Europe, though, schools are now mandatory.”

“But what about you, do you agree with Spencer in this?” asked Levin.

But a look of fright flashed in Sviyazhsky’s eyes, and smiling, he said, “No, that colic story is superb! Did you really hear that yourself?”

Levin saw that he would never find the connection between this man’s life and his thoughts. Obviously he was utterly indifferent as to where this discussion led; he needed only the process of discussion, and he did not like it when the process of discussion led him down a blind alley. This alone did he dislike and avoid, shifting the conversation to something pleasant and cheerful.

All the impressions of the day, beginning with the impression of the peasant halfway there, which in a way served as the basis for all his current impressions and thoughts, agitated Levin powerfully. This dear Sviyazhsky, who stored thoughts merely for public consumption and who evidently had other bases for

life of a kind that were a secret from Levin, and at the same time with the crowd, whose name was Legion, he guided public opinion with thoughts alien to him; this embittered landowner who was perfectly correct in his reasonings, which life had extorted from him, but incorrect in his bitterness toward an entire class, the very best class of Russia; and Levin's own dissatisfaction with what he did and his vague hope of finding a corrective to all this—all this had coalesced into a sense of inner disturbance and anticipation of an imminent solution.

Left alone in the room set aside for him, lying on a spring mattress, which threw his arms and legs up unexpectedly every time he moved, Levin could not sleep for a long time. Not a single conversation with Sviyazhsky, though he had said much that was intelligent, had interested Levin; the landowner's arguments, though, demanded discussion. Levin could not help but recall all his words and in his imagination he kept amending his own replies.

"Yes, I ought to have said to him, 'You say that our farms aren't doing well because the peasant hates all improvements and that they have to be imposed by authority. If farming didn't work at all without these improvements, you'd be right, but it does, and it is only where the worker is acting in accordance with his own habits, like the old man halfway here. Our shared dissatisfaction with farming proves that either we or the workers are at fault. We've been bumbling along for quite a while in our own, European way, without asking ourselves about the characteristics of labor. Why don't we try to admit that the labor force does not constitute an ideal *workforce* but the *Russian peasant* and his instincts, and let's set up farming in accordance with that.'³⁶ Imagine'—I ought to have told him—'that your farm was being run like that old man's, that you had found a way to give the workers an interest in the success of their work and found the same middle ground in improvements that they recognize—then, without exhausting the soil, you would get double, triple what you did before. Divide it in half, give one half to the labor force; the difference you're left with would be more, and the labor force will get more. But in order to do this, you have to lower the level of farming and give the workers an interest in the farming's success. How to do this is a matter of details, but it is no doubt possible.'"

This thought got Levin very worked up. He did not sleep half the night, thinking through the details for implementing his thought. He had not been planning to leave the following day, but now he decided to go home early in the morning. Moreover, this sister-in-law with the low neckline produced in him an emotion resembling shame and remorse for having done a bad deed. Most of all, he needed to be going without delay: he needed time to propose his new project to the peasants before the winter wheat was sown, so that it could be sown on the new bases. He decided to overturn all his former farming.

29

The implementation of Levin's plan posed many difficulties; but he kept at it with all the strength he had, and he achieved if not what he had wished, then enough so that he could, without deceiving himself, believe that the attempt had been worth the work. One of the main difficulties had been the fact that the farming was already under way, that he could not bring everything to a halt and start all over from the beginning, but rather had to overhaul a machine already in motion.

When he arrived home that same night and informed the steward of his plans, the steward agreed with visible satisfaction to the part of the speech which showed that everything done so far had made no sense or profit. The steward said that he had been saying so for a long time but that they had not wanted to listen to him. As for the proposal made by Levin — to take part, as a shareholder, with the workers, in the entire farming enterprise — at this the steward expressed only dejection and no definite opinion but began talking immediately about the necessity of carting away the last remaining sheaves of rye on the morrow and sending them to cross-plow, so that Levin felt that now was not the time for this.

When he brought up the same idea with the peasants and made them the proposal to hand lands over under the new conditions, he also ran into the chief difficulty that they were so busy with the day's current work that they had no time to think through the enterprise's advantages and disadvantages.

Naïve Ivan the herdsman seemed to understand Levin's proposal full well — to accept, with his family, participation in the profits from the cattle yard — and fully sympathized with this enterprise. But when Levin tried to offer him future profits, alarm and regret that he couldn't finish listening was expressed on Ivan's face, and he hastily found for himself something that could not be put off: either he was picking up pitchforks to throw the hay down from a stall, or fetching water, or mucking out the dung.

Another difficulty consisted in the peasants' insuperable suspicion that the landowner's purpose could be anything other than the desire to fleece them as much as possible. They were firmly convinced that his real purpose (no matter what he told them) would always be something he would not say, and they themselves, when they did speak out, said many things, but never what their real purpose was. Moreover (Levin felt that the bilious landowner had been right), the peasants set their first and nonnegotiable condition for any kind of agreement that they not be forced to take up any new farming methods or use new implements. They agreed that the iron plow plowed better and that the scarifier did a better job, but they found thousands of reasons why they could not use either one, and although he was convinced that the standard of farming had to

be lowered, it seemed a pity to reject improvements whose advantage was so obvious. Notwithstanding all these difficulties, though, he got what he wanted, and by autumn the matter was under way, or at least so it seemed to him.

At first Levin had thought of letting out the entire farm, as it was, to the peasants, workers, and steward, under new partnership terms, but very quickly he became convinced that this was impossible and decided to subdivide the farm. The cattle yard, orchard, kitchen garden, meadows, and fields, divided into several sections, ought to constitute separate items. Naïve Ivan the herdsman who, Levin thought, understood the matter better than anyone else, having gathered together an *artel*, primarily his own family, became a participant in the cattle yard.³⁷ A distant field that had lain fallow, waiting to be used, for eight years was taken with the help of the clever carpenter Fyodor Rezunov by six families of peasants on the new bases of association, and the peasant Shurayev leased all the kitchen gardens on the same terms. The remainder was still worked as in the past, but these three items were the start of a new system and kept Levin very busy.

It is true that in the cattle yard things went on no better than before, and Ivan strongly protested the warm quarters for the cows and the butter, affirming that a cow needs less feed in the cold and that soured cream came out better, and he demanded his wages, as in the old days, and took no interest whatsoever in the fact that the money he received was not wages but an advance against his share of the profit.

It is true that Fyodor Rezunov did not have his men cross-plow before the sowing, as stipulated, justifying himself by saying time was short. It is true that the peasants of that group, although they had contracted to conduct the matter on the new bases, called this land sharecropped rather than land in common, and more than once both the peasants of this *artel* and Rezunov himself told Levin, "If you'd take some money for the land, you'd be more at ease and we'd have our hands untied." What's more, these peasants under various pretexts kept putting off construction of a cattle yard and threshing barn on the land and dragged it out until winter.

It is true that Shurayev would have liked to distribute the kitchen gardens he'd taken to the peasants in small parcels. He evidently had understood the terms on which the land had been let to him all wrong, and, it seemed, intentionally so.

It is true that often, while talking with the peasants and trying to explain all the advantages of the enterprise, Levin felt that the peasants were listening all the while only to the singing of his voice and knew for a fact that no matter what he said they would not fall for his trick. He sensed this in particular when

he spoke with the cleverest of the peasants, Rezunov, and he noticed that play in Rezunov's eyes which clearly showed both his amusement at Levin and his firm conviction that if anyone was going to be tricked, then it was by no means going to be him, Rezunov.

Despite all this, though, Levin thought that the business was under way and that, by keeping strict accounts and standing up for himself, he would prove to them in the future the advantages of this arrangement and that then the matter would take off of its own accord.

These matters, along with the rest of the farm that remained in his hands, as well as his desk work on his book, so occupied Levin's entire summer that he scarcely even went hunting. In late August he learned from their servant, who was bringing back the saddle, that the Oblonskys had left for Moscow. He sensed that by not replying to Darya Alexandrovna's letter, by his rudeness, which he could not recall without a blush of shame, he had burned his boats and could never see them again. He had acted in exactly the same way with Sviyazhsky, by leaving without saying good-bye. But he would never go to see them again, either. Now none of this mattered to him. The new system for his farm engaged him as nothing else in his life ever had. He read the books Sviyazhsky had given him, and after ordering those he didn't have, he also read the political economy and socialist books on this subject, and as he had anticipated, found nothing that might bear on the enterprise he had undertaken. In the books on political economy, in Mill, for example, whom he had studied at first with great fervor, hoping at any moment to come upon a solution to the problems that occupied him, he found laws derived from the situation in European farming. But he simply could not see why these laws, which did not apply to Russia, had to be universal. He saw the same thing in the socialist books: either it was the marvelous, but inapplicable, fantasies that had so carried him away as a student; or else it was alterations, fixes, for the situation in which Europe had been placed and with which agriculture in Russia had nothing in common. Political economy said that the laws by which Europe's wealth was developing were universal laws not subject to doubt. Socialist teaching said that development according to these laws would lead to ruin. Neither provided, let alone an answer, but even the slightest hint at what he, Levin, and all the Russian peasants and landowners were to do with their millions of hands and desyatinas to make them the most productive for the common good.

Once he had taken this matter up, he conscientiously read everything on the subject, and in the autumn he intended to go abroad to study the matter more on the spot, so that the same thing didn't happen to him on this question that had often happened to him on various issues. No sooner would he begin to understand a thought someone was expressing and to set forth his own when

someone would suddenly say to him, "But what about Kaufman, Jones, Dubois, and Miccelli?"³⁸ You haven't read them? Read them. They've already dealt with this issue."

He saw clearly now that Kaufman and Miccelli had nothing to tell him. He knew what he wanted. He saw that Russia had splendid lands and splendid workers and that in some instances, as with the peasant halfway to Sviyazhsky's, the workers and land had produced a lot, but in the majority of cases when capital had been invested in the European way, they produced little, and that this was so only because the workers wanted to work and worked well in the one way characteristic of them, and that this opposition was not haphazard but rather consistent, having its foundation in the spirit of the people. He thought that the Russian people, who had a calling to settle and work the immense unoccupied expanses until all the land was occupied, had consciously been sticking with the methods they needed to do this and that these methods were not nearly as bad as people ordinarily thought. He wanted to prove this in theory in his book and in practice on his farm.

30

In late September, lumber was felled for the construction of a cattle yard on the land given to the artel, and butter was sold from the cows and the profit divided up. On the farm, the business was going excellently in practice, or at least so it seemed to Levin. In order to explain the entire matter theoretically and complete his book, which, in Levin's dreams, ought not only to produce a revolution in political economy but also to annihilate that science completely and lay the foundation for a new science, about the people's relation to the land, he just needed to go abroad and study on the spot, everything that had been done along these lines, and find convincing proofs that everything that had been done there was wrong. Levin was waiting only for the wheat to be shipped in order to get the money and go abroad. But the rains began, preventing them from gathering the grain and potatoes left in the field, and all work stopped, even the wheat shipment. The roads were impassable muck; two mills were borne away in a flood, and the weather kept getting worse and worse.

On September 30 the sun came out in the morning, and counting on the weather, Levin began preparing finally for departure. He ordered the wheat poured, sent the steward to the merchant for the money, and himself set out through the farm to give his last instructions before his departure.

After completing all his business, wet from the water that streamed down his leather coat and down his back and boots, but in the jauntiest and highest of

spirits, Levin returned home as evening was falling. Toward evening the weather got much worse: sleet lashed his soaking wet horse, hitting its ears and head, so painfully that it was moving sideways; but under his hood Levin was fine, and he gazed cheerfully around at the muddy streams running down the ruts, at the drops hanging on every bared branch, at the whiteness of the patch of unmelted sleet on the planks of the bridge and at the succulent, still fleshy leaves of the elm that had fallen in a thick layer around the naked tree. Despite the gloominess of the surrounding nature, he felt particularly invigorated. His conversations with the peasants in the far village had shown him that they were getting used to the relationship. An old man, the innkeeper where he had stopped in to get dry, obviously approved of Levin's plan and himself proposed entering into a partnership for purchasing livestock.

"I only need to move steadily toward my goal and I'll get what I want," thought Levin, "but you have to have something to work and labor for. This is not my personal cause; rather here is a question of the general good. All farming, and most important the situation of the entire people, must change completely. Instead of poverty, general wealth and contentment; instead of hostility, consensus and the linking of interests. In short, a bloodless revolution, but a magnificent revolution, first in the small circle of our district, then the province, then Russia, then the entire world. Because a just idea cannot help but be fruitful. Yes, it is a goal worth working for. And it's being me, Kostya Levin, the one who went to a ball in a black tie and was refused by the Shcherbatskaya girl and who to himself is so pitiful and insignificant—that proves nothing. I'm certain that Franklin felt just as insignificant and had the same lack of confidence when he thought back on everything. That means nothing. He, too, must have had his own Agafya Mikhailovna in whom he confided his plans."

With thoughts like these, Levin rode up to the house in the darkness.

The steward, who had been to see the merchant, had come back and brought some of the money for the wheat. An agreement had been reached with the innkeeper, and along the way the steward had learned that the grain was still standing in the fields everywhere, so that this hundred and sixty haystacks were nothing in comparison with what others had lost.

After he had eaten, Levin sat in his armchair with a book, as he usually did, and as he read he continued to ponder his impending trip in connection with his book. Now the full import of the matter presented itself to him especially clearly, and entire sections expressing the essence of his thoughts coalesced in his mind of their own accord. "I need to write this down," he thought. "This should make up the brief introduction I'd thought unnecessary before." He rose to go to his desk, and Laska, lying at his feet, stretched, stood up as well, and

looked around at him, as if asking where to go. But there was no time to write it down because the foremen for the work detail arrived and Levin went out to the front hall to see them.

After the detail, that is, the job instructions for the next day, and after seeing all the peasants who had business with him, Levin went into his study and sat down to work. Laska lay down under the desk; Agafya Mikhailovna settled into her usual place knitting her sock.

After Levin had been writing for a while, Kitty, her refusal and their last meeting, suddenly came to mind with unusual vividness. He stood up and began pacing around the room.

"There's no sense in being miserable," Agafya Mikhailovna told him. "What are you sitting home for? You should go to the spa, seeing as you're all packed."

"I am going, Agafya Mikhailovna, the day after tomorrow. I have business to finish."

"Oh, what business do you have! Haven't you rewarded the peasants enough as is! As it is, they're saying, Your master's going to win the tsar's favor for this. It's strange. Why should you worry about the peasants?"

"I'm not worrying about them, I'm doing this for myself."

Agafya Mikhailovna knew all the details of Levin's farming plans. Levin often laid out his thoughts to her in all their subtleties and frequently debated with her and refused to agree with her explanations. Now, though, she understood what he told her very differently.

"Your soul, as everyone knows, it's your soul you have to think about more than anything," she said with a sigh. "There's Parfyon Denisych, even though he was illiterate, even so he passed away such as God grant anyone," she said about a recently deceased former house serf. "They gave him communion and extreme unction."

"I'm not talking about that," he said. "I'm saying that I'm doing it for my own benefit. It's more to my benefit if the peasants work better."

"Oh, no matter what you do, if he's a lazybones, he's going to keep stumbling along. If he has a conscience, he's going to work, and if not, there's nothing you can do."

"Well, but you yourself say Ivan's begun looking after the livestock better."

"I say one thing," replied Agafya Mikhailovna, evidently not by coincidence, but with the strict logic of thought. "You need to get married. That's what!"

Agafya Mikhailovna's mention of the very thing he had just been thinking about grieved and hurt him. Levin scowled and without answering her sat back down to his work, repeating to himself everything he had thought about the work's significance. But from time to time he listened in the silence to the

sound of Agafya Mikhailovna's needles, and recalling what he did not want to recall, he frowned once more.

At nine o'clock he heard a bell and the muffled rocking of a carriage through the muck.

"Well, now you have guests, so you won't be bored," said Agafya Mikhailovna, standing up and heading for the door. But Levin overtook her. His work was not going very well now, and he was happy to have any guest at all.

31

When he had run halfway down the staircase, Levin heard the familiar sound of coughing in the front hall; but he heard it indistinctly due to the sound of his steps and hoped that he was mistaken; then he caught sight of the entire long, bony, familiar figure, and it seemed he could no longer deceive himself, but he still hoped that he was mistaken and that this tall man, who had removed his fur coat and stopped coughing, was not his brother Nikolai.

Levin loved his brother, but being with him was always agony. Now, under the influence of the thoughts that had come to him and Agafya Mikhailovna's reminders, Levin was in a vague, confused state, and the impending meeting with his brother seemed especially hard. Instead of a cheerful, healthy guest, a stranger who, he hoped, might distract him in his emotional muddle, he had to see his brother, who understood him through and through, who would evoke in him the most heartfelt thoughts and make him speak his mind in full, and this is what he dreaded.

Berating himself for this vile feeling, Levin ran into the front hall. As soon as he saw his brother up close, this feeling of personal disenchantment evaporated to be replaced by pity. No matter how terrible his brother Nikolai's emaciation and chronic ill health had been before, now he was even thinner, even more exhausted. He was a skeleton covered with skin.

He was standing in the front hall, jerking his long skinny neck and pulling off his scarf; he was smiling in a strangely doleful way. When he saw this smile, meek and humble, Levin felt spasms squeeze his throat.

"There, I've come to see you," said Nikolai in a muffled voice, not taking his eyes off his brother's face for a second. "I've been meaning to for a long time, but I was always unwell. Now I'm much better," he said, wiping his beard with his large, thin hands.

"Yes, yes!" replied Levin. He was even more terrified when they kissed in greeting and he felt with his lips the dryness of his brother's body and saw at close hand his large, strangely glittering eyes.

A few weeks before, Levin had written his brother that from the sale of the small section that remained undivided among them in the house, his brother could now get his share, about two thousand rubles.

Nikolai said he had come now to receive the money and, most important, spend some time in the family nest and touch the land to gather strength, like the *bogatyr*s, for his upcoming exploits.³⁹ In spite of his increased stoop, and in spite of his skinniness, which was so striking given his height, his movements, as usual, were quick and abrupt. Levin led him to his study.

His brother changed his clothes with special care, something he never used to do, combed his thinning, straight hair, and smiling, went upstairs.

He was in the most affectionate and cheerful of spirits, the way Levin often recalled him in childhood. He even mentioned Sergej Ivanovich without malice. When he saw Agafya Mikhailovna, he joked with her and asked her about old servants. The news of Parfyon Denisych's death had an unpleasant effect on him. Fear passed across his face, but he recovered immediately.

"He was old, after all," he said, and changed the subject. "Yes, you see I'm going to stay with you for a month or two and then go to Moscow. You know, Myahkov promised me a position, and I'm entering the service. Now I'm going to arrange my life very differently," he continued. "You know, I sent that woman away."

"Marya Nikolaevna? What do you mean? What for?"

"Oh, she's a vile woman! She caused me a pile of trouble." But he did not relate what kind of trouble there had been. He could not say he had driven Marya Nikolaevna out because the tea was weak; the main thing was she had tended to him as if he were sick. "And anyway, now I want to change my life completely. Naturally, I, like everyone else, have done foolish things, but money is the least of it; I don't regret it. If only I have my health, and now my health has improved, thank God."

Levin listened and tried to think what to say, but couldn't. Nikolai must have felt it, too; he began questioning his brother about his affairs; and Levin was happy to talk about himself because he could talk without pretending. He related to his brother his plans and actions.

His brother listened but obviously took no interest.

These two men were so close, so dear, that the slightest movement, their tone of voice, said more to them than anything that could be said in words.

Now both had but one thought: Nikolai's illness and imminent death, which overshadowed everything else. Neither one dared speak of it, though, and so no matter what they said without expressing what alone interested them—it was all a lie. Never had Levin been so happy to see an evening end and to have to

go to bed. Never with any visit from any stranger or official had he been so unnatural and false as he had been that day, and his awareness and remorse for this unnaturalness made him even more unnatural. He felt like crying over his dear dying brother, yet he had to listen to and sustain a conversation about how he was going to live.

Since it was damp in the house and only one room was heated, Levin had his brother sleep in his bedroom behind a screen.

His brother went to bed and, whether he did or didn't sleep, he tossed and turned, coughed like a sick man, and when he could not stop coughing, grumbled something. Sometimes, when he was breathing hard, he said, "Oh, my God!" Sometimes when the wetness was choking him he said with irritation, "Oh, hell!" For a long time Levin could not sleep, listening to him. Levin's thoughts were running in different directions, but all his thoughts ended up at the same place: death.

Death, the inevitable end of everything, for the first time presented itself to him with irresistible force, and this death which here, in his dear brother, who was half-awake moaning and calling out of habit first on God, then the devil, was not at all so far away as it had seemed. It was right there inside him; he could feel it. If not today, then tomorrow, if not tomorrow then in thirty years, did it really matter? But what precisely this inevitable death was—that he not only did not know, not only had he never thought about it, but he could not and dared not think about it.

"I'm working and I'm trying to accomplish something, but I've forgotten that everything comes to an end, that there is death."

He was sitting up in bed in the darkness, hunched over and hugging his knees, and holding his breath from the strain of thinking, he thought. But the more he strained his thoughts, the clearer it became to him that it was undoubtedly so that he had indeed forgotten, had overlooked in life one small circumstance—that death would come and everything would come to an end, that it was not even worth starting anything and there was simply no way to do anything about it. Yes, it was horrible, but it was so.

"Yes, but I am still alive. So what should I do? What should I do?" he said in despair. He lit a candle and cautiously stood and walked to the mirror and began examining his face and hair. Yes, there were gray hairs at his temples. He opened his mouth. His back teeth were beginning to decay. He bared his muscular arms. Yes, plenty of strength. But dear Nikolai, who was now breathing there with what remained of his lungs, had also had a healthy body. Suddenly he recalled how as children they had slept together and just waited for Fyodor Bogdanych to walk out the door to fall on each other with pillows and laugh,

laugh uncontrollably, so that even their fear of Fyodor Bogdanych could not put a stop to this overflowing, ebullient awareness of the happiness of life. “And now this crooked, hollow chest . . . and I, not knowing what is going to happen to me or why.”

“Ugh! Ugh! Hell! What are you fussing about? Why aren’t you sleeping?” his brother’s voice called out.

“I don’t know. Insomnia.”

“And I was sleeping so well, I’m not even sweating now. Look, feel my shirt. Any sweat?”

Levin felt it, went back behind the screen, and put out the candle, but it took him a long time to fall asleep. Just when the matter of how to live was a little clearer to him, a new insoluble question had posed itself—death.

“Well, he’s dying, well, he’ll die by spring, and how can I help him? What can I tell him? What do I know of this? I’d even forgotten it existed.”

32

Levin had long ago observed that when it is awkward to be with people because they are excessively amenable and humble, then it very quickly becomes unbearable because they are too demanding and faultfinding. He sensed that this would happen with his brother, too, and indeed, his brother Nikolai’s meekness did not last long. Beginning the following morning he became irritable and assiduously found fault with his brother, touching his most sensitive spots.

Levin felt guilty and could do nothing to fix that. He felt that if they didn’t both pretend but instead said what their hearts were prompting them to say, that is, only what they were actually thinking and feeling, then they would only look each other in the eye and Konstantin would say, “You’re going to die, die, die!” and Nikolai would reply, “I know I’m going to die, but I’m afraid, afraid, afraid!” And they would have nothing more to say if they said only what was in their hearts. But no one can live that way, so Konstantin attempted to do what he had attempted all his life and been unable to do and what, according to his observation, many knew how to do so well and without which living was impossible: he attempted to say not what he was thinking and constantly sensed that this sounded false, that his brother was catching him in this and was irritated by it.

On the third day Nikolai called his brother in to explain his plan again and began not only to condemn it but also intentionally to confuse it with communism.

“You’ve just borrowed someone else’s idea but distorted it, and now you want to apply it to something you can’t.”

"I've been telling you that this has nothing in common with that. They repudiate the fairness of property, capital, and inheritance, while I, without repudiating this chief *stimulus* (Levin was disgusted with himself for using these words, but ever since he had gotten engrossed in his work, he had begun using non-Russian words more and more), I merely want to regulate labor."

"That's just what I mean. You've taken someone else's thought, cut off everything that represents its strength, and are trying to assure me that this is something new," said Nikolai, twitching angrily in his tie.

"But my idea has nothing in common—"

"There," said Nikolai Levin, smiling ironically, his eyes glittering spitefully, "there at least there is a geometric charm, so to speak—a clarity and inevitability. Perhaps it's a utopia. But let's allow that one could make a *tabula rasa* of all that's past—no property, no family—and then labor would sort itself out properly. But you have nothing—"

"Why do you confuse things? I've never been a communist."

"Well, I have, and I find that it's premature but sensible, and there's a future in it, like Christianity in the first centuries."

"I just think the workforce should be considered from the natural scientist's point of view, that is, study it and recognize its properties and—"

"Oh, that's utterly pointless. This force finds a certain manner of activity for itself, according to its degree of development. Everywhere there have been slaves, then *métayers*; and we have sharecropping, we have leasing, we have farm labor—what are you looking for?"⁴⁰

Levin suddenly turned red at these words because in his heart of hearts he was afraid it was the truth—the truth that he had been wanting to strike a balance between communism and concrete forms and that this was scarcely possible.

"I'm searching for a means of working productively both for myself and for the worker. I want to set up—" he replied hotly.

"You don't want to set up anything. It's just the way you've lived your whole life. You'd like to be original and show that you're not simply exploiting the peasants but have an idea to go along with it."

"Well, that's what you think. Now leave me alone!" replied Levin, feeling the muscle in his left cheek twitching uncontrollably.

"You've never had any convictions. You just want to soothe your self-esteem."

"Fine! Now leave me alone!"

"I will! I should have a long time ago, and to hell with you! I truly regret I ever came!"

No matter what Levin did after that to try to calm his brother, Nikolai would

have none of it. He kept saying that it would be much better if they went their separate ways, and Konstantin saw that life had simply become intolerable for his brother.

Nikolai was quite ready to leave when Konstantin went to see him again and with a certain affectation asked for his forgiveness if he had done anything to offend him.

“Ah, magnanimity!” said Nikolai, and he smiled. “If you want to be in the right, then I can afford you that satisfaction. You’re right, but I’m leaving anyway!”

Only just before Nikolai’s departure did they embrace, and Nikolai said, suddenly looking at his brother in an oddly grave way:

“Please don’t think ill of me, Kostya!” And his voice trembled.

These were the only words spoken sincerely. Levin realized that by these words he meant, “You see and know that I’m in a bad way and we may never see each other again.” Levin realized this, and tears gushed from his eyes. He kissed his brother once more, but he didn’t have the strength or the ability to say anything to him.

Three days after his brother’s departure, Levin too went abroad. When he met Shcherbatsky, Kitty’s cousin, on the train, Levin’s gloom surprised him greatly.

“What’s the matter with you?” Shcherbatsky asked him.

“Oh, nothing, it’s just there’s not much of anything cheerful in the world.”

“What do you mean not much? Here we are on our way to Paris instead of Mulhouse. Just look how cheerful!”

“No, I’m already done. It’s time for me to die.”

“Now there’s something!” said Shcherbatsky, laughing. “I was just getting ready to begin.”

“Yes, I thought the same until recently, but now I know I shall die soon.”

Levin said what he had genuinely been thinking of late. He saw in everything only death or the approach to it. But the matter he had undertaken occupied him all the more. Somehow he had to live out his life until death did come. Darkness had covered everything for him. But it was precisely because of this darkness that he felt that the sole guiding thread in this darkness was his work, and he grabbed it and held on with all his strength.

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IV

1

The Karenins, husband and wife, continued to live in the same house, and meet every day, but they were utter strangers to each other. Alexei Alexandrovich made it a rule to see his wife every day, so that a servant would have no right to make any assumptions, but he avoided dinners at home. Vronsky never appeared in Alexei Alexandrovich's house, but Anna saw him outside the house, and her husband knew this.

The situation was agonizing for all three, and none of them would have had the strength to make it through a single day in this situation had he not anticipated that it would change and that it was merely a temporary, grievous complication that would pass. Alexei Alexandrovich was waiting for this passion to pass, as everything does, for everyone to forget about it and his name to remain unbesmirched. Anna, on whom this situation depended and for whom it was more agonizing than anyone, endured it because she not only anticipated but was firmly confident that all this would be disentangled and clarified very soon. She decidedly did not know what would disentangle the situation, but she was firmly confident that this something would now come very soon. Vronsky, who could not do other than obey her, was also anticipating something independent of himself that would oblige all the complications to be resolved.

In the middle of winter Vronsky spent a very boring week. He had been assigned to a foreign prince who was visiting Petersburg and was supposed to show him the sights of Petersburg. Vronsky himself was impressive. Besides that, he possessed the art of bearing himself in a dignified and respectful manner and had the habit of dealing with such individuals; this was why he had been assigned to the prince. He found his duty very hard, though. The prince did not want to miss anything about which he would be asked at home whether he had seen it in Russia; and he himself wished to partake of all the Russian pleasures he could. Vronsky was obliged to guide him in both. In the mornings they rode around viewing the sights, and in the evenings they took part in national pleasures. The prince enjoyed health unusual even among princes; through both gymnastics and good care of his body he had brought himself to such strength

that, despite the excesses of his pleasures, he was as fresh as a big green glossy Dutch cucumber. The prince had traveled a great deal and found that one of the main advantages of the current ease of transportation consisted in the accessibility of national pleasures. He had been in Spain and there had serenaded and become intimate with a Spanish girl who played the mandolin. In Switzerland he had killed a *chamois*. In England he had jumped fences on horseback wearing a red hunting jacket and killed two hundred pheasants on a bet. In Turkey he had been in a harem, in India he had ridden an elephant, and now in Russia he wished to sample all the special Russian pleasures.

Vronsky, who was with him as a kind of master of ceremonies, took great pains to apportion all the Russian pleasures offered the prince by various individuals. There were trotters, *bliny*, bear hunts, troikas, Gypsies, and drinking bouts with Russian plate smashing.¹ The prince assimilated the Russian spirit with extraordinary ease, smashed trays of plates, sat a Gypsy woman on his knee, and seemed to ask, Isn't there something else, or does the entire Russian spirit consist merely of this?

In essence, of all the Russian pleasures the prince liked best of all the French actresses, the ballet dancer, and the white seal Champagne. Vronsky was used to princes, but whether it was because he himself had changed of late or due to the excessive closeness with this prince, he found this week terribly hard. All this week without a break he experienced an emotion similar to the emotion of someone who has been assigned to a dangerous lunatic, who fears the lunatic and at the same time, due to his proximity, fears for his own sanity. Vronsky felt a constant necessity not for one second to ease up on his tone of strict official deference, so that he would not be insulted. The prince's manner of address with the very same people who, to Vronsky's surprise, were doing their utmost to afford him Russian pleasures, was contemptuous. His judgments on Russian women, whom he wished to study, made Vronsky turn red with indignation more than once. The main reason why Vronsky found the prince especially difficult was the fact that he could not help but see himself in him. And what he saw in this mirror did not flatter his self-esteem. This was a very foolish, very self-assured, very healthy, very cleanly man, and nothing more. He was a gentleman—that was true, and Vronsky could not deny it. He was even-tempered and not ingratiating with his superiors; he was free and easy in addressing his equals and was contemptuously good-natured with his inferiors. Vronsky himself was just the same and considered it a great virtue; but with respect to the prince he was an inferior, and this contemptuous good nature infuriated him.

"Dumb ox! Am I really like that?" he thought.

Be that as it may, when he said good-bye to him on the seventh day, before

his departure for Moscow, and received his gratitude, he was happy to be rid of this awkward situation and distasteful mirror. He said good-bye to him at the station upon their return from a bear hunt where all night long they had witnessed a presentation of Russian mettle.

2

Returning home, Vronsky found a note from Anna in his room. She wrote, "I am ill and unhappy. I cannot go out, but I cannot go any longer without seeing you. Come this evening. At seven o'clock Alexei Alexandrovich is going to the council and will be there until ten." After contemplating for a minute the oddness of her summoning him directly to her home, despite her husband's demand that she not receive him, he decided he would go.

Vronsky had that winter been promoted to colonel, had moved out of the regiment, and was living alone. After eating, he immediately lay down on the sofa, and in five minutes memories of the outrageous scenes he had witnessed in the last few days became confused and mixed up with an image in his mind of Anna and the peasant beater who had played an important role in the bear hunt; and Vronsky fell asleep. He awoke in the darkness, trembling from terror, and hastily lit a candle. "What's this? What? What terrible thing did I dream? Yes, yes. The peasant beater, I think, that short, filthy man with the rumpled beard, leaned over doing something and suddenly started speaking such strange words in French. Yes, that's all I dreamed," he told himself. "But why was it so awful?" Once again he vividly recalled the peasant and those incomprehensible French words this peasant had uttered, and horror ran down his spine like ice.

"What nonsense!" thought Vronsky, and he looked at his watch.

It was already half past eight. He rang for his servant, dressed in haste, and went out onto the front steps, having completely forgotten the dream and bothered only by the fact that he was late. Riding up to the Karenins' front steps, he glanced at his watch and saw that it was ten until nine. A tall, narrow carriage harnessed with a pair of grays was standing by the entrance. He recognized Anna's carriage. "She's coming to see me," thought Vronsky, "and that would have been better. I find it distasteful to enter this house. It doesn't matter, though; I can't hide," he told himself, and with the manners of a man who has nothing to be ashamed of, manners he had possessed since childhood, Vronsky stepped from his sleigh and walked to the door. The door opened and the porter, carrying a lap robe on his arm, beckoned to the carriage. Vronsky, who was unaccustomed to noticing details, noticed nonetheless the now astonished expression the porter cast at him. Vronsky nearly ran into Alexei Alexandro-

vich in the doorway. A gas jet directly lit the bloodless, pinched face under the black hat and the white tie that gleamed from under the beaver of his coat. Karenin's perfectly still, dull eyes focused on Vronsky's face. Vronsky bowed, and Alexei Alexandrovich, chewing his lips, raised his hand to his hat and walked past. Vronsky saw him get into the carriage without looking back, take the lap robe and opera glass through the window, and disappear. Vronsky walked into the front hall. His brow was scowling, and his eyes glittered with an angry and proud gleam.

"There's a situation!" he thought. "Had he struggled and tried to defend his honor, I might have acted, expressed my feelings; but this weakness, or baseness. . . . He is putting me in the position of the cheat, and that I have never wanted to be."

Since the time of his explanation with Anna, in Madame Wrede's garden, Vronsky's thoughts had changed greatly. Unwillingly submitting to Anna's weakness, who had surrendered to him completely and only awaited from him the decision of her fate, submitting in advance to everything, he had long since ceased to think that this liaison could end, as he had once thought. His ambitious plans once again receded into the background, and sensing that he had stepped out of the circle of activity in which everything was well defined, he surrendered entirely to his emotion, and this emotion was attaching him to her with increasing strength.

While still in the front hall he heard her retreating steps. He realized that she had been waiting for him, listening, and had now returned to the drawing room.

"No!" she cried when she saw him, and at the first sound of her voice tears came to her eyes. "No, if this is going to go on like this, then it's going to happen much, much sooner!"

"What, my friend?"

"What? I've been waiting, agonizing, an hour, two. . . . No, I'm not going to! I cannot quarrel with you. It's true, you couldn't have. No, I'm not going to!"

She put both hands on his shoulders and for a long time gazed at him with a deep, ecstatic, yet searching gaze. She studied his face to make up for the time she had not seen him. As at any rendezvous, she rolled into one her imagined notion of him (incomparably better, impossible in reality) and the way he really was.

3

"Did you run into him?" she asked when they had sat down by the table under the lamp. "That's your punishment for being late."

“Yes, but how did it happen? Wasn’t he supposed to be in council?”

“He was and came back and went out again somewhere. But that doesn’t matter. Don’t speak of it. Where have you been? With the prince all that time?”

She knew all the details of his life. He wanted to tell her that he hadn’t slept all night and had fallen asleep, but looking at her agitated and happy face, he felt guilty. He said that he’d had to go give a report on the prince’s departure.

“But now it’s over? He’s gone?”

“Thank God, it’s over. You can’t believe how unbearable it was for me.”

“But why? After all, it’s the typical life of all you young men,” she said, frowning her brow, and, picking up her crocheting, which lay on the table, she began freeing the hook from it, not looking at Vronsky.

“I left that life behind long ago,” he said, amazed at the change of expression in her face and trying to penetrate its meaning. “I confess,” he said, displaying his strong white teeth with his smile, “I’ve been looking in the mirror this week, looking at this life, and I found it distasteful.”

She held her crocheting in her hands but didn’t crochet, instead she looked at him with a strange, glittering, and unfriendly gaze.

“This morning Liza came by to see me. They’re still not afraid of paying me a visit, despite Countess Lydia Ivanovna,” she interjected, “and she told me about your Athenian night.² What filth!”

“I just wanted to say that—”

She interrupted him.

“Was that *Thérèse* there, who you used to know?”

“I wanted to say—”

“How vile you are, you men! How can you fail to conceive that a woman cannot forget that,” she said, getting angrier and angrier and in this way revealing to him the reason for her irritation. “Especially a woman who cannot know your life. What do I know? What did I know?” she said. “Just what you tell me. But how do I know you’re telling me the truth?”

“Anna! You’re insulting me. Don’t you believe me? Haven’t I told you that I have no thought I wouldn’t reveal to you?”

“Yes, yes,” she said, evidently trying to drive out her jealous thoughts. “But if you knew how hard it was for me! I believe you, I do. . . . So what were you saying?”

But he couldn’t remember immediately what he had been about to say. These fits of jealousy, which had been coming over her more and more often lately, horrified him, and no matter how he tried to conceal it, they made him cooler toward her, although he knew that the cause of her jealousy was her love for him. How many times had he told himself that her love was his happiness; and here she loved him as a woman can love for whom love outweighed every

good in life—yet he was much farther from happiness than when he had followed her from Moscow. Then, he had counted himself unhappy, but happiness was ahead, and now he felt that the best happiness was already behind. She was not at all the way she had been when he had seen her the first time. Both morally and physically she had changed for the worse. She was much filled out, and her face, when she was talking about the actress, had a spiteful expression that distorted it. He looked at her as a man looks at a faded flower he has plucked and in which he has trouble seeing the beauty that had led him to pluck and ruin it. He felt that when his love had been stronger he could have, if he had wanted to very much, torn that love out of his heart, but now, when at this moment he did not seem to feel any love for her, he knew that his tie to her could not be sundered.

“Well, well, so what did you want to tell me about the prince? I’ve driven the demon out, driven it out,” she added. Between themselves they called her jealousy the demon. “Yes, weren’t you starting to tell me about the prince? Why was it so difficult for you?”

“Oh, unbearable!” he said, trying to retrieve the thread of his lost thought. “He doesn’t gain from closer acquaintance. If I were to define him, then he’s a superbly fed animal, the kind that wins first in show, and nothing more,” he said with an annoyance that piqued her interest.

“No, but how?” she objected. “Hasn’t he seen a great deal? Isn’t he educated?”

“It’s a completely different education—their education. He evidently has been educated only in order to have the right to despise education, as they despise everything other than animal pleasures.”

“Yes, but you all love these animal pleasures,” she said, and again he noticed the dark look that avoided him.

“So how is it you’re defending him?” he said, smiling.

“I’m not defending him, I don’t care at all; but I think that if you yourself did not love these pleasures, then you could have refused. But it gives you pleasure to look at Thérèse in the costume of Eve.”

“Again, again the devil!” said Vronsky, picking up the hand she had laid on the table and kissing it.

“Yes, but I can’t help it! You don’t know how I suffered waiting for you! I don’t think I’m jealous. I’m not jealous; I believe in you when you’re here, with me; but when you’re somewhere alone leading a life I don’t understand . . .”

She pulled away from him, extricated, at last, the hook from her crocheting, and quickly, with the help of her index finger, began throwing one loop after another of white wool gleaming under the lamp’s light, and quickly, nervously began twisting her slender wrist in its embroidered cuff.

“Well how was it? Where did you meet Alexei Alexandrovich?” Her voice suddenly sounded unnatural.

“We ran into each other at the door.”

“And he bowed to you like this?”

She made a long face, and half-closing her eyes, quickly changed the expression of her face and folded her hands, and Vronsky suddenly saw in her handsome face the very expression with which Alexei Alexandrovich had bowed to him. He smiled, and she laughed gaily, that sweet, deep laugh that was one of her main charms.

“I decidedly do not understand him,” said Vronsky. “If after your explanation at the dacha he had broken with you, if he had challenged me to a duel . . . but this I don’t understand. How can he bear this situation? He’s suffering, that is obvious.”

“He?” she said with a grin. “He is perfectly content.”

“What do we all keep torturing ourselves over when everything could be so fine?”

“Only not him. Don’t I know him, this lie that runs right through him? Could I, feeling anything, live the way he lives with me? He understands nothing, feels nothing. Can a man who feels anything really live in the same house with a *criminal* wife? Could he really speak with her? Address her familiarly?”³

Again she could not help but mimic him. “Anna, *ma chère*, Anna dear!

“He’s not a man, not a human being, he’s a puppet! No one knows, but I know. Oh, if I were in his place, I would have killed her long ago, I would have torn a wife like myself to pieces, and I would not be saying, ‘Anna, *ma chère*, Anna, dear.’ He’s not a man, he’s a ministerial machine. He doesn’t understand that I am your wife, that he is the outsider, that he is the one who is superfluous. Let’s not, let’s not speak of him!”

“You’re unfair, very unfair, my friend,” said Vronsky, trying to calm her. “But it doesn’t matter, let’s not talk about him. Tell me, what have you been doing? What’s wrong with you? What is this illness, and what did the doctor say?”

She looked at him with derisive delight. Evidently she had found still other ridiculous and ugly aspects in her husband and was waiting for the moment to express them.

He went on.

“I’m guessing it’s not an illness but your condition. When will it be?”

The mocking light went out in her eyes, but another smile—the knowledge of something he did not know and of a quiet sorrow—replaced her former expression.

“Soon, soon. You yourself have said that our situation is agonizing, that we need to disentangle it. If only you knew how hard it was for me, what I would

give to love you freely and boldly! I would not be tormented, and would not torment you with my jealousy. And this is going to happen soon, but not the way we have been thinking.”

At the thought of how it would be, she seemed so pathetic even to herself that tears sprang to her eyes, and she could not go on. She put her very white hand with its rings, which glowed under the lamp, on his sleeve.

“It’s not going to be the way we’ve been thinking. I didn’t want to tell you this, but you’ve forced me. Soon, very soon, everything will disentangle itself, and all of us, all of us will calm down and be tormented no longer.”

“I don’t understand,” he said, understanding her.

“You asked when? Soon. And I won’t survive it. Don’t interrupt!” She hastened to finish. “I know this, and I know it for certain. I’m going to die, and I’m very happy that I’m going to die and free myself and you.”

Tears streamed from her eyes; he leaned over her hand and began kissing it, trying to conceal his agitation, which, he knew, had no foundation, but he could not overcome it.

“There, that’s it, and it’s better that way,” she said, pressing his hand with a powerful movement. “This is the one thing, the one thing we have left.”

He recovered and looked up.

“What nonsense! What idiotic nonsense you’re speaking!”

“No, it’s the truth.”

“What? What’s the truth?”

“That I’m going to die. I had a dream.”

“A dream?” Vronsky repeated, and he instantly recalled the peasant in his dream.

“Yes, a dream,” she said. “It was a long time ago that I had this dream. I dreamed that I was running into my bedroom, that I needed to get something there, find out something. You know how it is in a dream,” she said, opening her eyes wide in horror. “And in the bedroom, something was standing in the corner.”

“What nonsense! How can you believe . . .”

But she would not let herself be cut off. What she was saying was too important to her.

“That ‘something’ turned around, and I saw it was a peasant with a rumpled beard, and he was small and frightening. I wanted to run, but he leaned over a sack and rummaged through it.”

She imitated him rummaging in the sack. Horror was on her face. And Vronsky, recalling his own dream, felt the same horror that had filled his soul.

“He was rummaging around and saying something in French, very quickly,

and you know, he was using French *r*'s: '*Il faut le battre le fer, le boyer, le pétrir.*'⁴ And from terror I wanted to wake up, and I did, but when I woke up I was still dreaming, and I began asking myself what it meant, and Kornei told me, 'Labor, you're going to die in labor, labor, good mother.' Then I woke up."

"What nonsense, what nonsense!" said Vronsky, but he himself could feel the lack of conviction in his voice.

"But let's not talk about it. Ring, I'll have tea served. And stay awhile, it won't be long now until I—"

But suddenly she stopped. The expression on her face changed instantaneously. Horror and agitation were suddenly replaced by an expression of gentle, grave, and blissful attention. He couldn't understand the significance of this change. She had felt inside her the stirring of a new life.

4

After meeting Vronsky on his own front steps, Alexei Alexandrovich had set out, as he had intended, for the Italian opera. He had sat through two acts there and seen everyone he needed to see. When he returned home, he examined the coat stand carefully, and remarking that there was no military coat, he proceeded to his rooms, as was his custom. But contrary to custom he did not go to bed and paced back and forth, up and down his study, until three o'clock in the morning. His fury at his wife, who had not wished to observe the proprieties and comply with the sole condition he had set for her— not to receive her lover at home— would give him no rest. She had not met his demand, and he had to punish her and carry out his threat— demand a divorce and take away their son. He knew all the difficulties connected with this course of action, but he said he would do it and now he had to follow through on his threat. Countess Lydia Ivanovna had hinted to him that this was the best solution to his situation, and of late the practice of divorces had been brought to such a state of perfection that Alexei Alexandrovich could see an opportunity for overcoming the formal difficulties. Moreover, misfortune does not come alone, and the affairs of organizing the native populations and irrigating the fields of Zaisk Province had brought down upon Alexei Alexandrovich such official troubles that of late he had been constantly in a state of extreme irritation.

He did not sleep all night, and his fury, mounting in a tremendous progression, by morning had reached extreme limits. He dressed hurriedly, and as if he were carrying a full cup of his fury and afraid of spilling it, afraid of wasting not only his fury but the energy needed for the explanation with his wife, went into her room the moment he learned that she had risen.

Anna, who had thought she knew her husband so well, was stunned by the sight of him when he entered her room. His brow was furrowed, and his eyes were staring gloomily straight ahead, avoiding her gaze; his mouth was pressed firmly and contemptuously shut. His walk, his movements, and the sound of his voice held a decisiveness and firmness that his wife had never seen in him before. He entered the room and without greeting her headed directly toward her writing table, picked up the key, and opened the drawer.

“What do you need?!” she cried.

“Your lover’s letters,” he said.

“They’re not here,” she said, closing the drawer; but by this movement he realized that he had guessed correctly, and rudely pushing her hand aside, he quickly snatched the portfolio in which he knew she kept her most essential papers. She was about to tear the portfolio away, but he pushed her back.

“Sit down! I need to speak with you,” he said, slipping the portfolio under his arm and squeezing it so tensely with his elbow that his shoulder lifted.

Surprised and intimidated, she looked at him in silence.

“I told you I would not allow you to receive your lover at home.”

“I needed to see him to—”

She stopped, not finding any excuse.

“I won’t go into the details of why a woman needs to see her lover.”

“I wanted, I only . . .” she said, blazing up. This rudeness of his irritated her and gave her daring. “Can’t you feel how easy it is for you to insult me?” she said.

“One can insult an honest man and an honest woman, but to tell a thief that he is a thief is only *la constatation d’un fait*.”⁵

“This is a new cruelty I never knew in you before.”

“You call it cruelty when a husband gives his wife her freedom, giving her the honorable shelter of his name on the sole condition that she observe the proprieties. That is cruelty?”

“It’s worse than cruelty. It’s baseness, if you really want to know!” Anna shouted in a burst of anger, and standing up, she tried to leave.

“No!” he cried in his shrill voice, which now rose a note even higher than usual, and grabbing her by the arm with his large fingers so powerfully that the bracelet he squeezed left red marks, he forcibly sat her down. “Baseness? If you want to use that word, then baseness is abandoning husband and son for a lover while eating your husband’s bread!”

She bowed her head. She not only did not say what she had said yesterday to her lover, that *he* was her husband, and her husband was superfluous; she did not even think this. She felt the full justice of his words and only said softly, “You cannot make my position out to be worse than I myself understand it to be, but what are you saying all this for?”

“What am I saying this for? What for?” he continued just as angrily. “So you know that, since you have not complied with my will concerning observing the proprieties, I am going to take measures to end this situation.”

“Soon, very soon, it will end anyway,” she said, and again tears at the thought of her imminent, now desired death sprang to her eyes.

“It will end sooner than you and your lover imagined! You need satisfaction of your animal passion —”

“Alexei Alexandrovich! I’m not saying this is not magnanimous, but it is indecent to beat someone who is already laid low.”

“Yes, all you think of is yourself, but the sufferings of the man who was your husband are of no interest for you. You don’t care that his entire life has been ruined, what he has suffered . . . suffered . . . suffered through.”

Alexei Alexandrovich was speaking so quickly that he got muddled and simply could not pronounce that word. Eventually he pronounced it “suffered.” She found this funny and was immediately ashamed that she could find anything funny at a moment like this. And for the first time, she felt sorry for him for an instant, put herself in his place and felt sorry for him. But what could she say or do? She dropped her head and fell silent. He, too, was silent for a brief while and began speaking again in a less shrill and cold voice, emphasizing arbitrarily chosen words of no particular importance:

“I came to tell you, . . .” he said.

She looked up at him. “No, I only imagined it,” she thought, recalling the expression of his face when he got muddled on the word “suffered.” “No, can a man with these dull eyes and this complacent calm feel anything?”

“I cannot change anything,” she whispered.

“I came to tell you that I am leaving for Moscow tomorrow and I will not return again to this house, and you will have news of my decision through my lawyer, to whom I will entrust the matter of a divorce. My son will move to my sister’s,” said Alexei Alexandrovich, struggling to remember what he had meant to say about his son.

“You need Seryozha just to hurt me,” she said, looking up at him sullenly. “You don’t love him. Leave me Seryozha!”

“Yes, I’ve even lost my love for my son because he is connected to my revulsion for you. But I will take him anyway. Good-bye!”

He was about to leave, but she held him back.

“Alexei Alexandrovich, leave me Seryozha,” she whispered again. “I have nothing else to say. Leave me Seryozha until I . . . I’m going to give birth soon, leave him to me!”

Alexei Alexandrovich flared up and tearing his hand away from her left the room without a word.

5

The waiting room of the famous Petersburg lawyer was full when Alexei Alexandrovich entered it. Three ladies—an old woman, a young woman, and a merchant's wife—and three gentlemen—one German banker with a signet ring on his finger, another a merchant with a beard, and a third, an angry official wearing a civil uniform, with an order around his neck, had evidently been waiting a long time.⁶ Two assistants were writing at their desks, scratching with their pens. The writing implements, for which Alexei Alexandrovich was a great enthusiast, were uncommonly fine; Alexei Alexandrovich could not help but notice this. One of the assistants, without standing, scowled and addressed Alexei Alexandrovich angrily.

“What can I do for you?”

“I have a matter for the lawyer.”

“The lawyer is busy,” the assistant replied sternly, pointing with his pen to the people waiting, and he continued to write.

“Can't he find the time?” said Alexei Alexandrovich.

“He has no free time, he is always busy. If you like, you may wait.”

“Then I must trouble you to give him my card,” said Alexei Alexandrovich with dignity, seeing the necessity of abandoning his incognito.

The assistant took his card, and obviously not approving of its content, passed through the door.

Alexei Alexandrovich sympathized with the public trial in principle, but some of the details of its application among us did not meet with his full sympathy, due to higher official attitudes known to him, and he condemned it, as much as he was capable of condemning anything that had been approved at the very highest level.⁷ His entire life had passed in administrative work, so when he did not sympathize with something, his lack of sympathy was tempered by his recognition of the inevitability of mistakes and the possibility of correction in each case. In the new judicial institutions he did not approve of the conditions in which the legal profession had been placed. Up until this time, however, he had never had any dealings with the legal profession, so he had disapproved of it only in theory; now his disapproval was intensified by the distasteful impression he had been given in the lawyer's waiting room.

“He will be right out,” said the assistant, and indeed, two minutes later the tall figure of an elderly man of the law who had been consulting with the lawyer appeared in the doorway together with the lawyer himself.

The lawyer was a short, stocky, balding man with a dark rusty beard, long fair eyebrows, and an overhanging brow. He was as smartly turned out as a bridegroom, from his tie to his double chain and patent leather boots. His face was clever and peasantlike; his attire dandyish and in poor taste.

“Please,” said the lawyer, addressing Alexei Alexandrovich. After gloomily allowing Karenin to pass, he shut the door. “Will this do?” He pointed to a comfortable chair by a desk covered with papers and himself sat in the presiding chair, rubbing his small hands with his stubby fingers covered in white hairs, his head tilted to one side. No sooner had he settled into his pose, though, than a moth flew across his desk. With a speed one could not have expected from him, the lawyer unclasped his hands, caught the moth, and resumed his former position.

“Before beginning to speak about my case,” said Alexei Alexandrovich, watching the lawyer’s movements in astonishment, “I must note that the case about which I must speak with you is to remain a secret.”

A barely perceptible smile spread the lawyer’s rusty hanging mustache.

“I would not be a lawyer if I could not keep the secrets entrusted to me. However, if you would like confirmation . . .”

Alexei Alexandrovich looked at his face and saw that the clever gray eyes were laughing and already knew everything.

“Do you know my name?” continued Alexei Alexandrovich.

“I know you and your beneficial” —he caught another moth — “activities, as does every Russian,” said the lawyer, bowing.

Alexei Alexandrovich took a deep breath, summoning his courage. Once he had made up his mind, though, he continued in his shrill voice, not at all timid, without stumbling, and emphasizing the odd word.

“I have the misfortune,” began Alexei Alexandrovich, “of being a deceived husband, and I wish to legally sunder my relations with my wife, that is, divorce, however in such a manner that my son does not remain with his mother.”

The lawyer’s gray eyes tried not to laugh, but they were leaping from irrepressible glee, and Alexei Alexandrovich could see that that was not just the glee of someone obtaining a profitable order; here too were triumph and delight, a gleam similar to that sinister gleam he had seen in the eyes of his wife.

“You desire my assistance in obtaining a divorce?”

“Yes, precisely so, but I must warn you that I risk abusing your attention. I came merely to consult with you preliminarily. I do wish a divorce, but the forms under which it is possible are important for me. It may well be that these forms will not coincide with my requirements, and then I will reject a legal suit.”

“Oh, it’s always that way,” said the lawyer, “and it’s always up to you.”

The lawyer lowered his gaze to Alexei Alexandrovich’s feet, sensing that he might offend his client with the sight of his irrepressible glee. He looked at a moth flying under his nose, and his hand twitched, but he did not catch it out of respect for Alexei Alexandrovich’s situation.

“Although our statutes on this subject are known to me in their general features,” Alexei Alexandrovich continued, “I would like to know generally the forms in which this type of matter is accomplished in practice.”

“You wish me,” replied the lawyer without looking up, and not without a certain satisfaction, entering into the tone of his client’s speech, “to set forth the ways in which it is possible to fulfill your wish.”

At the confirmatory nod of Alexei Alexandrovich’s head, he continued, only rarely glancing at Alexei Alexandrovich’s face, which was blotchy red.

“Under our laws,” he said with a slight nuance of disapproval for our laws, “divorce is possible, as you know, in the following instances. Wait!” he addressed his assistant, who had poked his head in the door, but nonetheless did stand up, say a few words, and sit back down. “In the following instances: the spouses’ physical defects, then a separation of five years without any contact,” he said, bending down a stubby and very hairy finger, “then adultery (he pronounced this word with obvious satisfaction) in the following subcategories (he continued to bend down his fat fingers, although the instances and subcategories evidently could not be classified together): physical defects in the husband or wife, and then the adultery of the husband or wife.” Since all his fingers were used, he straightened them all and continued, “This is the theoretical view, but I believe you have done me the honor of turning to me in order to learn the practical application, and so, guided by precedents, I must inform you that instances of divorce all lead to the following. There are no physical defects, do I understand correctly? Nor any absence without contact?”

Alexei Alexandrovich nodded in the affirmative.

“They come down to the following: the adultery of one of the spouses and the disclosure of the illicit aspect by mutual consent and, in lieu of such consent, involuntary disclosure. I have to tell you that this last instance is rarely met with in practice,” said the lawyer, and glancing briefly at Alexei Alexandrovich he fell silent, like the purveyor of revolvers who has described the advantages of one weapon or another and is anticipating his buyer’s choice. Alexei Alexandrovich said nothing, however, and so the lawyer continued. “The most common and simple, the most reasonable, I believe, is adultery by mutual consent. I would not permit myself to express myself in this way speaking with an uncultured man,” said the lawyer, “but I believe that you will understand this.”

Alexei Alexandrovich was so distraught, however, that he did not immediately perceive the reasonableness of adultery by mutual consent and expressed this perplexity in his look; but the lawyer immediately came to his aid:

“The people cannot live together any longer — this is a fact, and if both agree in this, then the details and formalities become a matter of indifference. In addition, this is the simplest and surest means.”

Alexei Alexandrovich understood perfectly now, but he had religious requirements that prevented him from permitting this measure.

“That is out of the question in the present instance,” he said. “Here just one instance is possible: involuntary disclosure, confirmed by letters in my possession.”

At the mention of letters, the lawyer pursed his lips and produced a subtle, sympathetic, and contemptuous sound.

“Kindly observe,” he began. “Matters of this type are decided, as you know, by the religious authorities; in cases of this type the priests and archpriests are avid to go into the finest details,” he said with a smile, indicating his sympathy for the archpriests’ taste. “Letters can, without a doubt, confirm in part; however, the evidence must be obtained by direct means, that is, by eyewitnesses. Generally speaking, if you would do me the honor of conferring on me your trust and entrust me with your choice of those measures which should be employed. Whoever desires a result must also allow for the means.”

“If that is so,” began Alexei Alexandrovich, blanching, but at the same time the lawyer rose and again went to the door to talk to his assistant, who had interrupted him.

“Tell her we are not dealing in cheap goods!”⁸ he said, and he returned to Alexei Alexandrovich.

Returning to his seat, he caught another moth he had failed to notice. “My repp is going to be in a fine state by summer!” he thought, frowning.

“And so, you were so kind as to be saying . . .” he said.

“I shall inform you of my decision in writing,” said Alexei Alexandrovich, and he held onto the desk as he rose. After standing there for a moment in silence, he said, “From your explanation I may conclude, accordingly, that accomplishment of a divorce is possible. I would ask that you inform me as well of what your terms are.”

“Everything is possible if you allow me complete freedom of action,” said the lawyer, not answering his question. “When may I expect to receive news from you?” asked the lawyer, moving toward the door, his eyes and patent leather boots gleaming.

“In a week. And your reply as to whether you agree to plead this case and on what terms, you’ll be so kind as to inform me.”

“Very good.”

The lawyer bowed respectfully, let his client through the door, and once alone, gave in to his delight. He became so cheerful that, contrary to his own rules, he gave a discount to the haggling young lady and stopped catching moths, having decided conclusively that before next winter he must reupholster the furniture in velvet, as Sigonin had.

6

Alexei Alexandrovich won a brilliant victory at the Commission of August 17th, but the consequences of this victory undercut him. The new commission investigating all aspects of the life of native populations had been constituted and sent off to the site with an unusual speed and energy aroused by Alexei Alexandrovich. A report was presented three months later. The life of native populations had been researched in its political, administrative, economic, ethnographic, material, and religious aspects. To all these questions excellent answers were set forth, and answers that were not subject to doubt, since they were not the product of human thought, which is always subject to error, but were all the product of official activity. All the answers were the results of official data and reports from the governors and archbishops, based on reports from the district heads and rural deans, which were based, in turn, on reports from rural administrations and parish priests; and so all these answers were indubitable. All the questions about why, for instance, there were crop failures, why inhabitants clung to their beliefs, and so forth, questions which cannot be resolved without the official machinery and have not been resolved for ages, received a clear and indubitable solution. And the solution supported Alexei Alexandrovich's opinion. Stremov, however, feeling he had been cut to the quick at the last session, upon receiving the commission's reports, employed a tactic that caught Alexei Alexandrovich off guard. Bringing several other members along with him, Stremov suddenly went over to Alexei Alexandrovich's side and heatedly not only defended the introduction of the measures proposed by Karenin but also proposed others more radical in the same spirit. These measures, extreme even compared with what had been Alexei Alexandrovich's main concept, were approved, and then Stremov's tactic was laid bare. These measures, taken to their extreme, suddenly appeared so foolish that at one and the same time men of state, and public opinion, and intellectual ladies, and the newspapers—everyone came crashing down on these measures, expressing their indignation both at the measures themselves and at their acknowledged father, Alexei Alexandrovich. Stremov stepped back, pretending that he had merely been blindly following Karenin's plan and now himself was amazed and indignant at what had been done. This undercut Alexei Alexandrovich. Despite his declining health, however, and despite his familial woes, Alexei Alexandrovich did not yield. A schism occurred in the commission. Some members, led by Stremov, tried to justify their error by saying that they had trusted the commission of inspection directed by Alexei Alexandrovich which had presented the report, and they said that the report of this commission was rubbish and nothing more than scribbled paper. Alexei Alexandrovich and a group of men who saw the danger

of this kind of revolutionary attitude toward documents continued to support the figures worked out by the commission of inspection. As a result of this, in higher spheres, and even in society, all was chaos, and even though everyone found this extremely interesting, no one could tell whether the native populations were truly living in poverty and perishing, or whether they were flourishing. Alexei Alexandrovich's position as a result of this and, in part, the contempt that had befallen him due to his wife's unfaithfulness, became quite shaky. In this position, Alexei Alexandrovich took an important decision. To the commission's surprise, he announced that he would be asking permission to travel himself to the site to study the matter. Once he had obtained permission, Alexei Alexandrovich set out for the remote provinces.

Alexei Alexandrovich's departure caused a great sensation, especially since immediately before his departure he officially returned the traveling allowance issued him for twelve horses to proceed to the appointed location.

"I find that very noble," Betsy told Princess Myahkaya. "Why issue an allowance for post horses when everyone knows that there are railways everywhere now?"

However, Princess Myahkaya did not agree, and the opinion of Princess Tverskaya rather irritated her.

"Fine for you to say," said she, "when you have I don't know how many millions, but I like it very much when my husband travels to inspect in the summer. It's good for his health and he enjoys the travel, and it has already been established for me that with this money I can keep a carriage and driver."

En route to the remote provinces, Alexei Alexandrovich spent three days in Moscow.

The day after his arrival he called on the governor general. At the crossing near Gazetny Lane, where carriages and drivers always clustered, Alexei Alexandrovich suddenly heard his name being shouted in such a loud and cheerful voice that he could not help but look around. On the corner of the sidewalk, wearing a short stylish coat, with a short stylish hat tilted to the side, beaming with a smile of white teeth between red lips, cheerful and young, stood Stepan Arkadyevich, who had been shouting firmly and insistently demanding that he stop. He kept one hand on the window of a carriage that had stopped at the corner, out of which poked a woman's head in a velvet hat and also two childish heads, and he smiled and beckoned to his brother-in-law. The lady smiled a good smile and also beckoned to Alexei Alexandrovich. It was Dolly and her children.

Alexei Alexandrovich had not wanted to see anyone in Moscow, least of all his wife's brother. He tipped his hat and was about to continue on his way, but

Stepan Arkadyevich ordered his driver to stop and ran toward him through the snow.

“Well, it wouldn’t have hurt to send word! Been here long? I was at Dus-sault’s yesterday and saw ‘Karenin’ on the board, but it didn’t occur to me that it was you!” said Stepan Arkadyevich, poking his head through the carriage window. “Otherwise I would have stopped by. How glad I am to see you!” he said, knocking one foot against the other to shake off the snow. “It wouldn’t have hurt to let us know!” he repeated.

“I had no time. I’m very busy,” replied Alexei Alexandrovich dryly.

“Let’s go over to my wife, she so wants to see you.”

Alexei Alexandrovich folded back the lap robe tucked around his shivering legs, and emerging from the carriage, made his way through the snow to see Darya Alexandrovna.

“What is this, Alexei Alexandrovich? Why are you trying so hard to avoid us?” said Dolly, smiling dolefully.

“I’ve been very busy. I’m very pleased to see you,” he said in a tone that clearly said he was grieved by this. “How is your health?”

“Well, and what of my dear Anna?”

Alexei Alexandrovich mumbled something and was about to leave. But Stepan Arkadyevich stopped him.

“Here’s what we’ll do tomorrow. Dolly, invite him to dinner! We’ll invite Koznyshev and Pestsov in order to treat him to the Moscow intelligentsia.”

“Yes, please, do come,” said Dolly. “We’ll be expecting you at five or six o’clock, if you like. Well, and what about my dear Anna? It’s been so long—”

“She is well,” Alexei Alexandrovich mumbled again, frowning. “Very pleased!” and he headed for his carriage.

“Will you come?” cried Dolly.

Alexei Alexandrovich said something Dolly could not make out in the noise of the jostling carriages.

“I shall stop by tomorrow!” Stepan Arkadyevich shouted after him.

Alexei Alexandrovich got into his carriage and sat so far inside that he could neither see nor be seen.

“A peculiar man!” Stepan Arkadyevich said to his wife, and glancing at his watch, he made a motion with his hand in front of his face that signified a caress for his wife and children, and set off jauntily down the sidewalk.

“Stiva! Stiva!” shouted Dolly, blushing.

He turned around.

“You know I need to buy coats for Grisha and Tanya. Give me some money!”

“It’s all right, just tell them I’ll pay,” and he was gone, cheerfully nodding to a passing acquaintance.

7

The next day was Sunday. Stepan Arkadyevich stopped in at the Bolshoi Theater for a ballet rehearsal and gave Masha Chibisova, the pretty little dancer who had newly come under his protection, the coral beads he had promised the night before, and backstage, in the theater's dim daylight, he managed to kiss her pretty little face, which was beaming from the gift. Besides the gift of the coral beads, he needed to make arrangements with her for a tryst after the ballet. Explaining to her that he could not be there for the ballet's beginning, he gave her his word that he would arrive by the final act and take her to supper. From the theater Stepan Arkadyevich drove by Hunter's Row, himself selected the fish and asparagus for dinner, and at twelve o'clock was already at Dussault's, where he needed to see three different people who, to his good fortune, were all staying in the same hotel: Levin, who was staying there, having recently arrived from abroad; his new superior, who had just entered into this exalted position and was inspecting Moscow; and his brother-in-law Karenin, in order to be sure to bring him for dinner.

Stepan Arkadyevich liked to dine, but even more he liked to give dinners, not too big, but refined, both for their food and drink and for the choice of guests. He liked the program for the present dinner very much: there would be fresh perch, asparagus, and, *la pièce de résistance*—a marvelous but simple roast of beef and the appropriate wines: that took care of the food and drink. Of the guests there would be Kitty and Levin, and so that it was not too obvious, there would also be a cousin and young Shcherbatsky and, *la pièce de résistance* among the guests—Sergei Koznyshv and Alexei Alexandrovich. Sergei Ivanovich was a Muscovite and philosopher, Alexei Alexandrovich a Petersburger and a practitioner; and he would also invite that famous eccentric and enthusiast Pestsov, a liberal, chatterer, musician, historian, and the sweetest of fifty-year-old youths, who would be the sauce or garnish for Koznyshv and Karenin. He would stir them up and play them off against each other.

The second installment of the forest money had been received and was not yet entirely spent, Dolly had been very sweet and good of late, and the thought of this dinner cheered Stepan Arkadyevich in all respects. He was in the most cheerful of spirits. There were two rather unpleasant circumstances, but both these circumstances drowned in the sea of good-natured cheer surging inside Stepan Arkadyevich. These two circumstances were the following: first, yesterday, when he met Alexei Alexandrovich on the street, he had noticed that he was dry and stern with him, and putting together the expression on Alexei Alexandrovich's face and the fact that he had not come to see them or let them know he was there with the talk he had heard about Anna and Vronsky, Stepan Arkadyevich guessed that something was amiss between husband and wife.

That was one unpleasant thing. The other somewhat unpleasant thing was the fact that his new superior, like all new superiors, had a reputation as a terrifying man who rose at six in the morning, worked like a horse, and demanded the same kind of work from his subordinates. Moreover, this new superior also had a reputation as a bear in his manner and was, according to rumors, a man of the tendency completely opposite to the one to which his predecessor, and up to this point, Stepan Arkadyevich belonged. Yesterday Stepan Arkadyevich showed up for service in his uniform, and his new superior was very amiable and spoke with Oblonsky as if he were an acquaintance; therefore Stepan Arkadyevich felt it was his duty to call on him in his frock coat. The thought that his new superior might not receive him well, that was the other unpleasant circumstance. However, Stepan Arkadyevich instinctively felt that everything would *shapify* beautifully. “They’re all people, all human beings, sinners like us. What’s the point of being cross and quarrelsome?” he thought as he entered the hotel.

“Good day, Vasily,” he said, passing down the corridor, his hat atilt and addressing a footman he knew. “You let your whiskers grow? Levin is room seven, right? Take me there, please. Oh, and would you find out whether Count Anichkin (this was his new superior) is receiving?”

“Yes, sir,” replied Vasily, smiling. “You haven’t been to see us in a long time.”

“I was here yesterday, only from the other entry. This is seven?”

Levin was standing with a peasant from Tver in the middle of his room, measuring a fresh bearskin, when Stepan Arkadyevich walked in.

“You killed it, eh?” exclaimed Stepan Arkadyevich. “A marvelous piece! A mama bear? Hello there, Arkhip!”

He shook the peasant’s hand and sat down on a chair without removing his coat and hat.

“Oh, take it off, stay a while!” said Levin, removing Stiva’s hat.

“No, I’m in a rush, I’ve only one second,” replied Stepan Arkadyevich. He opened his coat but then did remove it and sat there a full hour talking with Levin about hunting and the subjects nearest to his heart.

“Well, then, tell me, please, what you did abroad. Where were you?” said Stepan Arkadyevich when the peasant had left.

“Oh, I was in Germany, Prussia, France, England—not in the capitals but in the manufacturing towns, and I saw a lot that was new. And I’m glad I went.”

“Yes, I know your idea about reorganizing labor.”

“Not at all. In Russia there can be no labor issue. In Russia it’s an issue of the working people’s relationship to the land; that’s true there, too, but there it’s repairing something rotten, while here—”

Stepan Arkadyevich was listening closely to Levin.

“Yes, yes!” he said. “You may very well be right,” he said. “But I’m happy you’re in hearty spirits; you’re going after bears, and working, and getting carried away. Yet Shcherbatsky told me—he saw you—that you’re in some kind of dependency, you keep talking about death.”

“Well, yes, I never stop thinking about death,” said Levin. “It’s true that it’s time to die, and that it’s all nonsense. I’ll tell you in truth: I treasure my ideas and work highly, but in essence—you must think about this: all this world of ours is but a little mold that has grown on our tiny planet. And yet we think that we might have something great—thoughts and deeds! It’s all grains of sand.”

“This is as old as the hills, brother!”

“It is, but you know, when you understand it clearly, everything somehow becomes insignificant. When you understand that any day now you’re going to die and there’ll be nothing left, then it’s all so insignificant! I consider my idea very important, but it’s turning out, even if it does get implemented, to be as insignificant as walking around this mama bear. That’s how you spend your life, distracting yourself with hunting, work—anything just so you don’t think about death.”

Stepan Arkadyevich smiled faintly and affectionately as he listened to Levin.

“Well, of course! Here you’ve come around to my position. Remember how you attacked me for seeking pleasures in life?

*“Be not, oh moralist, so stern!”*⁹

“No, still, what’s good in life is . . .” Levin became confused. “I don’t really know. All I know is we’re going to die soon.”

“Why so soon?”

“And you know, life’s charms are fewer when you’re thinking about death—but it’s more peaceful.”

“On the contrary, it’s even more cheerful at the finish. Well, it’s time I went,” said Stepan Arkadyevich, rising for the tenth time.

“Oh no, sit a while!” said Levin, holding him back. “Now when are we going to see each other? I’m leaving tomorrow.”

“A fine one I am! That’s why I came. You simply must come to my house now for dinner. Your brother will be there, and so will Karenin, my brother-in-law.”

“You mean he’s here?” said Levin, and he wanted to ask about Kitty. He’d heard that she’d been in Petersburg with her sister, the diplomat’s wife, at winter’s start, and didn’t know whether she’d returned, but he thought better of asking. “Whether she is or not, it doesn’t matter.”

“So you’ll come?”

“Naturally.”

“Then at five o’clock. Frock coat.”

Stepan Arkadyevich rose and went downstairs to see his new superior. Instinct had not misled Stepan Arkadyevich. His terrifying new superior proved to be an extremely courteous man, and Stepan Arkadyevich had lunch with him and sat so long it was after three before he got to Alexei Alexandrovich's.

8

Alexei Alexandrovich, having returned from Mass, spent the entire morning at home. That morning he had two matters to attend to: first, to receive and send on a deputation from the native population who were now in Moscow on their way to Petersburg; second, to write the promised letter to the lawyer. Although it had been summoned at Alexei Alexandrovich's initiative, the deputation presented many inconveniences and even perils, and Alexei Alexandrovich was very glad to have found them in Moscow. The members of this deputation had not the slightest concept of their role and obligations. They were naïvely confident that their business consisted in setting forth their needs and the actual state of affairs and asking for the government's aid, and they decidedly did not realize that certain statements and demands of theirs supported the enemy party and so were destroying their entire cause. Alexei Alexandrovich took great pains with them, wrote them a program from which they were not supposed to deviate, and after letting them go, wrote letters to Petersburg for the deputation's guidance. His principal helper in this matter was supposed to be Countess Lydia Ivanovna. She was a specialist in the matter of deputations, and no one could manage and give genuine guidance to deputations as she could. Having completed this, Alexei Alexandrovich wrote the letter to the lawyer. Without the slightest hesitation he gave him permission to act at his own discretion. With the letter he included three notes from Vronsky to Anna which had been found in the portfolio he had taken.

Ever since Alexei Alexandrovich had left his house with the intention of not returning to his family, and ever since he had seen the lawyer and had spoken if only to one person of his intention, and especially ever since he had translated this matter of life to a matter of paper, he had become more and more used to his intention and now saw clearly the possibility of its realization.

He was sealing the envelope to the lawyer when he heard the loud sounds of Stepan Arkadyevich's voice. Stepan Arkadyevich was arguing with Alexei Alexandrovich's servant and insisting that he be informed of his presence.

"It doesn't matter," thought Alexei Alexandrovich. "All the better: I'll announce my position now with respect to his sister and explain why I cannot dine at his home."

"Ask him in!" he spoke loudly as he gathered his papers and put them in their folder.

"There, you see? You're lying. He is at home!" answered the voice of Stepan Arkadyevich to the servant who had not let him in, and removing his coat as he walked, Oblonsky entered the room. "Well, I'm very pleased I've caught you! I do so hope—" Stepan Arkadyevich began cheerfully.

"I cannot come," said Alexei Alexandrovich coldly, standing and not asking his guest to sit.

Alexei Alexandrovich thought immediately to enter into the cool relations he must have with the brother of a wife against whom he had initiated divorce proceedings; but he had not counted on the sea of good nature that overflowed the shores of Stepan Arkadyevich's soul.

Stepan Arkadyevich opened his shining, clear eyes wide.

"Why can't you? What do you mean?" he said in French, in disbelief. "No, you've promised. We're all counting on you."

"I mean that I cannot come to your house because the familial relations that existed between us must come to an end."

"What? What's that? Why?" Stepan Arkadyevich said with a smile.

"Because I am initiating divorce proceedings against your sister, my wife. I should have—"

But before Alexei Alexandrovich could finish his speech, Stepan Arkadyevich acted in a way entirely different from what he had anticipated. Stepan Arkadyevich gasped and sat down in an armchair.

"No, Alexei Alexandrovich, what are you saying!" exclaimed Oblonsky, and his suffering was expressed on his face.

"It is so."

"Forgive me, I cannot, simply cannot believe this."

Alexei Alexandrovich sat down, sensing that his words had not had the anticipated effect and that he would have to explain himself and that, regardless of what his explanations were, his relations with his brother-in-law would remain the same.

"Yes, I have been placed in the difficult but necessary position of demanding a divorce," he said.

"I shall say one thing, Alexei Alexandrovich. I know you for an excellent and fair man, and I know Anna—excuse me, I cannot alter my opinion of her—for a marvelous and excellent woman, and so, pardon me, I cannot believe this. There is some misunderstanding here," he said.

"If only it were a misunderstanding."

"Please, I understand," Stepan Arkadyevich interrupted. "But, of course . . . for one, there's no need to rush into anything. No need, no need to rush!"

“I have not rushed,” said Alexei Alexandrovich coolly. “But in such a matter one cannot consult with anyone. My mind is made up.”

“This is awful!” said Stepan Arkadyevich, sighing heavily. “I would do one thing, Alexei Alexandrovich. I beg of you, do this!” he said. “The proceedings are not yet begun, as I understand. Before you do begin, please see my wife, speak with her. She loves Anna like a sister, she loves you, and she is an amazing woman. For God’s sake, speak with her! Perform this act of friendship for me, I beg of you!”

Alexei Alexandrovich thought it over, and Stepan Arkadyevich watched him with concern without interrupting his silence.

“Will you go see her?”

“I just don’t know. This is why I haven’t been to see you. I believe our relations must change.”

“But why? I don’t see that. Allow me to think that apart from our familial relations you have, at least in part, the same amicable feelings that I have always had for you. And sincere respect,” said Stepan Arkadyevich pressing his hand. “If even your worst suppositions are correct, I cannot and never will take it upon myself to condemn one side or the other, and I see no reason why our relations have to change. But now, do this, and come see my wife.”

“Well, we look on this matter differently,” said Alexei Alexandrovich coolly. “Actually, let’s not talk about this.”

“No, why shouldn’t you come? At least to dine today? My wife is expecting you. Please, do come. And above all, talk it over with her. She is an amazing woman. For God’s sake, I’m on my knees begging you!”

“If you want me to so much, I’ll come,” said Alexei Alexandrovich, sighing.

Wishing to change the conversation, he asked about what interested them both — Stepan Arkadyevich’s new superior, a man not yet old who had suddenly received such a high appointment.

Alexei Alexandrovich had not liked Count Anichkin even before and had already differed from him in his opinions, but now he could not restrain himself from the hatred, understandable to those in service, of someone who had suffered a defeat in service for a man who has received a promotion.

“Well then, have you seen him?” said Alexei Alexandrovich with a venomous grin.

“Oh yes, he was at our office yesterday. He seems to have an excellent understanding of his work and is quite energetic.”

“Yes, but what is his energy directed toward?” said Alexei Alexandrovich. “To do what needs doing or redo what’s been done? The misfortune of our state is the paper-ridden administration of which he is a worthy representative.”

“True, I don’t know what there is to condemn in him. I don’t know his aims, but for one thing he is an excellent fellow,” replied Stepan Arkadyevich. “I was just in to see him, and it’s true, he’s an excellent fellow. We lunched, and I taught him to make that drink, you know, wine with oranges. It’s very refreshing. I’m amazed he didn’t know it. He liked it very much. No, it’s true, he’s a splendid fellow.”

Stepan Arkadyevich glanced at his watch.

“Gracious me! It’s past four and I still have to see Dolgovushin! So please, come dine with us. You can’t imagine how you would grieve me and my wife.”

Alexei Alexandrovich saw his brother-in-law out in a manner completely different from the way he had greeted him.

“I promised and I’ll come,” he replied dolefully.

“Believe me, I appreciate this, and I hope you won’t regret it,” Stepan Arkadyevich replied, smiling.

Donning his overcoat as he went, he patted the footman on the head, laughed, and went out.

“At five o’clock, and in a frock coat, please!” he shouted once again, turning back to the door.

9

It was after five and a few guests had already arrived when the host himself did. He walked in with Sergei Ivanovich Koznyshev and Pestsov, who had run into one another at the front door. These were the two principal representatives of the Moscow intelligentsia, as Oblonsky referred to them. Both were men admired for both their character and their intellect. They respected each other but in nearly everything were in utter and hopeless disagreement—not because they belonged to opposite trends but precisely because they were in the same camp (their enemies confused them), but in this camp each had his own nuance, and since there is nothing more incapable of reconciliation than differences of opinion on semiabstract ideas, not only did they never come to any agreement in their opinions, but they had long become accustomed, without becoming angry, of merely making fun of the incorrigible error of the other.

They were walking through the door, talking about the weather, when Stepan Arkadyevich caught up with them. Already seated in the drawing room were Oblonsky’s father-in-law, Prince Alexander Dmitrievich, young Shcherbatsky, Turovtsyn, Kitty, and Karenin.

Stepan Arkadyevich immediately saw that things were going poorly in the drawing room without him. Darya Alexandrovna, wearing her formal gray silk

dress and evidently worried both by the children, who were to have their dinner in the nursery alone, and by the fact that her husband had not yet arrived, had not been able without him to get this whole company to mix nicely. Everyone was sitting like priest's daughters on a visit (as the old prince put it), evidently perplexed as to why they were here, squeezing out words so as not to be silent. The good-natured Turovtsyn, evidently, felt himself out of his element, and the smile of his thick lips with which he greeted Stepan Arkadyevich said as well as words could, "Well, brother, you've besieged me with some smart fellows! Why don't we go drink at Château des Fleurs—that's more in my line."¹⁰ The old prince was sitting in silence, glancing out of the corner of his glittering eyes at Karenin, and Stepan Arkadyevich realized the old prince had come up with some phrase to plant on this man of state whom they had invited for the sake of the guests as if he were a sturgeon. Kitty was watching the door, gathering her presence of mind in order not to blush at Konstantin Levin's entrance. Young Shcherbatsky, who had not been introduced to Karenin, was trying to show that he wasn't one whit intimidated by him. Karenin himself was, according to the Petersburg custom, wearing an evening coat and white tie for a dinner with ladies, and from his face Stepan Arkadyevich realized he had come merely to keep his word and by being present in this society was performing a difficult obligation. He was primarily to blame for the chill that had frozen all the guests before Stepan Arkadyevich's arrival.

As he entered the drawing room, Stepan Arkadyevich made his apologies, explained he had been detained by the same prince who was his usual scapegoat for all his late arrivals and absences, and in a minute he had reintroduced everyone, bringing Alexei Alexandrovich and Sergei Koznyshov together, and had slipped them the topic of the Russification of Poland, which they immediately latched onto, as did Pestov. Giving Turovtsyn a hearty slap on the shoulder, he whispered something humorous to him and sat him down with his wife and the prince. Then he told Kitty that she was very pretty today and introduced Shcherbatsky to Karenin. In one minute he had given this entire social batter such a good stir that wherever you went in the drawing room you heard animated voices. Only Konstantin Levin was absent. This was for the best, however, because upon entering the dining room Stepan Arkadyevich saw to his horror that the port and sherry had been gotten from Depré, not Levé, and after giving orders for the driver to be sent to Levé's post haste, he headed back to the drawing room.

He was met in the dining room by Konstantin Levin.

"I'm not late?"

"Could you ever not be late!" said Stepan Arkadyevich, taking him by the arm.

“Do you have a lot of people? Who then?” asked Levin, blushing uncontrollably as he knocked the snow off his hat with his glove.

“All our own people. Kitty’s here. Let’s go, I’ll introduce you to Karenin.”

For all his liberalism, Stepan Arkadyevich knew that meeting Karenin could not help but be flattering and so treated his best friends to it. But at this moment Konstantin Levin was in no condition to experience the full satisfaction of this introduction. He had not seen Kitty since the evening he remembered so well when he had met Vronsky, if you didn’t count the glimpse he had had of her on the highway. In the depths of his soul he had known that he would see her here today. But trying to keep his thoughts free, he tried to assure himself that he did not know so. Now, when he heard that she was here, he suddenly felt such joy and at the same time such terror that he was left gasping for breath, and he could not get out what he wanted to say.

“What is she like? The same as before, or the way she was in the carriage? What if Darya Alexandrovna was speaking the truth? Why shouldn’t it be the truth?” he thought.

“Ah yes, please, introduce me to Karenin,” he said with difficulty and with a desperately decisive step entered the drawing room and saw her.

She was neither the same as before nor the same as she had been in the carriage; she was completely different.

She was frightened, timid, flustered, and so even more magnificent. She saw him the very moment he entered the room. She had been waiting for him. She rejoiced and was so embarrassed by her joy that there was a moment, the very moment he walked over to the hostess and again glanced at her, when it seemed to her, and him, and Dolly, who had seen all, that she would not be able to stand it and would burst into tears. She turned red, then white, then red again, and then froze, her lips trembling slightly, waiting for him. He walked up to her, bowed, and silently extended his hand. Had it not been for the light tremor of her lips and the moisture in her eyes that gave them a gleam, her smile would have been almost tranquil when she said, “How long it’s been since we’ve seen each other!” and she squeezed his hand with her cold one with desperate resolution.

“You haven’t seen me, but I’ve seen you,” said Levin, beaming with a smile of happiness. “I saw you when you were traveling from the railway to Ergushovo.”

“When?” she asked in surprise.

“You were on your way to Ergushovo,” said Levin, feeling himself choking from the happiness that was flooding his soul. “How dare I tie the thought of anything not innocent with this touching creature! Yes, apparently, it’s true what Darya Alexandrovna said,” he thought.

Stepan Arkadyevich took him by the arm and led him toward Karenin.

“Allow me to introduce you.” He mentioned their names.

“It’s my pleasure to meet again,” said Alexei Alexandrovich coolly as he shook Levin’s hand.

“You know each other?” asked Stepan Arkadyevich in surprise.

“We spent three hours together on the train,” said Levin, smiling, “but we emerged as if from a masked ball, intrigued, or at least I did.”

“Imagine that! Please join us,” said Stepan Arkadyevich, pointing in the direction of the dining room.

The men went into the dining room and walked up to the table of appetizers on which had been set six sorts of vodka and as many sorts of cheeses with and without little silver spades, caviars, herrings, preserves of various sorts, and plates with slices of French bread.

The men stood around the fragrant vodkas and appetizers, and the discussion among Sergei Ivanovich Koznyshev, Karenin, and Pestsov of the Russification of Poland died down in anticipation of dinner.

Sergei Ivanovich, who knew better than anyone how, in order to close the most abstract and serious debate, to sprinkle Attic salt unexpectedly and in this way change his opponents’ mood, did so now.¹¹

Alexei Alexandrovich had been trying to prove that the Russification of Poland could be brought about only as a consequence of higher principles, which would have to be introduced by the Russian administration.

Pestsov had insisted that one nation assimilates another only when it is more densely populated.

Koznyshev recognized both arguments, but with qualifications. When they emerged from the drawing room, in order to wind up the discussion, Koznyshev said, smiling:

“So, for the Russification of native populations there is a single means — raise as many children as possible. Here my brother and I are behaving worse than everyone. Whereas you married gentlemen, especially you, Stepan Arkadyevich, are acting quite patriotically. How many do you have?” he turned, smiling kindly at his host, and handed him a tiny glass.

Everyone laughed, and Stepan Arkadyevich with especial cheer.

“Yes, that is the very best means!” he said, chewing on cheese and pouring some special type of vodka into the proffered glass. The discussion did indeed end on a jest.

“This cheese isn’t bad. May I give you some?” said the host. “Don’t tell me you’ve been at gymnastics again?” he turned to Levin and with his left hand felt his muscle. Levin smiled, flexed his arm, and under Stepan Arkadyevich’s fingers rose a steel-hard lump, like a round cheese, under the fine fabric of his coat.

“There’s a bicep! Samson!”

“I think you must need great strength to hunt bear,” said Alexei Alexandrovich, who had the vaguest of notions of hunting, as he spread cheese and tore through the soft bread, which was fine as a spider’s web.

Levin smiled.

“None whatsoever. On the contrary, a child could kill a bear,” he said, bowing slightly and stepping aside for the ladies, who with their hostess were approaching the appetizer table.

“And you killed a bear, they were telling me?” said Kitty, vainly trying to catch a recalcitrant, slippery mushroom with her fork and shaking her lace, through which her arm showed white. “Do you really have bears?” she added, half-turning her lovely head toward him and smiling.

There was nothing unusual, it seemed, in what she had said, but with these words there was some unexpressed significance for him in every sound, every movement of her lips, eyes, and hand when she said this! In it was her plea for forgiveness, and her trust in him, and a fondness, a tender, timid fondness, and a promise, and a hope, and a love for him in which he could not help but believe and which was suffocating him with happiness.

“No, we were traveling to Tver Province. On our return, in the train car, I met your *beau-frère* or your brother-in-law’s *beau-frère*,” he said with a smile.¹² “It was an entertaining encounter.”

And gaily and humorously he recounted that, not having slept all night, he had burst into Alexei Alexandrovich’s compartment wearing his sheepskin jacket.

“The conductor, contrary to the proverb, wanted to throw me out because of my clothes, but then I started expressing myself in high style, and . . . you too,” he said, forgetting Karenin’s name as he turned to him, “first you wanted to drive me out because of my coat, but then you stood up for me, for which I am very grateful.”¹³

“Generally speaking, passengers’ rights as to the selection of a seat are quite vague,” said Alexei Alexandrovich, wiping the tips of his fingers with his handkerchief.

“I could see you were undecided concerning me,” said Levin, smiling good-naturedly, “but I hastened to begin an intelligent conversation, in order to smooth over my sheepskin.”

Continuing his conversation with his hostess and listening to his brother with one ear, Sergei Ivanovich shot a glance at him. “What is it about him now? Quite the conqueror,” he thought. He didn’t know that Levin felt as if he had grown wings. Levin knew she was listening to what he was saying and that she liked to listen to him, and this was the only thing that concerned him. Not in this room alone but in the whole world there existed for him only he, who had

acquired tremendous significance and importance for himself, and she. He felt himself at such a height it made his head spin, and there, below, far away, were all these good, glorious Karenins and Oblonskys and the whole world.

Quite inconspicuously, without looking at them, and acting as if there were nowhere else to put them, Stepan Arkadyevich seated Levin and Kitty side by side.

“Why don’t you sit here,” he said to Levin.

The dinner was just as fine as the plate, of which Stepan Arkadyevich was an enthusiast. The *potage Marie-Louise* had come out wonderfully; the tiny pirozhki, which melted in the mouth, were irreproachable. Two footmen and Matvei, wearing white ties, went about their duties with the food and wine unobtrusively, quietly, and swiftly. The dinner was a success from the material aspect; it was no less of a success from the nonmaterial. The conversation, some of it general, some of it private, never let up, and by the end of the dinner had so livened up that the men rose from the table still talking, and even Alexei Alexandrovich had livened up.

10

Pestsov loved to argue a subject out to its conclusion and was not satisfied with what Sergei Ivanovich had said, especially since he felt his own opinion to be wrong.

“I never had in mind,” he said over the soup, addressing Alexei Alexandrovich, “simply density of population, but in combination with fundamentals, not principles.”

“It seems to me,” Alexei Alexandrovich replied unhurriedly, languidly, “that this is the same thing. In my opinion, the only nation that can act upon another nation is one which has a higher development, which—”

“But that’s just the issue,” Pestsov, who was always in a hurry to speak and who always seemed to put his whole heart into what he was saying, interrupted in his bass voice. “Just what is this higher development supposed to be? The English, the French, the Germans—which stands at the highest degree of development? Which is going to nationalize the other? We see that the Rhine has become French, but the Germans do not stand below them!” he shouted. “Here there is another law!”

“It seems to me that influence is always on the side of true culture,” said Alexei Alexandrovich, raising his eyebrows slightly.

“But what exactly are the signs of true culture?” said Pestsov.

“I think these signs are well known,” said Alexei Alexandrovich.

“Are they known in their entirety?” Sergei Ivanovich interjected with a thin smile. “It is now recognized that a genuine education can be only a purely classical one; however, we are seeing bitter disputes on both sides, and it cannot be denied that the opposing camp does have strong arguments in their favor.”

“You are a classicist, Sergei Ivanovich. Would you care for some red?” said Stepan Arkadyevich.

“I am not expressing my own opinion about any particular culture,” said Sergei Ivanovich with a smile of condescension, as if for a child, as he offered his glass. “I am merely saying that both sides have powerful arguments,” he continued, addressing Alexei Alexandrovich. “I am a classicist by education, but in this argument I personally cannot find a place for myself. I see no clear arguments as to why classical learning is given preference over the real sciences.”

“The natural sciences have just as much pedagogical and educational influence,” chimed in Pestsov. “Just take astronomy, take botany, or zoology, with its system of universal laws!”

“I cannot agree with this entirely,” replied Alexei Alexandrovich. “It seems to me that one cannot help but admit that the very process of studying the forms of languages has a particularly beneficial influence on one’s spiritual development. Moreover, one cannot deny either that the influence of classical writers is to the highest degree moral, whereas, unfortunately, linked to the teaching of the natural sciences are those dangerous and false teachings which constitute the plague of our era.”

Sergei Ivanovich was about to say something, but Pestsov interrupted him in his thick bass voice. He hotly began trying to prove the injustice of this opinion. Sergei Ivanovich calmly awaited his turn, obviously with a vanquishing objection at the ready.

“Nevertheless,” said Sergei Ivanovich, smiling thinly and addressing Karenin, “one must agree that weighing fully all the advantages and disadvantages of the various sciences is difficult and that the question of which to prefer would not be so quickly and conclusively decided if on the side of classical education there were not that advantage which you have just expressed: the moral—*disons le mot*—antinihilist influence.”¹⁴

“Without a doubt.”

“Were it not for this advantage of the antinihilist influence on the side of classical learning, we would think over and weigh the arguments of both sides better,” said Sergei Ivanovich with a thin smile, “and we would give space to both tendencies. Now, however, we know that in these little pills of classical education lies the healing power of antinihilism, and we boldly offer them to our patients. But what if there is no healing power?” he concluded, sprinkling the Attic salt.

At Sergei Ivanovich's "little pills," everyone burst into laughter, and Turovskyn especially loudly and merrily, having finally reached the funny part, which is all he'd been waiting for, as he listened to the conversation.

Stepan Arkadyevich had not been mistaken in inviting Pestsov. With Pestsov an intelligent conversation could not flag for a moment. No sooner had Sergei Ivanovich concluded the discussion with his jest than Pestsov immediately raised a new one.

"One cannot even agree," he said, "with the government having this goal. The government, obviously, is guided by general considerations and remains indifferent to the influences the measures it takes might have. For example, the question of women's education ought to be considered pernicious, but the government is opening women's courses and universities."

The conversation immediately jumped to the new topic of women's education.

Alexei Alexandrovich expressed the thought that the education of women was usually confused with the issue of women's freedom and for this reason alone could be considered harmful.

"I, on the contrary, think that these two issues are indissolubly linked," said Pestsov, "it's a vicious circle. A woman is deprived of her rights because of insufficient education, and her insufficient education stems from the absence of rights. One must not forget that the enslavement of women is so great and old that we often do not want to understand the gulf that separates them from us," he said.

"You said 'rights,'" said Sergei Ivanovich, waiting for Pestsov's silence, "'rights' to occupy positions as jurors, councilors, chairmen, the rights of a civil servant, a member of parliament —"

"Without a doubt."

"But even if women, as a rare exception, could occupy these places, then it seems to me that you have incorrectly used the term 'rights.' It would be more accurate to say: 'obligations.' Anyone would agree that in performing the function of juror, councilor, or telegraph clerk, we feel we are fulfilling an obligation. And so it is more accurate to express oneself by saying that women are seeking obligations, and perfectly legitimately. One can only sympathize with this desire to assist in the general labor of the man."

"Perfectly fair," confirmed Alexei Alexandrovich. "The question, I think, consists merely in whether they are fit for these obligations."

"They probably will be quite capable," interposed Stepan Arkadyevich, "when education is widespread among them. We can see this —"

"And the old saying?" said the prince, who had long been listening in on

the discussion and whose small, bemused eyes were gleaming. "In front of my daughters I can say, Long of hair, short . . ." ¹⁵

"That's precisely what they thought of the Negroes before their emancipation!" said Pestsov angrily.

"I find it strange only that women are looking for new obligations," said Sergei Ivanovich, "while we, unfortunately, see that men ordinarily avoid them."

"Obligations are harnessed to rights: power, money, and honor. These are what women are seeking," said Pestsov.

"It is as if I were seeking the right to be a wet nurse and took offense that they were paying women and didn't want me," said the old prince.

Turovtsyn burst into loud laughter, and Sergei Ivanovich regretted that he had not said this. Even Alexei Alexandrovich smiled.

"Yes, but a man can't nurse," said Pestsov, "whereas a woman —"

"No, an Englishman nursed his own child on a ship," said the old prince, permitting himself this liberty of conversation in front of his own daughters.

"The same number of women as there are such Englishmen will be officials," said Sergei Ivanovich now.

"Yes, but what's a young woman to do who doesn't have a family?" Stepan Arkadyevich interjected, recalling Miss Chibisova, whom he had in mind the whole time he was sympathizing with and supporting Pestsov.

"If you sort out the story of that young woman properly, you'll find that this young woman abandoned a family, either her own, or her sister's, where she would have had a woman's work," Darya Alexandrovna said with irritability, unexpectedly entering into the discussion and probably guessing what sort of young woman Stepan Arkadyevich had in mind.

"But we stand for a principle, an ideal!" Pestsov objected in his booming bass voice. "A woman has the right to be independent and educated. She is constrained, repressed, by the awareness of the impossibility of being so."

"And I am constrained and repressed by the fact that they won't take me for a wet nurse at the foundling hospital," said the old prince again, to the great delight of Turovtsyn, who was laughing so hard he dropped the fat end of his asparagus in the sauce.

11

Everyone took part in the general conversation except Kitty and Levin. At first, when they were talking about one nation's influence on another, Levin involuntarily thought about what he had to say on this subject, but these thoughts, previously very important for him, flickered in his mind as if in a dream and

held for him now not the slightest interest. It even seemed strange to him why they were trying to speak of something of no use to anyone. In precisely the same way, Kitty thought that what they were saying about the rights and education of women ought to be interesting. How many times had she thought about this, recalling her friend Varenka abroad and her difficult state of dependence if she didn't marry, how many times had she thought about herself and what would become of her if she did not marry, and how many times she had argued about this with her sister! But now this did not interest her in the slightest. She and Levin were having their own conversation, not even a conversation but a kind of mysterious communication which tied them closer and closer together by the minute and produced in both a sense of joyous terror before the unknown into which they were entering.

At first Levin, to Kitty's question as to how he could have seen her last year in her carriage, told her how he had been walking back from the mowing down the highway and encountered her.

"It was very early in the morning. You had probably only just awakened. Your *maman* was sleeping in her corner. It was a marvelous morning. I was walking along and wondering who that was in the carriage with the team of four. A glorious team of four with bells, and for an instant you flashed by, and I saw through the window—you were sitting like this and holding the ties of your bonnet with both hands and thinking terribly hard about something," he said, smiling. "How I would have liked to know what you were thinking about then. Something important?"

"Wasn't I very untidy?" she thought; but when she saw the ecstatic smile these details evoked in his recollection, she sensed that, on the contrary, the impression she had produced was very good. She blushed and laughed delightedly.

"Truly, I don't recall."

"How well Turovtsyn laughs!" said Levin, admiring his moist eyes and shaking body.

"Have you known him long?" asked Kitty.

"Who doesn't know him!"

"And I see you think he's a bad man?"

"Not bad, inconsequential."

"That's not true! You must quickly stop thinking that way anymore!" said Kitty. "I also used to have a poor opinion of him, but he is, he is—a terribly dear and amazingly good person. He has a heart of gold."

"How is it you could find out about his heart?"

"He and I are great friends. I know him very well. Last winter, soon after . . . you came to see us," she said with a guilty and at the same time trusting smile,

“Dolly’s children all had scarlet fever, and somehow he stopped by to see her. And just imagine,” she whispered, “he felt so sorry for her that he stayed and began helping her look after the children. Yes, he spent three weeks with them in the house and looked after the children like a nurse.

“I’m telling Konstantin Dmitrievich about Turovtsyn and the scarlet fever,” she said, leaning toward her sister.

“Yes, it was amazing, splendid!” said Dolly, glancing at Turovtsyn, who sensed they were talking about him, and smiling briefly at him. Levin once again glanced at Turovtsyn and was amazed how he had not realized before just how splendid this man was.

“I’m sorry, I’m sorry, I shall never think badly of people again!” he said cheerfully, sincerely expressing what he now felt.

12

The conversation begun in the ladies’ presence about women’s rights turned to ticklish questions about the inequality of rights in marriage. During dinner Pestsov several times touched upon these questions, but Sergei Ivanovich and Stepan Arkadyevich cautiously deflected him.

When they rose from the table and the ladies went out, Pestsov, not following them, turned to Alexei Alexandrovich and set about expressing the main reason for the inequality. The inequality of spouses, in his opinion, consisted in the fact that the infidelity of a wife and the infidelity of a husband were punished unequally both by law and by public opinion.

Stepan Arkadyevich hurriedly walked over to Alexei Alexandrovich, offering him a cigar.

“No, I don’t smoke,” replied Alexei Alexandrovich calmly, and as if intentionally wishing to show that he was not afraid of this conversation, he turned toward Pestsov with a cold smile.

“I think that the bases for this view lie in the very essence of things,” he said, and he was about to proceed to the drawing room, but at this Turovtsyn suddenly spoke up, addressing Alexei Alexandrovich.

“And have you by chance heard about Pryachnikov?” said Turovtsyn, enlivened by the Champagne he had drunk and long awaiting an occasion to break his burdensome silence. “Vasya Pryachnikov,” he said with a kindhearted smile of his moist and rosy lips, addressing primarily the main guest, Alexei Alexandrovich, “I just heard that he fought a duel in Tver with Kvytsky and killed him.”

Just as one always seems to be bruising oneself, as if on purpose, on the very

spot that's already sore, so too Stepan Arkadyevich felt that by ill luck the conversation kept landing, time and again, on Alexei Alexandrovich's sore spot. Again he tried to lead his brother-in-law away, but Alexei Alexandrovich himself asked with curiosity:

"What was Pryachnikov fighting over?"

"His wife. Acted like a man! Challenged him and killed him!"

"Ah!" said Alexei Alexandrovich noncommittally and, lifting his eyebrows, proceeded to the drawing room.

"I'm so glad you've come," Dolly said to him with a frightened smile when she encountered him in the outer drawing room. "I need to speak with you. Let's sit down here."

With the same expression of indifference that his raised eyebrows had lent him, Alexei Alexandrovich sat down alongside Darya Alexandrovna and smiled affectedly.

"Especially," he said, "since I wanted to beg your forgiveness and say my good-bye immediately. I must leave tomorrow."

Darya Alexandrovna was firmly convinced of Anna's innocence and felt that she was turning white and her lips were trembling from fury at this cold, unfeeling man who was so calmly intent on ruining her innocent friend.

"Alexei Alexandrovich," she said, looking straight at him with desperate decisiveness. "I've asked you about Anna and you have not replied. How is she?"

"She is fine, apparently, Darya Alexandrovna," replied Alexei Alexandrovich without looking at her.

"Alexei Alexandrovich, forgive me, I have no right . . . but I love and respect Anna like a sister. I'm begging, imploring you to tell me what has happened between you. Of what are you accusing her?"

Alexei Alexandrovich frowned and, nearly shutting his eyes, dropped his head.

"I presume your husband conveyed to you the reasons why I feel it necessary to alter my former relations with Anna Arkadyevna," he said, not looking her in the eye but surveying with displeasure Shcherbatsky, who was passing through the drawing room.

"I don't believe it. I don't. I can't believe it!" said Dolly, kneading her bony hands in front of her in an energetic gesture. She rose quickly and put her hand on Alexei Alexandrovich's sleeve. "We shall be disturbed here. Let us go in here, please."

Darya Alexandrovna's agitation had its effect on Alexei Alexandrovich. He rose and meekly followed her into the classroom. They sat at a table covered in oilcloth scarred by penknives.

"I don't believe it, I don't!" Dolly continued, trying to catch his averted gaze.

"One cannot fail to believe facts, Darya Alexandrovna," he said, emphasizing the word "facts."

"But what did she do? What? What?" said Darya Alexandrovna. "What exactly did she do?"

"She despised her obligations and deceived her husband. That is what she did," he said.

"No, no, it can't be! No, for the love of God, you're mistaken!" said Dolly, touching her temples and shutting her eyes.

Alexei Alexandrovich smiled coldly with just his lips, wishing to show her and himself the firmness of his conviction; but this heated defense, although it did not sway him, did rub salt in his wound. He began speaking with greater animation.

"It is extremely difficult to be mistaken when one's wife herself declares this to her husband. And declares that eight years of life and a son—that all this is a mistake and that she wants to start her life all over again," he said angrily, snorting.

"Anna and sin—I can't connect them, I can't believe it."

"Darya Alexandrovna!" he said, now looking directly into Dolly's good and agitated face and feeling his tongue loosening in spite of himself. "I would pay dearly for doubt to still be possible. When I doubted, it was hard for me, but easier than it is now. When I doubted, there was hope; but now there is no hope, and nonetheless I doubt everything. I so doubt everything that I hate my son and sometimes believe he is not my son. I am very unhappy."

He did not have to say that. Darya Alexandrovna realized this as soon as he looked into her face; and she began to feel sorry for him, and her faith in her friend's innocence wavered.

"Oh no! This is horrible, horrible! But is it really true that you've decided on divorce?"

"I've decided on the final measure. I have no other choice."

"No other choice, no other choice," she said with tears in her eyes. "No, not no other choice!" she said.

"What is so horrible in this kind of grief is that one cannot do what one can in any other—in loss, in death—bear your cross, while here one must act," he said, as if guessing her thought. "One must extricate oneself from the humiliating position in which one has been put. One cannot live *à trois*."¹⁶

"I understand, I understand very well," said Dolly, and she lowered her head. She was silent for a while, thinking about herself and about her own familial grief, and suddenly with an energetic gesture she raised her head and in an im-

ploring gesture folded her hands. “But wait! You’re a Christian. Think of her! What will happen to her if you abandon her?”

“I have thought, Darya Alexandrovna. I’ve thought a great deal,” said Alexei Alexandrovich. His face broke out in red blotches, and his cloudy eyes looked straight at her. Darya Alexandrovna now pitied him with all her soul. “That is exactly what I did after she herself announced to me my disgrace; I left everything as it had been. I gave her an opportunity to amend, I tried to save her. And what happened? She did not fulfill my easiest demand—to observe the proprieties,” he said, growing heated. “A person can be saved who does not want to perish; but if her entire nature is so corrupt, so depraved, that perishing itself seems to her salvation, what is to be done?”

“Anything, only not divorce!” answered Darya Alexandrovna.

“But what is anything?”

“No, this is horrible. She will be no one’s wife, she will perish!”

“What can I do?” said Alexei Alexandrovich, raising his shoulders and eyebrows. The memory of his wife’s latest transgression so vexed him that he again turned cold, as he had been at the beginning of the conversation. “I am very grateful to you for your concern, but it’s time I went,” he said, standing.

“No, wait! You must not ruin her. Wait, I’ll tell you about myself. I married. My husband deceived me; in anger and jealousy, I wanted to abandon everything, I myself wanted . . . but I came to my senses; and who was it? Anna saved me. And so I live. My children are growing up, my husband has returned to his family and senses his error, things are getting cleaner, better, and I live. I forgave, and you should forgive!”

Alexei Alexandrovich listened to her, but her words had no further effect on him. The full anger of the day he decided on divorce rose up inside him again. He gave himself a shake and began speaking in a loud, penetrating voice, “I cannot forgive, and I do not want to, and I consider it unjust. I have done everything for this woman, and she has trampled it all in the mud characteristic of her. I am not a spiteful man, I have never hated anyone, but I hate her with every fiber of my being, and I cannot even forgive her because I hate her too much for all the evil she has done me!” he said with tears of anger in his voice.

“Love those who hate you,” whispered Darya Alexandrovna bashfully.¹⁷

Alexei Alexandrovich smiled contemptuously. He had long known this, but it could not be applied to his case.

“Love those who hate you, but to love those you hate is impossible. Forgive me for troubling you. Each of us has grief enough of his own!” And regaining his self-control, Alexei Alexandrovich calmly said good-bye and left.

13

When they rose from the table, Levin wanted to follow Kitty into the drawing room, but he was afraid she might find this unpleasant because he was so obviously courting her. He remained among the men, taking part in the general conversation, and without looking at Kitty felt her movements, her gazes, and the spot where she was in the drawing room.

Now, at once, without the slightest effort he was keeping the promise he had given her—always to think well of all people and always to love everyone. The conversation turned to the commune, in which Pestsov saw such a special principle, which he called the choral principle.¹⁸ Levin did not agree with Pestsov or with his brother, who somehow in his own way managed both to admit and not to admit the significance of the Russian commune. But he spoke with them, trying only to reconcile them and soften their objections. He had not the slightest interest in what he himself was saying, and even less in what they were saying, and wanted only one thing—for them and everyone to have a good and pleasant time. He knew now that just one thing was important. And this one thing was first there, in the drawing room, and then began moving and stopped at the door. Without turning around, he could feel her gaze and smile aimed at himself, and he could not help but turn around. She was standing in the doorway with Shcherbatsky, looking at him.

“I thought you were on your way to the piano,” he said, walking over to her. “That is what I miss in the country: music.”

“No, we only came to get you, and thank you for coming,” she said, rewarding him with a smile like a gift. “What is this urge to argue? After all, no one ever convinces anyone else.”

“Yes, it’s true,” said Levin, “most of the time you argue heatedly only because you just can’t understand what exactly your opponent is trying to prove.”

Levin had often noticed in debates among the most intelligent of men that after tremendous efforts and a tremendous number of logical subtleties and words, the debaters arrived ultimately at the awareness that what they had long been fighting to prove to one another had been known to them all for a very long time, since the beginning of the debate, but they liked different things and so did not want to name what they did like, in order not to be disputed. He frequently experienced during a debate that sometimes you understand what your opponent likes and suddenly you yourself come to like the very same thing and immediately you agree and then all arguments fall away as unnecessary. But sometimes you experience the opposite: you finally state what you yourself like and what you have been coming up with arguments for, and if you happen to

express this well and sincerely then suddenly your opponent agrees and stops arguing. This is the very thing he wanted to say.

She frowned, trying to understand. But as soon as he began explaining, she understood.

“I understand. You have to know what he’s arguing for and what he loves, and then you can . . .”

She had fully intuited and expressed his badly expressed thought. Levin smiled delightedly. So astonishing to him was this transition from the confused, verbose debate with Pestsov and his brother to this laconic and clear report, without words almost, of the most complicated thoughts.

Shcherbatsky walked away from them, and Kitty, walking over to the card table that had been set up, sat down, and picking up the chalk, began drawing spirals with it on the new green cloth.

They revived the conversation they’d been having at dinner about the freedom and occupations of women. Levin agreed with Darya Alexandrovna’s opinion that a young woman who did not marry would find her womanly duties in the family. He confirmed this by the fact that no family could get along without a helper, that every family rich and poor had and should have nurses, whether hired or relations.

“No!” said Kitty, blushing, but looking at him all the more boldly with her truthful eyes, “a young woman may be so disposed that she cannot enter a family without humiliation, while she herself—”

He understood immediately.

“Oh yes!” he said. “Yes, yes, yes, you’re right, you’re right!”

And he understood everything Pestsov had been arguing at dinner about women’s freedom merely by the fact that he saw in Kitty’s heart the terror of being an old maid and suffering humiliation; and loving her, he felt this terror and humiliation and immediately rejected his own arguments.

There was a silence. She was still drawing with chalk on the table. Her eyes were shining quietly. Falling in with her mood, he felt throughout his being the constantly mounting tension of happiness.

“Oh no! I’ve written all over the table!” she said, and putting down the chalk, she made a movement as if to rise.

“How can I be left alone without her?” he thought with horror and he picked up the chalk.

“Wait,” he said, sitting down at the table. “I’ve long wanted to ask you something.”

And he looked straight into her kind, albeit frightened eyes.

“Please, ask.”

“Look,” he said, and he wrote the initial letters: w, y, a, i, c, b, d, t, m, n, o, t? These letters meant: “When you answered, *It cannot be*, did that mean never, or then?” There was no likelihood she could understand this complicated sentence; but he gave her a look that said his life depended on whether she would understand these words.

She looked at him gravely, then leaned her furrowed brow on her hand and began to read. She glanced up at him from time to time, asking him with her gaze, “Is it what I think it is?”

“I understand,” she said, blushing.

“What word is this?” he said, pointing to the “n,” which signified “never.”

“That means ‘never,’” she said, “but it’s not true!”

He quickly wiped away what he had written, gave her the chalk, and stood. She wrote: t, i, c, n, h, a, o.

Dolly was completely consoled from the grief inflicted upon her by the conversation with Alexei Alexandrovich when she caught sight of these two figures: Kitty with the chalk in her hands and looking up at Levin with a shy and happy smile, and his handsome figure bent over the table, his ardent eyes aimed first at the table, then at her. He suddenly beamed: he had understood. It meant, “Then I could not have answered otherwise.”

He looked at her questioningly, timidly.

“Only then?”

“Yes,” her smile answered.

“And n . . . and now?” he asked.

“Well, read this then. I’ll tell you what I would wish. With all my heart!” She wrote the initial letters: f, y, t, f, a, f, w, h. This meant, “For you to forget and forgive what happened.”

He grabbed the chalk with tense, trembling fingers, and breaking it, wrote the initial letters of the following, “I have nothing to forget or forgive, I never stopped loving you.”

She looked at him with an unswerving smile.

“I understand,” she whispered.

He sat down and wrote a long sentence. She understood everything, and without asking him, Is this so? took the chalk and immediately replied.

For a long time he couldn’t understand what she had written and he kept looking into her eyes. He was stupefied by happiness. He simply could not supply the words she had meant; but in her splendid eyes radiant with happiness he understood everything he needed to know. He wrote three letters. But before he could finish writing she had already read over his arm and herself finished it and wrote her answer: Yes.

“Are you playing *secrétaire*?” said the old prince, approaching. “Well, we should be going, though, if you want to be on time to the theater.”

Levin stood and saw Kitty to the door.

In their conversation, all had been said; it had been said that she loved him and would tell her father and mother, and that he would come tomorrow morning.

14

When Kitty had gone and Levin was left alone, he felt such disquiet without her and such an impatient desire to live as quickly, as quickly as possible, through to the coming morning, when he would see her again and be united with her forever, that he feared like death these fourteen hours that he faced spending without her. He had to be with and talk with someone in order not to be left alone, in order to cheat time. Stepan Arkadyevich would have been the most pleasant of companions, but he had said he was going to an evening party, though in reality to the ballet. Levin only managed to tell him that he was happy and that he loved him and would never, never forget what he had done for him. Stepan Arkadyevich’s look and smile showed Levin that he had properly understood this emotion.

“So it’s not time to die after all?” said Stepan Arkadyevich, shaking Levin’s hand with emotion.

“Nnnno!” said Levin.

Darya Alexandrovna, in saying good-bye to him, also seemed to be congratulating him when she said, “I’m so pleased you saw Kitty again. We must treasure old friendships.”

But Levin found these words of Darya Alexandrovna unpleasant. She could not understand how lofty and inaccessible to her all this was, and she should not make bold to mention this.

Levin said good-bye to them, but in order not to be left alone, he latched on to his brother.

“Where are you going?”

“To a meeting.”

