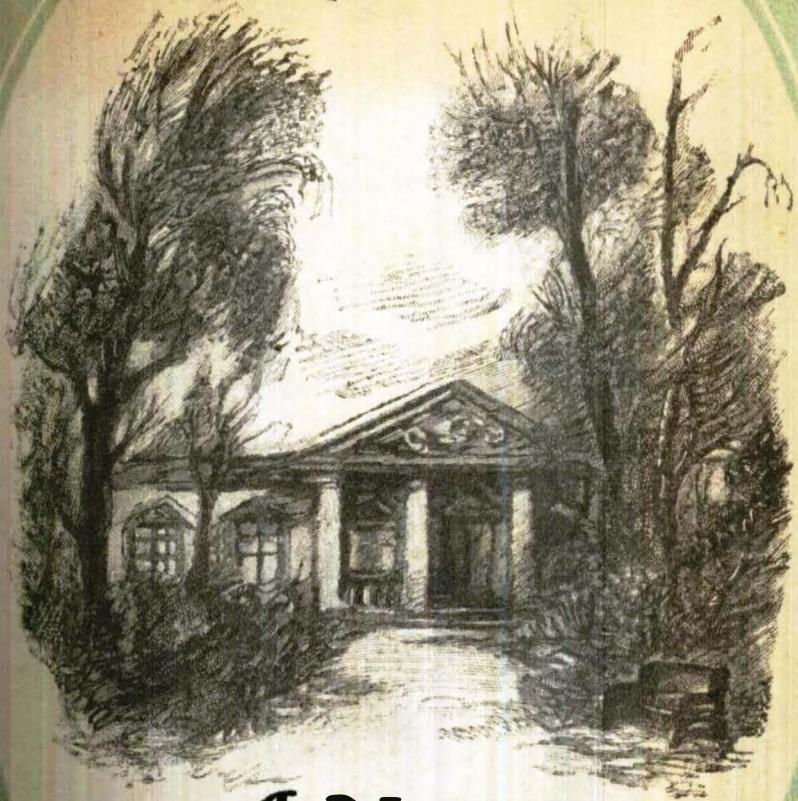
Ivan Turgenyev: A Nest of the Gentry

IVAN TURGENYEV



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A NOVEL

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I

A fair spring day was drawing to a close. Little rosy clouds hung high in the clear sky, seeming to melt in the azure depths as they floated slowly past.

Before the open window of a handsome house in the suburbs of the gubernia town of O—(it was in the year 1842) sat two women; one was about fifty years of age, the other an old lady of seventy.

The name of the former was Marya Dmitrievna Kalitina. Her husband, ex-public prosecutor of the gubernia, noted in his day as a man of business, an active, resourceful man of stubborn and choleric temper, had been dead for ten years. He had received a good education and graduated the university; but having been born among the humbler orders he realized early in life the necessity of making his way in the world and lining his pocket. It had been a love match on Marya Dmitrievna's side, for he had been quite a good-looking man, clever,

and amiable when he chose. Marya Dmitrievna (*nee* Pestova) had lost her parents in childhood. She spent some years in Moscow in a ladies' institute and on her return lived on the family estate in the village of Pokrovskoye, about fifty versts from O— with her aunt and an elder brother. This brother shortly moved to St. Petersburg, where he held a government post, and treated his sister and aunt high-handedly till sudden death cut short his career. Marya Dmitrievna inherited Pokrovskoye, but she did not live there long: a year after her marriage to Kalitin, who had conquered her heart in the space of a few days, Pokrovskoye was exchanged for a more lucrative estate which, however, was unattractive and had no homestead. At the same time Kalitin took a house in the town of O— in which he and his wife took up their permanent abode. The house stood in a large garden which on one side overlooked the open country. "And so," decided Kalitin, who was no lover of rural amenities, "there'll be no going off to the country." At bottom Marya Dmitrievna more than once rued the loss of her pretty Pokrovskoye with its smiling brook, its broad meadows and green groves; but she never in any way opposed her husband, of whose wisdom and knowledge of the world she stood in profoundest awe. However, when after fifteen years of married life, he died leaving her with a son and two daughters, Marya Dmitrievna had grown so accustomed to her house and town life that she had no wish to leave O —.

In her youth Marya Dmitrievna had had the reputation of being a pretty blonde; even at fifty her features had not lost all their charm, though they were rather puffy and had lost their delicacy. She was sentimental rather than kind-hearted, and retained her school-day mannerisms even at a mature age; she coddled herself, was easily irritated and would even grow tearful if her habits were interfered with; but she could also be very gracious and kind when humoured and nobody gainsaid her. Her house was one of the most agreeable in the town. She had a pretty fortune, not so much from her own legacy as through her husband's thrift. Both daughters lived

with her; her son was attending one of the best public schools in St. Petersburg.

The old lady sitting with Marya Dmitrievna at the window was that same aunt, her father's sister, with whom she had once spent several years in the seclusion of Pokrovskoye. Her name was Marfa Timofeyevna Pestova. She was by repute an eccentric old lady of independent character, told everyone the truth to his face, and was able to keep up a show of opulence even on the most scanty means. She had had a strong aversion to Kalitin, and directly her niece married him she returned to her little village, where for ten whole years she lived in the ramshackle hut of a muzhik. Marya Dmitrievna was a little afraid of her. A little sharp-nosed woman, black-haired and keen-eyed even in her old age, Marfa Timofeyevna walked with a sprightly step, held herself erect and spoke rapidly and distinctly in a resonant voice. She was always to be seen in a white lace cap and white dressing-jacket.

"What's the matter?" she asked Marya Dmitrievna suddenly. "What are you sighing about, my dear?"

"Oh, nothing," answered the other. "What lovely clouds!"

"Do you feel so sorry for them?"

Marya Dmitrievna made no reply.

"I wonder why Gedeonovsky doesn't come?" observed Marfa Timofeyevna, nimbly plying her knitting needles. (She was knitting a big woollen scarf.) "He would help you sigh—or tell you some fibs."

"How hard you always are on him! Sergei Petrovich is a worthy man."

"Worthy!" echoed the old lady deprecatingly.

"And how devoted he was to my dear husband!" said Marya Dmitrievna; "to this day he cannot speak of him without emotion."

"I should think he would! Didn't your husband pick him up out of the gutter?" muttered Marfa Timofeyevna, and her knitting needles moved faster.

"Mind you, he's such a meek person to look at," she began again, "with his head all grey, but no sooner does he

open his mouth than out comes a lie or a bit of scandal. And he a civil servant too, in the rank of councillor! Ah, but then he's only the son of a village priest."

"Every one has his faults, auntie; that's his weak side, to be sure. Sergei Petrovich has had no education. I admit—he doesn't speak French; but he is a very agreeable person, say what you like."

"Of course, he is always kissing your hands. What if he doesn't speak French! For that matter, I don't shine myself in French tattle. It were better he didn't speak at all in any language—he wouldn't be telling lies. But here he comes—talk of the devil," added Marfa Timofeyevna glancing into the street. "Here's your agreeable person, stalking along. As lean and lanky as a stork he is!"

Marya Dmitrievna tidied her curls. Marfa Timofeyevna eyed her ironically.

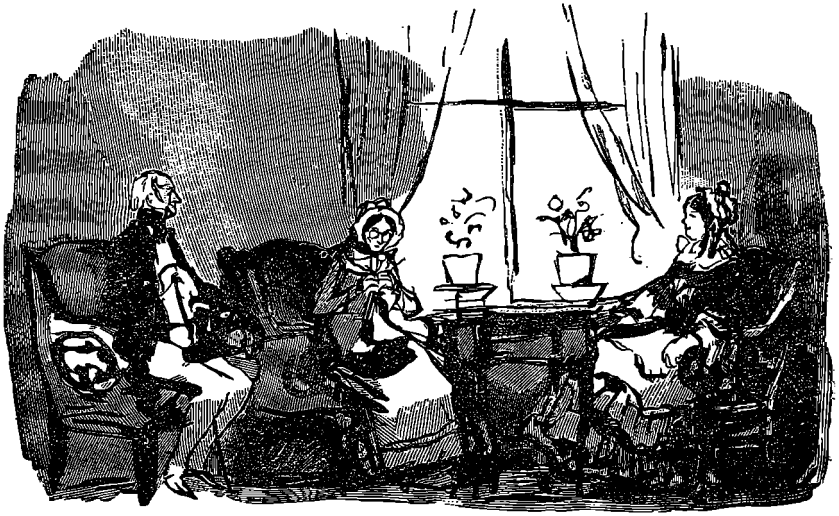
"What's that, my dear, not a grey hair, surely? That Palashka of yours should be told off. Really, where does she think her eyes are?"

"Really auntie, you always..." murmured Marya Dmitrievna in a grieved tone, drumming her fingers on the arm of her chair.

"Sergei Petrovich Gedeonovsky"—piped a rosy-cheeked servant boy, popping his head in at the door.

II

A tall man entered, dressed in a neat frock coat, shortish trousers, grey suède gloves and double cravat—a black one on top and a white one underneath. His whole aspect breathed of decorum and respectability, from his well-favoured countenance and smoothly brushed temples to his flat-heeled, soft-padded topboots. He bowed first to the lady of the house, then to Marfa Timofeyevna, and slowly drawing off his gloves, stooped over Marya Dmitrievna's hand. Having kissed it reverently, in fact twice, he seated himself with deliberation



in an armchair, and rubbing his fingertips, observed with a smile:

"And is Elizaveta Mikhailovna quite well?"

"Yes," replied Marya Dmitrievna, "she's in the garden."

"And Elena Mikhailovna?"

"Lenochka's in the garden, too. Is there anything new?"

"I should say there is," replied the visitor, blinking slowly and pursing his lips.

"Hm!... there certainly is some news, and very astonishing news at that. Lavretsky, Fyodor Ivanich, is here."

"Fedya!" cried Marfa Timofeyevna. "Come, good man, you are not making it up, are you?"

"Why, of course not, I saw him myself."

"That doesn't prove anything."

"He looks extremely well," continued Gedeonovsky, affecting not to have heard Marfa Timofeyevna's remark. "He is broader in the shoulders and has a fine colour."

"Looks extremely well," repeated Marya Dmitrievna slowly. "One would not think he has any reason to be looking well."

"Yes, indeed," took up Gedeonovsky; "another man in his position would have thought twice before appearing in society."

"How's that?" interposed Marfa Timofeyevna. "That's sheer nonsense! The man has come back home—where would you have him go? Now, I understand if he were in any way to blame!"

"The husband is always to blame, Madam, you can take it from me, when his wife misbehaves."

"You say that, my good sir, because you have never been married." Gedeonovsky listened with a constrained smile.

"If I may be so inquisitive," he enquired after a short silence, "who is that pretty scarf for?"

Marfa Timofeyevna threw him a swift glance.

"It's for a man who never gossips, who is not a humbug and doesn't tell lies, if there is such a man in the world. I know Fedya well; his only fault is that he pampered his wife. Then, of course, he married for love, and they've never done any good, these love matches," threw in the old lady, giving Marya Dmitrievna a look out of the corner of her eye and getting up. "And now, my dear sir, you can pull to pieces whomsoever you please, even me for all I care; I'm going, I won't be in your way." And Marfa Timofeyevna walked out.

"That's how she always is," said Marya Dmitrievna, following her aunt with her eyes. "Always!"

"Your aunt's getting on in years, you know.... It can't be helped!" remarked Gedeonovsky. "She said something about being a humbug. But who is not that nowadays? Life's like that today. A friend of mine, a very worthy man and of no mean rank, let me tell you, used to say that nowadays even a hen can't pick up a grain without shamming—she will always go for it sideways. But when I look at you, dear lady,—I see the soul of an angel; ah, permit me to take your snow-white little hand."

Marya Dmitrievna smiled faintly and held out her dimpled hand with the little finger thrust out. He pressed his lips to it. Drawing her chair closer to him, she bent slightly forward and asked him, in an undertone:

"So you have seen him? Is he really—all right—er, quite well and cheerful?"

"Yes, quite cheerful," said Gedeonovsky *sotto voce*.

"Haven't you heard where his wife is?"

"She was lately in Paris; now there is talk of her having gone off to Italy."

"It is really dreadful—Fedya's position; I wonder how he bears up under it. Misfortune, of course, can be anybody's lot; but he, one might say, has become the talk of Europe."

Gedeonovsky sighed.

"Yes, yes, indeed. You know, they say she has been associating with artists and pianists—society lions, I believe they call them—and all sorts of strange creatures. She's utterly shameless."

"I'm ever so sorry," said Marya Dmitrievna. "He's one of the family, after all—he's a distant cousin of mine, you know, Sergei Petrovich."

"Why, of course. Don't I know everything that concerns your family. I should say I do."

"Will he come to see us, do you think?"

"I should imagine so; though I hear he intends to go to his country place."

Marya Dmitrievna lifted up her eyes.

"Ah, Sergei Petrovich, Sergei Petrovich, when I come to think of it,—how discreet we women must be!"

"Not all women are alike, Marya Dmitrievna. There are unfortunately some women—flighty, you know... and the age, too, has something to do with it; and then they are not brought up properly in childhood." (Sergei Petrovich drew a blue checked handkerchief out of his pocket and began to unfold it.) "There are such women, aye, there are." (Sergei Petrovich dabbed each eye in turn with a corner of his handkerchief.) "But, generally speaking, if one may be allowed to say so, that is.... The dust in town is awful," he concluded.

"Maman, Maman," cried a winsome little girl of eleven, darting into the room; "Vladimir Nikolaich is coming on horseback!"

Marya Dmitrievna got up; Sergei Petrovich got up too and made a bow. "Elena Mikhailovna, my compliments," he said, and turning aside into a corner for the sake of decorum, he started to blow his long straight nose.

"What a fine horse he has!" continued the little girl. "He was at the wicket just now and told Liza and me he would come round to the porch." There came a sound of approaching hoofs, and a graceful young man astride a beautiful bay horse came into view in the street and stopped before the open window.

III

"How do you do, Marya Dmitrievna!" cried the rider in a resonant pleasant voice. "How do you like my new purchase?"

Marya Dmitrievna stepped to the window.

"How do you do, *Woldemar*. Oh, what a splendid horse! Where did you buy it?"

"I bought it from the army contractor.... He made me pay a pretty penny, the rogue."

"What is its name?"

"Orlando.... It's a silly name; I want to change it.... *Eh bien, eh bien, mon garçon*... what a restive beast he is!"

The horse snorted, pranced and tossed its foam-flaked muzzle.

"Lenochka, pat him. Don't be afraid."

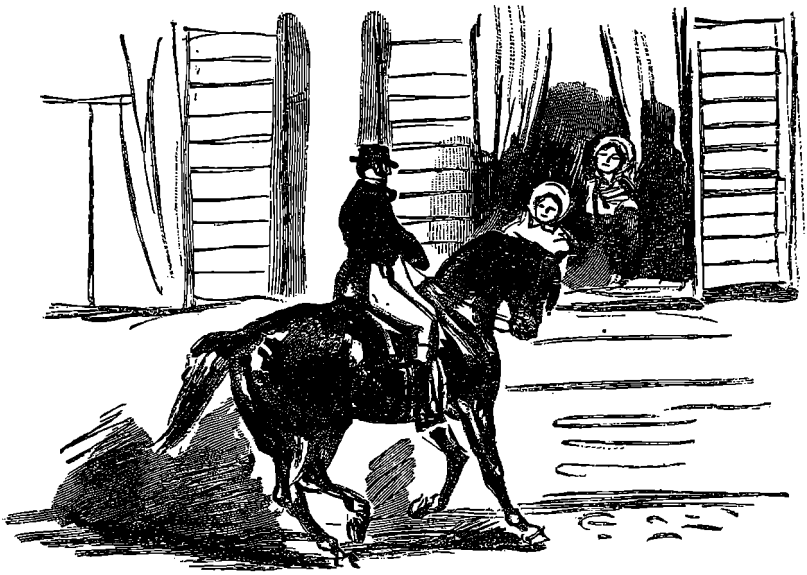
The little girl put her hand out of the window, but Orlando suddenly reared and shied.

The rider with perfect sangfroid gave it a flick of his whip across the neck, and digging his legs into its sides brought it, despite its resistance, back to the window.

"Prenez garde, prenez garde," Marya Dmitrievna kept on reiterating.

"Lenochka, pat him," said the young man, "I won't let him have things his own way."

The girl put her hand out again and timidly patted the quivering nostrils of the champing, restive horse.



"Bravo!" cried Marya Dmitrievna; "but now get off and come inside."

The rider adroitly veered his horse's head, gave him a touch of the spur, and riding at a brisk gallop down the street, entered the courtyard. Presently he ran into the drawing room through the hall door swinging his riding whip; simultaneously there appeared in another doorway a tall, slender, dark-haired girl of nineteen, Marya Dmitrievna's eldest daughter, Liza.

IV

The young man whom we have just introduced to our reader was Vladimir Nikolaich Panshin. He was a civil servant in St. Petersburg, acting on special commissions in the Ministry of the Interior. He had come to the town of O— on a temporary official commission and was in attendance on the Governor-General Zonnenberg, to whom he was distantly related.

Panshin's father, a retired cavalry officer and notorious gambler, a man with honeyed eyes, a creased face and a nervous twitch about the mouth, had spent all his life rubbing shoulders with nobility; he haunted the English clubs of both capitals and had the reputation of being an adroit, though not very trustworthy man of the hail-fellow kind. Despite his adroitness he was nearly always on the brink of penury, and left his only son a meagre and heavily mortgaged property. He did, however, in a way, provide for his son's education. Vladimir Nikolaich spoke French excellently, English well and German badly. That was how it should be: respectable folk considered it bad form to speak German well; but to employ a German phrase on a suitable occasion—preferably facetiously —was quite the thing, *c'est même très chis,* as the Petersburg Parisians say. At fifteen Vladimir Nikolaich could enter a drawing room without embarrassment, dawdle pleasantly therein and depart at the proper time. Panshin's father procured his son numerous connections. When shuffling cards between two rubbers or after a successful "grand slam" he would never miss an opportunity of putting in a word for his "Volodka" to any personage of importance who liked a game of skill. For his part, Vladimir Nikolaich, during his stay at the university, which he graduated with a degree of bachelor, made the acquaintance of several young men of quality and was received into the best houses. He was welcome everywhere; he was very good-looking, nonchalant, amusing, always in good health and sociable; deferential when he should be, audacious when he dared to be; an excellent fellow, *un charmant garçon.* Life smiled on him. Panshin quickly learnt the secrets of high society; he could yield a genuine respect for its decrees; he could dally with trifles with an air of flippant gravity and make pretence of regarding grave matters as trifles; he danced admirably and dressed in the English mode. In a short time he won the reputation of being one of the most amiable and accomplished young men in St. Petersburg. Panshin was indeed exceedingly adroit, more so than his father; but then he was endowed with no mean talents. He could turn his hand to

anything: he sang charmingly, sketched dexterously, wrote verses and was not at all bad at theatricals. He was only in his twenty-eighth year and was already a *kammer-junker* and held a very good position. Panshin had complete confidence in himself, in his intelligence and sagacity; he made his way boldly and blithely; his life was smooth sailing. He was used to being a general favourite with old and young alike and fancied he knew people, especially women: he certainly knew their common foibles. Having a penchant for the arts, he was conscious of an innate ardour, an imaginative zeal and even rapture, and consequently permitted himself certain deviations from the rule: he sowed some wild oats, associated with people who were beyond the pale of good society and, in general, carried himself with a free and easy air; at heart, however, he was cold and crafty, and during the most boisterous revelry his shrewd brown little eye was always alert and watchful of what was going on; this bold, independent young man could never give himself up entirely to a ruling passion. To do him justice, he never boasted of his conquests. He found his way into Marya Dmitrievna's house directly he arrived in O—and he soon made himself quite at home there. Marya Dmitrievna simply doted on him.

Panshin bowed courteously to everybody in the room, shook hands with Marya Dmitrievna and Elizaveta Mikhailovna, patted Gedeonovsky lightly on the shoulder, and swinging round, he took hold of Lenochka's head and imprinted a kiss on her forehead.

"Aren't you afraid to ride such a vicious horse?" Marya Dmitrievna asked him.

"He's very docile, really; but I'll tell you what I really am afraid of: I'm afraid to play whist with Sergei Petrovich; yesterday at the Belenitsyns' he beat me clean."

Gedeonovsky gave a little simper of a laugh; he strove to ingratiate himself with this brilliant young official from St. Petersburg—the Governor's favourite. In his conversation with Marya Dmitrievna he frequently alluded to Panshin's remarkable accomplishments. "Indeed, how could one help praising him," he used to say. "The young man is succeeding in the highest spheres, he's an exemplary official and not a bit up-

pish." As a matter of fact, in St. Petersburg, too, Panshin was looked upon as a competent official: his capacity for work was remarkable; he spoke of it lightly, as behoves a man of the world who does not attach much importance to his labours, but he was an "efficient executive." Principals like such subordinates; he himself had no doubt that he would rise to ministerial eminence in time if he chose.

"You say, sir, that I beat you clean," said Gedeonovsky, "but who was it won twelve rubles of me the other day? And then again. . . ."

"Oh, you wicked man," Panshin interjected in a tone of kindly though contemptuous nonchalance and, turning his back on him, he went up to Liza.

"I couldn't get the Oberon overture here," he began. "Belenitsyna merely boasted when she said she had all the classical music—she really has nothing but polkas and waltzes; but I've written to Moscow and within a week you will have the overture. By the way," he went on, "I wrote a new song yesterday, the words are mine too. Would you care to hear it? I don't know what it's like; Belenitsyna thought it a pretty piece, but her opinion's not worth much. I should like to know what you think of it. But, never mind, it can wait. . . ."

"Why wait?" interposed Marya Dmitrievna. "Why not now?"

"As you please," replied Panshin with a sweetly radiant smile that disappeared from his face as suddenly as it had appeared. Pushing up the stool with his knee, he sat down to the piano, and striking a few chords, began to sing, clearly enunciating his words:

The moon doth soar o'er vales of weeping willows,
Through clouds she gleams,
And from on high she rules the briny billows
With magic beams.
Thou art, O love, the moon that stirs my soul's tide—
Its boundless sea—
Which ebbs and flows with grief and joy where shoals bide,
In tune with thee.
For thee my soul doth yearn, to thee complaining:
With love I swoon,
But thou serene and calm I see remaining
Like yon fair moon.

The second verse Panshin brought out with special force and feeling; the turbulent accompaniment was reminiscent of the sound of waves. After the words "with love I swoon" he sighed softly, lowered his eyes and dropped his voice, *morendo*. When he had finished, Liza praised the tune, Marya Dmitrievna said it was "charming!" and Gedeonovsky even burst out with "delightful! Both the music and the words are simply delightful!" Lenochka gazed in childish awe at the singer. In short, the company was very pleased with the young dilettante's composition; but in the hallway stood an old man who had apparently just arrived, and whom, to judge by the look of his downcast face and the gesture he made with his shoulders, Panshin's song, pretty though it was, afforded anything but pleasure. Pausing to flick the dust off his boots with a coarse handkerchief, the man suddenly narrowed his eyes, sullenly tightened his mouth, bent his already stooping figure and slowly entered the drawing room.

"Ah! Christopher Fyodorich, good evening!" exclaimed Panshin, anticipating the rest of the company and jumping up from his seat. "I had no idea you were here—I would never have had the nerve to sing my song before you. I know you don't approve of light music."

"I hear it not," rejoined the newcomer in very bad Russian, and bowing to everyone present, he stopped awkwardly in the middle of the room.

"I suppose, Monsieur Lemm," said Marya Dmitrievna, "you've come to give Liza her music lesson?"

"No, not Elizaveta Mikhailovna, but Elená Mikhailovna."

"Ah! Very well. Lenochka, go upstairs with M-r Lemm."

The old man was on the point of following the little girl out, but Panshin intercepted him.

"Don't go away after the lesson, Christopher Fyodorich," he said. "Elizaveta Mikhailovna and I are going to play a Beethoven sonata."

The old man growled something under his breath, and Panshin went on in German, mispronouncing the words:

"Elizaveta Mikhailovna showed me the religious cantata you

dedicated to her—a beautiful thing! Please, do not think me incapable of appreciating serious music; on the contrary. It is tedious sometimes, but so very wholesome."

The old man reddened to the roots of his hair, and with a sidelong glance at Liza he hurriedly left the room.

Marya Dmitrievna asked Panshin to sing his song again; but he demurred that he did not wish to offend the ears of the learned German and offered Liza instead to tackle the Beethoven sonata. Thereupon Marya Dmitrievna sighed and for her part suggested to Gedeonovsky that he should take a walk with her in the garden. "I should like," she said, "to continue our talk and ask your advice about our poor Fedya." Gedeonovsky smirked, bowed, picked up with two fingers his hat, on the brim of which he had laid his carefully folded gloves, and followed Marya Dmitrievna out of the room. Panshin and Liza remained alone in the room; she got out the sonata and opened it; they sat down to the piano in silence. From above came the faint sound of scales, practised by the halting fingers of little Lenochka.

V

Christopher Theodore Gottlieb Lemm was born in the year 1786 in the Kingdom of Saxony, in the town of Chemnitz, of poor musicians. His father played the French horn, his mother the harp. When only five he was practising on three different instruments. At eight years of age he was left an orphan and at ten was earning his livelihood by his art. For a long time he led an itinerant life, playing wherever he could—at inns, fairs, peasants' weddings and balls; eventually he got into an orchestra where, rising by degrees, he finally became conductor. As a performer he was pretty poor, but he had a thorough knowledge of music. At twenty-eight he migrated to Russia. He was invited by a grand gentleman who detested music himself but kept an orchestra for the sake of ostentation. Lemm stayed with him for seven years in the capacity of musical direc-

tor and parted company with him with nothing to show. That gentleman went bankrupt, he had wanted to give Lemm a promissory note, but subsequently thought better of it—in short, he did not pay him a farthing. Lemm was advised to leave the country, but he did not want to return home a beggar from Russia, that great Russia, the El Dorado of the artist; he decided to remain and try his luck. The poor German had been trying his luck for twenty years: he had stayed with various of the gentry, had tried both Moscow and provincial towns, had suffered and endured much, tasted poverty and buffeted the waves; but the thought of returning to his native land never deserted him amid all his tribulations; that thought alone bore him up. Fate, however, did not vouchsafe him this last and first bliss: at fifty, ill and prematurely infirm, he became stranded in the town of O— and there he stayed for good, giving up all hope of leaving Russia, which he abhorred. He contrived to eke out a precarious existence by giving lessons. Lemm's appearance was not lovely to behold. He was short of stature and bent, with crooked shoulders and indrawn stomach, large flat feet and bluish-white nails on the stiff, horny fingers of his blue-veined red hands; he had a puckered face, hollow cheeks and tightened lips which he was for ever twisting and gnawing at and which, added to his habitual taciturnity, produced an almost gruesome effect. His grey hair strayed in tufts over a low brow, his little immobile eyes smouldered like dying embers; he moved in a lumbering gait, swinging his unwieldy bulk forward at each step. Some of his gestures reminded one of the uncouth preening of a caged owl when it feels it is being observed and can but peer helplessly about with its enormous, timorously blinking and somnolent yellow eyes. A deep gnawing grief had laid its ineffaceable seal on the poor musician; it had marred and maimed his by no means engaging aspect; but to those who were not prone to be influenced by first impressions there was something good, and honest, something uncommon in this ravaged creature. An admirer of Bach and Handel, a master of his craft, endowed with a vivid imagination and that strength of mind which is a fea-

ture of the German race, Lemm might in time—who knows?—have ranked with the great composers of his country, had the tide of life favoured him; but not under a lucky star was he born! He had written a great deal in his time, but was not to see a single one of his compositions published: he could not handle things the right way, curry favour in the right place, bestir himself at the right time. Once, a long time ago, an admirer and friend of his, also a German and also poor, published two of his sonatas at his own expense, but the whole edition remained on the shelves of the music-shops; they were swallowed up in oblivion, as though someone had cast them into the river overnight. Lemm finally resigned himself to his fate; and his years were telling too; his mind, like his hands, had become callous and benumbed. He lived alone in a little house not far from the Kalitins, with an old cook he had taken out of the almshouse (he had never married). He took long walks, read the Bible, a volume of Protestant hymns, or Shakespeare in Schlegel's translation. He had not written any music for a long time; but apparently Liza, who was his best pupil, had been able to rouse him from his lethargy; he had composed for her the cantata which Panshin had mentioned. The words for this cantata he had borrowed from his psalm-book, to which he had added some verses of his own. It was intended for two choruses—a chorus of the happy and a chorus of the unhappy, which merged together at the end and sang in unison, "Merciful God, forgive thy sinners and deliver us from evil thoughts and earthly hopes." On the title-page, painstakingly inscribed and even embellished, was the legend: "Only the righteous are just. A Religious Cantata. Composed and dedicated to my dear pupil, Miss Elizaveta Kalitina, by her teacher, C.T.G. Lemm." The words, "Only the righteous are just" and "Elizaveta Kalitina" stood in a circle of rays. Underneath was added: "For you alone, *für Sie allein*." This was why Lemm had reddened and looked reproachfully at Liza; he was deeply pained when Panshin spoke of his cantata before him.

VI

Panshin loudly and resolutely struck the first chords of the sonata (he was playing the second part), but Liza did not begin. He stopped and looked at her. Liza's eyes, which were fixed on him, expressed displeasure; her lips were unsmiling, and her countenance was stern, almost sad.

"What's the matter?" he asked.

"Why didn't you keep your word?" she said. "I showed you Christopher Fyodorich's cantata on the understanding that you would say nothing to him about it."

"I'm sorry, Elizaveta Mikhailovna, the words slipped out."

"You've upset him, and me too. Now he won't trust me either."

"I couldn't help it, Elizaveta Mikhailovna. Ever since I was a youngster I could never bide the sight of a German; I've always had an itch to tease him."

"How can you say such a thing, Vladimir Nikolaich! This German is a poor, lonely, broken man—don't you feel sorry for him? Can you wish to tease him?"

Panshin looked abashed.

"You are right, Elizaveta Mikhailovna," he said. "It's that eternal imprudence of mine. No, don't remonstrate; I know myself. My indiscretion has caused me a lot of harm. Thanks to that I am considered an egoist."

Panshin paused. On whatever subject he began a conversation he invariably ended up by talking about himself, and he did this with a disarming grace, unaffectedly and genially—unconsciously, as it were.

"Take your own house, for instance," he went on, "your mother, of course, is well disposed towards me, she is so kind; you... well, I don't know what you think of me; as for your aunt, she simply can't bear me. I've probably offended her too by some imprudent, silly speech. She doesn't like me, now does she?"

"No," admitted Liza after a moment's hesitation, "she doesn't."

Panshin ran his fingers over the keys; a faintly ironical smile played about his lips.

"What about you?" he said. "Do you consider me an egoist too?"

"I know you so little," replied Liza, "but I don't consider you an egoist; on the contrary, I ought to be grateful to you. . . ."

"I know, I know what you are going to say," Panshin broke in, running his fingers once more over the keys: "for the music, for the books I let you have, for the bad sketches I adorn your album with *et cetera, et cetera.* I could do that and still be an egoist. I dare to hope you do not find my company boring or believe me a bad fellow, but still you probably think that I wouldn't even—now how does that saying run—spare neither friend nor father for the sake of a joke."

"You are inattentive and forgetful, like all society people," observed Liza, "that is all."

Panshin frowned slightly.

"Come," he said, "don't let us talk about me any more; let us go on with the sonata. There's one thing I want to ask you though," he added, smoothing out the leaves of the music-book on the stand, "please think me what you like, call me an egoist even—so be it! But don't call me a society man; that appellation's hateful. . . . *Anch'io sono pittore.* I'm an artist too, maybe a poor one, and that—the fact that I'm a poor artist—I'm going to prove to your here and now. Let us begin."

"Yes, let us begin," said Liza.

The first *adagio* went off fairly well, though Panshin frequently blundered. His own things and music that he had practised he could play nicely, but he was bad at reading music at sight. The second part of the sonata—a fairly quick *allegro*—was altogether sad work; at the twentieth bar Panshin, who was two bars behind, gave it up and pushed his chair back with a laugh.

"It's no use!" he exclaimed. "I can't play today; thank goodness Lemm didn't hear us; he would have had a fit."

Liza got up, shut the piano and turned to Panshin.

"What shall we do then?" she asked.

"How like you that question is! You can never sit idle for a moment. Well, if you like, let's do some sketching while it's still light. Maybe the other Muse—the Muse of Painting—what d'ye call her? can't remember will be more disposed towards me. Where is your album? If I remember aright, that landscape of mine is not finished."

Liza went out into the next room to fetch the album, and Panshin, left to himself, drew out of his pocket a cambric handkerchief, rubbed his nails and contemplated his hands. They were white and exquisite; on the thumb of his left hand he wore a gold spiral ring. Liza came back; Panshin took a seat near the window and opened the album.

"Ah!" said he: "So you've begun to copy my landscape—fine. Very good indeed! Only just here—pass me a pencil—the shadows are not quite heavy enough. Look here."

And Panshin dashed off several long strokes. He was for ever drawing the same landscapes: large straggling trees in the foreground, a bit of meadow in the background and jagged mountains on the skyline. Liza watched him over his shoulder.

"In drawing, as in life generally," observed Panshin, inclining his head first to the right then to the left, "the main thing is—lightness and daring."

Just then Lemm entered the room, and, bowing stiffly, was about to retire; but Panshin, flinging aside album and pencils, barred his way.

"Where are you going, my dear Christopher Fyodorich? Aren't you staying for tea?"

"I go home," said Lemm gruffly; "my head aches."

"Oh, come now—do stay. We'll discuss Shakespeare."

"My head aches," repeated the old man.

"We started on the Beethoven sonata here without you," went on Panshin, putting an arm around him affectionately and smiling sweetly, "but we couldn't get on at all. Would you believe it, I couldn't play two consecutive notes rightly."

"You'd better haf sung dat song of yours again," retorted Lemm, removing Panshin's hands, and withdrew.

Liza ran after him. She overtook him on the porch.

"Christopher Fyodorich, listen," she said in German, walking down with him to the gate across the green sward of the courtyard, "I have offended you—please forgive me."

Lemm made no reply.

"I showed Vladimir Nikolaich your cantata; I was sure he would appreciate it—and he really does like it very much."

Lemm stopped.

"That's all right," he said in Russian and then added in his native tongue: "but he can't understand anything; don't you see that? He's a dilettante—and nothing more!"

"You are unfair to him," urged Liza; "he understands everything and can do almost everything himself."

"Yes, but it's all second-rate, light stuff, cheap work. People like it and like him, and he is pleased—so everything is fine. I am not angry; that cantata and I—we are both old fools; I'm a little bit ashamed, but that doesn't matter."

"Forgive me, Chistopher Fyodorich," murmured Liza again.

"All right," he repeated once more in Russian: "You are a good girl... but here is somebody coming. Good-bye. You are a very good girl."

And Lemm bent a hurried step towards the gate, through which there passed a stranger—a gentleman in a grey coat and broad-brimmed straw hat. Greeting him with a polite bow (he always greeted strangers; from acquaintances he would turn away on meeting them in the street—such was his rule), Lemm went past and disappeared behind the fence. The stranger gazed at his retreating figure in surprise, and glancing attentively at Liza, walked straight up to her.

VII

"You don't recognize me," he said, doffing his hat; "but I recognized you, although it's eight years since I saw you last. You were a child then. I am Lavretsky. Is your mother at home? May I see her?"

"My mother will be very glad to see you," said Liza: "she has heard of your arrival."

"Your name, I believe, is Elizaveta?" said Lavretsky, mounting the steps of the porch.

"Yes."

"I remember you well; even then you had a face one does not easily forget; I used to bring you sweets."

Liza blushed and thought to herself: what an odd man! Lavretsky stopped for a moment in the hall. Liza went into the drawing room whence came the sounds of Panshin's voice and laughter; he was communicating a piece of town gossip to Marya Dmitrievna and Gedeonovsky who had already returned from their wa'k in the garden, and laughed loudly at his own story. On hearing Lavretsky's name, Marya Dmitrievna was thrown into a flutter, went pale and came forward to meet him.

"How do you do, my dear cousin!" she cried in a languid, almost tearful voice: "I am awfully glad to see you!"

"How are you, my good cousin," said Lavretsky, giving her hand a friendly squeeze: "how has Providence been treating you?"

"Sit down, sit down, my dear Fyodor Ivanich. Oh, how glad I am. First of all let me introduce to you my daughter, Liza...."

