

GREAT BOOKS
SEMINARS IN OJAI



Russian Short Stories II

October 11-12, 2003

Tolstoy, Chekov, Dostoyevsky

The Devil

5 But I say unto you, that every one that looketh on a woman to
lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his
heart.

And if thy right eye causeth thee to stumble, pluck it out,
and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of
10 thy members should perish, and not thy whole body be cast into
hell.

And if thy right hand causeth thee to stumble, cut it off, and
cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy
members should perish, and not thy whole body go into hell.

15 Matthew v. 28, 29, 30

I

20 A brilliant career lay before Eugene Iretnev. He had
everything necessary to attain it: an admirable education at home,
high honours when he graduated in law at Petersburg University, and
connexions in the highest society through his recently deceased
father; he had also already begun service in one of the Ministries
25 under the protection of the minister. Moreover he had a fortune;
even a large one, though insecure. His father had lived abroad and
in Petersburg, allowing his sons, Eugene and Andrew (who was older
than Eugene and in the Horse Guards), six thousand rubles a year
each, while he himself and his wife spent a great deal. He only
30 used to visit his estate for a couple of months in summer and did
not concern himself with its direction, entrusting it all to an
unscrupulous manager who also failed to attend to it, but in whom
he had complete confidence.

After the father's death, when the brothers began to divide
the property, so many debts were discovered that their lawyer even 40
advised them to refuse the inheritance and retain only an estate
left them by their grandmother, which was valued at a hundred
thousand rubles. But a neighbouring landed-proprietor who had done
business with old Irtenev, that is to say, who had promissory notes
from him and had come to Petersburg on that account, said that in 45
spite of the debts they could straighten out affairs so as to
retain a large fortune (it would only be necessary to sell the
forest and some outlying land, retaining the rich Semenov estate
with four thousand desyatins of black earth, the sugar factory, and
two hundred desyatins of water-meadows) if one devoted oneself to 50
the management of the estate, settled there, and farmed it wisely
and economically.

And so, having visited the estate in spring (his father had
died in Lent), Eugene looked into everything, resolved to retire 55
from the Civil Service, settle in the country with his mother, and
undertake the management with the object of preserving the main
estate. He arranged with his brother, with whom he was very
friendly, that he would pay him either four thousand rubles a year,
or a lump sum of eighty thousand, for which Andrew would hand over
to him his share of his inheritance. 60

So he arranged matters and, having settled down with his
mother in the big house, began managing the estate eagerly, yet
cautiously.

It is generally supposed the Conservatives are usually old
people, and that those in favour of change are the young. That is 65
not quite correct. Usually Conservatives are young people: those
who want to live but who do not think about how to live, and have

1 not time to think, and therefore take as a model for themselves a
way of life that they have seen.

Thus it was with Eugene. Having settled in the village, his
aim and ideal was to restore the form of life that had existed, not
5 in his father's time — his father had been a bad manager — but in
his grandfather's. And now he tried to resurrect the general
spirit of his grandfather's life — in the house, the garden, and
in the estate management — of course with changes suited to the
times — everything on a large scale — good order, method, and
10 everybody satisfied. But to do this entailed much work. It was
necessary to meet the demands of the creditors and the banks, and
for that purpose to sell some land and arrange renewals of credit.
It was also necessary to get money to carry on (partly by farming
out land, and partly by hiring labour) the immense operations on
15 the Semenov estate, with its four hundred desyatins of ploughland
and its sugar factory, and to deal with the garden so that it
should not seem to be neglected or in decay.

There was much work to do, but Eugene had plenty of strength -
- physical and mental. He was twenty-six, of medium height,
20 strongly built, with muscles developed by gymnastics. He was full-
blooded and his whole neck was very red, his teeth and lips were
bright, and his hair soft and curly though not thick. His only
physical defect was short-sightedness, which he had himself
developed by using spectacles, so that he could not now do without
25 a pince-nez, which had already formed a line on the bridge of his
nose.

Such was his physically. For his spiritual portrait it might
be said that the better people knew him the better they liked him.
His mother had always loved him more than anyone else, and now
30 after her husband's death she concentrated on him not only her
whole affection but her whole life. Nor was it only his mother who
so loved him. All his comrades at the high school and the
university not merely liked him very much, but respected him. He
had this effect on all who met him. It was impossible not to
35 believe what he said, impossible to suspect any deception or

falseness in one who had such an open, honest face and in
particular such eyes. 36

In general his personality helped him much in his affairs. A
creditor who would have refused another trusted him. The clerk,
the village Elder, or a peasant, who would have played a dirty
40 trick and cheated someone else, forgot to deceive under the
pleasant impression of intercourse with this kindly, agreeable, and
above all candid man.

It was the end of May. Eugene had somehow managed in town to
get the vacant land freed from the mortgage, so as to sell it to a
45 merchant, and had borrowed money from that same merchant to
replenish his stock, that is to say, to procure horses, bulls, and
carts, and in particular to begin to build a necessary farm-house.
The matter had been arranged. The timber was being carted, the
carpenters were already at work, and manure for the estate was
50 being brought on eighty carts, but everything still hung by a
thread.

II

Amid these cares something came about which though unimportant
tormented Eugene at the time. As a young man he had lived as all
healthy young men live, that is, he had had relations with women of
various kinds. He was not a libertine but neither, as he himself
60 said, was he a monk. He only turned to this, however, in so far as
was necessary for physical health and to have his mind free, as he
used to say. This had begun when he was sixteen and had gone on
satisfactorily — in the sense that he had never given himself up
to debauchery, never once been infatuated, and had never contracted
65 a disease. At first he had a seamstress in Petersburg, then she
got spoilt and he made other arrangements, and that side of his
affairs was so well secured that it did not trouble him.

But now he was living in the country for the second month and
did not at all know what he was to do. Compulsory self-restraint 70

1 was beginning to have a bad effect on him.

Must he really go to town for that purpose? And where to? How? That was the only thing that disturbed him; but as he was convinced that the thing was necessary and that he needed it, it
5 really became a necessity, and he felt that he was not free and that his eyes involuntarily followed every young woman.

He did not approve of having relations with a married woman or a maid in his own village. He knew by report that both his father and grandfather had been quite different in this matter from other
10 landowners of that time. At home they had never had any entanglements with peasant-women, and he had decided that he would not do so either; but afterwards, feeling himself ever more and more under compulsion and imagining with horror what might happen to him in the neighbouring country town, and reflecting on the fact
15 that the days of serfdom were now over, he decided that it might be done on the spot. Only it must be done so that no one should know of it, and not for the sake of debauchery but merely for health's sake — as he said to himself. And when he had decided this he became still more restless. When talking to the village Elder, the
20 peasants, or the carpenters, he involuntarily brought the conversation round to women, and when it turned to women he kept it on that theme. He noticed the women more and more.

III

25 To settle the matter in his own mind was one thing but to carry it out was another. To approach a woman himself was impossible. Which one? Where? It must be done through someone else, but to whom should he speak about it?

30 He happened to go into a watchman's hut in the forest to get a drink of water. The watchman had been his father's huntsman, and Eugene Ivanich chatted with him, and the man began telling some strange tales of hunting sprees. It occurred to Eugene Ivanich that it would be convenient to arrange matters in this hut, or in
35 the wood, only he did not know how to manage it and whether old

Daniel would undertake the arrangement. "Perhaps he will be
36 horrified at such a proposal and I shall have disgraced myself, but perhaps he will agree to it quite simply." So he thought while listening to Daniel's stories. Daniel was telling how once when
40 they had been stopping at the hut of the sexton's wife in an outlying field, he had brought a woman for Fedor Zakharich Pryanishnikov.

"It will be all right," thought Eugene.

"Your father, may the kingdom of heaven be his, did not go in
45 for nonsense of that kind."

"It won't do," thought Eugene. But to test the matter he said: "How was it you engaged on such bad things?"

"But what was there bad in it? She was glad, and Fedor Zakharich was satisfied, very satisfied. I got a ruble. Why, what
50 was he to do? He too is a lively limb apparently, and drinks wine."

"Yes, I may speak," thought Eugene, and at once proceeded to do so.

"And do you know, Daniel, I don't know how to endure it," —
55 he felt himself going scarlet.

Daniel smiled.

"I am not a monk — I have been accustomed to it."

He felt that what he was saying was stupid, but was glad to see that Daniel approved.

"Why of course, you should have told me long ago. It can all
60 be arranged," said he: "only tell me which one you want."

"Oh, it is really all the same to me. Of course not an ugly one, and she must be healthy."

"I understand!" said Daniel briefly. He reflected.

"Ah! There is a tasty morsel," he began. Again Eugene went
65 red. "A tasty morsel. See here, she was married last autumn." Daniel whispered — "and he hasn't been able to do anything. Think what that is worth to one who wants it!"

Eugene even frowned with shame.

"No, no," he said. "I don't want that at all. I want, on the
70

1 contrary (what could the contrary be?), on the contrary I only want
that she should be healthy and that there should be as little fuss
as possible — a woman whose husband is away in the army or
something of that kind.”

5 “I know. It’s Stepanida I must bring you. Her husband is
away in town, just the same as a soldier. And she is a fine woman,
and clean. You will be satisfied. As it is I was saying to her
the other day — you should go, but she...”

“Well then, when is it to be?”

10 “Tomorrow if you like. I shall be going to get some tobacco
and I will call in, and at the dinner-hour come here, or to the
bath-house behind the kitchen garden. There will be nobody about.
Besides after dinner everybody takes a nap.”

“All right then.”

15 A terrible excitement seized Eugene as he rode home. “What
will happen? What is a peasant woman like? Suppose it turns out
that she is hideous, horrible? No, she is handsome,” he told
himself, remembering some he had been noticing. “But what shall I
say? What shall I do?”

20 He was not himself all that day. Next day at noon he went to
the forester’s hut. Daniel stood at the door and silently and
significantly nodded towards the wood. The blood rushed to
Eugene’s heart, he was conscious of it and went to the kitchen
garden. No one was there. He went to the bath-house — there was
25 no one about, he looked in, came out, and suddenly heard the
crackling of a breaking twig. He looked round — and she was
standing in the thicket beyond the little ravine. He rushed there
across the ravine. There were nettles in it which he had not
noticed. They stung him and, losing the pince-nez from his nose,
30 he ran up the slope on the farther side. She stood there, in a
white embroidered apron, a red-brown skirt, and a bright red
kerchief, barefoot, fresh, firm, and handsome, and smiling shyly.

“There is a path leading round — you should have gone round,”
she said. “I came long ago, ever so long.”

35 He went up to her and, looking her over, touched her.

A quarter of an hour later they separated; he found his pince- 36
nez, called in to see Daniel, and in reply to his question: “Are
you satisfied, master?” gave him a ruble and went home.

He was satisfied. Only at first had he felt ashamed, then it 40
had passed off. And everything had gone well. The best thing was
that he now felt at ease, tranquil and vigorous. As for her, he
had not even seen her thoroughly. He remembered that she was
clean, fresh, not bad-looking, and simple, without any pretence.
“Whose wife is she?” said he to himself. “Pechnikov’s, Daniel
said. What Pechnikov is that? There are two households of that 45
name. Probably she is old Michael’s daughter-in-law. Yes, that
must be it. His son does live in Moscow. I’ll ask Daniel about it
some time.”

From then onward that previously important drawback to country 50
life — enforced self-restraint — was eliminated. Eugene’s
freedom of mind was no longer disturbed and he was able to attend
freely to his affairs.

And the matter Eugene had undertaken was far from easy: before 55
he had time to stop up one hole a new one would unexpectedly show
itself, and it sometimes seemed to him that he would not be able to
go through with it and that it would end in his having to sell the
estate after all, which would mean that all his efforts would be
wasted and that he had failed to accomplish what he had undertaken.
That prospect disturbed him most of all.

All this time more and more debts of his father’s unexpectedly 60
came to light. It was evident that towards the end of his life he
had borrowed right and left. At the time of the settlement in May,
Eugene had thought he at least knew everything, but in the middle
of the summer he suddenly received a letter from which it appeared
that there was still a debt of twelve thousand rubles to the widow 65
Esipova. There was no promissory note, but only an ordinary
receipt which his lawyer told him could be disputed. But it did
not enter Eugene’s head to refuse to pay a debt of his father’s
merely because the document could be challenged. He only wanted to
know for certain whether there had been such a debt. 70

1 “Mamma! Who is Kaleriya Vladimirovna Esipova?” he asked his mother when they met as usual for dinner.

“Esipova? she was brought up by your grandfather. Why?”

Eugene told his mother about the letter.

5 “I wonder she is not ashamed to ask for it. Your father gave her so much!”

“But do we owe her this?”

“Well now, how shall I put it? It is not a debt. Papa, out of his unbounded kindness...”

10 “Yes, but did Papa consider it a debt?”

“I cannot say. I don’t know. I only know it is hard enough for you without that.”

Eugene saw that Mary Pavlovna did not know what to say, and was as it were sounding him.

15 “I see from what you say that it must be paid,” said he. “I will go to see her tomorrow and have a chat, and see if it cannot be deferred.”

“Ah, how sorry I am for you, but you know that will be best. Tell her she must wait,” said Mary Pavlovna, evidently

20 tranquillized and proud of her son’s decision.

Eugene’s position was particularly hard because his mother, who was living with him, did not at all realize his position. She had been accustomed all her life long to live extravagantly that she could not even imagine to herself the position her son was in, that is to say, that today or tomorrow matters might shape themselves so that they would have nothing left and he would have to sell everything and live and support his mother on what salary he could earn, which at the very most would be two thousand rubles.

25 She did not understand that they could only save themselves from that position by cutting down expense in everything, and so she could not understand why Eugene was so careful about trifles, in expenditure on gardeners, coachmen, servants — even on food. Also, like most widows, she nourished feelings of devotion to the memory of her departed spouse quite different from those she had felt for him while he lived, and she did not admit the thought that

anything the departed had done or arranged could be wrong or could be altered. 36

Eugene by great efforts managed to keep up the garden and the conservatory with two gardeners, and the stables with two coachmen. And Mary Pavlovna naively thought that she was sacrificing herself for her son and doing all a mother could do, by not complaining of the food which the old man-cook prepared, of the fact that the paths in the park were not all swept clean, and that instead of footmen they had only a boy. 40

So, too, concerning this new debt, in which Eugene saw an almost crushing blow to all his undertakings, Mary Pavlovna only saw an incident displaying Eugene’s noble nature. Moreover she did not feel much anxiety about Eugene’s position, because she was confident that he would make a brilliant marriage which would put everything right. And he could make a very brilliant marriage: she knew a dozen families who would be glad to give their daughters to him. And she wished to arrange the matter as soon as possible. 45 50

IV

Eugene himself dreamt of marriage, but not in the same way as his mother. The idea of using marriage as a means of putting his affairs in order was repulsive to him. He wished to marry honourably, for love. He observed the girls whom he met and those he knew, and compared himself with them, but no decision had yet been taken. Meanwhile, contrary to his expectations, his relations with Stepanida continued, and even acquired the character of a settled affair. Eugene was so far from debauchery, it was so hard for him secretly to do this thing which he felt to be bad, that he could not arrange these meetings himself and even after the first one hoped not to see Stepanida again; but it turned out that after some time the same restlessness (due he believed to that cause) again overcame him. And his restlessness this time was no longer impersonal, but suggested just those same bright, black eyes, and 60 65 70

1 that deep voice, saying, “ever so long,” that same scent of
 something fresh and strong, and that same full breast lifting the
 bib of her apron, and all this in that hazel and maple thicket,
 bathed in bright sunlight.

5 Though he felt ashamed he again approached Daniel. And again
 a rendezvous was fixed for midday in the wood. This time Eugene
 looked her over more carefully and everything about her seemed
 attractive. He tried talking to her and asked about her husband.
 He really was Michael’s son and lived as a coachman in Moscow.

10 “Well, then, how is it you...” Eugene wanted to ask how it was
 she was untrue to him.

“What about ‘how is it?’” asked she. Evidently she was clever
 and quick-witted.

“Well, how is it you come to me?”

15 “There now,” said she merrily. “I bet he goes on the spree
 there. Why shouldn’t I?”

Evidently she was putting on an air of sauciness and
 assurance, and this seemed charming to Eugene. But all the same he
 did not himself fix a rendezvous with her. Even when she proposed
 20 that they should meet without the aid of Daniel, to whom she seemed
 not very well disposed, he did not consent. He hoped that this
 meeting would be the last. He like her. He thought such
 intercourse was necessary for him and that there was nothing bad
 about it, but in the depth of his soul there was a stricter judge
 25 who did not approve of it and hoped that this would be the last
 time, or if he did not hope that, at any rate did not wish to
 participate in arrangements to repeat it another time.

So the whole summer passed, during which they met a dozen
 times and always by Daniel’s help. It happened once that she could
 30 not be there because her husband had come home, and Daniel proposed
 another woman, but Eugene refused with disgust. Then the husband
 went away and the meetings continued as before, at first through
 Daniel, but afterwards he simply fixed the time and she came with
 another woman, Prokhovova — as it would not do for a peasant-woman
 35 to go about alone.

Once at the very time fixed for the rendezvous a family came 36
 to call on Mary Pavlovna, with the very girl she wished Eugene to
 marry, and it was impossible for Eugene to get away. As soon as he
 could do so, he went out as though to the thrashing floor, and
 round by the path to their meeting place in the wood. She was not 40
 there, but at the accustomed spot everything within reach had been
 broken — the black alder, the hazel-twigs, and even a young maple
 the thickness of a stake. She had waited, had become excited and
 angry, and had skittishly left him a remembrance. He waited and
 waited, and then went to Daniel to ask him to call her for 45
 tomorrow. She came and was just as usual.

So the summer passed. The meetings ere always arranged in the
 wood, and only once, when it grew towards autumn, in the shed that
 stood in her backyard.

It did not enter Eugene’s head that these relations of his had 50
 any importance for him. About her he did not even think. He gave
 her money and nothing more. At first he did not know and did not
 think that the affair was known and that she was envied throughout
 the village, or that her relations took money from her and
 encouraged her, and that her conception of any sin in the matter 55
 had been quite obliterated by the influence of the money and her
 family’s approval. It seemed to her that if people envied her,
 then what she was doing was good.

“It is simply necessary for my health,” thought Eugene. “I
 grant it is not right, and though no one says anything, everybody, 60
 or many people, know of it. The woman who comes with her knows.
 And once she knows she is sure to have told others. But what’s to
 be done? I am acting badly,” thought Eugene, “but what’s one to
 do? Anyhow it is not for long.

What chiefly disturbed Eugene was the thought of the husband. 65
 At first for some reason it seemed to him that the husband must be
 a poor sort, and this as it were partly justified his conduct. But
 he saw the husband and was struck by his appearance: he was a fine
 fellow and smartly dressed, in no way a worse man than himself, but
 surely better. At their next meeting he told her he had seen her 70

1 husband and had been surprised to see that he was such a fine
fellow.

“There’s not another man like him in the village,” said she
proudly.

5 This surprised Eugene, and the thought of the husband
tormented him still more after that. He happened to be at Daniel’s
one day and Daniel, having begun chatting said to him quite openly:

“And Michael asked me the other day: ‘Is it true that the
master is living with my wife?’ I said I did not know. ‘Anyway,’”

10 I said, “better with the master than with a peasant.”

“Well, and what did he say?”

“He said: ‘Wait a bit. I’ll get to know and I’ll give it her
all the same.’”

15 “Yes, if the husband returned to live here I would give her
up,” thought Eugene.

But the husband lived in town and for the present their
intercourse continued.

“When necessary I will break it off, and there will be nothing
left of it,” thought he.

20 And this seemed to him certain, especially as during the whole
summer many different things occupied him very fully: the erection
of the new farm-house, and the harvest and building, and above all
meeting the debts and selling the wasteland. All these were
affairs that completely absorbed him and on which he spent his
25 thoughts when he lay down and when he got up. All that was real
life. His intercourse — he did not even call it connection —
with Stepanida he paid no attention to. It is true that when the
wish to see her arose it came with such strength that he could
think of nothing else. But this did not last long. A meeting was
30 arranged, and he again forgot her for a week or even for a month.

In autumn Eugene often rode to town, and there became friendly
with the Annenskis. They had a daughter who had just finished the
Institute. And then, to Mary Pavlovna’s great grief, it happened
that Eugene “cheapened himself,” as she expressed it, by falling in
35 love with Liza Annenskaya and proposing to her.

From that time his relations with Stepanida ceased.

36

V

40 It is impossible to explain why Eugene chose Liza Annenskaya,
as it is always impossible to explain why a man chooses this and
not that woman. There were many reasons — positive and negative.
One reason was that she was not a very rich heiress such as his
mother sought for him, another that she was naive and to be pitied
45 in her relations with her mother, another that she was not a beauty
who attracted general attention to herself, and yet she was not
bad-looking. But the chief reason was that his acquaintance with
her began at the time when he was ripe for marriage. He fell in
love because he knew that he would marry.
50

Liza Annenskaya was at first merely pleasing to Eugene, but
when he decided to make her his wife his feelings for her became
much stronger. He felt that he was in love.

Liza was tall, slender, and long. Everything about her was
long; her face, and her nose (not prominently but downwards), and
55 her fingers, and her feet. The colour of her face was very
delicate, creamy white and delicately pink; she had long, soft, and
curly, light-brown hair, and beautiful eyes, clear, mild, and
confiding. Those eyes especially struck Eugene, and when he
thought of Liza he always saw those clear, mild, confiding eyes.
60

Such was she physically; he knew nothing of her spiritually,
but only saw those eyes. And those eyes seemed to tell him all he
needed to know. The meaning of their expression was this:

While still in the Institute, when she was fifteen, Liza used
continually to fall in love with all the attractive men she met and
65 was animated and happy only when she was in love. After leaving
the Institute she continued to fall in love in just the same way
with all the young men she met, and of course fell in love with
Eugene as soon as she made his acquaintance. It was this being in
love which gave her eyes that particular expression which so
70

1 captivated Eugene. Already that winter she had been in love with
two young men at one and the same time, and blushed and became
excited not only when they entered the room but whenever their
names were mentioned. But afterwards, when her mother hinted to
5 her that Irtenev seemed to have serious intentions, her love for
him increased so that she became almost indifferent to the two
previous attractions, and when Irtenev began to come to their balls
and parties and danced with her more than with others and evidently
only wished to know whether she loved him, her love for him became
10 painful. She dreamed of him in her sleep and seemed to see him
when she was awake in a dark room, and everyone else vanished from
her mind. But when he proposed and they were formally engaged, and
when they had kissed one another and were a betrothed couple, then
she had no thoughts but of him, no desire but to be with him, to
15 love him, and to be loved by him. She was also proud of him and
felt emotional about him and herself and her love, and quite melted
and felt faint from love of him.

