Anna Karenina, v1

Leo Tolstoy

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translated by Constance Garnett

PART ONE

Vengeance is mine; I will repay

I.

Happy families are all alike; every unhappy family is unhappy in its own way.

Everything was in confusion in the Oblonskys' house. The wife had discovered that the husband was carrying on an intrigue with a French girl, who had been a governess in their family, and she had announced to her husband that she could not go on living in the same house with him. This position of affairs had now lasted two days, and not only the husband and wife themselves, but all the members of their family and the household, were painfully conscious of it. All the members of the family and the household felt that there was no sense in their living together, and that even stray people brought together by chance in any inn had more in common with one another than they, the members of the family and the household of the Oblonskys. The wife did not leave her own apartments; the husband had not been home for two days. The children ran wild all over the house; the English governess quarreled with the housekeeper, and wrote to a friend asking her to look out for a new employ for her; the man cook had walked off the day before just at dinnertime; the kitchenmaid and the coachman had given warning.

Two days after the quarrel, Prince Stepan Arkadyevich Oblonsky Stiva, as he was called in the fashionable world woke up at his usual hour, that is, at eight o'clock in the morning, not in his wife's bedroom, but on the leather−covered sofa in his study. He turned over his stout, well−cared−for person on the springy sofa, as though he would sink into a long sleep again; he vigorously embraced the pillow on its other side and buried his face in it; but all at once he jumped up, sat up on the sofa, and opened his eyes.

"Yes, yes, how was it now?" he thought, going over his dream. "Yes, how was it? Yes! Alabin was giving a dinner at Darmstadt; no, not Darmstadt, but something American. Yes, but then, Darmstadt was in America. Yes, Alabin was giving a dinner on glass tables, and the tables sang, Il mio tesoro no, not Il mio tesoro, but something better, and there were some sort of little decanters on the table, and, at the same time, these decanters were women," he recalled.

Stepan Arkadyevich's eyes twinkled gaily, and he pondered with a smile. "Yes, it was jolly, very jolly. There was a great deal more that was delightful, only there's no putting it into words, or even expressing it in one's waking thoughts." And noticing a gleam of light peeping in beside one of the woolen−cloth curtains, he cheerfully dropped his feet over the edge of the sofa and felt about with them for his slippers, a present on his last birthday, worked for him by his wife on gold−colored morocco. And, as he used to do for the last nine years, he stretched out his hand, without getting up, toward the place where his dressing gown always hung in the bedroom. And thereupon he suddenly remembered that he was not sleeping in his wife's room, but in his study, as well as the reason; the smile vanished from his face and he knit his brows.

"Ah, ah, ah! Oo!..." he muttered, recalling everything that had happened. And again every detail of his quarrel with his wife was present to his imagination, all the hopelessness of his position, and, worst of all, his own fault.

"Yes, she won't forgive me, and she can't forgive me. And the most awful thing about it is that it's all my fault all my fault, though I'm not to blame. That's the point of the whole tragedy," he reflected. "Oh, oh, oh!" he kept repeating in despair, as he remembered the acutely painful sensations caused him by this quarrel.

Most unpleasant of all was the first minute when, on coming from the theater, good−humored and lighthearted, with a huge pear in his hand for his wife, he had not found his wife in the drawing room, to his surprise, nor in the

study, but saw her at last in her bedroom, clutching the unlucky letter that revealed everything.

She, his Dolly, forever fussing and worrying over household details, and limited in her ideas, as he considered, was sitting motionless with the letter in her hand, looking at him with an expression of horror, despair and indignation.

"What is this? This?" she asked, pointing to the letter.

And at this recollection, Stepan Arkadyevich, as is so often the case, was not so much annoyed at the fact itself as at the way in which he had met his wife's words.

There happened to him at that instant that which happens to people when they are unexpectedly caught in something very disgraceful. He did not succeed in adapting his face to the situation in which he was placed toward his wife by the discovery of his fault. Instead of being hurt, denying, defending himself, begging forgiveness; instead of remaining indifferent even anything would have been better than what he did do his face utterly without his volition ("cerebral reflexes," mused Stepan Arkadyevich, who was fond of physiology) had assumed its habitual good−humored, and therefore stupid, smile.

This stupid smile he could not forgive himself. Catching sight of that smile Dolly shuddered as though from physical pain, broke out with her characteristic heat into a flood of cruel words, and rushed out of the room. Since then she had refused to see her husband.

"It's all the fault of that stupid smile," Stepan Arkadyevich was thinking.

"But what's to be done? What's to be done?" he kept saying to himself in despair and found no answer.

II.

Stepan Arkadyevich was a truthful man in his relations with himself. He was incapable of self−deception and of persuading himself that he repented his conduct. He could not at this date repent the fact that he, handsome, susceptible to love, a man of thirty−four, was not in love with his wife, the mother of five living and two dead children, and only a year younger than himself. All he repented was that he had not succeeded better in hiding this from his wife. But he felt all the difficulty of his position and was sorry for his wife, his children, and himself. Possibly he might have managed to conceal his sins better from his wife if he had anticipated that the knowledge of them would have had such an effect upon her. He had never clearly reflected on the subject, but he had vaguely conceived that his wife must long ago have suspected him of being unfaithful to her, and had shut her eyes to the fact. He had even supposed that she, a worn−out woman no longer young or good−looking, and in no way remarkable or uncommon merely a good mother ought from a sense of fairness to take an indulgent view. It had turned out quite the other way.