“Well, I’m going with you. May I?”

“Why not? Let’s go,” said Sergei Ivanovich, smiling. “What’s just happened to you?”

“To me? Happiness has happened to me!” said Levin, lowering the window of the carriage in which they were riding. “You don’t mind? Otherwise it’s stuffy. Happiness happened! Why haven’t you ever married?”

Sergei Ivanovich smiled.

"I've very glad, she seems a splendid young—" Sergei Ivanovich was about to begin.

"Don't say it, don't say it, don't say it!" cried Levin, grabbing him by the coat collar with both hands and muffling him up. "She's a splendid young woman" were such simple, common words, so inappropriate to his emotion.

Sergei Ivanovich gave a merry laugh, something which happened rarely with him.

"Well, at least I can say I'm very glad of it."

"You can say that tomorrow, tomorrow, and nothing more! Nothing, nothing, silence!"¹⁹ said Levin, and muffling him up once more with his coat, he added, "I love you very much! So, may I attend your meeting?"

"Of course you may."

"What are you discussing these days?" asked Levin, who couldn't stop smiling.

They arrived at the meeting. Levin listened to the secretary, stammering, read the minutes, which he himself obviously did not understand; but Levin saw from the face of this secretary what a dear, good, and splendid man he was. That was evident from the way he got confused and embarrassed reading the minutes. Then the speeches began. They argued about the allocation of certain sums and about laying certain pipelines, and Sergei Ivanovich wounded two members and spoke for a long time triumphantly; and another member, having written something on a piece of paper, first was shy, but then responded to him quite venomously and sweetly. And then Sviyazhsky (he was there as well) also said something very handsomely and nobly. Levin listened to them and clearly saw that neither these allocated sums or pipelines nor any of this was anything at all, and they were not in the least angry, but were all such good, splendid people, and everything was going so well, so sweetly among them. They weren't bothering anyone, and everyone was having a pleasant time. It was remarkable for Levin that he could see right through all of them now, and from small, nearly imperceptible signs he could recognize the soul of each and clearly see that they were all good. In particular, they all now had an extraordinary love for him, Levin. This was evident from how they spoke with him and how kindly and lovingly even everyone he didn't know looked at him.

"Well, are you satisfied?" Sergei Ivanovich asked him.

"Quite. I never thought this would be so interesting! Splendid, wonderful!"

Sviyazhsky came up to Levin and invited him for tea. Levin simply could not understand or recall why he had been dissatisfied with Sviyazhsky, what he had been looking for in him. He was an intelligent and amazingly good man.

“Oh, my pleasure,” he said, and he inquired about his wife and sister-in-law. By a strange association of thoughts, since in his imagination the thought of Sviyazhsky’s sister-in-law was connected with marriage, he imagined that there could be no one better to tell about his happiness than Sviyazhsky’s wife and sister-in-law, and he was very happy to go see them.

Sviyazhsky questioned him all about his affairs in the country, as he always did, not presuming any possibility of discovering something that had not been discovered in Europe, and now this was not the least bit unpleasant for Levin. On the contrary, he felt that Sviyazhsky was right, that this whole business was inconsequential, and he saw the astonishing gentleness and kindness with which Sviyazhsky avoided proclaiming his own correctness. Sviyazhsky’s ladies were especially sweet. It seemed to Levin that they all knew already and sympathized with him but were not speaking merely out of delicacy. He sat with them for one hour, two, three, talking about various subjects, but he implied only what was filling his soul and did not notice that he had bored them dreadfully and that it was long past their bedtime.

Sviyazhsky saw him to the front door, yawning and wondering at the strange state his friend was in. It was after one. Levin returned to his hotel and took fright at the thought of spending the remaining ten hours alone with his impatience. The night servant, who was not asleep, lit the candles for him and was about to leave, but Levin stopped him. This servant, Egor, whom Levin had not noticed previously, proved a quite intelligent and fine, and most important, good man.

“Say, Egor, is it hard not to sleep?”

“What can I do? That’s our duty. It’s more restful in a gentleman’s house, but the pay here is more.”

It turned out that Egor had a family, three boys and a seamstress daughter whom he wanted to marry off to a sales clerk in a harness shop.

Levin took this occasion to inform Egor of his thought about how in marriage the main thing was love and that with love you would always be happy because happiness can only be in you yourself.

Egor listened to all he had to say and evidently fully understood Levin’s thought, but in confirmation of it he made a comment that surprised Levin, that when he had lived with fine gentlemen he had always been content with his employer, and now he was perfectly content with his master, even though he was a Frenchman.

“What an amazingly good man,” thought Levin.

“Well, and what about you, Egor, when you married, did you love your wife?”

“How could I not?” replied Egor.

Levin saw that Egor, too, was in an enthusiastic state and intended to express all his own most heartfelt emotions.

“My life is amazing, too. Ever since I was a small boy—” he began, his eyes glittering, evidently having caught Levin’s enthusiasm, the way people catch yawning.

But at that moment the bell rang; Egor went and Levin was left alone. He had eaten practically nothing at dinner and had refused tea and supper at the Sviyazhskys’, but he couldn’t think about supper. He hadn’t slept the previous night, but he couldn’t think about sleep, either. The air was fresh in the room, but the heat was suffocating him. He opened two small panes in the window and sat at the table in front of them. Beyond the snow-covered roofs he could see the patterned cross with chains and, above that, the rising triangle of the constellation Charioteer with its bright yellow Capella. He looked first at the cross and then at the star, inhaled the fresh frosty air flowing evenly into the room, and as in a dream followed the images and memories that arose in his imagination. Between three and four he heard steps in the corridor and looked out the door. This was a gambler he knew, Myaskin, returning from the club. He was walking gloomily, frowning and clearing his throat. “Poor, unfortunate man!” thought Levin, and tears came to his eyes out of love and pity for this man. He was about to speak with him and console him; but recalling he was wearing only his nightshirt, he thought better of it and again sat down by the open pane in order to bathe in the cold air and look at this cross of marvelous shape, silent but for him full of meaning, and at the bright yellow star rising. Between six and seven the floor polishers began making noise, people started ringing for service, and Levin felt himself getting chilled. He shut the pane, washed, dressed, and went outside.

15

The streets were still deserted. Levin set out for the Shcherbatsky house. The front doors were locked and everyone was asleep. He started back, went to his room again, and asked for coffee. The day servant, no longer Egor, brought it to him. Levin wanted to start a conversation, but someone rang for the servant and he left. Levin tried to sip his coffee and put a bun in his mouth, but his mouth definitely did not know what to do with the bun. Levin spat out the bun, put on his coat, and went out for a walk again. It was past nine when he arrived for the second time on the Shcherbatskys’ front steps. In the house they had just gotten up, and the cook was on his way to get provisions. He would have to live through at least two more hours.

All this night and morning Levin had been living perfectly unconsciously and had felt totally removed from the conditions of material life. He had not eaten for an entire day, had not slept for two nights, had spent several hours without a coat in the frost and felt not only fresher and haler than ever but perfectly independent of his body. He moved without any effort of his muscles and felt he could do anything. He was certain he could fly or move the corner of a building if need be. He spent the remaining time walking through the streets, constantly looking at his watch and looking from side to side.

What he saw then he never saw again. In particular the children on their way to school, the doves flying down from the rooftops to the sidewalk, and the flour-dusted batch bread, set out by an invisible hand, touched him. The bread, the doves, and the two boys were unearthly creatures. All this happened simultaneously: a boy ran up to a dove and, smiling, glanced at Levin; the dove fluttered its wings and darted off, gleaming in the sun between flakes of snow trembling in the air; and from a window he could smell freshly baked bread and the buns were set out. All this taken together was so unusually fine that Levin laughed and cried from joy. Having made a large circle along Gazetny Lane and Kislovka, he returned again to the hotel, and placing his watch before him, sat down, waiting for twelve o'clock. In the next room they were saying something about machines and trickery and coughing a morning cough. They didn't realize the hand was approaching twelve. The hand reached it. Levin came out on the front steps. The drivers obviously knew everything. They surrounded Levin with happy faces, arguing among themselves and offering their services. Trying not to offend the other drivers and promising to ride with them as well, Levin took one and ordered him to drive to the Shcherbatskys'. The driver was splendid in his white shirt collar, which poked out from under his coat and fit snugly around his strong, red, muscled neck. This driver's sleigh was high and comfortable such as Levin never rode in again, and the horse was fine and tried to gallop but seemed not to budge. The driver knew the Shcherbatsky house and, with especial deference to his fare, pulled up to the entrance with a sweep of the arm and a "Whoa!" The Shcherbatskys' doorman obviously knew all. This was evident from the smile in his eyes and from the way he said, "Well, you haven't been to see us for quite a while, Konstantin Dmitrievich!"

Not only did he know everything, but he was obviously delighted and making an effort to conceal his delight. Looking at his kindly old eyes, Levin even realized something else new in his happiness.

"Have they gotten up?"

"Please, come in! And leave that here," he said smiling, when Levin wanted to go back for his hat. That meant something.

“To whom shall I announce your arrival?” asked a footman.

Although the footman was young and one of the new footmen, and a dandy, he was a very good and fine man and also understood everything.

“The princess . . . The prince . . . The young princess . . .” said Levin.

The first face he saw was *Mademoiselle Linon*. She was passing through the hall, and her ringlets and face were shining. No sooner had he begun talking with her than suddenly behind the door he heard the rustle of a dress, and *Mademoiselle Linon* vanished from Levin’s sight, and the joyous horror of the proximity of his happiness was conveyed to him. *Mademoiselle Linon* hurried, and leaving him, went toward another door. As soon as she went out, quick, quick, light steps were heard across the parquet, and his happiness, his life, he himself—the best of himself, that which he had been searching for and longing for so long—quickly, quickly drew near. She was not walking but borne toward him by some invisible power.

He saw only her clear, truthful eyes, frightened by the same joy of love that filled his heart as well. These eyes shone closer and closer, blinding him with their light of love. She stopped right alongside him, touching him. Her hands rose up and rested on his shoulders.

She had done everything she could. She had run up to him and given herself to him wholeheartedly, shy and joyous. He embraced her and pressed his lips to her mouth, which sought his kiss.

She too had not slept all night and had been waiting for him all morning. Her mother and father were unreservedly agreed and happy with her happiness. She had been waiting for him. She wanted to be the first to announce to him her own and his happiness. She had been preparing to greet him alone and rejoiced at this thought, and she was both shy and embarrassed and did not know herself what she would do. She had heard his steps and voice and waited behind the door for *Mademoiselle Linon* to leave. *Mademoiselle Linon* had left. Without thinking, without asking herself how or what, she went up to him and did what she had done.

“Let us go see mama!” she said, taking him by the hand. For a long time he couldn’t say anything, not so much because he was afraid of spoiling the exaltation of his emotion as because each time he tried to say something, instead of words, he felt he would burst out in tears of happiness. He took her hand and kissed it.

“Can it really be true?” he said, at last, in a husky voice. “I can’t believe you love me!”

She smiled at his familiar address and at the shyness with which he looked at her.

“Yes!” she said significantly, slowly. “I’m so happy!”

Without letting go of his hand, she went into the drawing room. The princess, seeing them, took quick breaths and immediately began to cry and then to laugh and with an energetic step Levin had not expected, ran up to him, and putting her hands around Levin’s head, kissed him and wet his cheeks with her tears.

“So it’s all over! I’m glad. Love her. I’m glad . . . Kitty!”

“You got that settled quickly!” said the old prince, trying to be casual; but Levin noticed that his eyes were moist when he turned toward him. “For so long, I’ve always wished for this!” he said, taking Levin’s hand and drawing him toward himself. “Even then, when this empty little head got the idea—”

“Papa!” Kitty exclaimed, and she covered his mouth with her hands.

“No, I won’t!” he said. “I’m very very . . . plea . . . Ah! I’m so stupid.”

He embraced Kitty, kissed her face, her hand, her face again, and made the sign of the cross over her.

Levin was overcome by a new feeling of love for this man, the old prince, who had before been a stranger to him, when he saw how long and tenderly Kitty kissed his fleshy hand.

16

The princess was sitting in an armchair, not talking, smiling; the prince was sitting next to her. Kitty was standing by her father’s chair, still not letting go of his hand. Everyone was silent.

The princess was the first to put everything in words and translated all their thoughts and emotions into practical questions, and this seemed identically strange and painful to everyone in that first minute.

“When? There needs to be a blessing and an announcement. But when is the wedding? What do you think, Alexander?”

“Here he is,” said the old prince, pointing to Levin. “He’s the principal person here.”

“When?” said Levin, turning red. “Tomorrow. If you’re asking me, then, in my opinion, the blessing today and the wedding tomorrow.”

“Come, *mon cher*, stop it. That’s silly!”

“Well then, in a week.”

“He truly is mad.”

“No, but why?”

“Have some pity!” said the mother, smiling radiantly at his impatience. “What about the trousseau?”

“Is there really going to be a trousseau and all that?” thought Levin with horror. “But actually, can a trousseau, and a blessing, and all that—can that really spoil my happiness? Nothing can!” He looked at Kitty and noticed that she was not offended in the least by the thought of a trousseau. “It must be needed, then,” he thought.

“I know nothing, really, I only said what I wished,” he said, apologizing.

“Then let’s talk it over. We can have the blessing and announcement now. That’s fine.”

The princess walked up to her husband, kissed him, and was about to go, but he held her back, embraced her, and tenderly, like a young lover, several times, smiling, kissed her. The old people evidently had become confused for a moment and didn’t know very well whether it was they who were in love again or only their daughter. After the prince and princess left, Levin went over to his betrothed and took her hand. He had mastered himself and could speak, and he had a lot he needed to tell her. But he said something completely different from what he should have.

“How I knew it would be like this! I never stopped hoping; but in my heart I was always sure,” he said. “I believe it was ordained.”

“And I?” she said. “Even then . . .” She stopped and then resumed, looking at him squarely with her truthful eyes, “even then, when I pushed away my happiness. I always loved you alone, but I was distracted. I have to say it. . . . Can you forget that?”

“Perhaps it’s for the best. You have much to forgive me for. I have to tell you . . .”

This was one of the things he had resolved to tell her. He had decided from the very first days to tell her two things—that he was not as pure as she, and also that he was not a believer. This was agonizing, but he felt he had to say both things.

“No, not now, afterward!” he said.

“Fine, afterward, but you must be sure to tell me. I’m not afraid of anything. I need to know everything. Now it’s done.”

To which he added, “It’s done and you will take me, no matter what I was, you won’t reject me? Yes?”

“Yes, yes.”

Their conversation was interrupted by *Mademoiselle Linon*, who, with an affected but tender smile, came to congratulate her favorite pupil. Before she left, the servants came in with their congratulations. Then relatives came, and then began that blissful chaos from which Levin did not emerge until the day after his wedding. Levin’s awkwardness and tedium were constant, but the in-

tensity of his happiness kept increasing. He constantly felt that a great deal he didn't know was required of him, and he did all he was told, and all this afforded him happiness. He thought that his engagement would have nothing resembling others' and that the usual conditions of an engagement would spoil his special happiness; but it ended in his doing as others do, and his happiness only increased from this and became more and more special, since he had never known anything like it.

"Now we shall eat candy," *Mademoiselle Linon* would say, and Levin would go out to purchase candy.

"Well, I'm very glad," said *Sviyazhsky*. "I advise you to get your bouquets from *Fomin*."

"Must I?" And he went to *Fomin's*.

His brother told him he must borrow some money because there would be many expenses and gifts.

"Must there be gifts?" And he galloped off to *Fulde's*.²⁰

And at the confectioner's, and at *Fomin's*, and at *Fulde's*, he saw he was expected, that they were happy to see him and exulted in his happiness, as did everyone he had dealings with during those days. What was extraordinary was that everyone not only loved him but that everyone who had in the past been unsympathetic, cold, and indifferent now admired him and yielded to him in everything. They treated his emotion gently and delicately and shared his conviction that he was the happiest man in the world because his betrothed was beyond perfection. *Kitty* was experiencing the same thing. When *Countess Nordston* allowed herself to hint that she had wished for something better, *Kitty* became so furious and proved so convincingly that there could be nothing in the world better than *Levin*, *Countess Nordston* had to admit this and in *Kitty's* presence no longer failed to greet *Levin* without a smile of admiration.

The explanation he had promised was the one difficult event of this period. He consulted with the old prince, and having received his permission, gave *Kitty* his diary, in which was written what had been tormenting him. He had in fact written this diary with a view toward his future bride. Two things tormented him: his lack of innocence and his lack of faith. His confession of his lack of faith passed unremarked. She was religious and never doubted the truths of religion, but his outward lack of faith did not affect her in the slightest. She knew his entire soul with her love, and in his soul she saw what she wanted, and the fact that this state of the soul was called being a nonbeliever did not matter to her. The other confession cost her bitter tears.

Not without an inner struggle had *Levin* handed over his diary to her. He knew that between him and her there could and should be no secrets, and so

he had decided this was how it must be. But he had not realized what effect this might have, he had not put himself in her place. Only when that evening he came to see them before the theater, entered her room, and saw her tear-stained, pitiful, and dear face, so unhappy for the irretrievable grief he had caused, did he realize the abyss that separated his shameful past from her profound purity, and he was horrified at what he had done.

“Take them, take these horrid books!” she said, pushing away the notebooks that lay in front of her on the table. “Why did you give them to me? No, still, it’s better,” she added, taking pity on his despairing face. “But this is horrid, horrid!”

He dropped his head and said nothing. There was nothing he could say.

“You can’t forgive me,” he whispered.

“No, I’ve forgiven you, but this is horrid!”

His happiness was so great, though, that this confession did not destroy it but merely lent it a new nuance. She had forgiven him, but since then he had considered himself even more unworthy of her and bowed even lower morally before her and valued even more highly his own undeserved happiness.

17

Unable to keep himself from sorting through in his memory his impression of the conversations he had had during and after dinner, Alexei Alexandrovich returned to his lonely room. Darya Alexandrovna’s words about forgiveness had produced nothing but irritation in him. The applicability or nonapplicability of the Christian precept to his case was too difficult a matter about which one could not speak lightly, and this matter had long since been decided by Alexei Alexandrovich in the negative. From all that had been said, what stayed most in his imagination were the words of the foolish, good-natured Turovtsyn: *Acted like a man! Challenged him and killed him!* Everyone, evidently, shared this feeling, although out of courtesy had not said so.

“Actually, the matter is settled, and there is nothing more to think about it,” Alexei Alexandrovich told himself. And thinking only about his impending departure and the matter of the inspection, he walked into his room and asked the doorman escorting him where his valet was; the porter said that the valet had just gone out. Alexei Alexandrovich ordered tea served, sat down at the table, and picking up Froom, began deciding the route of his journey.²¹

“Two telegrams,” said the returned valet as he entered the room. “Forgive me, Your Excellency, I had just gone out.”

Alexei Alexandrovich took the telegrams and unsealed them. The first telegram was news of Stremov’s appointment to the very position that Karenin had

wanted. Alexei Alexandrovich threw down the dispatch and, red in the face, rose and began pacing around the room. “*Quos vult perdere dementat*,” he said, by *quos*, naturally, implying those individuals who had promoted this appointment.²² He was not annoyed that he had not been given the job, that he had obviously been passed over; but he could not understand, he was amazed, that they hadn’t seen that the loudmouth phrasemonger Stremov was the last man fit for it. How had they failed to see that they were ruining themselves and their *prestige* with this appointment!

“Something else in the same vein,” he told himself biliously, opening the second dispatch. The telegram was from his wife. Her signature in blue pencil, “Anna,” was the first thing to catch his eye. “I am dying, I am begging, pleading for you to come. With your forgiveness I will die more peacefully,” he read. He smiled contemptuously and threw down the telegram. That this was a deceit and a trick, at the first moment he felt that there could be no doubt of this.

“There is no deceit at which she would not stop. She is supposed to give birth. Perhaps it is an illness of childbirth. But what is their purpose? To legitimize the child, compromise me, and prevent the divorce,” he thought. “But something was said there: I am dying.” He reread the telegram and suddenly the plain meaning of what was said struck him. “And what if it’s true?” he told himself. “If it’s true that in her moment of suffering and the imminence of death she sincerely repents and I, having taken it for deceit, refuse to come? That would not only be cruel, not only would everyone condemn me, but it would be foolish on my part.”

“Peter, cancel the carriage. I’m going to Petersburg,” he told his valet.

Alexei Alexandrovich decided he would go to Petersburg and see his wife. If her illness was a trick, he would say nothing and leave. If she was in fact ill, near death, and wished to see him before her death, then he would forgive her, if he reached her still alive, and would do his final duty if he came too late.

All the way he thought no more of what he should do.

Feeling weary and dirty, as a result of a night spent in the train car, in the early fog of Petersburg, Alexei Alexandrovich rode down a deserted Nevsky Avenue and looked straight ahead, not thinking about what awaited him. He could not think about this because in trying to imagine what would happen, he could not drive away the supposition that her death would resolve at once all the difficulty of his position. The bakeries, the locked shops, the night cabbies, the porters sweeping the sidewalks flashed before his eyes, and he watched it all, trying to drown out the thought of what awaited him and what he dared not wish for yet did wish for. He rode up to the front steps. A sleigh and a carriage with a sleeping driver were waiting by the entrance. As he walked into the entry,

Alexei Alexandrovich seemed to draw his resolution from the deepest corner of his brain and got a grip on it. It meant, "If it's a trick, then calm disdain, and leave. If it's the truth, then observe the proprieties."

The porter opened the door even before Alexei Alexandrovich rang. The doorman, Petrov, otherwise known as Kapitonych, looked odd in his old coat, without a tie, in his slippers.

"How is the mistress?"

"A successful delivery yesterday."

Alexei Alexandrovich stopped and turned pale. Now he clearly understood how powerfully he had wished her death.

"And her health?"

Kornei, wearing his morning apron, ran down the stairs.

"Very bad," he replied. "Yesterday there was a doctor's consultation, and the doctor is here now."

"Take my things," said Alexei Alexandrovich, and feeling some relief at the news that there was still a hope of death, he walked into the front hall. Hanging there was a military coat. Alexei Alexandrovich noted this and asked:

"Who is here?"

"The doctor, the midwife, and Count Vronsky."

Alexei Alexandrovich proceeded into the inner rooms.

There was no one in the drawing room; from her sitting room, at the sound of his steps, the midwife emerged in a cap with purple ribbons.

She went up to Alexei Alexandrovich and with the familiarity brought by the imminence of death, took him by the arm and led him into the bedroom.

"Thank God you've arrived! She talks of you and only of you," she said.

"Get me ice, fast!" said the doctor's imperious voice from the bedroom.

Alexei Alexandrovich went into her sitting room. Near her table, sitting sideways on a low chair, sat Vronsky, crying, his hands covering his face. He jumped up at the doctor's voice, took his hands from his face, and saw Alexei Alexandrovich. Upon seeing the husband, he became so confused that he sat back down, pulling his head into his shoulders as if wishing to disappear. Nonetheless, he made an effort over himself, rose, and said, "She is dying. The doctors said there is no hope. I am entirely in your power, but allow me to be here. . . . It's as you will, I . . ."

Alexei Alexandrovich, seeing Vronsky's tears, felt a rush of that emotional distress which the sight of other people's sufferings produced in him, and averting his face, without listening to the rest of his words, he hurried toward the door. From the bedroom he could hear Anna's voice saying something. Her voice was cheerful, animated, with extraordinarily precise intonations. Alexei

Alexandrovich walked into the bedroom and up to the bed. She lay with her head turned toward him. Her cheeks glowed with color, her eyes glittered, her small white hands, poking out from the cuffs of her dressing gown, were playing with, twisting the corner of the blanket. She seemed not only healthy and fresh but in the best of spirits. She was speaking quickly, sonorously, and with unusually correct and heartfelt intonations.

“Because Alexei, I’m speaking of Alexei Alexandrovich (what a strange, terrible fate, that they’re both Alexei, isn’t it?), Alexei would not refuse me. I would forget and he would forgive. . . . But why doesn’t he come? He is good, he himself does not know how good he is. Oh, my God, what agony! Quick, give me some water! Oh, it would harm her, my little girl! Well, fine, then give her to the nurse. Yes, I agree, that’s even better. He will come, it will hurt him to see her. Take her away.”

“Anna Arkadyevna, he’s come. Here he is!” said the midwife, trying to draw her attention to Alexei Alexandrovich.

“Oh, what nonsense!” Anna continued, not seeing her husband. “Come, give her to me, my little girl, give her! He hasn’t arrived yet. You’re just saying he won’t forgive me because you don’t know him. No one knew him. Only I do, and it was hard even for me. His eyes, you’ve got to know, Seryozha has the very same eyes, and I see them and I can’t go on because of it. Did Seryozha have his dinner? You see I know, everyone will forget. He wouldn’t forget. You must move Seryozha into the corner room and ask Mariette to sleep with him.”

Suddenly she shrank, stopped talking, and in fright, as if anticipating a blow, as if protecting herself, she raised her hands to her face. She had seen her husband.

“No, no,” she began, “I am not afraid of him. I am afraid of death. Alexei, come here. I am in a hurry because I have no time, I have only a little longer to live, now the fever will begin and I won’t understand anything anymore. Now I understand, I understand everything, I see everything.”

Alexei Alexandrovich’s wrinkled face took on an expression full of suffering. He took her hand and wanted to say something but simply could not get the words out; his lower lip quivered, but he was still battling his agitation and now and then glanced at her. Each time he glanced, he saw her eyes, which were watching him with a touching and ecstatic tenderness as he had never seen in them.

“Wait, you don’t know. Wait, wait . . .” She stopped, as if gathering her thoughts. “Yes,” she began. “Yes, yes, yes. Here is what I wanted to say. Don’t be surprised at me. I’m still the same. . . . But there is another woman inside me, and I’m afraid of her—she loved the other man, and I wanted to hate you

and couldn't forget the woman who had been before. I'm not her. Now I'm the real one, I'm whole. I'm dying now, I know I'll die, ask him. Even now I feel, here they are, the weights on my arms, my legs, my fingers. Look at my fingers—they're huge! But this will all end soon. . . . I just need one thing: forgive me. Forgive me completely! I've been horrible, but my nurse used to say: the holy martyr—what was her name?—she was worse.²³ I'll go to Rome, there's a hermitage there, and then I won't bother anyone, only I'll take Seryozha and my little girl. No, you cannot forgive me! I know it can't be forgiven! No, no, go away, you're too good!" She held his hand in one of her hot hands and pushed him away with the other.

Alexei Alexandrovich's emotional derangement had kept increasing and had now reached the point where he stopped fighting it. He suddenly felt that what he had considered emotional derangement was, on the contrary, a blessed state of the soul, which had suddenly given him a new happiness he had never before experienced. He did not think that the Christian law he had tried to follow all his life prescribed that he forgive and love his enemies, but a joyous feeling of love and forgiveness for his enemies filled his soul. He knelt, and laying his head on the curve of her arm, which burned him like fire through her dressing gown, sobbed like a child. She embraced his balding head, shifted toward him, and with defiant pride looked upward.

"That's him, I knew it! Now forgive everything, forgive! . . . They've come again, why don't they go away? . . . Oh, take these furs off me!"

The doctor took away her hands, cautiously lowered her to the pillow, and covered her to her shoulders. She lay back meekly and looked straight ahead with a shining gaze.

"Remember one thing, that I needed only forgiveness, and I want nothing more. . . . Why doesn't *he* come?" she said, turning toward Vronsky at the door. "Come closer, come closer! Give him your hand."

Vronsky walked up to the edge of the bed, and when he saw her, he again covered his face with his hands.

"Uncover your face, look at him. He's a saint," she said. "Yes, uncover it, uncover your face!" she said angrily. "Alexei Alexandrovich, uncover his face! I want to see it."

Alexei Alexandrovich took Vronsky's hands and moved them away from his face, which was horrible for the suffering and shame on it.

"Give him your hand. Forgive him."

Alexei Alexandrovich gave him his hand and could not hold back the tears that were streaming from his eyes.

"Thank God, thank God," she began. "Now everything is settled. Only

stretch my legs out a little. There, that's it, that's wonderful. How tastelessly these flowers were done, nothing at all like a violet," she said, pointing to the wallpaper. "My God, my God! When will it end? Give me morphine. Doctor! Give me morphine. My God, my God!"

And she thrashed about in the bed.

The doctors said it was a case of puerperal fever, of which ninety-nine cases out of a hundred ended in death. All day she suffered fever, delirium, and unconsciousness. By midnight the patient was lying senseless and nearly without a pulse.

They expected the end at any moment.

Vronsky went home, but in the morning he came to inquire, and Alexei Alexandrovich, meeting him in the entry, said, "Stay, she may ask for you," and he himself led him into his wife's sitting room.

At dawn the agitation, vivacity, and quickness of thought and speech began all over again, and ended again in unconsciousness. On the third day it was the same, and the doctors said that there was hope. That day Alexei Alexandrovich went out into the sitting room, where Vronsky sat, and locking the door, sat down across from him.

"Alexei Alexandrovich," said Vronsky, sensing that an explanation was coming. "I can't talk, I can't understand. Have mercy on me! However hard it is for you, believe me, it is even more awful for me."

He was about to rise. But Alexei Alexandrovich took his hand and said:

"I beg you to hear me out, it's necessary. I must explain to you my feelings, those that have guided me and will guide me, so that you are not misled about me. You know that I decided on divorce and even began proceedings. I won't hide from you the fact that, in initiating the proceedings, I was reluctant and I agonized. I confess to you that a desire to take revenge on you and on her pursued me. When I got the telegram I came here with the same feelings. I'll say even more: I wished for her death. But . . ." He fell silent and pondered whether to reveal or not to reveal to him his feeling. "But I saw her and forgave. And the happiness of forgiveness revealed my duty to me. I have forgiven completely. I want to turn the other cheek, I would give my coat if my cloak be taken, and I pray to God for only one thing, that He not take away from me the happiness of forgiveness!" There were tears in his eyes, and their bright, tranquil gaze struck Vronsky. "Here is my position. You can trample me in the mud, you can make me the laughingstock of the world, but I won't abandon her and will never utter a word of reproach to you," he continued. "My duty is clearly marked out for

me: I must be with her and I will. If she wishes to see you, I'll let you know, but for now, I think, it's better if you stay away."

He rose, and sobs cut short his speech. Vronsky rose as well and while still stooped over, before he had straightened up, looked up at him. He did not understand Alexei Alexandrovich's emotion. But he felt that this was something loftier and even inaccessible to him with his outlook on the world.

18

After his conversation with Alexei Alexandrovich, Vronsky walked out onto the front steps of the Karenins' home and stopped, having a hard time remembering where he was and where he should go. He felt contrite, humiliated, guilty, and robbed of any opportunity to wipe away his humiliation. He felt he had been knocked off the track he had been following so proudly and easily until now. Everything that had seemed so solid, the habits and rules of his life, had suddenly proved false and inapplicable. The husband, the deceived husband, who had before seemed a pitiful creature, an irrelevant and somewhat comic obstacle to his happiness, had suddenly been summoned by Anna herself and elevated to an awe-inspiring height, and this husband had shown himself at this height not malicious, not affected, and not ridiculous, but good, simple, and magnificent. Vronsky could not help but feel this. Their roles had suddenly reversed. Vronsky felt the other man's height and his own humiliation, the other man's right and his own wrong. He felt that the husband had been magnanimous even in his grief, whereas he had been base and petty in his deception. But this awareness of his own baseness before the man whom he had unjustly despised was only a small part of his grief. He felt inexpressibly unhappy now because his passion for Anna, who of late seemed to be cooling toward him, now that he knew he had lost her forever had become stronger than it had ever been. He saw the whole of her during her illness, he glimpsed her soul, and it seemed to him he had never loved her until now. And now that he had come to know her and come to love her as he should, he had been humiliated before her and lost her forever, having left her with a single shameful memory of himself. Most horrible of all was his ridiculous and shameful position when Alexei Alexandrovich pulled his hands away from his ashamed face. He was standing on the front steps of the Karenins' house like a lost soul not knowing what to do.

"Shall I summon a sleigh?" asked the doorman.

"Yes, a sleigh."

Returning home after three sleepless nights, Vronsky lay prone on the sofa without undressing, crossing his arms and resting his head on them. His head

was heavy. The strangest pictures, memories, and thoughts kept coming, one after the other, with incredible speed and clarity: the medicine he had poured the patient, letting the spoon overflow; the midwife's white hands; Alexei Alexandrovich's strange position on the floor by her bed.

"To sleep! And forget!" he told himself, with the serene confidence of a healthy man that if he is tired and sleepy he will fall asleep right away. Indeed, in that instant his mind grew hazy and he began to plunge into the abyss of forgetfulness. The waves of the sea of unconscious life were already starting to gather over his head when suddenly—it was exactly as if a powerful jolt of electricity had passed through him—he shuddered so that his entire body lurched on the springs of the sofa, and leaning on his hands, in fright he jumped to his knees. His eyes were wide open, as if he had never been asleep. The weight of his head and the sluggishness of his limbs that he had experienced for a minute suddenly vanished.

"You can trample me in the dirt"—he heard Alexei Alexandrovich speaking and saw him before him, and saw Anna's face with the feverish flush and glittering eyes looking with tenderness and love not at him but at Alexei Alexandrovich; he saw his own foolish and ridiculous, or so it seemed to him, figure when Alexei Alexandrovich pulled his hands away from his face. He stretched his legs out again and flung himself on the sofa in his former pose and closed his eyes.

"Sleep! Sleep!" he repeated to himself. But with closed eyes he saw even more clearly Anna's face as it was on that memorable evening before the races.

"That is gone and will never be, and she wants to wipe that from her memory. But I cannot live without it. How are we to reconcile? How are we to reconcile?" he said out loud and unconsciously began repeating these words. This repetition of words kept back the emergence of the new images and memories he felt teeming in his head. But the repetition of words did not restrain his imagination for long. Again, one after another, he pictured with extraordinary rapidity the best minutes and along with them his recent humiliation. "Take away his hands," says Anna's voice. He takes away his hands and senses the ashamed and foolish expression on his face.

He lay there, trying to fall asleep, though he felt there was not the slightest hope of it, and kept repeating in a whisper random words from some thought, hoping in this way to keep new images from appearing. He listened closely—and heard words repeated in a bizarre, insane whisper, "Unable to value it, unable to make the most of it; unable to value it, unable to make the most of it."

"What is this? Or am I going mad?" he told himself. "Perhaps. Why do people go mad? Why do they shoot themselves?" he answered himself and opening his eyes, was surprised to see near his head the pillow embroidered by Varya, his

brother's wife. He touched the pillow's tassel and tried to recall Varya and when he had seen her last. But it was agony to think of anything unrelated. "No, I must sleep!" He moved the pillow closer and pressed his head to it, but he had to make an effort to keep his eyes closed. He jumped up and sat down. "It's over for me," he told himself. "I must figure out what to do. What is left?" His thoughts quickly ran over his life apart from his love for Anna.

"Ambition? Serpukhovskoi? Society? The court?" He couldn't decide on anything. All this had had meaning, but now none of it existed anymore. He rose from the sofa, removed his coat, loosened his belt, and baring his hairy chest in order to breathe more freely, walked around the room. "This is how people go mad," he repeated, "and shoot themselves . . . to escape the shame," he added slowly.

He walked to the door and closed it. Then, with a fixed gaze and clenched teeth, he walked over to the table, picked up his revolver, examined it, spun it to a loaded chamber, and became lost in thought. For a couple of minutes, his head lowered with an expression of intense mental effort, he stood perfectly still holding the revolver and thought. "Of course," he told himself, as if a logical, extended, and clear progression of thought had led him to an unquestionable conclusion. In reality, this "of course" that seemed convincing to him was only the result of the repetition of exactly the same circle of memories and pictures through which he had passed tens of times in that hour. The same memories of happiness, forever lost, the same picture of the meaninglessness of everything he had to look forward to in life, the same awareness of his own humiliation. And the sequence of pictures and emotions was also the same.

"Of course," he repeated when for the third time his thoughts headed back through the same vicious circle of memories and thoughts, and pressing the revolver to the left side of his chest and giving it a good jerk with his whole hand, as if suddenly squeezing it in his fist, he pulled the trigger. He didn't hear the shot, but the powerful blow to his chest knocked him off his feet. He tried to clutch at the edge of the table, dropped the revolver, staggered, and sat down on the ground, looking around in amazement. He did not recognize his room, looking from below at the table's curved legs, at the waste paper basket and the tiger skin. The fast, creaking steps of his valet walking through the drawing room brought him around. He made an effort to think and realized he was on the floor, and seeing the blood on the tiger skin and on his own hand he realized he had shot himself.

"How stupid! I missed," he said, groping for the revolver. The revolver was next to him—he was looking farther away. Still searching, he reached in the other direction and too weak to maintain his balance, fell, bleeding profusely.

The elegant valet with whiskers who had complained many times to his acquaintances about the weakness of his nerves took such fright when he saw his master lying on the floor that he left him there to bleed to death and ran for help. An hour later Varya, his brother's wife, arrived, and with the help of three doctors who had come, for whom she had sent everywhere and who all arrived at the same time, laid the wounded man on the bed and stayed there to nurse him.

19

The mistake Alexei Alexandrovich had made that, in preparing for his meeting with his wife, he had not considered the chance that her repentance would be sincere and he would forgive her but she wouldn't die—this mistake presented itself to him in full force two months after his return from Moscow. But the mistake he had made had come about not only because he had overlooked this possibility but also because until that day of meeting with his dying wife he had not known his own heart. At his ill wife's bedside, for the first time in his life, he surrendered to the warm compassion which other people's suffering evoked in him and which had previously embarrassed him as a harmful weakness; and his pity for her, and remorse for having wished her death, and, most of all, the very joy of forgiveness made him feel not only relief from his sufferings but also a spiritual peace he had never before experienced. He suddenly felt that the very thing that had been the source of his sufferings had become the source of his spiritual joy; that what had seemed insoluble when he had condemned, reproached, and hated became simple and clear when he forgave and loved.

He forgave his wife and pitied her for her sufferings and repentance. He forgave Vronsky and pitied him, especially after the rumors reached him of his desperate act. He pitied even his son more than before and reproached himself now for taking too little interest in him. But for the newborn baby girl he experienced a special feeling, not only of pity but of tenderness. At first from a feeling of compassion alone he took an interest in the rather weak newborn girl who was not his daughter and who had been abandoned during her mother's illness and who surely would have died had he not taken an interest in her—and himself did not notice how he had come to love her. Several times a day he went to the nursery and sat there for long stretches of time so that the wet nurse and nurse, who at first were shy in front of him, became accustomed to him. Sometimes he would spend half an hour silently watching the sleeping, saffron-and-red, downy and wrinkled little face of the child and observing the movements of her frowning brow and her plump little hands and her curled fingers, which

wiped her little eyes and the bridge of her nose with the back of her hand. In those moments in particular Alexei Alexandrovich felt perfectly at peace and in harmony with himself and did not see in his position anything unusual, anything that needed changing.

The more time passed, however, the more clearly he saw that no matter how natural this situation was for him now, he would not be allowed to remain in it. He sensed that apart from the benevolent spiritual force guiding his soul there was another, brutal force, just as or even more powerful, that was guiding his life, and this force would not allow him the humble peace he desired. He sensed everyone looking at him with questioning amazement; they did not understand him and were waiting for something from him. In particular, he sensed the instability and unnaturalness of his relations with his wife.

When the softening produced in her by the imminence of death had passed, Alexei Alexandrovich noticed that Anna was afraid of him, oppressed by him, and could not look him in the eye. It was as if she wanted to tell him something but couldn't bring herself to do so and also as if she had a presentiment that their relations could not continue, that she was expecting something from him.

Late in February it happened that Anna's newborn daughter, also named Anna, fell ill. Alexei Alexandrovich was in the nursery that morning and after ordering that the doctor be sent for, he left for the ministry. After three o'clock, finished with his affairs, he returned home. Walking into the entry he caught sight of a handsome footman in braided livery and a bearskin cape holding a white cloak made of American wolf.

"Who is here?" asked Alexei Alexandrovich.

"Princess Elizaveta Fyodorovna Tverskaya," replied the footman with a smile, or so it seemed to Alexei Alexandrovich.

Throughout this difficult time Alexei Alexandrovich had noticed that his society acquaintances, especially the women, had taken a particular interest in him and his wife. He had noticed in all their acquaintances a barely concealed delight in something, the same delight he had seen in the eyes of the lawyer and now saw in the eyes of the footman. Everyone seemed to be in rapture, as if they were marrying someone off. When he was greeted, he was asked with scarcely concealed delight about her health.

The presence of Princess Tverskaya—both because of the memories connected with her and because he did not like her in general—was distasteful to Alexei Alexandrovich, and he went straight to the nursery. In the first nursery, Seryozha, lying with his chest on the table and his feet on the chair, was drawing something and chattering away. The English governess, who had replaced the French one during Anna's illness and was sitting alongside the boy tating her picot, hastily rose, sat back down, and tugged at Seryozha.²⁴

Alexei Alexandrovich stroked his son's hair, answered the governess's question about his wife's health, and asked what the doctor had said about the *baby*.²⁵

"The doctor said there was no danger and prescribed baths, sir."

"But she is still suffering," said Alexei Alexandrovich, listening to the child's screaming in the next room.

"I think the wet nurse isn't working out, sir," said the Englishwoman decisively.

"What makes you think so?" he asked, stopping.

"That's how it was with Countess Pohl, sir. They were treating the child, but it turned out the child was simply hungry: the wet nurse had no milk, sir."

Alexei Alexandrovich pondered that, and after standing there for several seconds went through the other door. The little girl lay there, her tiny head flung back, arching her back in the wet nurse's arms, and would not take the plump breast being offered her or be quiet, despite the double shushing of the wet nurse and the nurse bending over her.

"Still no better?" said Alexei Alexandrovich.

"Very restless," the nurse whispered in reply.

"Miss Edward says that perhaps the wet nurse has no milk," he said.

"I think so, too, Alexei Alexandrovich."

"Then why don't you say something?"

"Who could I say it to? Anna Arkadyevna is still unwell," said the nurse, displeased.

The nurse was an old family servant, and in these plain words of hers Alexei Alexandrovich saw a hint at his position.

The baby was screaming louder and louder, tossing about and wheezing. With a gesture of despair, the nurse walked up to her, took her from the wet nurse's arms, and began rocking her as she walked.

"You must ask the doctor to examine the wet nurse," said Alexei Alexandrovich.

The robust-looking, well-dressed wet nurse, frightened that they would turn her away, mumbled something to herself, and covering up her large breast, smiled contemptuously at the doubts about her milk supply. In this smile Alexei Alexandrovich also found scorn for his own position.

"Unlucky child!" said the nurse, shushing the child and continuing to walk her up and down.

Alexei Alexandrovich sat down on a chair and with a suffering, mournful face watched the nurse pacing back and forth.

When the baby, quieted at last, was lowered into her deep crib and the nurse had straightened the pillow and walked away, Alexei Alexandrovich stood up,

and trying hard to walk on tiptoe, approached the child. For a minute he was silent and watched the baby with the same mournful face; but suddenly, a smile, moving his hair and the skin on his forehead, a smile broke out on his face, and he walked out of the room just as quietly.

In the dining room he rang and ordered the servant who came in to send again for the doctor. He was annoyed at his wife for not concerning herself with this charming child and in this irritated mood did not want to go to her, nor did he feel like seeing Princess Betsy; but his wife might wonder why he did not stop in to see her as usual and so he made an effort to master himself and went to the bedroom. As he walked over the soft carpet toward the doorway, he could not help but overhear a conversation which he did not want to hear.

“If he weren’t going away, I would have understood your refusal and his as well. But your husband has to be above that,” said Betsy.

“It’s not for my husband that I don’t want it but for myself. Don’t say that!” Anna’s agitated voice replied.

“Yes, but you can’t help wishing to say good-bye to the man who shot himself over you.”

“That’s exactly why I don’t want to.”

With a frightened and guilty expression, Alexei Alexandrovich came to a halt and was about to go back unobserved. But reflecting that this would be unworthy of him, he turned back, coughed, and walked toward the bedroom. The voices fell silent and he entered.

Anna, wearing a gray robe, her black hair cut short but growing out like a thick brush on her round head, was sitting on the settee. As always at the sight of her husband, the animation of her face suddenly vanished. She dropped her head and looked over nervously at Betsy. Betsy, dressed in the very latest fashion, wearing a hat that swooped somewhere above her head, like the shade over a lamp, and a dove-gray dress with dramatic diagonal stripes going one way on the bodice and the other on the skirt, was sitting next to Anna, holding her tall, flat torso erect, and bowing her head, she greeted Alexei Alexandrovich with an amused smile.

“Ah!” she said, as if surprised. “I’m very happy that you’re home. You never show yourself anywhere, and I haven’t seen you during Anna’s illness. I’ve heard everything—your concern. Yes, you are an amazing husband!” she said with a significant and kindly look, as if conferring upon him a decoration for magnanimity for his conduct toward his wife.

Alexei Alexandrovich bowed coldly, and kissing his wife’s hand, inquired about her health.

“Better, I think,” she said, avoiding his gaze.

“But you seem to have a feverish color to your face,” he said, stressing the word “feverish.”

“We’ve been talking too much,” said Betsy. “I feel that it’s egoism on my part, so I’m leaving.”

She stood up, but Anna, blushing all of a sudden, quickly grabbed her arm.

“No, stay a little longer, please. I need to tell you . . . no, you,” she turned to Alexei Alexandrovich, and a flush covered her neck and brow. “I can’t and don’t want to keep anything hidden from you,” she said.

Alexei Alexandrovich cracked his knuckles and dropped his head.

“Betsy has said that Count Vronsky wishes to come by and say good-bye before his departure for Tashkent.” She was not looking at her husband and evidently was in haste to say everything, no matter how hard it was for her. “I said I could not receive him.”

“You said, my friend, that it would depend on Alexei Alexandrovich,” Betsy corrected her.

“But no, I can’t receive him, it will not do any—” She stopped suddenly and glanced inquiringly at her husband (he was not looking at her). “In short, I do not want . . .”

Alexei Alexandrovich moved forward and tried to take her hand.

Her first reaction was to jerk her hand away from the damp hand with its large raised veins, which was seeking hers; but making a visible effort, she pressed his hand.

“I’m very grateful for your confidence, but . . .” he said, feeling with embarrassment and irritation that what he might decide easily and clearly by himself he could not discuss in the presence of Princess Tverskaya, who seemed to him the personification of that brutal force that must guide his life in the eyes of society and that prevented him from surrendering to his feeling of love and forgiveness. He stopped, looking at Princess Tverskaya.

“Good-bye, then, my darling,” said Betsy, standing. She kissed Anna and went out. Alexei Alexandrovich escorted her.

“Alexei Alexandrovich! I know you for a genuinely magnanimous man,” said Betsy, who had halted in the small drawing room and was pressing his hand yet again with special fervor. “I am an outsider, but I love her and respect you and so I am allowing myself this advice. Receive him. Alexei is honor personified, and he is leaving for Tashkent.”

“I thank you, Princess, for your concern and advice. But the matter of whether my wife may or may not receive someone is for her to decide.”

He said this, lifting his eyebrows with dignity out of habit and then thought that regardless of what he said, there could be no dignity in his position, and

he saw this in the suppressed, malicious, and mocking smile with which Betsy looked at him after this phrase.

20

Alexei Alexandrovich bowed to Betsy in the drawing room and went to see his wife. She was lying down, but when she heard his steps she hurriedly sat up in her former position and looked at him apprehensively. He saw that she had been crying.

"I am most grateful for your confidence in me," he meekly repeated in Russian the sentence he had spoken in French when Betsy was there and sat down beside her. When he spoke Russian he used the familiar "you," which never failed to irritate Anna. "And I am most grateful for your decision. I, too, think that since he is going there is no need for Count Vronsky to come here. Actually—"

"Yes, I already said that, so why repeat it?" Anna interrupted him with an irritation she made no haste to restrain. "No need," she thought, "for a man to come to say good-bye to the woman he loves, for whom he wished to perish and ruin himself, and who cannot live without him. No need whatsoever!" She pursed her lips and lowered her glittering eyes to his venous hands, which he was slowly rubbing together. "Let's never speak of this," she added, more calmly.

"I left it to you to decide this matter, and I am very pleased to see—" Alexei Alexandrovich was about to go on.

"That my desire coincides with yours," she quickly finished his sentence, irritated by the fact that he spoke so slowly, when she knew in advance all that he would say.

"Yes," he confirmed, "and Princess Tverskaya was entirely out of line interfering in these most difficult family matters. In particular, she—"

"I don't believe anything people say about her," said Anna quickly. "I know that her love for me is sincere."

Alexei Alexandrovich sighed and fell silent. She was toying anxiously with the tassels of her robe, glancing at him with the same agonizing sense of physical revulsion for him for which she had reproached herself but could not overcome. She now desired but one thing—to be rid of his hateful presence.

"I have just sent for the doctor," said Alexei Alexandrovich.

"I'm well. Why do I need a doctor?"

"No, the little one is crying, and they're saying the wet nurse hasn't enough milk."

"Why didn't you allow me to nurse her when I begged you? Anyway"—

Alexei Alexandrovich realized what “anyway” signified — “she is a baby, and they shall be the death of her.” She rang and instructed them to bring the baby in. “I begged to nurse her, they wouldn’t let me, and now they’re reproaching me.”

“I am not reproaching —”

“Yes you are! My God! Why didn’t I die!” And she burst into sobs. “Forgive me, I’m irritable, I’m being unfair,” she said, regaining control. “But go. . . .”

“No, it cannot go on like this,” Alexei Alexandrovich told himself decisively as he left his wife’s room.

Never before had the impossibility of his position in society’s eyes and his wife’s hatred for him — and in general the might of that brutal, mysterious force which, contrary to his own spiritual mood, guided his life and demanded the fulfillment of its will and the alteration of his relations toward his wife — presented themselves to him as obviously as they did today. He saw clearly that all society and his wife were demanding something of him, but what precisely, he could not understand. He felt the anger that had risen in his soul over this, shattering his tranquility and the full merit of his deed. He believed that for Anna it would be better to break off relations with Vronsky, but if they all found that this was impossible, he was prepared even to allow these relations once again, just so they did not bring shame on the children, take them away from him, and change his position. As bad as this was, it was still better than a break, which would put her in a hopeless, shameful position, while he himself would be deprived of all he loved. But he felt powerless; he knew in advance that everyone was against him and would not allow him to do what now seemed to him so natural and good but would force him to do what was bad but to them seemed proper.

21

Before Betsy could leave the drawing room, Stepan Arkadyevich, who had only just arrived from Eliseyev’s, where fresh oysters had come in, greeted her in the doorway.²⁶

“Ah, Princess! What a pleasant meeting!” he began. “I’ve been to see you.”

“A moment’s meeting because I am going,” said Betsy, smiling and donning a glove.

“Wait to put on the glove, Princess, and let me kiss your hand. There is nothing I am so grateful for as the return of old-fashioned ways like the kissing of hands.” He kissed Betsy’s hand. “When shall we see each other?”

“You don’t deserve it,” replied Betsy, smiling.

“No, I deserve it very much because I have become the most serious of men.

I have been arranging not only my own but other people's family matters as well," he said with a significant expression on his face.

"Oh, I'm so pleased!" replied Betsy, immediately realizing that he was speaking about Anna. And returning to the room, they stood in a corner. "He will be the death of her," said Betsy in a significant whisper. "This is impossible, impossible."

"I am so glad you think so," said Stepan Arkadyevich, shaking his head with a grave look of agonized compassion on his face. "That's what I've come to Petersburg for."

"The whole town is talking about it," she said. "It is an impossible situation. She is simply pining away. He doesn't understand that she is one of those women who cannot trifle with their emotions. One or the other: either take her away, take vigorous action; or else give her a divorce. But this is suffocating her."

"Yes, yes. Precisely," said Oblonsky, sighing. "That is why I've come. Well, not only for that. . . . I've been made a chamberlain, and, well, I had to express my gratitude. But the main thing is I need to settle this."

"Well, may God help you!" said Betsy.

After he had seen Princess Betsy to the entry and had kissed her wrist once again above her glove, right where the pulse beats, and having made up some other risqué nonsense so that she no longer knew whether she should be angry or laugh, Stepan Arkadyevich went to see his sister. He found her in tears.

Although he had only just been bubbling over with good cheer, Stepan Arkadyevich shifted instantly and naturally to the sympathetic, poetically moved tone that suited her mood. He asked her about her health and how she had spent the morning.

"Very, very badly. The afternoon and the morning both, and all the days past and to come," she said.

"It seems to me you're succumbing to gloom. You must give yourself a good shake and look life straight in the eye. I know it's hard, but . . ."

"I've heard that women love men even for their vices," Anna began all of a sudden, "but I despise him for his virtues. I cannot go on living with him. You must understand, the sight of him affects me physically, it enrages me. I cannot, simply cannot go on living with him. What am I to do? I was unhappy and thought one could not be any unhappier, but the horrible state I'm experiencing now I could never have imagined. Would you believe it, knowing he is a good, a superb man, that I am not worth his fingernail, I still hate him. I hate him for his magnanimity. There is nothing left for me except—"

She was about to say "death," but Stepan Arkadyevich would not let her finish.

"You're sick and irritable," he said. "Believe me, you are exaggerating terribly. There is nothing so awful in this."

And Stepan Arkadyevich smiled. No one in Stepan Arkadyevich's place, having to deal with such despair, would have allowed himself to smile (a smile would have seemed rude), but his smile held so much goodness and almost feminine tenderness that his smile did not offend but rather soothed and consoled. His quiet, calming speeches and smiles had a soothing, calming effect, like almond oil. And Anna quickly felt this.

"No, Stiva," she said. "I'm lost. Lost! Worse than lost. I'm not yet lost, I can't say it's all over, on the contrary, I feel it isn't all over. I'm like a taut string that is bound to break. But it's not over yet . . . and it will end terribly."

"It's all right, you can loosen the string little by little. There is no situation without a solution."

"I've thought and thought. The only—"

Again he realized from her terrified glance that this only solution, in her opinion, was death, and he did not let her finish.

"Not at all," he said. "Allow me. You can't see your situation as I can. Let me state my opinion frankly." Again he cautiously smiled his almond smile. "I'll start from the beginning. You married a man twenty years your senior. You married him either without love or not knowing what love is. That was a mistake, let's say."

"A terrible mistake!" said Anna.

"I repeat, though: it's an accomplished fact. Then you had, shall we say, the misfortune to love someone not your husband. That's a misfortune, but it is also an accomplished fact. And your husband admitted and forgave this." He paused after each sentence, expecting her objection, but she said nothing in response. "That is how it is. Now the question is whether you can go on living with your husband. Do you wish to? Does he wish to?"

"I know nothing. Nothing."

"But you yourself said you couldn't stand him."

"No I didn't. I deny it. I know nothing and understand nothing."

"Yes, but allow—"

"You can't understand. I feel as if I'm flying head over heels into an abyss, but I mustn't save myself. And I can't."

"That's all right, we'll spread something out to catch you. I understand you, I understand that you can't take it on yourself to express your wishes and feelings."

"I wish for nothing, nothing . . . only for all this to be over."

"But he sees it and knows it. Do you think he is any less weighed down by

this than you? You're in agony, he's in agony, and what can come of this? While divorce unties all knots." And so Stepan Arkadyevich expressed, not without effort, his main thought and looked at her significantly.

She said nothing in reply and shook her shorn head. But from the expression of her face, which suddenly beamed with its former beauty, he saw that she did not wish this only because it seemed to her an impossible happiness.

"I'm so terribly sorry for you! How happy I would be if I could settle this!" said Stepan Arkadyevich, smiling more boldly now. "Don't say anything! Don't! God grant I'm able to say what I feel. I'm going to see him."

Anna looked at him with pensive, glittering eyes and said not a word.

22

Stepan Arkadyevich, with the same rather solemn face with which he took his chairman's chair in his office, entered Alexei Alexandrovich's study. Alexei Alexandrovich, hands clasped behind his back, was pacing around the room and thinking about exactly what Stepan Arkadyevich had spoken of with his wife.

"I'm not disturbing you?" said Stepan Arkadyevich, suddenly experiencing at the sight of his brother-in-law a sense of embarrassment unusual in him. To hide his embarrassment he took out a cigarette case with a new opening mechanism that he had just purchased, and after sniffing the leather, took out a cigarette.

"No. Can I do anything for you?" replied Alexei Alexandrovich reluctantly.

"Yes, I would like . . . I need to . . . Yes, we need to talk," said Stepan Arkadyevich, surprised to feel an unaccustomed shyness.

This feeling was so surprising and strange that Stepan Arkadyevich could not believe it was the voice of conscience telling him that what he was about to do was wrong. Stepan Arkadyevich made a concerted effort and fought off the shyness that had descended upon him.

"I hope that you believe in my love for my sister and my sincere attachment and respect for you," he said, blushing.

Alexei Alexandrovich halted and made no reply, but his face struck Stepan Arkadyevich with its expression of humble sacrifice.

"I intended, I wanted to speak about my sister and about your mutual situation," said Stepan Arkadyevich, still struggling with this unaccustomed shyness.

Alexei Alexandrovich smiled dolefully, looked at his brother-in-law, and without answering, walked over to his desk, took from it the letter he had started, and handed it to his brother-in-law.

"I have been thinking of the same thing incessantly. Here is what I started to

write, thinking that I would say it better in writing and that my presence irritates her," he said, handing him the letter.

Stepan Arkadyevich took the letter, looked with perplexed surprise at the dull eyes fixed on him, and began to read.

"I can see that my presence weighs on you. Difficult though it was for me to convince myself of this, I can see that it is so and cannot be otherwise. I do not blame you, and God is my witness, when I saw you during your illness, I resolved with all my heart to forget everything that had been between us and begin a new life. I do not repent and never shall repent of what I have done; but I have wished one thing, your good, the good of your soul, and now I can see that I did not achieve this. Tell me yourself what would give you genuine happiness and peace for your soul. I surrender wholly to your will and your sense of fairness."

Stepan Arkadyevich handed the letter back and with the same perplexity continued to look at his brother-in-law, not knowing what to say. This silence was so awkward for them both that Stepan Arkadyevich's lips began to twitch, while he said nothing, not taking his eyes off Karenin's face.

"That is what I wanted to tell her," said Alexei Alexandrovich, turning away.

"Yes, yes," said Stepan Arkadyevich, unable to respond because tears were coming to his throat. "Yes, yes. I understand you," he finally was able to say.

"I wish I knew what she wanted," said Alexei Alexandrovich.

"I'm afraid she herself does not appreciate her own situation. She is no judge," said Stepan Arkadyevich, recovering. "She is crushed, yes, crushed by your magnanimity. If she reads this letter she will be unable to say anything. She will merely hang her head lower."

"Yes, but what can I do in that case? How can I explain? How can I learn her wishes?"

"If you allow me to tell you my opinion, then I think that it is up to you to point directly to those measures you deem necessary to put an end to this situation."

"Which means you deem it necessary to end it?" Alexei Alexandrovich interrupted him. "But how?" he added, making an unaccustomed gesture across his eyes. "I see no possible solution."

"There is a solution to every situation," said Stepan Arkadyevich standing and becoming animated. "There was a time when you wanted to break off . . . If you are now convinced that you cannot accomplish your mutual happiness . . ."

"Happiness can be understood variously. Let us say, though, that I agree to everything, I want nothing. What is the solution to our situation?"

"If you want to know my opinion," said Stepan Arkadyevich with the same

mollifying, almond-gentle smile with which he had spoken with Anna. His good smile was so convincing that despite himself, Alexei Alexandrovich, feeling his own weakness and surrendering to it, was prepared to believe what Stepan Arkadyevich was going to say. "She would never say this. But only one thing is possible, only one thing can she desire," continued Stepan Arkadyevich, "and that is a cessation of your relations and all the memories connected with them. In my opinion, in your position, it is essential to clarify your new relationship. And this relationship can be established only by freedom for both sides."

"Divorce," Alexei Alexandrovich interrupted with distaste.

"Yes, I think divorce. Yes, divorce," repeated Stepan Arkadyevich, turning red. "That is in all respects the most sensible solution for spouses who find themselves in a relationship such as yours. What is to be done if the spouses have found that life for them is impossible together? That can always occur." Alexei Alexandrovich sighed heavily and shut his eyes. "Here there is but one consideration: whether one of the spouses wishes to enter into another marriage. If not, then this is very simple," said Stepan Arkadyevich, freeing himself increasingly from his embarrassment.²⁷

Frowning in distress, Alexei Alexandrovich said something to himself and made no answer. Everything that had seemed so very simple for Stepan Arkadyevich, Alexei Alexandrovich had thought over thousands and thousands of times, and it all seemed to him far from simple; it seemed utterly impossible. Divorce, the details of which he already knew, now seemed to him impossible because the sense of his own dignity and his respect for religion would not permit him to plead guilty to a fictitious charge of adultery and even less to allow his wife, whom he had forgiven and loved, to be declared guilty and disgraced. Divorce also appeared impossible for other, even more important reasons.

What would happen to their son in the event of a divorce? He could not be left with his mother. His divorced mother would have her own illegitimate family in which a stepson's position and upbringing would, in all likelihood, be bad. Keep him with himself? He knew that this would amount to vengeance on his part, and he did not want that. Apart from this, divorce seemed even more impossible for Alexei Alexandrovich because, by agreeing to a divorce, he would be ruining Anna. Imprinted in his soul was what Darya Alexandrovna had said in Moscow, that in deciding on a divorce he was thinking about himself, and not thinking about how he was ruining her irrevocably. Connecting her word to his forgiveness, to his attachment to the children, he now understood this in his own way. Agreeing to a divorce, giving her her freedom, would mean in his understanding taking away from himself his last attachment to the life of the children he loved, and from her, her last support on the path of good, and rele-

gating her to ruin. If she were a divorced wife, he knew that she would be united with Vronsky, and this union would be illegitimate and illicit, because according to the meaning of church law, a wife cannot marry as long as her husband is alive. "She will be united with him, and in a year or two he will abandon her, or she will enter into a new liaison," thought Alexei Alexandrovich. "And by agreeing to an illegitimate divorce, I would be to blame for her ruin." He had thought all this over hundreds of times and was convinced that the matter of divorce was not only far from simple, despite what his brother-in-law had said, but absolutely impossible. He did not believe one word of Stepan Arkadyevich, to whose every word he had thousands of refutations, but he did listen to him, feeling that his words were expressing that powerful and brutal force which was guiding his life and to which he would have to submit.

"The question is merely how, on what terms, you would agree to give her a divorce. She wants nothing and would not dare ask you. She leaves everything to your generosity."

"My God! My God! What for?" thought Alexei Alexandrovich, recalling the details of a divorce in which the husband accepts the blame and with the same gesture with which Vronsky had hidden himself, hid his face with his hands from shame.

"You're upset, I can understand that. But if you think it over —"

"But whosoever shall smite thee on one cheek, turn to him the other also; and if any man take thy coat away, let him have thy cloak also," thought Alexei Alexandrovich.

"Yes, yes!" he exclaimed in a shrill voice, "I will take the disgrace upon myself and even give up my son, but . . . but wouldn't it be better to leave it be? But do what you like."

Turning away from his brother-in-law, so that he could not see him, he sat in the chair by the window. It was a bitter and shameful thing for him; but along with this grief and shame he was experiencing joy and tenderness at the loftiness of his own humility.

Stepan Arkadyevich was touched. He waited before speaking.

"Alexei, believe me, she does appreciate your generosity," he said, "but evidently this was God's will," he added, and as soon as he had said this he felt it was foolish, and he had difficulty restraining a smile at his own foolishness.

Alexei Alexandrovich was about to say something in reply, but tears prevented him.

"This is a fatal misfortune, and this must be admitted to be. I admit this misfortune as an accomplished fact and am trying to help both her and you," said Stepan Arkadyevich.

When Stepan Arkadyevich left his brother-in-law's room, he was touched, but this did not prevent him from being satisfied at having successfully concluded this business, since he was confident that Alexei Alexandrovich would not renounce his words. To this satisfaction was added another; when this matter was accomplished he would ask his wife and close friends this question, "What is the difference between myself and the sovereign? When the sovereign breaks a tie, no one is the better for it, whereas when I break a tie, we have a winner. Or, what is the similarity between myself and the sovereign? When . . . Actually, I'll think of something better," he told himself with a smile.

23

Vronsky's wound was dangerous, although it had missed his heart, and for a few days he lingered between life and death. When for the first time he was in a condition to speak, only Varya, his brother's wife, was in his room.

"Varya!" he said, looking at her sternly. "I shot myself by accident. Please, never speak of this and explain it this way to everyone. Otherwise it is too stupid!"

Without responding to his words, Varya leaned over him and with a radiant smile looked into his face. His eyes were bright but not feverish, though their expression was stern.

"Well, thank God!" she said. "You don't hurt?"

"A little here." He pointed to his chest.

"Here, let me change your bandage."

Silently, clenching his broad jaw, he watched her change his bandage. When she was finished, he said, "I'm not delirious, please, make sure there are no discussions of me having shot myself on purpose."

"No one is saying anything. I only hope you won't be shooting yourself by accident anymore," she said with an inquiring smile.

"Probably not, but it would be better if . . ."

He smiled darkly.

Despite these words and smile, which had given Varya such a fright, when the inflammation had passed and he began to recuperate he felt utterly free of a certain portion of his grief. By this act he had somehow wiped away the shame and humiliation he had been feeling. He could now think calmly about Alexei Alexandrovich. He admitted to all his generosity and no longer felt humiliated. Moreover, he fell back into his old rut. He saw the possibility of looking men in the eye without shame and could live, guided by his habits. The one thing he could not tear from his heart, although he struggled with this feeling constantly, was the regret, which drove him to despair, that he had lost her forever. The fact

that now, having redeemed his guilt before her husband, he must give her up and never stand anymore between her husband and her in her atonement, had been firmly decided in his heart; but he could not tear from his heart his regret over the loss of her love, could not wipe out from his memory those moments of happiness he had known with her, which he had valued so little at the time, and which pursued him now with all their charm.

Serpukhovskoi came up with an appointment to Tashkent for him, and Vronsky, without the slightest hesitation, accepted the offer. But the closer the time of departure came, the harder the sacrifice he was making to what he considered proper.

His wound had healed, and he was getting ready to leave, making preparations for his departure for Tashkent.

“See her once and then bury myself and die,” he thought, and making his farewell visits, he expressed this thought to Betsy. It was with this embassy that Betsy had gone to see Anna and brought him a negative reply.

“All the better,” thought Vronsky upon receiving this news. “It was a weakness that would have destroyed my last strength.”

The next morning Betsy herself came to see him and announced that she had received through Oblonsky positive news, that Alexei Alexandrovich was giving her a divorce and so he could see her.

Without even bothering to see Betsy out, forgetting all his resolutions, without asking when he could see her or where her husband was, Vronsky set off immediately for the Karenins'. He ran up the staircase, seeing nothing and no one, and with a quick step, barely keeping himself from running, went into her room. And without thinking or noticing whether anyone was in the room or not, he embraced her and began covering her face, arms, and neck with kisses.

Anna had been preparing for this meeting and thinking what she would tell him, but she did not manage to tell him any of this: his passion overwhelmed her. She wanted to calm him and calm herself, but it was too late. His emotion communicated itself to her. Her lips trembled so that for a long time she could not speak.

“Yes, you have possessed me, and I am yours,” she uttered at last, pressing his hand to her breast.

“So it had to be!” he said. “As long as we live, this must be. I know it now.”

“That’s true,” she said, turning whiter and whiter, putting her arms around his head. “Still, there is something terrible in this after all that has been.”

“It will all pass, it will all pass, and we will be so happy! Our love, if it could be stronger, is stronger because there is something terrible in it,” he said, raising his head and smiling to reveal his strong teeth.

She could not help but respond with a smile—not to his words but to his infatuated eyes. She took his hand and stroked her cold cheeks and shorn locks with it.

“I wouldn’t have recognized you with this short hair. You’re prettier than ever. A little boy. But how pale you are!”

“Yes, I’m very weak,” she said, smiling. Again her lips began to tremble.

“We will go to Italy and you will get better,” he said.

“Can that really be possible? Can you and I be like husband and wife, just ourselves, a family of you and me?” she said, gazing closely into his eyes.

“I’m only amazed that it could ever have been otherwise.”

“Stiva says *he* has agreed to everything, but I cannot accept *his* generosity,” she said, gazing pensively past Vronsky’s face. “I don’t want a divorce. I don’t care now. Only I don’t know what he will decide about Seryozha.”

He simply could not understand how at this moment of meeting she could think of and remember her son and the divorce. Wasn’t it all the same?

“Don’t speak of it. Don’t think,” he said, turning her hand over in his and trying to draw her attention; but she still would not look at him.

“Oh, why didn’t I die? It would have been better!” she said, and without a sound, tears trickled down both her cheeks; but she tried to smile, so as not to grieve him.

By Vronsky’s old lights, to turn down the flattering and dangerous assignment to Tashkent would have been disgraceful and impossible. Now, though, without a moment’s thought, he turned it down and, when he noticed the disapproval of his action among those on high, immediately resigned.

A month later, Alexei Alexandrovich was left alone with his son in his apartments and Anna and Vronsky had gone abroad not only without having obtained a divorce but having resolutely refused one.

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V

1

Princess Shcherbatskaya found it impossible to have the wedding before Lent, to which only five weeks remained, since she could not get half the trousseau ready by that time. But she could not help but agree with Levin that after Lent would be too late, since Prince Shcherbatsky's old aunt was very ill and might die at any time, and then the mourning period would postpone the wedding still longer. And so, after deciding to divide the trousseau into two parts, a larger and a smaller trousseau, the princess agreed to have the wedding before Lent. She decided that she would get the smaller part of the trousseau all ready now and send the large trousseau afterward, and she was very angry at Levin because he simply could not answer her seriously as to whether he agreed to this or not. This notion was all the more suitable because the young people were going immediately after the wedding to the country, where the items in the large trousseau would not be needed.

Levin continued to find himself in that same state of insanity in which he and his happiness seemed to be the chief and sole goal of all existence and he need not be concerned with anything now because everything was being and would be done for him by others. He did not even have any plans or goals for his future life; he left such decisions to others, knowing that everything would be wonderful. His brother Sergei Ivanovich, Stepan Arkadyevich, and the princess guided him in doing what he should. All he did was completely agree to everything they proposed. His brother borrowed money for him, the princess advised them to leave Moscow after the wedding. Stepan Arkadyevich advised them to go abroad. All he did was be perfectly agreeable to everything. "Do what you like if you think it amusing. I'm happy, and my happiness can be neither more nor less, no matter what you do," he thought. When he conveyed to Kitty Stepan Arkadyevich's advice to go abroad, he was quite amazed when she did not agree and had certain specific demands of her own concerning their future life. She knew that Levin had work in the country which he loved. As he saw, she not only did not understand this work but did not want to understand it. But that did not prevent her from considering this work very important. She knew that

their home would be in the country, and she wished not to go abroad, where she would not be living, but where their home was going to be. This firmly expressed intention amazed Levin. But since he didn't care, he immediately asked Stepan Arkadyevich, as if this were his responsibility, to go to the country and arrange all the things he knew so well with all the taste he had so much of.

"Listen, though," Stepan Arkadyevich said to Levin after returning from the country, where he had arranged everything for the young people's arrival, "do you have a certificate saying that you've prepared for communion?"

"No. Why?"

"Without it you can't get married."

"Oh, no!" exclaimed Levin. "It must be nine years since I fasted for communion. I never gave it a thought."

"You're a fine one!" said Stepan Arkadyevich, laughing. "And you call me a nihilist! You know, though, this just won't do. You have to fast."

"But when? There are only four days left."

Stepan Arkadyevich arranged this as well, and Levin began fasting. For Levin, as for anyone who is not a believer but still respects the faith of others, attending and participating in the various church rituals was very hard. Now, in the softened spirits in which he found himself and in which he was sensitive to everything, this need to pretend seemed to Levin not merely hard but utterly impossible. Now, in his glory, his flowering, he would have to lie or blaspheme. He did not feel capable of either. But no matter how much he interrogated Stepan Arkadyevich as to whether he could get the certificate without fasting, Stepan Arkadyevich announced that he could not.

"What does it cost you anyway—two days? He's a very dear and clever old fellow. He'll pull out that tooth of yours so you never even notice."

Standing at the first Mass, Levin attempted to refresh his youthful memories of that powerful religious feeling he had experienced from ages sixteen to seventeen. Immediately he was convinced, however, that this was quite impossible. He attempted to look on all this as an empty ritual of no importance, like the ritual of paying calls; but he felt that even this he simply could not do. Like most of his contemporaries, Levin found himself in the most indeterminate position with respect to religion. Believe he could not, yet he was not firmly convinced that all this was wrong, and so, without being in a condition to believe in the significance of what he was doing or to look on it indifferently, as an empty formality, he experienced throughout this fasting a sense of awkwardness and shame, doing something he himself did not understand, and so, as an inner voice kept telling him, something hypocritical and bad.

During the service he would listen to the prayers, trying to ascribe to them a

meaning that did not diverge from his own views, or else feeling that he could not understand and must condemn them, tried not to listen to them but rather occupied himself with his own thoughts, observations, and memories, which roamed in his mind with extraordinary liveliness during this futile standing.

He stood through Mass, vespers, and evensong, and the next day, arising earlier than usual, without having his tea, arrived at the church at eight o'clock for the morning service and confession.

There was no one in the church but a beggar soldier, two old women, and the church officials.

The young deacon, with two sharply delineated halves of his long back under his thin cassock, greeted him and, walking over to a small table by the wall, immediately began reading the service. The longer he read, especially given his frequent and rapid repetition of the words "Lord have mercy," which sounded like "lordomsee," "lordomsee," Levin felt his thoughts locked and sealed and that he should not touch or disturb them or else confusion would come of it, and so, standing behind the deacon, he continued to think his own thoughts, without listening or grasping. "Her hand has an amazing number of expressions," he thought, recalling how yesterday they had sat at a corner table. They had had nothing to talk about, as almost always during this time, and she began opening and shutting the hand she had put on the table and herself laughed watching its movement. He recalled how he had kissed that hand and then examined the converging lines on her pink palm. "Again lordomsee," thought Levin, crossing himself, bowing, and looking at the agile movement of the bowing deacon's back. "Then she took my hand and examined the lines: 'You have a splendid hand,' she said." And he looked at his hand and at the deacon's stubby hand. "Yes, it will soon be over now," he thought. "No, I think it's starting all over again," he thought, listening to the prayers. "No, it's coming to an end; here he's bowing to the ground. That always comes right before the end."

Imperceptibly taking the three-ruble note in his velvet-cuffed hand, the deacon said he would record this, and he proceeded to the altar, his new boots making a bold click over the flagstones of the empty church. A minute later he looked out and beckoned to Levin. A thought that had been locked up until now stirred in Levin's mind, but he hastened to drive it out. "Things will arrange themselves somehow," he thought, and he started toward the ambo.¹ He walked up the steps and, turning to the right, saw the priest. The old priest, with his sparse, graying beard and good, weary eyes, was standing at the lectern leafing through the prayer book. Bowing slightly to Levin, he immediately began reciting the prayers in his habitual voice. When he had finished them, he bowed to the ground and turned to face Levin.

“Here is Christ, invisibly present, accepting your confession,” he said, pointing to the crucifix. “Do you believe in everything the Holy Apostolic Church teaches us?” continued the priest, turning his eyes away from Levin’s face and folding his hands under his stole.

“I have doubted, and do doubt all,” Levin uttered in a voice he found unpleasant, and he fell silent.

The priest waited a few seconds to see whether he would say anything else, and closing his eyes, said with a broad, rapid Vladimir accent:

“Doubts are characteristic of human weakness, but we must pray for our merciful Lord to strengthen us. What particular sins do you have?” he added without the slightest pause, as if trying not to waste time.

“My chief sin is doubt. I doubt everything and for the most part find myself in doubt.”

“Doubt is characteristic of human weakness,” the priest repeated the same words. “What do you doubt primarily?”

“I doubt everything. Sometimes I even doubt the existence of God,” Levin could not help saying, and he was horrified at the impropriety of what he had said. However Levin’s words did not seem to make an impression on the priest.

“What kind of doubts could there be of the existence of God?” he said quickly, with a barely perceptible smile.

Levin did not reply.

“What kind of doubt could you have about the Creator when you behold his creations?” continued the priest in his usual rapid speech. “Who adorned the heavenly vault with stars? Who cloaked the earth in its beauty? How could this be without a creator?” he said, looking inquiringly at Levin.

Levin felt it would be improper to enter into a philosophical debate with a priest and so said in reply only what related directly to the question.

“I don’t know,” he said.

“You don’t know? Then how can you doubt that God created everything?” said the priest in cheerful perplexity.

“I don’t understand anything,” said Levin, blushing and feeling that his words were foolish and that they could not help but be foolish in this situation.

“Pray to God and beseech Him. Even the Holy Fathers had doubts and asked God for confirmation of their belief. The Devil has great power, and we must not surrender to him. Pray to God. Beseech Him. Pray to God,” he repeated quickly.

The priest was silent for a while, as if lost in thought.

“I’ve been told you intend to enter into holy matrimony with the daughter of my parishioner and spiritual son, Prince Shcherbatsky, is that correct? A lovely young lady,” he added with a smile.

“Yes,” answered Levin, blushing for the priest. “Why does he need to ask about this at confession?” he thought.

As if responding to his thought, the priest said to him, “You are planning to enter into holy matrimony, and God may perhaps reward you with progeny, isn’t that right? Well then, what kind of upbringing can you give your babes if you do not vanquish in yourself the temptation of the Devil, who is trying to draw you into disbelief?” he said with mild reproach. “If you love your offspring, then you, as a good father, shall desire for your child not mere wealth, luxury, and honor, you will desire for him salvation, his spiritual enlightenment by the light of truth. Isn’t that right? What are you going to answer him when the innocent babe asks you: ‘Papa dear! Who created everything that attracts me in this world—the earth, the water, the sun, the flowers, the grass?’ Are you really going to tell him, ‘I don’t know?’ You cannot help but know when the Lord God in His great mercy has revealed this to you. Or your child will ask you, ‘What awaits me in the life beyond the grave?’ What will you tell him when you don’t know anything? How are you going to answer him? Show him the splendors of the world and the Devil? That’s not good!” he said, and he halted, tilting his head to one side and looking at Levin with his good, meek eyes.

Levin made no reply now—not because he did not want to enter into a debate with the priest but because no one had ever asked him these questions, and he still had time to think of what to answer when his babes asked him these questions.

“You are entering a time of life,” the priest continued, “when you must choose a path and hold to it. Pray to God that He in His mercy might help and have mercy on you,” he concluded. “May our Lord and God Jesus Christ, in the grace and munificence of His love for man forgive you, His child.” After finishing the prayer of absolution, the priest blessed and released him.

When he returned home that day, Levin experienced the joyous sensation of his awkward position having ended, and ended in such a way that he had not had to lie. Moreover, he was left with a vague recollection that what this good and dear old fellow had said was not at all so foolish as it had seemed to him at first and that there was something here that needed to be clarified.

“Not now, of course,” thought Levin, “but sometime later.” More than ever, Levin now felt that there was something vague and impure in his soul and that with respect to religion he was in the very same position which he had seen so clearly and disliked in others and for which he had reproached his friend Svizhsky.

As he spent the evening with his fiancée at Dolly’s, Levin was especially cheerful, and in explaining to Stepan Arkadyevich the exalted state in which he found himself, he said that he was as cheerful as a dog trained to jump through

a hoop who, having at last understood and accomplished what was demanded of it, barks and, wagging its tail, leaps from joy onto the tables and windows.

2

On the day of Levin's wedding, according to custom (the princess and Darya Alexandrovna had strictly insisted on keeping all customs), Levin did not see his fiancée and dined in his room at the hotel with three bachelors who had gathered to be with him on the occasion: Sergei Ivanovich; Katavasov, a friend from university, now a professor of natural sciences whom Levin had met on the street and dragged to his rooms; and Chirikov, his best man, a Moscow justice of the peace, and Levin's bear-hunting companion. The dinner was very cheerful. Sergei Ivanovich was in the best of spirits and was entertained by Katavasov's originality. Katavasov, sensing that his originality was appreciated and understood, flaunted it. Chirikov, with his good cheer and good nature, supported every turn of conversation.

"See here now," said Katavasov, following a habit acquired at the lectern of stretching out his words, "what a capable fellow our friend Konstantin Dmitrievich was. I speak of him as absent, because he is no longer here. He loved science then, when he was leaving the university, and he had humanitarian interests; now, though, one half of his abilities are devoted to deceiving himself and the other to justifying this deceit."

"A more resolute foe of marriage than you I have never seen," said Sergei Ivanovich.

"No, I'm no foe. I am a friend of the division of labor. Men who can make nothing must make people, whereas the rest must facilitate their education and happiness. That's how I understand it. There is a horde of enthusiasts for mixing those two trades, but I am not among them."²

"How happy I shall be when I learn that you have fallen in love!" said Levin. "Please, invite me to the wedding."

"I'm already in love."

"Yes, with a cuttlefish. You know" — Levin turned to his brother — "Mikhail Semyonich is writing a composition on digestion in —"

"Well, don't go mixing it up! It doesn't matter what it's about. What matters is that I do in fact love a cuttlefish."

"But she won't keep you from loving a wife."

"She won't, but a wife would."

"But why?"

"You'll see. Here you love your farm, and hunting — well, wait and see!"

“Arkhip was just here. He said there’s masses of elk at Prudnoye and two bears,” said Chirikov.

“Well, you’ll be taking those without me.”

“That’s the truth,” said Sergei Ivanovich. “Yes, and from now on say good-bye to bear hunting. Your wife won’t let you go!”

Levin smiled. The picture of his wife not letting him go was so pleasant that he was prepared to give up the pleasure of seeing bears for good.

“Still, it’s a shame those two bears will get taken without you. Remember Khapilovka the last time? That was marvelous hunting,” said Chirikov.

Levin did not want to deprive him of the illusion that somewhere there could be something good without her and so he said nothing.

“It’s not for nothing this ritual was established of saying farewell to the bachelor life,” said Sergei Ivanovich. “No matter how happy you are, you still regret your freedom.”

“Confess, do you have that feeling, like Gogol’s bridegroom, that you’d like to jump out the window?”³

“Sure he does, but he won’t admit it!” said Katavasov, and he started laughing loudly.

“Well, the window’s open. Let’s go to Tver right now! There’s an old she-bear, you can walk right up to her lair. Come on, let’s catch the five o’clock! Let them do what they want here,” said Chirikov, smiling.

“Well, you know, honestly,” said Levin, smiling, “deep down inside I just can’t find this feeling of regret for my freedom!”

“Deep down inside you there’s such chaos now, you couldn’t find anything,” said Katavasov. “Just wait, when you get yourself sorted out a little, you’ll find it!”

“No, otherwise, regardless of my feelings (he didn’t want to say ‘love’ in front of him) and happiness, I would still have regretted losing my freedom. Quite the contrary, I’m very happy to be losing my freedom.”

“This is bad! A hopeless case!” said Katavasov. “Well, let’s drink to his recovery or else wish him that just a hundredth of his dreams come true. That would be a happiness such as has never been on earth!”

Soon after dinner the guests left in order to have time to dress for the wedding.

Left alone and recalling the conversations of these bachelors, Levin once again asked himself whether in his heart he had this feeling of regret for his freedom that they were speaking of. He smiled at the question. “Freedom? What is freedom for? Happiness is only in loving, in desiring and thinking her desires and thoughts, that is, no freedom whatsoever — there’s happiness!

“But do I know her thoughts, her desires, her feelings?” a voice suddenly whispered to him. The smile vanished from his face and he lapsed into thought. Suddenly he was beset by a strange feeling. He was beset by fear and doubt—doubt about everything.

“What if she doesn’t love me? What if she’s marrying me only in order to get married? What if she herself doesn’t know what she’s doing?” he asked himself. “She might come to her senses and only while she is being married realize that she doesn’t and couldn’t love me.” Strange, very bad thoughts about her began occurring to him. He was jealous of her attachment to Vronsky, as he had been a year ago, as if the evening when he saw her with Vronsky were yesterday. He suspected she had not told him everything.

He quickly jumped up. “No, it can’t be!” he told himself with despair. “I’ll go see her, ask her, say to her for the last time, We are free. Wouldn’t it be better to remain that way? Anything is better than eternal unhappiness, disgrace, and infidelity!” With despair in his heart and malice for all men, himself, and her, he left the hotel and went to see her.

No one was expecting him. He found her in the back rooms. She was sitting on a trunk and giving the maid instructions about something, sorting through piles of dresses of various colors laid out on the backs of chairs and on the floor.

“Oh!” she exclaimed when she saw him, and she beamed with joy. “Why are you, why are you here?”⁴ (Up until the last day she used both the familiar and formal “you” with him.) “I never expected this! I’m sorting through my old dresses, what goes to whom . . .”

“Ah! That’s very nice!” he said, glowering at the maid.

“Go away, Dunyasha. I’ll ring for you later,” said Kitty. “What’s wrong?” she asked, decisively using the familiar form as soon as the maid went out. She had noticed his odd face, agitated and dark, and she was beset by fear.

“Kitty! I’m in agony. I can’t be in agony alone,” he said with despair in his voice, stopping directly in front of her and gazing entreatingly into her eyes. He could already see from her loving and truthful face that nothing would come of what he had intended to say, nonetheless he needed her to reassure him herself. “I came to say that it’s not too late. All this can be done away with and set right.”

“What? I don’t understand. What’s wrong?”

“What I’ve said a thousand times and can’t keep from thinking . . . that I’m not worthy of you. You couldn’t agree to marry me. Think it over. You were mistaken. Think it over well. You couldn’t love me. . . . If . . . it’s better for you to tell me,” he said, unable to look at her. “I’ll be miserable. Let everyone say what they want; anything’s better than unhappiness. . . . It’s still better now, while there’s still time.”

"I don't understand," she replied, frightened. "You mean you want to refuse . . . you mean we shouldn't?"

"Yes, if you don't love me."

"You've lost your mind!" she shouted, turning red from vexation.

But his face was so pathetic that she curbed her vexation, and clearing the dresses from the chair, sat closer to him.

"What are you thinking? Tell me everything."

"I'm thinking that you couldn't love me. What could you love me for?"

"My God! What can I do?" she said, and she burst into tears.

"Oh, what have I done!" he exclaimed, and getting down on his knees before her, he began kissing her hands.

When the princess walked into the room five minutes later, she found them entirely reconciled. Kitty had not only assured him that she loved him but even, answering his question, had told him why she loved him, explained to him why. She told him she loved him because she understood him completely, because she knew what he must love, and that everything he loved, everything, was good. This seemed to him perfectly clear. When the princess joined them, they were sitting side by side on the trunk, sorting through her dresses and arguing about the fact that Kitty wanted to give Dunyasha the brown dress she had been wearing when Levin proposed to her, while he insisted she not give the dress away to anyone but give Dunyasha the blue one instead.

"Why can't you understand? She's a brunette, and it won't suit her. I have it all figured out."

When she found out why he had come, the princess, half-jokingly, half-seriously, became very angry and sent him home to dress and not to get in the way of Kitty's hair being done, since Charles was just about to arrive.

"As it is she hasn't eaten anything all these days and looks much the worse for it, and now you're upsetting her with your foolish notions," she told him. "Away with you, away with you, my dear man."

Levin, guilty and put to shame, but reassured, returned to his hotel. His brother, Darya Alexandrovna, and Stepan Arkadyevich, all in full dress, were already waiting for him to bless him with the icon. There was no time to dawdle. Darya Alexandrovna still had to stop home to pick up her pomaded and curled son, who was supposed to bring the icon for the bride. Then one carriage had to be sent for the best man, and another, which would take Sergei Ivanovich, had to be sent back. . . . All in all, there were quite a few highly involved considerations. One thing was unquestionable, that there could be no dawdling, because it was already half past six.

Nothing came of the blessing with the icon. Stepan Arkadyevich struck a

comically formal pose next to his wife, picked up the icon, and instructing Levin to bow to the ground, blessed him with a good and amused smile and kissed him three times; Darya Alexandrovna did the same and immediately rushed to leave and again became confused over the arrangements for the carriages.

“Look, here’s what we’re going to do. You pick him up in our carriage, and Sergei Ivanovich, if he would be so kind, can go and then send the carriage.”

“Of course, it would be my pleasure.”

“We shall go with him immediately. Have your things been sent?” said Stepan Arkadyevich.

“Yes,” replied Levin, and he told Kuzma to lay out his clothes.

3

A crowd of people, especially women, surrounded the church, which had been illuminated for the wedding. Those who had not been able to penetrate to the center crowded around the windows, jostling, arguing, and looking through the gratings.

More than twenty carriages had already been lined up along the street by the policemen. A police officer, disdaining the frost, was standing by the entrance, his uniform gleaming. Carriages kept pulling up, and ladies wearing flowers, their trains held high, and men, removing their military cap or black hat, were stepping into the church. In the church itself the two chandeliers and all the candles by the local icons had been lit. The golden glow on the background of the iconostasis, the gilt carving of the icons, the silver of the church chandeliers and candlesticks, the flagstones, the rugs, the banners up above by the choirs, the ambo steps, the old blackened books, the cassocks, the surplices—all this was drenched in light. On the right-hand side of the warm church, in the crowd of frock coats and white ties, uniforms and damasks, velvet, satin, hair, flowers, bared shoulders and arms and long gloves, there was restrained and animated talk, which reverberated oddly in the high cupola. Each time the door creaked as it was opened, the talk in the crowd died down, and everyone looked around, expecting to see the groom and bride entering. However the door had already opened more than ten times, and each time it had been a late guest or guests, who attached themselves to the circle of invitees, on the right, or a spectator, who had fooled or implored the police officer and who attached herself to the crowd of strangers, on the left. Both relatives and bystanders had already gone through all the phases of anticipation.

At first they had thought that the groom and bride would come any minute and ascribed no importance whatsoever to this delay. Then they began checking

the door more and more often, discussing whether something might have happened. Then this delay became frankly awkward, and both relatives and guests tried to pretend they weren't thinking about the groom and were caught up in their own conversation.

The archdeacon, as if to remind everyone of the value of his time, coughed impatiently, making the glass in the windows shake. In the choir one could hear bored singers testing their voices and blowing their noses. The priest kept sending first the beadle and then the deacon out to see whether the groom had arrived and went out himself, wearing a violet cassock and embroidered sash, more and more often to the side door, awaiting the groom. Finally, one of the ladies, looking at her watch, said, "I must say, it is strange!" and all the guests became anxious and began loudly expressing their amazement and displeasure. One of the best men went to find out what had happened. Meanwhile, Kitty, who had been ready long since, in her white dress, long veil, and crown of orange blossoms, and with her nuptial mother and sister, Madame Lvova, was standing in the drawing room of the Shcherbatsky home looking out the window, vainly waiting for more than half an hour already for news from the best man of her groom's arrival at the church.⁵

Levin, meanwhile, wearing his trousers but not his vest or coat, was pacing back and forth in his room, constantly poking his head out the door and surveying the corridor. But in the corridor he did not see the person he was expecting, and returning with desperation and waving his arms he addressed Stepan Arkadyevich, who was calmly smoking.

"Has there ever been a man in such a dreadfully idiotic position?" he said.

"Yes, it is stupid," confirmed Stepan Arkadyevich, smiling reassuringly. "But calm down, they'll bring it any time now."

"No, but how can they!" said Levin with curbed fury. "And these idiotic open vests! It's impossible!" he said, looking at the crumpled front of his shirt. "What if they've taken my things to the train already!" he exclaimed in despair.

"Then you'll put on mine."

"I should have a long time ago."

"It's not good to be ridiculous. Wait a bit! *Things will shapify.*"

The problem was that when Levin ordered his clothes, Kuzma, Levin's old valet, had brought his coat, vest, and everything he needed.

"And my shirt?" exclaimed Levin.

"You're wearing it," replied Kuzma with a calm smile.

Kuzma had not thought to keep a clean shirt, and when he had received instructions to pack everything and have it taken to the Shcherbatskys', where the young people would depart from this evening, that's what he had done, packing everything except the dress suit. The shirt he had put on this morning was

crumpled and impossible with the open style of vests. It was too far to send to the Shcherbatskys'. So they sent out for a shirt to be bought. The servant returned: everything was closed—it was Sunday. They sent to Stepan Arkadyevich's house, a shirt was brought; it was impossibly wide and short. They sent, at last, to the Shcherbatskys' to unpack his things. The groom was awaited at church, and he, like a beast locked in a cage, was pacing around the room, looking out into the corridor, and with horror and despair remembering what he had told Kitty and what she might be thinking now.

Finally a guilty Kuzma, having a hard time catching his breath, flew into the room with the shirt.

"I barely caught them. They were already loading it on the dray," said Kuzma.

Three minutes later, not looking at his watch, in order not to rub salt in the wounds, Levin went running down the corridor.

"You're not going to help that way," said Stepan Arkadyevich with a smile, following quickly but not hurriedly behind him. "*Things will shapify, they'll shapify.* I'm telling you."

4

"They've arrived! Here he is! Which one? The younger one, you think? But look at her. Gracious! More dead than alive!" the crowd began talking when Levin, having met his bride at the entrance, entered the church with her.

Stepan Arkadyevich told his wife the reason for the delay, and the guests, smiling, exchanged whispers among themselves. Levin noticed nothing and no one; he could not take his eyes off his bride.

Everyone was saying that her looks had suffered very much in these last few days, and under the crown she was far from as pretty as usual, but Levin did not find it so. He gazed at her hair piled high and the long white veil and white flowers, at the tall standing scalloped collar, which covered her long neck on the sides and revealed it in front in an especially maidenly way, and her stunningly slender waist, and it seemed to him that she was more beautiful than ever—not because the flowers, the veil, or the dress ordered from Paris added anything to her beauty but because despite the manufactured luxury of her attire, the expression of her dear face, her gaze, and her lips were still the very same special expression of her innocent truthfulness.

"I was beginning to think you wanted to run away," she said, and she smiled at him.

"It's so stupid, what happened to me, I'm ashamed to tell you!" he said, blushing, and he had to turn to Sergei Ivanovich, who was walking toward him.

“That’s a fine story of yours about the shirt!” said Sergei Ivanovich, shaking his head and smiling.

“Yes, yes,” replied Levin, not understanding why they were talking to him.

“Well, Kostya, now you have to decide,” said Stepan Arkadyevich, feigning fright, “an important question. Now precisely you can appreciate its full importance. They’re asking me whether to light the used or unused candles. It’s a difference of ten rubles,” he added, gathering his lips into a smile. “I’ve decided, but I’m afraid you won’t give your consent.”

Levin realized this was a joke, but he couldn’t smile.

“So what shall it be? Unused or used? There’s the question.”

“Yes, yes! The unused ones!”

“Well, I’m very glad. The matter is decided!” said Stepan Arkadyevich, smiling. “People in this situation can be so silly, though,” he said to Chirikov when Levin, giving him a perplexed look, took a step toward his bride.

“Watch, Kitty, be the first to step on the rug,” said Countess Nordston, approaching.⁶ “A fine one you are!” she turned to Levin.

“What, aren’t you afraid?” said Marya Dmitrievna, the old aunt.

“Are you chilled? You’re pale. Stop and lean over!” Kitty’s sister, Madame Lvova, said, and rounding her splendid full arms, she smiled and straightened the flowers on her head.

Dolly came up and wanted to say something but could not get the words out; she started crying and then began laughing unnaturally.

Kitty looked at everyone with the same absent eyes as did Levin. To all the speeches addressed to her she could respond only with the smile of happiness which now came to her so naturally.

In the meantime the officiating clergy had donned their vestments, and the priest and deacon had stepped out toward the lectern standing on the porch of the church. The priest said something and turned to Levin. Levin did not hear what the priest said.

“Take your bride’s hand and lead her,” the best man told Levin.

For a long time Levin couldn’t figure out what was being asked of him. For a long time they kept correcting him and were ready to give up—because he kept either taking the wrong hand or taking it with the wrong hand—when he realized, finally, that he needed to use his right hand, without changing position, and take her by the right hand. When Levin had finally taken his bride by the hand as he was supposed to, the priest took a few steps ahead of them and halted at the lectern. The crowd of relatives and friends, buzzing with talk and rustling their trains, advanced behind them. Someone bent over and straightened the bride’s train. It became so quiet in the church that they could hear drops of wax fall.

The old priest in his kamelaukion, the gray locks of his hair shining like silver and gathered behind his ears on both sides, freed his small old man's hands from under his heavy silver chasuble with the gold cross on the back and looked through something at the lectern.⁷ Stepan Arkadyevich cautiously walked up to him, whispered something, and winking at Levin, returned to his place.

The priest lit two candles adorned with flowers, holding them sideways in his left hand so that the wax dripped from them slowly, and turned to face the bridal pair. The priest was the same one who had heard Levin's confession. He gazed wearily and sorrowfully at the groom and bride, heaved a sigh, and freeing his right hand from under his chasuble, blessed the groom with that hand and also, but with a hint of cautious tenderness, placed his crossed fingers on Kitty's bowed head. Then he handed them the candles, and taking up the censer, walked slowly away from them.

"Is it really true?" thought Levin, and he looked over at his bride. He saw her profile from slightly above, and from the barely perceptible movement of her lips and eyelashes he knew that she had felt his gaze. She did not look around, but the high scalloped collar stirred, rising toward her pink little ear. He saw a sigh catch in her breast and her little hand in the long glove begin to tremble, holding the candle.

All the fuss over the shirt, the delay, the conversation with his friends and relatives, their displeasure, his ridiculous situation—all this suddenly vanished, and he felt joyful and terrified.

The handsome, stately archdeacon in his silver surplice, his tight curls combed to either side, took a jaunty step forward and, raising the stole on two fingers with his habitual gesture, stopped opposite the priest.

"Blessed be Thy name, oh Lord!" the solemn words resounded slowly, one after the other, shaking waves of air.

"Blessed is our God, always, both now and ever, and to the end of ages," responded the old priest humbly and melodiously, continuing to sort through something on the lectern. Filling the entire church from windows to vaults, the full chord of the unseen choir rose harmoniously and broadly, gained power, held there a moment, and softly died down.

They prayed, as always, for the world on high and salvation, the Synod, and the sovereign; they prayed for God's newly betrothed slaves Konstantin and Ekaterina.⁸

"That He may send down from above perfect and peaceful love, and salvation, let us pray to the Lord," the entire church seemed to breathe through the archdeacon's voice.

Levin listened to the words, and they struck him. "How did they guess that it

was help, specifically help, that one needs?" he thought, recalling all his recent fears and doubts. "What do I know? What can I do in this frightening business without help?" he thought. "It's help I need now."

When the deacon had finished with the liturgical prayer, the priest turned to the betrothed with his book.

"O eternal God, who hast brought together into unity those who before had been separate," he read in his meek, melodious voice, "and in so doing hast imposed on them an indissoluble bond of love, who didst bless Isaac and Rebecca, and didst make them inheritors of Thy promise: Bless also these Thy servants, Konstantin and Ekaterina, directing them into every good work. For Thou art a merciful God and lovest mankind, and to Thee do we send up all glory: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, both now and ever, and to the end of ages." "Amen," the unseen choir again spilled in the air.

"Who hast brought together into unity those who before had been separate.' How profound those words are and how appropriate to what one feels at this moment!" thought Levin. "Does she feel the same as I do?"

Looking over, he met her gaze.

From the expression of this gaze, he concluded that she had understood the same thing he had. It was not true, however; she had scarcely understood the words of the service at all and had not even listened to them during the ceremony. She could not listen to or understand them, so strong was the one emotion that filled her soul with greater and greater intensity. This emotion was the joy of the perfect completion of what a month and a half ago now had come about in her soul and that for six weeks now had thrilled and tormented her. In her soul, the day she in her brown dress in the drawing room of the Arbat house had approached him in silence and given herself to him—in her soul on that day and in that hour, there had been a total break with her former life, and a completely other, new life had begun, a life completely unknown to her, while in reality her old life had continued. These six weeks had been the most blissful and the most agonizing time for her. All her life, all her wishes and hopes, had been focused on that one man who was still inscrutable to her and with whom she was linked by something even more inscrutable than the man himself, an emotion that drew her in and pushed her away, and at the same time she continued to live in the conditions of her former life. Living her old life, she was horrified at herself, at her complete, insurmountable indifference toward her entire past: the things, habits, and people she loved and who loved her, her mother, who was distressed by this indifference, and her dear, kind father, whom she loved more than anything in the world. She was in turn horrified at this indifference and thrilled at what had led her to this indifference. She could neither

think nor wish apart from her life with this man; but this new life had not yet begun, and she could not even picture it to herself clearly. There was only anticipation—terror and joy at the new and uncertain. And now behold: this anticipation, and uncertainty, and remorse for renouncing her former life—all this was coming to an end, and something new would begin. This something new could not help but be frightening due to its uncertainty, but frightening or not, it had already come about six weeks before in her soul; now what had long been accomplished in her soul was merely being blessed.

Returning again to the lectern, the priest with difficulty grasped Kitty's little ring and, demanding Levin's hand, placed it on the first joint of his finger. "The servant of God, Konstantin, is betrothed to the handmaiden of God, Ekaterina." Placing the large ring on Kitty's pink, small, endearingly weak finger, the priest spoke the same words.

Several times the betrothed pair tried to guess what should be done, and each time they were wrong, and the priest corrected them with a whisper. At last, having done what was needed, and having made the sign of the cross over them with the rings, he again handed Kitty the large and Levin the small one; once again they got confused and twice they passed the ring from hand to hand, but somehow it didn't come out as it was supposed to.

Dolly, Chirikov, and Stepan Arkadyevich stepped forward to correct them. There was some confusion, whispering and smiles, but the somber emotion on the faces of the betrothed did not change; on the contrary, while mixing up hands, they watched more seriously and somberly than before, and the smile with which Stepan Arkadyevich had whispered that now each should put on his own ring died on his lips of its own accord. He sensed that any smile would give them offense.

"For in the beginning Thou hast created them male and female," the priest read after the exchange of rings, "and by Thee is a woman joined to a man for his assistance and for the continuation of the human race. Therefore, O Lord our God, who hast sent forth Thy truth to Thine inheritance, and Thy promise to Thy servants our fathers, Thine elect from generation to generation: Look upon Thy servant, Konstantin, and Thy handmaiden, Ekaterina, and seal their betrothal in faith, in oneness of mind, in truth and in love."

Levin was feeling more and more that all his thoughts about marriage and his dreams about how he would arrange his life—that all this was childishness and that this was something which he had not understood until now and now he understood it even less, although it was happening to him; shudders rose ever higher in his breast, and unruly tears welled up in his eyes.

5

All Moscow, family and friends, were in the church. During the betrothal ceremony, in the brilliant illumination of the church, among the resplendent women, young ladies, and men in white ties, evening coats, and uniforms, the decorous murmuring, initiated primarily by the men, was constant, while the women were busy observing all the details of the solemn ceremony, which always touches them so.

Among those closest to the bride were her two sisters: Dolly and the eldest, the serene beauty Madame Lvova, who had come from abroad.

“Why is it Marie is in lilac—as bad as black—at a wedding?” said Korsunskaya.

“With her complexion, it’s the only salvation,” replied Drubetskaya. “I’m surprised they had the wedding in the evening. That’s for merchants.”

“It is more beautiful. I, too, was married in the evening,” replied Korsunskaya, and she sighed recalling how sweet she had been that day, how ridiculously in love her husband had been, and how different everything was now.

“They say that someone who has been best man more than ten times will never marry. I’d like to be on my tenth, to safeguard myself, but the place was already taken,” said Count Sinyavin to pretty Princess Charskaya, who had designs on him.

Princess Charskaya replied with only a smile. She was looking at Kitty and thinking about how and when she would be standing with Count Sinyavin in Kitty’s position and how then she would remind him of his joke today.

Young Shcherbatsky was telling Madame Nikolaeva, the old lady-in-waiting, that he intended to place the crown on Kitty’s chignon, for luck.

“There was no need to wear a chignon,” replied Madame Nikolaeva, who had long since decided that if the old widower she had been chasing married her, the wedding would be the simplest. “I don’t care for this opulence.”

Sergei Ivanovich was talking with Darya Dmitrievna, assuring her in jest that the custom of going away after a wedding had spread because the newlyweds were always slightly ashamed.

“Your brother can be proud. She is marvelously sweet. You must be envious, aren’t you?”

“I’ve gotten over that, Darya Dmitrievna,” he replied, and his face suddenly adopted a mournful and somber expression.

Stepan Arkadyevich was telling his sister-in-law his pun on divorce.

“Her wreath wants straightening,” she replied, not listening to him.

“It’s too bad her looks have spoiled so,” Countess Nordston was telling Madame Lvova. “Still, he isn’t worth her little finger. Don’t you agree?”

“No, I like him very much, and not because he is my future *beau-frère*,” replied Madame Lvova. “How well he behaves! It is so difficult to behave well in this situation—not to be ridiculous. But he is neither ridiculous nor strained; he is obviously moved.”

“You were expecting this apparently?”

“Almost. She has always loved him.”

“Well, we shall see who is first to step on the rug. I was advising Kitty.”

“It doesn’t matter,” replied Madame Lvova. “We’re all dutiful wives. It’s in our blood.”

“While I very purposely stepped on the rug first before Vasily. What about you, Dolly?”

Dolly was standing beside them, and listening to them, but not responding. She was moved. There were tears in her eyes, and she could not say anything without bursting into tears. She was happy for Kitty and Levin; returning to the thought of her own wedding, she glanced over at the beaming Stepan Arkadyevich, forgot all about the present and remembered only her first innocent love. She recalled not only herself but all the women, both intimate friends and acquaintances; she recalled them in that one moment of triumph when they, just like Kitty, stood under the crown, with love, hope, and fear in their heart, renouncing the past and entering into a mysterious future. Among all the brides that came to mind she recalled her own sweet Anna as well, the details of whose impending divorce she had recently heard. She, too, had stood, pure, in orange blossoms and veil. And now what?

“It’s terribly odd,” she said.

Not only were the sisters, friends, and family following all the details of the ceremony, so too were the women spectators, with emotion, holding their breath, watching, afraid to miss a single movement or expression on the face of the groom or bride and in annoyance did not reply to and often did not even hear what the indifferent men, who were making jokes or irrelevant remarks, were saying.

“Why is she in tears? Or is she marrying against her will?”

“How could anyone be marrying such a fine young man against her will? A prince, isn’t he?”

“Is that her sister in the white satin? Oh, listen to the deacon bellowing: ‘And obey thy husband.’”

“Chudovo choristers?”

“The Synod’s.”

“I asked the footman. He says he’s going to take her back to his estate. Awfully rich, they say. That’s why they gave her to him.”

“No, they make a fine pair.”

“And here you were arguing, Marya Vasilyevna, that they were wearing their crinolines fuller. Take a look at that one in the puce, an ambassador’s wife, they say, and see how it drapes. This way, then that.”

“What a darling the bride is, like a fancy lamb! I don’t care what you say, one feels sorry for a sister.”

That’s what they were saying in the crowd of women spectators who had managed to slip through the church doors.

6

When the betrothal ceremony was over, the priest spread a length of pink silk cloth in front of the lectern in the middle of the church, the chorus began singing a subtle, intricate psalm, in which the bass and tenor called back and forth, and the priest turned around and pointed the spread pink cloth out to the bridal pair. No matter how often or how much both had heard about the omen that whoever stepped first on the rug would be the head of the family, neither Levin nor Kitty could remember this when they took these few steps. Nor did they hear the loud comments and arguments about how, according to the observation of some, he had stepped first, and in the opinion of others, they had both stepped together.

After the usual questions about their desire to enter into marriage and whether they had promised themselves to others and their answers, which sounded strange to them, the next service began. Kitty listened to the words of the prayer, wishing to understand their meaning, but she couldn’t. A sense of triumph and shining joy at the close of the ceremony steadily overwhelmed her soul, depriving her of any power of attention.

They prayed, “That He will grant to them chastity, and of the fruit of the womb, that He will gladden them with the sight of sons and daughters.” It was mentioned that God had created a wife from Adam’s rib, and “For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and cleave to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh,” and that “this is a great mystery”; they prayed for God to make them fruitful and bless them, like Isaac and Rebecca, Joseph, Moses and Zipporah, and that they might see the sons of their sons. “It has all been beautiful,” thought Kitty, listening to these words, “all just as it’s supposed to be,” and a smile of joy, which was unconsciously conveyed to all who were looking at her, shone on her illumined face.

“Put them on firmly!” the advice was heard when the priest put the crowns on them and Shcherbatsky, his hand shaking in its three-button glove, held the crown high above her head.

“Put it on!” she whispered, smiling.

Levin looked over at her and was stunned by the joyous glow on her face; and this feeling was unconsciously conveyed to him. Like her, he felt bright and cheerful.

They enjoyed the reading of the epistle and the archdeacon’s voice thundering at the last line, so eagerly anticipated by the uninvited public. They enjoyed drinking the warm red wine and water from the shallow cup and enjoyed it even more when the priest, flinging aside his surplice and taking both their hands in his, led them around the lectern to the blast of the bass chanting, “Rejoice, O Isaiah!” Shcherbatsky and Chirikov, who had been holding the crowns and getting tangled in the bride’s train and who were also smiling and happy about something either lagged behind or bumped into the wedding couple each time the priest came to a halt. The spark of joy ignited in Kitty seemed to be conveyed to everyone in the church. It seemed to Levin that both the priest and the deacon felt like smiling, as did he.

Removing the crowns from their heads, the priest read the last prayer and congratulated the young people. Levin looked at Kitty. Never before had he seen her as she was now. She was splendid with the new glow of happiness that was on her face. Levin felt like saying something to her, but he didn’t know whether it was over. The priest helped him out of his difficulty. He smiled with his kindly mouth and said quietly, “Kiss your wife, and you kiss your husband,” and he took the candles from their hands.

Levin kissed her smiling lips cautiously, gave her his arm, and sensing a new, strange intimacy, headed out of the church. He didn’t, couldn’t believe that it was true. Only when their amazed and timid gazes met did he believe it, because he sensed that they were already one.

After supper that night, the young people left for the country.

7

Vronsky and Anna had been touring Europe together for three months. They had traveled to Venice, Rome, and Naples and had only just arrived in the small Italian town where they wanted to settle for a time.

The headwaiter, a handsome man with a part in his thick pomaded hair that began at his neck and wearing a tailcoat and a shirt with a broad white batiste front and a bundle of charms across his round belly, putting his hands in his pockets and squinting disdainfully, replied sternly to the gentleman who had stopped in front of him. Hearing the approach of steps from the other side coming up the staircase, the headwaiter turned around, and seeing the Russian

count, who had taken their best rooms, respectfully took his hands out of his pockets and bowing, explained that the courier had arrived and the matter of renting the palazzo had been accomplished. The chief steward was prepared to sign the agreement.

“Ah! I’m very glad,” said Vronsky. “Is Madame at home or not?”

“Madame went out for a stroll but has returned now,” replied the headwaiter.

Vronsky took the soft, wide-brimmed hat from his head and wiped his handkerchief across his sweaty brow and his hair, which he had let grow halfway over his ears and had combed back to cover his bald spot. Glancing distractedly at the gentleman still standing there and regarding him, he tried to pass.

“This gentleman is a Russian and has been inquiring about you,” said the headwaiter.

With a mixture of annoyance that one can never get away from people one knows and a desire to find some distraction from the monotony of his life, Vronsky once again looked around at the gentleman, who had moved away and stopped, and at the same time both their eyes began to shine.

“Golenishchev!”

“Vronsky!”

Indeed, it was Golenishchev, Vronsky’s comrade from the Corps of Pages. In the Corps, Golenishchev had belonged to the liberal party, had left the Corps with a civilian rank, and had never served anywhere. The comrades had gone their separate ways upon leaving the Corps and had met only once since.

At that meeting Vronsky had realized that Golenishchev had chosen some high-minded liberal activity and consequently wanted to despise Vronsky’s career and calling. Therefore, at the meeting with Golenishchev, Vronsky had given him the cold and proud rebuff he knew how to give people, the meaning of which was, “You may or may not like my way of life, but that is a matter of utter indifference to me. If you wish to know me, you must respect me.” Golenishchev had been just as disdainful of Vronsky’s tone. This meeting, one would think, should have dissociated them even more, but now they beamed and cried out with joy upon recognizing one another. Vronsky had never expected he would be so happy to see Golenishchev, but probably he himself had not known how bored he was. He forgot the unpleasant impression from their last meeting and with an open, delighted face held out his hand to his former comrade. The same expression of delight replaced the former anxious expression on Golenishchev’s face.

“How glad I am to see you!” said Vronsky, his amiable smile displaying his strong white teeth.

“I’ve been hearing ‘Vronsky,’ but which one, I didn’t know. I’m very, very glad!”

“Let’s go in. So, what are you doing?”

“I’ve been living here for more than a year. I’m working.”

“Ah!” said Vronsky with sympathy. “Let’s go in.”

As is Russians’ usual habit, instead of saying in Russian what he wished to hide from the servants, he began speaking French.

“Do you know Madame Karenina? We are traveling together. I am on my way to see her,” he said in French, watching Golenishchev’s face intently.

“Ah! I didn’t know that (although he did),” Golenishchev replied nonchalantly. “Have you been here long?” he added.

“I? Four days,” replied Vronsky, again watching his comrade’s face intently.

“Yes, he is a decent man and takes a proper view of the matter,” Vronsky told himself, understanding the import of the expression on Golenishchev’s face and the change of conversation. “I could introduce him to Anna. He takes the proper view of this.”

In the three months Vronsky had spent abroad with Anna, whenever he met new people, he always asked himself how this new person would view his relations with Anna, and for the most part he encountered in men the proper understanding. But if he and those who understood things “properly” had been asked what this understanding consisted of, both he and they would have been at great pains to answer.

In essence, those who, in Vronsky’s opinion, understood things “properly” did not understand at all but rather behaved in general as well-bred men behave with respect to all the complex and insoluble questions that surround life on all sides—politely, avoiding innuendo and unpleasant questions. They assumed an air of fully understanding the significance and meaning of the situation, of acknowledging and even approving of it, but they acted as if it were improper and excessive to explain all this.

Vronsky immediately guessed that Golenishchev was one of these people and so was doubly glad to see him. Indeed, Golenishchev behaved with Madame Karenina, when he had been taken to see her, precisely as Vronsky might have wished. Evidently without the slightest effort, he avoided all conversations that might lead to awkwardness.

He had not known Anna previously and was struck by her beauty and even more by the simplicity with which she accepted her situation. She blushed when Vronsky brought Golenishchev in, and he liked this childish color, which covered her open and beautiful face, enormously. But what he liked especially was the fact that she immediately, as if on purpose, so that there would be no misunderstanding in front of a stranger, called Vronsky simply Alexei and said that they were moving into a newly let home, which people here called

a palazzo. Golenishchev liked this direct and simple attitude toward her own situation. Looking at Anna's good-natured, energetic manner, and knowing both Alexei Alexandrovich and Vronsky, Golenishchev felt that he understood her completely. He felt he understood something she could not have understood: namely, how, having made her husband miserable by abandoning him and her son and having lost her good name, she could feel energetic, cheerful, and happy.

"It's in the guide," said Golenishchev about the palazzo Vronsky had let. "There's a marvelous Tintoretto there. From his final period."