"I've already introduced myself to Elizaveta Mikhailovna," broke in Lavretsky.

"Monsieur Panshin.... Sergei Petrovich Gedeonovsky.... Sit down, do! So here you are; I can't believe my eyes really! How are you?"

"As you see, I'm doing well. And you too, cousin, touch wood! Don't look any the worse after these eight years."

"When you come to think of it, it's a long time since we've seen each other," said Marya Dmitrievna pensively. "Where have you come from? Where did you leave... that is, I wanted to say," she caught herself up, "I mean, have you come for long?"

"I've just arrived from Berlin," answered Lavretsky: "and tomorrow I am leaving for the country—probably for long."

"You will live at Lavriky, of course?"

"No, not at Lavriky; there's a little village of mine about twenty-five versts from here; I intend to go there."

"Is that the place you inherited from Glafira Petrovna?"

"The very same."

"But Fyodor Ivanich! You have such a lovely house at Lavriky!"

Lavretsky frowned slightly.

"Yes... but there's a small house in that village which will suit me well. I don't need anything more just now."

Marya Dmitrievna was so confounded that she stiffened in her chair and made a gesture of despair. Panshin came to her aid and engaged Lavretsky in conversation. Marya Dmitrievna recovered her composure, sank back into her armchair, and occasionally inserted a word, gazing meanwhile with such commiseration at her visitor, sighing so expressively and nodding so lugubriously that the latter finally lost patience and enquired rather sharply whether she was quite well.

"Thank God, I am," replied Marya Dmitrievna: "why do you ask?"

"Just so. For a moment I thought you were not quite yourself."

Marya Dmitrievna assumed a look of injured dignity. "Oh, if that's how it is," she thought: "I certainly shan't worry: it seems, my fine fellow, that with you it's like water off a duck's back; anyone else in your stead would have wasted to a shadow, whereas you're bursting with health." Marya Dmitrievna did not bandy words with herself; aloud she expressed herself more elegantly.

Lavretsky certainly did not look like a victim of fate. His ruddy-complexioned, typical Russian face, with its large white brow, fleshy nose and wide clean-cut mouth seemed to breathe the vitality and pristine vigour of his native steppes. He had a strapping well-knit figure, and his fair hair grew in curls like a boy's. His eyes alone, which were blue and prominent and somewhat immobile, betrayed a pensiveness—or was it weariness?—and his voice sounded a little too level.

Panshin in the meantime kept up the flagging conversation,

He turned the talk on the merits of sugar refining about which he had recently read two French booklets, and proceeded to expound their contents with serene modesty, without, however, mentioning a word about them.

"Why, if that is not Fedya!" the voice of Marfa Timofeyevna was suddenly heard through the half-open door leading into the next room: "Fedya, to be sure!" And the old lady came briskly into the room. Before Lavretsky could rise to his feet she was already embracing him. "Let's have a look at you," she exclaimed, stepping back a pace. "Eh, what a bonny fellow you are. A little bit older, but none the worse for that, I vow! Now, don't kiss my hands—come kiss me, man, if you don't mind my creased cheeks. I don't suppose you asked after me,—now, is auntie still alive? Why, you were born in my hands, you rogue! Well, never mind that; how could you be expected to think of me! But it's splendid of you to have come. Here, my dear," she added, turning to Marya Dmitrievna: "haven't you offered him anything?"

"I don't want anything," Lavretsky hastened to declare.

"But have a cup of tea, at least, my dear. Goodness gracious! He has come from God knows where and is not even offered a cup of tea! Liza, go and see to it, quickly. I remember when he was a little fellow he was a terrible glutton, and I shouldn't be surprised if he were fond of eating now too."

"My respects, Marfa Timofeyevna, said Panshin, sidling up to the flustered old lady with a low bow.

"Excuse me, sir," replied Marfa Timofeyevna: "I didn't notice you what with all this excitement. You look more than ever like your dear mother," she resumed, turning to Lavretsky: "except your nose, your father's it was and your father's it has remained. Well, and have you come for long?"

"I am leaving tomorrow, auntie."

"Where are you going?"

"To my place at Vasilyevskoye."

"Tomorrow?"

"Tomorrow."

"Well, if it's tomorrow, tomorrow be it. God be with you,

you know best. But see you come and say good-bye before you go!" The old lady patted his cheek. "I never thought to see you again; not that I am going to die; oh no, I think I'll last another ten years at least: we Pestovs are a tenacious lot; your grandfather used to say we had double lives; but Lord only knows how long you'd have gone on loitering abroad. Aye, but it really is a treat to see you; can you still lift ten poods with one hand, as you used to do? Your father, absurd person though he was—excuse me for saying so—did a good thing when he engaged that Swiss fellow for your education; do you remember the fist fights you had together; gymnastics, I believe they call it? Dear me, here am I cackling away, and only interfering with Mr. Panshin's discussion" (she would never call him Pánshin, which was the right stress). "Let us have tea though; come and have it out on the terrace, my dear; we have delicious cream, not the kind of stuff you get in those Londons and Parises of yours. Come on, come on, and you, Fedya dear, give me your arm. My goodness, how hefty it is! No fear of coming a cropper with you."

The company rose and went out onto the terrace, except Gedeonovsky who had quietly slipped out. Throughout Lavretsky's conversation with the lady of the house, with Panshin and Marfa Timofeyevna, he had sat in a corner, blinking attentively and gaping in childish curiosity; now he was hurrying away to spread news of the new arrival through the town.

That same day, at eleven o'clock in the evening, this is what took place in Madam Kalitina's house. Downstairs, on the threshold of the drawing room, Vladimir Nikolaich, seizing an opportune moment, was taking his leave of Liza, and saying, with her hand in his: "You know what makes me come here; you know why I am constantly paying visits to your house; why speak of it, when everything is so clear?" Liza made no reply, she did not smile, but with slightly lifted eyebrow was gazing at the floor and blushing, and did not withdraw her hand; while upstairs in Marfa Timofeyevna's room, by the dim light of an

oil-lamp banging in front of the tarnished old icons, Lavretsky was sitting in an armchair, his elbows propped on his knees and his face buried in his hands; the old lady, standing in front of him, silently stroked his hair. Over an hour had he been with her, after having bidden the hostess good-night; he had hardly spoken with his kind old friend, and she had not questioned him.... Indeed, what was there to talk about, where the need for questions? She understood everything, and she gave him all the tender sympathy his brimful heart could ever need.

VIII

Fyodor Ivanich Lavretsky (we must beg the reader's indulgence to break off the thread of our story for a time) was of old noble stock. The first of the Lavretskys came over from Prussia in the reign of Vassili Tyomny* and received an investiture of two hundred *chetverts* of land in Byezhetsk-Verkh. Many of his descendants held various offices and served under princes and noblemen in distant provinces; none of them, however, attained greater eminence than the rank of dapifer or considerable opulence. Richer and more remarkable than all the Lavretskys was Fyodor Ivanich's great-grandfather Andrei, —a cruel, insolent, astute and crafty man. To this day lives the fame of his tyranny, his turbulent disposition, preposterous munificence and unquenchable cupidity. He was very corpulent and tall, swarthy-complexioned and beardless, spoke with a burr and looked somnolent; but the softer his tone, the more those about him quaked. The wife he took unto himself was his compeer. Goggle-eyed, with an aquiline nose, and a round sallow visage, a Gipsy by birth, shrewish and vindictive, she never yielded to her husband, who was nearly the death of her, but whose death she nevertheless did not survive, despite the cat-and-dog life she led him. Andrei's son, Pyotr—Fyodor's grandfather—bore no resemblance to his father: he was a simple

* Basil the Blind.

landowner of the steppes, rather giddy-headed, vociferous and torpid, coarse but not ill-natured, hospitable and fond of the hunt with hounds. He was over thirty when he succeeded to an estate with two thousand serfs in perfect condition; but he soon turned them all adrift, sold part of his estate and spoiled his menials. All sorts of lowly folk, frequenters and strangers alike, swarmed like cockroaches to his roomy, warm and ill-kept mansion; all this brotherhood ate its fill of whatever it could, drank itself drunk, and helped itself to whatever it could lay hands on, extolling and blessing a gracious host; and their host, when he was in the doldrums, would call his guests toadeaters and rascals, but would find life dull without them. Pyotr Andreich's wife was a mild and gentle thing, whom he had taken from a neighbouring family at his father's behest and choice; her name was Anna Pavlovna. She never meddled in anything, was a cheerful hostess, and gladly made calls herself, although, to be powdered, she would aver, was a plague. "They would put," she used to relate in her old age, "a felt hood on your head, comb all your hair up, smear grease over it, cover it with flour and stick iron pins all over the place,—you couldn't wash it off for no money; but you daren't pay visits without being powdered—people would take it as an affront; ah, but what a torture it was!" She was fond of taking a ride behind spirited race-horses, was ready to play cards from morning till night and would always cover up her score of farthing forfeits when her husband came up to the card table; yet her entire dowry, all her money, she had given up entirely into his keeping. She bore him two children: a son, Ivan, Fyodor's father, and a daughter, Glafira. Ivan was not brought up at home, but lived with a rich old aunt, the Princess Kubenskaya; she had made him her heir (his father would not have let him go otherwise). She dressed him up like a doll, engaged all sorts of teachers for him and placed him in charge of a tutor, a Frenchman and former abbé,—a disciple of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, by the name of M. Courtin de Vaucelles—a subtle, scheming man, the very, as she expressed it, *fine fleur* of emigration, and ended by marrying this *"fine fleur"* almost at the

prime age of seventy years; she transferred all her possessions to his name and shortly afterwards, all painted up and perfumed with scent *à la Richelieu*, surrounded by Negro page-boys, lap-dogs and noisy parrots, she died on a crooked silken Louis XV divan with a Petitot enamelled snuff-box in her hand, died forsaken by her husband—the smooth-tongued M. Courtin had deemed it wise to make off to Paris with her money. Ivan was in his twentieth year when this unexpected disaster (we mean the princess' marriage not her death) overtook him; he was loath to remain in his aunt's home where, from a wealthy heir, he had suddenly found himself in the position of a sponger; in St. Petersburg the society in which he had grown up was closed to him; the hard work and obscurity of a petty post in the civil service was repugnant to him (this was early in the reign of the Emperor Alexander); he was obliged to return to the country and his father's home. His old home seemed dirty, poor and ugly; the dreariness and squalor of these backwoods shocked him at every step; he was bored to death; on the other hand, everybody in the house, except his mother, looked askance at him. His father disliked his city ways, his frock coats, ruffles, books, his flute, his fastidious habits, which betrayed an obvious disgust; he frequently complained and grumbled at his son. "He turns up his nose," he used to say, "at everything here; he is finicky with his food, won't eat, is squeamish about the smell of humanity, or the stuffiness of a room, the sight of drunkenness gets on his nerves, and you daren't punish a rascal in his presence; he won't enter the civil service—his health is poor, if you please; Pah, the mollycoddle! And only because his head's full of that Voltaire." The old man had conceived a special grudge against Voltaire and that "infidel" Diderot, although he had never read a word of their writings: reading was not his forte. Pyotr Andreich was not mistaken: Diderot and Voltaire, and, for that matter, Rousseau and Raynal and Helvetius and many other similar writers, too, were crammed in his son's head; but they were in his head alone. Ivan Petrovich's former preceptor, the retired abbé and encyclopedist had done no more than fill his

pupil's head with the whole of eighteenth-century wisdom, lock, stock and barrel, and he went about with his head chock-full of it; there it was in him, but without filtrating into his blood, or entering his innermost being or manifesting itself in firm convictions.... And could one really demand convictions in a young man of fifty years ago, when we have not grown up to them even today? His father's guests, too, felt uncomfortable in the presence of Ivan Petrovich: he shunned them and they were afraid of him; as to his sister Glafira, who was twelve years his senior, he could not get on with her at all. This Glafira was a queer creature: ugly, hunchbacked and gaunt, with grim, dilated eyes and tight-lipped mouth she, in appearance, voice and quick angular gestures resembled her grandmother, the Gipsy, Andrei's wife. Headstrong and ambitious, she would not hear of matrimony. The coming home of Ivan Petrovich was not to her liking; as long as the Princess Kubenskaya had charge of him she had hoped to get at least half her father's estate; she took after her grandmother in miserliness too. Furthermore, Glafira was envious of her brother; he was so well educated, spoke French so well with a Parisian accent, whereas she could barely say "bon jour" or "comment vous portez-vous." True, her parents were entirely ignorant of French, but she felt none the better for it. Time hung heavily on Ivan Petrovich's hands, he was bored to distraction. He had spent no more than a year in the country, but that year seemed to him like ten. To his mother alone he would unburden his heart, sitting for hours in her low-ceilinged chambers, listening to the good woman's artless chatter and gorging himself with jam. Among Anna Pavlovna's maids there happened to be a very pretty girl with clear gentle eyes and delicate features called Malanya, a clever demure lass. She caught his fancy at once and he fell in love with her: he loved her timid mien, her bashful answers, her gentle voice and gentle smile; his love for her grew stronger every day. And she too became attached to Ivan Petrovich with all the strength of her soul, she loved him as only Russian girls can love—and she yielded to his love. No secret can be kept long in the

household of a country squire: soon everyone knew of the young master's liaison with Malanya; the news of it eventually reached the ears of Pyotr Andreich. At any other time he would probably have overlooked such a trivial matter; but he had long harboured a grudge against his son and he snatched at the opportunity to humiliate this Petersburg wiseacre and dandy.

A hubbub and clamour broke loose; Malanya was locked up in the lumber room; Ivan Petrovich was summoned to his father. Anna Pavlovna too came running out at the tumult. She made an attempt to pacify her husband, but Pyotr Andreich would no longer listen to reason. He pounced upon his son, heaped reproaches on him for looseness of morals, irreligion, and duplicity; incidentally he vented on him all his pent-up resentment against the Princess Kubenskaya, and rained insults upon him. At first Ivan Petrovich said nothing and held himself in check, but when his father took it into his head to threaten him with disgraceful punishment he could contain himself no longer. "So," he said to himself, "the infidel Diderot is dragged out again—well then, I'll let you have him; you wait, I'll make you sit up." Whereupon, in a calm and steady voice, though with an inner tremor, Ivan Petrovich informed his father that his reproach of immorality was unmerited; that although he did not inted to justify his guilt, he was prepared to atone for it, the more so that he felt himself to be above all prejudices,—in fact—was prepared to marry Malanya. In uttering these words Ivan Petrovich indubitably gained his end; Pyotr Andreich was so astonished that he stared at his son dumbfounded for a moment; but the next instant he recovered, and just as he was, clad in his squirrel-lined jacket and with slippers on his bare feet, he flung himself on Ivan Petrovich with his fists; his son, as luck would have it, had that day dressed his hair *à la Titus,* and donned a new English frock coat, high boots with little tassels and tight-fitting spruce buckskin breeches. Anna Pavlovna shrieked at the top of her voice and hid her face in her hands, while her son dashed through the house, ran out into the courtyard, darted through the kitchen garden, across the park

and out onto the road and kept running for all he was worth till he no longer heard the heavy tramp of his father's pursuit and his gasping ejaculations.... "Stop!" he fulminated. "Stop, you scoundrel, or I'll bring a curse down on you!" Ivan Petrovich found refuge with a neighbouring farmer, while Pyotr Andreich dragged himself home spent and perspiring. Still panting for breath, he forthwith announced that he disinherited his son and withdrew his benediction, ordered all his ridiculous books to be burned and the girl Malanya to be instantly dispatched to a distant village. Some good people sought out Ivan Petrovich and told him all about it. Humiliated and enraged, he swore vengeance on his father, and that same night he waylaid the peasant's cart which was conveying Malanya to her exile, abducted her, galloped away with her to the nearest town and wedded her. He was supplied with money by the neighbour, a warm-hearted retired sea-dog who was never out of his cups, but who took a keen delight in every kind of "romantic adventure," as he termed it. The next day Ivan Petrovich wrote Pyotr Andreich a scathingly cold and polite letter and set out for the village where his second cousin, Dmitri Pestov, lived with his sister, Marfa Timofeyevna, whom the reader already knows. He gave them an account of what had happened, declared his intention of going to St. Petersburg to look for a situation, and entreated them, at least for a time, to take care of his wife. At the word "wife" he wept bitterly and despite his city education and philosophy, he humbly went down on his knees, like a lowly Russian supplicant, and even knocked his forehead against the floor. The Pestovs, being the tender-hearted compassionate folk they were, willingly acceded to his request; he spent three weeks with them, secretly hoping that his father would respond; but there was no response, nor could there be. On hearing of his son's marriage Pyotr Andreich took to his bed and forbade the very mention of his son's name; but his mother furtively borrowed from the archdeacon and sent him five hundred rubles together with a little icon for his wife; she dare not write but sent a message by word of mouth to Ivan Petrovich through a wiry little muzhik who could walk as

much as sixty versts a day, that he was not to distress himself too much, that, please God, everything would turn out all right and his father would forgive him; that she too would have preferred a different daughter-in-law, but as this was apparently the will of God, she sent Malanya Sergeyevna her maternal blessings. The wiry little muzhik got a ruble for his pains, asked to be allowed to see the new mistress, whose godfather he happened to be, kissed her hand and trotted off.

Ivan Petrovich, meanwhile, had left for St. Petersburg with a light heart. The future was obscure; poverty, perhaps, awaited him, but he had done with the detestable country life, and, above all, he had not betrayed his preceptors, he had actually "brought into play" and vindicated Rousseau, Diderot and *la Déclaration des droits de l'homme.* A sense of duty done, a feeling of elation and pride swelled his heart. Separation from his wife did not greatly distress him; indeed, the need of constantly living with her under the same roof would have disturbed him more. That thing was done; now other things had to be attended to. In St. Petersburg, in spite of his assumptions, he met with luck: the Princess Kubenskaya, already deserted by Monsieur Courtin, but still alive, by way of making amends to her nephew, commended him to all her friends and made him a present of 5,000 rubles—practically all that was left of her money—together with a Lepique watch with his monogram engraved in a festoon of cupids. Three months had barely elapsed before he obtained a position in the Russian mission in London and sailed overseas on the first English vessel leaving port (steamships were not even thought of then). Several months later he received a letter from Pestov. The good fellow congratulated Ivan Petrovich on the birth of a son, who had come into the world in the village of Pokrovskoye on the 20th of August, 1807 and had been christened Fyodor in honour of his namesake, the Holy Martyr. Feeling very poorly, Malanya Sergeyevna had added only, a few lines; but even these few lines astonished Ivan Petrovich—he was not aware that Marfa Timofeyevna had taught his wife to read and write. Ivan Petrovich, however, did not long give himself up to the tender

feeling of paternal pride; he was paying court to a then celebrated Phryne or Lais (classical names were still in the fashion); the Peace of Tilsit had just been concluded, and the world, caught up in a dizzy whirl, went pleasure-mad; his head, too, was turned by the black eyes of a saucy belle. He had little money, but he played a lucky game of cards; he struck up numerous acquaintances, joined in every kind of entertainment, —in a word, he sailed along in full trim.

IX

Resentment over his son's marriage rankled in old Lavretsky's heart a long time; had Ivan Petrovich returned six months later with a penitent heart and thrown himself on his father's mercy, he would probably have forgiven him, first having given him a scolding and a rap or two with his gnarled stick by way of intimidation; but Ivan Petrovich lived abroad and did not seem to give the matter a thought. "Have done! Don't you dare!" Pyotr Andreich would admonish his wife every time she attempted to soften his heart; "the whelp, he should thank his lucky stars that I did not bring my curse on him; my father would have strangled the rascal with his own hands, and a good job too." At these awful speeches Anna Pavlovna could only cross herself furtively. As for his son's wife, Pyotr Andreich at the beginning washed his hands of her, and in response to a letter from Pestov in which the good man mentioned his daughter-in-law, he sent him word that he refused to hear about any daughter-in-law and considered it his duty to warn him that it was against the law to shelter fugitive serfs; but, later on, when news of the birth of a grandson reached him, he was mollified, ordered secret enquiries to be made as to how the young mother was faring after childbirth and sent her some money without letting her know it was from him. Fedya was not quite a year old when Anna Pavlovna fell mortally ill. A few days before she died, bed-ridden, with timid tears suffusing her dimming eyes, she told her

husband in the presence of the confessor, that she wished to see and bid farewell to her daughter-in-law and give her grandchild her blessing. The distressed old man set her mind at rest, and immediately dispatched his own carriage for his daughter-in-law, calling her for the first time Malanya Sergeyevna. She came with her son and Marfa Timofeyevna, who would not hear of her going alone and was determined to take her part if need be. More dead than alive from fright, Malanya Sergeyevna entered Pyotr Andreich's study. A nurse followed carrying Fedya. Pyotr Andreich eyed her in silence; she went up to kiss his hand; her quivering lips could barely shape themselves into a soundless kiss.

"Well, my unleavened gentlewoman," he broke the silence at length, "how are you? Let's go to the mistress."

He rose and bent over Fedya; the baby smiled and stretched its pale little hands out to him. This went straight to the old man's heart.

"Ah," he murmured, "poor little bird! Pleading for your daddy? I shall not forsake you, little one."

Malanya Sergeyevna, directly she stepped into Anna Pavlovna's bedroom, dropped on her knees by the door. Anna Pavlovna motioned her to approach the bedside, embraced her and blessed her son; then, turning to her husband a face ravaged by cruel pain, she tried to speak....

"I know, I know what you want to say," murmured Pyotr Andreich; "Don't fret; she will stay with us, and for her sake I will forgive Vanka."

With an effort Anna Pavlovna clutched her husband's hand and raised it to her lips. That evening she was no more.

Pyotr Andreich was true to his word. He notified his son that for the sake of his mother's dying wish and the baby Fyodor he restored to him his blessing and was giving Malanya Sergeyevna a home in his house. She was given two rooms in the mezzanine; he presented her to his most honoured guests, the one-eyed brigadier Skurekhin and his wife; made her a gift of two serving wenches and an errand boy; Marfa Timofeyevna took her leave of her; she had conceived a strong

dislike for Glafira with whom she had thrice quarrelled in the course of a day.

The poor woman's position was at first difficult and embarrassing; but in time she got used to it and to her father-in-law. He, too, grew accustomed to her and even fond of her, though he hardly ever spoke to her and his very kindness bore a trace of unconscious disdain. Malanya Sergeyevna's heaviest cross was Glafira, her sister-in-law. Glafira had contrived already during her mother's lifetime to gradually gain control over the whole household; everybody, including her father, was at her beck and call; not a piece of sugar was issued without her license; she would rather die than yield an inch of her authority to another mistress—and what a mistress! She had taken her brother's marriage more to heart than had Pyotr Andreich; she determined to get even with the upstart, and Malanya Sergeyevna became her slave from the very first hour. Indeed, how was she to pit herself against the wayward, haughty Glafira, she who was so docile, lost and bewildered, timorous and sickly? A day did not pass without Glafira reminding her of her former status and commending her for knowing her proper place. Malanya Sergeyevna would have readily put up with these reminders and commendations, however unpalatable they were... but she was deprived of Fedya—there was the misery. On the pretext that she was incapable of devoting herself to his upbringing, she was scarcely allowed to see him; Glafira saw to that herself; the child was placed under her complete control. Malanya Sergeyevna in her grief entreated Ivan Petrovich in her letters to come home quickly; Pyotr Andreich too wanted to see his son; but the latter merely wrote back excuses, thanked his father for his wife's comfort and for the money sent him, promised to return soon—but did not come. The year 1812 finally brought him home. When they first met after six years' absence, father and son embraced without mentioning a word of old grievances; indeed this was not the time for it; all Russia was up in arms against the foe, and both felt that Russian blood was flowing in their veins. Pyotr Andreich accoutred a regiment of the national militia at his



own expense. But the war came to an end, the danger passed; Ivan Petrovich was once more bored, the lure of distant places was on him, he was drawn to the world to which he had grown accustomed and where he felt at home. Malanya Sergeyevna could not hold him; she meant too little to him. Even her fond hopes were dashed—her husband, too, thought it more befitting to entrust Fedya's upbringing to Glafira. Ivan Petrovich's poor wife could not survive this blow, she could not get over another separation; in the space of a few days, she uncomplainingly resigned her being. Throughout her life she had never been able to set her face against anything, and now too she did not show any fight against her illness. No longer able to speak, with the shadows of death creeping over her face, her features still wore their former look of patient bewilderment and gentle meekness; she gazed at Glafira with the same dumb resignation, and like Anna Pavlovna, who on

her deathbed had kissed her husband's hand, so did she too kiss Glafira's hand, entrusting to her, Glafira, her only son. Thus ended her earthly career this kind and gentle creature, plucked, God only knows why, like an uprooted sapling from its native soil to be tossed aside with its roots in the sun; she had drooped and faded into oblivion and no one mourned her. Malanya Sergeyevna's maids were sorry for her, as was Pyotr Andreich. The old man missed her kind face, her mute presence. "Fare thee well, meek child," he murmured softly as he bowed before her for the last time in church. He wept as he threw a handful of earth into her grave.

He did not survive her long; not more than five years. In the winter of 1819 he passed away quietly in Moscow, whither he had moved with Glafira and his grandson and had asked to be buried beside Anna Pavlovna and "Malasha." Ivan Petrovich was in Paris at the time, enjoying himself; he had resigned his post soon after 1815. On hearing of his father's death he made up his mind to return to Russia. Arrangements had to be made for the superintendence of the estate, and judging by Glafira's letter, Fedya was now getting on for thirteen, and it was time to give serious attention to his education.

X

Ivan Petrovich returned to Russia an Anglomaniac. His short-cropped hair, starched front, long-skirted pea-green frock coat with its numerous capes, the dour expression of his face, a manner at once brusque and indifferent, his way of speaking through his teeth, his sudden wooden laugh, his unsmiling countenance, his one invariable topic of conversation—politics or political economy—his passion for underdone roast-beef and port wine—everything about him breathed of Great Britain. But, strange as it may seem, while having become such an Anglomaniac, Ivan Petrovich had also become a patriot—at least he called himself one, though he was ill-acquainted with Russia, had not preserved a single Russian habit

and spoke Russian in a very odd way: in ordinary conversation his speech was clumsy and listless and teemed with Gallicisms; but no sooner did the conversation turn on important topics than Ivan Petrovich would come out with expressions such as: "afford new tests of self-assiduity," "it does not conform with the very nature of things," and so forth. Ivan Petrovich had imported several plans in manuscript dealing with the organization and betterment of the state; he was very displeased with everything he saw; the lack of system particularly provoked his spleen. On meeting his sister, the first thing he did was to announce his determination to introduce radical reforms, warning her that henceforth, everything would be run on a new system. Glafira Petrovna said nothing; she only clenched her teeth and thought—"what's to become of me?" But when she got back to the country with her brother and nephew her fears were soon allayed. Certain changes were indeed made in the house: spongers and toadeaters were summarily banished from the house, among them two old women, one of whom was blind, the other stricken with palsy, and a major of Ochakov days in his dotage who, on account of his really ravenous appetite was fed on nothing but rye bread and lentils. An order was also promulgated not to receive former guests—they were all superseded by a distant neighbour, a blond scrofulous baron, a very genteel and very stupid gentleman. New furniture arrived from Moscow; spittoons, bells and washing stands were introduced; breakfast was served in a new way; foreign wines replaced vodka and homemade liqueurs: new liveries were made for the servants; a new motto was added to the family arms: *"in recto wirtus...."* Actually Glafira's authority in no wise diminished: all the shopping and dispensing was still under her control; the Alsatian valet, brought over from foreign parts, had tried to challenge her authority and lost his place, although he enjoyed his master's patronage. As for husbandry and management of the estates—Glafira Petrovna had a say in these matters too—everything remained as before, despite Ivan Petrovich's oft expressed intention of breathing new life into this chaos—everything, that

is, except a raising of quitrents here and there, a tightening up of the corvée and an edict forbidding the peasants to apply directly to Ivan Petrovich. The patriot, it transpired, had a great contempt for his fellow countrymen. Ivan Petrovich's system was applied in full force only on Fedya: his education really underwent "a radical transformation"; his father applied himself to the task to the exclusion of everything else.

XI

During Ivan Petrovich's absence abroad, Fedya, as we have already stated, was on Glafira's hands. He was not eight years old when his mother died; he saw her occasionally and loved her passionately; the memory of her, of her gentle, pallid face, her melancholy gaze and timid caresses, was engraved indelibly in his heart; he but dimly realized the position she occupied in the house; he was aware of a barrier which stood between them and which she neither dared nor was capable of destroying. He shunned his father, and the latter, it must be said, never caressed him; his grandfather had now and then stroked his head and allowed him to kiss his hand, but he had called him an unlicked cub and thought him stupid. After Malanya Sergeyevna's death he fell entirely into his aunt's clutches. Fedya was afraid of her, afraid of her bright piercing eyes and sharp voice; he dare not utter a sound in her presence; if he so much as stirred in his chair she would hiss at him: "What now? Sit still!" On Sundays, after Mass, he was allowed to play, that is, he was given a fat book, a mysterious book, the work of a certain Maximovich-Ambodik entitled "Symbols and Emblems." This book contained about a thousand, for the most part very enigmatical pictures with as many cryptic interpretations of them in five languages. A plump and naked cupid played a prominent part in these illustrations. To one of them, under the title "The Saffron and the Rainbow" was appended the explanation "The influence thereof is vast"; another, depicting "A Heron Flying with a Violet in its Beak" bore the in-

scription "All are known to thee." "Cupid and the Bear Licking Her Cub" signified "little by little." Fedya studied these pictures, they were all familiar to him to the smallest detail; some of them, invariably the same, set him pondering and loosed his imagination; other amusements he knew not. When it was time for him to learn languages and music Glafira Petrovna engaged for a mere song an old maid, a hare-eyed Swede, who had a smattering of French and German, could play the piano at a pinch and, to crown all, pickled cucumbers famously. In the society of this governess, his aunt and the old servant maid, Vassilyevna, Fedya spent the best of four years. He would often be found sitting in the corner with his "Emblems"; many a long day had he sat there; the low-ceilinged room exuded a scent of geranium, a solitary tallow candle flickered dimly, the cricket chirped drowsily, wearily; the little clock ticked hurriedly on the wall, somewhere behind the wainscot a mouse furtively scratched and gnawed, and the three old women sat like the Fates, swiftly and silently plying their needles, the shadows from their hands casting weird quivering shapes in the gathering gloom,—and as weird and gloomy were the thoughts that gathered in the child's head. Fedya could certainly not be called an interesting child; he was rather pale, but fat, unwieldy and awkward—a veritable muzhik, as Glafira Petrovna used to say; the colour would have come quickly into his cheeks had he been let out oftener in the fresh air. He studied quite well, though he was often lazy; he never cried, but at times a fit of sullen obstinacy would come over him, and then nobody could manage him. Fedya loved no one of those around him.... Woe betide the heart that has not loved in youth.

Thus Ivan Petrovich found him, and proceeded without loss of time to enforce his system. "I want, first and foremost, to make a man of him, *un homme*," he said to Glafira Petrovna, "and not only a man, but a Spartan." Ivan Petrovich inaugurated his plans by first rigging his son out in a Scotch kilt; the twelve-year-old fellow began to strut about barekneed with a feathered bonnet on his head; the Swedish lady gave way to a young Swiss tutor, an accomplished master of gymnastics;

music, as an unmanly pursuit, was discarded entirely; the natural sciences, international law, mathematics, carpentry, after the precept of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, and heraldry as a means of promoting chivalrous feelings—these were to be the occupations of the future "man"; he was roused at four o'clock in the morning, forthwith doused with cold water and made to run on a string round a high pole; he ate one meal a day, consisting of a single dish, rode on horseback, and practised shooting from an arbalest; on every suitable occasion he was exercised in strength of will, after the model of his parent, and every evening he set down in a special book an account of the day and his impressions. Ivan Petrovich, for his part, wrote him words of counsel in French, in which he called him *mon fils* and addressed him as *vous*. In Russian Fedya addressed his father as "thou," but dare not sit down in his presence. The "system" left the boy bewildered, sowed confusion in his head and cramped his mind; the new mode of living, however, had a beneficial effect on his health; at first he went down with a fever, but soon recovered and grew into a sturdy youngster. His father was proud of him and called him, in his peculiar dialect, "a son of nature, my handiwork." When Fedya had attained the age of sixteen Ivan Petrovich saw fit, in good season, to breed in him a contempt for the opposite sex—and our young Spartan, with shyness in his soul and the first down shading his lip, brimful of manhood, virility and young blood, tried to feign indifference, aloofness and rudeness.

Time was meanwhile passing. Ivan Petrovich spent most of the year in Lavriky (that was the name of his principal patrimony) but in the winter he would go to Moscow alone, where he put up at an inn, sedulously frequented his club, holding forth and expounding his plans in drawing rooms, and bore himself more than ever like an Anglomaniac, a malcontent, a public man. Then came the year 1825, bringing sorrow and misery in its train. Intimate friends and acquaintances of Ivan Petrovich drained the bitter cup. Ivan Petrovich promptly withdrew to the seclusion of his country house and shut himself off from the world. Another year passed, and Ivan Petrovich's

health suddenly began to decline; he became infirm and ill. The freethinker started going to church and bespoke public prayers; the European began to use the Russian steam bath-house, dine at two o'clock, go to bed at nine and fall asleep to the old butler's chatter; the public man burnt all his schemes and all his correspondence, quaked before the governor and cringed before the police inspector; the man of hardened will winced and whimpered when he had a boil or when the soup was cold. Glafira Petrovna once more assumed control over the whole house; once more stewards, bailiffs and all manner of common folk could be seen coming to the back entrance to speak to "the old skinflint," as the menials called her. The change in Ivan Petrovich had a staggering effect on his son; he was now getting on for nineteen and had begun to reflect and disengage himself from the oppressive hand of his parent. He had previously noticed the inconsistency of his father's words and actions, his ample liberalism and sordid tyranny; but he had not expected such a violent change. The inveterate egoist now revealed himself in his true colours. Young Lavretsky was on the eve of going to Moscow to prepare for the university, when suddenly another affliction came down on the head of Ivan Petrovich: he became blind, hopelessly blind, in a single day.

Not trusting the skill of Russian doctors he applied for permission to go abroad. It was refused. He then took his son with him and for three whole years travelled all over Russia, from one doctor to another, wandering ceaselessly from town to town and driving his physicians, his son and servants to despair with his pusillanimity and fretfulness. He returned to Lavriky an abject creature, a snivelling querulous child. Bitter days set in for everybody in the household. Ivan Petrovich was quiet only at meal-time; never before had he eaten so much and so greedily; the rest of the time he gave himself and others no peace. He prayed, grumbled at fate, cursed himself, politics, his system, held up to execration everything he had vaunted and taken pride in, everything he had once taught his son to look up to; he averred that he did not believe in anything, then resumed his prayers; he could not endure

a moment's solitude and demanded that his household keep him company day and night and entertain him with stories, which he interrupted from time to time with exclamations of "you're a confounded liar—what twaddle!"

Glafira Petrovna bore the brunt of it all; he simply could not do without her—and she carried out to the last every whim of the sick man, though sometimes she dare not answer him immediately lest her voice betray the rage that choked her. Thus he dragged on for another two years and died early in May after having been carried out on the balcony in the sunlight. "Glasha, Glashka! Where's my broth, you old foo..." he stammered with faltering tongue, and ere he had finished, was silent evermore. Glafira Petrovna, who had snatched the cup of broth out of the butler's hands, stood still, looked her brother in the face, slowly, sweepingly made a sign of the cross and silently withdrew; and his son, who was present, said nothing too; he leaned on the balustrade of the balcony and stood gazing a long time into the garden, all fragrant and green and resplendent in the golden rays of the spring sunshine. He was twenty-three years old; how terribly, how cruelly swift those twenty-three years had flown!... Life was opening before him.