The more he got to know her the more he loved her. He had not
at all expected to find such love, and it strengthened his own
20 feeling more.

VI

25 Towards spring he went to his estate at Semenovskoe to have a
look at it and to give directions about the management, and
especially about the house which was being done up for his wedding.

Mary Pavlovna was dissatisfied with her son's choice, not only
because the match was not as brilliant as it might have been, but
30 also because she did not like Varvara Alexeevna, his future mother-
in-law. Whether she was good-natured or not she did not know and
could not decide, but that she was not well-bred, not **comme il
faut** — “not a lady” as Mary Pavlovna said to herself — she saw
from their first acquaintance, and this distressed her; distressed
35 her because she was accustomed to value breeding and knew that

Eugene was sensitive to it, and she foresaw that he would suffer 36
much annoyance on this account. But she liked the girl. Liked her
chiefly because Eugene did. One could not help loving her, and
Mary Pavlovna was quite sincerely ready to do so.

Eugene found his mother contented and in good spirits. She 40
was getting everything straight in the house and preparing to go
away herself as soon as he brought his young wife. Eugene
persuaded her to stay for the time being, and the future remained
undecided.

In the evening after tea Mary Pavlovna played patience as 45
usual. Eugene sat by, helping her. This was the hour of their
most intimate talks. Having finished one game and while preparing
to begin another, she looked up at him and, with a little
hesitation, began thus:

“I wanted to tell you, Jenya — of course I do not know, but 50
in general I wanted to suggest to you — that before your wedding
it is absolutely necessary to have finished with all your bachelor
affairs so that nothing may disturb either you or your wife. God
forbid that it should. You understand me?”

And indeed Eugene at once understood that Mary Pavlovna was 55
hinting at his relations with Stepanida which had ended in the
previous autumn, and that she attributed much more importance to
those relations than they deserved, as solitary women always do.
Eugene blushed, not from shame so much as from vexation that good-
natured Mary Pavlovna was bothering — out of affection no doubt, 60
but still was bothering — about matters that were not her business
and that she did not and could not understand. He answered that
there was nothing that needed concealment, and that he had always
conducted himself so that there should be nothing to hinder his
65 marrying.

“Well, dear, that is excellent. Only, Jenya...don't be vexed
with me,” said Mary Pavlovna, and broke off in confusion.

Eugene saw that she had not finished and had not said what she
wanted to. And this was confirmed, when a little later she began
70 to tell him how, in his absence, she had been asked to stand

1 godmother at ... the Pechnikovs.

Eugene flushed again, not with vexation or shame this time, but with some strange consciousness of the importance of what was about to be told him — an involuntary consciousness quite at

5 variance with his conclusions. And what he expected happened.

Mary Pavlovna, as if merely by way of conversation, mentioned that this year only boys were being born — evidently a sign of a coming war. Both at the Vasins and the pechnikovs the young wife had a first child — at each house a boy. Mary Pavlovna wanted to say

10 this casually, but she herself felt ashamed when she saw the colour mount to her son's face and saw him nervously removing, tapping, and replacing his pince-nez and hurriedly lighting a cigarette.

She became silent. He too was silent and could not think how to break that silence. So they both understood that they had

15 understood one another.

“Yes, the chief thing is that there should be justice and no favouritism in the village — as under your grandfather.”

“Mamma,” said Eugene suddenly, “I know why you are saying this. You have no need to be disturbed. My future family life is so sacred to me that I should not infringe it in any case. And as to what occurred in my bachelor days, that is quite ended. I never formed any union and on one has any claims on me.”

25 “Well, I am glad,” said his mother. “I know how noble your feelings are.”

Eugene accepted his mother's words as a tribute due to him, and did not reply.

Next day he drove to town thinking of his fiancée and of anything in the world except of Stepanida. But, as if purposely to remind him, on approaching the church he met people walking and driving back from it. He met old Matvey with Simon, some lads and girls, and then two women, one elderly, the other, who seemed familiar, smartly dressed and wearing a bright-red kerchief. This woman was walking lightly and boldly, carrying a child in her arms. He came up to them, and the elder woman bowed, stopping in the old-fashioned way, but the young woman with the child only bent her

head, and from under the kerchief gleamed familiar, merry, smiling eyes. 36

Yes, this was she, but all that was over and it was no use looking at her: “and the child may be mine,” flashed through his mind. No, what nonsense! There was her husband, she used to see him. He did not even consider the matter further, so settled in his mind was it that it had been necessary for his health — he had paid her money and there was no more to be said; there was, there had been, and there could be, no question of any union between them. It was not that he stifled the voice of conscience, no — his conscience simply said nothing to him. And he thought no more about her after the conversation with his mother and this meeting. Nor did he meet her again. 40 45

Eugene was married in town the week after Easter, and left at once with his young wife for his country estate. The house had been arranged as usual for a young couple. Mary Pavlovna wished to leave, but Eugene begged her to remain, and Liza still more strongly, and she only moved into a detached wing of the house. 50

And so a new life began for Eugene. 55

VII

The first year of his marriage was a hard one for Eugene. It was hard because affairs he had managed to put off during the time of his courtship now, after his marriage, all came upon him at once. 60

To escape from debts was impossible. An outlying part of the estate was sold and the most pressing obligations met, but others remained, and he had no money. The estate yielded a good revenue, but he had had to send payments to his brother and to spend on his own marriage, so that there was no ready money and the factory could not carry on and would have to be closed down. The only way of escape was to use his wife's money; and Liza, having realized her husband's position, insisted on this herself. Eugene agreed, 65 70

1 but only on condition that he should give her a mortgage on half
his estate, which he did. Of course this was done not for his
wife's sake, who felt offended at it, but to appease his mother-in-
law.

5 These affairs with various fluctuations of success and failure
helped to poison Eugene's life that first year. Another thing was
his wife's ill-health. That same first year, seven months after
their marriage, a misfortune befell Liza. She was driving out to
meet her husband on his return from town, and the quiet horse
10 became rather playful and she was frightened and jumped out. Her
jump was comparatively fortunate — she might have been caught by
the wheel — but she was pregnant, and that same night the pains
began and she had a miscarriage from which she was long in
recovering. The loss of the expected child and his wife's illness,
15 together with the disorder in his affairs, and above all the
presence of his mother-in-law, who arrived as soon as Liza fell ill
— all this together made the year still harder for Eugene.

But notwithstanding these difficult circumstances, towards the
end of the first year Eugene felt very well. First of all his
20 cherished hope of restoring his fallen fortune and renewing his
grandfather's way of life in a new form, was approaching
accomplishment, though slowly and with difficulty. There was no
longer any question of having to sell the whole estate to meet the
debts. The chief estate, thought transferred to his wife's name,
25 was saved, and if only the beet crop succeeded and the price kept
up, by next year his position of want and stress might be replaced
by one of complete prosperity. That was one thing.

Another was that however much he had expected from his wife,
he had never expected to find in her what he actually found. He
30 found not what he had expected, but something much better.
Raptures of love — though he tried to produce them — did not take
place or were very slight, but he discovered something quite
different, namely that he was not merely more cheerful and happier
but that it had become easier to live. He did not know why this
35 should be so, but it was.

And it was so because immediately after marriage his wife 36
decided that Eugene irtenev was superior to anyone else in the
world: wiser, purer, and nobler than they, and that therefore it
was right for everyone to serve him and please him; but that as it
was impossible to make everyone do this, she must do it herself to 40
the limit of her strength. And she did; directing all her strength
of mind towards learning and guessing what he liked, and then doing
just that thing, whatever it was and however difficult it might be.

She had the gift which furnishes the chief delight of
intercourse with a loving woman: thanks to her love of her husband 45
she penetrated into his soul. She knew his every state and his
every shade of feeling — better it seemed to him than he himself -
- and she behaved correspondingly and therefore never hurt his
feelings, but always lessened his distresses and strengthened his
joys. And she understood not only his feelings but also his joys. 50
Things quite foreign to her — concerning the farming, the factory,
or the appraisalment of others — she immediately understood so that
she could not merely converse with him, but could often, as he
himself said, be a useful and irreplaceable counsellor. She
regarded affairs and people and everything in the world only though 55
his eyes. She loved her mother, but having seen that Eugene
disliked his mother-in-law's interference in their life she
immediately took her husband's side, and did so with such decision
that he had to restrain her.

Besides all this she had very good taste, much tact, and above 60
all she had repose. All that she did, she did unnoticed; only the
results of what she did were observable, namely, that always and in
everything there was cleanliness, order, and elegance. Liza had at
once understood in what her husband's ideal of life consisted, and
she tried to attain, and in the arrangement and order of the house 65
did attain, what he wanted. Children it is true were lacking, but
there was hope of that also. In winter she went to Petersburg to
see a specialist and he assured them that she was quite well and
could have children.

1 And this desire was accomplished. By the end of the year she
was again pregnant.

The one thing that threatened, not to say poisoned, their
happiness was her jealousy — a jealousy she restrained and did not
5 exhibit, but from which she often suffered. Not only might Eugene
not love any other woman — because there was not a woman on earth
worthy of him (as to whether she herself was worthy or not she
never asked herself), — but not a single woman might therefore
dare to love him.

VIII

10 This was how they lived: he rose early, as he always had
done, and went to see to the farm or the factory where work was
going on, or sometimes to the fields. Towards ten o'clock he would
come back for his coffee, which they had on the veranda: Mary
Pavlovna, an uncle who lived with them, and Liza. After a
conversation which was often very animated while they drank their
20 coffee, they dispersed till dinner-time. At two o'clock they dined
and then went for a walk or a drive. In the evening when he
returned from the office they drank their evening tea and sometimes
he read aloud while she worked, or when there were guests they had
music or conversation. When he went away on business he wrote to
25 his wife and received letters from her every day. Sometimes she
accompanied him, and then they were particularly merry. On his
name-day and on her guests assembled, and it pleased him to see how
well she managed to arrange things so that everybody enjoyed
coming. He saw and heard that they all admired her — the young,
30 agreeable hostess — and he loved her still more for this.

All went excellently. She bore her pregnancy easily and,
thought they were afraid, they both began making plans as to how
they would bring the child up. The system of education and the
arrangements were all decided by Eugene, and her only wish was to
35 carry out his desires obediently. Eugene on his part read up

medical works and intended to bring the child up according to all 36
the precepts of science. She of course agreed to everything and
made preparations, making warm and also cool “envelopes”, and
preparing a cradle. Thus the second year of their marriage arrived
and the second spring. 40

IX

It was just before Trinity Sunday. Liza was in her fifth 45
month, and though careful she was still brisk and active. Both his
mother and hers were living in the house, but under the pretext of
watching and safeguarding her only upset her by their tiffs.
Eugene was specially engrossed with a new experiment for the
cultivation of sugar-beet on a large scale. 50

Just before Trinity Liza decided it was necessary to have a
thorough house-cleaning as it had not been done since Easter, and
she hired two women by the day to help the servants wash the floors
and windows, beat the furniture and the carpets, and put covers on
them. These women came early in the morning, heated the coppers, 55
and set to work. One of the two was Stepanida, who had just weaned
her baby boy and had begged for the job of washing the floors
through the office-clerk — whom she now carried on with. She
wanted to have a good look at the new mistress. Stepanida was
living by herself as formerly, her husband being away, and she was 60
up to tricks as she had formerly been first with old Daniel (who
had once caught her taking some logs of firewood), afterwards with
the master, and now with the young clerk. She was not concerning
herself any longer about her master. “He has a wife now,” she
thought. But it would be good to have a look at the lady and at 65
her establishment: folk said it was well arranged.

Eugene had not seen her since he had met her with the child.
Having a baby to attend to she had not been going out to work, and
he seldom walked through the village. That morning, on the eve of
Trinity Sunday, he got up at five o'clock and rode to the fallow 70

1 land which was to sprinkled with phosphates, and had left the house
before the women were about, and while they were still engaged
lighting the copper fires.

He returned to breakfast merry, contented, and hungry;
5 dismounting from his mare at the gate and handing her over to the
gardener. Flicking the high grass with his whip and repeating a
phrase he had just uttered, as one often does, he walked towards
the house. The phrase was: "phosphates justify" — what or to
whom, he neither knew nor reflected.

10 They were beating a carpet on the grass. The furniture had
been brought out.

"There now! What a house-cleaning Liza has undertaken! ...
Phosphates justify.... What a manageress she is! Yes, a
manageress," said he to himself, vividly imagining her in her white
15 wrapper and with her smiling joyful face, as it nearly always was
when he looked at her. "Yes, I must change my boots, or else
'phosphates justify', that is, smell of manure, and the manageress
in such a condition. Why 'in such a condition'? Because a new
little Irtenev is growing there inside her," he thought. "Yes,
20 phosphates justify," and smiling at his thoughts he put his hand to
the door of his room.

But he had not time to push the door before it opened of
itself and he came face to face with a woman coming towards him
carrying a pail, barefoot and with sleeves turned up high. He
25 stepped aside to let her pass and she too stepped aside, adjusting
her kerchief with a wet hand.

"Go on, go on, I won't go in, if you ..." began Eugene and
suddenly stopped, recognizing her.

She glanced merrily at him with smiling eyes, and pulling down
30 her skirt went out at the door.

"What nonsense!...It is impossible," said Eugene to himself,
frowning and waving his hand as though to get rid of a fly,
displeased at having noticed her. He was vexed that he had noticed
her and yet he could not take his eyes from her strong body, swayed
35 by her agile strides, from her bare feet, or from her arms and

shoulders, and the pleasing folds of her shirt and the handsome 36
skirt tucked up high above her white calves.

"But why am I looking?" said he to himself, lowering his eyes
so as not to see her. "And anyhow I must go in to get some other
40 boots." and he turned back to go into his own room, but had not
gone five steps before he again glanced round to have another look
at her without knowing why or wherefore. She was just going round
the corner and also glanced at him.

"Ah, what am I doing!" said he to himself. "She may
think...It is even certain that she already does think..." 45

He entered his damp room. Another woman, an old and skinny
one, was there, and was still washing it. Eugene passed on tiptoe
across the floor, wet with dirty water, to the wall where his boots
stood, and he was about to leave the room when the woman herself
50 went out.

"This one has gone and the other, Stepanida, will come here
alone," someone within him began to reflect.

"My God, what am I thinking of and what am I doing!" He
seized his boots and ran out with them into the hall, put them on
there, brushed himself, and went out onto the veranda where both 55
the mammas were already drinking coffee. Liza had evidently been
expecting him and came onto the veranda through another door at the
same time.

"My God! If she, who considers me so honourable, pure, and
innocent — if she only knew!" — thought he. 60

Liza as usual met him with shining face. But today somehow
she seemed to him particularly pale, yellow, long, and weak.

X

During coffee, as often happened, a peculiarly feminine kind
of conversation went on which had no logical sequence but which
evidently was connected in some way for it went on uninterruptedly.

The two old ladies were pin-pricking one another, and Liza was 70

1 skillfully manoeuvring between them.

“I am so vexed that we had not finished washing your room before you got back,” she said to her husband. “But I do so want to get everything arranged.”

5 “Well, did you sleep well after I got up?”

“Yes, I slept well and I fell well.”

“How can a woman be well in her condition during this intolerable heat, when her windows face the sun,” said Varvara Alexeevna, her mother. “And they have no venetian-blinds or
10 awnings. I always had awnings.”

“But you know we are in the shade after ten o’clock,” said Mary Pavlovna.

“That’s what causes fever; it comes of dampness,” said Varvara Alexeevna, not noticing that what she was saying did not agree with
15 what she had just said. “My doctor always says that it is impossible to diagnose an illness unless one knows the patient. And he certainly knows, for he is the leading physician and we pay him a hundred rubles a visit. My late husband did not believe in doctors, but he did not grudge me anything.”

20 “How can a man grudge anything to a woman when perhaps her life and the child’s depend...”

“Yes, when she has means a wife need not depend on her husband. A good wife submits to her husband,” said Varvara Alexeevna — “only Liza is too weak after her illness.”

25 “Oh no, mamma, I feel quite well. But why have they not brought you any boiled cream?”

“I don’t want any. I can do with raw cream.”

“I offered some to Varvara Alexeevna, but she declined,” said Mary Pavlovna, as if justifying herself.

30 “No, I don’t want any today.” and as if to terminate an unpleasant conversation and yield magnanimously, Varvara Alexeevna turned to Eugene and said: “Well, and have you sprinkled the phosphates?”

Liza ran to fetch the cream.

35 “But I don’t want it. I don’t want it.”

“Liza, Liza, go gently,” said Mary Pavlovna. “Such rapid
36 movements do her harm.”

“Nothing does harm if one’s mind is at peace,” said Varvara Alexeevna as if referring to something, though she knew that there was nothing her words could refer to. 40

Liza returned with the cream and Eugene drank his coffee and listened morosely. He was accustomed to these conversations, but today he was particularly annoyed by its lack of sense. He wanted to think over what had happened to him but this chatter disturbed him. Having finished her coffee Varvara Alexeevna went away in a
45 bad humour. Liza, Eugene, and Mary Pavlovna stayed behind, and their conversation was simple and pleasant. But Liza, being sensitive, at once noticed that something was tormenting Eugene, and she asked him whether anything unpleasant had happened. He was not prepared for this question and hesitated a little before
50 replying that there had been nothing. This reply made Liza think all the more. That something was tormenting him, and greatly tormenting, was as evident to her as that a fly had fallen into the milk, yet he would not speak of it. What could it be?

XI

After breakfast they all dispersed. Eugene as usual went to his study, but instead of beginning to read or write his letters,
60 he sat smoking one cigarette after another and thinking. He was terribly surprised and disturbed by the unexpected recrudescence within him of the bad feeling from which he had thought himself free since his marriage. Since then he had not once experienced that feeling, either for her — the woman he had known — or for
65 any other woman except his wife. He had often felt glad of this emancipation, and now suddenly a chance meeting, seemingly so unimportant, revealed to him the fact that he was not free. What now tormented him was not that he was yielding to that feeling and desired her — he did not dream of so doing — but that the feeling 70

1 was awake within him and he had to be on his guard against it. He had not doubt but that he would suppress it.

He had a letter to answer and a paper to write, and sat down at his writing table and began to work. Having finished it and quite forgotten what had disturbed him, he went out to go to the stables. And again as ill-luck would have it, either by unfortunate chance or intentionally, as soon as he stepped from the porch a red skirt and a red kerchief appeared from round the corner, and she went past him swinging her arms and swaying her body. She not only went past him, but on passing him ran, as if playfully, to overtake her fellow-servant.

Again the bright midday, the nettles, the back of Daniel's hut, and in the shade of the plant-trees her smiling face biting some leaves, rose in his imagination.

15 "No, it is impossible to let matters continue so," he said to himself, and waiting till the women had passed out of sight he went to the office.

It was just the dinner-hour and he hoped to find the steward still there, and so it happened. The steward was just waking up from his after-dinner nap, and stretching himself and yawning was standing in the office, looking at the herdsman who was telling him something.

"Vasili Nikolaich!" said Eugene to the steward.

"What is your pleasure?"

25 "Just finish what you are saying."

"Aren't you going to bring it in?" said Vasili Nikolaich to the herdsman.

"It's heavy, Vasili Nikolaich."

"What is it?" asked Eugene.

30 "Why, a cow has calved in the meadow. Well, all right, I'll order them to harness a horse at once. Tell Nicholas Lysukh to get out the dray cart."

The herdsman went out.

35 "Do you know," began Eugene, flushing and conscious that he was doing so, "do you know, Vasili Nikolaich, while I was a

bachelor I went off the track a bit....You may have heard..." 36

Vasili Nikolaich, evidently sorry for his master, said with smiling eyes: "Is it about Stepanida?"

"Why, yes. Look here. Please, please do not engage her to help in the house. You understand, it is very awkward for me..." 40

"Yes, it must have been Vanya the clerk who arranged it."

"Yes, please...and hadn't the rest of the phosphate better be strewn?" said Eugene, to hide his confusion.

"Yes, I am just going to see to it."

So the matter ended, and Eugene calmed down, hoping that as he had lived for a year without seeing her, so things would go on now. 45

"Besides, Vasili Nikolaich will speak to Ivan the clerk; Ivan will speak to her, and she will understand that I don't want it," said Eugene to himself, and he was glad he had forced himself to speak to Vasili Nikolaich, hard as it had been to do so. 50

"Yes, it is better, much better, than that feeling of doubt, that feeling of shame." He shuddered at the mere remembrance of his sin in thought.

XII

The moral effort he had made to overcome his shame and speak to Vasili Nikolaich tranquillized Eugene. It seemed to him that the matter was all over now. Liza at once noticed that he was quite calm, and even happier than usual. "No doubt he was upset by our mothers pin-pricking one another. It really is disagreeable, especially for him who is so sensitive and noble, always to hear such unfriendly and ill-mannered insinuations," thought she. 60

The next day was Trinity Sunday. It was a beautiful day, and the peasant-women, on their way into the woods to plait wreaths, came, according to custom, to the landowner's home and began to sing and dance. Mary Pavlovna and Varvara Alexeevna came out onto the porch in smart clothes, carrying sunshades, and went up to the ring of singers. With them, in a jacket of Chinese silk, came out 70

1 the uncle, a flabby libertine and drunkard, who was living that
summer with Eugene.

As usual there was a bright, many-coloured ring of young women
and girls, the centre of everything, and around these from
5 different sides like attendant planets that had detached themselves
and were circling round, went girls hand in hand, rustling in their
new print gowns; young lads giggling and running backwards and
forwards after one another; full-grown lads in dark blue or black
coats and caps and with red shirts, who unceasingly spat out
10 sunflower-seed shells; and the domestic servants or other outsiders
watching the dance-circle from aside. Both the old ladies went
close up to the ring, and Liza accompanied them in a light blue
dress, with light blue ribbons on her head, and with wide sleeves
under which her long white arms and angular elbows were visible.

15 Eugene did not wish to come out, but it was ridiculous to
hide, and he too came out onto the porch smoking a cigarette, bowed
to the men and lads, and talked with one of them. The women
meanwhile shouted a dance-song with all their might, snapping their
fingers, clapping their hands, and dancing.

20 "They are calling for the master," said a youngster coming up
to Eugene's wife, who had not noticed the call. Liza called Eugene
to look at the dance and at one of the women dancers who
particularly pleased her. This was Stepanida. She wore a yellow
skirt, a velveteen sleeveless jacket and a silk kerchief, and was
25 broad, energetic, ruddy, and merry. No doubt she danced well. He
saw nothing.

"Yes, yes," he said, removing and replacing his pince-nez.
"Yes, yes," he repeated. "So it seems I cannot be rid of her," he
thought.