"You know what? The weather's marvelous. Let's go there and take another look," said Vronsky, turning to Anna.

"I should like that very much. I'll go put on my hat right now. Did you say it was warm?" she said, stopping in the doorway and looking at Vronsky inquiringly, and again vivid color covered her face.

Vronsky understood from her look that she did not know what kind of relations he desired with Golenishchev, and she was afraid that she might not be behaving as he would like.

He looked at her with a long, tender gaze.

"No, not very," he said.

She felt that she understood everything and, most of all, that he was content with her; and smiling at him, she left the doorway with a quick step.

The friends looked at each other, and there was confusion in the faces of both, as if Golenishchev, obviously admiring her, wanted to say something about her but could not decide what, while Vronsky both wished and feared the same thing.

"So there it is," began Vronsky, in order to start some sort of conversation. "So you've settled here? Are you still doing the same work?" he continued, recalling that he'd been told that Golenishchev was writing something.

"Yes, I'm writing the second part of *Two Principles*," said Golenishchev, bursting with pleasure at this question. "That is, to be precise, I'm not writing yet, but I'm preparing, gathering materials. It's going to be much more extensive and encompass nearly all the issues. In Russia, people don't want to understand that we are the heirs of Byzantium," he began his long, fervent explanation.

Vronsky felt awkward at first because he did not know the first essay on *Two Principles*, about which the author was speaking to him as something well known. But later, when Golenishchev began setting forth his thoughts and Vronsky was able to follow them, even without knowing *Two Principles* he listened with considerable interest, since Golenishchev spoke well. However, Vronsky was amazed and distressed by Golenishchev's irritable agitation

in speaking about the topic he was studying. The more he spoke, the more his eyes burned, the more hastily he objected to his imaginary opponents, and the more alarmed and insulted the expression of his face. Recalling Golenishchev as a skinny, lively, amiable, and well-bred boy, always the top pupil in the Corps, Vronsky simply could not understand the reasons for this irritation and did not approve of it. In particular, he did not like the fact that Golenishchev, a man from a good set, had put himself on a level with the kinds of hack writers who irritated him and at whom he raged. Was it worth it? Vronsky did not like this; but he sensed that Golenishchev was unhappy, so he felt sorry for him. Unhappiness, almost to the point of derangement, was evident in this mobile, fairly handsome face, while he, not even noticing Anna's entrance, continued to express his thoughts hastily and heatedly.

When Anna came out wearing her hat and cape, and while playing with her umbrella with a rapid movement of her pretty hand, stopped alongside him, Vronsky, with a feeling of relief, broke away from Golenishchev's plaintive eyes, which were aimed steadily at him, and with a new love looked at his charming friend, so full of life and joy. Golenishchev had a hard time recovering and for a while was despondent and gloomy, but Anna, who was kindly disposed toward everyone (which was what she was like at that time), quickly refreshed him with her simple and cheerful address. Having tried out various topics of conversation, she led him to painting, about which he spoke very well, and she listened to him intently. They reached the let house on foot and surveyed it.

"I'm very pleased at one thing," Anna said to Golenishchev when they were on their way back. "Alexei will have a fine *atelier*.⁹ You simply must take that room," she told Vronsky in Russian, and using the familiar form of address, since she had realized that in their isolation, Golenishchev would become someone close to them and that there was no need to hide in front of him.

"You mean you paint?" said Golenishchev, turning around quickly to Vronsky.

"Yes, I studied a long time ago and now I've started a little," said Vronsky, turning red.

"He has great talent," said Anna with a delighted smile. "Naturally, I am no judge! But judges who do know have said the same thing."

8

In this first period of her liberation and speedy recovery, Anna felt unforgivably happy and full of the joy of life. The memory of her husband's unhappiness did not poison her happiness. On the one hand, this memory was too horrible

to contemplate. On the other, her husband's unhappiness had given her too great a happiness to repent. The memory of all that had happened to her since her illness—the reconciliation with her husband, the rift, the news of Vronsky's wound, his appearance, the preparations for the divorce, the departure from her husband's house, the farewell with her son—all this seemed to her like a delirious dream from which she had awakened abroad, alone with Vronsky. The memory of the evil inflicted on her husband aroused in her a feeling similar to the revulsion a drowning man would experience after tearing away from someone clinging to him. That man had drowned. Naturally, this was bad, but it was her sole salvation, and it was better not to recall those frightful details.

The one consoling thought about her action came to her then, in the first moment of the rift, and when she now recalled all that had happened, she recalled this one thought. "I have inevitably made that man's unhappiness," she thought, "but I don't want to profit by this unhappiness. I am suffering too, and I am going to suffer. I've given up what I've treasured most—my good name and my son. I've done something bad and so do not want happiness, do not want a divorce, and will suffer my disgrace and the separation from my son." But however sincerely Anna had wished to suffer, she did not suffer. There was no disgrace whatsoever. With the very tact they both had so much of, they avoided Russian ladies abroad, never put themselves in a false position, and everywhere encountered people who pretended that they fully understood their mutual situation much better than they did themselves. The separation from her son, whom she loved, even that did not torment her at first. The little girl, his child, was so sweet and had so attached Anna to herself, once this little girl was all she had left, Anna rarely thought of her son.

Life's urgency, which was magnified by her recovery, was so powerful, and the conditions of her life were so new and pleasant, that Anna felt unforgivably happy. The more she learned about Vronsky, the more she loved him. She loved him for himself and for his love for her. Her complete possession of him was a constant joy to her. His proximity to her was always pleasant. All the features of his character, which she was getting to know better and better, were inexpressibly dear to her. His appearance, which had changed in civilian dress, was as attractive to her as to a young woman in love. In all that he said, thought, and did she saw something especially noble and lofty. Often her admiration for him even frightened her: she sought but could not find in him anything that was not wonderful. She dared not show him her awareness of her own insignificance compared with him. It seemed to her that he, knowing this, might quickly cease to love her, and she feared nothing so much now—although she had no grounds for it whatsoever—as losing his love. Yet she could not help but be grateful to

him for his attitude toward her and show him how she appreciated it. In her opinion, he, who had such a definite vocation for public service, in which he ought to have played a prominent role—he had sacrificed his ambition for her without ever displaying the slightest regret. He was, even more than before, tenderly respectful of her, and the thought that she should never feel the awkwardness of her position did not quit him for a moment. Such a manly man, he not only never contradicted her but did not have his own will and was, it seemed, concerned solely with anticipating her wishes. She could not help but appreciate this, although the very intensity of his attention to her, this atmosphere of concern with which he surrounded her, did at times weigh on her.

Vronsky, meanwhile, despite the full realization of what he had for so long desired, was not entirely happy. He soon felt that the realization of his desire had afforded him only a grain of sand from the mountain of happiness he had anticipated. This realization had shown him the eternal error men make in imagining happiness as the realization of their desire. At first after he and she had been united and he had donned civilian dress, he had felt the full splendor of freedom in general, which he had never known before, and the freedom of love, and he was content, but not for long. He soon felt rise up inside him the desire for desires, a melancholy longing. Involuntarily, he began grasping at every fleeting caprice, taking it for desire and purpose. Sixteen hours of the day had to be taken up by something, since they were living abroad in perfect freedom, outside those conditions of social life that had taken up their time in Petersburg. There could be no thought of the pleasures of the bachelor life that had occupied Vronsky on previous travels abroad, since the one attempt of this kind produced an unexpected sadness in Anna far out of proportion with its cause, a late supper with friends. Nor could he have relations with local or Russian society, given the irregularity of their position. The viewing of sights, to say nothing of the fact that all of it had been seen before, did not hold for him, as an intelligent Russian man, that inexplicable significance which Englishmen are able to ascribe to it.

Just as a starving animal snatches at any object that comes its way, hoping to find sustenance in it, so too did Vronsky quite unconsciously snatch first at politics, then at new books, and then at paintings.

Since he had had a talent for painting since his youth, and since, not knowing how to spend his money, he had begun collecting engravings, he settled at last on painting, began to occupy himself with it, and invested in it the unspent store of desires that demanded satisfaction.

He had a capacity for understanding art and for imitating art accurately and tastefully, and he supposed he had precisely what was needed for an artist, and

after hesitating for a while over what type of painting to select—religious, the historical, genre, or realistic—he began to paint. He understood all the genres and could take his inspiration from any of them; but he could not imagine the possibility of knowing nothing at all of any school of painting and taking one’s inspiration directly from what lay in one’s soul, without worrying whether what he painted belonged to any known school. Since he did not know this and took his inspiration not directly from life, but indirectly, from life already embodied in art, he became inspired very quickly and easily, and just as quickly and easily reached the point where his painting very much resembled the sort he had been trying to imitate.

More than all other styles he liked the French, full of grace and effect, and in that style he began painting a portrait of Anna in an Italian costume, and this portrait seemed to him and to everyone who saw it very successful.

9

The neglected old palazzo, with its tall sculpted ceilings and frescoes on its walls, mosaic floors, heavy yellow damask curtains on the tall windows, vases on pedestals and mantels, carved doors, and dark rooms hung with pictures—this palazzo, after they moved into it, by its very appearance supported Vronsky’s pleasant delusion that he was not so much a Russian landowner, a master of the hunt without a post, as he was an enlightened lover and patron of the arts, and he himself a modest artist who had renounced society, connections, and ambition for the woman he loved.

The role Vronsky had chosen with their move to the palazzo succeeded perfectly, and after making the acquaintance of several interesting individuals through the mediation of Golenishchev, he was tranquil at first. He was painting life studies under the guidance of an Italian professor of painting and studying medieval Italian life. Medieval Italian life had of late so charmed Vronsky that he even wore his hat and flung his cape over his shoulder in medieval fashion, which was very becoming to him.

“But we live here and know nothing about it,” Vronsky said to Golenishchev when he came to see him one morning. “Have you seen Mikhailov’s painting?” he said, handing him the Russian paper he had just received that morning and pointing to an article about a Russian artist living in the same town who had completed a picture about which rumors had long been circulating and which had been purchased before its completion. The article reproached the government and the Academy because this remarkable artist had been denied all encouragement and aid.

“I have,” Golenishchev answered. “Naturally, he does not lack talent, but it is an utterly false direction. It’s the same Ivanov-Strauss-Renan treatment of Christ and religious painting.”¹⁰

“What does the picture depict?” asked Anna.

“Christ before Pilate. Christ is shown as a Jew with all the realism of the new school.”

Having been brought to one of his favorite themes by the question about the painting’s content, Golenishchev began to expound.

“I don’t understand how they can make such a gross error. Christ already has his own specific embodiment in the art of the great masters. If they wanted to depict a revolutionary or a sage instead of God, they could have chosen Socrates, Franklin, or Charlotte Corday from history—anyone but Christ.¹¹ They choose the very person that should not be chosen for art, and then—”

“But is it true that this Mikhailov is in such penury?” asked Vronsky, thinking that he, as a Russian Maecenas, should help the artist, regardless of whether his picture was good or bad.¹²

“Hardly. He’s a marvelous portrait painter. Have you seen his portrait of Madame Vasilchikova? Apparently, though, he doesn’t want to paint portraits anymore, and so he may well be in need. I say that—”

“Couldn’t we ask him to do Anna Arkadyevna’s portrait?” said Vronsky.

“Why mine?” said Anna. “After yours, I don’t want any other portrait. Better Annie’s (this is what she called her daughter).¹³ Here she is,” she added, looking out the window at the beautiful Italian nurse, who was carrying the child into the garden and who immediately looked back imperceptibly at Vronsky. The beautiful nurse, whose head Vronsky had been painting for his picture, was the one secret sorrow in Anna’s life. When he had painted her, Vronsky had admired her beauty and medievalness, and Anna dared not admit that she feared becoming jealous of this nurse, and therefore showered special kindnesses upon her and her small son.

Vronsky, too, looked out the window and into Anna’s eyes, and turning away immediately to face Golenishchev, he said, “Do you know this Mikhailov?”

“I’ve met him. But he’s a crank and lacks any breeding. You know, one of those savage new men one encounters so frequently nowadays; you know, one of those freethinkers reared *d’emblée* on the notions of disbelief, negation, and materialism.¹⁴ It used to be,” said Golenishchev, not noticing or not wishing to notice that Anna and Vronsky wanted to say something, “it used to be that a freethinker might have been someone reared on ideas of religion, law, and morality and who himself became a freethinker through struggle and effort; now, though, there is a new type of self-styled freethinker who has been reared

without ever even hearing that there are laws of morality and religion or that there are authorities, reared directly on the notions of negating everything, that is, as savages. That's what he is like. He is apparently the son of a Moscow valet and had no education whatsoever. When he entered the Academy and made a reputation for himself, being far from a stupid man, he wanted to get educated, so he turned to what seemed the fount of education—the magazines.¹⁵ In the old days, you know, someone who wanted to become educated, a Frenchman, let's say, would have begun by studying all the classics: the theologians, tragedians, historians, philosophers, and all the intellectual work he came across. Nowadays, he, like others among us, went straight for the literature of negation, assimilated very quickly the entire digest of the science of negation, and he was set. And not only that. About twenty years ago he would have found in this literature signs of struggle with the authorities and age-old worldviews, he would have understood from this struggle that there had been something different; now, though, he falls directly upon a literature in which they do not even deign to debate the old worldviews but instead say directly that there is nothing but *évolution*, selection, the struggle for existence—and that's it. In my article, I—”

“You know what,” said Anna, who had been cautiously exchanging glances with Vronsky for quite a while already and who knew that Vronsky was not interested in this artist's education but only in the thought of helping him and commissioning a portrait from him. “You know what?” she firmly interrupted Golenishchev, who had gotten carried away. “Let's go see him!”

Golenishchev collected himself and willingly agreed. However, since the artist lived in a distant quarter, they decided to hire a carriage.

An hour later, Anna, seated beside Golenishchev and with Vronsky on the front seat of the carriage, drove up to an unattractive new house in a distant quarter. Learning from the porter's wife, who came out to meet them, that Mikhailov did allow people into his studio but that he was now in his apartment a couple of steps away, they sent her to him with their calling cards, asking his permission to see his pictures.

10

The artist Mikhailov was, as always, at work when he was brought the calling cards of Count Vronsky and Golenishchev. That morning he had been working in his studio on a large painting. When he came home, he flew into a rage at his wife for not being able to cope with the landlady, who had demanded money.

“I've told you twenty times. Don't go into explanations. You're such a fool,

you'll start trying to explain in Italian, and you'll come out looking a fool three times over," he said to her after a long argument.

"Then don't fall behind. I'm not to blame. If I had the money—"

"Leave me in peace, for God's sake!" Mikhailov exclaimed with tears in his voice, and covering his ears, he went into his workroom behind the partition and locked the door behind him. "Dimwit!" he told himself, and he sat down at his desk, opened a portfolio, and immediately set to work with special fervor on a sketch he had begun.

Never did he work with such fervor and success as when his life was going badly and especially when he quarreled with his wife. "Ah! I wish I could disappear!" he thought, continuing to work. He was doing a sketch for the figure of someone in a fit of rage. A sketch had been finished previously; but he was dissatisfied with it. "No, that one was better. . . . Where is it?" He went to his wife and scowling, not looking at her, asked his older daughter where the piece of paper was which he had given them. The paper with the abandoned sketch was found, but it was covered with stains and drips from a stearin candle. He nonetheless took the sketch, placed it on his table, and stepping back and squinting, began examining it. Suddenly he smiled and gestured delightedly.

"That's it, that's it!" he announced, and picking up a pencil then and there, he began drawing quickly. A stearin drip had given the man a new pose.

He drew this new pose, and suddenly he recalled the energetic face and jutting jaw of the merchant from whom he got his cigars, and he drew this very same face, this jaw, for his man. He laughed out loud from joy. The figure suddenly had ceased to be dead and contrived and came alive, something that could no longer be changed. This figure lived and was clearly and indubitably defined. He might correct the sketch in accordance with the demands of this figure; he might and even ought to set the feet differently, completely change the position of the left arm, and throw the hair back. But in making these corrections, he was not changing the figure but only tossing aside what had been concealing the figure. It was as if he were removing the coverings that had kept it from being entirely visible; each new feature only brought out all the more the entire figure in all its energy and strength, as it had appeared to him suddenly from the stearin drip. He was carefully completing the figure when he was brought the calling cards.

"Just a moment, just a moment!"

He went out to see his wife.

"Enough, Sasha, don't be angry!" he said to her, smiling timidly and tenderly. "You were to blame. I was to blame. I'll fix everything." Having reconciled with his wife, he put on his olive green coat with the velvet collar and his hat and went

to his studio. The successful figure was already forgotten. Now he was pleased and excited by the visit to his studio by these important Russians, who had arrived in a carriage.

About his picture, the one now standing on his easel, he had in the depths of his soul but one opinion—that no one had ever painted a picture like it. He did not think the picture was better than all of Raphael's, but he did know that what he had wanted to convey and had conveyed in this picture no one had ever conveyed before. This he knew positively and had known for a long time, ever since he had begun painting it; but the judgments of other people, whatever they might be, still had tremendous importance for him and stirred him to the depths of his soul. Any comment, even the most insignificant, which demonstrated that judges saw even a small part of what he saw in this picture, stirred him to the depths of his soul. To his judges he always ascribed a depth of understanding greater than his own, and from them he always expected something which he himself had not seen in his own picture, and often in the opinions of viewers, he managed to find this.

He approached the door of his studio with a quick step, and despite his excitement, the soft light of the figure of Anna standing in the shadow of the entrance and listening to Golenishchev telling her something heatedly and at the same time, evidently, wishing to look around at the approaching artist, struck him. He himself did not notice how, approaching them, he seized upon and assimilated this impression, just as he had the jaw of the merchant who had sold the cigars, and hid it away to be brought out when the need arose. The visitors, disenchanted beforehand by Golenishchev's story about the artist, were even more disenchanted by his appearance. Of average height, thickset, and with a restless gait, Mikhailov, in his brown hat, olive coat, and narrow trousers—though wide ones had long been worn—and especially the ordinariness of his broad face and the combination of his shy expression with his desire to preserve his own dignity, made a distasteful impression.

"If you would do me the honor," he said, trying to maintain a look of indifference, and entering the inner porch, he took the key from his pocket and unlocked the door.

11

As he entered the studio, the artist Mikhailov once again looked around at his guests and made a mental note of the expression on Vronsky's face, especially his cheekbones. Even though his artistic sense was always at work, gathering material for itself, and even though he felt more and more excitement as the

moment for judging his work drew near, he rapidly and subtly composed from imperceptible signs a mental image of these three individuals. That one (Golenishchev) was the local Russian. Mikhailov could not recall his name, where he had met him, or what they had talked about. He remembered only his face, as he remembered all the faces he had ever seen, but he also remembered that this was one of the faces stored away in his imagination in that huge class of the falsely consequential and poor of expression. The mass of hair and very open brow lent a superficial consequence to a face that had but one small, childish, agitated expression, concentrated on the narrow bridge of his nose. Vronsky and Madame Karenina, according to Mikhailov's lights, must be noble and wealthy Russians who understood nothing in art, like all rich Russians, but who passed themselves off as amateurs and admirers. "I suppose they've already toured all the ancient art and now are traveling around to the studios of the new ones, the German charlatan and the idiot Pre-Raphaelite Englishmen, and they've come to see me merely to complete their survey," he thought. He knew very well the manner of dilettantes (the cleverer, the worse) visiting the studios of contemporary artists with the sole purpose of having the right to say that art has declined and that the more one looks at new artists, the more one sees how inimitable the old masters have remained. He expected all this, saw it all in their faces, saw it in the indifferent, offhand way they spoke among themselves, looked at the manikins and busts, and walked about freely, waiting for him to reveal his picture. And yet, as he was turning over his studies, raising blinds, and removing the sheet, he felt a powerful excitement, all the more so because, even if all noble and wealthy Russians were to him cattle and idiots, he liked both Vronsky and Anna in particular.

"Here, do you like it?" he said, taking a fidgety step to the side and pointing to the picture. "This is Pilate's Admonition. Matthew, chapter twenty-seven," he said, feeling his lips begin to tremble from excitement. He moved back and stood behind them.

In those few seconds while the visitors were looking silently at the picture, Mikhailov looked at it as well, and looked with an indifferent, unbiased eye. In these few seconds he believed in advance that the highest and fairest judgment would be pronounced by them, these visitors, whom he had so despised a moment before. He forgot everything he had thought about his picture previously, during the three years he had been painting it; he forgot all its virtues, which for him were beyond doubt. He saw the picture with their indifferent, unbiased, fresh gaze and saw nothing good in it. He saw in the foreground the irritated face of Pilate and the serene face of Christ and in the background the figures of Pilate's servants and the face of John intently watching what was happening.

Each face that had matured in him with its own particular character after so much searching and so many corrected mistakes; each face that had afforded him so many torments and joys; and all these faces, repositioned so many times for the sake of the overall effect; all the shades of coloring and all the tones, achieved by him with such effort—all of this together, now, looking with their eyes, seemed to him a banality repeated a thousand times over. The face most precious to him, the face of Christ, the focus of the picture, which had afforded him such ecstasy in its discovery—all was lost for him when he looked at the picture with their eyes. He saw the well-drawn (and maybe not even so well-drawn at that—he now saw clearly many shortcomings) repetition of all those endless Christs by Titian, Raphael, and Rubens, as well as the same soldiers and Pilate. All this was banal, meager, old, badly drawn even—garish and weak. They would be right in uttering feigned courteous phrases in the artist's presence and pitying and ridiculing him when left alone.

This silence became too difficult for him (although it lasted no more than a minute). In order to cut it short and show he was not upset, he made an effort to control himself and addressed Golenishchev.

"I believe I have had the pleasure of meeting you before," he said, looking around worriedly first at Anna, then at Vronsky, so as not to miss a single feature of the expression on their faces.

"What do you mean! We saw each other at Rossi's, remember, the evening that young Italian lady—the new Rachel—was declaiming," Golenishchev began freely, without the slightest regret removing his gaze from the picture and turning to the artist.¹⁶

Noting, however, that Mikhailov was awaiting his opinion of the picture, he said, "Your picture has come a very long way since I saw it last, and just as then, so too now I am unusually struck by the figure of Pilate. You understand this man so well, a good, fine fellow, but a bureaucrat to the depths of his soul, who knows not what he does. It seems to me, though, . . ."

Mikhailov's entire mobile face suddenly beamed. His eyes lit up. He wanted to say something but could not get anything out he was so moved, and he pretended to be clearing his throat. No matter how low his opinion of Golenishchev's ability to understand art, no matter how insignificant his fair remark about the truthfulness of the expression of Pilate's face as a bureaucrat, no matter how offensive the utterance of this first insignificant remark might have been, since it did not speak of the most important figures, Mikhailov was thrilled by this remark. He himself thought of the figure of Pilate exactly what Golenishchev had said. The fact that this thought was one of millions of other thoughts which—Mikhailov firmly knew—would all be true, did not diminish for him

the significance of Golenishchev's remark. He took a liking to Golenishchev for this remark and shifted suddenly from a state of sorrow to delight. Immediately, his entire picture came to life before him with all the inexpressible complexity of everything vital. Mikhailov again attempted to say that he had understood Pilate in the same way; but his lips trembled recalcitrantly, and he could not speak. Vronsky and Anna were also saying something in that same quiet voice people usually use at exhibitions of pictures, in part so as not to offend the artist, in part so as not to say out loud something foolish that is so easy to say when speaking about art. It seemed to Mikhailov that the picture had made an impression on them, too. He walked up to them.

"How amazing Christ's expression is!" said Anna. Of all that she had seen, she liked this expression most of all, and she sensed that this was the center of the picture, and so praise of this would please the artist. "You can see how he pities Pilate."

This was again one of the million truthful reflections that one could find in his picture and in the figure of Christ. She said he pitied Pilate. Christ's expression indeed ought to have an expression of pity because it had an expression of love, unearthly serenity, readiness for death, and awareness of the vanity of words. Naturally, there was an expression of the bureaucrat in Pilate and of pity in Christ, since one was the embodiment of the flesh and the other of spiritual life. All this and much more flashed through Mikhailov's mind, and again his face beamed with joy.

"Yes, and how the figure is done, there's so much air. You could walk around it," said Golenishchev, obviously demonstrating by this remark that he did not approve of the figure's content and idea.

"Yes, amazing craftsmanship!" said Vronsky. "How these figures in the background stand out! That's what one calls technique," he said, turning to Golenishchev and thereby referring to the conversation they had had about Vronsky's despair at acquiring this technique.

"Yes, yes, amazing!" Golenishchev and Anna chimed in. Despite the state of excitement he was in, the remark about technique clawed at Mikhailov's heart, and looking angrily at Vronsky, he suddenly frowned. He had often heard this word "technique" and decidedly did not understand what people meant by it. He knew that by this word they meant a mechanical ability to paint and draw that was completely independent of content. Often he noticed that, even in genuine praise, technique was contrasted to essential merit, as if one could draw well something that was bad. He knew that it took a great deal of attention and caution in order to remove the covering without harming the work itself, and to remove all the coverings. But the art of painting was not a matter of technique

at all. If what he saw had been revealed to a small child or to his cook, she would have been able to uncover what she saw. But the most experienced and refined technician could not paint anything by mere mechanical ability if the outlines of his content had not already revealed themselves to him. Besides, he saw that if one were speaking of technique, then he could not be praised for it. In all that he had ever painted, he saw irritating shortcomings that derived from his lack of care in removing the coverings and that he now could not correct without spoiling the overall composition. On nearly all his figures and faces he still saw remnants of coverings not fully removed, which spoiled the picture.

“One thing I might say, if you would allow me to make this remark,” remarked Golenishchev.

“Ah, I would be very glad, I beg of you,” said Mikhailov, smiling affectedly.

“It is that you have a man-God rather than a God-man. Although I know this is what you meant to do.”

“I could not draw a Christ who was not in my heart,” said Mikhailov mose-rosely.

“Yes, but in that case, if you would allow me to express my thought. . . . Your picture is so fine that my remark cannot detract from it, and anyway this is my personal opinion. With you it’s different. Your motive itself is different. Let’s take Ivanov, for instance. I think that if Christ is reduced to the status of a historical figure, then it would have been better for Ivanov to choose a different historical theme, fresh and untouched.”

“But what if this is the greatest theme ever presented to art?”

“If one were to look, others would be found. The point, though, is that art cannot endure dispute or discussion. But with Ivanov’s picture, there is a question for the believer and the unbeliever—Is this or is this not God?—and it destroys the unity of the impression.”¹⁷

“But why? It seems to me that for educated people,” said Mikhailov, “there can no longer be any dispute.”

Golenishchev did not agree with this, and holding to his first idea about the unity of the impression that art needed, he crushed Mikhailov.

Mikhailov was upset but did not know how to say anything in defense of his idea.

12

Anna and Vronsky had long been exchanging looks, regretting their friend’s clever loquacity, and at last Vronsky walked over to another small picture, without waiting for his host.

“Ah, how lovely, what a lovely picture! Marvelous! How lovely!” they began in unison.

“What have they taken such a liking to?” thought Mikhailov. He had forgotten all about this picture, which he had painted three years ago. He had forgotten all the suffering and ecstasy he had experienced with this picture when for several months it alone had occupied him incessantly, day and night, forgotten, just as he always forgot the pictures he had completed. He did not even like to look at it and had displayed it only because he was expecting an Englishman who wanted to buy it.

“Oh, that’s just an old study,” he said.

“How fine it is!” said Golenishchev, who also had evidently fallen sincerely under the picture’s charm.

Two boys were fishing in the shade of a willow. One, the elder, had just cast his line and was diligently pulling a float out from behind a bush, wholly absorbed in what he was doing; the other, a bit younger, was lying in the grass, resting his head of blond curls on his arms and gazing at the water with pensive blue eyes. What was he thinking about?

The admiration for this picture stirred the old excitement in Mikhailov, but he feared and disliked this vain feeling for the past and so, although he rejoiced in these praises, he wanted to divert his visitors to a third picture.

But Vronsky asked whether the picture was for sale. For Mikhailov at this moment, agitated by his visitors, talk of money matters was highly unpleasant.

“It is on display to be sold,” he replied, frowning gloomily.

When the visitors had left, Mikhailov sat down opposite the picture of Pilate and Christ and in his mind repeated what had and had not been said, but rather implied, by these visitors. It was strange because what had had such weight for him when they were there and when he had mentally shifted to their point of view suddenly lost all importance for him. He began looking at his picture with his full artistic vision and arrived at a state of confidence in the perfection and thus the importance of his painting, which he needed for an intensity excluding all other interests, in which alone he could work.

The foreshortening of Christ’s foot was not right, though. He picked up his palette and set to work. While correcting the foot, he was constantly staring at the figure of John in the background, which the visitors had not noticed but which, he knew, was the height of perfection. Having completed the foot, he wanted to start on this figure, but he felt too agitated for that. He was identically as unable to work when he was indifferent as he was when he was overstrained and saw everything in excessive detail. There was only one step on this continuum from indifference to inspiration at which work was possible. Today,

however, he was too agitated. He wanted to cover the picture, but he stopped, and holding the sheet in his hand, smiling blissfully, looked at the figure of John for a long time. Finally, as if sad to break away, he lowered the sheet, and weary but happy, he went home.

Returning home, Vronsky, Anna, and Golenishchev were especially animated and cheerful. They were talking about Mikhailov and his pictures. The word “talent,” by which they meant an innate, almost physical ability, independent of mind and heart, and which was what they wanted to call everything that artist had lived through, came up quite often in their conversation, since they needed it in order to name what they had no concept of but wanted to talk about. They said one could not deny his talent but his talent had not been allowed to develop due to a lack of education—the common misfortune of our Russian artists. Yet the picture of the boys stuck in their memory, and they kept returning to it.

“How lovely! How well it came out and how simply! Even he doesn’t realize how fine it is. Yes, I can’t let it slip, I must buy it,” said Vronsky.

13

Mikhailov sold Vronsky his picture and agreed to paint Anna’s portrait. On the appointed day, he arrived and began work.

At the fifth sitting, the portrait impressed everyone, especially Vronsky, not only by its likeness but also by its special beauty. It was strange how Mikhailov had managed to discover that special beauty of hers. “One has to know and love her, the way I have loved her, to discover this very dear, tender expression of hers,” thought Vronsky, although it was only from this portrait that he had discovered this very dear, tender expression of hers. But this expression was so true that he and others felt they had known it all along.

“I’ve been struggling for so long and accomplished nothing,” he said about his own portrait, “while he looked and painted. That is what technique means.”

“It will come,” Golenishchev reassured him. By his lights, Vronsky had both talent and, most of all, the culture that gave him a lofty view of art. Golenishchev’s conviction about Vronsky’s talent was supported as well by his need for Vronsky’s sympathy and praise for his own articles and ideas, and he sensed that the praise and support had to be mutual.

In someone else’s house, especially Vronsky’s palazzo, Mikhailov was a completely different man from what he was in his studio. He was barely civil, as if fearing intimacy with people whom he did not respect. He addressed Vronsky as “Your Excellency” and never, despite Anna and Vronsky’s invitation, stayed

for dinner or came except for the sittings. Anna was kinder to him than to others and grateful for her portrait. Vronsky was more than courteous with him and was evidently interested in the artist's opinion of his own painting. Golenishchev did not miss an occasion to try to instill in Mikhailov a true concept of art. However, Mikhailov remained equally indifferent to them all. Anna sensed from his gaze that he liked to look at her, but he avoided conversation with her. To Vronsky's conversation about his painting he was persistently silent and just as persistently silent when he was shown Vronsky's painting. He was obviously bored by Golenishchev's discussions and never contradicted him.

All in all, when they got to know Mikhailov better, with his restrained and unpleasant, seemingly hostile, attitude, they did not like him very much. They were glad when the sittings were over and they were left with a beautiful portrait and he stopped coming.

Golenishchev was the first to express the thought they all shared—namely, that Mikhailov simply envied Vronsky.

“Perhaps he doesn't envy him, because he has *talent*. But he is annoyed that a wealthy man, a man of the highest society, and also a count (they all hate this, you see), without any extraordinary labor was doing as well, if not better, than he was after devoting his entire life to it. It's mainly a matter of culture, which he lacks.”

Vronsky tried to defend Mikhailov, but in his heart of hearts he believed this because, by his lights, someone from another, lower world ought to envy him.

The portrait of Anna—the same subject painted from life by him and by Mikhailov—ought to have shown Vronsky the difference between him and Mikhailov, but he didn't see it. After Mikhailov he stopped painting his portrait of Anna, though, deciding that it was now superfluous. He did continue with his painting of medieval life, though, and he, and Golenishchev, and especially Anna, found that it was very fine because it resembled famous paintings much more closely than Mikhailov's painting did.

Mikhailov, meanwhile, even though Anna's portrait had diverted him greatly, was even more pleased than they when the sittings were over and he did not need to listen anymore to Golenishchev's opinions of art and could forget about Vronsky's painting. He knew he could not forbid Vronsky to amuse himself with painting; he knew that he and all dilettantes had a perfect right to paint what they pleased, but he did not like it. One cannot forbid someone to make himself a big wax doll and kiss it. But if this person with the doll were to come and sit down before a man in love and begin caressing his doll the way the lover caressed his beloved, the lover would find it distasteful. Mikhailov experienced the very same distaste at the sight of Vronsky's painting; he found it laughable, and annoying, and pathetic, and offensive.

Vronsky's enthusiasm for painting and the Middle Ages did not last long. He had enough taste for painting that he could not finish his picture. The picture came to a standstill. He vaguely sensed that its shortcomings, less noticeable at the start, would be striking if he were to continue. The same thing happened to him as had to Golenishchev, who felt he had nothing to say and was constantly deceiving himself that his idea had not matured, that he was giving birth to it and readying the materials. Golenishchev was embittered and tormented by this, whereas Vronsky could not be deceived and tormented, to say nothing of embittered. With his characteristic decisiveness, without attempting to explain or justify anything, he stopped painting.

However, without this occupation, his life and Anna's, who was surprised at his disenchantment, seemed so boring to him in the Italian town, and the palazzo suddenly became so obviously old and dirty, the spots on the curtains, the cracks in the floors, and the plastering on the cornices that had broken off so unsightly, and the invariable Golenishchev, the Italian professor, and the German traveler became so tedious that they had to make a change. They decided to go to Russia, to the country. In Petersburg, Vronsky intended to make a division of property with his brother, and Anna to see her son. The summer they intended to spend on Vronsky's large family estate.

14

Levin had been married nearly three months. He was happy, but not at all in the way he had expected to be. At each step he had been disenchanted in his former dreams and found new, unexpected sources of enchantment. Levin was happy, but having embarked upon family life, he saw at each step that it was not at all what he had imagined. At each step he experienced what someone would experience who, having admired the smooth, happy progress of a little boat across a lake, should then actually get into that boat. He saw that it was not enough to sit there evenly without rocking; that one had to think, too, without forgetting for a moment where one was going, that beneath one's feet was water, and that one must row, and that his unaccustomed hands would hurt, and that it was only easy to look at, but doing it, though quite joyful, was also quite difficult.

Sometimes, as a bachelor, looking at other people's conjugal life, at the petty cares, quarrels, and jealousy, he would merely smile contemptuously to himself. His future conjugal life, he was convinced, not only could not have anything of the sort, but even all the outward forms would be entirely unlike the life of others in everything. And suddenly, instead of that, his life with his wife was not special in any way but, on the contrary, consisted entirely of those very same in-

significant trifles which he had so despised previously but which now, contrary to his will, acquired extraordinary and incontrovertible significance. Levin saw that arranging all these minor details was not nearly as easy as he had imagined. Even though Levin thought he had the most precise notions of family life, he, like all men, could not help but picture family life merely as the enjoyment of love which nothing should impede and from which petty cares should not distract. By his lights, he was meant to do his work and rest from it in the happiness of love. She was to be loved, and nothing more. But like all men, he had forgotten that she too needed to work. He wondered that she, this poetic, splendid Kitty, could not only during the first weeks but even the first days of family life, think, remember, and worry about tablecloths, about furniture, about mattresses for guests, about a tray, about the cook, dinner, and so forth. When still only betrothed, he had been amazed by the firmness with which she had rejected a trip abroad and determined to go to the country, as though she had known something essential and, apart from her love, could still think about other things. This had hurt him then, and now her petty fussing and cares had offended him several times. But he saw that she needed this. And loving her as he did, although he did not understand why she did all this, and although he laughed at these cares, he could not help but admire them. He laughed at how she arranged the furniture that had been brought from Moscow, the new way she tidied his and her room, how she hung the curtains, how she arranged to accommodate future guests like Dolly, and for Dolly, how she arranged a room for her new maid, how she ordered dinner with the old cook, how she got into disagreements with Agafya Mikhailovna, trying to take charge of the provisions. He saw the old cook smile, admiring her and listening to her clumsy, impossible instructions; saw Agafya Mikhailovna thoughtfully and kindly shake her head at the young matron's new instructions in the storeroom; saw Kitty be extraordinarily sweet when, laughing and crying, she came to him to announce that Masha the maid was used to considering her a girl and so no one was obeying her. He found this sweet but odd, and he thought he could do better without this.

He did not know the sense of change she was experiencing. At home she had sometimes wanted cabbage with kvass, or candies, and had not been allowed either one, but now she could order what she pleased, buy a heap of candies, spend as much money as she wanted, and order whatever dessert she wanted.

She now dreamed with delight of Dolly's arrival with the children, especially because she would order each child's favorite dessert, and Dolly would appreciate her whole new arrangement. She herself did not know why, but housekeeping had drawn her irresistibly. Instinctively sensing the approach of spring and

knowing that there would be days of bad weather, too, she was weaving her nest as best she could and hurrying to weave it while learning how to do so.

This mundane care of Kitty's, so contrary to Levin's ideal of lofty happiness in the beginning, was one of his disenchantments; and this sweet care, whose meaning he did not understand but could not help but love, was one of the new enchantments.

The other disenchantment and enchantment was the quarreling. Levin could never have imagined there being between himself and his wife anything but kind, respectful, loving relations, and suddenly, from the very first days, they had quarreled so that she had told him he didn't love her, he only loved himself, had started crying and gesturing.

This first quarrel of theirs came about because Levin had gone to his new farmstead and spent an extra half an hour because he wanted to take the short-cut and had got lost. He rode home thinking only of her, her love, and his happiness, and the closer he got, the more his tenderness for her burned in him. He ran into the room with the same feeling and even stronger than that with which he had gone to the Shcherbatskys' to propose. Suddenly he was met by a dark expression he had never seen in her. He tried to kiss her, but she pushed him away.

"What's the matter?"

"You've had a fine time," she began, trying to be calm and venomous.

But no sooner had she opened her mouth than words of reproach and senseless jealousy, everything that had been tormenting her this half an hour which she had spent sitting motionless at the window, burst from her. Only then, for the first time, did he clearly understand something he had not understood when he had led her from the church after the wedding. He realized that not only was she close to him but he did not know where she left off and he began. He realized this from the agonizing feeling of splitting he experienced in that moment. He took offense in the first moment, but in the second he felt he could not be offended by her, that she was himself. In that first minute he had experienced what a person would experience when, having received a sudden and powerful blow from behind, he turns around with annoyance and a desire for revenge in order to find the guilty party, and becomes convinced that he has somehow accidentally struck himself, that there is no one to be angry at, and that he must endure and soothe the pain.

Never again afterward did he experience this with the same force, but this first time it took him a long while to recover. Natural feeling demanded that he defend himself, prove her wrong; but proving her wrong meant irritating her even more and making even greater the rift that had been the cause of all her grief. One familiar emotion drew him to denying his own guilt and shifting it

onto her; another emotion, stronger, drew him to smooth over the rift quickly, as quickly as possible, and not let it widen. It was agonizing to be left with this unjust accusation, but causing her pain by defending himself was even worse. Like a man beset by pain while half-asleep, he wanted to tear out, throw away the sore spot, and coming to his senses, he felt that the painful spot was he himself. He could only try to help the painful spot bear it, and this he tried to do.

They reconciled. Recognizing her own fault, but not saying so, she became kinder to him, and he experienced a new, redoubled happiness of love. But this did not prevent these conflicts from repeating, and even especially often, on the most unexpected and minor grounds. These conflicts arose often because they did not yet know what was important for each other and because during this early period they both were often in bad spirits. When one was in good spirits and the other in bad, the peace was not violated, but when both happened to be in bad spirits, there were conflicts for such incomprehensibly minor reasons that they later simply could not recall why they had quarreled. True, when they were both in good spirits, their joy in life doubled. But all the same in this early period it was hard for them.

Throughout this period, the tension was especially vivid, like a jerking on one end or the other of the chain that joined them. All in all, this honeymoon, that is, the month after their wedding, from which, according to the tradition, Levin had expected so much, was not only not like honey but remained in both their memories as the most difficult and humiliating time of their life. In the same way, they both tried in later life to wipe from their memory all the ugly, shameful circumstances of this unhealthy time, when they both were rarely in good spirits and were rarely themselves.

Only in their third month of marriage, after their return from Moscow, where they had gone for a month, did their life grow smoother.

15

They had only just arrived from Moscow and were glad of their solitude. He was sitting in his study at his desk and writing. She, wearing the same dark violet dress she had worn during the first days of their marriage and which she had put on again today, a dress especially memorable and dear to him, was sitting on the sofa, on the same ancient leather sofa that had always stood in the study of Levin's grandfather and father, and was doing *broderie anglaise*. He was thinking and writing, not ceasing to feel joy at her presence. His work on the farm and his book, in which he intended to set forth the foundations of a new way of farming, had not been abandoned. But just as before these occupations and thoughts

had seemed to him small and insignificant in comparison with the gloom that covered his whole life, so in the very same way did they now seem unimportant and small in comparison with the life before him, which was flooded with the vivid light of happiness. He continued his work but felt now that his attention's center of gravity had shifted elsewhere and that he consequently viewed the work quite differently and more clearly. Previously, this work had been for him a salvation from life. Previously he had felt that without it his life would be too dark. Now, he needed this occupation so that life was not so unvaryingly bright. Taking up his papers again, rereading what was written, he was pleased to find that the work was worth his effort. His ideas were new and useful. Many of his previous thoughts now seemed superfluous and extreme, but many gaps were filled in when he had refreshed his memory of it all. He was now writing a new chapter on the causes of agriculture's unprofitable condition in Russia. He was trying to prove that Russia's poverty was due not only to the incorrect distribution of land resources and a mistaken perspective but that this result had of late been encouraged by the outside civilization that had been foisted on Russia artificially, especially means of communication and railroads, which had brought centralization in the towns, the development of luxury, and consequently, the development of industry, credit, and its companion—the stock market, all to agriculture's detriment. It seemed to him that when a state's wealth developed normally, all these phenomena would arise only when significant labor had been invested into agriculture, when it was in a proper or at least well-defined condition; that the country's wealth should grow at a uniform rate and in particular in such a way that other branches of wealth did not outstrip agriculture; that in conformity with a given state of agriculture there ought to be the corresponding means of communication, and that given our improper use of lands, the railroads, which had been called forth by political rather than economic necessity, were premature, and instead of helping agriculture, as people had expected, they had outstripped agriculture and called forth the development of industry and credit, bringing it to a standstill and so, just as the one-sided and premature development of an organ in an animal would hinder overall development, so credit, communications, and the strengthening of factory activity, undoubtedly unavoidable in Europe, where they had come at the appropriate time, had only done harm to the general development of wealth in Russia by having set aside the next major issue, the organization of agriculture.

While he was writing, she was thinking about how unnaturally attentive her husband had been to young Prince Charsky, who had paid her quite tactless compliments on the eve of their departure. "You see he's jealous," she thought. "Heavens! How sweet and foolish he is. He's jealous of me! If he only knew that

for me they might as well be Peter the cook," she thought, gazing at the nape of his red neck with a proprietary feeling strange for her. "Even though I'm sorry to tear him away from his work (but he'll have time to do it!), I need to see his face. Can he sense me looking at him? I wish he would turn around. . . . I wish it, so!" And she opened her eyes even wider, wishing thereby to strengthen the effect of her gaze.

"Yes, they're drawing off all the juices and lending a false shine," he muttered after he had stopped writing, and sensing that she was looking at him and smiling, he looked around.

"What is it?" he asked, smiling and rising.

"He looked around," she thought.

"It's nothing, I wanted you to look around," she said, staring at him and wishing she could guess whether or not he was annoyed that she had distracted him.

"You see how nice it is for us together! For me at least," he said, walking toward her and beaming a smile of happiness.

"How nice it is for me! I'm never going anywhere, especially not to Moscow."

"What were you thinking about?"

"Me? I was thinking. . . . No, no, go write, don't get distracted," she said, pursing her lips. "Now I need to cut out these little holes, see?"

She picked up her scissors and started cutting.

"No, tell me, what is it?" he said, sitting next to her and watching the circular movement of her little scissors.

"Oh, what was I thinking? I was thinking about Moscow, and about the nape of your neck."

"Who am I, of all people, to have such happiness? It's unnatural. It's too good," he said, kissing her hand.

"For me, on the contrary, the better it is, the more natural."

"But you have a tiny lock of hair," he said, cautiously turning her head. "A tiny lock. See, right here. No, no, we're busy with our work."

They did not continue what they had been doing but jumped apart as if guilty of something when Kuzma came in to announce that tea was served.

"Have they come from the city?" Levin asked Kuzma.

"Just arrived, they're getting settled."

"Come as soon as you can," she told him as she left the study, "or else I shall read the letters without you. We can play duets."

Left alone and having put his notebooks away in the new portfolio she had bought him, he began washing his hands in the new basin with the elegant new fixtures that had also appeared with her. Levin smiled at his thoughts and shook his head disapprovingly at these thoughts. A feeling akin to remorse plagued

him. There was something shameful, coddled, Capuan, as he referred to it privately, about their present life.¹⁸ “It’s not good to live like this,” he thought. “Here it will soon be three months, and I’ve accomplished almost nothing. Now almost for the first time I’ve begun to work seriously, and what happened? I barely began and I’ve already quit. Even my usual occupations—even those I’ve nearly stopped. And the farm—I almost never go out and tend to it. Either I’m sorry to leave her, or I see that she’s bored. I used to think before marriage that my life was all right, so-so, didn’t matter, and that after marriage my real life would begin. Now it has been nearly three months, and I have never spent my time so idly and uselessly. No, this cannot go on. I must begin. Of course, she’s not to blame. She can’t be reproached for anything. I myself ought to have been firmer, guarded my masculine independence. The way it is, I might grow accustomed to it and accustom her. . . . Of course, she’s not to blame,” he told himself.

But it is hard for a dissatisfied man not to blame someone else, especially whoever is closest to hand, for the fact that he is dissatisfied. And it vaguely occurred to Levin that it was not that she herself was to blame (she could not be to blame for anything), but rather her excessively superficial and frivolous upbringing. (“That idiot Charsky. I know she wanted to stop him, but she didn’t know how.”) “Yes, other than her interest in the house (that she has), other than her toilette and her *broderie anglaise*, she has no serious interests. No interest in my work, the farm, the peasants, or in music, which she’s pretty good at, or in reading. She does nothing and is perfectly satisfied.” Deep down, Levin condemned this and did not yet understand that she was preparing for that period of activity which would come for her when she would be at once her husband’s wife and the mistress of the house and would be carrying, feeding, and rearing her children. He did not understand that she knew this by instinct and, preparing herself for this terrible labor, did not begrudge herself these carefree minutes and the happiness of love she now enjoyed as she cheerfully wove her future nest.

16

When Levin went upstairs, his wife was sitting over their new tea set by their new silver samovar, and having seated Agafya Mikhailovna at a small table with a cup of tea poured for her, was reading a letter from Dolly, with whom she was in constant and frequent correspondence.

“See? Your lady sat me down and told me to sit with her,” said Agafya Mikhailovna, smiling amiably at Kitty.

In these words of Agafya Mikhailovna, Levin read the dénouement of the drama which of late had played out between Agafya Mikhailovna and Kitty. He

saw that despite all the grief inflicted on Agafya Mikhailovna by her new mistress, who had taken the reins away from her, Kitty had nonetheless vanquished her and made her love her.

“Here, I just finished reading your letter,” said Kitty, handing him an illiterate letter. “It’s from that woman of your brother’s, apparently,” she said. “I didn’t read it all, and this one is from my family and Dolly. Imagine! Dolly took Grisha and Tanya to the Sarmatsky’ for their children’s ball; Tanya was a marquise.”

But Levin wasn’t listening to her; turning red, he picked up the letter from Marya Nikolaevna, his brother Nikolai’s former mistress, and began reading it. This was the second letter now from Marya Nikolaevna. In the first letter, Marya Nikolaevna had written that his brother had driven her away through no fault of hers, and with touching naïveté had added that although she was once again impoverished, nonetheless she was not asking for or desiring anything, only the thought that Nikolai Dmitrievich would perish without her due to the weakness of his health was killing her, and she begged his brother to watch over him. Now she was writing something else. She had found Nikolai Dmitrievich, reunited with him in Moscow, and gone with him to a provincial town where he had been given a government post, but there, she wrote, he had quarreled with his superior and gone back to Moscow, but had fallen so ill en route that he could barely stand up. “He keeps mentioning you, and also he has no more money.”

“Read this, what Dolly writes about you,” Kitty, beginning with a smile, was about to go on but suddenly stopped, noticing the altered expression on her husband’s face.

“What is it? What’s the matter?”

“She writes me that Nikolai, my brother, is near death. I’m going.”

Kitty’s face changed at once. Thoughts of Tanya as a marquise, of Dolly, all that vanished.

“When are you going?” she said.

“Tomorrow.”

“I’ll go with you, may I?” she said.

“Kitty! What is this?” he said reproachfully.

“What do you mean?” offended that he had apparently taken her proposal with reluctance and irritation. “Why shouldn’t I go? I won’t get in your way. I—”

“I’m going because my brother is dying,” said Levin. “Why should you—”

“Why? For the same reason as you.”

“And at a moment of such importance to me she thinks only about how bored she’ll be alone,” thought Levin. This pretext in a matter so important angered him.

“That’s impossible,” he said sternly.

Agafya Mikhailovna, seeing that the matter was building toward a quarrel, quietly set down her cup and went out. Kitty did not even notice her. The tone in which her husband had spoken his last words hurt her in particular because he evidently did not believe what she had said.

“And I’m telling you that if you’re going, I’m going with you, I’m definitely going,” she spoke quickly and angrily. “Why is it impossible? Why do you say that it’s impossible?”

“Because it means going God knows where or down what roads, or to what hotels. You would constrain me,” said Levin, trying to remain composed.

“Not at all. I don’t need anything. Wherever you can be, so can I.”

“Well, there’s also the fact that this woman is there with whom you cannot associate.”

“I know nothing of who or what is there, nor do I want to. I know that my husband’s brother is dying and my husband is going to see him, and I’m going with my husband in order to—”

“Kitty! Don’t be angry. But think about it. The matter is so important that it pains me to think that you’re mixing it up with a feeling of weakness, a reluctance to be left alone. Well, if you’re going to be bored alone, well, then go to Moscow.”

“There, you’re *always* ascribing bad, low thoughts to me,” she began with tears of hurt and rage. “I’m fine, it’s not weakness, nothing like that. . . . I feel that it’s my duty to be with my husband in his sorrow, but you want to hurt me on purpose, you don’t want to understand me on purpose.”

“No, this is dreadful. To be some kind of slave!” exclaimed Levin, standing up and unable to restrain his vexation anymore. But at that very second he felt he was striking himself.

“So why did you get married? You’d be free. Why, if you regret it?” she began, leapt up, and ran into the drawing room.

When he came after her, she was in tears, sobbing.

He began to speak, wishing he could find the words that perhaps would not so much dissuade as calm her down. But she would not listen to him or agree with anything. He leaned toward her and took her resisting hand. He kissed her hand, kissed her hair, again kissed her hand—still she would not speak. But when he took her face in both his hands and said, “Kitty!” she suddenly recovered, wept a little, and was reconciled.

It was decided that they would leave together the next day. Levin told his wife that he believed she wanted to go only in order to be helpful and agreed that he found nothing improper in the presence of Marya Nikolaevna at his

brother's; but in the depth of his soul he was leaving dissatisfied with her and himself. He was dissatisfied with her because she could not bring herself to let him go when it was necessary (and how strange it was for him to think that he who so recently had not yet dared believe in the happiness that she might love him now felt unhappy because she loved him too much!); and he was dissatisfied with himself for not standing firm. Even more, in his heart of hearts he did not agree that for her it did not matter what the woman with his brother was. He thought with horror about all the conflicts they might encounter. The mere idea of his wife, his Kitty, being in the same room with a fallen woman made him shudder with revulsion and horror.

17

The hotel in the provincial town where Nikolai Levin lay ill was one of those provincial hotels built according to the new improved models, with the very best intentions regarding cleanliness, comfort, and even elegance, but which, due to the public that frequents them, are with extraordinary speed transformed into filthy taverns with pretensions to modern improvements and are made by this very pretension even worse than the old-fashioned, simply filthy hotels. This hotel had already reached this state; the soldier in the filthy uniform smoking a cheap cigarette at the front door who was supposed to be a hall porter, and the open, cast iron, dark, unpleasant staircase, the overfamiliar waiter in the filthy frock coat, and the lobby with the dusty bouquet of wax flowers adorning the table, and the dirt and dust, and the slovenliness everywhere, and at the same time the new up-to-date railroad kind of bustling smugness of this hotel produced in the Levins after their new life together the most grievous feeling, especially because the artificial impression produced by the hotel ran completely contrary to what awaited them.

As always happens, it turned out, after their inquiry about the price for a proper room for them, not a single good room was to be had: one good room was occupied by a railway inspector; another by a lawyer from Moscow, and the third by Princess Astafyeva from the country. All that remained was a single filthy room next to which they promised to free up another by evening. Vexed at his wife because just what he had expected had happened, and that at the moment of their arrival, when his heart was gripped by anxiety at the thought of what was going on with his brother he should have to worry about her instead of running straight to his brother, Levin led his wife to their assigned room.

"Go, go!" she said, giving him a shy, guilty look.

He silently walked out the door and immediately ran into Marya Nikolaevna,

who had learned of his arrival and had not dared go in to see him. She was precisely the same as he had seen her in Moscow: the same woolen dress and bare arms and neck and the same dull but good-natured, if somewhat fuller, pock-marked face.

“Well? How is he? Well?”

“Very bad. He can’t get up. He’s been expecting you. He . . . You . . . and your wife.”

Levin did not understand in that first minute what was embarrassing her, but she immediately explained for him.

“I’m leaving, I’m going to the kitchen,” she managed to get out. “He’ll be pleased. He heard, and he knows her, and remembers her from abroad.”

Levin realized she meant his wife and did not know what to say.

“Let’s go, let’s go!” he said.

But no sooner had he started than the door of his room opened and Kitty peeked out. Levin blushed both from shame and vexation at his wife, who had put herself and him in this difficult position, but Marya Nikolaevna blushed even more. She shrank and blushed to the point of tears, and grabbing the ends of her kerchief with both hands, twisted them with her red fingers, not knowing what to say or what to do.

In the first moment Levin saw an expression of avid curiosity in the look with which Kitty took in this incomprehensible and for her horrible woman, but it lasted only a moment.

“Well? How is he?” She turned to her husband and then to her.

“Really, one can’t discuss this in the hallway!” said Levin, looking around, vexed, at a gentleman who, with trembling legs, as if on business of his own, was just that moment walking down the hall.

“Well then come in,” said Kitty, addressing Marya Nikolaevna, who had recovered, but noticing her husband’s frightened face, “or go, go on, and send for me,” she said, and she returned to the room. Levin went to his brother.

He could not have anticipated what he saw and felt when he was with his brother. He had anticipated finding the same state of self-delusion which, he had heard, one so often finds in consumptives and which had struck him so powerfully during his brother’s autumn visit. He had anticipated finding the physical signs of imminent death more defined, greater weakness and greater emaciation, but nonetheless nearly the same situation. He had anticipated that he himself would feel pity at the loss of his beloved brother and horror in the face of death that he had experienced then, only to a greater degree. He had been preparing himself for this, but he found something completely different.

In the filthy little room, where there was spit all over the painted wall panels,

behind whose thin screen talking could be heard, in air permeated with the suffocating odor of filth, on a bed pushed away from the wall, lay a body covered with a blanket. One arm of this body lay on top of the blanket, and the wrist of this arm, as large as a rake, incomprehensibly attached to a slender spool, so even from beginning to middle. The head lay sideways on the pillow. Levin could see the sparse, sweaty hair on his temples and his taut, positively translucent brow.

“This terrible body cannot be my brother Nikolai,” thought Levin. But he came closer, saw the face, and doubt became impossible. Despite the terrible change in face, Levin had but to glance at the vibrant eyes raised to the entering man to note the slight movement of the mouth under the sticking mustache and to realize the terrible truth, that this dead body was his living brother.

Glittering eyes looked sternly and reproachfully at the entering brother, and immediately this look established a vibrant relationship between the living. Levin immediately felt the reproach in the look aimed at him and remorse over his own happiness.

When Konstantin took his hand, Nikolai smiled. The smile was feeble, barely noticeable, and despite the smile, the stern expression of his eyes did not change.

“You didn’t expect to find me like this,” he said with difficulty.

“Yes . . . no,” said Levin, muddling his words. “How is it you didn’t let me know before, that is, back during my wedding? I made inquiries everywhere.”

He had to talk in order not to be silent, but he didn’t know what to say, especially since his brother made no reply but only looked, without lowering his eyes, and evidently tried to penetrate the meaning of each word. Levin told his brother that his wife had come with him. Nikolai expressed pleasure but said he was afraid of frightening her with his situation. There was a pause. Suddenly Nikolai stirred and began saying something. Levin was expecting something especially significant and important from the expression on his face, but Nikolai started talking about his health. He accused the doctor, regretted that a famous Moscow doctor wasn’t there, and Levin realized that he still had hope.

Choosing the first moment of silence, Levin stood up, wishing to rid himself if only for a minute of the agonizing feeling, and said he was going to bring his wife.

“Well, all right, and I’ll tell her to tidy up here. It’s filthy and it stinks, I think. Masha! Clean up in here,” the sick man said with difficulty. “And as soon as you clean up, clear out,” he added, looking inquiringly at his brother.

Levin said nothing in reply. As he was going out into the hallway, he stopped. He said he would bring his wife, but now, having admitted the feeling he was experiencing, he decided that, on the contrary, he would try to talk her out of coming to see the sick man. “Why should she suffer as I am?” he thought.

“Well? How is he?” asked Kitty with a frightened face.

“Oh, it’s dreadful, dreadful! Why did you come?” said Levin.

Kitty was silent for a few seconds, glancing shyly and plaintively at her husband; then she walked up and put both her hands around his elbow.

“Kostya! Take me to him, it will be easier for us together. Just take me, take me, please, and leave,” she began. “You have to understand that for me seeing you and not seeing him is much more difficult. There I may perhaps be useful to you and to him. Please, I beg of you!” she entreated her husband, as if her life’s happiness depended on this.

Levin was obliged to agree, and having recovered and forgotten all about Marya Nikolaevna, he and Kitty went back to see his brother.

Stepping lightly and constantly glancing at her husband and showing him a brave and compassionate face, she walked into the sick man’s room, and turning around in unhurried fashion, silently closed the door. Inaudible steps quickly brought her to the sick man’s deathbed, and walking around in such a way that he would not have to turn his head, she immediately took the bones of his large hand in her fresh young hand, pressed it, and with that particularly feminine animation that held no insult but only compassion, began talking to him.

“You and I have met, but we were not introduced, at Soden,” she said. “You didn’t imagine I was going to be your sister, did you?”

“You would not have recognized me?” he said with a smile that beamed at her entrance.

“Yes, I would have. How well you did to let us know! Not a day has passed that Kostya hasn’t mentioned you and worried.”

However the sick man’s animation did not last very long.

She had not finished speaking when the stern, reproachful expression of envy that the dying have for the living again fixed on his face.

“I’m afraid you’re not entirely comfortable here,” she said, turning away from his stare and surveying the room. “We’ll have to ask the landlord for another room,” she told her husband, “and then we can be closer.”

18

Levin could not look at his brother calmly, could not himself be natural and calm in his presence. When he was coming into the sick man’s room, his eyes and attention unconsciously clouded over, and he neither saw nor distinguished the details of his brother’s situation. He smelled a horrible odor, saw the filth, disorder, and agonizing situation, and heard the moans, and felt he could do nothing to help. It never crossed his mind to examine all the details of the

sick man's condition, think about how his body was lying there, under the blanket, how these wasted knees, hips, and back were bent, and whether there wasn't some better way to position them, or to do something that would make things, if not better, then at least less bad. A chill ran down his back when he began thinking about all these details. He was convinced beyond a doubt that nothing could be done either to prolong his life or to ease his suffering. But the awareness that he considered any aid impossible was felt by the sick man and irritated him, and this made it even harder for Levin. Being in the sick man's room was agony for him; not being there, even worse. He was constantly going out and coming back in under various pretexts, being incapable of remaining alone.

Kitty, however, thought, felt, and acted altogether differently. At the sight of the sick man, she felt pity for him, and the pity in her womanly heart produced not the horror and loathing that it did in her husband but rather the need to act, to learn all the details of his condition, and to help him. Since she had not the slightest doubt that she should help him, she did not doubt that she could, and so she immediately set about doing so. The very details, the mere thought of which horrified her husband, immediately drew her attention. She sent for the doctor, sent to the pharmacy, and instructed the maid who had accompanied her and Marya Nikolaevna to sweep, dust, and wash, and she herself washed and scrubbed and spread something under the blanket. On her instruction they brought something in and took something out of the sick man's room. She herself made several trips to her room, paying no attention to the gentlemen she passed in the hall, and found and brought sheets, pillowcases, towels, and shirts.

The waiter, who was serving dinner to some engineers in the dining room, answered her summons several times with an angry face but could not help but carry out her orders, since she gave them with such kind insistence that no one could turn away from her. Levin did not approve of all this; he did not believe any good would come of it for the sick man. More than anything, he feared the sick man would get angry. But the sick man, though he seemed indifferent to all this, was not angry but only embarrassed and in general seemed to take an interest in what she was doing for him. After returning from the doctor, to whom Kitty had sent him, Levin opened the door and found the sick man at the very moment when, following Kitty's instructions, they were changing his linens. The long white skeleton of his back, with its large protruding shoulder blades and jutting ribs and vertebrae, was bared, and Marya Nikolaevna and the servant were tangled up in the sleeve of his shirt and could not get the long, dangling arm into it. Kitty, hastily shutting the door behind Levin, was not looking in that direction; but the sick man began to moan, and she quickly went to him.

"Quickly," she said.

"Oh, don't come," the sick man said angrily, "I'll do it myself."

“What’s that?” Marya Nikolaevna asked.

But Kitty heard him and realized that he felt ashamed and unhappy to be naked in front of her.

“I’m not looking, I’m not looking!” she said, adjusting his arm. “Marya Nikolaevna, come over from that side and straighten this,” she added.

“Go, please, I have a flask in my small bag,” she turned to her husband, “you know, in the side pocket, bring it, please, and in the meantime they’ll clean everything up here.”

Returning with the flask, Levin now found the sick man tucked in and everything around him completely changed. The heavy odor had been replaced by the smell of aromatic vinegar, which Kitty had sprayed through a little tube, her lips pouting and her rosy cheeks puffed out. There was no dust to be seen anywhere, and there was a rug under the bed. Arranged neatly on the table were vials and decanters, the needed linens folded, and Kitty’s *broderie anglaise*. On the other table by the sick man’s bed was something to drink, a candle, and his powders. The sick man himself, washed and combed, lay on clean sheets, on plumped pillows, wearing a clean shirt with a white collar around his unnaturally thin neck and with a new expression of hope. He did not take his eyes off Kitty.

The doctor, whom Levin had found at the club and brought, was not the one who had been treating Nikolai Levin and with whom he had been dissatisfied. The new doctor took out his stethoscope and listened to the patient, shook his head, prescribed medicine, and in special detail explained, first, how to take the medicine and, then, what diet to follow. He advised raw or lightly boiled eggs and soda water with fresh milk at a certain temperature. When the doctor had left, the sick man said something to his brother; but Levin heard only the last words, “your Katya,” and from the look with which he looked at her, Levin realized he was praising her. He beckoned to Katya, as he called Kitty.

“I’m a good deal better now,” he said. “You know, with you I would have been all better long ago. How fine!” He took her hand and drew it to his lips, but as if afraid she would find this unpleasant, thought better of the idea, and released and merely stroked it. Kitty took this hand in both of hers and pressed it.

“Now you’ll turn me over on my left side and go to bed,” he said.

No one could make out what he had said, Kitty alone understood. She understood because she had been constantly thinking about and keeping track of his needs.

“On the other side,” she told her husband. “He always sleeps on that side. Turn him over. He doesn’t like calling the servant. I can’t do it. Can you?” she turned to Marya Nikolaevna.

“I’m afraid,” Marya Nikolaevna replied.

Regardless of how awful it was for Levin to take this terrible body in his arms, and hold on, under the blanket, to places about which he had no desire to know, nonetheless, yielding to his wife's influence, Levin made the determined face which his wife knew, and lowering his arms, grabbed hold, but despite his strength, he was amazed at the eerie weight of those wasted limbs. As he was turning him over, feeling his own neck embraced by the large wasted arm, Kitty, quickly and silently, turned the pillow, plumped it, and tidied the sick man's head and his thinning hair, which had again stuck to his temple.

The sick man held his brother's hand in his own. Levin sensed that he wanted to do something with his hand and was pulling it somewhere. Levin surrendered with a sinking heart. Yes, he was pulling it toward his mouth and kissing it. Levin was wracked by sobs, and unable to utter a word, he left the room.

19

"Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes and the foolish."¹⁹ So thought Levin about his wife as he talked with her that evening.

Levin was thinking about the Gospel saying not because he considered himself wise. He didn't consider himself wise, but he couldn't help knowing that he was smarter than his wife and Agafya Mikhailovna, could not help knowing that when he thought about death he thought with all the powers of his soul. He knew too that the minds of many great men whose ideas about this he read had thought about this and did not know one hundredth part of what his wife and Agafya Mikhailovna knew. However different these two women were, Agafya Mikhailovna and Katya, as his brother Nikolai called her and as it now pleased Levin to call her, were absolutely alike in this. Both knew without a doubt what life was and what death was, and although they had no way to answer and would not even have understood the questions Levin was asking himself, neither had any doubt of the significance of this phenomenon and looked on it in precisely the same way not only as each other but as millions of other people. The proof that they firmly knew what death was lay in the fact that, without doubting for a second, they knew how one should act with the dying and were not afraid of them. Levin and others like him, although they could say a great deal about death, obviously did not know this, because they were afraid of death and decidedly did not know what to do when people were dying. Had Levin now been alone with his brother Nikolai, he would have looked at him with horror and waited with still greater terror, and would not have known what else to do.

Not only that, he did not know what to say, where to look, or how to walk. To

speak about something else seemed insulting and impossible; speaking about death, about something gloomy, also impossible. Saying nothing was also impossible. "If I look at him, I'm afraid he'll think I'm studying him; if I don't, he'll think I'm thinking about something else. If I walk on tiptoe he'll be displeased; tread hard and I'll feel ashamed." Kitty obviously wasn't thinking about herself, had no time to think about herself; she was thinking about him because she knew something, and everything came out well. She told him about herself and her wedding, smiled, pitied and comforted him, and talked about cases of recovery, and everything came out well; so she had to know. The proof of the fact that her actions and Agafya Mikhailovna's were not instinctive, animal, and unconscious was that besides physical care and easing of his sufferings, both Agafya Mikhailovna and Kitty demanded for the dying something else more important than physical care, something that had nothing to do with physical conditions. Agafya Mikhailovna, talking about an old man who had died, said, "What's so bad? Thank God, he took the sacrament and received extreme unction. God grant everyone might die like that." Katya in exactly the same way, apart from all her concerns about linens, bedsores, and drink, on the very first day managed to convince the sick man of the necessity of taking the sacrament and receiving extreme unction.

Returning from the sick man's room to their two rooms for the night, Levin sat, his head hanging, not knowing what to do. Not to mention the fact that he needed to eat supper, get settled for the night, and think over what they were going to do, he could not even talk to his wife because he felt ashamed. Kitty, on the contrary, was more energetic than usual. She was even more animated than usual. She ordered supper brought in, sorted out their things herself, helped smooth the sheets out herself, and did not forget to sprinkle them with insect powder. There was an alertness to her, the quick wit that comes to men before combat or battle, at dangerous and decisive moments in life, those moments when a man shows his mettle once and for all and that his entire past has not been spent in vain but as preparation for these moments.

Everything went well with her, and it was not even twelve when all their things had been arranged in such a clean, neat, and somehow special way that their room began to look like a home, like her own rooms: the beds were made, the brushes, combs, and mirrors set out, the doilies smoothed flat.

Levin found it unforgivable to eat, sleep, or talk even now; each movement he made seemed indecent. She arranged the brushes but did everything in such a way that there was nothing offensive in it.

They could not eat a thing, however, and for a long time could not fall asleep and for a long time did not even go to bed.

"I'm very glad I talked him into receiving extreme unction tomorrow," she said, sitting in her bed jacket in front of her folding mirror and combing her soft, fragrant hair with a fine-tooth comb. "I've never seen it, but I know, Mama told me, that there are prayers in it about healing."

"Do you really think he might recover?" said Levin, looking at the narrow part on the back of her round head that was constantly being covered up as soon as she brought the comb forward.

"I asked the doctor. He said he couldn't live more than a few days. But can they really know? I'm still very glad I talked him into it," she said, looking sideways at her husband from behind her hair. "Anything can happen," she added with that special, rather sly expression her face always had when she was talking about religion.

Since their conversation about religion, when they were still only engaged, neither he nor she had ever initiated a conversation about it, but she performed all the rituals of churchgoing and prayers, always with the identical calm awareness that this was how it should be. Despite his assurances to the contrary, she was firmly convinced that he was just as good or even better a Christian than she was and that everything he said about this was one of his silly masculine whims, like what he said about her *broderie anglaise*: good people darn holes, while she intentionally cut them out, and so forth.

"Yes, this woman here, Marya Nikolaevna, she didn't know how to arrange all this," said Levin. "And . . . I must admit, I'm very, very pleased that you came. You're such purity that . . ." He took her hand and did not kiss it (kissing her hand in this proximity to death seemed to him indecent) but merely pressed it with a guilty expression, gazing into her brightened eyes.

"It would have been such agony for you alone," she said, and raising her hands, which were covering her cheeks, red from pleasure, she twisted her braids at her nape and pinned them there. "No," she continued, "she didn't. Fortunately, I learned a lot at Soden."

"You mean there were people just as ill there?"

"Worse."

"What's awful for me is the fact that I keep seeing him the way he was when he was young. You can't believe what a splendid young man he was, but I didn't understand him then."

"I believe it, I do, and I can tell *we would have been* good friends with him," she said and, taking fright at what she had said, looked around at her husband. Tears welled up in her eyes.

"Yes, *would have*," he said sadly. "Here is one of those people they say aren't meant for this world."

“We have many days ahead of us though, and we must go to bed,” said Kitty, glancing at her tiny watch.

20

DEATH

The next day the sick man received communion and extreme unction.²⁰ During the rite, Nikolai Levin prayed fervently. His big eyes, which were aimed at the icon placed on the card table, which had been covered with a colored cloth, expressed such fervent prayer and hope that it was awful for Levin to gaze upon. Levin knew that this fervent prayer and hope would only make it that much harder for him to part with the life he so loved. Levin knew his brother and the progression of his thoughts; he knew that his disbelief had come about not because it was easier for him to live without faith but because, step by step, modern scientific explanations for the phenomena of the world had crowded out belief, and so he knew that the present return of his faith was not a legitimate one, accomplished by means of the same thought, but was merely temporary and selfish, a mad hope for recovery. Levin knew also that Kitty had been reinforcing this hope with stories about unusual healings she had heard of. All this Levin knew, and it was agonizing and painful for him to look at the prayerful, hope-filled look and at the wasted hand straining to rise and make the sign of the cross on the tautly stretched brow, at those jutting shoulders and that wheezing, hollow chest, which could no longer find room inside for the life the sick man was asking for. During the sacrament Levin prayed, too, and did what he, an unbeliever, had done a thousand times. He said, addressing God, “If Thou dost exist, make this man whole (for that very thing had repeatedly happened), and Thou wilt save him and me.”

After extreme unction, the sick man suddenly felt much better. He stopped coughing for the space of an hour, smiled, kissed Kitty’s hand, thanking her with tears and saying that he felt fine, didn’t hurt anywhere, and had an appetite and strength. He even sat up himself when they brought him soup and asked for a cutlet as well. So hopeless was he, so obvious was it at one look that he could not recover, Levin and Kitty passed that hour in the same happy and timid excitement, as if they feared being mistaken.

“Is he better?” “Yes, much.” “Amazing.” “Nothing amazing about it.” “All the same, he’s better,” they said in a whisper, smiling at one another.

This delusion was not long-lasting. The sick man fell asleep peacefully, but half an hour later coughing awakened him. Suddenly all hopes evaporated both in those around him and in the sick man himself. Without a doubt, the reality

of suffering, even without memories of hopes past, destroyed them in Levin and Kitty and in the sick man himself.

Without even mentioning what he had believed half an hour before, as if he would be ashamed to bring it up, he demanded they give him iodine to inhale in a flask covered with perforated paper. Levin handed him the bottle, and the same look of fervent hope with which he had taken the sacrament was now aimed at his brother, demanding from him confirmation of the doctor's words about how inhaling iodine would work miracles.

"Has Katya gone?" he wheezed, looking around, when Levin reluctantly confirmed the doctor's words. "If she has, I can tell you . . . I went through that farce for her. She is so sweet, but you and I shouldn't fool ourselves. This, here, I believe in," he said, and clutching the flask in his bony hand, he began breathing over it.

Between seven and eight that evening, Levin and his wife were drinking tea in their room when Marya Nikolaevna, breathless, ran into their room. She was pale, and her lips were trembling.

"He's dying!" she whispered. "I'm afraid he'll die any minute."

They both ran to his room. He had sat up and was leaning on his elbow, on the bed, his long spine bent and his head hanging low.

"What do you feel?" Levin asked in a whisper after a moment's silence.

"I feel I'm on my way out," Nikolai uttered with difficulty but extraordinary firmness, slowly squeezing the words out. He did not raise his head but only aimed his eyes upward but not as high as his brother's face. "Katya, go away!" he added.

Levin jumped up and in an admonitory whisper forced her to leave.

"I'm on my way out," he said again.

"Why do you think so?" said Levin, just to say something.

"Because I'm on my way out," he repeated, as if having taken a liking to the expression. "This is the end."

Marya Nikolaevna came up to him.

"You should lie down. You'll feel better," she said.

"I'll be lying quietly soon enough," he went on, "a dead man," he said wryly, angrily. "Well, lay me down if you like."

Levin laid his brother down on his back, sat beside him, and, not breathing, gazed at his face. The dying man lay with his eyes closed, but the muscles on his forehead twitched from time to time, as if he were someone thinking deeply and intensely. Levin found himself thinking along with him about what was taking place in him right now, but despite all his efforts to think and follow his thoughts, he saw from the expression of this calm stern face and the play of the

muscle on his forehead that what was becoming clearer and clearer for the dying man remained as obscure as ever for Levin.

“Yes, yes. That’s so,” the dying man spoke slowly, with pauses. “Wait.” Again he was silent. “That’s so!” he suddenly drawled reassuringly, as if all had been resolved for him. “Oh Lord!” he said, and he sighed deeply.

Marya Nikolaevna felt his feet.

“Getting cold,” she whispered.

For a long time, a very long time, or so it seemed to Levin, the sick man lay motionless. But he was still alive, and from time to time he took a breath. Levin was tired from the strain of thinking. He felt that, despite the mental strain, he could not understand what was so. He felt he had long since fallen behind the dying man. He could no longer think about the question of death itself, but without his will thoughts came to him about what he would have to do now, right now: close his eyes, dress him, order the coffin. It was a strange thing, but he felt utterly indifferent and experienced neither grief nor loss, and still less so pity for his brother. If he had any feeling for his brother, then it was more like envy for the knowledge that the dying man now had but he could not.

He sat over him like that for a long time, constantly expecting the end. But the end did not come. The door opened, and Kitty appeared. Levin rose to stop her. But while he was rising he heard the dead man move.

“Don’t go,” said Nikolai, and he reached out. Levin gave him his hand and angrily waved at his wife to leave.

He sat holding the dead man’s hand in his own for half an hour, an hour, another hour. Now he was not thinking about death at all. He was thinking about what Kitty was doing, about who was staying in the next room, about whether the doctor had his own house. He was hungry and sleepy. He cautiously freed his hand and felt his brother’s feet. His feet were cold, but the sick man was breathing. Levin once again tried to leave on tiptoe, but the sick man stirred once again and said:

“Don’t go.”

.....
Dawn broke; the sick man’s situation was the same. Levin, having freed his hand little by little, without looking at the dying man, went to his room and fell asleep. When he awoke, instead of the news he was expecting of his brother’s death, he learned that the sick man had regained his former condition. He was again sitting up and coughing, again starting to eat and talk, and again had ceased to talk about death, again started to express hope of recovery and to become even more irritable and gloomy than before. No one, neither his brother nor Kitty, could console him. He was angry at everyone and said unkind words

to everyone. He reproached everyone for his sufferings and demanded that they bring him a famous doctor from Moscow. To all the questions he was asked about how he felt, he replied identically with an expression of malice and reproach.

“I’m suffering horribly, unbearably!”

The sick man was suffering more and more, especially from bedsores, which could no longer be treated, and getting angrier and angrier at the people around him, reproaching them for everything and especially for not bringing him the doctor from Moscow. Kitty tried everything she could to help and reassure him; but it was all in vain, and Levin saw that she herself was tormented both physically and morally, although she would not admit to it. The sense of death that had been evoked in everyone by his farewell to life the night he had summoned his brother was destroyed. Everyone knew he would die, inevitably and soon, that he was half-dead already. Everyone wished but one thing—for him to die as quickly as possible, and everyone, while trying to hide this, kept giving him medicine from bottles, looking for medicines and doctors, and deceiving him, and themselves, and one another. It was all a lie, a filthy, insulting, and blasphemous lie, and this lie, both due to the quality of its nature and because he loved the dying man more than anyone else, Levin felt especially keenly.

Levin, who had long been preoccupied by the thought of reconciling his brothers at least before death, had written to his brother Sergei Ivanovich, and having received a reply from him had read this letter to the sick man. Sergei Ivanovich wrote that he could not come himself, but in touching phrases he begged his brother’s forgiveness.

The sick man said nothing.

“What should I write him?” asked Levin. “I hope you’re not angry with him.”

“No, not a bit!” Nikolai replied to the question with annoyance. “Write him to send me a doctor.”

Three more agonizing days passed; the sick man remained in the same condition. The sense of desiring his death was now felt by everyone who had occasion to see him: the waiter from the hotel, its owner, all the guests, the doctor, Marya Nikolaevna, Levin, Kitty. The sick man alone did not express this sense but, on the contrary, was angry that they had not brought the doctor, and he continued to take his medicine and speak of life. Only in rare moments, when the opium made him forget his unrelenting sufferings for an instant, half-asleep, did he sometimes say what was in his soul more powerfully than in everyone else’s, “Oh, if only this were the end!” or, “When will this end?”

His sufferings, which were steadily intensifying, were doing their work and preparing him for death. There was not a position in which he did not suffer,

not a minute when he forgot himself, not a place or a limb on his body that did not hurt or torment him. Even the memories, impressions, and thoughts of this body now evoked the same revulsion in him as did his body itself. The sight of other people, their conversations, and his own memories—all this was sheer agony for him. Those around him felt this and unconsciously would not permit themselves to move freely, talk, or express their wishes in his presence. His entire life had been merged into the single sense of suffering and the desire to be rid of it.

He was, obviously, beginning to experience the revulsion that would force him to look at death as the gratification of his desires, as good fortune. In the past, each separate desire evoked by suffering or privation, such as hunger, weariness, and thirst, had been satisfied by some bodily function that gave him pleasure; now, however, privation and suffering could have no relief, and any attempt at relief evoked new suffering. And so all desires were merged into one: the desire to be rid of all sufferings and their source, the body. However, he had no words to express this desire for liberation, and so he did not speak of it but out of habit demanded satisfaction of those desires which could no longer be satisfied. “Turn me on my other side,” he said, and then immediately afterward demanded that he be placed as before. “Give me some broth. Take the broth away. Tell me something, why don’t you speak?” As soon as they began talking, he would shut his eyes and express weariness, indifference, and revulsion.

On the tenth day after their arrival in the town Kitty fell ill. She came down with a headache and vomiting, and for an entire morning she could not get out of bed.

The doctor explained that her sickness was due to exhaustion and agitation and prescribed rest.

After dinner, however, Kitty rose and took her work, as always, to the sick man’s room. He gave her a stern look when she entered and smiled contemptuously when she said she had been sick. That day he was constantly blowing his nose and moaning plaintively.

“How do you feel?” she asked him.

“Worse,” he said with difficulty. “It hurts!”

“Where does it hurt?”

“Everywhere.”

“It’ll all be over today, you’ll see,” said Marya Nikolaevna, and although she had whispered, she had done so in such a way that the sick man, who was very sensitive, as Levin had noticed, must have heard her. Levin hushed at her and looked around at the sick man. Nikolai had heard, but these words had made

no impression on him whatsoever. His look was as reproachful and tense as ever.

“What makes you think so?” Levin asked her when she had followed him out into the hall.

“He’s started to pick at himself,” said Marya Nikolaevna.

“What do you mean pick at?”

“Like this,” she said, tugging at the folds of her woolen dress.

Indeed, he had noticed that all that day the sick man had been grabbing at himself as if trying to pull something off.

Marya Nikolaevna’s prediction was accurate. By nightfall the sick man was already too weak to raise his arms and only looked straight ahead, not changing his intently focused expression. Even when his brother or Kitty leaned over him so that he could see them, he kept looking the same way. Kitty sent for the priest to read the prayer for the dying.

While the priest was reading the prayer, the dying man betrayed no signs of life; his eyes were shut. Levin, Kitty, and Marya Nikolaevna stood by the bed. Before the priest had finished the prayer, the dying man stretched, sighed, and opened his eyes. The priest finished the prayer, placed his cross on the cold forehead, and then slowly wrapped it in his stole, and after standing in silence another few minutes, touched the large bloodless hand grown cold.

“It’s over,” said the priest and was about to move away; but suddenly the dead man’s matted mustache moved, and clearly in the silence, from the depths of his chest, they heard precise, sharp sounds:

“Not quite. . . . Soon.”

A minute later his face cleared, a smile appeared under his mustache, and the women who had gathered became preoccupied with laying out the body.

The sight of his brother and the proximity of death revived in Levin’s soul a deep horror before the insolvability and at the same time the proximity and inevitability of death which had seized him that autumn evening when his brother had come to visit. This sense was now even stronger than before; even less than before did he feel capable of understanding the meaning of death, and even more horrible did its inevitability present itself to him; but now, thanks to his wife’s nearness, this sense did not lead him to despair. In spite of death, he felt the necessity of living and loving. He felt that love had saved him from despair and that, threatened by despair, this love had grown even stronger and purer.

No sooner had the still insolvable mystery of death arisen before his very eyes than another mystery, just as enigmatic, arose, summoning him to love and life.

The doctor confirmed his surmises about Kitty. Her indisposition was a pregnancy.

From the moment Alexei Alexandrovich realized from his interviews with Betsy and Stepan Arkadyevich that all that was demanded of him was that he leave his wife in peace, without troubling her with his presence, and that his wife herself desired this, he felt so lost that he was unable to decide anything himself, did not know himself what he now wanted, and placing himself in the hands of those who took such pleasure in managing his affairs, he consented to everything. Only when Anna had left his house and the English governess had sent to inquire whether she should dine with him, or separately, did he for the first time clearly understand his position, and it horrified him.

Hardest of all in this situation was the fact that he simply could not connect and reconcile his past with what now was. It was not the past when he had lived happily with his wife that bothered him. He was still suffering grievously through the transition from that past to the knowledge of his wife's infidelity; this condition was hard, but understandable. If his wife then, declaring her infidelity, had left him, he would have been grieved and unhappy, but he would not have been in the hopeless and incomprehensible position in which he now felt himself to be. He could not now in any way reconcile his recent act of forgiveness, his tenderness, and his love for his ailing wife and another man's child with what was now the case, that, as if in reward for all this, he now found himself alone, disgraced, ridiculed, unneeded, and despised by all.

For the first two days after his wife's departure, Alexei Alexandrovich received petitioners and his private secretary, went to his committee, and went down for dinner in the dining room, as usual. Without admitting to himself why he was doing so, he mustered all his inner strength in those two days just to maintain a calm and even indifferent appearance. While answering questions about how to dispose of Anna Arkadyevna's belongings and rooms, he made the greatest effort to maintain the look of someone for whom what happened had not been unforeseen and did not entail anything that departed from the category of ordinary events, and he achieved his goal. No one could have noticed the signs of despair in him. But on the second day after her departure, when Kornei handed him a bill from a fashionable shop that Anna had forgotten to pay and informed him that the shop manager himself was there, Alexei Alexandrovich told him to call the manager in.

"Forgive me, Your Excellency, for making so bold as to disturb you. But if you are going to tell me to apply to Her Excellency, then would you please be so kind as to inform me of her address?"

Alexei Alexandrovich lapsed into thought, as it seemed to the manager, and suddenly, turning around, sat down at his desk. Dropping his head in his hands,

he sat in that position for a long time, made several attempts to speak, and each time halted.

Understanding his master's feelings, Kornei asked the manager to come another time. Left alone once again, Alexei Alexandrovich realized that he did not have the strength to keep up his role of firmness and calm any more. He canceled the waiting carriage, instructed that no one be received, and did not go down for dinner.

He felt he could not withstand the pressure of universal contempt and hard-heartedness which he clearly saw on the face of this manager, and Kornei, and everyone without exception whom he encountered in these two days. He felt he could not avert people's hatred because this hatred derived not from the fact that he was bad (in which case he might try to be better) but because he was shamefully and repulsively unhappy. He felt it was because of this, precisely because his heart was lacerated, that they would be pitiless toward him. He felt that people would destroy him, the way dogs suffocate a dog lacerated and howling from pain. He knew that the sole salvation from people was to hide his wounds from them, and that is what he unconsciously had attempted to do for two days, but now he felt he no longer had the strength to pursue this unequal combat.

His despair was intensified as well by the awareness that he was utterly alone in his grief. Not only did he not have anyone in Petersburg to whom he could tell everything he was experiencing, who might take pity on him not for his high position or as a member of society but simply as a suffering man; he did not have anyone like that anywhere.

Alexei Alexandrovich had grown up an orphan. There were two brothers. Their father they did not remember, and their mother died when Alexei Alexandrovich was ten years old. Their inheritance was small. His Uncle Karenin, an important official and once a favorite of the late emperor, had raised them.

When he had completed his courses at high school and university with medals, Alexei Alexandrovich, with the help of his uncle, immediately began a prominent official career and had ever since devoted himself exclusively to his official ambition. Alexei Alexandrovich had never entered into close friendship with anyone, not in high school, not at the university, and not afterward, at the ministry. His brother was the person closest to his heart, but he had served in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and had always lived abroad, where he had died soon after Alexei Alexandrovich's marriage.

During his governorship, Anna's aunt, a wealthy provincial lady, had introduced this no longer young man, who was nevertheless young for a governor, to her niece and placed him in such a position that he either had to propose or leave town. Alexei Alexandrovich hesitated for a long time. There were just

as many arguments in favor of this step as there were against it, and there was no decisive reason compelling him to alter his rule: when in doubt, refrain.²¹ But Anna's aunt suggested to him through a mutual acquaintance that he had already compromised the young lady and that honor required him to propose. He proposed and bestowed upon his betrothed and wife all the feeling of which he was capable.

The attachment he felt for Anna eliminated in his heart any remaining need for intimate relations with others. And now among all his acquaintances he had not one close friend. He had a great many of what are called connections, but he had no friendships. Alexei Alexandrovich knew a great many people whom he could invite to his home for dinner or ask to participate in a matter of interest to him, or to give protection to some petitioner, or with whom he could discuss candidly the actions of other individuals and affairs of state. But his relations toward these individuals had been confined to one sphere, which was firmly defined by custom and habit and to which they were bound. He had one university classmate with whom he had been close afterward and with whom he might have spoken about his personal grief; but this classmate was the administrator of a distant school district. Of those in Petersburg, closest and likeliest of all were his chief secretary and his doctor.

Mikhail Vasilyevich Slyudin, his chief secretary, was a simple, clever, good, and moral man, and in him Alexei Alexandrovich sensed personal goodwill toward himself. But five years of official work had placed between them a barrier to heart-to-heart talks.

Alexei Alexandrovich finished signing papers and was silent for a long time, glancing at Mikhail Vasilyevich, and several times he tried but could not bring himself to begin speaking. He had already prepared something to say, "You've heard of my sorrow?" But he ended up saying just what he ordinarily did—"So, you can prepare this for me"—and with that dismissed him.

The other person was his doctor, who was also well disposed toward him. But between them a tacit agreement had long been recognized that both were inundated with their own affairs and both were pressed for time.

Of his women friends, Countess Lydia Ivanovna chief among them, Alexei Alexandrovich never thought. He found all women, simply as women, terrifying and repellent.

22

Alexei Alexandrovich had forgotten about Countess Lydia Ivanovna, but she had not forgotten about him. In his most trying moment of lonely despair,

she came to see him and without further ado entered his study. She found him in the same position in which he had been sitting, his head resting in both hands.

"*J'ai forc  la consigne,*" she said, entering with a rapid step and breathing heavily from her agitation and rapid movement.²² "I've heard everything! Alexei Alexandrovich! My friend!" she continued, firmly pressing his hand with both of hers and gazing into his eyes with her beautiful, pensive eyes.

Alexei Alexandrovich, frowning, rose, and freeing his hand from hers, pulled up a chair for her.

"Won't you, Countess? I have not been receiving because I've been ill, Countess," he said, and his lips began to tremble.

"My friend!" repeated Countess Lydia Ivanovna, not taking her eyes off him, and suddenly the inner corners of her eyebrows lifted to form a triangle on her forehead, and her unattractive, yellow face became even more unattractive, but Alexei Alexandrovich felt that she pitied him and was about to cry. And he too was moved. He seized her puffy hand and began to kiss it.

"My dear friend!" she said, her voice cracking from emotion. "You must not surrender to sorrow. Your sorrow is great, but you must find consolation."

"I'm broken, crushed. I'm not a man anymore!" said Alexei Alexandrovich, dropping her hand but continuing to look into her tear-filled eyes. "My situation is all the worse because nowhere, not even in myself, can I find any support."

"You will find support. Look for it not in me, although I beg of you to believe in my friendship," she said with a sigh. "Our support is love, the love which He has bestowed upon us. His burden is light," she said with that ecstatic gaze Alexei Alexandrovich knew so well.²³ "He will support you and succor you."

Even though these words expressed a tenderness for her own lofty feelings, as well as that new, ecstatic, mystical mood that had lately spread in Petersburg and that seemed to Alexei Alexandrovich excessive, Alexei Alexandrovich now found them pleasant to hear.

"I'm weak. I'm destroyed. I foresaw nothing and now understand nothing."

"My friend," Lydia Ivanovna repeated.

"It is not the loss of what is now gone, not that," Alexei Alexandrovich continued. "I have no regrets. But I can't help being ashamed before people for the position I find myself in. That's bad, but I can't help it. I can't."

"It wasn't you who performed that noble deed of forgiveness which I and everyone admire but He, who abides in your heart," said Countess Lydia Ivanovna, raising her eyes ecstatically, "and so you cannot be ashamed of your action."

Alexei Alexandrovich frowned and, bending his hands back, cracked his knuckles.

“One must know all the details,” he said in a thin voice. “There are limits to a man’s powers, Countess, and I have found the limit of mine. All day today I was supposed to be giving instructions, instructions about the house pursuant (he stressed the word ‘pursuant’) to my new, solitary situation. The servants, the governess, the bills. . . . These petty flames burned me, and I was too weak to withstand it. At dinner . . . yesterday I nearly had to leave the table. I couldn’t stand the way my son was looking at me. He didn’t ask me the meaning of it all, but he wanted to ask, and I couldn’t withstand that look. He was afraid to look at me, but that is the least of it.”

Alexei Alexandrovich was about to mention the bill that had been brought to him, but his voice began to tremble and he stopped. He could not recall that bill, on blue paper, for a hat and ribbons, without feeling sorry for himself.

“I understand, my friend,” said Countess Lydia Ivanovna. “I understand everything. Succor and consolation you will not find in me, but I have come all the same only to help you, if I can. If I could unburden you of all these petty, demeaning cares . . . I understand, you need a woman’s word, a woman’s direction. You will entrust this to me?”

Silently, gratefully, Alexei Alexandrovich pressed her hand.

“Together we will care for Seryozha. I’m not strong in practical matters. However I shall undertake them, I shall be your housekeeper. Do not thank me. It’s not I who am doing it . . .”

“I cannot help but thank you.”

“But my friend, do not surrender to the feeling of which you were speaking—being ashamed of the supreme height of a Christian: *He that shall humble himself shall be exalted.*²⁴ And you cannot thank me. You must thank Him and ask Him for succor. In Him alone do we find serenity, consolation, salvation, and love,” she said, and lifting her eyes to heaven, she began praying, as Alexei Alexandrovich understood from her silence.

Alexei Alexandrovich listened to her now, and those expressions which he previously had found, if not distasteful then at least excessive, now seemed natural and comforting. Alexei Alexandrovich did not like this new, ecstatic spirit. He was a believer interested in religion primarily in its political sense, but the new teaching, which permitted several new interpretations and for precisely that reason opened the door to argument and analysis, he found distasteful in principle. He previously had been cold and even hostile toward this new teaching and with Countess Lydia Ivanovna, who had been carried away by it, he never argued and assiduously passed over her appeals in silence. Now, for the first time, he listened to her words with pleasure and did not object to them inwardly.

“I am very, very grateful to you for both your deeds and your words,” he said when she was finished praying.

Countess Lydia Ivanovna once again pressed both of her friend's hands.

"Now I'll enter upon my duties," she said with a smile after a moment's silence and wiping the last of the tears from her face. "I'll go see Seryozha. Only as a last resort will I turn to you." She rose and went out.

Countess Lydia Ivanovna went to Seryozha's part of the house and there, drenching the frightened boy's cheeks with tears, told him that his father was a saint and his mother was dead.

Countess Lydia Ivanovna kept her promise. She did indeed take on all the cares of arranging and running Alexei Alexandrovich's household. But she was not exaggerating when she said that she was not strong in practical matters. All her instructions had to be changed, since they were impossible to execute, and they were changed by Kornei, Alexei Alexandrovich's valet, who, imperceptibly to everyone, was now running Karenin's entire household and while the master was dressing calmly and carefully reported to him what he needed to know. But Lydia Ivanovna's assistance was nonetheless highly effective: she gave Alexei Alexandrovich moral support in the awareness of her love and respect for him and especially, as it comforted her to think, almost turning him toward Christianity. That is, from an indifferent and lazy believer she had turned him into an ardent and firm supporter of that new interpretation of the Christian doctrine which had spread of late in Petersburg. Alexei Alexandrovich was easily convinced of this. Like Lydia Ivanovna and other people who shared their views, Alexei Alexandrovich was utterly lacking in any depth of imagination, that spiritual capacity thanks to which the conceptions called forth by the imagination become so compelling that they demand to be brought into accord with other conceptions and with reality. He saw nothing impossible or incompatible in the notion that death, which exists for nonbelievers, did not exist for him, and that since he possessed the fullest faith, the judge of whose measure was he himself, then there was no sin in his soul now, and he was already experiencing complete salvation here, on earth.

True, Alexei Alexandrovich vaguely sensed the facileness and error of this conception about his faith; and he knew that when he had surrendered to this direct emotion, without any thought that his forgiveness was an act of a higher power, had surrendered to this direct emotion, he had experienced a greater happiness than when, as now, he thought every minute that Christ was living in his heart and that, by signing papers, he was doing His will. But Alexei Alexandrovich needed so much to think this way, so needed in his humiliation to have that loftiness, however fabricated, from which he, despised by all, might despise others, that he clung to this salvation, this mock salvation.

23

Countess Lydia Ivanovna had been married as a very young and ecstatic girl to a wealthy, distinguished, most good-natured, and most debauched bon vivant. The second month, her husband abandoned her and responded to her ecstatic avowals of tenderness only with ridicule and even hostility, which people who knew the count's good heart and had not seen any shortcomings in the ecstatic Lydia simply could not explain. Ever since, although they were not divorced, they had lived apart, and when the husband encountered the wife, he always treated her with invariable and venomous ridicule, the reason for which was incomprehensible.

Countess Lydia Ivanovna had long since ceased to be in love with her husband, but ever since had not ceased being in love with someone. She had been in love with several people at once, both men and women; she had been in love with nearly everyone who was in some way especially prominent. She had been in love with all the new princesses and princes who had married into the tsar's family, she had been in love with one metropolitan, one vicar, and one priest. She had been in love with one journalist, three Slavs, and Komisarov; one minister, one doctor, one English missionary, and Karenin.²⁵ All these loves, waning and waxing, had not gotten in the way of the most extensive and complex relations at court and in society. Ever since misfortune had befallen Karenin and she had taken him under her special protection, ever since she had labored in Karenin's household, looking after his well-being, she had felt that all her other loves had not been genuine and that now she was truly in love with Karenin alone. The feeling she now experienced for him seemed to her stronger than all her former feelings. Analyzing her feelings and comparing them with those before, she clearly saw that she would not have been in love with Komisarov had he not saved the sovereign's life and would not have been in love with Ristić-Kudzhitsky had it not been for the Slavic question, but that she loved Karenin for himself, for his lofty, misunderstood soul, for the reedy sound of his voice, which she found so sweet, with its drawn out intonations, for his weary look, for his character and his soft white hands with the swollen veins.²⁶ Not only did she rejoice at their meeting, she sought in his face signs of the impression she was making on him. She wanted him to like her not only for her speeches but for her entire person. For him she now took greater care with her attire than ever before. She caught herself daydreaming about what might have been had she not been married and he were free. She blushed from agitation when he entered the room, and she could not restrain a smile of ecstasy when he had a kind word for her.

For several days, Countess Lydia Ivanovna had been in the most powerful

state of agitation. She had learned that Anna and Vronsky were in Petersburg. She had to save Alexei Alexandrovich from a meeting with her; she had to save him even from the agonizing knowledge that this horrible woman was in the same city as he and that he might encounter her at any moment.

Lydia Ivanovna investigated through acquaintances what these *disgusting people*, as she called Anna and Vronsky, intended to do, and during those days tried to guide all her friend's movements so that he would not encounter them. A young adjutant, a friend of Vronsky, through whom she had acquired information and who had hopes of obtaining a concession through Countess Lydia Ivanovna, told her that they had completed their business and were leaving the next day. Lydia Ivanovna had already begun to calm down when the next morning she was brought a note whose handwriting she recognized with horror. It was the handwriting of Anna Karenina. The envelope was made of paper as thick as a strip of bast; on the oblong yellow paper was a large monogram, and the letter smelled beautiful.

"Who brought this?"

"A *commissionaire* from the hotel."

For a long time Countess Lydia Ivanovna could not sit down to read the letter. She had an attack of shortness of breath, to which she was susceptible, brought on by agitation. When she calmed down, she read the following letter in French:

"*Madame la Comtesse*, The Christian feelings that fill your heart have given me what is, I feel, the unforgivable boldness to write you. I am unhappy over the separation from my son. I beg your permission to see him once before my departure. Forgive me for reminding you of myself. I am turning to you rather than to Alexei Alexandrovich only because I do not want to make this magnanimous man suffer at the mention of myself. Knowing your friendship for him, I know you will understand me. Will you send Seryozha to see me, or shall I come to the house at a specific, appointed hour, or will you let me know when and where I might see him outside the house? I do not contemplate a refusal, knowing the magnanimity of the person on whom it depends. You cannot imagine the craving I feel to see him and so cannot imagine the gratitude your help will arouse in me. Anna."

Everything in this letter irritated Countess Lydia Ivanovna: the content, the suggestion of her magnanimity, and especially what seemed to her its unduly familiar tone.

"Say there will be no reply," said Countess Lydia Ivanovna and immediately, opening the blotting pad, wrote Alexei Alexandrovich that she hoped to see him between twelve and one for the congratulations at the palace.

"I need to discuss an important and sad matter with you. There we will settle

on where. Best would be at my home, where I will have *your* tea waiting. This is essential. He lays His cross. He gives strength as well,” she added, in order to prepare him at least somewhat.

Countess Lydia Ivanovna ordinarily wrote Alexei Alexandrovich two or three notes a day. She loved this process of communication with him, which had an elegance and mystery that was lacking in her personal dealings.

24

The congratulations were drawing to a close. As they left, people discussed the latest news of the day, the newly received honors, and the reappointments of important public servants.

“You would think Countess Marya Borisovna had been given the war ministry and Princess Vatkovskaya were chief of staff,” said an old man wearing a gold-embroidered uniform, addressing a tall beauty, a lady in waiting who had asked him about a transfer.

“And I’d been made adjutant,” replied the lady in waiting, smiling.

“You already have an appointment. You for the ecclesiastical department, and for your aide—Karenin.”

“How do you do, Prince!” said the old man, shaking the hand of the man who had walked up to him.

“What were you saying about Karenin?” said the prince.

“He and Putyatov received the Alexander Nevsky.”²⁷

“I thought he already had it.”

“No. Just look at him,” said the old man, pointing with his embroidered hat to Karenin, who had stopped in the doorway of the hall with an influential member of the State Council and was wearing his court uniform with his new red sash across the shoulder. “As happy and content as a brass kopek,” he added, stopping to shake the hand of the handsome and athletically built chamberlain.

“No, he’s aged,” said the chamberlain.

“From work. He writes all his projects now. He won’t let a poor fellow go until he has set everything out point by point.”

“What do you mean aged? *Il fait des passions*.²⁸ I think Countess Lydia Ivanovna is jealous of his wife now.”

“Come, come! Kindly do not speak ill of Countess Lydia Ivanovna.”

“But is it really so bad that she’s in love with Karenin?”

“And is it true that Madame Karenina is here?”

“I don’t mean here, at the palace, but in Petersburg. I met her yesterday, with Alexei Vronsky, *bras dessus, bras dessous*, on Morskaya.”²⁹

*“C’est un homme qui n’a pas—”*³⁰ The chamberlain was about to go on but stopped, making way for and bowing to a member of the tsar’s family who was just passing through.

In this way they talked incessantly about Alexei Alexandrovich, judging and laughing at him, while he, having blocked the way of a member of the State Council he had captured, and not stopping his explanation for a moment so as not to lose him, was explaining his financial plan point by point.

At almost exactly the same time his wife had left Alexei Alexandrovich, the bitterest event for a public servant had befallen him—a cessation in his career advancement. This cessation had come about, and everyone could see it clearly, but Alexei Alexandrovich himself would still not admit that his career was over. Whether it was his confrontation with Stremov, the misfortune with his wife, or simply that Alexei Alexandrovich had reached his predetermined limit, this year it had become obvious to everyone that his public career was over. He still occupied an important position, and he sat on several commissions and committees; but he was someone who was used up and from whom no more was expected. No matter what he said, no matter what he proposed, he was listened to as if what he were proposing had been known for a long time and was precisely what was not needed.

Alexei Alexandrovich did not sense this, however. On the contrary, removed as he was from direct participation in government activity, he now saw more clearly than ever the shortcomings and errors in the activities of others and considered it his duty to point out the means for correcting them. Soon after his separation from his wife, he began writing his first memorandum about the new court, the first of countless useless memoranda he was destined to write on every branch of administration.

Alexei Alexandrovich not only did not notice his hopeless position in the political world and not only was not pained by it but more than ever he was satisfied with his career.

“He that is unmarried cares for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please the Lord. But he that is married cares for the things that are of the world,” says the Apostle Paul, and Alexei Alexandrovich, who was now guided by Scripture in all his affairs, often recalled this text.³¹ It seemed to him that ever since he had been left without a wife he had with these projects served the Lord more than ever.

The obvious impatience of the Council member, who wished to get away from him, did not perturb Alexei Alexandrovich; he stopped holding forth only when the member, taking advantage of the arrival of a member of the tsar’s family, slipped away.

Left alone, Alexei Alexandrovich dropped his head, gathering his thoughts, then looked around distractedly and started toward the door, where he hoped to meet Countess Lydia Ivanovna.

“How strong and healthy they all are physically,” thought Alexei Alexandrovich, looking at the chamberlain, powerful with his combed and perfumed whiskers, and at the red neck of the snugly uniformed prince, whom he had to walk by. “Rightly it is said that all in the world is evil,” he thought, squinting once more at the chamberlain’s calves.

Moving his feet at a leisurely pace, with his usual look of weariness and dignity, Alexei Alexandrovich bowed to the gentlemen who had been talking about him and, glancing at the door, looked for Countess Lydia Ivanovna.

“Ah! Alexei Alexandrovich!” said the little old man, his eyes glittering maliciously, when Karenin drew even with him and nodded to him with a cold gesture. “I have yet to congratulate you,” he said, pointing to his newly received ribbon.

“I thank you,” replied Alexei Alexandrovich. “What a *marvelous* day today has been,” he added, leaning especially on the word “*marvelous*,” as was his wont.

The fact that they were laughing at him, he knew very well, but he did not expect anything other than hostility from them; he was already used to that.

Seeing yellow shoulders rising out of the bodice of Countess Lydia Ivanovna, who had emerged in the doorway, and her beautiful pensive eyes beckoning, Alexei Alexandrovich smiled, revealing his unfading white teeth, and went toward her.

Lydia Ivanovna’s gown had cost her much effort, as had all her gowns of late. The goal of her gown was now utterly opposite to that which she had pursued thirty years before. Then, she had wanted to adorn herself with something, and the more the better. Now, on the contrary, she was necessarily adorned so inconsistently with her years and figure that she troubled only to make the contrast between these adornments and her appearance not too dreadful. With respect to Alexei Alexandrovich, she achieved this and seemed to him attractive. For him she was the sole island not only of good will toward him but even of love, in that sea of hostility and ridicule surrounding him.

Passing through the ranks of mocking glances, he was naturally drawn toward her enamored gaze, like a plant to the light.

“I congratulate you,” she told him, indicating the ribbon with her eyes.

Restraining a smile of satisfaction, he closed his eyes and shrugged, as if to say that it could not gladden him. Countess Lydia Ivanovna well knew that this was one of his chief joys, although he would never admit to it.

“How is our angel?” said Countess Lydia Ivanovna, meaning Seryozha.

“I cannot say I have been entirely satisfied with him,” said Alexei Alexandrovich, raising his eyebrows and opening his eyes. “Nor is Sitnikov. (Sitnikov was the tutor to whom Seryozha’s secular education had been entrusted.) As I have told you, he has a kind of coldness toward all the most important questions that ought to touch the heart of every man and every child.” Alexei Alexandrovich began setting forth his thoughts on the one issue that interested him other than public service—his son’s education.

When Alexei Alexandrovich, with Lydia Ivanovna’s help, had once again returned to life and activity, he had felt it his duty to occupy himself with the education of the son left on his hands. Never before having studied issues of education, Alexei Alexandrovich devoted a certain period of time to a theoretical study of the subject. After reading several books of anthropology, pedagogy, and didactics, Alexei Alexandrovich composed a plan of education, invited the best Petersburg pedagogue to supervise it, and got down to work, and this work kept him continually engaged.

“Yes, but what of his heart? I see in him his father’s heart, and with a heart like that a child cannot be bad,” said Countess Lydia Ivanovna ecstatically.

“Yes, that may be. As for myself, I am doing my duty. That is all I can do.”

“You must come see me,” said Countess Lydia Ivanovna after a moment’s silence. “We need to talk over a matter grievous to you. I would give anything to free you of certain memories, but others do not think the same way. I received a letter from *her*. *She* is here, in Petersburg.”

Alexei Alexandrovich shuddered at the mention of his wife, but his face immediately assumed a deathlike immobility that expressed his utter helplessness in the matter.

“I was expecting this,” he said.

Countess Lydia Ivanovna looked at him ecstatically, and tears of admiration at the magnificence of his soul welled up in her eyes.

25

When Alexei Alexandrovich walked into Countess Lydia Ivanovna’s small and cozy sitting room, which was decorated with antique porcelain and hung with portraits, the mistress herself was not yet there. She was changing her clothes.

On a round table a cloth had been laid and there was a Chinese tea service and a silver spirit teapot. Alexei Alexandrovich looked around absentmindedly at the innumerable familiar portraits that decorated her sitting room and, sitting

down at the table, opened the Gospels that lay on it. The sound of the countess's silk dress distracted him.

"Well there, now we can sit calmly," said Countess Lydia Ivanovna, slipping hurriedly, with an agitated smile, between table and sofa, "and have a talk over our tea."

After a few words' preparation, Countess Lydia Ivanovna, breathing hard and blushing, handed Alexei Alexandrovich the letter she had received.

Reading the letter through, he did not say anything for a long time.

"I don't think I have the right to refuse her," he said timidly, looking up.

"My friend! You see evil in no one!"

"On the contrary, I see that everything is evil. But is this fair?"

His face held indecision and a plea for advice, support, and guidance in a matter he found incomprehensible.

"No," Countess Lydia Ivanovna interrupted him. "There is a limit to everything. I understand immorality," she said, not quite sincerely, since she never had been able to understand what led women to immorality, "but I do not understand cruelty, and against whom? Against you! How can she stay in the same city where you are? No, you live and learn, and I'm learning to understand how high you stand and how low she has fallen."

"But who is throwing stones?" said Alexei Alexandrovich, obviously pleased with his role. "I have forgiven everything and so cannot deprive her of what is a demand of love for her—her love for her son."

"But is this love, my friend? Is it sincere? Let us say you have forgiven her . . . but do we have the right to act on this angel's heart? He believes her dead. He prays for her and asks God to forgive her her sins. It is better this way. But what is he going to think now?"

"I had not thought of that," said Alexei Alexandrovich, obviously agreeing.

Countess Lydia Ivanovna covered her face with her hands and did not speak. She was praying.

"If you are asking my advice," she said, after she had finished praying and uncovered her face, "then I am advising you not to do this. Don't I see how you are suffering, how this has reopened your wounds? No, let us say you, as always, forget about yourself. To what can this lead? New sufferings on your part and agony for the child? If she had a drop of human kindness left in her, she herself would not wish it. No, without hesitation, I do not advise it, and if you will allow me, I shall write to her."

Alexei Alexandrovich agreed, and Countess Lydia wrote the following letter in French:

"Madam,

“For your son, your reminder could lead to questions on his part that cannot be answered without placing the spirit of condemnation in the child’s heart for what should for him be sacred, and so I beg of you to understand your husband’s refusal in the spirit of Christian love. I pray to the Almighty to have mercy on you.

“Countess Lydia.”

This letter achieved the desired goal, which Countess Lydia Ivanovna had been concealing even from herself. She had insulted Anna to the depths of her soul.

For his part, Alexei Alexandrovich, after returning home from Lydia Ivanovna’s, could not that day devote himself to his usual occupations and find the spiritual serenity of the believing and saved man which he had felt formerly.

The memory of his wife, who was guilty of so much before him and to whom he had been so saintly, as Countess Lydia Ivanovna had rightly told him, should not have upset him; but he could not be calm. He could not understand the book he was reading, could not drive out the agonizing memories of his relations with her or of the mistakes which he, as it now seemed to him, had made in regard to her. The memory of how, returning from the races, he had accepted her admission of infidelity (the fact in particular that he had demanded of her merely outward decency and not sent a challenge) tormented him like remorse. He was also tormented by the memory of the letter he had written her; especially its forgiveness, which no one needed, and his concerns about the other man’s child made his heart burn with shame and remorse.

He experienced the exact same feeling of shame and remorse now in sorting through his entire past with her and recalling the awkward words with which he, after long hesitation, had proposed to her.

“But what am I guilty of?” he told himself. This question always led to another question — about whether these other men felt differently, did their loving differently, did their marrying differently — these Vronskys and Oblonskys . . . these chamberlains with thick calves. He pictured an entire series of these juicy, vigorous men who did not doubt themselves and who could not help but attract his curious attention no matter when or where. He tried to drive away these thoughts; he tried to convince himself that he was living not for earthly, temporary life but for life everlasting, that his spirit held peace and love. But the fact that he had in this temporary and insignificant life committed, as it seemed to him, several insignificant mistakes tormented him, as if that eternal salvation in which he believed did not exist. But this temptation did not last long, and soon there was restored in Alexei Alexandrovich’s soul that serenity and high-mindedness thanks to which he could forget about whatever it was he did not wish to remember.

26

“Well, Kapitonych?” said Seryozha, rosy-cheeked and cheerful upon his return from his walk the day before his birthday, handing his light, fitted coat to the tall old doorman, who was smiling down at the little man from his considerable height. “What, has the bundled-up official been here today? Did Papa see him?”

“He did. As soon as the secretary came out, I announced him,” said the doorman, winking merrily. “Allow me sir, I’ll take it.”

“Seryozha!” said his Slav tutor, who was standing in the doorway leading to the inner rooms. “Take it off yourself.”

But Seryozha, although he did hear his tutor’s weak voice, paid no attention to it. He stood, holding onto the doorman’s shoulder strap, and looked into his face.

“Well, did Papa do what he was supposed to?”

The doorman nodded affirmatively.

The bundled-up official, who had come seven times before to ask Alexei Alexandrovich about something, had intrigued both Seryozha and the doorman. Seryozha had found him once in the front hall and heard him piteously asking the doorman to announce him, saying that he and his children were on the brink of death.

Ever since, Seryozha, who met the official once more in the hall, had taken an interest in him.

“Well, was he very pleased?” he asked.

“How could he not be! He went out of here practically leaping.”

“Did they bring anything?” asked Seryozha after a short pause.

“Well, sir,” said the doorman in a whisper, shaking his head, “there is something from the countess.”

Seryozha immediately understood that what the doorman was talking about was a birthday present from Countess Lydia Ivanovna.

“Really? Where?”

“Kornei brought it to your Papa. Must be something fine!”

“How big? Like this?”

“A little smaller, but a fine thing.”

“A book?”

“No, something else. Go on, go on, Vasily Lukich is calling you,” said the doorman, hearing the tutor’s approaching steps and cautiously disengaging the little hand in its half-removed glove from his shoulder strap, and winking, he indicated Vunich with a nod.

“Vasily Lukich, right this minute!” replied Seryozha with the cheerful and loving smile that always vanquished the conscientious Vasily Lukich.

Seryozha was too cheerful, everything was too delightful, to keep from sharing with his friend the doorman the family joy about which he had learned on his walk in the Summer Garden from Countess Lydia Ivanovna's niece. This joy seemed especially important to him because it coincided with the joy of the official and his own joy that toys had been brought. It seemed to Seryozha that today was the kind of day when everyone should be happy and cheerful.

"Do you know Papa was given the Alexander Nevsky?"

"How could I not! People have been coming by to congratulate him."

"Well, is he pleased?"

"How could he not be pleased at the tsar's favor! That means he earned it," said the doorman sternly and gravely.