XII

After burying his father and handing over the household affairs and superintendence of his bailiffs to the invariable Glafira, young Lavretsky went to Moscow, whither he felt drawn by an obscure but irresistible force. He realized the defects of his education and formed a resolution to make up as far as possible for lost time. He had read a great deal in the last five years and seen a few things; many were the ideas that had fermented in his head; a professor might well have envied some of his accomplishments, yet he was ignorant of many things that every schoolboy knew. Lavretsky realized that he was not free; he was secretly conscious of the fact that he cut an odd figure. The Anglomaniac had played a

cruel trick on his son; his freakish education had borne fruit. For long years he had implicitly obeyed his father's will; when, finally, he began to see through him, the evil was already done, his habits had become second nature. He could not get on with people: at the age of twenty-three, with an inextinguishable desire for love in his shy heart, he had never yet had the temerity to look a woman in the face. With his clear, though somewhat heavy intellect, and common sense, his tendency to obstinacy, contemplation and indolence he should have been thrown early into the whirlpool of life, instead of which he had been kept in artificial seclusion.... And now the spell was broken, but he continued to stand on the same spot, reticent and locked up within himself. It was ludicrous at his age to put on a student's uniform; but he was not afraid of ridicule—his Spartan training had at least the effect of rendering him impervious to the opinion of others—and he donned, without embarrassment, the student's uniform. He entered the department of physics and mathematics. Stalwart and ruddy-faced, tongue-tied, with a full-grown beard, he produced an odd impression on his fellow students; how could they guess that this grim-looking man, who punctually attended the lectures, driving up in a spacious country sleigh drawn by two horses, was almost a child. They thought him a queer fish of a pedant, they did not seek his company and did not need it, and he held himself aloof. During his first two years in the university he became intimate with only one student from whom he took lessons in Latin. This student, whose name was Mikhalevich, was an enthusiast and a poet; he became sincerely attached to Lavretsky and was the innocent cause of an important change in his destiny.

One day at the theatre (Mochalov was then at the zenith of his fame and Lavretsky did not miss a single performance) he saw a girl in a box in the dress circle, and though no woman ever passed his sombre figure without setting his heart beating, it had never throbbed so violently before. With elbows propped on the velvet of the box the girl sat without stirring the warm vivacity of youth quivered in every feature of her dark

rounded, attractive face; an elegant mind was mirrored in the lovely eyes gazing with a soft regard from under delicate eyebrows, in the swift smile of her expressive lips, in the very poise of her head, her arms, her neck; she was exquisitely dressed. Beside her sat a wizened sallow woman of forty-five in a low-necked dress and black toque, with a toothless smile on an anxiously rapt and vacuous face, while in the inner recesses of the box could be seen an elderly man in a loose-fitting frock coat and high cravat, with an expression of stolid solemnity and something akin to unctuous suspiciousness in his beady eyes, with dyed moustache and side whiskers, a ponderous insignificant-looking forehead and creased cheeks—by every sign a retired general. Lavretsky did not take his eyes off the lovely vision; suddenly the door of the box opened and Mikhalevich entered. The appearance of this man, his almost sole acquaintance in Moscow, in the society of the one girl who was absorbing his whole attention, struck Lavretsky as odd and significant. Continuing to gaze into the box he noticed that all its occupants treated Mikhalevich as an old friend. The performance on the stage ceased to interest Lavretsky; even Mochalov, though he was that evening "in form," did not make the usual impression on him. At one very pathetic moment on the stage Lavretsky involuntarily glanced up at the beauty; she was straining forward, her eyes sparkling, her cheeks aglow; under his insistent regard her eyes, which had been glued on the stage, slowly turned and rested on him.... All night those eyes haunted him. The artificially built dam broke down at last: he was all aquiver and in fever of excitement. The very next day he went to see Mikhalevich. From him he learnt that the lovely creature's name was Varvara Pavlovna Korobyna, that the old couple with her in the box were her father and mother and that he, Mikhalevich, had made their acquaintance the year before during his stay at Count N—'s place near Moscow where he had been "coaching." The enthusiast lauded Varvara Pavlovna to the skies. "My dear fellow," he exclaimed in his mellow voice, "that girl, I say, is a wonder, a genius, an artist in the true sense of the

word, and awfully kind, too." Noting from Lavretsky's enquiries the impression Varvara Pavlovna had made on him, he volunteered to present him to her, adding that he was considered one of the family, that the general was not a bit uppish and the mother was so stupid she thought the moon was made of green cheese. Lavretsky coloured, mumbled something unintelligible and made off. He fought his timidity for five whole days; on the sixth the young Spartan got into a new uniform and placed himself at Mikhalevich's disposal; the latter, being one of the family, merely combed his hair, and both repaired to the Korobyns.

XIII

Varvara Pavlovna's father, Pavel Petrovich Korobyn, a retired major-general, had spent all his life in the service in St. Petersburg, had the reputation in his youth of being a good dancer and smart soldier, had served, because of reduced circumstances, as adjutant to two or three mediocre generals and married the daughter of one of them with a dowry of twenty-five thousand rubles; had mastered to a nicety the art of military parade and army drill, and so plodded on, until, after twenty years of service, he received the rank of general and the command of a regiment. At this juncture he might have relaxed his efforts and devoted himself leisurely to feathering his nest; indeed, this was what he intended doing, but for a slight miscarriage in his plans: he had devised a new method of negotiating public funds—the method seemed an excellent one in itself, but he was chary where he should not have been and got himself reported; there was a disagreeable affair, nay, a nasty affair. The general managed somehow to extricate himself, but his career was ruined and he was advised to retire. He knocked about for another two years in St. Petersburg hoping to run into something in the nature of a sinecure, but nothing came his way; his daughter meanwhile had left school and expenses were increasing every day.... Much against his will he decided to remove to Moscow where they could live on

the cheap, rented a low tiny house in Staro-Konyushenni Street with a huge blazon on the frontal and settled down to the Moscow life of a retired general, on an income of 2,750 rubles a year. Moscow is a hospitable city, ready to welcome all the world and his wife, not to mention a general. And so the thickset, still soldierly-looking figure of Pavel Petrovich soon began to make its appearance in the best drawing rooms of Moscow. His nape with its straggling wisps of dyed hair and the soiled ribbon of the Order of St. Anne which he wore across his raven-black cravat became a familiar sight to all the pallid and languid young men loitering dejectedly about the card tables during the dancing. Pavel Petrovich knew how to claim his due in society; he spoke little and, by force of habit, in a nasal voice—of course, he dropped that tone when speaking to persons above him; played a discreet game of cards, ate abstemiously at home and enough for six at receptions. Of his wife nothing more can be said than that her name was Kalliopa Karlovna; there was a drop of moisture in her left eye by virtue of which Kalliopa Karlovna (she was of German extraction, by the way) considered herself a woman of sentiment; she was constantly in a flutter of anxiety, as though she were underfed, and wore tight-fitting velvet dresses, a toque and tarnished hollow bracelets. The only daughter of Pavel Petrovich and Kalliopa Karlovna, Varvara Pavlovna had only turned seventeen when she left the institute, where she was considered to be, if not the prettiest, at least the cleverest pupil and the best musician, and where she had received her cipher;* she was not yet nineteen when Lavretsky first set eyes on her.

XIV

The Spartan shook in his shoes when Mikhalevich led him into the rather untidy drawing room of the Korobyns and introduced him. But his nervousness soon vanished: in the gener-

* A mark of distinction in the shape of a gold monogram with the royal cipher.

al the geniality inherent in all Russians was heightened by that curious affability peculiar to all people with a somewhat sullied reputation; the general's lady very soon effaced herself; as for Varvara Pavlovna, she was so composed and serenely gracious that one was immediately set at ease in her presence: indeed all her exquisite form, her smiling eyes, the ingenuous slope of her shoulders and rosy-tinged arms, her light yet languid tread, even the sound of her voice, so lingeringly sweet, breathed a seductive charm, elusive like a faint perfume, a soft and tender, yet still bashful, langour, something which words cannot describe but which stirred and excited—certainly not a feeling of timidity. Lavretsky turned the conversation on the theatre, on the performance of the previous day; she forthwith started to speak about Mochalov and did not merely sigh and exclaim but passed some pertinent remarks, femininely discerning, on his acting. Mikhalevich mentioned music; she sat down to the piano without the least constraint and played with precision some of Chopin's mazurkas, which were just becoming the fashion. Dinner was announced; Lavretsky would have taken his leave, but was induced to stay; at dinner the general regaled him with excellent lafitte for which the general's valet had been dispatched post haste to Depré's wine vault in a hired cab. Lavretsky returned home late in the evening and sat for a long time without undressing, his eyes screened by his hand, spell-bound. He seemed to be realizing for the first time what it was that made life worth living; all his assumptions and resolutions, all that stuff and nonsense had vanished instantaneously into thin air; his whole soul merged into a single feeling, a single desire—the desire of happiness, possession, love, the sweet love of a woman. From that day he became a frequent visitor at the Korobyns. Six months later he declared his love to Varvara Pavlovna and asked her to become his wife. His proposal was accepted; the general had long ago, almost on the eve of Lavretsky's first visit, sounded Mikhalevich as to how many serfs Lavretsky owned; Varvara Pavlovna, who throughout the young man's courtship and even when he was proposing to her had preserved her usual

equanimity and sereneness of mind—Varvara Pavlovna, too, was quite aware that her suitor was a rich man; as for Kalliopa Karlovna, she thought, *"Meine Tochter macht eine schöne Partie,"* and bought herself a new toque.

XV

And so his proposal was accepted, but with certain stipulations. In the first place, Lavretsky was to leave the university at once; what girl marries a student, and what a queer idea for a landowner, a rich man, to be taking lessons at twenty-six like a schoolboy? Secondly, Varvara Pavlovna took upon herself the ordering and buying of her trousseau and even the choosing of the bridegroom's wedding presents. She possessed a large fund of practical sense and good taste and a very great love of comfort, with an equal capacity for procuring it. Lavretsky was particularly struck by this capacity of hers when, immediately after the wedding, they set out together for Lavriky in the comfortable carriage she had purchased. What forethought, care and preparation on Varvara Pavlovna's part were manifest in everything around him! What charming dressing cases appeared in various snug corners, what exquisite toilet sets and coffee pots, and how prettily Varvara Pavlovna herself prepared the coffee in the morning!

Lavretsky was not in a frame of mind to be observant at the time: he was beatifically happy, drunk with joy; he gave himself up to it like a child.... He was indeed as innocent as a child, this young Alcides. And was not his adorable young wife a vision of delight; did she not hold forth a secret promise of voluptuous, unutterable joys? She fulfilled more than the promise. Arriving at Lavriky in the height of the summer, she found the house gloomy and dirty, the servants old-fashioned and ludicrous, but she deemed wise not to give a hint of this to her husband. Had she intended settling down in Lavriky, she would have changed everything there, beginning, of course, with the house itself; but the idea of remaining in those god-

forsaken steppes never entered her mind for a moment; she lived there as in a bivouac, meekly enduring all the inconveniences and whimsically making fun at them. Marfa Timofeyevna came to see her former charge; Varvara Pavlovna liked her very much, but she did not like Varvara Pavlovna. The new mistress did not get on with Glafira Petrovna either; she would have left her in peace, had not old Korobyn been desirous of getting his hands into his son-in-law's affairs; to superintend the estate of such a near relative, he said, was not beneath the dignity even of a general. It is conceivable that Pavel Petrovich would even have condescended to manage the property of a total stranger. Varvara Pavlovna led the attack very skilfully; without showing herself to the fore, apparently completely absorbed in her honeymoon bliss, in the halcyon joys of country life, in her music and reading, she worked Glafira up by degrees to a pitch when the latter rushed fuming one morning into Lavretsky's study and, flinging a bunch of keys on the table, declared that she could not go on managing the house and refused to stay. Lavretsky, who had been duly prepared for the contingency, at once consented to her departure. This Glafira Petrovna had not anticipated. "Very well," she said, her eyes darkening, "it looks as if I'm one too many here; I know who's driving me from here, from my home. Only mark my word, nephew,—you will never find a home anywhere, and it's an eternal wanderer you'll be. That's all I want to say to you." That day she left for her own little country place, and a week later General Korobyn arrived, and with a pleasant melancholy of mien and gesture took over the management of the whole estate into his hands.

In September Varvara Pavlovna took her husband away with her to St. Petersburg. She spent two winters in St. Petersburg (for the summer they went to stay at Tsarskoye Selo) in a beautiful, airy, elegantly furnished flat; they contracted many acquaintances among the middle and even higher circles of society, paid visits and entertained a good deal, and held the most charming musical soirées and dance parties. Varvara Pavlovna attracted guests as a flame does moths. This kind of

hectic life was not quite to Fyodor Ivanich's taste. His wife advised him to take a post in the government service; in consideration of his father's memory and his own inclinations he was loath to enter the government service, but stayed on in St. Petersburg for Varvara Pavlovna's sake. It was soon borne in on him, however, that no one hindered him from seeking seclusion; indeed, did he not have the quietest and most comfortable study in St. Petersburg, was not his solicitous wife even ready to help him in this? And henceforth everything went well. He applied himself once more to what he considered his unfinished education, he began to read again and even took up the study of the English language. It was curious to see his strapping broad-shouldered figure for ever bent over his writing table, his full, bearded, ruddy face half hidden behind the pages of a dictionary or notebook. He devoted his mornings to studies, then he had a capital dinner (Varvara Pavlovna was an excellent housekeeper) and in the evenings he stepped into a charmed, perfumed, dazzling world, peopled by gay young faces—and the centre of this world was the same sedulous hostess, his wife. She gladdened him with the birth of a son, but the poor boy was short-lived; he died in the spring; and in the summer, following the doctor's advice, Lavretsky took his wife abroad to a watering place. She was in need of distraction after such a misfortune, and her health too could do with a warm climate. They spent the summer and autumn in Germany and Switzerland, and for the winter, as one could be led to expect, they moved to Paris. In Paris Varvara Pavlovna blossomed forth like a rose, and contrived a little nest for herself as quickly and ingeniously as she had done in St. Petersburg. She found very pretty apartments in a quiet but fashionable neighbourhood; made her husband a dressing gown the like of which he had never worn before; engaged a spruce-looking maid, an excellent cook and a smart footman; purchased a charming turn-out and an exquisite piano. Within a week she was crossing the street, wearing her shawl, opening her parasol and putting on her gloves like a trueborn Parisienne. And she soon formed a circle

of acquaintances. At first only Russians visited her, then Frenchmen appeared, very affable, courteous, bachelors, with excellent manners and euphonious names; they all spoke volubly, bowed with easy grace and screwed up their eyes in an agreeable manner; white teeth flashed from under rosy lips, and as for smiling, they were inimitable! Each brought his friends and soon *la belle madame de Lavretzki* became known from Chaussée d'Antin to Rue de Lille. In those days (it was in the year 1836) the breed of journalists and reporters who now swarm all over the place like ants in a scattered ant-hill had not hatched out yet, but even then there was a certain M. Jules who used to turn up in Varvara Pavlovna's salon, a gentleman of ill-favoured countenance and scandalous repute, insolent and despicable, like all duellers and men who have taken punishment. Varvara Pavlovna found this M. Jules very repellent, but she received him because he did some writing for various newspapers and continually brought up her name, now calling her *Madame de L...tzki,* then *Madame de***, cette grande dame russe si distinguée, que demeure rue de P...*; told the world at large, or rather some hundreds of subscribers who were not in the least interested in *Madame de L...tzki,* what a charming and gracious lady she was, how she possessed the wit of a Frenchwoman (*une vraie française par l'esprit*)—Frenchmen have no higher praise than that—what a remarkable gift she had for music and how delightfully she waltzed (Varvara Pavlovna indeed waltzed in a way that lured all hearts to the hem of her flying skirts) ... in a word, he spread her fame abroad, and that, surely, is a pleasant thing. Mademoiselle Mars had by that time quitted the stage, and Mademoiselle Rachelle had not yet made her appearance; in spite of that Varvara Pavlovna was a *habitué* of the theatre. She was enraptured with Italian music and laughed at the wreck of Odry, yawned decorously at the Comedie Française and was moved to tears by the acting of Madame Dorval in ultra-romantic melodrama; and above all—Liszt himself had played twice in her salon, and he had been so nice, so simple—it was simply thrilling! In such agreeable sensations passed the winter, at the close

of which Varvara Pavlovna was even presented at court. As for Fyodor Ivanich, he was not bored, though life sometimes weighed heavily on his shoulders—it was so empty. He read the papers, attended lectures at the Sorbonne and Collège de France, followed the debates in the Chambers, and started to translate a well-known scientific treatise on irrigation. "I am not suffering the grass to grow under my feet," he reflected, "it will all come in handy; but next winter I must get back to Russia at all costs and buckle down to the job." It is difficult to say whether he had any clear-formed idea of exactly what this job was to consist in, and the Lord only knows whether he would have succeeded in getting back to Russia in the winter—meanwhile he was leaving with his wife for Baden-Baden. An unexpected event upset all his plans.

XVI

Chancing one day to enter Varvara Pavlovna's boudoir in her absence, Lavretsky saw a carefully folded slip of paper lying on the floor. He mechanically picked it up, mechanically unfolded it and read the following, which was written in French:

> "My darling angel Betsy! (I can't get myself to call you Barbe or Varvara.) I waited for you in vain at the corner of the boulevard; come to our little apartment at half past one tomorrow. Your amiable fat husband (*ton gros bonhomme de mari*) is usually busy with his books at that time; we will sing again that song of your poet *Pouskine* (*de votre poète Pouskine*) you taught me: 'Old husband, cruel husband!' A thousand kisses on your little hands and feet. I await you.
>
> *Ernest.*"

The import of what he had read did not sink at once into Lavretsky's mind; he read it a second time—and his head began to swim, the floor swayed beneath him like the deck of a lurching ship. He emitted a cry, gasped and wept all at once.

He lost his head entirely. He had so blindly trusted his wife; the possibility of deception, faithlessness, had never entered his mind. This Ernest, his wife's lover, was a blond pert-looking boy of 23 with a little snub nose and a natty moustache, the most insignificant of all her acquaintances. A few minutes passed, half an hour went by; Lavretsky still stood crushing the fateful note in his hand and staring blankly at the floor; pallid faces seemed to loom at him through a maze of whirling darkness; his heart contracted painfully; he seemed to be falling, falling into a bottomless abyss. The familiar rustle of silk brought him out of his torpor; Varvara Pavlovna, in hat and shawl, had just returned from her walk. Lavretsky quivered from head to foot and rushed out of the room: he felt capable at that moment of tearing her limb from limb, beating her to death, peasant-wise, strangling her with his own hands. Varvara Pavlovna was amazed, she tried to stop him; all he could do was to whisper "Betsy" and rush out of the house.

Lavretsky took a cab and told the driver to take him out of town. The rest of that day and all night long he prowled about, stopping incessantly and throwing up his hands in a gesture of despair; at one moment he carried on like a madman, at another things struck him suddenly as funny, he even felt gay. In the morning, feeling chilled, he went into a wretched tavern on the outskirts of the city, asked for a private room, and sat down on a chair before the window. He was seized with a fit of yawning. He could scarcely stand on his feet, he was physically spent and distraught—but he did not feel fatigue; fatigue, however, was taking toll of him: he sat and stared into space, comprehending nothing; he could not understand what had happened to him, why he was alone, with his limbs stiff and numb, with a taste of bitterness in his mouth and a stone on his heart, in a strange empty room; he could not understand what had made her, Varya, give herself to this Frenchman, and how she, knowing that she was unfaithful, could go on being just as composed, affectionate and trustful to him as before! "I can't make it out!" his parched lips whispered. "Who can vouch now that in St. Petersburg

too she didn't. . . ." He left the question unfinished, and yawned again, shivering and shaking from head to foot. Bright and gloomy memories stung him with equal anguish; it suddenly crossed his mind that she had several days ago sat down to the piano in his and Ernest's presence and sung "Old husband, cruel husband." He recalled the expression of her face, the queer sparkle in her eyes and the flush on her cheeks—and he jumped up; he wanted to go to them and say: "you shouldn't have played jokes on me; my great-grandfather used to hang the muzhiks up by their ribs, and my grandfather was a muzhik himself"—and then to kill them both. Suddenly it seemed to him that it was all a dream, nay, not even a dream, but some kind of tomfoolery—all he had to do was to shake himself and look round. . . . He looked round, and like a hawk that sinks its claws into its prey, anguish sunk deeper and deeper into his soul. To crown all, Lavretsky was expecting to become a father in a few months' time. . . . The past, the future, his whole life was poisoned. Finally, he returned to Paris, took a room in an hotel and sent Mr. Ernest's note to Varvara Pavlovna with the following letter:

"The enclosed slip of paper will tell you all. I must say, by the way, that it was not like you, who are always so careful, to be dropping such important papers." (Poor Lavretsky had pondered and cherished this phrase for hours.) "I cannot see you any more; I presume you will not insist on meeting me either. I am fixing you an annual allowance of fifteen thousand francs—I cannot give more. Send your address to the country office. Do whatever you please; live wherever you please. I wish you happiness. No reply is needed."

Lavretsky wrote that he needed no reply but he looked forward to, he hungered for a reply, for an explanation of this inexplicable, inconceivable affair. Varvara Pavlovna wrote him by return a long letter in French. This was the crowning stroke; his last doubts vanished—and he felt ashamed for having entertained any. Varvara Pavlovna did not defend herself: all she wanted was to see him; she begged him not to pass his irrevocable verdict. The letter was cold and constrained, though

here and there were traces of tears. Lavretsky smiled grimly and bade the messenger say that everything was all right. Three days later he was no longer in Paris: but he went to Italy and not to Russia. He did not know himself why he chose Italy; it did not really matter where he went—so long as it was not home. He wrote to his steward about his wife's allowance and ordered him at the same time to take over the affairs of the estate at once from General Korobyn, without waiting for him to draw up an account, and arrange for His Excellency's departure from Lavriky; he pictured to himself vividly the discomfiture and air of baffled dignity of the evicted general, and in the midst of his grief, felt a sort of malicious satisfaction. He wrote simultaneously to Glafira Petrovna asking her to return to Lavriky and sent her a deed of attorney drawn up in her name; Glafira Petrovna, however, did not return to Lavriky and inserted a notice in the papers that the letter of attorney was null and void, which was quite unnecessary on her part. From his concealment in a small Italian town Lavretsky was tempted for a long time to follow the movements of his wife. He gleaned from the newspapers that she had gone from Paris to Baden-Baden, as she had planned; her name shortly appeared in a paragraph signed by our friend M. Jules. Through the author's customary flippancy of style one could discern a note of friendly condolence; a sense of deep revulsion overwhelmed Fyodor Ivanich when he read that paragraph. Afterwards he learned that a daughter had been born to him; two months later he was notified by his steward that Varvara Pavlovna had drawn her first quarter's allowance. Then the rumours went from bad to worse and culminated in a tragic-comic story which was blazed abroad through all the newspapers and in which his wife played an unenviable role. It was all over now: Varvara Pavlovna had become a "notoriety."

Lavretsky no longer followed her movements; but he could not pull himself together for a long while. At times he was overcome by such a longing for his wife that he felt like giving everything up, perhaps even... forgiving her, just for the sake of hearing once more her caressing voice, feeling the

touch of her hand in his. Time, however, was taking its own. It was not written for him to be a martyr of suffering; his robust nature reasserted itself. His eyes had been opened: even the blow that he had sustained did not seem so unexpected; he understood his wife,—we can only truly inderstand those who are near to us when we part with them. He could resume once more his studies and take up his work, though with nothing like his former zeal; scepticism, brought on by life's trials and his ear'y training, had crept into his heart for good. He became indifferent to everything around him. Four years passed, and he at last felt he had the strength to return home, and meet his own people. Stopping neither at St. Petersburg nor Moscow he came to the town of O—where we parted from him, and whither we will now ask the gentle reader to return with us.

XVII

At about ten o'clock on the following morning Lavretsky was seen ascending the porch steps of the Kalitins' house. He was met by Liza coming out in her hat and gloves.

"Where are you off to?" he asked.

"To Mass. It's Sunday today."

"Do you go to church?"

Liza looked at him in an astonished silence.

"I beg your pardon," said Lavretsky. "I... I didn't mean that. I've come to say good-bye to you. I am leaving for the country in an hour's time."

"It's not far from here, is it?" asked Liza.

"About twenty-five versts."

Lenochka came out attended by a maid.

"Well, don't forget us," said Liza, descending the steps.

"Don't forget me either. Oh, by the way," he added—"since you are going to church—perhaps you'll prav for me too."

Liza stopped and turned round to face him.

"If you wish," she answered, looking at him squarely. "I'll pray for you too. Come along, Lenochka."



In the drawing room Lavretsky found Marya Dmitrievna alone. She smelled of eau-de-cologne and mint. She complained of a headache and of having had a bad night. She received him with her usual languid affability and gradually dropped into conversation.

"Vladimir Nikolaich is an agreeable young man—don't you think so?" she asked him.

"What Vladimir Nikolaich is that?"

"Why, Panshin, the one who was here yesterday. You've made quite an impression on him; let me tell you confidentially, *mon cher cousin,*—he is simply head over heels in love with my Liza. Well, he's of a good family, he has a promising career, he's clever, and a *kammer-junker* too, and if it's the Lord's will... all I can say, as a mother, is that I will be very glad. It's a great responsibility, of course; the happiness of the children

certainly does depend on the parents, you can't get away from it, you know; here I've been all this time quite alone, doing everything myself and all that; who brought up the children, who taught them, if not I? Even now, if you please, I have engaged a French governess. . . ."

Marya Dmitrievna plunged into a description of her cares and worries and maternal feelings. Lavretsky listened in silence, twisting his hat in his hands. His frigid heavy gaze disconcerted the garrulous lady.

"And how do you like Liza?" she asked.

"Elizaveta Mikhailovna is a very nice girl," rejoined Lavretsky. He got up, took his leave with a bow and went in to see Marfa Timofeyevna. Marya Dmitrievna cast a look of displeasure at his retreating figure and thought: "What a boor of a fellow he is, a real muzhik. Now I can understand why his wife couldn't stay faithful."

Marfa Timofeyevna sat in her room surrounded by her domestic staff. This consisted of five creatures, almost all equally dear to her heart: a cropful canny bullfinch, of which she became fond since he had stopped whistling and filching water, a timorous, shrinking little dog named Roska, an ill-tempered cat Matross, a swarthy fidgety little girl of nine with great eyes and a sharp little nose called Shurochka, and an elderly woman of about fifty-five in a white cap and short brown jacket worn over a dark dress, by the name of Nastasya Karpovna Ogarkova. Shurochka was a child of the humbler classes, and an orphan. Marfa Timofeyevna had taken her out of pity, like Roska; she had found both the child and the dog in the street; both were thin and hungry; both were wet with the autumn rain; nobody missed Roska, while Shurochka was gladly relinquished by her uncle, a drunken shoemaker, who did not have enough to eat himself and used to hit his niece over the head with his last instead of feeding her. Nastasya Karpovna's acquaintance Marfa Timofeyevna had made during a visit to a monastery; she had accosted her in church (Marfa Timofeyevna alleged she had taken a fancy to her for the succulent zest with which she said her prayers), had chatted with her and invited her to a cup

of tea. She had not parted with her since. Nastasya Karpovna was a very cheerful and mild-tempered woman, a childless widow, and poor gentlewoman; she had a round head of grey hair, soft white hands, a soft face with large kindly features and a rather droll turned-up nose; she had a profound reverence for Marfa Timofeyevna, who was very fond of her for all that she used to poke fun at her soft heart: she had a weak spot for young men and would blush like a girl at the most innocent joke. Her capital consisted of 1200 rubles all told; she lived at Marfa Timofeyevna's expense, but on an equal footing with her—Marfa Timofeyevna would not suffer any kind of servility.

"Ah! Fedya!" she cried, as soon as she saw him; "You didn't see my family last night—here we are, all gathered for tea; it's our second holiday tea. You can pet them all; only Shurochka won't let you, and the cat'll scratch. Are you going away today?"

"Yes." Lavretsky seated himself on a low stool. "I've already said good-bye to Marya Dmitrievna. I've seen Elizaveta Mikhailovna too."

"Call her Liza, my dear fellow; since when is she Mikhailovna to you! Now don't fidget, or you'll break Shurochka's stool."

"She was going to church," went on Lavretsky. "I didn't know she was religious."

"Yes, Fedya, she is very religious: More than you or I, Fedya."

"Aren't you religious then?" put in Nastasya Karpovna with a lisping voice. "You haven't been to early service today, but you are going to attend the evening one."

"No, my dear; you'll go alone—I've grown lazy," replied Marfa Timofeyevna. "I've been letting myself go with the tea." She used *thou* when speaking to Nastasya Karpovna, though she treated her as an equal—she was a Pestov after all: three Pestovs had been in the diptych of Ivan Grozny; Marfa Timofeyevna would not forget that.

"I wanted to ask," resumed Lavretsky, "Marya Dmitrievna's just been telling me about this... what's his name?—Panshin. What kind of gentleman is he?"

"Lord, what a chatterbox that woman is!" muttered Marfa Timofeyevna; "I suppose she's been telling you confidentially what a fine suitor she has baited. Why doesn't she hugger-mugger with that priest's son of hers, and leave other people alone. There's nothing in the wind yet, thank God! Yet she must go gossiping about it."

"Why thank God?" asked Lavretsky.

"Because that fine fellow is not to my liking; and what is there to be glad about, anyway?"

"You don't like him?"

"No, I don't. He can't captivate everyone. Enough that Nastasya Karpovna here's in love with him."

The poor widow was filled with dismay.

"Oh, how can you, Marfa Timofeyevna, haven't you the fear of God!" she exclaimed, her face and neck flushing scarlet.

"And he knows, the rogue," broke in Marfa Timofeyevna, he knows the way to a woman's heart: he's made her a present of a snuff-box, you know. Ask her for a pinch of snuff, Fedya, you'll see what a handsome thing it is, there is a picture of a hussar on horseback on the lid. Now, don't you try to defend yourself, my dear."

Nastasya Karpovna could only raise her hands in a gesture of despair.

"What about Liza?" asked Lavretsky, "does she like him?"

"I believe she likes him,—but there, God knows! A strange heart, you know, is like a dark forest, the more so a girl's. Take Shurochka's heart, for instance,—try and make it out! Why has she hidden herself since you've come, instead of going out?"

Shurochka smothered a giggle and dashed out of the room. Lavretsky got up from his seat.

"Yes," he said slowly, "a girl's heart is a riddle."

He began to take his leave.

"Well, shall we be seeing you again soon?" asked Marfa Timofeyevna.

"Very likely, auntie; it's not far from here, you know."

"Oh, of course, you are going to Vasilyevskoye. You don't want to live in Lavriky; well, that's your business; only mind

'you pay a visit to your mother's grave, and your grandmother's too while you are at it. You've probably picked up a lot of clever ideas in foreign parts, and who knows, maybe they will feel in their graves that you have come to them. And, Fedya, don't forget to have a service sung for Glafira Petrovna; here take this ruble coin for it. Come, come, take it, I want to have that office done. I wasn't too fond of her when she was alive, but there's no denying she had an independent character, that maid. She was a shrewd piece, she was, and didn't ill-treat you. Well, God bless you, or I'll be boring you."

And Marfa Timofeyevna embraced her nephew.

"And Liza will not be marrying Panshin, don't you worry; she's worth a better husband than that."

"I'm not worrying in the least," answered Lavretsky, and withdrew.

XVIII

Four hours later he was on his way home. His tarantass rolled swiftly along the soft country road. There had been no rain for a fortnight; a fine mist hung milkily in the air and screened the distant woods, from which came an odour of burning. A multitude of shadowy faintly-edged clouds crept across the pale blue sky; a fairly stiff breeze blew in a steady dry gust, without tempering the heat. Resting his head on the cushion and with his arms folded across his chest, Lavretsky watched the flitting fields spreading out like a fan before him, the willow bushes as they drifted past, the silly ravens and rooks looking dully askance at the passing vehicle, the long strips of the field bounds overgrown with wormwood, mugwort and mountain ash; and as he looked at this fresh and teeming nudity of steppe wilderness, the verdure, the long slopes, the gullies with their oak thickets, the grey little villages, the scraggy birch trees, the whole of this long unvisited Russian landscape, he was stirred by emotions at once sweet and sorrowful that tugged softly at the heart-strings. Slowly his thoughts began to rove; they were as dim and hazy as the shapes of the clouds which

also seemed to be roving overhead. He recalled his childhood, his mother, he recalled the scene of her dying hour, how he was brought to her, how she clasped his head to her bosom, had started feebly to wail over him, then looked at Glafira Petrovna and checked herself. He recalled his father, at first buoyant, eternally discontented, sonorous-voiced, then blind, pathetic, with unkempt grey beard; he recalled how one day, after having had a drop too much at dinner and spilling the gravy over his napkin, he had suddenly laughed and begun relating his conquests, blinking his sightless eyes and growing red in the face; he recalled Varvara Pavlovna and winced involuntarily, like a man does who suffers a sudden twinge of pain and shook his head. Then his thoughts dwelt on Liza.

"Here," he thought, "is a new creature just entering on life. A fine girl. I wonder what will become of her? She is attractive too. A pale, fresh face, and such a grave mouth and eyes, and straightforward innocent look. Pity she seems to be a bit too zealous. She's nicely built, moves so lightly and her voice is soft. I particularly like the way she suddenly stops, listens attentively, unsmilingly, then becomes thoughtful and tosses back her hair. I don't think either that Panshin is worthy of her. What's wrong with him, though? Besides, what am I daydreaming about? She will go the way all go. I'd better take a nap." And Lavretsky closed his eyes.

He could not fall asleep, but sank into a nodding drowsiness. Memories of the past continued to rise up slowly and take possession of his heart, mingling and mixing with other recollections. For some inexplicable reason Lavretsky switched his thoughts to Robert Peel. French history. to how he would win a battle if he were a general—he even seemed to hear the sounds of firing, alarms and excursions.... His head slipped down, he opened his eyes.... The same fields, the same steppe scenes; the run-down shoes of the outrunners glinted alternately through the curling dust; the coachman's yellow smock with red gussets billowed out with the wind... "A nice homecoming, my dear fellow!" Lavretsky was struck with the thought. He shouted out "Gee up, there!" wrapped his cloak around him, snuggled

closer to the cushion. The carriage gave a jolt: Lavretsky sat up and opened his eyes wide. On the hillock before him nestled a little village; a little to the right could be seen a small decrepit-looking manor house with closed shutters and an awry little porch; the wide courtyard, from the very gates, was covered with an undergrowth of nettles, green and thick as hemp; a barn, built of oak and still sturdy, stood here too. This was Vasilyevskoye.

The coachman drew up at the gates; Lavretsky's valet stood up on the box, and making as though he were about to jump down, cried out "hey!" There was a hoarse muffled barking, but nothing, not even a dog came in sight; the valet took another stand for a jump and shouted "hey!" again. The feeble barking was renewed, and a moment later a man sprang up apparently from nowhere and came running into the courtyard, clad in a nankeen caftan, with a head as white as snow; he stared at the carriage, with his hand cupped to his eyes, suddenly clapped both hands to his thighs, began to dart hither and thither, then ran to open the gates. The tarantass drove into the yard with a crunching sound as its wheels passed over the nettles and came to a stop before the porch. The silver-haired man, apparently very nimble of foot, was already standing at the bottom of the steps, his legs crookedly straddled; he unfastened the front, jerked back the hood and helped his master to alight, then kissed his hand.

"How do you do, my good fellow!" said Lavretsky. "Your name's Anton, I believe? So you are still alive?"

The old man bowed in silence and shambled off to fetch the keys. While he was gone the coachman sat immobile with arms akimbo, gaping at the closed door; Lavretsky's valet, having jumped down from his perch, stood as if rooted to the spot in a picturesque pose with one hand thrown over the box. The old man brought the keys and twisting his body in needless contortions like a snake, with jutting elbows, he unlocked the door, stepped aside and made another low bow.

"So here I am at home, here am I back again," thought Lavretsky, entering the tiny hall, while the shutters were flung open one after another with a creak and bang, and daylight streamed into the deserted rooms.