30 He did not look at her, fearing her attraction, and just on
that account what his passing glance caught of her seemed to him
especially attractive. Besides this he saw by her sparkling look
that she saw him and saw that he admired her. He stood there as
long as propriety demanded, and seeing that Varvara Alexeevna had
35 called her "my dear" senselessly and insincerely and was talking to

her, he turned aside and went away. 36

He went into the house in order not to see her, but on
reaching the upper story he approached the window, without knowing
how or why, and as long as the women remained at the porch he stood
there and looked and looked at her, feasting his eyes on her. 40

He ran, while there was no one to see him, and then went with
quiet steps onto the veranda and from there, smoking a cigarette,
he passed through the garden as if going for a stroll, and followed
the direction she had taken. He had not gone two steps along the
alley before he noticed behind the trees a velveteen sleeveless 45
jacket, with a pink and yellow skirt and a red kerchief. She was
going somewhere with another woman. "Where are they going?"

And suddenly a terrible desire scorched him as though a hand
were seizing his heart. As if by someone else's wish he looked
round and went towards her. 50

"Eugene Ivanich, Eugene Ivanich! I have come to see your
honour," said a voice behind him, and Eugene, seeing old Samokhin
who was digging a well for him, roused himself and turning quickly
round went to meet Samokhin. While speaking with him he turned
sideways and saw that she and the woman who was with her went down 55
the slope, evidently to the well or making an excuse of the well,
and having stopped there a little while ran back to the dance-
circle.

XIII

After talking to Samokhin, Eugene returned to the house as
depressed as if he had committed a crime. In the first place she
had understood him, believed that he wanted to see her, and desired 65
it herself. Secondly that other woman, Anna Prokhorova, evidently
knew of it.

Above all he felt that he was conquered, that he was not
master of his own will but that there was another power moving him,
that he had been saved only by good fortune, and that if not today 70

1 then tomorrow or a day later, he would perish all the same.

“Yes, perish,” he did not understand it otherwise: to be unfaithful to his young and loving wife with a peasant woman in the village, in the sight of everyone — what was it but to perish,
5 perish utterly, so that it would be impossible to live? No, something must be done.

“My God, my God! What am I to do? Can it be that I shall perish like this?” said he to himself. Is it not possible to do anything? Yet something must be done. Do not think about her” —
10 he ordered himself. “Do not think!” and immediately he began thinking and seeing her before him, and seeing also the shade of the plane-tree.

He remembered having read of a hermit who, to avoid the temptation he felt for a woman on whom he had to lay his hand to
15 heal her, thrust his other hand into a brazier and burnt his fingers. He called that to mind. “Yes, I am ready to burn my fingers rather than to perish.” He looked round to make sure that there was no one in the room, lit a candle, and put a finger into the flame. “There, now think about her,” he said to himself
20 ironically. It hurt him and he withdrew his smoke-stained finger, threw away the match, and laughed at himself. What nonsense! That was not what had to be done. But it was necessary to do something, to avoid seeing her — either to go away himself or to send her away. Yes — send her away. Offer her husband money to remove to
25 town or to another village. People would hear of it and would talk about it. Well, what of that? At any rate it was better than this danger. “Yes, that must be done,” he said to himself, and at that very moment he was looking at her without moving his eyes. “Where is she going?” he suddenly asked himself. She, it seemed to him,
30 had seen him at the window and now, having glanced at him and taken another woman by the hand, was going towards the garden swinging her arm briskly. Without knowing why or wherefore, merely in accord with what he had been thinking, he went to the office.

Vasili Nikolaich in holiday costume and with oiled hair was
35 sitting at tea with his wife and a guest who was wearing an

oriental kerchief.

“I want a word with you, Vasili Nikolaich!”

“Please say what you want to. We have finished tea.”

“No. I’d rather you came out with me.”

“Directly; only let me get my cap. Tanya, put out the
40 samovar,” said Vasili Nikolaich, stepping outside cheerfully. It seemed to Eugene that Vasili had been drinking, but what was to be done? It might be all the better — he would sympathize with him in his difficulties the more readily.

“I have come again to speak about that same matter, Vasili
45 Nikolaich,” said Eugene — “about that woman.”

“Well, what of her? I told them not to take her again on any account.”

“No, I have been thinking in general, and this is what I
50 wanted to take your advice about. Isn’t it possible to get them away, to send the whole family away?”

“Where can they be sent?” said Vasili, disapprovingly and ironically as it seem to Eugene.

“Well, I thought of giving them money, or even some land in
55 Koltovski, — so that she should not be here.”

“But how can they be sent away? Where is he to go — torn up from his roots? And why should you do it? What harm can she do you?”

“Ah, Vasili Nikolaich, you must understand that it would be
60 dreadful for my wife to hear of it.”

“But who will tell her?”

“How can I live with this dread? The whole thing is vary painful for me.”

“But really, why should you distress yourself? Whoever stirs up the past — out with his eye! Who is not a sinner before God
65 and to blame before the Tsar, as the saying is?”

“All the same it would be better to get rid of them. Can’t you speak to the husband?”

“But it is no use speaking! Eh, Eugene Ivanich, what is the
70 matter with you? It is all past and forgotten. All sorts of

1 things happen. Who is there that would now say anything bad of
you? Everybody sees you.”

“But all the same go and have a talk with him.”

“All right, I will speak to him.”

5 Though he knew that nothing would come of it, this talk
somewhat calmed Eugene. Above all, it made him feel that through
excitement he had been exaggerating the danger.

Had he gone to meet her by appointment? It was impossible. He
had simply gone to stroll in the garden and she had happened to run
10 out at the same time.

XIV

15 After dinner that very Trinity Sunday Liza while walking from
the garden to the meadow, where her husband wanted to show her the
clover, took a false step and fell when crossing a little ditch.

She fell gently, on her side; but she gave an exclamation, and her
husband saw an expression in her face not only of fear but of pain.

20 He was about to help her up, but she motioned him away with her
hand.

“No, wait a bit, Eugene,” she said, with a weak smile, and
looked up guiltily as it seemed to him. “My foot only gave way
under me.”

25 “There, I always say,” remarked Varvara Alexeevna, “can anyone
in her condition possibly jump over ditches?”

“But it is all right, mamma. I shall get up directly.” With
her husband’s help she did get up, but she immediately turned pale,
and looked frightened.

30 “Yes, I am not well!” and she whispered something to her
mother.

“Oh, my God, what have you done! I said you ought not to go
there,” cried Varvara Alexeevna. “Wait — I will call the
servants. She must not walk. She must be carried!”

35 “Don’t be afraid, Liza, I will carry you,” said Eugene,

putting his left arm round her. “Hold me by the neck. Like that.” 36

And stopping down he put his right arm under her knees and lifted
her. He could never afterwards forget the suffering and yet
beatific expression of her face.

“I am too heavy for you, dear,” she said with a smile. “Mamma 40
is running, tell her!” And she bent towards him and kissed him.
She evidently wanted her mother to see how he was carrying her.

Eugene shouted to Varvara Alexeevna not to hurry, and that he
would carry Liza home. Varvara Alexeevna stopped and began to
shout still louder. 45

“You will drop her, you’ll be sure to drop her. You want to
destroy her. You have no conscience!”

“But I am carrying her excellently.”

“I do not want to watch you killing my daughter, and I can’t.”

And she ran round the bend in the alley. 50

“Never mind, it will pass,” said Liza, smiling.

“Yes, if only it does not have consequences like last time.”

“No. I am not speaking of that. That is all right. I mean
mamma. You are tired. Rest a bit.”

But though he found it heavy, Eugene carried his burden 55
proudly and gladly to the house and did not hand her over to the
housemaid and the man-cook whom Varvara Alexeevna had found and
sent to meet them. He carried her to the bedroom and put her on
the bed.

“Now go away,” she said, and drawing his hand to her she 60
kissed it. “Annushka and I will manage all right.”

Mary Pavlovna also ran in from her rooms in the wing. They
undressed Liza and laid her on the bed. Eugene sat in the drawing
room with a book in his hand, waiting. Varvara Alexeevna went past
him with such a reproachfully gloomy air that he felt alarmed. 65

“Well, how is it?” he asked.

“How is it? What’s the good of asking? It is probably what
you wanted when you made your wife jump over the ditch.”

“Varvara Alexeevna!” he cried. “This is impossible. If you
want to torment people and to poison their life” (he wanted to say, 70

1 “then go elsewhere to do it,” but restrained himself). “How is it that it does not hurt you?”

“It is too late now.” And shaking her cap in a triumphant manner she passed out by the door.

5 The fall had really been a bad one; Liza’s foot had twisted awkwardly and there was danger of her having another miscarriage. Everyone knew that there was nothing to be done but that she must just lie quietly, yet all the same they decided to send for a doctor.

10 “Dear Nikolay Semenich,” wrote Eugene to the doctor, “you have always been so kind to us that I hope you will not refuse to come to my wife’s assistance. She...” and so on. Having written the letter he went to the stables to arrange about the horses and the carriage. Horses had to be got ready to bring the doctor and
15 others to take him back. When an estate is not run on a large scale, such things cannot be quickly decided but have to be considered. Having arranged it all and dispatched the coachman, it was past nine before he got back to the house. His wife was lying down, and said that she felt perfectly well and had no pain. But
20 Varvara Alexeevna was sitting with a lamp screened from Liza by some sheets of music and knitting a large red coverlet, with a mien that said that after what had happened peace was impossible, but that she at any rate would do her duty no matter what anyone else did.

25 Eugene noticed this, but, to appear as if he had not done so, tried to assume a cheerful and tranquil air and told how he had chosen the horses and how capably the mare, Kabushka, had galloped as left trace-horse in the troyka.

“Yes, of course, it is just the time to exercise the horses
30 when help is needed. Probably the doctor will also be thrown into the ditch,” remarked Varvara Alexeevna, examining her knitting from under her pince-nez and moving it close up to the lamp.

“But you know we had to send one way or another, and I made the best arrangement I could.”

35 “Yes, I remember very well how your horses galloped with me

under the arch of the gateway.” This was a long-standing fancy of hers, and Eugene now was injudicious enough to remark that that was not quite what had happened. 36

“It is not for nothing that I have always said, and have often remarked to the prince, that it is hardest of all to live with
40 people who are untruthful and insincere. I can endure anything except that.”

“Well, if anyone has to suffer more than another, it is certainly I,” said Eugene. “But you...”

“Yes, it is evident.” 45

“What?”

“Nothing, I am only counting my stitches.”

Eugene was standing at the time by the bed and Liza was looking at him, and one of her moist hands outside the coverlet caught his hand and pressed it. “Bear with her for my sake. You
50 know she cannot prevent our loving one another,” was what her look said.

“I won’t do so again. It’s nothing,” he whispered, and he kissed her damp, long hand and then her affectionate eyes, which closed while he kissed them. 55

“Can it be the same thing over again?” he asked. “How are you feeling?”

“I am afraid to say for fear of being mistaken, but I feel that he is alive and will live,” said she, glancing at her stomach.

“Ah, it is dreadful, dreadful to think of.” 60

Notwithstanding Liza’s insistence that he should go away, Eugene spent the night with her, hardly closing an eye and ready to attend on her.

But she passed the night well, and had they not sent for the doctor she would perhaps have got up. 65

By dinner-time the doctor arrived and of course said that though if the symptoms recurred there might be cause for apprehension, yet actually there were no positive symptoms, but as there were also no contrary indications one might suppose on the one hand that — and on the other hand that... And therefore she 70

1 must lie still, and that “though I do not like prescribing, yet all
the same she should take this mixture and should lie quiet.”
Besides this, the doctor gave Varvara Alexeevna a lecture on
woman’s anatomy, during which Varvara Alexeevna nodded her head
5 significantly. Having received his fee, as usual into the backmost
part of his palm, the doctor drove away and the patient was left to
lie in bed for a week.

XV

10 Eugene spent most of his time by his wife’s bedside, talking
to her, reading to her, and what was hardest of all, enduring
without murmur Varvara Alexeevna’s attacks, and even contriving to
15 turn these into jokes.

But he could not stay at home all the time. In the first
place his wife sent him away, saying that he would fall ill if he
always remained with her; and secondly the farming was progressing
in a way that demanded his presence at every step. He could not
20 stay at home, but had to be in the fields, in the wood, in the
garden, at the thrashing-floor; and everywhere he was pursued not
merely by the thought but by the vivid image of Stepanida, and he
only occasionally forgot her. But that would not have mattered, he
could perhaps have mastered his feeling; what was worst of all was
25 that, whereas he had previously lived for months without seeing
her, he now continually came across her. She evidently understood
that he wished to renew relations with her and tried to come in his
way. Nothing was said either by him or by her, and therefore
neither he nor she went directly to a rendezvous, but only sought
30 opportunities of meeting.

The most possible place for them to meet was in the forest,
where peasant-women went with sacks to collect grass for their
cows. Eugene knew this and therefore went there every day. Every
day he told himself that he would not go, and every day it ended by
35 his making his way to the forest and, on hearing the sound of

voices, standing behind the bushes with sinking heart looking to 36
see if she was there.

Why he wanted to know whether it was she who was there, he did
not know. If it had been she and she had been alone, he would not
have gone to her — so he believed — he would have run away; but 40
he wanted to see her.

Once he met her. As he was entering the forest she came out
of it with two other women, carrying a heavy sack full of grass on
her back. A little earlier he would perhaps have met her in the 45
forest. Now, with the other women there, she could not go back to
him. But though he realized this impossibility, he stood for a
long time behind a hazel bush, at the risk of attracting the other
women’s attention. Of course she did not return, but he stayed
there a long time. And, great heavens, how delightful his 50
imagination made her appear to him! And this not only once, but
five or six times, and each time more intensely. Never had she
seemed so attractive, and never had he been so completely in her
power.

He felt that he had lost control of himself and had become
almost insane. His strictness with himself had not weakened a jot; 55
on the contrary he saw all the abomination of his desire and even
of his action, for his going to the wood was an action. He knew
that he only need come near her anywhere in the dark, and if
possible touch her, and he would yield to his feelings. He knew
that it was only shame before people, before her, and no doubt 60
before himself that restrained him. And he knew too that he had
sought conditions in which that shame would not be apparent —
darkness or proximity — in which it would be stifled by animal
passion. And therefore he knew that he was a wretched criminal,
and despised and hated himself with all his soul. He hated himself 65
because he still had not surrendered: every day he prayed God to
strengthen him, to save him from perishing; every day he determined
that from today onward he would not take a step to see her, and
would forget her. Every day he devised means of delivering himself
from this enticement, and he made use of those means. 70

1 But it was all in vain.

One of the means was continual occupation; another was intense physical work and fasting; a third was imagining to himself the shame that would fall upon him when everybody knew of it — his wife, his mother-in-law, and the folk around. He did all this and it seemed to him that he was conquering, but midday came — the hour of their former meetings and the hour when he had met her carrying the grass — and he went to the forest. Thus five days of torment passed. He only saw her from a distance, and did not once encounter her.

XVI

15 Liza was gradually recovering, she could move about and was only uneasy at the change that had taken place in her husband, which she did not understand.

Varvara Alexeevna had gone away for a while, and the only visitor was Eugene's uncle. Mary Pavlovna was as usual at home.

20 Eugene was in his semi-insane condition when there came two days of pouring rain, as often happens after thunder in June. The rain stopped all work. They even ceased carting manure on account of the dampness and dirt. The peasants remained at home. The herdsmen wore themselves out with the cattle, and eventually drove them home. The cows and sheep wandered about in the pastureland and ran loose in the grounds. The peasant women, barefoot and wrapped in shawls, splashing through the mud, rushed about to seek the runaway cows. Streams flowed everywhere along the paths, all the leaves and all the grass were saturated with water, and streams flowed unceasingly from the spouts into the bubbling puddles.

30 Eugene sat at home with his wife, who was particularly wearisome that day. She questioned Eugene several times as to the cause of his discontent, and he replied with vexation that nothing was the matter. She ceased questioning him but was still distressed.

35 They were sitting after breakfast in the drawing room. His

uncle for the hundredth time was recounting fabrications about his society acquaintances. Liza was knitting a jacket and sighed, complaining of the weather and of a pain in the small of her back. The uncle advised her to lie down, and asked for vodka for himself. It was terribly dull for Eugene in the house. Everything was weak and dull. He read a book and a magazine, but understood nothing of them.

"I must go out and look at the rasping-machine they brought yesterday," said he, and got up and went out.

"Take an umbrella with you."

"Oh, no, I have a leather coat. And I am only going as far as the boiling-room."

He put on his boots and his leather coat and went to the factory; and he had not gone twenty steps before he met her coming towards him, with her skirts tucked up high above her white calves. She was walking, holding down the shawl in which her head and shoulders were wrapped.

"Where are you going?" said he, not recognizing her the first instant. When he recognized her it was already too late. She stopped, smiling, and looked long at him.

"I am looking for a calf. Where are you off to in such weather?" said she, as if she were seeing him every day.

"Come to the shed," said he suddenly, without knowing how he said it. It was as if someone else had uttered the words.

She bit her shawl, winked, and ran in the direction which led from the garden to the shed, and he continued his path, intending to turn off beyond the lilac-bush and go there too.

"Master," he heard a voice behind him. "The mistress is calling you, and wants you to come back for a minute."

This was Misha, his man-servant.

"My God! This is the second time you have saved me," thought Eugene, and immediately turned back. His wife reminded him that he had promised to take some medicine at the dinner hour to a sick woman, and he had better take it with him.

While they were getting the medicine some five minutes

1 elapsed, and then, going away with the medicine, he hesitated to go
 direct to the shed lest he should be seen from the house, but as
 soon as he was out of sight he promptly turned and made his way to
 it. He already saw her in imagination inside the shed smiling
 5 gaily. But she was not there, and there was nothing in the shed to
 show that she had been there.

He was already thinking that she had not come, had not heard
 or understood his words — he had muttered them through his nose as
 if afraid of her hearing them — or perhaps she had not wanted to
 10 come. “And why did I imagine that she would rush to me? She has
 her own husband; it is only I who am such a wretch as to have a
 wife, and a good one, and to run after another.” Thus he thought
 sitting in the shed, the thatch of which had a leak and dripped
 from its straw. “But how delightful it would be if she did come —
 15 alone here in this rain. If only I could embrace her once again,
 then let happen what may. But I could tell if she has been here by
 her footprints,” he reflected. He looked at the trodden ground
 near the shed and at the path overgrown by grass, and the fresh
 print of bare feet, and even of one that had slipped, was visible.

20 “Yes, she has been here. Well, now it is settled. Wherever
 I may see her I shall go straight to her. I will go to her at
 night.” He sat for a long time in the shed and left it exhausted
 and crushed. He delivered the medicine, returned home, and lay
 down in his room to wait for dinner.

XVII

Before dinner Liza came to him and, still wondering what could
 30 be the cause of his discontent, began to say that she was afraid he
 did not like the idea of her going to Moscow for her confinement,
 and that she had decided that she would remain at home and on no
 account go to Moscow. He knew how she feared both her confinement
 itself and the risk of not having a healthy child, and therefore he
 35 could not help being touched at seeing how ready she was to

sacrifice everything for his sake. All was so nice, so pleasant, 36
 so clean, in the house; and in his soul it was so dirty,
 despicable, and foul. The whole evening Eugene was tormented by
 knowing that notwithstanding his sincere repulsion at his own
 weakness, notwithstanding his firm intention to break off, — the 40
 same thing would happen again tomorrow.

“No, this is impossible,” he said to himself, walking up and
 down in his room. “There must be some remedy for it. My God!
 What am I to do?”

Someone knocked at the door as foreigners do. He knew this 45
 must be his uncle. “Come in,” he said.

The uncle had come as a self-appointed ambassador from Liza.

“Do you know, I really do notice that there is a change in
 you,” he said, — “and Liza — I understand how it troubles her.
 I understand that it must be hard for you to leave all the business 50
 you have so excellently started, but **que veux-tu**? I should
 advise you to go away. It will be more satisfactory both for you
 and for her. And do you know, I should advise you to go to the
 Crimea. The climate is beautiful and there is an excellent
 accoucheur there, and you would be just in time for the best of 55
 the grape season.”

“Uncle,” Eugene suddenly exclaimed. “Can you keep a secret?
 A secret that is terrible to me, a shameful secret.”

“Oh, come — do you really feel any doubt of me?”

“Uncle, you can help me. Not only help, but save me!” said 60
 Eugene. And the thought of disclosing his secret to his uncle whom
 he did not respect, the thought that he should show himself in the
 worst light and humiliate himself before him, was pleasant. He
 felt himself to be despicable and guilty, and wished to punish
 himself. 65

“Speak, my dear fellow, you know how fond I am of you,” said
 the uncle, evidently well content that there was a secret and that
 it was a shameful one, and that it would be communicated to him,
 and that he could be of use.

“First of all I must tell you that I am a wretch, a good-for- 70

1 nothing, a scoundrel — a real scoundrel.”

“Now what are you saying...” began his uncle, as if he were offended.

5 “What! Not a wretch when I — Liza’s husband, Liza’s! One has only to know her purity, her love — and that I, her husband, want to be untrue to her with a peasant-woman!”

“What is this? Why do you want to — you have not been unfaithful to her?”

10 “Yes, at least just the same as being untrue, for it did not depend on me. I was ready to do so. I was hindered, or else I should...now. I do not know what I should have done...”

“But please, explain to me...”

15 “Well, it is like this. When I was a bachelor I was stupid enough to have relations with a woman here in our village. That is to say, I used to have meetings with her in the forest, in the field...”

“Was she pretty?” asked his uncle.

Eugene frowned at this question, but he was in such need of external help that he made as if he did not hear it, and continued:

20 “Well, I thought this was just casual and that I should break it off and have done with it. And I did break it off before my marriage. For nearly a year I did not see her or think about her.” It seemed strange to Eugene himself to hear the description of his own condition. “Then suddenly, I don’t myself know why — really
25 one sometimes believes in witchcraft — I saw her, and a worm crept into my heart; and it gnaws. I reproach myself, I understand the full horror of my action, that is to say, of the act I may commit any moment, and yet I myself turn to it, and if I have not committed it, it is only because God preserved me. Yesterday I was
30 on my way to see her when Liza sent for me.”

“What, in the rain?”

35 “Yes. I am worn out, Uncle, and have decided to confess to you and to ask your help.” “Yes, of course, it’s a bad thing on your own estate. People will get to know. I understand that Liza is weak and that it is necessary to spare her, but why on your own

estate?”

36

Again Eugene tried not to hear what his uncle was saying, and hurried on to the core of the matter.

40 “Yes, save me from myself. That is what I ask of you. Today I was hindered by chance. But tomorrow or next time no one will hinder me. And she knows now. Don’t leave me alone.”

“Yes, all right,” said his uncle, — “but are you really so much in love?”

45 “Oh, it is not that at all. It is not that, it is some kind of power that has seized me and holds me. I do not know what to do. Perhaps I shall gain strength, and then...”