Seryozha thought about that, gazing into the doorman's face, which he had studied down to its tiniest details, especially the chin, which hung between his gray whiskers, a chin no one ever saw except Seryozha, who never looked at him any other way than from below.

"Well, and has your daughter been to see you lately?"

The doorman's daughter was a ballerina.

"When can she come on weekdays? They have their lessons, too. And you have your lessons, sir. Run along."

Arriving at his room, Seryozha, instead of sitting down to his lessons, recounted to his teacher his guess that what the carriage brought must be a machine. "What do you think?" he asked.

But Vasily Lukich was thinking only of the grammar lesson Seryozha needed to learn for the teacher, who was coming at two o'clock.

"No, just tell me, Vasily Lukich," he asked suddenly, when he was already sitting at his desk and had the book in his hands, "what's above the Alexander Nevsky? Do you know Papa was given the Alexander Nevsky?"

Vasily Lukich said that more than the Alexander Nevsky was the Vladimir.

"And higher?"

"And highest of all is the Andrei the First-Called."³²

"And higher even than the Andrei?"

"I don't know."

"What, even you don't know?" And Seryozha propped his head up on his hands, lost in reflection.

His reflections were very complicated and diverse. He was imagining his father being suddenly given both the Vladimir and the Andrei and how as a result he would be much kinder at his lesson, and how he himself, when he was big, would be given all the orders and whatever they might invent that was higher than the Andrei. As soon as they invented it, he would earn it. When they invented one even higher, he would earn it right away.

The time passed in these reflections, and when his teacher arrived, the lesson on the adverbial modifiers of time and place and manner of action was not prepared and the teacher was not only dissatisfied but grieved. This grief of the teacher's touched Seryozha. He did not feel guilty for not learning the lesson; but no matter how much he tried, he absolutely couldn't do it. As long as the teacher was explaining it to him, he believed him and seemingly understood, but as soon as he was left to himself, he absolutely could not remember or understand that the short and very understandable word "suddenly" was an *adverb of manner of action*. But he was still sorry that he had grieved his teacher, and he wanted to console him.

He chose a moment when his teacher was looking silently at the book.

"Mikhail Ivanovich, when is your name day?"³³ he asked suddenly.

"You'd be better off thinking about your work. Name days have no importance for a rational being. They are days like every other day, when one has to work."

Seryozha took a careful look at his teacher, at his sparse beard, his eyeglasses, which had dropped below the notch he had on his nose, and became lost in thought so that he now heard nothing his teacher explained to him. He understood that the teacher did not believe what he said; he sensed it from the tone in which he said it. "But why have they all agreed to say the most tedious and useless things in the very same manner? Why is he pushing me away? Why doesn't he like me?" he asked himself with sadness, and could think of no answer.

27

After his teacher was the lesson with his father. Before his father came, Seryozha sat down at his desk, playing with his penknife, and started thinking. Among Seryozha's favorite activities was searching for his mother during his walk. He did not believe in death in general and in her death in particular, in spite of what Lydia Ivanovna had told him, and his father had confirmed, and so even after they told him she had died, he kept looking for her during his walk. Any full-figured, graceful woman with dark hair was his mother. At the sight of such a woman a feeling of tenderness arose inside him that made him gasp and tears well up in his eyes. At any moment he expected her to walk up to him and lift her veil. Her whole face would be visible, she would smile and embrace him, he would smell her scent, feel the softness of her hand, and start crying happily, as he had one evening lain at her feet and she had tickled him, and he had giggled and bit her white beringed hand. Later, when he had learned by accident from his nurse that his mother had not died, and his father and Lydia

Ivanovna had explained to him that she had died for him, because she was bad (something he simply could not believe, because he loved her), he kept searching and waiting for her. Today in the Summer Garden there was one lady in a violet veil whom he had followed, his heart sinking, expecting it to be her, while she was walking toward him down the path. This lady did not walk up to them but disappeared from view. Today, more strongly than ever, Seryozha felt a surge of love for her, and now, oblivious, waiting for his father, he carved the entire edge of his desk with his penknife, looking straight ahead with glittering eyes and thinking of her.

“Your papa’s coming!” Vasily Lukich distracted him.

Seryozha jumped up, went up to his father, and kissing his hand, looked at him intently, searching for signs of joy at receiving the Alexander Nevsky.

“Did you have a good walk?” said Alexei Alexandrovich, sitting in his comfortable chair, bringing the Old Testament closer, and opening it. Although Alexei Alexandrovich more than once told Seryozha that any Christian must firmly know Scripture, he himself often looked things up in the Old Testament, and Seryozha had noticed this.

“Yes, it was great fun, Papa,” said Seryozha, sitting sideways on his chair and rocking it, which was forbidden. “I saw Nadenka. (Nadenka was Lydia Ivanovna’s niece and ward.) She told me you were given a new star. Are you happy, Papa?”

“First of all, don’t rock, please,” said Alexei Alexandrovich. “And second, what’s valuable is not the reward but the work. I would like you to understand that. Now if you labor and study in order to receive a reward, then the labor will seem hard to you; but when you labor,” said Alexei Alexandrovich, recalling how he had supported himself with the awareness of duty during the tedious labor of this morning, which had consisted of signing one hundred eighteen documents, “if you love your labor, you will find your reward in it.”

Seryozha’s eyes, which glittered with tenderness and good cheer, became lackluster and looked down under his father’s gaze. This was the same, long-familiar tone in which his father had always addressed him and which Seryozha had already learned how to imitate. His father always spoke with him—as Seryozha felt—as if he were addressing some boy he had imagined, one of those whom you find in books but not at all resembling Seryozha. With his father, Seryozha always tried to pretend to be that boy in the book.

“You understand this, I hope?” said his father.

“Yes, Papa,” answered Seryozha, pretending to be the imagined boy.

The lesson consisted of learning a few verses from the Gospels by heart and repeating the opening of the Old Testament. Seryozha knew the verses from the Gospels quite well, but at the moment he was saying them, he could not take his

eyes off his father's bony forehead, which curved back so steeply at his temple, and so he got confused and transposed the end of one verse and the beginning of the next. It was obvious to Alexei Alexandrovich that he did not understand what he was saying, and this irritated him.

He frowned and began explaining what Seryozha had heard many times before and could never remember because he understood all too well—somewhat like the fact that “suddenly” was an adverb of manner of action. Seryozha gave his father a frightened look and thought of only one thing: whether his father would make him repeat what he had said, as sometimes happened, or not. This thought so frightened Seryozha that he could not remember anything. However, his father did not make him repeat it and moved on to the lesson from the Old Testament. Seryozha did a good job of relating the events themselves, but when it came to answering questions about what several events prefigured, he knew nothing, even though he had already been punished for this lesson. The place where he could not say anything and hemmed and hawed, and carved the desk, and rocked in his chair, was the one where he was supposed to talk about the patriarchs before the Flood. He did not know any of them except Enoch, who was taken live up to heaven.³⁴ He had once remembered the names, but now he had forgotten completely, in particular because Enoch was his favorite character from the entire Old Testament, and in his mind the taking of Enoch live up to heaven was connected to a long train of thoughts to which he now succumbed, his eyes fixed on his father's watch chain and the half-fastened button of his vest.

Death, about which people spoke to him so often, Seryozha did not believe in at all. He did not believe that the people he loved could die, and above all that he himself would die. This was for him utterly impossible and incomprehensible. But they told him that everyone dies; he even asked people he trusted, and they confirmed this as well; his nurse said so, too, although reluctantly. But Enoch did not die, so probably not everyone died. “Why couldn't anyone serve God the same way and be taken live up to heaven?” thought Seryozha. Bad people, that is, those whom Seryozha did not like, “they could die, but all the good people can be like Enoch.”

“Well, so who are the patriarchs?”

“Enoch, Enos.”

“Yes, you said that already. This is bad, Seryozha, very bad. If you don't make an effort to find out what is most necessary of all for a Christian,” said his father, standing, “then what could interest you? I'm dissatisfied with you, and Peter Ignatyevich (this was his principal teacher) is dissatisfied with you. . . . I must punish you.”

Father and teacher were both dissatisfied with Seryozha, and indeed he

studied very badly. But by no means could it be said that he was not a capable boy. On the contrary, he was a great deal more capable than those boys whom the teacher set as an example for Seryozha. From the standpoint of his father, he did not want to learn what he was being taught. In essence, he could not learn this. He could not because his soul had demands more pressing for him than those declared by his father and teacher. Those demands were contradictory, and he struggled directly with his educators.

He was nine years old, he was a child; but he knew his soul and it was precious to him, he guarded it as an eyelid guards an eye, and without the key of love let no one into his soul. His teachers complained that he did not want to study, but his soul was overflowing with the thirst for knowledge, and he did study, with Kapitonych, his nurse, Nadenka, and Vasily Lukich, but not with his teachers. The water which father and teacher were expecting to see on their wheels had dried up long since and was doing its work elsewhere.

His father punished Seryozha by not letting him visit Nadenka, Lydia Ivanovna's niece; but this punishment proved for the best for Seryozha. Vasily Lukich was in good spirits and showed him how to make windmills. He spent an entire evening over this work and his dreams about how you might make a windmill you could spin on: grab onto the blades with your hands or tie yourself to it—and spin. Seryozha did not think about his mother all evening, but when he went to bed, he suddenly remembered her and prayed in his own words that tomorrow, for his birthday, his mother would stop hiding and come to see him.

“Vasily Lukich, do you know what extra I prayed for?”

“To study better?”

“No.”

“Toys?”

“No. You can't guess. It's excellent, but a secret! When it comes true, I'll tell you. You haven't guessed?”

“No, I haven't guessed. You'll tell me,” said Vasily Lukich, smiling, something that happened rarely with him. “Well, go to bed, I'll put out the candle.”

“Without a candle I can see what I'm seeing and what I was praying for better. There, I nearly told you the secret!” said Seryozha, bursting into merry laughter.

When they took the candle away, Seryozha heard and felt his mother. She was standing over him and caressing him with her loving gaze. But then windmills appeared, and a penknife, all was confusion, and he fell asleep.

28

When they arrived in Petersburg, Vronsky and Anna stayed at one of the best hotels. Vronsky separately, on the lower floor, and Anna upstairs with the baby, the nurse, and the maid, in a large suite of four rooms.

On the very first day of their arrival Vronsky went to see his brother. There he found his mother, who had come from Moscow on sundry matters. His mother and sister-in-law greeted him in the usual way; they asked him questions about his trip abroad and spoke of mutual acquaintances, but did not say a word about his liaison with Anna. His brother, who went to see Vronsky the next morning, asked him about her himself, and Alexei Vronsky told him frankly that he regarded his liaison with Madame Karenina as a marriage and that he hoped to arrange for a divorce and then marry her, but until then he considered her as much his wife as he would any other wife and asked him to tell his mother and his own wife so.

"If society doesn't approve, I don't care," said Vronsky, "but if my family wants to maintain familial relations with me, then they must have the same relations with my wife."

His older brother, who had always respected his younger brother's opinions, did not quite know whether he was right or not until society decided the matter. For his part, he had nothing against it, and went with Alexei to see Anna.

In his brother's presence, Vronsky used the formal "you" with Anna, as he did in front of everyone, and treated her like a close acquaintance, but it was understood that his brother knew their relationship, and they spoke of the fact that Anna was going to Vronsky's estate.

In spite of all his worldly experience, Vronsky was, as a result of the new situation in which he now found himself, strangely deluded. One would have thought he would have to understand that society was closed to him and Anna. But now vague notions were born in his mind that it was only that way in the old days and that now, given rapid progress (without himself noticing it, he had now become a supporter of any kind of progress), society's view had changed and that the issue of whether or not they would be accepted in society was not yet decided. "Naturally," he thought, "she will not be received at court, but the people close to me can and should take the proper view of this."

You can sit for a few hours in a row, legs crossed in the same position, if you know nothing is preventing you from changing your position; but if a man knows that he has to sit like that, with crossed legs, then he will suffer cramps, his legs will twitch and strain to where he would like to stretch them. That is exactly what Vronsky was experiencing with respect to society. Although deep down he knew that society was closed to them, he was testing whether society

might not change now and accept them. But he very quickly noticed that although society was open to him personally, it was closed to Anna. As in a game of cat and mouse, the arms that lifted for him immediately dropped in front of Anna.

One of the first ladies from Petersburg society whom Vronsky saw was his cousin Betsy.

“At long last!” she greeted him joyously. “And Anna? I’m so pleased! Where are you staying? I can imagine that after your splendid travels you must find our Petersburg simply dreadful; I can imagine your honeymoon in Rome. What about the divorce? Has all that been taken care of?”

Vronsky noted that Betsy’s enthusiasm diminished when she learned there had still been no divorce.

“They’ll be throwing stones at me, I know,” she said, “but I shall come to see Anna. Yes, I definitely shall. Will you be here long?”

Indeed, that very same day she went to see Anna, but her tone was quite different from before. She evidently took pride in her daring and wanted Anna to appreciate the loyalty of her friendship. She stayed no more than ten minutes, chatting about society news, and upon her departure said:

“You haven’t told me when the divorce is to be. Even if I toss my cap over the windmill, you will get the cold shoulder from the other starched collars until you marry, and it is so simple now. *Ça se fait*.³⁵ So you’re leaving on Friday? Such a pity we won’t see each other again.”

From Betsy’s tone, Vronsky might have understood what society had in store for him; nonetheless he made another attempt in his own family. He was not counting on his mother. He knew that his mother, who had admired Anna so during their first acquaintance, was now unpardoning toward her for being the ruination of her son’s career. But he placed greater hope on Varya, his brother’s wife. He did not think she would throw stones and would simply and decisively visit Anna and receive her.

The day after his arrival, Vronsky went to see her and, finding her alone, frankly expressed his wish.

“Alexei,” she said after listening to him, “you know how I love you and how willing I am to do anything for you, but I was silent because I knew I could not be useful to you and Anna Arkadyevna,” she said, putting especial emphasis on “Anna Arkadyevna.” “Please do not think I judge her. Never. In her place I might have done the same. I will not and cannot go into details,” she said, gazing timidly at his dark face, “but one must call things by their name. You want me to go see her, accept her, and by doing so rehabilitate her in society; but you have to understand that I *cannot* do that. I have daughters growing up, and I have to

live in society for my husband. Well, suppose I pay Anna Arkadyevna a visit; she would understand that I cannot invite her to my house or must do so in such a way that she does not meet anyone who views things differently, and this would insult her. I cannot raise her up—”

“But I do not believe she has fallen any more than hundreds of women whom you do receive!” Vronsky interrupted her even more gloomily and stood up in silence, realizing that his sister-in-law’s decision was inalterable.

“Alexei! Don’t be angry with me. Please, understand, I’m not to blame,” Varya began, looking at him with a timid smile.

“I’m not angry with you,” he said just as gloomily, “but this pains me doubly. It pains me also because this breaches our friendship. Or perhaps not breaches, but does weaken it. You must understand that for me it cannot be otherwise.”

And with that, he left her.

Vronsky realized that further attempts were futile and that he must spend these few days in Petersburg as if it were a foreign city, avoiding all dealings with his former world in order to avoid being subjected to unpleasant and insulting treatment, which would be agonizing for him. One of the most unpleasant aspects of his situation in Petersburg was the fact that Alexei Alexandrovich and his name seemed to be everywhere. You could not begin talking about anything without the conversation turning to Alexei Alexandrovich; you could not go anywhere without encountering him. Or so at least it seemed to Vronsky, as it seems to someone with a sore toe that he is constantly stubbing this same sore toe, as if on purpose.

Vronsky found their stay in Petersburg even more difficult because all the while he saw in Anna a new and to him incomprehensible mood. At one time she acted as if she were in love with him, at another she became cold, irritable, and impenetrable. She was in agony over something and hiding something from him and did not seem to notice the insults which were poisoning his life and which for her, with her subtle understanding, ought to have been an agony still greater.

29

One of Anna’s reasons for returning to Russia was to meet with her son. Since the day she had left Italy, the thought of this meeting had not ceased to agitate her. The closer she drew to Petersburg, the greater and greater the joy and significance she ascribed to this meeting. She did not ask herself how she would arrange this meeting. It seemed natural and simple to see her son when she was in the same city. But upon her arrival in Petersburg she suddenly pic-

tured clearly her present position in society, and she realized that arranging a meeting would be difficult.

She had already been in Petersburg for two days. The thought of her son had not left her for a moment, but she had yet to see her son. She felt she did not have the right to go straight to the house, where she might encounter Alexei Alexandrovich. They might not let her in and might insult her. Just the thought of writing to and dealing with her husband was agony: she could be calm only when she did not think about her husband. Seeing her son on his walk, having found out where and when he went out, was not enough for her. She had prepared so much for this meeting, there was so much she needed to tell him, and she wanted so badly to hug and kiss him. Seryozha's old nurse could have helped and shown her what to do, but the nurse was no longer in Alexei Alexandrovich's household. Two days passed in these hesitations and in seeking out the nurse.

Having learned of Alexei Alexandrovich's close relations with Countess Lydia Ivanovna, on the third day Anna decided to write her a letter that cost her great effort and in which she intentionally said that permission to see her son would depend on her husband's magnanimity. She knew that if the letter were shown to her husband, he, continuing in his role of magnanimity, would not refuse her.

The *commissionaire* who brought the letter conveyed to her the cruelest and most unexpected reply—that there would be no reply. She had never felt so humiliated as at that moment when, summoning the *commissionaire*, she heard his detailed story about how he had been kept waiting and how he had then been told, "There will be no reply." Anna felt humiliated and insulted, but she saw that from her point of view Countess Lydia Ivanovna was right. Her grief was all the stronger because it was solitary. She could not and did not want to share it with Vronsky. She knew that for him, even though he was the chief cause of her misfortune, the issue of her meeting with her son would seem completely unimportant. She knew that he would never be able to understand the full depth of her suffering; she knew that his cold tone at any allusion to this would make her hate him, and she feared this more than anything in the world and so hid from him everything that concerned her son.

Having spent the entire day at home, she kept thinking of ways to meet with her son and settled on the solution of writing her husband. She was already composing this letter when she was brought a letter from Lydia Ivanovna. The countess's silence had restrained and subdued her, but the letter, everything that she read between its lines, so irritated her, this malice seemed to her so outrageous in comparison with her passionate and legitimate tenderness for her son, that she became incensed at others and ceased to blame herself.

“This indifference, this pretense of feeling,” she told herself. “All they want is to insult me and torture my child, and I will not let myself be subdued by them! Not for anything! She is worse than me. At least I don’t lie!” Then she decided that the very next day, on Seryozha’s birthday, she would go straight to her husband’s house, bribe the staff, be deceitful, but no matter what happened she would see her son and destroy the hideous deceit with which they had surrounded her unlucky child.

She went to a toy store, bought toys, and contemplated a plan of action. She would arrive early in the morning, at eight o’clock, before Alexei Alexandrovich had gotten up. She would have money in hand, which she would give the doorman and the footman, so that they would let her in, and without lifting her veil she would say she had come from Seryozha’s godfather to congratulate him and that she had been instructed to put the toys at the child’s bedside. The only thing she hadn’t prepared was what she would say to her son. No matter how much she thought about this, she could think of nothing.

The next day, at eight o’clock in the morning, Anna emerged alone from a hired sleigh and rang at the main entrance of her former home.

“Go see what they want. It’s some lady,” said Kapitonych, who was not yet dressed and was wearing coat and galoshes, having seen out the window a lady covered with a veil and standing right by the door.

The doorman’s helper, a young lad Anna did not know, had just opened the door for her when she walked in and taking a three-ruble note from her muff hurriedly slipped it into his hand.

“Seryozha . . . Sergei Alexeyevich,” she said, and was about to walk ahead. The assistant looked at the note and stopped her at the other glass door.

“Whom did you wish to see?” he asked.

She did not hear his words and did not say anything in reply.

Noticing the stranger’s confusion, Kapitonych himself went out to see her, let her in, and asked what she needed.

“From Prince Skorodumov for Sergei Alexeyevich,” she said.

“He is not up yet,” said the doorman, looking at her closely.

Anna had never anticipated that the furnishings of the front hall of the house where she had lived for nine years, which had not changed at all, would have such a powerful effect on her. One after another, memories, both joyous and agonizing, rose up in her soul, and for a moment she forgot why she was here.

“Would you please wait?” said Kapitonych, removing her coat.

Removing her coat, Kapitonych looked into her face, recognized her, and bowed low in silence.

“If you please, Your Excellency,” he said to her.

She wanted to say something, but her voice refused to produce any sounds

whatsoever; looking at the old man with a guilty entreaty, she walked to the staircase with quick light steps. Hunched over completely and catching his galoshes on the steps, Kapitonych ran after her, trying to overtake her.

“The tutor is there and may not be dressed. I’ll tell him.”

Anna continued walking up the familiar staircase, understanding nothing of what the old man was saying.

“Here, to the left, please. Forgive me, it’s not clean. They’re in the old sitting room now,” said the doorman, gasping. “Kindly wait a moment, Your Excellency, I’ll take a look,” he said, and overtaking her, he opened the tall door and was hidden from view. Anna stopped, waiting. “He just woke up,” said the doorman, coming out the door again.

The moment the doorman said this, Anna heard the sound of a child yawning. From the voice of this yawning alone she recognized her son and saw him before her as if alive.

“Let me in, let me in, go!” she began, and she went through the tall door. To the right of the door was a bed, and on the bed, sitting up, was her son, in his unbuttoned nightshirt, and arching his little body, stretching, he was finishing his yawn. The moment his lips came together, they formed a blissfully sleepy smile, and with this smile he again collapsed backward, slowly and sweetly.

“Seryozha!” she whispered, noiselessly walking up to him.

During her separation from him, and during the flood of love she had recently been feeling for him all the time, she had imagined him as a four-year-old boy, as she had loved him most of all. Now he was not even the same as she had left him; even farther from being a four-year-old, he was taller and thinner. What was this! How thin his face, how short his hair! How long his arms! How he had changed since she had left him! But it was he, the same shape of his head, his lips, his soft cheek, and his broad little shoulders.

“Seryozha!” she repeated right above the child’s ear.

He raised himself back up on an elbow, turned his tousled head from side to side, as if searching for something, and opened his eyes. Quietly and quizzically he looked for several seconds at his mother standing stock-still in front of him, then suddenly smiled blissfully, and once again shutting his sleepy eyes, collapsed, but not backward, rather toward her, into her arms.

“Seryozha! My sweet boy!” she said, gasping and hugging his soft body.

“Mama!” he said, moving under her arms so that different parts of his body would touch her arms.

Smiling sleepily, his eyes still shut, he let go of the back of the bed with his soft little hands and grabbed her by the shoulders, collapsed onto her, bathing her in the sweet sleepy scent and warmth that only children have and began rubbing his face into her neck and shoulders.

"I knew it," he said, opening his eyes. "Today's my birthday. I knew you'd come. I'll get up right away."

And saying that, he fell asleep.

Anna surveyed him hungrily; she saw how he had grown and changed in her absence. She did and did not recognize his bare feet, now so big, which had freed themselves from the blanket, recognized the thinner cheeks, the short clipped curls at the nape of his neck, which she had kissed so often. She touched all this and could not speak; tears were choking her.

"What are you crying for, Mama?" he said, thoroughly awake now. "Mama, what are you crying for?" he exclaimed in a tearful voice.

"Me? I won't cry. . . . I'm crying from joy. It's been so long since I've seen you. I won't. I'm not," she said, swallowing her tears and turning away. "Come, it's time for you to get dressed now," she added after she had recovered, and after a moment's silence, not letting go his hands, sat down by his bed on the chair where his clothes had been laid out.

"How do you get dressed without me? How—" she was about to begin talking simply and cheerfully, but she couldn't, and again she turned away.

"I don't bathe in cold water, Papa told me not to. Have you seen Vasily Lukich? He's coming. Oh, you sat down on my clothes!" and Seryozha burst out laughing.

She looked at him and smiled.

"Mama, darling, dear Mama!" he exclaimed, rushing toward her again and hugging her. It was as if only now, seeing her smile, that he clearly realized what had happened. "You don't need this," he said, removing her hat. As if seeing her for the first time without her hat all over again, he again rushed toward her and kissed her.

"But what have you been thinking about me? Did you think I was dead?"

"I never believed it."

"You didn't, my sweet boy?"

"I knew it, I knew it!" he repeated his favorite phrase, and seizing her hand, which was caressing his hair, began pressing the palm of her hand to his mouth and kissing it.

30

Vasily Lukich, meanwhile, not realizing at first who this lady was, and learning from the conversation that this was the very mother who had abandoned her husband and whom he did not know, since he had joined the household after she left it, was in doubt as to whether or not he should enter or inform Alexei

Alexandrovich. Reflecting at last that his responsibility consisted in getting Seryozha up at a specific hour and that it was therefore not up to him to sort out who was sitting there, his mother or someone else, but that he must do his duty, he got dressed, went to the door, and opened it.

But the caresses of mother and son, the sounds of their voices, and what they were saying—all this made him change his mind. He shook his head, sighed, and shut the door. “I’ll wait another ten minutes,” he told himself, clearing his throat and wiping his tears.

There was a great uproar among the household servants all this time. Everyone had learned that the lady of the house had arrived, that Kapitonych had let her in, that she was now in the nursery, while the master himself always stopped by the nursery between eight and nine o’clock, and everyone realized that a meeting of the spouses was impossible and must be prevented. Kornei, the valet, walking into the doorman’s room, asked who had let her in and how, and when he learned that Kapitonych had received and escorted her, he reprimanded the old man. The doorman maintained a stubborn silence, but when Kornei told him that he should be fired for this, Kapitonych jumped up, and waving his arms in front of Kornei’s face, began saying:

“Oh yes, you wouldn’t have let her in! Ten years of service, and nothing from her but kindness, oh yes, you’d go now and say, ‘If you please,’ you’d say, ‘Get out!’ That’s how you’d show what a clever politician you are! That’s you, all right! You’d just be thinking of how to fleece the master and pinch raccoon coats!”

“Soldier!” Kornei said contemptuously, and he turned to the nurse, who had come in. “You judge, Marya Efimovna. He let her in without telling anyone,” Kornei addressed her. “Alexei Alexandrovich will be down shortly and will go to the nursery.”

“Such goings-on!” said the nurse. “You, Kornei Vasilyevich, you have to stop him somehow, the master, and I’ll run up and somehow get her away. Such goings-on!”

When the nurse entered the nursery, Seryozha was telling his mother about how he and Nadenka had fallen when they sledded down the hill and turned a somersault three times. She was listening to the sounds of his voice, watching his face and the play of expression, and holding his hand, but she was not registering what he was saying. She had to go, she had to leave him—that was all she could think and feel. She heard the steps of Vasily Lukich, who approached the door and coughed, and heard the nurse’s steps approaching; but she sat as if turned to stone, incapable of speaking or standing.

“My lady, my dear!” the nurse began, walking up to Anna and kissing her

hands and shoulders. "See how God brought joy to our birthday boy. You haven't changed the least bit."

"Oh, nurse, my dear, I didn't know you were in the house," said Anna, coming to her senses for a moment.

"I don't live here, I live with my daughter, I came to congratulate him, Anna Arkadyevna, my dear!" The nurse suddenly burst into tears and again began kissing her hand.

Seryozha, his eyes and smile shining, and holding onto his mother with one hand and his nurse with the other, stamped on the carpet with his pudgy bare feet. His beloved nurse's tenderness for his mother enraptured him.

"Mama! She comes to see me often and when—" he was about to begin, but he stopped, noticing the nurse whisper something to his mother and fear and something like shame come over his mother's face, which was so unbecoming to his mother.

She went to him.

"My dearest!" she said.

She could not say *good-bye*, but the expression on her face said it, and he understood.

"My sweet, sweet Kutik!" she used the name she had called him when he was little. "You won't forget me? You—" but she could not go on.

How many words she thought of later that she might have said to him! But now she couldn't think of anything and could say nothing. But Seryozha understood everything she meant to tell him. He understood she was unhappy and loved him. He even understood what the nurse was whispering. He heard the words "Always between eight and nine o'clock," and he understood that this had been said about his father and that his mother and father could not meet. He understood this, but one thing he could not understand: why was there fear and shame on her face? It wasn't her fault, yet she was afraid of him and ashamed of something. He wanted to ask a question that would explain away this doubt for him, but he didn't dare. He saw she was suffering and he felt sorry for her. He silently pressed close to her and whispered, "Don't go yet. He won't come right away."

She held him away from herself to see whether he was thinking about what he was saying, and in the frightened expression on his face she read that he was not only talking about his father but trying to ask her how he ought to think about his father.

"Seryozha, my sweet boy," she said, "love him. He is much better and nobler than me, and I am guilty before him. When you grow up, you will decide."

"There's no one better than you!" he exclaimed desperately through tears,

and grabbing her around the shoulders, squeezed her as hard as he could with his arms, which trembled from the exertion.

“Dear heart, my little boy!” Anna said, and she began crying just as softly and childishly as he.

At that moment the door opened and Vasily Lukich walked in. Steps were heard at the other door, and the nurse said in a frightened whisper:

“He’s coming,” and she handed Anna her hat.

Seryozha dropped onto his bed and began sobbing, covering his face with his hands. Anna pulled away those hands, kissed his wet face once again, and with quick steps walked out the door. Alexei Alexandrovich was walking toward her. When he saw her, he stopped and bowed his head.

Despite what she had just said, that he was better and nobler than she, in the quick glance she cast at him, taking in his entire person in all its detail, feelings of revulsion and anger for him and envy over her son gripped her. She lowered her veil with a rapid motion and picking up her pace, nearly ran out of the room.

She had not managed to unwrap them and so brought home those toys which she had selected in the shop with such love and sorrow the day before.

31

No matter how powerfully Anna had desired the meeting with her son, no matter how long she had been thinking about it and preparing for it, she could not have anticipated the powerful effect this meeting would have on her. Returning to her lonely suite in the hotel, for a long time she could not understand why she was here. “Yes, it’s all over, and I am alone once again,” she told herself, and without removing her hat, she sat down on a chair by the hearth. Staring with unblinking eyes at the bronze clock on the table between the windows, she began thinking.

The French maid she had brought from abroad came in and suggested that she dress. She looked at her with amazement and said, “Later.”

The footman suggested coffee.

“Later.”

The Italian nurse, after taking the baby out, came in with her and brought her to Anna. The chubby, well-fed little girl, as always, upon seeing her mother, turned her little bare arms, which looked as if strings had been tied around her wrists, palms down, and smiling a toothless little grin, began, like a fish with its fins, to row with her little arms, rustling them over the starched folds of her embroidered skirt. It was impossible not to smile and kiss the little girl, it was impossible not to extend her finger and let her latch on, shrieking and bouncing

with her whole body; impossible not to stick out her lip, which she, by way of a kiss, took into her little mouth. Anna did all this, and took her in her arms, and bounced her, and kissed her fresh little cheek and bared little elbows; but at the sight of this child it was even clearer to her that the emotion she felt for her was not even love in comparison with what she felt for Seryozha. Everything about this little girl was dear, but for some reason all this had not made a claim on her heart. To her first child, though by a man she did not love, she had given all the power of love that had not been satisfied; her little girl had been born in the most difficult conditions, yet not a hundredth of the care had been lavished on her as had been on her first. Moreover, in the little girl everything was still expectation, whereas Seryozha was nearly a person already, and a beloved person; thoughts and feelings already contended inside him; he understood, he loved, he judged her, she thought, recalling his words and looks. She had been torn from him not only physically but spiritually, forever, and nothing she could do would fix that.

She gave the little girl back to the nurse, let her go, and opened the locket in which she kept Seryozha's portrait from when he was almost the same age as her daughter. She rose, removed her hat, and picked up from the small table an album of photographs of her son at different ages. She wanted to sort the photographs and began taking them out of the album. She took them all out. One remained, the last and best photograph. He was wearing a white shirt and sitting astride a chair, his eyes frowning and his mouth smiling. This was his best, most characteristic expression. With her small, deft hands, her slender white fingers moving with unusual intensity, she flicked the corner of the photograph, but the photograph kept getting away, and she couldn't get hold of it. There was no paper knife on the table, so she took out a photograph that was nearby (it was a card of Vronsky done in Rome, in a round hat and with long hair) and coaxed out the photograph of her son. "Yes, here he is!" she said, glancing at the photograph of Vronsky, and suddenly she remembered who the cause was of her present grief. She had not thought of him once all this morning. But now, suddenly, seeing this brave and noble face, so familiar and dear to her, she felt an unexpected surge of love for him.

"Oh, where is he? How can he leave me alone with my sufferings?" she thought suddenly with a sense of reproach, forgetting that she herself had been hiding from him everything that concerned her son. She sent to ask him to come see her right away; with a sinking heart, considering the words with which she would tell him everything, and those expressions of his love which would console her, she waited for him. The messenger returned with the reply that he had a guest but that he would come right away and had instructed him to ask her whether she could receive him and Prince Yashvin, who had arrived in Peters-

burg. "He won't come alone, though he hasn't seen me since dinner yesterday," she thought. "He won't come so I could tell him everything but is coming with Yashvin." Suddenly a strange thought occurred to her: What if he had stopped loving her?

Sorting through the events of recent days, she seemed to see in everything confirmation of this terrifying thought: he had not dined at home yesterday, he had insisted that they take separate rooms in Petersburg, and even now he wasn't coming to see her alone, as if to avoid meeting her one-on-one.

"But he ought to tell me this. I need to know it. If I know it, then I know what I shall do," she told herself, unable to imagine the position she would be in once convinced of his indifference. She thought that he had stopped loving her, she felt close to despair, and as a result was particularly agitated. She rang for her maid and went to her dressing room. As she was dressing, she took more care dressing than she had all these days, as if, having stopped loving her, he might start loving her again because she was wearing that dress or had done her hair in a more becoming way.

She heard his ring before she was ready.

When she came out into the drawing room, not he but Yashvin met her gaze. Vronsky was examining the photographs of her son, which she had left on the table, and did not hurry to look up at her.

"We are acquainted," she said, placing her small hand in the large hand of a flustered Yashvin (which was so strange given his huge size and coarse face). "Acquainted since last year, at the races. Give me those," she said, with a quick motion taking from Vronsky the photographs of her son, which he had been looking at, and looking at him significantly with flashing eyes. "Were the races good this year? Instead of them I watched the races at the Corso in Rome. You don't like life abroad, though," she said, smiling kindly. "I know you and I know all your tastes, though you and I have met very little."

"I am truly sorry about that, because my tastes are mostly bad," said Yashvin, biting the left side of his mustache.

After they had talked a little while, Yashvin noticed Vronsky glancing at his watch and asked whether she would be staying in Petersburg for long, and bowing his large figure, he picked up his peaked cap.

"Not long, I think," she said in confusion, glancing at Vronsky.

"So, we won't see each other again?" said Yashvin, standing and turning toward Vronsky. "Where are you dining?"

"Come dine with me," said Anna decisively, as if angry at herself for her embarrassment, but blushing, as always when she revealed her position to someone new. "The dinner here is not very good, but at least you will be able to see each other. Alexei doesn't care for any of his regimental friends as much as you."

"I would be most pleased," said Yashvin with a smile, from which Vronsky could see that he liked Anna very much.

Yashvin bowed and exited, and Vronsky stayed behind.

"Are you going, too?" she told him.

"I'm already late," he replied. "Go on! I'll catch up with you in a minute!" he shouted to Yashvin.

She took him by the hand and, not lowering her eyes, looked at him, searching her thoughts for something to say to make him stay.

"Wait, there's something I need to say." Taking his stubby hand, she pressed it to her neck. "Is it all right that I invited him to dine?"

"You did wonderfully," he said with a serene smile, revealing his close-set teeth and kissing her hand.

"Alexei, you haven't changed toward me, have you?" she said, pressing his hand with both of hers. "Alexei, I'm in utter agony here. When will we leave?"

"Soon, soon. You can't believe how hard our life is here for me, too," he said, and he extended his hand.

"Well, go on, go on!" she said, hurt, and she moved quickly away from him.

32

When Vronsky returned, Anna was not yet home. Soon after he left, they told him, some lady came to see her and they had gone out together. The fact that she went out without saying where, the fact that she was still not back, the fact that she had also gone somewhere that morning without telling him anything—all this, along with the strangely agitated expression on her face this morning and the memory of the hostile tone with which she had nearly torn her son's photographs out of his hands when Yashvin was there, gave him pause. He decided he must have a talk with her, and he waited for her in her drawing room. But Anna did not return alone; she brought her aunt, an old maid, Princess Oblonskaya. This was the same lady who had come in the morning and with whom Anna had gone out to make her purchases. Anna seemed not to notice the preoccupied and perplexed expression on Vronsky's face and cheerfully recounted to him what she had bought that morning. He saw that there was something peculiar going on in her: in her flashing eyes, when they rested for an instant on him, was a strained attention, and her speech and movements had that nervous quickness and grace which at the start of their intimacy had so enticed him but now alarmed and frightened him.

Dinner was laid for four. Everyone had gathered in order to go into the small dining room when Tushkevich arrived with a message for Anna from Princess

Betsy. Princess Betsy asked her to forgive her for not coming to say good-bye; she was unwell, but asked Anna to come see her between half past six and nine o'clock. Vronsky looked at Anna when the time was specified, which showed her that measures had been taken so that she would not meet anyone; but Anna seemed not to notice it.

"I'm so sorry, but I can't between half past six and nine," she said, smiling faintly.

"The princess will be very sorry."

"And I as well."

"You are doubtless going to hear Patti?" said Tushkevich.³⁶

"Patti? You've given me an idea. I would go if I could get a box."

"I can get one," Tushkevich responded.

"I would be very, very grateful to you," said Anna. "Wouldn't you like to dine with us?"

Vronsky gave a barely perceptible shrug. He decidedly did not understand what Anna was doing. Why had she brought this old princess, why had she kept Tushkevich to dine, and most astonishing of all, why had she sent him out for a box? Could she really think that in her position she could attend the Patti subscription, where she would find all the society she knew? He gave her a grave look, but she answered him with the same provocative look, partly cheerful and partly desperate, whose significance he could not discern. At dinner, Anna was aggressively cheerful: she seemed to be flirting with both Tushkevich and Yashvin. When they rose from dinner and Tushkevich had gone for the box, Yashvin, joined by Vronsky, went to Vronsky's rooms to smoke. After sitting for a short while, he ran back upstairs. Anna was already dressed in a light-colored silk and velvet dress, which she had had made in Paris, with an open neckline and expensive white lace on her head framing her face and setting off her vivid beauty to particular advantage.

"Are you sure you want to go to the theater?" he said, trying not to look at her.

"Why do you sound so frightened?" she said, offended once more that he would not look at her. "Why shouldn't I?"

She seemed not to understand the meaning of his words.

"Oh, no reason whatsoever," he said, frowning.

"That is exactly what I've been saying," she said, intentionally refusing to see the irony in his tone and calmly rolling up her long, fragrant glove.

"Anna, for God's sake! What's wrong with you?" he said, as if to wake her up in precisely the same way her husband had once spoken to her.

"I don't understand what you're asking."

"You know you can't go."

“Why? I’m not going alone. Princess Varvara has gone to dress, she will come with me.”

He shrugged his shoulders with a look of perplexity and despair.

“But do you really not know —” he began.

“But I don’t want to know!” she nearly shouted. “I don’t! Do I repent of what I have done? No, no, and no. If it were all to do over again, it would happen the same. For us, for me and for you, only one thing is important: whether we love each other. There are no other considerations. Why are we living apart here and not seeing each other? Why can’t I go? I love you, and I don’t care” — she said it in Russian and looked at him with an unusual gleam in her eyes that he did not understand — “as long as you have not changed. Why don’t you look at me?”

He looked at her. He saw all the beauty of her face and gown, which was always so becoming to her. But now this beauty and elegance of hers was the very thing that irritated him.

“My feelings cannot change, you know that. But I’m asking you not to go. I beg of you,” he said again in French with a gentle supplication in his voice but a coldness in his look.

She did not hear the words but she did see the coldness of his look and replied with irritation, “And I’m asking you to say why I shouldn’t go.”

“Because it could cause you —” he stopped short.

“I don’t understand anything. Yashvin *n’est pas compromettant*, and Princess Varvara is no worse than anyone else.³⁷ And here she is.”

33

For the first time, Vronsky experienced annoyance bordering on anger at Anna for her intentional refusal to understand her position. This feeling was intensified by the fact that he could not express the reason for his annoyance. Had he told her frankly what he was thinking, then he would have said, “In this gown, with a princess only too well known, to appear at the theater would mean not only admitting your position as a fallen woman but also throwing down the gauntlet to society, that is to say, renouncing it forever.”

He could not tell her this. “But how can she fail to understand it, and what is going on inside her?” he said to himself. He felt his respect for her diminishing and his awareness of her beauty increasing at one and the same time.

Scowling, he returned to his room, and sitting beside Yashvin, who had stretched his long legs out on a chair and was drinking cognac with soda water, ordered himself served the same thing.

“You were saying, Lankovsky’s Mighty. A good horse and I advise that you

buy him," said Yashvin, looking at his friend's dark face. "He has a sloping croup, but his legs and head—you couldn't wish for better."

"I think I'll take him," Vronsky replied.

The discussion of horses interested him, but not for a moment did he forget Anna, nor could he keep from listening for the sound of steps along the hall and looking at the clock on the mantel.

"Anna Arkadyevna ordered me to report that they have left for the theater."

Yashvin, tipping another shot of cognac into the fizzing water, tossed it back and rose, buttoning his coat.

"Well then? Let's go," he said, smiling faintly under his mustache and showing with this smile that he understood the reason for Vronsky's gloom but was ascribing no importance to it.

"I'm not going," Vronsky replied gloomily.

"But I must, I promised. Well, good-bye. Or else come to the orchestra, take Krasinsky's stall," Yashvin added as he was walking out.

"No, I have business to attend to."

"A wife is a worry, but a non-wife is even worse," thought Yashvin as he left the hotel.

Vronsky, left alone, rose from his chair and began pacing around the room.

"What's today? It's the fourth subscription. Egor and his wife are there, and his mother, likely. That means all Petersburg is there. Now she's walked in, removed her coat, and come out into the light. Tushkevich, Yashvin, and Princess Varvara," he was picturing it to himself. "What about me? Either I'm afraid or I put her under Tushkevich's protection. No matter how you look at it, it's foolish, foolish. Why is she putting me in this position?" he said, with a wave of his arm.

With this gesture he caught the table where the soda water and decanter of cognac were standing and nearly knocked it over. He tried to catch it, dropped it, and with annoyance kicked at the table and rang.

"If you care to be in my service," he told the entering valet, "then remember your duties. This should not happen. You should have cleared it away."

The valet, feeling himself innocent, wanted to defend himself, but he took one look at his master, realized from his face that the only thing to do was keep silent, and hurriedly bending over, got down on the carpet and began sorting out the whole and broken glasses and bottles.

"That's not your job. Send in the footman to clean it up and ready my evening coat."

Vronsky entered the theater at half past eight. The performance was well under way. The box keeper, a kind old fellow, removed Vronsky's coat, and

recognizing him, called him "Your Excellency" and suggested that he not take a number but simply call for Fyodor. There was no one in the brightly lit corridor but the box keeper and two footmen holding coats and listening at the door. Through the closed door he could hear the orchestra's cautious staccato accompaniment and a single female voice, which was distinctly articulating a musical phrase. The door opened, allowing the box keeper to slip in, and the phrase, which was coming to its end, clearly struck Vronsky's ear. The door shut immediately, and Vronsky did not hear the end of the phrase or cadenza, but he understood from the thunderous applause through the door that the cadenza was over. When he entered the hall, which was brightly illuminated by chandeliers and bronze gas jets, the noise was continuing. On stage the singer, gleaming with bared shoulders and diamonds, bowing and smiling, was collecting, with the help of the tenor, who was holding her by the arm, the bouquets that were clumsily flying over the footlights; she walked toward a gentleman with a part down the middle of his glossy, pomaded hair who was stretching his long arms across the footlights holding out something to her, and the entire audience in the orchestra, as well as in the boxes, buzzed and leaned forward, shouting and clapping. The conductor on his podium was helping with the transfer and straightening his white tie. Vronsky walked to the middle of the orchestra, stopped, and began to look around. Today he paid less attention than ever to the familiar, habitual surroundings, to the stage, to this noise, to all this familiar, uninteresting, motley herd of spectators in the packed theater.

The same sort of ladies as always were with the same sort of officers as usual at the back of the boxes; the same, God knows who, colorful women, and uniforms, and frock coats; the same filthy mob in the balcony, and in this entire crowd, in the boxes and the first rows, there were about forty of the *real* men and women. It was to these oases that Vronsky immediately turned his attention and began to interact.

The act was ending when he entered, and so without stopping at his brother's box he passed through to the first row and by the footlights stopped beside Serpukhovskoi, who, knee bent and heel tapping, caught sight of him from far off and called him over with a smile.

Vronsky had not yet seen Anna; he was intentionally not looking in her direction. But he knew from the direction of people's glances where she was. He looked around surreptitiously but did not look for her; expecting the worst, he looked for Alexei Alexandrovich. To his good fortune, Alexei Alexandrovich was not at the theater this time.

"How little there is of the military left in you!" Serpukhovskoi told him. "A diplomat, an artist, something along those lines."

“Yes, as soon as I came home, I put on my evening coat,” Vronsky replied, smiling and slowly taking out his opera glasses.

“Now in this, I admit, I envy you. When I come back from abroad and put on this one”—he touched his epaulettes—“I regret my freedom.”

Serpukhovskoi had given up on Vronsky’s political career long ago, but he still liked him and now was especially gracious with him.

“It’s too bad you were late for the first act.”

Vronsky, listening with one ear, swept his opera glasses from the baignoires to the dress circle and surveyed the boxes.³⁸ Alongside a lady in a turban and a bald old man blinking angrily into the moving opera glasses, Vronsky suddenly caught sight of Anna’s head, proud, stunningly beautiful, and smiling in its lace frame. She was in the fifth baignoire, twenty paces from him. She was sitting toward the front and had turned slightly to say something to Yashvin. The set of her head on her beautiful broad shoulders and the excited but checked radiance of her eyes and her entire face reminded him of her exactly as he had first seen her at the ball in Moscow. Now, though, he experienced this beauty in a completely different way. There was nothing mysterious in his emotion for her now, and so her beauty, although it attracted him even more strongly than before, at the same time now offended him. She was not looking in his direction, but Vronsky could sense that she had seen him.

When Vronsky again turned his opera glasses in that direction, he noted that Princess Varvara, especially red-faced, was laughing unnaturally and constantly looking around at the next box; Anna, tapping her folded fan against the red velvet, was looking off somewhere but not seeing and evidently not wanting to see what was going on in the next box. The expression on Yashvin’s face was the one he wore when he was losing at cards. Scowling, he was sucking the left half of his mustache in deeper and deeper and casting sidelong glances at the next box.

In that box, to the left, were the Kartasovs. Vronsky knew them and knew that they and Anna were acquainted. Madame Kartasova, a thin, small woman, was standing in her box and, her back turned toward Anna, was putting on her wrap, which her husband was holding for her. Her face was pale and angry, and she was saying something in an agitated voice. Kartasov, a fat, bald gentleman, constantly looking around at Anna, was trying to calm his wife. When his wife had gone out, her husband dawdled for a long time, trying to catch Anna’s eye and evidently wishing to bow to her. But Anna, obviously not noticing him on purpose, had turned away and was saying something to Yashvin, who had inclined his crooked head toward her. Kartasov went out without bowing, and the box was left empty.

Vronsky did not understand what exactly had transpired between the Kartasovs and Anna; but he did understand that something humiliating had hap-

pened to Anna. He understood this both from what he saw, and most of all from the face of Anna, who, he knew, had summoned her last strength to maintain the role she had taken on. And this role of outward calm was succeeding quite well for her. Anyone who did not know her and her circle, who had not heard all the women's expressions of sympathy, indignation, and astonishment that she had allowed herself to appear in society and appear so noticeably in her lace and with her beauty, would have admired this woman's calm and beauty and not suspected that she felt like someone being pilloried.

Knowing that something had occurred, but not knowing precisely what, Vronsky was experiencing agonizing alarm. Hoping to learn something, he went to his brother's box. Intentionally choosing the parterre stairwell on the side opposite to Anna's box, as he was walking out he bumped into his former regimental commander, who was speaking with two acquaintances. Vronsky heard Madame Karenina's name spoken and noticed how the regimental commander hastened to call to Vronsky loudly, glancing significantly at those speaking.

"Ah, Vronsky! When are you coming to see us at the regiment? We can't let you go without a feast. You're one of us through and through," said the regimental commander.

"Can't stop, very sorry, next time," said Vronsky and he ran up the stairs to his brother's box.

The old countess, Vronsky's mother, with her steel opera glasses, was in his brother's box. Varya and Princess Sorokina met him in the dress circle corridor.

Escorting Princess Sorokina as far as her mother, Varya had put her hand out to her brother-in-law and immediately began talking about what interested him. She was agitated such as he had rarely seen her.

"I find it base and vile, and Madame Kartasova had no right. Madame Karenina . . ." she began.

"But what is it? I don't know."

"What, you didn't hear?"

"You know I'd be the last to hear of it."

"Is there a nastier creature than that Madame Kartasova?"

"But what did she do?"

"My husband told me. . . . She insulted Madame Karenina. Her husband began speaking with her across the box, and Madame Kartasova made a scene. They say she said something insulting very loudly and went out."

"Count, your *maman* is asking for you," said Princess Sorokina, peeking out the box door.

"I have been waiting for you," his mother said to him, smiling derisively. "You're never to be seen."

The son saw that she could not restrain her smile of delight.

"Hello, *maman*. I was on my way to see you," he said coldly.

"What? Aren't you going to *faire la cour à Madame Karenine*?"³⁹ she added when Princess Sorokina had moved away. "*Elle fait sensation. On oublie la Patti pour elle.*"⁴⁰

"*Maman*, I've asked you not to speak to me of this," he answered, frowning.

"I'm just saying what everyone is saying."

Vronsky made no reply, and after a few words to Princess Sorokina, he went out. In the doorway he met his brother.

"Ah, Alexei!" said his brother. "What vileness! A fool, nothing more. I wanted to go to her straightaway. Let's go together."

Vronsky was not listening to him. He had started downstairs with rapid steps; he felt he must do something, but did not know what. Annoyance at her for putting herself and him in such a false position, along with pity for her sufferings, was agitating him. He descended to the orchestra and headed directly for Anna's baignoire. Stremov was standing by the baignoire and chatting with her, "There are no more tenors. *Le moule en est brisé.*"⁴¹

Vronsky bowed to her and stopped, exchanging greetings with Stremov.

"You seem to have arrived late and not heard the best aria," Anna said to Vronsky, glancing at him derisively, as it seemed to him.

"I am a poor judge," he said, looking sternly at her.

"Like Prince Yashvin," she said, smiling, "who maintains that Patti sings too loudly.

"Thank you," she said, her small hand in the long glove taking the program Vronsky had picked up, and suddenly at that instant, her beautiful face shuddered. She rose and stepped to the back of the box.

Noticing that during the next act her box remained empty, Vronsky, provoking hushes from the theater, which had gone quiet at the sounds of the cavatina, left the orchestra and went home.

Anna was already at home. When Vronsky went in to see her she was alone, wearing the same gown she had worn at the theater. She was sitting on the first chair by the wall and looking straight ahead. She glanced at him and immediately resumed her previous position.

"Anna," he said.

"You! You are to blame for everything!" she screamed with tears of despair and anger in her voice as she rose.

"I asked you, I begged you not to go. I knew it would not be pleasant for you."

"Unpleasant!" she exclaimed. "It was horrible! No matter how long I live, I shall never forget it. She said it was a disgrace to be sitting next to me."

"The words of a foolish woman," he said, "but why risk, arouse—"

“I despise your calm. You should not have brought me to this pass. If you loved me—”

“Anna! What does the question of my love have to do with this?”

“Yes, if you loved me as I do you, if you suffered as I do . . .” she said, looking at him with an expression of fright.

He felt sorry for her but annoyed nonetheless. He assured her of his love because he saw that this alone could calm her now, and he did not reproach her in words, but in his soul he did.

Those assurances of love which had seemed to him so vulgar that he was ashamed to utter them she drank in and little by little calmed down. They left for the country the next day, perfectly reconciled.

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VI

1

Darya Alexandrovna spent the summer with her children at Pokrovskoye, with her sister Kitty Levina. The house at her own estate was in complete disrepair, and Levin and his wife had persuaded her to spend the summer with them. Stepan Arkadyevich highly approved of this arrangement. He said that he very much regretted that his duties prevented him from spending the summer with his family in the country, but it would be the supreme happiness for him, while remaining in Moscow, to come to the country from time to time for a day or two. Besides the Oblonskys with all their children and governess, that summer the Levins entertained the old princess, who considered it her duty to watch over her inexperienced daughter, who was in *that condition*. Besides that, Varenka, Kitty's friend from abroad, kept her promise to come see her when Kitty was married and was a guest in her friend's home. All of these were the relatives and friends of Levin's wife, and although he loved them all, he rather regretted his own Levin world and ways, which were drowned out by this influx of the "Shcherbatsky element," as he called it privately. Of his family, only Sergei Ivanovich was a visitor this summer, but even he was not a Levin but a Koznyshev sort of man, so that the Levin spirit was quite obliterated.

In the long-deserted Levin house there were now so many people that nearly all the rooms were occupied and nearly every day the old princess, sitting down to table, had to count everyone again and move the thirteenth, a grandson or granddaughter, to a special little table. Kitty, who was taking such pains with the household, had quite a lot to attend to, what with buying hens, turkeys, and ducks, which, given the summer appetites of their guests and children, came out to quite a few.

The entire family was sitting at dinner. Dolly's children, the governess, and Varenka were planning where to go mushroom hunting. Sergei Ivanovich, who enjoyed a respect among all the guests for his intellect and erudition that went almost to the point of worship, amazed everyone by breaking into the discussion of mushrooms.

"You must take me with you. I dearly love mushroom hunting," he said, looking at Varenka. "I find this a very fine activity."

“Why certainly, we would be very pleased,” replied Varenka, blushing. Kitty exchanged significant looks with Dolly. The proposal by the erudite and intelligent Sergei Ivanovich to go mushroom hunting with Varenka confirmed certain of Kitty’s surmises which had occupied her a great deal of late. She hastened to start talking with her mother, so that her look would not be noticed. After dinner, Sergei Ivanovich sat down with his cup of coffee at the drawing room window, continuing the discussion begun with his brother and glancing at the door where the children gathering for mushroom hunting would emerge. Levin perched on the windowsill near his brother.

Kitty was standing beside her husband, evidently waiting for the end of their uninteresting conversation in order to tell him something.

“You’ve changed in many ways since you’ve married, and for the better,” said Sergei Ivanovich, smiling at Kitty, and evidently little interested in the conversation they had begun, “but you’ve remained faithful to your passion for defending the most paradoxical themes.”

“Katya, it’s not good for you to stand,” her husband told her, moving a chair up for her and looking at her significantly.

“Well, yes, and anyway there’s no time,” added Sergei Ivanovich, seeing the children run out.

Ahead of everyone, galloping sideways, in her snug stockings, swinging her basket and Sergei Ivanovich’s hat, Tanya ran straight for him.

She boldly ran up to Sergei Ivanovich and handed him his hat, her eyes shining, so like her father’s marvelous eyes, and pretended to try to put it on him, with her shy and gentle smile softening her audacity.

“Varenka’s waiting,” she said, carefully putting his hat on him and seeing from Sergei Ivanovich’s smile that this was all right.

Varenka was standing in the doorway, dressed now in a yellow cotton print dress with a white kerchief tied around her head.

“I’m coming, I’m coming, Varvara Andreyevna,” said Sergei Ivanovich, drinking the last of his cup of coffee and depositing his handkerchief and cigar case in his pockets.

“How lovely my Varenka is! Don’t you think?” Kitty said to her husband as soon as Sergei Ivanovich stood up. She said this so that Sergei Ivanovich could hear her, which was obviously what she intended. “And how beautiful, how nobly beautiful! Varenka!” Kitty exclaimed. “Will you be in the miller’s woods? We’ll come find you.”

“You have certainly forgotten your condition, Kitty,” the old princess intoned, hurrying out the door. “You mustn’t shout like that.”

Varenka, hearing Kitty’s summons and the mother’s reprimand, went up to Kitty quickly, with light steps. The quickness of her movements and the color

that covered her animated face—everything showed that something unusual was transpiring inside her. Kitty knew what this unusual something was, and she was watching her closely. She now summoned Varenka only in order to give her silent blessing to the important event which, by Kitty's lights, ought to take place today after dinner in the woods.

"Varenka, I would be very happy if a certain something were to happen," she whispered, kissing her.

"Will you be coming with us?" Varenka said to Levin, embarrassed, pretending she hadn't heard what had been said to her.

"I will come, but only as far as the barn. I'll wait there."

"Why would you do that?" said Kitty.

"I need to look over the new wagons and take stock," said Levin. "Where will you be?"

"On the terrace."

2

The entire company of women had gathered on the terrace. They liked sitting there after dinner in general, but now they also had work there. Besides sewing baby jackets and knitting swaddling clothes, which kept everyone busy, they were now cooking jam according to a method that was new to Agafya Mikhailovna, without the addition of water. Kitty had instituted this new method, which they had used at home. Agafya Mikhailovna, to whom this matter had been entrusted formerly, believing that what was done in the Levins' house could not be bad, still added water to the strawberries, asserting that it was impossible any other way. She had been caught doing this, and now the raspberries were being cooked in full view of everyone, and Agafya Mikhailovna had to be brought around to the conviction that the jam would come out well even without water.

Agafya Mikhailovna, with a flushed and distressed face, tangled hair, and skinny arms bared to the elbow, was tipping the pot over the brazier in a circular fashion and gloomily watching the raspberries, hoping with all her might that they would stiffen and not boil. The princess, sensing that she, as chief adviser in the cooking of the raspberries, must be the object of Agafya Mikhailovna's fury, was trying to pretend she was otherwise engaged and not interested in the raspberries, talking about other matters but watching the brazier out of the corner of her eye.

"I always buy the maids' dresses myself from inexpensive goods," the princess was saying, picking up their conversation. "Shouldn't the foam be skimmed

now, dear?" she added, addressing Agafya Mikhailovna. "There is absolutely no need for you to do it yourself. It's too hot," she stopped Kitty.

"I'll do it," said Dolly, and rising, she cautiously began running the spoon over the foaming sugar, occasionally tapping it on the saucer, which was already covered with varicolored, yellowish pink spots of foam and flowing blood-red syrup, to free what had stuck to the spoon. "How they shall lick this with their tea!" she thought about her children, recalling how she herself, as a child, had been amazed that the grown-ups did not eat the very best part—the foam.

"Stiva says it's much better to give money," Dolly in the meantime continued the engaging conversation that had begun about how best to give gifts to people, "but—"

"How can one give money!" the princess and Kitty said in unison. "They appreciate a present."

"Well, for example, last year I bought our Matryona Semyonovna not a poplin but something like it," said the princess.

"I remember, she was wearing it on your name day."

"An absolutely darling pattern; so simple and refined. I would have had it made up for myself if she hadn't had it. Something like what Varenka has. So darling and inexpensive."

"Well, I think it's ready now," said Dolly, letting the syrup drip from the spoon.

"When it forms little curls, then it's ready. Cook it a little longer, Agafya Mikhailovna."

"These flies!" said Agafya Mikhailovna angrily. "It's going to be just the same," she added.

"Oh, how sweet it is, don't frighten it!" said Kitty suddenly, looking at the sparrow that was perched on the railing and, having turned the stem of the raspberry around, had begun pecking at it.

"Yes, but you should stay away from the brazier," said her mother.

"À *propos de* Varenka," said Kitty in French, as they always did when they did not want Agafya Mikhailovna to understand them. "You know, *maman*, that for some reason I'm expecting a decision today. You understand what kind. How nice that would be!"

"Well, isn't she a fine matchmaker!" said Dolly. "How carefully and cleverly she brings them together."

"No, tell me, *maman*, what do you think?"

"What's there to think? He (by 'he' she meant Sergei Ivanovich) might have made a match for anyone in Russia; now he is not that young, but still, I know many would be happy to marry him even now. She is very good, but he could—"

"No, you have to understand, Mama, why no one could ever think of any-

thing better for him and for her. First of all, she's lovely!" said Kitty, bending down one finger.

"He does like her a lot, that's true," Dolly confirmed.

"Then, second, he occupies a position in society such that he has absolutely no need of either wealth or social position in a wife. He needs one thing—a good, sweet wife, a calm wife."

"Yes, he could certainly be calm with her," Dolly confirmed.

"Third, she must love him, and so it is . . . that is, it would be so nice! I'm waiting for them to show up from the woods any moment and for everything to be decided. I'll be able to tell right away from their eyes. I would be so happy! What do you think, Dolly?"

"Now, don't go getting yourself worked up. You absolutely mustn't get worked up," said her mother.

"Oh I'm not worked up, Mama. I think he's going to propose today."

"It is so odd, how and when a man proposes. There is some kind of barrier, and suddenly it bursts," said Dolly, smiling pensively and recalling her past with Stepan Arkadyevich.

"Mama, how did Papa propose to you?" Kitty asked all of a sudden.

"There was nothing unusual. It was very simple," replied the princess, but her face beamed at the memory.

"No, but how? You must have loved him before they let him speak to you."

Kitty derived a special pleasure from the idea that she and her mother could now speak, as equals, about all these most important matters in the life of a woman.

"Naturally I loved him. He had come to see us in the country."

"But how was it decided? Mama?"

"You probably think you've invented something altogether new. It's all exactly the same: it was decided by our eyes and our smiles."

"How nicely you said that, Mama! Exactly, by our eyes and our smiles," Dolly confirmed.

"But what words did he say?"

"What words did Kostya say to you?"

"He wrote in chalk. It was wonderful. How long ago that seems!" she said.

The three women lapsed into reverie about the same thing. Kitty was the first to break the silence. She had recalled that entire last winter before her engagement and her infatuation with Vronsky.

"There's one thing . . . it's Varenka's old passion," she said, making a natural connection in her mind when she recalled that. "I wanted to say something to Sergei Ivanovich, to prepare him. They, all men," she added, "are dreadfully jealous of our past."

"Not all," said Dolly. "You're judging based on your own husband. He still agonizes over the memory of Vronsky? Right? That's true, isn't it?"

"Yes," Kitty replied, smiling pensively with her eyes.

"I simply don't know," her mother the princess spoke up as maternal guardian over her daughter, "what past of yours could disturb him? That Vronsky courted you? That happens with every young girl."

"Well, yes, but that's not what we're speaking of," said Kitty, blushing.

"No, please," her mother continued, "and afterward you wouldn't let me speak with Vronsky. Remember?"

"Oh, Mama!" said Kitty with an expression of suffering.

"Nowadays there's no holding you back. Your relations could not have gone farther than was proper, I would have challenged him myself. Actually, my love, it does you no good to get excited. Please, remember that and calm down."

"I am perfectly calm, *Maman*."

"How fortunate it turned out then for Kitty that Anna arrived," said Dolly, "and how unfortunate for her. You see, it was exactly the opposite," she added, struck by her own thought. "Anna was so happy then, and Kitty considered herself unhappy. Now it's completely the other way! I often think of her."

"What a person to think about! A vile, repulsive woman, and heartless," said her mother, who could not forget that Kitty had married Levin rather than Vronsky.

"What is this desire to speak of it?" said Kitty with annoyance. "I don't think about it and I don't want to think about it. I don't," she repeated, hearing her husband's familiar tread on the terrace steps.

"What don't you want to think about?" asked Levin as he walked onto the terrace.

But no one answered him, and he did not repeat the question.

"I'm sorry to disturb your feminine realm," he said, surveying them all with dissatisfaction and realizing they were talking about something they would not talk about in front of him.

For a second he felt that he shared Agafya Mikhailovna's feeling, her dissatisfaction that they were cooking the raspberries without water, and in general at the alien Shcherbatsky influence. He smiled, though, and walked over to Kitty.

"Well, how are you?" he asked her, looking at her with the same expression as everyone did now.

"I'm fine, marvelous," said Kitty, smiling, "and how about you?"

"They're carrying three times more than with the old cart. So shall I go for the children? I ordered the horses readied."

"What, do you want to take Kitty in the trap?" her mother said with reproach.

"But just at a walk, Princess."

Levin had never called the princess *Maman*, as sons-in-law do, and the princess did not like this. But Levin, although he loved and respected the princess greatly, could not call her that without profaning his feelings for his own dead mother.

“Come with us, *Maman*,” said Kitty.

“I have no desire to gaze upon all this recklessness.”

“Well, I’ll walk. It’s good for me, you know.” Kitty rose, walked up to her husband, and took his arm.

“It is, but everything in moderation,” said the princess.

“Well, what about it, Agafya Mikhailovna, is the jam ready?” said Levin, smiling at Agafya Mikhailovna and trying to cheer her up. “Is it good the new way?”

“It’s probably good. To our way, it’s overcooked.”

“It’s better, Agafya Mikhailovna. It won’t sour, and our ice has almost all melted away now, and there’s nowhere to keep it,” said Kitty, immediately picking up on her husband’s intention and addressing the old woman with the same feeling. “On the other hand, your pickles are so good that mama says she’s never eaten anything like them,” she added, smiling, and she straightened her kerchief.

Agafya Mikhailovna looked at Kitty angrily.

“You don’t have to console me, mistress. I just have to look at you and him and I feel happy,” she said, and her use of the familiar “you” touched Kitty.

“Come pick mushrooms with us; you’ll show us the places.”

Agafya Mikhailovna smiled and shook her head, as if to say, “I’d like to be angry with you, but I can’t.”

“Take my advice, please,” said the old princess. “Put a piece of paper over the jam and moisten it with rum, and even without any ice there’ll never be any mold.”

3

Kitty was particularly glad at the chance to be alone with her husband because she had noticed a shadow of distress cross his face, which reflected everything so vividly, the moment he walked onto the terrace and asked what they were talking about and received no reply.

When they started out on foot ahead of the others and were out of sight of the house on the well-worn, dusty road, which was scattered with rusty ears and kernels of grain, she leaned more firmly on his arm and pressed it close to her. He had forgotten the momentary unpleasant impression, and alone with her

now, the thought of her pregnancy never leaving him for a moment, he knew the pleasure, which he still found new and joyous and which was utterly pure of sensuality, of being close to the woman he loved. There was nothing to say, but he wanted to hear the sound of her voice which, like her look, had changed now with her pregnancy. Her voice, like her look, had a softness and gravity similar to that found in people who are steadily focused on one cherished task.

“So you aren’t tired? Lean more,” he said.

“No, I’m so happy at the chance to be alone with you, and I confess, no matter how nice it is to be with them, I miss our winter evenings together.”

“That was fine, but this is even better. Both are better,” he said, pressing her arm.

“Do you know what we were talking about when you came in?”

“The jam?”

“Yes, the jam, too, but afterward about how men propose.”

“Ah!” said Levin, listening more to the sound of her voice than to the words she was saying, all the time thinking about the road, which was now going through the woods, and avoiding those places where she might take a wrong step.

“And about Sergei Ivanovich and Varenka. Have you noticed? I wish it so much,” she continued. “What do you think of this?” She looked into his face.

“I don’t know what to think,” replied Levin, smiling. “I find Sergei very odd in this respect. You know I was saying—”

“Yes, that he was in love with that girl who died.”

“That was when I was a child; I know it from the legends. I remember him then. He was wonderfully kind. But ever since I’ve watched him with women. He’s courteous, and he likes some of them, but you get the feeling that for him they are just people, and not women.”

“Yes, but now with Varenka. . . . There seems to be something.”

“Maybe there is. But you have to know him. He’s an unusual person, a wonderful person. He lives a solely spiritual life. He is too pure and of too lofty a soul.”

“What do you mean? Would this really lower him?”

“No, but he is so accustomed to living his solely spiritual life that he can’t reconcile himself with reality, and Varenka is, after all, a reality.”

By now Levin was used to expressing his thoughts boldly, not troubling himself to put them in precise words. He knew his wife in moments of love such as now would understand what he was trying to say; one hint and she understood him.

“Yes, but she doesn’t have the reality about her that I do, I realize he would never love me. She is entirely spiritual.”

“Oh no, he loves you very much, and I always find it so pleasant that my people love you.”

“Yes, he is good to me, but—”

“But it’s not the way it was with our departed Nikolenka. You did love each other,” Levin finished her thought. “Why not speak of it?” he added. “Sometimes I reproach myself: you end up forgetting. Oh, what an awful and splendid person. Yes, now what were we talking about?” said Levin after a moment’s silence.

“You think he can’t fall in love,” said Kitty, translating into her own language.

“It’s not that he can’t fall in love,” said Levin, smiling, “but he doesn’t have that weakness you need. I’ve always envied him, and now, even when I’m so happy, I still envy him.”

“You envy him for not being able to fall in love?”

“I envy him for being better than me,” said Levin, smiling. “He doesn’t live for himself. His whole life is subordinated to duty. So he can be serene and content.”

“And you?” said Kitty with a mocking, loving smile.

She could never have expressed the chain of thoughts that made her smile; but her final conclusion was that her husband, in admiring his brother and belittling himself before him, was being insincere. Kitty knew that this insincerity came from his love for his brother, out of his feeling of guilt for being too happy, and in particular out of the permanent desire to be better. She loved this in him and so smiled.

“And you? What are you dissatisfied with?” she asked with the same smile.

Her disbelief in his dissatisfaction with himself overjoyed him; unconsciously he had been provoking her to express the reasons for her disbelief.

“I’m happy but dissatisfied with myself,” he said.

“How is it you can be dissatisfied if you’re happy?”

“Oh, how can I tell you? In my heart I want nothing but for you not to stumble. Oh, really, you mustn’t jump like that!” he broke off their conversation with a reproach to her for moving too quickly in stepping over a branch lying on the path. “But when I consider myself and compare myself with others, especially my brother, I feel that I’ve been bad.”

“But in what way?” Kitty continued with the same smile. “Don’t you do things for others as well? Your farmsteads, and your farming methods, and your book?”

“No, and I feel it now especially, that you are to blame,” he said, pressing her arm, “that this isn’t right. I do everything so negligibly. If I could love all of this the way I love you, but lately I’ve been doing it like an assigned lesson.”

“Well, what would you say of Papa?” asked Kitty. “Is he bad because he hasn’t done anything for the common good?”

“He? No. But one must have the simplicity, clarity, and goodness your father has, and do I? I don’t do anything and it tortures me. It’s all your doing. When there was no you, there wasn’t *this* as well,” he said with a glance at her belly which she understood, “I used to put all my energy into my work, but now I can’t, and I feel ashamed; I do it just like an assigned lesson, I’m pretending.”

“Well, would you like to change places with Sergei Ivanovich now?” said Kitty. “Would you like to work for this common cause and love this assigned lesson the way he does, and only that?”

“Of course not,” said Levin. “Actually, I’m so happy, I don’t understand anything. But do you really think he’ll propose today?” he added after a pause.

“I do and I don’t. It’s just that I want it so badly. Here, wait.” She leaned over and picked a wild chamomile from the edge of the road. “Well, count: he will propose, he won’t,” she said, handing him the flower.

“He will propose, he won’t,” said Levin, tearing off the narrow nicked white petals.

“No, no!” Kitty grabbed his arm and stopped him, after watching his fingers with agitation. “You tore off two.”

“Oh, this little one here doesn’t count,” said Levin, tearing off a short, immature petal. “And here the trap has caught up with us.”

“Aren’t you tired, Kitty?” the princess called out.

“Not at all.”

“Well, you can get in, if the horses are quiet and go at a walk.”

But it wasn’t worth getting in. They were close now, and everyone set out on foot.

4

Varenka, wearing a white kerchief on her black hair, surrounded by the children, good-naturedly and gaily busy with them, and obviously agitated at the possibility of a declaration from a man she liked, was very attractive. Sergei Ivanovich was walking beside her, not ceasing to admire her. Looking at her, he recalled all those sweet speeches he had heard from her, everything good he knew about her, and became increasingly aware that the emotion he was feeling for her was something special that he had felt long long ago and just once, in his first youth. The feeling of joy at being close to her, while it kept mounting, reached the point that, as he was putting a brown mushroom with a curled lip, on a slender stem, into her large basket, he looked into her eyes, and noticing

the flush of joyous and frightened agitation that covered her face, himself became embarrassed and smiled at her in silence with a smile that said too much.

"If so," he told himself, "I must think it through and decide and not surrender like a small boy to a moment's enthusiasm."

"I'll go gather mushrooms separately from everyone now, or else no one will notice what I get," he said, and he set out alone from the edge of the woods, where they were walking across low silken grass between sparse old birches, into the middle of the woods, where between the white birch trunks he could see the gray trunks of aspens and the dark leaves of a hazelnut tree. Walking forty paces away and ducking behind some common bittersweet in full bloom, with its pinkish red catkins, Sergei Ivanovich, knowing he could not be seen, stopped. Around him it was completely quiet. Only at the top of the birches under which he stood a bee was buzzing, the flies were making an incessant noise, and from time to time the children's voices reached him. Suddenly, not far from the edge of the woods, he heard Varenka's contralto voice calling Grisha, and a joyous smile broke out on Sergei Ivanovich's face. Conscious of this smile, Sergei Ivanovich shook his head disparagingly at his condition and, getting out a cigar, attempted to light it. For a long time he couldn't light the match on the birch trunk. The white bark's gentle pellicle kept sticking to the phosphorous, putting the fire out. Finally, one of the matches caught, and the fragrant smoke of his cigar, like a broad, rippling cloth, stretched forward and up over a bush under the low-hanging branches of the birch. Watching the band of smoke, Sergei Ivanovich set out with quiet steps, contemplating his situation.

"Why on earth not?" he thought. "Were this a mere whim or passion, had I experienced only this attraction—this mutual attraction (I can say *mutual*) but felt that it went counter to the entire cast of my life, had I felt that by surrendering to this attraction I would be betraying my calling and duty . . . but there's none of that. The one thing I can say against it is that, when I lost Marie I told myself I would remain faithful to her memory. This is the one thing I can say against my feeling. That's important," Sergei Ivanovich told himself, feeling at the same time that this consideration for him personally could not have any importance whatsoever except to spoil his poetic role in the eyes of other people. "But apart from that, no matter how hard I look, I can find nothing to speak against my feeling. If I were to choose by reason alone I could find nothing better."

No matter how many women and girls he could remember knowing, he could not recall a young woman who combined to such a degree all, absolutely all the qualities which he, reasoning coolly, would wish to see in his wife. She had all the charm and freshness of youth but was not a child, and if she loved him, then she loved him consciously, as a woman should love: that was one

thing. Another: she was not only far from being of society but obviously had a revulsion for society, and yet at the same time she knew society and had all the ways of a woman of good society without which a life partner would be unthinkable for Sergei Ivanovich. Third, she was religious, and not instinctively religious and good like a child, as was Kitty, for example; rather, her life was based on religious convictions. Even down to the smallest details Sergei Ivanovich found in her everything he would wish for from a wife. She was poor and lonely, so she would not bring with her a pack of relatives and their influence into her husband's house, as he saw was so with Kitty, but would be obliged to her husband for everything, something he had always wished for in his future family life. This young woman, who combined in herself all these qualities, loved him. He was modest, but he could not help but see that. And he loved her. The one consideration against it was his age. But his family was long-lived, he did not have a single gray hair, no one would have taken him for forty, and he remembered Varenka saying that only in Russia did men at fifty consider themselves old, whereas in France a fifty-year-old man considered himself *dans la force de l'âge*, and a forty-year-old *un jeune homme*.¹ But what did the number of years matter when he felt young of heart, as he did twenty years ago? Wasn't youth the feeling he was experiencing now, when, coming out the other side again to the edge of the woods he saw in the bright light of the sun's slanted rays the graceful figure of Varenka, in her yellow dress and with her basket, stepping lightly past the trunk of an old birch, and when this impression of the sight of Varenka coalesced into one with the stunningly beautiful view of the yellowing field of oats awash in the slanted rays and beyond the field the distant old woods, spotted with yellow melting in the dark blue distance? His heart pounded joyfully. A feeling of tenderness gripped him. He felt he had made up his mind. Varenka, who had just squatted to pick a mushroom, with an agile movement rose and looked around. Throwing away his cigar, Sergei Ivanovich set off toward her with decisive steps.

5

“Varvara Andreyevna, when I was still very young, I composed for myself the ideal of the woman whom I would love and whom I would be happy to call my wife. I have lived a long life and now for the first time I have met in you what I was searching for. I love you and offer you my hand.”

Sergei Ivanovich was saying this to himself when he was just ten paces from Varenka. Dropping to her knees and protecting the mushroom from Grisha with her hands, she called to little Masha.

“Come here, come here! Little ones! There are lots!” she said with her dear, husky voice.

Seeing the approaching Sergei Ivanovich, she did not rise or change position; but everything told him that she felt his approach and was glad of it.

“What, did you find something?” she asked, turning her pretty, quietly smiling face under its white kerchief toward him.

“Not a one,” said Sergei Ivanovich. “What about you?”

She did not reply, being busy with the children who surrounded her.

“This one, too, beside the twig,” she pointed out to little Masha a small russula, cut across its tough pinkish cap by a dry blade of grass, from under which it was pushing out. She rose when Masha had picked the russula, after breaking it into two white halves. “This reminds me of my childhood,” she added, stepping away from the children alongside Sergei Ivanovich.

They walked several paces in silence. Varenka could see what he wanted to say; she had guessed what it was about and was dying of agitation, joy, and terror. They walked so far away that no one could hear them any longer, but still he did not speak. Varenka should have kept silent. After a silence it would have been easier to say what they wanted to say than after words about mushrooms; but against her will, as if inadvertently, Varenka said:

“So you didn’t find anything? Actually, there are always fewer in the middle of the woods.”

Sergei Ivanovich sighed and said nothing in reply. He was annoyed that she had started talking about mushrooms. He wanted to turn her back to her first words, when she had spoken about her childhood; but as if against his own will, after a brief silence, he made a comment on her last words.

“I have heard only that the white ones are primarily on the edge, although I don’t know how to tell a white one.”

A few more minutes passed; they walked farther and farther from the children and were completely alone. Varenka’s heart was pounding so loudly she could hear it and felt herself blushing, paling, and blushing again.

To be the wife of a man such as Koznyshev, after her position with Madame Stahl, seemed to her the pinnacle of happiness. Moreover, she was almost certain that she was in love with him, and this had to be decided right now. She was terrified. Terrified of what he would and would not say.

He had to declare himself, it was now or never; even Sergei Ivanovich felt this. Everything in Varenka’s look, her blush, her lowered eyes, showed her painful anticipation. Sergei Ivanovich saw this and felt sorry for her. He felt even that not saying anything now would mean offending her. Quickly in his mind he repeated all the arguments in favor of his decision. He repeated to himself,

too, the words with which he wanted to express his proposal; but instead of these words, a thought came to him unexpectedly, and he suddenly asked:

“What is the difference between the white and the brown?”

Varenka’s lips were trembling from agitation when she answered:

“In the cap there is almost no difference, but there is in the stem.”

As soon as these words had been said, both he and she realized that it was over, that what ought to have been said would not be said, and their agitation, which before this had reached the highest degree, began to subside.

“The brown mushroom—its stem looks like a dark-haired man’s two-day beard,” Sergei Ivanovich said, calmly now.

“Yes, that’s true,” replied Varenka, smiling, and unwittingly the direction of their walk changed. They began drawing closer to the children. Varenka was both hurt and ashamed, but at the same time she experienced a sense of relief.

When he had returned home and was running through all his arguments, Sergei Ivanovich found that he had been reasoning incorrectly. He could not betray Marie’s memory.

“Easy, children, easy!” Levin shouted angrily at the children, standing in front of his wife to protect her when the throng of children came swooping down on them with a whoop of delight.

Sergei Ivanovich and Varenka followed the children out of the woods. Kitty did not need to ask Varenka; from the calm and somewhat ashamed expression of both faces she realized that her plans had not come to pass.

“Well, what happened?” her husband asked her when they were returning home.

“No bite,” said Kitty, in her smile and manner of speaking reminding him of her father, something Levin often noticed in her with satisfaction.

“What do you mean no bite?”

“Just this,” she said, picking up her husband’s hand, bringing it to her mouth, and touching it with her unopened lips. “The way people kiss the hand of a bishop.”

“Whose no bite, though?” he said, laughing.

“Both. It should have been like this—”

“There are peasants coming.”

“No, they didn’t see.”

6

During the children’s tea, the grown-ups sat on the balcony and talked as if nothing had happened, although everyone, especially Sergei Ivanovich and

Varenka, knew very well that something had happened, something negative, but very important. They both were experiencing the identical emotion, resembling what a pupil experiences after he has failed an exam and is left in the same class or expelled from the institution forever. All those present, sensing also that something had happened, spoke animatedly on irrelevant topics. Levin and Kitty felt especially happy and loving this evening. The fact that they were happy in their love contained an unpleasant hint to those who wanted as much and could not have it—and they felt ashamed.

“Mark my word: *Alexandre* will not come,” said the old princess.

This evening they were awaiting Stepan Arkadyevich’s train, and the old prince had written that he might come as well.

“And I know why,” the princess continued. “He says young people should be left alone for a while at first.”

“Well, Papa has left us alone. We haven’t seen him,” said Kitty. “And what kind of young people are we? We’re already such old folks.”

“Only if he doesn’t come, I will be saying good-bye to you, children,” said the princess, sighing sadly.

“Don’t say such things, Mama!” both daughters fell on her.

“Just think, how must he feel? After all, now . . .”

And suddenly, quite unexpectedly, the old princess’s voice began to tremble. The daughters fell silent and exchanged looks. “*Maman* will always find something sad for herself,” they said with this look. They did not know that no matter how nice it was for the princess with her daughter, no matter how needed she felt here, she had been agonizingly sad both for herself and for her husband ever since they had married off their last and favorite daughter and their nest had emptied.

“What is it, Agafya Mikhailovna?” Kitty suddenly asked Agafya Mikhailovna, who had stopped and had a mysterious look and significant expression.

“It’s about supper.”

“Well, this is fine,” said Dolly. “You arrange it, and I’ll go with Grisha and review his lesson. Otherwise he won’t have done anything today.”

“That’s my lesson! No, Dolly, I’ll go,” said Levin, jumping up.

Grisha, who had already entered school, was supposed to review his lessons over the summer. Darya Alexandrovna, who had been studying Latin with her son in Moscow before, made it a rule when she had come to the Levins’ to review with him, at least once a day, the very hardest lessons in arithmetic and Latin. Levin had volunteered to take her place; but Grisha’s mother, having once heard Levin’s lesson and noticing that it was not being done as the teacher had drilled in Moscow, firmly told Levin, though she was embarrassed and anx-

ious not to offend him, that he must go through the book the way the teacher had and that she had better go back to doing this herself. Levin was annoyed at Stepan Arkadyevich as well because, by taking no care, he had left it to the boy's mother to supervise studies she did not understand at all. He was annoyed as well at the teachers because they taught the children so badly. However, he promised his sister-in-law to go about the teaching as she wished it. He continued to work with Grisha now not in his own way but by the book, and therefore reluctantly and often forgetting lesson time. That's what had happened today.

"No, I'm coming, Dolly, you sit down," he said. "We'll do everything properly, by the book. Only look, when Stiva arrives, we're going hunting, then I will be missing it."

Levin went to see Grisha.

Varenka told Kitty the same thing. In the Levins' sympathetic and comfortable home, Varvara had made herself useful.

"I'll order supper, while you sit," she said, and she rose to go see Agafya Mikhailovna.

"Yes, yes, that's right, they didn't find any chickens. Then our own—" said Kitty.

"Agafya Mikhailovna and I will discuss it." And Varenka slipped out of sight.

"What a dear young lady!" said the princess.

"Not dear, *Maman*, quite splendid, there is no one like her."

"So are you expecting Stepan Arkadyevich now?" said Sergei Ivanovich, obviously not wishing to prolong the conversation about Varenka. "It would be hard to find two brothers-in-law less alike than your husbands," he said with a faint smile. "One is in motion, alive only in society, like a fish in water; the other, our Kostya, is vital, quick, alert to everything, but the moment he's in society, he either freezes or flops about like a fish on dry land."

"Yes, he's very frivolous," said the princess, turning to Sergei Ivanovich. "I wanted to ask you specifically to tell him that she"—she pointed to Kitty—"simply cannot remain here but must definitely come to Moscow. He says he'll send for a doctor."

"*Maman*, he'll do everything, he's agreed to everything," said Kitty, annoyed at her mother for bringing Sergei Ivanovich into the matter as a judge.

In the middle of their conversation, the snorting of horses and the sound of wheels on crushed stone was heard on the drive.

Before Dolly could even stand to greet her husband, Levin, downstairs, had jumped out the window of the room in which Grisha was studying and helped Grisha down.

"It's Stiva!" shouted Levin from beneath the balcony. "We're finished, Dolly,

don't worry!" he added, and like a little boy he set out running to meet the carriage.

"Is, ea, id, ejus, ejus, ejus," shouted Grisha, skipping down the drive.²

"And someone else, too. It must be Papa!" Levin exclaimed, stopping by the entrance to the drive. "Kitty, go around. Don't take the steep stairs."

But Levin was wrong in taking the person sitting in the carriage with Oblonsky for the old prince. When he got closer to the carriage, he saw sitting next to Stepan Arkadyevich not the prince but a handsome, stout young man wearing a Scotch cap with long ribbons down the back. This was Vasenka Veslovsky, the Shcherbatskys' second cousin, a brilliant young Petersburg and Moscow man, "the most excellent of fellows and a passionate hunter," as Stepan Arkadyevich introduced him.

Not embarrassed in the slightest by the disappointment he had caused by taking the old prince's place, Veslovsky cheerfully greeted Levin, reminding him of their former acquaintance, and picking Grisha up into the carriage, lifted him over the pointer that Stepan Arkadyevich had brought along.

Levin did not get into the carriage but walked behind. He was slightly annoyed that the old prince, whom the more he knew the more he loved, had not come and that this Vasenka Veslovsky had shown up, a completely superfluous stranger. He seemed all the more strange and superfluous because when Levin walked up to the front stairs, where an animated crowd of adults and children had gathered, he saw that Vasenka Veslovsky was kissing Kitty's hand, looking especially fond and gallant.

"Your wife and I are *cousins* as well as old friends," said Vasenka Veslovsky, again giving Levin's hand a hearty shake.

"How about it. Is there any game?" Stepan Arkadyevich, who had barely managed to say a word of greeting to everyone, turned to Levin. "He and I have the cruelest of intentions now. Of course, *Maman*, they haven't been in Moscow since . . . Here, Tanya, this is for you! Get it out, please, it's in the back of the carriage." He spoke in every direction. "How fresh you look, Dollenka," he told his wife, kissing her hand again, holding it in his own and tousling her hair with the other.

Levin, who a minute before had been in the most cheerful of spirits, was now looking gloomily at everyone, and he didn't like any of it.

"Who was he kissing with those lips yesterday?" he thought, looking at Stepan Arkadyevich's tendernesses with his wife. He looked at Dolly, and he didn't like her either.

"She doesn't believe in his love. So what is she so pleased about? It's disgusting!" Levin thought.

He looked at the princess, who had been so dear to him a minute before, and he didn't like the way she was welcoming this Vasenka with his ribbons into the house as if it were her own.

Even Sergei Ivanovich, who had also come out on the front steps, seemed unpleasant to him with the feigned amiability with which he greeted Stepan Arkadyevich, whereas Levin knew that his brother neither liked nor respected Oblonsky.

Even Varenka, even she was offensive because with her look of *sainte nitouche* she was being introduced to this gentleman when just before she had only been thinking about getting married.³

Most offensive of all was Kitty for the way she gave in to the tone of good cheer with which this gentleman looked upon his own arrival in the country; and that special smile with which she responded to his smiles made her seem especially unpleasant.

Everyone went into the house, conversing noisily, but no sooner were they settled than Levin turned on his heel and walked out.

Kitty could see that something had happened with her husband. She wanted to steal a moment to speak with him alone, but he hurried to get away from her, saying he needed to go to his office. It was a long time since his business affairs had seemed as important to him as now. "It's all a holiday to them," he thought, "but matters here are not on holiday, they won't wait, and we can't survive without them."

7

Levin did not return to the house until they sent to call him for supper. On the staircase stood Kitty and Agafya Mikhailovna, consulting on the wines for supper.

"Why are you making such a *fuss*?⁴ Serve what we usually do."

"No, Stiva doesn't drink . . . Kostya, wait, what's wrong?" Kitty began, hurrying after him, but pitilessly, not waiting for her, he took long strides away from her into the dining room and immediately joined in the general, animated discussion being maintained there by Vasenka Veslovsky and Stepan Arkadyevich.

"How about it then, shall we go hunting tomorrow?" said Stepan Arkadyevich.

"Please, let's," said Veslovsky, sitting sideways on another chair and tucking his fat leg underneath him.

"I'd love to. Let's go. Have you already been hunting this year?" Levin said to Veslovsky, carefully surveying his leg, but with a feigned pleasantness

which Kitty had never known in him and which did not suit him. "I don't know whether we'll find any great snipe, but there are lots of jacksnipe. Only we must get an early start. You won't be tired? You're not tired, Stiva?"

"Me tired? I've never been tired yet. We can stay up all night! Let's go for a walk."

"Indeed, let's stay up! Excellent!" Veslovsky joined in.

"Oh, we're sure of that, that you can stay up and keep others up as well," Dolly told her husband with that barely perceptible irony with which she almost always addressed her husband now. "But in my opinion, it's already bedtime now. I'm going, I won't be having supper."

"No, sit a little, Dollenka," said Stepan Arkadyevich, crossing to the other side of the large table at which they were dining. "I still have so much to tell you!"

"Not so much, surely."

"But did you know, Veslovsky went to visit Anna, and he's going to see them again? You know, they're all of seventy versts from you. I too will definitely go. Veslovsky, come here!"

Vasenska crossed toward the ladies and sat down next to Kitty.

"Oh, tell us, please, you went to see her? How is she?" Darya Alexandrovna turned to him.

Levin remained at the other end of the table, and though he never paused in his conversation with the princess and Vasenska, he saw that there was an animated and mysterious discussion in progress among Dolly, Kitty, and Veslovsky. It was not enough that it was a mysterious discussion; he could see an expression of serious emotion in his wife's face as she looked steadily into the handsome face of Vasenska, who was recounting something in lively fashion.

"It's very nice at their place," Vasenska was talking about Vronsky and Anna. "Naturally, I don't take it upon myself to judge, but in their home you feel yourself in a family."

"What do they intend to do?"

"Apparently they want to go to Moscow for the winter."

"How nice it would be for us all to meet at their place! You're going when?" Stepan Arkadyevich asked Vasenska.

"I'm spending July with them."

"Will you go?" Stepan Arkadyevich turned to his wife.

"I've wanted to for a long time and I most certainly will," said Dolly. "I feel sorry for her, and I know her. She's a wonderful woman. I'll go there alone, when you leave, and that way I won't embarrass anyone. It will even be better without you."

"That's splendid," said Stepan Arkadyevich. "What about you, Kitty?"

“Me? Why would I go?” said Kitty, turning quite red. She looked around at her husband.

“Do you know Anna Arkadyevna?” Veslovsky asked her. “She is a very attractive woman.”

“Yes,” she replied to Veslovsky, turning redder still, then she stood up and walked over to her husband.

“So you’re going hunting tomorrow?” she said.

His jealousy in those few minutes, especially over the blush that covered her cheeks when she was speaking with Veslovsky, had gone a long way. Now, listening to her words, he understood them in his own way. Strange though it was for him to recall it later, it now seemed clear to him that if she was asking him whether he was going hunting, then this interested her only in order to find out whether he would afford this pleasure to Vasenka Veslovsky, with whom she, according to his lights, was already in love.

“Yes, I am,” he answered in an unnatural voice that even he found offensive.

“No, it would be better for you to spend tomorrow afternoon here, for Dolly hasn’t seen her husband at all, and the day after tomorrow you can go,” said Kitty.

Levin now translated the meaning of Kitty’s words as follows, “Do not take *him* away from me. Whether or not you go is all the same to me, but let me enjoy the society of this charming young man.”

“Oh, if you wish, then we’ll spend tomorrow here,” Levin replied with especial agreeableness.

Meanwhile Vasenka, not in the least suspecting the suffering his presence was causing, stood up from the table after Kitty, and following her with a smiling, fond gaze, walked after her.

Levin saw that gaze. He turned pale and for a moment could not catch his breath. “How dare you look at my wife like that!” was boiling inside him.

“Tomorrow, then? Let’s go, please,” said Vasenka, perching on a chair and again tucking his leg under, as was his habit.

Levin’s jealousy went even farther. He now saw himself as a deceived husband whom his wife and her lover needed only in order to afford them the comforts of life and pleasure. But despite this, he graciously and hospitably questioned Vasenka about his hunting, his guns, and his boots and agreed to go the next day.

Luckily for Levin, the old princess put an end to his sufferings by herself rising and advising Kitty to go to bed. Even here, though, there was no getting around fresh suffering for Levin. In saying good-bye to his hostess, Vasenka again wanted to kiss her hand, but Kitty, blushing, with a naïve rudeness for

which her mother later berated her, said, pulling her hand away, "We don't do that."

In Levin's eyes she was guilty for permitting these relations, and even guiltier for having shown so clumsily that she didn't like them.

"What is this desire to sleep!" said Stepan Arkadyevich, who, after the several glasses of wine he had drunk at dinner, had arrived at his sweetest and most poetic mood. "Look, Kitty, look," he said, pointing to the moon rising behind the linden trees. "How lovely! Veslovsky, this is when we need a serenade. You know, he has a glorious voice; he and I were singing on the road. He has brought beautiful ballads with him, two new ones. He and Varvara Andreyevna must sing."

When everyone had gone their separate ways, Stepan Arkadyevich and Veslovsky spent a long time walking up and down the drive, and their voices could be heard singing a new ballad.

Listening to these voices, Levin sat scowling in the chair in his wife's bedroom and was stubbornly silent to her questions about what was wrong. But when, at last, she herself, smiling shyly, asked, "Was there something about Veslovsky that you didn't like?" something exploded inside him, and he told her everything; what he told her humiliated him and so irritated him all the more.

He was standing in front of her, his eyes glittering terribly under his knitted brows and his strong arms pressed across his chest, as if he were harnessing all his efforts to restrain himself. The expression on his face would have been stern and even harsh if it had not also expressed suffering, which touched her. His temples were twitching, his voice breaking.

"You must understand. I'm not jealous; that's a vile word. I can't be jealous and believe that . . . I can't say what I'm feeling, but it's awful. . . . I'm not jealous but I'm insulted, humiliated that someone dares think, dares look at you with eyes like that."

"But what eyes?" said Kitty, trying as conscientiously as possible to recall all the speeches and gestures of the evening and all their nuances.

Deep down she found that there was something specifically in that moment when he crossed behind her to the other side of the table, but she did not dare admit this even to herself, to say nothing of resolving to tell him and thereby intensify his suffering.

"What could be attractive in me, the way I am?"

"Ugh!" he exclaimed, clutching his head. "You shouldn't have said that! That means if you were attractive —"

“No, Kostya, stop it. Listen to me!” she said, looking at him with an expression of suffering and compassion. “What ever could you be thinking? When there is no one else for me, no one! Would you prefer I never saw anybody?”

For the first minute she was offended by his jealousy; she was annoyed that the slightest distraction, the most innocent, was forbidden her; but now she would have willingly sacrificed even those trifles, everything, for his peace of mind, to relieve his suffering.

“You have to understand the horror and the comical aspect of my position,” he continued in a despairing whisper, “that he is in my house, that he basically hasn’t done anything improper, after all, other than that familiarity and foot tucking. He considers this in the best taste and so I must be gracious with him.”

“But Kostya, you’re exaggerating,” said Kitty, rejoicing deep down at the strength of his love for her, expressed now in his jealousy.

“The most horrible part is that you—you’re just the way you are always, and now, when you are such a sacred object for me, and we’re so happy, so especially happy, and all of a sudden this filth. . . . Not filth, why am I berating him? I don’t care about him. But what about my happiness and yours?”

“You know, I understand why this happened,” Kitty began.

“Why? Why?”

“I saw you watching when we were talking at dinner.”

“Well, yes, yes!” said Levin, frightened.

She told him what they had been talking about, and as she told him, she was breathless from agitation. Levin was silent, then he looked closely into her pale, frightened face and suddenly clutched his head.

“Katya, I’ve been torturing you! My darling, forgive me! This is madness! Katya, it’s all my fault. How could anyone be in such agony over such foolishness?”

“No, I feel sorry for you.”

“For me? Me? What am I? A madman! Why should you? It’s horrible to think that any stranger could disrupt our happiness.”

“Naturally, it’s also insulting.”

“No, on the contrary, now I will keep him with us all summer on purpose and will shower him with kindnesses,” said Levin, kissing her hands. “Wait and see. Tomorrow . . . yes, indeed, tomorrow we shall go.”

8

The next day, the ladies had not yet risen when the hunters’ two conveyances, a shooting brake and a cart, were standing by the entrance and Laska,

who had realized since morning that they were going hunting, having bounded about and barked her fill, was sitting on the brake beside the driver, watching the door, from which the hunters had still not emerged, in excitement and disapproval at the delay. First to emerge was Vasenka Veslovsky, wearing big new boots that went halfway up his fat thighs, a green shirt, and a cartridge belt that smelled of new leather, and his cap with the ribbons, and with a brand-new English gun without a ring or sling. Laska bounded up to him in greeting, leaping, asking him in her own way whether the others would be out soon, but receiving no answer from him, returned to her waiting post and again quieted down, turning her head on one side and pricking up one ear. At last the door clattered open, and Krak, Stepan Arkadyevich's sandy dappled pointer, flew out, running in circles and turning in the air, and Stepan Arkadyevich himself came out with a gun in his arms and a cigar in his mouth. "Stay, stay, Krak!" he shouted fondly at the dog, who had thrown her paws onto his belly and chest, getting them caught in his game bag. Stepan Arkadyevich was wearing leather ghillies and leg bindings, torn trousers, and a jacket. On his head was the ruin of some hat, but his newfangled gun was a darling, and the game bag and cartridge belt, although well worn, were of the best quality.

Vasenka Veslovsky had not understood before this true hunting dandyism — to wear rags but to have hunting gear of the very best quality. He understood this now, looking at Stepan Arkadyevich, his elegant, well-fed, and cheerful lordly figure glowing in these rags, and decided that he would definitely fit himself out like that for the next hunt.

"Well, and what about our host?" he asked.

"A young wife," said Stepan Arkadyevich, smiling.

"Yes, and such a charming one."

"He was already dressed. He must have run back to see her."

Stepan Arkadyevich had guessed. Levin had run by again to see his wife and ask her one more time whether she forgave him for yesterday's foolishness, and also to ask her to be more careful, for Christ's sake. Most of all, she should stay away from the children — they might bump into her. Then he had to get confirmation from her once again that she was not angry with him for going away for two days and also to ask her to be sure to send him a note tomorrow morning with the rider, to write just a few words, so he could know she was well.

As always, it hurt Kitty to be parted from her husband for two days, but seeing his animated figure, which was especially large and strong in his hunting boots and white shirt, and that hunting excitement which was so inscrutable to her, she forgot her grief because of his delight and parted with him gaily.

"My fault, gentlemen!" he said, running out on the front steps. "Is the lunch

in? Why is the chestnut on the right? Oh well, it doesn't matter. Laska, stop it. Go sit!"

"Let them out with the heifers," he turned to the herdsman who was waiting for him by the front steps with a question about the lambs. "My fault, here comes another villain."

Levin jumped down from the shooting brake, where he had just taken a seat, to meet the hired carpenter, who was walking toward the front steps carrying a measuring stick.

"So you didn't come to the office yesterday, and now you're holding me up. Well, what is it?"

"Have me make another turn. It's just three steps to add, and it'll fit just right. It'll be much easier."

"You should have listened to me," Levin replied with annoyance. "I told you. Set the guidelines first and then cut in the treads. Now there's no fixing it. Do it the way I told you. Cut it new."

The problem was that the contractor had ruined the staircase in the annex being built by cutting it separately and not taking into account the rise, so that all the treads were sloped when they were put in place. Now the contractor wanted to leave the same staircase and add three treads.

"It will be a lot better."

"And where would you have it coming out with three steps?"

"I beg your pardon, sir," said the carpenter with a contemptuous smile. "It'll be coming out at the very same spot. You see, I mean, it'll start from the bottom," he said with a convincing gesture, "and go up and up 'til it gets there."

"But three steps are going to add to the length. . . . So where will it come to?"

"That's just it, I mean, from the bottom you see it goes up and so 'til it gets there," the contractor spoke persistently and convincingly.

"It'll come up to the ceiling and to the wall."

"I beg your pardon. You see, from the bottom it'll go up. It'll go up and up and get there."

Levin took out a cleaning rod and started drawing the staircase for him in the dust.

"Well, do you see?"

"Whatever you say," said the carpenter, a light suddenly coming on in his eyes, evidently having understood, at last, his point. "I see I'll have to cut a new one."

"Well, then go and do it as I ordered!" shouted Levin, getting into the brake. "I'm off! Hold the dogs, Filipp!"

Now, having left behind all his family and farming cares, Levin experienced

such a powerful sense of *joie de vivre* and anticipation that he didn't feel like talking. Not only that, he was experiencing that intense excitement which any hunter experiences as he gets closer to the scene of action. If anything occupied him now, it was merely questions of whether they would find something in the Kolpensk marsh, how Laska would compare to Krak, and how he himself might fare in the shooting today. Would he keep from disgracing himself in front of someone new? What if Oblonsky outshot him? That, too, occurred to him.

Oblonsky was experiencing a similar emotion and was not feeling talkative, either. Vasenka Veslovsky alone chattered away cheerfully. Now, listening to him, Levin was ashamed at how unfair he had been to him the day before. Vasenka was truly a splendid fellow, simple, good-natured, and very cheerful. Had Levin met him as a bachelor, he would have become close to him. Levin found his idle attitude toward life and the familiarity of his elegance slightly unpleasant. It was as if he recognized a lofty and undeniable importance for himself because he had long nails, and a Scotch cap, and everything that went with it; but he could be forgiven this for his good nature and decency. Levin liked in him his fine upbringing, the excellence of his French and English, and the fact that he was a man of Levin's world.

Vasenka took an extraordinary liking to the Don steppe horse in the left trace. He kept singing its praises.

"How fine it is to ride a steppe horse at a gallop across the steppe. Isn't that right?" he said.

He was trying to picture something wild and poetic for himself in riding a steppe horse, though nothing came of it; however, his naïveté, especially in combination with his good looks, sweet smile, and the grace of his movements, was very attractive. Whether it was because his nature was congenial to Levin, or because Levin was trying to atone for yesterday's sin by finding everything good in him, Levin was having a pleasant time with him.

Having ridden three versts, Veslovsky suddenly felt for his cigar and wallet and didn't know whether he had lost them or left them on the table. His wallet had three hundred seventy rubles in it, and so he could not just leave it at that.

"You know what, Levin, I'll gallop home on this Don trace horse. That will be excellent. Won't it?" he said, already preparing to climb down.

"No, but why?" replied Levin, calculating that Vasenka had to weigh at least six poods. "I'll send the driver."

The driver rode off, and Levin took up the reins himself.

9

“Well, what’s our route? Tell us all about it,” said Stepan Arkadyevich.

“The plan is this. Right now we’ll go as far as Gvozdevo. At Gvozdevo there’s a snipe marsh along this side, and beyond Gvozdevo there are marvelous snipe marshes, and sometimes there are great snipe. It’s hot now, and by nightfall we’ll arrive (twenty versts) and take the evening field; we’ll sleep over, and tomorrow we’ll go to the bigger marshes.”

“You mean there’s nothing along the way?”

“There is, but it will hold us up, and it’s hot. There are two splendid little spots, but there’s scarcely going to be anything.”

Levin himself felt like stopping at these spots, but the spots were close to home, he could always take them, and the spots were small—there was nowhere for three people to shoot. So he dissembled, saying he doubted there would be anything. As they drew even with a small marsh, Levin wanted to drive by, but Stepan Arkadyevich’s experienced hunter’s eye immediately noted a swampy spot visible from the road.

“Aren’t we going to stop?” he said, pointing to the marsh.

“Levin, please! How excellent!” Vasenka Veslovsky begged, and Levin could not but consent.

They had barely come to a halt when the dogs, one overtaking the other, were racing toward the swamp.

“Klak! Laska!”

The dogs came back.

“There isn’t room for three. I’ll stay here,” said Levin, hoping they didn’t find anything but the lapwings which the dogs had flushed out and which were wailing piteously above the marsh, swooping in flight.

“No! Let’s go, Levin, let’s go together!” Veslovsky called.

“You’re right, it is crowded. Laska, back! Laska! You won’t need another dog, will you?”

Levin stayed by the brake and watched the hunters enviously. The hunters walked right across the marsh. Other than a moorhen and the lapwings, one of which Vasenka killed, there was nothing in the marsh.

“Well, you see there, I didn’t begrudge the marsh,” said Levin, “just the time lost.”

“No, still, it’s fun. Did you see?” said Vasenka Veslovsky, clumsily climbing onto the brake carrying his gun and his lapwing. “How splendidly I killed this! Didn’t I? Well, will we be getting to the genuine article soon?”

All of a sudden the horses bolted, Levin hit his head on the butt of someone’s gun, and a shot rang out. The shot, actually, rang out before, but that was how

it seemed to Levin. The problem was that Vasenka Veslovsky, while uncocking his gun, had squeezed one trigger but held the other. The charge drove into the ground, doing no one any harm. Stepan Arkadyevich shook his head and laughed balefully at Veslovsky, but Levin did not have the heart to reprove him. First of all, any reproach would have seemed provoked by the danger that had passed and the bump that had been raised on Levin's forehead; and second, Veslovsky was so naïvely grieved at first, and then laughed so good-naturedly and attractively at their shared panic that he could not help but laugh himself.

When they drove up to the second marsh, which was fairly large and ought to have taken a lot of time, Levin tried to convince them not to get out. But Veslovsky entreated him again, and again, since the swamp was narrow, Levin, as the gracious host, stayed with the carriages.

Straightaway when they pulled up Krak made for the tussocks. Vasenka Veslovsky was the first to run after the dog, and before Stepan Arkadyevich could get there, a snipe flew out. Veslovsky missed, and the snipe landed in an unmown meadow. That snipe was left for Veslovsky. Krak found it again, it flew up, and Veslovsky killed it and returned to the carriages.

"Now you go, and I'll stay with the horses," he said.

Hunter's envy was beginning to fill Levin. He handed the reins to Veslovsky and set off for the marsh.

Laska, who had been barking for a long time and complaining at the injustice, raced straight ahead to a reliable marshy spot Levin knew where Krak had not gone.

"Why don't you stop her?" shouted Stepan Arkadyevich.

"She won't scare it off," Levin replied, exulting in his dog and hurrying after her.

In Laska's search, the closer she came to the familiar marshy spots, the greater did the seriousness of the situation become. A tiny marsh bird distracted her only for a moment. She made one circle in front of the tussocks, began another, and suddenly shuddered and froze.

"Come, Stiva, come!" shouted Levin, feeling his heart starting to pound harder and harder and suddenly, as if some bolt had been shunted aside in his tensed hearing, all the sounds, having lost their measure of distance, began to strike him in a disorderly but vivid way. He heard the steps of Stepan Arkadyevich, taking them for the distant thunder of horses, heard the fragile sound of a corner of tussock he had stepped on break off with the roots, taking this sound for the flight of a great snipe. He also heard behind him not far away a splashing through the water, which he could not account for.

Placing his feet carefully, he advanced toward the dog.

“Take!”

It was a great snipe, not a jacksnipe, that burst up from under the dog. Levin raised his gun, but while he was aiming, the same sound of splashing through the water intensified, came close, and was joined by the voice of Veslovsky, who was shouting something in a strangely loud voice. Levin saw he was firing at the snipe from behind, but he took the shot anyway.

Convinced that he had missed, Levin looked around and saw that the horses were no longer on the road but in the marsh.

Veslovsky, wishing to see the shooting, had driven into the marsh and the horses were stuck.

“Damn that man!” Levin muttered, returning to the mired carriage. “Why did you move it?” he said to him dryly, and calling to the driver, he began trying to free the horses.

Levin was annoyed both that he had been prevented from firing and that his horses were stuck, and, the main thing, that neither Stepan Arkadyevich nor Veslovsky helped him and the driver unhitch and free the horses, since neither one had the slightest idea of what harnessing was. Saying not a word to Vasenka’s assurances that it was perfectly dry there, Levin worked in silence with the driver to free the horses. But later, heated up by the work, and seeing how very earnestly Veslovsky was dragging the brake by its splashboard, so that he actually broke it off, Levin reproached himself for being excessively cold toward Veslovsky, under the influence of yesterday’s emotion, and he tried with especial graciousness to smooth over his dryness. When all had been put to rights and the carriages taken out to the road, Levin had lunch brought out.

“*Bon appetit — bonne conscience! Ce poulet va tomber jusqu’au fond de mes bottes,*” a once again cheerful Vasenka offered the French saying as he finished his second chicken.⁵ “Our troubles are over now; everything will go well now. Only for my offense I must sit on the box. Isn’t that right? Ah? No, no, I am Automedon.⁶ Just see me get you there!” he responded, not letting go of the reins when Levin asked him to let the driver up. “No, I must atone, and I find it marvelous on the box.” And he was off.

Levin was a little afraid that he was exhausting the horses, especially the chestnut on the left, which he couldn’t restrain; but he couldn’t help but surrender to his good cheer, listen to the ballads which Veslovsky sang the entire way on the box, or his stories and notions about people, and how you should drive *four in hand*, English style; and after lunch all of them reached the Gvozdevo marsh in the most cheerful of spirits.⁷

10

Vasenka had driven the horses so smartly that they arrived at the marsh too early, so it was still hot.

As they drove up to this considerable marsh, the main goal of the trip, Levin couldn't help thinking about how he might get rid of Vasenka and go about without obstacle. Stepan Arkadyevich obviously wished the same thing, and on his face Levin saw the expression of concern a true hunter always has before the start of a hunt and of a certain good-natured cunning characteristic of him.

"Shall we go then? It's an excellent marsh, I can see, and there are hawks," said Stepan Arkadyevich, pointing to two large birds winding above the sedge. "Where there are hawks, there is surely game as well."

"Well, see here, gentlemen," said Levin, pulling up his boots with a somewhat gloomy expression and examining the caps on his gun. "Do you see this sedge?" He pointed to an islet darkened by black vegetation in the huge wet, half-mown meadow that stretched along the right bank of the river. "The marsh begins here, right in front of us, see—where it's greener. From here it goes to the right, where the horses are; there you can find tussocks and snipe; and around that sedge there to that alder thicket and all the way to the mill. Over there, see, where the inlet is. That's the best spot. I once killed seventeen snipe there. We'll split up with the two dogs in different directions and meet up there by the mill."

"So, who's going right and who's going left?" asked Stepan Arkadyevich. "It's broader to the right, so you two go together, and I'll go to the left," he said as if casually.

"Marvelous! We'll outshoot him! Well, let's go, let's go!" Vasenka chimed in. Levin had no choice but to agree, and they parted ways.

No sooner had they entered the marsh than both dogs started hunting together and made for a stagnant patch. Levin knew this hunting of Laska's, cautious and noncommittal; he knew the place, too, and was expecting a wisp of snipe.

"Veslovsky, beside me, walk beside me!" he said in a faint voice to his companion, who was splashing through the water behind him and the direction of whose gun, after the accidental firing at the Kopensk marsh, could not help but interest Levin.

"No, I'm not going to crowd you, don't give me a thought."

But Levin involuntarily thought and recalled Kitty's words when she was releasing him, "Watch you don't shoot each other." The dogs were coming closer and closer, one passing the other, each following her own scent; the anticipation of snipe was so strong that the squelching of his heel as it pulled out of the

stagnant patch sounded to Levin like the cry of the snipe, and he gripped and squeezed the butt of his gun.

Bang! Bang! rang out above his ear. That was Vasenka firing at a flock of ducks that was circling over the marsh and flying quite immoderately at that moment toward the hunters. Before Levin could look around, one snipe, a second, a third, and another eight of them made a squelching sound and rose, one after the other.

Stepan Arkadyevich cut down one at the very moment he was planning to begin his zigzags, and the snipe fell like a lump into the quagmire. Oblonsky unhurriedly took aim at another still flying low toward the sedge, and together with the sound of the shot this snipe too fell; and it could be seen trying to take off from the mown sedge, beating its wing, which was white underneath.

Levin was not so fortunate. He fired at the first snipe too close and missed; he aimed after it had started to rise, but at the same time another one flew up right at his feet and distracted him, and he had another miss.

While they were loading their guns, another snipe rose up, and Veslovsky, who had managed to reload already, released two more charges of small shot over the water. Stepan Arkadyevich gathered up his snipe and looked at Levin with shining eyes.

“Well, now, let’s separate,” said Stepan Arkadyevich, and limping on his left leg and holding his gun at the ready and whistling to the dog, he started off in one direction. Levin and Veslovsky started in the other.

Whenever Levin’s first shots were unsuccessful he became impatient and annoyed and shot badly all day. So it was this day as well. There were a great many snipe. Snipe kept flying up at the dogs’ feet and at the hunters’ feet, and Levin might have done better; but the more he shot, the more he disgraced himself in front of Veslovsky, who was cheerfully firing away, moderately and immoderately, killing nothing, and not at all embarrassed by it. Levin rushed, showed no restraint, and became more and more impatient, to the point where he fired almost without hope of killing anything. Laska seemed to understand this. She began hunting more lackadaisically and looked around at the hunters with what seemed exactly like perplexity or reproach. Shots followed shots. Gunpowder smoke hung around the hunters, and in the large, roomy net of the game bag there were only three flimsy little snipe. Even so, one had been killed by Veslovsky and one in common. Meanwhile, along the other side of the marsh they heard the not frequent but, as it seemed to Levin, significant shots of Stepan Arkadyevich; what’s more, after nearly each one they heard, “Kraak, Kraak, fetch!”

This got Levin even more worked up. Snipe kept circling over the sedge. The squelching on the ground and the cawing up high could be heard all around

without pause; snipe that had taken off before and raced in the air landed in front of the hunters. Instead of two hawks now there were a dozen circling over the marsh, shrieking.

Having walked more than halfway through the marsh, Levin and Veslovsky reached the place where the peasants' haymaking, in long rows abutting the sedge, was set off, marked here by trampled rows and there by a mown row. Half of these rows had already been mown.

Although there was little hope of finding as many in the unmown as the mown, Levin had promised Stepan Arkadyevich to meet up with him and so set off farther with his companion down the mown and unmown rows.

"Hey, hunters!" one of the peasants sitting by an unharnessed wagon shouted to them. "Come lunch with us! Wet your whistle!"

Levin looked around.

"Come on, s'all right!" the cheerful, bearded peasant with a red face shouted, showing his white teeth in a grin and raising his light green mug, which glinted in the sun.

"*Qu'est ce qu'ils disent?*" asked Veslovsky.⁸

"We're being invited to drink vodka. They must have been dividing up the meadow. I wouldn't mind a drink," said Levin, not without cunning, hoping Veslovsky would be tempted by the vodka and go off with them.

"Why would they treat us?"