XIX

The little house to which Lavretsky had come and where Glafira Petrovna had died two years ago, was built in the preceding century out of solid pine-wood; it only looked decrepit, but would stand for another fifty years or more. Lavretsky made a round of all the rooms, and to the great discomfiture of the torpid dust-covered old flies sitting motionlessly under the lintels, he had the windows opened everywhere: nobody had opened them since the death of Glafira Petrovna. Everything in the house had remained untouched: the little slim-legged divans in the drawing room, upholstered in glossy grey damask, frayed and sagging, were a vivid reminder of the days of Catherine the Great; here in the drawing room stood the mistress' favourite armchair, with its high straight back, against which she had never leaned even in her old age. On the main wall there hung an old portrait of Fyodor's great-grandfather Andrei Lavretsky; the sombre splenetic face scarcely stood out from the dark warped background; the small scowling eyes looked grimly from under heavy drooping eyelids; his black unpowdered hair bristled above a ponderous rugged brow. From a corner of the frame hung a dusty wreath of immortelles. "Glafira Petrovna made that wreath herself," announced Anton. In the bedroom towered a narrow bedstead under a striped canopy of some goodly old-time material; a pile of faded pillows and a threadbare counterpane lay on the bed, at the head of which hung a holy image depicting the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin, that same image which the old maid on her lonely deathbed had pressed for the last time to her chilling lips. A small dressing table of inlaid wood with brass fittings and a distorted mirror in a blackened gilt frame stood by the window. Adjoining the bedroom was the icon-room, a small chamber with bare walls and a massive image-case in the corner; on the floor lay a threadbare wax-begrimed rug; on this Glafira Petrovna used to kneel in worship. Anton went out with Lavretsky's valet to unlock the stable and the coach-house; in his stead there appeared an ancient little woman of about the same age, with a kerchief

tied low down over her eyebrows; her head shook and her eyes gazed vacuously but with an expression of eagerness,—the habit of years of unquestioning service—and at the same time with a kind of reverent regret. She pressed her lips to Lavretsky's hand and stood silently in the doorway, waiting his commands. He could not for the life of him remember her name or recollect ever having seen her; her name, it appears was Apraxia; forty years ago Glafira Petrovna had expelled her from the house into the poultry-yard; she spoke little, however—as though she had lost her senses—and could only stare at him with that cringing look of hers. Besides these two old creatures and three pot-bellied children in long smocks—Anton's great-grandchildren, there dwelt on the estate a one-armed little peasant who was exempted from servitude; he went about muttering like a woodcock and was no good at anything; no more useful was the decrepit hound that had greeted Lavretsky's homecoming with its bark; it had lived for ten years on a heavy chain, purchased on Glafira Petrovna's orders, and was barely able to move about and drag its burden. After going over the house Lavretsky went into the garden, the sight of which pleased him. It was all overgrown with weeds and burdock and gooseberry and raspberry bushes, but there was a fair amount of shade supplied by numerous old limes which were remarkable both for size and the singular arrangement of their boughs; they had been planted too close together, and at some time or other—perhaps a hundred years ago—had been trimmed. At the end of the garden was a small clear pond fringed with slender brown rushes. Traces of human life fade away quickly; Glafira Petrovna's homestead had not yet grown desolate, but seemed sunk in that quiet slumber in which everything reposes on earth where the taint of the madding crowd has not touched it. Fyodor Ivanich also took a walk through the village; the peasant women regarded him from the doorsteps of their huts, cupping their cheeks in their hands; the men touched their forelocks from a distance, the children scampered away, the dogs barked indifferently. He began to feel hungry, but his servants and the cook were not expected until evening; the waggons with provisions from Lavriky had

not yet arrived—and he was obliged to fall back on Anton. The latter dispatched himself with haste to execute his master's wishes: he caught, killed and plucked an old hen; Apraxia scoured and cleaned it and rinsed it like a piece of washing before putting it into the saucepan; when it was finally done, Anton spread the cloth and set the table, laying out a knife and fork, a tarnished three-legged salt-cellar and a cut-glass narrow-necked decanter with a round glass stopper; then he informed his master in a sing-song voice that dinner was served, and stood behind his chair, swathing his right fist in a napkin and diffusing a pungent, ancient sort of odour, like the smell of a cypress tree. Lavretsky ate some soup and reached for the hen; its skin was all covered with large pimples; a tough tendon ran up each leg, the meat gave off a flavour of wood and lye. When he had finished his meal Lavretsky said he would not mind a cup of tea, if.... "I will bring it right away," the old man interjected, and kept his word. A pinch of tea was hunted up wrapped in a piece of red paper; a small but very mettlesome and noisy samovar was unearthed and sugar too in small soggy-looking fragments. Lavretsky drank tea out of a big cup; he remembered this cup from childhood; playing-cards were depicted on the outside, and it had been used only for visitors—and now he was drinking out of it like a visitor. The servants arrived in the evening; Lavretsky did not want to sleep in his aunt's bed; he had a bed put up in the dining room. After snuffing out the candle he sat looking about him for a long while, thinking sad thoughts; he experienced the feeling familiar to any person who has had occasion to spend the night in a long untenanted place; the darkness which closed in on him from all sides seemed to resent the new tenant, the very walls of the house seemed startled. Finally he sighed, drew up the blanket and fell asleep. Anton was up after the rest of the household had retired; he talked in whispers for a long while with Apraxia, groaned in an undertone and crossed himself once or twice; neither had expected their master to settle at Vasilyevskoye, when he had such a fine estate and well-appointed manor so near at hand; it did not occur to them that that place was

hateful to him,—it was too full of distressful memories. Having done whispering, Anton took a stick and struck the night-watchman's board which had hung so long unsounded by the barn, and there in the courtyard settled himself down to sleep, his white head uncovered. The May night was soft and gentle, and the old man slumbered sweetly.

XX

The next day Lavretsky rose early, interviewed the bailiff, visited the threshing-floor, ordered the chain to be taken off the house dog, who had merely given a desultory bark but did not detach himself from his kennel, and returning home, became immersed in a sort of peaceful torpor in which he remained all day. "Here is where I've struck bottom," he said to himself more than once. He sat at the window without stirring, listening, as it were, to the current of peaceful life flowing around him, to the rare sounds of country quietude. From somewhere under the nettles came a faint shrill note; a gnat took up the tune. The note died away, but the gnat went on humming; through the measured, persistent and plaintive buzzing of the flies came the loud drone of a fat bumble-bee hitting its head incessantly against the ceiling; outside the cock crowed, hanging hoarsely on the last note; a cart lumbered by; a gate creaked somewhere in the village. "What d'yer say?" sounded the raucous voice of a peasant woman. "Well, dearie," said Anton to a little two-year-old girl he was dandling in his arms. "Fetch the *kvass*," repeated the woman's voice—and suddenly a dead silence ensued; not a rattle was heard, not a sound; not a leaf stirred in the wind; the swallows wheeled noiselessly one after another over the ground, and their silent flight saddened the heart. "Here is where I've struck bottom," reflected Lavretsky again. "And here life is always, invariably placid and unhurried," he ruminated; "Whoever comes within its circle must resign himself to its power; here cares are banished, and nothing preys on the mind; here things will go well only with him who makes the

steady tenor of his way like the ploughman behind the furrows of his plough. And what power, what vigour lie hidden in this sequestered stillness. Here under the window the sturdy burdock shoots up out of the thick grasses; above it the lovage throws out its succulent stems, and still higher the Virgin's bower trails its pink tendrils; and yonder in the fields gleams the ripe rye, and the oats are already in ear, and every leaf on every tree and every blade of grass on its stalk is growing and opening out to its utmost extent. My best years have been spent in loving a woman," Lavretsky resumed his reflections, "let solitude sober me, let it soothe and prepare me for the leisurely taking up of my task." And once more he listened to the silence, without hopefulness—and yet constantly in suspense as though hoping for something; the silence engulfed him from all sides; the sun moved slowly across the tranquil blue heavens and the clouds drifted gently overhead; it seemed as if they knew whither and why they were drifting. At this same time life elsewhere was seething, hurrying and clashing on its way; here it slipped by noiselessly, like water over marshy grass; and till late in the evening Lavretsky could not tear himself away from the contemplation of this receding life that glided imperceptibly by; sorrow for the days that have gone melted in his heart like the snow of early spring—and, strange as it may seem, never had love for his native land sat so deep and strong within him.

XXI

Within a couple of weeks Fyodor Ivanich brought Glafira Petrovna's little house into order, cleared the courtyard and the garden; comfortable furniture was brought from Lavriky, wine, books and journals from town; horses made their appearance in the stables; in short, Fyodor Ivanich provided himself for all his needs and settled down to the life, one could not say whether of a country landowner or a hermit. His days passed unvariedly, but he was not bored, although he saw nobody; he devoted himself sedulously to the affairs of the estate, explored the countryside on horseback, and did some reading. He read

little, however; he preferred listening to old Anton's narrations. Lavretsky would usually sit down by the window with his pipe and a cup of cold tea; Anton would stand by the door with his hands clasped behind his back and begin his rambling stories of old times, those fabulous days of yore, when oats and rye were not sold by the measure but in great sacks, at two or three kopecks a sack; when impenetrable forests and virgin steppes stretched away on all sides, fast by the towns. "And now," complained the old man, who was already on the right side of eighty, "they've done so much felling and ploughing there's hardly room anywhere for a carriage to pass." Anton would relate many stories about his mistress, Glafira Petrovna, too; how prudent and thrifty she was; how a certain gentleman, a young neighbour, had tried to curry favour in this quarter and ridden over often to see her, and how my lady had even deigned to put on her holiday cap with dark crimson ribbons and her yellow gown of tru-tru-levantine for him; but how she had later been in high dudgeon over an indiscreet enquiry on that gentleman's part as to the extent of her means and had forbidden him the house, and how she had summarily commanded that when she died everything to the last little scrap was to go to Fyodor Ivanich. And, indeed, Lavretsky found all his aunt's household goods intact, including the holiday cap with crimson ribbons and the yellow gown of tru-tru-levantine. Of old papers and interesting documents, which Lavretsky hoped to find, there were none, except an old book, in which his grandfather, Pyotr Andreich, had inscribed, in one place: "Celebration in the city of Saint Petersburg of the peace made with the Empire of Turkey by His Excellency Prince Alexander Alexandrovich Prozorovsky"; in another, a recipe for a pectoral with the remark: "These directions were given to the General's lady, Praskovya Fyodorovna Saltykova by the chief priest of the Church of the Holy Trinity Fyodor Avksentyevich"; elsewhere a piece of political news: "there seems to be no more talk of the French tigers," and beside it the following entry: "The *Moskovskiye Vedomosti* announces the death of Senior Major Mikhail Petrovich Kolychev. Would this be the son of Pyotr Vassilyevich Koly-

chev?" Lavretsky also discovered some old calendars and dream-books and the mysterious work of M. Ambodik; many were the memories these long-forgotten but familiar "Symbols and Emblems" awakened in him. In Glafira Petrovna's dressing table Lavretsky found a small packet tied with black ribbon, sealed with black sealing wax and thrust into the innermost recesses of the drawer. In the packet there lay, face to face, a pastel portrait of his father in his youth, with soft hair hanging in ringlets about his brow, and almond-shaped languid eyes and parted lips, and an almost obliterated portrait of a pale woman in a white dress with a white rose in her hand—his mother. Glafira Petrovna had never consented to having a portrait of herself made. "I myself, dear master, Fyodor Ivanich," Anton used to relate to Lavretsky, "though I weren't living at the time in the house, still remember your great-grandfather, Andrei Afanasich; to be sure, I was only getting on for eighteen when he died. Once he came across of me in the garden, and I shook in me shoes, I can tell you; but there, he didn't do nothing, just asked me my name and sent me to his room to fetch a pocket handkerchief. He was a grand gentleman, indeed,—aye, and he would be second to none. And all because he had a wonderful amulet, did your great-grandfather; a monk from Mount Athos gave it him as a present, this 'amulet. And he tells him, this monk did, 'I give thee this gift, my lord, for thy kind hospitality; wear it and thou mayest fear no judgement.' You know, dear master, what them times were like: the master could do whatever he wanted; sometimes one of the gentlefolk would take it into his head to gainsay him, but he would just look at him and say: 'You poor fish'—that was his pet saying. And he lived, your great-grandfather, God bless him, in a little wooden house; and as for the goods he left behind him, silver plate and what not, why all the cellars was packed full of 'em! He was a thrifty one, he was. That decanter you said you liked, now that was his too: he used to drink vodka out of it. Now take your grandfather, Pyotr Andreich—he built hisself a stone house but he never made good; everything went topsy-turvy and he was worse off than his father, never got any pleasure out of life,



squandered all his money, and didn't leave a thing to remember him by; not even a silver spoon's come down from him—whatever's left is thanks to Glafira Petrovna's thrift and care."

"Is it true," Lavretsky broke in, "that they used to call her old skinflint?"

"Aye, but who used to call her that!" protested Anton in a tone of displeasure.

Once the old man made bold to ask: "How is it, dear master, with the mistress, where would she be staying?"

"I have divorced my wife, said Lavretsky with an effort, "please don't ask about her."

"Yes sir," replied the old man sadly.

After a lapse of three weeks Lavretsky rode down to O—on horseback to visit the Kalitins, and spent the evening with them. Lemm was there; Lavretsky took a great liking to him. Although, thanks to his father, he did not play on any instrument, he was passionately fond of music, real, classical music. Panshin was not at the Kalitins' that evening. The governor-general had dispatched him on some business out of town. Liza played by herself and with great precision; Lemm became animated, and waxing lively, rolled up a piece of paper into a tube and began using it as a baton. Marya Dmitrievna at first laughed at the sight, then went off to bed; Beethoven, she averred, was too ex-

citing for her nerves. At midnight Lavretsky saw Lemm off to his lodgings and stopped there with him till three o'clock in the morning. Lemm talked a lot; his stooping figure straightened up, his eyes grew wide and bright; even his hair stood erect above his brow. It was so long since anyone had taken an interest in him, and Lavretsky was obviously interested in him, plying him solicitously and sympathetically with questions. This touched the old man; he ended by showing his visitor his music, playing and even singing in a lifeless voice some fragments from his own compositions, including the whole of Schiller's ballad, Fridolin, set by him to music. Lavretsky complimented him, made him repeat some of the music and, before leaving, invited him to come and stay a few days with him. Lemm, who saw him out of the house, readily consented and gave him a hearty handshake; but, left alone in the fresh, moist air, in the first rays of daybreak, he looked round him, screwed up his eyes, shivered, and crept back to his room with a guilty air: *"Ich bin wohl nicht klug"* (I must be out of my senses), he muttered, getting into his hard short bed. He tried to feign indisposition when, a few days later, Lavretsky drove up in his calash to fetch him; but Fyodor Ivanich went up to his room and persuaded him into going. What impressed Lemm most of all, was that Lavretsky had ordered a piano to be brought up from town specially for him. They both went to the Kalitins and spent the evening there, but not so agreeably as on the previous occasion. Panshin was there, he talked a great deal about his recent journey, and very amusingly mimicked and copied the country gentry he had met; Lavretsky laughed, but Lemm kept in his corner, where he sat scowling in silence, his huddled-up body making spider-like stirrings, and he brightened up only when Lavretsky rose to take his leave. Even in the carriage the old man was still reticent and shrinking; but the soft, warm air, the balmy breeze, the faint shadows, the smell of grass and birch-buds, the placid radiance of the star-lit moonless night, the measured sound of hoofbeats and snorting of the horses, the whole spell of the roadside, the enchantment of the spring and the night sank into the poor German's soul, and he was first to break the silence.

He began talking about music, about Liza and then once more about music. He seemed to utter his words more slowly when he spoke of Liza. Lavretsky turned the conversation on his compositions, and, half in jest, offered to write him a libretto.

"Hm, a libretto!" rejoined Lemm; "no, that's beyond me; I no longer have the vivid touch, the flight of imagination that is necessary for an opera; my powers are on the wane.... But if I were still able to do anything,—I would be contented with a romanza; of course, I should want the words to be fitting...

He fell silent, and sat motionless a long while with his eyes lifted to the heavens.

"For instance," he said presently; "something of this sort —'Ye stars. O ye pure stars! ...'"

Lavretsky turned slightly towards him and looked at him.

"Ye stars, ye pure stars," repeated Lemm. "Ye gaze down upon both the just and the unjust... but only the innocent heart,"—or something like that—'can understand'—no, not that —'can love you.' But I am no poet—not likely! Something of that kind, though, something lofty."

Lemm tilted his hat on the back of his head; in the dim twilight of the clear night his face looked paler and younger.

"'And ye too,'" he continued, his voice gradually sinking to a murmur, "'Ye know who loveth, who can love, because ye are pure, ye alone can bring solace....' No, that's not it! I'm no poet," he said, "anyway, something in that style...."

"I'm sorry I am not a poet," observed Lavretsky.

"Vain dreams!" said Lemm, and buried himself in the corner of the carriage. He closed his eyes, as though he were composing himself for sleep.

Some moments passed.... Lavretsky listened.... "Stars, pure stars, love," whispered the old man.

"Love," Lavretsky repeated to himself. He became lost in thought, and his heart grew heavy.

"That is beautiful music you have set to Fridolin, Christopher Fyodorich," he said aloud; "What do you think—this

Fridolin, after the Count presented him to his wife—that's when he became her lover, eh?"

"That's what you think," replied Lemm, "because you probably have experienced. . . ."—he stopped suddenly and turned away in confusion. Lavretsky gave a forced laugh, turned away too and looked out at the road.

The stars had grown dimmer and the sky was greying when the carriage drove up to the little porch in Vasilyevskoye. Lavretsky showed his guest to his room, returned to his study and sat down at the window. Out in the garden the nightingale was singing its last carol before the break of dawn. Lavretsky was reminded of the nightingale that had sung in the garden at the Kalitins'; he recalled, too, the gentle movement of Liza's eyes when she turned to the dark window at its first notes. He began to think about her and his heart was eased again. "Pure maid," he murmured half-aloud; "pure stars," he added with a smile and crept away to bed.

But Lemm sat for a long time on his bed, a music book on his knees. He was haunted by a sweet and wonderful melody; he was stirred and kindled, he could feel the languor and sweetness of its hovering presence but he could not grasp it.

"Neither poet nor musician," he muttered at length. . . .

And his weary head sank heavily on the pillow.

XXIII

The next day the host and his guest drank tea in the garden under an old lime tree.

"Maestro!" said Lavretsky by the way, "you'll have to write a triumphal cantata soon."

"What is the occasion?"

"The nuptials of Mr. Panshin and Liza. Did you notice yesterday the attentions he paid her? It looks as though things are in a fair way there."

"That will never be!" cried Lemm.

"Why not?"

"Because it's impossible. Though," he added after a pause, "everything's possible in this world. Especially with you people, here in Russia."

"Let us leave Russia out of it for the time being; what's wrong with this marriage?"

"It's wrong, all wrong. Elizaveta Mikhailovna is a frank, serious girl with noble feelings, and he... he's a di-let-tan-te, in short."

"But she loves him, doesn't she?"

Lemm rose to his feet.

"No, she doesn't love him, I mean she is innocent of heart and doesn't know herself what love is. Madame von Kalitina tells her that he is a fine young man, and she obeys Madame von Kalitina because she's still a mere child, though she's nineteen: she prays in the morning, prays in the evening—that's all very well; but she does not love him. She can only love what is beautiful, and he's not beautiful, that is, his soul isn't."

Lemm made this little speech fluently and with fervour, pacing to and fro with little steps before the tea table and running his eyes over the ground.

"My dear Maestro!" exclaimed Lavretsky suddenly. "I do believe you're in love with my cousin yourself."

Lemm stopped short.

"Please," he began in a shaky voice, "don't make fun of me like that. I'm not crazy—I'm looking into the dark beyond, and not into the rosy future."

Lavretsky was filled with remorse; he asked the old man's forgiveness. After tea Lemm played him his cantata, and during dinner, at Lavretsky's own lead, began to talk again about Liza. Lavretsky listened with attention and curiosity.

"What do you say, Christopher Fyodorich," he pronounced at length, "everything seems to be in order here now, the garden is in full bloom,—what about inviting her down here for the day with her mother and my old aunt, eh? Would you like it?"

Lemm bent his head over his plate.

"All right," he said in a scarcely audible murmur.

"And we can do without Panshin?"

"We can," rejoined the old man with an almost childlike smile.

Two days later Fyodor Ivanich rode to town to see the Kalitins.

XXIV

He found them all at home, but did not open his mind at once; he wanted to discuss the matter first with Liza. An opportunity presented itself: they were left alone in the drawing room. They fell into conversation; she had already grown accustomed to him,—indeed, she was not shy as a rule with anyone. He listened to her, studied her face and mentally went over Lenin's words and endorsed them. It sometimes happens that two acquaintances who are not on intimate terms are suddenly and momentarily drawn together, and the realization of this intimacy immediately finds expression in mutual glances, quiet friendly smiles and even gestures. This is exactly what happened with Lavretsky and Liza. "So he is like that," was her thought, as she looked at him kindly; "So that is what you are like," he too was thinking. He was not greatly surprised, therefore, when she told him, not without a slight hesitancy, that she had long wanted to ease her mind, but was afraid to offend him.

"Don't be afraid, tell me," he replied, and stopped in front of her.

Liza raised her limpid eyes to him.

"You are so good," she began, and the thought ran through her mind: 'yes, he is certainly good...' "you will excuse me, I should not really dare speak of it to you... but how could you... why did you part with your wife?"

Lavretsky winced, looked at Liza and sat down near her.

"My child," he began, "please do not touch that wound; your hands are tender, but it will hurt all the same."

"I know," Liza went on as though she had not heard him, "she has wronged you, I do not want to justify her; but how can one put asunder what God has joined?"

"Our views on that point are too wide apart, Elizaveta Mikhailovna," retorted Lavretsky somewhat sharply; "we shall not be able to understand each other."

Liza's face paled; her frame quivered slightly, but she did not remain silent.

"You must forgive," she murmured gently, "if you wish to be forgiven."

"Forgive!" broke in Lavretsky. "You should first know the person on whose behalf you are speaking! Forgive that woman, take her back into my home, that empty, soulless creature! And who told you she wants to come back? Why, she is perfectly contented with her lot.... Oh, what's the use of talking about it? Her name ought never to pass your lips. You are too pure, you cannot even know what sort of creature that is."

"Must you abuse her?" said Liza with an effort. Her hands now visibly trembled. "You left her yourself, Fyodor Ivanich."

"But I am telling you," broke out Lavretsky impatiently, "you don't know what that creature is!"

"Then why did you marry her?" whispered Liza, dropping her eyes.

Lavretsky rose quickly to his feet.

"Why did I marry? I was young and inexperienced; I was taken in, infatuated by a beautiful exterior. I didn't know women, I didn't know anything. God grant you a luckier marriage! But, believe me, you can never be sure."

"I might be unfortunate, too," said Liza (her voice had a catch in it); "but then you must resign yourself to your fate; I don't know how to say it, but unless we resign ourselves...."

Lavretsky clenched his hands and brought his foot down.

"Please don't be angry, forgive me," put in Liza hastily.

At that instant Marya Dmitrievna entered the room. Liza got up to leave the room.

"One moment," Lavretsky suddenly ejaculated. "I have a boon to ask of your mother and you—won't you pay me a visit, make up a house-warming party? You know, I've procured a piano; Lemm is staying with me; the lilac is just now in

blossom; you will take a breath of country air and go back the same day—do you agree?"

Liza looked at her mother, and Marya Dmitrievna assumed a look of distress; but Lavretsky gave her no time to open her mouth and kissed both her hands there and then; Marya Dmitrievna, always susceptible to touching demonstrations and least expecting such courtesy from "the boor," unbent and gave her consent. While she was considering what day to fix, Lavretsky went up to Liza and, still greatly moved, said to her in a whisper: "Thanks, you're a good girl; I'm sorry...." And her pale face flushed with a happy, shy smile; her eyes smiled too—she had been afraid that she had given him offence.

"Can Vladimir Nikolaich come with us?" inquired Marya Dmitrievna.

"Of course," replied Lavretsky, "but wouldn't it be better if it were just a family party?"

"But I thought...." Marya Dmitrievna started to say "well, just as you like," she added.

It was decided to take Lenochka and Shurochka. Marfa Timofeyevna declined to go.

"I'm sorry, my dear," she protested; "it would be too hard on my old bones; and I don't suppose there is anywhere to sleep at your place; I can't sleep in a strange bed. Let the young ones romp it."

Lavretsky found no more opportunity of being alone with Liza; but he looked at her in a way that made her feel good, and a little shame-faced, and sorry for him. He gripped her hand at parting; left by herself, she became thoughtful.

XXV

When Lavretsky got home he was met on the threshold of the drawing room by a tall spare man, in a bedraggled blue coat, with a wrinkled but animated face, dishevelled grey whiskers, a long straight nose and small inflamed eyes. This was Mikhalevich, his old university chum. Lavretsky did not recog-

nize him at first, but embraced him warmly directly he learned his name. They had not seen each other since Moscow days. A rain of questions and exclamations followed; long-buried recollections were dragged out. Hurriedly smoking pipe after pipe, sipping occasionally at his tea and gesticulating with his long hands, Mikhalevich related his adventures to Lavretsky; there was nothing particularly exhilarating in them, he could not boast of any success in his undertakings,—but he laughed incessantly with a husky nervous laugh. A month ago he had got a situation in the counting-house of a rich tax farmer about three hundred versts from the town of O—, and hearing of Lavretsky's return from abroad, he had come out of his way to see his old friend. Mikhalevich talked as impetuously as he did in his youth, with the same old vehemence and ardour. Lavretsky started to mention his own circumstances, but Mikhalevich interrupted him, muttering hastily: "I have heard, old chap, I have heard,—who could have imagined it?" and forthwith switched the talk onto general topics.

"I must be moving on tomorrow, my dear fellow," he said; "today, however, with your permission, we will stay up late. I am keen to know how you have turned out, what your opinions are, your convictions, what you have become, what life has taught you?" (Mikhalevich still used the phraseology of the thirties.) "As for me, I have changed a good bit, old chap: the waves of life have swept over my breast—who was it said that?—though in essentials I haven't changed at all; I still believe in the good and the true; but I do not merely believe—I have the faith, aye, the faith. Listen, you know I dabble in poetry; my verses are not poetic, but they're true. I'll read you my last poem; I've expressed therein my heartfelt convictions. Listen." Mikhalevich started to read his poem; it was fairly long and ended with the following lines:

My heart to new feelings is wholly yielded,
Like a child at heart have I grown:
And all that I worshipped I have burnt,
And all I have burnt I now worship.

Mikhalevich was almost on the verge of tears as he uttered the two last lines; a slight twitch—a sign of deep emotion—crossed his wide mouth, his plain face lit up. Lavretsky sat listening and listening—and a spirit of defiance stirred within him: he was exasperated by this cut-and-dried ever-simmering enthusiasm of the Moscow student. A quarter of an hour had not elapsed before an argument sprang up between them, one of those interminable arguments of which only Russian people are capable. Straightway, after many years' absence spent in two different worlds, with a vague understanding of their own, let alone other people's ideas, splitting hairs and bandying words, they fell into an argument on the most abstract subjects, and argued as though it were a matter of life and death to them both; they shouted and vociferated with such fervour that everybody in the house was startled, and poor Lemm, who since Mikhalevich's arrival had locked himself up in his room, was bewildered and began even to feel vaguely alarmed.

"Then what are you after that? Disillusioned?" shouted Mikhalevich past midnight.

"Do I look like a disillusioned man?" retorted Lavretsky; "they are always pale and sickly—would you like me to lift you up with one hand?"

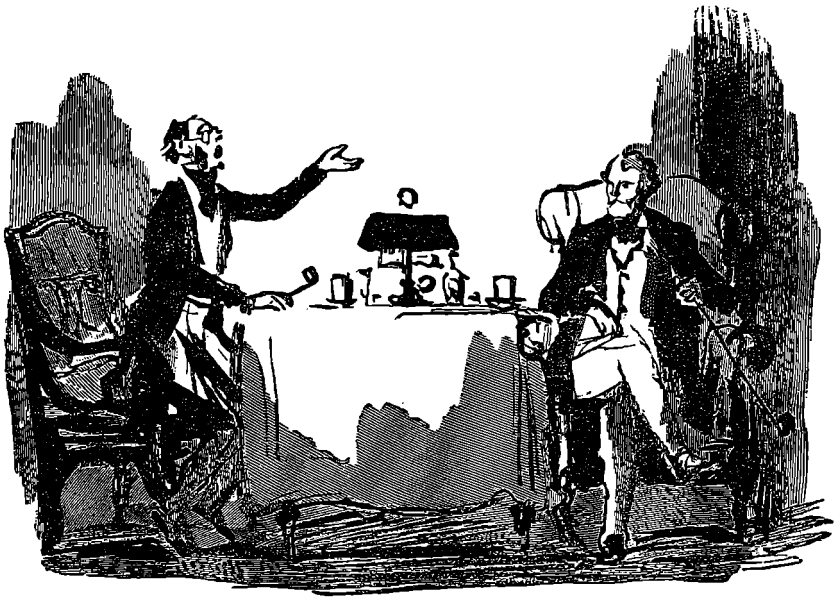
"Well, if you are not a disillusioned man, you are a *scepteek*, which is worse (Mikhalevich's accent savoured of his native Malorossia). What do you mean by being a sceptic? Luck has gone against you—admitted; you're not to blame—you were born with a passionate, loving soul and you were forcibly estranged from women; naturally the first woman you came across fooled you."

"She fooled you too," observed Lavretsky moodily.

"Granted, granted; I happened to be the instrument of fate—dash it, that's twaddle—there's no fate here; an old habit of loose definition. But what does it prove?"

"It proves that I have been crippled in childhood."

"Well, get yourself straight!—you're a man, aren't you? Surely, you don't need to go borrowing stamina! However it



is, you can't reduce a particular case, so to speak, to a general law, an immutable rule."

"What's rule got to do with it?" broke in Lavretsky. "I don't admit...."

"No, it's your rule, your rule...." threw in Mikhalevich in his turn.

"You're an egoist, that's what you are!" he was bawling an hour later; "you were after self-pleasure, you sought happiness in life, you wanted to live for yourself...."

"What the dickens is self-pleasure?"

"And you've been let down all round; everything has come toppling down."

"What is self-pleasure, I ask you?"

"And it had to topple down. Because you sought a foothold where there wasn't any; because you built your house on shifting sands...."

"Make yourself clear, don't speak in similes, *because* I can't understand you."

"Because—all right, laugh if you like—because you have no faith, no warmness of heart; you're nothing but mind, just paltry mind... you're simply an abject, antiquated Voltairean—that's what you are."

"What, I—a Voltairean?"

"Yes, like your father was, and you don't even suspect it."

"All I can say then is that you're a fanatic!" cried Lavretsky.

"Alas!" replied Mikhalevich ruefully, "I have not yet, unfortunately, earned that lofty designation...."

"I know now what to call you," shouted Mikhalevich at past two in the morning—"you're neither sceptic, nor disillusioned, nor a Voltairean—you're a sluggard, yes, that's what you are—a downright sluggard, a sophisticated sluggard. Unsophisticated sluggards kick their heels for nothing to do, because they're not capable of doing anything; they can't even think, but you're a thinking person—and you let the grass grow under your feet; you could be up and about—but you aren't; you just lie around with a full belly and say: that's how it should be, because whatever men do is all stuff and nonsense, leading nowhere."

"Where did you get the idea that I'm lying about?" protested Lavretsky; "what makes you think I have such ideas?"

"Besides, all you fellows, the whole of your tribe," went on Mikhalevich, nothing daunted, "are just well-read sluggards. You know the German's weak spot; you know what ails the English and the French,—and that pitiful learning of yours is used as a mainstay to justify your shameful sloth, your vile indolence. Some of you even exult in the fact that they lie around, like wise fellows, doing nothing, while those other fools are kicking up a dust. Yes, sir! There are some fine gentlemen among us—I'm not hinting at you, mind you—who spend all their lives sunk in a stupor of boredom, get used to it, stick in it like like a mushroom in white sauce," blurted out Mikhalevich, laughing at his own simile. "Oh, that stupor of boredom—it will be the death of us Russians! The odious sluggard is for ever making up his mind to get to work...."

"What are you scolding for?"—it was Lavretsky's turn to yell. "It's all very well to rant about working... doing things.... Tell me better what to do instead of scolding, Demosthenes of Poltava!"

"Is that all you want? I can't tell you that, sir; every man must know that himself," retorted Demosthenes sarcastically. "A landowner! A nobleman, if you please! And he doesn't know what to do! You have no faith, or else you would know; where there's no faith there's no revelation."

"Give me at least time to rest, confound it; let me look around," pleaded Lavretsky.

"Not a minute's rest, not a second!" retorted Mikhalevich with an imperious gesture. "Not a single second! Death waits for no man, and life should not wait."

"And what a time, what a place for men to be taking it into their heads to become sluggards!" he cried at four in the morning in a voice now slightly hoarse from shouting, "Here! Now! In Russia! When every individual has a duty to perform, a grave responsibility to carry in the face of God, the nation and his own self! We are sleeping while time is slipping by; we are sleeping...."

"Let me tell you, observed Lavretsky, "that we are certainly not sleeping now, but rather preventing others from sleeping. We're screeching like a couple of cocks. Hark, can that be a third one crowing?"

This sally brought a chuckle from Mikhalevich and quietened him down. "Well, till tomorrow," he said with a smile and put his pipe away.

"Till tomorrow," repeated Lavretsky. But the friends chatted on for more than an hour.... However their voices were no longer raised, their talk was subdued and sad and its burden was tender.

Mikhalevich went away the next day, despite all Lavretsky's efforts to detain him. Fyodor Ivanich could not persuade him to remain, but they had talked to their heart's content. Mikhalevich, it appeared, had not a penny to bless himself with. Lavretsky had noticed with regret the previous evening the obvious

signs and habits of long-standing poverty; his boots were down at heel, a button was missing off the back of his coat, his hands were unused to gloves, there was fluff in his hair; on his arrival it had not even occurred to him to ask whether he might have a wash, and at supper he ate voraciously, tearing the meat with his hands and crunching the bones with his strong black teeth. It transpired also that the civil service had not brought him anything, that all his hopes were now centred on his present employer who had taken him merely to have "an educated man" about the office. Notwithstanding, Mikhalevich was not disconcerted and lived the cynic, idealist and poet that he was, sincerely solicitous and anxious over the destinies of man and his own vocation, and giving very little thought to keeping his own head above water. Mikhalevich was not married, but had fallen in love times beyond number and had written poems to all the objects of his passion; one particularly inspired rhapsody was dedicated to a mysterious "Polish Lady" with dark tresses..... True, there were rumours that this Polish lady was a common Jewess, familiar to a good many cavalry officers ... but, come to think of it, even that does not count.

Mikhalevich did not get on with Lemm: his turbulent talk and brusque manners alarmed the German, who was not used to such ways.... One poor beggar is quick to espy another from a distance, but in old age they seldom become friends—and that is hardly surprising: they have nothing to share in common, not even hopes.

Before leaving, Mikhalevich had another long chat with Lavretsky, prophesied his ruin unless he came to his senses, begged him to turn his serious attention to the welfare of his peasants, set himself up as an example, claiming that he had purged himself in the inferno of suffering, and in the same breath repeated several times that he was a happy man, and compared himself to the birds of the air and the lily of the valley..

"A black lily, anyway," observed Lavretsky.

"Come, my dear fellow, don't be a snob," retorted Mikhalevich; "you'd better thank God that you too have honest plebeian blood flowing in your veins. I see that what you need now

is some pure heavenly creature to drag you out of your apathy."

"Thanks, old chap," observed Lavretsky, "I've about had enough of these heavenly creatures."

"Shut up, you *cyneec*!" cried Mikhalevich.

"Cynic," Lavretsky corrected him.

"Precisely *cyneec*," repeated Mikhalevich unabashed.

He was still talking even when he had taken his seat in the tarantass, whither they had brought out his flat, yellow, surprisingly light portmanteau; muffled in a Spanish-looking cloak with a rusty brown collar and a clasp in the shape of two lion's paws, he continued expounding his views on the destiny of Russia, and waved his swarthy hand in the air as though scattering the seeds of future weal. The horses finally started off.... "Remember my three last words," he cried, thrusting his body out of the carriage and balancing it: "religion, progress, humanity!... Good-bye!" His head, with the cap pulled down over his eyes, disappeared. Lavretsky was left standing alone on the steps, and he gazed intently down the road until the tarantass was no longer in sight. "I believe he is right," he thought as he went back into the house, "I believe I am a sluggard." Much of what Mikhalevich had said had sunk irresistibly into his heart, though he had argued and disagreed with him. If a man be good none can resist him.