“Well, it turns out as I suggested,” said his uncle. “Let us be off to the Crimea.”

50 “Yes, yes, let us go, and meanwhile you will be with me and will talk to me.”

XVIII

55 The fact that Eugene had confided his secret to his uncle, and still more the sufferings of his conscience and the feeling of shame he experienced after that rainy day, sobered him. It was settled that they would start for Yalta in a week’s time. During that week Eugene drove to town to get money for the journey, gave
60 instructions from the house and from the office concerning the management of the estate, again became gay and friendly with his wife, and began to awaken morally.

65 So without having once seen Stepanida after that rainy day he left with his wife for the Crimea. There he spent an excellent two months. He received so many new impressions that it seemed to him that the past was obliterated from his memory. In the Crimea they met former acquaintances and became particularly friendly with them, and they also made new acquaintances. Life in the Crimea was a continual holiday for Eugene, besides being instructive and
70 beneficial. They became friendly there with the former Marshal of

1 the Nobility of their province, a clever and liberal-minded man who
became fond of Eugene and coached him, and attracted him to his
Party.

At the end of August Liza gave birth to a beautiful, healthy
5 daughter, and her confinement was unexpectedly easy.

In September they returned home, the four of them, including
the baby and its wet-nurse, as Liza was unable to nurse it herself.
Eugene returned home entirely free from the former horrors and
quite a new and happy man. Having gone through all that a husband
10 goes through when his wife bears a child, he loved her more than
ever. His feeling for the child when he took it in his arms was a
funny, new, very pleasant and, as it were, a tickling feeling.
Another new thing in his life now was that, besides his occupation
with the estate, thanks to his acquaintance with Dumchin (the ex-
15 Marshal) a new interest occupied his mind, that of the Zemstvo —
partly an ambitious interest, partly a feeling of duty. In October
there was to be a special Assembly, at which he was to be elected.
After arriving home he drove once to town and another time to
Dumchin.

20 Of the torments of his temptation and struggle he had
forgotten even to think, and could with difficulty recall them to
mind. It seemed to him something like an attack of insanity he had
undergone.

To such an extent did he now feel free from it that he was not
25 even afraid to make inquiries on the first occasion when he
remained alone with the steward. As he had previously spoken to
him about the matter he was not ashamed to ask.

“Well, and is Sidor Pechnikov still away from home?” he
inquired.

30 “Yes, he is still in town.”

“And his wife?”

“Oh, she is a worthless woman. She is now carrying on with
Zenovi. She has gone quite on the loose.”

35 “Well, that is all right,” thought Eugene. “How wonderfully
indifferent to it I am! How I have changed.”

All that Eugene had wished had been realized. He had obtained
the property, the factory was working successfully, the beet-crops
were excellent, and he expected a large income; his wife had borne 40
a child satisfactorily, his mother-in-law had left, and he had been
unanimously elected to the Zemstvo.

He was returning home from town after the election. He had
been congratulated and had had to return thanks. He had had dinner
and had drunk some five glasses of champagne. Quite new plans of 45
life now presented themselves to him, and he was thinking about
these as he drove home. It was the Indian summer: an excellent
road and a hot sun. As he approached his home Eugene was thinking
of how, as a result of this election, he would occupy among the
people the position he had always dreamed of; that is to say, one 50
in which he would be able to serve them not only by production,
which gave employment, but also by direct influence. He imagined
what his own and the other peasants would think of him in three
years' time. “For instance this one,” he thought, drifting just
then through the village and glancing at a peasant who with a 55
peasant woman was crossing the street in front of him carrying a
full water-tub. They stopped to let his carriage pass. The
peasant was old Pechnikov, and the woman was Stepanida. Eugene
looked at her, recognized her, and was glad to feel that he
remained quite tranquil. She was still as good looking as ever, 60
but this did not touch him at all. He drove home.

“Well, may we congratulate you?” said his uncle.

“Yes, I was elected.”

“Capital! We must drink to it!”

Next day Eugene drove about to see to the farming which he had 65
been neglecting. At the outlying farmstead a new thrashing machine
was at work. While watching it Eugene stepped among the women,
trying not to take notice of them; but try as he would he once or
twice noticed the black eyes and red kerchief of Stepanida, who was
carrying away the straw. Once or twice he glanced sideways at her 70

1 and felt that something was happening, but could not account for it
to himself. Only next day, when he again drove to the thrashing
floor and spent two hours there quite unnecessarily, without
ceasing to caress with his eyes the familiar, handsome figure of
5 the young woman, did he feel that he was lost, irremediably lost.
Again those torments! Again all that horror and fear, and there
was no saving himself.

What he expected happened to him. The evening of the next
10 day, without knowing how, he found himself at her back yard, by her
hay shed, where in autumn they had once had a meeting. As though
having a stroll, he stopped there lighting a cigarette. A
neighbouring peasant-woman saw him, and as he turned back he heard
her say to someone: "Go, he is waiting for you — on my dying word
15 he is standing there. Go, you fool!"

He saw how a woman — she — ran to the hay shed; but as a
peasant had met him it was no longer possible for him to turn back,
and so he went home.

XX

When he entered the drawing-room everything seemed strange and
unnatural to him. He had risen that morning vigorous, determined
25 to fling it all aside, to forget it and not allow himself to think
about it. But without noticing how it occurred he had all the
morning not merely not interested himself in the work, but tried to
avoid it. What had formerly cheered him and been important was now
insignificant. Unconsciously he tried to free himself from
30 business. It seemed to him that he had to do so in order to think
and to plan. And he freed himself and remained alone. But as soon
as he was alone he began to wander about in the garden and the
forest. And all those spots were besmirched in his recollection by
memories that gripped him. He felt that he was walking in the
35 garden and pretending to himself that he was thinking out

something, but that really he was not thinking out anything, but 36
insanely and unreasonably expecting her; expecting that by some
miracle she would be aware that he was expecting her, and would
come here at once and go somewhere where no one would see them, or
would come at night when there would be no moon, and no one, not 40
even she herself, would see — on such a night she would come and
he would touch her body...

"There now, talking of breaking off when I wish to," he said
to himself. "Yes, and that is having a clean healthy woman for
one's health sake! No, it seems one can't play with her like that. 45
I thought I had taken her, but it was she who took me; took me and
does not let me go. Why, I thought I was free, but I was not free
and was deceiving myself when I married. It was all nonsense —
fraud. From the time I had her I experienced a new feeling, the
real feeling of a husband. Yes, I ought to have lived with her. 50

"One of two lives is possible for me: that which I began with
Liza: service, estate management, the child, and people's respect.
If that is life, it is necessary that she, Stepanida, should not be
there. She must be sent away, as I said, or destroyed so that she
shall not exist. And the other life — is this: For me to take 55
her away from her husband, pay him money, disregard the shame and
disgrace, and live with her. But in that case it is necessary that
Liza should not exist, nor Mimi (the baby). No, that is not so,
the baby does not matter, but it is necessary that there should be
no Liza — that she should go away — that she should know, curse 60
me, and go away. That she should know that I have exchanged her
for a peasant woman, that I am a deceiver and a scoundrel! — No,
that is too terrible! It is impossible. But it might happen," he
went on thinking — "it might happen that Liza might fall ill and
die. Die, and then everything would be capital. 65

"Capital! Oh, scoundrel! No, if someone must die it should
be Stepanida. If she were to die, how good it would be.

"Yes, that is how men come to poison or kill their wives or
lovers. Take a revolver and go and call her, and instead of
embracing her, shoot her in the breast and have done with it. 70

1 “Really she is — a devil. Simply a devil. She has possessed herself of me against my own will.

“Kill? Yes. There are only two ways out: to kill my wife or her. For it is impossible to live like this. [Translator’s

5 footnote: At this place the alternative ending, printed at the end of the story, begins. A.M.] It is impossible! I must consider

the matter and look ahead. If things remain as they are what will happen? I shall again be saying to myself that I do not wish it and that I will throw her off, but it will be merely words; in the

10 evening I shall be at her back yard, and she will know it and will come out. And if people know of it and tell my wife, or if I tell her myself — for I can’t lie — I shall not be able to live so.

I cannot! People will know. They will all know — Parasha and the blacksmith. Well, is it possible to live so?

15 “Impossible! There are only two ways out: to kill my wife, or to kill her. Yes, or else...Ah, yes, there is a third way: to kill myself,” said he softly, and suddenly a shudder ran over his skin. “Yes, kill myself, then I shall not need to kill them.” He became frightened, for he felt that only that way was possible. He

20 had a revolver. “Shall I really kill myself? It is something I never thought of — how strange it will be...”

He returned to his study and at once opened the cupboard where the revolver lay, but before he had taken it out of its case his wife entered the room.

25

XXI

He threw a newspaper over the revolver.

30 “Again the same!” said she aghast when she had looked at him.

“What is the same?”

“The same terrible expression that you had before and would not explain to me. Jenya, dear one, tell me about it. I see that you are suffering. Tell me and you will feel easier. Whatever it

35 may be, it will be better than for you to suffer so. Don’t I know

that it is nothing bad?” 36

“You know? While...”

“Tell me, tell me, tell me. I won’t let you go.”

He smiled a piteous smile.

“Shall I? — No, it is impossible. And there is nothing to tell.” 40

Perhaps he might have told her, but at that moment the wet-nurse entered to ask if she should go for a walk. Liza went out to dress the baby.

“Then you will tell me? I will be back directly.” 45

“Yes, perhaps...”

She never could forget the piteous smile with which he said this. She went out.

Hurriedly, stealthily like a robber, he seized the revolver and took it out of its case. It was loaded, yes, but long ago, and one cartridge was missing. 50

“Well, how will it be?” He put it to his temple and hesitated a little, but as soon as he remembered Stepanida — his decision not to see her, his struggle, temptation, fall, and renewed struggle — he shuddered with horror. “No, this is better,” and he 55 pulled the trigger...

When Liza ran into the room — she had only had time to step down from the balcony — he was lying face downwards on the floor: black, warm blood was gushing from the wound, and his corpse was twitching. 60

There was an inquest. No one could understand or explain the suicide. It never even entered his uncle’s head that its cause could be anything in common with the confession Eugene had made to him two months previously.

Varvara Alexeevna assured them that she had always foreseen 65 it. It had been evident from his way of disputing. Neither Liza nor Mary Pavlovna could at all understand why it had happened, but still they did not believe what the doctors said, namely, that he was mentally deranged — a psychopath. They were quite unable to accept this, for they knew he was saner than hundreds of their 70

1 acquaintances.

And indeed if Eugene Irtenev was mentally deranged everyone is
in the same case; the most mentally deranged people are certainly
those who see in others indications of insanity they do not notice
5 in themselves.



VARIATION OF THE CONCLUSION TO *THE DEVIL*

10 “To kill, yes. There are only two ways out: to kill my wife,
or to kill her. For it is impossible to live like this,” said he
to himself, and going up to the table he took from it a revolver
and, having examined it — one cartridge was wanting — he put it
15 in his trouser pocket.

“My God! What am I doing?” he suddenly exclaimed, and folding
his hands he began to pray.

“O God, help me and deliver me! Thou knowest that I do not
desire evil, but by myself am powerless. Help me,” said he, making
20 the sign of the cross on his breast before the icon.

“Yes, I can control myself. I will go out, walk about and
think things over.”

He went to the entrance-hall, put on his overcoat and went out
onto the porch. Unconsciously his steps took him past the garden
25 along the field path to the outlying farmstead. There the
thrashing machine was still droning and the cries of the driver
lads were heard. He entered the barn. She was there. He saw her
at once. She was raking up the corn, and on seeing him she ran
briskly and merrily about, with laughing eyes, raking up the
30 scattered corn with agility. Eugene could not help watching her
though he did not wish to do so. He only recollected himself when
she was no longer in sight. The clerk informed him that they were
now finishing thrashing the corn that had been beaten down — that
was why it was going slower and the output was less. Eugene went
35 up to the drum, which occasionally gave a knock as sheaves not

evenly fed in passed under it, and he asked the clerk if there were 36
many such sheaves of beaten-down corn.

“There will be five cartloads of it.”

“Then look here...” began Eugene, but he did not finish the
sentence. She had gone close up to the drum and was raking the 40
corn from under it, and she scorched him with her laughing eyes.
That look spoke of a merry, careless love between them, of the fact
that she knew he wanted her and had come to her shed, and that she
as always was ready to live and be merry with him regardless of all
conditions or consequences. Eugene felt himself to be in her power 45
but did not wish to yield.

He remembered his prayer and tried to repeat it. He began
saying it to himself, but at once felt that it was useless. A
single thought now engrossed him entirely: how to arrange a
meeting with her so that the others should not notice it. 50

“If we finish this lot today, are we to start on a fresh stack
or leave it till tomorrow?” asked the clerk.

“Yes, yes,” replied Eugene, involuntarily following her to the
heap to which with the other women she was raking the corn.

“But can I really not master myself?” said he to himself. 55
“Have I really perished? O God! But there is not God. There is
only a devil. And it is she. She has possessed me. But I won’t,
I won’t! A devil, yes, a devil.”

Again he went up to her, drew the revolver from his pocket and
shot her, once, twice, thrice, in the back. She ran a few steps 60
and fell on the heap of corn.

“My God, my God! What is that?” cried the women.

“No, it was not an accident. I killed her on purpose,” cried
Eugene. “Send for the police-officer.”

He went home and went to his study and locked himself in, 65
without speaking to his wife.

“Do not come to me,” he cried to her through the door. “You
will know all about it.”

An hour later he rang, and bade the man-servant who answered
the bell: “Go and find out whether Stepanida is alive.” 70

1 The servant already knew all about it, and told him she had
died an hour ago. 36

“Well, all right. Now leave me alone. When the police
officer or the magistrate comes, let me know.”

5 The police officer and magistrate arrived next morning, and 40
Eugene, having bidden his wife and baby farewell, was taken to
prison.

He was tried. It was during the early days of trial by jury,
and the verdict was one of temporary insanity, and he was sentenced

10 only to perform church penance. 45

He had been kept in prison for nine months and was then
confined in a monastery for one month.

He had begun to drink while still in prison, continued to do
so in the monastery, and returned home an enfeebled, irresponsible

15 drunkard. 50

Varvara Alexeevna assured them that she had always predicted
this. It was, she said, evident from the way he disputed. Neither
Liza nor Mary Pavlovna could understand how the affair had
happened, but for all that, they did not believe what the doctors

20 said, namely, that he was mentally deranged — a psychopath. They 55
could not accept that, for he knew that he was saner than hundreds
of their acquaintances.

And indeed, if Eugene Iretnev was mentally deranged when he
committed this crime, then everyone is similarly insane. The most

25 mentally deranged people are certainly those who see in others 60
indications of insanity they do not notice in themselves.



30 65

35 70

The Black Monk

ANDREY VASSILITCH KOVRIN, who held a master's degree at the University, had exhausted himself, and had upset his nerves. He did not send for a doctor, but casually, over a bottle of wine, he spoke to a friend who was a doctor, and the latter advised him to spend the spring and summer in the country. Very opportunely a long letter came from Tanya Pesotsky, who asked him to come and stay with them at Borissovka. And he made up his mind that he really must go.

To begin with—that was in April—he went to his own home, Kovrinka, and there spent three weeks in solitude; then, as soon as the roads were in good condition, he set off, driving in a carriage, to visit Pesotsky, his former guardian, who had brought him up, and was a horticulturist well known all over Russia. The distance from Kovrinka to Borissovka was reckoned only a little over fifty miles. To drive along a soft road in May in a comfortable carriage with springs was a real pleasure.

Pesotsky had an immense house with columns and lions, off which the stucco was peeling, and with a footman in swallow-tails at the entrance. The old park, laid out in the English style, gloomy and severe, stretched for almost three-quarters of a mile to the river, and there ended in a steep, precipitous clay bank, where pines grew with bare roots that looked like shaggy paws; the water shone below with an unfriendly gleam, and the peewits flew up with a plaintive cry, and there one always felt that one must sit down and write a ballad. But near the house itself, in the courtyard and orchard, which together with the nurseries covered ninety acres, it was all life and gaiety even in bad weather. Such marvellous roses, lilies, camellias; such tulips of all possible shades, from glistening white to sooty black—such a wealth of flowers, in fact, Kovrin had never

seen anywhere as at Pesotsky's. It was only the beginning of spring, and the real glory of the flower-beds was still hidden away in the hot-houses. But even the flowers along the avenues, and here and there in the flower-beds, were enough to make one feel, as one walked about the garden, as though one were in a realm of tender colours, especially in the early morning when the dew was glistening on every petal.

What was the decorative part of the garden, and what Pesotsky contemptuously spoke of as rubbish, had at one time in his childhood given Kovrin an impression of fairyland.

Every sort of caprice, of elaborate monstrosity and mockery at Nature was here. There were espaliers of fruit-trees, a pear-tree in the shape of a pyramidal poplar, spherical oaks and lime-trees, an apple-tree in the shape of an umbrella, plum-trees trained into arches, crests, candelabra, and even into the number 1862—the year when Pesotsky first took up horticulture. One came across, too, lovely, graceful trees with strong, straight stems like palms, and it was only by looking intently that one could recognise these trees as gooseberries or currants. But what made the garden most cheerful and gave it a lively air, was the continual coming and going in it, from early morning till evening; people with wheelbarrows, shovels, and watering-cans swarmed round the trees and bushes, in the avenues and the flower-beds, like ants. . . .

Kovrin arrived at Pesotsky's at ten o'clock in the evening. He found Tanya and her father, Yegor Semyonitch, in great anxiety. The clear starlight sky and the thermometer foretold a frost towards morning, and meanwhile Ivan Karlitch, the gardener, had gone to the town, and they had no one to rely upon. At supper they talked of nothing but the morning frost, and it was settled that Tanya

1 should not go to bed, and between twelve and one should walk
through the garden, and see that everything was done properly, and
Yegor Semyonitch should get up at three o'clock or even earlier.

Kovrin sat with Tanya all the evening, and after midnight went
5 out with her into the garden. It was cold. There was a strong smell
of burning already in the garden. In the big orchard, which was
called the commercial garden, and which brought Yegor
Semyonitch several thousand clear profit, a thick, black, acrid smoke
was creeping over the ground and, curling around the trees, was
10 saving those thousands from the frost. Here the trees were arranged
as on a chessboard, in straight and regular rows like ranks of soldiers,
and this severe pedantic regularity, and the fact that all the trees
were of the same size, and had tops and trunks all exactly alike,
made them look monotonous and even dreary. Kovrin and Tanya
15 walked along the rows where fires of dung, straw, and all sorts of
refuse were smouldering, and from time to time they were met by
labourers who wandered in the smoke like shadows. The only trees
in flower were the cherries, plums, and certain sorts of apples, but
the whole garden was plunged in smoke, and it was only near the
20 nurseries that Kovrin could breathe freely.

"Even as a child I used to sneeze from the smoke here," he said,
shrugging his shoulders, "but to this day I don't understand how
smoke can keep off frost."

"Smoke takes the place of clouds when there are none . . ."
25 answered Tanya.

"And what do you want clouds for?"

"In overcast and cloudy weather there is no
frost."

"You don't say so."

30 He laughed and took her arm. Her broad, very earnest face,
chilled with the frost, with her delicate black eyebrows, the turned-
up collar of her coat, which prevented her moving her head freely,
and the whole of her thin, graceful figure, with her skirts tucked up
on account of the dew, touched him.

35 "Good heavens! she is grown up," he said. "When I went away

from here last, five years ago, you were still a child. You were such a 36
thin, longlegged creature, with your hair hanging on your shoulders;
you used to wear short frocks, and I used to tease you, calling you a
heron. . . . What time does!"

"Yes, five years!" sighed Tanya. "Much water has flowed since 40
then. Tell me, Andryusha, honestly," she began eagerly, looking him
in the face: "do you feel strange with us now? But why do I ask you?
You are a man, you live your own interesting life, you are somebody.
. . . To grow apart is so natural! But however that may be,
Andryusha, I want you to think of us as your people. We have a 45
right to that."

"I do, Tanya."

"On your word of honour?"

"Yes, on my word of honour."

"You were surprised this evening that we have so many of your 50
photographs. You know my father adores you. Sometimes it seems to
me that he loves you more than he does me. He is proud of you. You
are a clever, extraordinary man, you have made a brilliant career for
yourself, and he is persuaded that you have turned out like this
because he brought you up. I don't try to prevent him from 55
thinking so. Let him."

Dawn was already beginning, and that was especially perceptible
from the distinctness with which the coils of smoke and the tops of
the trees began to stand out in the air.

"It's time we were asleep, though," said Tanya, "and it's cold, too." 60
She took his arm. "Thank you for coming, Andryusha. We have
only uninteresting acquaintances, and not many of them. We have
only the garden, the garden, the garden, and nothing else. Stan-
dards, half-standards," she laughed. "Aports, Reinettes, Borovinkas,
budded stocks, grafted stocks. . . . All, all our life has gone into the 65
garden. I never even dream of anything but apples and pears. Of
course, it is very nice and useful, but sometimes one longs for
something else for variety. I remember that when you used to come
to us for the summer holidays, or simply a visit, it always seemed to
be fresher and brighter in the house, as though the covers had been 70

1 taken off the lustres and the furniture. I was only a little girl then,
but yet I understood it.”

She talked a long while and with great feeling. For some reason
the idea came into his head that in the course of the summer he
5 might grow fond of this little, weak, talkative creature, might be
carried away and fall in love; in their position it was so possible and
natural! This thought touched and amused him; he bent down to
her sweet, preoccupied face and hummed softly:

“Onyegin, I won’t conceal it;
10 I madly love Tatiana. . . .”

By the time they reached the house, Yegor Semyonitch had got
up. Kovrin did not feel sleepy; he talked to the old man and went
to the garden with him. Yegor Semyonitch was a tall, broad-
shouldered, corpulent man, and he suffered from asthma, yet he
15 walked so fast that it was hard work to hurry after him. He had an
extremely preoccupied air; he was always hurrying somewhere, with
an expression that suggested that if he were one minute late all
would be ruined!

“Here is a business, brother . . .” he began, standing still to take
20 breath. “On the surface of the ground, as you see, is frost; but if you
raise the thermometer on a stick fourteen feet above the ground,
there it is warm. . . . Why is that?”

“I really don’t know,” said Kovrin, and he laughed.

“H’m! . . . One can’t know everything, of course. . . . However
25 large the intellect may be, you can’t find room for everything in it. I
suppose you still go in chiefly for philosophy?”

“Yes, I lecture in psychology; I am working at philosophy in
general.”

“And it does not bore you?”

30 “On the contrary, it’s all I live for.”

“Well, God bless you! . . .” said Yegor Semyonitch, meditatively
stroking his grey whiskers. “God bless you! . . . I am delighted about
you . . . delighted, my boy. . . .”