"Oh, it's awful! Oh dear, oh dear! Awful!" Stepan Arkadyevich kept repeating to himself, and he could think of nothing to be done. "And how well things were going up till now! How well we got on! She was contented and happy in her children; I never interfered with her in anything; I let her manage the children and the house just as she liked. True, it's bad her having been a governess in our house. That's bad! There's something common, vulgar, in flirting with one's governess. But what a governess!" (He vividly recalled the roguish black eyes of Mlle. Roland and her smile.) "But after all, while she was in the house, I kept myself in hand. And the worst of it all is that she's already... It seems as if ill luck would have it so! Oh, oh! But what, what is to be done?"

There was no solution, save that universal solution which life gives to all questions, even the most complex and insolvable: One must live in the needs of the day that is, forget oneself. To forget himself in sleep was

impossible now, at least till nighttime; he could not go back now to the music sung by the decanter women; so he must forget himself in the dream of daily life.

"Then we shall see," Stepan Arkadyevich said to himself, and getting up he put on a gray dressing gown lined with blue silk, tied the tassels in a knot, and, drawing a deep breath of air into his broad chest, he walked to the window with his usual confident step, turning out his feet that carried his full frame so easily. He pulled up the blind and rang the bell loudly. It was at once answered by the appearance of an old friend, his valet, Matvei, carrying his clothes, his boots and a telegram. Matvei was followed by the barber with all the necessaries for shaving.

"Are there any papers from the board?" asked Stepan Arkadyevich, taking the telegram and seating himself at the looking glass.

"On the table," replied Matvei, glancing with inquiring sympathy at his master; and, after a short pause, he added with a sly smile:

"They've sent from the carriage jobber."

Stepan Arkadyevich made no reply, but merely glanced at Matvei in the looking glass. The glance, in which their eyes met in the looking glass, made it clear that they understood one another. Stepan Arkadyevich's eyes seemed to ask: "Why do you tell me that? Don't you know?"

Matvei put his hands in his jacket pockets, thrust out one leg, and gazed silently, with a good−humored, faint smile, at his master.

"I told them to come on Sunday, and till then not to trouble you or themselves for nothing," he said. He had obviously prepared the sentence beforehand.

Stepan Arkadyevich saw Matvei wanted to make a joke and attract attention to himself. Tearing open the telegram, he read it through, guessing at the words, misspelled as they always are in telegrams, and his face brightened.

"Matvei, my sister Anna Arkadyevna will be here tomorrow," he said, checking for a minute the sleek, plump hand of the barber, cutting a pink path between his long, curly side whiskers.

"Thank God!" said Matvei, showing by this response that he, like his master, realized the significance of this arrival: Anna Arkadyevna, the sister his master was so fond of, might bring about a reconciliation between husband and wife.

"Alone, or with her husband?" inquired Matvei.

Stepan Arkadyevich could not answer, as the barber was at work on his upper lip, and he raised one finger. Matvei nodded at the looking glass.

"Alone. Is the room to be got ready upstairs?"

"Inform Darya Alexandrovna: where she orders."

"Darya Alexandrovna?" Matvei repeated, as though in doubt.

"Yes, inform her. Here, take the telegram; give it to her, and then do what she tells you."

"You want to try it out," Matvei guessed, but only said: "Yes, sir."

Stepan Arkadyevich was already washed and combed and ready to be dressed, when Matvei, stepping slowly in his creaky boots, came back into the room with the telegram in his hand. The barber had gone.

"Darya Alexandrovna told me to inform you that she is going away. 'Let him' that is you 'do as he likes,'" he said, laughing only with his eyes, and, putting his hands in his pockets, he watched his master with his head on one side. Stepan Arkadyevich was silent a minute. Then a good−humored and rather pitiful smile showed itself on his handsome face.

"Eh, Matvei?" he said, shaking his head.

"Never mind, sir; everything will come round," said Matvei.

"Come round?"

"Just so, sir."

"Do you think so? Who's there?" asked Stepan Arkadyevich, hearing the rustle of a woman's dress at the door.

"It's I," said a firm, pleasant feminine voice, and the stern, pockmarked face of Matriona Philimonovna, the nurse, was thrust in at the door.

"Well, what's the matter, Matriosha?" queried Stepan Arkadyevich, meeting her in the doorway.

Although Stepan Arkadyevich was completely in the wrong as regards his wife, and was conscious of this himself, almost everyone in the house (even the nurse, Darya Alexandrovna's chief ally) was on his side.

"Well, what now?" he asked cheerlessly.

"Go to her, sir; own your fault again. Maybe God will aid you. She is suffering so, it's pitiful to see her; and besides, everything in the house is topsy−turvy. You must have pity, sir, on the children. Beg her forgiveness, sir. There's no help for it! One must pay the piper...."

"But she won't see me."

"You do your part. God is merciful; pray to God, sir pray to God."

"Come, that'll do, you can go," said Stepan Arkadyevich, blushing suddenly. "Well, now, let's dress," he turned to Matvei and resolutely threw off his dressing gown.

Matvei was already holding up the shirt like a horse's collar, and, blowing off some invisible speck, he slipped it with obvious pleasure over the well−cared−for person of his master.

III.

When he was dressed, Stepan Arkadyevich sprinkled some scent on himself, pulled down his shirt cuffs, distributed into his pockets his cigarettes, pocketbook, matches and watch, with its double chain and seals, and, shaking out his handkerchief, feeling himself clean, fragrant, healthy and physically at ease, in spite of his misfortune, he walked with a slight swing of each leg into the dining room, where coffee was already waiting for

him and, alongside of his cup, the letters and papers from the office.