"No reason. To have a good time. Go on, join them. You'll find it interesting."

"*Allons, c'est curieux.*"⁹

"Go on, go on, you'll find your way to the mill!" cried Levin, and looking around he saw with satisfaction Veslovsky lean over, stumble on his weary legs as he held his gun in his extended arm, and clamber out of the marsh toward the peasants.

"You come, too!" the peasant shouted to Levin. "Don't be scared! Have a pie! There!"

Levin had a powerful urge to drink some vodka and eat a bite of bread. He was weak and felt he was dragging his unsteady feet out of the quagmire, and for a moment he hesitated. But the dog stood perfectly still and immediately all his weariness vanished, and he set out lightly across the quagmire toward the dog. A snipe flew up at his feet; he hit and killed it, and the dog continued to stand there. "Take!" Another rose up from under the dog. Levin fired. But it was an unlucky day; he missed, and when he went to find the one he had killed, he couldn't. He clambered through the sedge, but Laska didn't believe he had killed it, and when he tried to send her to find it, she pretended to search but didn't.

Without Vasenka, whom Levin had blamed for his bad luck, his luck got no better. There were lots of snipe here as well, but Levin had miss after miss.

The sun's slanting rays were still hot; his clothes, soaked through with sweat, were sticking to his body; his left boot, full of water, was heavy and squelched; sweat was dripping down his face, spotted with powder residue; there was a bitter taste in his mouth, the smell of gunpowder and slime in his nose, and in his ears the incessant squelching of snipe; he couldn't touch the barrels, they had heated up so; his heart was taking short, quick beats; his hands were trembling from agitation, and his weary feet stumbled and faltered over the tussocks and quagmire; but he kept on walking and shooting. At last, after a shameful miss, he threw his gun and hat to the ground.

"No, I must pull myself together!" he told himself. He picked up his gun and hat, called Laska to heel, and left the marsh. Stepping out onto dry ground, he sat down on a tussock, took his boots off, poured the water out of his boot, and then walked up to the marsh, drank his fill of the rusty-tasting water, splashed his overheated gun barrels, and washed his face and hands. Refreshed, he returned to the spot where the snipe had moved, with the firm intention of not acting rashly.

He wanted to be calm, but it was the same thing. His finger squeezed the trigger before he had the bird in his sights. Everything was going worse and worse.

He had only five pieces in his game bag when he came out of the swamp going toward the alder thicket where he was supposed to meet up with Stepan Arkadyevich.

He saw the dog before he saw Stepan Arkadyevich. Krak scampered out from behind the twisted root of an alder, all black from the foul-smelling marsh slime, and with the look of a victor, sniffed at Laska. Behind Krak, in the darkness of the alders, appeared the stately figure of Stepan Arkadyevich. He was walking forward, red, drenched in sweat, his collar unfastened, still limping.

"Well, what happened? You were shooting a lot!" he said, smiling cheerfully.

"What about you?" asked Levin. He didn't need to ask, though, because he had already seen the full game bag.

"Oh, not bad."

He had fourteen pieces.

"A glorious marsh. You were probably hampered by Veslovsky. Two men and one dog is awkward," said Stepan Arkadyevich, trying to soften his triumph.

When Levin and Stepan Arkadyevich arrived at the peasant's hut where Levin had always stayed, Veslovsky was already there. He was sitting in the middle of the hut, holding on with both hands to a bench that a soldier, the owner's brother, was dragging him away from, by his slime-filled boots, and laughing his infectious and cheerful laugh.

"I only just arrived. *Ils ont été charmants*.¹⁰ Imagine, they got me drunk and fed me. What bread, it's a miracle! *Délicieux!*¹¹ And the vodka! I've never drunk any more delicious! And they refused to take money from me. They kept saying, 'Don't think badly,' or something like that."

"Why should they take your money? They were treating you. You think they have vodka for sale?" said the soldier, finally pulling off the soaked boot and blackened stocking.

In spite of the dirtiness of the hut, which was filthy from the hunters' boots and the muddy dogs licking themselves, and the smell of marsh and gunpowder filling the room, and the lack of knives and forks, the hunters drank their fill of tea and supped with the relish men have only on a hunt. Washed and clean, they went to the swept hay barn, where the driver had prepared the gentlemen their pallets.

Although the light was fading, none of the hunters was sleepy.

After shifting among reminiscences and stories about shooting, dogs, and past hunts, the conversation finally landed on a topic that interested everyone. On the occasion of Vasenka's expressions of rapture, already repeated several times, about the splendor of this lodging and the fragrance of the hay, the splendor of the broken wagon (he thought it was broken because it had been detached from its front section), the good nature of the peasants who had plied him with vodka, and the dogs lying each at the feet of her master, Oblonsky told them about the splendor of the hunting at Malthus's, where he had been last summer. Malthus was a rich and well-known railroad man. Stepan Arkadyevich told them about the marshes that Malthus had bought in Tver Province and how they had been preserved, and about what carriages and dogcarts had carried the hunters, and what a tent had been pitched next to the marsh for lunch.

"I don't understand you," said Levin, sitting up on his hay, "why you don't find these people offensive. I understand that lunch with a bottle of Lafite is very pleasant, but doesn't that luxury offend you? All those people, like our tax farmers in the old days, make money in a way that earns people's contempt for their gains; they disdain this contempt, and then use their dishonest gains to buy off that contempt."¹²

“Absolutely right!” Vasenka Veslovsky responded. “Absolutely! Naturally, Oblonsky does this out of *bonhomie*, but others say, ‘If Oblonsky goes there—’”¹³

“Not at all,” Levin could hear Oblonsky smiling as he said this. “I simply consider him no more dishonest than any other rich merchant or nobleman. Both have profited identically, by their labor and intellect.”

“Yes, but what labor? Is that really labor, obtaining a concession and reselling it?”

“Of course it’s labor. Labor in the sense that were it not for him and others like him, there would be no railroads.”

“But it’s not labor like the labor of a peasant or a scholar.”

“Perhaps, but it is labor in the sense that his activity yields a result—a railroad. But you think that railroads are useless.”

“No, that’s another issue. I’m prepared to admit that they have their use. But any profit disproportionate to the labor invested is dishonest.”

“And who defines what’s proportionate?”

“Profiting by dishonest means, by cunning,” said Levin, feeling he did not know how to define clearly the line between honest and dishonest, “like the profits of the banks,” he continued. “This is an evil, the accumulation of tremendous wealth without labor, as it was under the tax farms, only the form has changed. *Le roi est mort, vive le roi!*”¹⁴ No sooner did we get rid of tax farming than the railroads appeared, and the banks: it’s the same profit without labor.”

“Yes, all this may well be true and clever . . . Lie down, Krak!” shouted Stepan Arkadyevich at the dog, who was scratching and upturning all the straw. Evidently confident of the justness of his position, Stepan Arkadyevich spoke calmly and unhurriedly. “But you haven’t defined the line between honest and dishonest labor. The fact that I receive a larger salary than my chief clerk, even though he knows the business better than I do—is that dishonest?”

“I don’t know.”

“Well, then I’ll tell you. The fact that you receive for your labor on the farm more than, let’s say, five thousand, while our peasant host, no matter how hard he works, won’t get more than fifty rubles, is just as dishonest as the fact that I get more than my chief clerk and Malthus gets more than a railway mechanic. On the contrary, I see something hostile, an attitude of society toward these men that is utterly unfounded, and I think what’s at work here is envy.”

“No, that’s unfair,” said Veslovsky. “There can’t be envy, but there’s something dirty in it all.”

“No, permit me,” Levin continued. “You say it’s unfair that I get five thousand and the peasant fifty rubles. That’s the truth. It is unfair, and I sense this, but—”

"It really is! So why is it that we eat, drink, hunt, do nothing, and he is always, always working?" said Vasenka, who had obviously just thought of this for the first time in his life and so utterly sincerely.

"Yes, you sense it but you won't be giving up your estate to him," said Stepan Arkadyevich, as if provoking Levin on purpose.

Of late a secret hostility had established itself between the two brothers-in-law. It was as if ever since they had married sisters, a rivalry had arisen between them over who had arranged his life better, and now this hostility had expressed itself in a discussion that had begun to acquire personal overtones.

"I'm not giving it up because no one is asking me to, and even if I wanted to, I couldn't," replied Levin. "There is no one to whom I could give it."

"Give it to that peasant. He won't turn you down."

"Yes, but how would I give it to him? Go with him and make out a deed of purchase?"

"I don't know, but if you're convinced you don't have the right—"

"Not at all. On the contrary, I feel I don't have the right to give it away, that I have obligations both to the land and to my family."

"No, allow me. If you feel that this inequality is unfair, then why don't you act in such a way—"

"I am acting, only negatively, in the sense that I'm not going to try to increase the difference in position that exists between him and me."

"No, you must forgive me. That's a paradox."

"Yes, it is something of a sophistic explanation," confirmed Veslovsky. "Ah! Our host," he said to the peasant who had entered the barn, making the doors creak. "What, aren't you asleep yet?"

"No, what sleep! I thought our gentlemen were sleeping, but I heard 'em natterin'. I need t'get a hook outta here. She won't bite?" he added, stepping cautiously in bare feet.

"But where are you going to sleep?"

"We're outside tonight."

"Oh, what a night!" said Veslovsky, looking at the edge of the hut and the unharnessed brake, which were visible in the faint twilight through the large frame of the now open barn doors. "Why listen, those are women's voices singing and, my word, not badly. Who is it singing, host?"

"Those are the housemaids, right nearby."

"Let's take a walk! We won't be sleeping anyway. Oblonsky, let's go!"

"If only I could do both, lie here and go," replied Oblonsky, stretching. "Lying here is excellent."

"Well, I'll go myself," said Veslovsky, rising energetically and pulling on his

boots. "Farewell, gentlemen. If it's cheerful, I'll call you. You treated me to game, and I won't forget you."

"He's quite a guy, isn't he?" said Oblonsky when Veslovsky had gone and the peasant had shut the doors behind him.

"Yes, great," Levin replied, still thinking about the subject of their earlier discussion. It seemed to him that he had clearly expressed his thoughts and feelings as well as he could, and yet both of them, intelligent and sincere men, had said together that he was reassuring himself with sophisms. That distressed him.

"So it's like this, my friend. It has to be one or the other: either you admit that the present arrangement of society is fair and then you defend your rights; or else you admit that you are exploiting unjust advantages, as I do, and enjoy them with pleasure."

"No, if it were unfair you couldn't enjoy these advantages, at least I couldn't. For me the principal thing is not to feel guilty."

"Hey, why not go after all?" said Stepan Arkadyevich, obviously weary of this strain of thought. "We're not going to sleep anyway. Really, let's go!"

Levin did not respond. He was preoccupied by what they had said to him in the discussion about how he was acting fairly only in the negative sense. "Can it be that it's possible to be just only negatively?" he asked himself.

"But how strong the fresh hay smells!" said Stepan Arkadyevich sitting up. "There's no chance I'm going to fall asleep. Vasenka is up to something there. Hear the laughter and his voice? Shall we go? Let's go!"

"No, I'm not going," Levin replied.

"Maybe that's also out of principle?" said Stepan Arkadyevich, laughing as he felt for his cap in the darkness.

"Not out of principle, but why should I go?"

"You know, you're making things hard for yourself," said Stepan Arkadyevich, finding his cap and standing.

"Why's that?"

"Do you think I don't see how you have positioned yourself with your wife? I heard how it's a question of the utmost importance—whether or not you're going hunting for two days. That's fine as an idyll, but it's not enough for an entire life. A man has to be independent; he has his own masculine interests. A man should be manly," said Oblonsky, opening the doors.

"Which is to say what? Go chasing after the housemaids?" asked Levin.

"Why not if it's fun? *Ça ne tire pas à conséquence*.¹⁵ My wife will be none the worse off, and I will have much more fun. The most important thing is to observe the sanctity of the home. Nothing should happen in the home. But don't tie your own hands."

"Perhaps," said Levin dryly, and he turned onto his side. "Tomorrow I want to go shooting early, and I won't wake anyone. I'll leave at dawn."

"*Messieurs, venez vite!*" the voice of a returned Veslovsky was heard.¹⁶ "*Charmante!* It was I who discovered her. *Charmante*, a perfect Gretchen, and she and I have already made friends.¹⁷ Really, extremely pretty!" he was telling them with an approving look, as if it were just for him that she had been made pretty and he was content with whoever had made her so for him.

Levin pretended to be sleeping, and Oblonsky, after putting on his shoes and lighting a cigar, followed Veslovsky out of the barn and their voices quickly died down.

It took Levin a long time to fall asleep. He heard his horses chewing the hay, and then his host and his elder son getting ready and leaving for the night pasture; then he heard the soldier making up his bed on the other side of the barn with his nephew, their host's little boy; he heard the boy in a spindly voice inform his uncle of his impression of the dogs, which had seemed terrifying and huge to the boy; and then he heard the boy ask what these dogs were going to catch and the soldier telling him in a hoarse and sleepy voice that tomorrow the hunters would be going into the marsh and firing their guns and after that, in order to fend off the boy's questions, he said, "Sleep, Vaska, sleep, or watch out," and soon he himself had begun to snore, and everything became quiet; all you could hear was the horses snorting and a snipe cawing. "Is it really only negative?" he repeated to himself. "Well, and what if it is? It's not my fault." And he began thinking about the next day.

"Tomorrow I'll get an early start and take it upon myself not to lose patience. There are heaps of jacksnipe. Great snipe, too. And I'll come back and there will be a note from Kitty. Yes, Stiva may be right. I'm not manly with her. I've turned into an old woman. But what's to be done? Negatively again!"

Through his sleep he heard the laughter and cheerful talk of Veslovsky and Stepan Arkadyevich. For a moment he opened his eyes: the moon had risen, and in the open barn doors, brightly illuminated by the moonlight, they were standing and talking. Stepan Arkadyevich was saying something about one girl's freshness, comparing her with a fresh, just-shelled nut, and Veslovsky, laughing his infectious laughter, was repeating something, probably words the peasant had said to him, "Go get your own girl!" Through his sleep Levin said, "Gentlemen, tomorrow, first light!" and he fell asleep.

12

Waking at early dawn, Levin attempted to wake his companions. Vasenka, lying on his belly, one stocking foot poking out, was sleeping so soundly there was no response to be got from him. Through his sleep Oblonsky refused to go so early. Even Laska, asleep, curled up, at the edge of the hay, arose reluctantly and lazily, unfolding and straightening her hind legs one at a time. Boots on and gun in hand, Levin cautiously opened the creaking barn door and went outside. The drivers were sleeping beside their conveyances, and the horses were dozing. One was just lazily eating oats, scattering them over the trough with its nose. It was still gray outside.

“Why up so early, dearie?” his hostess, who had come out of the hut, addressed him amiably, like a good and longtime friend.

“Why, to hunt, auntie. Can I get through the marsh here?”

“Straight ’round back, past our threshing floor, dear man, and the hemp. There’s a path there.”

Stepping carefully with her bare, sunburnt feet, the old woman showed Levin the way and threw back the gate by the threshing floor for him.

“Straight this way and you’ll get to the marsh. Our lads drove ’em out there last night.”

Laska was running cheerfully ahead along the path; Levin followed her with a quick, light step, glancing constantly at the sky. He hoped the sun would not rise before he reached the marsh. But the sun was not dawdling. The moon, still shining when he had gone out, now glowed like a drop of quicksilver; the morning summer lightning, which he could not help but see before, now had to be looked for; spots on a distant field that had been indeterminate could now be made out clearly. These were the stacks of rye. The dew in the tall fragrant hemp, which he had not been able to see without the sun’s light and which had already lost its pollen, soaked Levin’s feet and his shirt above the waist. In the transparent quiet of morning he could hear the slightest of sounds. A bee flew like a bullet’s whistle past Levin’s ear. He took a closer look and saw another and a third. They were all flying out of the beehive behind the wattle fencing and flying out of sight toward the marsh. The path led straight into the marsh. Levin could tell where the marsh was by the mist rising from it, where it was thicker and where it was sparser, so that the sedge and brittle willow bushes, like islets, swayed in this mist. At the edge of the marsh and road, the small boys and peasants who had been herding that night were lying and before the dawn all were sleeping under their caftans. Not far from them stood three hobbled horses. One of them was rattling his shackles. Laska was walking beside her master, constantly looking back and asking to go ahead. As they walked by the sleeping peasants and

came even with the first wet spot, Levin examined his percussion caps and released the dog. When one of the horses, a sleek, dark brown three-year-old, saw the dog, it shied, raised its tail, and snorted. The other horses startled, too, and slapping through water and producing a sound like clapping as they dragged their hooves out of the thick clay, they leaped out of the marsh. Laska stopped, looking derisively at the horses and inquiringly at Levin. Levin petted Laska and whistled to signal that she could begin.

Laska ran, cheerful and intent, through the mire, which rocked under her.

Running into the marsh, Laska immediately, amid the to her familiar smells of roots, marsh grasses, and stagnant water, and picked up that redolent bird's scent, which spread throughout the entire spot, the scent that always excited her more than all the others. Here and there in the moss and marsh burdock this scent was very strong, but she could not decide in which direction it got stronger and weaker. To find the direction, she had to move farther downwind. Not feeling the movement of her legs, Laska bounded to the right in a tense gallop, so that at every bound she could stop if need be, away from the predawn breeze blowing from the east and turned into the wind. Inhaling the air through flared nostrils, she immediately smelled not only their trail but *them*, here, right in front of her, and not just one but several. Laska slackened the pace of her running. They were here, but where exactly she still could not determine. In order to find the exact spot, she began a circle, when suddenly her master's voice distracted her. "Laska! There!" he said, pointing in another direction. She stood there, asking him whether it wouldn't be better to do as she had begun. But he repeated his command in an angry voice, pointing to a tussock inundated with water where there couldn't be anything. She obeyed him, and pretending to search, in order to please him, she went all over the tussock and returned to her former spot and immediately smelled them once again. Now, when he was not bothering her, she knew what to do, and without looking down and stumbling with annoyance on the tall tussocks and falling in the water, but righting herself with her strong, agile legs, she began a circle that would explain everything. The scent of *them* struck her with greater and greater strength and definition, and suddenly it became entirely clear to her that one of them was here, behind this tussock, five paces in front of her, and she stopped and her entire body became perfectly still. On her short legs she could not see anything in front of her, but she knew from the scent that it was sitting no more than five paces away. She stood, smelling it more and more and enjoying the anticipation. Her stiff tail stuck straight out and trembled just at the very tip. Her mouth was slightly opened, her ears pricked. One ear had turned over on her run, and she was breathing heavily but cautiously and looking around even more cau-

tiously, more with her eyes than her head, at her master. He, with his familiar face but always frightening eyes, was walking, stumbling on the tussocks, and unusually slowly, it seemed to her. It seemed to her that he was walking slowly, but he was running.

Noticing Laska's special search, when she pressed her entire body to the ground, as if she were digging by taking big steps with her hind legs, and letting her mouth fall open slightly, Levin realized that she had picked up the snipes' scent, and in his soul praying to God for success, especially with his first bird, was running toward her. When he came right up to her, he began looking ahead from his height and saw with his eyes what she had seen with her nose. In a break between tussocks, there was a snipe. Turning its head, it listened closely. Then, preening a little and folding its wings again, it clumsily moved its backside and hid around a corner.

"Take, take," Levin shouted, pushing Laska from behind.

"But I can't go," thought Laska. "Where will I go? I can smell them from here, but if I move forward I won't have any idea where or who they are." But now he pushed her with his knee and in an agitated whisper said, "Take, Lasochka, take!"

"Well, if he wants it so badly, I'll do it, but I'm not responsible for myself now anymore," she thought, and she scrambled ahead between the tussocks as fast as her legs would carry her. She couldn't smell anything now and could only see and hear while understanding nothing.

Ten paces from her former spot, with a guttural cry and the unusual prominent sound of snipe wings, one snipe rose up. Following the shot it splashed heavily, white breast down, into the wet muck. Another did not wait around and rose up behind Levin without the dog.

When Levin turned toward it, it was already far away. But his shot got it. Having flown about twenty paces, the second snipe shot straight up, turned head over heels, and like a thrown ball, fell heavily on a dry spot.

"Now we're getting somewhere!" said Levin, stowing the warm, fat snipe in his game bag. "How about it, Lasochka, are we getting somewhere?"

When Levin had loaded his gun and moved on, the sun, though still not visible behind the clouds, had already risen. The moon, having lost all its glow, like a puffy cloud, was white in the sky; there was not a single star to be seen. The swampy spots, which had been silver with dew, were now golden. The stagnant water was all amber. The blue of the grasses was shifting to a yellowish green. Marsh birds were swarming on the dew-bright bushes by the stream, which cast a long shadow. A hawk had awakened and was sitting on a haystack, turning its head from side to side, looking at the marsh with displeasure. Jackdaws were flying in the field, and a barefoot boy was already driving the horses toward an old

man who had risen from under his caftan and was scratching. The smoke from the shots was white as milk against the grass's green.

One of the little boys started running toward Levin.

"Uncle, there were ducks here yesterday!" he shouted to him, and he started following him at a distance.

And Levin, expressing his approval at the sight of this boy, found it doubly pleasant to kill another three snipe in a row.

13

The hunter's saying that if you don't miss the first beast or first bird, then the field will be lucky proved true.

Wearily, hungry, and happy, Levin, after nine o'clock, after tramping nearly thirty versts, returned to his lodgings with nineteen pieces of fine game and one duck, which he had tied to his waist, since it would not fit into the game bag. His companions had awakened long before and had enough time to get hungry and eat breakfast.

"Hold on, hold on, I know it's nineteen," said Levin, counting for the second time the jack and great snipe, which had lost the substantial look they had had when they flew up and which were now curled up, dried out, and caked with blood, their little heads twisted to the side.

The count was accurate, and Levin enjoyed Stepan Arkadyevich's envy. He also enjoyed the fact that, returning to their lodgings, he found a man sent from Kitty with a note.

"I'm entirely well and cheerful. If you're afraid for me, then you may be even calmer than before. I have a new bodyguard, Marya Vlasyevna (this was the midwife, a new and important figure in Levin's family life). She came to examine me. She found me perfectly healthy, and we've kept her until your arrival. Everyone is cheerful and healthy, and please, don't be in a rush, and if the hunting is good, stay another day."

These two joys, the lucky hunting and the note from his wife, were so great that Levin took the two small unpleasant incidents that followed easily. One was that the chestnut trace horse, which had evidently worked too hard yesterday, was not eating the feed and was listless. The driver said she'd been overtaxed.

"Driven too hard yesterday, Konstantin Dmitrievich," he said. "Why, he was driven rough for ten versts!"

The other unpleasant incident, which spoiled his fine spirits at first but which later he had a good laugh about, was that out of all their provisions, which Kitty had provided in such abundance that it seemed they could not all be eaten in a

week, nothing remained. Returning tired and hungry from hunting, Levin had been dreaming so specifically of pies that, walking up to their quarters, he could already smell and taste them in his mouth, the way Laska could sniff game, and he immediately ordered Filipp to serve him. It turned out that not only were there no pies left, there weren't any chickens either.

"Now that's an appetite!" said Stepan Arkadyevich, laughing and pointing at Vasenka Veslovsky. "I don't suffer from want of appetite, but this is amazing."

"Well, what's to be done?" said Levin, looking gloomily at Veslovsky. "Filipp, then serve me some beef."

"They ate up the beef, I gave the bone to the dogs," replied Filipp.

Levin was so offended that he said with annoyance:

"They might have left me something!" and he felt like crying.

"You can dress the game," he told Filipp in a shaky voice, trying not to look at Vasenka, "and put on nettles. And get me at least a little milk."

Later, when he had had his fill of milk, he felt ashamed for expressing his annoyance at a stranger, and he began laughing at his hungry animosity.

In the evening they hunted in a field where even Veslovsky killed a few, and it was night when they came home.

The return trip was just as cheerful as the way there. Veslovsky sang, recalled with pleasure his escapades among the peasants, who had treated him to vodka and told him, "Don't think badly"; and then his nighttime escapades with the nuts and the housemaid and the peasant who asked him whether he was married and finding out that he wasn't told him, "Don't be going after other men's wives now, better get one of your own." These words had especially amused Veslovsky.

"All in all I'm terribly pleased with our trip. What about you, Levin?"

"I'm very pleased," said Levin sincerely, who was especially happy that not only did he not feel the hostility he had experienced at home toward Vasenka Veslovsky but, on the contrary, felt most amiably disposed toward him.

14

The next day, at ten o'clock, Levin, after making his rounds of the farm, knocked at the room where Vasenka was spending the night.

"*Entrez*," Veslovsky shouted out to him.¹⁸ "You'll have to forgive me, I've just completed my *ablutions*," he said, smiling, standing before Levin in just his linen.¹⁹

"Don't be embarrassed, please," Levin sat down by the window. "Did you sleep well?"

“Like the dead. What a day it is today for hunting!”

“What do you drink, tea or coffee?”

“Neither. I’ll just have lunch. I must admit I feel ashamed. The ladies are up, I suppose? A walk now would be excellent. Show me your horses.”

After walking through the garden, stopping at the stables, and even doing gymnastics together on the bars, Levin returned with his guest and entered the drawing room with him.

“Marvelous hunting and so many impressions!” said Veslovsky, walking toward Kitty, who was sitting at the samovar. “What a pity that ladies are deprived of these pleasures!”

“Oh well, he has to say something to the mistress of the house,” Levin told himself. Once again he thought there was something in the smile, in that triumphant expression with which his guest addressed Kitty.

The princess, who was sitting on the other side of the table with Marya Vlashevna and Stepan Arkadyevich, called Levin over and began a conversation with him about moving to Moscow for Kitty’s confinement and preparing their apartment. Just as with the wedding, Levin had disliked all the preparations, whose triviality insulted the grandeur of what was taking place, so he found even more insulting the preparations for the impending birth, the time of which they somehow calculated on their fingers. He kept trying not to hear their conversations about the way to swaddle the future child, tried to turn away and not see the mysterious and endless knitting of strips, certain triangles of cloth to which Dolly ascribed special importance, and so forth. The event of his son’s birth (he was certain it was a son), which had been promised him but which he still could not believe in—so extraordinary did it seem—presented itself to him, on the one hand, as so immense and therefore impossible a happiness and, on the other, as such a mysterious event, that this imagined knowledge of what would happen, and the consequent preparations for it as if it were quite ordinary, wrought by human beings, seemed to him outrageous and demeaning.

But the princess did not understand his feelings and explained his reluctance to think and talk about it as frivolity and indifference and so would give him no rest. She had instructed Stepan Arkadyevich to see about the apartment and had now called Levin over.

“I don’t know anything, Princess. Do as you please,” he said.

“You must decide when you’re moving.”

“Truthfully, I don’t know. I know that millions of children are born without Moscow or doctors, so why—”

“If that’s the case—”

“Oh no, as Kitty wishes.”

“You must not speak of it with Kitty! What do you want to do, frighten her? Just this spring Natalie Golitsyna died from a bad midwife.”

“I’ll do whatever you say,” he said gloomily.

The princess began talking to him, but he wasn’t listening. Although the conversation with the princess did upset him, he had been made gloomy not by this conversation but by what he was seeing at the samovar.

“No, this is impossible,” he thought, glancing from time to time at Vasenka, who was leaning toward Kitty, with his handsome smile telling her something, and at her, blushing and agitated.

There was something improper in Vasenka’s pose, his glance, his smile. Levin even saw something improper in Kitty’s pose and glance, and once again the light in his eyes dimmed. Once again, as happened the other day, suddenly, without the slightest transition, he felt cast down from the pinnacle of happiness, tranquility, and dignity into an abyss of despair, anger, and humiliation. Once again, everyone and everything repelled him.

“Do as you like, Princess,” he said, looking around again.

“Heavy is the cap of Monomakh!” Stepan Arkadyevich said in jest, alluding, evidently, not only to the conversation with the princess but also to the cause of Levin’s agitation, which he had noted.²⁰ “How late you are today, Dolly!”

Everyone got up to greet Darya Alexandrovna. Vasenka stood for a moment and with the lack of courtesy for ladies characteristic of the new young men barely bowed and resumed his conversation, laughing at something.

“Masha was wearing me out. She slept poorly and is quite petulant today,” said Dolly.

The conversation Vasenka had begun with Kitty went on again as yesterday about what had happened, about Anna, and about whether love could stand above society’s conventions. Kitty found this conversation unpleasant, disturbing both in its content and in the tone in which it was conducted, and especially by the fact that she knew how it would affect her husband. But she was too simple and naïve to know how to put a stop to this conversation, or even to conceal the outward satisfaction that the obvious attention of this young man afforded her. She wanted to put a stop to this conversation, but she didn’t know what she should do. Whatever she might do, she knew, would be noticed by her husband, and everything interpreted for the worst. And in fact, when she asked Dolly what was wrong with Masha, and Vasenka, waiting for this conversation, which he found tiresome, to end, began to look at Dolly indifferently, this question seemed to Levin an unnatural and repugnant ruse.

“What do you think, shall we go mushroom hunting today?” asked Dolly.

“Let’s go, if you like, and I’ll go, too,” said Kitty, and she blushed. She wanted

to ask Vasenka, out of courtesy, whether he would go, but she didn't. "Where are you going, Kostya?" she asked her husband with a guilty look when he walked past her with a resolute step. This guilty expression confirmed all his suspicions.

"The mechanic came when I was gone, and I still haven't seen him," he said, not looking at her.

He went downstairs, but before he could leave his study he heard the familiar steps of his wife walking toward him recklessly fast.

"What can I do for you?" he told her dryly. "We're busy."

"Excuse me," she turned to the German mechanic. "I need a word with my husband."

The German was about to leave, but Levin told him, "Don't trouble yourself."

"The train is at three?" asked the German. "I wouldn't want to be late."

Levin did not reply and himself went out with his wife.

"Well, what do you have to say to me?" he began in French.

He did not look her in the face and did not want to see that she, in her condition, could not keep her face from trembling and wore a pathetic, crushed look.

"I . . . I want to say that we can't live like this, that this is agony," she said.

"There are servants in the pantry," he said angrily. "Don't make a scene."

"Then, let's go in here!"

They were standing in a passage. Kitty wanted to go into the adjoining room, but the English governess was giving Tanya her lessons there.

"Then, let's go into the garden!"

In the garden they bumped into a peasant clearing a path. No longer thinking about the fact that the peasant could see her tear-stained and his agitated face, not thinking about the fact that they had the look of people fleeing some misfortune, with quick steps they walked forward, feeling that they needed to speak their minds and dissuade each other, to be alone together and be rid in this way of the agony they both were experiencing.

"We can't live like this! This is agony! I'm suffering and you're suffering. And over what?" she said when at last they reached the secluded bench at the corner of the avenue of linden trees.

"But you must tell me one thing. Was there anything improper or indecent, anything humiliating or awful in his tone?" he said, standing before her again in the same pose, his fists in front of his chest, as he had stood before her that night.

"Yes," she said in a trembling voice. "But Kostya, can't you see that it's not my fault? I've wanted to adopt the proper tone since morning, but these people . . . Why did he come? How happy we were!" she said, gasping from the sobs that were wracking her entire rounded body.

The gardener was amazed to see—although nothing was chasing them and there was nothing to run away from, and although they could not have found anything especially joyful on the bench—the gardener saw them returning home past him with beaming, reassured faces.

15

After seeing his wife upstairs, Levin headed for Dolly's half of the house. Darya Alexandrovna, for her part, was much grieved that day. She was pacing around her room and speaking angrily to the weeping little girl who was standing in the corner:

"You're going to stand in the corner all day, you're going to have your dinner alone, you won't see a single doll, and I won't have a new dress sewn for you," she was saying, not knowing at this point how to punish her.

"No, this is a vile little girl!" she turned to Levin. "Where did she pick up these awful tendencies?"

"But what has she done?" said Levin—who wanted to consult about his own affair and so was annoyed that he had come at a bad time—rather casually.

"She and Grisha went for raspberries and there . . . I can't even say what she did. What vile things. It's a thousand pities we don't have *Miss Elliot*. This one doesn't watch after anything, she's a machine. *Figurez vous, qu'elle . . .*"²¹

And Darya Alexandrovna related Masha's crime.

"That doesn't prove anything. Those aren't vile tendencies at all, it's simply naughtiness," Levin tried to console her.

"But are you upset over something? Why did you come?" asked Dolly. "What's going on there?"

And in the tone of this question Levin heard that it would be easy for him to say what he had intended to say.

"I wasn't there, I was alone in the garden with Kitty. We quarreled for the second time since . . . since Stiva arrived."

Dolly looked at him with her clever, understanding eyes.

"Tell me, hand on your heart, was there . . . not in Kitty, but in this gentleman, the sort of tone that might be unpleasant, not unpleasant, but awful, insulting for a husband?"

"Oh, how can I put it. . . . Stand there. Stand in the corner!" she turned toward Masha who, catching the barely perceptible smile on her mother's face, was about to turn around. "Society's opinion would be that he was behaving the way all young men behave. *Il fait la cour à une jeune et jolie femme*, and a society husband should only be flattered by this."²²

“Yes, yes,” said Levin gloomily. “But did you notice?”

“Not only I, but Stiva noticed. Immediately afterward he said to me, *Je crois que Veslovsky fait un petit brin de cour à Kitty.*”²³

“Well, that’s just marvelous, now I’m at peace. I’m going to drive him out,” said Levin.

“What are you saying? Have you lost your mind?” Dolly exclaimed in horror. “What’s wrong with you, Kostya? Come to your senses!” she said, laughing. “Well, you can go to Fanny now,” she said to Masha. “No, if you really wish it, I’ll tell Stiva. He’ll take him away. You can say you’re expecting guests. He really doesn’t suit our house anyway.”

“No, no, I’ll do it myself.”

“But will you quarrel?”

“Not at all. I’ll have a good time of it,” said Levin, his eyes indeed glittering cheerfully. “Oh, forgive her, Dolly! She won’t do it again,” he said about the little offender who was not on her way to see Fanny and was standing hesitantly in front of her mother, looking up in anticipation and seeking out her gaze.

Her mother took a look at her. The girl burst into sobs and buried her face in her mother’s lap, and Dolly placed her thin, gentle hand on her head.

“What do he and I have in common?” thought Levin, and he set off to find Veslovsky.

Passing through the front hall, he ordered the carriage harnessed to go to the station.

“The spring broke yesterday,” the servant replied.

“Well, then, the tarantass, but quickly. Where is our guest?”

“He went to his room.”

Levin found Vasenka just as he, having unpacked his suitcase and set out his new ballads, was trying on his leggings, to go riding.

Whether there was something unusual in Levin’s face or Vasenka himself sensed that *ce petit brin de cour* he had initiated was inappropriate in this family, he was somewhat embarrassed (insofar as a sophisticated man can be) at Levin’s entrance.

“You ride in leggings?”

“Yes, it’s much cleaner,” said Vasenka, putting his fat leg on a chair, fastening the bottom hook, and smiling cheerfully and good-naturedly.

He was undoubtedly a good fellow, and Levin felt sorry for him and ashamed of himself, the master of the house, when he noted the shyness in Vasenka’s look.

On the table lay the piece of stick they had broken together this morning at their gymnastics, trying to raise the stuck bars. Levin picked up this fragment and began breaking off the splintery end, not knowing how to begin.

"I wanted . . ." He was about to stop, but suddenly, remembering Kitty and all that had happened, looking him decisively in the eye, he said, "I've ordered the horses harnessed for you."

"What's that you say?" Vasenka began with amazement. "Where are we going?"

"You, to the train," said Levin gloomily, pinching off the end of the stick.

"Are you going away or did something happen?"

"What happened is that I'm expecting guests," said Levin, breaking off the ends of the splintered stick with his strong fingers faster and faster. "And I'm not expecting guests and nothing happened, but I'm asking you to leave. You may explain my discourtesy as you like."

Vasenka straightened up.

"I beg of *you* to explain to me," he said with dignity, understanding at last.

"I can't explain to you," Levin began softly and slowly, trying to conceal the trembling of his jaw, "and I'd rather you not ask."

Since the splintered ends had all been broken off, Levin dug his fingers into the thick ends, snapped the stick, and diligently caught the dropped end.

More than likely the sight of these tensed arms, the same muscles which he had felt that morning at gymnastics, and the glittering eyes, low voice, and trembling jaw, dissuaded Vasenka from further words. Shrugging his shoulders and smiling contemptuously, he bowed.

"Might I not see Oblonsky?"

The shrugging of shoulders and smile did not irritate Levin. "What else can he do?" he thought.

"I'll send him to you immediately."

"What kind of foolishness is this!" said Stepan Arkadyevich, when he learned from his friend that he was being driven out of the house, and finding Levin in the garden, where he was pacing, waiting for his guest's departure. "*Mais c'est ridicule!* What's this bee in your bonnet? *Mais c'est du dernier ridicule!*"²⁴ Did you actually think that if a young man . . ."

But Levin evidently still had a bee in his bonnet because he turned pale again when Stepan Arkadyevich was trying to explain the reason, and he hastily interrupted him.

"Please, don't explain! I can't do otherwise! I feel very ashamed before you and him. But it will be no great sorrow for him to leave, I think, and my wife and I find his presence unpleasant."

"But it's insulting for him! *Et puis c'est ridicule.*"²⁵

"And it's insulting and agonizing for me! It's not my fault and there is no reason for me to suffer!"

“Well, this I never expected of you! *On peut être jaloux, mais à ce point, c’est du dernier ridicule!*”²⁶

Levin turned on his heel, walked farther down the avenue, and continued walking alone, back and forth. Soon he heard the rumble of the tarantass and caught sight, through the trees, of Vasenka, sitting on the hay (unfortunately there was no seat in the tarantass) in his Scotch cap, bouncing over the ruts, riding down the drive.

“What now?” thought Levin when a footman, running out of the house, stopped the tarantass. It was the mechanic, whom Levin had forgotten altogether. The mechanic bowed and said something to Veslovsky, then climbed into the tarantass, and they rode away together.

Stepan Arkadyevich and the princess were outraged by Levin’s action. Even he himself felt not only *ridicule* to the utmost degree but ashamed all around and disgraced; however, recalling what he and his wife had suffered through, and asking himself how he would act another time, he told himself that he would do exactly the same.

Despite all this, by the end of this day everyone, with the exception of the princess, who had not forgiven Levin this action, was unusually lively and cheerful, like children after a punishment or adults after a tedious official reception, so that in the evening, in the princess’s absence, Vasenka’s banishment was spoken of as a distant event, and Dolly, who had her father’s gift for telling stories in an amusing way, making Varenka fall down from laughter when for the third and fourth time, each time with humorous new additions, recounted how she had just been getting ready to put on her nice new bows for their guest and had come out into the drawing room when she suddenly heard the rumble of the wagon. And who was it in the wagon? Vasenka himself, with his Scotch cap, and his ballads, and his leggings, sitting on the hay.

“If only you had ordered the carriage harnessed! No, and then I hear, ‘Wait!’ Well, I think, they’ve relented. I look, and the fat German has taken a seat beside him and they’re being driven away. My nice bows were all for nothing!”

16

Darya Alexandrovna carried out her intention and went to see Anna. She was very sorry to grieve her sister and do anything unpleasant for her husband, and she understood the Levins were fair in not wishing to have any relations with Vronsky; however, she considered it her duty to spend some time with Anna and show her that her feelings could not change, despite her altered situation.

In order not to depend on the Levins in this trip, Darya Alexandrovna sent to the village to hire horses; but Levin, when he found out about this, went to her with a reproof.

“Why do you think I find your trip unpleasant? And even if I did, I find the fact that you’re not taking my horses even more unpleasant,” he said. “You never once told me that you were definitely going. To begin with, I find hiring in the village unpleasant, and above all, they will start out to take you but not take you all the way. I have the horses, and if you do not wish to grieve me, then you must take mine.”

Darya Alexandrovna was obliged to agree, and on the appointed day Levin had a team of four horses and a relay readied for his sister-in-law, collecting them from laborers and riders, a very ugly team, but one that could take Darya Alexandrovna there in one day. Now, when horses were needed for the departing princess and the midwife as well, Levin found this difficult, but he considered it his duty as a host not to allow Darya Alexandrovna to hire horses while in his house; besides, he knew that the sum of twenty rubles they were asking Darya Alexandrovna for this trip was very serious for her, and the Levins felt Darya Alexandrovna’s money matters, which were in a very bad state, as their own.

On Levin’s advice, Darya Alexandrovna left before dawn. The road was fine, the carriage steady, the horses ran well, and on the box, besides the driver, instead of a footman, sat Levin’s clerk, whom Levin had sent for safety. Darya Alexandrovna dozed and woke up only as they were driving into the wayside inn where they were to change horses.

After drinking tea with the same prosperous peasant with whom Levin had stopped on his visit to Sviyazhsky, and having chatted with the women about their children and with the old man about Count Vronsky, whom he praised highly, Darya Alexandrovna at ten o’clock continued on her way. At home, what with all her concerns about the children, she never had time to think. So that now, on this four-hour trip, all the thoughts that had been held in check suddenly clamored in her mind, and she thought through her entire life as she never had before, and from the most various vantages. Even she found her thoughts strange. At first she thought about the children, and even though at least the princess, but most important, Kitty (she placed great hopes in her), had promised to look after them, she was nonetheless concerned. “If only Masha doesn’t start with her naughty ways again, if only Grisha isn’t kicked by a horse, and Lily’s stomach doesn’t get upset again.” But then matters of the present began to be replaced by matters of the near future. She began to think about how in Moscow she had to take a new apartment for the winter, change the furniture

in the drawing room, and have a warm coat made for her older daughter. Then matters of the more distant future began presenting themselves to her: How was she going to place her children in the world? “The girls will be all right,” she thought, “but what about the boys?”

“It’s good that I’m studying with Grisha now, but of course that is only because I myself am free now, I’m not giving birth. There’s no sense counting on Stiva, naturally, and I will bring them up with the help of good people; but if there is another birth . . .” And it occurred to her how unfairly it is said that a curse laid upon woman was to bring forth her children in pain.²⁷ “Giving birth is nothing, but carrying—that’s the agony,” she thought, picturing to herself her last pregnancy and the death of this last child. She recalled her conversation with the young peasant girl at the inn. To the question of whether she had children, the handsome girl had responded cheerfully, “I did have one little girl, but God set me free and I buried her at Lent.”

“Oh, and do you feel very sorry about her?” asked Darya Alexandrovna.

“Why feel sorry? The old man has so many grandchildren as is. It’s only trouble. You can’t work, nothing. It’s just a burden.”

Darya Alexandrovna found this answer repugnant, despite the girl’s sweet, good-natured appearance, but now the words came back to her of their own accord. These cynical words held a grain of truth.

“And in general,” thought Darya Alexandrovna, having surveyed her entire life in these fifteen years of marriage, “the pregnancy, the nausea, the dullness of mind, the indifference to everything, and above all, the ugliness. Kitty, youthful, pretty Kitty, even she has lost her looks, and me, when I’m pregnant, I become ugly, I know. The birth, the sufferings, the outrageous sufferings, the final minute . . . then the feeding, those sleepless nights, those terrible pains. . . .”

Darya Alexandrovna shuddered at the mere memory of the pain of cracked nipples which she had suffered with nearly every child. “Then the children’s illnesses, the perpetual fear; then their upbringing, their vile tendencies (she recalled little Masha’s crime in the raspberries), the lessons, the Latin—it’s all so mysterious and difficult. And on top of everything, there is the death of these children.” Once again there arose in her imagination the cruel memory that weighed eternally on her maternal heart of the death of her last infant, who had died of croup, the funeral, the universal indifference before this tiny pink coffin and her lonely, heartrending pain before the pale little brow with the little curls and before the open and surprised little mouth that could be seen from the coffin at the very moment when they were closing the pink lid with the lace cross.

“What’s it all for? What will come of it all? Merely that I, without a mo-

ment's peace, will live my entire life either pregnant, or nursing, constantly angry, querulous, torturing myself and others, and repulsive to my husband, and my children will grow up unhappy, poorly educated, and impoverished, and now, if it weren't for the summer with the Levins, I don't know how we would have gotten through it. Naturally, Kostya and Kitty are so sensitive that we don't notice it, but this cannot go on. Once they start having children, they won't be able to help us; even now they're cramped. How could Papa, who has almost nothing left himself, possibly help? Because I can't raise the children myself, maybe not even with the help of others, and all in humiliation. All right, then, let's assume the best possible outcome: no more children die, and I manage to raise them. At best they simply won't grow up to be scoundrels. That's all I can hope for. At the cost of so much agony and labor. . . . My whole life has been ruined!" Once again she recalled what the peasant girl had said, and again she found it vile to think that way; but she could not help agreeing that there was a grain of rough truth in these words.

"Is it still far, Mikhail?" Darya Alexandrovna asked the clerk, in order to distract herself from these frightening thoughts.

"From this village, they say, it's seven versts."

The carriage drove down the village street and onto a little bridge. Across the bridge, chattering in ringing, cheerful voices, a crowd of cheerful women was carrying bound and twisted sheaves over their shoulders. The women came to a halt on the bridge, examining the carriage with curiosity. All the faces turned toward Darya Alexandrovna seemed to her healthy and cheerful, taunting her with the joy of life. "They all live. They're all enjoying life," Darya Alexandrovna continued thinking after she had passed the women, driven back uphill, and was once again rocking pleasantly at a trot on the soft springs of the old carriage, "and, like someone just let out of jail, from a world killing me with worries, I have only now come to my senses. They're all living—these women, my sister Natalie, Varenka, Anna, whom I'm on my way to see—all except me.

"And they attack Anna. For what? Am I really any better? At least I have a husband I love. Not the way I would like to love him, but I do, but Anna doesn't love hers. What is she guilty of? She wants to live. God put that in our hearts. More than likely I would have done the very same thing. To this day I don't know whether I did well by listening to her that terrible time when she came to see me in Moscow. Perhaps I should have left my husband then and begun a new life. Maybe I would have loved and been loved for real. And is it actually better now? I don't respect him. I need him," she thought of her husband, "and I put up with him. Is this really better? At the time I was still pretty, I still had my beauty," Darya Alexandrovna continued thinking, and she felt like taking a look in a mirror. She had a traveling hand mirror in her bag, and she wanted to

get it out; but when she took a look at the backs of the driver and the swaying clerk, she felt she would be ashamed if either of them were to look around, so she did not get the mirror.

Even without looking in the mirror, though, she thought that even now it was not too late, and she recalled Sergei Ivanovich, who had been especially gracious to her, and Stiva's friend, the kind Turovtsyn, who had helped her take care of her children during the scarlet fever and was in love with her, and there was one other quite young man who, her husband had joked, found her the most beautiful of all the sisters. Darya Alexandrovna pictured the most passionate and impossible romances. "Anna did quite right, and I can't ever reproach her in the least. She is happy, she is making someone else happy, and she is not broken down, as I am, but is probably just as fresh, clever, and open to everything as ever," thought Darya Alexandrovna, and a mischievous grin creased her lips, especially because, while thinking about Anna's romance, Darya Alexandrovna imagined parallel to it her almost identical romance with an imagined composite man who was in love with her. Like Anna, she confessed everything to her husband. And Stepan Arkadyevich's shock and confusion at this news made her smile.

In such dreams she rode up to the turn in the main road leading to Vozdvizhenskoye.

17

The driver stopped the team of four and looked around to the right, at a field of rye where some peasants were sitting by a wagon. The clerk wanted to jump down but thought better of it and shouted imperiously to a peasant, beckoning him over. What breeze there had been as they were traveling died down when they stopped; horseflies were clinging to the sweaty horses, which were angrily trying to shake them off. The metallic ringing that had come from the wagon from men sharpening their scythes died down. One of the peasants rose and started toward the carriage.

"Hey, you broken down fool!" the clerk shouted angrily at the peasant, who was stepping slowly, barefoot, down the ruts of the dry, well-worn road. "Come on, will you!"

The curly-headed old man, a strip of bast tied around his hair, his hunched back dark with sweat, sped up, walked over to the carriage, and grabbed onto the carriage's splashboard with his sunburnt hand.

"Vozdvizhenskoye, the manor house? To see the count?" he repeated. "Just go out down this track. Turn left. Straight down the lane, and you'll run into it. Who do you want anyway? The count himself?"

“Are they home, dear?” said Darya Alexandrovna uncertainly, not knowing how to even ask the peasant about Anna.

“Sure to be,” said the peasant, shifting from bare foot to bare foot and leaving the clear track of his sole and five toes in the dust. “Sure to be,” he repeated, evidently eager to talk. “Yesterday more guests came. An awful lot of guests. . . . What’s wrong with you?” He turned to a lad shouting something at him from the wagon. “Oh, right! Just now all of ’em rode by here to have a look at the reaper. Must be home by now. And whose might you be?”

“We’re from far away,” said the driver, climbing onto the box. “So, not too much farther?”

“I’m telling you, it’s just here. You just go out . . .” he said, running his hand across the carriage’s splashboard.

A strapping youth walked up as well.

“Hey, any work, come harvest?” he asked.

“I don’t know, dear.”

“So, see, you take a left and you’ll run right into it,” said the peasant, obviously reluctant to let the travelers go and eager to talk some more.

The driver started, but no sooner had they turned when the peasant cried out, “Wait! Hey, friend! Wait up!” shouted two voices.

The driver stopped.

“They’re comin’! There they are!” shouted the peasant. “See, pilin’ it on!” he continued, pointing to four riders and two in a charabanc riding down the road.

It was Vronsky and his jockey, Veslovsky and Anna on horseback, and Princess Varvara and Sviyazhsky in the charabanc. They had gone for a ride and were watching the newly delivered harvesting machines in action.

When the carriage stopped, the riders slowed to a walk. Anna rode ahead, beside Veslovsky. Anna was riding at a calm gait on a not very tall, sturdily built English cob with a clipped mane and a short tail. Her beautiful head, her black hair curling out from under her tall hat, her full shoulders, and her narrow waist in her black riding habit, and her entire calm, graceful seat struck Dolly.

In that first minute it seemed improper to her that Anna was riding horseback. The notion of horseback riding for a lady was linked in Darya Alexandrovna’s understanding with the notion of youthful, casual coquetry, which, in her opinion, did not suit Anna’s position. But when she looked at her up close, she was immediately reconciled to her horseback riding. Despite her elegance, everything about Anna’s pose, attire, and movements was so simple, serene, and dignified that nothing could have been more natural.

Beside Anna, on an overheated gray cavalry horse, stretching his plump legs out in front and obviously pleased with himself, rode Vasenka Veslovsky wearing his Scotch cap with the fluttering ribbons, and Darya Alexandrovna could not

repress a mirthful smile when she recognized him. Behind them rode Vronsky on a dark bay thoroughbred which had obviously become overheated at the gallop. He was holding her back, working the reins.

Behind him rode a small man in a jockey's costume. Sviyazhsky and the princess, in the nice new charabanc with a large, raven-black trotter, were trying to catch up to the riders.

The moment she recognized Dolly in the small figure pressed into the corner of the old carriage, Anna's face suddenly broke into a delighted smile. She exclaimed, started in her saddle, and set the horse into a gallop. Riding up to the carriage, she jumped down without assistance and, clutching her habit, ran up to greet Dolly.

"I thought it was you but didn't dare to really think so. How delightful! You can't imagine how delightful!" she said, first pressing her face to Dolly's and kissing her, then holding her away and surveying her with a smile.

"How delightful, Alexei," she said, looking around at Vronsky, who had dismounted from his horse and was walking toward them.

Vronsky, removing his tall gray hat, walked up to Dolly.

"You cannot imagine how pleased we are at your arrival," he said, ascribing special significance to what he was saying and revealing his strong white teeth as he smiled.

Without dismounting, Vasenka Veslovsky removed his cap and greeted their guest, waving the ribbons over his head toward her delightedly.

"This is Princess Varvara," Anna replied to Dolly's inquiring glance when the charabanc rode up.

"Ah!" said Darya Alexandrovna, and her face involuntarily expressed her displeasure.

Princess Varvara was her husband's aunt, and she had not seen her in a long time and did not respect her. She knew that Princess Varvara had spent all her life as a hanger-on with rich relatives; but the fact that she was now living with Vronsky, a stranger to her, offended Dolly for her husband's family. Anna noticed the expression on Dolly's face and became embarrassed, blushed, let go of her habit, and tripped on it.

Darya Alexandrovna walked over to the halted charabanc and coldly exchanged greetings with Princess Varvara. Sviyazhsky was also someone she knew. He asked how his eccentric friend was getting on with his young wife, and casting a quick glance over the unmatched horses and carriage with the patched splashboards, invited the ladies to ride in the charabanc.

"And I shall ride in this vehicle," he said. "The horse is calm and the princess is an excellent driver."

“No, stay as you were,” said Anna, approaching, “and we’ll go in the carriage,” and taking Dolly by the arm, she led her away.

Darya Alexandrovna’s eyes darted at the elegant carriage, the likes of which she had never seen, at the magnificent horses, at the elegant, brilliant faces that surrounded her. But more than anything she was stunned at the change that had come over the Anna she knew and loved. Another woman, less attentive, who had not known Anna previously and especially who had not thought those thoughts which Darya Alexandrovna had been thinking en route, would not have noticed anything special in Anna. But now Dolly was struck by the fleeting beauty which women have only in moments of love and which she found in Anna’s face. Everything about her face—the definition of the dimples in her cheeks and chin, the crease of her lips, her smile, which seemed to fly around her face, the gleam in her eyes, the grace and quickness of her movements, the fullness of her voice, even the manner in which she responded in a cross but kind voice to Veslovsky, who had asked her permission to ride her cob, in order to teach it to gallop off the right foot—everything was particularly attractive; and she herself seemed to know and take delight in this.

When both women had taken their seats in the carriage, embarrassment suddenly beset them both. Anna was embarrassed by Dolly’s attentive and inquisitive look; Dolly because after Sviyazhsky’s words about her “vehicle” she could not help but feel ashamed of the dirty old carriage in which Anna had sat with her. Filipp the driver and the clerk were experiencing the same feeling. To hide his embarrassment, the clerk fussed, seating the ladies, but Filipp became sullen and prepared not to be cowed by this outward superiority. He smiled ironically, taking a look at the raven-black trotter and already deciding in his mind that this raven was fine in a charabanc for a *promenade* and no more and wouldn’t last forty versts in the heat.

The peasants had all stepped back from the wagon and were watching the meeting of the guests with curiosity and good cheer, making their own comments.

“They’re glad, too. Haven’t seen each other in a long time,” said the curly-haired old man with the strip of bast tied around his head.

“Look, Uncle Gerasim, we should have that raven stallion hauling haystacks, wouldn’t that step lively!”

“Look at that. Is that one in trousers a woman?” said one of them, pointing to Vasenka Veslovsky, who had taken a lady’s saddle.

“No, a man. See, how easily he jumped up!”

“How’s about it, fellows? Looks like no sleep for us.”

“What sleep now!” said the old man, squinting at the sun. “It’s past midday, look! Let’s go! Take your hooks and get going!”

18

Anna looked at Dolly's thin, exhausted face and the dust caked in her wrinkles, and she was about to say what she was thinking, namely, that Dolly had grown thinner; but aware that she herself had become so much prettier and that Dolly's look had told her so, she sighed and began talking about herself.

"You're looking at me," she said, "and thinking, can I be happy in my position? What can I say! I'm ashamed to admit it, but I'm . . . I'm unforgivably happy. Something magical has happened to me. It's like a dream, when you get frightened and feel so awful, and all of a sudden you wake up and feel that all those fears are gone. I've woken up. I've lived through something agonizing and terrible, and now for a long time, especially since we've been here, I've been so happy!" she said, looking at Dolly with the shy smile of a question.

"How glad I am!" said Dolly, smiling, but more coldly than she would have wished. "I'm very pleased for you. Why didn't you write me?"

"Why? Because I didn't dare. You forget my position."

"To me? Not dare? If only you knew how I . . . I look upon . . ."

Darya Alexandrovna was about to express her thoughts of that morning, but for some reason doing so now seemed out of place.

"Well, we'll talk about that later. What are all these buildings?" she asked, wishing to change the subject and pointing to the red and green roofs visible beyond the green of the hedge of acacia and lilac. "It's just like a village."

But Anna did not answer her.

"No, no! How do you look at my position? What do you think? Tell me!" she asked.

"I think—" Darya Alexandrovna was about to begin when Vasenka Veslovsky, having set the cob to gallop off its right foot, thudding along bulkily in his short jacket on the chamois of the lady's saddle, galloped past them.

"He's doing it, Anna Arkadyevna!" he shouted.

Anna did not so much as glance at him; but again Darya Alexandrovna felt awkward beginning this long conversation in the carriage, so she abbreviated her thought.

"I don't think anything," she said. "I've always loved you, and if you love, then you love the whole person as she is, not the way I would like her to be."

Anna, taking her eyes off her friend's face and narrowing her eyes (this was a new habit that Dolly had never known in her), considered this, wishing to understand the full meaning of these words, and obviously, having understood them the way she wanted to, she looked at Dolly.

"If you had any sins," she said, "they'd all be forgiven you for visiting me and for these words."

Dolly saw tears welling up in Anna's eyes. She silently squeezed Anna's hand.

"So what are these buildings? There are so many of them!" After a minute's silence she repeated her question.

"These are the servants' houses, the stud farm, and the stables," Anna replied. "And this is where the park begins. All of this had been neglected, but Alexei has restored everything. He loves this estate very much, and, something I never expected, he has taken an avid interest in its management. Actually, his is such an abundant nature! No matter what he takes up, he does everything wonderfully. Not only is he not bored, he works with a passion. He — that's just the way I know him — he has become a prudent, marvelous master, he's even stingy in his management. But only in his management. Where it's a matter of tens of thousands, he doesn't bother to count," she said with that joyful sly grin with which women often speak about the secret qualities only they have discovered in the man they love. "There, you see this large building? This is the new hospital. I think it's going to cost more than a hundred thousand. This is his *dada* now.²⁸ And you know how it came about? The peasants asked him to rent them a meadow for less money, I think, and he refused, and I reproached him for being stingy. Naturally, it wasn't only because of that, but everything put together — so he started this hospital, you see, to show how he wasn't stingy. *C'est un petitesse*, if you like, but I love him all the more for it.²⁹ Now you're just about to see the house. It was his grandfather's house, and it's not been altered in any way on the outside."

"How lovely!" said Dolly, caught off guard by the beautiful house with the columns appearing through the variegated green of the old trees in the garden.

"It is lovely, isn't it? And from the house, from upstairs, the view is wonderful."

They rode into the gravel-strewn courtyard planted around with flowers, where two workers were bordering the loose soil of the flower beds with unworked porous stones. They stopped in the porte cochere.

"Ah, they're here already!" said Anna, looking at the horses, which were just being led away from the front steps. "The horse is quite lovely, isn't it? It's a cob. My favorite. Bring her here and give me a lump of sugar. Where is the count?" she asked the two liveried footmen who ran out. "Ah, here he is!" she said, seeing Vronsky and Veslovsky coming out to meet her.

"Where will you put the princess?" said Vronsky in French, addressing Anna and, without waiting for her answer, exchanged greetings once again with Darya Alexandrovna and now kissed her hand. "In the large balcony room, I think?"

"Oh no, that's too far! Better in the corner room; we'll see more of each

other. Well, shall we go?" said Anna, giving her favorite horse the sugar the footman had brought her.

"*Et vous oubliez votre devoir,*" she told Veslovsky, who had also come out onto the steps.³⁰

"*Pardon, j'en ai tout plein les poches,*" he replied, smiling, sticking his fingers into his vest pocket.³¹

"*Mais vous venez trop tard,*" she said, wiping her hand, which the horse had made all wet when it took the sugar, with her handkerchief.³² Anna turned to Dolly. "Will you be staying long? One day! That's impossible!"

"That's what I promised, and the children . . ." said Dolly, feeling embarrassed both because she had to take her bag from the carriage and because she knew that her face must be very dusty.

"No, Dolly, darling. . . Well, we shall see. Let's go, let's go!" and Anna led Dolly to her room.

This room was not the formal one Vronsky had proposed but one for which Anna said Dolly must forgive her, and this room for which she had to be forgiven was overflowing with a luxury in which Dolly had never lived and which reminded her of the best hotels abroad.

"Oh, darling, how happy I am!" said Anna, perching for a moment in her habit beside Dolly. "Tell me about the family. I saw Stiva briefly, but he can't tell me about the children. How is my pet, Tanya? She must be a big girl by now, am I right?"

"Yes, very big," replied Darya Alexandrovna curtly, amazed herself that she was replying so coldly about her own children. "We're having a marvelous visit with the Levins," she added.

"There, if only I'd known," said Anna, "that you do not despise me. You could have all come for a visit. After all, Stiva is an old and great friend of Alexei," she added and suddenly blushed.

"Yes, but we're having such a fine time," replied Dolly, flustered.

"Yes, actually, it's out of delight that I'm saying such foolish things. The one thing, my darling, is I'm so glad to see you!" said Anna, kissing her again. "You still haven't told me what you think of me, and I want to know everything. But I'm very glad that you will see me as I am. For me what is most important is I wouldn't want you to think that I'm trying to prove anything. I'm not. I simply want to live, to harm no one but myself. I do have that right, don't I? Actually, that's a long conversation, and we'll talk about everything after. Now I'm going to dress, and I'll send in a maid."

19

Left alone, Darya Alexandrovna, with the eye of the mistress of a house, surveyed her room. Everything she had seen as they were driving up to the house and walking through it, and now in her room, everything produced in her an impression of abundance and stylishness and that new European luxury about which she had read only in English novels, but had never seen in Russia before, especially in the countryside. Everything was new, from the new French wallpaper to the carpet that stretched over the entire room. The bed had a spring mattress and a special headboard and taffeta slippers on little pillows. The marble washbasin, the vanity, the sofa, the tables, the bronze clock on the mantel, the curtains and portières—all of this was expensive and new.

The stylish maid, whose hair and dress were more fashionable than Dolly's and who had come to offer her services, was as new and expensive as the rest of the room. Darya Alexandrovna enjoyed her good manners, tidiness, and obligingness but felt ill at ease with her; she was ashamed of her mended jacket, which had so unfortunately been packed for her by mistake. She was embarrassed over the very patches and darned spots in which she had taken such pride at home. At home it was clear that six jackets required twenty-four arshins of nainsook at sixty-five kopeks an arshin, which came to more than fifteen rubles, apart from the trimmings and labor, and these fifteen rubles were economized. But in front of the maid she felt, if not quite ashamed, then ill at ease.

Darya Alexandrovna was greatly relieved when her old friend Annushka came into the room. The fancy maid was needed for the lady of the house, and Annushka stayed with Darya Alexandrovna.

Annushka was obviously very pleased at the lady's arrival and chattered away. Dolly noticed that she wanted to express her own opinion concerning the lady's position, in particular with respect to the count's love and devotion for Anna Arkadyevna, but Dolly assiduously stopped her whenever she began to speak of it. "Anna Arkadyevna and I grew up together, and she is dearer to me than anything. Oh well, it's not for us to judge. And to love like that seems—"

"Yes, please, pour some water so I can wash, if you wouldn't mind," Darya Alexandrovna interrupted her.

"Yes, ma'am. We have two women in especially for the hand washing, but the linen's all by machine. The count himself sees to everything. Oh, what a husband."

Dolly was glad when Anna came into her room and with her arrival put a stop to Annushka's chatter.

Anna had changed into a very simple batiste dress. Dolly carefully examined

this simple dress. She knew what this simplicity meant and the money it took to acquire.

“Our old friend,” Anna said to Annushka.

Anna was no longer embarrassed. She was perfectly free and at her ease. Dolly could see that she had now recovered fully from the impression her arrival had made and had adopted that superficial, indifferent tone that closed the door to that compartment where her feelings and deepest thoughts were to be found.

“And how is your little girl, Anna?” Dolly asked.

“Annie? (This was what she called her daughter Anna.)³³ Healthy. She’s doing very well. Would you like to see her? Let’s go, I’ll show her to you. There has been a dreadful amount of fuss over nurses,” she began recounting. “We had an Italian woman for a wet nurse. She was good, but so foolish! We wanted to send her back, but the little girl had grown so used to her that we’ve kept her on.”

“But how did you manage?” Dolly was about to begin to ask what name the little girl would have, but when she noticed Anna’s suddenly frowning face, she changed the sense of her question. “How did you manage it? Have you weaned her already?”

But Anna understood.

“That’s not what you wanted to ask, is it? You wanted to ask about her name. Am I right? That torments Alexei. She has no name. That is, she’s a Karenin,” said Anna, narrowing her eyes so that only her eyelids could be seen pressed together. “Actually,” her face suddenly brightening, “we’ll have a good talk about it after. Let’s go, I’ll show her to you. *Elle est très gentille*.³⁴ She’s crawling already.”

In the nursery, the luxury which had struck Darya Alexandrovna throughout the house struck her even more painfully. Here there were little wagons ordered from England, and instruments for teaching her to walk, and a specially built sofa like a billiard table, for crawling, and a swing, and a special bath, all new. Everything was English, well built, of good quality, and obviously very expensive. The room was large and full of light and had a high ceiling.

When they walked in, the little girl, wearing only a little shirt, was sitting in a tiny chair by the table and having her dinner of bouillon, which she was spilling all over her little chest. The little girl was being fed by the Russian maid who served in the nursery and who was herself obviously eating with her. Neither the wet nurse nor the nurse was there; they were in the next room, and from there they could be heard speaking the odd French that was the only way they could make themselves understood to each other.

When she heard Anna’s voice, a tall, elegant Englishwoman with an unpleasant face and a coarse expression walked through the door, quickly shaking her blond curls, and immediately began making excuses, although Anna was not

accusing her of anything. To each word of Anna's, the Englishwoman would hurriedly intone, "Yes, my lady."³⁵

The dark-browed, dark-haired, rosy-cheeked little girl, with her sturdy little ruddy body covered with gooseflesh, in spite of the stern expression with which she regarded the new face was very much to Darya Alexandrovna's liking; she even envied her healthy appearance. She also liked very much the way the little girl crawled. None of her children had ever crawled like that. This little girl, when she was set down on the carpet and her little dress tucked up in back, was wonderfully sweet. Like a little wild animal, she looked around at the adults with flashing black eyes, obviously delighting in the fact that she was being admired and smiling; and holding her legs out to the side, she leaned energetically on her arms, quickly drew up her whole backside, and then reached ahead with her little hands.

But Darya Alexandrovna very much disliked the general spirit of the nursery, and especially the Englishwoman. Only by telling herself that a good one would not come to such an irregular family as Anna's could Darya Alexandrovna explain to herself how Anna, with her knowledge of people, could employ for her daughter such an unsympathetic, unrespectable Englishwoman. Not only that, but from just a few words Darya Alexandrovna immediately realized that Anna, the wet nurse, the governess, and the child were not accustomed to being together and that the mother's visit was an unusual event. Anna wanted to get the daughter her toy but could not find it.

Most astonishing of all was the fact that when she was asked how many teeth she had, Anna was wrong and had not known at all about the last two teeth.

"Sometimes it's hard for me being in a way superfluous here," said Anna as she walked out of the nursery, lifting her train to avoid the toys by the door. "That wasn't the way it was with my first."

"I expected just the opposite," said Darya Alexandrovna timidly.

"Oh no! You must know that I saw him, Seryozha," said Anna, narrowing her eyes as if she were looking at something far away. "Actually, let's talk about this later. You won't believe, I'm like a starving woman when a full dinner is suddenly set before her and she doesn't know where to begin. A full dinner—that's you and the conversations I'm going to have with you, which I haven't been able to have with anyone else; and I don't know which conversation to begin with. *Mais je ne vous ferai grâce de rien.*³⁶ I must tell you everything. Oh, I must give you a sketch of the society you'll find here," she began. "I'll begin with the ladies. Princess Varvara. You know her, and I know your opinion of her and Stiva's. Stiva says that her entire purpose in life is to demonstrate her superiority over his aunt Katerina Pavlovna. That's all true, but she is kind, and I am so grateful

to her. In Petersburg there was a moment when I needed *un chaperon*, and she just turned up. But really, she is kind. She has done a great deal to ease my position. I can see that you don't realize the full burden of my position . . . there, in Petersburg," she added. "Here I'm perfectly calm and happy. Well, about all that after. I need to run through them all. Next there's Sviyazhsky—he's the marshal of the nobility, and he is a very decent man, but he needs something from Alexei. You understand, with his wealth, now that we've settled in the countryside, Alexei could have tremendous influence. Then Tushkevich—you've seen him, he was Betsy's admirer. Now he's been dropped, and he's come to see us. As Alexei says, he is one of those men who are very pleasant if they are taken for what they want to seem, *et puis, comme il faut*, as Princess Varvara says.³⁷ Then Veslovsky . . . that one you know. Such a dear boy," she said, and a mischievous smile creased her lips. "What was that wild story with Levin? Veslovsky was telling Alexei, and we can't believe it. *Il est très gentil et naïf*," she said again with the same smile.³⁸ "Men have to have recreation, and Alexei needs an audience, so I value this entire society. It has to be lively and cheerful here so that Alexei won't want anything new. Then you'll see the steward, a German, a very good fellow and knows his business. Alexei holds him in very high esteem. Then the doctor, a young man, not quite a nihilist, but you know, he eats with a knife . . . but a very fine doctor. Then the architect . . . *Une petite cour*."³⁹

20

"Well, here is Dolly for you, Princess. You were so anxious to see her," said Anna as she and Darya Alexandrovna went out onto the large stone terrace, where in the shadow, over a lace frame, embroidering an armchair for Count Alexei Kirillovich, sat Princess Varvara. "She says she doesn't want anything before dinner, but you tell them to serve lunch, and I'll go look for Alexei and bring them all back."

Princess Varvara greeted Dolly blandly and rather patronizingly and immediately began explaining to her that she had come to live with Anna because she had always loved her more than had her sister, Katerina Pavlovna, the aunt who had raised Anna, and that now, when everyone had thrown Anna over, she considered it her duty to help her through this very difficult, transitional period.

"Her husband will give her a divorce, and then I'll go back to my solitude, but now I can be useful and do my duty, no matter how hard it is for me—not like some others. How sweet you are, and how well you've done by coming! They live here absolutely like the very best of spouses; it is God who will judge them, not us, and didn't Biriuzovsky and Madame Avenyeva . . . And Nikandrov

himself, and Vasilyev and Madame Mamonova, and Liza Neptunova . . . And no one said anything, did they? In the end everyone accepted them, and then, *c'est un intérieur si joli, si comme il faut. Tout à fait à l'anglaise. On se réunit le matin au breakfast et puis on se sépare.*⁴⁰ Everyone does what he likes until dinner. Dinner is at seven. Stiva did very well sending you. He needs their support. You know, through his mother and brother he can do anything. Then they do a great deal of good. Didn't he tell you about his hospital? *Ce sera admirable.*⁴¹ Everything is from Paris."

Their conversation was interrupted by Anna, who had found the men in the billiards room and was returning with them to the terrace. Quite a lot of time remained until dinner, and the weather was magnificent, and so several different ways of passing the two hours remaining were proposed. There were a great many ways to spend the time at Vozdvizhenskoye, and all of them were different from those employed at Pokrovskoye.

"*Une partie de lawn tennis,*" proposed Veslovsky, smiling his handsome smile.⁴² "You and I together again, Anna Arkadyevna."

"No, it's too hot. It would be better to walk through the garden and go for a ride in the boat and show Darya Alexandrovna the riverbank," Vronsky proposed.

"I agree to anything," said Sviyazhsky.

"I think Dolly would find it nicest of all to go for a walk, am I right? And after that the boat," said Anna.

So it was decided. Veslovsky and Tushkevich went to the bathing place and there promised to get the boat ready and wait.

They set out in two pairs down the path, Anna with Sviyazhsky and Dolly with Vronsky. Dolly was slightly embarrassed and anxious over this utterly new environment in which she had found herself. Abstractly, theoretically, she not only tried to justify but even approve of Anna's action. As often happens in general with irreproachably moral women who are weary of the monotony of a moral life, from afar she had not only excused Anna's illicit love but even envied it. Besides, she loved Anna with all her heart. But in reality, seeing her among these people so alien to her, with this fine tone that was new to Darya Alexandrovna, she felt awkward. She found it especially unpleasant seeing Princess Varvara, who had forgiven them in return for the comforts she was enjoying.

Generally speaking, in the abstract, Dolly approved of Anna's action, but she found it unpleasant to see the person for whom this action had been taken. Besides, she had never liked Vronsky. She considered him very proud and saw nothing in him that he might take pride in other than his wealth. But against her own will, here in his own home, he impressed her even more than before, and

she could not be at ease with him. With him she experienced a feeling similar to what she had experienced with the maid over the jacket. As in front of the maid she was not so much embarrassed as ill at ease over the patches, so with him she was constantly not embarrassed but ill at ease over herself.

Dolly felt flustered and sought a topic of conversation. Although she felt that with his pride he ought to find praises of his house and garden unpleasant, finding no other topic of conversation, she nonetheless told him that she liked his house very much.

“Yes, it is a very handsome structure and in a fine, old-fashioned style,” he said.

“I liked the courtyard in front of the steps very much. Has it always been that way?”

“Oh no!” he said, and his face beamed with satisfaction. “If only you had seen that courtyard this spring!”

He began, at first cautiously, then getting increasingly carried away, drawing her attention to the various details of the adornments of the house and garden. It was obvious that, having devoted much effort to improving and adorning his estate, Vronsky felt a need to boast of them to someone new and sincerely rejoiced in Darya Alexandrovna’s praises.

“If you would like to take a look at the hospital and aren’t too tired, it’s not far. Shall we go?” he said, looking her in the face to convince himself she really wouldn’t be bored.

“Will you go, Anna?” he turned to her.

“We will both go. Won’t we?” she turned to Sviyazhsky. “*Mais il ne faut pas laisser le pauvre Veslovsky et Tushkevich se morfondre là dans le bateau.*”⁴³ We must send someone to tell them. Yes, this is the monument he will leave behind,” said Anna, turning to Dolly with the same cunning, knowing smile with which she had previously spoken about the hospital.

“Oh, a capital affair!” said Sviyazhsky. But so as not to seem to be ingratiating himself with Vronsky, he immediately added a slightly critical comment. “I am amazed, though, Count,” he said, “how, while doing so much in the way of public health for the people, you are so indifferent toward the schools.”

“*C’est devenue tellement commun les écoles,*” said Vronsky.⁴⁴ “You must understand, that’s not why I got carried away. I just did. So, we need to go this way to the hospital,” he turned to Darya Alexandrovna, pointing to a side path from the avenue.

The ladies opened their parasols and went out onto the side path. After taking several turns and coming out a wicket gate, Darya Alexandrovna saw before her on high ground a large, red, nearly completed building of intricate design.

The still unpainted tin roof dazzled in the bright sun. Alongside the completed building another had been laid out, surrounded by scaffolding, and on planks workers wearing aprons were laying bricks, pouring water over the brickwork from tubs, and leveling it with trowels.

“How quickly the work is going here!” said Sviyazhsky. “When I was here last, there wasn’t a roof.”

“Everything will be ready by autumn. Inside it’s nearly all finished,” said Anna.

“And what is this new structure?”

“That’s a building for the doctor and pharmacist,” replied Vronsky, catching sight of the architect in a short coat walking toward him, and making his apologies to the ladies, he went toward him.

Skirting the lime pit, where the workers were taking the lime, he and the architect stopped and began a heated discussion.

“The pediment keeps coming out too low,” he replied to Anna, who had asked what was wrong.

“I told you the foundation should have been raised,” said Anna.

“Yes, of course, it would have been better, Anna Arkadyevna,” said the architect, “and now it’s too late.”

“Yes, I’m very interested in this,” Anna replied to Sviyazhsky, who had expressed his amazement at her knowledge of architecture. “The new building should match the hospital. But it was conceived as an afterthought and started without a plan.”

His conversation with the architect over, Vronsky joined the ladies and led them inside the hospital.

Even though on the outside they were still finishing the cornices and painting downstairs, upstairs everything was nearly complete. Ascending the broad iron staircase to the landing, they entered the first large room. The walls had been plastered to look like marble and large plate-glass windows had been installed, and only the parquet floor was not yet finished, and the joiners who had been planing a raised square had left their work and removed the strips of cloth holding back their hair to greet the party.

“This is the reception room,” said Vronsky. “Here there will be a desk, table, cupboard, and nothing else.”

“This way. Let’s go through here. Don’t get too close to the window,” said Anna, testing whether the paint had dried. “Alexei, the paint hasn’t dried yet,” she added.

From the reception room they walked down the corridor. Here Vronsky showed them the new system of ventilation he had installed. Then he showed

them the marble tubs and beds with unusual springs. Then he showed them one ward after the other, the storeroom, the linen room, then a new type of furnace, then carts that would not make any noise carrying necessary items down the corridor, and much else. Sviyazhsky appreciated everything, as someone who was familiar with all the latest improvements. Dolly was simply amazed at the things she had never seen before, and wishing to understand everything, asked detailed questions about everything, which afforded Vronsky obvious pleasure.

“Yes, I think this will be the sole wholly properly arranged hospital in Russia,” said Sviyazhsky.

“Won’t you have a maternity ward?” asked Dolly. “It’s so needed in the countryside. I often—”

Despite his good manners, Vronsky interrupted her.

“This is not a maternity home but a hospital, intended for all sicknesses except the contagious ones,” he said. “But take a look at this here.” He wheeled toward Darya Alexandrovna a newly ordered chair for recuperating patients. “You must look.” He sat down in the chair and began moving it. “He can’t walk, he’s still weak or it’s a disease of the legs, but he needs air, so he rides.”

Darya Alexandrovna was interested in everything, and she liked everything very much, but most of all she liked Vronsky himself with this natural and naïve enthusiasm. “Yes, this is a very sweet, fine man,” she thought at times, not listening but looking at him and penetrating his expression and mentally putting herself in Anna’s place. She liked him so much now in his animation that she understood how Anna could have fallen in love with him.

21

“No, I think the princess is tired, and horses are of no interest to her,” Vronsky told Anna, who had proposed going on to the stud farm, where Sviyazhsky wanted to see the new stallion. “You go, and I’ll see the princess home and we’ll have a little chat,” he said, “if that pleases you,” he turned to her.

“I understand nothing about horses, and that pleases me very much,” said a somewhat astonished Darya Alexandrovna.

She could see from Vronsky’s face that he needed something from her. She was not mistaken. As soon as they had gone through the wicket gate and into the garden, he looked in the direction Anna had gone, and convinced that she could neither hear nor see them, began.

“Have you guessed that I wanted to have a talk with you?” he said, looking at her with laughing eyes. “I’m not wrong that you are Anna’s friend.” He removed his hat and, taking out his handkerchief, wiped his balding head.

Darya Alexandrovna said nothing in reply and only looked fearfully at him. When she was left alone with him, she suddenly felt afraid; his laughing eyes and stern expression scared her.

The most various assumptions about what he was getting ready to talk about with her flashed through her mind. "He's going to ask me to come visit them with the children, and I'm going to have to refuse him; or for me to put together a circle for Anna in Moscow. Or is it about Vasenka Veslovsky and his relations toward Anna? But perhaps it's about Kitty, about him feeling guilty." She foresaw only something unpleasant but could not guess what he wanted to talk about with her.

"You have such influence with Anna, and she loves you so much," he said. "You must help me."

Darya Alexandrovna looked inquisitively, shyly, at his energetic face, which sometimes fully, sometimes in patches, fell under a shaft of light in the shade of the linden trees, then was again darkened by the shadow, and waited for him to say more, but thrusting his cane into the gravel, he walked on in silence by her side.

"If you came to see us, you, the only woman of Anna's former friends—I don't count Princess Varvara—then I realize you've done so not because you consider our situation normal but because, understanding the full burden of this situation, you still love her the same as ever and want to help her. Have I understood you correctly?" he asked, looking around at her.

"Oh, yes," replied Darya Alexandrovna, folding up her parasol, "but—"

"No," he broke in, and unconsciously, forgetting that by doing this he was putting his companion in an awkward position, stopped, so that she, too, had to stop. "No one feels the full weight of Anna's situation more, or more strongly, than I do. That's understandable, if you do me the honor of considering me a man who has a heart. I am the cause of this situation, and so I am sensible of it."

"I understand," said Darya Alexandrovna, who could not help but admire him, how sincerely and firmly he said this. "But it is because you feel you are the cause that you exaggerate, I fear," she said. "Her situation in society is difficult, I realize."

"Society is hell!" he said quickly, frowning darkly. "You cannot imagine moral anguish worse than what she suffered in Petersburg those two weeks. I beg you to believe this."

"Yes, but here, until Anna . . . or you feel the need of society—"

"Society!" he said with contempt. "What need can I have of society?"

"As long—and this could be forever—as you are happy and at peace. I can see from Anna that she is happy, perfectly happy, she managed to convey that

to me," said Darya Alexandrovna, smiling; and despite herself, saying this, she now doubted whether Anna was really happy.

Vronsky, however, apparently did not doubt it.

"Yes, yes," he said. "I know that she has come alive after all her sufferings, and she is happy. She is happy with the present. But what about me? I fear what awaits us. I'm sorry, would you prefer to walk?"

"No, I don't care."

"Well, then let's take a seat here."

Darya Alexandrovna sat down on the garden bench in a corner of the avenue. He stopped in front of her.

"I see that she is happy," he repeated, and doubt as to whether she was happy struck Darya Alexandrovna with even more force. "But can it continue like this? Whether we have acted well or badly, that is another matter, but the die is cast," he said, switching from Russian to French, "and we are bound for life. We are joined by what are for us the most sacred bonds of love. We have a child, we may have more children. But the law and all the conditions of our situation are such that there are thousands of complications, which she does not see and does not care to see while she is resting her soul after all her sufferings and trials, and this is understandable. But I cannot fail to see. Under the law, my daughter is not my daughter but Karenin's. I want no part of this deceit!" he said with an energetic gesture of rejection and looking gloomily and inquiringly at Darya Alexandrovna.

She said nothing in reply and only looked at him. He continued.

"Tomorrow a son could be born, my son, but by law he would be a Karenin, not my heir, and he would have neither my name nor my legacy, and no matter how happy we are in our family and how many children we have, there will be no connection between me and them. They would be Karenins. You must understand the burden and horror of this situation! I've tried to discuss this with Anna. It irritates her. She doesn't understand, and I can't tell *her* everything. Now look at it from the other side. I am happy with her love, but I must have an occupation. I have found this occupation, and I'm proud of this occupation; I consider it nobler than the occupations of my former fellows at court and in service. Without a doubt, I would no longer exchange this work for their work. I'm working here, settled in my own place, and I'm happy and content, and we need nothing more for happiness. I love this pursuit. *Cela n'est pas un pis-aller*, quite the contrary."⁴⁵

Darya Alexandrovna noticed that he had confused things at this point in his explanation, and she did not quite understand this digression, but she had a sense that, since he had begun talking about his inmost feelings, which he

could not talk about with Anna, he was now telling her everything and that the question of his pursuits in the country were held in the same compartment of his inmost thoughts as the question of his relations with Anna.

“Well, I’ll go on,” he said, recovering. “The main thing is that, working, I must have the conviction that my work will not die with me, that I shall have heirs—but I don’t. Imagine the position of a man who knows that his children and the woman he loves will be not his but someone else’s, someone who despises them and does not want to know them. It’s dreadful!”

He fell silent, obviously powerfully moved.

“Yes, of course, I understand that. But can Anna do anything?” Darya Alexandrovna asked.

“Yes, this brings me to my point,” he said, forcing himself to calm down. “Anna can, this depends on her. Even to petition the sovereign for adoption, a divorce is necessary, and that depends on Anna. Her husband agreed to a divorce—at the time, your husband nearly had this arranged. Now, I know, he would not refuse. It is merely a matter of writing to him. He replied directly at the time that if she expressed the wish he would not refuse her. Naturally,” he said gloomily, “this is one of those pharisaical cruelties of which only heartless men are capable. He knows what torture any mention of him costs her, and knowing her, demands a letter from her. I understand what torture it is for her. But the reasons are so important that she must *passer pardessus toutes ces finesses de sentiments. Il y va du bonheur et de l’existence d’Anne et de ses enfants*.⁴⁶ I’m not talking about myself, although it is hard, very hard, for me,” he said with an expression of threatening someone because it was hard for him. “So you see, Princess, I am clinging unconscionably to you as a lifesaver. Help me talk her into writing to him and demanding a divorce!”

“Yes, of course,” said Darya Alexandrovna pensively, vividly recalling her last meeting with Alexei Alexandrovich. “Yes, of course,” she repeated decisively, recalling Anna.

“Use your influence with her. Convince her to write. I don’t want to and almost cannot speak with her of this.”

“All right, I will. But how is it she isn’t thinking of it herself?” said Darya Alexandrovna, suddenly for some reason at this point recalling Anna’s strange new habit of narrowing and half-shutting her eyes, and she recalled that Anna did this precisely when matters touched upon the most intimate aspects of her life. “It’s as if she were half-shutting her eyes at her life so as not to see all of it,” thought Dolly. “Without fail, for my sake and hers, I will speak with her,” Darya Alexandrovna replied to his expression of gratitude.

They rose and started toward the house.

22

Finding Dolly already at home, Anna looked closely into her eyes, as if asking about the conversation she had had with Vronsky, but she did not put her question into words.

"It seems to be time for dinner," she said. "We haven't seen anything at all of each other yet. I'm counting on the evening. Now I must go dress. I guess you do, too. We all got soiled at the building site."

Dolly went to her room and she felt amused. She had nothing to change into because she had already put on her best dress; but in order to signal in some way her preparation for dinner, she asked the maid to clean her dress, changed her cuffs and bow, and put lace on her head.

"That's the best I can do," she said with a smile to Anna, who came out to see her in a third, again extremely simple dress.

"Yes, we are too formal here," she said, as if apologizing for her elegance. "Alexei is pleased at your visit as he rarely is with anything. He's definitely in love with you," she added. "You aren't tired?"

Before dinner there was no time to talk about anything. Walking into the drawing room, they found Princess Varvara already there and the men in their black frock coats. The architect was wearing an evening coat. Vronsky presented the doctor and the steward to his guest. He had introduced the architect to her already at the hospital.

The stout butler, his round shaven face and the starched bow of his white tie gleaming, informed them that the meal was ready, and the ladies rose. Vronsky asked Sviyazhsky to give Anna Arkadyevna his arm, and he himself walked over to Dolly. Veslovsky gave Princess Varvara his arm before Tushkevich could, so that Tushkevich, the steward, and the doctor went in singly.

The dinner, the dining room, the service, the staff, and the wine and food not only matched the general tone of the house's brand-new luxury but seemed newest and most luxurious of all. Darya Alexandrovna observed this luxury, which was new to her, and like a careful housekeeper—although not even hoping to apply any of what she had seen to her own house, since all this was in a style of luxury well beyond her way of life—could not help scrutinizing all the details and asking herself who had done all this and how. Vasenka Veslovsky, her husband, and even Sviyazhsky and many of the people she knew had never thought about this and took on faith what any proper host wishes to make his guests feel, that is, that all that was so well ordered in his home cost him, the host, no effort but had come about of its own accord. Darya Alexandrovna knew, however, that not even the porridge for the children's breakfast comes about of its own accord and that therefore this complicated and beautiful arrangement

had required someone's earnest attention. From Alexei Kirillovich's look, the way he surveyed the table, how he nodded to the butler, signaling, and how he offered Darya Alexandrovna a choice between a hot soup and a cold soup of fish, potherbs, and kvass, she realized that all this was done and maintained through the cares of the host himself. All this obviously had no more to do with Anna than it did with Veslovsky. She, Sviyazhsky, the princess, and Veslovsky were equally guests, cheerfully enjoying what had been prepared for them.

Anna was the hostess only in leading the conversation. And this conversation was quite difficult for the mistress of the house at a small table, with people like the steward and the architect, people of a completely different world who were trying not to be timid faced with the unaccustomed luxury and unable to take an extensive part in the general conversation. This difficult conversation Anna led with her usual tact, natural manner, and even satisfaction, as Darya Alexandrovna noted.

The conversation began about how Tushkevich and Veslovsky had taken the boat out alone, and Tushkevich began telling them about the last races in Petersburg at the Yacht Club. But Anna, waiting for a pause, immediately turned to the architect in order to draw him out of his silence.

"Nikolai Ivanovich was impressed," she said, referring to Sviyazhsky, "at how the new building has progressed since he last was there, but I am there every day and even I marvel every day at how quickly it is going."

"It is good working with His Excellency," the architect said with a smile (he was a respectful and calm man, conscious of his own merit). "It is not like dealing with the provincial authorities. Where they would write out a stack of papers, I report to the count, we discuss it, and in a few words it's done."

"American methods," said Sviyazhsky, smiling.

"Why yes, there they erect buildings rationally."

The conversation moved on to the government's abuses in the United States, but Anna immediately turned it to another topic, in order to draw the steward out of his silence.

"Have you ever seen harvesting machines?" she turned to Darya Alexandrovna. "We had just been out to see them when we met you. I myself was seeing them for the first time."

"How do they work?" asked Dolly.

"Exactly like scissors. A board and lots of little scissors. Like this."

Anna picked up her knife and fork with her beautiful beringed white hands and began demonstrating. She obviously could see that nothing would come of her explanation, but knowing that she was speaking agreeably and that her hands were beautiful, she continued her explanation.

"More like penknives," said Veslovsky, flirting, not taking his eyes off her.

Anna smiled very faintly but did not respond to him.

"Isn't it true, Karl Fyodorovich, that it's like scissors?" she addressed the steward.

"O ja," the German replied. "*Es ist ein ganz einfaches Ding,*"⁴⁷ and he began explaining the machine's construction.

"It's a shame it doesn't bind, too. At the Vienna exhibition I saw one that tied it up with wire," said Sviyazhsky.⁴⁸ "Those would be more profitable."

"*Es kommt drauf an . . . Der Preis vom Draht muss ausgerechnet werden.*"⁴⁹ And the German, summoned out of his silence, turned to Vronsky. "*Das lässt sich ausrechnen, Erlaucht.*"⁵⁰ The German was just about to reach into his pocket, where he had a pencil and the little book in which he did all his calculations, but remembering that he was sitting at the table, and noting Vronsky's cold look, he refrained. "*Zu kompliziert, macht zu viel Klopot,*" he concluded.⁵¹

"*Wünscht man Dochots, so hat man auch Klopots,*" said Vasenka Veslovsky, chaffing at the German.⁵² "*J'adore l'allemand,*" he turned again to Anna with the same smile.⁵³

"*Cessez,*" she said with mock severity.⁵⁴

"But we thought we'd find you in the field, Vasily Semyonovich," she turned to the doctor, a sickly man. "Were you there?"

"I was, but I evaporated," the doctor replied in gloomy jest.

"You probably took some good exercise."

"Excellent!"

"And how is the old woman's health? I hope it's not typhus."

"Whether it's typhus or not, it's not turning out to her advantage."

"What a shame!" said Anna, and in this way having paid her respects to the household, she addressed her own friends.

"Nonetheless, based on your account, it would be difficult to build a machine, Anna Arkadyevna," said Sviyazhsky, joking.

"No, why?" said Anna with a smile that said she knew there was something darling in her interpretation of the machine that Sviyazhsky too had noticed. This new trait of youthful coquetry struck Dolly unpleasantly.

"On the other hand, Anna Arkadyevna's knowledge of architecture is wonderful," said Tushkevich.

"Why yes, I heard Anna Arkadyevna saying yesterday: 'in strobilus' and 'plinths,'" said Veslovsky. "Am I saying it right?"

"There's nothing wonderful about that when you see and hear so much," said Anna. "And you probably don't even know what a house is made of."

Darya Alexandrovna could see that Anna was displeased by the playful tone between her and Veslovsky, but could not keep from falling in with it herself.

Vronsky behaved in this instance completely differently from the way Levin

had. He evidently ascribed no importance to Veslovsky's chattering, and on the contrary encouraged these jokes.

"So tell me, Veslovsky, what holds the stones together?"

"Cement, naturally."

"Bravo! And what is cement?"

"Well, it's a sludge . . . no, putty," said Veslovsky, provoking general laughter.

The conversation among the diners, with the exception of the doctor, architect, and steward, who had plunged into gloomy silence, never paused, gliding here, catching there, and cutting someone now and then to the quick. One time Darya Alexandrovna was cut to the quick and became so angry that she even turned red, and afterward she tried to remember whether she had said anything excessive or unpleasant. Sviyazhsky began talking about Levin, relating his strange opinions about how machines only cause harm to Russian farming.

"I have not had the pleasure of knowing this gentleman, Levin," said Vronsky, smiling, "but more than likely he has never seen the very machines he is condemning. If he has seen and tried them, then only haphazardly, and not a foreign one but some Russian one. What kind of opinions can he have here?"

"Turkish opinions, generally speaking," said Veslovsky with a smile, turning to Anna.

"I cannot defend his opinions," said Darya Alexandrovna, flaring up, "but I can say that he is a very well-educated man, and if he were here he would have known how to answer you, but I do not."

"I love him very much, and he and I are great friends," said Sviyazhsky, smiling good-naturedly. "*Mais pardon, il est un petit peu toqué.*"⁵⁵ For instance, he says that both the district council and the justices of the peace—they're all unnecessary, and he wants no part of any of it."

"It's our Russian indifference," said Vronsky, pouring water from an iced pitcher into a delicate footed glass, "not to feel the obligations our rights lay upon us and so to deny these obligations."

"I know of no one more strict in fulfilling his obligations," said Darya Alexandrovna, irritated by this tone of superiority in Vronsky.

"I, on the contrary," Vronsky continued, evidently cut to the quick for some reason by this conversation, "I, on the contrary, as you see me, am very grateful for the honor they have done me, here, thanks to Nikolai Ivanovich"—he indicated Sviyazhsky—"having elected me an honorable justice of the peace. I feel that for me the responsibility to attend the sessions, and judging a peasant's case about a horse, is just as important as anything I can do, and I shall consider it an honor if I am elected to the council. In this way alone can I repay all the advantages which I enjoy as a landowner. Unfortunately, they don't understand the significance that major landowners ought to have in the state."

It was strange to Darya Alexandrovna to hear how serenely confident he was in the rightness of his opinions at his own table. She recalled that Levin, thinking the very opposite, had been just as determined in his judgments at his own table. But she loved Levin and so was on his side.

“So we can rely on you, Count, for the next session?” said Sviyazhsky. “But you must go early in order to be there by the eighth. Would you do me the honor of staying with me?”

“And I am somewhat in agreement with your *beau-frère*,” said Anna. “Only not the same way,” she added with a smile. “I’m afraid that lately we have had too many of these public obligations. Just as before there were so many government officials that every last thing required an official, so now it’s all society figures. Alexei has been here six months now, and he is already a member of, I believe, five or six different public institutions—justice of the peace, judge, councilor, juror, and something to do with horses. *Du train que cela va* all his time will go to this.⁵⁶ I’m afraid that given such a multiplicity of these matters it’s all just form. How many are you a member of, Nikolai Ivanovich?” she turned to Sviyazhsky. “More than twenty, I imagine?”

Anna was speaking in jest, but there was irritation in her tone. Darya Alexandrovna, who had been closely observing Anna and Vronsky, noticed this immediately. She noticed as well that during this conversation Vronsky’s face immediately adopted a grave and obstinate expression. Having noticed this as well as the fact that Princess Varvara immediately, in order to turn the conversation, began talking rapidly about Petersburg acquaintances, and having recalled how Vronsky had digressed in the garden about his pursuits, Dolly realized that connected with this issue of public activity was some private dispute between Anna and Vronsky.

The dinner, the wine, the service—all this was very fine, but it was all the same as Darya Alexandrovna had seen at banquets and balls, to which she had grown unaccustomed, with the same character of impersonality and constraint; and so on an ordinary day and among a small circle all this made an unpleasant impression on her.

After dinner they sat for a while on the terrace. Then they began playing *lawn tennis*.⁵⁷ The players, divided into two parties, spread out on the painstakingly leveled and rolled *krokaygrownd* extending on either side of a net stretched on gilded posts.⁵⁸ Darya Alexandrovna tried to play, but it took her a long time to understand the game, and by the time she did, she was so tired that she sat down with Princess Varvara and merely watched those playing. Her partner Tushkevich also hung back, but the others kept up their game for a long time. Sviyazhsky and Vronsky both played very well and seriously. They kept a sharp eye on the ball coming toward them and without hurrying or lingering, they deftly ran

up to it, waited for the bounce, and precisely and accurately serving up the ball with the racket, hit it over the net. Veslovsky played worse than the others. He was too impatient, but his good cheer enlivened the players. His laughter and shouts never let up. Like the other men, with the ladies' permission he removed his coat, and his large, handsome figure in the white sleeves of his shirt, with his ruddy, sweaty face and impulsive movements, positively etched themselves in memory.

That night, when Darya Alexandrovna went to bed, as soon as she shut her eyes, she saw Vasenka Veslovsky rushing about the croquet lawn.

During the game Darya Alexandrovna did not have a good time. She did not like the playful relations that continued during it between Vasenka Veslovsky and Anna or that general unnaturalness of adults when they are alone without children playing a children's game. But in order not to spoil it for the others and somehow pass the time, after a rest, she again joined the game and pretended to be having a good time. All that day it seemed to her that she was acting in a theater with actors better than she and that her poor acting was ruining the whole performance.

She had come with the intention of spending two days, if all went well. But that evening, during the game, she decided she would leave the next day. Those agonizing maternal cares which she had so hated on the road, now, after a day spent without them, presented themselves to her in a very different light and drew her to them.

When after evening tea and an evening ride in the boat Darya Alexandrovna entered her room alone, took off her dress, and sat down to put her thin hair up for the night, she felt great relief.

She even found it unpleasant to think that Anna would come in to see her now. She wanted to be alone with her thoughts.

23

Dolly was ready for bed when Anna came in wearing her dressing gown.

During the course of the day, Anna had started conversations about a matter near her heart several times, and each time, after saying a few words, had stopped. "After, when we're alone, we'll have a good talk. There's so much I need to tell you," she said.

Now they were by themselves, and Anna did not know what to talk about. She was sitting by the window, looking at Dolly and sifting her memory for all those seemingly inexhaustible reserves of intimate topics, and could find nothing. At that moment she felt as if everything had already been said.

“Well, how is Kitty?” she said, sighing heavily and looking guiltily at Dolly. “Tell me the truth, Dolly, she isn’t angry at me, is she?”

“Angry? No,” said Darya Alexandrovna, smiling.

“But she hates me, despises me?”

“Oh no! But you know, that sort of thing can’t be forgiven.”

“Yes, yes,” said Anna, turning away and looking out the open window. “But I was not to blame. And who was to blame? What does it mean to be to blame? Could it really have been any other way? Well, what do you think? Could it have happened that you did not become Stiva’s wife?”

“Really, I don’t know. But here’s what you must tell me . . .”

“Yes, yes, but we haven’t finished about Kitty. Is she happy? He’s a fine man, they say.”

“That’s saying too little, that he’s fine. I know no one better.”

“Oh, I’m so pleased! Very pleased! Saying too little, that he’s fine,” she repeated.

Dolly smiled.

“But you must tell me about yourself. I must have a long talk with you. I was talking with . . .” Dolly didn’t know what to call him. She felt awkward calling him the count or Alexei Kirillovich.

“With Alexei,” said Anna. “I know you talked. But I wanted to ask you candidly, what do you think of me, of my life?”

“How can I say just like that? I don’t really know.”

“No, you must tell me anyway. . . . You see my life. But you mustn’t forget that you’re seeing us in the summer, when you’ve come for a visit, and we’re not alone. . . . But we arrived in the early spring, we lived completely alone and we’re going to be living alone, and I wish for nothing better than this. But you have to imagine me living alone without him, alone, and it’s going to happen. . . . I can see from everything that it’s going to happen often, that he will be away from home half the time,” she said, standing up and moving closer to Dolly.

“Naturally,” she interrupted Dolly, who was about to object, “naturally, I will not hold him by force. And I don’t hold him. Now it’s the races; his horses are racing and he’s going. It’s fine with me. But you have to think about me and imagine my position. . . . But why talk about it!” She smiled. “So what did he talk to you about?”

“He was talking about what I myself want to talk about, and it’s easy for me to be his advocate: about whether it wouldn’t be possible, whether you couldn’t” — Darya Alexandrovna stammered — “rectify, improve your position. . . . You know how I look upon it . . . Nonetheless, if possible, you should get married. . . .”

“You mean a divorce?” said Anna. “Do you know, the only woman who came

to see me in Petersburg was Betsy Tverskaya? You do know her don't you? *Au fond c'est la femme la plus dépravée qui existe.*⁵⁹ She had a liaison with Tushkevich, deceiving her husband in the vilest manner. And she told me she doesn't want to know me as long as my position is irregular. You mustn't think that I was comparing . . . I know you, my darling. But I couldn't help recalling . . . Well, so what did he tell you?" she repeated.

"He said he was suffering for you and for himself. Perhaps you'll say it's egoism, but such legitimate and noble egoism! He wants, first of all, to legitimize his daughter and be your husband, to have the right to you."

"What wife, what slave, could be so utterly a slave as I am, in my position?" she interrupted gloomily.

"The most important thing is, he doesn't want . . . doesn't want you to suffer."

"That's impossible! And?"

"And, and the most legitimate—he wants your children to have his name."

"What children?" said Anna, narrowing her eyes and not looking at Dolly.

"Annie and those to come—"

"He can stop worrying on that score. There won't be any more children."

"How can you tell there won't?"

"There won't be because I don't wish it."

And despite all her agitation, Anna smiled when she noticed the naïve expression of curiosity, amazement, and horror on Dolly's face.

"The doctor told me after my illness."

.....

"That can't be!" said Dolly, her eyes opened wide. For her, this was one of those discoveries whose consequences and conclusions were so enormous that all she felt in the first moment was only that she could not take it all in and that she would have to give it a very great deal of thought later.

This discovery, which suddenly explained for her all those families she had never understood before, in which there were only one or two children, provoked so many thoughts, considerations, and contradictory feelings in her that she was unable to speak and could only look at Anna in amazement with wide open eyes. This was the very thing about which she had just been dreaming on the road, but now, learning that it was possible, she was horrified. She felt that it was too simple a solution to too complex a problem.

"*N'est ce pas immoral?*" was all she said after a brief silence.⁶⁰

"Why so? Just think, I have one of two choices: either be pregnant, that is, ill, or be a friend, a companion to my husband, who is as good as my husband," said Anna in a purposely superficial and frivolous tone.

"Well, yes, yes," said Darya Alexandrovna, listening to the same arguments that she herself had recited and not finding in them their former cogency.

“For you and others,” said Anna, as if guessing her thoughts, “there may still be doubt, but for me . . . You must understand. I am not a wife; he loves me as long as he loves me, but how am I going to keep his love? Like this?”

She extended her white arms in front of her belly.

With extraordinary rapidity, as happens in moments of agitation, thoughts and memories jostled in Darya Alexandrovna’s mind. “I,” she thought, “have not remained attractive to Stiva. He’s left me for others, and the first one he betrayed me for did not keep him by being always beautiful and cheerful. He threw her over and took another. Is Anna really going to attract and keep Count Vronsky that way? If he is looking for that, he will find gowns and manners even more attractive and charming, and no matter how white, how magnificent her bare arms, no matter how beautiful her entire full figure, her ardent face under that black hair, he will find even better ones, just as my repulsive, pitiful, and sweet husband seeks and finds them.”

Dolly said nothing in reply and merely sighed. Anna noticed this sigh, indicating her disagreement, and went on. She had more arguments in reserve, arguments so powerful that they could not be answered.

“You say it’s not right? But one must reason,” she continued. “You are forgetting my position. How can I want children? I’m not speaking of the sufferings. I’m not afraid of that. Just think, who will my children be? Unfortunate children who will bear a stranger’s name. By virtue of their very birth they will be forced to be ashamed of their mother, their father, and their birth.”

“Yes, that’s precisely why you need a divorce.”

But Anna was not listening. She felt like finishing to voice all those arguments with which she had so many times tried to convince herself.

“Why was I given reason if I don’t use it in order not to bring unhappy beings into the world?”

She looked at Dolly, but without waiting for an answer, went on.

“I would always feel guilty before these unhappy children,” she said. “If they don’t exist, then at least they are not unhappy, and if they are unhappy, then I alone am to blame.”

These were the very same arguments Darya Alexandrovna had been citing to herself; but now she listened and did not understand them. “How can she be guilty before beings who don’t exist?” she thought. Suddenly it dawned on her: could it possibly under any circumstances be better for her favorite Grisha if he had never existed? And this seemed so wild, so bizarre, that she shook her head to dispel this tangle of spinning, insane thoughts.

“No, I don’t know, it’s not right,” was all she said, an expression of aversion on her face.

“Yes, but you mustn’t forget that you and I . . . And besides,” Anna added,

as if, despite the wealth of her own arguments and the poverty of Dolly's arguments, she were nonetheless admitting that it was not right, "you can't forget the main thing, that I am not now in the same position as you. For you the question is do I want not to have more children, whereas for me it is do I want to have them. That's a big difference. You can understand that I cannot want to in my position."

Darya Alexandrovna offered no objections. She suddenly felt that she had become very distant from Anna, that between them there were matters on which they would never agree and about which it was better not to speak.

24

"All the more reason, then, for you to settle your position, if possible," said Dolly.

"Yes, if possible," said Anna suddenly in a completely different, quiet, and mournful voice.

"Is a divorce really impossible? I've been told your husband agrees."

"Dolly! I don't feel like speaking about this."

"Well then, we won't," Darya Alexandrovna hastened to say, noticing the expression of suffering on Anna's face. "I only see that you take too gloomy a view."

"Me? Not a bit. I'm quite cheerful and content. You saw, *je fais des passions*."⁶¹ Veslovsky—"

"Yes, to tell the truth, I don't like Veslovsky's tone," said Darya Alexandrovna, wishing to change the subject.

"Oh, not a bit of it! It tickles Alexei, nothing more; but he's a little boy and entirely in my hands; you realize, I turn him as I like. He's exactly like your Grisha. . . . Dolly!" Suddenly her voice changed. "You say I take too gloomy a view. You can't understand. It's too horrible. I try not to look at all."

"But it seems to me you ought to. You ought to do everything you can."

"But what can I do? Nothing. You say I should marry Alexei and that I'm not thinking about that. I don't think about it!" she repeated, and color flushed her face. She rose, straightened her shoulders, sighed heavily, and began pacing with her light step around the room, stopping from time to time. "Not think about it? There isn't a day, an hour, when I'm not thinking about it and reproaching myself for thinking about it . . . because thoughts about this could drive me mad. Drive me mad," she repeated. "When I think about it, I can't fall asleep without morphine. But very well. Let's talk calmly. People tell me, a divorce. First of all, *he* won't give it to me. *He* is now under the influence of Countess Lydia Ivanovna."

Darya Alexandrovna, sitting ramrod straight in the chair, with a face full of suffering and sympathy, turning her head, followed the pacing Anna.

“You must try,” she said quietly.

“Let’s say I do. What does that mean?” she expressed a thought she had evidently thought over a thousand times and learned by heart. “It means that I, who hate him but still recognize myself as guilty before him — and consider him magnanimous — I must demean myself and write to him. . . . Well, let’s say I do make an effort and I do this. I will receive either an insulting reply or his consent. Fine, I’ve received his consent.” During this time Anna was at the far end of the room and had stopped there, doing something with the window’s curtain. “I receive his consent, but my so . . . son? You see, he’s not going to give him up to me. He will grow up despising me, he and his father, whom I abandoned. You must understand that I love — equally I think, but both more than myself, two beings — Seryozha and Alexei.”

She came out into the middle of the room and stopped in front of Dolly, pressing her arms across her breast. In her white peignoir her figure seemed especially grand and broad. She bowed her head and looked up with shining, wet eyes at small, thin Dolly, pitiful in her mended bed jacket and nightcap, who was trembling all over from agitation.

“I love only these two beings, and one excludes the other. I can’t have them together, and that’s the one thing I need. And if I don’t have that, then I don’t care. I just don’t care. It will end somehow, and so I can’t, don’t want to talk about it. So you must not reproach me or judge me for anything. You with your purity can’t understand all that I am suffering.”

She walked over, sat down beside Dolly, and with a guilty expression looked into her face and took her hand.

“What do you think? What do you think of me? You mustn’t despise me. I’m not worth your contempt. What I am is unfortunate. If anyone is unfortunate, then it’s me,” she uttered, and turning away, began to weep.

Once she was alone, Dolly prayed to God and went to bed. She had pitied Anna with all her heart when she was speaking with her; but now she could not force herself to think about her. In her mind, memories of home and her children arose with a special charm that was new for her, in a new glow. This world of hers now seemed to her so precious and dear that she did not want to spend a single extra day away from it and decided she would leave the next day without fail.

Anna, meanwhile, having returned to her sitting room, picked up a wineglass and put in it a few drops of medicine, the main ingredient of which was morphine, and after drinking it and sitting motionless for a while, with a calmer and cheerful spirit, went into the bedroom.

When she entered the bedroom, Vronsky looked at her attentively. He was searching for traces of the conversation which he knew that she, staying so long in Dolly's room, must have had with her. But in her expression of restrained excitement that concealed something from him, he found nothing but her beauty, which, accustomed as he was to it, still captivated him, her awareness of it, and the desire that it affect him. He did not want to ask her what they had talked about, but he hoped she would say something herself. But all she said was, "I'm pleased you like Dolly. You do, don't you?"

"But I've known her for a long time. She is a very good person, I think, *mais excessivement terre-à-terre*.⁶² Still, I was very glad to see her."

He took Anna's hand and looked inquiringly into her eyes.

She, understanding this look in another way, smiled at him.

The next morning, in spite of her hosts' entreaties, Darya Alexandrovna got ready to leave. Levin's driver, wearing his far-from-new caftan and a kind of postman's hat, with unmatched horses, in a carriage with patched splashboards, drove sullenly and resolutely under the sand-strewn porte cochere.

Darya Alexandrovna found the parting with Princess Varvara and the men unpleasant. Having spent a day together, both she and her hosts clearly felt that they did not suit one another and that it would be better if they did not meet. Only Anna was sad. She knew that now, with Dolly's departure, no one would stir up the inmost feelings that had surfaced in her with this meeting. It hurt her to stir up these feelings, but she knew that that was the very best part of her soul and that that part of her soul was quickly overgrown in the life she was leading.

Driving out into the fields, Darya Alexandrovna experienced a pleasant relief, and she felt like asking the men how they had liked it at Vronsky's when suddenly Filipp the driver himself spoke up.

"They're more than rich, but they only gave us three measures of oats. It was all clean gone before cocks' crow. What's three measures? A bite. And oats are forty-five kopeks now from innkeepers. If we have visitors come, we give them as much as they can eat."

"A stingy gentleman," confirmed the clerk.

"Well, but did you like their horses?" asked Dolly.

"The horses—only one word for them. And good food. Even so it seemed dreary to me, Darya Alexandrovna, I don't know about you," he said, turning his handsome and kind face toward her.

"Yes, to me, too. What do you think, will we get there by evening?"

"Have to."

Returning home and finding everyone quite well and especially sweet, Darya Alexandrovna gave a very lively account of her trip, how well she was received, the luxury and good taste of the Vronskys' life, and their entertainments and would not let anyone say a word against them.

"You have to know Anna and Vronsky—I know him better now—in order to understand how touching and nice they are," she now said quite sincerely, forgetting the vague sense of dissatisfaction and awkwardness she had experienced there.

25

Vronsky and Anna spent the entire summer and part of the autumn in the country, living in the same way, still not taking any measures toward a divorce. It had been decided between them that they would not go anywhere; but both felt that the longer they lived alone, especially in the autumn and without guests, they would not stand this life and would have to alter it.

Life, it seemed, was such that nothing better could be desired. They had abundant means, they had their health, they had a child, and they both had occupations. Without guests Anna continued to keep busy and was a great deal occupied with reading—both novels and the serious books that were in fashion. She subscribed to all the books that had been mentioned with praise in the foreign newspapers and journals they received and read them with the attentiveness to what is read given only in isolation. Besides, all the subjects that engaged Vronsky she studied from books and specialized journals, so that often he turned directly to her with questions about agronomy, architecture, and even sometimes stud farming and sports. He was amazed by her knowledge and memory and at first, doubtful, asked for confirmation, and she would find what he had asked about in books and show him.

Arrangements for the hospital also kept her busy. She not merely assisted but arranged and conceived of a great deal herself. But her main concern was still herself—she herself, how dear she was to Vronsky and how she might replace all he had left behind. Vronsky appreciated this, which she had made the sole purpose of her life, the desire not only to please him but also to serve him, but at the same time he was weighed down by the nets of love with which she was trying to ensnare him. The more time passed and the more often he saw himself ensnared in these nets, the more he felt not exactly like escaping them but like testing to see whether they were inhibiting his freedom. Were it not for this increasing desire to be free, not to have a scene every time he needed to go to town for a session or a race, Vronsky would have been perfectly content with his life.

The role he had chosen, the role of wealthy landowner, the kind supposed to form the core of the Russian aristocracy, not only was perfectly to his taste but, now that he had lived half a year this way, was affording him increasing satisfaction. And the work that was engaging and drawing him in more and more was going beautifully. Despite the huge sums the hospital, the machines, the cows ordered from Switzerland, and much else had cost him, he was certain that he had increased, not decimated his fortune. Where it was a matter of income, the sale of timber, grain, and wool, and leasing lands, Vronsky was as hard as flint and could keep up the price. In all large-scale operations on this and his other estates he kept to the very simplest, least risky methods and was to the highest degree thrifty and careful when it came to the minor housekeeping details. Despite all the wiles and cunning of the German steward, who had been trying to draw him into purchases by first grossly overestimating expenses and then figuring out how to do the same thing for less and so making an immediate profit, Vronsky would not yield. He heard his steward out, questioned him, and agreed only when what had been ordered or arranged was the very newest, as yet unknown in Russia, and capable of arousing astonishment. Besides, he agreed to a major expenditure only when he had extra money, and making this expenditure, he went into all the details and insisted on getting the very best for his money. And so it was clear from the way he had conducted his affairs that he had not squandered but increased his fortune.

In October, there were the nobility elections in Kashin Province, where Vronsky's, Sviyazhsky's, Koznyshev's, Oblonsky's, and a small part of Levin's estates were located.

These elections, due to many circumstances and the individuals taking part in them, had attracted the public's attention. Much had been said about them and people were preparing for them. Residents of Moscow, Petersburg, and abroad who had never attended the elections had assembled for these.

Vronsky had promised Sviyazhsky long ago that he would attend.

Before the elections, Sviyazhsky, who often visited Vozdvizhenskoye, rode by for Vronsky.

On the previous day, Vronsky and Anna had almost quarreled over this proposed trip. It was autumn, the dullest, hardest season in the country, and so Vronsky, preparing for battle, with a stern and cold expression as he had never spoken to Anna before, announced his departure. To his surprise, though, Anna took this news very calmly and only asked him when he would return. He looked at her closely, not understanding this calm. She smiled at his glance. He knew this ability of hers to withdraw within herself and knew that this happened only when she had decided something privately, without informing him of her plans.

He had been afraid of this; but he so wanted to avoid a scene that he pretended and in part sincerely believed what he wanted to believe in—her good sense.

“I hope you won’t be bored?”

“I hope not,” said Anna. “Yesterday I received a box of books from Gautier.⁶³ No, I won’t be bored.”