But suddenly he listened, and, with a terrible face, ran off and
35 quickly disappeared behind the trees in a cloud of smoke.

“Who tied this horse to an apple-tree?” Kovrin heard his despair- 36
ing, heart-rending cry. “Who is the low scoundrel who has dared to
tie this horse to an apple-tree? My God, my God! They have ruined
everything; they have spoilt everything; they have done everything
filthy, horrible, and abominable. The orchard’s done for, the 40
orchard’s ruined. My God!”

When he came back to Kovrin, his face looked exhausted and
mortified.

“What is one to do with these accursed people?” he said in a
tearful voice, flinging up his hands. “Styopka was carting dung at 45
night, and tied the horse to an apple-tree! He twisted the reins
round it, the rascal, as tightly as he could, so that the bark is rubbed
off in three places. What do you think of that! I spoke to him and he
stands like a post and only blinks his eyes. Hanging is too good for
him.” 50

Growing calmer, he embraced Kovrin and kissed him on the
cheek.

“Well, God bless you! . . . God bless you! . . .” he muttered. “I am
very glad you have come. Unutterably glad. . . . Thank you.”

Then, with the same rapid step and preoccupied face, he made 55
the round of the whole garden, and showed his former ward all his
greenhouses and hot-houses, his covered-in garden, and two apiaries
which he called the marvel of our century.

While they were walking the sun rose, flooding the garden with
brilliant light. It grew warm. Foreseeing a long, bright, cheerful day, 60
Kovrin recollected that it was only the beginning of May, and that
he had before him a whole summer as bright, cheerful, and long;
and suddenly there stirred in his bosom a joyous, youthful feeling,
such as he used to experience in his childhood, running about in
that garden. And he hugged the old man and kissed him affection- 65
ately. Both of them, feeling touched, went indoors and drank tea
out of old-fashioned china cups, with cream and satisfying krendels
made with milk and eggs; and these trifles reminded Kovrin again of
his childhood and boyhood. The delightful present was blended
with the impressions of the past that stirred within him; there was a 70

1 tightness at his heart; yet he was happy.

He waited till Tanya was awake and had coffee with her, went for a walk, then went to his room and sat down to work. He read attentively, making notes, and from time to time raised his eyes to look out
5 at the open windows or at the fresh, still dewy flowers in the vases on the table; and again he dropped his eyes to his book, and it seemed to him as though every vein in his body was quivering and fluttering with pleasure.

10 II

In the country he led just as nervous and restless a life as in town. He read and wrote a great deal, he studied Italian, and when he was out for a walk, thought with pleasure that he would soon sit down to
15 work again. He slept so little that every one wondered at him; if he accidentally [sic] dozed for half an hour in the daytime, he would lie awake all night, and, after a sleepless night, would feel cheerful and vigorous as though nothing had happened.

He talked a great deal, drank wine, and smoked expensive cigars. Very often, almost every day, young ladies of neighbouring families would come to the Pesotskys', and would sing and play the piano with Tanya; sometimes a young neighbour who was a good violinist would come, too. Kovrin listened with eagerness to the music and singing, and was exhausted by it, and this showed itself by his eyes
25 closing and his head falling to one side.

One day he was sitting on the balcony after evening tea, reading. At the same time, in the drawing-room, Tanya taking soprano, one of the young ladies a contralto, and the young man with his violin, were practising a well-known serenade of Braga's. Kovrin listened to the
30 words—they were Russian—and could not understand their meaning. At last, leaving his book and listening attentively, he understood: a maiden, full of sick fancies, heard one night in her garden mysterious sounds, so strange and lovely that she was obliged to recognise them as a holy harmony which is unintelligible to us
35 mortals, and so flies back to heaven. Kovrin's eyes began to close. He

got up, and in exhaustion walked up and down the drawing-room, 36 and then the dining-room. When the singing was over he took Tanya's arm, and with her went out on the balcony.

"I have been all day thinking of a legend," he said. "I don't remember whether I have read it somewhere or heard it, but it is a
40 strange and almost grotesque legend. To begin with, it is somewhat obscure. A thousand years ago a monk, dressed in black, wandered about the desert, somewhere in Syria or Arabia. . . . Some miles from where he was, some fisherman saw another black monk, who was moving slowly over the surface of a lake. This second monk was a
45 mirage. Now forget all the laws of optics, which the legend does not recognise, and listen to the rest. From that mirage there was cast another mirage, then from that other a third, so that the image of the black monk began to be repeated endlessly from one layer of the atmosphere to another. So that he was seen at one time in Africa, at
50 another in Spain, then in Italy, then in the Far North. . . . Then he passed out of the atmosphere of the earth, and now he is wandering all over the universe, still never coming into conditions in which he might disappear. Possibly he may be seen now in Mars or in some star of the Southern Cross. But, my dear, the real point on which the
55 whole legend hangs lies in the fact that, exactly a thousand years from the day when the monk walked in the desert, the mirage will return to the atmosphere of the earth again and will appear to men. And it seems that the thousand years is almost up. . . . According to the legend, we may look out for the black monk to-day or to-
60 morrow."

"A queer mirage," said Tanya, who did not like the legend.

"But the most wonderful part of it all," laughed Kovrin, "is that I simply cannot recall where I got this legend from. Have I read it
65 somewhere? Have I heard it? Or perhaps I dreamed of the black monk. I swear I don't remember. But the legend interests me. I have been thinking about it all day."

Letting Tanya go back to her visitors, he went out of the house, and, lost in meditation, walked by the flower-beds. The sun was already setting. The flowers, having just been watered, gave forth a
70

1 damp, irritating fragrance. Indoors they began singing again, and in
the distance the violin had the effect of a human voice. Kovrin,
racking his brains to remember where he had read or heard the
legend, turned slowly towards the park, and unconsciously went as
5 far as the river. By a little path that ran along the steep bank,
between the bare roots, he went down to the water, disturbed the
peewits there and frightened two ducks. The last rays of the setting
sun still threw light here and there on the gloomy pines, but it was
quite dark on the surface of the river. Kovrin crossed to the other
10 side by the narrow bridge. Before him lay a wide field covered with
young rye not yet in blossom. There was no living habitation, no
living soul in the distance, and it seemed as though the little path, if
one went along it, would take one to the unknown, mysterious
place where the sun had just gone down, and where the evening
15 glow was flaming in immensity and splendour.

“How open, how free, how still it is here!” thought Kovrin,
walking along the path. “And it feels as though all the world were
watching me, hiding and waiting for me to understand it. . . .”

But then waves began running across the rye, and a light evening
20 breeze softly touched his uncovered head. A minute later there was
another gust of wind, but stronger—the rye began rustling, and he
heard behind him the hollow murmur of the pines. Kovrin stood
still in amazement. From the horizon there rose up to the sky, like a
whirlwind or a waterspout, a tall black column. Its outline was
25 indistinct, but from the first instant it could be seen that it was not
standing still, but moving with fearful rapidity, moving straight
towards Kovrin, and the nearer it came the smaller and the more
distinct it was. Kovrin moved aside into the rye to make way for it,
and only just had time to do so.

30 A monk, dressed in black, with a grey head and black eyebrows,
his arms crossed over his breast, floated by him. . . . His bare feet did
not touch the earth. After he had floated twenty feet beyond him,
he looked round at Kovrin, and nodded to him with a friendly but
sly smile. But what a pale, fearfully pale, thin face! Beginning to
35 grow larger again, he flew across the river, collided noiselessly with

the clay bank and pines, and passing through them, vanished like 36
smoke.

“Why, you see,” muttered Kovrin, “there must be truth in the
legend.”

Without trying to explain to himself the strange apparition, glad 40
that he had succeeded in seeing so near and so distinctly, not only
the monk’s black garments, but even his face and eyes, agreeably
excited, he went back to the house.

In the park and in the garden people were moving about quietly,
in the house they were playing—so he alone had seen the monk. He 45
had an intense desire to tell Tanya and Yegor Semyonitch, but he
reflected that they would certainly think his words the ravings of
delirium, and that would frighten them; he had better say nothing.

He laughed aloud, sang, and danced the mazurka; he was in high 50
spirits, and all of them, the visitors and Tanya, thought he had a
peculiar look, radiant and inspired, and that he was very interesting.

III

After supper, when the visitors had gone, he went to his room and 55
lay down on the sofa: he wanted to think about the monk. But a
minute later Tanya came in.

“Here, Andryusha; read father’s articles,” she said, giving him a
bundle of pamphlets and proofs. “They are splendid articles. He
writes capitally.” 60

“Capitally, indeed!” said Yegor Semyonitch, following her and
smiling constrainedly; he was ashamed. “Don’t listen to her, please;
don’t read them! Though, if you want to go to sleep, read them by
all means; they are a fine soporific.”

“I think they are splendid articles,” said Tanya, with deep 65
conviction. “You read them, Andryusha, and persuade father to
write oftener. He could write a complete manual of horticulture.”

Yegor Semyonitch gave a forced laugh, blushed, and began
uttering the phrases usually made us of by an embarrassed author.
At last he began to give way. 70

1 “In that case, begin with Gaucher’s article and these Russian
 articles,” he muttered, turning over the pamphlets with a trembling
 hand, “or else you won’t understand. Before you read my objections,
 you must know what I am objecting to. But it’s all nonsense . . .
 5 tiresome stuff. Besides, I believe it’s bedtime.”

Tanya went away. Yegor Semyonitch sat down on the sofa by
 Kovrin and heaved a deep sigh.

“Yes, my boy . . .” he began after a pause. “That’s how it is, my
 dear lecturer. Here I write articles, and take part in exhibitions, and
 10 receive medals. . . . Pesotsky, they say, has apples the size of a head,
 and Pesotsky, they say, has made his fortune with his garden. In
 short, ‘Kotcheby is rich and glorious.’ But one asks oneself: what is
 it all for? The garden is certainly fine, a model. It’s not really a
 garden, but a regular institution, which is of the greatest public
 15 importance because it marks, so to say, a new era in Russian
 agriculture and Russian industry. But, what’s it for? What’s the
 object of it?”

“The fact speaks for itself.”

“I do not mean in that sense. I meant to ask: what will happen to
 20 the garden when I die? In the condition in which you see it now, it
 would not be maintained for one month without me. The whole
 secret of success lies not in its being a big garden or a great number
 of labourers being employed in it, but in the fact that I love the
 work. Do you understand? I love it perhaps more than myself. Look
 25 at me; I do everything myself. I work from morning to night: I do
 all the grafting myself, the pruning myself, the planting myself. I do
 it all myself: when any one helps me I am jealous and irritable till I
 am rude. The whole secret lies in loving it—that is, in the sharp eye
 of the master; yes, and in the master’s hands, and in the feeling that
 30 makes one, when one goes anywhere for an hour’s visit, sit, ill at
 ease, with one’s heart far away, afraid that something may have
 happened in the garden. But when I die, who will look after it?
 Who will work? The gardener? The labourers? Yes? But I will tell
 you, my dear fellow, the worst enemy in the garden is not a hare,
 35 not a cockchafer, and not the frost, but any outside person.”

“And Tanya?” asked Kovrin, laughing. “She can’t be more harmful 36
 than a hare? She loves the work and understands it.”

“Yes, she loves it and understands it. If after my death the garden
 goes to her and she is the mistress, of course nothing better could be
 wished. But if, which God forbid, she should marry,” Yegor 40
 Semyonitch whispered, and looked with a frightened look at Kovrin,
 “that’s just it. If she marries and children come, she will have no time
 to think about the garden. What I fear most is: she will marry some
 fine gentleman, and he will be greedy, and he will let the garden to
 people who will run it for profit, and everything will go to the devil 45
 the very first year! In our work females are the scourge of God!”

Yegor Semyonitch sighed and paused for a while.

“Perhaps it is egoism, but I tell you frankly: I don’t want Tanya to
 get married. I am afraid of it! There is one young dandy comes to see
 us, bringing his violin and scraping on it; I know Tanya will not 50
 marry him, I know it quite well; but I can’t bear to see him! Alto-
 gether, my boy, I am very queer. I know that.”

Yegor Semyonitch got up and walked about the room in excite-
 ment, and it was evident that he wanted to say something very
 important, but could not bring himself to it. 55

“I am very fond of you, and so I am going to speak to you
 openly,” he decided at last, thrusting his hands into his pockets. “I
 deal plainly with certain delicate questions, and say exactly what I
 think, and I cannot endure so-called hidden thoughts. I will speak
 plainly: you are the only man to whom I should not be afraid to 60
 marry my daughter. You are a clever man with a good heart, and
 would not let my beloved work go to ruin; and the chief reason is
 that I love you as a son, and I am proud of you. If Tanya and you
 could get up a romance somehow, then—well! I should be very glad
 and even happy. I tell you this plainly, without mincing matters, like 65
 an honest man.”

Kovrin laughed. Yegor Semyonitch opened the door to go out,
 and stood in the doorway.

“If Tanya and you had a son, I would make a horticulturist of
 him,” he said, after a moment’s thought. “However, this is idle 70

1 dreaming. Goodnight.”

Left alone, Kovrin settled himself more comfortably on the sofa and took up the articles. The title of one was “On Intercropping”; of another, “A few Words on the Remarks of Monsieur Z. concerning
5 the Trenching of the Soil for a New Garden”; a third, “Additional Matter concerning Grafting with a Dormant Bud”; and they were all of the same sort. But what a restless, jerky tone! What nervous, almost hysterical passion! Here was an article, one would have thought, with most peaceable and impersonal contents: the subject
10 of it was the Russian Antonovsky Apple. But Yegor Semyonitch began it with “Audiatur altera pars,” and finished it with “Sapientia sat”; and between these two quotations a perfect torrent of venomous phrases directed “at the learned ignorance of our recognised horticultural authorities, who observe Nature from the height of
15 their university chairs,” or at Monsieur Gaucher, “whose success has been the work of the vulgar and the dilettanti.” “And then followed an inappropriate, affected, and insincere regret that peasants who stole fruit and broke the branches could not nowadays be flogged.

“It is beautiful, charming, healthy work, but even in this there is
20 strife and passion,” thought Kovrin, “I suppose that everywhere and in all careers men of ideas are nervous, and marked by exaggerated sensitiveness. Most likely it must be so.”

He thought of Tanya, who was so pleased with Yegor Semyonitch’s articles. Small, pale, and so thin that her shoulder-
25 blades stuck out, her eyes, wide and open, dark and intelligent, had an intent gaze, as though looking for something. She walked like her father with a little hurried step. She talked a great deal and was fond of arguing, accompanying every phrase, however insignificant, with expressive mimicry and gesticulation. No doubt she was nervous in
30 the extreme.

Kovrin went on reading the articles, but he understood nothing of them, and flung them aside. The same pleasant excitement with which he had earlier in the evening danced the mazurka and
35 listened to the music was now mastering him again and rousing a multitude of thoughts. He got up and began walking about the

room, thinking about the black monk. It occurred to him that if this
36 strange, supernatural monk had appeared to him only, that meant that he was ill and had reached the point of having hallucinations. This reflection frightened him, but not for long.

“But I am all right, and I am doing no harm to any one; so there is
40 no harm in my hallucinations,” he thought; and he felt happy again.

He sat down on the sofa and clasped his hands round his head. Restraining the unaccountable joy which filled his whole being, he then paced up and down again, and sat down to his work. But the thought that he read in the book did not satisfy him. He wanted
45 something gigantic, unfathomable, stupendous. Towards morning he undressed and reluctantly went to bed: he ought to sleep.

When he heard the footsteps of Yegor Semyonitch going out into the garden, Kovrin rang the bell and asked the footman to bring
50 him some wine. He drank several glasses of Lafitte, then wrapped himself up, head and all; his consciousness grew clouded and he fell asleep.

IV

55 Yegor Semyonitch and Tanya often quarrelled and said nasty things to each other.

They quarrelled about something that morning. Tanya burst out crying and went to her room. She would not come down to dinner nor to tea. At first Yegor Semyonitch went about looking sulky and
60 dignified, as though to give every one to understand that for him the claims of justice and good order were more important than anything else in the world; but he could not keep it up for long, and soon sank into depression. He walked about the park dejectedly, continually sighing: “Oh, my God! My God!” and at dinner did not
65 eat a morsel. At last, guilty and conscience-stricken, he knocked at the locked door and called timidly:

“Tanya! Tanya!”

And from behind the door came a faint voice, weak with crying
70 but still determined:

1 “Leave me alone, if you please.”

The depression of the master and mistress was reflected in the whole household, even in the labourers working in the garden.

Kovrin was absorbed in his interesting work, but at last he, too, felt
5 dreary and uncomfortable. To dissipate the general ill-humour in
some way, he made up his mind to intervene, and towards evening
he knocked at Tanya’s door. He was admitted.

“Fie, fie, for shame!” he began playfully, looking with surprise at
Tanya’s tear-stained, weebgone face, flushed in patches with
10 crying. “Is it really so serious? Fie, fie!”

“But if you knew how he tortures me!” she said, and floods of
scalding tears streamed from her big eyes. “He torments me to
death,” she went on, wringing her hands. “I said nothing to him . . .
nothing . . . I only said that there was no need to keep . . . too many
15 labourers . . . if we could hire them by the day when we wanted
them. You know . . . you know the labourers have been doing
nothing for a whole week. . . . I . . . I . . . only said that, and he
shouted and . . . said . . . a lot of horrible insulting things to me.
What for?”

20 “There, there,” said Kovrin, smoothing her hair. “You’ve quar-
relled with each other, you’ve cried, and that’s enough. You must
not be angry for long—that’s wrong . . . all the more as he loves you
beyond everything.”

“He has . . . has spoiled my whole life,” Tanya went on, sobbing.
25 “I hear nothing but abuse and . . . insults. He thinks I am of no use
in the house. Well! He is right. I shall go away to-morrow; I shall
become a telegraph clerk. . . . I don’t care. . . .”

“Come, come, come. . . . You mustn’t cry, Tanya. You mustn’t,
30 dear. . . . You are both hot-tempered and irritable, and you are both
to blame. Come along; I will reconcile you.”

Kovrin talked affectionately and persuasively, while she went on
crying, twitching her shoulders and wringing her hands, as though
some terrible misfortune had really befallen her. He felt all the sorrier
for her because her grief was not a serious one, yet she suffered
35 extremely. What trivialities were enough to make this little creature

miserable for a whole day, perhaps for her whole life! Comforting 36
Tanya, Kovrin thought that, apart from this girl and her father, he
might hunt the world over and would not find people who would
love him as one of themselves, as one of their kindred. If it had not
40 been for those two he might very likely, having lost his father and
mother in early childhood, never to the day of his death have
known what was meant by genuine affection and that naïve,
uncritical love which is only lavished on very close blood relations;
and he felt that the nerves of this weeping, shaking girl responded to
45 his half-sick, overstrained nerves like iron to a magnet. He never
could have loved a healthy, strong, rosy-cheeked woman, but pale,
weak, unhappy Tanya attracted him.

And he liked stroking her hair and her shoulders, pressing her
hand and wiping away her tears. . . . At last she left off crying. She
went on for a long time complaining of her father and her hard, 50
insufferable life in that house, entreating Kovrin to put himself in
her place; then she began, little by little, smiling, and sighing that
God had given her such a bad temper. At last, laughing aloud, she
called herself a fool, and ran out of the room.

When a little later Kovrin went into the garden, Yegor 55
Semyonitch and Tanya were walking side by side along an avenue as
though nothing had happened, and both were eating rye bread
with salt on it, as both were hungry.

V

Glad that he had been so successful in the part of peacemaker,
Kovrin went into the park. Sitting on a garden seat, thinking, he
heard the rattle of a carriage and a feminine laugh—visitors were
arriving. When the shades of evening began falling on the garden, 65
the sounds of the violin and singing voices reached him indistinctly,
and that reminded him of the black monk. Where, in what land or
in what planet, was that optical absurdity moving now?

Hardly had he recalled the legend and pictured in his imagination
the dark apparition he had seen in the rye-field, when, from behind 70

1 a pine-tree exactly opposite, there came out noiselessly, without the
 slightest rustle, a man of medium height with uncovered grey head,
 all in black, and barefooted like a beggar, and his black eyebrows
 stood out conspicuously on his pale, death-like face. Nodding his
 5 head graciously, this beggar or pilgrim came noiselessly to the seat
 and sat down, and Kovrin recognised him as the black monk.

For a minute they looked at one another, Kovrin with amaze-
 ment, and the monk with friendliness, and, just as before, a little
 slyness, as though he were thinking something to himself.

10 “But you are a mirage,” said Kovrin. “Why are you here and
 sitting still? That does not fit in with the legend.”

“That does not matter,” the monk answered in a low voice, not
 immediately turning his face towards him. “The legend, the mirage,
 and I are all the products of your excited imagination. I am a
 15 phantom.”

“Then you don’t exist?” said Kovrin.

“You can think as you like,” said the monk, with a faint smile. “I
 exist in your imagination, and your imagination is part of nature, so
 I exist in nature.”

20 “You have a very old, wise, and extremely expressive face, as
 though you really had lived more than a thousand years,” said
 Kovrin. “I did not know that my imagination was capable of
 creating such phenomena. But why do you look at me with such
 enthusiasm? Do you like me?”

25 “Yes, you are one of those few who are justly called the chosen of
 God. You do the service of eternal truth. Your thoughts, your
 designs, the marvellous studies you are engaged in, and all your life,
 bear the Divine, the heavenly stamp, seeing that they are conse-
 crated to the rational and the beautiful—that is, to what is eternal.”

30 “You said ‘eternal truth.’ . . . But is eternal truth of use to man and
 within his reach, if there is no eternal life?”

“There is eternal life,” said the monk.

“Do you believe in the immortality of man?”

“Yes, of course. A grand, brilliant future is in store for you men.

35 And the more there are like you on earth, the sooner will this future

be realised. Without you who serve the higher principle and live in 36
 full understanding and freedom, mankind would be of little
 account; developing in a natural way, it would have to wait a long
 time for the end of its earthly history. You will lead it some thou-
 sands of years earlier into the kingdom of eternal truth—and therein 40
 lies your supreme service. You are the incarnation of the blessing of
 God, which rests upon men.”

“And what is the object of eternal life?” asked Kovrin.

“As of all life—enjoyment. True enjoyment lies in knowledge, and
 eternal life provides innumerable and inexhaustible sources of 45
 knowledge, and in that sense it has been said: ‘In My Father’s house
 there are many mansions.’”

“If only you knew how pleasant it is to hear you!” said Kovrin,
 rubbing his hands with satisfaction.

“I am very glad.” 50

“But I know that when you go away I shall be worried by the
 question of your reality. You are a phantom, an hallucination. So I
 am mentally deranged, not normal?”