He read the letters. One was very unpleasant, from a merchant who was buying a forest on his wife's property. To sell this forest was absolutely essential; but at present, until he was reconciled with his wife, the subject could not be discussed. The most unpleasant thing of all was that his pecuniary interests should in this way enter into the question of his reconciliation with his wife. And the idea that he might be led on by his interests, that he might seek a reconciliation with his wife on account of the sale of the forest that idea hurt him.

When he had finished his letters, Stepan Arkadyevich moved the office papers close to him, rapidly looked through two cases, made a few notes with a big pencil, and, pushing away the papers, turned to his coffee. Sipping it, he opened a still damp morning paper and began to read it.

Stepan Arkadyevich took in and read a liberal paper, not an extreme one, but one advocating the views held by the majority. And in spite of the fact that science, art and politics had no special interest for him, he firmly held those views on all these subjects which were held by the majority and by his paper, and he only changed them when the majority changed them or, more strictly speaking, he did not change them, but they imperceptibly changed of themselves within him.

Stepan Arkadyevich had not chosen his political opinions or his views these political opinions and views had come to him of themselves just as he did not choose the shapes of his hat and coat, but simply accepted those that were being worn. And for him, living in a certain society owing to the need, ordinarily developed at years of discretion, for some degree of mental activity to have views was just as indispensable as to have a hat. If there was a reason for his preferring liberal to conservative views, which were held also by many of his circle, it arose not from his considering liberalism more rational, but from its being in closer accordance with his manner of life. The liberal party said that in Russia everything was wrong, and indeed Stepan Arkadyevich had many debts and was decidedly short of money. The liberal party said that marriage was an institution quite out of date, and that it stood in need of reconstruction, and indeed family life afforded Stepan Arkadyevich little gratification, and forced him into lying and hypocrisy, which were so repulsive to his nature. The liberal party said, or rather allowed it to be understood, that religion was only a curb to keep in check the barbarous classes of the people, and indeed Stepan Arkadyevich could not stand through even a short service without his legs aching, and could never make out what was the object of all the terrible and high−flown language about another world when life might be so very amusing in this world. And with all this Stepan Arkadyevich, who liked a merry joke, was fond of embarrassing some plain man by saying that if one were to pride oneself on one's origin, one ought not to stop at Rurik and disown the founder of the line the monkey. And so liberalism had become a habit of Stepan Arkadyevich, and he liked his newspaper, as he did his cigar after dinner, for the slight fog it diffused in his brain. He read the leading article, which maintained that it was quite senseless in our day to raise an outcry that radicalism was threatening to swallow up all conservative elements, and that the government ought to take measures to crush the revolutionary hydra; that, on the contrary, "in our opinion the danger lies not in that imaginary revolutionary hydra, but in the obstinacy of traditionalism clogging progress," etc., etc. He read another article, too, a financial one, which alluded to Bentham and Mill, and dropped some innuendoes reflecting on the ministry. With his characteristic quick−wittedness he caught the drift of each innuendo, divined whence it came, at whom and on what ground it was aimed, and that afforded him, as it always did, a certain gratification. But today that gratification was embittered by Matriona Philimonovna's advice and the unsatisfactory state of his household. He read, too, that Count Beist was rumored to have left for Wiesbaden, and that one need have no more gray hair, and of the sale of a light carriage, and of a young person seeking a situation; but these items of information did not give him, as usual, a quiet, ironical gratification.

Having finished the paper, a second cup of coffee and a roll and butter, he got up, shaking the crumbs off his waistcoat; and, squaring his broad chest, he smiled joyously; not because there was anything particularly agreeable in his mind the joyous smile was evoked by a good digestion.

But this joyous smile at once recalled everything to him, and he grew thoughtful.

Two childish voices (Stepan Arkadyevich recognized the voices of Grisha, his youngest boy, and Tania, his eldest girl) were heard outside the door. They were carrying something, and dropped it.

"I told you not to sit passengers on the roof," said the little girl in English; "there, pick them up!"

"Everything's in confusion," thought Stepan Arkadyevich; "there are the children running about by themselves." And going to the door, he called them. They left off the box that represented a train, and came in to their father.

The little girl, her father's favorite, ran up boldly, embraced him and hung laughingly on his neck, enjoying as she always did the well−known smell of scent that came from his whiskers. At last the little girl kissed his face, which was flushed from his stooping posture and beaming with tenderness, loosed her hands, and was about to run away again; but her father held her back.

"How is mamma?" he asked, passing his hand over his daughter's smooth, soft little neck. "Good morning," he said, smiling to the boy, who had come up to greet him.

He was conscious that he loved the boy less, and always tried to be fair; but the boy felt it, and did not smile responsively to his father's chilly smile.

"Mamma? She is up," answered the girl.

Stepan Arkadyevich sighed.

"That means she hasn't slept again all night," he thought.

"Well, is she cheerful?"

The little girl knew that there was a quarrel between her father and mother, and that her mother could not be cheerful, and that her father must be aware of this, and that he was pretending when he asked about it so lightly. And she blushed for her father. He at once perceived it, and blushed too.

"I don't know," she said. "She did not say we must do our lessons, but she said we were to go for a walk with Miss Hoole to grandmamma's."

"Well, go, Tania, my darling. Oh, wait a minute, though," he said, still holding her and stroking her soft little hand.

He took off the mantelpiece, where he had put it yesterday, a little box of sweets, and gave her two, picking out her favorites, a chocolate and a bonbon.

"For Grisha?" said the little girl, pointing to the chocolate.

"Yes, yes." And still stroking her little shoulder, he kissed the nape of her neck, and let her go.

"The carriage is ready," said Matvei; "but there's someone to see you with a petition."