XXVI

Two days later Marya Dmitrievna came down to Vasilyevskoye as she had promised, with all the young folk. The little girls ran straightway into the garden, while Marya Dmitrievna languidly paced the rooms and languidly admired everything. Her call on Lavretsky she considered a token of great condescension on her part, almost a deed of charity. She smiled graciously when Anton and Apraxia kissed her hand in the time-old way of manorial servants, and asked for some tea in a listless drawling voice. To the deep chagrin of Anton, who had put on white knitted gloves for the occasion, the lady visitor was served

tea by Lavretsky's hired valet who, according to Anton, had no notion of the proprieties. But Anton had his own back at dinner-time: he took up his stand resolutely behind Marya Dmitrievna's chair and did not surrender his post to anybody. The uncommon sight of visitors at Vasilyevskoye delighted and flustered the old man: it did his heart good to see what fine gentlefolk his master hobnobbed with. Nor was he the only one to be in a state of excitement that day: Lemm too was in a flurry. He was arrayed in shortish snuff-coloured dock-tailed coat, had drawn his neckerchief taut round his neck and incessantly cleared his throat and made way for people with an air of extreme affability. Lavretsky noted with pleasure that the feeling of intimacy that had sprung up between himself and Liza still continued: she held out her hand to him in a friendly way the moment she came in. After dinner Lemm drew out of his coat-tail pocket, where he had been fumbling all the time, a small roll of music, and tightening his lips he placed it silently on the piano. It was a romanza he had composed the previous evening to some old-fashioned German words containing an allusion to the stars. Liza sat down forthwith to the piano and began playing it.... Alas! the music turned out to be involved and distressingly laborious; the composer had obviously striven to express something deep and impassioned, but had failed; the striving was there but nothing else. Both Lavretsky and Liza felt it, and Lemm perceived it—for without a word he put the music back into his pocket, and at Liza's suggestion to play it again, he merely shook his head, said meaningly "That's that!"—hunched his shoulders, shrank into himself and moved away.

Towards evening the whole company went out fishing. The pond at the bottom of the garden was full of carp and groundlings. Marya Dmitrievna was placed in an armchair beside the edge, in the shade, a rug was spread for her feet, and she was given the best line; Anton, as an old practised angler, put himself at her disposal. He fussed over the line, baited the hook, slapped the worm, spat on it and even threw in the line with a graceful curve of the body. Speaking of him that day to Lavretsky in her boarding-school French, Marya Dmitrievna

said: *"Il n'y a plus maintenant de ces gens comme ça comme autrefois."* Lemm with the two little girls went further down to a spot near the dam: Lavretsky disposed himself next to Liza. The fish were nibbling incessantly; the carp flashed gold and silver in the air as the lines here and there were drawn in; the little girls emitted ceaseless cries of delight; even Marya Dmitrievna uttered a delicate little shriek on two occasions. Least of all did Lavretsky and Liza hook in; this was probably because they were paying less attention to the fishing than the others, and allowed their floats to come up to the very bank. The high reddish reeds swished softly round them, the still water shimmered softly, and soft were the voices in which they spoke. Liza stood on a small raft; Lavretsky sat on the bent trunk of a willow tree; Liza wore a white dress girdled with a white sash; her straw hat dangled in one hand, the other was engaged holding up the taut-bent fishing rod. Lavretsky gazed at her clear-cut, somewhat severe profile, at her hair drawn back behind the ears, at her tender cheeks kissed by the sun like those of a child, and thought: "O, how sweet art thou, standing by my pond!" Liza stood with her face turned away, gazing at the water with eyes that looked as if they were screwed up or smiling. The lime tree nearby cast its shadow upon them.

"Do you know," began Lavretsky, "I have been thinking a lot about the last talk we had, and have come to the conclusion that you are exceedingly good."

"Oh, I didn't want to give you the impression. . . ." Liza started to say, and was overcome with embarrassment.

"You are good," repeated Lavretsky. "I'm a crude sort of fellow, but I can imagine everyone being fond of you. Take Lemm for instance; he's simply in love with you."

Liza not so much knitted as twitched her brows; she always did that when she heard anything disagreeable.

"I felt very sorry for him today," Lavretsky hastened to put in, "with his unfortunate romanza. To be young and inapt is tolerable; but to be old and incapable is a very sad thing. The worst of it is that you don't realize your powers are failing.

It is very hard on the old man.... Look out, it's biting.... I hear," added Lavretsky after a pause, "that Vladimir Nikolaich has composed a very nice song."

"Yes," answered Liza; "it's a trifle, but not bad."

"What is your opinion," asked Lavretsky, "is he a good musician?"

"I think he has a great gift for music; but so far he hasn't taken it up seriously."

"Well, and as a man, would you call him good?"

Liza laughed and cast a swift glance at Fyodor Ivanich.

"What an odd thing to ask!" she cried, pulling in her line and throwing it out again.

"Why odd? I ask you about him as one who has just arrived in these parts, as a relation."

"A relation?"

"Yes. I happen to be an uncle of yours, I believe?"

"Vladimir Nikolaich has a kind heart," said Liza; "he is clever; *maman* likes him very much."

"Do you like him?"

"He is a nice man; why shouldn't I like him?"

"Ah!" murmured Lavretsky and fell silent. A look of mingled sorrow and scorn flashed across his countenance. His intent gaze disconcerted Liza, but she went on smiling. "Well, God grant they be happy!" he muttered presently, as though to himself, and turned his head aside.

Liza blushed.

"You are mistaken, Fyodor Ivanich," she said; "you shouldn't think.... But don't you like Vladimir Nikolaich?" she asked suddenly.

"No, I don't."

"Why?"

"I believe it's precisely a heart he hasn't got."

The smile left Liza's face.

"You are in the habit of judging people harshly," she said after a lengthy pause.

"I don't think so. What right have I to judge people harshly, when I need indulgence myself? Or have you forgotten that I

am a laughing stock?... Ah yes," he added, "did you keep your promise?"

"What promise?"

"Did you say a prayer for me?"

"Yes, I did, and I say a prayer for you every day. But do not make light of it please."

Lavretsky began to assure Liza that the idea of doing so was far from his mind, and that he had the deepest respect for other people's convictions; then he discoursed upon religion, its place in human history, the significance of Christianity....

"One needs to be a Christian," began Liza, not without a slight effort, "not in order to perceive the divine ... and ... the earthly, but because every man must die."

Lavretsky looked up at Liza in surprise and met her gaze.

"What is that word you have just said!"

"That word is not mine," she replied.

"Not yours.... But what made you speak of death?"

"I don't know. I often think of it."

"Often?"

"Yes."

"One wouldn't believe it, looking at you now: you have such a bright, happy face, you are smiling...."

"Yes, I feel very happy now," Liza answered artlessly.

Lavretsky felt an urge to seize both her hands and give them a hard squeeze....

"Liza, Liza," cried Marya Dmitrievna, "come here. Look at the carp I've caught!"

"I'm coming, *maman*," replied Liza and went up to her, leaving Lavretsky sitting on the willow. "I talk to her as though I had not lived my life already," he mused. Before going, Liza had hung her hat on a twig; Lavretsky gazed at the hat, at its long, slightly crumpled ribbons, with a strange almost affectionate emotion. Liza soon came back and took her place on the raft.

"Why do you think Vladimir Nikolaich has no heart?" she asked after several moments.

"I've told you that I may be mistaken; time will show, however."

Liza became lost in thought. Lavretsky started to talk about his life in Vasilyevskoye, about Mikhalevich, Anton; he felt a need to talk to Liza, to tell her everything that was passing in his heart; she was such a charming, attentive listener; her rare remarks and observations seemed to him so simple and wise. He told her so.

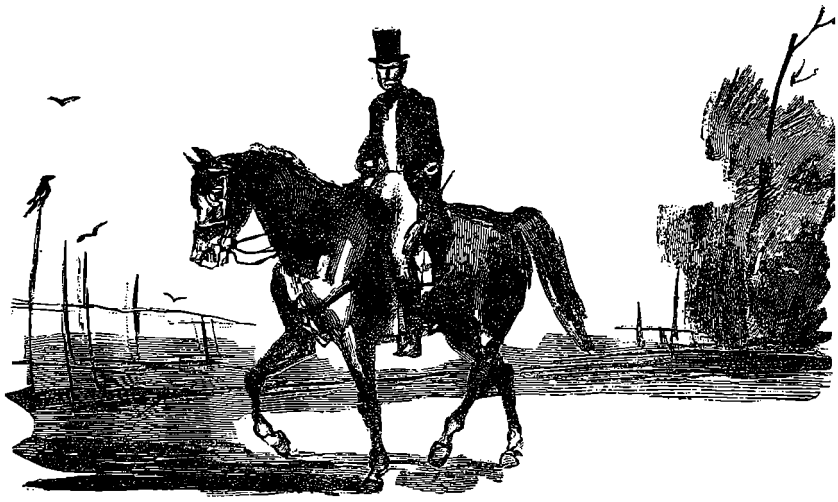
Liza was astonished.

"Really?" she said. "And I was always under the impression that, like my maid Nastya, I had no words *of my own.* She once told her fiancé—'you must find it dull with me; you always talk so nicely to me and I have no words of my own.'"

"And thank God for it!" thought Lavretsky.

XXVII

Meanwhile evening was drawing in, and Marya Dmitrievna declared it was time to go home. The little girls had to be dragged away from the fish-pond and were got ready. Lavretsky announced he would see the guests halfway down the road, and ordered his horse to be saddled. As he was handing Marya Dmitrievna into the carriage, he suddenly remembered Lemm; but the old man was nowhere to be found. He had disappeared as soon as the fishing was over. Anton, with a vigour remarkable in one of his years, slammed the carriage doors and shouted sternly, "Off you go, coachman!" The carriage started off. The back seats were occupied by Marya Dmitrievna and Liza, while the little girls and the maid sat in the front. It was a warm still evening and the windows on both sides were lowered. Lavretsky trotted abreast of the carriage on Liza's side, his hand resting on the door—he had dropped the reins on the neck of his smoothly pacing horse—and now and then exchanged a few words with the young girl. The glow of sunset had faded; night had fallen, but the air seemed to have grown warmer. Marya Dmi-



trievna soon began to doze; the little girls and their maid too fell asleep. The carriage rolled along swiftly and smoothly; Liza leaned forward; the rising moon lighted up her face, the fragrant night breeze fanned her eyes and cheeks. She felt happy. Her hand rested on the carriage door next to Lavretsky's. And he was happy too; carried swiftly along in the still warmth of the night, never taking his eyes off the sweet young face, listening to the young voice whispering melodiously good and simple things, he rode half the way before he was aware of it. Not wishing to wake Marya Dmitrievna, he gave Liza's hand a light squeeze and said: "We're friends now, aren't we?" She nodded; he brought his horse to a stop. The carriage rolled away, swaying and bobbing up and down; Lavretsky turned homeward at a walking pace. The loveliness of the summer night entered his soul; everything around him seemed so suddenly strange, and yet so long and so sweetly familiar; a deep peace rested over everything far and near—and one could see far, although the eye could not fathom much of what it saw; the very peace seemed to be alive with the spring-tide of youth. Lavretsky's horse stepped out, swaying gently from side to side; its

long dark shadow moved along beside it; there was something strangely fascinating in the tramp of its hoofs, something elating and alluring in the ringing cry of the quails. The stars were lost in a luminous haze; a crescent moon shone with a hard radiance: its beams shed a blue lustre across the skies and fell in patches of pearly gold on the filmy clouds drifting by; the crisp night air drew a film of moisture to the eye, spread softly throughout the limbs and flowed freely into the lungs. Lavretsky drank it all in with delight, and he rejoiced in this delight. "We still have a shot in the locker," he thought, "we'll show them...." He did not say who or what.... Then he fell to musing about Liza, thinking that she could hardly be in love with Panshin, that if he had met her under other circumstances—God knows what might have happened; that he agreed with Lemm, though she had no words "of her own." In any case, that was not true —she did have words of her own.... "Do not make light of it" —came back to Lavretsky's mind. He rode on a long while with his head bent low, then drawing himself up he slowly pronounced:

And all that I worshipped I have burnt,
And all I have burnt I now worship....

and whipping up his horse he galloped all the way home.

Dismounting, he took a last look round with an involuntary smile of gratitude. Night—kindly, silent night, lay over the hillsides and valleys; from afar, out of its perfumed depths—one could not say whether it was from heaven or earth—there stole a soft and gentle warmth. Lavretsky sent Liza a last silent greeting and ran up the steps.

The next day passed rather tediously. The morning started with a drizzle. Lemm wore a scowl and his lips compressed ever more tightly, as though he had taken an oath never to open them. On his way to bed Lavretsky took with him a batch of French periodicals, which had lain on his table unopened for more than two weeks. He casually broke open the wrappings and ran his eye down the columns of the newspapers, in which there was nothing new. He was on the point of putting them aside

when he suddenly leaped out of bed as if he had been stung. In an article in one of the newspapers our old acquaintance, Monsieur Jules, imparted to his readers "sad news": the charming, fascinating Muscovite Lady, he wrote, one of the queens of fashion, who adorned Parisian salons, *Madame de Lavretzki* had died almost suddenly, and the tidings thereof—alack, too true—had just reached his, M. Jules' ears. He was—he went on—a friend of the deceased, one might say....

Lavretsky dressed and went out into the garden; morning found him still pacing up and down the same path.

XXVIII

The next morning, over their tea, Lemm asked Lavretsky to let him have the horses to go back to town. "It's time I started work, that is, my lessons," said the old man; "I'm merely wasting my time here." Lavretsky did not reply at once; he appeared abstracted. "All right," he said at length: "I'll go with you myself." Unaided by the servants, grunting and irate, Lemm packed his small suitcase, and tore up and burnt some sheets of music paper. The horses were harnessed. As he came out of his room Lavretsky slipped yesterday's newspaper into his pocket. Lemm and Lavretsky spoke very little all the way, each was preoccupied with his own thoughts and glad the other did not disturb him. They parted rather coolly, too, which is often the case, by the way, among friends in Russia. Lavretsky drove the old man to his little house; the latter got out, took his suitcase, and without offering his friend his hand (he held his luggage in both hands against his chest), without even looking at him, said in Russian: "Good-bye!" "Good-bye," repeated Lavretsky, and told the coachman to take him to his rooms. He had taken rooms in town in case of need. After writing some letters and partaking of a hasty meal, Lavretsky went to the Kalitins. In the drawing room he found only Panshin, who told him that Marya Dmitrievna would soon be coming out and forthwith entered into conversation

with him with the most engaging cordiality. Until that day Panshin had treated Lavretsky condescendingly, if not patronizingly; but Liza, in relating to Panshin her visit to Lavretsky, had spoken of him as an excellent and intelligent man; that was enough: he had to win over that "excellent" man. Panshin launched out with compliments, describing how delighted Marya Dmitrievna's entire family was with Vasilyevskoye, and then, as was his wont, passed glibly to his own person, began to talk about his pursuits, expounded his views on life, the world and government service, passed a few utterances on the future of Russia, opining that the provincial governors should be kept well in hand; made some bantering remarks at his own expense, adding that, by the way, he had been intrusted in St. Petersburg with the task *de populariser l'idée du cadastre.* He spoke at great length, solving all difficulties with nonchalant self-assurance, juggling with weighty administrative and political problems as if they were so many balls.

Expressions such as: "That's what I would do if I were the government"; "you, as a man of intelligence, will readily agree with me," were for ever on his tongue. Lavretsky listened coldly to Panshin's grandiloquence: he did not like this handsome, clever, debonair young man with his illuminating smile, suave voice and prying eyes. Panshin, who was quick of apprehension, soon guessed that his interlocutor was not deriving any particular pleasure from his discourse, and slipped out on some plausible excuse, deciding in his own mind that Lavretsky might be an excellent man, but he was cross-grained, *aigri,* and *en somme* rather ridiculous. Marya Dmitrievna made her appearance attended by Gedeonovsky; then Marfa Timofeyevna and Liza came in, followed later on by the rest of the household; later arrived the music-loving Madame Belenitsyna, a slight little lady with a childishly pretty tired-looking face, wearing a rustling black gown and heavy gold bracelets and with a gaudy fan in her hand; there was her husband too, a chubby florid man with big feet and hands, pale eyelashes and a set smile on his thick lips; his wife never spoke to him in public, but at home, in tender moods, called him her little piggy; Panshin re-

turned; the rooms were full of people and noise. Such a crowd was not to Lavretsky's taste; he was especially irritated by Belenitsyna who kept staring at him through her lorgnette. He would have gone away at once if not for Liza: he wanted to say a word to her in private, but for a long time could not find an opportune moment, and had to content himself with following her in secret delight with his eyes; never had her face looked sweeter and more noble to him. She showed up to advantage beside Belenitsyna. The latter was constantly wriggling in her chair, shrugging her narrow little shoulders, simpering demurely, now narrowing her eyes and then suddenly dilating them. Liza sat still, she looked people squarely in the face and did not laugh at all. The hostess sat down to a game of cards with Marfa Timofeyevna, Belenitsyna and Gedeonovsky, who played a lingering game, continuously made blunders, blinked his eyes and mopped his face with a handkerchief. Panshin wore a melancholy look, expressed himself drily, in gloomy tones pregnant with meaning—for all the world like a thwarted genius—but despite the entreaties of Madame Belenitsyna who flirted with him outrageously, he refused to sing his song: he felt constrained by Lavretsky's presence. Fyodor Ivanich spoke little too; the odd look on his face struck Liza as soon as she saw him: she had a feeling that he had something to tell her, but was afraid to ask him, she knew not why. At last, as she was going into the next room to pour out tea, she involuntarily turned her head in his direction. He immediately followed her out.

"What is the matter with you?" she said, setting the teapot on the samovar.

"Why, have you noticed anything?" he asked.

"You are not the same today you usually are."

Lavretsky bent over the table.

"I have been wanting," he said, "to tell you a piece of news, but it's impossible now. However, you can read the paragraph marked off here in this article," he added, handing her the newspaper he had brought with him. "Please keep this a secret; I will come tomorrow morning."

Liza was mystified.... Panshin appeared in the doorway. She tucked the newspaper into her pocket.

"Have you read Obermann, Elizaveta Mikhailovna?" Panshin enquired in a pensive voice.

Liza murmured something and went upstairs. Lavretsky returned to the drawing room and went up to the card table. Marfa Timofeyevna, flushed with annoyance, her cap-strings fluttering loose, complained to him of her partner, Gedeonovsky, who, she said, was good for nothing.

"Playing cards, you see," she said, "is not so simple as tale-bearing."

The delinquent continued to blink and wipe his face. Liza came in and sat down in a corner; Lavretsky looked at her and she looked at him—and both felt almost awe-struck. He read perplexity and a kind of secret reproach in her face. He could not speak to her, however much he wanted to; to remain with her in the same room as a mere guest among other guests was too painful: he decided to go away. As he took leave of her he managed to repeat that he would come tomorrow, and added that he trusted in her friendship.

"Come," she answered with the same look of perplexity on her face.

Panshin livened up when Lavretsky had gone; he started to give Gedeonovsky advice, paid ironical attention to Madame Belenitsyna and finally sang his song. But with Liza he still spoke and looked as before—meaningly and a little sadly.

Again Lavretsky did not sleep all night; he was not sad, neither was he disturbed, he was all quiescent; but he could not sleep. He did not even recall memories of the past; he simply gazed into what had been his life; his heart beat heavily and measuredly; the hours slipped by, but he did not think of sleep. At times the thought flashed through his mind: "It isn't true, it's all nonsense"—and then he would stop, bow his head, and again begin to review his life.

XXIX

Marya Dmitrievna was none too cordial when Lavretsky called the next morning. "Upon my word, he's made a habit of coming," she thought. She did not care much for him as it was, and Panshin, under whose influence she was, had very insidiously dropped a perfunctory word in his praise the night before. As she did not consider him a guest, and did not think it necessary to entertain a relation, almost one of the family, it came about that in less than half an hour he was walking with Liza in an avenue in the grounds. Lenochka and Shurochka were running about within a few paces of them in the flower garden.

Liza was calm as usual, but more than usually pale. She took out of her pocket the sheet of newspaper folded up small and handed it to Lavretsky.

"It is terrible!" she said.

Lavretsky did not reply.

"But perhaps it isn't true after all," added Liza.

"That is why I asked you not to mention it to anyone."

Liza walked on a little.

"Tell me," she began, "aren't you distressed? Not at all?"

"I don't know myself what I feel," said Lavretsky.

"But you loved her before, didn't you?"

"Yes."

"Very much?"

"Yes."

"And you are not distressed at her death?"

"She died for me before this."

"What you say is sinful.... Don't be angry with me. You call me your friend—a friend may say everything I really feel awful about it... I didn't like the look you had on your face yesterday.... Do you remember complaining against her the other day?—and she perhaps was dead at the time. It is dreadful. It is as though a punishment had been visited on you."

Lavretsky smiled bitterly.

"Do you think so? At any rate I am free now."

Liza shuddered.

"Please, do not talk like that. Of what use is your freedom to you? You should not be thinking of that now, but of forgiveness...."

"I forgave her long ago," broke in Lavretsky with a deprecatory wave of the hand.

"No, not that," replied Liza flushing. "You misunderstand me. You should be seeking forgiveness...."

"From whom?"

"From God. Who can forgive us if not God?"

Lavretsky seized her hand.

"Ah, Elizaveta Mikhailovna, believe me," he cried, "I have been punished enough as it is. I have atoned for everything, believe me."

"You cannot be sure of that," said Liza in a low voice; "you have forgotten quite recently, when you were talking with me—you were not ready to forgive her...."

They walked on in silence.

"How about your daughter?" Liza asked suddenly, coming to a standstill.

Lavretsky started.

"Oh, you needn't worry! I have sent letters out in all directions. The future of my daughter, as you call... as you say... is provided for. Don't worry."

Liza smiled ruefully.

"But you are right," went on Lavretsky, "of what use is my freedom to me? What good is it to me?"

"When did you receive that newspaper?" said Liza, without replying to his question.

"The day after your visit."

"And do you mean... do you mean to say you did not even shed a tear?"

"No. I was dumbfounded; and where were tears to come from? To cry over the past, when it has all been burned out of my heart? Her misdemeanour did not destroy my happiness,



it merely showed me that it never existed. What was there to cry over? Ah well, who knows?—perhaps I might have been more grieved had I received this news a fortnight earlier. . . ."

"A fortnight?" queried Liza. "What could have happened in the last fortnight?"

Lavretsky made no reply, and Liza suddenly coloured deeply.

"Yes, yes, you have guessed," Lavretsky cried suddenly; "during that fortnight I have come to know the value of a pure woman's heart, and my past has receded still further from me. . . ."

Liza was embarrassed and walked slowly towards the flower beds where Lenochka and Shurochka were playing.

"I'm glad I showed you that newspaper," said Lavretsky walking after her. "I've got into the habit of concealing noth-

ing from you, and I hope you will repay me with the same confidence."

"Do you think so?" murmured Liza, stopping. "In that case I should . . . but no! That's impossible!. . ."

"What is it? Tell me, tell me."

"Really, I don't think I ought to. . . . Well," she added, turning to Lavretsky with a smile, "what's the good of half confidences? Do you know, I received a letter today?"

"From Panshin?"

"Yes. . . . How did you know?"

"He has proposed to you?"

"Yes," replied Liza, and looked Lavretsky straight and seriously in the eyes.

Lavretsky in turn looked seriously at Liza.

"Well, and what answer did you give him?" he brought out at last.

"I do not know what to answer," replied Liza, letting her clasped hands fall to her sides.

"Why? You love him, don't you?"

"Yes, I like him; he seems to be a nice man."

"You said the same thing in the same words three days ago. What I want to know is, do you love him with that intense passionate feeling we are accustomed to call love?"

"As *you* understand it—no."

"You are not in love with him?"

"No. But is that essential?"

"What!"

"Mamma likes him," went on Liza; "he is kind; I don't see anything objectionable in him."

"Yet you hesitate?"

"Yes and perhaps—because of you, because of what you said. Do you remember what you said the day before yesterday? But this is weakness. . . ."

"O my child!" cried Lavretsky and his voice shook. "Do not play at cross purposes, do not call weakness what is really the cry of your heart, that does not want to give itself without love. Do not take upon yourself such a fearful responsibility

to this man you do not love and to whom you wish to belong...."

"I do what I'm told, I take nothing upon myself," Liza started to say....

"Do what your heart dictates; it alone will tell you the truth," broke in Lavretsky. "Experience, reason—all that is dust and ashes, idle show! Do not deprive yourself of the greatest, the only happiness this world contains."

"And you say that, Fyodor Ivanich? You yourself married for love—and were you happy?"

Lavretsky threw up his hands.

"Oh, don't talk about me! You simply can't understand what a young, guileless, atrociously brought up boy can mistake for love!... Besides why should I be unfair to myself? I told you just now that I did not know what happiness was.... It's not true! I was happy!"

"I think, Fyodor Ivanich," said Liza in a low voice (when she disagreed with a person she had a habit of dropping her voice; in addition, she was greatly agitated)—"that happiness on earth does not depend on us...."

"But it does, it does, believe me," (he gripped her hands in his; Liza turned pale and looked at him with something akin to fear, but unflinchingly)—"as long as we don't ruin our own lives. For some people a love match may be a misfortune; but not for you, with your steady character, your pure heart! I beseech you, do not marry without love, merely from a sense of duty, self-sacrifice, or anything of that kind.... It is no better than lack of faith, it is as bad as a marriage of convenience, even worse. Believe me—I have the right to say so: I've paid dearly for the right. And if your God...."

Here Lavretsky suddenly became aware that Lenochka and Shurochka were standing near Liza and staring at him agape. He let go of Liza's hands, saying hurriedly: "I beg your pardon," and turned towards the house.

"One thing only I beg of you," he said, coming back again; "do not make a hasty decision, wait a bit, think over what I have told you. Even if you do not believe me, even if you did

decide on a marriage of convenience—you mustn't marry Panshin—he can't be your husband.... You promise not to be in a hurry, don't you?"

Liza wanted to answer Lavretsky, but she did not utter a word—not because she had made up her mind "to be in a hurry," but because her heart beat too violently and a feeling akin to terror took her breath away.

XXX

As he was leaving the Kalitins Lavretsky encountered Panshin; they bowed coldly to each other.

Lavretsky went to his rooms and shut himself in. He was in the grip of emotions he had hardly ever experienced before. Was it so very long ago that he had been in a state of "peaceful stupor"? Had struck bottom, as he had expressed it? What had changed his position? What had brought him up to the surface? A very ordinary, inevitable, though always unexpected contingency—death? Yes; but he was thinking not so much of his wife's death or of his own freedom, as of what answer Liza would give Panshin. He felt that in the last three days he had come to regard her with different eyes; he remembered how, returning home and thinking of her in the silence of the night, he had said to himself: "If only!..." That "if only," which he had applied to the past, the unattainable, had now come to pass, though not as he had envisaged it,—but his freedom alone was not all. "She will obey her mother," he thought, "she will marry Panshin; but even if she does refuse him—what difference will it make to me?" Passing the mirror he glanced at his face and shrugged his shoulders.

The day passed quickly in such ruminations; evening set in. Lavretsky went to the Kalitins. He walked with a hurried step, but his pace slackened as he neared the house. Panshin's droshky stood before the porch. "Come," thought Lavretsky, "I mustn't be an egoist," and he went into the house. He encountered nobody indoors, and there was no sound in the drawing

room; he opened the door and saw Marya Dmitrievna playing picquet with Panshin. Panshin bowed to him in silence, and the hostess exclaimed: "Well, this is unexpected!" and frowned slightly. Lavretsky sat down near her and began to look at her cards.

"Why, do you play picquet?" she asked him in a tone of veiled annoyance, and promptly declared that she had played a wrong hand.

Panshin made a count of ninety and began calmly and politely taking tricks with a sedate and dignified expression of countenance. So might diplomats play; probably this was the way he played in St. Petersburg with some high dignitary in whom he wanted to create a favourable impression of his solidity and matureness. "A hundred and one, a hundred and two, hearts, a hundred and three," his voice droned in measured tones, and Lavretsky could not make out whether it had a ring of reproach in it or self-satisfaction.

"Can I see Marfa Timofeyevna?" he enquired, seeing that Panshin was about to reshuffle with an air of still greater majesty. Not a vestige of the artist was visible in him now.

"I think so. She is in her room upstairs," replied Marya Dmitrievna; "You may enquire."

Lavretsky went upstairs. He found Marfa Timofeyevna at cards too: she was playing Old Maid with Nastasya Karpovna. Roska barked at him; but both the old ladies were delighted to see him; Marfa Timofeyevna especially seemed in excellent spirits.

"Ah, Fedya! Welcome!" she cried; "pray, sit down, my dear. We'll just finish this game. Do you want some jam? Shurochka, get him out the jar of strawberry. Won't you have any? Well, stay as you are; but don't smoke, please; I can't stand your horrid tobacco, and it makes Matross sneeze."

Lavretsky hastened to assure her that he did not have the least desire to smoke.

"Have you been downstairs?" continued the old lady; "who's there? Is Panshin still hanging around? Did you see Liza?

No? She wanted to come here.... Why, here she is—talk of angels."

Liza came into the room and, at sight of Lavretsky, she reddened.

"I have just come for a moment, Marfa Timofeyevna," she began....

"Why for a moment?" interposed the old lady. "Why are all you young maids such a flighty lot? You see I have a visitor—sit down and chat with him, entertain him."

Liza seated herself on the edge of a chair, looked up at Lavretsky—and felt that she must tell him the result of her interview with Panshin. But how was she to do it? She felt both embarrassed and ashamed. She had not known him long, this man who seldom went to church and who took his wife's death so calmly—and here she was confiding her secrets to him.... True, he took an interest in her; she herself trusted him and was attracted to him; and yet she felt ashamed, as though a stranger had walked into her pure maiden's bower. Marfa Timofeyevna came to the rescue.

"Unless you entertain him," she said, "who will, poor fellow? I'm too old for him, he's too clever for me and too old for Nastasya Karpovna—she'll only be content with the young ones."

"What can I do to entertain Fyodor Ivanich?" said Liza. "If he likes I can play him something on the piano," she added irresolutely.

"Splendid; that's a clever girl," said Marfa Timofeyevna. "Go downstairs, my dear; when you're finished, come back; I've gone and been left Old Maid; it's a shame, I must get my revenge."

Liza rose to her feet. Lavretsky followed her out. Descending the staircase, Liza stopped.

"It is rightly said," she began, "that the human heart is full of contradictions. Your example should have daunted me, make me distrust marriage for love, but I...."

"You've refused him?" broke in Lavretsky.

"No; but I haven't consented either. I told him everything, all that I felt, and asked him to wait. Are you satisfied?" she

added with a quick smile, and touching the banister lightly with her hand ran down the stairs.

"What do you want me to play?" she asked, lifting the lid of the piano.

"Whatever you like," replied Lavretsky, sitting down so that he could see her.

Liza began to play and for a long while did not take her eyes off her fingers. At length she glanced up at Lavretsky and stopped playing—his face seemed to her so strange and striking.

"What is the matter with you?" she asked.

"Nothing," he retorted; "I feel very happy; I'm glad for your sake, I'm glad to see you—please go on."

"It seems to me," said Liza after a pause, "that if he really loved me he would not have written that letter; he should have felt that I could not give him an answer now."

"That's not important," observed Lavretsky; "what is important is that you do not love him."

"Don't! How can we talk like this! I keep thinking of your dead wife, and you terrify me."

"Don't you think, Woldemar, my Lizette plays charmingly?" Marya Dmitrievna was saying to Panshin.

"Yes," said Panshin, "very charmingly indeed."

Marya Dmitrievna threw a tender glance at her young partner, but the latter put on a still more momentous and preoccupied air and called fourteen kings.

XXXI

Lavretsky was not a young man; he could not long remain under any illusion as to the feeling he entertained for Liza; he realized finally that day that he loved her. He was not elated at the thought. "Couldn't I think of anything better to do," he communed with himself, "at thirty-five years of age than to be delivering my soul again into a woman's keeping? But Liza is not like *her*; she would not demand degrading sacrifices; she

would not divert me from my studies; she would herself inspire me to hard and honest toil, and we would go hand in hand towards a noble goal. Yes," he wound up his reflections, "that's all very well, but the trouble is she hasn't the least desire to go with me. Didn't she say that I terrify her? But she doesn't love Panshin either.... A poor consolation!"

Lavretsky went back to Vasilyevskoye; but he could not stand more than four days of it there—so tedious did it seem to him. He was, moreover, in a state of suspense: the news announced by M. Jules required corroboration, and he had not received any letters. He returned to town and spent the evening at the Kalitins'. It was not difficult for him to notice that Marya Dmitrievna regarded him with disfavour; but he managed to appease her a little by losing fifteen rubles to her at a game of picquet—and he spent about a half hour almost alone with Liza, despite her mother's admonition the previous evening not to be too familiar with a person—*qui a un si grand ridicule.* He found a change in her—she seemed to be more meditative; she chided him for his absence and enquired whether he would not go on the morrow to Mass (the next day was Sunday).

"Do go," she said, before he could reply; "we will say a prayer together for the peace of *her* soul." Then she added that she did not know what to do—whether she had the right to keep Panshin waiting for her decision any longer.

"Why?" asked Lavretsky.

"Because," she said, "I now have a feeling what that decision will be."

She complained of a headache, and irresolutely holding out the tips of her fingers to Lavretsky, went upstairs to her room.

The following day Lavretsky went to Mass.

Liza was already in the church when he arrived. She noticed him, though she did not turn her head. She prayed fervently, her eyes shone with a gentle light and softly she bowed and lifted her head. He had a feeling that she was praying for him too—and his soul was thrilled with an ineffable tenderness. He was at once happy and a little remorseful. The people standing



sedately around, the dear familiar faces, the solemn chanting, the smell of incense, the long slanting rays of light falling from the windows, the very gloom of the walls and vaulted roof—all this touched his heart. It was a long time since he had been to church, it was long since he had communed with God: even now he uttered no words of prayer—he did not pray even without words—but, for a brief moment, with all his soul, if not his body, he prostrated himself in humble homage to the ground. He remembered how in his childhood he had prayed so long in church until he could feel, as it were, a cool touch on his brow: that, he used to think, is the guardian angel receiving me, placing on me the seal of grace. He looked at Liza.... "Thou hast brought me here," he thought, "touch me, touch my soul." She was still praying softly; her face seemed to him filled with joy; his heart swelled once more with tenderness, and he prayed for peace for another soul and forgiveness for his own....

They met outside on the porch; she greeted him with a look of sunny and tender gravity. The sun threw a bright ra-

diance over the young grass in the churchyard and the gay dresses and kerchiefs of the womenfolk; the bells of neighbouring churches pealed on the air; sparrows twittered on the hedges; Lavretsky stood bareheaded, a smile on his face; a gentle breeze played with the strands of his hair and the ribbons of Liza's hat. He helped Liza and Lenochka, who was with her, into their carriage, gave away all his money to the poor and slowly wended his way homeward.

XXXII

Hard days set in for Fyodor Ivanich. He was in a constant state of fever. Every morning he went himself to the post office, impatiently tore open letters and wrappers, but found nothing either to confirm or disprove the fateful rumour. At times he would be disgusted with himself: "Here am I," he thought, "waiting like a vulture for blood, for certain news of my wife's death!" He called on the Kalitins every day; but there too he felt no easier: the mistress obviously sulked at him, received him out of condescension; Panshin treated him with exaggerated courtesy; Lemm affected an air of misanthropy and barely nodded to him, and worst of all—Liza seemed to be shunning him. When she happened to be left alone with him she was in a state of confusion where she had been all trustfulness before; she was at a loss what to say to him, and he felt embarrassed too. In the space of a few days Liza had become quite different from what he had known her—there was a lurking anxiety, a hitherto unwonted tremulousness in her movements, her voice, in her very laugh. Marya Dmitrievna, wrapped up as she was in herself, suspected nothing; but Marfa Timofeyevna began to keep an observant eye on her favourite. Lavretsky more than once regretted having shown Liza the newspaper: he could not help being aware that there was something offensive in his state of mind to a pure nature. He also believed that the change in Liza was due to her inner conflict, her doubts as to what answer to give

Panshin. Once she brought him a book, a novel of Walter Scott's, which she had asked him to lend her.

"Have you read it?" he asked.

"No, I'm not in a mood for reading just now," she replied, turning to go away.

"Wait a minute: I haven't been alone with you for such a long time. One would think you're afraid of me."

"I am."

"Good heavens, why?"

"I don't know."

Lavretsky said nothing.

"Tell me," he resumed, "have you made up your mind yet?"

"What do you mean?" she said, her eyes downcast.

"You know what I mean...."

Liza suddenly flushed.

"Oh, don't ask me," she broke out warmly, "I don't know anything; I don't even know myself...."

And she was gone.

The next day Lavretsky arrived at the Kalitins' after dinner and found preparations in progress for vespers. In a corner of the dining room, on a square table covered with a clean cloth stood leaning up against the wall small holy images in gilt frames with small tarnished jewels in the nimbus. An old serving man in a grey frock coat and shoes walked slowly and noiselessly across the room, set two wax candles in the slender candlesticks before the icons, crossed himself, bowed, and quietly left the room. The unlighted drawing room was empty. Lavretsky walked about the dining room and enquired whether it was anybody's Saint's Day. He was told in a whisper that no, vespers was to be held at the desire of Elizaveta Mikhailovna and Marfa Timofeyevna; that it had been intended to bring down a wonder-working icon, but it was away ministering to a sick man thirty versts from here. Soon the priest arrived with the deacons. He was a middle-aged man with a large bald patch, and coughed loudly in the hall; the ladies came filing slowly out of the sitting room and went up to receive his blessing;

Lavretsky bowed to them in silence and they returned his bow in silence. The priest tarried a while, coughed once more and enquired in a deep-chested undertone:

"Shall we begin?"