“What if you are? Why trouble yourself? You are ill because you
 have overworked and exhausted yourself, and that means that you 55
 have sacrificed your health to the idea, and the time is near at hand
 when you will give up life itself to it. What could be better? That is
 the goal towards which all divinely endowed, noble natures strive.”

“If I know I am mentally affected, can I trust myself?”

“And are you sure that the men of genius, whom all men trust, 60
 did not see phantoms, too? The learned say now that genius is allied
 to madness. My friend, healthy and normal people are only the
 common herd. Reflections upon the neurasthenia of the age,
 nervous exhaustion and degeneracy, et cetera, can only seriously
 agitate those who place the object of life in the present—that is, the 65
 common herd.”

“The Romans used to say: *Mens sana in corpore sano.*”

“Not everything the Greeks and the Romans said is true. Exalta-
 tion, enthusiasm, ecstasy—all that distinguishes prophets, poets,
 martyrs for the idea, from the common folk—is repellent to the 70

1 animal side of man—that is, his physical health. I repeat, if you
want to be healthy and normal, go to the common herd.”

“Strange that you repeat what often comes into my mind,” said
Kovrin. “It is as though you had seen and overheard my secret
5 thoughts. But don’t let us talk about me. What do you mean by
‘eternal truth?’”

The monk did not answer. Kovrin looked at him and could not
distinguish his face. His features grew blurred and misty. Then the
monk’s head and arms disappeared; his body seemed merged into
10 the seat and the evening twilight, and he vanished altogether.

“The hallucination is over,” said Kovrin; and he laughed. “It’s a
pity.”

He went back to the house, light-hearted and happy. The little
the monk had said to him had flattered, not his vanity, but his
15 whole soul, his whole being. To be one of the chosen, to serve
eternal truth, to stand in the ranks of those who could make
mankind worthy of the kingdom of God some thousands of years
sooner—that is, to free men from some thousands of years of
unnecessary struggle, sin, and suffering; to sacrifice to the idea
20 everything—youth, strength, health; to be ready to die for the
common weal—what an exalted, what a happy lot! He recalled his
past—pure, chaste, laborious; he remembered what he had learned
himself and what he had taught to others, and decided that there
was no exaggeration in the monk’s words.

25 Tanya came to meet him in the park: she was by now wearing a
different dress.

“Are you here?” she said. “And we have been looking and looking
for you. . . . But what is the matter with you?” she asked in wonder,
glancing at his radiant, ecstatic face and eyes full of tears. “How
30 strange you are, Andryusha!”

“I am pleased, Tanya,” said Kovrin, laying his hand on her
shoulders. “I am more than pleased: I am happy. Tanya, darling
Tanya, you are an extraordinary, nice creature. Dear Tanya, I am so
glad, I am so glad!”

35 He kissed both her hands ardently, and went on:

“I have just passed through an exalted, wonderful, unearthly 36
moment. But I can’t tell you all about it or you would call me mad
and not believe me. Let us talk of you. Dear, delightful Tanya! I love
you, and am used to loving you. To have you near me, to meet you
a dozen times a day, has become a necessity of my existence; I don’t 40
know how I shall get on without you when I go back home.”

“Oh,” laughed Tanya, “you will forget about us in two days. We
are humble people and you are a great man.”

“No; let us talk in earnest!” he said. “I shall take you with me,
Tanya. Yes? Will you come with me? Will you be mine?” 45

“Come,” said Tanya, and tried to laugh again, but the laugh
would not come, and patches of colour came into her face.

She began breathing quickly and walked very quickly, but not to
the house, but further into the park.

“I was not thinking of it . . . I was not thinking of it,” she said, 50
wringing her hands in despair.

And Kovrin followed her and went on talking, with the same
radiant, enthusiastic face:

“I want a love that will dominate me altogether; and that love 55
only you, Tanya, can give me. I am happy! I am happy!”

She was overwhelmed, and huddling and shrinking together,
seemed ten years older all at once, while he thought her beautiful
and expressed his rapture aloud:

“How lovely she is!” 60

VI

Learning from Kovrin that not only a romance had been got up,
but that there would even be a wedding, Yegor Semyonitch spent a
long time in pacing from one corner of the room to the other, trying 65
to conceal his agitation. His hands began trembling, his neck
swelled and turned purple, he ordered his racing droshky and drove
off somewhere. Tanya, seeing how he lashed the horse, and seeing
how he pulled his cap over his ears, understood what he was feeling,
shut herself up in her room, and cried the whole day. 70

1 In the hot-houses the peaches and plums were already ripe; the
 packing and sending off of these tender and fragile goods to
 Moscow took a great deal of care, work, and trouble. Owing to the
 fact that the summer was very hot and dry, it was necessary to water
 5 every tree, and a great deal of time and labour was spent on doing it.
 Numbers of caterpillars made their appearance, which, to Kovrin's
 disgust, the labourers and even Yegor Semyonitch and Tanya
 squashed with their fingers. In spite of all that, they had already to
 book autumn orders for fruit and trees, and to carry on a great deal
 10 of correspondence. And at the very busiest time, when no one
 seemed to have a free moment, the work of the fields carried off
 more than half their labourers from the garden. Yegor Semyonitch,
 sunburnt, exhausted, ill-humoured, galloped from the fields to the
 garden and back again; cried that he was being torn to pieces, and
 15 that he should put a bullet through his brains.

Then came the fuss and worry of the trousseau, to which the
 Pesotskys attached a good deal of importance. Every one's head was
 in a whirl from the snipping of the scissors, the rattle of the sewing-
 machine, the smell of hot irons, and the caprices of the dressmaker, a
 20 huffy and nervous lady. And, as ill-luck would have it, visitors came
 every day, who had to be entertained, fed, and even put up for the
 night. But all this hard labour passed unnoticed as though in a fog.
 Tanya felt that love and happiness had taken her unawares, though
 she had, since she was fourteen, for some reason been convinced
 25 that Kovrin would marry her and no one else. She was bewildered,
 could not grasp it, could not believe herself. . . . At one minute such
 joy would swoop down upon her that she longed to fly away to the
 clouds and there pray to God, at another moment she would
 remember that in August she would have to part from her home
 30 and leave her father; or, goodness knows why, the idea would occur
 to her that she was worthless—insignificant and unworthy of a
 great man like Kovrin—and she would go to her room, lock herself
 in, and cry bitterly for several hours. When there were visitors, she
 would suddenly fancy that Kovrin looked extraordinarily hand-
 35 some, and that all the women were in love with him and envying

her, and her soul was filled with pride and rapture, as though she 36
 had vanquished the whole world; but he had only to smile politely
 at any young lady for her to be trembling with jealousy, to retreat to
 her room—and tears again. These new sensations mastered her
 40 completely; she helped her father mechanically, without noticing
 peaches, caterpillars or labourers, or how rapidly the time was
 passing.

It was almost the same with Yegor Semyonitch. He worked from
 morning till night, was always in a hurry, was irritable, and flew into
 rages, but all of this was in a sort of spellbound dream. It seemed as 45
 though there were two men in him: one was the real Yegor
 Semyonitch, who was moved to indignation, and clutched his head
 in despair when he heard of some irregularity from Ivan Karlovitch
 the gardener; and another—not the real one—who seemed as
 though he were half drunk, would interrupt a business conversation 50
 at half a word, touch the gardener on the shoulder, and begin
 muttering:

“Say what you like, there is a great deal in blood. His mother was a
 wonderful woman, most high-minded and intelligent. It was a
 pleasure to look at her good, candid, pure face; it was like the face of 55
 an angel. She drew splendidly, wrote verses, spoke five foreign
 languages, sang. . . . Poor thing! she died of consumption. The
 Kingdom of Heaven be hers.”

The unreal Yegor Semyonitch sighed, and after a pause went on:
 “When he was a boy and growing up in my house, he had the 60
 same angelic face, good and candid. The way he looks and talks and
 moves is as soft and elegant as his mother's. And his intellect! We
 were always struck with his intelligence. To be sure, it's not for
 nothing he's a Master of Arts! It's not for nothing! And wait a bit,
 Ivan Karlovitch, what will he be in ten years' time? He will be far 65
 above us!”

But at this point the real Yegor Semyonitch, suddenly coming to
 himself, would make a terrible face, would clutch his head and cry:
 “The devils! They have spoilt everything! They have ruined
 everything! They have spoilt everything! The garden's done for, the 70

1 garden's ruined!"

VII

36

Kovrin, meanwhile, worked with the same ardour as before, and did not notice the general commotion. Love only added fuel to the flames. After every talk with Tanya he went to his room, happy and triumphant, took up his book or his manuscript with the same passion with which he had just kissed Tanya and told her of his love. What the black monk had told him of the chosen of God, of eternal truth, of the brilliant future of mankind and so on, gave peculiar and extraordinary significance to his work, and filled his soul with pride and the consciousness of his own exalted consequence. Once or twice a week, in the park or in the house, he met the black monk and had long conversations with him, but this did not alarm him, but, on the contrary, delighted him, as he was now firmly persuaded that such apparitions only visited the elect few who rise up above their fellows and devote themselves to the service of the idea.

One day the monk appeared at dinner-time and sat in the dining-room window. Kovrin was delighted, and very adroitly began a conversation with Yegor Semyonitch and Tanya of what might be of interest to the monk; the black-robed visitor listened and nodded his head graciously, and Yegor Semyonitch and Tanya listened, too, and smiled gaily without suspecting that Kovrin was not talking to them but to his hallucination.

Imperceptibly the fast of the Assumption was approaching, and soon after came the wedding, which, at Yegor Semyonitch's urgent desire, was celebrated with "a flourish"—that is, with senseless festivities that lasted for two whole days and nights. Three thousand roubles' worth of food and drink was consumed, but the music of the wretched hired band, the noisy toasts, the scurrying to and fro of the footmen, the uproar and crowding, prevented them from appreciating the taste of the expensive wines and wonderful delicacies ordered from Moscow.

One long winter night Kovrin was lying in bed, reading a French novel. Poor Tanya, who had headaches in the evenings from living in town, to which she was not accustomed, had been asleep a long while, and, from time to time, articulated some incoherent phrase in her restless dreams.

It struck three o'clock. Kovrin put out the light and lay down to sleep, lay for a long time with his eyes closed, but could not get to sleep because, as he fancied, the room was very hot and Tanya talked in her sleep. At half-past four he lighted the candle again, and this time he saw the black monk sitting in an arm-chair near the bed.

"Good-morning," said the monk, and after a brief pause he asked: "What are you thinking of now?"

"Of fame," answered Kovrin. "In the French novel I have just been reading, there is a description of a young *savant*, who does silly things and pines away through worrying about fame. I can't understand such anxiety."

"Because you are wise. Your attitude towards fame is one of indifference, as towards a toy which no longer interests you."

"Yes, that is true."

"Renown does not allure you now. What is there flattering, amusing, or edifying in their carving your name on a tombstone, then time rubbing off the inscription together with the gilding? Moreover, happily there are too many of you for the weak memory of mankind to be able to retain your names."

"Of course," assented Kovrin. "Besides, why should they be remembered? But let us talk of something else. Of happiness, for instance. What is happiness?"

When the clock struck five, he was sitting on the bed, dangling his feet to the carpet, talking to the monk:

"In ancient times a happy man grew at last frightened of his happiness—it was so great!—and to propitiate the gods he brought as a sacrifice his favourite ring. Do you know, I, too, like Polykrates, begin to be uneasy of my happiness. It seems strange to me that

1 from morning to night I feel nothing but joy; it fills my whole
being and smothers all other feelings. I don't know what sadness,
grief, or boredom is. Here I am not asleep; I suffer from sleeplessness,
but I am not dull. I say it in earnest; I begin to feel perplexed."

5 "But why?" the monk asked in wonder. "Is joy a supernatural
feeling? Ought it not to be the normal state of man? The more
highly a man is developed on the intellectual and moral side, the
more independent he is, the more pleasure life gives him. Socrates,
Diogenes, and Marcus Aurelius, were joyful, not sorrowful. And the
10 Apostle tells us: 'Rejoice continually'; 'Rejoice and be glad.'"

"But will the gods be suddenly wrathful?" Kovrin jested; and he
laughed. "If they take from me comfort and make me go cold and
hungry, it won't be very much to my taste."

15 Meanwhile Tanya woke up and looked with amazement and
horror at her husband. He was talking, addressing the arm-chair,
laughing and gesticulating; his eyes were gleaming, and there was
something strange in his laugh.

"Andryusha, whom are you talking to?" she asked, clutching the
hand he stretched out to the monk. "Andryusha! Whom?"

20 "Oh! Whom?" said Kovrin in confusion. "Why, to him. . . . He is
sitting here," he said, pointing to the black monk.

"There is no one here . . . no one! Andryusha, you are ill!"

25 Tanya put her arm round her husband and held him tight, as
though protecting him from the apparition, and put her hand over
his eyes.

"You are ill!" she sobbed, trembling all over. "Forgive me, my
precious, my dear one, but I have noticed for a long time that your
mind is clouded in some way. . . You are mentally ill, Andryusha. . ."

30 Her trembling infected him, too. He glanced once more at the
arm-chair, which was now empty, felt a sudden weakness in his arms
and legs, was frightened, and began dressing.

"It's nothing, Tanya; it's nothing," he muttered, shivering. "I
really am not quite well . . . it's time to admit that."

35 "I have noticed it for a long time . . . and father has noticed it,"
she said, trying to suppress her sobs. "You talk to yourself, smile

36 somehow strangely . . . and can't sleep. Oh, my God, my God, save
us!" she said in terror. "But don't be frightened, Andryusha; for
God's sake don't be frightened. . . ."

40 She began dressing, too. Only now, looking at her, Kovrin realised
the danger of his position—realised the meaning of the black monk
and his conversations with him. It was clear to him now that he was
mad.

45 Neither of them knew why they dressed and went into the
dining-room: she in front and he following her. There they found
Yegor Semyonitch standing in his dressing-gown and with a candle
in his hand. He was staying with them, and had been awakened by
Tanya's sobs.

50 "Don't be frightened, Andryusha," Tanya was saying, shivering as
though in a fever; "don't be frightened. . . . Father, it will all pass over
. . . it will all pass over. . . ."

Kovrin was too much agitated to speak. He wanted to say to his
father-in-law in a playful tone: "Congratulate me; it appears I have
gone out of my mind"; but he could only move his lips and smile
bitterly.

55 At nine o'clock in the morning they put on his jacket and fur coat,
wrapped him up in a shawl, and took him in a carriage to a doctor.

VIII

60 Summer had come again, and the doctor advised their going into
the country. Kovrin had recovered; he had left off seeing the black
monk, and he had only to get up his strength. Staying at his father-
in-law's, he drank a great deal of milk, worked for only two hours
out of the twenty-four, and neither smoked nor drank wine.

65 On the evening before Elijah's Day they had an evening service in
the house. When the deacon was handing the priest the censer the
immense old room smelt like a graveyard, and Kovrin felt bored. He
went out into the garden. Without noticing the gorgeous flowers, he
walked about the garden, sat down on a seat, then strolled about the
70 park; reaching the river, he went down and then stood lost in

1 thought, looking at the water. The sullen pines with their shaggy
 roots, which had seen him a year before so young, so joyful and
 confident, were not whispering now, but standing mute and
 motionless, as though they did not recognise him. And, indeed, his
 5 head was closely cropped, his beautiful long hair was gone, his step
 was lagging, his face was fuller and paler than last summer.

He crossed by the footbridge to the other side. Where the year
 before there had been rye the oats stood, reaped, and lay in rows.
 The sun had set and there was a broad stretch of glowing red on the
 10 horizon, a sign of windy weather next day. It was still. Looking in
 the direction from which the year before the black monk had first
 appeared, Kovrin stood for twenty minutes, till the evening glow
 had begun to fade. . . .

When, listless and dissatisfied, he returned home the service was
 15 over. Yegor Semyonitch and Tanya were sitting on the steps of the
 verandah, drinking tea. They were talking of something, but, seeing
 Kovrin, ceased at once, and he concluded from their faces that their
 talk had been about him.

"I believe it is time for you to have your milk," Tanya said to her
 20 husband.

"No, it is not time yet . . ." he said, sitting down on the bottom
 step. "Drink it yourself; I don't want it."

Tanya exchanged a troubled glance with her father, and said in a
 guilty voice:

25 "You notice yourself that milk does you good."

"Yes, a great deal of good!" Kovrin laughed. "I congratulate you: I
 have gained a pound in weight since Friday." He pressed his head
 tightly in his hands and said miserably: "Why, why have you cured
 me? Preparations of bromide, idleness, hot baths, supervision,
 30 cowardly consternation at every mouthful, at every step—all this
 will reduce me at last to idiocy. I went out of my mind, I had
 megalomania; but then I was cheerful, confident, and even happy; I
 was interesting and original. Now I have become more sensible and
 stolid, but I am just like every one else: I am—mediocrity; I am
 35 weary of life. . . . Oh, how cruelly you have treated me! . . . I saw

hallucinations, but what harm did that do to any one? I ask, what
 36 harm did that do any one?"

"Goodness knows what you are saying!" sighed Yegor
 Semyonitch. "It's positively wearisome to listen to it."

"Then don't listen."
 40

The presence of other people, especially Yegor Semyonitch,
 irritated Kovrin now; he answered him drily, coldly, and even
 rudely, never looked at him but with irony and hatred, while Yegor
 Semyonitch was overcome with confusion and cleared his throat
 guiltily, though he was not conscious of any fault in himself. At a
 45 loss to understand why their charming and affectionate relations had
 changed so abruptly, Tanya huddled up to her father and looked
 anxiously in his face; she wanted to understand and could not
 understand, and all that was clear to her was that their relations were
 growing worse and worse every day, that of late her father had
 50 begun to look much older, and her husband had grown irritable,
 capricious, quarrelsome and uninteresting. She could not laugh or
 sing; at dinner she ate nothing; did not sleep for nights together,
 expecting something awful, and was so worn out that on one
 occasion she lay in a dead faint from dinner-time till evening.
 55 During the service she thought her father was crying, and now
 while the three of them were sitting together on the terrace she made
 an effort not to think of it.

"How fortunate Buddha, Mahomed, and Shakespeare were that
 their kind relations and doctors did not cure them of their ecstasy
 60 and their inspiration," said Kovrin. "If Mahomed had taken
 bromide for his nerves, had worked only two hours out of the
 twenty-four, and had drunk milk, that remarkable man would have
 left no more trace after him than his dog. Doctors and kind relations
 will succeed in stupefying mankind, in making mediocrity pass for
 65 genius and in bringing civilisation to ruin. If only you knew,"
 Kovrin said with annoyance, "how grateful I am to you."

He felt intense irritation, and to avoid saying too much, he got up
 quickly and went into the house. It was still, and the fragrance of the
 tobacco plant and the marvel of Peru floated in at the open window.
 70

1 The moonlight lay in green patches on the floor and on the piano in
the big dark dining-room. Kovrin remembered the raptures of the
previous summer when there had been the same scent of the marvel
of Peru and the moon had shone in at the window. To bring back
5 the mood of last year he went quickly to his study, lighted a strong
cigar, and told the footman to bring him some wine. But the cigar
left a bitter and disgusting taste in his mouth, and the wine had not
the same flavour as it had the year before. And so great is the effect
of giving up a habit, the cigar and the two gulps of wine made him
10 giddy, and brought on palpitations of the heart, so that he was
obliged to take bromide.

Before going to bed, Tanya said to him:

“Father adores you. You are cross with him about something, and
it is killing him. Look at him; he is ageing, not from day to day, but
15 from hour to hour. I entreat you, Andryusha, for God’s sake, for the
sake of your dead father, for the sake of my peace of mind, be
affectionate to him.”

“I can’t, I don’t want to.”

“But why?” asked Tanya, beginning to tremble all over. “Explain
20 why.”

“Because he is antipathetic to me, that’s all,” said Kovrin carelessly;
and he shrugged his shoulders. “But we won’t talk about him: he is
your father.”

“I can’t understand, I can’t,” said Tanya, pressing her hands to her
25 temples and staring at a fixed point. “Something incomprehensible,
awful, is going on in the house. You have changed, grown unlike
yourself. . . . You, clever, extraordinary man as you are, are irritated
over trifles, meddle in paltry nonsense. . . . Such trivial things excite
you, that sometimes one is simply amazed and can’t believe that it is
30 you. Come, come, don’t be angry, don’t be angry,” she went on,
kissing his hands, frightened of her own words. “You are clever,
kind, noble. You will be just to father. He is so good.”

“He is not good; he is just good-natured. Burlesque old uncles like
your father, with well-fed, good-natured faces, extraordinarily
35 hospitable and queer, at one time used to touch me and amuse me

in novels and in farces and in life; now I dislike them. They are
egoists to the marrow of their bones. What disgusts me most of all is
their being so well-fed, and that purely bovine, purely hoggish
optimism of a full stomach.”

Tanya sat down on the bed and laid her head on the pillow. 40

“This is torture,” she said, and from her voice it was evident that
she was utterly exhausted, and that it was hard for her to speak.
“Not one moment of peace since the winter. . . . Why, it’s awful! My
God! I am wretched.”

“Oh, of course, I am Herod, and you and your father are the
45 innocents. Of course.”

His face seemed to Tanya ugly and unpleasant. Hatred and an
ironical expression did not suit him. And, indeed, she had noticed
before that there was something lacking in his face, as though ever
since his hair had been cut his face had changed, too. She wanted to
50 say something wounding to him, but immediately she caught
herself in this antagonistic feeling, she was frightened and went out
of the bedroom.

IX

55

Kovrin received a professorship at the University. The inaugural
address was fixed for the second of December, and a notice to that
effect was hung up in the corridor at the University. But on the day
appointed he informed the students’ inspector, by telegram, that he
60 was prevented by illness from giving the lecture.

He had hæmorrhage from the throat. He was often spitting
blood, but it happened two or three times a month that there was a
considerable loss of blood, and then he grew extremely weak and
sank into a drowsy condition. This illness did not particularly
65 frighten him, as he knew that his mother had lived for ten years or
longer suffering from the same disease, and the doctors assured him
that there was no danger, and had only advised him to avoid
excitement, to lead a regular life, and to speak as little as possible.

In January again his lecture did not take place owing to the same 70

1 reason, and in February it was too late to begin the course. It had to
be postponed to the following year.

By now he was living not with Tanya, but with another woman,
who was two years older than he was, and who looked after him as
5 though he were a baby. He was in a calm and tranquil state of mind;
he readily gave in to her, and when Varvara Nikolaevna—that was
the name of his friend—decided to take him to the Crimea, he
agreed, though he had a presentiment that no good would come of
the trip.