"Been here long?" asked Stepan Arkadyevich.

"Half an hour or so."

"How many times have I told you to tell me at once?"

"One must let you drink your coffee in peace, at least," said Matvei, in the affectionately gruff tone with which it was impossible to be angry.

"Well, show the person up at once," said Oblonsky, frowning with vexation.

The petitioner, the widow of a staff captain Kalinin, came with a request impossible and unreasonable; but Stepan Arkadyevich, as he generally did, made her sit down, heard her to the end attentively without interrupting her, and gave her detailed advice as to how and to whom to apply, and even wrote for her, easily and clearly, in his large, sprawling calligraphic and legible hand, a little note to a personage who might be of use to her. Having got rid of the staff captain's widow, Stepan Arkadyevich took his hat and stopped to recollect whether he had forgotten anything. It appeared that he had forgotten nothing except what he wanted to forget his wife.

"Ah, yes!" He bowed his head, and his handsome face assumed a melancholy expression. "To go, or not to go?" he said to himself; and an inner voice told him he must not go, that nothing could come of it but falsity; that to amend, to set right their relations was impossible, because it was impossible to make her attractive again and able to inspire love, or to make him an old man, not susceptible to love. Except deceit and lying nothing could come of it now; and deceit and lying were opposed to his nature.

"It must be some day, though: it can't go on like this," he said, trying to give himself courage. He set straight his chest, took out a cigarette, lighted it, took two whiffs at it, flung it into a mother−of−pearl ash tray, and with rapid steps walked through the drawing room and opened the other door into his wife's bedroom.

IV.

Darya Alexandrovna, in a dressing jacket, and with her now scanty hair (once luxuriant and beautiful) fastened up with hairpins on the nape of her neck, with a sunken, thin face and large, startled eyes, which looked prominent from the thinness of her face, was standing, among a litter of all sorts of things scattered all over the room, before an open bureau, from which she was taking something. Hearing her husband's steps, she stopped, looking toward the door, and trying in vain to give her features a severe and contemptuous expression. She felt she was afraid of him, and afraid of the coming interview. She was just attempting to do what she had attempted to do ten times already in these last three days to sort out the children's things and her own, so as to take them to her mother's and again she could not bring herself to do this; but now again, as each time before, she kept saying to herself, that things cannot go on like this, that she must undertake something, punish him, put him to shame, avenge on him some little part at least of the suffering he had caused her. She still continued to tell herself that she should leave him, but she was conscious that this was impossible; it was impossible because she could not get out of the habit of regarding him as her husband and of loving him. Besides this, she realized that if even here in her own house she could hardly manage to look after her five children properly, they would be still worse off where she was going with all of them. As it was, even in the course of these three days, the youngest was unwell from being given unwholesome soup, and the others had almost gone without their dinner the day before. She was conscious that it was impossible to go away; but, cheating herself, she went on all the same sorting out her things and pretending she was going.

Seeing her husband, she dropped her hands into the drawer of the bureau as though looking for something, and only looked round at him when he had come quite up to her. But her face, to which she tried to give a severe and resolute expression, expressed bewilderment and suffering.

"Dolly!" he said in a subdued and timid voice. He had hunched up his shoulders and tried to look pitiful and humble, but for all that he was radiant with freshness and health. In a rapid glance she scanned his figure,

beaming with freshness and health. "Yes, he is happy and content!" she thought; "while I... And that disgusting good nature which everyone likes him for and praises I hate that good nature of his," she thought. Her mouth stiffened, the muscles of the cheek trembled on the right side of her pale, nervous face.

"What do you want?" she said in a rapid, deep, unnatural voice.

"Dolly!" he repeated, with a quiver in his voice. "Anna is coming today."

"Well, what is that to me? I can't see her!" she cried.

"But you must, really, Dolly..."

"Go away, go away, go away!" she shrieked, without looking at him, as though this shriek were called up by physical pain.

Stepan Arkadyevich could be calm when he thought of his wife, he could hope that everything would come round, as Matvei expressed it, and had been able to go on reading his paper and drinking his coffee; but when he saw her tortured, suffering face, heard the tone of her voice, submissive to fate and full of despair, his breath was cut short and a lump came to this throat, and his eyes began to shine with tears.

"My God! What have I done? Dolly! For God's sake!... You know..." He could not go on; there was a sob in his throat.

She shut the bureau with a slam, and glanced at him.

"Dolly, what can I say?... One thing: forgive me... Remember, cannot nine years of our life atone for an instant..."

She dropped her eyes and listened, expecting what he would say, as if beseeching him in some way or other to make her believe differently.

"...instant of passion..." he said, and would have gone on, but at that word, as at a pang of physical pain, her lips stiffened again, and again the muscles of her right cheek worked.

"Go away, go out of the room!" she shrieked still more shrilly, "and don't talk to me of your passions and your vilenesses."

She tried to go out, but tottered, and clung to the back of a chair to support herself. His face relaxed, his lips became puffy; tears welled up in his eyes.

"Dolly!" he said, sobbing now. "For mercy's sake, think of the children; they are not to blame! I am to blame punish me then, make me expiate my fault. Anything I can do, I am ready to do! I am to blame, no words can express how much I am to blame! But, Dolly, forgive me!"

She sat down. He listened to her hard, heavy breathing, and he was unutterably sorry for her. She made several attempts to speak, but could not. He waited.

"You remember the children, Stiva, to play with them; but I remember, and know that they go to ruin now," she said obviously one of the phrases she had more than once repeated to herself in the course of the last three days.

She had called him "Stiva," and he glanced at her with gratitude and moved to take her hand, but she drew back from him with aversion.