"Please begin, father," said Marya Dmitrievna.

He started to don his robes. A deacon in a surplice asked in an unctuous voice for a hot ember; a scent of incense arose. Maidservants and menservants came in from the hall and huddled before the door. Roska, who had never been downstairs before, suddenly darted into the dining room: they began shooing her out, but she got scared, began to scurry hither and thither and suddenly sat down in her tracks; a footman picked her up and carried her off. The service began. Lavretsky snuggled into a corner; his emotions were strange, almost sad; he could not quite make out what it was he felt. Marya Dmitrievna stood in the forefront, before the chairs; she crossed herself with languid lady-like nonchalance, ever and anon glancing around and then suddenly lifting her eyes ceilingward: she was bored. Marfa Timofeyevna looked anxious; Nastasya Karpovna bowed low to the ground and got up with a discreet kind of rustle; Liza stood as if rooted to the spot, without stirring; the rapt expression of her face alone betrayed that she was praying steadfastly and fervidly. When kissing the cross at the end of the service she likewise kissed the large red hand of the priest. Marya Dmitrievna invited the priest to tea; he doffed his vestments, assumed a secular air and crossed to the drawing room with the ladies. A subdued conversation began. The priest drank four cups of tea, incessantly mopping his bald head with his handkerchief, and related, by the way, that Avoshnikov, the merchant, had made a donation of seven hundred rubles for gilding the "cumpola" of the church, and imparted a reliable remedy for freckles.

Lavretsky contrived a seat near Liza, but she held herself rigidly, almost severely aloof and never glanced at him once. She seemed to be deliberately ignoring him; a kind of cold and solemn fervour appeared to have taken possession of her.

Lavretsky felt an inexplicable urge to smile and say something amusing; but there was perplexity in his heart, and he finally went away mystified.... He felt that there was something in Liza which he could not penetrate.

On another occasion Lavretsky was sitting in the drawing room listening to the specious yarns of Gedeonovsky, when suddenly, he could not say why, he turned his head and intercepted an intent questioning look in Liza's eyes.... It was bent on him, that enigmatic look. Lavretsky thought of it the whole night long. His love was not like a boy's, it was not befitting for him to sigh and pine, and Liza herself did not inspire emotions of that kind; but love has its tortures for every age—and he was spared none of them.

XXXIII

One day Lavretsky, as was his wont, was at the Kalitins' After a sultry day such a lovely evening had set in that Marya Dmitrievna, despite her aversion to draughts, ordered all the windows and doors into the garden to be opened, and declared she would not play cards because it was a shame to play in such weather when one should be enjoying nature. Panshin was the only guest. Stimulated by the beauty of the evening and conscious of a flow of artistic sensations, but not caring to sing before Lavretsky, he chose to read some poetry: he recited well, but not too intelligently and with unnecessary finesse, some poems of Lermontov's (Pushkin had not yet made his return to fashion) and then, as though suddenly ashamed of his effusions, began, apropos of the well-known poem *A Reverie,* to reprove and impugn the younger generation; he did not lose an opportunity to prove how he would change everything his own way if he had the power. "Russia," he said, "has fallen behind Europe; we must catch up with her. It is claimed that we are young—that's nonsense; what we lack is an inventive capacity; K—v himself admits that we did not even invent the mouse-trap.

Consequently, we must perforce borrow from others. We are sick, says Lermontov,—I agree with him; but we are sick because we have only half become Europeans; our only cure was a hair of the dog ("le cadastre" thought Lavretsky). The best intellects among us, *les meilleures têtes*," he went on, "have long been convinced of that; all nations are essentially alike; simply introduce good institutions and the deed's done. I daresay things could be adjusted to prevailing national customs; that's our business, the business of state (he very nearly said statesmen)—of public officers; but, if need be, you needn't worry—the institutions themselves will remake the national customs." Marya Dmitrievna nodded her head complaisantly at everything he said. "There," she thought, "what a clever man is holding forth in my drawing room." Liza sat in silence, leaning against the window; Lavretsky too was silent; Marfa Timofeyevna, who was playing cards in the corner with her companion, muttered something to herself. Panshin paced up and down the room and spoke fluently but in a tone of secret exasperation: he seemed to be upbraiding not a whole generation, but several people of his acquaintance. The first evening notes of a nightingale that had made its nest in a large lilac bush in the Kalitins' garden filled the pauses of his oration; the first stars lit up in the rose-tinted sky over the motionless tops of the limes. Lavretsky rose and began to remonstrate with Panshin; a dispute sprang up. Lavretsky championed the youth and independence of Russia; he was ready to immolate himself and his generation, but he stood up for the new men, their convictions and their aspirations; Panshin retorted irritably and sharply, maintained that intelligent people should change everything, and let himself go to a point when, mindless of his *kammer-junker* status and official career, he called Lavretsky an antiquated conservative, and even hinted—true, very remotely—at the dubious position he occupied in society. Lavretsky did not lose his temper, nor did he raise his voice (it came back to him that Mikhalevich had also called him antiquated—but a Voltairean); and he coolly defeated Panshin on all points. He

proved to him the impracticability of changing things at a bound, of changes from above born in the overweening minds of officialdom, justified neither by a knowledge of the mother country nor a genuine faith in an ideal, even a negative one; he cited his own education, demanded first and foremost a recognition of the popular wisdom in a spirit of abasement,—a spirit without which hardihood cannot challenge error; finally, he did not waive the reproach, which he considered merited, of reckless waste of time and energy.

"That's all very well!" exclaimed Panshin, who was by this time thoroughly annoyed; "now that you've come back to Russia—what do you intend to do?"

"Plough the land," replied Lavretsky, "and try to plough it as well as possible."

"Very commendable, no doubt," rejoined Panshin; "I've been told you have been very successful in that direction; but you must allow that not everybody is fitted for that kind of pursuit. . . ."

"Une nature poétique," threw in Marya Dmitrievna, "certainly cannot plough the land *et puis* it is your vocation, Vladimir Nikolaich, to do everything *en grand."*

This was too much even for Panshin: he looked crestfallen and changed the subject. He tried to turn the talk on the beauty of the starry sky, the music of Schubert—but the conversation flagged; he finally proposed to Marya Dmitrievna a game of picquet. "What! On such a night?" she remonstrated feebly, but nevertheless ordered the cards to be brought in.

Panshin broke open a new pack with a loud snap, while Liza and Lavretsky, as though of one accord, got up and sat down near Marfa Timofeyevna. They both felt suddenly so happy, that they were even a little afraid of remaining alone together—they were also aware that the embarrassment of the last few days had vanished never to return. The old lady patted Lavretsky stealthily on the cheek, winked slyly, nodded her head several times and said in a whisper: "You have brought that wiseacre down a peg, thanks." A hush descended on the room; the only sound was the faint crackling of the wax

candles and the occasional tap of a hand on the table, an exclamation or a count of score—and the song of the nightingale, audaciously loud and sweet, pouring in a cascade through the open casement together with the dewy coolness of the night.

XXXIV

Liza had not spoken a word during the dispute between Lavretsky and Panshin, but had followed it closely and was all for Lavretsky. For politics she had very little interest; but the supercilious tone of the worldly official (he had never let himself go like that before) repelled her; his contempt for Russia shocked her. It had never entered Liza's mind that she was a patriot; but she felt at home with Russian people; the Russian habit of mind delighted her; she would unassumingly talk for hours on end with the peasant overseer of her mother's estate when he came to town, and talk to him as an equal, without a trace of superiority. Lavretsky felt all this: he would not have bothered to answer Panshin himself; what he had said was meant for Liza alone. They had not spoken to each other, their eyes had rarely met; but both of them realized that they had become close-knit that evening, that they liked and disliked the same things. On one point only were they at variance, but Liza cherished a secret hope to bring him to God. They sat beside Marfa Timofeyevna and seemed to be following the game; they were indeed following the game—but meanwhile their hearts beat high within them, and nothing was lost on them: for them it was the nightingale sang and the stars shone and the trees whispered softly as if lulled by summer's languor and summer's warmth. Lavretsky gave himself up entirely to the feeling that flooded his soul—and rejoiced in it; but no word can convey what was passing in the pure heart of the maiden: it was a mystery to herself; let it then remain a mystery for all. No one knows, nobody has ever seen nor will ever see how the seed, born to live and flower, swells and ripens in the bosom of the earth.

Ten o'clock struck. Marfa Timofeyevna went upstairs with Nastasya Karpovna; Lavretsky and Liza crossed the room, stood at the open door leading into the garden, looked out into the darkness, then at one another, and smiled; they had a feeling like taking hands and talking to their heart's content. They went back to Marya Dmitrievna and Panshin who had not yet finished their game of picquet. At length the last king was called, and the hostess rose sighing and groaning from her cushions in the easy-chair; Panshin took his hat, kissed Marya Dmitrievna's hand, observed that some people were lucky to go to sleep if they wanted or enjoy the lovely night whereas he had to sit up till morning over some stupid papers, bowed coldly to Liza (he had not expected to be asked to wait when he made his proposal—and was therefore cross with her) and left the house. Lavretsky followed him. They parted at the gate. Panshin waked his coachman by poking the end of his stick into his neck, took his seat and rode off. Lavretsky did not feel like going home: he walked into the open country, leaving the town behind him. The night was quiet and clear, though moonless; Lavretsky wandered for a long time through the dewy grass; he came across a narrow path; he took it; it led him up to a long fence, to a wicket; he pushed it, half unwittingly; the gate creaked and swung open, as though it had been expecting the touch of his hand. Lavretsky found himself in a garden, took several paces up a lime avenue and suddenly came to a stop in astonishment: he recognized the Kalitins' garden.

He quickly stepped into the dark shadows of a hazel clump and stood a long time without stirring, wondering and shrugging his shoulders.

"This is not mere chance!" he thought.

All was hushed around; not a sound reached him from the house. He walked on cautiously. At a bend in the avenue the whole house suddenly came into view; all was in darkness save for a glimmer of light in two upper windows: in Liza's room a candle was burning behind a white curtain, and in Marfa Timofeyevna's bedroom a little lamp glowed red before the icon casting a soft sheen on the gilded frame; below, the door leading

onto the balcony gaped wide open. Lavretsky sat down on a wooden garden seat, propped his face in his hand and gazed at the door and at Liza's window. A clock in town struck the hour of midnight; a little clock in the house shrilly tinkled twelve; the night watchman played a tattoo on his board. Lavretsky thought of nothing, expected nothing; he was glad to feel himself near Liza, to sit in her garden, on the seat she had sat on many a time.... The light in Liza's room vanished. "Good night, my dearest girl," whispered Lavretsky, without stirring from his seat, his eyes fastened on the darkened window.

A light suddenly appeared in a window of the ground floor, moved to another, then to a third.... Somebody was walking through the rooms with a candle. "Can it be Liza? Impossible!" Lavretsky rose from his seat.... He caught a glimpse of a well-known face—Liza came into the drawing room. In a white gown, with braided tresses hanging over her shoulders, she stepped quietly up to the table, bent over it, put down the candle and began looking for something; then turning her face towards the garden she approached the open door and stood on the threshold, a slim white-clad figure. Lavretsky shivered violently.

"Liza!" an almost inaudible whisper broke from his lips.

She started and peered into the darkness.

"Liza!" repeated Lavretsky more loudly and came out of the shadows.

Liza thrust her neck out in alarm and recoiled. She had recognised him. He called her a third time and stretched out his arms to her. She came away from the door and stepped into the garden.

"You?" she murmured; "you here?"

"I... I... hear me out," whispered Lavretsky, and grasping her hand he led her to the seat.

She followed him unresistingly; the pallor of her face, her fixed gaze, her every gesture expressed unutterable astonishment. Lavretsky made her sit down and stood facing her.

"I did not think of coming here," he began; "I was drawn... I... I... I love you," he uttered in involuntary dismay.

Liza looked up at him slowly; she seemed only now to have become aware of where she was and what was taking place.

She wanted to get up, could not, and buried her face in her hands.

"Liza," murmured Lavretsky; "Liza," he repeated, and went down on his knees at her feet....

A slight tremor shook her shoulders, the fingers of her pale hands pressed still closer to her face.

"What is the matter?" murmured Lavretsky, and he heard a subdued sob. His heart beat madly.... He knew the meaning of those tears. "Can it be that you love me?" he whispered, and touched her knees.

"Get up," he heard her say; "get up, Fyodor Ivanich. What are we doing?"

He got up and sat down beside her. She was no longer weeping and regarded him attentively with her wet eyes.

"I'm frightened; what are we doing?" she faltered.

"I love you," he murmured once more; "I am prepared to give all my life to you."

She shuddered again as if she had been stung, and lifted her eyes to the heavens.

"It is all in God's hands," she said.

"But you love me, Liza? We shall be happy?"

She dropped her eyes; he drew her gently to him, and her head sank on his shoulder.... He inclined his head and touched her pale lips with his own.

Half an hour later Lavretsky was standing at the garden gate. He found it locked and was obliged to vault the fence. He returned to the town and walked through the sleeping streets. A sense of immense unhoped-for happiness filled his soul; all his doubts were at rest. "Begone, dim phantom of the past!" he thought; "she loves me, she will be mine." Suddenly the air above his head seemed to be filled with a burst of exquisite triumphant sound; he stopped: the strains rose still more sublime, sweeping on in a mighty flood of melody—and all the vastness of his joy seemed to speak and sing in the throbbing music. He looked round him; the sounds were floating from two upper windows of a small house.

"Lemm!" cried Lavretsky, and ran towards the house. "Lemm! Lemm!" he repeated loudly.

The sounds died away, and the figure of the old man in a dressing robe, his chest exposed and hair dishevelled, appeared at the window.

"Aha!" he uttered with dignity; "it is you?"

"Christopher Fyodorich, what glorious music! For God's sake, let me in."

Without uttering a word the old man, with a majestic flourish of the arm, dropped the key of the street door from the window. Lavretsky took the stairs at a bound, rushed into the room and up to Lemm; but the latter imperiously waved him to a chair, saying abruptly in Russian: "Sit, listen," sat down himself to the piano, looked proudly and sternly about him, and began to play. It was long since Lavretsky had heard anything of the kind: the tender passionate melody gripped the heart from the very first note; it was all aglow, languishing with the fire of inspiration, joy and beauty; it rose and melted on the air; it spoke of everything that is precious, unutterable and hallowed on earth; it breathed of immortal sadness, and ascended dying to the heavenly spheres. Lavretsky drew himself up and stood pale and chilled with rapture. The music seemed to clutch at his heart-strings, still quivering with the tumult of new-found love; it pulsated with love itself. "Again," he whispered as the last chord died down. The old man threw him an eagle glance, tapped his chest with his hand, saying slowly in his own tongue: "I have done this, for I am a great musician," and he played his wonderful composition again. There were no candles in the room; the beams of a climbing moon fell athwart the windows; the soft air was vibrant with sound; the poor little room seemed a holy place and noble and inspired loomed the old man's head in the silvery twilight. Lavretsky went up to him and embraced him. At first Lemm did not respond to his embrace, he even repulsed him with his elbow; for a long time he sat motionless, with the same stern, almost surly expression and only mumbled twice: "Aha!" At last his transfigured countenance relaxed, and in



response to Lavretsky's ardent congratulations he first smiled faintly, then burst into tears, sobbing weakly like a child.

"It is remarkable," he said, "that you should have come just at this moment; but I know, I know everything."

"You know everything?" queried Lavretsky, taken aback.

"You heard what I said," replied Lemm; "Didn't you realize that I know everything?"

Till daybreak Lavretsky could not fall asleep: he sat on his bed all night. And Liza too did not sleep: she was praying.

XXXV

The reader is acquainted with Lavretsky's childhood and upbringing; we will now say a few words about Liza's education. She was ten when her father died; but he had not devoted much time to her. Overwhelmed with business worries, constant-

ly preoccupied with schemes for the advancement of his fortune, choleric, brusque and impatient, he gave money ungrudgingly for teachers, governesses, clothes and other requirements of his children; but he detested having "to dandle the squalling brats," as he put it; indeed he had very little time to dandle them—he worked, attended to business, slept little, played cards once in a while, then back to work again; he compared himself to a horse harnessed to a threshing machine. "Yes, my life has run out all too quickly," he muttered on his death-bed with a bitter smile on his parched lips. Marya Dmitrievna did not devote very much more time to Liza, than her husband had done, although she had boasted to Lavretsky that she had brought up the children all by herself: she dressed her up like a doll, patted her on the head before visitors and called her to her face a clever little girl and a darling, and that was all: a constant attention was too much for the indolent lady. During her father's lifetime Liza was in the custody of her governess, a Mademoiselle Moreau from Paris, and when he died she was placed into the charge of Marfa Timofeyevna. Marfa Timofeyevna the reader knows; Mademoiselle Moreau was a shrivelled diminutive creature with little bird-like ways and bird's brains. In her youth she had led a very gay life, but in approaching old age had retained only two passions—sweetmeats and cards. When she was full-fed, not playing cards or chattering, her face would become like a death-mask: there she would be—sitting, looking, breathing, and yet it was obvious that her head was innocent of any thoughts. You would not even say she was kind-hearted: there is no such thing as a kind-hearted bird. Whether it was due to a frivolously spent youth, or to the air of Paris which she had inhaled from childhood, but she was infected with a kind of cheap universal scepticism which found vent in the commonplace expression: "*tout ca c'est des bêtises.*" She spoke a solecistic but pure Parisian patois, did not gossip and had no caprices—what more could one desire of a governess? She exercised very little influence on Liza; all the more powerful was the influence on the child of her nurse Agafya Vlasyevna.

This woman's history was most interesting. She came of peasant stock; at the age of sixteen she was married to a muzhik; but she was remarkably unlike her peasant sisters. Her father had been a bailiff on the estate for twenty years, had made a lot of money and pampered her. She was an exceedingly beautiful maid, the queen of the parish, clever, bold and with a tongue in her head. Her master, Dmitry Pestov, Marya Dmitrievna's father, a quiet modest man, saw her once at threshing time, spoke to her, and fell passionately in love with her. Very soon she became a widow; Pestov, though he was a married man, took her into his house and dressed her like a lady. Agafya quickly adapted herself to her new role, as if she had never lived otherwise. She waxed fair and plump; her arms beneath their muslin sleeves grew as "floury white" as those of a merchant's wife; the samovar was never taken off the table; she disdained to wear anything but silks and velvets and slept on feather beds. This blissful state of things went on for five years, and then Dmitry Pestov died; his widow, who was a merciful mistress, out of regard for the memory of her late husband, was loath to deal harshly with her rival, the more so that Agafya had always kept her proper distance; she married her, however, to a cow-herd and banished her out of sight. Three years passed. One sultry summer day the mistress visited her cattle-farm. Agafya served her such delicious cool cream, was so demure, neat, cheerful and contented that her mistress forgave her and admitted her to the house; within six months she had grown so attached to her that she appointed her housekeeper and gave over to her the management of the entire household. Agafya rallied, grew plump and fair once more; she had her mistress' implicit trust. Thus elapsed another five years. And then Agafya came to grief again. Her husband, whom she had elevated to the position of footman, took to drink, was frequently missing from home and ended by stealing six of the mistress' silver spoons, which he secreted for the time being in his wife's coffer. This came to light. He was restored to cow-herd and Agafya fell from her high estate; she was not banished from the house, but humbled to the po-

sition of needle-woman and made to wear a kerchief on her head instead of a lace cap. To everybody's surprise Agafya meekly bent her head before the storm. She was over thirty at the time, all her children were dead and her husband did not live long. It was time she came to her senses; and come to her senses she did. She became very taciturn and religious, never missed a single matin's service nor a single mass, and gave away all her fine clothes. She spent fifteen years quietly, meekly, staidly, quarrelling with nobody and putting up with everything. If insulted she would merely bow meekly and be grateful for the homily. Her mistress had long forgiven her, and restored her to her good graces, and had even bestowed her own cap as a gift to her; but Agafya would not discard her kerchief and always wore a dark dress; and after her mistress' death she became still more quiet and humble. A Russian is easily prone to fear and affection; but one cannot easily win his respect: it is not yielded soon or without discrimination. For Agafya everybody in the house had a great respect; nobody ever so much as mentioned previous lapses, as though they had been interred together with the old master.

When Kalitin became Marya Dmitrievna's husband it was his intention to place Agafya in charge of the household; but she could not be persuaded "for fear of temptation"; when he raised his voice at her she bowed humbly and left the room. Kalitin was no fool at sizing up people; he sized up Agafya too and did not forget her. When he moved to town, he gave her, on her own acquiescence, the place of nurse to Liza, who was then getting on for five.

Liza at first was scared by the stern and grave-looking countenance of her new nurse, but she soon got used to her and grew to love her very dearly. She was herself a grave child; she had something of the starkly defined features of her father; only her eyes were not like his; they had a look of gentle regard and kindness rarely to be found in children. She did not care for dolls, her laughter was neither loud nor long, and she bore herself sedately. Hers was not habitually a thoughtful cast of mind, but she never lacked food for thought: after a

brief silence she would usually put a question to a grown-up which showed that her mind had been busy on some new impression. She stopped lisping very early and spoke quite clearly when she was three years of age. She feared her father; her feelings towards her mother were indeterminate: she neither feared her nor displayed any signs of affection for her; she displayed no outward signs of affection for that matter to Agafya either, though she was the only person she loved. Agafya was inseparable from her. The two made an odd sight together. Agafya, clothed all in black, with a dark kerchief on her head, her wan face wax-like but still beautiful and expressive, would be sitting erect, knitting a stocking, while Liza sat at her feet in a little armchair, likewise engaged in her little task or listening gravely with upraised clear eyes to what Agafya was telling her; and Agafya did not relate fairy tales, but in slow and even tones told her about the life of the Holy Virgin, the lives of hermits, saints and martyrs and holy men and women, told her how the saints lived in the wilderness, how they sought salvation, suffered hunger and privation and did not stand in awe of kings but confessed Christ; how the birds of the air brought them meat and the beasts of the field obeyed them; how flowers sprang up where their blood had been shed. "Wallflowers?" Liza once asked—she was very fond of flowers.... Agafya spoke to Liza gravely and humbly conscious, as it were, that it was not for her to be uttering words so sublime and holy. Liza hung upon her lips—and the image of an all-powerful omniscient God stole with a sweet power into her soul, filling it with pure and reverent awe, while Christ became a near, an intimate presence, something almost kindred; Agafya taught her to pray as well. Sometimes she would rouse Liza early at daybreak, dress her hurriedly and steal away with her to morning service: Liza would follow her on tip-toe with bated breath; the chill and dusk of early morn, the cold and vacant church, the very secrecy of these sudden absences, the stealthy coming back to bed—all this curious mixture of the forbidden, the strange and holy thrilled the child to the depths of her soul. Agafya never chided any one and did not scold Liza for

being fractious. When displeased she was always silent, and Liza knew what that silence meant; with the quick sagacity of a child she also understood when she was annoyed with others—with Marya Dmitrievna or Kalitin himself. Agafya had care of Liza for over three years, when Mademoiselle took her place; the light-headed Frenchwoman, however, with her jejune manners and exclamatory *"tout ça c'est des bêtises,"* could not replace her dear nurse in Liza's affections: the seeds had struck root. Besides, though Agafya no longer attended Liza, she was still in the house and often saw her charge, who was still true to her.

Agafya, however, did not get on with Marfa Timofeyevna when the latter came to live in the Kalitins' house. The touchy and self-willed old lady did not like the grave and dignified mien of this former peasant woman. Agafya set out on a pilgrimage and did not come back. There were dark rumours that she had retired to a hermitary of the Raskolniks. But the mark she left in Liza's heart was indelible. She continued to attend mass which she looked forward to as a holiday, prayed with relish, with a sort of restrained and bashful fervour which was a source of secret wonder to Marya Dmitrievna; Marfa Timofeyevna too, although she never restricted Liza's freedom in any way, tried to moderate her zeal and dissuade her from making too many prostrations—she did not consider it fitting in a girl of noble family. Liza studied well, that is diligently; she was not blessed with particularly brilliant abilities or great intellect; she learnt by dint of hard work. She played the piano well, but only Lemm knew what that cost her. She did not read much; she had "no words of her own" but she had thoughts of her own and went her own way. Not in vain was she her father's daughter: he, too, had never asked people what to do. And so she grew up, quietly, unhurriedly, till she reached the age of nineteen. She was very charming, without knowing it. Her every movement was full of unstudied, somewhat awkward grace; her voice had the silvery tone of untouched youth, the slightest pleasurable sensation brought an engaging smile to her lips, and lit up her eyes with a deep and caressing light.

Imbued with a keen sense of duty, a fear of hurting anyone, with a heart kind and gentle, she loved everybody and no one in particular; God alone she loved fervidly, timidly, tenderly. Lavretsky was the first to disturb the even tenor of her life.

Such was Liza.

XXXVI

The next day, a little after eleven in the morning, Lavretsky went to the Kalitins. On the way he met Panshin who galloped past him on horseback, pulling his hat down to his very eyebrows. At the Kalitins' he was not received—for the first time since his acquaintance with them. Marya Dmitrievna was "resting"—the footman announced; "the mistress" had a headache. Marfa Timofeyevna and Elizaveta Mikhailovna were not at home. Lavretsky strolled about the garden in the faint hope of meeting Liza, but he saw no one. He came back in two hours to be told the same thing by the footman who eyed him askance. Lavretsky thought it unseemly to call a third time in one day, and decided to go to Vasilyevskoye where he had matters to attend to. On the way he made plans, each more sanguine than the other; but when he arrived at his aunt's little village his spirits drooped; he started a conversation with Anton; as luck would have it the old man was full of dismal reminiscences. He told Lavretsky how Glafira Petrovna had bitten her own hand before she died—and, after a pause, added with a sigh: "every man, my dear master, is destined to devour hisself." It was late when Lavretsky journeyed back to town. The strains of yesterday's music haunted him, and the image of Liza rose to his mind in all its gentle clearness; he was thrilled at the thought that she loved him, and it was with a mind at rest and a feeling of happiness that he rode up to his town house.

The first thing that assailed him on coming into the hall was a smell of patchouli which he loathed; here too stood tall travelling trunks and suit-cases. The face of his valet who came running out to meet him struck him as odd. Without stopping

to analyse his impressions he crossed the threshold of the drawing room.... From the sofa there rose to meet him a lady in a black silk dress with flounces who, raising a cambric handkerchief to her pale face, advanced a few steps, bent an immaculately coiffured perfumed head—and fell at his feet.... Then only did he recognize her: that lady was his wife.

He caught his breath.... He leaned up against the wall. ..

"Theodore, do not turn me away!" she said in French, and her voice was like a knife-thrust at his heart.

He stared at her vacantly, but nevertheless had a momentary impression that she had grown whiter and more obese.

"Theodore!" she resumed, lifting up her eyes now and then and carefully wringing her beautiful hands with their rosy polished fingernails; "Theodore, I have wronged you, deeply wronged you—nay, I am a wicked woman, but please hear me out; I am racked by remorse; I have become a burden to myself, I could no longer endure my position; how often I was on the point of appealing to you, but I was afraid to incur your anger; I have made up my mind to break with the past ... *puis j'ai été si malade*—I was so ill," she added, passing her hand over her brow and cheek—"I took advantage of the rumours about my death to give it all up; without resting day or night I hastened hither; I hesitated long before I could summon up courage to appear before you, my judge—*paraître devant vous, mon juge*; but I fought down my tremors, remembering how kind you always were; I found out your address in Moscow. Believe me," she went on, slowly getting up from the floor and sitting down on the edge of an armchair, "the thought of death has often been in my mind, and I would not shrink from that awful step—ah, life is merely an insufferable burden to me now!—but the thought of my daughter, my little Ada, arrested my hand; she is here, she is asleep in the other room, poor child! She is tired—you will see her; she, at any rate, is guiltless before you; oh, I am so miserable, so miserable!" cried Madame Lavretskaya and broke into tears.

Lavretsky came to himself at last; he moved away from the wall and turned towards the door.

"You are going?" cried his wife in tones of despair; "O, how cruel! Without uttering a word, or even a reproach.... This contempt is unendurable, it is terrible!"

Lavretsky stopped.

"What do you want me to say?" he uttered in an expressionless voice.

"Nothing, nothing," she broke in hastily; "I know that I have no claim to anything; I am not bereft of my senses, I assure you; I have no hope, I dare not hope that you will forgive me; I venture only to beg that you command me what to do, where to live? I will obey your commands, whatever they be, like a slave."

"I have no commands to give you," replied Lavretsky in the same lifeless tones; "you know that it is all over between us... now more than ever. You may live wherever you please; and if your allowance is insufficient...."

"Oh, do not utter such dreadful words," broke in Varvara Pavlovna; "spare me, at least... at least for this mite's sake...." saying which she ran precipitately into the next room and instantly returned with a very elegantly dressed little girl in her arms. Long fair locks fell over her pretty rosy little face, her big, dark, sleepy eyes; she smiled and blinked at the light, leaning a dimpled little hand on her mother's neck.

"*Ada, vois, c'est ton père,*" murmured Varvara Pavlovna smoothing the curls back from her eyes and kissing her; "*prie le avec moi.*"

"*C'est ça, papa*?" lisped the child.

"*Oui, mon enfant, n'est ce pas, que tu l'aimes?*"

This was too much for Lavretsky.

"In what melodrama is there a scene exactly like this?" he muttered and went out.

Varvara Pavlovna stood stock-still for some moments, gave a slight shrug of her shoulders, carried the little girl into the next room, undressed her and put her to bed. She then took up a book, sat down by the lamp, waited for about an hour and went to bed herself.

"*Eh bien, madame*?" queried her maid, a Frenchwoman she had brought with her from Paris, as she was unlacing her corset.

"*Eh bien, Justine,*" she replied; "he's much older, but I believe he is just as kind as he was. Give me my gloves for the night, lay out my grey gown with the high collar for tomorrow; and don't forget the mutton chops for Ada.... I daresay it will be a job to get them here; but we must try."

"A la guerre, comme à la guerre," retorted Justine, and put out the candle.

XXXVII

For more than two hours Lavretsky wandered about the streets of the town. The night he had spent in the outskirts of Paris came back to his mind. His heart was rent with pain and his head, dull and stunned, whirled with the same dark, senseless, furious thoughts. "She is alive, she is back," he whispered in constantly recurring bewilderment. He felt that he had lost Liza. He fumed with rage; this crushing blow had come like a bolt out of the blue. How could he be so credulous as to believe that drivelling article, that wretched rag of a paper? "Well, say I didn't believe it," he reflected, "what difference would it make? I would not have known that Liza loves me; she would not have known it either." He could not shake off the image, the voice, the eyes of his wife... and he cursed himself, cursed the whole world.

Faint with weariness and pain he came before dawn to Lemm. For a long time no one responded to his knocking; at length the old man's head appeared at a window in a nightcap, looking sour and shrunken and utterly unlike the inspired and impressive visage which twenty-four hours ago had surveyed Lavretsky majestically from the height of its sublime artistry.

"What is it?" asked Lemm; "I cannot play for you every night, I've taken a decoction." Lavretsky's face must have looked peculiar, for the old man cupped his hand to his eyes, gave his late visitor a close scrutiny and opened the door.

Lavretsky came into the room and sank into a chair; the old man stood in front of him, drawing his frayed gaudy dressing robe about him, shivering and gnawing his lips.

"My wife's come," said Lavretsky; he raised his head and suddenly broke into a mirthless laugh.

Lemm looked dumbstruck, but he did not even smile; he only drew his robe closer about him.

"Of course, you didn't know," went on Lavretsky; "I had imagined.... I read in a newspaper that she was dead."

"O-oh, you read that not long ago?" asked Lemm.

"Not long ago."

"O-oh," reiterated the old man, lifting his eyebrows. "And she is here now?"

"Yes. She is at my house; I... I'm a luckless man."

He smiled bitterly.

"You're a luckless man," repeated Lemm slowly.

"Christopher Fyodorich," began Lavretsky, "will you deliver a note for me?"

"Hm. May I know to whom?"

"To Elizave...."

"Ah, yes, yes, I understand. All right. And when has it got to be delivered?"

"Tomorrow, as early as possible."

"Hm. I can send Catherine, my cook. No, I'll take it myself."

"And you will bring me an answer?"

"Yes, I will."

Lemm heaved a sigh.

"Yes, my poor young friend; you are indeed a luckless young man."

Lavretsky wrote Liza a few words: he told her of his wife's arrival, asked her to let him see her—then threw himself down on the narrow sofa and turned his face to the wall; the old man lay down on his bed, tossing restlessly and coughing, and drinking his decoction in gulps.

Morning came, and they both got up. They looked at each other with strange eyes. Lavretsky at that moment felt like doing away with himself. Catherine the cook brought them some bad coffee. The clock struck eight. Lemm put on his hat, and saying that he gave his lesson at the Kalitins' at ten o'clock but would invent a plausible excuse, he set out. Lavretsky flung him-

self again on the little sofa and grim mirth stirred anew in the depths of his soul. He thought of how his wife had driven him out of the house; he imagined Liza's position, closed his eyes and clasped his hands behind his head. At last Lemm came back and brought him a scrap of paper on which Liza had written in pencil: "We cannot meet today; perhaps tomorrow evening. Farewell." Lavretsky drily and absent-mindedly thanked Lemm and went home.

He discovered his wife over her breakfast; Ada, with her head all in ringlets, in a little white frock with blue ribbons, was eating mutton chops. Varvara Pavlovna rose at once when Lavretsky came in, and stepped forward to meet him with an air of submissiveness. He asked her to follow him into the study, locked the door from inside and began to pace up and down the room; she sat down demurely with folded hands and followed his movements with eyes that were still beautiful, though lightly touched up.

Lavretsky could not force himself to speak for some length of time; he realized that he had no control over himself; he could clearly see that Varvara Pavlovna was not at all afraid of him and merely pretended to look as though she would swoon at any moment.

"Look here, madam, he began at length, breathing heavily and clenching his teeth; "there is no need to deceive each other; I do not believe in your penitence; even if it were sincere it would be impossible for me to go back to you, live with you."

Varvara Pavlovna sat close-lipped and narrow-eyed.

"It is aversion," she was thinking; "it's all over! I am not even a woman in his eyes."

"Impossible," Lavretsky repeated, buttoning his coat right up. "I don't know what made you come here: probably you have run out of money."

"Ah! You insult me," whispered Varvara Pavlovna.

"However, you are still—unfortunately—my wife. I cannot really turn you out... now this is the proposal I want to make to you. You may, this very day if you choose, go to Lavriky; live there; there's a good house there, as you know; you will

get whatever you need in addition to your allowance.... Do you agree?"

Varvara Pavlovna raised an embroidered handkerchief to her face.

"I have told you already," she said with a nervous twitch of the lips, "that I will agree to everything you think fit to do with me; now it's only left for me to ask you—will you at least let me thank you for your magnanimity?"

"Let's do without thanks, please—it's better that way," put in Lavretsky hurriedly. "And so," he went on, making for the door, "I can count on...."

"Tomorrow I will be at Lavriky," murmured Varvara Pavlovna, rising respectfully from her seat. "But Fyodor Ivanich... (She did not call him Theodore any more.)

"What do you want?"

"I know I have not yet earned forgiveness, but may I at least hope that in time...."

"Eh, Varvara Pavlovna," interrupted Lavretsky, "you're a clever woman, and I'm no fool either; I know that you don't care a scrap about that. I've forgiven you long ago, but there has always been an abyss between us."

"You will find me submissive," rejoined Varvara Pavlovna bowing her head. "I have not forgotten my sin; it would not surprise me to know that you were even glad to hear of my death," she put in meekly, pointing to the newspaper which Lavretsky had left on the table.

Fyodor Ivanich started; the article had been marked in pencil. Varvara Pavlovna regarded him with a look of still deeper humiliation. She was superb at that moment. The grey Parisian gown clung to her lissom, girlish-looking figure; her shapely tender neck encircled in a white collar, the gentle rise and fall of her bosom, the arms bare of bracelets or rings—her whole figure, from her sleek head to the tip of a barely visible shoe, was so elegant...