“She wants to adopt this tone, so much the better,” he thought, “otherwise it’s always the same thing.”

And so, without challenging her to a frank explanation, he left for the elections. This was the first time since the beginning of their liaison that he had parted from her without a full explanation. On one hand, this disturbed him; on the other, he found that it was better. “At first, like now, it will be something vague and suppressed, but later she’ll get used to it. In any case, I can give her everything but not my independence as a man,” he thought.

26

In September, Levin moved to Moscow for Kitty’s confinement. He had already been a whole month in Moscow without anything to do when Sergei Ivanovich, who had an estate in Kashin Province and who had taken a vital part in the issue of the upcoming elections, prepared to go to the elections. He invited his brother, who had a vote for the Seleznev District, to come along. Besides, Levin had business in Kashin that was of the utmost necessity for his sister, who lived abroad, involving a trusteeship and the receipt of redemption money.

Levin was still undecided, but Kitty, seeing how bored he was in Moscow, and advising him to go, without asking ordered him a nobleman’s uniform that cost eighty rubles, and those eighty rubles paid for the uniform were the main reason leading Levin to go. He left for Kashin.

Levin had been in Kashin five days, each day attending the assembly and taking care of his sister’s business, which was still not settled. All the marshals of the nobility were busy with the elections, and he could not accomplish the simplest business that depended on the trusteeship. The other matter—the receipt of money—was encountering exactly the same obstacles. After long efforts to lift the prohibition, the money was ready for issue; but the notary, a most obliging man, could not issue the warrant because he needed the signature of the chairman, and the chairman, who had not delegated his authority, was at the session. All these efforts, the trek from place to place, the conversations with very kind, good men who fully understood how unpleasant the petitioner’s position was but who could not help him—all this exertion yielding no results produced in Levin an agonizing feeling similar to that annoying impotence experi-

enced in dreams, when you want to use your physical strength. He experienced this often conversing with his very good-natured attorney. This attorney seemed to be doing everything possible and straining all his mental powers to extricate Levin from his difficulty. "Here's what you should try," he told him more than once. "Go there and there," and the attorney would draw up an entire plan for skirting the fateful principle that was hindering everything. But then he would immediately add, "All the same, they'll uphold it, but give it a try anyway." And Levin would give it a try, walk there, ride there, but although everyone was kind and gracious, it would turn out that what he had skirted had cropped back up at the end and was again barring his way. Especially offensive was the fact that Levin simply could not understand whom he was fighting, who benefited from this matter not being concluded. This no one seemed to know; the attorney did not know either. If Levin had been able to understand this, the way he understood why you cannot approach the ticket window on the railway except by standing in line, he would not have been offended and annoyed; but in the obstacles he was encountering in this matter, no one could explain to him the point of their existence.

But Levin had changed a lot during his marriage; he was patient, and if he did not understand why all this had been arranged this way, then he told himself that, without knowing everything, he could not judge, that this was probably as it should be, and he tried not to be indignant.

Now, attending the elections and participating in them, he also tried not to judge or argue but as much as possible to understand what honorable and good men whom he respected had taken up so seriously and enthusiastically. Ever since he had gotten married, so many new and serious aspects that out of frivolity used to seem insignificant had been revealed to him that he assumed and sought out grave importance in the elections.

Sergei Ivanovich explained to him the meaning and significance of the revolution proposed in the elections. The provincial marshal of the nobility, who by law held in his hands so many important public functions—both trusteeships (the very ones giving Levin so much trouble), and the huge funds of the nobility, and the high schools for women, men, and the military, and popular education under the new dispensation, and, finally, the district council—Snetkov, the provincial marshal of the nobility, was a man of the old type of nobleman who had run through a tremendous fortune, a good man, honest in his way, but quite incapable of understanding the demands of the new era. He always upheld the side of the nobility in everything, he was directly opposed to the spread of popular education, and ascribed to the district council, which was supposed to have such tremendous significance, a class nature. What was

needed was to replace him with a fresh, up-to-date, practical man, someone totally new, and pursue a policy that would extract as much self-government as possible from the powers granted to the nobility, not as the nobility, but as an element of the district council. In wealthy Kashin Province, which had always taken the lead, such forces were now gathering that, if conducted here properly, could serve as a model for other provinces, for all of Russia. And so the entire matter was of great significance. It had been proposed to place Sviyazhsky or, even better, Nevedovsky, a former professor, a remarkably intelligent man, and a great friend of Sergei Ivanovich, in Snetkov's place as marshal of the nobility.

The assembly was opened by the governor, who gave a speech to the noblemen, telling them to choose their officials based not on partiality but rather on their merits and for the good of the fatherland, and that he hoped that Kashin's estimable nobility, as in previous elections, would carry out its duty as sacred and vindicate the supreme confidence of the monarch.

Upon concluding his speech, the governor left the hall, and the noblemen followed and surrounded him noisily and animatedly, some even ecstatically, while he was putting on his coat and conversing amicably with the provincial marshal. Levin, wishing to probe everything and miss nothing, was standing right there in the crowd and heard the governor say, "Please, tell Marya Ivanovna that my wife is very sorry that she is going to the orphanage." Immediately thereafter the noblemen were cheerfully sorting out their coats and everyone left for the cathedral.

At the cathedral, Levin, raising his hand with the others and repeating the words of the archpriest, swore the most solemn oaths to do all that the governor was expecting. Church services always had an effect on Levin, and when he uttered the words, "I kiss the cross" and looked around at the crowd of these young and old men repeating the same thing, he was much affected.

On the second and third days, there was business concerning the finances of the nobility's and the girls' high schools, which, as Sergei Ivanovich explained, were of no importance, and Levin, busy going about his affairs, did not follow them. On the fourth day, the auditing of the provincial finances took place at the governor's table. Here for the first time a clash occurred between the new party and the old. The commission instructed to audit the finances reported to the assembly that the sums were all intact. The provincial marshal rose, thanking the nobility for their confidence, and tears welled up in his eyes. The noblemen saluted him loudly and shook his hand. But at that moment one nobleman from Sergei Ivanovich's party said that he had heard that the commission had not actually audited the finances, considering an audit an insult to the marshal of the province. One of the commission's members rashly confirmed this. Then

one short, very young-looking, but quite venomous gentleman began saying that the provincial marshal of the nobility would in all likelihood enjoy giving a report on the finances and that the excessive delicacy of the commission's members was depriving him of this moral satisfaction. Then the commission's members tried to retract their own statement, and Sergei Ivanovich began arguing logically that they must admit that they had either verified the finances or not, and developed this dilemma in detail. Someone speaking from the rival party tried to object to Sergei Ivanovich. Then Sviyazhsky spoke and again the venomous gentleman. The debate went on for a long time and ended in nothing. Levin was amazed that they had argued about this for so long, especially when he asked Sergei Ivanovich whether he thought the sums had been squandered, and Sergei Ivanovich replied, "Oh no! He's an honest man. But this outmoded method of patriarchal family management of the nobility's affairs has to be dislodged."

On the fifth day, elections were held for district marshals of the nobility. This day was fairly stormy in some districts. In Seleznev District, Sviyazhsky was elected unanimously, by acclaim, and that day he gave a dinner.

27

The provincial elections were slated for the sixth day. Both the large and small halls were filled with noblemen in all kinds of uniforms. Many had come only for this day. Friends who had not seen each other for a long time, one from the Crimea, another from Petersburg, yet another from abroad, met in the halls. At the governor's table, under a portrait of the sovereign, the debates were under way.

The noblemen in both the large and small halls had grouped into camps, and from the hostility and mistrust of their glances, from the talk that died upon the approach of members of the other camp, from the fact that some, whispering, retreated even to a distant corridor, one could see that each side had secrets from the other. In appearance, the noblemen were sharply divided into two sorts: the old and the new. The old were for the most part wearing either the nobleman's old-fashioned buttoned uniforms, with swords and hats, or their special naval, cavalry, or infantry uniforms earned in service. The uniforms of the old noblemen were made in the old-fashioned style, with gathers at the shoulders; they were obviously too small, too short in the waist, and too narrow, as if their wearers had outgrown them. The younger men were wearing their noblemen's uniforms unfastened, low-waisted and broad in the shoulders, with white vests, or uniforms with black collars and laurels, the insignia of the Ministry of

Justice. To the younger men belonged the court uniforms that here and there adorned the crowd.

But the division into young and old did not coincide with the division into parties. Some of the younger men, according to Levin's observations, belonged to the old party, and, on the contrary, some of the very oldest noblemen were whispering with Sviyazhsky and were, evidently, zealous supporters of the new party.

Levin was standing in the smaller hall, where men were smoking and having a bite to eat, alongside a group of his friends, listening to what they were saying and assiduously straining all his mental powers in order to understand what was being said. Sergei Ivanovich was the center around which the others grouped. He was now listening to Sviyazhsky and Khlyustov, the marshal of the nobility of another district who belonged to their party. Khlyustov was refusing to go with his district to ask Snetkov to stand, and Sviyazhsky was trying to talk him into doing just that, and Sergei Ivanovich approved of this plan. Levin did not understand why a hostile party should ask the very marshal of the nobility whom they wanted to vote out to stand for election.

Stepan Arkadyevich, who had just had a bite to eat and something to drink, wiping his mouth with his fragrant hemmed batiste handkerchief, walked over to them wearing his chamberlain uniform.

"We are taking a position," he said, smoothing both his side whiskers. "Sergei Ivanovich!"

After listening to the conversation, he supported Sviyazhsky's opinion.

"One district is enough, and Sviyazhsky is obviously already the opposition," he said, using words everyone but Levin understood.

"So, Kostya, got a taste for this, have you?" he added, addressing Levin, and he took him by the arm. Levin would have been glad to have a taste for it, but he could not understand what it was all about, and taking a few steps away from those who'd been speaking, he expressed his perplexity to Stepan Arkadyevich over why they should ask the provincial marshal to stand.

"*O sancta simplicitas!*" said Stepan Arkadyevich and he quickly and clearly interpreted for Levin what was going on.⁶⁴

If, as in the last elections, all the districts asked the provincial marshal, then he would have been chosen by all white balls. That mustn't happen. Now eight districts had agreed to ask him; if two refused to ask him, then Snetkov might decline to stand for election. Then the old party could choose one of its own, since the entire calculation would be thrown off. But if Sviyazhsky's district alone did not ask, Snetkov would stand. He would even be chosen and they would purposely shift votes over to him, so that the opposing party would mis-

count its support, and when our side nominated a candidate of our own, they would shift back to him.

Levin understood, but not entirely, and he was about to ask a few more questions when suddenly everyone started talking, making noise, and moving toward the big hall.

“What’s going on? What? Who?” “A warrant? For whom? What?” “They’re rejecting him?” “No warrant.” “They’re not allowing Flerov.” “What if he is on trial?” “In that case they won’t allow anyone. That’s base.” “Law!” Levin heard from different sides and together with everyone else, rushing somewhere and afraid of missing something, headed for the big hall, and hemmed in by noblemen, moved closer to the governor’s desk, where the provincial marshal, Sviyazhsky, and the other ringleaders were arguing heatedly.

28

Levin was standing rather far off. One nobleman breathing heavily, with a wheeze, beside him, and another creaking his thick soles, were preventing him from hearing clearly. From a distance he could hear only the soft voice of the marshal of the nobility, then the shrill voice of the venomous nobleman, and then Sviyazhsky’s voice. They were arguing, as far as he could tell, about the meaning of an article of law and about the meaning of the words “to be under investigation.”

The crowd parted to make way for Sergei Ivanovich, who was approaching the desk. Sergei Ivanovich, having waited for the venomous nobleman’s speech to end, said that it seemed to him that the surest thing to do was to check the article of law, and he asked the secretary to find that article. The article said that in the event of disagreement a vote must be taken.

Sergei Ivanovich read through the article and began explaining its meaning, but at this one tall, fat, round-shouldered landowner with a dyed mustache, wearing a tight uniform with a collar that dug into the back of his neck, interrupted him. He approached the desk and, striking it with his signet ring, began shouting very loudly.

“Vote! Put it to a vote! There’s nothing to discuss! Let’s vote!”

At this, several voices began talking at once, and the tall nobleman with the signet ring, growing increasingly angry, shouted more and more loudly. But no one could figure out what he was saying.

He was saying exactly what Sergei Ivanovich had been proposing; but evidently he hated him and his whole party, and this feeling of hatred was conveyed to the whole party and provoked resistance of an identical, albeit more

civil, malice from the other side. Shouts went up, and for a moment all was confusion, so that the provincial marshal had to call for order.

“Vote! Vote! Anyone who is a noblemen understands. We shed our blood. . . .” “The monarch’s trust. . . . Don’t audit the marshal, he’s not a shop assistant. . . . Yes, that’s not the point. . . . Put it to a vote, if you please! This is vile!” Malevolent, furious shouts were heard on all sides. The looks and faces were even more bitter and furious than the speech. They expressed irreconcilable hatred. Levin positively did not understand what it was about and wondered at the passion with which the question was being dissected as to whether the decision about Flerov should or should not be put to a vote. He was forgetting, as Sergei Ivanovich later explained to him, the syllogism that for the common good the provincial marshal had to be ousted; ousting the marshal required a majority of votes; for a majority of votes Flerov needed to be given the right to vote; to deem Flerov competent it had to be explained how to interpret the article of law.

“But one vote might decide the entire matter, and you must be serious and consistent if you want to serve the public cause,” Sergei Ivanovich concluded.

But Levin had forgotten this, and it was hard for him to see these good people, whom he respected, in this unpleasant, nasty state of excitement. In order to be rid of this difficult feeling, without waiting for the debate to end, he went into the other hall, where there was nobody but the waiters around the buffet. Seeing the waiters busy wiping the china and setting out plates and glasses, seeing their calm, animated faces, Levin experienced an unexpected relief, just as if he had come out of a stuffy room into fresh air. He began pacing back and forth, watching the waiters with satisfaction. He liked very much the way one waiter with gray whiskers, showing his contempt for the other younger ones who were trying to undermine him, taught them how they should fold the napkins. Levin was just about to start up a conversation with the old waiter when the secretary for noble trusteeship, an old man whose specialty was knowing all the noblemen of the province by name and patronymic, distracted him.

“If you please, Konstantin Dmitrievich,” he told him, “your brother is looking for you. The question is up for vote.”

Levin went into the hall, received a white ball, and followed his brother Sergei Ivanovich up to the table where Sviyazhsky was standing with an important and ironical face, gathering his beard into his fist and sniffing it. Sergei Ivanovich put his hand in the box, put his ball somewhere, and yielding his place to Levin, stayed right there. Levin came up, but having forgotten altogether what it was about, and embarrassed, he turned to Sergei Ivanovich with a question, “Where should I put it?” He asked quietly, while nearby they were talking, so that he hoped they wouldn’t hear his question. But those talking fell silent, and his improper question was heard. Sergei Ivanovich frowned.

“That is a matter for each man’s conviction,” he said sternly.

Some smiled. Levin blushed, hurriedly stuck his hand under the cloth, and put it on the right, since the ball was in his right hand. After he’d put it in he remembered he was supposed to put his left hand in, too, and he did, but it was too late by then, and even more confused, he went to the backmost rows as quickly as he could.

“One hundred twenty-six in favor! Ninety-eight opposed!” the voice of the secretary, who could not pronounce the letter “r,” was heard. Then there was laughter: a button and two nuts had been found in the box. The nobleman was allowed to vote, and the new party triumphed.

The old party, however, did not consider itself vanquished. Levin heard them ask Snetkov to stand and saw a crowd of nobleman surround the provincial marshal, who was saying something. Levin drew closer. Responding to the noblemen, Snetkov spoke about the trust of the nobility and their love for him, which he did not deserve, since all his merit consisted of allegiance to the nobility, to whom he had devoted twelve years of service. A few times he repeated the words, “I served to the best of my strength, faith, and truth, and I am appreciative and grateful,” and suddenly he halted due to the tears choking him and left the hall. Whether these tears had come about from the awareness of the injustice done him, from his love for the nobility, or from the tension of the situation in which he found himself, feeling surrounded by enemies, his agitation was communicated, and most of the noblemen were touched, and even Levin felt a tenderness for Snetkov.

In the doorway the marshal of the nobility bumped into Levin.

“I’m sorry, pardon me, please,” he said, as if to a stranger; upon recognizing Levin, however, he smiled shyly. It seemed to Levin that he was about to say something but was too upset. The expression of his face and his entire figure in his uniform, crosses, and white, braid-trimmed trousers, the way he was hurrying along, reminded Levin of a hunted beast who sees that things are going badly. Levin found this expression on the marshal’s face particularly touching because just yesterday he had been at his home on the trusteeship matter and seen him in all the grandeur of a good man, a family man. His large home with the old family furniture; the old, unstylish footmen who were not quite clean but respectful, clearly some of those former serfs who had not changed master; his stout, good-natured wife in her lace-edged cap and Turkish shawl caressing her pretty little granddaughter, her daughter’s daughter; his rascal of a son, a high school boy who had come home from school, and greeting his father, had kissed his large hand; the impressive and kind words and gestures of his host—all this the day before had aroused in Levin an involuntary respect and sympa-

thy. Levin was touched and sorry now for this old man, and he felt like saying something pleasant to him.

“You are probably our marshal once again,” he said.

“Hardly,” said the marshal, looking around in fright. “I’m tired and old now. There are those worthier and younger than I. Let them serve.”

And the marshal of the nobility vanished through a side door.

The solemn moment had arrived. They had to begin the elections immediately. The leaders of both parties were counting white and black balls on their fingers.

The debate about Flerov not only had given the new party Flerov’s one vote but had also gained time, so that they were able to bring in three noblemen who through the machinations of the old party had been deprived of the chance to participate in the elections. Two of the noblemen, who had a weakness for wine, had been made drunk by Snetkov’s minions, and the third had had his uniform carried off.

Learning of this, the new party was able during the debates about Flerov to send one of their own by sleigh to reuniform the nobleman and bring one of the two drunks to the assembly.

“I brought one, doused him with water,” said the landowner who had gone to get him as he approached Sviyazhsky. “It’s all right. He’ll do.”

“He’s not too drunk? He won’t fall down?” said Sviyazhsky, shaking his head.

“No, he’s just fine. As long as they don’t give him any more to drink here. I told the waiter he is on no account to serve him.”

29

The narrow hall where they were smoking and eating was full of noblemen. Everyone’s agitation was increasing, and worry could be noted on every face. Especially agitated were the leaders, who knew all the details and the count of all the votes. These were the generals of the impending battle. The others, like the rank and file before a battle, although they were preparing for a fight, for the time being were seeking entertainments. Some were having a bite to eat, standing or sitting at the table; others were walking about, smoking cigarettes, back and forth across the long room, and talking with friends they hadn’t seen for a long time.

Levin wasn’t hungry and he didn’t smoke; he didn’t want to join his own friends, that is, Sergei Ivanovich, Stepan Arkadyevich, Sviyazhsky, and the others, because Vronsky, dressed in his equerry uniform, was standing with them in lively conversation. Levin had already seen him, the day before, at the

elections, and had assiduously avoided him, not wishing to meet him. He walked over to the window and sat down, surveying the groups and eavesdropping on what was being said around him. He felt sad in particular because everyone, as he saw, was animated, concerned, and engaged, and only he alone, along with a very old, toothless man in a naval uniform who had sat down beside him and was chewing his lips, lacked interest and occupation.

“He’s such a scoundrel! I told him, but no. Just think! He couldn’t put that much together in three years,” a short, stooped landowner was saying energetically. His pomaded hair lay on the embroidered collar of his uniform and he stoutly stamped the heels of his new boots, which he had obviously put on for the elections, and the landowner, casting a dissatisfied look at Levin, turned sharply on his heels.

“Yes, a nasty business, what can you say,” said the short landowner in a reedy voice.

After these, an entire crowd of landowners, having surrounded a fat general, hurriedly drew closer to Levin. The landowners were obviously looking for somewhere to talk so as not to be overheard.

“How dare he say I told them to steal his trousers! I think he sold them for drink. I spit on him and his title. How dare he say that! The swine!”

“If you’ll allow me! They’re basing themselves on the article,” they were saying in another group. “The wife has to be registered as a noblewoman.”

“The article be damned! I speak from the soul. That’s what proper noblemen are for. You have to have trust.”

“Your Excellency, let’s go. *Fine Champagne.*”⁶⁵

Another crowd was walking behind a nobleman who was shouting something very loudly; this was one of the three who had been made drunk.

“I always advised Marya Semyonovna to lease it because she never makes a profit,” a landowner with a gray mustache and the regimental uniform of the old General Staff was saying in a pleasant voice. This was the same landowner whom Levin had met at Sviyazhsky’s. He recognized him immediately. The landowner also gave Levin a closer look, and they exchanged greetings.

“Very nice to see you. Of course! I remember very well. Last year at Nikolai Ivanovich’s, the marshal’s.”

“So how is your farming going?” asked Levin.

“Oh, just the same, at a loss,” replied the landowner with a humble smile but with an expression of tranquility and the conviction that so it must be, and stopping next to him. “How did you ever come to be in our province?” he asked. “Did you come to take part in our *coup d’état*?” he said firmly but pronouncing the French words badly. “All Russia has gathered—even chamberlains and

everyone this side of ministers.” He pointed to the imposing figure of Stepan Arkadyevich in his white trousers and chamberlain’s uniform, who was walking back and forth with a general.

“I must confess to you that I don’t understand the significance of the nobility’s elections very well,” said Levin.

The landowner looked at him.

“But what’s there to understand? There’s no significance whatsoever. It is an institution in decline, continuing its movement only by force of inertia. Take a look, the uniforms—even they tell you that this is an assembly of justices of the peace, permanent members, and so forth, not noblemen.”

“Then why do you come?” asked Levin.

“Out of habit, for one. Then I need to maintain connections. A moral obligation of a certain sort. And then, to tell you the truth, I have an interest of my own. My son-in-law wishes to stand for permanent member; they’re not wealthy people, and he needs to be helped along. Why do these gentlemen here come?” he said, pointing to the venomous gentleman who had spoken at the governor’s desk.

“It’s the new generation of nobility.”

“New it may be. But it’s not nobility. These men own land, whereas we are landowners. As noblemen they are slitting their own throats.”

“Yes, but haven’t you just said that this is an obsolete institution?”

“Obsolete it may be, but one must still treat it with more respect. If only Snetkov . . . Fine ones, aren’t we? We’ve been growing for a thousand years. You know, if you plant a garden in front of your house, plan it, before you know it you have a hundred-year-old tree growing . . . it may be gnarled and it may be old, but still you wouldn’t chop the old guy down for a pretty bed of flowers. You’d plan your flowerbed to take advantage of the tree. You can’t grow it in a year,” he said cautiously and immediately changed the topic. “Well, and how is your farming going?”

“Oh, not well. About five percent.”

“Yes, but you’re not counting yourself. You too are worth something after all, am I right? Here’s what I’ll say about myself. Before, when I wasn’t farming, I received three thousand in service. Now I’m working more than I did in service, and just like you, I get five percent, God willing. But your own efforts aren’t counted.”

“So why do you do it? If it’s a clear loss?”

“You just do! What would you have me do? It’s habit, and you know it’s the right thing to do. I’ll tell you something more,” the landowner continued, leaning his elbow against the window and warming to his topic, “my son has no taste

for farming. He's obviously going to be a scholar. So there's no one to carry on. But you still keep doing it. You know, I just planted an orchard."

"Yes, yes," said Levin, "that's perfectly fair. I always feel there's no real gain in my farming, but you do it anyway. . . . You feel some sort of obligation toward the land."

"Let me tell you something," the landowner continued. "My neighbor, a merchant, came to visit. We were walking through the farm and the garden. 'No,' he says, 'Stepan Vasilyevich, you have everything in order, but your garden is in a state of neglect.' Although it's very much in order. 'To my mind, I'd chop down this linden tree. When the sap rises. There are a thousand linden trees, after all, and out of each you get two good planks. These days a plank is worth something, and you could cut some nice linden frames.'"

"And for that money he would have bought livestock, or bought a piece of land for nothing and rented it out to the peasants," Levin finished for him with a smile, obviously having encountered similar calculations more than once before. "And he would make his fortune. While you and I—God willing, we'll only manage to hold on and leave it to our children."

"You've gotten married, I hear?" said the landowner.

"Yes," Levin replied with proud satisfaction. "Yes, it's rather strange," he continued. "That's how we live, without calculation, exactly as if we were commanded to guard some fire, like vestal virgins of antiquity."

The landowner chuckled under his white mustache.

"There are some of us, too, like our friend Nikolai Ivanovich and now Count Vronsky, who have settled here lately, who want to make agronomy an industry; but so far, besides using up capital, it's led nowhere."

"But why is it we don't do as the merchants do? Why don't we chop the trees for lumber?" said Levin, returning to the thought that had struck him.

"Well, it's like you said, we're guarding the flame, and the other way isn't what a nobleman does. What a nobleman does is not done here, at the elections, but there, in our own nook. There is also our class instinct, what is and isn't proper. There are the peasants as well, I'd take another look at him: how the good peasant, how he tries to get as much land as he can. No matter how poor the land, he plows it all. Also without calculation. At a clear loss."

"Just as we do," said Levin. "It's been very, very pleasant to see you," he added, seeing Sviyazhsky coming toward him.

"And here we've met for the first time since we were at your place," said the landowner, "and we were getting caught up."

"So, have you been berating the new ways?" said Sviyazhsky with a smile.

"But not only."

"We unburdened our souls."

30

Sviyazhsky took Levin by the arm and went with him to see their friends.

Now Vronsky could not be avoided. He was standing with Stepan Arkadyevich and Sergei Ivanovich and looking straight at the approaching Levin.

"Very pleased. I believe I've had the pleasure of meeting you . . . at Princess Shcherbatskaya's," he said, shaking Levin's hand.

"Yes, I remember our meeting very well," said Levin, and blushing a deep red, he immediately turned away and began talking to his brother.

Vronsky smiled faintly and continued talking with Sviyazhsky, obviously having no desire to enter into conversation with Levin. But Levin, while speaking with his brother, kept looking around at Vronsky, trying to think of something to talk with him about, in order to smooth over his rudeness.

"What's this all about now?" asked Levin, glancing back at Sviyazhsky and Vronsky.

"Snetkov. He needs either to decline or to agree," Sviyazhsky replied.

"What do you mean, has he agreed or not?"

"That's just the point, neither one nor the other," said Vronsky.

"But if he declines, who is going to stand?" asked Levin, looking at Vronsky.

"Whoever wants to," said Sviyazhsky.

"Will you?" asked Levin.

"Only not me," said Sviyazhsky, caught unawares and casting a frightened glance at the venomous gentleman standing next to Sergei Ivanovich.

"Then who? Nevedovsky?" said Levin, sensing he had botched something.

But this was even worse. Nevedovsky and Sviyazhsky were the two candidates.

"Well, not me, no matter what," replied the venomous gentleman.

This was Nevedovsky himself. Sviyazhsky introduced him to Levin.

"What, were you cut to the quick as well?" said Stepan Arkadyevich, winking at Vronsky. "It's like the races. You might bet."

"Yes, it does cut me to the quick," said Vronsky. "Once I've started something, I like to finish it. A fight!" he said, frowning and gripping his powerful jaws.

"What a smart operator Sviyazhsky is! It's all so clear to him."

"Oh yes," said Vronsky distractedly.

There was a pause, during which Vronsky, since he had to look at something, looked at Levin, at his feet, his uniform, and then his face, and noticing the gloomy eyes aimed at him, so as to say something, said, "How is it that you are a permanent resident in the country and not a justice of the peace? You're not wearing a justice of the peace's uniform."

“Because I believe the justice of the peace court to be an idiotic institution,” Levin replied gloomily, all this time having waited for a chance to start up a conversation with Vronsky in order to smooth over his rudeness at their first encounter.

“I don’t think so. On the contrary,” said Vronsky with calm surprise.

“It’s a plaything,” Levin interrupted him. “We don’t need justices of the peace. In eight years I haven’t had a single case, and what I’ve had has been resolved the wrong way around. The justice of the peace is forty versts away. For a two-ruble case, I have to send my attorney, who costs fifteen.”

He recounted how a peasant had stolen some flour from the miller, and when the miller told him this, the peasant sued him for slander. All this was beside the point and stupid, and even Levin while he was speaking felt this himself.

“Oh, such an original!” said Stepan Arkadyevich with his most almandine smile. “But let’s go. It looks like they’re voting.”

And they separated.

“I don’t understand,” said Sergei Ivanovich, having noticed his brother’s awkward outburst. “I don’t understand how one can be so devoid of any political tact. That is what we Russians don’t have. The provincial marshal is our opponent, you and he are *ami cochon* and you ask him to stand for office.⁶⁶ While Count Vronsky . . . I’m not going to make a friend of him; he invited me to dinner and I won’t go, but he is one of us. Why make an enemy of him? Then you ask Nevedovsky whether he is going to stand. That isn’t done.”

“Oh, I don’t understand anything! And all this is trifles,” Levin replied gloomily.

“Here you say it’s all trifles, but as soon as you take it up you get it all muddled.”

Levin fell silent, and together they entered the large hall.

The provincial marshal, in spite of sensing in the air that a dirty trick was about to be played on him, and in spite of not being asked by everyone, had still decided to stand for election. All fell silent in the hall, and the secretary announced loudly that Guards Captain Mikhail Stepanovich Snetkov was standing for provincial marshal of the nobility.

The district marshals walked around with saucers, on which were little balls, from their tables to the provincial marshal’s, and the elections began.

“Put it on the right,” Stepan Arkadyevich whispered to Levin when he and his brother followed their marshal up to the table. But Levin now forgot the calculation they had explained to him, and he was afraid Stepan Arkadyevich might be wrong in saying “on the right.” After all, Snetkov was the enemy. Walking up to the box, he held the ball in his right hand, but thinking he was mistaken, right in front of the box he shifted the ball to his left hand and then,

obviously, put it on the left. A connoisseur of the matter standing by the box, figuring from just the movement of the elbow who was putting it where, frowned with displeasure. There was no point in exercising his perspicacity.

All fell silent, and the counting of balls could be heard. Then a solitary voice announced the number of votes for and against.

The marshal of the nobility was chosen by a significant majority. It got noisy and people rushed for the door. Snetkov walked in, and the nobility surrounded him, congratulating him.

“Well, is it over now?” Levin asked Sergei Ivanovich.

“It’s only beginning,” Sviyazhsky spoke for Sergei Ivanovich, smiling. “The other candidate for marshal may receive more votes.”

Again Levin had completely forgotten about this. Only now did he recall that there was some fine point here, but it bored him to try to remember what it consisted of. Sadness descended upon him, and he wished he could escape this crowd.

Since no one was paying him any attention, and no one seemed to need him, he quietly headed toward the small hall, where people were having something to eat, and felt great relief upon seeing the waiters again. The old waiter offered him something to eat and Levin consented. After eating a cutlet and haricots verts, and after talking with the waiter about masters of the past, Levin, not wishing to enter the hall where he had found it so unpleasant, proceeded to the gallery to stretch his legs.

The gallery was filled with elegant ladies leaning over the railing and trying not to miss a single word of what was being said downstairs. Near the ladies sat and stood elegant attorneys, high school teachers in spectacles, and officers. Everywhere the talk was about the elections and how anxious the marshal of the nobility had been and how fine the debates; in one group Levin heard praise for his brother.

One lady was telling her attorney, “I’m so pleased I heard Koznyshev! It’s worth going hungry for. Splendid! How clear it is. And one can hear it all! No one there in your court speaks like that. There’s only Meidel, and he’s far from that eloquent.”

Finding a free place near the railings, Levin leaned over and began watching and listening.

All the noblemen were sitting behind barriers by district. In the middle of the hall stood a man in a uniform announcing in a high, loud voice, “Standing for election for provincial marshal of the nobility is Guards Captain Evgeny Ivanovich Apukhtin!”

A deadly silence ensued, and one weak, elderly voice was heard.

“Declined!”

“Standing for election is Court Counselor Peter Petrovich Bohl,” the voice began again.

“Declined!” rang out a young, shrill voice.

They started in again, and again heard “declined.” This went on for about an hour. Levin, leaning on the railing, looked and listened. At first he was amazed and wanted to understand what it meant; then, convinced that he could not understand it, he became bored. Then, recalling all the excitement and malice he had seen on all the faces, he became sad: he decided to leave and went downstairs. Crossing the gallery vestibule, he encountered a doleful high school student with teary eyes walking back and forth. On the staircase he met a couple: a lady, running quickly on her heels, and the easygoing assistant prosecutor.

“I told you you wouldn’t be late,” said the prosecutor as Levin stepped aside to let the lady pass.

Levin was already on the staircase leading outside and retrieving his coat check from his vest pocket when the secretary caught him.

“Please, Konstantin Dmitrievich, they’re voting.”

Standing for office was Nevedovsky, who had declined so decisively.

Levin walked over to the door to the hall: it was locked. The secretary knocked, the door opened, and two red-faced landowners lunged toward Levin.

“This is intolerable,” said one red-faced landowner.

Behind the landowner the face of the provincial marshal poked out. This face was terrible from exhaustion and fear.

“I told you not to let anyone out!” he shouted at the guard.

“I let him in, Your Excellency!”

“Lord!” Sighing heavily, the provincial marshal, shuffling wearily in his white trousers, his head lowered, walked through the middle of the hall toward the high table.

They had switched over to Nevedovsky, as had been calculated, and he was the provincial marshal. Many were cheerful, many content and happy, many in ecstasy, many dissatisfied and unhappy. The provincial marshal was in a despair he could not hide. When Nevedovsky left the hall, a crowd surrounded him and followed behind him enthusiastically, just as it had followed the governor the first day when he had opened the elections and just as it had followed Snetkov when he was chosen.

The newly elected provincial marshal and many from the victorious party of the new had dinner that day at Vronsky’s.

Vronsky had come to the elections partly because he was bored in the country and needed to declare to Anna his rights to freedom, and partly to repay Sviyazhsky by his support in the elections for all the trouble he had taken for Vronsky in the district council elections, and most of all in order to strictly fulfill all the obligations of his position as a nobleman and landowner which he had taken upon himself. He had never anticipated that this matter of elections would engage him so, cut him to the quick so, and that he might do this sort of thing so well. He was a completely new man among the noblemen, but he had obviously enjoyed some success and was not mistaken in thinking that he had already acquired influence among the noblemen. His influence was facilitated by his wealth and exalted status; his magnificent quarters in town, which his old friend Shirkov, who was engaged in financial affairs and had founded a flourishing bank in Kashin, had let him use; Vronsky's excellent cook, whom he had brought from the country; his friendship with the governor, who was not only Vronsky's schoolmate but his protégé as well; and most of all, his simple, evenhanded attitude to everyone, which quickly forced most of the noblemen to change their condemnation of his illusory pride. He himself felt that, other than the mad gentleman who had married Kitty Shcherbatskaya, who à *propos de bottes* had said with insane malice numerous foolish things that had nothing to do with anything, each nobleman whom he had met had become his supporter.⁶⁷ He clearly saw, and others recognized this, that he had done a great deal to facilitate Nevedovsky's success. Now, at his own table, celebrating Nevedovsky's election, he experienced the pleasant sensation of victory for his own choice. The elections themselves had so intrigued him that if he were married by the next triennial, he himself would think about standing for election—much as if after winning a prize through his jockey he had felt like racing himself.

Now the jockey's win was being celebrated. Vronsky was sitting at the head of the table; on his right hand sat the young governor, a high-ranking general. For everyone, this was the master of the province who had formally opened the elections, given a speech, and aroused both respect and servility in many, as Vronsky had seen; for Vronsky this was Katka Maslov—that had been his nickname in the Corps of Pages—who had become flustered in front of him and whom Vronsky had tried to *mettre à son aise*.⁶⁸ On his left hand sat Nevedovsky with his youthful, unwavering, and venomous face. With him Vronsky was simple and respectful.

Sviyazhsky suffered his failure cheerfully. It wasn't even a failure for him, as he himself said, addressing Nevedovsky with a wineglass in hand: a better representative could not be found for the new direction which the nobility ought

to pursue. So every honest person, as he said, stood on the side of today's success and celebrated it.

Stepan Arkadyevich, too, was pleased to have spent his time so cheerfully and that everyone was content. Over a splendid dinner they dissected the election episodes. Sviyazhsky comically conveyed the tearful speech of the marshal of the nobility and noticed, as he turned to Nevedovsky, that His Excellency would have to select another, more complicated way to audit his sums than by tears. Another comical nobleman recounted how the stockinged footmen had been hired for the provincial marshal's ball and how now they would have to be sent back unless the new provincial marshal gave a ball with stockinged footmen.

Constantly throughout the dinner, in addressing Nevedovsky, they said, "our provincial marshal" and "Your Excellency."

This was spoken with the same satisfaction with which a young woman is called *madame* and her husband's name. Nevedovsky pretended that he not only was indifferent to but also despised this title, but it was obvious that he was happy and was keeping himself in check so as not to express a joy unbecoming to the new liberal atmosphere in which everyone found himself.

At dinner several telegrams were sent to people interested in the outcome of the elections. Even Stepan Arkadyevich, who was feeling very cheerful, sent Darya Alexandrovna a telegram: "Nevedovsky elected by twelve votes. Congratulations. Tell others." He dictated it aloud, noting, "This should please them." Upon receiving the dispatch, Darya Alexandrovna merely sighed over the ruble for the telegram and realized that this had happened at the end of the dinner. She knew Stiva had a weakness at the end of dinners to *faire jouer le télégraphe*.⁶⁹

Everything—the excellent dinner and the wines not from Russian wine merchants but directly from foreign bottlers—was very noble, simple, and cheerful. A circle of about twenty men had been chosen by Sviyazhsky from among the new liberal figures of like mind who were also witty and well bred. They drank toasts, also half in jest, to the new provincial marshal, to the governor, to the bank director, and to "our gracious host."

Vronsky was pleased. He had never anticipated such a pleasant tone in the provinces.

At dinner's end it became even more cheerful. The governor asked Vronsky to go to a concert to benefit the *brethren*, which his wife, who wished to meet him, had arranged.⁷⁰

"There will be a ball, and you will see the beauty of the province. Really remarkable."

“*Not in my line*,” Vronsky, who liked this expression, replied, but he smiled and promised to come.⁷¹

Right before leaving the table, when everyone had begun to smoke, Vronsky’s valet walked up to him with a letter on a tray.

“Urgent, from Vozdvizhenskoye,” he said with a significant expression.

“It’s amazing how much he resembles our friend Sventitsky, the prosecutor,” said one of the guests in French about the valet while Vronsky, frowning, was reading the letter.

The letter was from Anna. Even before he had read the letter through, he already knew its content. Assuming that the elections would be over in five days, he had promised to return on Friday. Now it was Saturday, and he knew that the letter contained reproaches for not returning on time. The letter he had sent the evening before had probably not yet reached her.

The content was exactly what he had expected, but the form was surprising and especially unpleasant to him. “Annie is very ill, the doctor says it may be pneumonia. I’m losing my mind all alone. Princess Varvara is a hindrance, not a help. I was expecting you the day before yesterday, and yesterday, and now I’m sending to find out where you are and what’s wrong. I wanted to come myself, but I thought better of it, knowing that you would find that unpleasant. Send some reply so that I know what to do.”

The child was ill, but she herself wanted to come. His daughter was ill, and this hostile tone.

Vronsky was struck by the contrast between this innocent amusement of the elections and that dark, burdensome love to which he was supposed to return. But he did need to go home, and he did so that night, on the very first train.

32

Before Vronsky’s departure for the elections, Anna, having reflected that the scenes repeated every time he went somewhere could only make him cold rather than more attached to her, decided to make every possible effort to endure the separation from him calmly. But that cold, stern look he had given her when he had come to announce his departure had hurt her, and before he had left, her tranquility had already been destroyed.

Later, in her solitude, mulling over this look, which had expressed his right to freedom, she came, as always, to the same point—the awareness of her own humiliation. “He has the right to go whenever and wherever he likes. Not only to go away but to leave me. He has all rights and I have none at all. But knowing this, he should not have done it.” “But what has he actually done? . . . He gave

me a cold, stern look. Naturally, that's something indefinable and intangible, but it's never been there before, and that look means a great deal," she thought. "This look shows that the cooling has begun."

And although she was convinced that the cooling was beginning, there was still nothing she could do, nothing she could change in her attitude toward him. Precisely as before, she could hold him with her love and attraction alone. Just as before, by being busy during the day and taking morphine at night, she could block the terrible thoughts about what would happen if he ceased to love her. True, there was one other means: not to hold him—for that she wanted nothing besides his love—but to get closer to him, to be in a position such that he would not abandon her. The means for this was divorce and marriage, and she began to wish for this and resolved to agree to it the first time he or Stiva broached the subject.

In such thoughts she spent the five days without him, the very ones when he was supposed to be absent.

Walks, conversations with Princess Varvara, hospital visits, and most important, reading, reading one book after another, occupied her time. But on the sixth day, when the driver returned without him, she felt she could no longer do anything to block out the thought of him and of what he was doing there. At the same time, her daughter fell ill. Anna began to tend to her, but even this did not distract her, especially since the illness was not dangerous. No matter how she tried, she could not love this little girl, nor could she pretend to love her. By the evening of that day, left alone, Anna felt such fear over him that she nearly decided to go to town, but thinking better of it, she wrote the contradictory letter which Vronsky received and, without rereading it, sent it by courier. The next morning she received his letter and repented of her own. She anticipated with horror a repetition of that stern look which he had cast at her as he left, especially when he found out that the girl was not dangerously ill. All the same, she was glad she had written him. Now Anna could admit to herself that she was a burden to him, that he was giving up his freedom regretfully in order to return to her, but in spite of that, she was glad he was coming. Let him be burdened with her, but he would be here with her, so that she could see him and could know his every movement.

She was sitting in the drawing room, under a lamp, with a new book by Taine, and reading as she listened to the sounds of the wind outside and anticipating the arrival of the carriage at any moment.⁷² Several times she thought she heard the sound of wheels, but she was mistaken; at last she heard not only the sound of wheels but also the driver's shout and the muffled sound in the porte cochere. Even Princess Varvara, who had been laying out patience, confirmed this, and

Anna blushed and rose, but instead of going downstairs, as she had done twice before, she stopped. She was suddenly ashamed of her deception, but most of all she was afraid of how he would receive her. The feeling of insult had passed; she was only afraid of the expression of his displeasure. She recalled that her daughter had already been quite well for more than a day. She was even annoyed at her for getting better the moment the letter was sent. Then she remembered him, that he was here, all of him, his eyes, his hands. She heard his voice, and forgetting everything, she ran joyfully toward him.

“Well, how is Annie?” he said shyly from below, looking at Anna running toward him.

He was sitting on a chair, and a footman was removing his warm boot.

“Fine, she’s better.”

“And you?” he said, giving himself a shake.

She took his hand in both of hers and pulled it toward her waist, not taking her eyes off him.

“Well, I’m very glad,” he said, coldly surveying her, her hair, her dress, which he knew she had put on for him.

He liked all this, but he had liked it so many times already! And that stern and stony expression which she so feared remained on his face.

“Well, I’m very glad. But are you well?” he said, wiping his wet beard with his handkerchief and kissing her hand.

“It doesn’t matter,” she thought. “Just so he’s here, and when he’s here, he cannot, he dare not fail to love me.”

The evening passed happily and cheerfully in the presence of Princess Varvara, who complained to him that without him there, Anna was taking morphine.

“And what am I to do? I couldn’t sleep. My thoughts kept me from it. When he’s here I never take it. Almost never.”

He told stories about the elections, and Anna knew how to draw out in him the very thing that cheered him—his success. She told him everything that interested him at home, and all her news was the most cheerful sort.

But late at night, when they were left alone, Anna, seeing that she had once again taken full possession of him, wished to wipe away the heavy impression of his glance at her because of the letter. She said, “Admit it, you were annoyed at getting my letter and you didn’t believe me.”

No sooner had she said this than she realized that no matter how lovingly he was disposed toward her, he had not forgiven her for that.

“Yes,” he said. “The letter was such an odd one. First Annie was ill, then you yourself wanted to come.”

“It was all the truth.”

“Yes, I don’t doubt it.”

“No, you do. You’re displeased, I can see.”

“Not for a minute. I’m only displeased, it’s true, by the fact that you seem not to want to admit that I have obligations.”

“Obligations to go to concerts.”

“But let’s not talk of it,” he said.

“Why shouldn’t we?” she said.

“I just want to say that essential matters may come up. Now I’m going to have to go to Moscow, over the matter of a house. Oh, Anna, why are you so irritable? Don’t you know that I can’t live without you?”

“But if that’s so,” said Anna in a suddenly changed voice, “then you are weighed down by this life. Yes, you come for a day and leave, the way men do.”

“Anna, that’s harsh. I’m prepared to give up my entire life.”

But she wasn’t listening.

“If you go to Moscow, then I’m going as well. I’m not going to stay here. Either we must part, or we must live together.”

“You know very well that is my sole desire. But for that to be . . .”

“There must be a divorce? I shall write him. I see that I cannot live like this. But I am coming with you to Moscow.”

“One would think you were threatening me. I desire nothing more than not to be parted from you,” said Vronsky, smiling.

But a look not only cold but angry, as of someone pursued and embittered, blazed in his eyes when he spoke these tender words.

She saw this look and accurately guessed its meaning.

“If that is so, then this is a disaster!” this look of his said. It was a moment’s impression, but she could never forget it.

Anna wrote her husband a letter asking him for a divorce, and in late November, saying good-bye to Princess Varvara, who needed to go to Petersburg, she and Vronsky moved to Moscow. Anticipating Alexei Alexandrovich’s reply any day and the divorce following that, they now settled down together, like a married couple.

VII

1

The Levins had been in Moscow for more than two months. The time had long passed when, according to the most reliable calculations by people knowledgeable in these matters, Kitty should have given birth; but she was still expecting, and there was nothing to show that the time was now closer than it had been two months before. The doctor, the midwife, Dolly, her mother, and especially Levin, who could not think of what was approaching without horror, had all begun to feel an impatience and unease; Kitty alone felt perfectly calm and happy.

She now had a clear awareness of the birth inside her of a new feeling of love for her future and, for her, partly present child and took delight in attending closely to this feeling. He was no longer entirely a part of her but sometimes lived his own life, independently of her. Often she was pained by this but at the same time felt like laughing from this strange new joy.

Everyone she loved was with her, and everyone was so good to her, took such good care of her, and afforded her nothing but pleasure in everything that, had she not known and felt that this was coming to an end very soon, she would have desired no better or more pleasant a life. The one thing that spoiled the charm of this life was the fact that her husband was not the way she loved him and the way he was in the country.

She loved his calm, kind, and hospitable tone in the country. In town he seemed constantly uneasy and on guard, as if he were afraid someone might insult him and, most important, her. There, in the country, obviously knowing he was in his rightful place, he never hurried anywhere and was never without occupation. Here, in town, he was constantly rushing about, as if afraid of missing something, yet there was nothing for him to do. She pitied him. To others, she knew, he did not seem an object of pity; on the contrary, when Kitty looked at him in society, the way people sometimes look at those they love, trying to see him as if he were a stranger, so as to define for themselves the impression he made on others, she saw, even with fear of her own jealousy, that he was not only not pitiful but very attractive with his decency, his rather old-fashioned,

bashful courtesy with women, his powerful figure, and what seemed to her his especially expressive face. But she saw him from within, not without; she saw that here he was not himself; she could not define his condition to herself any other way. Sometimes she reproached him inwardly for not knowing how to live in town; sometimes she admitted that it was truly hard for him to arrange his life here in such a way as to be content with it.

In point of fact, what was there for him to do? He did not like to play cards. He did not go to the club. She knew now what it meant to go around with cheerful men like Oblonsky . . . it meant drinking and going to a certain place after drinking. She could not think without horror where men went in those instances. Enter into society? But she knew that this required finding pleasure in the proximity of young women, and she could not wish that. Sit at home with her, her mother, and her sisters? But no matter how pleasant and cheerful she found the same conversations—the old prince called these conversations among the sisters “Alina-Nadinas”—she knew this had to bore him. What was left for him to do? Continue writing his book? He had tried to do that and at first had visited the library to make extracts and take notes for his book; however, as he told her, the more he did nothing, the less time he had left. Besides, he complained to her that he had talked too much here about his book and as a result all his ideas about it had become mixed up in his head and he had lost interest.

The only advantage of this city life was the fact that here, in town, there were never quarrels between them. Whether it was because their conditions in town were different, or because they had both become more cautious and sensible in this respect, in Moscow they had had no quarrels due to jealousy, which they had been so afraid of in moving to town.

In this respect one event that was very important for them both had occurred, namely, Kitty’s encounter with Vronsky.

Old Princess Marya Borisovna, Kitty’s godmother, who had always loved her very much, wished to see her without fail. Kitty, who was not going out because of her condition, went with her father to visit the venerable old woman and there met Vronsky.

At this meeting Kitty could reproach herself only that for a moment, when she recognized the features so familiar to her in civilian dress, she stopped breathing, blood rushed to her heart, and vivid color, she felt this, rose to her face. But it lasted only a few seconds. Before her father, who had purposely begun speaking volubly with Vronsky, had finished his conversation she was already fully prepared to look at Vronsky and speak with him, if necessary, just as she spoke with Princess Marya Borisovna, and, most important, so that every-

thing down to the last intonation and smile would have been approved of by her husband, whose invisible presence she seemed to feel over her at that moment.

She exchanged a few words with him and even smiled calmly at his joke about the elections, which he called "our parliament." (She had to smile to show she understood the joke.) But she turned then immediately to Princess Marya Borisovna and did not glance at him even once until he rose, saying good-bye; then she looked at him, but obviously only because it was impolite not to look at someone when he was bowing.

She was grateful to her father for not saying anything to her about meeting Vronsky; but she could see from his special gentleness after the visit, during their usual walk, that he was pleased with her. She was pleased with herself. She had never expected she would find the strength to restrain somewhere in the depths of her soul all her memories of her former feeling for Vronsky and not only seem but even be perfectly indifferent and calm toward him.

Levin turned considerably redder than she when she told him she had met Vronsky at Princess Marya Borisovna's. It was very hard for her to tell him this, but it was even harder to talk about the details of the meeting, since he did not ask her but only frowned and looked at her.

"I'm very sorry you weren't there," she said. "Not that you weren't in the room . . . I would not have been so natural in your presence. I'm blushing now much more, much, much more," she said, blushing to the point of tears. "But I'm sorry you couldn't watch through a crack."

Her truthful eyes told Levin that she was pleased with herself, and, even though she had blushed, he immediately calmed down and began asking her questions, which was all she had wanted. When he had learned everything, even the detail that she had only been unable to keep from blushing the first instant but that afterward it had been as simple and easy for her as with anyone she might chance to meet, Levin became quite cheerful and said that he was very glad and that now he would not act as foolishly as he had at the elections but would try the very next time he met Vronsky to be as amiable as he could.

"It's so agonizing to think that there is someone who is almost an enemy, whom it is difficult to meet," said Levin. "I'm very, very glad."

2

"Do drop in on the Bohls, please," Kitty told her husband when he came in to see her at eleven o'clock, before leaving the house. "I know you're dining at the club, Papa put your name down. But what are you doing in the morning?"

"I'm only going to see Katavasov," Levin replied.

“Why so early?”

“He promised to introduce me to Metrov. I’ve wanted to talk over my work with him, he’s a famous Petersburg scholar,” said Levin.

“Oh, was that his article you were praising so? Well, and what then?” said Kitty.

“To the court as well, perhaps. I’ll stop by on my sister’s business.”

“What about the concert?” she asked.

“Why would I go alone?”

“No, go; they’re playing these new pieces. You were so interested in it. I would certainly go.”

“Well, in any event I’ll stop by home before dinner,” he said, looking at his watch.

“Put on your frock coat so that you can stop by directly to see Countess Bohl.”

“Is that really absolutely necessary?”

“Oh, absolutely! He did call on us. What does it cost you? You stop by, sit down, talk about the weather for five minutes, get up, and leave.”

“Well, you won’t believe how unused to all that I’ve become, I actually feel ashamed. How can it be? A stranger comes, sits down, stays without anything to do, gets in their way, upsets himself, and leaves.”

Kitty burst out laughing.

“Didn’t you pay calls as a bachelor?” she said.

“Yes, but I always felt ashamed, and now I’m so unused to it that, my God, I’d rather miss supper two days in a row than pay this call. I feel so ashamed! I keep thinking they’re going to take offense and say, ‘Why did you come here if you have no business?’”

“No, they won’t take offense. That I can answer for,” said Kitty, looking at his face and laughing. She took his hand. “Good-bye now. . . . Please go already.”

He was just leaving after kissing his wife’s hand when she stopped him.

“Kostya, you know I only have fifty rubles left.”

“Oh, all right. I’ll stop by and get some from the bank. How much?” he said, with the expression of displeasure familiar to her.

“No, wait a minute.” She held onto his hand. “Let’s talk. It worries me. I don’t seem to be buying anything extra, but the money just floats away. We’re doing something wrong.”

“Not at all,” he said, coughing and looking at her sullenly.

She knew this cough. It was a mark of his severe displeasure, not with her, but with himself. He was indeed displeased, not that so much money had gone out but at being reminded of what he, knowing that there was something wrong in this, wanted to forget.

"I told Sokolov to sell the wheat and borrow for the mill in advance. There will be money in any case."

"No, but I'm afraid that in general it's too much."

"Not at all, not at all," he repeated. "Well, good-bye, my darling."

"No, really, sometimes I regret having listened to Mama. How fine it would be in the country! Instead I've tortured everyone and we're spending money."

"Not at all, not at all. Not once since I've been married have I said things could have been better than they are."

"Really?" she said, looking into his eyes.

He had said it without thinking, only to reassure her. But when he looked at her and saw that these dear, truthful eyes were aimed inquiringly at him, he repeated the same thing with all his heart. "I definitely am forgetting her," he thought. And he remembered what awaited them so soon.

"But is it soon? How do you feel?" he whispered, taking both her hands.

"I've thought of it so many times that now I neither think nor know anything."

"And you're not afraid?"

She smiled scornfully.

"Not a bit," she said.

"So if anything happens, I'll be at Katavasov's."

"No, nothing will happen. Don't give it a thought. Papa and I are going for a walk on the boulevard. We'll stop by at Dolly's. I'll be expecting you for dinner. Oh yes! Do you know that Dolly's situation is becoming absolutely impossible? She is in debt all around, and she has no money. Yesterday Mama, Arseny (this was what she called her sister Madame Lvova's husband), and I decided to let you and him loose on Stiva. It's absolutely impossible. We can't talk with Papa about it. . . . But if you and he were to . . ."

"What can we do?" said Levin.

"In any case you're going to see Arseny, so speak with him. He'll tell you what we decided."

"Well, I agree with Arseny on everything in advance. So I'll stop by to see him. By the way, if I do go to the concert, I'll go with Natalie. Well, good-bye."

On the front steps, his old servant Kuzma from his bachelor days, who was in charge of their household in town, stopped Levin.

"Beauty" — that was the horse, the left trace, brought from the country — "was reshod but she's still limping," he said. "What are your instructions?"

At first in Moscow Levin used the horses he'd brought from the country. He wanted to arrange this part of their expenses as well and cheaply as possible; but it turned out that his own horses were more expensive than hired ones, so they hired a carriage anyway.

“Have her sent to the farrier. Could be a bruise.”

“Well, and for Katerina Alexandrovna?” asked Kuzma.

Levin was no longer surprised, as he had been at the beginning of his life in Moscow, that to go from Vozdvizhenskoye to Sivtsev Vrazhek he had to harness a pair of powerful horses to a heavy wagon, pull this wagon over the snowy slush a quarter of a verst, and wait there for four hours, having paid five rubles for this. Now it seemed natural.

“Tell the driver to hitch a pair to our carriage,” he said.

“Yes, sir.”

Having resolved so simply and easily, thanks to the conditions of city life, a difficulty that in the country would have required so much personal effort and attention, Levin went out on the steps, and calling to the driver, took his seat and left for Nikitskaya Street. On the way he no longer thought about money but contemplated meeting the Petersburg scholar who studied sociology and would talk with him about his book.

It was only at the beginning of his time in Moscow that these unproductive but unavoidable expenses, so strange to the country dweller but demanded of him on every side, had shocked Levin. By now he was used to them. The same thing had happened to him that people say happens to drunkards: the first shot’s a squawk, the second a hawk, and after the third—like tiny little birds. When Levin broke his first hundred-ruble banknote for the purchase of livery for the footman and porter, he could not help considering that these liveries, which no one needed but were unavoidably necessary—judging by how amazed the princess and Kitty were at the suggestion that they might get along without liveries—cost as much as two summer workers, that is, approximately as much as three hundred working days from Holy Week to Lent, each day devoted to heavy labor from early morning until late evening—and this hundred-ruble banknote had stuck in his craw. But the next, broken for the purchase of provisions for a dinner for relatives that cost twenty-eight rubles, although it evoked in Levin the memory that twenty-eight rubles was nine quarters of oats, which, sweating and grunting, they had mown, tied, threshed, winnowed, sown, and spread—this next banknote somehow went more easily. Now, broken banknotes had long ceased to evoke any such considerations and flew by like little birds. Whether the labor invested in the acquisition of money corresponded to the pleasure afforded by what was purchased for it—this consideration long since had been lost. The economic calculation that there is a certain price below which one cannot sell certain grain was also forgotten. Rye, the price of which had held him back for so long, was sold at fifty kopeks a quarter less than had been given for it a month before. Even the calculation that he could not live an entire year given these kinds of expenses without going into debt—even this

calculation no longer had any significance. One thing alone was required: to have money in the bank, without asking where it came from, so that he always knew what he would buy beef with tomorrow. Up until now he had observed this calculation and had always had money in the bank. But now the money in the bank was gone, and he did not know very well where to borrow it. And it was this that for a moment, when Kitty reminded him about money, had upset him; but he had no time to think about it. He was on his way, thinking about Katavasov and his imminent introduction to Metrov.

3

During this visit to Moscow, Levin had again become close with a former university classmate, Professor Katavasov, whom he had not seen since his marriage. He liked Katavasov for the clarity and simplicity of his worldview. Levin thought that the clarity of Katavasov's worldview stemmed from the poverty of his nature; Katavasov thought that the incoherence of Levin's thought stemmed from his mind's lack of discipline; but Levin found Katavasov's clarity pleasing, and Katavasov found Levin's abundance of undisciplined thoughts pleasing, and they liked to get together and debate.

Levin had read Katavasov a few passages from his writing, and he had liked them. The day before, meeting Levin at a public lecture, Katavasov told him that the celebrated Metrov, whose article Levin had liked so much, was in Moscow and had taken great interest in what Katavasov had told him about Levin's work, and that Metrov would be at his place tomorrow at eleven o'clock and would be very glad to meet him.

"You have taken a decided turn for the better, old man, it's a pleasure to see you," said Katavasov, greeting Levin in the small drawing room. "I hear the bell and think, it can't be he's on time! . . . So, what do you think of those Montegnins? Fighters by nature."¹

"Why?" asked Levin.

Katavasov reported the latest news in a few brief words and, entering his study, introduced Levin to a short, solidly built, very pleasant-looking man. This was Metrov. The conversation dwelt briefly on politics and about how the highest spheres in Petersburg viewed the latest events. Metrov conveyed what he had learned from a reliable source and supposedly had been uttered by the sovereign and one of his ministers on the subject. Katavasov had heard also for a certainty that the sovereign had said something completely different. Levin tried to conceive of a situation in which both sets of words could have been uttered, and the conversation on that topic came to a halt.

“Now this man here has written nearly a book on the natural conditions of the worker with respect to the land,” said Katavasov. “I’m not a specialist, but as a naturalist I liked the way he doesn’t take man for something apart from the laws of zoology, but on the contrary, sees his dependence on his environment and in that dependence searches for the laws of development.”

“That’s very interesting,” said Metrov.

“I actually have written an agricultural book, but without intending to, having taken up the main instrument of agriculture, the worker,” said Levin, blushing, “I arrived at quite unexpected results.”

Levin began cautiously, as if testing the ground, to expound his view. He knew that Metrov had written an article against the commonly accepted teaching of political economy, but to what degree he might hope to find sympathy in him for his new views he did not know and could not guess from the scholar’s intelligent and calm face.

“But where do you see the special characteristics of the Russian worker?” said Metrov. “In his zoological characteristics, so to speak, or in the conditions in which he finds himself?”

Levin saw that this question already expressed a thought with which he did not agree, but he continued to expound his thought, which was that the Russian worker has a view of the land that is completely distinct from that of other nations. In order to prove this thesis, he hastened to add that, in his opinion, this view of the Russian people stemmed from their awareness of their calling to settle the vast, unoccupied expanses in the East.

“It is easy to be led astray in drawing a conclusion about the overall calling of a people,” said Metrov, interrupting Levin. “The worker’s condition will always depend upon his relationship to the land and capital.”

Not allowing Levin to finish his thought, Metrov began laying out for him the specificity of his own teaching.

What the specificity of his teaching consisted of Levin did not understand because he made no effort to understand. He could see that Metrov, like others, despite his article, in which he refuted the teaching of economists, nonetheless looked on the situation of the Russian worker only from the standpoint of capital, wages, and rents. Although he ought to have admitted that in the eastern, largest part of Russia rents were still zero, that wages were expressed for nine-tenths of the eighty million Russian people only in subsistence for themselves, and that capital still did not exist other than in the form of the most primitive tools—he still considered any worker only from this standpoint, even though on most points he disagreed with the economists and had his own new theory about wages, which he expounded to Levin.

Levin listened reluctantly and at first voiced objections. He wanted to inter-

rupt Metrov in order to express his own thought, which, in his opinion, should have made further exposition superfluous. But later, convinced that they viewed the matter so differently that they would never understand each other, he stopped contradicting him and merely listened. Even though he had no interest at all now in what Metrov was saying, he did experience a certain satisfaction in listening to him. His self-esteem was flattered by the fact that such a scholarly man was expressing his thoughts to him so eagerly and with such attention and confidence in Levin's knowledge of the subject, from time to time hinting at an entire aspect of the topic. He ascribed this to his own merit, not knowing that Metrov, having talked it all over with all the people close to him, spoke especially eagerly on this subject with every new person, and in general spoke eagerly with anyone about any subject that interested but was not yet quite clear to himself.

"We are late, though," said Katavasov, glancing at his watch, as soon as Metrov finished his exposition.

"Yes, today there's a session at the Society of Amateurs in memory of Svinitch's fiftieth jubilee," said Katavasov to Levin's question. "Peter Ivanovich and I were planning to go. I promised to say something about his works on zoology. Come along, it's very interesting."

"Yes, in point of fact, it's time," said Metrov. "Come along, and from there, if you like, come to my place. I would very much like to hear your work."

"Oh no. It's still not finished. But I'd be very happy to go to the session."

"What is it, old man, have you heard? He's submitted a separate opinion," said Katavasov, who had put on his tail coat in the other room.

And a conversation began about the university question.²

The university question was a very important event that winter in Moscow. Three old professors on the council had not accepted the opinion of the younger ones, and the younger ones had submitted a separate opinion. This opinion, in the judgment of some, was terrible; in the judgment of others, it was the simplest and fairest opinion, and the professors had split into two parties.

One, to which Katavasov belonged, saw in the opposing side base denunciation and deceit; the other, puerility and a lack of respect for the authorities. Although he did not belong to the university, Levin had several times already during his stay in Moscow heard and spoken about this question and had formed his own opinion about it; he took part in the conversation, which continued outside as well, until all three reached the Old University.

The session had already begun. There were six men at the cloth-covered table where Katavasov and Metrov took their seats, and one of them, bent closely over his manuscript, was reading something out loud. Levin sat in one of the empty chairs around the table and in a whisper asked a student sitting there what he

was reading. The student, looking around in a dissatisfied way at Levin, said, "A biography."

Although Levin was not interested in the scholar's biography, he couldn't help but listen and learn something interesting and new about the famous scholar's life.

When the reader had finished, the chairman thanked him and read poems sent to him from the poet Ment on this jubilee and a few words in gratitude to the poem's author. Then Katavasov, in his loud, clamorous voice, read his own note about the celebrant's scholarly works.

When Katavasov had finished, Levin looked at his watch, saw it was already after one, and thought that he would not have time to read Metrov his work before the concert; and indeed, he no longer cared to do so. During the reading he had been thinking about their conversation. It was clear to him now that although Metrov's ideas perhaps had significance, so too his thoughts had significance; these thoughts could be clarified and something made of them only when each worked separately on his chosen path, but nothing would ever come of exchanging these thoughts. Having decided to decline Metrov's invitation, Levin at the end of the session walked over to him. Metrov introduced Levin to the chairman, with whom he was speaking about the political news. In doing so Metrov told the chairman exactly what he had told Levin, and Levin made the same comments which he had already made that morning, but for variety's sake he also expressed his own new opinion, which had occurred to him here. After this a conversation began about the university question. Since Levin had already heard it all, he hastened to tell Metrov that he regretted he would not be able to accept his invitation, bowed to everyone, and went to see Lvov.

4

Lvov, who was married to Natalie, Kitty's sister, had spent all his life in the capitals and abroad, where he had been educated as well and served as a diplomat.

The previous year he had left the diplomatic service, though not because of any trouble (he never had any trouble with anyone), and moved on to serving in the court's ministry in Moscow in order to give his two young sons the very best education.

Despite the very sharp contrast in their habits and views, and despite the fact that Lvov was older than Levin, that winter they had become very close and had come to love each other.

Lvov was at home, and Levin went in to see him unannounced.

Lvov, dressed in his belted house jacket and suede boots, was sitting in an armchair and, wearing a *pince-nez* with blue lenses, was reading a book that rested on a reading stand, while carefully holding a cigar that was half ash in his handsome outstretched hand.

His splendid, refined, and still youthful face, to which his gleaming, curly silver hair lent an even more thoroughbred expression, lit up with a smile when he saw Levin.

“Excellent! I was about to send for you. Well, how is Kitty? Sit down here, it’s more comfortable.” He rose and moved the rocking chair over. “Have you read the last circular in the *Journal de St.-Petersbourg*?³ I find it marvelous,” he said with a vaguely French accent.

Levin recounted what he had heard from Katavasov about what people were saying in Petersburg, and having spoken about politics, he recounted making Metrov’s acquaintance and his trip to the session. Lvov found this very interesting.

“There, I envy you. You have entrée to this interesting scholarly world,” he said. Once he began talking, as usual, he immediately switched to French, which he found more comfortable. “True, I really have no time. My work and the children deprive me of it; and then I’m not ashamed to say that my education falls far short.”

“I don’t think so,” said Levin with a smile and moved, as always, by his low opinion of himself, which was by no means affected out of a desire to seem or even be modest but quite sincerely.

“It’s true! I feel now how poorly educated I am. In order to educate my children I must refresh so much in my memory and simply learn it by heart. Because it is not enough for there to be teachers, there must be an observer, just as your farm needs workers and an overseer. Here I am reading” — he showed him Buslaev’s grammar lying on the reading desk — “they’re requiring it of Misha, and it is so difficult.⁴ Look, explain this to me. Here he says . . .”

Levin tried to explain to him that it couldn’t be understood, just learned; but Lvov never agreed with him.

“Yes, look, you’re laughing at it!”

“On the contrary, you cannot imagine how, looking at you, I’m always studying the task that is facing me — namely, the education of my children.”

“Well, there’s really nothing to study,” said Lvov.

“I only know,” said Levin, “that I have never seen children better raised than yours, and I could not wish for children better than yours.”

Lvov evidently wanted to restrain himself and not express his delight, but his smile nonetheless beamed.

“Just so they are better than me. That’s all I wish for. You don’t know yet all

the work there is," he began, "with little boys who, like mine, were neglected by that life abroad."

"You will make up for all that. They are such capable children. Most important is their moral upbringing. This is what I am learning when I look at your children."

"You say 'moral upbringing.' You cannot imagine how difficult that is! No sooner have you overcome one problem when others pop up, and you have to do it again. Without support in religion—remember, you and I were talking about that—no father could rear a child by his own strength alone, without that aid."

This conversation, which always interested Levin, was interrupted by the beautiful Natalya Alexandrovna, who had walked in already dressed to go out.

"I didn't know you were here," she said, obviously not only not regretting but actually rejoicing in having interrupted an old familiar conversation that had bored her long ago. "Well, how is Kitty? I'm having dinner with you today. I'll tell you what, Arseny," she addressed her husband, "you take the carriage."

Between husband and wife there began a discussion of how they would spend the day. Since the husband needed to go somewhere to see someone from the ministry, and the wife was going to a concert and public meeting of the South-Eastern Committee, they had much to decide and ponder. Levin, who felt quite at home, was supposed to take part in these plans. It was decided that Levin would go with Natalie to the concert and the public meeting, and from there they would send the carriage to the office for Arseny and he would pick her up and drop her off at Kitty's; or, if he had not finished his business, he would send the carriage, and Levin would go with her.

"You see, he is spoiling me," Lvov told his wife, "he assures me that our children are marvelous when I know there is so much that is bad in them."

"Arseny tends to extremes, I always say," said the wife. "If you seek perfection, you'll never be satisfied. Papa tells the truth when he says that when we were raised, there was one extreme—we were kept in the attic, while our parents lived on the first floor; now it's the opposite, the parents are kept in the storeroom and the children on the first floor. Parents are no longer supposed to live, and everything's for the children."

"But what if it's more pleasant like that?" said Lvov, smiling his handsome smile and touching her hand. "Someone who didn't know you might think you were a stepmother, not a mother."

"No, extremes are not good in anything," said Natalie calmly, putting his paper knife in its special place on his desk.

"Well then, come here, my perfect children," he said to the handsome little

boys who had come in and who, after bowing to Levin, went to their father, obviously wanting to ask him something.

Levin felt like talking with them and listening to what they would say to their father, but Natalie began talking to him, and right then Lvov's friend from the ministry, Makhotin, walked into the room wearing his court uniform, so that they could go together to meet someone, and then their incessant discussion about Herzegovina, Princess Korzinskaya, the town council, and Apraxina's untimely death began.⁵

Levin had forgotten all about his errand. He remembered it when he was going out the front door.

"Oh yes, Kitty told me to discuss Oblonsky with you," he said when Lvov had stopped on the stairs, seeing his wife and Levin to the door.

"Yes, yes, *maman* wants us, *les beaux-frères*, to swoop down on him," he said, turning red and smiling. "But why me?"

"So I'll swoop down on him," said Madame Lvova, smiling, waiting in her white fur cape for the conversation to end. "Well, let's go."

5

At the matinee concert, two very interesting pieces were performed.

One was a fantasia, *King Lear on the Steppe*, the other a quartet dedicated to the memory of Bach.⁶ Both pieces were new and in a new vein, and Levin wanted to form his own opinion of them. After escorting his sister-in-law to her seat, he stood next to a column and resolved to listen as attentively and conscientiously as he could. He tried not to be distracted or spoil the impression for himself by watching the white-tied conductor waving his arms, which always distracted his musical attention so unpleasantly, the ladies in hats which they had tied assiduously with ribbons over their ears for the concert, and all these faces which were either not engaged in anything or engaged in their own various interests—anything but the music. He tried to avoid meeting the eyes of the music connoisseurs and chatterboxes but stood, looking straight ahead and down, and listened.

The more he listened to the *King Lear* fantasia, however, the farther he felt from the possibility of forming any definite opinion for himself. He kept feeling as if a musical expression of an emotion was gathering, but immediately it would fall apart into snatches of the new principles of musical expressions, and sometimes simply into nothing but the composer's whim, unconnected but extremely complicated sounds. Even the snatches of these musical expressions themselves, though sometimes good, were unpleasant because they were com-

pletely unexpected and unprepared for by anything. Good cheer and sadness, despair, tenderness, and triumph appeared for no reason whatsoever, like the emotions of a madman. And just as with a madman, these emotions passed unexpectedly.

Throughout the performance, Levin felt like a deaf man watching dancers. He was in utter disbelief when the piece ended and felt a great weariness from the intense attention, which had rewarded him with nothing. On all sides he heard loud applause. Everyone stood up and began walking around and talking. Wishing to clarify his own perplexity at the impression of others, Levin went to stretch his legs, seeking out the connoisseurs, and was happy when he saw one well-known expert in conversation with Pestsov, whom he knew.

“Wonderful!” said Pestsov’s deep bass. “How do you do, Konstantin Dmitrievich. It is particularly graphic and sculptural, so to speak, and rich in colors where you feel the approach of Cordelia, where the woman, *das ewig Weibliche*, joins the struggle with fate. Isn’t that so?”⁷⁷

“What’s Cordelia got to do with it?” asked Levin shyly, completely forgetting that the fantasia depicted King Lear on the steppe.

“Cordelia enters. . . . Look!” said Pestsov, tapping the satiny program he was holding in his hand and handing it to Levin.

Only then did Levin remember the title of the fantasia and hasten to read Shakespeare’s verse in Russian translation, which was printed on the back of the program.

“Without this you can’t follow it,” said Pestsov, addressing Levin, since his companion had walked away and he had no one else to talk to.

During the *entr’acte* Levin and Pestsov got into a debate about the merits and faults of the Wagnerian direction in music. Levin tried to prove that the mistake of Wagner and all his followers lay in the fact that the music was trying to move into an alien art form, just as poetry errs when it describes the features of faces, which is what painting is supposed to do, and as an example of this kind of error, he cited the sculptor who took it into his head to carve out of marble the shades of poetic images rising around a poet on a pedestal. “The sculptor’s shades had so little of the shade about them that they were positively holding onto the ladder,” said Levin. He liked this phrase, but he couldn’t remember whether he had spoken this very phrase before and specifically to Pestsov, and once he said it, he became embarrassed.

Pestsov argued that art was one and that it could achieve its loftiest manifestations only by merging all art forms.

Levin could not listen to the concert’s second piece. Pestsov, who was standing next to him, spoke to him nearly the entire time, condemning the piece

for its excessive, saccharine, affected simplicity and comparing it with the simplicity of the Pre-Raphaelites in painting. As he was going out, Levin met many more acquaintances with whom he spoke about politics, music, and mutual acquaintances; in passing he met Count Bohl, his visit to whom he had entirely forgotten.

“Well, then go right now,” Madame Lvova said to him when he told her this. “They may not see you, but then you can drive by for me at my meeting. You’ll find me there.”

6

“Maybe they’re not receiving?” said Levin as he entered the front door of Countess Bohl’s home.

“They will see you, right this way,” said the doorman, resolutely removing his coat.

“What a bother,” thought Levin, removing one glove and smoothing his hat with a sigh. “So what did I come for? What am I to speak about with them?”

Passing into the first drawing room, Levin met Countess Bohl giving orders to a servant in the doorway, her face worried and stern. Seeing Levin she smiled and invited him into the next small drawing room, from which voices could be heard. In this drawing room, sitting in armchairs, were the countess’s two daughters and a Moscow colonel whom Levin knew. Levin walked up to him, exchanged greetings, and sat down beside him on the sofa, holding his hat on his knee.

“How is your wife’s health? Were you at the concert? We couldn’t go. Mama had to attend a funeral service.”

“Yes, I heard. Such an untimely death,” said Levin.

The countess came and sat down on the sofa and also inquired about his wife and the concert. Levin replied and repeated his question about Apraxina’s untimely death.

“Actually, she had always been in poor health.”

“Were you at the opera yesterday?”

“Yes, I was.”

“Lucca was very fine.”⁸

“Yes, very fine,” he said, and, since he absolutely did not care what they thought of him, he began repeating what he had heard hundreds of times about the peculiarity of the singer’s talent. Countess Bohl pretended to listen. Then, when he had said enough and fallen silent, the colonel, who had been silent thus far, began speaking. The colonel, too, began about the opera and about

the lighting. Finally, having talked about the proposed *folle journée* at Tyurin's, the colonel burst into laughter, made a lot of noise, rose, and left.⁹ Levin rose as well, but from the countess's face he could tell that it was not yet time for him to leave. He had to stay another minute or two. He sat back down.

However, since he had been thinking all this time about how silly this was, he could not find a topic of conversation and was silent.

"Are you going to the public meeting? They say it's very interesting," the countess began.

"No, I promised my *belle-soeur* to drive by for her," said Levin.

Silence ensued. Mother and daughter again exchanged glances.

"Well, I guess it's time now," Levin thought, and he rose. The ladies shook his hand and asked him to convey *mille choses* to his wife.¹⁰

The doorman asked him as he handed him his coat, "Where is the gentleman staying?" and he immediately noted it down in a large, well-bound book.

"Naturally, I don't care, but still I feel ashamed and terribly foolish," thought Levin, consoling himself by saying that everyone does this, and he set out for the Committee's public meeting, where he was supposed to find his sister-in-law and bring her home.

There was a great crowd at the Committee's public meeting and nearly all high society. Levin arrived in time for the review, which, as everyone had said, was very interesting. When the reading of the review was concluded, society came together, and Levin met both Sviyazhsky, who invited him to come that evening without fail to the Society of Agriculture, where a distinguished report would be read, and Stepan Arkadyevich, who had only just arrived from the races, and many other acquaintances, and Levin said and heard various opinions about the meeting, the new piece, and the trial. But as a result of the mental fatigue he was beginning to experience, in speaking about the trial he made a mistake, and he recalled this mistake later several times with annoyance. Speaking about the impending punishment of the foreigner who had been tried in Russia and about how it would be wrong to punish him with exile abroad, Levin repeated what he had heard the day before in a conversation with one acquaintance.

"I think that sending him abroad is the same as punishing a pike by dropping it in the water," said Levin. It wasn't until later that he recalled that his idea, which he had tried to pass off as his own, and which he had heard from an acquaintance, came out of a Krylov fable and that this acquaintance had repeated the idea from a satirical article in the newspaper.¹¹

After dropping his sister-in-law off at his home and finding Kitty cheerful and well, Levin went to his club.

7

Levin arrived at the club at just the right time. Other guests and members were driving up as he arrived. It was long since Levin had been to the club—not since, after leaving the university, he had lived in Moscow and gone into society. He remembered the club and the outward details of its arrangement but had completely forgotten the impression the club had at one time made on him. But as soon as he rode into the broad, semicircular courtyard and climbed down from the sleigh, he stepped onto the front steps and a doorman wearing a shoulder belt took a step toward him and opened the door and bowed to him without making a sound; as soon as he saw in the coatroom the overshoes and coats of members who had figured that it was less trouble to remove their overshoes downstairs than to carry them upstairs; as soon as he heard the mysterious bell preceding him and saw, as he stepped onto the sloping, carpeted staircase, the statue on the landing and in the upper doorway a third, now aged, familiar doorman in the club livery, who without haste or delay was opening the door and surveying the guest—Levin was gripped by a very old impression of the club, an impression of relaxation, contentment, and propriety.

“Sir, your hat,” the doorman said to Levin, who had forgotten the club’s rule of leaving hats in the coatroom. “You haven’t been here in a long time. The prince registered you yesterday. Prince Stepan Arkadyevich is not here yet.”

The doorman knew not only Levin but all his connections and family and immediately mentioned people close to him.

Passing through an anteroom with screens and turning right into a partitioned room where there was a buffet of fruit, Levin overtook a slow-moving old man and entered the dining room, which was noisy with people.

He walked past tables that were nearly full, surveying the guests. First here, then there, he came across the most diverse men, old and young, some scarcely familiar and some quite close. There was not a single angry or worried face. Everyone seemed to have left their fears and cares in the coatroom along with their hats and had gathered for the leisurely enjoyment of life’s material blessings. Here were Sviyazhsky, and Shcherbatsky, and Nevedovsky, and the old prince, and Vronsky, and Sergei Ivanovich.

“Ah! Why so late?” said the prince, smiling and giving him his hand over his shoulder. “How’s Kitty?” he added, fixing his napkin, which he had tucked behind a vest button.

“Fine, well; the threesome are dining at home.”

“Ah, the Alina-Nadinas. Well, there’s no room with us here. Go over to that table and take a seat quickly,” said the prince, and turning around, he carefully took a plate of turbot soup.

“Levin, over here!” shouted a good-natured voice somewhat farther way. It was Turovtsyn. He was sitting with a young military man, and next to them were two tipped-up chairs. Levin walked over to them with delight. He had always liked the good-natured, hard-drinking Turovtsyn, with whom he linked his memory of his declaration of love to Kitty. But today, after all the intensely intellectual conversations, he found Turovtsyn’s good-natured appearance especially pleasant.

“This is for you and Oblonsky. He’ll be here soon.”

The military man, who held himself very erect and had cheerful, always laughing eyes, was the Petersburger Gagin. Turovtsyn introduced them.

“Oblonsky is perpetually late.”

“Ah, and here he is.”

“You only just arrived?” said Oblonsky, walking quickly toward them. “Excellent. Have you had any vodka? Well, let’s get started.”

Levin rose and went with him to a large table arrayed with vodkas and all different kinds of hors d’oeuvres. One would have thought that of the twenty or so hors d’oeuvres one could find something to one’s taste, but Stepan Arkadyevich ordered something special, and one of the liveried waiters standing there immediately brought what he had requested. They each downed a shot and returned to the table.

Immediately, with the fish soup, Gagin was served Champagne, which he had poured into all four glasses. Levin did not refuse the offered wine and asked for another bottle. He was famished and he ate and drank with great pleasure and with even greater pleasure took part in his companions’ cheerful and simple conversations. Gagin lowered his voice and told a new Petersburg anecdote, an anecdote which, although indecent and silly, was so funny that Levin guffawed loudly enough to make his neighbors look around.

“It’s in the same vein as, ‘I can’t stand that!’ Do you know it?” asked Stepan Arkadyevich. “Ah, this is splendid! Another bottle,” he told the waiter and began telling a story.

“Compliments of Peter Ilich Vinovsky,” the old waiter interrupted Stepan Arkadyevich as he served two slender glasses of Champagne that was losing its bubbles and addressed Stepan Arkadyevich and Levin. Stepan Arkadyevich took the glass and, looking down at the other end of the table and at the bald, red-mustached man, acknowledged him, smiling, with a nod.

“Who’s that?” asked Levin.

“You met him at my place once, remember? A good fellow.”

Levin did just what Stepan Arkadyevich had done and took the glass.

Stepan Arkadyevich’s anecdote was also very amusing. Levin told his own anecdote, which everyone liked as well. Then the talk turned to horses, today’s

aces, and how spiritedly Vronsky's *Satin* had won first prize. Levin did not notice dinner pass.

"Ah! Here they are!" said Stepan Arkadyevich when dinner was already at an end, bending across the back of his chair and extending his hand to Vronsky and a tall colonel of the Guards, who were walking toward him. The club's general good cheer shone on Vronsky's face as well. He cheerfully leaned an elbow on Stepan Arkadyevich's shoulder, whispering something to him, and with the same cheerful smile extended his hand to Levin.

"I'm very glad to see you," he said. "I looked for you then at the elections, but they told me you'd already left," he said to him.

"Yes, I left the same day. We were just now talking about your horse. I congratulate you," said Levin. "That's very fast riding."

"I believe you have horses as well."

"No, my father did. But I remember, and I know something about them."

"Where were you eating?" asked Stepan Arkadyevich.

"We were at the second table, behind the columns."

"They were congratulating him," said the tall colonel. "His second imperial prize; if only I had the luck at cards that he has with horses."

"Well, no point wasting this golden time. I'm on my way to the infernal regions," said the colonel, and he walked away from the table.

"That's *Yashvin*," Vronsky told *Turovtsyn*, and he sat in the free seat beside them. Drinking down the proffered glass, he ordered a bottle. Under the influence of the club's impression, or the wine he had drunk, Levin fell into conversation with Vronsky about the best breed of cattle and was very pleased not to feel any hostility toward this man. He even told him, by the way, that he had heard from his wife that she had met him at *Princess Marya Borisovna's*.

"Ah, *Princess Marya Borisovna*, how charming!" said Stepan Arkadyevich, and he told an anecdote about her that amused everyone. Vronsky in particular laughed so good-naturedly that Levin felt quite reconciled with him.

"So, are we finished?" said Stepan Arkadyevich, rising and smiling. "Let's go!"

8

Rising from the table, Levin, feeling his arms swinging especially well and easily as he walked, set off with *Gagin* through the high-ceilinged rooms to the billiards room. Passing through the grand hall, he ran into his father-in-law.

"Well, what do you think? How do you like our temple to idleness?" said the prince, taking him by the arm. "Let's take a turn."

"I did in fact want to walk around and take a look. It's interesting."

“Yes, interesting to you. But I have a different interest than you do. Look over there at those old men,” he said, pointing to a hunched over member with a drooping lip who, shuffling his feet in soft boots, was coming toward them, “and you think they were born rollers like that.”

“What do you mean rollers?”

“You don’t know that name. It’s our club term. You know how they roll eggs, well when you roll them too much, you get a roller. Just like our friend: you keep going to the club and eventually you turn into a roller. Yes, you’re laughing, but our friend is already looking at the day he himself joins the rollers. You know Prince Chechensky?” asked the prince, and Levin could see from his face that he was getting ready to tell him something funny.

“No, I don’t.”

“You don’t? Well, Prince Chechensky is very well known. Oh well, it doesn’t matter. You see he’s always playing billiards. About three years ago he wasn’t one of the rollers and he put on a good show. He was the one to call others rollers. Only one day he comes, and our doorman—you know, Vasily? Well, the fat one. He’s a great one for *bons mots*. So Prince Chechensky asks him, ‘How about it, Vasily, who’s come? Any rollers?’ And he replied, ‘You’re the third.’ Yes, friend, that’s how it goes!”

Talking and greeting acquaintances as they met, Levin and the prince walked through all the rooms: the main room, where the tables were already up and the usual partners were playing a friendly game; the sitting room, where they were playing chess and Sergei Ivanovich was sitting, talking with someone; the billiards room, where by the sofa in the recess a cheerful Champagne party had convened, of which Gagin was a part; and they looked in on the infernal region, too, where near one table at which Yashvin was already sitting many bettors had crowded around. Trying not to make any noise, they walked into the dimly lit reading room as well, where under shaded lamps sat one young man with an angry face who was picking up one journal after another and a bald general was buried in his reading. They went into the room which the prince called the smart room, too. In that room, three gentlemen were heatedly discussing the latest political news.

“Prince, please, we’re ready,” said one of his partners, finding him here, and the prince left. Levin sat and listened for a while; but recalling all the conversations of that morning, he was suddenly terribly bored. He rose hurriedly and went to find Oblonsky and Turovtsyn, with whom it was cheerful.

Turovtsyn was sitting with a tankard of drink on a high-backed sofa in the billiards room, and Stepan Arkadyevich and Vronsky were discussing something by the door in the far corner of the room.

“It’s not that she’s bored, but this indeterminacy, the unsettledness of her

position," Levin heard, and he wanted to walk away quickly, but Stepan Arkadyevich called him over.

"Levin!" said Stepan Arkadyevich, and Levin noted that his eyes weren't exactly full of tears, but they were moist, as they always were when he had been drinking, or when he became maudlin. Now it was both. "Levin, don't leave," he said, and he squeezed his arm firmly at the elbow, obviously not wishing to let him go for anything.

"This is my true friend, practically my best friend," he told Vronsky, "and you are closer and dearer to me now, too. And I want and know that you have to be friends and close, because you're both good men."

"Well then, all we have to do is kiss," said Vronsky, joking good-naturedly as he extended his hand.

He quickly took the extended hand and shook it firmly.

"I'm very, very pleased," said Levin, shaking his hand.

"Waiter, a bottle of Champagne," said Stepan Arkadyevich.

"I am, too," said Vronsky.

However, despite Stepan Arkadyevich's wish and their mutual wish, they had nothing to talk about, and both felt this.

"Do you know he has never met Anna?" Stepan Arkadyevich told Vronsky. "And I definitely want to introduce him to her. Let's go, Levin!"

"Really?" said Vronsky. "She'll be very pleased. I would go home right now," he added, "but Yashvin worries me, and I want to stay here a little longer until he finishes."

"What, is it going badly?"

"He keeps losing, and I'm the only one who can restrain him."

"Well, how about a game of pyramids? Levin, will you play? That's just wonderful," said Stepan Arkadyevich. "Set it up," he told the marker.

"It was ready a long time ago," replied the marker, who had already placed the balls in the triangle and had been rolling the red for his own amusement.

"Well, let's begin."

After the game, Vronsky and Levin sat down at Gagin's table, and Levin, at Stepan Arkadyevich's suggestion, began betting on aces. Vronsky kept sitting down at the table, surrounded by a constant stream of acquaintances, and going to the infernal region to check on Yashvin; Levin had a pleasant respite from the morning's mental strain. He was pleased by the cessation of hostilities with Vronsky, and the impression of tranquility, civility, and pleasure stayed with him.

When the game ended, Stepan Arkadyevich took Levin by the arm.

"Well, then, let's go see Anna. Right now? Eh? She's at home. I've long promised to bring you to see her. Where were you planning to go this evening?"

"Nowhere in particular. I promised Sviyazhsky I'd go to the Society of Agriculture. Let's go, if you like," said Levin.

"Excellent; let's go! Find out whether my carriage has arrived," Stepan Arkadyevich spoke to the waiter.

Levin walked over to the table, paid the forty rubles he had lost on the aces, paid the amount known in some mysterious way to the old waiter standing by the lintel, his expenses for the club, and swinging his arms in that special way, walked through all the rooms to the exit.

9

"The Oblonsky carriage!" shouted the doorman in an angry bass. The carriage drove up, and both got in. Only for a while, as the carriage was pulling out of the club gates, did Levin continue to experience the impression of the club's peace and pleasure and the undoubted civility of the surroundings; but as soon as the carriage drove into the street and he felt the carriage rocking over the uneven road, heard the angry shout of an oncoming driver, and saw in the low light the red sign of a tavern and the shops, this impression was shattered, and he began thinking over his actions and asking himself whether he was doing the right thing in going to see Anna. What would Kitty say? But Stepan Arkadyevich did not give him a chance to think, and as if guessing his doubts, allayed them.

"I'm so pleased that you will get to know her," he said. "You know, Dolly has wished this for a long time. And Lvov has been to see her. Even though she is my sister," continued Stepan Arkadyevich, "I can boldly say that this is a remarkable woman. You will see. Her position is very difficult, especially now."

"Why especially now?"

"We're negotiating with her husband about a divorce. He agrees, but there are complications regarding the son, and this matter, which ought to have been taken care of a long time ago, has been dragging on for three months. As soon as she has the divorce, she will marry Vronsky. How silly it is, that old custom of walking around in a circle saying, 'Rejoice, O Isaiah!' which no one believes in and which stands in the way of people's happiness!" Stepan Arkadyevich interjected. "Well, and then their situation will be settled, like mine and like yours."

"Where does the difficulty lie?" said Levin.

"Oh, it's a long and tedious story! All this is so indeterminate in our country. But the problem is that she has been living in Moscow, where everyone knows her, for three months, waiting for this divorce; she doesn't go out anywhere, doesn't see any of the women except Dolly because, you see, she doesn't want people to visit her out of charity; that fool Princess Varvara—even she left, con-

sidering it indecent. So you see, in this situation another woman might not have found the resources in herself. But she, you'll see it now, how she has arranged her life, how calm and dignified she is. To the left, into the lane, opposite the church!" shouted Stepan Arkadyevich, leaning out the carriage window. "My, it's hot!" he said, despite a temperature of twelve below zero, opening his already open coat even wider.

"She does have a daughter, though. Isn't she kept busy with her?" said Levin.

"You apparently imagine any woman only as a female, *une couveuse*," said Stepan Arkadyevich.¹² "If she's busy, then it must be with her children. No, she is raising her beautifully, it seems, but one hears nothing of her. She is busy, first of all, because she is writing. Ah, I see you smiling ironically, but you shouldn't. She is writing a children's book and is telling no one about it, but she read it to me and I have given the manuscript to Vorkuyev . . . you know, the publisher . . . and he himself is a writer, it seems. He knows what's what, and he says it's a marvelous piece. But you think she is an authoress? Not a bit. She is a woman with a heart above all, you'll see. She now has an English girl and an entire family that keeps her busy."

"You mean something philanthropic?"

"There you go, you still want to see something bad. Not philanthropic, but sincere. They, I mean, Vronsky, had an Englishman for a trainer, a master of his trade, but a drunkard. He took completely to drink, *delirium tremens*, and the family was abandoned. She saw them, helped them, was drawn to them, and now the entire family is on her hands; and not just from on high, with money, but she herself is preparing the boys in Russian for high school, and has taken the little girl in. You'll see her now."

The carriage drove into the courtyard, and Stepan Arkadyevich rang loudly at the front door, where sleighs were standing.

Without asking the servant who opened the door whether she was home, Stepan Arkadyevich walked into the front hall. Levin followed, wondering more and more whether he was acting rightly or wrongly.

Taking a look in the mirror, Levin noticed he was red in the face; but he was certain he wasn't drunk, and he walked up the carpeted staircase behind Stepan Arkadyevich. Upstairs, Stepan Arkadyevich asked the footman, who had bowed to him as someone close, who was with Anna Arkadyevna and received the answer: Mr. Vorkuyev.

"Where are they?"

"In the study."

Passing through a small dining room with dark wood paneling, Stepan Arkadyevich and Levin stepped onto a soft carpet and walked into a dimly lit study illuminated by a single lamp with a dark shade. Another reflector lamp burned

on the wall and illuminated a large, full-length portrait of a woman to which Levin could not help but turn his attention. It was the portrait of Anna done in Italy by Mikhailov. While Stepan Arkadyevich stepped behind a *treillage* and the man's voice fell silent, Levin looked at the portrait, which, in the brilliant illumination, projected out of its frame, and he could not tear himself away from it.¹³ He even forgot where he was, and not listening to what was being said, he did not take his eyes off the amazing portrait. This was not a picture but a splendid, living woman with black waving hair, bared shoulders and arms, and a pensive half-smile on her lips, which were covered with a tender bloom, who looked at him triumphantly and tenderly with disarming eyes. Only, because she was not alive, she was even more beautiful than a living woman could be.

"I'm very pleased," he suddenly heard a voice next to him, obviously directed toward him, the voice of the same woman whom he had been admiring in the portrait. Anna came out to meet him from behind the *treillage*, and in the half-light of the study Levin saw the very same woman from the portrait wearing a dark, variegated blue dress, not in the same position, not with the same expression, but at the same summit of beauty at which she had been captured by the artist in the portrait. She was less brilliant in reality, but on the other hand in real life there was something new and attractive which there had not been in the portrait.

10

She rose to greet him, not concealing her joy at seeing him. In the ease with which she extended her small and energetic hand and introduced him to Vorkuyev and pointed out the pretty little red-haired girl sitting right there at her work, referring to her as her ward, were the familiar and, to Levin, pleasant manners of a woman of high society who is always calm and natural.

"I am very, very pleased," she repeated, and on her lips these simple words for some reason acquired special significance for Levin. "I've known and loved you for a long time, both through your friendship for Stiva and because of your wife. . . . I only knew her a short while, but she left me with the impression of a lovely flower, yes, a flower. And she is soon to be a mother!"

She spoke freely and without haste, from time to time transferring her gaze from Levin to her brother, and Levin felt that the impression he had made was a good one, and he immediately felt at his ease with her, as simple and pleasant as if he had known her since childhood.

"Ivan Petrovich and I have settled in Alexei's study," she said in answer to Stepan Arkadyevich's question as to whether one could smoke, "precisely so that

one could smoke." Glancing at Levin, instead of asking whether he smoked, she pulled over a tortoiseshell cigar box and took out a cigarette.

"How is your health today?" her brother asked her.

"All right. Nerves, as always."

"Isn't it true, it's unusually fine?" said Stepan Arkadyevich when he noticed Levin glancing at the portrait.

"I've never seen a better portrait."

"An extraordinary resemblance, isn't it?" said Vorkuyev.

Levin looked from the portrait to the original. A special gleam lit up Anna's face when she felt his glance on her. Levin turned red, and to hide his embarrassment was about to ask whether it had been long since she had seen Darya Alexandrovna, but at that moment Anna began speaking.

"Ivan Petrovich and I were just talking about Vashchenkov's latest pictures. Have you seen them?"

"Yes, I have," Levin replied.

"But I'm sorry, I interrupted you, you were about to say . . ."

Levin asked whether it had been long since she'd seen Dolly.

"She was here yesterday, she was very angry at the school over Grisha. The Latin teacher, it seems, has been unfair toward him."

"Yes, I did see the pictures. I didn't like them very much," Levin returned to the conversation she had begun.

Levin spoke now completely without the workmanlike attitude with which he had spoken that morning. Every word in a conversation with her took on special significance. It was pleasant to talk with her, and even more pleasant to listen to her.

Anna spoke not only naturally and intelligently but intelligently and casually, attaching no value whatever to her own thoughts but lending great value to the thoughts of the person she was talking with.

A conversation began about the new trend in art and about the new illustrated Bible by a French artist.¹⁴ Vorkuyev accused the artist of realism taken to the point of coarseness. Levin said that the French had taken convention in art farther than anyone and that for this reason they saw special merit in the return to realism. In the very fact they no longer lie, they see poetry.

Never again did a single clever thing Levin said afford him the kind of pleasure as did this one. Anna's face suddenly beamed when she suddenly appreciated this idea. She burst into laughter.

"I'm laughing," she said, "the way you laugh when you see a very good likeness. What you said perfectly characterizes French art now, both painting and even literature. *Zola, Daudet*.¹⁵ But perhaps it has always been like this, that they build their *conceptions* from invented, conventional figures and then,

once all the *combinaisons* are made, the invented figures grow tedious, and they begin to come up with more natural and honest figures.”¹⁶

“That is perfectly true!” said Vorkuyev.

“So you were at the club?” she turned to her brother.

“Yes, yes, here is a woman!” thought Levin, forgetting himself and staring at her beautiful, mobile face, which now suddenly had changed completely. Levin had not heard what she was saying, leaning toward her brother, but he was struck by the change in her expression. Formerly so magnificent in its tranquility, her face suddenly expressed a strange curiosity, anger, and pride. This lasted only a minute, however. She narrowed her eyes, as if trying to remember something.

“Well, yes, actually, no one’s interested in that,” she said, and she turned to the English girl:

“Please order the tea in the drawing room.”¹⁷

The girl rose and went out.

“Well, how about it, did she pass her examination?” asked Stepan Arkadyevich.

“Beautifully. She’s a very capable girl and a sweet person.”

“It will end with you loving her more than your own.”

“There’s a man talking. In love there is no more or less. I love my daughter in one way, and her in another.”

“Here I’ve been telling Anna Arkadyevna,” said Vorkuyev, “that if she would put one hundredth of that energy she puts into this English girl into the general cause of educating Russian children, Anna Arkadyevna would have done a great and beneficial deed.”

“Yes, that’s what you would like, but I couldn’t. Count Alexei Kirillovich has encouraged me greatly” — as she spoke the words “Count Alexei Kirillovich” she gave Levin a shyly questioning look, and he involuntarily answered her with a respectful and confirming look — “has encouraged me to work with the school in the village. I’ve visited several times. They are very sweet, but I could not get attached to that cause. You say ‘energy.’ Energy is founded on love. But love comes on its own, you can’t force it. Here I’ve come to love this girl, and I don’t know why myself.”

Again she looked at Levin. Both her smile and her look — everything told him that she was addressing him alone, valuing his opinion and at the same time knowing in advance that they understood one another.

“I understand that perfectly,” replied Levin. “You can’t put your heart into a school or any such institution, and that’s why I think these philanthropic institutions always yield such meager results.”

She was silent for a moment, then smiled.

“Yes, yes,” she confirmed. “I never could. *Je n’ai pas le coeur assez large*, to love an entire orphanage of vile little girls.¹⁸ *Cela ne m’a jamais réussi*.¹⁹ There are so many women who make a *position sociale* for themselves that way.²⁰ And now even more so,” she said with a sorrowful, trusting expression aimed outwardly at her brother but obviously only at Levin. “And now, when I so need some occupation, I cannot.” Frowning suddenly (Levin realized that she had frowned at herself for talking about herself), she changed the topic. “I know about you,” she told Levin, “that you are a bad citizen, and I defended you as best I could.”

“Just how did you defend me?”

“It depends on the attack. Actually, wouldn’t you like some tea?” She stood up and picked up a morocco-bound book.

“Let me have that, Anna Arkadyevna,” said Vorkuyev, pointing to the book. “It’s well worth doing.”

“Oh no, it’s still so unfinished.”

“I told him,” Stepan Arkadyevich addressed his sister while pointing to Levin.

“You shouldn’t have. My writing is like those carved baskets made in prisons that Liza Mertsalova used to sell me. She was in charge of the prisons in some society,” again she addressed Levin. “And these wretches made miracles of patience.”

Levin caught a glimpse of yet another feature in this woman to whom he had taken such an extraordinary liking as it was. Apart from her intellect, grace, and beauty, there was something true in her. She did not wish to hide from him the full difficulty of her position. Having said this, she sighed, and her face suddenly took on a stern expression and seemed to turn to stone. With this expression on her face she was even more beautiful than before; however, this expression was new; it was outside that circle of expressions, which both beamed with and emitted happiness, that the artist had captured in the portrait. Levin took one more look at the portrait and at her figure as she took her brother’s arm and walked with him through the tall doors, and he felt a tenderness and pity for her that surprised even him.

She asked Levin and Vorkuyev to proceed to the drawing room, while she herself stayed back to discuss something with her brother. “About the divorce, Vronsky, what he did at the club, me?” thought Levin. He was so agitated by the question of what she was discussing with Stepan Arkadyevich that he barely heard what Vorkuyev was telling him about the merits of the children’s novel Anna Arkadyevna had written.

At tea, the same pleasant conversation, full of real content, continued. Not only was there not a single moment when one had to search for a topic of conversation, but on the contrary, one felt one wouldn’t have time to say what one

wanted and willingly held back to hear what someone else was saying. And no matter what was said, not only by her but by Vorkuyev and Stepan Arkadyevich, everything, as it seemed to Levin, acquired special significance from her attention and remarks.

Following the interesting conversation, Levin admired her all the while—her beauty, her mind, her culture, along with her simplicity and deep feeling. He listened and spoke and all the while he was thinking about her and her inner life, trying to guess her feelings. Having judged her so severely before, now, following a certain strange progression of thoughts, he tried to justify her and at the same time pitied her and feared that Vronsky did not fully understand her. After ten o'clock, when Stepan Arkadyevich rose to leave (Vorkuyev had left earlier), it seemed to Levin that he had only just arrived. With regret, Levin rose as well.

“Good-bye,” she said, holding him back by his arm and looking into his eyes with a magnetic gaze. “I’m very glad *que la glace est rompue*.”²¹

She released his arm and narrowed her eyes.

“Tell your wife that I love her as ever, and that if she cannot forgive me my position, then I do not desire that she ever forgive me. In order to forgive me, you have to suffer what I have suffered, and may God spare her that.”

“Certainly, yes, I will tell her,” said Levin, blushing.

11

“What a wonderful, sweet, and pitiful woman,” he thought as he walked out into the frosty air with Stepan Arkadyevich.

“Well, what do you think? I told you,” Stepan Arkadyevich said, seeing that Levin was utterly vanquished.

“Yes,” Levin replied thoughtfully, “an exceptional woman! It’s not just her mind, but she has a wonderful heart. I feel terribly sorry for her!”

“Now, God willing, everything will soon be settled. Now, you see, don’t judge in advance,” said Stepan Arkadyevich, opening the carriage door. “Good-bye, we’re not going the same way.”

Without ceasing to think about Anna, about all the very simple conversations he had had with her, and recalling at the same time all the details of her facial expression, entering more and more into her situation and feeling pity for her, Levin arrived home.

At home, Kuzma told Levin that Katerina Alexandrovna was well, that her dear sisters had only just left her, and he handed him two letters. Levin read

them right there, in the front hall, so that he wouldn't get distracted later. One was from Sokolov, the steward. Sokolov wrote that the wheat could not be sold, they were giving only five and a half rubles for it, and there was nowhere else to raise any money. The other letter was from his sister. She reproached him because her business had still not been completed.

"Well, we'll sell it for five and a half if they're not giving more," Levin decided the first question, which had previously seemed so difficult to him, with unusual ease. "It's amazing how taken up my time always is here," he thought about the second letter. He felt guilty before his sister for not yet having done what she had asked of him. "Today, once again, I did not go to court, but today there really was no time." Deciding that he would definitely take care of it the next day, he went to see his wife. Walking into her room, Levin quickly ran through his entire day in his memory. All the events of the day were conversations: conversations which he had listened to and in which he had taken part. All the conversations were about subjects which he, had he been alone and in the country, would never have raised, but here they were very interesting, and all the conversations had been good; only in two places had they not been entirely good. One was what he had said about the pike; the other, that there was something wrong in the tender pity he had felt for Anna.

Levin found his wife sad and bored. The three sisters' dinner would have been very cheerful, but then they had waited and waited for him, and everyone got bored, the sisters had departed, and she was left alone.

"Well, and what did you do?" she asked, looking into his eyes, which for some reason were glittering rather suspiciously. So that she would not prevent him from telling her everything, though, she concealed her attention and with an approving smile listened to his tale of how he had spent the evening.

"Well, I was very glad to have met Vronsky. I found it very easy and simple to be with him. You understand, now I will try never to see him, but an end had to be put to this awkwardness," he said, and recalling that, *in trying never to see him again*, he had gone straight to see Anna, he blushed. "Here we are saying that the common people drink; I don't know who drinks more, the people or our class; the people perhaps on a holiday, but . . ."

But Kitty was not interested in discussing how much the people drank. She saw him blushing and she wanted to know why.

"Well, then where were you?"

"Stiva begged me to go see Anna Arkadyevna."

Having said that, Levin blushed even more, and his doubts as to whether he had done well or ill in going to see Anna were resolved conclusively. He now knew that he should not have done that.

Kitty's eyes opened especially wide and glittered at Anna's name, but making an effort, she concealed her agitation and deceived him.

"Ah!" was all she said.

"You're right in not getting angry at me for going. Stiva asked me, and Dolly wanted it," Levin continued.

"Oh no," she said, and in her eyes he saw the effort she was making, which boded no good.

"She is very sweet, very much to be pitied, a fine woman," he said, telling her about Anna, her occupations, and what she had told him to tell Kitty.

"Yes, naturally, she is much to be pitied," said Kitty when he had finished. "Who did you get a letter from?"

He told her, and trusting her calm tone, he went to undress.

Returning, he found Kitty in the same chair. When he walked up to her, she took one look at him and burst into sobs.

"What? What is it?" he asked, already knowing *what*.

"You've fallen in love with that vile woman, she's bewitched you. I saw it in your eyes. Yes, yes! What can come of this? At the club you drank and drank, gambled, and then went . . . to see whom? No, we're leaving. . . . I'm leaving tomorrow."

It took Levin a long time to calm his wife. At last he did, only by confessing that his feeling of pity in combination with his feeling of guilt had thrown him off balance and he had surrendered to Anna's clever influence and that he would avoid her. One thing he confessed most sincerely of all was the fact that, living so long in Moscow, he had gone mad on nothing but conversations, food, and drink. They talked on and on, until three o'clock in the morning. It was not until three o'clock that they had reconciled sufficiently to be able to fall asleep.

12

After seeing her guests out, Anna did not sit down but began pacing back and forth in her room. Although unconsciously (as she had been acting of late toward all young men) she had done everything possible the entire evening to arouse in Levin a feeling of love for her, and although she knew that she had achieved this, insofar as possible with an honest married man and in a single evening, and although she liked him very much (despite the sharp difference, from the standpoint of men, between Vronsky and Levin, she, as a woman, saw in them what they had in common for which Kitty, too, had loved both Vronsky and Levin), she had ceased thinking of him the moment he left the room.

One thought and one thought alone pursued her obsessively in various

forms. "If I have this effect on others, on this loving, family man, why is *he* so cold toward me? . . . Not that he's indifferent, he loves me, I know that. But something new is driving us apart now. Why hasn't he been here all evening? He had Stiva send word that he could not leave Yashvin alone and had to keep an eye on his gambling. Is Yashvin a child? Suppose it's true, for argument's sake. He never tells a lie. But there is something else in this truth. He's happy at the chance to show me that he has other obligations. I know that, and I agree to that. But why must he insist on proving it to me? He wants to prove to me that his love for me must not impede his freedom. But I don't need his proofs, I need his love. He ought to understand the full burden of this life of mine here, in Moscow. Am I really living? I'm not living, I'm waiting for the denouement, which keeps getting put off and put off. Again no answer! And Stiva says that he cannot go to Alexei Alexandrovich. And I cannot write to him again. I can do nothing, begin nothing, change nothing, I keep myself in check and wait, inventing amusements for myself—the Englishwoman's family, writing, reading—but all this is merely deception, all this is the same as morphine. He ought to take pity on me," she said, feeling tears of self-pity well up in her eyes.

She heard Vronsky's impatient ring and hastily wiped away those tears, and not only wiped away the tears but sat down by the lamp and opened a book, pretending to be calm. She had to show him that she was displeased that he had not returned as he had promised—displeased only, but in no way show him her grief and, most important, her self-pity. It was all right for her to pity herself, but not for him. She did not want a fight and reproached him for wanting to fight, but in spite of herself she had put herself in the position of fighting.

"Well, you weren't bored?" he said, approaching her with animation and cheer. "What a terrible passion gambling is!"

"No, I wasn't bored. I learned not to be bored long ago. Stiva was here and so was Levin."

"Yes, they wanted to pay you a visit. Well, how did you like Levin?" he said, sitting beside her.

"Very much. They left a little while ago. What did Yashvin do?"

"He was winning, seventeen thousand. I called to him. He was just about to leave. But he went back and now he's losing."

"So why did you stay?" she asked, suddenly raising her eyes to him. The expression on her face was cold and hostile. "You told Stiva that you would stay to take Yashvin away. But you left him."

The same expression of cold readiness for a fight was expressed on his face as well.

"First of all, I didn't ask him to tell you anything, and second, I never lie.

Most important, I wanted to stay and so I did," he said, frowning. "Why, Anna, why?" he said after a moment's pause, leaning toward her, and he opened his hand, hoping she would put hers in it.

She was glad of this appeal to her tenderness. But some strange evil force would not let her surrender to her attraction, as if the terms of the fight would not let her be subdued.

"Naturally, you wanted to stay and so you did. You do everything you like. But why are you telling me this? To achieve what?" she said, getting more and more heated. "Has anyone ever disputed your rights? But you want to be right, so be right."

His hand closed, he leaned back, and his face took on an expression even more stubborn than before.

"For you this is a matter of obstinacy," she said, staring at him and suddenly finding a name for this expression on his face that so irritated her, "precisely of obstinacy. For you the question is whether you will remain the conqueror with me, while for me . . ." Once again she took pity on herself and nearly began to cry. "If you only knew what it is for me! When I feel as I do now, that you have a hostile — exactly — a hostile attitude toward me, if you knew what that meant for me! If you knew how close I am to disaster at such moments, how afraid I am, afraid of myself!" And she turned away, concealing her sobs.

"But what are we talking about?" he said, horrified at the expression of her despair and again leaning toward her and taking her hand and kissing it. "What's it for? Do I look for entertainments outside our home? Don't I avoid the company of women?"

"If only it were that simple!" she said.

"Well, tell me what I have to do to set your mind to rest. I'm prepared to do anything in order for you to be happy," he said, touched by her despair. "What I wouldn't do to relieve you of the sort of grief you're feeling now, Anna!" he said.

"It's all right, it's all right," she said. "I myself don't know whether it's my lonely life or my nerves. . . . Oh, let's not speak of it. What about the race? You didn't tell me," she asked, trying to conceal the triumph of the victory, which was, after all, hers.

He asked for supper and began to tell her the details of the races; but in his tone and his looks, which were becoming colder and colder, she could see that he did not forgive her her victory, that the obstinacy with which she had struggled had asserted itself in him. He was colder to her than before, as if he had repented of being subdued, and she, remembering the words which had given her the victory, namely, "I'm close to a terrible disaster and am afraid of myself," realized that this weapon was dangerous and that she could not wield

it again. She felt that along with the love that tied them, there had been established between them the evil spirit of struggle, which she could not drive out of his heart, let alone her own.

13

There are no conditions to which a person cannot accustom himself, especially if he sees that everyone around him lives the same way. Levin would not have believed three months before that he could fall asleep peacefully in the conditions in which he was today; that living an aimless, senseless life, and what's more, a life beyond his means, after inebriation (there was nothing else he could call what had gone on at the club), the awkward friendly relations with a man with whom his wife had once been in love, and even more the awkward visit to see a woman who could only be called lost, and after his enthusiasm for this woman and his wife's distress—that under these conditions he could easily fall asleep. Nonetheless, under the influence of weariness, a sleepless night, and the wine he had drunk, he fell into a sound and tranquil sleep.

At five o'clock the creak of a door opening woke him. He jumped up and looked around. Kitty was not in the bed next to him. But behind the screen there was a flickering light, and he heard her steps.

"What? . . . what is it?" he was speaking while half-awake. "Kitty! What is it?"

"It's fine," she said, coming out from behind the screen holding a candle. "I was feeling unwell," she said, smiling an especially sweet and significant smile.

"What? Has it begun, has it?" he said fearfully. "We must send—" and he rushed to dress.

"No, no," she said, smiling, and restraining him with her hand. "I'm sure it's fine. I just felt a little unwell. But it's passed now."

Walking to the bed, she put out the candle, lay down, and was quiet. Although he found her stillness suspicious, as if she were holding her breath, and most of all the expression of special gentleness and excitement with which, as she came out from behind the screen, she had said, "It's fine," he was so sleepy that he fell right back to sleep. Only later did he recall the quiet of her breathing and realize everything that was taking place in her dear, sweet heart while she, without stirring, in anticipation of the greatest event in a woman's life, lay beside him. At seven o'clock he was awakened by the touch of her hand on his shoulder and her quiet whisper. She seemed to be struggling between her regret at waking him and her urge to talk.

"Kostya, don't be frightened. It's fine. But I think . . . We should send for Lizaveta Petrovna."

The candle was lit once again. She was sitting on the bed and holding the knitting she had kept herself busy with the last few days.

“Please, don’t be frightened, it’s fine. I’m not afraid in the least,” she said when she saw his frightened face, and she pressed his hand to her breast, then to her lips.

He quickly jumped up, only half-awake and not taking his eyes off her, put on his robe, and came to a halt, all the while looking at her. He should go, but he couldn’t tear himself away from her gaze. It was not as if he didn’t love her face or did not know her expression, her gaze, but he had never seen it like this. How vile and horrid he imagined himself, recalling how he had grieved her yesterday, standing before her as she was now! Her rosy-cheeked face, haloed by soft curls peeking out from under her night cap, shone with joy and resolve.

Regardless of how little unnaturalness and conventionality there was in Kitty’s general character, Levin was nonetheless struck by what had bared itself before him now, when suddenly all the coverings had been removed and the very core of her soul shone in her eyes. In this simplicity and nakedness, she, her, the one he loved, was even more visible. Smiling, she looked at him; but suddenly her eyebrows trembled, she raised her head, and walking quickly to him, she took him by the hand and pressed her entire body to him, pouring her hot breath over him. She was suffering and seemed to be complaining to him of her sufferings. In that first minute, out of habit, he felt that he was to blame. But in her gaze there was a tenderness which said that she not only did not reproach him, she loved him for these sufferings. “If not I, then who is to blame for this?” he could not help but think, seeking the culprit in these sufferings in order to punish him; but there was no culprit. And though there was no culprit, couldn’t he simply help her, relieve her? But even that was impossible and unnecessary. She was suffering, complaining, and triumphing through these sufferings, and rejoicing in them, and loving them. He could see that something magnificent was taking place in her soul, but what? That he could not understand. It was beyond his understanding.