"I remember the children, and for that reason I would do anything in the world to save them; but I don't myself know the means. By taking them away from their father, or by leaving them with a vicious father yes, a vicious father.... Tell me, after what... has happened, can we live together? Is that possible? Do tell me is it possible?" she repeated, raising her voice. "After my husband, the father of my children, enters into a love affair with his own children's governess...."

"But what's to be done? What's to be done?" he kept saying in a pitiful voice, not knowing what he was saying, as his head sank lower and lower.

"You are loathsome to me, repulsive!" she shrieked, getting more and more heated. "Your tears mean nothing! You have never loved me; you have neither a heart nor a sense of honor! You are hateful to me, disgusting, a stranger yes, a complete stranger!" With pain and wrath she uttered the word so terrible to herself stranger.

He looked at her, and the fury expressed in her face alarmed and amazed him. He did not understand that it was his pity for her that exasperated her. She saw in him compassion for her, but not love. "No, she hates me. She will not forgive me," he thought.

"It is awful Awful!" he said.

At that moment in the next room a child began to cry; probably it had fallen down. Darya Alexandrovna listened, and her face suddenly softened.

She seemed pulling herself together for a few seconds, as though she did not know where she was nor what she was doing, and, getting up rapidly, she moved toward the door.

"Well, she loves my child," he thought, noticing the change of her face at the child's cry, "my child: how can she hate me then?"

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

"If you follow me, I will call in the servants, and the children! Let them all know you are a scoundrel! I am going away at once, and you may live here with your mistress!"

And she went out, slamming the door.

Stepan Arkadyevich sighed, mopped his face, and with a subdued tread walked out of the room. "Matvei says everything will come round; but how? I don't see the least chance of it. Ah, ah, how horrible it is! And how vulgarly she shouted," he said to himself, remembering her shrieks and the words "scoundrel" and "mistress." "And very likely the maids were listening! Horribly vulgar, horribly." Stepan Arkadyevich stood a few seconds alone, wiped his eyes, thrust out his chest and walked out of the room.

It was Friday, and in the dining room the watchmaker, a German, was winding up the clock. Stepan Arkadyevich remembered his joke about this punctual, bald watchmaker, "that the German was wound up for a whole lifetime himself, to wind up watches," and he smiled. Stepan Arkadyevich was fond of a nice joke. "And maybe it will come round!" That's a good expression, 'come round,' he thought. "I must tell that."

"Matvei!" he shouted. "Arrange everything with Marya in the sitting room for Anna Arkadyevna," he said to Matvei when he came in.

"Yes, sir."

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

"You won't dine at home?" said Matvei, seeing him off.

"It all depends. But here's for the housekeeping," he said, taking ten roubles from his pocketbook. "Will it be enough?"

"Enough or not enough, we must make it do," said Matvei, slamming the carriage door and going back to the steps.

Darya Alexandrovna meanwhile having pacified the child, and knowing from the sound of the carriage that he had gone off, went back to her bedroom. It was her only refuge from the household cares which crowded upon her directly she went out from it. Even now, in the short time she had been in the nursery, the English governess and Matriona Philimonovna had succeeded in putting several questions to her, which did not admit of delay, and which only she could answer: "What were the children to put on for their walk? Should they have any milk? Should not a new cook be sent for?"

"Ah, let me alone, let me alone!" she said, and going back to her bedroom she sat down in the same place she had occupied when talking to her husband, clasping tightly her thin hands, her rings slipping down on her bony fingers, and fell to going over her recollections of the entire interview. "He has gone! But what has he finally arrived at with her?" she thought. "Can it be he sees her? Why didn't I ask him! No, no, reconciliation is impossible. Even if we remain in the same house, we are strangers strangers forever!" She repeated again with special significance the word so dreadful to her. "And how I loved him! my God, how I loved him!... How I loved him! And now don't I love him? Don't I love him more than before? The most horrible thing is," she began, but did not finish her thought, because Matriona Philimonovna put her head in at the door.

"Let us send for my brother," she said; "he can get a dinner anyway, or we shall have the children getting nothing to eat till six again, like yesterday."

"Very well, I will come directly and see about it. But did you send for some new milk?"

And Darya Alexandrovna plunged into the duties of the day, and drowned her grief in them for a time.

V.

Stepan Arkadyevich had learned easily at school, thanks to his excellent abilities, but he had been idle and mischievous, and therefore was one of the lowest in his class. But in spite of his habitually dissipated mode of life, his inferior grade in the service, and his comparative youth, he occupied the honorable and lucrative position of president of one of the government boards at Moscow. This post he had received through his sister Anna's husband, Alexei Alexandrovich Karenin, who held one of the most important positions in the ministry to which the Moscow office belonged. But if Karenin had not got his brother−in−law this berth, then through a hundred other personages brothers, sisters, cousins, uncles and aunts Stiva Oblonsky would have received this post or some other like it, together with the salary of six thousand absolutely needful for him, as his affairs, in spite of his wife's considerable property, were in a poor state.

Half Moscow and Peterburg were friends and relations of Stepan Arkadyevich. He was born in the midst of those who had been, and had become, the powerful ones of this world. One−third of the men in the government, the older men, had been friends of his father's, and had known him in pinafores; another third were his intimate chums, and the remainder were friendly acquaintances. Consequently the distributors of earthly blessings in the shape of posts, rents, concessions and such, were all his friends, and could not overlook one of their own set; and

Oblonsky had no need to make any special exertion to get a lucrative post. He had only not to refuse things, not to show jealousy, not to be quarrelsome or take offense, all of which from his characteristic good nature he never did. It would have struck him as absurd if he had been told that he would not get a position with the salary he required, especially as he expected nothing out of the way; he only wanted what the men of his own age and standing did get, and he was no worse qualified for performing duties of this kind than any other man.