Lavretsky glared at her in hatred, very nearly cried: "Bravo!" very nearly brought his fist down on her temple, and turned on his heel. An hour later he was on his way to Vasilyevskoye,

and two hours later Varvara Pavlovna had hired the smartest carriage in town, put on a simple straw hat with a black veil and a modest mantle, left Ada to Justine's care and repaired herself to the Kalitins: from the information she had elicited from the servants she learnt that her husband visited them every day.

XXXVIII

The day Lavretsky's wife arrived in the town of O— was a cheerless day for him and a dreary day for Liza too. She had barely gone downstairs and greeted her mother when the sound of horses' hoofs was heard outside, and she saw with trepidation that Panshin was riding into the courtyard. "He has come so early in order to get his answer," she thought, and was not mistaken; after sauntering a while in the drawing room he suggested they should go out into the garden where he demanded to know his fate. Plucking up courage Liza told him that she could not be his wife. He heard her out, standing sideways with his hat drawn down over his forehead; politely, but in a changed voice, he asked her whether that was her last word and whether he had given any ground for her changing her mind, then pressed his hand to his eyes, heaved a short fitful sigh and drew his hand away again.

"I did not want to follow the beaten path," he said in a hollow voice; "I thought to choose a helpmeet after my own heart; but obviously it is willed otherwise. Farewell, fond dream!" He made a low bow to Liza and turned back to the house.

She hoped he would leave at once; but he went into Marya Dmitrievna's room and stayed there close on an hour. On leaving, he said to Liza: *"votre mère vous appelle; adieu a jamais. ."* mounted his horse and set off at a canter from the house steps. Liza found Marya Dmitrievna in tears: Panshin had apprized her of his fate.

"What have you done to me, what have you done?" was how the distressed widow commenced her plaint. "Whom do you want? Isn't he good enough for you? He's a *kammer-junker*! He's not a fortune-hunter! In St. Petersburg he could

marry any maid of Honour if he wanted. Oh dear, and didn't I look forward to it! And is it long since you've changed your mind? This thing could not have dropped from the clouds, this ill-wind's of somebody's blowing. I wonder if that oaf of a cousin's not behind it? A fine confidant you have fished up!"

"And he, poor dear," Marya Dmitrievna went on "how respectful he is, how considerate even in his misfortune! He promised not to desert me. Oh dear, I will not get over it! Oh dear, what a splitting headache I have! Send Palasha to me. You will be the death of me if you don't think better of it—do you hear?" And admonishing her several times for an undutiful girl, Marya Dmitrievna dismissed her.

Liza went to her room. She had scarcely recovered her composure after her interview with Panshin and her mother when the storm broke out anew, from whence she least expected it. Marfa Timofeyevna strode into her room, slamming the door behind her. The old lady's face was pale, her cap askew, her eyes ablaze, and her hands and lips quivering. Liza was amazed: she had never seen her sensible and sober aunt in such a state.

"A pretty pass, madam," Marfa Timofeyevna spluttered in a trembling whisper, "a pretty pass! And where on earth did you learn the likes, my dear!... Give me some water; I can hardly speak."

"Calm yourself, auntie; what is the matter?" said Liza, passing her a glass of water. "Why, I thought you were not too fond of Panshin yourself."

Marfa Timofeyevna deposited the glass.

"I can't drink—I'll knock my last teeth out. Where does Panshin come in? What's Panshin got to do with it? Better tell me, young lady, who taught you to be making appointments at night—eh? What now?"

Liza turned pale.

"Now, don't you start denying it," went on Marfa Timofeyevna. "Shurochka saw it all with her own eyes and told me. I've forbidden her to chatter, but she's not a liar."

"I am not denying anything, auntie," said Liza in a low voice.

"Oh! So that's it, is it, young lady? So you made an appointment with that old meek-faced sinner?"

"No."

"How then?"

"I was going down to the drawing room for a book; he was in the garden—he called me."

"And you went? Fine. Do you love him, or what?"

"I love him," murmured Liza.

"Goodness gracious! She loves him!" Marfa Timofeyevna snatched the cap off her head. "Loves a married man! Do you hear that, eh! Loves him!"

"He told me...." began Liza.

"What did he tell you, the darling creature, eh?"

"He told me his wife had died."

Marfa Timofeyevna made a sign of the cross. "May she rest in peace," she whispered; "she was a vain hussy, God forgive her. I see. So he's a widower. He's a cunning blade, it looks. He has no sooner killed off one wife than he goes after another. Sanctimonious snakes! Let me tell you one thing, niece: in my day, when I was young, maids got it hot for pranks such as this. Don't be angry with me, my dear; only fools are angry at the truth. I gave orders not to admit him today. I love him, but this I will never forgive him. A widower, if you please! Let me have some water.... As for sending Panshin about his business, you are a clever girl; but don't go sitting about at nights with that Billy-goat's breed, those male creatures; don't break my old heart! You'll find I am not all fondling and petting—I can bite too.... A widower!"

Marfa Timofeyevna went off, and Liza sat down in a corner and burst into tears. She felt wretched at heart; she had not deserved such humiliation. Love had brought her no gladness: twice since yesternight she had been crying. Hardly had this new and wonderful feeling arisen in her heart, than she was already paying such heavy toll and her sacred secret was exposed to the rude touch of alien hands! She felt ashamed and bitter and wounded, but without a vestige of doubt or fear—and Lavretsky was dearer to her than before. She had wavered

only so long as she had not understood her own mind; but after that meeting, after that kiss, she wavered no longer; she knew that she loved—and she loved honestly, earnestly, with an affection that was strong and lifelong and defiant; she felt that no power on earth could dissever that bond.

XXXIX

Marya Dmitrievna was greatly perturbed when Varvara Pavlovna Lavretskaya was announced; she was at a loss whether to receive her or not: she was afraid of giving offence to Fyodor Ivanich. At last, curiosity prevailed. "Oh! well," she reflected, "she's one of the kin, too," and sinking back in her armchair, she said to the footman: "Show her in." Several moments passed; the door opened; Varvara Pavlovna swiftly glided across the room to Marya Dmitrievna, and without giving her a chance to rise from her chair, bent almost on her knees before her.

"Thanks awfully, dear aunt," she began in a low tremulous voice, speaking in Russian; "Thanks awfully; I did not hope for such forbearance on your part; you are as good as an angel."

Having said which, Varvara Pavlovna impulsively seized one of Marya Dmitrievna's hands, and pressing it lightly between her lavender gloves raised it unctuously to her full rosy lips. Marya Dmitrievna was bewildered beyond words at the sight of this beautiful, exquisitely-dressed woman almost prostrated at her feet; she did not know what to do: she would have liked to withdraw her hand, to offer her a seat, to say something kind; she got up instead and implanted a kiss on Varvara Pavlovna's smooth scented brow. Varvara Pavlovna was quite overcome.

"How do you do, *bonjour*," said Marya Dmitrievna; "of course, I never expected. . .but, of course, I am glad to see you. You understand, my dear, it is not for me to act as judge between man and wife. . . ."

"My husband, is entirely right," broke in Varvara Pavlovna; "I alone am to blame."

"That is a very laudable sentiment," rejoined Marya Dmitrievna; "very. Have you been here long? Have you seen him? But, please, sit down."

"I arrived yesterday," answered Varvara Pavlovna, humbly taking a seat; "I have seen Fyodor Ivanich, I have spoken to him."

"Ah! Well, and how did he take it?"

"I was afraid my coming so unexpectedly would rouse his anger," resumed Varvara Pavlovna; "but he did not deprive me of his presence."

"That is to say, he did not.... Yes, yes, I understand," commented Marya Dmitrievna; "he is only a little rough on the surface, but he has a kind heart."

"Fyodor Ivanich has not forgiven me; he would not hear me out.... But he was so kind as to assign Lavriky for me to reside at."

"Ah! A beautiful estate!"

"I am setting out tomorrow, in compliance with his orders; but I deemed it my duty to call on you first."

"Thanks, thanks awfully, my dear. One should never forget one's relations. Do you know, I am surprised how well you speak Russian. *C'est étonnant.*"

Varvara Pavlovna sighed.

"I have been abroad too long, Marya Dmitrievna, I know it; but my heart has always remained Russian and I have not forgotten my native land."

"Quite, quite; that's a good thing. Fyodor Ivanich, however, was not expecting you.... Yes, you can take it from me: *la patrie avant tout.* Oh, what a lovely mantle that is, may I look at it?"

"Do you like it?" Varvara Pavlovna slipped it quickly off her shoulders. "It's very simple, from Madame Baudran."

"You can see that at once. From Madame Baudran.... How charming and chic! I'm sure you must have brought lots of fascinating things with you. If I could only see them."

"My entire toilette is at your service, dearest aunt. If you permit, I can show some of the things to your maid. I have a maidservant with me from Paris—she's a wonderful dressmaker."

"It is very good of you, my dear. But really, I shouldn't like to trouble you."

"Trouble me...." rejoined Varvara Pavlovna in a tone of mild reproach. "If you want to make me happy, dispose of me as you would your own property."

Marya Dmitrievna melted.

"*Vous êtes charmante*," she murmured. "But why don't you take off your hat and gloves?"

"Oh, may I?" asked Varvara Pavlovna, clasping her hands pathetically.

"Why, certainly; you are dining with us, I hope? I...I will introduce you to my daughter." Marya Dmitrievna looked uneasy. "Oh, in for a penny!..." she thought. "She is a bit out of sorts today."

"O, *ma tante*, how kind of you!" cried Varvara Pavlovna and lifted her handkerchief to her eyes.

A servant boy announced Gedeonovsky. The old gossip came in lavishing bows and smirks. Marya Dmitrievna introduced him to her guest. At first he was thrown into a flutter; but Varvara Pavlovna was so bewitchingly respectful that his ears soon began to tingle, and gossip, tittle-tattle and flattery dripped blandly from his tongue like honey. Varvara Pavlovna listened with a restrained smile and gradually joined in the conversation. She spoke modestly of Paris, of her travels, of Baden; she raised a laugh from Marya Dmitrievna on two occasions, and each time she gave a little sigh as though inwardly reproaching herself for unseemly merriment; she obtained permission to bring Ada with her next time; taking off her gloves she showed with her smooth-skinned hands redolent of soap *à la guimauve* how and where flounces were worn, quillings, lace and rosettes; promised to bring a bottle of Victoria's Essence, a new English scent, and was delighted as a child when Marya Dmitrievna agreed to accept it as a gift; she was moved to tears at the recollection of the thrill she had when she first heard Russian church-bells; "they went straight to my heart," she murmured.

At that moment Liza entered the room.

Ever since the morning, from the moment when, frozen with

horror, she had read Lavretsky's note, Liza had been steeling herself for the encounter with his wife; she had had a presentiment that she would see her. She made up her mind not to avoid her, as a retribution for what she called her sinful hopes. The sudden crisis in her destiny had shaken her to the very core of her being; in some two hours her face had become drawn; but she did not shed a single tear. "Serves me right!" she said to herself, suppressing with difficulty and emotion a rush of poignant resentful impulses that appalled her. "Well, I must go!" she thought as soon as she heard of the arrival of Lavretskaya, and she went down.... She stood for a long time outside the drawing room before she could summon up courage to open the door; "I have done her wrong"—with this thought she entered the drawing room and forced herself to look at her, forced herself to smile. Varvara Pavlovna came forward to meet her the moment she saw her, and bowed slightly, but with deference. "Allow me to introduce myself," she said unctuously; "your *maman* has been so gracious, that I hope you too will... be kind." The expression on Varvara Pavlovna's face when she uttered the last word, her sly smile, the cold yet soft glance, the gesture of her hands and shoulders, the very gown she wore, her whole being roused such a feeling of repulsion in Liza that she was unable to make reply and it was all she could do to hold out her hand. "This young lady cannot abide me," thought Varvara Pavlovna as she squeezed Liza's cold fingers, and turning to Marya Dmitrievna she murmured: *"mais elle est délicieuse!"* Liza faintly coloured: there was something mocking and insulting in this interjection; but she decided not to rely on her impressions and took a seat by the window at her tambour. Even here Varvara Pavlovna did not leave her in peace; she went up to her, complimented her on her taste and skill.... Liza's heart beat violently and painfully: she tried with all her might to keep her chin up. It seemed to her that Varvara Pavlovna knew everything and was tormenting her in malicious glee. To her relief Gedeonovsky began to talk to Varvara Pavlovna and diverted her attention.

Liza bent over her tambour and glanced at the other furtively. "This is the woman," she thought, "*he* once loved." But

she instantly banished the thought of Lavretsky from her mind: she was afraid of losing her self-possession, she felt that her head was gently reeling. Marya Dmitrievna began to talk of music.

"I have heard, my dear," she began, "that you are a veritable virtuoso."

"I haven't played for a long time," retorted Varvara Pavlovna sitting down promptly to the piano and running her fingers deftly over the keys. "May I?"

"Please do."

Varvara Pavlovna gave a masterly rendering of a brilliant and difficult Hertz etude. She had great force and dexterity.

"A sylphid!" cried Gedeonovsky.

"Remarkable!" Marya Dmitrievna chimed in. "Well, Varvara Pavlovna," she observed, calling her for the first time by her name, "I avow you have astonished me; you really should be giving concerts. We've a musician here, a German, an eccentric old fellow, but a very knowing musician; he gives Liza lessons: he will be simply crazy over you."

"Does Elizaveta Mikhailovna play too?" enquired Varvara Pavlovna turning her head slightly towards her.

"Yes, she doesn't play badly and likes music: but what is that compared to you? But there is another young man here; there's a man you ought to meet. He's an artist at heart and composes very charming things. He alone would be able to appreciate you fully."

"A young man?" said Varvara Pavlovna; "Who is he? Some poor fellow?"

"Oh dear, no, our foremost ladies' man, and not only here but in St. Petersburg too. A *kammer-junker,* received in the best society. You have probably heard of him: Panshin, Vladimir Nikolaich. He is here on government business ... a future minister I should say!"

"And an artist?"

"An artist at heart, and so courteous. You shall see him. He has been coming here very often; I invited him down this evening; *I do hope* he will come," added Marya Dmitrievna with a little sigh and a devious rueful smile.

Liza understood the smile, but she was not in the mood to mind it.

"And young?" intoned Varvara Pavlovna.

"Twenty-eight, and extremely good-looking. *Un jeune homme accompli*, indeed."

"A model young man, I should say," observed Gedeonovsky.

Varvara Pavlovna suddenly struck up a boisterous Strauss waltz, opening with such a dazzling strident trill that Gedeonovsky was staggered; in the middle of the waltz she unexpectedly introduced a sad theme and finished up with the aria from "Lucia," Fra poco.... It dawned on her that gay music was not appropriate to her position. The "Lucia" aria, with emphasis on the sentimental passages, moved Marya Dmitrievna deeply.

"What feeling!" she observed in an undertone to Gedeonovsky.

"A sylphid!" repeated Gedeonovsky, rolling up his eyes.

The dinner hour arrived. Marfa Timofeyevna came downstairs when the soup had already been served. She greeted Varvara Pavlovna drily, answered her polite talk in monosyllables and did not look at her. Varvara Pavlovna soon realized that there was nothing to be got out of this old lady and gave up trying to entertain her; all the kinder was Marya Dmitrievna to her guest: her aunt's discourtesy piqued her. Marfa Timofeyevna, however, did not avoid only Varvara Pavlovna; she did not look at Liza either, although her eyes were all aglitter. She sat like a stone image, all yellow and pale and tight-lipped and ate nothing. Liza looked calm; indeed, the storm within her had subsided; she felt oddly benumbed, like a person condemned. At dinner Varvara Pavlovna was not very talkative; she seemed to have become diffident again and her face wore a look of demure melancholy. Gedeonovsky alone kept the conversation going with his stories, looking ever and anon uneasily at Marfa Timofeyevna and clearing his throat—he always had an attack of huskiness when he was about to tell a lie in her presence—but she did not hinder him or interrupt. When the dinner was over it turned out that Varvara Pavlovna was very fond of whist; Marya Dmitrievna was so delighted by this in-

telligence that she was quite overcome, saying to herself: "really, what a fool that Fyodor Ivanich must be! Fancy not appreciating such a woman!"

She sat down to a game of cards with her and Gedeonovsky, and Marfa Timofeyevna led Liza upstairs, saying she looked bad and no doubt had a headache.

"Yes, she has an awful headache," said Marya Dmitrievna addressing herself to Varvara Pavlovna and rolling up her eyes.

"I get such awful attacks of migraine too...."

"Really!" murmured Varvara Pavlovna.

Liza went into her aunt's room and sank limply into a chair. Marfa Timofeyevna looked at her long and silently, then quietly went down on her knees before her and silently started kissing her hands. Liza leaned forward, a flush mounting into her face—and began to weep, but she did not make Marfa Timofeyevna get up, neither did she take her hands away: she felt that she had no right to take them away, to prevent the old lady from giving vent to her remorse and sympathy, from begging forgiveness for what had passed the day before; and Marfa Timofeyevna could not kiss enough those poor, pale, powerless hands, while the silent tears flowed from her eyes and from those of Liza; and the cat Matross purred in the wide armchair among the knitting wool, and the long flame flickered and wavered in the little oil lamp before the icon, while in the next room, behind the door, Nastasya Karpovna stood furtively wiping her eyes with her checked handkerchief twisted into a little ball.

XL

Meanwhile, down below in the drawing room, the company were playing whist. Marya Dmitrievna was winning and was in a good humour. A servant came in and announced the arrival of Panshin.

Marya Dmitrievna dropped her cards and began to fidget in her chair; Varvara Pavlovna glanced at her with a quizzical smile and then turned her eyes to the door. Panshin entered attired in a black frock coat with a high English collar but-

toned up to the throat. "It was not easy for me to obey, but you see I have come," spoke his unsmiling, freshly-shaven face.

"Really, Woldemar," cried Marya Dmitrievna, "you always used to come in unannounced!"

Panshin answered Marya Dmitrievna with his eyes alone, bowed politely to her, but did not kiss her hand. She introduced him to Varvara Pavlovna; he fell back a pace, bowed to her just as politely but with a tinge of elegance and deference, and seated himself at the card table. The game was soon over. Panshin made enquiries about Elizaveta Mikhailovna, heard that she was indisposed, murmured his regret; then he dropped into conversation with Varvara Pavlovna, diplomatically weighing and enunciating incisively each word and lending a polite ear to her answers. The solemnity of his diplomatic tone, however, had no effect on Varvara Pavlovna and touched no answering chord. On the contrary, she studied him with a jovial regard, talked in a casual tone, while her fine nostrils quivered slightly as though with suppressed mirth. Marya Dmitrievna began to extol her gifts; Panshin politely, as far as his collar would permit him, inclined his head, averring that "he was convinced of it all the time," and led off on a tack that brought him almost to Metternich himself. Varvara Pavlovna narrowed her velvety eyes and murmuring in an undertone: "Why, but you are an artist too, *un confrère*," added *sotto voce:* "*venez*!" with a nod towards the piano. This one word "*venez*!" which she had let fall had an instantaneous, almost magical, effect on Panshin. His grave mien vanished; his face broke out into smiles, he brightened up, unbuttoned his coat and repeating: "not much of an artist, alas! but you, I hear, are a real artist," he followed Varvara Pavlovna to the piano.

"Make him sing his song—about the floating moon," cried Marya Dmitrievna.

"Do you sing?" asked Varvara Pavlovna flashing at him a swift smile. "Sit down."

Panshin began to plead excuses.

"Sit down," she repeated, drumming her fingers insistently on the back of the chair.

He sat down, coughed, pulled at his collar and sang his song.

"*Charmant*," pronounced Varvara Pavlovna; "you sing very well, *vous avez du style*, sing it again."

She moved round the piano and stood directly facing Panshin. He repeated his song, communicating to his voice a melodramatic tremor. Varvara Pavlovna gazed at him steadily, propping her elbows on the piano and holding her white hands level with her lips. Panshin finished.

"*Charmant, charmante idée*," she said with the calm assurance of a connoisseur. "Tell me, have you written anything for a woman's voice, for a mezzo-soprano?"

"I hardly compose anything at all," said Panshin; "I just do it to amuse myself, you know . . . but do you sing?"

"Yes."

"Oh! sing us something, do!" urged Marya Dmitrievna.

Varvara Pavlovna pushed her hair back from her flushed cheeks and tossed her head.

"Our voices ought to go well together," she murmured, turning to Panshin; "let us sing a duet. Do you know *Son geloso*, or *La ci darem*, or *Mira la bianca luna*?"

"I sang *Mira la bianca luna* once upon a time, replied Panshin: "but that was ages ago and I've forgotten it."

"Never mind, we will rehearse it in a low voice. Allow me."

Varvara Pavlovna sat down to the piano. Panshin stood beside her. They sang through the duet in an undertone, Varvara Pavlovna correcting him several times, then they sang it aloud and repeated twice: *Mira la bianca lu . . . u . . . una*. Varvara Pavlovna's voice had lost its freshness but she managed it very dexterously. Panshin was shy at first and a little out of tune, but he soon warmed up, and if his performance was not quite irreproachable, he made up for it with shrugs of the shoulders and a swaying of the body and an occasional lifting of the hand like a true singer. Varvara Pavlovna played two or three pieces of Thalberg's and coquettishly "recited" a French ariette. Marya Dmitrievna could not find words to express her delight; several times she had wanted to send for Liza; Gedeonovsky too was at a loss for words and could only

shake his head, when he suddenly yawned and barely managed to disguise it. The yawn was not lost on Varvara Pavlovna; she suddenly turned her back to the piano, murmured: *"assez de musique comme ça,* let us talk," and folded her arms, *"Oui, assez de musique,"* repeated Panshin gaily and plunged into small-talk—light, sparkling, and in French. "Quite like in the best Parisian salon," thought Marya Dmitrievna, listening to their irrelevant fine-spun chit-chat. Panshin was enjoying himself immensely; his eyes shone, his face was wreathed in smiles; at first, on meeting Marya Dmitrievna's gaze, he would pass his hand across his face, knit his brows and sigh fitfully; but later he forgot about her entirely, and abandoned himself to the enjoyment of this semi-worldly, semi-artistic parlance. Varvara Pavlovna, it appeared, was quite the philosopher: she had a ready answer for everything; she never faltered, never had doubts on any score; one could see that she had conversed much and often with clever men of every sort and kind. All her thoughts and feelings revolved round Paris. Panshin turned the conversation on literature: it transpired that she, like he, read only French books: George Sand drove her to exasperation, Balzac she respected, though he was tedious, Sue and Scribe, she considered, had a profound knowledge of human nature, and Dumas and Feval she worshipped; at bottom however, she preferred Paul de Kock to them all, but of course she did not even mention his name. Indeed, literature did not interest her very much. Varvara Pavlovna skilfully steered clear of anything even remotely reminiscent of her own situation; of love there was not a mention in her conversation, in fact, its drift was rather one of austerity where the passions were concerned, of disenchantment and humility. Panshin expostulated; she demurred... but strange to say, while her lips uttered words of stricture, severely condemnatory at times, the sound of these words was stroking and caressing and her eyes spoke... exactly what those lovely eyes spoke it was hard to say; but their purport was dim and sweet and unforbidding. Panshin tried to fathom their secret meaning, he too tried to make his eyes speak, but he felt all his efforts were in vain; he realized

that Varvara Pavlovna as a lioness from foreign parts stood above him, and consequently he was not completely at his ease. Varvara Pavlovna had a habit of lightly touching the sleeve of the person whom she happened to be talking to; these momentary contacts had a most disquieting effect on Vladimir Nikolaich. Varvara Pavlovna possessed the faculty of getting on easily with people; within two hours it seemed to Panshin that he had known her for years, while Liza, the girl he really loved, and whom he had the evening before proposed to, was swallowed up in a mist, as it were. Tea was served; the conversation became still more unconstrained. Marya Dmitrievna rang for the servant boy and told him to tell Liza she should come down if her head was better. At the mention of Liza's name Panshin fell to discussing self-sacrifice and mooted the point as to whether men or women were more given to self-sacrifice. Marya Dmitrievna instantly became excited, claimed that women were more prone to self-sacrifice than men, vowed she would prove it there and then, got herself in a tangle and wound up with a rather lame illustration. Varvara Pavlovna picked up a music-book, screened herself with it and, bending towards Panshin while taking small bites at a cake, she remarked *sotto voce* with a bland smile on her lips and in her eyes: "*Elle n'a pas inventé la poudre, la bonne dame.*" Panshin was somewhat taken aback and astonished at Varvara Pavlovna's temerity; but he did not suspect the measure of derision this unexpected burst of candour contained for his own person; and forgetful of all the kindness and devotion Marya Dmitrievna had shown him, of the dinners she had given him and the money she had loaned him he replied (wretched man) with the same smile and in the same tone: "*je crois bien*"—nay, not even so, but "*j'crois ben*!"

Varvara Pavlovna shot him an amiable glance and got up. Liza came in; Marfa Timofeyevna had tried in vain to dissuade her: she was determined to go through with her ordeal. Varvara Pavlovna advanced to meet her together with Panshin, who reassumed the diplomatic look.

"How are you feeling?" he asked Liza.

"I am better now, thank you," she replied.

"We have been having a little music here; it's a pity you haven't heard Varvara Pavlovna. She sings remarkably well, *une artiste consommée.*"

"Come here, *ma chère,*" called Marya Dmitrievna.

Varvara Pavlovna responded dutifully, like a child, and sat down on a little stool at her feet. Marya Dmitrievna had called her away so as to leave her daughter alone for at least a moment with Panshin; she still cherished a hope that the girl would come to her senses. Besides, an idea had occurred to her which she was eager to divulge forthwith.

"Do you know," she whispered to Varvara Pavlovna, "I want to try to reconcile you with your husband; I won't say that I'll succeed, but I can make an attempt. He has a great regard for me, you know."

Varvara Pavlovna raised her eyes slowly to Marya Dmitrievna and crossed her hands in a beautiful gesture.

"You would be my saviour, *ma tante,*" she said piteously; "I don't know how to thank you for being so good to me; but I have wronged Fyodor Ivanich too deeply; he cannot forgive me."

"But did you... really. .." began Marya Dmitrievna probingly....

"Don't ask me," broke in Varvara Pavlovna, dropping her eyes; "I was young and frivolous.... But I don't want to excuse myself."

"Well, anyway, why shouldn't we try? Don't despair," rejoined Marya Dmitrievna, and was on the point of patting her on the cheek when she glanced at her face with misgiving. "She's demure enough," she thought, "but she's certainly a lioness."

"Are you ill?" Panshin meanwhile was saying to Liza.

"Yes, I am not well."

"I understand you," he murmured after a prolonged silence. "Yes, I understand you."

"What do you mean?"

"I understand you," repeated Panshin knowingly; it was the only thing he could find to say.

Liza was disconcerted, then she thought: "Let it be so!"

Panshin assumed an air of mystery and fell silent, glancing to one side with a stern expression.

"I believe it has already struck eleven, observed Marya Dmitrievna.

The guests took the hint and rose to take their leave. A promise was extracted from Varvara Pavlovna that she would come to dine the next day and bring Ada; Gedeonovsky who had nearly dozed off in a corner offered to see her home. Panshin solemnly bowed to everybody, and on the steps outside, when assisting Varvara Pavlovna into her carriage, he squeezed her hand and cried after her: *au revoir!* Gedeonovsky sat beside her; all the way she beguiled the time by resting the tip of her dainty foot, inadvertently as it were, on his; he was flustered and started paying her compliments; she simpered and made eyes at him when the light of a street lamp fell into the carriage. The waltz she had played was ringing in her head, she was tingling with excitement; wherever she was she had merely to conjure up lights, a ball-room, figures whirling to the strains of music—and her blood was on fire, her eyes became strangely blurred, a smile hovered about her lips, and her whole body thrilled with a sense of bacchanalian grace. When she reached home Varvara Pavlovna skipped lightly out of the carriage—could anyone but a lioness do that the way she did it?—faced round to Gedeonovsky and suddenly burst into a peal of merry laughter right under his nose.

"An engaging person," reflected the privy-councillor as he bent his steps homeward, where a servant was awaiting him with a glass of opodeldoc; "It's well I am a respectable man.... I wonder why she laughed though?"

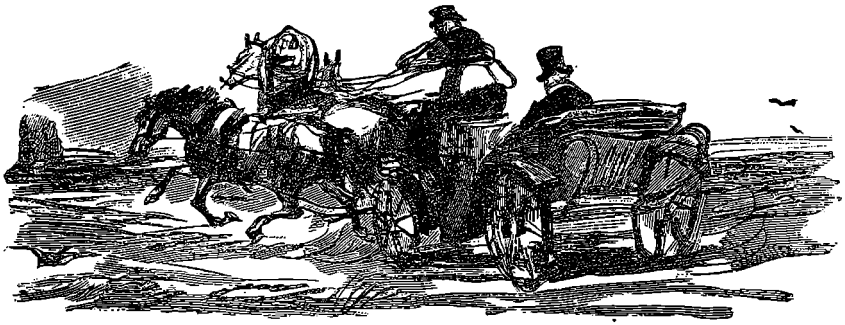
Marfa Timofeyevna sat all night at Liza's bedside.

XLI

Lavretsky was a day and a half at Vasilyevskoye and spent most of the time prowling about the neighbourhood. He could not stay long in one place: his heart was racked with grief; he suffered all the torments of ceaseless, violent and impotent passions. He remembered the emotions that flooded his soul the

day after his arrival in the country; he remembered the plans he had then made, and was furious with himself. What could have torn him from what he had known to be his duty, the sole task of his future? The thirst for happiness—once again the thirst for happiness! "It seems that Mikhalevich was right," he thought. "You wanted to taste the joys of life a second time," he soliloquized; "you have forgotten that it is a luxury, an unmerited boon even when it comes once to a man. You say it was not complete, it was spurious? Very well, then prove your title to complete and genuine bliss! Look round you—who is there blest with happiness, who is joyful? Take that peasant going to the meadow with his scythe—mayhap he is contented with his fate?...

"Well, would you care to change places with him? Think of your mother: what she asked of life was so infinitesimally small,—and what was doled out to her? It seems you simply boasted when you told Panshin you had come to Russia to plough the land; you have come to go philandering after the girls in your old age. Directly you received news of your freedom you dropped everything, forgot everything on earth and ran like a schoolboy after a butterfly...." The image of Liza rose continuously to his mind amidst these broodings; he dismissed it with an effort, as he did that other plaguing image, those imperturbably roguish, lovely, hateful features. Old Anton perceived that his master was out of sorts; after sighing once or twice behind the door and once or twice in the doorway he finally made bold to go up to him and advised him to take a drink of something warm. Lavretsky shouted at him, told him to get out and then begged his pardon; but this only saddened Anton still more. Lavretsky could not stay in the drawing room; his great-grandfather seemed to be looking down derisively from the canvas at this weakling of a descendant. "Bah! You poor fish!" his wry mouth seemed to be sneering. "Come," he said to himself, "it can't be that I will let myself go to pieces, give in to this... scratch?" (Men badly wounded in war always refer to their wounds as "a scratch." Unless he deceived himself man could not live on earth.) "Am I a snivelling boy after all? All right: I had a close glimpse, I almost held in my hands the chance of happiness



of a lifetime—and it suddenly vanished; but then in a lottery too, a slight turn of the wheel—and the beggar would become a rich man. If it's not to be, it's not to be, and that's all there is to it. I will set about my business with clenched teeth and force myself to keep quiet; it's not the first time either I've had to take a hold on myself. What made me slink away, why am I sticking here with my head buried in a bush like an ostrich? No nerve to face the music?—nonsense! Anton," he shouted out aloud, "have the tarantass brought round at once." "Yes," he reflected again, "I must force myself to keep quiet, I must pull myself together. . . ."

With reasonings such as these Lavretsky sought to ease his pain; but the pain was deep and poignant and even Apraxia, who was bereft not so much of mind as of all emotion, shook her head and followed him sadly with her eyes as he got into the tarantass to go to town. The horses went off at a canter; he sat stiff and motionless, staring motionlessly at the road before him.

XLII

Liza had written Lavretsky the day before asking him to call in the evening; but he first went to his rooms. He found neither his wife nor his daughter at home; the servants told him that she had gone with the child to the Kalitins. The information astonished and infuriated him. "It looks as though Varvara Pavlovna has made up her mind to lead me a dog's life,"

he reflected, with hatred burning in his heart. He began to pace to and fro, kicking and throwing aside toys, books and feminine things that got in his way; he called Justine and ordered her to clear away all that "rubbish." *"Oui, Monsieur,"* she said with a grimace and began to set the room in order, stooping gracefully and giving Lavretsky to understand with her every movement that she thought him an uncouth bear. He glared balefully at her dissolute but still "piquant" mocking Parisian face, her white oversleeves, her silk pinafore and little cap. He dismissed her at length, and after long hesitation—Varvara Pavlovna not having returned—he decided to go to the Kalitins, not to Marya Dmitrievna (he would not enter her drawing room, that room where his wife was, for anything in the world), but to Marfa Timofeyevna; he remembered that the staircase from the servants' entrance led straight to her apartment. He decided on this course. Chance favoured him; in the courtyard he met Shurochka who conducted him to Marfa Timofeyevna. He found her, contrary to her usual habit, alone; she was sitting in a corner, without a cap on, her body huddled and her hands crossed over her breast. She was very upset when she saw Lavretsky, got briskly to her feet and began to pace about the room as though searching for her cap.

"Ah, it's you, it's you," she began, avoiding his eyes and fussing about the room, "well, good day to you. Ah, well! There you are. Where were you yesterday? So she's come; yes, of course. Well, it can't be helped."

Lavretsky sank into a chair.

"There, sit down, sit down," continued the old lady. "You came straight upstairs? Why, yes, to be sure. Well? So you came to see me? Thanks."

The old lady paused; Lavretsky did not know what to say to her, but she understood him.

"Liza . . . yes, Liza's been here a little while ago," she went on, tying and untying the strings of her reticule. "She is not feeling well. Shurochka, where are you? Come here, my dear; why can't you sit still? I have a headache too. I suppose it's through that singing and music."

"What singing, aunt?"

"Why, they've been at those—now, what d'ye call 'em ... duet things. And all in Italian too: *chi-chi* and *cha-cha,* just like magpies. They'd begin to draw out the notes fit to make all your teeth ache. That fellow Panshin and your better half. And how soon they became thick, no standing on ceremony, just like among relations. Come to think of it, though, even a dog will try to find a home. You can't expect it to perish as long as there's folks as don't drive it away."

"Still, I'd never have believed it," observed Lavretsky; "it wants a lot of nerve."

"No, my dear, not nerve, but calculation. God forgive her! You're sending her to Lavriky, I hear?"

"Yes, I'm putting that estate at Varvara Pavlovna's disposal."

"Has she asked for money?"

"Not yet."

"Well, that'll come soon enough. But I've only just taken a good look at you, my dear. You're not ill, are you?"

"No."

"Shurochka!" cried Marfa Timofeyevna. "Go and tell Elizaveta Mikhailovna—that is, no, ask her.... She's downstairs, isn't she?"

"Yes."

"Well, then ask her what she's done with my book. She'll know."

"Very well."

The old lady began pottering about the room again, opening and closing the drawers in the chest. Lavretsky sat motionless. Suddenly light steps were heard on the stairs, and Liza came in.

Lavretsky rose and bowed; Liza stopped at the door.

"Liza, Liza dear," said Marfa Timofeyevna fussily, "Where's my book? What have you gone and done with the book?"

"What book, auntie?"

"Gracious me, the book! I didn't call you though.... There, it doesn't matter. What's going on downstairs? Here, Fyodor Ivanich has come. How's your head?"

"It's all right."

"You always say: all right. What's going on down there—music again?"

"No, they're playing cards."

"To be sure, she's good at everything. Shurochka, I see you want to go and play in the garden. Run along."

"Oh no, Marfa Timofeyevna. . . ."

"Come, don't argue now, run along. Nastasya Karpovna is out in the garden by herself; go and keep her company. Come, that's a good girl." Shurochka departed. "Where on earth is my cap? Where has it got to now?"

"Let me look for it," said Liza.

"You sit where you are. I still have the use of my legs. I suppose it's in my bedroom."

Casting a sidelong glance at Lavretsky, Marfa Timofeyevna went out. She had left the door ajar, but suddenly came back and shut it. . . .

Liza leaned back in her chair and slowly put her hands to her face; Lavretsky did not stir from his place.

"So this is how we were to meet again," he broke the silence.

Liza removed her hands from her face.

"Yes," she said in a low voice. "We've been punished all too soon."

"Punished," murmured Lavretsky. "What have *you* been punished for?"

Liza raised her eyes to his. They expressed neither grief nor anxiety; they looked shrunken and faded. There was a pallor on her face and parted lips.