“I sent for Mama. Now you go quickly for Lizaveta Petrovna. Kostya! It’s fine, it’s passed.”

She walked away from him and rang.

“All right then, you get going, Pasha’s on her way. I’m fine.”

Levin saw with amazement that she had picked up her knitting, which she had brought in during the night, and again begun to knit.

As Levin was going out one door, he heard the maid go in the other. He stopped at the door and listened to Kitty give detailed instructions to the maid and helped her begin to move the bed.

He dressed, and while the horses were being harnessed, since there were no

cabs, he again ran into the bedroom, not on tiptoe, but on wings, or so it seemed to him. Two maids were anxiously rearranging something in the bedroom. Kitty was pacing and knitting, quickly throwing the loops over, and giving orders.

“I’m going for the doctor right now. They’ve gone for Lizaveta Petrovna, but I’ll drive by as well. Don’t you need anything? Should I go to Dolly’s?”

She looked at him, obviously not listening to what he was saying.

“Yes, yes. Go, go,” she said quickly, frowning and waving her hand at him.

He was already going into the drawing room when suddenly from the bedroom a pitiful moan broke out and then just as quickly quieted down. He stopped and for a long time failed to understand.

“Yes, that’s her,” he told himself, and clutching his head, he ran downstairs.

“Lord have mercy! Forgive us, help us!” he repeated the words that suddenly came to his lips out of nowhere, and he, a nonbeliever, repeated these words not only with his lips. Now, at this moment, he knew that neither all his doubts nor the very impossibility of believing with his reason, which he had known in himself, in any way prevented him from turning to God. Now all that flew from his soul like dust. Who else was he to turn to if not to the One in whose hands he felt himself, his soul, and his love?

The horse was still not ready, but feeling in himself a special intensity of physical strength and attention for what he had to do, so as not to lose a single minute, without waiting for the horse, he left on foot and ordered Kuzma to catch up with him. At the corner he met a speeding night cab. Lizaveta Petrovna was sitting in the small sleigh wearing a velvet coat wrapped with a scarf. “Thank God, thank God!” he murmured, ecstatic to recognize her small, fair face, which bore an especially serious, even grave expression. Without telling the driver to stop, he ran back alongside her.

“So, a couple of hours. No more?” she asked. “You find Peter Dmitrievich, only don’t hurry him. Oh, and pick up the opium at the pharmacy.”

“So you think all may be well? Lord, have mercy and help us!” Levin murmured when he saw his horse coming out of the gates. Climbing up on the sleigh next to Kuzma, he ordered him to drive to the doctor’s.

14

The doctor was not yet up, and his servant said, “He went to bed late and told me not to wake him, but he’ll be getting up soon.” The servant was cleaning the lamp glasses and seemed completely absorbed in doing so. The servant’s attentiveness to the glass and indifference to what was happening with Levin at first astounded him, but immediately, once he had thought it over, he realized

that no one knew or was obliged to know his emotions, and that it was all the more necessary to act calmly, carefully, and decisively in order to break through this wall of indifference and achieve his goal. "Don't rush and don't leave anything out," Levin told himself, feeling an increasing surge of physical strength and attention to all he faced.

Having learned that the doctor was still not getting up, Levin, of all the plans that proposed themselves to him, settled on the following: Kuzma would take a note to another doctor, and he himself would go to the pharmacy for the opium, and if, when he returned, the doctor had still not gotten up, then, either by bribing the servant or, if he would not agree, by force, he would wake the doctor no matter what.

At the pharmacy, the lean chemist, with the same indifference with which the servant had been cleaning the glass, sealed up a capsule of powder for a waiting driver and refused him the opium. Trying not to hurry or to get angry, citing the names of the doctor and the midwife and explaining what he needed the opium for, Levin began trying to convince him. The chemist asked advice in German as to whether he should dispense it, and receiving consent from behind the partition, took out the vial and funnel, slowly poured it from a large bottle into a small one, glued on a label, sealed it, despite Levin's request not to do that, and wanted to wrap it up as well. This was too much for Levin; he grabbed the vial decisively from his hands and ran out the large glass doors. The doctor had not yet gotten up, and the servant, now busy laying a rug, refused to wake him. Without hurrying, Levin took out a ten-ruble note, and slowly uttering the words, but without wasting time either, handed him the note and explained that Peter Dmitrievich (how great and important the once so unimportant Peter Dmitrievich now seemed to Levin!) had promised to come at any time, that he surely would not be angry, and so he should be wakened right away.

The servant consented, went upstairs, and asked Levin into the waiting room.

Behind the door Levin could hear the doctor coughing, walking about, washing, and saying something. A few minutes passed; to Levin it seemed like more than an hour. He could not wait any longer.

"Peter Dmitrievich, Peter Dmitrievich!" he began in an imploring voice through the open door. "For God's sake, forgive me. Please see me as you are. It's been more than two hours."

"Right away, right away!" replied a voice, and Levin was astonished to hear the doctor saying this with a smile.

"Just for a moment."

"Right away."

Another couple of minutes passed while the doctor put on his boots, and another couple of minutes while the doctor put on his coat and combed his hair.

“Peter Dmitrievich!” Levin was about to begin again in a pitiful voice, but just then the doctor came out dressed and combed. “These people have no conscience,” thought Levin. “Combing while we perish!”

“Good morning!” the doctor said to him, extending his hand, exactly as if he were taunting him with his calm. “Don’t be in such a hurry. Well?”

Trying to be as thorough as possible, Levin began recounting all the unnecessary details about his wife’s situation, constantly interjecting his story with pleas for the doctor to come away with him right now.

“Now don’t be in such a hurry. You don’t know, you see. I’m probably not needed, but I promised, and if you like, I’ll come. But there’s no hurry. Please take a seat. Wouldn’t you like some coffee?”

Levin looked at him, asking with his gaze whether he was making fun of him. But the doctor had no thought of making fun.

“I know, sir, I know,” said the doctor, smiling. “I’m a family man myself, but we husbands are the most pathetic of people in moments like this. I have one patient whose husband always runs away to the stables during these times.”

“But what do you think, Peter Dmitrievich? Do you think it may turn out well?”

“All the facts point to a favorable outcome.”

“So will you come right away?” said Levin, looking angrily at the servant bringing in the coffee.

“In about an hour.”

“No, for God’s sake!”

“Well, then let me drink my coffee.”

The doctor began to drink his coffee. Both were silent for a while.

“The Turks are getting badly beaten, though. Did you read yesterday’s wire?” the doctor said, chewing on a roll.

“No, I can’t stand it!” said Levin, jumping up. “So will you be there in a quarter of an hour?”

“Half an hour.”

“Word of honor?”

When Levin returned home, he arrived with the princess, and together they walked up to the bedroom door. The princess had tears in her eyes, and her hands were trembling. When she saw Levin, she embraced him and began to weep.

“Oh, how is she, dear Lizaveta Petrovna?” she said, seizing the arm of Lizaveta Petrovna, who had come out to greet them with a beaming and concentrated face.

“It’s going fine,” she said. “Convince her to lie down. It would be easier.”

From the moment he had awakened and realized what was going on, Levin

had steeled himself for whatever faced him without thinking, without anticipating anything, locking up all his thoughts and feelings, firmly, trying not to upset his wife but, on the contrary, to soothe her and support her courage, to endure what he faced. Not letting himself even think about what was going to happen or how it would end, judging from his questions as to how long this usually lasts, Levin in his imagination had steeled himself to be patient and to hold his heart in his hands for about five hours, and that had seemed to him possible. But when he returned from the doctor and again saw her suffering, he began repeating more and more often, "Lord, forgive us, help us," sighing and lifting his head up; and he was terrified that he might not be able to withstand this, might burst into tears or run away. So agonizing was it for him. But only an hour had passed.

But after this hour, another hour passed, then two, three, and all five hours, which he had set for himself as the limit of his patience, and the situation was unchanged; and he had endured everything because there was nothing else to do but endure, each minute thinking that he had reached the outer limits of his patience and that his heart was about to burst from compassion.

However, more minutes and hours, and more hours, passed, and his suffering and horror mounted and became more and more intense.

All the usual conditions of life without which it is impossible to form a conception of anything ceased to exist for Levin. He had lost the sense of time. First the minutes—those minutes when she had called him in and he held her perspiring hand, which at turns squeezed his with uncommon strength and pushed him away—seemed to him like hours, then the hours seemed to him like minutes. He was surprised when Lizaveta Petrovna asked him to light a candle behind the screen and he learned it was already five o'clock in the afternoon. If they had told him that it was now just ten o'clock in the morning, he would have been just as little surprised. He knew just as little where he was at that time as he did when things were happening. He saw her enflamed face, alternately perplexed and suffering, then smiling and reassuring him. He saw the princess as well, red-faced and tense, the curls of her gray hair undone, and in tears, which she made an effort to swallow, biting her lips, and he saw Dolly, and the doctor smoking his fat cigarettes, and Lizaveta Petrovna with her firm, resolute, and reassuring face, and the old prince walking up and down the hall with a scowling face. But how they came and went and where they were, he did not know. The princess was either with the doctor in the bedroom or in the study, where a laid table appeared; or else it was not she but Dolly. Later Levin remembered they kept sending him places. Once they sent him to bring in a table and sofa. He did this diligently, thinking she needed this, and only later learned that he was getting a bed for himself. Then he was sent to see the doctor in the study

and ask him something. The doctor replied and then began talking about the unrest in the municipal duma.²² Then they sent him to the bedroom to see the princess and bring the icon with the silver gilt mounting, and he and the princess's old maid climbed up to the shelf to get it and broke the icon lamp, and the princess's maid tried to reassure him about his wife and about the lamp, and he brought the icon and placed it at the head of Kitty's bed, trying hard to slip it in behind the pillows. But where, when, and why all that had been, he did not know. Nor did he understand why the princess took him by the arm, and gazing on him with pity, begged him to calm down, and Dolly tried to talk him into eating something and led him out of the room, and even the doctor looked at him gravely and sympathetically and offered him some drops.

He knew and felt only that what was transpiring was similar to that which had transpired a year before in the provincial town hotel at his brother Nikolai's deathbed. But that had been grief—and this was joy. Still, both that grief and this joy were identically outside all life's ordinary conditions; they were like an opening in that ordinary life through which something sublime appeared. What was transpiring had come about with identical difficulty and agony; and with identical incomprehensibility, the soul, when it did contemplate this sublime something, rose to a height as it had never risen before, where reason could not keep up.

"Lord, forgive us and help us," he repeated to himself incessantly, feeling, in spite of such a long and seemingly total estrangement, that he was addressing God just as trustingly and simply as during his childhood and first youth.

All this time, he was experiencing two distinct moods. One was outside her presence, with the doctor, who was smoking one fat cigarette after another and crushing them on the edge of a full ashtray, and with Dolly and the prince, where the talk was of dinner, politics, and Marya Petrovna's illness and where Levin suddenly forgot completely for a moment what was happening and felt as if he had just awakened; and the other mood was in her presence, at her bedside, where his heart wanted to but wouldn't burst from compassion, and he prayed to God without cease. And each time he was brought out of a moment's forgetfulness by a shriek flying to him from the bedroom, he fell into the same strange error that had descended upon him at first; each time, hearing the shriek, he jumped up, ran to defend himself, remembered on his way that he was not to blame, and was overcome with the urge to protect and help her. Looking at her, though, he again saw that he could not help, and he was horrified and said, "Lord, forgive us and help us." The more time passed, the more powerful both moods became: outside her presence, he became calmer, forgetting her entirely; the more agonizing her sufferings, the greater his helplessness

in the face of them. He would jump up, wish he could run away somewhere, and run in to see her.

Sometimes, when she kept calling him in again and again, he blamed her. But when he saw her meek, smiling face and heard the words, "I've been torturing you," he blamed God, but then remembering about God, he immediately begged for forgiveness and mercy.

15

He didn't know whether it was late or early. The candles had burned down. Dolly had just been in the study and suggested to the doctor that he lie down. Levin was sitting, listening to the doctor's stories about a charlatan mesmerist and watching the ash of his cigarette. It was a period of relaxation, and he had forgotten himself. He had completely forgotten about what was now going on. He listened to the doctor's story and understood him. Suddenly there was a shriek unlike anything else. The shriek was so terrible that Levin didn't even jump up but held his breath and gave the doctor a frightened, questioning look. The doctor tilted his head to one side, listened closely, and smiled approvingly. It had all been so extraordinary that nothing surprised Levin anymore. "That must be the right thing," he thought and he continued to sit there. Whose shriek had that been? He jumped up, ran into the bedroom on tiptoe, walked around Lizaveta Petrovna and the princess, and took his place at the head of the bed. The shriek had stilled, but something had changed. What it was he could not see and did not understand and did not want to see or understand. But he saw this from Lizaveta Petrovna's face: Lizaveta Petrovna's face was stern and pale and just as resolute, although her jaw was trembling slightly and her eyes were aimed straight at Kitty. Kitty's enflamed and tortured face, with the locks of hair stuck to her perspiring face, was turned toward him and sought his gaze. Her raised hands begged for his hands. Grasping his cold hands in her perspiring hands, she began pressing them to her face.

"Don't leave, don't leave! I'm not afraid, I'm not afraid!" she said quickly. "Mama, take my earrings. They're bothering me. You're not afraid? Quickly, Lizaveta Petrovna, quickly."

She was speaking very rapidly and tried to smile. But suddenly her face was distorted and she pushed him away.

"No, it's too horrible! I'm going to die, I'm going to die! Go, go away!" she screamed, and again he heard the same shriek that was like nothing else.

Levin clutched his head and ran out of the room.

"It's all right, it's all right, everything's fine!" Dolly said as he left.

But no matter what they said, he knew now that all was lost. Leaning his head against the lintel, he stood in the next room and listened to someone's wail, a wail unlike anything he had ever heard, a howl, and he knew that what was screaming was what had once been Kitty. He had long since given up wanting the child. He now hated that child. He didn't even wish for her life now, he wanted only a cessation to these horrible sufferings.

"Doctor! What is this? What is this? My God!" he said, grabbing the doctor's hand as he came in.

"It's almost over," said the doctor. The doctor's face was so grave when he said this that Levin understood *over* in the sense of dying.

Forgetting himself, he ran into the bedroom. The first thing he saw was the face of Lizaveta Petrovna. She was scowling even more and more sternly. Kitty looked awful. In place of her usual face was something terrible both because of the tension there and because of the sound emanating from it. He prostrated himself before the bed's wooden frame, feeling his heart breaking. The horrible screaming did not stop, it had become even more horrible, and, as if approaching the final limit of horror, suddenly stopped. Levin could not believe his ears, but there could be no doubt: the screaming had stopped, and he could hear a quiet bustling, a rustle, and hurried breathing, and a breaking, vibrant and tender, happy voice softly say, "It's over."

He looked up. Her arms limp on the blanket, unusually beautiful and quiet, she looked at him without a word and wanted but was unable to smile.

Suddenly, out of that mysterious and horrible, otherworldly place where he had spent these twenty-two hours, Levin instantaneously felt himself transported to his former, accustomed world, but shining now with a new light of such happiness that he could not bear it. His taut strings all broke. Sobs and tears of joy, which he had in no way foreseen, rose in him with such force, rocking his entire body, that for a long time they prevented him from speaking.

He fell to his knees in front of the bed, held his wife's hand to his lips, and kissed it, and this hand responded to his kisses with a weak movement of the fingers. Meanwhile, there, at the foot of the bed, in the deft hands of Lizaveta Petrovna, like the flame over a lamp, flickered the life of a human being who had never been before and who would now, with the same right and same sense of his own importance, live and bear others like him.

"It's alive! Alive! And it's a boy! Don't worry!" Levin heard the voice of Lizaveta Petrovna, who had smacked the baby's back with a trembling hand.

"Mama, is it true?" said Kitty's voice.

Only the princess's sobbing answered her.

Amid the silence, like a sure answer to his mother's question, a completely

different voice was heard than all the subdued voices in the room. It was a bold, impudent cry that did not want to understand anything and that came from the new human being who had appeared seemingly out of nowhere.

Before, if they had told Levin that Kitty had died and that he had died along with her and that their children were angels and that God was right there before them, he would not have been surprised in the least; but now, having returned to the world of reality, he made great mental efforts to understand that she was alive and well and that the being howling so desperately was his son. Kitty was alive and her sufferings were over. And he was inexpressibly happy. This he understood and it made him completely happy. But the child? Where had he come from, and why, and who was he? He simply could not understand, could not get used to this idea. It seemed to him something superfluous, something extra, which he could not get used to for a long time.

16

At ten o'clock the old prince, Sergei Ivanovich, and Stepan Arkadyevich were sitting at Levin's, and after a few words about the new mother, began talking about unrelated subjects. Levin listened to them and during these conversations could not keep from recalling what had come to pass, what had happened prior to this morning, recalled himself as he had been yesterday, before all this. It was as if a hundred years had passed since then. He felt as if he were on some inaccessible height from which he was making an effort to descend in order not to insult the people he was speaking to. He spoke and thought incessantly about his wife, the details of her present condition, and his son, to the idea of whose existence he was trying to accustom himself. The entire feminine world, which had taken on for him a new, previously unknown significance since he had been married, now in his mind had risen so high that his mind could not grasp it. He listened to the conversation about the dinner yesterday at the club and thought, "What is happening with her now? Has she fallen asleep? How is she feeling? What is she thinking? Is my son Dmitry crying?" And in the middle of the conversation, in the middle of a sentence, he jumped up and left the room.

"Send to tell me whether I can see her," said the prince.

"Fine, right away," Levin replied, and without stopping, he went to see her.

She was not sleeping but talking quietly with her mother, making plans for the upcoming christening.

Groomed and coiffed, wearing an elegant cap with something blue on it, her hands freed on the blanket, she lay on her back, and meeting his gaze, pulled him toward her with hers. Her gaze, bright in any case, shone even more brightly

the closer he came. On her face was that same alteration from earthly to unearthly that one sees on the face of the dead; but there it is a farewell, here a welcome. Again agitation similar to what he had experienced at the moment of the birth overwhelmed his heart. She took his hand and asked him whether he had slept. He couldn't answer and turned away, convinced of his own weakness.

"But I dozed off, Kostya!" she told him. "And now I feel so good."

She looked at him, but suddenly her expression changed.

"Give him to me," she said, hearing the baby's chirp. "Give him to me, Lizaveta Petrovna, and he will have a look."

"Well then, let his papa take a look," said Lizaveta Petrovna, rising and carrying over something red, strange, and squirming. "Wait a moment, let's tidy him up first," and Lizaveta Petrovna put this squirming and red something on the bed and began unwrapping and wrapping the baby, lifting him up and turning him with one finger and sprinkling him with something.

Levin gazed at this tiny, pitiful being and made vain efforts to find in his heart some signs of fatherly feeling toward it. All he felt for it was revulsion. But when he had been undressed and his tiny little hands and feet flashed, saffron yellow, with toes, too, and even a big toe, different from the others, and when he saw how Lizaveta Petrovna held down these flailing little arms, which were just like soft coils, confining them in linen garments, there descended upon him such pity for this being and such fear that she would hurt him that he stayed her hand.

Lizaveta Petrovna burst out laughing.

"No fear, no fear!"

When the baby was clean and transformed into a sturdy little doll, Lizaveta Petrovna rocked him a little, as if proud of her work, and leaned back so that Levin could see his son in all his beauty.

Kitty, not lowering her eyes, and squinting, was looking in the same direction.

"Give him here, give him here!" she said, and she even tried to sit up.

"What are you doing, Katerina Alexandrovna. You're not allowed such movements! Wait a moment and I'll give him to you. Now we're showing his papa what a fine fellow we are!"

Lizaveta Petrovna lifted toward Levin on one arm (the other only supported the swaying head with the fingers) this strange, wobbly red being, which was hiding his head behind the edge of the cloth. But there was also a nose, squinting eyes, and smacking lips.

"A magnificent child!" said Lizaveta Petrovna.

Levin sighed, chagrined. This magnificent child aroused in him only a feeling of revulsion and pity. It was not at all the feeling he had been anticipating.

He turned away while Lizaveta Petrovna arranged him at the unaccustomed breast.

Suddenly laughter made him raise his head. It was Kitty laughing. The child had taken the breast.

"All right, that's enough, that's enough!" said Lizaveta Petrovna, but Kitty would not let him go. He fell asleep in her arms.

"Look now," said Kitty, turning the baby toward him so that he could see him. The wizened little face suddenly wrinkled up even more, and the baby sneezed.

Smiling and barely restraining tears of emotion, Levin kissed his wife and left the darkened room.

What he had experienced for this little being was not at all what he had anticipated. There was no cheer or joy in this feeling; on the contrary, it was a new and agonizing terror: the awareness of a new sphere of vulnerability. And this awareness was so agonizing at first, the fear that this helpless being might suffer was so powerful, that because of it, the strange feeling of senseless joy and even pride which he had experienced when the baby sneezed had gone unnoticed.

17

Stepan Arkadyevich's affairs were in a bad way.

Two-thirds of the money for the forest had already been spent, and he had borrowed all the remaining third from the merchant at a discount of ten percent. The merchant was not lending any more money, especially since this winter Darya Alexandrovna, for the first time asserting her rights to her own property, had refused to sign the contract in receipt of the money for the final third of the wood. All his salary went for household expenses and to pay his petty, never-ending debts. There was absolutely no money.

This was unpleasant and awkward and, in Stepan Arkadyevich's opinion, could not go on like this. The reason, in his view, lay in the fact that his salary was too small. The post that he filled had obviously been very good five years ago, but not anymore. Petrov, a bank director, made twelve thousand; Sventitsky, a company director, made seventeen thousand; Mitin, who had founded a bank, made fifty thousand. "Obviously I fell asleep and they forgot me," Stepan Arkadyevich thought to himself. He began listening and looking more closely, and by the end of the winter he had spied out a very good berth and mounted a campaign for it, first from Moscow, through his aunts, uncles, and friends, and then, when the matter had matured, in the spring, he himself went to Petersburg. It was one of those cozy, lucrative berths, of which there are so many more

nowadays than there used to be, being of all sizes, with salaries from a thousand to fifty thousand a year. This berth was that of member of the amalgamated agency of mutual credit balance of southern railroads and accompanying banking institutions. This position, like all such positions, required such tremendous knowledge and activity that it was hard to combine in any one person. And since there was no such person who combined these qualities, then it was at least better for the position to be occupied by an honest, rather than a dishonest man. And Stepan Arkadyevich was not only an “honest man” (in the ordinary sense of the word) but was also an “*honest* man,” with the special stress that this word has in Moscow when people say: an “*honest* official,” an “*honest* writer,” an “*honest* journal,” an “*honest* institution,” and an “*honest* administration,” meaning not only that the person or institution was not dishonest but also that they were capable if need be of standing up to the government. Stepan Arkadyevich moved in those circles in Moscow where this word had been introduced and was considered there an “*honest* man,” and so had more right than others to this position.

This position yielded between seven and ten thousand a year, and Oblonsky could occupy it without leaving his government position. It depended on two ministers, one lady, and two Jews; and all these people, although they had already been prepared, Stepan Arkadyevich needed to see in Petersburg. Besides, Stepan Arkadyevich had promised his sister Anna that he would get from Karenin a final answer about the divorce. After asking Dolly for fifty rubles, he left for Petersburg.

Sitting in Karenin’s study and listening to his project on the causes for the regrettable state of Russian finances, Stepan Arkadyevich was just waiting for the moment when he would finish so that he could bring up his own business and Anna.

“Yes, that’s quite true,” he said, when Alexei Alexandrovich, removing his *pince-nez*, without which he could not read now, looked inquiringly at his former brother-in-law, “that was quite true in the details, but nevertheless the principle of our era is freedom.”

“Yes, but I am setting forth another principle that embraces the principle of freedom,” said Alexei Alexandrovich, stressing the word “embraces” and putting his *pince-nez* back on in order to read once again for his listener the place where this very thing had been said.

Sorting through the handsomely written manuscript with the wide margins, Alexei Alexandrovich once again read through the conclusive section.

“I want to oppose a system of protection, not for the benefit of private individuals but for the public good—for the lower and the upper classes identically,”

he said looking at Oblonsky over his *pince-nez*. “However, *they* cannot understand this. *They* are preoccupied with their personal interests and get carried away by phrases.”

Stepan Arkadyevich knew that whenever Karenin began talking about what *they* were doing and thinking, the very people who did not want to accept his proposals and were the cause of all the evil in Russia, that then the end was not far off; and so he now willingly rejected the principle of freedom and agreed entirely. Alexei Alexandrovich fell silent, pensively leafing through his manuscript.

“Ah, by the way,” said Stepan Arkadyevich. “I wanted to ask you, if you happened to see Pomorsky, to put in a word with him about how I would very much like to have the new position of member of the amalgamated agency of mutual credit balance of southern railroads and accompanying banking institutions.”

The title of this position, so dear to his heart, was already such a habit with Stepan Arkadyevich that he uttered it quickly and without error.

Alexei Alexandrovich questioned him as to the activities of this new commission and became lost in thought. He was trying to figure out whether there wasn't something in the activities of this commission that was in opposition to his proposals. However, since the activities of this new institution were very complicated and his proposals embraced a very large sphere, he could not figure this out right away, and removing his *pince-nez*, he said, “Without a doubt, I can tell him. But why, actually, do you wish to occupy this position?”

“The salary is good, nearly nine thousand, and my means —”

“Nine thousand,” Alexei Alexandrovich echoed, and he frowned. The high figure of this salary reminded him that from this point of view the activities Stepan Arkadyevich was proposing were antithetical to the main point of his proposals, which always inclined toward economy.

“I consider, and on this matter I have written a memorandum, that in our times these immense salaries betoken the false economic *assiette* of our administration.”²³

“Yes, but what do you want?” said Stepan Arkadyevich. “Look at it this way. A bank director receives ten thousand—well, he's worth that. Or an engineer receives twenty thousand. It's vital work, whatever you say!”

“I would suppose that a salary is a payment for a good, and it must be subject to the law of supply and demand. If the fixing of a salary departs from this law, as, for example, when I see that two engineers graduate from an institute, both are identically knowledgeable and capable, and one receives forty thousand while the other makes do with two thousand; or that they appoint lawyers and husbands who have no particular special knowledge to be the directors of company banks, I conclude that the salary has been set not according to the law of supply

and demand but by blatant favoritism. Here we have an abuse that is important in and of itself and that has a harmful effect on government service. I think —”

Stepan Arkadyevich hastened to interrupt his brother-in-law.

“Yes, but you must agree that a new and undoubtedly useful institution is being opened. Whatever you say, it’s vital work! People value in particular that the matter is being seen through honestly,” said Stepan Arkadyevich with emphasis.

But Alexei Alexandrovich did not understand the Muscovite meaning of “*honest*.”

“Honesty is only a negative characteristic,” he said.

“But you would be doing me a great favor nonetheless,” said Stepan Arkadyevich, “by putting in a word with Pomorsky. Casually, in conversation.”

“This would depend more on Bolgarinov, after all,” said Alexei Alexandrovich.

“Bolgarinov for one completely agrees,” said Stepan Arkadyevich, turning red.

Stepan Arkadyevich turned red at the mention of Bolgarinov because that same morning he had been to see the Jew Bolgarinov, and this visit had left him with an unpleasant memory. Stepan Arkadyevich well knew that the matter he wished to serve was a new, vital, and honest matter; but this morning, when Bolgarinov, evidently on purpose, made him wait for two hours with the other petitioners in the waiting room, he suddenly felt awkward.

Whether he had felt awkward because he, Prince Oblonsky, a descendant of Rurik, had waited for two hours in the waiting room of a Jew, or because for the first time in his life he had not followed the example of his ancestors, serving the government, but had entered a new arena, he had felt very awkward. During those two hours of waiting at Bolgarinov’s, Stepan Arkadyevich, jauntily pacing around the waiting room, smoothing his whiskers, entering into conversation with the other petitioners, and trying to come up with a pun he could use about how he had been kept “adjudicating with a Jew,” tried hard to hide from others and even from himself what he had felt.

But this entire time he had felt awkward and annoyed, he himself did not know why: whether it was because nothing was coming of his pun — “I adjudicated with that Jew until June” — or because of something else. When Bolgarinov finally received him with extraordinary civility, obviously triumphing over his humiliation, and nearly refused him, Stepan Arkadyevich hurried to forget it as quickly as possible, and only now remembering, he had turned red.

18

“Now I have another matter, and you know what it is. It’s about Anna,” said Stepan Arkadyevich, pausing briefly and shaking off this unpleasant impression.

As soon as Oblonsky pronounced Anna’s name, Alexei Alexandrovich’s face changed completely. Instead of its former animation it expressed weariness and lifelessness.

“What exactly do you want of me?” he said, turning around in his chair and tapping his *pince-nez*.

“A decision, some sort of decision, Alexei Alexandrovich. I’m turning to you now (‘not as to an injured husband,’ Stepan Arkadyevich was about to say, but fearful of spoiling the matter this way replaced this with these words) not as a man of state (which came out wrong) but simply as a man, both a good man and a Christian. You must take pity on her,” he said.

“What exactly is this about?” said Karenin quietly.

“Yes, take pity on her. If you had seen her the way I have—I spent the entire winter with her—you would take pity on her. Her situation is awful, simply awful.”

“It seemed to me,” replied Alexei Alexandrovich in a reedier, almost shrill voice, “that Anna Arkadyevich had everything she herself had wanted.”

“Oh, Alexei Alexandrovich, for God’s sake, let’s not cast recriminations! What’s past is past, and you know what she wants and is waiting for—a divorce.”

“But I thought Anna Arkadyevna refused to divorce if I’m demanding that she give me custody of our son. That is what I replied, and I thought that this matter was concluded. I consider it so,” shrieked Alexei Alexandrovich.

“But for God’s sake, don’t get angry,” said Stepan Arkadyevich, lightly touching his brother-in-law’s knee. “The matter is not concluded. If you would permit me to recapitulate, the situation was this. When you separated, you were as magnificent, as magnanimous as one could possibly be; you offered her everything—her freedom, a divorce even. She appreciated this. No, don’t think that. She did appreciate it. To such an extent that at first, feeling her guilt before you, she did not think it through and could not have thought it all through. She refused everything. But reality and time have shown that her situation is agonizing and impossible.”

“Anna Arkadyevna’s life cannot interest me,” Alexei Alexandrovich interrupted, raising his eyebrows.

“Permit me not to believe you,” Stepan Arkadyevich objected gently. “Her situation is both agonizing for her and without any possible benefit for anyone. She has deserved it, you will say. She knows this and is not asking you; she says frankly that she would not dare ask you anything. But I, we, all her family, every-

one who loves her, are asking, begging you. Why should she be tortured? Who gains from this?"

"Permit me, you seem to be placing me in the position of the guilty party," Alexei Alexandrovich intoned.

"Oh no, no, not at all, you must understand me," said Stepan Arkadyevich, again touching his arm, as if he were confident that this touch would soften his brother-in-law. "I'm only saying one thing: her situation is agonizing, and it can be alleviated by you, and you will lose nothing. I will arrange everything for you in such a way that you won't notice. After all, you did promise."

"The promise was made before, and I thought the question of our son decided the matter. Moreover, I had hoped that Anna Arkadyevna would find the magnanimity inside her . . ." — with difficulty, lips trembling, the suddenly pale-faced Alexei Alexandrovich managed to say.

"She is indeed leaving everything up to your magnanimity. She asks, begs, one thing—to deliver her from this impossible situation in which she finds herself. She is no longer asking for her son. Alexei Alexandrovich, you are a good man. Try for a moment to imagine her situation. The matter of divorce for her, in her situation, is a matter of life and death. If you had not promised before, she would have reconciled herself to her situation and lived in the country. But you did promise, she wrote to you and moved to Moscow. And there in Moscow, where every meeting is a knife to her heart, she has been living for six months, awaiting a decision any day. You see, it's the same as if someone sentenced to death had been held for months with a noose around her neck, perhaps promised death, perhaps a pardon. Take pity on her, and then I will make it my business to arrange everything. *Vos scrupules*—" ²⁴

"I'm not talking about that, that . . ." Alexei Alexandrovich interrupted him disgustedly. "But I may have promised what I had no right to promise."

"So you are refusing what you promised?"

"I never refused to do what is possible, but I wish to have time to think over how possible what I promised is."

"No, Alexei Alexandrovich!" Oblonsky began, jumping up. "I won't believe that! She is so unhappy, as only a woman can be unhappy, and you cannot refuse her such a . . ."

"How possible what I promised is. *Vous professez d'être un libre penseur*.²⁵ But I, as a believer, cannot in such an important matter act counter to Christian law."

"But in Christian societies, as well as among us, as far as I know, divorce is permitted," said Stepan Arkadyevich. "Divorce is permitted by our church as well. And we see—"

"Permitted, but not in this sense."

“Alexei Alexandrovich, I don’t recognize you,” said Oblonsky after a pause. “Wasn’t it you (and didn’t we appreciate this?) who forgave everything and, moved by precisely your Christian feeling, were prepared to sacrifice everything? You yourself said, ‘If a man take thy coat, give him thy cloak also,’ and now—”

“I’m asking you,” Alexei Alexandrovich, pale and with trembling jaw, began in a shrill voice, rising suddenly to his feet, “I’m asking you to put an end to, put an end to . . . this conversation.”

“Oh no! Well, forgive me, forgive me if I’ve grieved you,” Stepan Arkadyevich began, smiling in embarrassment and extending his hand. “But, like an ambassador, I am merely carrying out my instructions.”

Alexei Alexandrovich gave him his hand, lapsed into thought, and spoke:

“I must think it over and seek direction. The day after tomorrow I will give you my final answer,” he said, having thought of something.

19

Stepan Arkadyevich was just about to leave when Kornei came to announce, “Sergei Alexeyevich!”

“Who is this Sergei Alexeyevich?” Stepan Arkadyevich was about to say, but then he remembered.

“Ah, Seryozha!” he said. “‘Sergei Alexeyevich’—I thought it might be the department director. Anna asked me to see him,” he remembered.

And he remembered the timid, pitiful expression with which Anna, letting him go, had said, “No matter what, you must see him. Find out in detail where he is and who is with him. And Stiva . . . if only it were possible! It is possible after all?” Stepan Arkadyevich realized what this “if only it were possible” meant: if only it were possible to bring about the divorce in such a way as to give her her son. Now Stepan Arkadyevich saw that there was no point even thinking about that; still, he was pleased to see his nephew.

Alexei Alexandrovich reminded his brother-in-law that they never spoke to his son about his mother and that he was asking him not to say a word about her.

“He was very ill after that meeting with his mother, which we had not anticipated,” said Alexei Alexandrovich. “We even feared for his life. But sensible treatment and sea bathing in the summer restored his health, and now I have enrolled him in school, on the doctor’s advice. Indeed, the influence of schoolmates has had a good effect on him, and he is quite healthy and studies well.”

“What a fine young man you’ve become! This isn’t Seryozha but a whole Sergei Alexeyevich!” said Stepan Arkadyevich, smiling as he looked at the hand-

some, broad-shouldered boy entering smartly and at his ease, wearing a navy blue jacket and long trousers. The boy had a healthy and cheerful look. He bowed to his uncle as if he were a stranger, but when he recognized him he turned red, exactly as if he had been insulted and aggravated by something, and quickly turned away. The boy walked over to his father and handed him a note about the grades he had received at school.

“Well, this is respectable,” said the father, “you may go.”

“He’s grown thinner and taller and ceased to be a baby but has become a boy, I like that,” said Stepan Arkadyevich. “Do you remember me?”

The boy quickly turned to look at his father.

“I remember, *mon oncle*,” he replied, glancing at his uncle, and again he looked down.

The uncle called the boy over and took his hand.

“Well, how about it, how are you doing?” he said, wishing to initiate a conversation and not knowing what to say.

The boy, turning red and not answering, cautiously drew his hand out of his uncle’s. As soon as Stepan Arkadyevich let go of his hand, he cast a questioning glance at his father with a quick step and left the room, like a bird set free.

A year had passed since Seryozha had last seen his mother. Since then he had not heard anything more about her. During that year he had been sent to school and had come to know and love his schoolmates. Those dreams and memories of his mother that had made him ill after his meeting with her no longer occupied him. When they came back, he strenuously drove them out, considering them shameful and fit only for girls, not a boy who went to school. He knew that there had been a fight between his father and mother that had separated them, knew that he was destined to remain with his father, and he had tried to get used to this idea.

Seeing his uncle, who resembled his mother, was unpleasant because it called up those same memories, which he considered shameful. It was even more unpleasant because from the few words he had heard as he waited outside the study door, and especially from the expression on the face of his father and uncle, he guessed that the talk between them must have been about his mother. So as not to condemn the father with whom he lived and on whom he depended and, most of all, not to succumb to sentimentality, which he considered equally humiliating, Seryozha tried not to look at this uncle who had come to disturb his peace and not to think about what he brought to mind.

But when Stepan Arkadyevich, who left right after him, saw him on the stairs, called him over, and asked him how he spent his time between classes, Seryozha, outside his father’s presence, became quite talkative.

“We play railroad now,” he said, answering his question. “This is how it works:

two boys sit on the bench. Those are the passengers. One gets up standing on the bench, and everyone latches on. Either with their arms or their belts, and they start through all the rooms. The doors are opened ahead of time. Oh, and it's very hard being the conductor!"

"That's the one standing?" asked Stepan Arkadyevich, smiling.

"Yes, you have to be brave and clever, especially when they stop suddenly or someone falls."

"Yes, that's no joke," said Stepan Arkadyevich, looking with sadness into those animated eyes, so like his mother's, no longer babyish, not entirely innocent anymore, and although he had promised Alexei Alexandrovich not to speak of Anna, he could not help himself.

"Do you remember your mother?" he asked all of a sudden.

"No, I don't," Seryozha spoke quickly, and turning crimson, he looked down. After that his uncle could not get anything more out of him.

Half an hour later the Slav tutor found his pupil on the staircase and for a long time could not tell whether he was angry or crying.

"Well, is it true, you hurt yourself when you fell?" said the tutor. "I've said that it's a dangerous game. The director should be told."

"If I'd hurt myself, no one would have noticed. That's for sure."

"Well then, what is it?"

"Leave me alone! I remember, I don't remember. What does he care? Why should I remember? Leave me in peace!" He was no longer addressing his tutor but the whole world.

20

Stepan Arkadyevich, as always, did not waste his time in Petersburg idly. In Petersburg, apart from business—his sister's divorce and the new post—he also needed, as always, to refresh himself after Moscow's stuffiness, as he put it.

Moscow, despite its *cafés chantants* and its omnibuses, was nonetheless a backwater.²⁶ Stepan Arkadyevich had always felt this. Living in Moscow, especially around his family, he felt his spirits sinking. When he had spent too long in Moscow without leaving the city, he positively reached the point where he worried about his wife's ill humor and reproaches, the health and education of his children, and the petty interests of his department; even the fact that he had debts worried him. All he had to do, though, was to spend some time in Petersburg, in that circle in which he moved, where people lived, truly lived, and didn't stagnate, as in Moscow, and all these thoughts vanished and melted away like wax before a fire.²⁷

His wife? . . . Only that day he had been speaking with Prince Chechensky. Prince Chechensky had a wife and family—grown children who were pages—and another, illegitimate family, by which he also had children. Although the first family was also good, Prince Chechensky felt happier in his second family. He had taken his older son to see his second family, and he told Stepan Arkadyevich how he found this beneficial and broadening for his son. What would they say to that in Moscow?

His children? In Petersburg, children did not prevent fathers from living. Children were reared in institutions, and there was not that wild notion, which was gaining ground in Moscow—with Lvov, for example—that children should have all of life's luxury while parents had only work and care. Here they understood that a man is obliged to live for himself, as a cultured man ought to live.

The service? Here, too, the service was not that incessant, hopeless drudgery that was dragged out in Moscow; here there was interest to be had in service. A meeting, a favor, an apt word, a flair for mimicking different people—and suddenly a man had made his career, like Bryantsev, whom Stepan Arkadyevich had met the day before and who was a dignitary of the first rank now. That sort of service did hold interest.

In particular, the Petersburg view of financial affairs had a calming effect on Stepan Arkadyevich. Bartnyansky, who had run through at least fifty thousand on his *train*, had told him something remarkable about this yesterday.²⁸

Before dinner, after they had struck up a conversation, Stepan Arkadyevich said to Bartnyansky, "You seem to be close to Mordvinsky. You would be doing me a favor if you put in a good word for me, please. There is a position I would like to take. A member of the agency . . ."

"Well, I won't remember in any case. . . . Only what is this longing of yours for railroads and Jews? . . . As you like, but it's vile!"

Stepan Arkadyevich did not tell him that this was a vital matter; Bartnyansky would not have understood that.

"I need the money, I have nothing to live on."

"Aren't you living now?"

"Yes, but I have debts."

"You don't say! A lot?" said Bartnyansky with sympathy.

"Quite a lot, about twenty thousand."

Bartnyansky burst into cheerful laughter.

"Oh, happy man!" he said. "I have a million and a half and nothing, and as you see, one can still live!"

And Stepan Arkadyevich, not just in words but in deed, saw the justness of this. Zhivakhov had debts of three hundred thousand and not a kopek to his name, but he was living, and in style! Count Krivtsov had run through every-

thing long since, yet he kept two mistresses. Petrovsky had gone through five million and was living exactly the same and even was in charge of a financial department and received twenty thousand in salary. And besides, Petersburg had a pleasant physical effect on Stepan Arkadyevich. It made him younger. In Moscow he glanced now and then at his gray hair, dozed off after dinner, and stretched, breathed heavily going up the stairs, was bored by young women, and did not dance at balls. In Petersburg he always felt ten years younger.

In Petersburg he experienced exactly what sixty-year-old Prince Oblonsky—that's Peter Oblonsky, who was just returned from abroad—had told him only the day before.

"We don't know how to live here," said Peter Oblonsky. "Believe me, I spent the summer in Baden, and really, I felt quite the young man. I'd see a woman, nice and young, and my thoughts . . . You have dinner, a quick drink—and you feel strong and full of cheer. I arrived in Russia—I had to see my wife and what's more go to the country—well, you wouldn't believe it, two weeks later I put on my robe and stopped dressing for dinner. No more nice young women! I was nothing but an old man. All I had left was to save my soul. I went to Paris—and I was back on my feet."

Stepan Arkadyevich felt the exact same difference as had Peter Oblonsky. In Moscow he had let himself go to such an extent that, if he went on living there for long, he would really reach the point, for all he knew, of saving his soul; whereas in Petersburg he felt himself a proper man again.

Between Princess Betsy Tverskaya and Stepan Arkadyevich there had long existed decidedly odd relations. Stepan Arkadyevich always flirted with her in jest and told her, also in jest, the most improper things, knowing that she liked this more than anything. The day after his conversation with Karenin, Stepan Arkadyevich, who had gone by to see her, felt so young that without meaning to he went so far in this jesting flirtation and nonsense that he didn't know how to extricate himself, inasmuch as, unfortunately, he not only did not like her but found her repulsive. This tone had been set because she had liked him very much. And so he was very glad at the arrival of Princess Myahkaya, who put an end to their tête-à-tête.

"Ah, so you're here as well," she said upon seeing him. "Well, how is your poor sister? Don't you look at me like that," she added. "Ever since they've all turned against her, people a hundred thousand times worse than she, I've thought that she has done a fine thing. I cannot forgive Vronsky for not letting me know when she was in Petersburg. I would have gone to see her and gone everywhere with her. Please send her my love. Well then, tell me all about her."

"Yes, her situation is difficult, she—" Stepan Arkadyevich, in his heartfelt simplicity having taken Princess Myahkaya's words "tell me all about your sis-

ter” for genuine coin, was just about to tell her. Princess Myahkaya immediately interrupted him, as was her wont, and began telling him what she thought.

“She did what everyone but me does but hides, but she didn’t want to be deceptive and did a fine thing. She did even better because she threw over that half-witted brother-in-law of yours. You must excuse me. Everyone used to say that he was clever, clever, I alone said he was a fool. Now that he has become involved with Lydia and Landau, everyone is saying that he is a half-wit, and I would be happy not to agree with everyone, but this time I have to.”

“Yes, please explain it,” said Stepan Arkadyevich, “what does it mean? Yesterday I went to see him on my sister’s affairs and asked for a final answer. He didn’t give me an answer and said he would think about it, and this morning, instead of an answer, I received an invitation to Countess Lydia Ivanovna’s this evening.”

“Well, that’s it, that’s it!” Princess Myahkaya began with glee. “They’re going to ask Landau what he says.”

“What do you mean Landau? Why? Who is this Landau?”

“You mean you don’t know *Jules Landau, le fameux Jules Landau, le clairvoyant*?²⁹ He’s a half-wit, too, but your sister’s fate depends on him. That’s what happens when you’re in the provinces, away from life, you don’t know anything. *Landau*, you see, was a *commis* at a shop in Paris and went to see a doctor.³⁰ In the doctor’s waiting room he fell asleep and in his sleep he began giving all the patients advice. And wonderful advice it was. Then Yuri Meledinsky—you know, the invalid?—his wife found out about Landau and took him to see her husband. He’s treating her husband. He’s done him no good whatsoever, in my opinion, because he’s just as debilitated, but they believe in him and take him around with them, and they brought him to Russia. Here everyone rushed to him, and he began to treat everyone. He cured Countess Bezzubova, and she became so fond of him that she adopted him.”

“What do you mean adopted him?”

“Just that, adopted him. He’s not *Landau* anymore but Count Bezzubov. But that’s not the point. Lydia—I love her dearly but her head is not screwed on right—naturally, has rushed now to this *Landau*, and without him nothing is decided either for her or for Alexei Alexandrovich, and therefore your sister’s fate is now in the hands of this *Landau*, otherwise known as Count Bezzubov.”

21

After a marvelous dinner and a large quantity of brandy drunk at Bartnyansky’s, Stepan Arkadyevich, who was only a little bit later than the appointed time, entered Countess Lydia Ivanovna’s home.

“Who else is with the countess? The Frenchman?” Stepan Arkadyevich asked the doorman, surveying Alexei Alexandrovich’s familiar coat and an odd, unsophisticated coat with clasps.

“Alexei Alexandrovich Karenin and Count Bezzubov,” the doorman responded sternly.

“Princess Myahkaya guessed,” thought Stepan Arkadyevich as he started up the staircase. “It’s very odd! Though it would be good to get close to her. She has tremendous influence. If she put in a good word with Pomorsky, then it would be a certainty.”

It was still quite light outside, but in Countess Lydia Ivanovna’s small drawing room the blinds were lowered and the lamps were burning.

At a round table under a lamp sat the countess and Alexei Alexandrovich, talking something over quietly. A short, skinny man with feminine hips and knock-kneed, very pale, handsome, with magnificent glittering eyes and long hair which lay on the collar of his frock coat, was standing at the other end, surveying the wall of portraits. After exchanging greetings with his hostess and Alexei Alexandrovich, Stepan Arkadyevich could not help but look once again at the stranger.

“*Monsieur Landau!*” the countess addressed him with a meekness and caution that struck Oblonsky. She introduced them.

Landau hastily looked around, walked over, and smiling, placed his stiff, sweaty hand in Stepan Arkadyevich’s extended hand and immediately walked away and started looking at the portraits again. The countess and Alexei Alexandrovich exchanged significant glances.

“I’m very happy to see you, especially today,” said Countess Lydia Ivanovna, pointing Stepan Arkadyevich to a seat next to Karenin.

“I introduced him to you as *Landau*,” she said in a low voice, glancing at the Frenchman and then immediately at Alexei Alexandrovich, “but he is actually Count Bezzubov, as you doubtless know. Only he does not like the title.”

“Yes, I’ve heard,” replied Stepan Arkadyevich. “They say he completely healed Countess Bezzubova.”

“She was just here to see me, she is so to be pitied!” the countess turned to Alexei Alexandrovich. “This separation is horrible for her. For her it is such a blow!”

“But is he definitely going?” asked Alexei Alexandrovich.

“Yes, he’s going to Paris. He heard a voice yesterday,” said Countess Lydia Ivanovna, looking at Stepan Arkadyevich.

“Ah, a voice!” echoed Oblonsky, sensing that he must be as cautious as possible in this company, where something special to which he did not yet have the key was or was about to be happening.

A moment's silence ensued, after which Countess Lydia Ivanovna, as if moving on to the main topic of conversation, with a faint smile said to Oblonsky, "I've known you for a long time and I am very happy to get to know you better. *Les amis de nos amis sont nos amis*."³¹ But in order to be a friend, one must give careful thought to the state of the friend's soul, and I fear that you are not doing this with respect to Alexei Alexandrovich. You understand what I mean," she said, raising her magnificent, pensive eyes.

"In part, Countess, I do understand Alexei Alexandrovich's position, . . ." said Oblonsky, not quite understanding what her point was and so wishing to keep things general.

"The change is not in his outward position," said Countess Lydia Ivanovna sternly, at the same time letting her loving gaze follow Alexei Alexandrovich, who had risen and walked over to *Landau*. "His heart has changed, he has been given a new heart, and I fear that you have not given full cognizance to the change which has come about in him."

"Well, I mean, in general terms I can imagine this change. We have always been friendly, and now . . ." said Stepan Arkadyevich, responding to the countess's gaze with a gentle gaze, and trying to figure out which of the two ministers she was closer to in order to know which of the two he should ask her about.

"The change that has come about in him cannot weaken his love for his near and dear; on the contrary, the change that has come about in him must increase his love. But I am afraid you are not understanding me. Wouldn't you like some tea?" she said, indicating with her eyes the footman who was serving tea on a tray.

"Not entirely, Countess. Naturally, his misfortune—"

"Yes, a misfortune which became the supreme happiness, when his heart became new, and was filled with it," she said, gazing lovingly at Stepan Arkadyevich.

"I think I might be able to ask her to put in a word to both," thought Stepan Arkadyevich.

"Oh, certainly, Countess," he said. "But I think that these changes are so intimate that no one, even those closest, likes to speak of them."

"On the contrary! We must speak of them and help one another."

"Yes, without a doubt, but there can be such a difference in convictions, and moreover . . ." said Oblonsky with a gentle smile.

"There can be no difference when it comes to the sacred truth."

"Oh yes, certainly, but . . ." Confused, Stepan Arkadyevich fell silent. He realized that the topic had turned to religion.

"I think he's just about to fall asleep," said Alexei Alexandrovich in a significant whisper as he walked up to Lydia Ivanovna.

Stepan Arkadyevich looked around. *Landau* was sitting by the window, leaning against the arm and back of the chair, his head lowered. Noticing the glances directed at him, he lifted his head and smiled a childishly naïve smile.

“Pay no attention,” said Lydia Ivanovna, and with an easy movement she pulled up a chair for Alexei Alexandrovich. “I have noticed,” she had been starting to say when the footman entered the room with a letter. Lydia Ivanovna quickly ran over the note and, excusing herself, with extraordinary speed, wrote and handed him a reply and returned to the table. “I have noticed,” she continued the conversation she had begun, “that Muscovites, especially the men, are the most indifferent to religion.”

“Oh no, Countess, I believe Muscovites have a reputation for being the most steadfast,” replied Stepan Arkadyevich.

“Yes, so far as I understand it, you, unfortunately, are among the indifferent,” said Alexei Alexandrovich, addressing him with a weary smile.

“How can one be indifferent!” said Lydia Ivanovna.

“In this respect it is not that I am indifferent but waiting,” said Stepan Arkadyevich with his most mollifying smile. “I do not think that my time for these questions has come.”

Alexei Alexandrovich and Lydia Ivanovna exchanged glances.

“We can never know whether our time has come or not,” said Alexei Alexandrovich sternly. “We must not think about whether we are or are not ready. Grace is not guided by human considerations; it sometimes does not descend upon those striving for it but descends upon the unprepared, as it did on Saul.”³²

“No, not yet, it seems,” said Lydia Ivanovna, following the Frenchman’s movements at this time.

Landau rose and walked over to them.

“Will you allow me to listen?” he asked.

“Oh yes, I did not want to disturb you,” said Lydia Ivanovna, looking at him tenderly. “Please, sit with us.”

“One must merely not shut one’s eyes in order not to be deprived of the light,” continued Alexei Alexandrovich.

“Ah, if you knew the happiness we experience feeling His constant presence in our hearts!” said Countess Ivanovna, smiling blissfully.

“But a man may feel incapable at times of rising to that height,” said Stepan Arkadyevich, feeling like a hypocrite in admitting a religious height, but at the same time reluctant to admit his freethinking in front of the person who with one word to Pomorsky could secure the position he desired.

“Do you mean to say that sin prevents him?” said Lydia Ivanovna. “But that is a false opinion. There is no sin for believers, the sin has already been redeemed.

Pardon," she added, looking at the footman, who had entered again with another note. She read it and spoke her reply, "Tomorrow at the grand duchess's, tell him. For the believer there is no sin," she continued their conversation.

"Yes, but faith without works is dead," said Stepan Arkadyevich, recalling the phrase from the catechism, only with a smile defending his independence.

"There it is, from the Epistle of James the Apostle," said Alexei Alexandrovich, turning to Lydia Ivanovna with a certain reproach, evidently about a topic they had already spoken of more than once.³³ "How much harm the false interpretation of this passage has done! Nothing so repels a man from faith as this interpretation. 'I have no works, I cannot believe,' since nowhere is this said. What is said is the opposite."

"To strive for God and through one's strivings, and by fasting save one's soul," said Countess Lydia Ivanovna with vile disdain, "these are the savage concepts of our monks. Whereas nowhere is this stated. It is much simpler and easier," she added, looking at Oblonsky with the same encouraging smile with which she encouraged the young ladies-in-waiting at court who were flustered by their new situation.

"We are saved by Christ, who suffered for us. We are saved by faith," said Alexei Alexandrovich approvingly, confirming her words with his look.

"*Vous comprenez l'anglais?*"³⁴ asked Lydia Ivanovna, and receiving an affirmative reply, rose and began looking through the books on her shelf.

"Do I want to read *Safe and Happy* or *Under the Wing*?"³⁵ she said, glancing inquiringly at Karenin. Finding the book and sitting back down in her place, she opened it. "It's very short. Described here is the path by which one acquires faith and the happiness higher than everything earthly, which at the same time fills the soul. A believing man cannot be unhappy because he is not alone. Here, you will see." She was just about to read when the footman came in again. "Madame Borozdina? Tell her tomorrow at two o'clock. Yes," she said, resting her finger at her place in the book and with a sigh glancing straight ahead with her fine, pensive eyes. "This is how genuine faith functions. Do you know Marie Sanina? Do you know her misfortune? She lost her only child. She was in despair. So what happened? She found this friend, and she thanks God now for the death of her child. This is the happiness faith gives!"

"Oh yes, that's very . . ." said Stepan Arkadyevich, glad that they were going to read and give him a moment to collect himself. "No, obviously it's better not to ask about anything today," he thought, "if only I can escape without making a hash of things."

"You will be bored," Countess Lydia Ivanovna said, addressing *Landau*. "You don't know English, but this is brief."

“Oh, I shall understand,” said Landau with the same smile, and he closed his eyes.

Alexei Alexandrovich and Lydia Ivanovna exchanged significant glances, and the reading began.

22

Stepan Arkadyevich felt utterly baffled by the strange new talk he was hearing. Generally speaking, the complexity of Petersburg life had a rousing effect on him, drawing him out of his Moscow stagnation, but the complexities he liked and understood were in the spheres congenial and familiar to him; in this alien milieu he was baffled, dumbfounded, and could not take it all in. Listening to Countess Lydia Ivanovna and feeling the handsome, either naïve or knavish—he himself did not know which—eyes of Landau aimed at him, Stepan Arkadyevich began experiencing a peculiar heaviness in his head.

The most incongruous thoughts were getting mixed up in his head. “Marie Sanina is rejoicing that her child died. . . . It would be nice to have a smoke now. . . . In order to be saved, one need only believe, and the monks don’t know how to do it, but Countess Lydia Ivanovna does. . . . Why do I have this heaviness in my head? Is it from the brandy or because all this is so very odd? Still, so far it looks like I haven’t done anything improper. Even so, I can’t ask her help yet. They say they make you pray. I just hope they don’t make me. That would be just too silly. And what is this nonsense she’s reading, though she articulates well. Landau is Bezzubov. Why is he Bezzubov?” All of a sudden Stepan Arkadyevich felt his lower jaw uncontrollably begin to tuck itself up for a yawn. He smoothed his whiskers, trying to conceal his yawn, and gave himself a shake. But immediately after he felt himself already asleep and about to snore. He woke up just as Countess Lydia Ivanovna’s voice said, “He’s asleep.”

Stepan Arkadyevich woke in a fright, feeling guilty and caught. He was immediately reassured, though, when he saw that the words “he’s asleep” referred to Landau, not him. The Frenchman had fallen asleep just as Stepan Arkadyevich had. But Stepan Arkadyevich’s sleeping, so he thought, would have offended them (actually he didn’t think that, so strange did everything seem to him now), whereas Landau’s sleeping delighted them extremely, especially Countess Lydia Ivanovna.

“*Mon ami*,” said Lydia Ivanovna, cautiously lifting the folds of her silk dress, so as not to make noise, and in her agitation calling Karenin now not Alexei Alexandrovich but “*mon ami*.”³⁶ “*Donnez lui la main. Vous voyez?*”³⁷ Shh!” she hissed at the footman, who had again entered. “I am not receiving.”

The Frenchman was asleep or pretending to be asleep, leaning his head against the back of the chair, and with the sweaty hand lying on his knee making feeble motions, as if trying to catch something. Alexei Alexandrovich rose, and wanted to walk over cautiously and put his hand in the Frenchman's hand, but bumped into the table. Stepan Arkadyevich rose as well, opening his eyes wide, wanting to wake himself up if he was asleep, and looked first at one and then the other. It was all real. Stepan Arkadyevich's head was feeling worse and worse all the time.

"Que la personne qui est arrivée la dernière, celle qui demande, qu'elle sorte! Qu'elle sorte!" intoned the Frenchman without opening his eyes.³⁸

*"Vous m'excuserez, mais vous voyez. . . . Revenez vers dix heures, encore mieux demain."*³⁹

*"Qu'elle sorte!"*⁴⁰ the Frenchman repeated impatiently.

*"C'est moi, n'est-ce pas?"*⁴¹

Receiving an affirmative reply, Stepan Arkadyevich, forgetting even what he had wanted to ask Lydia Ivanovna, forgetting even about his sister's errand, with the sole desire to get out as quickly as possible, left on tiptoe and ran outside, as from a house of plague, and for a long time chatted and joked with the driver, wishing to recover his senses as quickly as possible.

At the Théâtre Français, where he caught the last act, and then at Tatars' over Champagne, Stepan Arkadyevich caught his breath a little in his own familiar surroundings. Still, that evening he did not feel at all well.

Upon returning home to Peter Oblonsky's, with whom he was staying in Petersburg, Stepan Arkadyevich found a note from Betsy. She wrote him that she very much wished to finish the conversation they had begun and asked him to come by tomorrow. Scarcely had he read this note through and frowned over it when the heavy steps of men carrying something cumbersome were heard downstairs.

Stepan Arkadyevich went out to look. It was a rejuvenated Peter Oblonsky. He was so drunk that he could not get up the stairs; but he ordered himself put on his feet when he saw Stepan Arkadyevich, and grabbing onto him, went with him into his room and there began telling him about how he had spent his evening, and fell asleep right there.

Stepan Arkadyevich was feeling low, which happened rarely with him, and for a long time could not fall asleep. No matter what he recalled, everything was vile, but vilest of all, like something shameful, he recalled his evening with Countess Lydia Ivanovna.

The next day he received a positive refusal from Alexei Alexandrovich about Anna's divorce and realized that this decision was based on what the Frenchman had said yesterday in his real or feigned sleep.

23

To undertake anything in family life there must be either complete discord between the spouses or loving agreement. When spouses' relations are indefinite and there is neither one nor the other, there is no undertaking anything.

Many families stay from one year to the next in their old places, which are repellent to both spouses, merely because there is neither complete discord nor agreement.

For both Vronsky and Anna, Moscow life, in the heat and dust, when the sun was already shining not as in spring but as in summer, and all the trees on the boulevards had long since leafed out and the leaves were already covered with dust, was unbearable. Not moving to Vozdvizhenskoye, as had been decided long before, they stayed on in Moscow, which had become repellent to them both, because lately there had been no agreement between them.

The irritation that separated them did not have any outward cause, and all attempts at explanation not only did not eliminate but magnified it. It was an inner irritation, grounded for her in the diminution of his love and for him in his regret over having placed himself for her sake in a difficult position which she, instead of alleviating, was making even more difficult. Neither one nor the other would utter the reasons for their irritation, but each considered the other wrong and at every pretext attempted to prove this to the other.

For her, all of him—all his habits, thoughts, and desires, all his emotional and physical temperament—came down to one thing: his love for women, and this love, which, according to her feeling, ought to have been concentrated on her alone, this love had diminished; consequently, according to her reasoning, he must have transferred some of his love to other women or another woman—and she was jealous. She was jealous not of any particular woman but over the diminution of his love. Not having an object for her jealousy yet, she was on the watch for one. At the slightest hint she transferred her jealousy from one object to another. First she was jealous of the coarse women with whom, thanks to his bachelor ties, he might easily become involved; then she was jealous of the society women he might meet; then she was jealous of some imagined young woman whom he wanted to marry after sundering his tie with her. This last jealousy tormented her most of all, especially because he himself, incautiously, in a candid moment, told her that his mother understood him so little that she had allowed herself to try to talk him into marrying Princess Sorokina.

In her jealousy, Anna raged at him in indignation and tried to find grounds for indignation in everything. For everything that was difficult in her position she blamed him. The agonizing suspense of waiting, as if between heaven and earth, which she had endured in Moscow, as well as Alexei Alexandrovich's

slowness and indecisiveness and her own isolation — she blamed him for all of it. If he loved her, he would understand the full burden of her position and remove her from it. He was to blame for the fact that she was living in Moscow rather than in the country. He could not live buried in the country, as she wished to do. He required society, and he had put her in this terrible position, the burden of which he chose not to understand. And again, he was the one to blame that she had been separated from her son forever.

Even those rare moments of tenderness that did come between them did not reassure her: in his tenderness she now saw a shade of calm and assurance that had not been there formerly and that irritated her.

It was dusk. Anna, alone, awaiting his return from a bachelor dinner he had gone to, was pacing back and forth in his study (the room where the noise from the street was least audible) and thinking through the expressions of yesterday's quarrel in all its details. Going back from the quarrel's memorable words of insult to what their cause had been, she at last reached the beginning of the conversation. For a long time she could not believe that their discord had begun from such an inoffensive conversation close to no one's heart. But that was indeed the case. It had all begun with him laughing at women's high schools, considering them unnecessary, while she had spoken up for them. He had a disrespectful attitude toward women's education in general and said that Hannah, the English girl Anna patronized, had no need whatsoever to know physics.

This irritated Anna. She saw in this a contemptuous allusion to her own occupations, and she came up with and uttered a phrase which was supposed to repay him for the pain he had caused her.

"I don't expect you to remember me or my feelings the way a loving man might remember them, but simple tact I did expect," she said.

Indeed, he did turn red from annoyance and said something unpleasant. She didn't remember what she had said in reply, only then, evidently with a desire to cause her pain as well, he said, "I'm not interested in your infatuation for this girl, it's true, because I can see that it is unnatural."

This cruelty of his, which was destroying the world she had taken such pains to construct for herself in order to endure her hard life, this unfairness of his in accusing her of pretense, of being unnatural, enraged her.

"I'm very sorry that you find only what is coarse and material understandable and natural," she said, and she left the room.

When the previous evening he had come into her room, they hadn't mentioned their former quarrel, but both had felt that the quarrel, although smoothed over, was not settled.

Now he had not been home the entire day, and it was so lonely and hard for

her to feel she was quarreling with him that she wanted to forget everything, forgive and reconcile with him, she wanted to blame herself and defend him.

"It's all my fault. I'm irritable and senselessly jealous. I will reconcile with him and we will go to the country, and there I'll be calmer," she told herself.

"Unnatural!" She suddenly recalled not so much the word that had offended her as his intention to cause her pain.

"I know what he meant. He meant it's unnatural, while not loving your own daughter, to love someone else's child. What does he understand about love for one's children, my love for Seryozha, whom I sacrificed for him? But this desire to cause me pain! No, he loves another woman. It cannot be otherwise."

When she saw that, while wishing to calm herself, she had completed once again the same circle she had passed through so many times already and had returned to her former irritation, she was horrified at herself. "Is it really impossible? Am I really incapable of accepting responsibility?" she said to herself and started again from the beginning. "He is truthful, he is honest, and he loves me. I love him, and in a few days the divorce will come. What else do I need? I need calm and trust, and I will accept the blame. Yes, now, when he comes, I shall tell him that it was my fault, although it wasn't, and we shall leave."

In order not to think any more or succumb to irritation, she rang and ordered her trunks brought in for packing her things for the country.

At ten o'clock, Vronsky arrived.

24

"Well, did you have a good time?" she asked with a guilty and meek expression on her face as she came out to meet him.

"As usual," he replied, immediately realizing from just one look at her that she was in one of her good moods. He had grown used to these transitions and now was especially glad for it because he himself was in the very best of spirits.

"What do I see! Now that is good!" he said, pointing to the trunks in the anteroom.

"Yes, we must go. I went out for a drive, and it was so fine that I felt like going to the country. After all, nothing is keeping you, is it?"

"That's my one desire. I'll be right in and we'll have a talk, I'll just change my clothes. Have tea served."

And he went into his study.

There was something insulting in his saying, "Now that is good," the way people talk to a child when he has stopped fussing; even more insulting was the contrast between her guilty and his self-confident tone; and for an instant

she felt inside her a rising desire for a fight; however, making an effort, she suppressed it and greeted Vronsky just as cheerfully.

When he came in to see her, she told him, in part repeating prepared words, about her day and her plans for their departure.

“You know, it was almost an inspiration that came over me,” she said. “Why wait here for the divorce? Wouldn’t it be just the same in the country? I can’t wait any longer. I don’t want to hope, I don’t want to hear anything about the divorce. I’ve decided that this will no longer have any effect on my life. Do you agree?”

“Oh, yes!” he said, looking with concern at her agitated face.

“What were you doing there? Who was there?” she said after a pause.

Vronsky named the guests.

“The dinner was splendid, so was the boat race, and all that was nice enough, but in Moscow they cannot get along without something *ridicule*. Some lady appeared, the swimming instructor for the Swedish queen, and was demonstrating her art.”

“What do you mean? She swam?” asked Anna, frowning.

“In a red *costume de natation*.⁴² She was old and hideous. So when are we going?”

“What a silly fantasy! What, does she swim in some special way?” said Anna, not answering.

“There was definitely nothing special. I’m saying, it is terribly silly. So when are you thinking of going?”

Anna shook her head, as if wishing to drive out an unpleasant thought.

“When are we going? The sooner the better. Tomorrow we won’t be ready. The day after tomorrow.”

“Yes . . . no, wait. The day after tomorrow is Sunday, I must see *maman*,” said Vronsky, flustered because as soon as he pronounced his mother’s name he felt her suspicious stare. His confusion confirmed her suspicions. She flared up and moved away from him. Now it was no longer the Swedish queen’s instructor whom Anna pictured but Princess Sorokina, who lived in the country outside Moscow with Countess Vronskaya.

“Can you go tomorrow?” she said.

“By no means! I won’t have the warrant and money for the business I’m going on tomorrow,” he replied.

“If that’s how it is, then we won’t go at all.”

“But why not?”

“I won’t go later. It’s Monday or never!”

“Why, though?” said Vronsky as if surprised. “This makes no sense, really!”

“It makes no sense to you because you don’t care about me at all. You don’t

want to understand my life. The only thing that has kept me occupied here is Hannah. You say this is pretense. After all, yesterday you said I didn't love my daughter but pretended to love this English girl, that this was unnatural; I would like to know what kind of life for me here could be natural!"

For an instant she came to her senses and was horrified that she had betrayed her intention. But even knowing that she was ruining herself, she could not refrain, could not keep from trying to show him how wrong he was; she could not submit to him.

"I never said that. I said that I cannot sympathize with this sudden love."

"Why, boasting of your directness as you do, will you not speak the truth?"

"I have never boasted and I have never not spoken the truth," he said quietly, trying to quell the fury rising in him. "I'm very sorry if you don't respect—"

"Respect was invented to hide the void where love ought to be. But if you don't love me anymore, then it's better and more honest to say so."

"No, this is becoming intolerable!" exclaimed Vronsky, rising from his chair. And halting in front of her, he spoke slowly. "Why are you trying my patience?" he said with a look as if he could say even more but was refraining. "It has its limits."

"What do you mean by that?" she exclaimed, looking with horror into the frank expression of hatred that was all over his face and especially in his cruel, menacing eyes.

"I mean . . ." he was about to begin, but he stopped. "I must ask what it is you want of me."

"What can I want? I can want only for you not to abandon me, as you are thinking of doing," she said, understanding everything he had not said. "But I don't want this, this is secondary. I want love, but you don't have it. Consequently, it's all over!"

She headed for the door.

"Wait! Wait!" said Vronsky, not relaxing the somber fold of his brow but stopping her by the arm. "What's the matter? I said the departure had to be postponed for three days, and to that you said I was lying, that I was a dishonest man."

"Yes, and I repeat that a man who reproaches me by saying that he has sacrificed everything for me," she said, recalling the words from an even earlier quarrel, "that this is worse than a dishonest man. He's a heartless man."

"No, there are limits to my patience!" he exclaimed, and he quickly released her arm.

"He despises me, that's clear," she thought, and silently, without looking around, she walked out of the room with unsure steps.

“He loves another woman. That’s even clearer,” she told herself as she entered her room. “I want his love, but he has none. Consequently, it’s all over,” she repeated the words she had said, “and it must end.”

“But how?” she asked herself, and she sat down in the chair in front of the mirror.

Thoughts about where she would go now—whether to her aunt, who had raised her, to Dolly’s, or simply alone abroad—and about what *he* was doing now alone in his study, whether this was their final quarrel or a reconciliation was yet possible, and about the fact that now all her former Petersburg acquaintances would be talking about her, how Alexei Alexandrovich would look on this, and many other thoughts about what would happen now, after their rupture, came to her mind, but she could not surrender wholeheartedly to these thoughts. In her soul was something vague, which interested her, but which she could not clarify for herself. Recalling once more Alexei Alexandrovich, she recalled as well the time of her illness after the birth and the emotion that would not leave her at the time. “Why didn’t I die?” Her words then and her emotion at the time came back to her. Suddenly she realized what was in her heart. Yes, it was this idea which alone solved everything. “Yes, to die!”

“Alexei Alexandrovich’s shame and disgrace, and Seryozha, and my horrible shame—everything is saved by my death. Die—and he will repent, and regret, and love, and suffer over me.” With a frozen smile of compassion for herself, she sat in the chair, removing and replacing the ring on her left hand, animatedly imagining from all angles his emotions after her death.

Approaching steps, his steps, distracted her. As if occupied with putting away her ring, she did not even turn toward him.

He walked up to her, took her by the hand, and said quietly:

“Anna, we’ll go the day after tomorrow if you want. I agree to everything.”

She was silent.

“What is it?” he asked.

“You know yourself,” she said, and that same minute, unable to hold back any longer, she broke down sobbing.

“Leave me, leave me!” she managed to get out between sobs. “I will go away tomorrow. I’ll do more. Who am I? A depraved woman. A stone around your neck. I don’t want to torture you, I don’t! I’m setting you free. You don’t love me. You love another!”

Vronsky implored her to calm down and assured her that there was not the ghost of a foundation for her jealousy, that he had never stopped and never would stop loving her, that he loved her more than ever.

“Anna, why must you torture yourself and me so?” he said, kissing her hands.

Expressed on his face now was a tenderness, and she thought she heard the sound of tears in his voice and felt their moisture on her hand. Instantly Anna's desperate jealousy changed to desperate, passionate tenderness; she put her arms around him, and covered his head, neck, and hands with kisses.

25

Feeling that their reconciliation was complete, Anna eagerly set about in the morning preparing for their departure. Although it had not been decided whether they were going on Monday or Tuesday, since each had given in to the other yesterday, Anna was busily preparing for the departure, feeling now utterly indifferent as to whether they left a day earlier or later. She was standing in her room over an open trunk, selecting things, when he, already dressed, came in to see her earlier than usual.

"I'm driving out to see *maman* right now; she can send me money by Egorov, and tomorrow I shall be ready to go," he said.

Regardless of how good her mood, the mention of the trip to the dacha to see his mother stung her.

"No, I won't be ready then myself," she said, and immediately thought, "So then it was possible to have been arranged to do as I wanted." "No, do as you had wanted. Go to the dining room, I'll be right there, I just have to take out these things I don't need," she said, putting something more on Annushka's arm, where a mountain of finery lay already.

Vronsky was eating his beefsteak when she went out to the dining room.

"You can't believe how repellent these rooms are to me," she said, sitting down beside him for her coffee. "There is nothing worse than these *chambres garnies*.⁴³ They have no expression, no soul. This clock, these curtains, and mainly the wallpaper—it's a nightmare. I think of Vozdvizhenskoye as the Promised Land. You aren't sending out the horses yet?"

"No, they can follow us. Are you going anywhere?"

"I wanted to go out to Wilson's. I need to bring her the dresses. So it's definitely tomorrow?" she said in a cheerful voice; but all of a sudden her face changed.

Vronsky's valet came and asked him for a receipt for a telegram from Petersburg. There was nothing special in Vronsky receiving a dispatch, but as if wishing to hide something from her, he said that the receipt was in his study, and he hastily turned toward her.

"I will definitely finish everything tomorrow."

"Who is the dispatch from?" she asked, not listening to him.

“Stiva,” he answered reluctantly.

“Why didn’t you show it to me? What kind of secret can there be between Stiva and me?”

Vronsky brought the valet back and told him to bring the dispatch.

“I didn’t want to show it because Stiva has a passion for telegraphing; why telegraph when nothing is decided?”

“About the divorce?”

“Yes, but he writes: ‘I still haven’t been able to accomplish anything.’ A few days ago he promised a definite answer. Here, read it.”

With trembling hands Anna took the dispatch and read the same thing Vronsky had said. Added at the end also was: “Little hope, but I’ll do everything possible and impossible.”

“I said yesterday that I absolutely don’t care when or even if I get the divorce,” she said, turning red. “There was no need to hide it from me.” “So he could and does hide his correspondence with women from me this way,” she thought.

“Yashvin wanted to come this morning with Voitov,” said Vronsky. “It seems he won everything off Pevtsov, and even more than he can pay—about sixty thousand.”

“No,” she said, irritated that with this change of topic he was so obviously showing her that she was irritated, “why do you think this news interests me so much that you even have to hide it? I said I don’t want to think about it, and I would like you to take as little interest in it as I do.”

“I take an interest because I like clarity,” he said.

“Clarity is not in the form but in the love,” she said, growing more and more irritated not by his words but by the tone of cold calm with which he spoke. “What do you want it for?”

“My God, love again,” he thought, frowning.

“But you know what for: for you and for the children there are to be,” he said.

“There are to be no more children.”

“That’s very sad,” he said.

“You need it for the children, but you don’t think about me?” she said, having completely forgotten or not having heard that he had said, “*for you* and for the children.”

The question of the possibility of having children was a long-disputed one that had irritated her. She explained his desire to have children by the fact that he did not treasure her beauty.

“Oh, I did say ‘for you.’ For you most of all,” he repeated, frowning as if in pain, “because I’m certain that most of your irritation stems from the indeterminacy of your situation.”

“Yes, now he’s stopped all pretense, and all his cold hatred for me is there to be seen,” she thought, not listening to his words but looking with horror at that cold and cruel judge who, taunting her, was looking out from his eyes.

“That’s not the reason,” she said, “and I don’t even understand how the reason for my irritation, as you call it, could be the fact that I am entirely in your power. What indeterminacy is there to the situation? On the contrary.”

“I regret very much that you don’t want to understand,” he interrupted her, doggedly wishing to finish his thought, “the indeterminacy consists in the fact that you think I am free.”

“On that score you may be perfectly at ease,” she said, and turning away from him she began drinking her coffee.

She raised her cup, lifting her pinky, and brought it to her mouth. After taking a few sips, she glanced at him and from the expression on his face clearly realized that he found offensive her hand, her gesture and the sound she was making with her lips.

“I absolutely do not care what your mother thinks or how she wants to marry you off,” she said, putting down her cup with a trembling hand.

“But we’re not talking about that.”

“No, that’s just what we’re talking about. Believe me, for me a woman without a heart, whether she’s old or not, your mother or a stranger, is of no interest and I do not want to know her.”

“Anna, I beg you not to speak disrespectfully of my mother.”

“A woman who has not guessed with her heart where her son’s happiness and honor lie, that woman has no heart.”

“I repeat my request not to speak disrespectfully of my mother, whom I do respect,” he said, raising his voice and looking sternly at her.

She did not reply. Staring at him, at his face and hands, she recalled in all its details the scene of yesterday’s reconciliation and his passionate caresses. “These caresses, these exact same caresses he has lavished and will and wants to lavish on other women!” she thought.

“You don’t love your mother. These are all words, words, words!” she said with hatred, looking at him.

“But if that is so, then we must—”

“We must decide, and I have decided,” she said, and she was about to go but right then Yashvin walked into the room.

Anna greeted him and stayed.

Why, when there was a storm in her soul and she felt she was standing at a turning point in her life which could have terrible consequences, why in that minute did she have to pretend before a strange man who sooner or later would

learn everything, she didn't know; but instantly quieting the storm inside her, she sat down and began talking with their guest.

"Well, how did your business go? Did you collect your debt?" she asked Yashvin.

"Oh it's all right. I don't think I'll get it all, but I have to go on Wednesday. When are you leaving?" said Yashvin, looking at Vronsky with narrowed eyes and evidently guessing at the quarrel going on.

"The day after tomorrow, it seems," said Vronsky.

"You've actually been planning this for a long time."

"But now it's definite," said Anna, looking straight into Vronsky's eyes with a look that told him he shouldn't even think about the possibility of reconciliation.

"Don't you feel sorry for the unfortunate Pevtsov?" she continued the conversation with Yashvin.

"I've never asked myself whether I do or don't, Anna Arkadyevna. After all, my fortune is here"—he pointed to his side pocket—"and now I'm a rich man. But today I'll go to the club and perhaps walk out a beggar. After all, anyone who sits down with me also wants to leave me without my shirt, and I him. And so we struggle. Herein lies the pleasure."

"Well, but what if you were married," said Anna, "what would it be like for your wife?"

Yashvin laughed.

"Which is evidently why I haven't married and have never planned to marry."

"What about *Helsingfors*?" said Vronsky, joining the conversation, and he glanced at the smiling Anna.

Meeting his glance, Anna's face suddenly became cold and stern, as if she were saying to him, "It's not forgotten. Everything is the same."

"Don't tell me you were in love?" she said to Yashvin.

"Oh Lord! So many times! But you have to understand, a single man can sit down to cards, but in such a way as to always rise when the time comes for a *rendezvous*. I can make love, but in such a way as not to be late for the game in the evening. That's how I arrange it."

"No, I'm not asking about that but about the real thing." She wanted to say *Helsingfors*, but she did not want to say a word said by Vronsky.

Voitov arrived, having purchased a stallion; Anna rose and left the room.

Before leaving the house, Vronsky went in to see her. She intended to pretend she was looking for something on the table, but ashamed of her pretense, she looked him straight in the eye with a cold gaze.

"What do you need?" she asked him in French.

“To get Gabetta’s pedigree. I sold him,” he said in the kind of tone that expressed more clearly than words, “I have no time to go into explanations, and it would lead to nothing.”

“I’m not to blame before her,” he thought. “If she wants to punish herself, *tant pis pour elle*.”⁴⁴ But as he was going out, he thought she had said something, and his heart suddenly shuddered from compassion for her.

“What is it, Anna?” he asked.

“I’m fine,” she replied just as coldly and calmly.

“Fine, *tant pis*,” he thought, and becoming cold once again, he turned and went. As he was walking out, he saw her face in the mirror, pale, with trembling lips. He did want to stop and say something reassuring, but his feet carried him out of the room before he could think of what to say. He spent the entire day away from home, and when he arrived late at night, the maid told him that Anna Arkadyevna had a headache and had asked him not to come in to see her.

26

Never before had a day been spent in a quarrel. Today was the first time. And this was not a quarrel. It was open acknowledgment of their complete cooling. Could he really have looked at her the way he did when he entered the room for the pedigree? Looked at her and seen that her heart was breaking from despair and walked by in silence with that indifferent and calm face? Perhaps he hadn’t cooled toward her, but he did hate her because he loved another woman. That was clear.

And remembering all the harsh words he had spoken, Anna thought up still other words that he obviously had wished to say and might have said to her, and she became more and more irritated.

“I’m not holding you,” he might have said. “You may go where you like. You didn’t want to divorce your husband, probably so you could go back to him. So go back to him. If you need money, I’ll give it to you. How many rubles do you need?”

All the very cruelest words a coarse man might say he said to her in her imagination, and she could not forgive him for them, as if he had actually said them.

“But wasn’t it just yesterday that he swore his love, he, a truthful and honest man? Haven’t I despaired in vain many times before?” she told herself immediately thereafter.

All that day, with the exception of her trip to Wilson’s, which took up two hours, Anna spent in doubts about whether it was all over or there was hope of reconciliation, whether she should leave now or see him one more time.

She waited for him all day, and in the evening, going to her room, after having ordered he be told she had a headache, she thought privately, "If he does come, in spite of what the maid says, that means he still loves me. If not, then that means it's all over, and then I shall decide what I am to do!"

In the evening she heard the sound of his carriage coming to a halt, his ring, his steps, and his conversation with the maid. He believed what he was told, did not try to learn anything more, and went to his room. So then everything was over.

She pictured death, clearly and vibrantly, as the sole means for restoring love for her in his heart, for punishing him and gaining a victory in the battle that the evil spirit which had settled in her heart was waging with him.

Now nothing mattered—going or not going to Vozdvizhenskoye, getting or not getting a divorce from her husband—they meant nothing to her. The only thing that meant anything was punishing him.

When she poured herself her usual dose of opium and thought that all she had to do was drink the entire vial in order to die, it seemed so easy and simple to her that she again began thinking with pleasure about how he would agonize, repent, and love her memory, when it was already too late. She lay in bed with open eyes, looking by the light of a single, burning candle nearby at the carved cornice of the ceiling and at the shadow from the screen that enveloped part of it, and created lively pictures for herself of what he would feel when she was no more and was but a memory for him. "How could I have spoken those cruel words to her?" he would say. "How could I have left the room without saying anything? But now she is gone. She has left us forever. She is there . . ." Suddenly the screen's shadow wavered and enveloped the entire cornice, the entire ceiling, and other shadows from the other side rushed to meet it; for an instant the shadows ran together but then with new speed they drew nearer, wavered, merged, and all was dark. "Death!" she thought. Such horror descended upon her that for a long time she couldn't understand where she was, and for a long time her trembling hands could not find the matches to light another candle instead of the one that had burned down and gone out. "No, anything—only live! After all, I love him. After all, he loves me! This has happened before and it will pass," she said, feeling tears of joy at her return to life course down her cheeks. To save herself from her terror, she hurried to his study to see him.

He was sleeping soundly in his study. She walked up to him and, shining a light on his face from above, watched him for a long time. Now, when he was sleeping, she loved him so much that at the sight of him she could not restrain tears of tenderness; but she knew that if he were to awaken, he would look at her with a cold gaze conscious of his own correctness, and that before speaking to him of her love she would have to prove to him how guilty he was before

her. Without waking him, she returned to her room, and after a second dose of opium, just before dawn, fell into a heavy, partial sleep, during which she never ceased to be aware of herself.

In the morning, a terrible nightmare, which had been repeated in her dreams even before her liaison with Vronsky, came to her again and woke her up. A little old peasant with an unkempt beard was doing something, leaning over something iron, muttering meaningless French words, and she, as always in this nightmare (which is what made it so horrible), felt that this little peasant was paying no attention to her but was doing something horrible with the iron over her, something horrible over her. She woke up in a cold sweat.

When she got up, she remembered the previous day as if in a fog.

“There was a quarrel. Just what has already happened several times. I said I had a headache, and he didn’t come in. We’re leaving tomorrow, I must see him and prepare for our departure,” she told herself. Learning that he was in his study, she went to see him. Passing through the drawing room, she heard a carriage stop at the front door, and peering out the window, she saw a coach; a young woman in a lilac bonnet was leaning out, ordering the footman who was ringing the bell to do something. After negotiations in the front hall, someone went upstairs, and next to the drawing room Vronsky’s steps were heard. He was descending the staircase with quick steps. Anna again went to the window. Here he was going out without a hat onto the front steps and approaching the carriage. The young woman in the violet bonnet handed him a package. Vronsky, smiling, said something to her. The carriage drove off; he quickly ran back up the steps.

The fog that had obscured everything in her soul suddenly dispersed. Yesterday’s emotions shattered her sensitive heart with new pain. She could not understand now how she could have lowered herself to the point of spending an entire day with him in his house. She went into his study to announce her decision.

“That was Madame Sorokina and her daughter driving by and bringing me money and papers from *maman*. I couldn’t get them yesterday. How is your head, better?” he said calmly, refusing to see or understand the gloomy and solemn expression on her face.

She stared at him in silence, standing in the middle of the room. He glanced at her, frowned for an instant, and continued reading a letter. She turned and slowly left the room. He might still have brought her back, but she reached the door, he was still silent, and all that could be heard was the rustling of the pieces of paper being turned.

“Yes, by the way,” he said when she was already in the doorway, “tomorrow we are definitely going? Is it true?”

"You are, but I am not," she said, turning around to him.

"Anna, this is no way to live."

"You are, but I'm not," she repeated.

"This is becoming intolerable!"

"You . . . you will regret this," she said, and she went out.

Frightened by the desperate expression with which these words were said, he jumped up and was about to run after her, but coming to his senses he sat down again, firmly clenched his teeth, and frowned. This vulgar—as he found it—threat had irritated him. "I've tried everything," he thought, "only one thing remains: to pay no attention," and he began preparing to go to town and again to see his mother, from whom he needed to obtain a signature for her power of attorney.

She heard the sounds of his steps going through the study and dining room. At the drawing room, he stopped. But he did not turn to see her, he only gave instructions to let the stallion go to Voitov if he was out. Then she heard them bringing round the carriage, the door opening, and him going out again. And here he was going back into the vestibule, and someone ran upstairs. It was the valet running after his forgotten gloves. She went to the window and saw him take the gloves without looking, and touching the driver's back, say something to him. Then, without looking at the windows, he settled into his usual posture in the carriage, one leg crossed over the other, and as he was putting on his gloves, he vanished around the corner.

27

"He's gone! It's over!" Anna told herself, standing by the window; and in response to this thought, the impressions of darkness at the extinguished candle and her terrifying dream, merging into one, filled her heart with cold horror.

"No, it can't be!" she cried, and crossing the room, she rang firmly. She was so afraid now of being left alone that, not waiting for the servant to come, she went to meet him.

"Find out where the count went," she said.

The servant replied that the count had gone to the stable.

"He instructed me to report that if you wanted to go out, the carriage would be coming right back."

"Good. Wait there. I'll write a note immediately. Send Mikhail to the stable with a note. Quickly."

She sat down and wrote:

"I'm to blame. Come home. We must talk. For God's sake, come. I'm frightened."

She sealed it and handed it to the servant.

She was afraid of being alone now and so followed the servant out of the room and went to the nursery.

“What is this? It’s wrong, it’s not he! Where are his blue eyes and his sweet, shy smile?” was her first thought when she saw her chubby, rosy-cheeked daughter with the curly black hair instead of Seryozha, whom she, in the confusion of her thoughts, had expected to see in the nursery. The little girl, sitting at a table, kept banging a cork on it persistently and firmly and looking at her mother incomprehendingly with two currants—her black eyes. Replying to the English nurse that she was quite well and that tomorrow she was leaving for the country, Anna sat down with the little girl and began rolling the cork from the pitcher in front of her. But the loud, ringing laughter of the child and the movement she made with her forehead reminded her so vividly of Vronsky that, trying to hold back her sobs, she hurriedly got up and went out. “Can it really all be over? No, it can’t be,” she thought. “He’ll come back. But how will he explain to me that smile, that animation after he spoke with her? Even if he doesn’t explain, I’ll believe him anyway. If I don’t, I’m left with only one choice—and I don’t want that.”

She looked at the clock. Twelve minutes had passed. “Now he has received the note and is coming back. It won’t be long, another ten minutes. . . . But what if he doesn’t come? No, that can’t be. He mustn’t see me with tear-stained eyes. I’ll go wash my face. Yes, yes, did I comb my hair or not?” she asked herself. And she couldn’t remember. She felt her head with her hand. “Yes, I combed my hair, but when, I absolutely don’t remember.” She didn’t even believe her own hand and walked over to the pier glass to see whether or not she was in fact combed. She was combed and could not recall when she had done it. “Who is this?” she thought, looking in the mirror at the enflamed face with the strangely glittering eyes that looked at her in fright. “Yes, it’s me,” she suddenly realized, and surveying her entire self, all of a sudden she felt his kisses, and shuddering, she moved her shoulders. Then she raised her hand to her lips and kissed it.

“What is this? I’m going out of my mind.” She went to her bedroom, where Annushka was straightening the room.

“Annushka,” she said, stopping in front of her and looking at the maid, herself not knowing what to say to her.

“You wanted to go see Darya Alexandrovna,” said the maid, as if understanding.

“Darya Alexandrovna? Yes, I’ll go.”

“Fifteen minutes there, fifteen minutes back. He’s still on his way, he’ll be here soon.” She took out her watch and looked at it. “But how could he go,

leaving me in this state? How could he live without reconciling with me?" She went to the window and began looking out. Judging by the time, he could be back by now. But her calculation might be wrong, and once again she began trying to remember when he had left and to count the minutes.

Just as she was walking over to the clock, to check her watch, someone drove up. Looking out the window she saw his carriage. But no one was walking toward the stairs, and voices could be heard downstairs. It was the messenger, returning in the carriage. She went down to see him.

"I didn't catch the count. He'd left for the Nizhni Novgorod line."

"What are you saying? What is it?" she addressed the rosy-cheeked, cheerful Mikhail, who had handed her back her note.

"So he didn't receive it after all," she remembered.

"Take this note to the country, to Countess Vronskaya's place, do you know it? And bring me back an answer right away," she told the messenger.

"But what about me, what am I going to do?" she thought. "Yes, I'll go see Dolly, that's right, or I'll go out of my mind. Yes, I can also telegraph him." She sent a telegram:

"I absolutely must speak with you. Come immediately."

After sending the telegram, she went to dress. Already dressed and wearing her hat, she again looked into the eyes of the plump, calm Annushka. She saw frank compassion in those good little gray eyes.

"Annushka, dear, what am I to do?" said Anna, sobbing, and dropping helplessly into a chair.

"Don't upset yourself like that, Anna Arkadyevna! This sort of thing happens all the time. Go out and take your mind off it," said the maid.

"Yes, I'll go," said Anna, coming to her senses and getting up. "If there is a telegram and I'm not here, send it to Darya Alexandrovna's. No, I shall be back myself."

"Yes, I mustn't think, I must do something, go, most important—leave this house," she said, listening with horror to the terrible pounding going on in her heart, and she hurried out and got into the carriage.

"Where to?" asked Peter before sitting on the box.

"Znamenka, the Oblonskys."

28

The weather was clear. All morning there had been intermittent drizzle, and just now it had cleared up. The metal roofs, the sidewalk slabs, the gravel on the pavement, the wheels, and the leather, brass, and tin of the carriages—

everything sparkled brightly in the May sun. It was three o'clock and the liveliest time on the streets.

Sitting in the corner of the comfortable carriage, which barely rocked on its stiff springs at the quick gait of the grays, Anna, to the incessant rumble of wheels and quickly changing impressions in the fresh air, once again sorting through the events of the last few days, saw her situation completely differently from the way it had seemed at home. Now the thought of death did not seem so terrible and clear to her, and death itself did not seem impossible anymore. Now she reproached herself for the humiliation to which she had descended. "I begged him to forgive me. I've surrendered to him. I've admitted that I'm to blame. Why? Can't I live without him?" Without answering the question of how she would live without him she began reading the signs. "Office and warehouse. Dentist. Yes, I'll tell Dolly everything. She doesn't like Vronsky. It will be shameful and painful, but I'll tell her everything. She loves me, and I'll follow her advice. I won't surrender to him; I won't let him patronize me. Filippov, buns. They say they send the dough to Petersburg. Moscow water is so good. Oh, the springs of Mytishchi and the pancakes." She recalled how long, long ago, when she was just seventeen years old, she had gone with her aunt to the Trinity Monastery.⁴⁵ "On horses even. Was that really me, with red hands? How much of what at the time seemed so wonderful and beyond my reach has become insignificant, and what there was then is now forever out of reach. Would I have believed it then that I might come to such humiliation? How proud and satisfied he'll be when he receives my note! But I'll show him. . . . How awful this paint smells. Why are they always painting and building? Fashions and millinery," she read. A man bowed to her. It was Annushka's husband. "Our parasites," she recalled Vronsky saying. "Our? Why our? It's terrible one can't tear up the past by the roots. We can't tear it up, but we can hide our memory of it. And I will hide it." And here she recalled her past with Alexei Alexandrovich and how she had blotted him out of her memory. "Dolly will think that I'm leaving my second husband so I must be in the wrong. As if I cared about being right! I can't!" she said, and she felt like crying. But immediately she began thinking about what those two young girls might be smiling about. "Love, I'd guess? They don't know how dreary, how base it is. . . . The boulevard and the children. Three little boys are running, playing at horses. Seryozha! I'm losing everything and not getting him back. Yes, I will lose everything if he doesn't return. Perhaps he missed the train and has already returned. Again you're asking for humiliation!" she told herself. "No, I'll go in to see Dolly and tell her frankly that I am unhappy, I deserve it, I'm to blame, but nonetheless I am unhappy, help me. These horses, this carriage—how loathsome I am to myself in this carriage—everything is his; but I won't see them anymore."

Thinking over the words in which she would tell Dolly everything, and purposely trying to poison her own heart, Anna stepped onto the stairs.

"Is anyone here?" she asked in the front hall.

"Katerina Alexandrovna Levina," answered the footman.

"Kitty! The very Kitty Vronsky was in love with," thought Anna, "the very one whom he recalled with love. He regrets not marrying her. But me he thinks of with hatred and regrets he ever got involved with me."

The sisters, at the time Anna arrived, were conferring on breast-feeding. Dolly came out alone to greet the visitor who was interrupting their conversation at that moment.

"Ah, so you haven't left yet? I wanted to see you myself," she said. "I've just received a letter from Stiva."

"We received a wire as well," replied Anna, looking around for Kitty.

"He writes that he cannot figure out exactly what Alexei Alexandrovich wants but that he won't leave without an answer."

"I thought you had someone with you. May I read the letter?"

"Yes, Kitty," said Dolly, flustered. "She stayed in the nursery. She was very ill."

"I heard. May I read the letter?"

"I'll bring it right away. But he is not refusing; on the contrary, Stiva has hopes," said Dolly, stopping in the doorway.

"I neither hope nor wish," said Anna.

"What is this? Does it mean Kitty considers it humiliating to meet me?" thought Anna when she was left alone. "Perhaps she's right. But it's not for her, someone who was in love with Vronsky, it's not for her to point this out to me, even if it's true. I know that in my situation no decent woman can receive me. I know that from the very first minute I sacrificed everything for him! And here is my reward! Oh, how I hate him! Why did I come here? It's even worse, even harder for me." From the next room she heard the voices of the sisters talking something over. "What am I going to tell Dolly now? Console Kitty with the fact that I am unhappy and yield to her patronizing? No, and Dolly won't understand anything anyway. I have nothing to say to her. Only it would be interesting to see Kitty and show her how I despise everyone and everything, how I don't care anymore."

Dolly came in with the letter. Anna read it and handed it back in silence.

"I knew all that," she said, "and it does not interest me one bit."

"But why? I, on the contrary, have hope," said Dolly, looking with curiosity at Anna. She had never seen her in such a strange and irritable state. "When are you leaving?" she asked.

Anna narrowed her eyes, looked straight ahead, and did not answer her.

"Why is Kitty hiding from me?" she said, looking at the door and turning red.

“Oh, what nonsense! She’s nursing, and it’s not going well, I was advising her. She’s very pleased you’re here. She’ll be right out,” said Dolly awkwardly, unable to tell a lie. “And here she is.”

When she learned that Anna had come, Kitty had not wanted to come out, but Dolly had persuaded her. Summoning her courage, Kitty came out, and blushing, walked up to her and extended her hand.

“I’m very pleased to see you,” she said in a trembling voice.

Kitty was confused by the struggle taking place inside her, between hostility toward this bad woman and a desire to be indulgent; but as soon as she saw Anna’s beautiful, sympathetic face, all her hostility vanished instantly.

“I wouldn’t have been surprised if you hadn’t wanted to see me. I’m used to everything. You were ill? Yes, you have changed,” said Anna.

Kitty felt Anna looking at her hostilely. She explained this hostility by the awkward position in which Anna, who previously had taken her under her wing, now felt herself, and she felt sorry for her.

They talked about her illness, her baby, and Stiva, but it was obvious that nothing interested Anna.

“I stopped by to say good-bye,” she said, standing.

“When are you leaving?”

Again, though, Anna, not answering, turned to Kitty.

“Yes, I’m very glad I saw you,” she said with a smile. “I’d heard so much about you from all parties, even from your husband. He came to see me, and I liked him very much,” she added, obviously with malicious intent. “Where is he?”

“He’s gone to the country,” said Kitty, blushing.

“Give him my regards. Be sure to give him my regards.”

“I’ll be sure to!” Kitty echoed naïvely, looking sympathetically into her eyes.

“So good-bye, Dolly!” And kissing Dolly and shaking Kitty’s hand, Anna hurried out.

“She’s still the same and so attractive. Very pretty!” said Kitty when she was left alone with her sister. “But there is something pathetic about her! Terribly pathetic!”

“No, today there is something unusual about her,” said Dolly. “When I was seeing her out in the front hall, I thought she was about to cry.”

29

Anna got into the carriage in an even worse state than when she had set out from home. Added to her past agonies now was the sense of insult and rejection she had felt so clearly on meeting Kitty.

“Where to? Home?” asked Peter.

“Yes, home,” she said, now not even thinking about where she was going.

“How they looked at me, as if I were something terrible, incomprehensible, and curious. What could he be telling him with such heat?” she thought, gazing at two passersby. “Can one really tell someone else what one is feeling? I wanted to tell Dolly, and it’s good that I didn’t. How pleased she would have been at my misfortune! She would have hidden it; but her chief emotion would have been joy that I have been punished for the pleasures she envied me. Kitty, she would have been even more pleased. How well I see right through her! She knows that I was more than usually amiable to her husband. She’s jealous of me, she hates me. And despises me as well. In her eyes, I’m an immoral woman. If I were an immoral woman, I could have made her husband fall in love with me . . . if I had wanted to. And I did want to. There’s someone who’s pleased with himself,” she thought about the fat, ruddy-cheeked gentleman driving past her, who had taken her for an acquaintance and tipped the glossy hat over his glossy bald head and then realized his mistake. “He thought he knew me. Well, he knows me just as little as anyone on earth knows me. I don’t know myself. I know my own appetites, as the French say. They want some of that dirty ice cream. That they know for certain,” she thought, looking at two boys who had stopped by the ice cream vendor, who had removed his cap from his head and was wiping his sweaty face with the end of a towel. “We all want something sweet and tasty. If there aren’t any candies, then dirty ice cream. Kitty, too: if not Vronsky, then Levin. And she envies me. And hates me. And we all hate each other. I Kitty, and Kitty me. That’s the truth. *Tyutkin, coiffeur. Je me fais coiffer par Tyutkin. . .*”⁴⁶ “I’ll tell him that when he comes,” she thought and she smiled. But at that same moment she remembered that she had no one now to tell anything amusing. “And there isn’t anything amusing, there isn’t anything cheerful. Everything is vile. The bells are ringing for vespers, and how carefully that merchant is crossing himself!—just as if he were afraid of dropping something. What are these churches for, this bell ringing, and this hypocrisy? Only to hide the fact that we all hate one another, like these cabbies cursing so viciously. Yashvin says he wants to strip me of my shirt, and I him of his. Now that’s the truth!”

At these thoughts, which distracted her so much that she ceased even to think about her own situation, she found herself stopping at the front steps of her own house. Only when she saw the butler coming out to meet her did she remember that she had sent a note and telegram.

“Is there a reply?” she asked.

“I’ll look right now,” answered the doorman, and glancing at the desk, he found and handed her the thin rectangular envelope of a telegram. “I cannot come before ten o’clock. Vronsky,” she read.

“Hasn’t the messenger returned?”

“Absolutely not,” answered the doorman.

“But if that is so, then I know what I must do,” she said, and feeling an undefined fury and a need for revenge rising inside her, she ran upstairs. “I’ll go see him myself. Before leaving for good, I’ll tell him everything. I have never hated anyone the way I hate that man!” she thought. When she saw his hat on the hook, she shuddered from revulsion. She had not figured out that his telegram was an answer to her telegram or that he had not yet received her note. She imagined him now calmly conversing with his mother and Madame Sorokina and rejoicing at her sufferings. “Yes, I must go quickly,” she told herself, still not knowing where to go. She felt she had to get away from the emotions she was experiencing in this terrible house as quickly as possible. The servants, the walls, the things in this house—everything evoked revulsion and spite and crushed her with its weight.

“Yes, I must go to the train station, and if he’s not there, then go there and unmask him.” Anna looked in the papers for the train schedule. In the evening there was one leaving at two minutes past eight. “Yes, I’ll make it in time.” She ordered the other horses harnessed and got busy packing her traveling case with the things she would need for a few days. She knew she would not be coming back here anymore. She had vaguely decided for herself, among the plans that had come to mind, that after what happened there at the station or at the countess’s estate, she would take the Nizhni Novgorod line to the first town and stop there.

Dinner was on the table; she walked over, sniffed the bread and cheese, convincing herself that the smell of anything edible was disgusting to her, ordered the carriage brought around, and went out. The house already cast a shadow across the entire street, and it was a clear evening still warm in the sun. Anushka, who was accompanying her with her things, and Peter, who placed her things in the carriage, and the driver, who was obviously displeased—everyone was repulsive to her and irritated her with their words and movements.

“I don’t need you, Peter.”

“But what about your ticket?”

“Well, as you like, I don’t care,” she said with annoyance.

Peter jumped up on the box and, setting his arms akimbo, ordered the driver to take them to the station.

"Here it is again! I understand everything again," Anna told herself as soon as the carriage began to move and, rocking, rumbled over the small cobblestones, and again impressions began yielding one to the other.

"Yes, what was the last thing I was thinking about so well?" She tried to remember. "Tyutkin, *coiffeur*? No, not that. Yes, about what Yashvin says: the struggle for existence and hatred is the one thing that ties people together. No, there's no point in going," she mentally addressed a party in a carriage with a team of four who obviously were on their way out of town to have a good time. "And the dog you are taking with you won't help you. You can't get away from yourselves." Casting a glance in the direction in which Peter was turned, she caught sight of a factory worker dead drunk, with a bobbing head, whom a policeman was leading somewhere. "That's a faster way," she thought. "Count Vronsky and I did not find that satisfaction either, though we had expected a great deal from it." For the first time today, Anna turned that bright light by which she was seeing everything on her relations with him, about which she had been trying to avoid thinking. "What was he looking for in me? Not so much love as the satisfaction of vanity." She recalled his words, the expression on his face, which resembled a submissive setter dog, during the first period of their liaison. And everything now confirmed this. "Yes, he had in him the triumph of the success of vanity. Naturally, there was love as well, but the larger part was the pride of success. He bragged about me. Now that's passed. There's nothing to be proud of; he's ashamed, not proud. He took all he could from me, and now he doesn't need me. He's weighed down by me and is trying not to be dishonorable with regard to me. He let the truth slip yesterday—he wants a divorce and marriage, in order to burn his boats. He loves me—but how? *The zest is gone*.⁴⁷ That fellow wants to amaze everyone and is very pleased with himself," she thought, looking at a rosy-cheeked shop assistant on a riding-school horse. "Yes, he no longer has the same taste for me. If I leave him, in his heart of hearts he'll be pleased."

This was not speculation. She clearly saw this in that penetrating light which had revealed to her the meaning of life and human relations.

"My love keeps getting more passionate and selfish, but his keeps dying, and this is why we are drifting apart," she continued to think. "There's no help for it. For me everything is in him alone, and I need him to give himself to me entirely more and more. While he wants to get away from me more and more. It is as if we had been heading toward one another until we connected, and since then we have been moving in opposite directions irresistibly, and this cannot change. He tells me I am senselessly jealous, and I myself have told myself

that I am senselessly jealous; but it's not true. I'm not jealous, but I am dissatisfied. But . . ." She parted her lips and changed places in the carriage due to the agitation aroused in her by the thought that had suddenly occurred to her. "If I could only be something other than his mistress passionately loving his caresses alone; but I can't and don't want to be anything else. And by this desire I arouse revulsion in him, and he anger in me, and it can't be otherwise. Don't I know that he would never deceive me, that he has no designs on Princess Sorokina, that he is not in love with Kitty, that he would not betray me? I know all this, but it does not make things any easier for me. If without loving me, he is good and tender toward me out of *duty*, but what I want is missing—yes, this is a thousand times worse than anger! That's hell! And that's just the way it is. He has not loved me for a long time. And where love ends, hatred begins. I don't know these streets at all. Some sort of hills, and all the houses, and more houses. . . . And in the houses all the people, and more people. . . . So many of them, there's no end, and they all hate one another. Well, let me think what I want in order to be happy. Well? Suppose I get a divorce, Alexei Alexandrovich gives me Seryozha, and I marry Vronsky." Recalling Alexei Alexandrovich, she pictured him immediately, and unusually vividly, as if he were alive in front of her, with his meek, lifeless, lackluster eyes, the blue veins on his white hands, his intonations and the cracking of his knuckles, and recalling the emotion that there had been between them and that was also called love, she shuddered with revulsion. "Well, say I do get the divorce and become Vronsky's wife. Would Kitty cease to look at me as she looked today? No. Would Seryozha stop asking me or thinking about my two husbands? And between Vronsky and me, what new emotion can I invent? Is the only thing possible not happiness but agony? No and no!" she answered herself now without the slightest hesitation. "This is impossible! Life is pulling us apart, and I constitute his misfortune, and he mine, and there's no changing him or me. Every attempt has been made; but the screw has been stripped. Yes, a beggar woman and her baby. She thinks I feel sorry for her. Aren't we all cast into the world only to hate one another and so torment ourselves and others? Schoolboys walking and laughing. Seryozha?" she remembered. "I too thought that I loved him, and I was moved by my own tenderness. But I have lived without him. I exchanged his for another love and did not complain of this exchange so long as I was satisfied with that love." She remembered with revulsion what she had called love. The clarity with which she now saw her own life and the life of all people gladdened her. "It's like that with me, and Peter, and Fyodor the driver, and this merchant, and all those people who are living there along the Volga where these advertisements invite people to go, and everywhere, and always," she thought when they were already driv-

ing up to the low structure of the Nizhni Novgorod station and the porters were running toward her.

“A ticket to Obiralovka?” said Peter.

She had entirely forgotten where she was going and why, and only with great effort was she able to understand the question.

“Yes,” she told him, handing him her purse with the money, and picking up her small red bag, she stepped out of the carriage.

Heading through the crowd to the first-class waiting room, little by little she remembered all the details of her position and the choices between which she had been vacillating. And again, first hope, then despair over old sore spots began reopening the wounds of her tormented, terribly palpitating heart. Sitting on a star-shaped sofa waiting for the train, looking with revulsion at the people going in and out (they were all repulsive to her), she thought about how she would arrive at the station and write him a note and what she would write him, about how now he was complaining to his mother (without understanding her sufferings) of his own situation and how she would enter the room and what she would tell him. Then she thought about how her life might still be happy and how agonizingly she loved and hated him, and how terribly her heart was beating.

31

The bell rang, several young men walked by, hideous, rude, and rushing, and at the same time attentive to the impression they were making; Peter, too, walked through the hall in his livery and gaiters with a dull, brutish face and came over to accompany her to the train car. The noisy men fell quiet when she walked past them down the platform, and one of them whispered something about her to another, naturally something vile. She mounted the high step and took a seat alone in a compartment on a springy, stained, once-white seat. Her bag, shuddering on the springs, fell on its side. Peter, with an idiotic smile, tipped his lace-trimmed hat at the window in a sign of farewell, and the insolent conductor slammed the door and latch shut. A lady, hideous, with a bustle (Anna mentally undressed this woman and was horrified at her ugliness), and a girl laughing unnaturally, ran by below.

“Katerina Andreyevna, she has everything, *ma tante!*”⁴⁸ shouted the girl.

“A little girl—and even she deformed and affected,” thought Anna. To avoid seeing anyone, she quickly rose and sat by the opposite window in the empty train car. A hideous, dirty peasant whose snarled hair poked out from his cap walked past this window, bending over toward the train’s wheels. “There’s some-

thing familiar about that hideous peasant," thought Anna. When she recalled her dream, she moved toward the opposite door, shaking from terror. The conductor was opening the door, letting in a husband and wife.

"Would you like to get out?"

Anna did not reply. The conductor and the couple who entered did not notice under her veil the horror on her face. She returned to her corner and sat down. The couple sat down on the opposite side, attentively but covertly surveying her dress. Both husband and wife seemed repulsive to Anna. The husband asked whether she would allow him to smoke, evidently not in order to smoke but to strike up a conversation with her. Having received her consent, he began speaking with his wife in French about something he needed to talk about even less than he did to smoke.

They uttered idiocies, affectedly, merely so that she would hear. Anna saw clearly how sick and tired they were of and hated each other. Indeed it was impossible not to hate such pathetic freaks.

She heard the second bell and after that the movement of baggage, noise, shouts, and laughter. It was so clear to Anna that no one had anything to rejoice at, that this laughter irritated her to the point of pain, and she felt like stopping her ears so as not to hear it. Finally, the third bell rang, the whistle blew, and the locomotive shrieked; a chain jerked and the husband crossed himself. "It would be interesting to ask him what meaning he attaches to that," thought Anna, glancing at him angrily. She looked past the lady, out the window, at the people seeing the train off and standing on the platform, who looked as if they were rolling backward. Shaking regularly at the joins of the rails, the train car in which Anna was sitting rolled past the platform, a stone wall and a signal box, past other train cars; the well-oiled and smoothly rolling wheels made a light ringing sound over the rails, the window lit up with the bright evening sun, and a breeze played with the curtain. Anna forgot about her fellow passengers in the car, and breathing in the fresh air in the light rocking motion, she again began to think.

"Yes, where had I left off? At the thought that I cannot imagine a situation in which life would not be agony, that we are all created to suffer, and that we all know this and all try to come up with means for deceiving ourselves. But when one sees the truth, what is one to do?"

"That is why man was given reason, to rid himself of what disturbs him," the lady was saying in French, evidently pleased with her phrase and lisp.

These words seemed like an answer to Anna's thought.

"Rid himself of what disturbs him," Anna echoed. And looking at the red-cheeked husband and thin wife, she realized that the sickly wife considered herself a misunderstood woman and that her husband was deceiving her and

supporting her in this opinion of herself. By shifting her light on them, Anna seemed to see their history and all the crannies of their souls. But there was nothing interesting there, and she pursued her own thoughts.

“Yes, I am very troubled, and that’s why we were given reason, escape; therefore, I must rid myself of it. Why shouldn’t I extinguish the candle when there is nothing more to look at, when it’s vile to look at all this? But how? Why did this conductor rush down the running board? Why are they shouting, those young men in that car? Why are they talking, why are they laughing? It’s all untrue, all hypocrisy, all deceit, all evil! . . .”

When the train pulled into the station, Anna got out into the crowd of other passengers, and shunning them like lepers, she stopped on the platform, trying to remember why she had come here and what she had intended to do. Everything that had seemed possible to her before now was so difficult to imagine, especially in the noisy crowd of all these hideous people who would not leave her in peace. Now porters ran up to her, proffering their services; now young men, tapping their heels on the boards of the platform and talking loudly, were looking her over; now people coming toward her moved over to the wrong side. Recalling that she wanted to continue on if there was no reply, she stopped one of the porters and asked whether there wasn’t a driver here with a note for Count Vronsky.

“Count Vronsky? They’ve just been here from him. Meeting Princess Sorokina and her daughter. Now what does the coachman look like?”

As she was speaking with the porter, Mikhail the driver, ruddy and cheerful, wearing a jaunty, snug-fitting navy blue coat and chain, obviously proud of having carried out his instruction so well, walked up to her and handed her a note. She broke the seal, and her heart sank even before she had read it through.

“I am very sorry the note didn’t find me. I’ll be there at ten o’clock,” wrote Vronsky in a casual hand.

“So! As I expected!” she told herself with an evil smile.

“Fine, now go home,” she said quietly, addressing Mikhail. She spoke quietly because the rapidity of her heartbeat made it hard for her to breathe. “No, I won’t let you torture me,” she thought, addressing her threat not to him, not to herself, but to the one who had caused her such agony, and she walked down the platform past the station.

Two servant girls walking up and down the platform craned their heads to look at her, loudly discussing her gown. “It is real,” they said about the lace she was wearing. The young men would not leave her in peace. Once again, looking into her face and shouting something in an unnatural voice, laughing, they

walked past. The stationmaster, walking by, asked whether she was taking the train. A boy, a kvass seller, couldn't take his eyes off her. "My God, where am I to go?" she thought, walking farther and farther down the platform. She stopped at the end. Some ladies and children meeting a gentleman in spectacles and laughing and talking loudly fell silent, looking her over, when she drew even with them. She picked up her pace and moved away from them toward the edge of the platform. A freight train was pulling in. The platform shook, and it felt as if she were in the train once again.

Suddenly, recalling the man who was crushed the day she first met Vronsky, she realized what she had to do. Descending the stairs leading from the water pump to the rails with a quick light step, she stopped alongside the train passing close by her. She looked at the bottom of the train cars, at the bolts and chains and at the tall iron wheels of the slowly rolling first car and tried to estimate by eye the midpoint between the front and back wheels and the moment when that midpoint would be opposite her.

"Right there!" she told herself, looking into the shadow of the train car, at the sand mixed with coal sprinkled over the ties. "Right there, in the very middle, and I shall punish him and rid myself of everyone and myself."