Stepan Arkadyevich was not merely liked by all who knew him for his good humor, his bright disposition and his unquestionable honesty; in him, in his handsome, radiant figure, his sparkling eyes, black hair and eyebrows, and his white and pink complexion, there was something which produced a physical effect of kindliness and good humor on the people who met him. "Aha! Stiva! Oblonsky! The man himself!" was almost always said with a smile of delight on meeting him. Even though it happened at times that after a conversation with him it seemed that nothing particularly delightful had happened, the next day, and the next, everyone was just as delighted to meet him again.

After filling for two years the post of president of one of the government boards at Moscow, Stepan Arkadyevich had won the respect, as well as the liking, of his fellow officials, subordinates and superiors, and all who had had business with him. The principal qualities in Stepan Arkadyevich which had gained him this universal respect in the service consisted, in the first place, of his extreme indulgence for others, founded on a consciousness of his own shortcomings; secondly, of his perfect liberalism not the liberalism he read of in the papers, but the liberalism that was in his blood, in virtue of which he treated all men perfectly equally and exactly the same, whatever their fortune or rank might be; and thirdly the most important point of his complete indifference to the business in which he was engaged, in consequence of which he was never carried away, and made no mistakes.

On reaching the offices of the board Stepan Arkadyevich, escorted by a deferential porter with a portfolio, went into his little private room, put on his uniform, and went into the board room. The clerks and officials all rose, greeting him with good−humored deference. Stepan Arkadyevich moved quickly, as always, to his place, shook hands with the members of the board, and sat down. He made a joke or two, and talked just as much as was consistent with due decorum, and began work. No one knew better than Stepan Arkadyevich how to hit on that exact limit of freedom, simplicity and official stiffness which is necessary for the agreeable conduct of business. A secretary, with the good−humored deference common to everyone in Stepan Arkadyevich's office, came up with papers, and began to speak in the familiar and easy tone which had been introduced by Stepan Arkadyevich.

"We have succeeded in getting the information from the government department of Penza. Here, would you care?..."

"You've got it at last?" said Stepan Arkadyevich, laying his finger on the paper. "Now, gentlemen..."

And the sitting of the board began.

"If they but knew," he thought, inclining his head with an important air and listening to the report, "what a guilty little boy their president was half an hour ago!" And his eyes were laughing during the reading of the report. Till two o'clock the sitting would go on without a break then there would be an interval and luncheon.

It was not yet two, when the large glass doors of the board room suddenly opened and someone came in.

All the members of the board, sitting at the table, from below the portrait of the Czar and from behind the mirror of justice, delighted at any distraction, looked round at the door; but the doorkeeper standing there at once drove out the intruder, and closed the glass door after him.

When the case had been read through, Stepan Arkadyevich got up and stretched, and by way of tribute to the liberalism of the times took out a cigarette, being in the board room, and went into his private room. Two of his board fellows, the old veteran in the service, Nikitin, and the Kammerjunker Grinevich, went in with him.

"We shall have time to finish after lunch," said Stepan Arkadyevich.

"To be sure we shall!" said Nikitin.

"A pretty sharp fellow this Fomin must be," said Grinevich of one of the persons taking part in the case they were examining.

Stepan Arkadyevich frowned at Grinevich's words, giving him thereby to understand that it was improper to pass judgment prematurely, and made him no reply.

"Who was it who came in?" he asked the doorkeeper.

"Some fellow, your excellency, sneaked in without permission directly my back was turned. He was asking for you. I told him: when the members come out, then..."

"Where is he?"

"Maybe he's gone into the passage, he was strolling here till now. That's he," said the doorkeeper, pointing to a strongly built, broad shouldered man with a curly beard, who, without taking off his sheepskin cap, was running lightly and rapidly up the worn steps of the stone staircase. One of the officials going down a lean fellow with a portfolio stood out of his way, looked disapprovingly at the legs of the running man, and then glanced inquiringly at Oblonsky.

Stepan Arkadyevich was standing at the top of the stairs. His good−naturedly beaming face above the embroidered collar of his uniform beamed more than ever when he recognized the man coming up.

"Why, it's actually you, Levin, at last!" he said with a friendly mocking smile, gazing on the approaching man. "How is it you have deigned to look me up in this den?" said Stepan Arkadyevich and, not content with shaking hands, he kissed his friend. "Have you been here long?"

"I have just come, and very much wanted to see you," said Levin, looking about him shyly, and, at the same time, angrily and uneasily.

"Well, let's go into my room," said Stepan Arkadyevich, who knew his friend's sensitive and irritable shyness, and, taking his arm, he drew him along, as though guiding him through dangers.

Stepan Arkadyevich was on familiar terms with almost all his acquaintances, and called almost all of them by their Christian names: old men of sixty, boys of twenty, actors, ministers, merchants and adjutant generals, so that many of his intimate chums were to be found at the extreme ends of the social ladder, and would have been very much surprised to learn that they had, through the medium of Oblonsky, something in common. He was the familiar friend of everyone with whom he took a glass of champagne, and he took a glass of champagne with everyone, and when in consequence he met any of his disreputable chums, as he used in joke to call many of his friends, in the presence of his subordinates, he well knew how, with his characteristic tact, to diminish any possible disagreeable impression. Levin was not a disreputable chum, but Oblonsky, with his ready tact, felt that Levin fancied Oblonsky might not care to show his intimacy with him before subordinates, and so Stepan Arkadyevich made haste to take him off into his room.