10 They reached Sevastopol in the evening and stopped at an hotel to
rest and go on the next day to Yalta. They were both exhausted by
the journey. Varvara Nikolaevna had some tea, went to bed and was
soon asleep. But Kovrin did not go to bed. An hour before starting
for the station, he had received a letter from Tanya, and had not
15 brought himself to open it, and now it was lying in his coat pocket,
and the thought of it excited him disagreeably. At the bottom of his
heart he genuinely considered now that his marriage to Tanya had
been a mistake. He was glad that their separation was final, and the
thought of that woman who in the end had turned into a living relic,
20 still walking about though everything seemed dead in her except her
big, staring, intelligent eyes—the thought of her roused in him
nothing but pity and disgust with himself. The handwriting on the
envelope reminded him how cruel and unjust he had been two years
before, how he had worked off his anger at his spiritual emptiness,
25 his boredom, his loneliness, and his dissatisfaction with life by
revenging himself on people in no way to blame. He remembered,
also, how he had torn up his dissertation and all the articles he had
written during his illness, and how he had thrown them out of
window, and the bits of paper had fluttered in the wind and caught
30 on the trees and flowers. In every line of them he saw strange, utterly
groundless pretension, shallow defiance, arrogance, megalomania;
and they made him feel as though he were reading a description of
his vices. But when the last manuscript had been torn up and sent
flying out of window, he felt, for some reason, suddenly bitter and
35 angry; he went to his wife and said a great many unpleasant things to

her. My God, how he had tormented her! One day, wanting to 36
cause her pain, he told her that her father had played a very
unattractive part in their romance, that he had asked him to marry
her. Yegor Semyonitch accidentally overheard this, ran into the
room, and, in his despair, could not utter a word, could only stamp 40
and make a strange, bellowing sound as though he had lost the
power of speech, and Tanya, looking at her father, had uttered a
heart-rending shriek and had fallen into a swoon. It was hideous.

All this came back into his memory as he looked at the familiar
writing. Kovrin went out on to the balcony; it was still warm 45
weather and there was a smell of the sea. The wonderful bay
reflected the moonshine and the lights, and was of a colour for
which it was difficult to find a name. It was a soft and tender
blending of dark blue and green; in places the water was like blue
vitriol, and in places it seemed as though the moonlight were 50
liquefied and filling the bay instead of water. And what harmony of
colours, what an atmosphere of peace, calm, and sublimity!

In the lower storey under the balcony the windows were probably
open, for women's voices and laughter could be heard distinctly.
Apparently there was an evening party. 55

Kovrin made an effort, tore open the envelope, and, going back
into his room, read:

“My father is just dead. I owe that to you, for you have killed
him. Our garden is being ruined; strangers are managing it al-
ready—that is, the very thing is happening that poor father 60
dreaded. That, too, I owe to you. I hate you with my whole soul,
and I hope you may soon perish. Oh, how wretched I am! Insuffer-
able anguish is burning my soul. . . . My curses on you. I took you
for an extraordinary man, a genius; I loved you, and you have
turned out a madman. . . .” 65

Kovrin could read no more, he tore up the letter and threw it
away. He was overcome by an uneasiness that was akin to terror.
Varvara Nikolaevna was asleep behind the screen, and he could hear
her breathing. From the lower storey came the sounds of laughter
and women's voices, but he felt as though in the whole hotel there 70

1 were no living soul but him. Because Tanya, unhappy, broken by
sorrow, had cursed him in her letter and hoped for his perdition, he
felt eerie and kept glancing hurriedly at the door, as though he were
afraid that the uncomprehended force which two years before had
5 wrought such havoc in his life and in the life of those near him
might come into the room and master him once more.

He knew by experience that when his nerves were out of hand
the best thing for him to do was to work. He must sit down to the
table and force himself, at all costs, to concentrate his mind on some
10 one thought. He took from his red portfolio a manuscript contain-
ing a sketch of a small work of the nature of a compilation, which he
had planned in case he should find it dull in the Crimea without
work. He sat down to the table and began working at this plan, and
it seemed to him that his calm, peaceful, indifferent mood was
15 coming back. The manuscript with the sketch even led him to
meditation on the vanity of the world. He thought how much life
exacts for the worthless or very commonplace blessings it can give a
man. For instance, to gain, before forty, a university chair, to be an
ordinary professor, to expound ordinary and second-hand thoughts
20 in dull, heavy, insipid language—in fact, to gain the position of a
mediocre learned man, he, Kovrin, had had to study for fifteen
years, to work day and night, to endure a terrible mental illness, to
experience an unhappy marriage, and to do a great number of
stupid and unjust things which it would have been pleasant not to
25 remember. Kovrin recognised clearly, now, that he was a mediocrity,
and readily resigned himself to it, as he considered that every man
ought to be satisfied with what he is.

The plan of the volume would have soothed him completely, but
the torn letter showed white on the floor and prevented him from
30 concentrating his attention. He got up from the table, picked up
the pieces of the letter and threw them out of window, but there
was a light wind blowing from the sea, and the bits of paper were
scattered on the windowsill. Again he was overcome by uneasiness
akin to terror, and he felt as though in the whole hotel there were no
35 living soul but himself. . . . He went out on the balcony. The bay,

like a living thing, looked at him with its multitude of light blue, 36
dark blue, turquoise and fiery eyes, and seemed beckoning to him.
And it really was hot and oppressive, and it would not have been
amiss to have a bathe.

Suddenly in the lower storey under the balcony a violin began 40
playing, and two soft feminine voices began singing. It was
something familiar. The song was about a maiden, full of sick
fancies, who heard one night in her garden mysterious sounds, so
strange and lovely that she was obliged to recognise them as a holy
harmony which is unintelligible to us mortals, and so flies back to 45
heaven. . . . Kovrin caught his breath and there was a pang of
sadness at his heart, and a thrill of the sweet, exquisite delight he had
so long forgotten began to stir in his breast.

A tall black column, like a whirlwind or a waterspout, appeared 50
on the further side of the bay. It moved with fearful rapidity across
the bay, towards the hotel, growing smaller and darker as it came,
and Kovrin only just had time to get out of the way to let it pass. . . .
The monk with bare grey head, black eyebrows, barefoot, his arms
crossed over his breast, floated by him, and stood still in the middle
of the room. 55

“Why did you not believe me?” he asked reproachfully, looking
affectionately at Kovrin. “If you had believed me then, that you
were a genius, you would not have spent these two years so gloomily
and so wretchedly.”

Kovrin already believed that he was one of God’s chosen and a 60
genius; he vividly recalled his conversations with the monk in the
past and tried to speak, but the blood flowed from his throat on to
his breast, and not knowing what he was doing, he passed his hands
over his breast, and his cuffs were soaked with blood. He tried to call
Varvara Nikolaevna, who was asleep behind the screen; he made an 65
effort and said:

“Tanya!”

He fell on the floor, and propping himself on his arms, called
again:

“Tanya!” 70

1 He called Tanya, called to the great garden with the gorgeous 36
 flowers sprinkled with dew, called to the park, the pines with their
 shaggy roots, the rye-field, his marvellous learning, his youth,
 courage, joy—called to life, which was so lovely. He saw on the floor
 5 near his face a great pool of blood, and was too weak to utter a 40
 word, but an unspeakable, infinite happiness flooded his whole
 being. Below, under the balcony, they were playing the serenade,
 and the black monk whispered to him that he was a genius, and
 that he was dying only because his frail human body had lost its
 10 balance and could no longer serve as the mortal garb of genius. 45

When Varvara Nikolaevna woke up and came out from behind
 the screen, Kovrin was dead, and a blissful smile was set upon his
 face.

15 *1894* 50



20 55

25 60

30 65

35 70

The Dream of a Ridiculous Man

I am a ridiculous person. Now they call me a madman. That would be a promotion if it were not that I remain as
 10 ridiculous in their eyes as before. But now I do not resent it, they are all dear to me now, even when they laugh at me - and, indeed, it is just then that they are particularly dear to me. I could join in their laughter - not exactly at myself, but through affection for them, if I did not feel so sad as I look at
 15 them. Sad because they do not know the truth and I do know it. Oh, how hard it is to be the only one who knows the truth! But they won't understand that. No, they won't understand it.

In old days I used to be miserable at seeming ridiculous.
 20 Not seeming, but being. I have always been ridiculous, and I have known it, perhaps, from the hour I was born. Perhaps from the time I was seven years old I knew I was ridiculous. Afterwards I went to school, studied at the university, and, do you know, the more I learned, the more thoroughly I
 25 understood that I was ridiculous. So that it seemed in the end as though all the sciences I studied at the university existed only to prove and make evident to me as I went more deeply into them that I was ridiculous. It was the same with life as it was with science. With every year the same consciousness
 30 of the ridiculous figure I cut in every relation grew and strengthened. Everyone always laughed at me. But not one of them knew or guessed that if there were one man on earth who knew better than anybody else that I was absurd, it was myself, and what I resented most of all was that they did not
 35 know that. But that was my own fault; I was so proud that

nothing would have ever induced me to tell it to anyone. This pride grew in me with the years; and if it had happened that I allowed myself to confess to anyone that I was
 45 ridiculous, I believe that I should have blown out my brains the same evening. Oh, how I suffered in my early youth from the fear that I might give way and confess it to my schoolfellows. But since I grew to manhood, I have for some unknown reason become calmer, though I realised my awful
 50 characteristic more fully every year. I say 'unknown', for to this day I cannot tell why it was. Perhaps it was owing to the terrible misery that was growing in my soul through something which was of more consequence than anything
 55 else about me: that something was the conviction that had come upon me that nothing in the world mattered. I had long had an inkling of it, but the full realisation came last year almost suddenly. I suddenly felt that it was all the same to me whether the world existed or whether there had never
 60 been anything at all: I began to feel with all my being that there was nothing existing. At first I fancied that many things had existed in the past, but afterwards I guessed that there never had been anything in the past either, but that it had only seemed so for some reason. Little by little I
 65 guessed that there would be nothing in the future either. Then I left off being angry with people and almost ceased to notice them. Indeed this showed itself even in the pettiest trifles: I used, for instance, to knock against people in the street. And not so much from being lost in thought: what had
 70 I to think about? I had almost given up thinking by that time;

1 nothing mattered to me. If at least I had solved my
 problems! Oh, I had not settled one of them, and how many
 there were! But I gave up caring about anything, and all the
 problems disappeared.

5 And it was after that that I found out the truth. I learnt the
 truth last November - on the third of November, to be precise
 - and I remember every instant since. It was a gloomy
 evening, one of the gloomiest possible evenings. I was going
 home at about eleven o'clock, and I remember that I thought
 10 that the evening could not be gloomier. Even physically.
 Rain had been falling all day, and it had been a cold, gloomy,
 almost menacing rain, with, I remember, an unmistakable
 spite against mankind. Suddenly between ten and eleven it
 had stopped, and was followed by a horrible dampness,
 15 colder and damper than the rain, and a sort of steam was
 rising from everything, from every stone in the street, and
 from every by-lane if one looked down it as far as one could.
 A thought suddenly occurred to me, that if all the street
 lamps had been put out it would have been less cheerless,
 20 that the gas made one's heart sadder because it lighted it all
 up. I had had scarcely any dinner that day, and had been
 spending the evening with an engineer, and two other friends
 had been there also. I sat silent - I fancy I bored them. They
 talked of something rousing and suddenly they got excited
 25 over it. But they did not really care, I could see that, and
 only made a show of being excited. I suddenly said as much
 to them. "My friends," I said, "you really do not care one
 way or the other." They were not offended, but they laughed
 at me. That was because I spoke without any not of
 30 reproach, simply because it did not matter to me. They saw
 it did not, and it amused them.

As I was thinking about the gas lamps in the street I
 looked up at the sky. The sky was horribly dark, but one
 could distinctly see tattered clouds, and between them
 35 fathomless black patches. Suddenly I noticed in one of these

patches a star, and began watching it intently. That was 36
 because that star had given me an idea: I decided to kill
 myself that night. I had firmly determined to do so two
 months before, and poor as I was, I bought a splendid
 revolver that very day, and loaded it. But two months had 40
 passed and it was still lying in my drawer; I was so utterly
 indifferent that I wanted to seize a moment when I would not
 be so indifferent - why, I don't know. And so for two months
 every night that I came home I thought I would shoot myself.
 I kept waiting for the right moment. And so now this star 45
 gave me a thought. I made up my mind that it should
 certainly be that night. And why the star gave me the
 thought I don't know.

And just as I was looking at the sky, this little girl took me
 by the elbow. The street was empty, and there was scarcely 50
 anyone to be seen. A cabman was sleeping in the distance in
 his cab. It was a child of eight with a kerchief on her head,
 wearing nothing but a wretched little dress all soaked with
 rain, but I noticed her wet broken shoes and I recall them
 now. They caught my eye particularly. She suddenly pulled 55
 me by the elbow and called me. She was not weeping, but
 was spasmodically crying out some words which could not
 utter properly, because she was shivering and shuddering all
 over. She was in terror about something, and kept crying,
 "Mammy, mammy!" I turned facing her, I did not say a word 60
 and went on; but she ran, pulling at me, and there was that
 note in her voice which in frightened children means despair.
 I know that sound. Though she did not articulate the words,
 I understood that her mother was dying, or that something of
 the sort was happening to them, and that she had run out to 65
 call someone, to find something to help her mother. I did not
 go with her; on the contrary, I had an impulse to drive her
 away. I told her first to go to a policeman. But clasping her
 hands, she ran beside me sobbing and gasping, and would not
 leave me. Then I stamped my foot and shouted at her. She 70

1 called out "Sir! sir! . . ." but suddenly abandoned me and
rushed headlong across the road. Some other passerby
appeared there, and she evidently flew from me to him.

I mounted up to my fifth storey. I have a room in a flat
5 where there are other lodgers. Mr room is small and poor,
with a garret window in the shape of a semicircle. I have a
sofa covered with American leather, a table with books on it,
two chairs and a comfortable arm-chair, as old as old can be,
but of the good old-fashioned shape. I sat down, lighted the
10 candle, and began thinking. In the room next to mine,
through the partition wall, a perfect Bedlam was going on.
It had been going on for the last three days. A retired captain
lived there, and he had half a dozen visitors, gentlemen of
doubtful reputation, drinking vodka and playing stoss with
15 old cards. The night before there had been a fight, and I
know that two of them had been for a long time engaged in
dragging each other about by the hair. The landlady wanted
to complain, but she was in abject terror of the captain.
There was only one other lodger in the flat, a thin little
20 regimental lady, on a visit to Petersburg, with three little
children who had been taken ill since they came into the
lodgings. Both she and her children were in mortal fear of
the captain, and lay trembling and crossing themselves all
night, and the youngest child had a sort of fit from fright.
25 That captain, I know for a fact, sometimes stops people in the
Nevsky Prospect and begs. They won't take him into the
service, but strange to say (that's why I am telling this), all
this month that the captain has been here his behaviour has
caused me no annoyance. I have, of course, tried to avoid his
30 acquaintance from the very beginning, and he, too, was bored
with me from the first; but I never care how much they shout
the other side of the partition nor how many of them there are
in there: I sit up all night and forget them so completely that
I do not even hear them. I stay awake till daybreak, and have
35 been going on like that for the last year. I sit up all night in

my arm-chair at the table, doing nothing. I only read by day. 36
I sit - don't even think; ideas of a sort wander through my
mind and I let them come and go as they will. A whole
candle is burnt every night. I sat down quietly at the table,
took out the revolver and put it down before me. When I had 40
put it down I asked myself, I remember, "Is that so?" and
answered with complete conviction, "It is." That is, I shall
shoot myself. I knew that I should shoot myself that night
for certain, but how much longer I should go on sitting at the
table I did not know. And no doubt I should have shot 45
myself if it had not been for that little girl.

II

You see, though nothing mattered to me, I could feel pain, 50
for instance. If anyone had stuck me it would have hurt me.
It was the same morally: if anything very pathetic happened,
I should have felt pity just as I used to do in old days when
there were things in life that did matter to me. I had felt pity
that evening. I should have certainly helped a child. Why, 55
then, had I not helped the little girl? Because of an idea that
occurred to me at the time: when she was calling and pulling
at me, a question suddenly arose before me and I could not
settle it. The question was an idle one, but I was vexed. I
was vexed at the reflection that if I were going to make an 60
end of myself that night, nothing in life ought to have
mattered to me. Why was it that all at once I did not feel a
strange pang, quite incongruous in my position. Really I do
not know better how to convey my fleeting sensation at the
moment, but the sensation persisted at home when I was 65
sitting at the table, and I was very much irritated as I had not
been for a long time past. One reflection followed another.
I saw clearly that so long as I was still a human being and not
nothingness, I was alive and so could suffer, be angry and
feel shame at my actions. So be it. But if I am going to kill 70

1 myself, in two hours, say, what is the little girl to me and
 what have I to do with shame or with anything else in the
 world? I shall turn into nothing, absolutely nothing. And
 can it really be true that the consciousness that I shall
 5 completely cease to exist immediately and so everything else
 will cease to exist, does not in the least affect my feeling of
 pity for the child nor the feeling of shame after a
 contemptible action? I stamped and shouted at the unhappy
 child as though to say - not only I feel no pity, but even if I
 10 behave inhumanly and contemptibly, I am free to, for in
 another two hours everything will be extinguished. Do you
 believe that that was why I shouted that? I am almost
 convinced of it now. I seemed clear to me that life and the
 world somehow depended upon me now. I may almost say
 15 that the world now seemed created for me alone: if I shot
 myself the world would cease to be at least for me. I say
 nothing of its being likely that nothing will exist for anyone
 when I am gone, and that as soon as my consciousness is
 extinguished the whole world will vanish too and become
 20 void like a phantom, as a mere appurtenance of my
 consciousness, for possibly all this world and all these people
 are only me myself. I remember that as I sat and reflected,
 I turned all these new questions that swarmed one after
 another quite the other way, and thought of something quite
 25 new. For instance, a strange reflection suddenly occurred to
 me, that if I had lived before on the moon or on Mars and
 there had committed the most disgraceful and dishonourable
 action and had there been put to such shame and ignominy as
 one can only conceive and realise in dreams, in nightmares,
 30 and if, finding myself afterwards on earth, I were able to
 retain the memory of what I had done on the other planet and
 at the same time knew that I should never, under any
 circumstances, return there, then looking from the earth to
 the moon - should I care or not? Should I feel shame for that
 35 action or not? These were idle and superfluous questions for

the revolver was already lying before me, and I knew in 36
 every fibre of my being that it would happen for certain, but
 they excited me and I raged. I could not die now without
 having first settled something. In short, the child had saved
 me, for I put off my pistol shot for the sake of these 40
 questions. Meanwhile the clamour had begun to subside in
 the captain's room: they had finished their game, were
 settling down to sleep, and meanwhile were grumbling and
 languidly winding up their quarrels. At that point, I suddenly
 fell asleep in my chair at the table - a thing which had never 45
 happened to me before. I dropped asleep quite unawares.

Dreams, as we all know, are very queer things: some parts
 are presented with appalling vividness, with details worked
 up with the elaborate finish of jewellery, while others one
 gallops through, as it were, without noticing them at all, as, 50
 for instance, through space and time. Dreams seem to be
 spurred on not by reason but by desire, not by the head but
 by the heart, and yet what complicated tricks my reason has
 played sometimes in dreams, what utterly incomprehensible
 things happen to it! Mr brother died five years ago, for 55
 instance. I sometimes dream of him; he takes part in my
 affairs, we are very much interested, and yet all through my
 dream I quite know and remember that my brother is dead
 and buried. How is it that I am not surprised that, though he
 is dead, he is here beside me and working with me? Why is 60
 it that my reason fully accepts it? But enough. I will begin
 about my dream. Yes, I dreamed a dream, my dream of the
 third of November. They tease me now, telling me it was
 only a dream. But does it matter whether it was a dream or
 reality, if the dream made known to me the truth? If once 65
 one has recognized the truth and seen it, you know that it is
 the truth and that there is no other and there cannot be,
 whether you are asleep or awake. Let it be a dream, so be it,
 but that real life of which you make so much I had meant to
 extinguish by suicide, and my dream, my dream - oh, it 70

1 revealed to me a different life, renewed, grand and full of
power!

Listen.

5 III

I have mentioned that I dropped asleep unawares and even
seemed to be still reflecting on the same subjects. I suddenly
dreamt that I picked up the revolver and aimed it straight at
10 my heart - my heart, and not my head; and I had determined
beforehand to fire at my head, at my right temple. After
aiming at my chest I waited a second or two, and suddenly
my candle, my table, and the wall in front of me began
moving and heaving. I made haste to pull the trigger.

15 In dreams you sometimes fall from a height, or are
stabbed, or beaten, but you never feel pain unless, perhaps,
you really bruise yourself against the bedstead, then you feel
pain and almost always wake up from it. It was the same in
my dream. I did not feel any pain, but it seemed as though
20 with my shot everything within me was shaken and
everything was suddenly dimmed, and it grew horribly black
around me. I seemed to be blinded, and it benumbed, and I
was lying on something hard, stretched on my back; I saw
nothing, and could not make the slightest movement. People
25 were walking and shouting around me, the captain bawled,
the landlady shrieked - and suddenly another break and I was
being carried in a closed coffin. And I felt how the coffin
was shaking and reflected upon it, and for the first time the
idea struck me that I was dead, utterly dead, I knew it and
30 had no doubt of it, I could neither see nor move and yet I was
feeling and reflecting. But I was soon reconciled to the
position, and as one usually does in a dream, accepted the
facts without disputing them.

And now I was buried in the earth. They all went away, I
35 was left alone, utterly alone. I did not move. Whenever

before I had imagined being buried the one sensation I 36
associated with the grave was that of damp and cold. So now
I felt that I was very cold, especially the tips of my toes, but
I felt nothing else.

I lay still, strange to say I expected nothing, accepting 40
without dispute that a dead man had nothing to expect. But
it was damp. I don't know how long a time passed - whether
an hour or several days, or many days. But all at once a drop
of water fell on my closed left eye, making its way through
45 the coffin lid; it was followed a minute later by a second,
then a minute later by a third - and so on, regularly every
minute. There was a sudden glow of profound indignation in
my heart, and I suddenly felt in it a pang of physical pain.
"That's my wound," I thought; "that's the bullet . . ." And
50 drop after drop every minute kept falling on my closed
eyelid. And all at once, not with my voice, but with my
entire being, I called upon the power that was responsible for
all that was happening to me:

"Whoever you may be, if you exist, and if anything more 55
rational than what is happening here is possible, suffer it to be
here now. But if you are revenging yourself upon me for my
senseless suicide by the hideousness and absurdity of this
subsequent existence, then let me tell you that no torture
could ever equal the contempt which I shall go on dumbly
60 feeling, though my martyrdom may last a million years!"