She wanted to fall under the middle of the first car that was drawing even with her. But the red bag she began removing from her arm detained her and it was already too late: the middle had passed her by. She had to wait for the next car. A feeling like the one she had experienced when about to take the first plunge in bathing gripped her, and she crossed herself. The familiar gesture of making the sign of the cross evoked in her soul a whole series of memories from her childhood and girlhood, and suddenly the darkness covering everything for her was torn apart, and life appeared to her for an instant with all its bright past joys. But she did not take her eyes off the wheels of the approaching second car. And at the exact moment when the middle between the wheels came even with her she tossed aside her red bag and, tucking her head into her shoulders, fell on her hands under the car and, with a light movement, as though she would rise immediately, dropped on her knees. And at that instant she was horrified at what she had done. "Where am I? What am I doing? What for?" She wanted to get up and throw herself back; but something huge and implacable struck her in the head and dragged her down on her back. "Lord, forgive me for everything!" she said, feeling the impossibility of struggle. A little peasant, muttering something, was working on the iron. And the candle by which she had read that book full of alarm, deceit, grief, and evil flared up with a light brighter than ever before, lighted up for her everything covered in darkness, flickered, faded, and was snuffed out forever.

VIII

1

Nearly two months had passed. It was already halfway through a hot summer, and only now was Sergei Ivanovich getting ready to leave Moscow.

During this time events had been taking place in Sergei Ivanovich's life. His book, the fruit of six years' labor, *Sketch of a Survey of the Foundations and Forms of Statehood in Europe and in Russia*, had been completed a year before. Several sections of this book and the introduction had been published in periodicals, and Sergei Ivanovich had read other portions to men of his circle, so the ideas of this composition could not be a complete novelty for the public; all the same, Sergei Ivanovich anticipated that his book's appearance would make a serious impression on society and cause, if not a revolution in science, at any rate a powerful stir in the intellectual world.

After painstaking polishing, this book had been published last year and sent out to booksellers.

Asking no one about it, responding reluctantly and with feigned indifference to his friends' questions about how the book was doing, without even asking the booksellers how it was selling, Sergei Ivanovich followed keenly, with strained attention, the first impression his book would make in society and literature.

However, a week went by, then a second and a third, and in society no impression of any kind could be detected. His friends, specialists and scholars, occasionally—obviously to be polite—would strike up a conversation about it. The rest of his acquaintances, having no interest in a book of scholarly content, did not discuss it with him at all. And in society, which now in particular was otherwise occupied, there was utter indifference. In literature as well there was not a word about the book for a month.

Sergei Ivanovich had calculated in detail the time needed to write a review, but a month went by, and another, and it was the same silence.

Only in *The Northern Beetle*, in a humorous column about the singer Drapanti, who had lost his voice, were a few contemptuous words dropped in passing about Koznyshev's book, which showed that this book had long since been condemned by everyone and consigned to universal derision.¹

Finally, after two months, a critical article appeared in a serious journal. Sergei Ivanovich knew the article's author, too. He had met him once at Golbtsov's.

The article's author was a very young and sickly columnist, quite glib as a writer, but very poorly educated and shy in personal relations.

In spite of his utter contempt for the author, Sergei Ivanovich set to reading the article with perfect respect. The article was terrible.

Obviously the columnist had purposely understood the entire book in a way it could not be understood. But he chose his excerpts so adroitly that, for those who had not read the book (and obviously almost no one had read it), it was perfectly clear that the entire book was nothing but a collection of lofty words, and improperly used to boot (which he indicated with question marks), and that the book's author was an utterly ignorant man. All this was so witty that Sergei Ivanovich would not have disowned such wit himself. But that was just what was so terrible.

In spite of the perfect conscientiousness with which Sergei Ivanovich verified the fairness of the reviewer's arguments, not for a minute did he pause on the shortcomings and mistakes that had been ridiculed—it was too obvious that it had all been selected intentionally—but immediately he could not help but recall down to the smallest detail his meeting and conversation with the article's author.

“Could I have offended him in some way?” Sergei Ivanovich asked himself.

Recalling how during their meeting he had corrected this young man in the use of a word that had demonstrated his ignorance, Sergei Ivanovich found an explanation for the article's intent.

This article was followed by dead silence about the book, both in the press and in discussion, and Sergei Ivanovich saw that his six years of writing, done with such love and labor, had passed without a trace.

Sergei Ivanovich's position was even harder because, having completed his book, he had no more of the literary work that had formerly occupied the greater part of his time.

Sergei Ivanovich was clever, educated, healthy, and energetic, and he did not know how to put all his energy to use. Conversations in drawing rooms, at congresses and meetings, in committees, everywhere one could talk, took up some of his time; but he, a longtime city dweller, would not allow himself to get taken up entirely in conversation, as his inexperienced brother did when he was in Moscow; he still had a great deal of leisure and mental energy left over.

To his good fortune, at this most difficult time for him because of his book's failure, the issues of heterodoxy, their American friends, the Samara famine, ex-

hibitions, and spiritualism came to be replaced by the Slavonic question, which had hitherto merely been smoldering in society, and Sergei Ivanovich, who even before had been a promoter of this issue, gave himself up to it entirely.²

Among the set of men to which Sergei Ivanovich belonged, no one then was talking or writing about anything but the Slavonic question and the Serbian war. Everything that the idle crowd ordinarily does to kill time was now being done for the benefit of the Slavs. Balls, concerts, dinners, speeches, women's gowns, beer, taverns—everything testified to sympathy for the Slavs.

With much of what was being said and written on this occasion, Sergei Ivanovich did not agree in the details. He saw that the Slavonic question was becoming one of those fashionable enthusiasms which always, one after another, serve society as an object and occupation; he saw too that there were many people involved for avaricious, self-interested purposes. He admitted that the newspapers were printing much that was superfluous and exaggerated with a single goal—to attract attention and outshout everyone else. He saw that despite this general animation in society, it was all the failures and the offended—commanders-in-chief without armies, ministers without ministries, journalists without newspapers, and party chiefs without party members—who leapt to the forefront and shouted loudest of all. Here he saw much that was frivolous and silly; but he also saw and admitted the undeniable, steadily mounting enthusiasm that had united all classes of society as one, something with which he could not help but sympathize. The slaughter of their fellow Orthodox and brother Slavs evoked sympathy for those suffering and indignation at the oppressors, and the heroism of the Serbs and Montenegrins battling for their great cause gave birth in the entire nation to a desire to help their brothers not in word but in deed.

There was, moreover, another joyous phenomenon for Sergei Ivanovich: the development of public opinion. Society had definitely expressed its will. The national soul had found expression, as Sergei Ivanovich said, and the more he was involved in this cause, the more obvious it became to him that this was a cause destined to attain tremendous proportions and embody an era.

He devoted his entire self to serving this great cause and forgot to think about his book.

He was busy all the time now, so that he could not answer all the letters and requests addressed to him.

After working all spring and part of the summer, only in the month of July did he prepare to visit his brother in the country.

He went to relax for two weeks and, in the holiest of holies of the people, the depths of the countryside, to take pleasure in the sight of that surge of popular

spirit of which he and all the residents of the capital and the cities were thoroughly convinced. Katavasov, who had long since been planning to keep the promise he had given Levin to visit, went with him.

2

Scarcely had Sergei Ivanovich and Katavasov pulled into the Kursk Railway station, which was especially lively now with people, and, stepping out of their car, looked around for the footman following with their things, when volunteers rode up in four cabs.³ Ladies with bouquets greeted them and entered the station with the crowd surging behind them.

One of the ladies greeting the volunteers addressed Sergei Ivanovich as she was leaving the hall.

“Have you come to see them off as well?” she asked in French.

“No, I’m traveling myself, Princess. To my brother’s to relax. Do you always see them off?” said Sergei Ivanovich with a barely perceptible smile.

“That would be impossible!” replied the princess. “Is it true that we have already sent off eight hundred? Malvinsky didn’t believe me.”

“More than eight hundred. If you count those who were sent not directly from Moscow, more than a thousand,” said Sergei Ivanovich.

“There you have it. What did I say!” the lady chimed in joyously. “So it is true that now approximately a million has been donated?”

“More, Princess.”

“But how about the latest telegram? Again they beat the Turks.”

“Yes, I read it,” replied Sergei Ivanovich. They were talking about the latest telegram, which confirmed that for three days in a row the Turks had been beaten at all points and had fled and that the final battle was expected the next day.

“Ah yes, you know, one splendid young man asked to go. I don’t know why they made it difficult for him. I wanted to ask you, I know him, if you would, write a note. He was sent by Countess Lydia Ivanovna.”

After inquiring into the details the princess knew about the young man who had made the request, Sergei Ivanovich, walking through to first class, wrote a note to the person on whom this depended, and handed it to the princess.

“You know, Count Vronsky, the famous one . . . is taking this train,” said the princess with a triumphant and significant smile when he again found her and handed her the note.

“I heard he was going but I didn’t know when. This train?”

“I saw him. He’s here; only his mother is seeing him off. It’s the best thing he could do.”

“Oh yes, of course.”

While they were talking, the crowd surged past them to the dining room. They, too, began to move and heard the loud voice of one gentleman who, glass in hand, was giving a speech to the volunteers. “Serve your faith, mankind, and our brothers,” said the gentleman, his voice continuing to rise. “Mother Moscow blesses you in this great cause. *Zhivio!*” he concluded loudly and tearily.⁴

Everyone shouted *Zhivio!* and then a new crowd surged into the hall and nearly knocked the princess off her feet.

“Ah! Princess, wasn’t that fine!” said Stepan Arkadyevich, who had suddenly appeared in the middle of the crowd, beaming with a delighted smile. “Spoken warmly and gloriously, wasn’t it? Bravo! And Sergei Ivanovich! You should have said something as well—a few words, you know, your blessing. You do that so well,” he added with a tender, respectful, and cautious smile, moving Sergei Ivanovich along slightly by the arm.

“No, I’m leaving now.”

“Where?”

“For the country, to see my brother,” replied Sergei Ivanovich.

“Then you’ll see my wife. I wrote to her, but you will see her first. Please, tell her you’ve seen me and that I’m *all right*.⁵ She’ll understand. But actually, tell her, if you would, that I’ve been appointed a member of the commission of the joint . . . Well, she’ll understand! You know, *les petites misères de la vie humaine*,” as if apologizing, he addressed the princess.⁶ “But Myahkaya—*not Liza but Bibish*—is sending a thousand rifles and twelve nurses. Did I tell you?”

“Yes, I heard,” replied Koznyshev reluctantly.

“But it’s too bad you’re leaving,” said Stepan Arkadyevich. “Tomorrow we’re giving a dinner for two of those leaving—Dimer-Bartnyansky from Petersburg and our Veslovsky, Grisha. Both are going. Veslovsky married recently. There’s a fine fellow! Isn’t that so, Princess?” he addressed the lady.

The princess looked at Koznyshev without answering, but the fact that Sergei Ivanovich and the princess seemed to wish to get away from him did not bother Stepan Arkadyevich in the slightest. Smiling, he looked at the feather in the princess’s hat, then to either side, as if trying to remember something. When he saw a lady passing by with a collection cup, he called her over and added a five-ruble note.

“I cannot look at those collection cups unmoved so long as I have any money,” he said. “What is our latest dispatch? Fine fellows the Montenegrins!”

“You don’t say!” he exclaimed when the princess told him that Vronsky was traveling on this train. For a moment Stepan Arkadyevich’s face expressed grief, but when, a minute later, with a slight spring in his step and smoothing his whiskers, he walked into the room where Vronsky was, he had already completely

forgotten his despairing sobs over his sister's corpse and saw in Vronsky only a hero and an old friend.

"For all his faults, one has to give him his due," the princess said to Sergei Ivanovich as soon as Oblonsky had walked away from them. "There you have a thoroughly Russian, Slavonic nature! Only I fear that Vronsky will find it unpleasant to see him. No matter what you say, that man's fate touches me. Speak with him on your journey," said the princess.

"Yes, perhaps, if it comes up."

"I never liked him. But this makes up for a lot. Not only is he himself going, but he's taking a squadron at his own expense."

"Yes, I heard."

The bell rang. Everyone crowded toward the doors.

"There he is!" said the princess, indicating Vronsky, who was wearing a long coat and a black, broad-brimmed hat, walking arm in arm with his mother. Oblonsky was walking alongside him, saying something to him animatedly.

Vronsky, frowning, was looking straight ahead, as if not listening to what Stepan Arkadyevich was saying.

Probably because Oblonsky pointed them out, he looked around at where the princess and Sergei Ivanovich were standing and silently tipped his hat. His face, which had aged and expressed suffering, seemed frozen.

Walking onto the platform, Vronsky let his mother pass, silently, and vanished into his compartment.

On the platform one heard, "God save the Tsar!" then shouts of "Hurrah!" and "*Zhivio!*" One of the volunteers, a tall, very young man with a sunken chest, made a special show of bowing and waving his felt hat and bouquet over his head. Peering out behind him, also bowing, were two officers and an elderly man with a great beard wearing a soiled cap.

3

After saying good-bye to the princess, Sergei Ivanovich and Katavasov, who had joined him, entered the jam-packed car, and the train began to move.

At the Tsaritsyno station the train was greeted by a harmonious choir of young men, who sang "*Slavsya.*"⁷ Again the volunteers bowed and peered out, but Sergei Ivanovich paid no attention to them; he had had so many dealings with volunteers that he already knew their general type, and took no interest. But Katavasov, whose scholarly occupations had left no chance for observing the volunteers, took a great interest in them and asked Sergei Ivanovich questions about them.

Sergei Ivanovich advised him to take a walk to second class and speak with them himself. At the next station, Katavasov took this advice.

At the first stop he walked over to second class and introduced himself to the volunteers. They were sitting in a corner of the car, talking loudly and obviously aware that the attention of the passengers and the newly entered Katavasov was directed toward them. Speaking more loudly than them all was the tall young man with the sunken chest. Obviously, he was drunk and was telling a story about something that had happened at their school. Facing him sat a no longer young officer wearing the uniform jersey of the Austrian Guards. Smiling, he was listening to the narrator and trying to stop him. A third man wearing an artillery uniform was sitting alongside them on his suitcase. A fourth was sleeping.

Entering into conversation with the youth, Katavasov learned that this was a wealthy Moscow merchant who had squandered a great fortune before he was twenty-two years old. Katavasov did not like him because he was coddled, spoiled, and in weak health; he evidently was certain, especially now that he had been drinking, that he was committing a heroic act and was boasting in the most unpleasant manner.

The next, the retired officer, also made an unpleasant impression on Katavasov. Evidently this was a man who had tried everything. He had worked with the railroad, been an estate manager, and had himself started factories, and he spoke about everything with no call for doing so and misusing scholarly words.

On the other hand, Katavasov liked the third, the artilleryman, very much. He was a modest, quiet man who obviously bowed before the knowledge of the retired Guardsman and the merchant's heroic self-sacrifice and who said nothing about himself. When Katavasov asked him what had prompted him to go to Serbia, he answered modestly, "Well, everyone's going. I have to help the Serbs, too. I feel sorry for them."

"Yes, artillerymen are especially rare over there," said Katavasov.

"I didn't serve very long in the artillery; they may assign me to the infantry or the cavalry."

"What do you mean infantry, when they need artillerymen most of all?" said Katavasov, realizing from the artilleryman's years that he had to have reached a significant rank.

"I didn't serve very long in the artillery, I'm a retired cadet," he said, and he began explaining why he didn't pass the examination.⁸

This all made an unpleasant impression on Katavasov, and when the volunteers got out at the station to have a drink, Katavasov wanted to verify his unfavorable impression in conversation with someone. One old man traveling, wearing a military coat, had been listening in on Katavasov's conversation with the volunteers the entire time. Left alone with him, Katavasov addressed him.

“Yes, what a variety of positions all these men heading there come from,” said Katavasov vaguely, wishing to express his opinion and at the same time feel out the old man’s opinion.

The old man was a soldier and had been through two campaigns. He knew what a military man was, and judging from the look and conversation of these gentlemen and the swagger with which they had attached themselves to the flask, he considered them poor soldiers. Besides, he was a resident of a district town, and he longed to tell the story of a discharged soldier from his town, a drunkard and a thief, who had gone because no one would hire him as a worker. But knowing from experience that in society’s present mood it was dangerous to express an opinion opposite to that generally held, and especially to condemn volunteers, he was also scrutinizing Katavasov.

“What’s there to say? They need men,” he said, laughing with his eyes.

And they began to talk about the latest war news, and both revealed to one another their bewilderment about who would carry the battle expected the next day when the Turks, according to the latest news, had been beaten at all points. And so they parted without either having expressed his own opinion.

Katavasov, entering his own car, acting against his conscience despite himself, recounted to Sergei Ivanovich his observations about the volunteers, from which it turned out that they were excellent fellows.

At a major station in one town the volunteers were again greeted by singing and shouts, and more and more collection takers again appeared with cups, and provincial ladies offered bouquets to the volunteers and went with them to the refreshment room; but all this was much feebler and smaller than in Moscow.

4

While they were stopped in the provincial town, Sergei Ivanovich did not go to the refreshment room but began walking up and down the platform.

When he walked by Vronsky’s compartment for the first time, he noticed that the window was curtained. But when he walked by a second time, he saw the old countess by the window. She called Koznyshev over.

“Here I am, accompanying him as far as Kursk,” she said.

“Yes, I’d heard,” said Sergei Ivanovich, stopping by her window and looking in. “What a splendid gesture on his part!” he added, noticing that Vronsky was not in the compartment.

“Yes, after his misfortune, what was he to do?”

“What a terrible event!” said Sergei Ivanovich.

“Oh, what I’ve suffered! Please, come in. Oh, what I’ve suffered!” she re-

peated when Sergei Ivanovich had entered and sat down beside her on the seat. “It’s unimaginable! For six weeks he wouldn’t speak to anyone and ate only when I begged him. He could not be left alone for a minute. We took away everything he might use to kill himself; we lived on the ground floor, but one could not predict anything. After all, you know, he had already shot himself once over her,” she said, and the old woman’s brow furrowed at this memory. “Yes, she ended just the way a woman like that was bound to. She even chose a vile, base death.”

“It is not for us to judge, Countess,” said Sergei Ivanovich with a sigh, “but I do understand how difficult it was for you.”

“Oh, don’t speak of it! I was staying at my estate and he was with me. They brought a note. He wrote a reply and sent it off. We knew nothing about her being there at the station. That evening, as soon as I went to my room, my Mary told me that a lady had thrown herself under a train at the station. It was as if something struck me! I realized it was her. The first thing I said was, ‘Don’t tell him.’ But they already had told him. His driver had been there and seen everything. When I ran into his room, he was already not in his right mind—it was frightful to look at him. He said not a word and galloped off. I don’t know what happened there, but they brought him back as good as dead. I would not have recognized him. *Prostration complète*, the doctor said.⁹ Then what was nearly insanity began.

“What is there to say!” said the countess with a wave of her hand. “A dreadful time! No, I don’t care what you say, she was a bad woman. And what are all these desperate passions? This was all about proving something extraordinary. And she went ahead and proved it. She destroyed herself and two marvelous men—her own husband and my unfortunate son.”

“But what about her husband?” asked Sergei Ivanovich.

“He took her daughter. At first Alyosha agreed to everything. But now he is in terrible agony over having given up his own daughter to a stranger. But he can’t go back on his word. Karenin came for the funeral, but we tried to make sure he didn’t meet Alyosha. For him, the husband, it’s easier, after all. She had set him free. But my poor son had sacrificed himself entirely to her. He had given up everything—his career and me—and now again she failed to have pity on him but deliberately destroyed him completely. No, I don’t care what you say, her very death was the death of a vile woman without religion. May God forgive me, but I cannot help but despise her memory when I look at my son’s ruin.”

“But now how is he?”

“It was God who helped us—this Serbian war. I’m an old woman and I understand nothing about it, but it was sent him by God. Naturally, as a mother, I am afraid; and most important, people are saying, *ce n’est pas très bien vu à*

Petersbourg.¹⁰ But what can one do? Only this might lift him up. Yashvin—his friend—he gambled away everything and was intending to go to Serbia. He stopped by and persuaded him. Now this engages him. Please, you must speak with him. I would like to distract him. He is so sad. Even worse, he's come down with a toothache. He'll be very glad to see you. Please, speak with him. He's walking on the other side."

Sergei Ivanovich said he'd be glad to and crossed to the other side of the train.

5

In the slanting evening shadow of the sacks heaped on the platform, Vronsky, in his long coat and hat pulled low in front, his hands in his pockets, was pacing like a beast in a cage, quickly turning on his heels every twenty paces. As he approached, Sergei Ivanovich imagined that Vronsky saw him but was pretending not to. Sergei Ivanovich didn't mind. He stood above any personal scores with Vronsky.

At that moment, Vronsky was in Sergei Ivanovich's eyes an important actor for a great cause, and Koznyshev considered it his duty to lend his encouragement and approval. He walked up to him.

Vronsky stopped, peered at him, and recognized Sergei Ivanovich, and taking a few steps toward him, shook his hand very firmly.

"Perhaps you'd prefer not to see me," said Sergei Ivanovich, "but might I not be useful to you?"

"There is no one whom I would find it less unpleasant to see than you," said Vronsky. "Forgive me. I find nothing in life pleasant."

"I understand and wanted to offer you my services," said Sergei Ivanovich, peering into Vronsky's obviously suffering face. "Do you not want a letter to Ristich or Milan?"¹¹

"Oh no!" said Vronsky, as if having trouble understanding him. "If you don't mind, let's walk. It's so stuffy in the cars. A letter? No, I'm very grateful; to die one needs no letter of recommendation. Perhaps something for the Turks," he said, smiling with just his mouth. His eyes continued to express anger and suffering.

"Yes, but you might find it easier to establish connections, which are, after all, necessary, with someone who has been prepared. But as you wish. I was very pleased to hear of your decision. There have been so many attacks against the volunteers as it is that someone like you raises them in public opinion."

"My worth as a man," said Vronsky, "is that life to me is worth nothing, and that I have enough physical energy to hack my way through and crush them or

fall—that I know. I’m glad there is something for which I can give my life. It isn’t so much useless to me as repugnant. Anyone who can use it can have it.” He made an impatient movement with his jaw from the incessant, gnawing toothache, which kept him even from speaking with the kind of expression he desired.

“You will be reborn. I’m predicting this for you,” said Sergei Ivanovich, feeling touched. “Freeing your brothers from their yoke is a goal worthy of both death and life. God grant you success in your outer—and inner—world,” he added, and he extended his hand.

Vronsky firmly shook Sergei Ivanovich’s extended hand.

“Yes, as a weapon I may serve for something. But as a man, I’m a ruin,” he intoned slowly.

The nagging pain in his strong tooth, which filled his mouth with saliva, kept him from speaking. He fell silent, peering at the tender’s wheels turning slowly and smoothly down the tracks.

Suddenly something completely different—not pain but a general agonizing inner awkwardness—made him forget his toothache for a moment. While looking at the tender and the rails, under the influence of conversation with an acquaintance whom he had not met since his misfortune, he suddenly remembered *her*, that is, what still remained of her when he, like a madman, ran into the shed of the railway station. On the table in the shed, shamelessly laid out among strangers, was her bloody body, still full of recent life, her intact head thrown back, with its heavy braids and hair curling at the temples, and on her lovely face, with its half-open rosy mouth, her bizarre frozen expression, pathetic in the lips and horrible in the arrested, unclosed eyes, as if speaking those terrible words—about how he would regret it—which she had said to him during their quarrel.

He tried to remember her as she was when he had met her for the first time, also at a train station—mysterious, lovely, loving, seeking and bestowing happiness, and not cruelly vindictive as he recalled her in that last moment. He tried to remember his best moments with her, but those moments were poisoned forever. He recalled only her triumphant, now accomplished threat of indelible, useless remorse. He no longer felt his toothache, and sobs had contorted his face.

After he had walked past the sacks twice and mastered himself, he calmly turned to Sergei Ivanovich.

“You haven’t had a telegram since yesterday’s? Yes, beaten for the third time, but the decisive battle is expected tomorrow.”

After talking some more about the proclamation of Milan as king and about

the tremendous consequences that might have, they parted for their own cars after the second bell.

6

Not knowing when he might be leaving Moscow, Sergei Ivanovich had not telegraphed his brother so that they could send someone for him. Levin was not at home when Katavasov and Sergei Ivanovich, in a small tarantass hired at the station, dusty as Arabs, drove up to the front steps of the Pokrovskoye house between eleven and noon. Kitty, sitting on the balcony with her father and sister, recognized her husband's brother and ran downstairs to meet him.

"You should be ashamed for not letting us know," she said, giving Sergei Ivanovich her hand and presenting her brow for a kiss.

"We arrived wonderfully well, and we didn't disturb you," replied Sergei Ivanovich. "I'm so dusty I'm afraid to touch anything. I was so busy, I didn't even know when I would manage to tear myself away. But you are the same as ever," he said smiling, "enjoying your quiet happiness away from the currents in your quiet backwater. And here our friend Fyodor Vasilyevich at last made good on his intention."

"But I'm not a Negro. I'll go wash up. I'll look like a human being," said Katavasov with his usual joking nature, extending his hand and smiling with teeth that were especially bright due to his black face.

"Kostya will be very pleased. He's gone to the farm. He should be here any time now."

"Still busy with his farm. That's just how it is in a backwater," said Katavasov. "Whereas we in the city see nothing but the Serbian war. Well, how does my friend feel about it? Different, undoubtedly, from other people?"

"Oh he's fine, he's just like everyone," Kitty replied, somewhat flustered, looking around at Sergei Ivanovich. "I'll send for him. We have Papa visiting, too. He just came back from abroad."

After arranging to send for Levin and to show their dusty guests where they could wash up, one in the study, the other in Dolly's old room, and for the guests' lunch, she took advantage of the right to move quickly, of which she had been deprived during her pregnancy, and ran out onto the balcony.

"It's Sergei Ivanovich and Katavasov, the professor," she said.

"Oh, that's so hard in this heat!" said the prince.

"No, Papa, he's very sweet, and Kostya loves him dearly," said Kitty, smiling, as if imploring him about something, having noticed the expression of amusement on her father's face.

“Oh, I’m fine.”

“You go to them, darling,” Kitty told her sister, “and take care of them. They saw Stiva at the station, and he’s well. I’ll run to see Mitya. As it is, I haven’t fed him since tea. He’s awake now and probably crying.” Feeling her milk come in, she left with a quick step for the nursery.

In fact, it was no mere guess (her bond with her baby was not yet broken), she knew for a certainty from her milk coming in that he needed nourishment.

She knew he was crying even before she reached the nursery. In fact, he was. She heard his voice and quickened her step. But the faster she walked, the louder he cried. His voice was fine and healthy, merely hungry and impatient.

“Has it been long, nurse, very long?” Kitty said quickly, sitting down on the chair and preparing to nurse. “Yes, give him to me quickly. Oh, nurse, how tire-some you are, oh, you can knot his cap afterward!”

The baby was about to burst from its cry of hunger.

“Oh, but you mustn’t, my dear,” said Agafya Mikhailovna, who was almost always present in the nursery. “I have to tidy him up. Looloo, looloo!” she hummed over him, paying no attention to the mother.

The nurse brought the baby to his mother. Agafya Mikhailovna followed, her face melting with tenderness.

“He recognizes me, he does. God above, he does. Katerina Alexandrovna, he recognized me!” Agafya Mikhailovna exclaimed over the child’s cry.

But Kitty was not listening to her words. Her impatience was mounting just as her child’s was.

Due to their impatience, it took them a long time to get settled. The baby was latching on at the wrong place and was angry.

At last, after a desperate, gasping cry and vain sucking, they did get settled, and mother and child simultaneously felt calmed, and both quieted down.

“But he’s bathed in sweat, poor thing,” Kitty whispered, feeling the child. “Why do you think he recognizes you?” she added, casting a sidelong glance at the child’s eyes, which seemed to her to be looking mischievously out from under the cap, which had been pushed forward, at his evenly puffing cheeks, and at his little arm and the red hand, which was making circular motions.

“It can’t be! If he did recognize anyone, it would be me,” Kitty said to Agafya Mikhailovna’s assertion, and she smiled.

She smiled because, even though she said he couldn’t recognize her, she knew in her heart that he not only recognized Agafya Mikhailovna, he also knew and understood everything, and knew and understood a great deal more than no one knew and that she, his mother, herself had learned and begun to understand thanks only to him. For Agafya Mikhailovna, for his nurse, for his grandfather, for his father even, Mitya was a living being who required only ma-

terial care; but for his mother he had long been a moral being with whom she had an entire history of spiritual relations.

“Once he wakes up, God willing, you’ll see for yourself. When I do like this, he just beams, the darling. He just beams, like a clear day,” said Agafya Mikhailovna.

“Well, fine, fine, then we’ll see,” whispered Kitty. “Now run along. He’s falling asleep.”

7

Agafya Mikhailovna tiptoed out; the nurse lowered the curtain, drove a fly out from under the crib’s muslin curtain and a hornet beating against a pane of glass, and sat down, fanning a drooping birch branch over mother and child.

“The heat! Oh, the heat! If only God would give us a little rain,” she intoned.

“Mmm, hmm, sh-sh-sh,” was all Kitty replied, rocking slightly and tenderly holding the wrist of the plump arm Mitya was still waving weakly, as if it were pulled by a string, opening and closing his little eyes. This little arm confused Kitty: she wanted to kiss this little arm, but she was afraid of doing so and waking the child. Finally the arm stopped moving and the eyes closed. Only from time to time, continuing what he was doing, did the baby, fluttering his long, curling eyelashes, look at his mother with moist eyes that looked black in the dim light. The nurse had stopped fanning and was dozing. Upstairs she could hear the rumble of the old prince’s voice and Katavasov’s hearty laugh.

“I see they’ve struck up a conversation without me,” thought Kitty. “Still, it’s annoying that Kostya’s not here. I see he’s stopped by at the beekeeper’s again. Though it’s too bad he’s there so often, I’m glad anyway. It distracts him. Now he’s become much more cheerful and better than last spring.

“He was so gloomy then, and in such agony, that I began to fear for him. How funny he is!” she whispered, smiling.

She knew what had been tormenting her husband. It was his lack of faith. Had she been asked whether she thought that in the next life, if he did not believe, he would be damned, she would have agreed that he would be damned; nonetheless, his lack of faith did not cause her unhappiness. And she, confessing that for a nonbeliever there can be no salvation, and loving her husband more than anything on earth, thought of his lack of faith with a smile and told herself that he was funny.

“Why has he been reading all that philosophy this entire year?” she thought. “If it’s all written in those books, then he can understand them. If what’s there is untrue, then why read them? He himself says he would like to believe. So

why doesn't he believe? Maybe because he thinks so much? And he thinks so much because of his solitude. He's always alone, alone. He can't talk about it all with us. I think he'll enjoy these guests, especially Katavasov. He likes debating with him," she thought, and immediately she moved on in her mind to where it would be most convenient to have Katavasov sleep—alone or to share a room with Sergei Ivanovich. At this a thought suddenly occurred to her that made her shudder and even disturb Mitya, who gave her a stern look for this. "The laundress hasn't brought more linens, I don't think, and all the bed linens for guests are used up. If I don't give orders, then Agafya Mikhailovna will give Sergei Ivanovich the used linen." At the mere thought of this, blood rushed to Kitty's face.

"Yes, I'll arrange it," she decided, and returning to her former thoughts, she recalled that she had come to some important, intimate conclusion, and she tried to recall what it was. "Yes, Kostya is a nonbeliever," she recalled again with a smile.

"Well, a nonbeliever! Always better that than be like Madame Stahl or what I wanted to be back when I was abroad. No, he's not about to pretend."

A recent mark of his goodness rose vividly to mind. Two weeks before, Stepan Arkadyevich's remorseful letter to Dolly had come. He was begging her to save his honor and sell her estate to pay his debts. Dolly was in despair, detested her husband, despised and pitied him, and decided to divorce him, to refuse him, but ended by agreeing to sell a part of her estate. After that, Kitty, with an involuntary smile of emotion, recalled her husband's consternation, his frequent awkward approaches to the matter that preoccupied him, and how at last, having come up with the one and only means of helping Dolly without insulting her, he suggested to Kitty that she give Dolly her part of the estate, something she had never thought of before.

"What kind of nonbeliever is he? With his heart and his fear of disappointing anyone, even a child! Everything for others, and nothing for himself. That's what Sergei Ivanovich thinks as well, that it's Kostya's job—to be his steward. So does his sister. Now Dolly and her children are under his wing. All these peasants who come to see him every day, as if he were obligated to serve them."

"Yes, only be a man like your father, only a man like that," she murmured, handing Mitya to the nurse and grazing his little cheek with her lip.

8

Ever since that moment when, at the sight of his beloved brother dying, Levin had first looked at the questions of life and death through his new convictions, as he called them, which between age twenty and thirty-four had im-

perceptibly replaced the beliefs of his childhood and young adulthood, he was horrified less at death than at a life without the slightest knowledge of where it came from, what it was for, and what it was. The organism, its breakdown, the indestructibility of matter, the law of the conservation of energy, evolution—these were the words that had replaced his former belief. These words and the concepts associated with them were very fine for intellectual purposes; but for life they yielded nothing, and Levin suddenly felt like a man who exchanges his warm fur coat for light muslin clothes and, going into the frost for the first time, is immediately convinced for certain, not by reason, but with his entire being, that he is as good as naked and bound to perish in agony.

Since that moment, although not admitting it to himself and continuing to live as before, Levin had never ceased to feel this terror at his own ignorance.

Moreover, he had the vague feeling that what he was calling his convictions was not only ignorance but a cast of mind that made the knowledge of what he needed impossible.

During the first period of marriage, the new joys and obligations he was learning completely blocked these thoughts; but lately, since his wife had given birth, when he was living in Moscow without occupation, the question demanding resolution had faced him with increasing regularity and insistence.

The question for him was the following: if I do not recognize the answers Christianity gives to the questions of my life, then what answers do I recognize? He could find in the entire arsenal of his convictions not only no answers but nothing resembling an answer.

He was in the position of someone seeking food at a toy store or a gun shop.

Involuntarily, unconsciously, he now looked in any book, in any conversation, in any person, for connections to these questions and their answer.

What amazed and distressed him most of all in this process was that most of the men of his circle and age, having replaced their former beliefs with the same kind of new convictions, as he had, saw no harm in this and were perfectly content and serene. So that, in addition to the main question, Levin was tormented by other questions as well: Were these men sincere? Weren't they pretending? Or did they understand the answers science gives to the questions occupying him some other way, or somehow more clearly than he did? And he assiduously studied both the opinions of other men and the books that expressed these answers.

One thing he had found ever since these questions had begun to occupy him was that he had been mistaken in assuming from the memories of his youthful, university circle that religion had outlived its time and no longer existed. All the good people close to him in life believed. The old prince, Lvov, of whom he

had become so fond, Sergei Ivanovich, all the women, and his wife all believed the way he had believed in his early childhood, and ninety-nine hundredths of the Russian people, that entire people whose life inspired him with the greatest respect, believed.

Another thing he had been convinced of while reading all those books was that the men who shared precisely his views inferred nothing further from them and, without trying to explain those questions he could not live without answering, were simply rejecting their existence. They were trying to resolve completely different questions that could not interest him, such as the evolution of organisms, the mechanistic explanation of the soul, and so forth.

Besides, when his wife was in labor, something extraordinary happened to him. He, a nonbeliever, began praying, and at the moment he was praying he believed. But this moment passed, and he could not find a place for that state of mind in his life.

He could not admit that he had known the truth then and was now mistaken because as soon as he began thinking calmly about it, it all fell to pieces. Neither could he admit that he had been mistaken then, because he treasured that spiritual state of mind, and to regard it as the mere effect of weakness would be to desecrate those moments. He was in agonizing discord with himself and had strained all his emotional forces to resolve it.

9

These thoughts oppressed and tortured him, growing weaker or stronger, but they never quit him. He read and thought, and the more he read and thought, the farther he felt from the goal he sought.

Lately, in Moscow and in the country, convinced that he would not find the answer in the materialists, he had read and reread Plato, Spinoza, Kant, Schelling, Hegel, and Schopenhauer—the philosophers who did not try to explain life materialistically.

Their ideas seemed fruitful to him while he was either reading them or himself trying to come up with refutations of other teachings, especially the materialist one; but as soon as he read or himself came up with solutions to his questions, the same thing was always repeated. Following the specified definition of vague words such as “spirit,” “will,” “freedom,” and “substance,” purposely falling into that snare of words set for him by philosophers or even by himself, he seemed to begin to understand something; but all he had to do was forget the artificial train of thought and return from life itself to what had satisfied him when he was thinking and following the given thread—and suddenly that entire

artificial edifice would collapse like a house of cards, and it was clear that the edifice was made out of those same transposed words, independent of anything more important in life than reason.

Once, when reading Schopenhauer, he substituted “love” for “will,” and this new philosophy consoled him for a day or two, until he rejected it; but it collapsed in exactly the same way when he turned from life to look at it, and it turned out to be a thin, muslin garment.¹²

His brother Sergei Ivanovich advised him to read the theological works of Khomiakov.¹³ Levin read the second volume of Khomiakov’s works, and despite the polemical, elegant, and witty tone, which repulsed him at first, he was struck by his teaching about the church. He was struck first by the idea that the attainment of divine truths was given not to the individual but to the totality of men, united by love—the Church. He was gladdened by the thought of how much easier it was to believe in an existing, living church, comprising the entire belief of men, having God at its head, and therefore holy and infallible, and from there accept a belief in God, the creation, the fall, and the redemption, than to begin with God, a distant and mysterious God, the creation, and so forth. But later, reading a history of the church by a Catholic writer and a history of the church by an Orthodox writer and seeing that the two churches, infallible by their very essence, negated each other, he became disappointed in Khomiakov’s teaching on the church as well, and this edifice turned to dust just as had the philosophical edifices.

All that spring he was not himself, and he suffered moments of horror.

“Without a knowledge of what I am and why I am here, I cannot live. And I cannot know this, consequently I cannot live,” Levin told himself.

“In infinite time, in infinite matter, in infinite space, a bubble organism forms, and that bubble lasts a while and bursts, and that bubble is I.”

It was an agonizing falsehood, but it was the sole, final result of man’s age-old labors of thinking in this direction.

This was the ultimate belief on which had been built, in nearly all ramifications, all the inquiries of human thought. It was the reigning conviction, and of all other explanations, Levin had, without willing to, not knowing when or how, adopted it as, at any rate, the clearest, his own.

But it was not only a falsehood, it was the cruel joke of some evil force, an evil and repugnant power to which one must not submit.

One had to deliver oneself from this power, and every man had the means of deliverance in his hands. One had to put an end to this dependence on evil. And there was but one means: death.

And Levin, a man happy in his family, a healthy man, was several times so

close to suicide that he hid the rope lest he hang himself and was afraid to walk about with a gun lest he shoot himself.

But Levin neither shot nor hanged himself and continued to live.

10

When Levin thought about what he was and what he was living for, he could find no answer and fell into despair; but when he stopped questioning himself about it, it was as if he knew what he was and what he was living for because he acted and lived firmly and decisively; and lately he had even been living much more firmly and decisively than before.

Returning to the country in early June, he returned as well to his usual occupations. Farming, his relations with the peasants and neighbors, the care of the household, managing his sister's and brother's affairs, which were in his hands, his relations with his wife and relatives, his concerns about his child and his new beekeeping hobby, which had distracted him since the spring, took up all his time.

These things occupied him not because he justified them to himself with any sort of general views, as he had before; on the contrary, disappointed on the one hand by the failures of his former undertakings for the general good, and on the other, too occupied by his own thoughts and the very mass of work being heaped upon him from all sides, he had completely set aside any considerations about the general good and busied himself with all this work only because he felt he must do what he was doing—that he could not do otherwise.

Previously (beginning nearly in childhood and growing until full manhood), when he had tried to do anything that might do good for everyone, for mankind, for Russia, for the entire village, he had noticed that his ideas about it were pleasant, but doing it had always been awkward, that he had never been fully convinced of its absolute necessity, and that the work that had seemed at first so great kept growing less and less until reduced to nothing. But now, when after his marriage he had begun more and more to limit himself to living for himself, though he no longer experienced any joy at the idea of his activities, he felt confident that his work was essential, and saw that it turned out much better than in the past and kept growing more and more.

Now, as if involuntarily, he was cutting deeper and deeper into the earth, like a plow, so that he could no longer pull himself out without turning a furrow.

To live the same family life as his fathers and grandfathers had been accustomed to live, that is, in the same conditions of education and so to bring up his children, was incontestably necessary. It was just as necessary as eating when

one is hungry; and just as for this it was necessary to cook dinner, so it was just as necessary to run the economic machine at Pokrovskoye so that there was income. Just as incontestably as it was necessary to repay a debt, so was it necessary to keep the family land in such a condition that his son, when he came into his inheritance, would say thank you to his father just as Levin had said thank you to his grandfather for all that he had built and planted. And for this it was necessary not to rent out the land but to farm it himself, keep livestock, fertilize the fields, and plant forests.

It was impossible not to handle the affairs of Sergei Ivanovich, his sister, and all the peasants who came to him for advice and had grown used to doing so, just as it is impossible to fling away a child one is carrying in one's arms. It was necessary to trouble himself about the comfort of his visiting sister-in-law and her children, and of his wife and child, and it was impossible not to spend at least a small part of the day with them.

All this, along with the hunting for game, and his new beekeeping hobby, filled up Levin's whole life, which made no sense to him when he let himself think.

But besides firmly knowing *what* he had to do, he knew just as well *how* he had to do it all and which was more important than the rest.

He knew he needed to hire workers as cheaply as possible; but to put them in bondage by paying them in advance less than they were worth was what he must not do, even though it was very profitable. He could sell peasants straw when there was a shortage, even though he was sorry for them; but the inn and the public house, even though they brought income, had to be abolished. He needed to fine as strictly as possible for stolen timber, but he could not exact fines for livestock driven into his fields, and although it upset the guards and eliminated any fear, he had to release the livestock that had been driven in there.

To Peter, who was paying the moneylender ten percent a month, he had to extend a loan to set him free, but he could not let off or postpone the quitrent for peasants who did not pay. He could not overlook the steward's letting the meadow go unmown and the grass be wasted; but it was equally impossible to mow down eighty desyatinas where a young copse had been planted. It was impossible to forgive a worker who left during the busy season to go home because his father had died, no matter how sorry he felt for him, and he had to reduce his pay for precious squandered months; but it was equally impossible not to pay monthly wages to old house servants who were no longer of any use.

Levin also knew that, returning home, he had to go first of all to his wife, who was unwell; while the peasants who had been waiting for him for three hours could wait a bit longer. And he knew that in spite of all the pleasure he experi-

enced at hiving a swarm, he had to forgo this pleasure and leave the old man to hive the swarm without him and go talk with the peasants who had found him at the apiary.

Whether he was acting well or badly he did not know; and not only would he not start proving anything now, but he avoided conversations and thoughts about it.

Deliberation led him to doubt and prevented him from seeing what he should and should not do. When he did not think but simply lived, he never ceased sensing in his soul the presence of an infallible judge deciding which of the two possible actions was better and which worse; and as soon as he did not act rightly, he immediately felt it.

So he lived, not knowing or seeing the possibility of knowing what he was and what he was living for, and agonizing over this ignorance to such a degree that he feared suicide, and at the same time firmly laying his own individual, definite road in life.

11

The day Sergei Ivanovich arrived at Pokrovskoye, Levin was having one of his most agonizing days.

It was the busiest work period, when all the peasants show an extraordinary intensity of self-sacrifice in labor such as is not shown in any other conditions of life and would be highly appreciated if the people showing these qualities themselves appreciated them, if it were not repeated every year, and if the consequences of this intensity were not so simple.

Mowing and binding rye and oats and bringing them in, mowing down the meadow, reploting the fallow land, and threshing the seed and sowing the winter wheat all seems simple and ordinary; but in order to get all this done, everyone in the village, from oldest to youngest, must work without cease for these three or four weeks, three times as hard as usual, nourishing themselves with kvass, onions, and black bread, threshing and carting the sheaves in the night, and giving no more than a few hours to sleep a day. And every year this is done all over Russia.

Having lived the greater part of his life in the country and in close contact with the people, Levin always felt during this work time that the general popular excitement was communicated to him as well.

In the morning he would ride over for the first sowing of rye and to the oats, which they were dragging into stacks, and, returning home when his wife and sister-in-law were getting up, he drank coffee with them and left on foot for the

farm, where they were supposed to have put into use a newly installed thresher for preparing the seeds.

All this day, talking with the steward and the peasants and at home talking with his wife, Dolly, her children, and his father-in-law, Levin had been thinking about the one thing that occupied him at this time apart from household concerns, and he sought everywhere for anything relevant to his question: What am I? Where am I? Why am I here?

Standing in the cool of the newly thatched threshing barn with the fragrant leaf still clinging to the hazelwood lathing intertwined in the peeled green aspen beams of the roof, Levin looked through the open gates where the dry and bitter dust of threshing teemed and played, at the threshing-floor grass lit by the hot sun and the fresh straw only just brought from the barn, then at the colorful heads and white breasts of the swallows that flew in just under the roof with a whistle and, fluttering their wings, perched in the gaps of the doors, then at the people who had been swarming in the dark and dusty threshing barn, and he thought strange thoughts.

“Why is all this being done?” he thought. “Why am I standing here, making them work? Why are they all so busy and why are they all trying to show me their zeal? Why is this old woman Matryona, my friend, struggling? (I treated her when a joist fell on her in the fire),” he thought, looking at a scrawny old woman who, moving the grain with a rake, was stepping tensely over the uneven hard threshing floor with her sun-blackened bare feet. “Then she recovered; but today or tomorrow, or in ten years they’ll be burying her, and nothing will be left of her, or this pretty girl in her red-checked skirt who was knocking the ears from their husks with that deft, gentle motion. They will bury her, too, and that piebald gelding, too, very soon,” he thought, looking at the horse heavy in the belly and often breathing through flared nostrils that stepped along the slanting wheel moving underneath her. “They’ll be burying her, and Fyodor, who feeds the machine, with his curly, chaff-flecked beard and his shirt torn at his white shoulder will be buried. And yet he’s untying the sheaves, and giving orders and shouting at the women, and with a quick motion adjusting the belt on the flywheel. Most important, not only they, but I too am going to be buried, and nothing will be left. What’s it all for?”

He thought about this and at the same time looked at his watch in order to calculate how much they were threshing in an hour. He needed to know this in order to judge by it to set the quota for the day.

“It’ll soon be one, and they’ve only started on the third shock,” thought Levin, and he walked over to the man feeding the machine and, shouting over the machine’s rumble, told him to feed it in less often.

“You’re putting in too much, Fyodor! See? It’s jamming, so it’s not going well. Even it out!”

Fyodor, blackened from the dust stuck to his sweaty face, shouted something in response but still did not do it the way Levin wanted.

Levin, walking over to the drum, pushed Fyodor aside and started doing the feeding himself.

After working through until the peasants’ dinner, which was not long off, he and the feeder walked out of the threshing barn and got to talking, stopping next to a neat yellow rick of packed rye assembled on the threshing floor for the seeds.

The feeder was from a distant village, the one where Levin had once rented land on the basis of a cooperative. Now it had been rented out to an innkeeper.

Levin got to talking with Fyodor the feeder about that land and asked him whether Platon, a fine, rich peasant from the same village, wouldn’t take the land for next year.

“The price is too high, and Platon can’t make a go of it, Konstantin Dmitrievich,” replied the peasant, picking the chaff off his sweaty chest.

“So how does Kirillov make a go of it?”

“Mityukha”—this was the peasant’s contemptuous name for the innkeeper—“oh, he’ll make it pay. There’s someone who squeezes until he gets what he wants. He takes no pity on a Christian. But would Uncle Fokanych”—this was what he called old man Platon—“ever skin the hide off a man? Where’s the debt, he’ll forgive it. He lets it go. He’s that kind of a man.”

“But why would he let it go?”

“Oh well, you know—men are different. One man lives just for his own wants, like Mityukha. He just stuffs his belly. But Fokanych is a righteous old man. He lives for his soul. He remembers God.”

“What do you mean he remembers God? What do you mean he lives for his soul?” Levin was almost shouting.

“You know how, for what’s right, in God’s way. You see, men are different. Take you, for instance. You wouldn’t offend anyone either.”

“Yes, yes, good-bye!” said Levin, breathless from excitement, and turning on his heel, picked up his stick and walked quickly away, toward the house. A joyous new feeling gripped Levin. At the peasant’s words about how Fokanych lived for his soul, for what’s right, in God’s way, vague but important thoughts seemed to burst out from somewhere locked up, and all striving toward a single goal, began circling in his head, blinding him with their light.

12

Levin took long strides down the main road, listening not so much to his thoughts (he still could not sort them out) as to his spiritual condition, which he had never experienced before.

The words the peasant had said had produced in his soul the effect of an electrical spark that had suddenly transformed and embodied into a single whole the swarm of fragmented, impotent, separate thoughts that had never ceased to occupy him. These thoughts had imperceptibly occupied him while he was talking about leasing the land.

He sensed something new in his soul and with pleasure probed this new thing, not yet knowing what it was.

“To live not for one’s wants, but for God. For what God? And could one say anything more senseless than what he said? He said that one mustn’t live for one’s own wants, that is, one mustn’t live for what we understand, what we are drawn to, what we desire, but must live for something incomprehensible, for God, whom no one can either understand or define. And what of it? Didn’t I understand those senseless words of Fyodor’s? And having understood, did I doubt their truth? Did I find them stupid, obscure, or imprecise?”

“No, I understood him, and completely the way he understands his words, I understood fully and more clearly than I understand anything in life, and never in life have I doubted nor can I doubt this. And not only I but everyone, the entire world, fully understands this, about this alone they have no doubts and are always agreed.

“Fyodor says that Kirillov the innkeeper lives for his belly. That’s comprehensible and rational. All of us, as rational beings, cannot live otherwise than for our belly. And suddenly this same Fyodor says that it’s bad to live for one’s belly, that one must live for the truth, for God, and at a hint I understand him! I—like millions of men who lived centuries ago and are living now, peasants, the poor in spirit and the sages who have thought and written about this, in their obscure language saying the same thing—we all agree on this one thing: what one must live for and what is good. I and all men have only one firm, incontestable, and clear knowledge, and this knowledge cannot be explained by reason—it is outside reason and has no causes and can have no effects.

“If goodness has a cause, it isn’t goodness; if it has an effect, a reward, it is also not goodness. Therefore, good lies outside the chain of causes and effects.

“And yet I know this and we all know this.

“And I was looking for miracles, regretting that I had not seen a miracle that might convince me. But here is a miracle, the sole miracle possible, existing continuously, surrounding me on all sides, and I didn’t notice it!

“What greater miracle could there be?”

“Can it be that I have found the solution to it all? Can my sufferings be over now?” thought Levin, striding down the dusty road, noticing neither the heat nor his weariness and experiencing a sense of relief from long suffering. This feeling was so joyous that it seemed to him incredible. He was breathless from excitement, and unable to walk any farther; he stepped from the road into the wood and sat down in the shade of the aspens on the unmown grass. He removed his hat from his sweaty head and lay down, resting on his elbow, on the succulent, broad-bladed forest grass.

“Yes, I must collect my thoughts and think this through,” he thought, staring at the uncrushed grass in front of him and following the movements of a small green insect climbing a blade of couch grass and blocked in its ascent by a leaf of bishop’s weed. “Start all over,” he told himself, turning aside the leaf of bishop’s weed so it would not get in the insect’s way, and bending another blade of grass so the insect could cross onto it. “What is making me so happy? What have I discovered?”

“I used to say that in my body, in the body of this grass and this small insect (there, it didn’t want to go to that blade, it unfolded its wings and flew away), a transformation of matter takes place according to the laws of physics, chemistry, and physiology. And in all of us, as well as in the aspens, and the clouds, and the nebulae, a process of development is taking place. Development from what? Into what? Infinite development and struggle? . . . As if there could be any direction and struggle in the infinite! And I was amazed that, in spite of the utmost exertion of thought along this path, I could never discover the meaning of life, the meaning of my impulses and yearnings. Yet the meaning of my impulses is so clear to me that I am constantly living according to them, and I was amazed and rejoiced when the peasant told me: Live for God, for your soul.

“I have discovered nothing. I have only recognized what I already knew. I have understood the power that not only gave me life in the past but is giving me life now. I have been freed from falsity, I have found the Master.”

And he briefly repeated to himself the entire progression of his thought over these past two years, the beginning of which was the clear, obvious thought about death at the sight of his beloved, hopelessly ill brother.

Understanding clearly for the first time that, for every person and for himself, nothing lay ahead save suffering, death, and eternal oblivion, he had decided that one cannot live like that, that one must either explain one’s life so that it did not present itself as the evil joke of some devil, or else shoot oneself.

He had done neither; he had gone on living, thinking, and feeling and even at that very time gotten married and experienced many joys and been happy when he was not thinking about the meaning of his life.

What did this mean? It meant that he had been living rightly but thinking wrongly.

He had lived (without being aware of this) on those spiritual truths he had taken in with his mother's milk, but he had thought not only without admitting these truths but assiduously avoiding them.

Now it was clear to him that he could live only thanks to those beliefs in which he had been brought up.

"What would I be like, and how would I have lived my life, if I had not had these beliefs, if I had not known that one must live for God rather than one's own wants? I would have robbed, lied, killed. None of what constitutes the chief joys of my life would have existed for me." And not even by making the greatest effort of imagination could he imagine that bestial creature he would have been had he not known what he was living for.

"I was looking for an answer to my question, but thought could not give me an answer to my question—because thought is incommensurate with my question. The answer was given me by life itself, in my knowledge of what is right and what is wrong. And this knowledge I did not acquire in any way, rather it was given me as it is to everyone, *given* because I could not have gotten it from anywhere.

"Where did I get it? Was it by reason that I arrived at the idea that one must love one's neighbor and not oppress him? I was told that in childhood, and I joyfully believed because they were telling me something that was already in my soul. But who discovered it? Not reason. Reason discovered the struggle for existence and the law requiring that we oppress everyone who impedes the gratification of our desires. That is reason's conclusion. But loving one's fellow man reason could not discover because it is not reasonable.

"Yes, pride," he told himself, rolling over on his stomach and beginning to tie a knot with blades of grass, trying not to break them.

"And not merely the pride of intellect but the stupidity of intellect. And above all, the cheat, yes, the cheat of intellect. That's it precisely, the swindle of intellect," he repeated.

13

And Levin recalled a recent scene with Dolly and her children. Left alone, the children began cooking their raspberries over candles and pouring milk into their mouth like a fountain. Their mother, catching them in the act, tried to make them see, in Levin's presence, how much effort what they were destroying cost adults, and that this effort was exerted for them, that if they were going

to break teacups, then they would have nothing from which to drink tea, and if they were going to spill milk, they would have nothing to eat and they would starve to death.

Levin had been struck by the calm, mournful disbelief with which the children listened to these words of their mother. They were only annoyed that their amusing game had been interrupted, and they did not believe a word of what their mother was saying. They could not believe it because they could not imagine the enormity of what they enjoyed and so could not imagine that what they were destroying was the very thing by which they lived.

“That all comes of itself,” they think, “and there is nothing interesting or important about it because it has always been that way and always will be. And it’s all always the same. There’s nothing for us to think about, it’s all ready-made; but we want to think up something new and all our own. So we invented putting the raspberry into the teacup and cooking it over a candle, and pouring the milk like a fountain directly into each other’s mouth. That’s fun and new, and not a bit worse than drinking from teacups.”

“Aren’t we doing the very same thing? Didn’t I, in searching with my reason for the meaning of the forces of nature and the meaning of man’s life?” he continued thinking.

“Aren’t all the theories of philosophy doing the same thing, using abstract thought, a strange means not characteristic of man, to lead him to the knowledge of what he has long known and has known so truly that without it he could not have lived? Isn’t it clearly visible in the development of each philosopher’s theory that he knows in advance the chief meaning of life just as unquestionably as does the peasant Fyodor, and not a bit more clearly than he, and is simply trying by a dubious, intellectual path to arrive at what everyone already knows?

“All right, just leave the children on their own to provide for themselves, to make their dishes, milk the cow, and so on. Would they misbehave then? They would starve to death. And just the same way, leave us with our passions and thoughts, without a concept of the one God and Creator! Or without any understanding of what good is or an explanation of moral evil.

“Just try and build something without these concepts!

“We only destroy because we are spiritually sated. Just like children!

“Where did I get this joyous knowledge, which I share with the peasant, and which alone gives peace to my soul? Where did I get it?

“Raised with an idea of God, as a Christian, and having my entire life filled with the spiritual goods Christianity gave me, completely full of and living by these goods, I, like the children, destroy them without understanding them, that is, I have tried to destroy what I live by. But as soon as an important moment in

life comes, like the children when they are cold and hungry, I turn to Him, and even less than children whose mother scolds them for their childish mischief do, I feel that my childish attempt not to know how well off I am is to my credit.

“Yes, what I know I know not by reason, but it has been given me, revealed to me, and I know this with my heart, by my faith in the chief thing the church professes.

“The church? The church!” repeated Levin, and turning over on his other side and leaning on one elbow, he began gazing into the distance, at the herd converging on the river from the far side.

“But can I believe in everything the church professes?” he thought, testing himself and trying to think of everything that might destroy his present peace of mind. He purposely began recalling those teachings of the church which had always seemed to him most strange and had challenged him. “The creation? But how did I explain existence? By existence? By nothing? The devil and sin? But how do I explain evil? . . . The Redeemer? . . .

“But I know nothing, nothing, and I can know nothing other than what has been told me along with everyone else.”

Now it seemed to him that not a single belief of the church violated the main thing: belief in God and in goodness as man’s sole purpose.

For each belief of the church one could put belief in the service of truth instead of one’s wants. And each belief not only did not violate this but was essential to accomplish the chief miracle, constantly manifesting itself on earth, that made it possible for each person, along with millions of the most diverse people, sages and fools, children and old men—everyone, the peasants, Lvov, Kitty, beggars and tsars—to understand without doubt the same thing, and to constitute that life of the soul for which alone it is worth living and which alone we value.

Lying on his back, he now looked at the high, cloudless sky. “Don’t I know that that is infinite space and not a rounded vault? But no matter how I squint and strain my vision, I cannot help but see it as rounded and limited, and in spite of knowing about infinite space, I am incontestably correct when I see a solid blue vault, more correct than when I strain to see beyond it.”

Levin ceased thinking only, as it were, to listen to mysterious voices discussing something joyously and anxiously among themselves.

“Could this be faith?” he thought, afraid to believe in his happiness. “My God, I thank Thee!” he said, swallowing the sobs rising in his throat and with both hands wiping away the tears that filled his eyes.

14

Levin looked straight ahead and saw the herd, and then he caught sight of his cart, harnessed to Raven, and the coachman, who, driving up to the herd, said something to the herdsman; then he heard the sound of wheels very close by and the snorting of a well-fed horse; but he was so swallowed up by his own thoughts that he had not even considered why the coachman had come for him.

He thought of it only when the coachman, who had driven right up, called out to him.

“The mistress sent me. Your brother and some other gentleman have come.”

Levin got into the cart and took the reins.

As if awakened from a dream, for a long time Levin could not think clearly. He surveyed the well-fed horse, which was lathered up between its haunches and on its neck, where the reins rubbed, surveyed Ivan the coachman sitting next to him, and remembered that he had been expecting his brother and that his wife was probably concerned by his long absence, and he tried to guess who the guest was who had come with his brother. His brother, his wife, and the mysterious guest seemed different to him now. It seemed to him that now his relations with all people would be different.

“With my brother there won’t be that aloofness there has always been between us, there will be no quarrels, there will never be quarrels with Kitty; with my guest, whoever he is, I will be kind and good; with the servants, with Ivan—everything will be different.”

While keeping a tight rein on the good horse, which was snorting from impatience and asking to have its head, Levin looked over at Ivan sitting next to him, Ivan, who did not know what to do with his idle hands and was constantly clutching his shirt, and he sought a pretext for starting a conversation with him. He wanted to say that Ivan held the back band too high, but this resembled a reproof, and he longed for loving conversation. Yet nothing else occurred to him.

“You might take her to the right, sir, or else the stump,” said the driver, correcting Levin at the reins.

“Please, don’t touch me and don’t teach me!” said Levin, irritated by the coachman’s interference. Now as always, interference irritated him, and he immediately felt with sadness how wrong was his supposition that his spiritual state of mind might immediately change him in his contact with reality.

When they were a quarter of a verst from the house, Levin saw Grisha and Tanya running toward him.

“Uncle Kostya! Mama’s coming, and grandfather, and Sergei Ivanovich, and someone else,” they said, climbing onto the cart.

“And who is it?”

“An awfully scary man! Look, he does this with his arms,” said Tanya, rising in the wagon and mimicking Katavasov.

“Old or young?” asked Levin, laughing, reminded of someone by Tanya’s performance.

“Oh, if only it’s not someone unpleasant!” thought Levin.

Once he had made the turn in the road and seen them walking toward them, Levin recognized Katavasov in a straw hat, walking and swinging his arms about just as Tanya had shown him.

Katavasov was very fond of talking about philosophy, having a notion of it from natural scientists who had never studied philosophy; and in Moscow Levin had debated with him a great deal lately.

One of those discussions, in which Katavasov evidently thought he had had the upper hand, was the first thing Levin thought of when he recognized him.

“No, not for anything will I argue and express my thoughts lightly,” he thought.

Getting out of the cart and greeting his brother and Katavasov, Levin asked about his wife.

“She took Mitya to Kolok.” This was the wood near the house. “She wanted to find a place for him there because it’s so hot in the house,” said Dolly.

Levin had always advised his wife against carrying the baby into the wood, considering it dangerous, so this news did not please him.

“Running from place to place with him,” said the prince, smiling. “I advised her to try taking him down to the icehouse.”

“She wanted to come to the beehive. She thought you were there. That’s where we’re going,” said Dolly.

“Well, what have you been doing?” said Sergei Ivanovich, lagging behind the others and drawing even with his brother.

“Oh, nothing special. As always, busy with the farm,” replied Levin. “What about you, are you here for long? We’ve been expecting you for such a long time.”

“A couple of weeks. I have so much to do in Moscow.”

At these words the brothers’ eyes met, and Levin, despite his perpetual and now especially strong desire to be on friendly and above all simple terms with his brother, felt awkward looking at him. He looked down and didn’t know what to say.

Sorting through topics of conversations such as might be pleasant to Sergei Ivanovich and distract him from discussion of the Serbian war and the Slavonic question, which he had hinted at with his mention of his work in Moscow, Levin began talking about Sergei Ivanovich’s book.

“Well then, have there been any reviews of your book?” he asked.

Sergei Ivanovich smiled at the deliberateness of the question.

“No one’s interested in that, and I least of all,” he said. “Look, Darya Alexandrovna, it’s going to shower,” he added, pointing with his umbrella at the white clouds that had appeared above the aspens’ crowns.

These words sufficed to reestablish, if not the hostile, then the cold relations that Levin had so wanted to avoid.

Levin walked over to Katavasov.

“How well you did in thinking of visiting us,” he told him.

“I’ve been intending to for a long time. Now we’ll have a chat and we’ll see. Did you read Spencer?”¹⁴

“No, I haven’t finished it,” said Levin. “Actually, I don’t need him now.”

“How is that? That’s interesting. Why?”

“That is, I’m finally convinced that I won’t find the solution to the questions that interest me in him or others like him. Now—”

But the serene and cheerful expression on Katavasov’s face suddenly struck him, and he felt so sorry for the mood he had obviously destroyed with this conversation that, remembering his intention, he stopped.

“Actually, let’s talk later,” he added. “If we’re heading for the apiary, let’s go here, down this path,” he said, addressing everyone.

Following a narrow path, they reached an unmown glade covered solidly on one side with colorful heart’s ease, in the middle of which frequently popped up tall, dark green bushes of hellebore. Levin seated his guests in the thick fresh shade of some young aspens, on a bench and logs purposely readied for visitors who were afraid of bees, while he himself took a shortcut, in order to bring the children and grown-ups bread, cucumbers, and fresh honey.

Trying to make as few quick movements as possible, and listening closely to the bees flying by him more and more frequently, he followed the path to the hut. Right at the entrance one bee buzzed, having got tangled in Levin’s beard, but he cautiously freed it. Entering the shady entrance, he took his net hanging from a peg on the wall, put it on, stuck his hands in his pockets, and went out to the fenced-in apiary where, in even rows, fastened to the stakes with strips of bast, in the middle of a mown spot, stood the old hives he knew so well, each with its own history, and along the wattle fencing were the young ones, set this year. In front of the hives’ tapholes, there was a blur of bees and drones circling and jostling in one place, and among them, always in the same direction, into the wood to the blooming linden tree and back to the hives, flew the worker bees fetching honey.

His ears were filled with various sounds, now a busy worker bee flying by,

now a trumpeting, idle drone, now the alarmed sentry bees protecting their wealth from the enemy, ready to sting. On the other side of the fence the old man was planing a hoop and did not see Levin. Without calling to him, Levin stopped in the middle of the apiary.

He was glad at the chance to be alone, to clear his mind of the reality that had already managed to depress his mood so much.

He recalled that he had already managed to get angry at Ivan, show his coldness to his brother, and speak frivolously with Katavasov.

“Could this really have been only a momentary mood, and will it pass leaving no trace?” he thought.

But at that very moment, returning to his mood, he felt with joy that something new and important had happened inside him. Only for a while did reality veil that spiritual peace he had found; but it was intact inside him.

Just as the bees now buzzing around him, threatening and distracting him, had deprived him of complete physical peace, forced him to cringe, avoiding them, so too the cares besetting him from the moment he had gotten into the cart had deprived him of his spiritual freedom; but this had lasted only as long as he was in their midst. As his bodily strength was intact inside him, despite the bees, so too was the spiritual strength of which he was newly conscious.

15

“And do you know, Kostya, who Sergei Ivanovich traveled here with?” said Dolly, presenting the children with cucumbers and honey. “Vronsky! He’s on his way to Serbia.”

“And not alone either. He’s leading a squadron at his own expense!” said Katavasov.

“That suits him,” said Levin. “But are people really still signing up as volunteers?” he added, glancing at Sergei Ivanovich.

Sergei Ivanovich, not responding, carefully used a blunt knife to pull a still live bee out of his cup, where a corner of white comb that had stuck to the dripping honey was lying.

“They sure are! You should have seen what went on yesterday at the station!” said Katavasov, crunching a cucumber.

“So how are we to understand this? For Christ’s sake, explain it to me, Sergei Ivanovich. Where are all these volunteers going and who are they fighting?” asked the old prince, obviously continuing a discussion that had already begun without Levin.

“The Turks,” answered Sergei Ivanovich, smiling calmly, having freed the bee

helplessly kicking its little legs and dark from honey, and setting it on its feet on a firm aspen leaf.

“But who declared war on the Turks? Ivan Ivanovich Ragozov and Countess Lydia Ivanovna, along with Madame Stahl?”

“No one declared war, but people sympathize with the suffering of their neighbors and want to help them,” said Sergei Ivanovich.

“But the prince isn’t speaking of help,” said Levin, defending his father-in-law, “but of war. The prince is saying that private individuals may not take part in a war without permission of their government.”

“Kostya, watch out, it’s a bee! It’s really going to sting us!” said Dolly, waving away a wasp.

“But that’s not a bee, it’s a wasp,” said Levin.

“Well then, well then, what is your theory?” Katavasov said to Levin with a smile, obviously challenging him to a debate. “Why don’t private individuals have the right?”

“Well, my theory is this. On the one hand, war is such a beastly, cruel, and terrible matter that no one person, to say nothing of a Christian, may personally accept responsibility for starting a war. That can be done only by the government, which has been called upon to do this, and is led to war inevitably. On the other hand, both science and common sense tell us that in matters of state, especially when it comes to war, citizens renounce their personal will.”

Sergei Ivanovich and Katavasov began talking simultaneously, objections at the ready.

“But that’s just the point, my dear fellow. There may be instances when the government is not carrying out the citizens’ will, and then society declares its own will,” said Katavasov.

But Sergei Ivanovich obviously did not approve of this objection. He frowned at Katavasov’s words and said something else.

“You have not posed the question properly. Here there is no declaration of war, but merely the expression of human, Christian feeling. They are killing our brothers, men of our blood and faith. But even suppose they were not our brothers, our fellow believers, but simply children, women, and old men; feelings are aroused, and Russian men are running to help put a stop to these horrors. Imagine that you were walking down a street and saw drunkards beating a woman or a child; I don’t think you would have begun asking yourself whether war had been declared against this man, you would have thrown yourself at him and defended the victim.”

“But I would not kill him,” said Levin.

“Yes, you would.”

"I don't know. If I saw that, I might surrender to my immediate feeling; but I can't say so in advance. And there is no such immediate feeling for the oppression of Slavs, nor could there be."

"Perhaps not for you. But for others there is," said Sergei Ivanovich, frowning with displeasure. "The legends of Orthodox people suffering under the yoke of the 'impious Hagarenes' are alive among the people.¹⁵ The people have heard of their brothers' sufferings and spoken up."

"Perhaps," said Levin evasively, "but I don't see it. I am the people, too, and I don't feel this."¹⁶

"Neither do I," said the prince. "I have lived abroad, read the newspapers, and I confess, even before the Bulgarian atrocities I never could understand why all Russians suddenly took such a liking to their brother Slavs while I don't feel any love for them whatsoever. I was very upset, I thought I was a freak or that Carlsbad had had this effect on me. But when I came here, I calmed down. I see that besides me there are people who are interested only in Russia and not in their brother Slavs. Like Konstantin."

"Personal opinions here mean nothing," said Sergei Ivanovich. "This is no time for personal opinions when all Russia—the people—have expressed their will."

"You must forgive me. I don't see that. The people don't know anything about it," said the prince.

"No, Papa, what do you mean they don't? What about Sunday at church?" said Dolly, who had been listening to the discussion. "Give me a towel, please," she said to the old man who was looking at the children with a smile. "How could everyone—"

"So what happened at church Sunday? They told the priest to read something aloud. He read it. They understood nothing and they sighed, as they do at any sermon," the prince continued. "Then they were told that there would be a collection for a charitable cause, they took out a kopek apiece and gave it. But what for—they don't know themselves."

"The people can't help knowing; the people have always had an awareness of their own destiny, and in moments like these, it becomes clear to them," said Sergei Ivanovich affirmatively, glancing at the old beekeeper.

The handsome old man with the gray-streaked black beard and thick silver hair was standing motionlessly, holding a cup of honey, looking kindly and calmly at the gentlemen from the fullness of his height, obviously not understanding or wishing to understand anything.

"Exactly," he said, nodding his head significantly, at Sergei Ivanovich's words.

"There, ask him. He doesn't know or think anything about it," said Levin.

“Have you heard, Mikhailych, about the war?” he turned to him. “What was that they read in church? What do you think? Should we be fighting for the Christians?”

“What’s for us to think? Alexander Nikolaevich, our emperor, he’s thought it over for us, he thinks everything over for us. He knows best. Shouldn’t I bring a little more bread? Bring the boy some more?” he turned to Darya Alexandrovna, pointing to Grisha, who was finishing his crust.

“I don’t need to ask,” said Sergei Ivanovich. “We’ve seen hundreds upon hundreds of men drop everything to serve a just cause. They’ve come from every corner of Russia and directly and clearly expressed their idea and purpose. They offer up their coins or go themselves and say why. What does that mean?”

“It means, in my opinion,” said Levin, who was beginning to get worked up, “that in a nation of eighty million, there can always be found not hundreds, as now, but tens of thousands of men who have lost their social position, reckless men who are always ready to join Pugachev’s band and go to Khiva, or Serbia.”¹⁷

“I’m telling you it’s not hundreds and it’s not reckless men but the best representatives of the people!” said Sergei Ivanovich with such irritation as if he were defending his last piece of property. “What about the donations? Here the entire people is expressing its will directly.”

“This word ‘people’ is so vague,” said Levin. “Provincial scribes, teachers, and one in a thousand peasants, maybe, know what it’s all about. The rest of the eighty million, like Mikhailych, not only are not expressing their will but do not have the slightest notion what they’re supposed to be expressing their will about. What right have we to say that this is the will of the people?”

16

Experienced in dialectics, Sergei Ivanovich, without objecting, immediately shifted the conversation to another sphere.

“Yes, if you want to find out the spirit of a nation by arithmetic means, then, naturally, that’s very difficult to accomplish. Voting has not been introduced here, nor can it be, because it does not express the will of the people; but there are other means for that. It can be felt in the air, it can be felt with one’s heart. I’m not even talking about those undercurrents that have been set in motion in the stagnant sea of the people and that are clear to any unbiased person; take a look at society in the narrow sense. All the most diverse parts of the intelligentsia’s world, so hostile to each other before, have all united. Any strife has ended, and all public organs say one and the same thing; everyone has sensed an elemental force that has gripped them and is carrying them in the same direction.”

“Yes, the newspapers do all say the same thing,” said the prince. “It’s true. It’s all very much like frogs before a storm. You can’t hear a thing because of them.”

“Frogs or no frogs, I don’t publish newspapers and don’t mean to defend them; but I’m talking about the unanimity in the intelligentsia’s world,” said Sergei Ivanovich, turning to his brother.

Levin was about to respond, but the old prince interrupted him.

“Well, something else could be said about this consensus,” said the prince. “I have a son-in-law, now, Stepan Arkadyevich, you know him. He’s just obtained a seat as a member on the committee of a commission and something else, too, I don’t remember. Only he has nothing to do there—oh Dolly, it’s no secret!—but he gets a salary of eight thousand. Try and ask him whether his job is useful, and he’ll prove to you that it’s absolutely necessary. And he is a truthful man, but it’s impossible not to believe in the usefulness of eight thousand.”

“Yes, he asked me to tell Darya Alexandrovna about obtaining the post,” said Sergei Ivanovich with dissatisfaction, thinking that the prince’s remark was beside the point.

“It’s the same with the newspapers’ consensus. I’ve had it explained to me: as soon as there’s a war, they get twice the income. How could they not embrace the fate of the nation and of Slavs . . . and all that?”

“I don’t like a lot of newspapers, but that’s unfair,” said Sergei Ivanovich.

“I would set only one condition,” the prince continued. “*Alphonse Karr* marvelously wrote this before the war with Prussia: ‘You regard war as inevitable? Splendid. Whoever advocates war can join a special, vanguard legion and take them by storm and go on the attack, ahead of everyone!’”¹⁸

“Those editors would be a fine lot,” said Katavasov, laughing loudly, picturing to himself the editors he knew in this select legion.

“Oh, come now, they would run away,” said Dolly. “They would only get in the way.”

“But if they run, then we’ll have grapeshot and Cossacks with whips behind them,” said the prince.

“That’s just a joke, and a bad joke, excuse me, Prince,” said Sergei Ivanovich.

“I don’t see it as a joke, it’s—” Levin was about to begin, but Sergei Ivanovich interrupted him.

“Each member of society is called upon to do what he is best fitted for,” he said. “People of thought do their job by expressing public opinion. And unanimity and the full expression of public opinion are the job of the press and at the same time a joyous phenomenon. Twenty years ago we would have kept silent, but now we hear the voice of the Russian people, which is ready to rise up as one man, ready to sacrifice itself for its oppressed brothers. This is a great step and a proof of strength.”

“But it’s not just sacrificing, it’s killing Turks,” said Levin shyly. “The people sacrifice and are prepared to sacrifice for their soul, but not to murder,” he added, unconsciously linking this conversation with the thoughts that occupied him so.

“What do you mean, for the soul? As you know, that’s a rather troubling expression for a natural scientist. Just what exactly is a soul?” said Katavasov, smiling.

“Oh, you know!”

“No, God knows, I haven’t the faintest idea!” said Katavasov with a loud laugh.

“‘I come not to bring peace, but a sword,’ said Christ,” Sergei Ivanovich objected for his part, simply quoting, as if it were the easiest thing to understand, the very passage from the Gospels that had always puzzled Levin the most.¹⁹

“That’s exactly right,” repeated the old man, who was standing near them, responding to a glance that happened to be cast his way.

“No, old man, you’re beaten, beaten, totally beaten!” Katavasov cried out gaily.

Levin turned red from annoyance, not at the fact that he was beaten but at having failed to control himself and having begun to argue.

“No, I cannot argue with them,” he thought, “they wear an impenetrable armor, whereas I am naked.”

He saw that his brother and Katavasov could not be convinced, and he saw even less any possibility of agreeing with them himself. What they had been advocating was that very pride of intellect which had nearly destroyed him. He could not agree with the idea that dozens of people, including his brother, had the right, on the basis of what they had been told by hundreds of phrasemongering volunteers who had arrived in the capital, to say that they and the newspapers were expressing the will and thought of the people, and the kind of thought that is expressed in revenge and murder. He could not agree with this because he did not see the expression of these thoughts in the people among whom he lived, nor did he find these thoughts in himself (though he could not but consider himself one of the men who made up the Russian people), but most important because he, like the people, did not, could not know what the common good consisted of. But he did firmly know that the achievement of this common good was possible only by strictly observing the law of goodness that is revealed to each man, and so he could not desire war or preach it for any common goals whatsoever. He joined in saying, with Mikhailych and the people, who expressed their thought in the legend about the summoning of the Varangians: “Be our prince and master. We joyfully promise complete submission. All labor, all humiliation, and all sacrifices, we take upon ourselves; we will not

judge and decide.”²⁰ Now, according to Sergei Ivanovich, the people had renounced this right, which had been bought at such a high price.

He felt like saying as well that if public opinion was an infallible judge, then why were revolution and the commune not just as legitimate as the movement in favor of the Slavs? But all these were thoughts which could not settle anything. Only one thing could be seen without doubt: that at the present moment the argument was irritating Sergei Ivanovich, and so it was wrong to keep arguing. So Levin fell silent and drew his guests' attention to the fact that clouds had gathered and they had better get home because of the rain.

17

The prince and Sergei Ivanovich got into the cart and headed off; the rest of the company, quickening their pace, started home on foot.

But the clouds, first white, then black, advanced so quickly that they had to pick up their pace even more to make it home before the rain. Its leading clouds, low and black, like sooty smoke, were racing across the sky with uncommon speed. There were still two hundred paces to the house, but the wind had already come up, and a downpour could be expected any moment.

The children were running ahead with frightened and delighted squeals. Darya Alexandrovna, who was struggling with her skirts, which clung to her legs, was no longer walking but running, not letting her children out of her sight. The men, holding on to their hats, were taking long strides. They were right at the front steps when a fat drop struck and burst on the edge of the iron gutter. The children ran under the shelter of the roof with the grown-ups right behind them to the cheerful sound of voices.

“Katerina Alexandrovna?” Levin asked Agafya Mikhailovna, who had met them in the front hall with scarves and lap robes.

“We thought she was with you,” she said.

“And Mitya?”

“In the Kolok, probably, and the nurse with them.”

Levin grabbed the robes and ran to the Kolok.

In that brief span of time a cloud had already advanced its middle so far across the sun that it had grown dark, as in an eclipse. The wind persistently tried to stop Levin, as if insisting, and tearing the leaves and blossoms off the linden trees and wildly and eerily stripping the white birch branches, bent everything to one side: the acacias, the flowers, the burdock, the grass, and the treetops. The girls working in the garden had run squealing under the roof of the servants' quarters. A white curtain of pelting rain had already engulfed the entire distant

wood and half of the field close by and was moving quickly toward the Kolok. The damp of the rain breaking up into small drops could be smelled in the air.

Bowing his head and battling the wind, which was trying to tear away his clothes, Levin was already running up to the Kolok and could see something white beyond an oak when suddenly everything lit up, the whole earth caught fire, and the vault of the heavens seemed to shatter overhead. Opening his blinded eyes, Levin first saw with horror through the thick curtain of rain separating him now from the Kolok the green crown of a familiar oak in the middle of the wood that had strangely changed its position. "Has it really broken off?" Levin barely managed to think when, as he kept moving more and more quickly, the oak's crown was hidden behind other trees, and he heard the crack of the big tree falling on other trees.

The light of the lightning, the sound of the thunder, and the feeling of his instantly chilled body coalesced for Levin into a single impression of horror.

"My God! My God! Don't let it be on them!" he intoned.

And although he immediately thought about how senseless his plea was that they had not been killed by the oak, which had fallen by now, he repeated it, knowing that he could do nothing better than this senseless prayer.

Running to the spot where they usually were, he did not find them.

They were at the other end of the wood, under an old linden tree, and they were calling out to him. Two figures in dark dresses (before they had been in light ones), bowed, were standing over something. It was Kitty and the nurse. The rain was already letting up, and it was growing lighter, when Levin ran up to them. The bottom of the nurse's dress was dry, but the Katya's dress was soaked through and thoroughly stuck to her. Although the rain was over, they were standing in the same position in which they had been when the storm broke out. Both were standing, bowed over the little carriage with the green umbrella.

"Alive? Unhurt? Thank God!" he said, splashing through the undrained water in his slipping, water-filled boot, and running up to them.

Kitty's rosy and wet face was turned to him and was shyly smiling under her newly shaped hat.

"You should be ashamed of yourself! I don't understand how you can be so reckless!" he lashed out at his wife with annoyance.

"Really and truly, it's not my fault. We were just about to leave when it broke. We had to change him. We had just . . ." Kitty began apologizing.

Mitya was whole, dry, and still sleeping.

"Well, thank God! I don't know what I'm saying!"

They gathered the wet diapers; the nurse picked up the baby and carried him. Levin walked alongside his wife, feeling guilty for being annoyed, squeezing her hand so the nurse wouldn't see.

18

Throughout the day and during the most various conversations, in which he seemed to participate with only the outer layer of his mind, Levin, in spite of being disappointed because of the change that should have come about in him, never ceased to listen joyfully to the fullness of his heart.

After the rain it was too wet to go for a walk; besides, the storm clouds had not left the horizon and kept passing here and there, thundering and dark, along the edges of the sky. The entire company spent the rest of the day at home.

No more arguments started; on the contrary, after dinner everyone was in the very best of spirits.

Katavasov at first made the ladies laugh with his original jokes, which people always liked so much when they first met him, but later, called upon by Sergei Ivanovich, he recounted his very interesting observations on the difference in characters and even physiognomies in female and male houseflies and on their life. Sergei Ivanovich, too, was cheerful and at tea, called upon by his brother, set forth his view on the future of the Eastern question, and so plainly and well that everyone got caught up in listening to him.

Only Kitty could not hear him finish; she was called away to bathe Mitya.

A few minutes after Kitty left, Levin too was summoned to her in the nursery.

Leaving his tea and also regretting the break in the interesting conversation, and at the same time worried why he had been summoned, since this happened only on important occasions, Levin went to the nursery.

Although he had been very interested in Sergei Ivanovich's plan, which he did not hear the end of and was completely new to him, about how the liberated world of forty million Slavs must, with Russia, begin a new era in history, and although both curiosity and concern about why he had been summoned alarmed him, as soon as he was alone, walking out of the drawing room, he immediately recalled his morning thoughts, and all these notions about the importance of the Slavonic element in world history seemed to him so insignificant in comparison with what was happening in his soul that he instantly forgot all this and shifted back into the same mood in which he had been that morning.

He did not remember now, as he had before, the entire progression of his thought (he did not need that). He immediately shifted into the feeling that had guided him, and that was linked with these thoughts and found this feeling in his soul even stronger and more definite than before. Now he no longer experienced what he used to at conceived reassurances, when he had had to reconstruct the entire progression of his thought in order to find the feeling. Now, on the contrary, the feeling of joy and reassurance was more vivid than ever, and his thought could not keep up with his feelings.

He was walking across the terrace and looking at two stars that had appeared in the already darkening sky when suddenly he remembered. "Yes, looking at the sky, I was thinking about how the vault I see is not a deception, and at the same time there was something I didn't think through, something I was hiding from myself," he thought. "But no matter what happened, there can be no objection. One has only to think and everything becomes clear!"

As he entered the nursery he remembered what it was he had been hiding from himself. It was the fact that if the main proof of Divinity is Its revelation of the good, then why is this revelation limited to the Christian church alone? What relationship do Buddhists and Mohammedans, who also preach and do good, have to this revelation?

He thought he had the answer to this question, but before he could express it to himself he was entering the nursery.

Kitty was standing with her sleeves rolled up over the baby splashing in the bath, and hearing her husband's steps, she turned her face toward him and summoned him to her with a smile. With one hand she held up the head of the plump baby swimming on his back and kicking his little feet; with the other, evenly tensing her muscle, she was squeezing the sponge over him.

"Well here he is, look, look!" she said when her husband had walked up to her. "Agafya Mikhailovna is right. He does recognize us."

They had been talking about how, as of that day, Mitya obviously, undoubtedly, did recognize all his family.

As soon as Levin walked up to the bath, he was immediately presented with an experiment, and the experiment was a complete success. The cook, purposely summoned for this, leaned over the child. He frowned and shook his head in the negative. Kitty leaned over him, and he smiled radiantly, poked the sponge with his little hands, and smacked his lips, producing such a satisfied and odd noise, that not only Kitty and the nurse, but even Levin was struck with admiration.

The child was lifted out of the bath with one hand, rinsed with water, wrapped in a sheet, dried off, and after a piercing cry, handed to his mother.

"Well, I'm glad you're starting to love him," Kitty said to her husband after she had seated herself calmly in her usual seat with the child at her breast. "I'm very glad. It was already beginning to grieve me. You said you didn't feel anything for him."

"No, did I really say I didn't feel anything? I merely said that I was disappointed."

"What, disappointed in him?"

"I was disappointed not in him, but in my feeling. I expected more. I ex-

pected that, like a surprise, a new and pleasant feeling would fill me. And suddenly, instead of this, the disgust, the pity.”

She listened to him attentively across the child, putting her rings, which she had removed in order to bathe Mitya, back on her slender fingers.

“And above all, there is much more fear and pity than pleasure. Today, after this fright during the storm, I realized how much I love him.”

Kitty smiled radiantly.

“Were you very frightened?” she said. “So was I, but now that it’s passed I’m even more afraid. I’m going to go look at the oak. And how sweet Katavasov is! And the whole day was so pleasant. You’re so good with Sergei Ivanovich when you want to be. Oh, go on, join them. After the bath here it’s always hot and steamy.”

19

Walking out of the nursery and being alone again, Levin immediately remembered the thought in which something was unclear.

Instead of going to the drawing room, where he could hear voices, he stopped on the terrace, leaned on the railing, and began looking at the sky.

It was quite dark already, and there were no clouds in the south, where he was looking. There were clouds on the opposite side. From that direction he saw lightning blaze and heard distant thunder. Levin listened closely to the drops falling evenly from the linden trees in the garden and looked at the familiar triangle of stars and at the Milky Way with its branchings crossing through the middle of it. At each flash of lightning not only the Milky Way but even the bright stars vanished, but as soon as the lightning dimmed, again, as if thrown by some accurate hand, they appeared in the same places.

“Well, what is it that’s bothering me?” Levin said to himself, feeling in advance that the solution to his doubts, although he did not know it yet, was already there in his soul.

“Yes, one obvious, undoubted manifestation of Divinity is the laws of goodness, which appeared to the world as a revelation and which I feel inside, and in the recognition of which I do not unite but am united willy-nilly with other people into a single community of believers called the church. Well, and the Jews, the Mohammedans, the Confucians, the Buddhists—what are they?” he asked himself the same question that had seemed to him dangerous. “Are these hundreds of millions of people really deprived of that greatest good without which life has no meaning?” He thought about this but immediately corrected himself. “But what am I asking?” he said to himself. “I’m asking about the re-

lationship to Divinity of all the various faiths of all mankind. I'm asking about the common manifestation of God to all the world with all its nebulae. What am I doing? Without a doubt, knowledge inaccessible to reason has been revealed to me personally, to my heart, and I am obstinately trying to express this knowledge in reason and words.

"Don't I know that the stars don't move?" he asked himself, looking at the bright planet which had already changed its position in relation to the birch's top branch. "But looking at the movement of the stars, I cannot imagine the earth's rotation, and I'm right in saying that the stars move.

"Could the astronomers have understood and calculated anything if they had taken into account all the complicated and various movements of the earth? All their wonderful conclusions about the distances, weight, movements, and disturbances of heavenly bodies are based merely on the apparent movement of the heavenly bodies around an immobile earth, on the same movement which is now before me and which has been this way for millions of people for ages and was and always will be identical and can always be believed. And just as astronomers' conclusions not based on observations of the visible sky with respect to a single meridian and a single horizon are idle and shaky, so too will my conclusions be shaky if not based on that understanding of goodness which for everyone has always been and always will be identical and which was revealed to me by Christianity and can always be trusted in my soul. The question of other faiths and their relationship to Divinity I cannot and have no right to decide."

"You're still here?" the voice of Kitty, who was on her way by the same route to the drawing room, said suddenly. "You're not upset about anything, are you?" she said, gazing attentively into his face by the light of the stars.

Even so, she would not have been able to examine his face had it not been for the lightning again, which hid the stars but illuminated him. By the lightning's flash she made out his entire face, and seeing that he was calm and joyous, she smiled at him.

"She understands," he thought. "She knows what I'm thinking. Should I tell her or not? Yes, I will." But the very moment he was about to begin speaking, she began as well.

"Here's what, Kostya! Do something for me," she said. "Go to the corner room and look and see how everything's been arranged for Sergei Ivanovich. I feel awkward. Have they put in the new washstand?"

"Sure, certainly I'll go," said Levin, standing up and kissing her.

"No, there's no need to speak," he thought when she passed in front of him. "It's a secret only I need to know, important and inexpressible in words."

"This new feeling has not changed me, has not made me happy, or suddenly

illuminated things as I had dreamed—just like my feeling for my son. There was no surprise there either. But faith—not faith—I don't know what it is—but this feeling has come just as imperceptibly through my sufferings and settled firmly in my soul.

“I will still get angry at Ivan the coachman, I will still argue, I will express my thoughts ineptly, there will be a wall between the holy of holies of my soul and other people, even my wife; I will still blame her for my own terror and then repent of it, I will still not understand with my reason why I pray, and will go on praying—but my life now, my whole life, regardless of whatever may happen to me, each minute of it, is not only not meaningless, as it was before, but possesses the undoubted meaning of that goodness I have the power to put into it!”

The End
1873–1877

NOTES

Epigraph: Conventionally, this quotation, when taken from the Old Testament, threatens divine punishment for sinners; when taken from the New Testament, it bids us not to punish sinners ourselves but to leave punishment to God.

Introduction

1. Leo Tolstoy, “Why Do Men Stupefy Themselves?” *Recollections and Essays*, trans. Aylmer Maude (London: Oxford University Press, 1937, rpt. 1961), 81.

Translator’s Note

1. *Tolstoy Studies Journal* 1 (1988): 1–12.

Part I

1. In *War and Peace*, in a draft of *Anna Karenina*, and elsewhere, Tolstoy cites a French proverb: “Happy people have no history.” Carlyle attributes to Montesquieu: “Happy the people whose annals are blank in history books!” The idea is that happy families resemble each other because they have no dramatic events worthy of a history, but unhappy families each have their own story.

2. The original repeats the root word for “house” or “home” several times, and “servants” could be translated as “domestics.”

3. Stiva is an Anglicized nickname, presumably derived from Steve, as the English equivalent of the Russian Stepan, softened to Stiva.

4. “Il mio tesoro” is an aria from Mozart’s *Don Giovanni*.

5. Dolly is an Anglicized version of Darya, written in Cyrillic letters and pronounced as if it were a Russian word.

6. Oblonsky quotes *Reflexes of the Brain* (1863), by I. M. Sechenov (1829–1905).

7. According to the *Primary Chronicle* (or more literally *The Story of Bygone Years*), a history of the Eastern Slavs from about 850 to 1110, Riurik was a Varangian (Viking), the first prince of the various Slavic tribes as a group, and so the earliest possible ancestor for a Russian nobleman.

8. Jeremy Bentham (1748–1832) and John Stuart Mill (1806–1873) were British utilitarian philosophers, favored by liberals and radicals.

9. Friedrich Ferdinand von Beust (1809–1886) was an important government minister of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

10. Like French, Russian uses the second person singular to indicate intimacy.

11. The portrait is of the tsar, and the looking glass is a Mirror of Justice, a prism bearing engravings of the edicts of Peter the Great, an emblem of justice found in government offices.

12. The zemstvo was an organ of local government, an elected body established in 1864 as part of Alexander II's Great Reforms. Henceforth "council" or "district council." A pood is about thirty-six pounds.

13. The name Kitty is an Anglicization of Katerina.

14. A desyatina is a little more than two and a half acres.

15. Charles Darwin's *The Descent of Man, and Selection in Relation to Sex* was published in Russian translation in 1871.

16. Keiss, Wurst, Knaust, and Pripasov are invented names, intended as parody.

17. Less-accomplished skaters often used chairs equipped with runners to maintain balance.

18. Rice powder (poudre de riz) and toilet vinegar (vinaigre de toilette) are cosmetics.

19. Levin invokes the simplest possible Russian diet. Here, kasha is buckwheat groats.

20. An inexact quote from Pushkin's poem "From Anacreon."

21. From Pushkin's poem "Remembrance."

22. Cf. Psalms 51:1.

23. "It is heavenly when I master / My earthly desire; / But when I do not succeed / I still take my pleasure." Misquoted from Heinrich Heine's *Reisebilder*.

24. "Lovely fallen creatures": a paraphrase of Pushkin's *Feast during the Plague* (1830).

25. Cf. Luke 7:47: "Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much."

26. Mr. Podsnap, from *Our Mutual Friend*. See especially part I, chapter 11, "Podsnappery."

27. Plato distinguishes between sensual love and nonsensual, spiritual ("platonic") love.

28. "Women's higher courses" were first instituted in Moscow in 1872.

29. Spiritualism became fashionable in Russia in the 1870s and was widely discussed even in intellectual circles.

30. In the ring game, the player in the middle of a circle tries to guess which of the other players is holding the ring.

31. Diminutive of Darya.

32. Military school for aristocratic youth.

33. Bezique was a fashionable card game.

34. "Let him be ashamed who thinks evil," motto of the prestigious English Order of the Garter, founded 1348. Also the last line of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*.

35. The italicized phrase is in English in the original.

36. Belle-soeur: sister-in-law.

37. Prostitutes.

38. Alyosha is a diminutive of Alexei.

39. “You are head over heels. So much the better, my dear, so much the better.”
40. A sazhen is equal to about seven feet.
41. Seryozha is a diminutive of Sergei.
42. “Casting stones”: cf. John 8:7.
43. The first public theater in Moscow—in contrast to the government-controlled imperial theaters—opened in 1873.
44. Sunday schools were part of a progressive movement to educate workers, which the government stepped in to control in 1874.
45. More literally, “Don’t use the formal ‘you’ with her,” as Levin has just done.
46. Levin’s is a type of simple, comfortable, low-slung sleigh.
47. “The people”: peasants.
48. John Tyndall’s *Heat Considered as a Mode of Motion* was translated and published in St. Petersburg in 1864.
49. “Skeletons” is in English in the original.
50. Speeches in Parliament and fox hunting are the signatures of English novelist Anthony Trollope, so presumably Anna is reading one of his six Palliser novels. The one that seems closest to *Anna Karenina* is the first of the series, *Can You Forgive Her?*
51. “Unifying the churches”: that is, the Russian Orthodox Church with other Christian churches.
52. A saying of Goethe’s: *Ohne Hast, ohne Rast*.
53. An invented name, possibly parodying Leconte de Lisle or Comte de Villers de l’Isle-Adam. The title Tolstoy invents means “The Poetry of Hell.”
54. The Français: the French theater.
55. Rebecca: presumably the Jewess from Walter Scott’s *Ivanhoe*.

Part II

1. *Vieux saxe*: German porcelain.
2. “Let us understand one another.”
3. Christine Nilsson (1843–1921), a famous Swedish singer, who was a great success in Russia in 1872–1873.
4. Cf. Matthew 5:9.
5. Titular councilor: a modest rank in the civil service.
6. “Bonne chance”: good luck.
7. Wilhelm Kaulbach (1805–1874), a famous German painter.
8. “Small talk” is in English in the original.
9. A color, literally “devil pink.”
10. My dear.
11. Opera bouffe, from the Italian *opera buffa*, “comic opera.”
12. La Marquise de Rambouillet (1588–1665) formed an early and influential literary *salon* in Paris.
13. “Sneering” is in English in the original.
14. “A one in physics”: the lowest possible grade.

15. Perhaps an allusion to Genesis 2:18.
16. Krasnaya Gorka: a popular festival falling approximately one week after Easter.
17. An *osminnik* is one-quarter of a *desyatina*, or about five-eighths of an acre.
18. *Pirozhki* are small pies with meat, cheese, or vegetable filling.
19. *Ossian* was a Scottish epic poet, purportedly authentic, but actually invented by the Scottish poet James Macpherson.
20. Tolstoy seems to have made a slip. Being in the west, Venus would be setting, not rising.
21. Quoting from Gavriil Derzhavin's ode "God."
22. See Goethe's novel *The Sorrows of Young Werther*.
23. Beginning in the fourth century BC, ancient geographers wrote of Thule as an island at the world's extreme north, and it acquired legendary status. The line comes from Gounod's *Faust*, based on Goethe's *Faust*.
24. A *verst* is a little more than a kilometer, or about 3,500 feet.
25. Critics have seen this touch as a remarkable example of Tolstoyan realism: the romantic hero has a bald spot.
26. The italicized phrase is in English in the original; he then says the same thing in Russian.
27. "Pluck" is in English in the original, here and in next paragraph.
28. The italicized phrase is not in English, but translated into Russian in the original.
29. The term is in English in the original.
30. The italicized phrase is in English in the original.
31. He says the same thing twice in English, then twice in Russian.
32. An *arshin* is equal to about two and one-third feet.
33. Local official, elected by the provincial nobility.
34. "The flavor of the sauce."
35. The German phrase means "Prince Shcherbatsky, with wife and daughter."
36. *Fürstin*: princess.
37. "The last war": the Franco-Prussian War (1870–1871).
38. *Kurliste*: the list of people at the spa.
39. *Engouements*: infatuations.
40. *Sa compagne*: his companion.
41. "One must never overdo."
42. Matthew 5:39–40 and Luke 6:29.
43. A religious and philanthropic movement founded by German Lutheran theologian P. J. Spener in 1675.
44. The Academy of Arts was founded 1757 in St. Petersburg.
45. An allusion to Matthew 6:1–4, which bids us do good deeds without calling attention to them. "But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth."
46. "Eminence, Excellency, Serene Highness."
47. That is, *Kitty*, but using a Russian diminutive.

Part III

1. Trinity Sunday is the Russian Orthodox Church's equivalent of Pentecost.
2. Château Lafite, a fine Bordeaux wine.
3. A common lightly fermented malt drink, often made from rye. The old man is joking.
4. Under serfdom, *corvée* was a system whereby peasants owed several days' labor per week to the landowner.
5. "Work cure."
6. The French term means "impulsive."
7. Metempsychosis is the transmigration of souls.
8. English in the original.
9. In this case, the St. Peter's, Dormition, and Advent fasts.
10. November 14, the eve of the Advent fast.
11. Vanka is a diminutive of Ivan.
12. Menelaus was the husband of Helen of Troy, whose elopement with Paris occasioned the Trojan War. *La Belle Hélène* was a comic opera by Jacques Offenbach (1819–1880).
13. Tables discovered in Eugubium (now Gubbi, Italy) in 1444 that provide evidence for the early Umbrian dialect.
14. I.e., the non-Russian minorities.
15. "The seven wonders of the world."
16. The italicized clause is in English in the original.
17. A literal translation from the French: "nous a fait faux bond."
18. A literal translation from the French: "jeter les bonnets par-dessus les moulins."
19. "Terrible infant": a literal rendering of the French *enfant terrible*.
20. "The unexpected young guest": one of the young grand dukes is implied.
21. "Doing the washing."
22. Decembrist: In December 1825, upon the death of Alexander I, a movement of liberal noblemen led an uprising against the future tsar, Nicholas I. Many were exiled to Siberia.
23. "That's nothing but rot."
24. The French clause means "It's no subtler than that."
25. Fardeau: load.
26. "Down-to-earth."
27. A four-wheeled horse-drawn vehicle.
28. Thereby indicating that he was the district marshal of the nobility.
29. *Hélène*: the Offenbach operetta, as mentioned above.
30. Alexander II freed the serfs in 1861.
31. Peter the Great (1672–1725), Catherine the Great (1729–1796), and Alexander II (1818–1881).
32. The double-entry method, first developed in northern Italy.
33. Franz Hermann Schulze-Delitzsch (1808–1883), a German economist and

founder of the cooperative movement; Ferdinand Lassalle (1825–1864), German socialist who organized a cooperative association; the Mülhausen or Mulhouse system provided inexpensive housing for workers.

34. Frederick the Great of Prussia (1712–1786).

35. Herbert Spencer (1820–1903), English philosopher and social theorist.

36. Levin means that we should think not of abstract units of labor but of the work of a specific people with a particular culture, that is, not the laborer but “the Russian peasant.”

37. The *artel* was a common type of collective in Russia at the time.

38. Invented names—a German, an Englishman, a Frenchman, and an Italian.

39. The bogatyr is the hero of Russian epic songs.

40. *Métayers*: tenant farmers.

Part IV

1. Bliny are Russian pancakes.

2. I.e., an evening of debauchery, from *Attic Nights*, written by Aulus Gellius in the second century AD.

3. She is referring to her husband’s continued use of the familiar form of “you.”

4. “You must beat the iron, pound it, knead it.”

5. “The statement of a fact.”

6. “An order around his neck”: a decoration for service to the state.

7. The public trial was a recent Russian innovation, resulting from the judicial reform of 1864, itself one of the many modernizing reforms undertaken by Alexander II.

8. That is, he means, we don’t give discounts.

9. Misquoted from Afanasy Fet’s translation of a poem by Georg Friedrich Daumer, “Nicht düstre, Theosoph, so tief!”

10. A Parisian-style *café chantant* in Moscow.

11. Attic salt: dry wit.

12. *Beau-frère*: brother-in-law.

13. The proverb: “Upon meeting, you are judged by your clothes, upon parting, by your wits.”

14. The French clause means “let us be frank.”

15. The proverb in full, “Long of hair, short of wit.”

16. “As a threesome.”

17. Cf. Matthew 5:44 and Luke 6:27.

18. The implications of the peasant commune, felt to be a national Russian institution not imported from the West, were widely debated.

19. Quoted from Nikolai Gogol’s story “The Diary of a Madman.”

20. A jeweler.

21. *Froom’s Railway Guide for Russia and the Continent of Europe*.

22. “Whom [God] wants to destroy He deprives of his reason.”

23. Probably St. Mary of Egypt, a prostitute who converted to Christianity and spent forty-seven years in the desert.

24. Picot is a loop of thread created for functional or ornamental purposes along the edge of lace.
25. English in the original.
26. Eliseyev's: a famous food shop.
27. Under Russian law, as the lawyer has explained, the grounds for divorce would have to be adultery, and the adulterous party would be forbidden to remarry. Stiva is suggesting, since Anna wants to remarry, that Karenin plead that he is the adulterer.

Part V

1. The platform leading into the sanctuary.
2. The last sentence is misquoted from the classic Russian play *Woe from Wit*, by Alexander Griboedov, exactly as Lermontov misquoted the same passage in his novel *A Hero of Our Time*.
3. Podkolesin, in Nikolai Gogol's comedy *The Marriage*, escapes marriage by jumping out the window.
4. First she uses the familiar "you," then corrects herself to the formal "you."
5. Madame Lvova: Kitty's sister Natalie.
6. She's alluding to the traditional idea that whoever steps on the rug first will predominate in the marriage.
7. Kamelaukion: a cylindrical clerical hat.
8. The Holy Synod became the governing body of the Russian church when Peter the Great abolished the patriarchate.
9. Studio.
10. Alexander Andreyevich Ivanov (1806–1858), a painter, David Friedrich Strauss (1808–1874), a theologian, and Ernest Renan (1823–1892), a historian, all emphasized Christ as a historical figure rather than a divinity.
11. Charlotte Corday d'Armont (1768–1793) went to the guillotine for assassinating Jean-Paul Marat, a politician of the French Revolution.
12. Maecenas was a Roman of the Augustan period whose name became a byword for patron of the arts.
13. Annie is an anglicized nickname for Anna.
14. *D'emblée*: "all at once."
15. That is, the mass periodicals favored by the educated and those aspiring to be educated.
16. Elisa Rachel was a French actress who helped revive French classical tragedy.
17. Golenishchev alludes to Ivanov's *The Appearance of Christ to the People*.
18. Capua, Italy, is where Hannibal's troops became "soft" in their winter quarters.
19. Cf. Matthew 11:25.
20. This is the one chapter of the novel with a title.
21. A literal translation of a French proverb: *Dans le doute abstiens-toi*.
22. "I've forced my way in."
23. "His burden is light": cf. Matthew 11:30.

24. Cf. Matthew 23:12; Luke 14:11, 18:14.
25. Komisarov was a peasant who was granted nobility for saving Alexander II from a would-be assassin.
26. Jovan Ristić was Serbia's foreign minister during the war with Turkey. The "Slavic question" pertained to the situation of the Slavic peoples under Ottoman rule.
27. One of the highest orders in tsarist Russia.
28. "He arouses passions."
29. The French phrase means "arm in arm."
30. "That is a man who has no—"
31. Cf. 1 Corinthians 7:32–33.
32. That is, the apostle Andrew, called by Jesus (John 1:40).
33. An Orthodox Russian celebrates the feast day of his patron saint, after whom he was christened.
34. See Genesis 5:24 and Hebrews 11:5.
35. "It's done."
36. Patti was a prominent Italian opera singer.
37. The French phrase means "is not compromising."
38. Baignoire: orchestra box.
39. "Pay court to Madame Karenina?"
40. "She is creating a sensation. They ignore Patti for her."
41. "The mold for them has been broken"; derived from Ludovico Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*: "Nature made him and then broke the mold."

Part VI

1. *Dans la force de l'âge*: "in the prime of life"; *un jeune homme*: "a young man."
2. Declension of the Latin third-person singular pronoun, "He, she, it, his, hers, its."
3. *Sainte nitouche*: "a sanctimonious person."
4. English in the original.
5. "Good appetite—good conscience! This chicken will drop to the bottom of my boots."
6. Charioteer of Achilles in Homer's *Iliad*; a common term for a coachman.
7. The italicized phrase is in English in the original.
8. "What are they saying?"
9. "Come, it's interesting."
10. "They were charming."
11. "Delicious!"
12. Tax farmers were private individuals who collected taxes for the state in exchange for a fee.
13. *Bonhomie*: "good nature."
14. "The king is dead, long live the king!"
15. "It's of no consequence."

16. “Gentlemen, come quickly!”
17. Gretchen: diminutive of Margarete, a character in Goethe’s *Faust*.
18. Enter.
19. That is, undergarments. “Ablutions” is in English in the original.
20. The quoted line, alluding to the burdens of authority, occurs in Pushkin’s historical drama *Boris Godunov*.
21. “Just imagine, she . . .”
22. The French clause means “he pays court to a young and pretty woman.”
23. “I believe Veslovsky is courting Kitty a little bit.”
24. “But this is ridiculous! . . . But this is most ridiculous!”
25. “Besides, it’s ridiculous.”
26. “One may be jealous, but to such a point is most ridiculous.”
27. Cf. Genesis 3:16.
28. *Dada*: hobbyhorse.
29. “It is a pettiness.”
30. “And you forget your duty.”
31. “Excuse me, my pockets are full of it.”
32. “But you’ve come too late.”
33. That is, she has adopted an English nickname, rather than the usual Russian one.
34. “She is very sweet.”
35. English in the original.
36. “But I shall spare you nothing.”
37. “And then, he’s very refined.”
38. “He is very sweet and naïve.”
39. “A little court.”
40. “It is such a pretty home, so refined. Quite in the English style. We gather in the morning for breakfast and then we go our separate ways.”
41. “It will be admirable.”
42. “A game of lawn tennis.”
43. “But we must not leave poor Veslovsky and Tushkevich cooling their heels in the boat.”
44. “Schools have become so common.”
45. “It is not a last resort.”
46. “. . . get over all these delicate feelings. It is a matter of the welfare and existence of Anna and her children.”
47. “Oh yes, . . . It is a very simple thing.”
48. The Vienna Universal Exposition of 1873 was a world’s fair exhibiting the latest commercial products, including those pertaining to agriculture and machinery.
49. “It depends . . . you must allow for the price of wire.”
50. “It can be calculated, Excellency.”
51. “Too complicated, too much trouble.”

52. “If one wants profit, one must also have trouble.” The German has been mixing German and Russian, and on this pattern Veslovsky produces a pseudoproverb.
53. “I adore German.”
54. “Stop it.”
55. “Forgive me, but he is slightly cracked.”
56. “At this rate.”
57. English in the original.
58. The English words “croquet ground” are transliterated into the Russian alphabet as a single word.
59. “At bottom, she is the most depraved woman alive.”
60. “Isn’t it immoral?”
61. “I inspire passions.”
62. “Excessively down-to-earth.”
63. Owner of a Moscow bookshop.
64. “Oh holy simplicity!” Words attributed to Czech religious reformer Jan Hus as he was being burned at the stake for heresy, when he saw a peasant bringing sticks for the fire.
65. “Cognac.”
66. “Thick as thieves.”
67. *À propos de bottes*: irrelevantly.
68. “Put at his ease.”
69. “Play the telegraph.”
70. The brethren: “brother Slavs” in the Balkans.
71. The quoted phrase is in English in the original.
72. Hippolyte Taine (1828–1893) was a French historian.

Part VII

1. The Montenegrins were resisting Turkish rule.
2. I.e., the autonomy of the university from government control.
3. A French-language daily published in St. Petersburg with the support of the Foreign Ministry.
4. F. I. Buslaev (1818–1897) was the author of a Russian historical grammar.
5. Fighting first broke out against the Turks in Herzegovina, in 1875.
6. Mily Balakirev composed a version of *King Lear*, but this is presumably Tolstoy’s parody.
7. The German phrase means “the eternal feminine.”
8. Pauline Lucca (1841–1908) was an Austrian-born soprano and actress of Italian parentage.
9. *Folle journée*: “the follies of a day,” a music festival, the phrase taken from Beaumarchais’s *La Folle journée, ou le Mariage de Figaro*.
10. “A thousand things,” meaning their love.
11. Ivan Krylov (1769–1844), the preeminent Russian fabulist, wrote “The Pike.”

12. “A brood hen.”
13. *Trellage*: trelliswork. The French word is transliterated into the Russian alphabet.
14. Presumably, Gustave Doré (1833–1883).
15. Emile Zola (1840–1902) and Alphonse Daudet (1840–1897), French authors.
16. *Conceptions* and *combinaisons* are in French.
17. English in the original.
18. “My heart is not big enough.”
19. “That never succeeded for me.”
20. “Social position.”
21. “That the ice is broken.”
22. City council.
23. *Assiette*: policy.
24. “Your scruples.”
25. “You profess to be a freethinker.”
26. *Cafés chantants*: nightclubs.
27. Cf. Psalm 68:1–2. “Let God arise, let his enemies be scattered: let them also that hate thee flee before him. As smoke is driven away, so drive them away; as wax melteth before the fire, so let the wicked perish at the presence of God.”
28. *Train*: way of life.
29. “Jules Landau, the famous Jules Landau, the clairvoyant?”
30. *Commis*: shop assistant.
31. “The friends of our friends are our friends.”
32. The story of Saul’s conversion appears in Acts 9.
33. “For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.” James 2:26.
34. “Do you understand English?”
35. The titles, given here in English, were titles of actual religious tracts.
36. “My friend.”
37. “Give him your hand. You see?”
38. “Make the person who came in last, the one who questions, leave! Make him leave!”
39. “You will excuse me, but you see. . . . Return at ten o’clock, or still better, tomorrow.”
40. “Make him leave!”
41. “It’s me, isn’t it?”
42. “Bathing costume.”
43. “Furnished rooms.”
44. “So much the worse for her.”
45. The Trinity Monastery of St. Sergius, not far from Moscow.
46. “Tyutkin, hairdresser. I have my hair done by Tyutkin.”
47. English in the original.
48. “My aunt!”

Part VIII

1. The title is obviously a parody, perhaps alluding to *The Northern Bee*.
2. Heterodoxy: in 1875, Poland's Uniates, or Eastern-rite Christians, were pressured into converting to Russian Orthodoxy; "their American friends": Alexander II supported the North in the American Civil War; famine occurred in the Samara region in 1873; the Slavonic question refers again to Slav nationalist risings against the Turks in the Balkans.
3. Before Russia declared war on Turkey in 1877, volunteers joined the Slav insurgents.
4. *Zhivio!*: "Hail!" in Serbian.
5. English in the original.
6. "The little miseries of human life."
7. "Hail to Thee."
8. Required to obtain a commission.
9. "Complete prostration."
10. "It is not viewed favorably in Petersburg."
11. Yovan Ristich (1831–1899), Serbian statesman; Milan Obrenovič (1854–1901), then prince of Serbia.
12. The philosophy of Arthur Schopenhauer (1788–1860) exercised great influence on Tolstoy himself, and he often quoted it.
13. Alexei Stepanovich Khomiakov (1804–1860), Russian poet, theologian, and Slavophile philosopher.
14. Herbert Spencer (1820–1903), English philosopher.
15. "Impious Hagarenes": Muslims, considered as the descendants of Hagar (see Genesis 16).
16. Since the term "the people" is usually applied above all to the peasants, Levin's statement is bound to seem paradoxical and provocative.
17. Emelyan Pugachev (died 1775) was a pretender to the throne who led a peasant and Cossack revolt against the tsar.
18. Jean-Baptiste Alphonse Karr (1808–1890) was a French journalist and novelist who wrote against the Franco-Prussian War (1870). His comment "the more things change, the more they stay the same" (1849) was, and still is, widely quoted.
19. Cf. Matthew 10:34.
20. According to the Russian Primary Chronicle, the Russian state began when the people summoned the Varangians (Vikings) to rule over them on condition that the people would be allowed to surrender the burden of choice and decision.

LEO NIKOLAEVICH TOLSTOY (1828–1910) was born a count at Yasnaya Polyana, his family’s estate in Tula Province. As a young man, he fought in the Crimean War, traveled to Europe in the late 1850s and early 1860s, and then returned to Yasnaya Polyana, where he married Sofia Andreyevna Behrs, by whom he had thirteen children. Tolstoy’s long writing career began when he was in his twenties with *Sevastopol Stories*, written after his return from fighting in the Caucasus, and went on to include many works of fiction, including *Childhood*, *Boyhood*, *Youth*, *Hadji Murad*, *The Death of Ivan Ilyich*, *The Kreutzer Sonata*, and two classic Realistic novels of Russian—and world—literature: *War and Peace* (1869) and *Anna Karenina* (1877). In the 1870s, Tolstoy underwent a moral crisis that refocused his thought and writing on radical Christian anarchy and “nonresistance to evil,” in such works as *Father Sergius* and *The Kingdom of God Is Within You*, which had a significant influence on the nonviolent resistance movement. Tolstoy died at age eighty-two at the Astapovo train station, where he had fled in the dead of night after renouncing his privileged circumstances.

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Morson’s books straddle the boundary between the analysis of particular literary works and the pursuit of broad philosophical questions. In his classic studies of Tolstoy’s *War and Peace* (*Hidden in Plain View*) and *Anna Karenina*

(*“Anna Karenina” in Our Time*), he developed the idea of “prosaics,” to describe both an approach to literature centering on the Realist novel and a view of life that places the greatest value on the ordinary, messy events of daily life.

Ranging over many fields, he has also written extensively on the nature of time (*Narrative and Freedom*), our love for famous quotations (*The Words of Others*), and the philosophical aphorism as a literary form (*The Long and Short of It*).