Levin was almost of the same age as Oblonsky; their intimacy did not rest merely on champagne. Levin had been the friend and companion of his early youth. They were fond of one another in spite of the difference of their characters and tastes, as friends are fond of one another who have been together in early youth. But in spite of this, each of them as is often the way with men who have selected careers of different kinds though in discussion he would even justify the other's career, in his heart despised it. It seemed to each of them that the life he led himself was the only real life, and the life led by his friend was a mere phantasm. Oblonsky could not restrain a slight mocking smile at the sight of Levin. How often he had seen him come up to Moscow from the country where he was doing something, but what precisely Stepan Arkadyevich could never quite make out, and indeed took no interest in the matter. Levin arrived in Moscow always excited and in a hurry, rather ill at ease and irritated by his own want of ease, and for the most part with a perfectly new, unexpected view of things. Stepan Arkadyevich laughed at this, and liked it. In the same way Levin in his heart despised the town mode of life of his friend, and his official duties, which he laughed at and regarded as trifling. But the difference was that Oblonsky, since he was doing the same as everyone did, laughed assuredly and good−humoredly, while Levin laughed without assuredness and sometimes angrily.

"We have long been expecting you," said Stepan Arkadyevich, going into his room and letting Levin's hand go as though to show that here all danger was over. "I am very, very glad to see you," he went on. "Well, what now? How are you? When did you come?"

Levin was silent, looking at the unfamiliar faces of Oblonsky's two companions, and especially at the elegant Grinevich's hands with such long white fingers, such long yellow nails, curved at their end, and such huge shining studs on the shirt cuff, that apparently these hands absorbed all his attention, and allowed him no freedom of thought. Oblonsky noticed this at once, and smiled.

"Ah, to be sure, let me introduce you," he said. "My colleagues: Philip Ivanich Nikitin, Mikhail Stanislavich Grinevich" and turning to Levin "a Zemstvo member, a modern Zemstvo man, a gymnast who lifts five poods with one hand, a cattle breeder and sportsman, and my friend Constantin Dmitrievich Levin, the brother of Sergei Ivanovich Koznishev."

"Delighted," said the veteran.

"I have the honor of knowing your brother, Sergei Ivanovich," said Grinevich, holding out his slender hand with its long nails.

Levin frowned, shook hands coldly, and at once turned to Oblonsky. Though he had a great respect for his half−brother, an author well known to all Russia, he could not endure it when people treated him not as Constantin Levin, but as the brother of the celebrated Koznishev.

"No, I am no longer a Zemstvo man. I have quarreled with them all, and don't go to the sessions any more," he said, turning to Oblonsky.

"You've been quick about it!" said Oblonsky with a smile. "But how? Why?"

"It's a long story. I will tell you some time," said Levin but began telling him at once. "Well, to put it shortly, I was convinced that nothing was really done by the Zemstvo councils, or ever could be," he began, as though someone had just insulted him. "On one side it's a plaything; they play at being a parliament, and I'm neither young enough nor old enough to find amusement in playthings; and on the other side" (he stammered) "it's a means for the coterie of the district to feather their nests. Formerly they did this through wardships and courts of justice, now they do it through the Zemstvo instead of taking the bribes, they take the unearned salary," he said, as hotly as though one of those present had opposed his opinion.

"Aha! You're in a new phase again, I see a conservative," said Stepan Arkadyevich. "However, we can go into that later."

"Yes, later. But I had to see you," said Levin, looking with hatred at Grinevich's hand.

Stepan Arkadyevich gave a scarcely perceptible smile.

"But you used to say you'd never wear European dress again," he said, gazing on Levin's new suit, obviously cut by a French tailor. "So! I see: a new phase."

Levin suddenly blushed, not as grown men blush, slightly, without being themselves aware of it, but as boys blush, feeling that they are ridiculous through their shyness, and consequently ashamed of it, and blushing still more, almost to the point of tears. And it was so strange to see this sensible, manly face in such a childish plight, that Oblonsky left off looking at him.

"Oh, where shall we meet? You know I want very much to talk to you," said Levin.

Oblonsky seemed to ponder.

"I'll tell you what: let's go to Gurin's to lunch, and there we can talk. I am free till three."

"No," answered Levin, after an instant's thought, "I have another visit to make."

"All right, then, let's dine together."

"Dine together? But I have nothing very particular just a word or two, a question; then a little chatting."

"Well, let's have your word or two right now and we'll talk it over in the course of the dinner."

"Well, it's this," said Levin, "however it's of no importance."

His face suddenly assumed an expression of anger from the effort he was making to surmount his shyness.

"What are the Shcherbatskys doing? Everything as it used to be?" he said.

Stepan Arkadyevich, who had long known that Levin was in love with his sister−in−law, Kitty, gave a hardly perceptible smile, and his eyes sparkled merrily.

"You've said your word or two, but I can't answer in a few words, because... Excuse me for just a minute...."

A secretary came in, with respectful familiarity and the modest consciousness, characteristic of every secretary, of superiority to his chief in the knowledge of affairs; he went up to Oblonsky with some papers, and began, under pretense of asking a question, to explain some objection. Stepan Arkadyevich, without hearing him out, laid his hand genially on the secretary's sleeve.

"No, you do as I told you," he said, smoothing his remark with a smile, and with a brief explanation of his view of the matter he moved away the papers, and said: "So do it that way, if you please, Zakhar Nikitich."