I made this appeal and held my peace. There was a full
minute of unbroken silence and again another drop fell, but
I knew with infinite unshakable certainty that everything
would change immediately. And behold my grave suddenly
65 was rent asunder, that is, I don't know whether it was opened
or dug up, but I was caught up by some dark and unknown
being and we found ourselves in space. I suddenly regained
my sight. It was the dead of night, and never, never had
there been such darkness. We were flying through space far
70 away from the earth. I did not question the being who was

1 taking me; I was proud and waited. I assured myself that I
 was not afraid, and was thrilled with ecstasy at the thought
 that I was not afraid. I do not know how long we were
 flying, I cannot imagine; it happened as it always does in
 5 dreams when you skip over space and time, and the laws of
 thought and existence, and only pause upon the points for
 which the heart yearns. I remember that I suddenly saw in
 the darkness a star. "Is that Sirius?" I asked impulsively,
 though I had not meant to ask questions.

10 "No, that is the star you saw between the clouds when you
 were coming home," the being who was carrying me replied.

I knew that it had something like a human face. Strange
 to say, I did not like that being, in fact I felt an intense
 aversion for it. I had expected complete non-existence, and
 15 that was why I had put a bullet through my heart. And here
 I was in the hands of a creature not human, of course, but yet
 living, existing. "And so there is life beyond the grave," I
 thought with the strange frivolity one has in dreams. But in
 its inmost depth my heart remained unchanged. "And if I
 20 have got to exist again," I thought, "and live once more under
 the control of some irresistible power, I won't be vanquished
 and humiliated."

"You know that I am afraid of you and despise me for
 that," I said suddenly to my companion, unable to refrain
 25 from the humiliating question which implied a confession,
 and feeling my humiliation stab my heart as with a pin. He
 did not answer my question, but all at once I felt that he was
 not even despising me, but was laughing at me and had no
 compassion for me, and that our journey had an unknown
 30 and mysterious object that concerned me only. Fear was
 growing in my heart. Something was mutely and painfully
 communicated to me from my silent companion, and
 permeated my whole being. We were flying through dark,
 unknown space. I had for some time lost sight of the
 35 constellations familiar to my eyes. I knew that there were

stars in the heavenly spaces the light of which took thousands 36
 or millions of years to reach the earth. Perhaps we were
 already flying through those spaces. I expected something
 with a terrible anguish that tortured my heart. And suddenly
 I was thrilled by a familiar feeling that stirred me to the 40
 depths: I suddenly caught sight of our sun! I knew that it
 could not be our sun, that gave life to our earth, and that we
 were an infinite distance from our sun, but for some reason
 I knew in my whole being that it was a sun exactly like ours,
 a duplicate of it. A sweet, thrilling feeling resounded with 45
 ecstasy in my heart: the kindred power of the same light
 which had given me light stirred an echo in my heart and
 awakened it, and I had a sensation of life, the old life of the
 past for the first time since I had been in the grave.

"But if that is the sun, if that is exactly the same as our 50
 sun," I cried, "where is the earth?"

And my companion pointed to a star twinkling in the
 distance with an emerald light. We were flying straight
 towards it.

"And are such repetitions possible in the universe? Can 55
 that be the law of Nature? . . . And if that is an earth there,
 can it be just the same earth as ours . . . just the same, as
 poor, as unhappy, but precious and beloved for ever,
 arousing in the most ungrateful of her children the same
 poignant love for her that we feel for our earth?" I cried out, 60
 shaken by irresistible, ecstatic love for the old familiar earth
 which I had left. The image of the poor child whom I had
 repulsed flashed through my mind.

"You shall see it all," answered my companion, and there 65
 was a note of sorrow in his voice.

But we were rapidly approaching the planet. It was
 growing before my eyes; I could already distinguish the
 ocean, the outline of Europe; and suddenly a feeling of a
 great and holy jealousy glowed in my heart.

"How can it be repeated and what for? I love and can love 70

1 only that earth which I have left, stained with my blood,
 when, in my ingratitude, I quenched my life with a bullet in
 my heart. But I have never, never ceased to love that earth,
 and perhaps on the very night I parted from it I loved it more
 5 than ever. Is there suffering upon this new earth? On our
 earth we can only love with suffering and through suffering.
 We cannot love otherwise, and we know of no other sort of
 love. I want suffering in order to love. I long, I thirst, this
 very instant, to kiss with tears the earth that I have left, and
 10 I don't want, I won't accept life on any other!"

But my companion had already left me. I suddenly, quite
 without noticing how, found myself on this other earth, in the
 bright light of a sunny day, fair as paradise. I believe I was
 standing on one of the islands that make up on our globe the
 15 Greek archipelago, or on the coast of the mainland facing
 that archipelago. Oh, everything was exactly as it is with us,
 only everything seemed to have a festive radiance, the
 splendour of some great, holy triumph attained at last. The
 caressing sea, green as emerald, splashed softly upon the
 20 shore and kissed it with manifest, almost conscious love.
 The tall, lovely trees stood in all the glory of their blossom,
 and their innumerable leaves greeted me, I am certain, with
 their soft, caressing rustle and seemed to articulate words of
 love. The grass glowed with bright and fragrant flowers.
 25 Birds were flying in flocks in the air, and perched fearlessly
 on my shoulders and arms and joyfully struck me with their
 darling, fluttering wings. And at last I saw and knew the
 people of this happy land. That came to me of themselves,
 they surrounded me, kissed me. The children of the sun, the
 30 children of their sun - oh, how beautiful they were! Never
 had I seen on our own earth such beauty in mankind. Only
 perhaps in our children, in their earliest years, one might
 find, some remote faint reflection of this beauty. The eyes of
 these happy people shone with a clear brightness. Their
 35 faces were radiant with the light of reason and fullness of a

serenity that comes of perfect understanding, but those faces
 36 were gay; in their words and voices there was a note of
 childlike joy. Oh, from the first moment, from the first
 glance at them, I understood it all! It was the earth
 40 untarnished by the Fall; on it lived people who had not
 sinned. They lived just in such a paradise as that in which,
 according to all the legends of mankind, our first parents
 lived before they sinned; the only difference was that all this
 earth was the same paradise. These people, laughing
 45 joyfully, thronged round me and caressed me; they took me
 home with them, and each of them tried to reassure me. Oh,
 they asked me no questions, but they seemed, I fancied, to
 know everything without asking, and they wanted to make
 haste to smoothe away the signs of suffering from my face.

IV

And do you know what? Well, granted that it was only a
 dream, yet the sensation of the love of those innocent and
 beautiful people has remained with me for ever, and I feel as
 55 though their love is still flowing out to me from over there.
 I have seen them myself, have known them and been
 convinced; I loved them, I suffered for them afterwards. Oh,
 I understood at once even at the time that in many things I
 could not understand them at all; as an up-to-date Russian
 60 progressive and contemptible Petersburger, it struck me as
 inexplicable that, knowing so much, they had, for instance,
 no science like our. But I soon realised that their knowledge
 was gained and fostered by intuitions different from those of
 us on earth, and that their aspirations, too, were quite
 65 different. They desired nothing and were at peace; they did
 not aspire to knowledge of life as we aspire to understand it,
 because their lives were full. But their knowledge was
 higher and deeper than ours; for our science seeks to explain
 what life is, aspires to understand it in order to teach others
 70

1 how to love, while they without science knew how to live;
 and that I understood, but I could not understand their
 knowledge. They showed me their trees, and I could not
 understand the intense love with which they looked at them;
 5 it was as though they were talking with creatures like
 themselves. And perhaps I shall not be mistaken if I say that
 they conversed with them. Yes, they had found their
 language, and I am convinced that the trees understood them.
 They looked at all Nature like that - at the animals who lived
 10 in peace with them and did not attack them, but loved them,
 conquered by their love. They pointed to the stars and told
 me something about them which I could not understand, but
 I am convinced that they were somehow in touch with the
 stars, not only in thought, but by some living channel. Oh,
 15 these people did not persist in trying to make me understand
 them, they loved me without that, but I knew that they would
 never understand me, and so I hardly spoke to them about
 our earth. I only kissed in their presence the earth on which
 they lived and mutely worshipped them themselves. And
 20 they saw that and let me worship them without being abashed
 at my adoration, for they themselves loved much. They were
 not unhappy on my account when at times I kissed their feet
 with tears, joyfully conscious of the love with which they
 would respond to mine. At times I asked myself with
 25 wonder how it was they were able never to offend a creature
 like me, and never once to arouse a feeling of jealousy or
 envy in me? Often I wondered how it could be that, boastful
 and untruthful as I was, I never talked to them of what I
 knew - of which, of course, they had no notion - that I was
 30 never tempted to do so by a desire to astonish or even to
 benefit them.

They were as gay and sportive as children. They
 wandered about their lovely woods and copses, they sang
 their lovely songs; their fair was light - the fruits of their
 35 trees, the honey from their woods, and the milk of the

animals who loved them. The work they did for food and
 36 raiment was brief and not labourious. They loved and begot
 children, but I never noticed in them the impulse of that cruel
 sensuality which overcomes almost every man on this earth,
 40 all and each, and is the source of almost every sin of mankind
 on earth. They rejoiced at the arrival of children as new
 beings to share their happiness. There was no quarrelling, no
 jealousy among them, and they did not even know what the
 words meant. Their children were the children of all, for
 they all made up one family. There was scarcely any illness
 45 among them, though there was death; but their old people
 died peacefully, as though falling asleep, giving blessings
 and smiles to those who surrounded them to take their last
 farewell with bright and lovely smiles. I never saw grief or
 tears on those occasions, but only love, which reached the
 50 point of ecstasy, but a calm ecstasy, made perfect and
 contemplative. One might think that they were still in
 contact with the departed after death, and that their earthly
 union was not cut short by death. They scarcely understood
 me when I questioned them about immortality, but evidently
 55 they were so convinced of it without reasoning that it was not
 for them a question at all. They had no temples, but they had
 a real living and uninterrupted sense of oneness with the
 whole of the universe; they had no creed, but they had a
 certain knowledge that when their earthly joy had reached the
 60 limits of earthly nature, then there would come for them, for
 the living and for the dead, a still greater fullness of contact
 with the whole of the universe. They looked forward to that
 moment with joy, but without haste, not pining for it, but
 seeming to have a foretaste of it in their hearts, of which they
 65 talked to one another.

In the evening before going to sleep they liked singing in
 musical and harmonious chorus. In those songs they
 expressed all the sensations that the parting day had given
 them, sang its glories and took leave of it. They sang the
 70

1 praises of nature, of the sea, of the woods. They liked
 making songs about one another, and praised each other like
 children; they were the simplest songs, but they sprang from
 their hearts and went to one's heart. And not only in their
 5 songs but in all their lives they seemed to do nothing but
 admire one another. It was like being in love with each
 other, but an all-embracing, universal feeling.

Some of their songs, solemn and rapturous, I scarcely
 understood at all. Though I understood the words I could
 10 never fathom their full significance. It remained, as it were,
 beyond the grasp of my mind, yet my heart unconsciously
 absorbed it more and more. I often told them that I had had
 a presentiment of it long before, that this joy and glory had
 come to me on our earth in the form of a yearning
 15 melancholy that at times approached insufferable sorrow;
 that I had had a foreknowledge of them all and of their glory
 in the dreams of my heart and the visions of my mind; that
 often on our earth I could not look at the setting sun without
 tears. . . that in my hatred for the men of our earth there was
 20 always a yearning anguish: why could I not hate them
 without loving them? why could I not help forgiving them?
 and in my love for them there was a yearning grief: why
 could I not love them without hating them? They listened to
 me, and I saw they could not conceive what I was saying, but
 25 I did not regret that I had spoken to them of it: I knew that
 they understood the intensity of my yearning anguish over
 those whom I had left. But when they looked at me with
 their sweet eyes full of love, when I felt that in their presence
 my heart, too, became as innocent and just as theirs, the
 30 feeling of the fullness of life took my breath away, and I
 worshipped them in silence.

Oh, everyone laughs in my face now, and assures me that
 one cannot dream of such details as I am telling now, that I
 only dreamed or felt one sensation that arose in my heart in
 35 delirium and made up the details myself when I woke up.

And when I told them that perhaps it really was so, my God, 36
 how they shouted with laughter in my face, and what mirth
 I caused! Oh, yes, of course I was overcome by the mere
 sensation of my dream, and that was all that was preserved in
 my cruelly wounded heart; but the actual forms and images 40
 of my dream, that is, the very ones I really saw at the very
 time of my dream, were filled with such harmony, were so
 lovely and enchanting and were so actual, that on awakening
 I was, of course, incapable of clothing them in our poor
 language, so that they were bound to become blurred in my 45
 mind; and so perhaps I really was forced afterwards to make
 up the details, and so of course to distort them in my
 passionate desire to convey some at least of them as quickly
 as I could. But on the other hand, how can I help believing
 that it was all true? It was perhaps a thousand times brighter, 50
 happier and more joyful than I describe it. Granted that I
 dreamed it, yet it must have been real. You know, I will tell
 you a secret: perhaps it was not a dream at all! For then
 something happened so awful, something so horribly true,
 that it could not have been imagined in a dream. My heart 55
 may have originated the dream, but would my heart alone
 have been capable of originating the awful event which
 happened to me afterwards? How could I alone have
 invented it or imagined it in my dream? Could my petty
 heart and fickle, trivial mind have risen to such a revelation 60
 of truth? Oh, judge for yourselves: hitherto I have concealed
 it, but now I will tell the truth. The fact is that I . . .
 corrupted them all!

V

Yes, yes, it ended in my corrupting them all! How it could
 come to pass I do not know, but I remember it clearly. The
 dream embraced thousands of years and left in me only a
 sense of the whole. I only know that I was the cause of their 70

1 sin and downfall. Like a vile trichina, like a germ of the
 plague infecting whole kingdoms, so I contaminated all this
 earth, so happy and sinless before my coming. They learnt
 to lie, grew fond of lying, and discovered the charm of
 5 falsehood. Oh, at first perhaps it began innocently, with a
 jest, coquetry, with amorous play, perhaps indeed with a
 germ, but that germ of falsity made its way into their hearts
 and pleased them. Then sensuality was soon begotten,
 sensuality begot jealousy, jealousy - cruelty . . . Oh, I don't
 10 know, I don't remember; but soon, very soon the first blood
 was shed. They marvelled and were horrified, and began to
 be split up and divided. They formed into unions, but it was
 against one another. Reproaches, upbraidings followed.
 They came to know shame, and shame brought them to
 15 virtue. The conception of honour sprang up, and every union
 began waving its flags. They began torturing animals, and
 the animals withdrew from them into the forests and became
 hostile to them. They began to struggle for separation, for
 isolation, for individuality, for mine and thine. They began
 20 to talk in different languages. They became acquainted with
 sorrow and loved sorrow; they thirsted for suffering, and said
 that truth could only be attained through suffering. Then
 science appeared. As they became wicked they began talking
 of brotherhood and humanitarianism, and understood those
 25 ideas. As they became criminal, they invented justice and
 drew up whole legal codes in order to observe it, and to
 ensure their being kept, set up a guillotine. They hardly
 remembered what they had lost, in fact refused to believe that
 they had ever been happy and innocent. They even laughed
 30 at the possibility of this happiness in the past, and called it a
 dream. They could not even imagine it in definite form and
 shape, but, strange and wonderful to relate, though they lost
 all faith in their past happiness and called it a legend, they so
 longed to be happy and innocent once more that they
 35 succumbed to this desire like children, made an idol of it, set

up temples and worshipped their own idea, their own desire; 36
 though at the same time they fully believed that it was
 unattainable and could not be realised, yet they bowed down
 to it and adored it with tears! Nevertheless, if it could have
 happened that they had returned to the innocent and happy 40
 condition which they had lost, and if someone had shown it
 to them again and had asked them whether they wanted to go
 back to it, they would certainly have refused. They answered
 me:

“We may be deceitful, wicked and unjust, we know it and 45
 weep over it, we grieve over it; we torment and punish
 ourselves more perhaps than that merciful Judge Who will
 judge us and whose Name we know not. But we have
 science, and by the means of it we shall find the truth and we
 shall arrive at it consciously. Knowledge is higher than 50
 feeling, the consciousness of life is higher than life. Science
 will give us wisdom, wisdom will reveal the laws, and the
 knowledge of the laws of happiness is higher than
 happiness.”

That is what they said, and after saying such things 55
 everyone began to love himself better than anyone else, and
 indeed they could not do otherwise. All became so jealous
 of the rights of their own personality that they did their very
 utmost to curtail and destroy them in others, and made that
 the chief thing in their lives. Slavery followed, even 60
 voluntary slavery; the weak eagerly submitted to the strong,
 on condition that the latter aided them to subdue the still
 weaker. Then there were saints who came to these people,
 weeping, and talked to them of their pride, of their loss of
 harmony and due proportion, of their loss of shame. They 65
 were laughed at or pelted with stones. Holy blood was shed
 on the threshold of the temples. Then there arose men who
 began to think how to bring all people together again, so that
 everybody, while still loving himself best of all, might not
 interfere with others, and all might live together in something 70

1 like a harmonious society. Regular wars sprang up over this
 idea. All the combatants at the same time firmly believed
 that science, wisdom and the instinct of self-preservation
 would force men at last to unite into a harmonious and
 5 rational society; and so, meanwhile, to hasten matters, 'the
 wise' endeavoured to exterminate as rapidly as possible all
 who were 'not wise' and did not understand their idea, that
 the latter might not hinder its triumph. But the instinct of
 self-preservation grew rapidly weaker; there arose men,
 10 haughty and sensual, who demanded all or nothing. In order
 to obtain everything they resorted to crime, and if they did
 not succeed - to suicide. There arose religions with a cult of
 non-existence and self-destruction for the sake of the
 everlasting peace of annihilation. At last these people grew
 15 weary of their meaningless toil, and signs of suffering came
 into their faces, and then they proclaimed that suffering was
 a beauty, for in suffering alone was there meaning. They
 glorified suffering in their songs. I moved about among
 them, wringing my hands and weeping over them, but I loved
 20 them perhaps more than in old days when there was no
 suffering in their faces and when they were innocent and so
 lovely. I loved the earth they had polluted even more than
 when it had been a paradise, if only because sorrow had
 come to it. Alas! I always loved sorrow and tribulation, but
 25 only for myself, for myself; but I wept over them, pitying
 them. I stretched out my hands to them in despair, blaming,
 cursing and despising myself. I told them that all this was
 my doing, mine alone; that it was I had brought them
 corruption, contamination and falsity. I besought them to
 30 crucify me, I taught them how to make a cross. I could not
 kill myself, I had not the strength, but I wanted to suffer at
 their hands. I yearned for suffering, I longed that my blood
 should be drained to the last drop in these agonies. But they
 only laughed at me, and began at last to look upon me as
 35 crazy. They justified me, they declared that they had only

got what they wanted themselves, and that all that now was
 36 could not have been otherwise. At last they declared to me
 that I was becoming dangerous and that they should lock me
 up in a madhouse if I did not hold my tongue. Then such
 grief took possession of my soul that my heart was wrung,
 40 and I felt as though I were dying; and then . . . then I awoke.

It was morning, that is, it was not yet daylight, but about
 six o'clock. I woke up in the same arm-chair; my candle had
 burnt out; everyone was asleep in the captain's room, and
 45 there was a stillness all round, rare in our flat. First of all I
 leapt up in great amazement: nothing like this had ever
 happened to me before, not even in the most trivial detail; I
 had never, for instance, fallen asleep like this in my
 arm-chair. While I was standing and coming to myself I
 50 suddenly caught sight of my revolver lying loaded, ready -
 but instantly I thrust it away! Oh, now, life, life! I lifted up
 my hands and called upon eternal truth, not with words, but
 with tears; ecstasy, immeasurable ecstasy flooded my soul.
 Yes, life and spreading the good tidings! Oh, I at that
 55 moment resolved to spread the tidings, and resolved it, of
 course, for my whole life. I go to spread the tidings, I want
 to spread the tidings - of what? Of the truth, for I have seen
 it, have seen it with my own eyes, have seen it in all its glory.

And since then I have been preaching! Moreover I love all
 60 those who laugh at me more than any of the rest. Why that
 is so I do not know and cannot explain, but so be it. I am
 told that I am vague and confused, and if I am vague and
 confused now, what shall I be later on? It is true indeed: I
 am vague and confused, and perhaps as time goes on I shall
 65 be more so. And of course I shall make many blunders
 before I find out how to preach, that is, find out what words
 to say, what things to do, for it is a very difficult task. I see
 all that as clear as daylight, but, listen, who does not make
 mistakes? An yet, you know, all are making for the same
 70

1 goal, all are striving in the same direction anyway, from the
 sage to the lowest robber, only by different roads. It is an old
 truth, but this is what is new: I cannot go far wrong. For I
 have seen the truth; I have seen and I know that people can
 5 be beautiful and happy without losing the power of living on
 earth. I will not and cannot believe that evil is the normal
 condition of mankind. And it is just this faith of mine that
 they laugh at. But how can I help believing it? I have seen
 the truth - it is not as though I had invented it with my mind,
 10 I have seen it, seen it, and the living image of it has filled my
 soul for ever. I have seen it in such full perfection that I
 cannot believe that it is impossible for people to have it. And
 so how can I go wrong? I shall make some slips no doubt,
 and shall perhaps talk in second-hand language, but not for
 15 long; the living image of what I saw will always be with me
 and will always correct and guide me. Oh, I am full of
 courage and freshness, and I will go on and on if it were for
 a thousand years! Do you know, at first I meant to conceal
 the fact that I corrupted them, but that was a mistake - that
 20 was my first mistake! But truth whispered to me that I was
 lying, and preserved me and corrected me. But how establish
 paradise - I don't know, because I do not know how to put it
 into words. After my dream I lost command of words. All
 the chief words, anyway, the most necessary ones. But never
 25 mind, I shall go and I shall keep talking, I won't leave off, for
 anyway I have seen it with my own eyes, though I cannot
 describe what I saw. But the scoffers do not understand that.
 It was a dream, they say, delirium, hallucination. Oh! As
 though that meant so much! And they are so proud! A
 30 dream! What is a dream? And is not our life a dream? I will
 say more. Suppose that this paradise will never come to pass
 (that I understand), yet I shall go on preaching it. And yet
 how simple it is: in one day, in one hour everything could be
 arranged at once! The chief thing is to love others like
 35 yourself, that's the chief thing, and that's everything; nothing

else is wanted - you will find out at once how to arrange it 36
 all. And yet it's an old truth which has been told and retold
 a billion times - but it has not formed part of our lives! The
 consciousness of life is higher than life, the knowledge of the
 laws of happiness is higher than happiness - that is what one 40
 must contend against. And I shall. If only everyone wants
 it, it can be arranged at once.

And I tracked down that little girl . . . and I shall go on and
 on! 45



50

55

60

65

70