Lavretsky's heart contracted with compassion and love.

"You wrote me: it is all over," he whispered; "aye, it is all over—before it had begun."

"We must forget all that," murmured Liza; "I am glad you came; I wanted to write you, but it is better so. Only we must make the most of these minutes. We must both do our duty now. You, Fyodor Ivanich, must make it up with your wife."

"Liza!"

"I beg you to do that; only so we can make amends . . . for what has happened. Think it over—you will not deny me this."

"Liza, for God's sake—what you demand is impossible. I am prepared to do anything you command me; but to make up with her now!. I'll put up with anything. I've forgotten and forgiven but I can't compel my heart to.... Why, that's cruel!"

"I am not asking you. to do what you say; do not live with her if you cannot; but make it up with her," replied Liza and covered her face again with her hands. "Think of your little daughter; do this for me."

"Very well," muttered Lavretsky through clenched teeth, "I will do that, I suppose; I'll do my duty that way. But what about you—what does your duty consist in?"

"I know what my duty is to be."

Lavretsky started.

"You're not thinking of marrying that Panshin fellow, are you?" he demanded.

A wan smile flitted across Liza's countenance.

"Oh, no!" she said.

"Ah, Liza, Liza!" cried Lavretsky; "how happy we might have been!"

Liza looked at him again.

"Now you see yourself, Fyodor Ivanich, that happiness does not depend upon us, but on God."

"Yes, because you...."

The door leading into the next room opened quickly and Marfa Timofeyevna reappeared with her cap in her hand.

"I've found it, drat it," she said, standing between Lavretsky and Liza. "Probably mislaid it myself. That's what age does to you, alack! Come to think of it, youth is no better either. Are you going to Lavriky too with your wife?" she added, turning to Fyodor Ivanich.

"With her to Lavriky? I? I don't know," he murmured after a pause.

"Are you going down?"

"Not today."

"Well, you know best; but you ought to go down, Liza. Oh, goodness gracious, I haven't fed the bullfinch yet. Wait a moment, I'll soon...."

And Marfa Timofeyevna hurried out without putting on her cap.

Lavretsky stepped quickly up to Liza.

"Liza," he began in a supplicating voice, "we are parting for ever, my heart is breaking—give me your hand in farewell."

Liza raised her head. She regarded him with dimmed weary eyes.

"No," she murmured, and drew back the hand she had already held out; "no, Lavretsky (it was the first time she had used this name), I will not give you my hand. What is the good? Go away, I implore you. You know that I love you. Yes, I love you," she added with an effort, "but no... no."

She pressed her handkerchief to her lips.

"Give me, at least, that handkerchief."

The door creaked... The handkerchief slid to Liza's lap. Lavretsky caught it before it dropped, thrust it quickly into his pocket, and, turning round, met Marfa Timofeyevna's gaze.

"Liza, darling, I believe your mother's calling you," said the old lady.

Liza got up at once and went out.

Marfa Timofeyevna resumed her seat in the corner.

Lavretsky began to take his leave.

"Fedya," she said suddenly.

"Yes, auntie?"

"Are you a man of honour?"

"What do you mean?"

"I am asking you—are you a man of honour?"

"I hope so."

"Hm. Pledge me your word that you are a man of honour."

"Have it your way. But what is it all about?"

"I know what it is all about. And you too, my dear, if you'll give the matter a thought—you're no fool, you know—you'll understand what I'm aiming at. And now, my dear, good-bye. Thank you for coming to see me; and remember, you have given your word of honour, Fedya; come, kiss me. Ah, my dear boy, it's hard for you, I know; but then it's not easy for any-

one. I used to envy the flies once—there, I thought, they're having a good time out of life—until one night I heard one of the fellows whining in the spider's clutches; no, thought I, they have their troubles too. It can't be helped, Fedya. Now don't forget your promise. Go now. Good-bye."

Lavretsky went down the back stairs and had reached the gates when a manservant overtook him.

"Marya Dmitrievna would like to see you, he said to Lavretsky.

"Tell her, my man, that I can't just now...." Fyodor Ivanich began.

"The mistress told me to say it was very particular," went on the servant; "she told me to tell you she was alone."

"Have the visitors gone?" asked Lavretsky.

"Yes sir," rejoined the servant with a grin.

Lavretsky shrugged his shoulders and followed him.

XLIII

Marya Dmitrievna was sitting alone in her boudoir in a Voltairean armchair, and sniffing eau-de-cologne; on a little table at her side stood a glass of orange-flower water. She was agitated and seemed to be somewhat apprehensive.

Lavretsky came in.

"You wanted to see me," he said, bowing coldly.

"Yes," replied Marya Dmitrievna, taking a sip of water. "I heard that you had gone straight up to my aunt; I gave orders to ask you in—I wanted to have a talk with you. Sit down, please." Marya Dmitrievna drew a deep breath. "You know," she went on, "that your wife has come."

"I know that," rejoined Lavretsky.

"Well, then, that is, what I wanted to say is: she came to see me, and I received her; that is what I wanted to see you about, Fyodor Ivanich. I, thank God, enjoy the esteem of everybody, and nothing on earth would induce me to do anything that was not respectable and proper. Although I anticipated

that it would displease you, I couldn't find the heart to refuse her, Fyodor Ivanich; she's a relation after all—through you; now, put yourself in my position; what right had I to shut my doors on her—don't you agree?"

"You have no reason to be worrying over that, Marya Dmitrievna," replied Lavretsky. "You did the right thing; I am not in the least angry. I haven't the slightest intention of debarring Varvara Pavlovna from the society of her acquaintances; I did not look in today simply because I did not want to meet her—that is all."

"Oh, how glad I am to hear you say that, Fyodor Ivanich," cried Marya Dmitrievna; "though I must say I always expected it of your generous nature. As to my worrying—that is not surprising, for I too am a woman and a mother. And your wife, you know... of course, I cannot be your judge—I told her so myself; but she is such an amiable person, she is really so delightful. I don't see how one can help liking her."

Lavretsky smiled ironically and toyed with his hat.

"And this is what I wanted to say to you besides, Fyodor Ivanich," rattled on Marya Dmitrievna, moving up closer to him; "if you could have seen how modestly she carries herself, how respectful she is! It is really quite touching. And if you could have heard in what terms she speaks of you! I'm entirely to blame, she says; I didn't appreciate him, she says; he's not a man, she says, he's an angel. Indeed, that's what she says —an angel. She is so contrite.... 'Pon my word I've never seen such contrition in all my life!"

"Excuse my curiosity, Marya Dmitrievna," murmured Lavretsky; "I'm told Varvara Pavlovna has been singing here—did she sing while she was being contrite, eh?..."

"Oh, it's a shame to talk like that! She sang and played the piano only to please me, because I insistently begged her to, almost commanded her. She was looking sad, so sad; now, thought I to myself, what could I do to divert her—and then I'd heard that she had such a wonderful talent! I assure you, Fyodor Ivanich, she is utterly crushed, ask Sergei Petrovich if you like—a heartbroken woman, *tout-à-fait,* really, you know!"

Lavretsky only shrugged his shoulders.

"And then what a little angel is that Ada of yours, what an adorable child! She is so sweet, such a clever little thing; and she speaks French marvellously; and understands Russian too—called me auntie. And you know, she's not the least shy like most children of her age, not at all. And how she resembles you, Fyodor Ivanich, it's most extraordinary. The eyes, the eyebrows... well, just the image of you. I'm not particularly fond of little children, I must confess, but I've simply lost my heart to your little girl."

"Marya Dmitrievna," Lavretsky ejaculated, "may I ask you, what is your object in telling me all this?"

"My object?" Marya Dmitrievna took another sniff at the eau-de-cologne and a sip of water. "Well, I am telling you this, Fyodor Ivanich, because... I am a relation of yours, after all, I take a warm interest in you... I know your heart is of the best. Listen, *mon cousin*, I am at any rate a woman of experience and will not speak at random: forgive her, forgive your wife." Marya Dmitrievna's eyes suddenly brimmed with tears. "Just think: her youth, her inexperience... perhaps a bad example: she hadn't the kind of mother who could have set her right. Forgive her, Fyodor Ivanich, she has been punished enough."

The tears trickled down Marya Dmitrievna's cheeks; she did not wipe them away: she liked a cry. Lavretsky sat as if on thorns. "My God," he thought, "what torture, what a day this has been!"

"You do not answer," Marya Dmitrievna began again; "how am I to take it? Can you really be so cruel? No, I will not believe it. I feel that my words have convinced you. Fyodor Ivanich, God will reward you for your generosity, and now receive your wife from my hands...."

Lavretsky instinctively got up from his chair; Marya Dmitrievna rose too, and moving swiftly behind a screen, reappeared leading Varvara Pavlovna by the hand. Pallid and lifeless, with downcast eyes, she seemed to have relinquished all thought and volition of her own—and delivered herself utterly into Marya Dmitrievna's hands.

Lavretsky recoiled.

"You were here all the time!" he exclaimed.

"She is not to blame," broke in Marya Dmitrievna hurriedly; "she would not stay on any account, but I commanded her to remain; I put her behind the screen. She assured me this would only make you angrier; I would not even listen to her; I know you better than she does. Come, take your wife from my hands; come, Varya, don't be afraid, go down on your knees" (she gave a tug at her arm), "and my blessings. . . ."

"Wait a minute, Marya Dmitrievna," interjected Lavretsky in a low but terrible voice. "I daresay you are fond of affecting scenes" (Lavretsky was not mistaken: Marya Dmitrievna still retained her schoolgirl's passion for theatrical effects); "they amuse you, but they may be very painful to other people. However, I am not going to talk to you: in *this* scene you are not the principal character. What do *you* want of me, Madame," he added, turning on his wife. "Haven't I done what I could for you? Don't tell me you haven't laid this plot; I won't believe you—and you know that I cannot believe you. What then do you want? You're a clever woman—you do nothing without a motive. You must understand that to live with you as I lived before is out of the question; not that I am angry with you, but because I am not the man I was. I told you that the day after you came back, and you no doubt agree with me now in your heart of hearts. But you want to reinstate yourself in the world's opinion, it is not enough for you to live in my house, you want to live with me under the same roof—isn't that so?"

"I want you to forgive me," said Varvara Pavlovna without raising her eyes.

"She wants you to forgive her," repeated Marya Dmitrievna.

"And not for my sake, but for Ada's," whispered Varvara Pavlovna.

"Not for her sake, but for Ada's," re-echoed Marya Dmitrievna.

"Very good. Is that what you want?" uttered Lavretsky with an effort. "Very well, I consent to that too."

Varvara Pavlovna threw him a keen glance, and Marya Dmit-

rievna exclaimed: "There, God be thanked, and pulled Varvara Pavlovna again by the arm. "Now receive from my hands.

"Wait a minute, I tell you," Lavretsky interrupted. "I agree to live with you, Varvara Pavlovna, he went on; "that is, I will take you to Lavriky and live there with you as long as I can stand it, then I'll go away and come down from time to time. You see, I don't want to deceive you; but do not ask me more than that. You would laugh yourself were I to take our good cousin on her word and fold you to my bosom, and start assuring you that... that what has been has not been, that the felled tree can blossom again. But I see: one must bow before the inevitable. You will not understand these words the way I mean... but never mind. I repeat, I will live with you... no, that I couldn't promise.. I will be reconciled with you, I will regard you as my wife again...."

"Give her at least your hand on it," said Marya Dmitrievna, whose tears had already run dry.

"I have never deceived Varvara Pavlovna yet, retorted Lavretsky. "She will take my word for it. I will see her off to Lavriky; and remember, Varvara Pavlovna, this arrangement will be considered void as soon as you leave Lavriky. And now, with your leave, I will go.

He bowed to both ladies and hurried out.

"You're not taking her with you," called out Marya Dmitrievna.

"Let him be," whispered Varvara Pavlovna to her, and promptly fell on her neck, lavishing terms of gratitude, kissing her hands and calling her her benefactress.

Marya Dmitrievna accepted her blandishments indulgently; but at bottom she was displeased with Lavretsky, with Varvara Pavlovna and with the whole scene she had devised. It did not turn out nearly as touching as she had expected; Varvara Pavlovna, she thought, should have flung herself at her husband's feet.

"How is it you didn't understand me?" she queried; "I kept on telling you: down!"

"It's better so, dear auntie; don't worry—everything went off splendidly," Varvara Pavlovna assured her.

"True, he's as cold as ice," observed Marya Dmitrievna. "You did not cry, to be sure, but then I cried my eyes out to him. So he wants to shut you up in Lavriky. That means you won't even be able to come and see me. All men are so hardhearted," she concluded with a knowing shake of the head.

"But then women can appreciate goodness and generosity," murmured Varvara Pavlovna, and slipping down on her knees before Marya Dmitrievna, she flung her arms round her portly waist and pressed her face against her. Her face wore a furtive smile, and the tears began to ooze once more from Marya Dmitrievna's eyes.

When Lavretsky got home he shut himself up in his valet's room, flung himself on a sofa and lay like that till morning.

XLIV

The next day was Sunday. The church-bells ringing for matins did not wake Lavretsky—he had not closed an eye all night—but they had brought back the memory of that other Sunday when he had attended church on Liza's request. He got up hastily; an inner voice told him he would see her there today as well. He let himself quietly out of the house, leaving a message for Varvara Pavlovna, who still slept, that he would be back for dinner, and strode off to where the plaintive monotony of the bells seemed to be luring him. He arrived early; there was hardly a soul in the church; a deacon was reading the hours in the choir; his deep-chested drone, arrested by an occasional cough, rose and fell. Lavretsky took up a place near the door. Worshippers came in one by one, stopped, crossed themselves, bowed on all sides; their footsteps resounded in the quiet, empty church, reverberating hollowly under the vaulted roof. A decrepit little woman in a threadbare cloak and

hood stood on her knees near Lavretsky, offering up fervid prayers; her toothless, yellow, shrunken visage was tense with pious emotion; her red eyes gazed fixedly upward at the holy figures on the iconostasis; every now and then she thrust a bony hand from under her cloak and with a slow sweeping movement made a broad and rigid sign of the cross. A peasant with a bushy beard and grim face, ruffled and rumpled, came into the church, dropped precipitately on his knees and began to cross himself apace, flinging back and tossing his head after each prostration. His face and every one of his gestures were expressive of such poignant grief that Lavretsky was tempted to accost him and ask what his trouble was. The peasant started back fearfully, sullenly, and stared at him. "My son died," he blurted out, and resumed his prayers.... "What can supplant the solace of the church for these people?" thought Lavretsky, and tried to pray himself; but his heart was weighed down and embittered, and his mind was running on other things. He was waiting for Liza, but Liza did not come. The church began to fill with people, but still she did not come. The service had started, the deacon had already read the gospel, the bell had been rung for the last prayer; Lavretsky shifted his position—and suddenly he caught sight of Liza. She had been in the church before he arrived, but he had not noticed her; huddled between the wall and the choir, she had not moved or looked around. Lavretsky did not take his eyes off her all through the service: he was bidding her farewell. The congregation began to disperse, but she still tarried; she seemed to be waiting for Lavretsky to leave. At length she crossed herself for the last time and went out without turning her head; she had a maid with her. Lavretsky followed her out and caught up with her in the street; she walked quickly with head bent and a veil drawn over her face.

"Good morning, Elizaveta Mikhailovna," he said loudly with forced casualness; "May I escort you?"

She said nothing; he walked on by her side.

"Are you satisfied with me?" he asked her, dropping his voice. "You have heard what happened yesterday?"

"Yes, yes," she replied in a whisper, "that is well."

And she walked on faster.

"Are you satisfied?"

Liza only nodded her head.

"Fyodor Ivanich," she began in a steady but faint voice; "I wanted to ask you—please do not come to see us any more, go away as soon as possible; we can see each other later—some other time, in a year perhaps. But now, do this for my sake; do as I ask, I beseech you."

"I am ready to obey you in everything, Elizaveta Mikhailovna—but must we part like this? Will you not say one word to me?...

"Fyodor Ivanich, you are walking now by my side ..but you are already so far, far away from me. And not only you...."

"Speak out, I implore you!" cried Lavretsky; "what do you mean?"

"You will hear of it, perhaps.... But come what may, forget... no, do not forget me, think of me.

"Can I forget you?..."

"Enough, good-bye. Do not follow me.

"Liza," began Lavretsky.

"Good-bye, good-bye!" she repeated, drawing her veil still lower and darted forward almost at a run.

Lavretsky gazed at her retreating figure, then turned back down the street, his head bowed. He almost collided with Lemm who was also walking with his hat tipped over his nose and his eyes on the ground.

They looked at each other in silence.

"Well, what do you say?" Lavretsky brought out at length.

"What can I say?" rejoined Lemm gloomily. "I say nothing. Everything is dead and we are dead (*Alles ist tot und wir sind tot*). You are going to the right?"

"Yes."

"And I go to the left. Good-bye."

The next morning Fyodor Ivanich started out with his wife for Lavriky. She rode ahead in a carriage with Ada and Justine; he behind, in the tarantass. The pretty little girl could not tear herself away from the window all through the journey; everything filled her with wonder: the peasant folk, the huts, the wells, the yokes over the horses' heads, the tinkling bells and the innumerable rooks; Justine shared her wonder; Varvara Pavlovna laughed amusedly at their remarks and exclamations. She was in a good mood; before setting out she had cleared up the situation with her husband.

"I understand your position," she had said to him, and from the look in her shrewd eyes he gathered that she understood his position perfectly—"but you must at least give me credit for being an easy person to live with. I will not thrust myself on you or hinder you; all I wanted was to secure Ada's future; that's all."

"Well, you have achieved all your ends," observed Fyodor Ivanich.

"There's only one thing I dream of now: to bury myself forever in seclusion; I shall always remember your generosity....

"Pah! Have done...." he interrupted.

"And I shall know how to respect your independence and peace of mind," she went on completing the phrase she had prepared.

Lavretsky made her a low bow. Varvara Pavlovna understood that her husband was inwardly grateful to her.

On the evening of the next day they arrived in Lavriky; a week later Lavretsky went to Moscow, leaving his wife five thousand pocket money—and the day after his departure Panshin, whom Varvara Pavlovna had asked not to forget her in her retirement, came upon the scene. She made him extremely welcome, and till late in the night the lofty rooms of the house and the garden without resounded with music and singing and gay French speech. For three days Panshin enjoyed the hospitality of Varvara Pavlovna; when taking his leave he pressed her beautiful hands in his own, and promised to come again shortly. He was as good as his word.

XLV

Liza had her own little room on the second floor of her mother's house, a clean airy chamber with a white bed, pots of flowers in the corners and before the window, a small writing table, a book-shelf and a crucifix on the wall. This nook was known as the nursery; Liza had been born in it. On returning from the church after meeting Lavretsky, she tidied up her room more thoroughly than usual, dusted everything, went over all her copy-books and letters from girl friends and tied them up with ribbons, locked all the drawers, watered the flowers, touching each blossom with her fingers. All this she did leisurely, silently, with a look of rapt and gentle solicitude on her face. Then she stood still in the middle of the room, gazing slowly round, and going up to the table over which hung the crucifix, she went down on her knees, placed her head on her clasped hands and remained motionless.

Marfa Timofeyevna came in and found her in this posture. Liza had not noticed her entrance. The old lady went out on tip-toe and coughed loudly several times. Liza got up quickly and wiped her eyes which glistened with bright unshed tears.

"Ah, I see you have been tidying up your little cell again, observed Marfa Timofeyevna and bent low over a young rose plant; "how lovely it smells."

Liza looked pensively at her aunt.

"What was that word you said!" she whispered.

"What word, eh?" the old lady put in quickly. "What do you mean? This is terrible, she cried, suddenly flinging off her cap and sitting down on Liza's little bed; "it is more than I can endure! I've been on tenterhooks for four days now; I can't go on pretending that I don't notice anything—I can't bear the sight of you getting paler and pining away and weeping, I can't, I can't!"

"Why, what is the matter with you, auntie?" murmured Liza; "I am all right..

"All right!" cried Marfa Timofeyevna; "you tell that to somebody else, not to me! All right! Who has just been stand-

ing on her knees? Whose lashes are still wet with tears? All right! Take a look at yourself, what have you gone and done with yourself—look at your face, look at your eyes? All right, indeed! Don't I know what it's all about?"

"It will pass off, auntie, in time."

"Pass off, but when? Good Lord in heaven! Could you have loved him that bad? But he is an old man, Liza dear. Well, I admit he is a good fellow, he doesn't bite; but what of that? We're all good people; the world is large enough, there is enough and to spare of that kind of stuff."

"I tell you it will pass off, it has passed off already."

"Listen to me, Liza darling," Marfa Timofeyevna said all at once, making Liza sit down beside her and stroking now her hair, now her kerchief; "it only seems to you now in the heat of the moment that your grief is inconsolable. Ah, my dearest, only death knows no medicine! You only just say to yourself: 'I won't give in, no fear!' and you'd be surprised how easy it comes off your chest. Just grin and bear it a little."

"Auntie, replied Liza, "it has passed already, it is all over."

"All over! All over indeed! Why, just look how pinched your poor little nose is, and you say it is over! A fine way of getting over it!"

"Yes, it is over, auntie, if you will only consent to stand by me," said Liza with sudden animation, flinging her arms round Marfa Timofeyevna's neck. "Auntie dear, be a friend to me, help me, don't be angry, try to understand...."

"Why, what's that. what's that, my dear girl? Don't scare me like that, please; I shall begin to scream, don't look at me like that; tell me quickly, what is it?"

"I. I want..." Liza hid her face on Marfa Timofeyevna's bosom. "I want to go into a convent," she whispered.

The old lady almost bounded off the bed.

"Cross yourself, Liza, my dear, you don't know what you're saying! Good God, what a thing to say!" she stammered when she had finally found her tongue; "lie down, darling, take a little nap; all this comes from sleepless nights, sweetheart."

Liza raised her head; her cheeks flamed

"No, auntie," she said; "don't speak like that; I have made up my mind, I have prayed, I have sought counsel of God; it is over, my life with you is over. Such a lesson was not for nothing, and it is not the first time I have been thinking of this. Happiness did not come my way; even when I had hopes of happiness my heart was heavy with foreboding. I know all —my own sins and others' and how papa made his fortune; I know all about it. Prayers, prayers must wipe this all off. I am sorry for you, sorry for mother and Lenochka; but there is no help for it; I feel that life here is not for me; I have bidden farewell already to all and everything in the house for the last time; I am answering a summons; my heart is sick with pain, I want to shut myself away for ever. Do not hold me back, do not try to dissuade me, but help me, or else I will go alone. . . ."

Marfa Timofeyevna listened to her niece aghast.

"She's ill, she's delirious," she thought; "we must send for a doctor, but which one? Gedeonovsky was praising one the other day, but he's such a liar—perhaps this time he was telling the truth?" But when it dawned on her that Liza was not ill and not delirious, when she, Liza, constantly returned the same answer to all her expostulations, Marfa Timofeyevna was alarmed and distressed beyond words. "But you do not realize, my darling," she began to remonstrate with her, "what the life in those convents is like! They will feed you, my sweet, on horrible green hemp oil, they will give you coarse, rough underwear to put on, send you out in the cold; you'll never survive it, Liza darling! It's all Agafya's doing this is—it's she who has led you astray. But then she first had her taste of life, she'd lived for her own pleasure; you've got to live too. Let me at least die in peace; then you can do as you please. And where did you ever see anybody going into a convent because of a goat's beard—God forgive us—because of a man? Well, if you feel so bad about it, go on a pilgrimage, put up prayers to some saint, have a service sung, but don't go putting a black hood on your head, my darling, my sweet child.

And Marfa Timofeyevna burst into bitter tears.

Liza consoled her, wiped away her tears, wept herself, but was not to be shaken in her resolve. In her despair Marfa Timofeyevna resorted to threats—she said she would tell her mother everything, but all in vain. Liza yielded at last to the old lady's earnest pleading and agreed to postpone her intentions for six months; but a pledge was extracted from Marfa Timofeyevna in return that, should Liza not change her mind during that period, she would help her and secure Marya Dmitrievna's consent.

With the first spell of cold weather Varvara Pavlovna, despite the promise she had given to bury herself in seclusion, removed to St. Petersburg where, having provided herself with funds, she rented a modest but charming set of apartments found her by Panshin, who had left O— prior to her. During the later part of his sojourn in O— he had entirely forfeited Marya Dmitrievna's good graces; he suddenly stopped calling on her and was almost a permanent fixture at Lavriky. Varvara Pavlovna had enslaved him, nothing more or less; no other word can describe the illimitable, irrevocable and absolute power she had over him.

Lavretsky spent the winter in Moscow, and in the following spring the news reached him that Liza had taken the veil in the B— convent in one of the remotest parts of Russia.

EPILOGUE

Eight years passed. It was spring again.... But let us first say a few words concerning the fate of Mikhalevich, Panshin and Madame Lavretskaya, and take leave of them. Mikhalevich, after many vicissitudes, found his true vocation: he obtained a position as senior usher in a government school. He is quite content with his lot, and his charges "adore" him, though they mimick him behind his back. Panshin has moved high up the official ladder and is aiming at a directorship; he walks with a slight stoop, doubtlessly through the weight of the Vladimir Cross he wears around his neck. The official in him has gained indomitable ascendancy over the artist; his still young-looking face has grown sallow, his hair thin and he no longer sings, nor sketches, but secretly dabbles in literature: he has written a comedy in the style of a proverb, and as nowadays all authors invariably "delineate" something or somebody, he has delineated therein a coquette, and reads it in private to two or three devoted ladies of his acquaintance. He has not, however, embarked on matrimony, although he had many fine opportunities of doing so. For this Varvara Pavlovna is to blame. As for her, she resides permanently in Paris, as before: Fyodor Ivanich gave her a promissory note on himself, thereby securing his ransom and immunity from another surprise invasion. She has grown older and stouter, but is still attractive and elegant. Everybody has his beau ideal; Varvara Pavlovna found hers in the dramatic works of Dumas fils. She assiduously frequents the theatre where consumptive and lan-

guishing camelia ladies are portrayed on the stage, to be Madame Doch seems to her the height of human bliss; she once declared that she would desire nothing better for her own daughter. It is to be hoped that fate will spare Mademoiselle Ada such bliss: from the rosy chubby child she was she has become a weak-chested pale little girl; her nerves are already bad. Varvara Pavlovna's admirers have diminished in number, but still make a showing; some of them she will probably retain to the end of her days. The most ardent of them these days is a certain Zakurdalo-Skubyrnikov, a retired guardsman of the whisker-wearing clan, a man of thirty-eight, of extraordinarily vigorous physique. The French habitués of Madame Lavretskaya's salon call him "*le gros taureau de l'Ukraine*"; Varvara Pavlovna never invites him to her fashionable evening parties, but he unquestionably enjoys her good-will.

And so... eight years passed. Once more the skies suffuse the radiant joys of spring; once more spring smiles upon the earth and upon men; once more under its caresses the world is turning to blossom, to love and song. The town of O— has changed little in these eight years; but Marya Dmitrievna's house seems to have grown younger; its newly-painted walls are cheerfully bright and the panes of the open windows reflect shimmering crimson in the rays of the setting sun; from these windows is wafted into the street the light and happy sound of clear young voices and incessant laughter; the whole house seems to seethe with life and brim over with gaiety. The mistress of the house has long since gone down to the grave: Marya Dmitrievna died two years after Liza took the veil; Marfa Timofeyevna did not survive her niece long; they lie side by side in the town cemetery. Nastasya Karpovna too is no more; the faithful old woman had been going every week for several years to pray over her friend's grave.... Her time had come as well, and her bones were laid to rest in the damp earth. But Marya Dmitrievna's house did not fall into strangers' hands, did not pass out of the family, the nest was not ruined; Lenochka, grown into a slim beautiful girl, and her fiancé—a fair-haired officer of the hussars; Marya

Dmitrievna's son who had just married in St. Petersburg and had come down for the spring with his young wife; his wife's sister, a sixteen-year-old schoolgirl with rosy cheeks and limpid eyes; Shurochka, also grown up and winsome—such was the youthful household to whose gay laughter and chatter the walls of the Kalitins' house resounded. Everything in the house had changed, everything fitted in with the new inmates. Clean-shaven grinning servant lads, full of quips and cranks, had replaced the staid old servants of former days; where Roska used to waddle in dignified corpulence two setters were frisking madly and gambolling over the sofas; the stables now housed lean race-horses, spirited carriage horses, mettlesome outriders with plaited manes and saddle horses from the Don; the breakfast, dinner and supper hours were all mixed and muddled and things were run in a "newfangled way" as the neighbours put it.

On the evening in question, the inhabitants of the Kalitins' house (the oldest of whom, Lenochka's fiancé was twenty-four) were engaged in a simple, and, judging from their merry laughter, an exceedingly amusing game: they chased about the rooms trying to catch each other; the dogs followed suit and barked excitedly and the canaries in their cages hanging above the windows rent the air, adding to the general uproar with the piercing racket of their frenzied twittering. At the very height of this ear-splitting fun a mud-bespattered tarantass drove up to the gates and a man of five and forty in a travelling cloak stepped out of it and stood stock-still in amazement. He stood for some time without stirring, cast an observant glance over the house, went through the gate into the courtyard and slowly mounted the steps of the porch. He encountered nobody in the hall; suddenly the door of the living room was flung open and out rushed a flushed Shurochka, while in hot pursuit came all the yelling and shrieking young horde. They pulled up, subdued at the sight of a stranger; but the bright eyes that surveyed him looked just as kindly and the fresh faces still smiled. Marya Dmitrievna's son went up to the visitor and asked him in friendly tones what he wanted.

"I am Lavretsky," said the visitor.

He was answered by a burst of cries—not that these young people were so delighted at the arrival of a distant, almost forgotten relation, but simply because they were all agog to raise a din and rejoice on any provocation. Lavretsky was instantly surrounded: Lenochka, as an old acquaintance, made herself known first, declaring that she certainly would have recognized him in a short while, and introduced the rest of the company, calling each one, even her betrothed, by their pet names. They all trooped through the dining room into the drawing room. The wallpaper in both rooms was new, but the furniture remained intact. Lavretsky recognized the piano; even the embroidering frames by the window were the same, standing in the same position and, it seemed, with the same unfinished embroidery in them as eight years ago. They made him sit in a comfortable armchair; all sat around politely in a circle. Questions, exclamations and narrations followed one another in quick succession.

"It's a long time since we've seen you, remarked Lenochka artlessly, "and Varvara Pavlovna too."

"Naturally!" put in her brother hastily. "I carried you off to St. Petersburg and Fyodor Ivanich has been living all the time in the country."

"Yes, and mother has died since then."

"And Marfa Timofeyevna," murmured Shurochka.

"And Nastasya Karpovna," observed Lenochka, "and Monsieur Lemm. . . ."

"What? Lemm is dead too?" enquired Lavretsky.

"Yes," replied young Kalitin; "he went away to Odessa; they say someone lured him away; and he died there."

"Do you know whether he left any music?"

"I don't know. I doubt it."

All were silent and exchanged glances. A cloud of melancholy flitted across the young faces.

"Matross is alive, you know," said Lenochka suddenly.

"And Gedeonovsky too," added her brother.

At Gedeonovsky's name there was a burst of merry laughter.

"Yes, he's alive, and still the same old liar, went on Marya Dmitrievna's son; "and can you imagine it, this here madcap (he pointed to the schoolgirl, his sister-in-law) put some pepper in his snuff-box yesterday."

"You should have heard him sneeze!" cried Lenochka, and her voice was drowned in another peal of irrepressible laughter.

"We've recently had news of Liza," observed young Kalitin, and a hush fell again on all; "she is all right, her health is a little better now."

"Is she still in the same convent?" asked Lavretsky not without an effort.

"Yes."

"Does she write?"

"No, never; but we get news through other people." A sudden profound hush followed; "a sweet angel is passing," everybody thought.

"Would you care to go into the garden?" enquired Kalitin; "it's very nice now, though we've let it run a bit wild."

Lavretsky went out into the garden and the first thing he caught sight of was the garden seat, that same garden seat on which he had once spent with Liza those fleeting moments of unforgettable joy; it had grown black and warped, but he had recognized it, and his heart was gripped by an emotion that was exquisitely sweet and bitter,—a feeling of poignant sadness for youth that had vanished, for happiness once possessed. He strolled down the avenues with the young people; the lime trees looked hardly any older or taller, but their shade was thicker; all the bushes, however, had shot up, the raspberry bushes had grown sturdily, the hazels were a rank overgrowth and everything was redolent of the freshness of the woods, the scent of grass and lilac blossoms.

"This is just the spot for puss-in-the-corner," cried Lenochka suddenly, as they emerged into a small grassy enclosure among the lime trees; "there are just five of us, too.

"What about Fyodor Ivanich?" observed her brother. "Or don't you count yourself?"

Lenochka coloured slightly.

"But would Fyodor Ivanich, at his age. she began.

"Please go on with your games," Lavretsky hastened to interpose; "take no notice of me. I will feel all the better for knowing that I am not in your way. And there's no need for you to entertain me; we old folk have an occupation which you know nothing of yet, and which no entertainment can replace—memories."

The young people listened to Lavretsky with affable politeness tinged with amusement—as though a teacher were giving them a lesson—and then suddenly scattered, making for the green patch; four of them took up positions under the trees, one stood in the middle, and the fun began.

And Lavretsky retraced his steps to the house, went into the dining room, drew near the piano. and touched one of the keys: a faint but clear note vibrated on the air, and touched an answering chord within his heart; it was the opening note of that inspired melody with which Lemm, poor Lemm, had so delighted him on that memorable and happy night so long ago. Then Lavretsky passed into the drawing room and stayed there for a long time: here, where he had so often seen Liza, her image rose more vividly before him; he seemed to feel her presence around him; but his grief for her was agonizing and not easy to bear; it had none of the quietude which death brings. Liza was alive, somewhere far away and out of reach; he thought of her as of the living and he could not trace the features of the once beloved girl in that dim pallid vision clad in the guise of a nun and moving amid the curling vapours of incense. Lavretsky would not have recognized himself either, had he been able to see himself with the eyes with which he mentally regarded Liza. During these eight years he had at last turned the corner of his life, which many men pass without turning, but without which no one can wholly remain an honourable man: he had really ceased to think of his own happiness and self-interest. His spirit was quelled and—to be frank—he had grown old not only in face and body, he had grown old in heart; to keep a young heart in old age, as some

people say, is difficult and almost absurd; he may well be content who has not lost his faith in goodness, tenacity of purpose and the will to do. Lavretsky had the right to be content: he had really become a good husbandman, had really learnt to plough the land and he laboured not in his own interests alone; he had spared no pains to secure and strengthen the well-being of his peasants.

Lavretsky went out into the garden, sat down on the familiar garden seat. and on this dearly beloved spot facing the house where he had vainly reached his hands out for the last time to grasp the coveted goblet frothing and sparkling with the golden wine of delight, he, a lonely homeless wanderer, looked back on his life, while the joyous shouts of the young generation who had already taken his place came floating to him across the garden. He felt sad at heart, but without bitterness or distress: he had much to regret, nothing to be ashamed of. "Play, rejoice, grow, vigorous youth," he thought, and there was no gall in his reflection; "your life is before you, and for you life will be easier; you will not have to seek out paths for yourself like we did, to struggle, fall and rise again amid the darkness; we had our hands full trying to survive—and how many of us did not survive!—but you have a duty to perform, work to do—and the blessing of us old folk be with you. For me, after this day, after these experiences, there remains but to take my last leave of you—and, in view of the approaching end and a God who waits, to say with sadness but without envy, without dark feelings: 'Welcome, lone age! Burn out, useless life!' "

Lavretsky quietly rose to his feet and quietly went away; nobody heeded him, nobody detained him; the sounds of merriment rang out louder than ever in the garden behind the green wall of lofty lime trees. He got into his carriage and bade the coachman drive home and not to hurry the horses.

"And the end?" perhaps the disappointed reader will ask. "What happened afterwards to Lavretsky? and Liza?" But what is there to tell of people who though still living have retired from the world and its strife, why come back to them? Lavretsky, it is said, paid a visit to the remote cloister where Liza had

taken refuge, had seen her. Stepping down from choir to choir she walked close past him; she passed with the even, meekly-hurried gait of a nun and did not glance at him; only the eyelashes quivered slightly and the emaciated face bent still lower and the fingers of her clasped hands entwined with the rosary were pressed still tighter. What were they both thinking, what were they feeling? Who can know? Who can say? There are such moments in life, such feelings.... One can but point to them—and pass on.

THE END

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