The secretary retired in confusion. During the consultation with the secretary Levin had completely recovered from his embarrassment. He was standing with elbows on the back of a chair, and on his face was a look of ironical attention.

"I don't understand it I don't understand it," he said.

"What don't you understand?" said Oblonsky, smiling just as cheerfully, and picking up a cigarette. He expected some queer outburst from Levin.

"I don't understand what you are doing," said Levin, shrugging his shoulders. "How can you be serious about it?"

"Why not?"

"Why, because there's nothing in it."

"You think so yet we're overwhelmed with work."

"On paper. But, there, you've a gift for it," added Levin.

"That's to say, you think there's a lack of something in me?"

"Perhaps so," said Levin. "But all the same I admire your grandeur, and am proud to have such a great person as a friend. You've not answered my question, though," he went on, with a desperate effort looking Oblonsky straight in the face.

"Oh, that's all very well. You wait a bit, and you'll come to this yourself. It's very nice for you to have three thousand dessiatinas in the Karazinsky district, and such muscles, and the freshness of a girl of twelve; still you'll be one of us one day. Yes, as to your question, there is no change, but it's a pity you've been away so long."

"Oh, why so?" Levin queried, frightened.

"Oh, nothing," responded Oblonsky. "We'll talk it over. But what's brought you up to town?"

"Oh, we'll talk about that, too, later on," said Levin, reddening again up to his ears.

"All right. I see," said Stepan Arkadyevich. "I should ask you to come to us, you know, but my wife's not quite well. But I'll tell you what: if you want to see them, they're sure now to be at the Zoological Gardens from four to five. Kitty skates. You drive along there, and I'll come and fetch you, and we'll go and dine somewhere together."

"Capital. So good−by till then."

"Now mind, you'll forget I know you! or rush off home to the country!" Stepan Arkadyevich called out laughing.

"No, truly!"

And Levin went out of the room, recalling only when he was in the doorway that he had forgotten to take leave of Oblonsky's colleagues.

"That gentleman must be a man of great energy," said Grinevich, when Levin had gone away.

"Yes, my dear sir," said Stepan Arkadyevich, nodding his head, "he's a lucky fellow! Three thousand dessiatinas in the Karazinsky district; everything before him; and what youth and vigor! Not like some of us."

"But why are you complaining, Stepan Arkadyevich?"

"Why, it goes hard with me, very bad," said Stepan Arkadyevich with a heavy sigh.

VI.

When Oblonsky asked Levin what had brought him to town, Levin blushed, and was furious with himself for blushing, because he could not answer: "I have come to make your sister−in−law a proposal," though that was solely what he had come for.

The families of the Levins and the Shcherbatskys were old, noble Moscow families, and had always been on intimate and friendly terms. This intimacy had grown still closer during Levin's student days. He had both prepared for the university with the young Prince Shcherbatsky, the brother of Kitty and Dolly, and had entered at the same time with him. In those days Levin was a frequent visitor at the house of the Shcherbatskys, and he was in love with the Shcherbatsky household. Strange as it may appear, it was with the household, the family that Constantin Levin was in love, especially with the feminine half of the household. Levin did not remember his own mother, and his only sister was older than he was, so that it was in the Shcherbatskys' house that he saw for the first time that inner life of an old, noble, cultured and honorable family of which he had been deprived by the death of his father and mother. All the members of that family, especially the feminine half, were pictured by him, as it were, wrapped about with a mysterious poetical veil, and he not only perceived no defects whatever in them, but, under the poetical veil that shrouded them, he assumed the existence of the loftiest sentiments and every possible perfection. Why it was the three young ladies had one day to speak French, and the next English; why it was that at certain hours they played by turns on the piano, the sounds of which were audible in their brother's room above, where the students used to work; why they were visited by those professors of French literature, of music, of drawing, of dancing; why at certain hours all the three young ladies, with Mademoiselle Linon, drove in the coach to the Tverskoy boulevard, dressed in their satin cloaks, Dolly in a long one, Natalie in a half−long one, and Kitty in one so short that her shapely legs in tightly−drawn red stockings were visible to all beholders; why it was they had to walk about the Tverskoy boulevard escorted by a footman with a gold cockade in his hat all this and much more that was done in their mysterious world he did not understand, but he was sure that everything that was done there was very good, and he was in love precisely with the mystery of the proceedings.

In his student days he had all but been in love with the eldest, Dolly, but she was soon married to Oblonsky. Then he began being in love with the second. He felt, as it were, that he had to be in love with one of the sisters, only he could not quite make out which. But Natalie, too, had hardly made her appearance in the world when she married the diplomat Lvov. Kitty was still a child when Levin left the university. Young Shcherbatsky went into the navy, was drowned in the Baltic and Levin's visits to the Shcherbatskys, despite his friendship with Oblonsky, became less frequent. But when early in the winter of this year Levin came to Moscow, after a year in the country, and saw the Shcherbatskys, he realized which of the three sisters he was indeed destined to love.

One would have thought that nothing could be simpler than for him, a man of good family, rather rich than poor, and thirty−two years old, to make the young Princess Shcherbatskaia an offer of marriage; in all likelihood he would at once have been looked upon as a good match. But Levin was in love, and so it seemed to him that Kitty was so perfect in every respect, a creature so far above everything earthly, while he was a creature so low and so earthly that it could not even be conceived that other people and she herself could regard him as worthy of her.

After spending two months in Moscow in a state of befuddlement, seeing Kitty almost every day in society, into which he went so as to meet her, he abruptly decided that it could not be, and went back to the country.

Levin's conviction that it could not be was founded on the idea that in the eyes of her family he was a disadvantageous and worthless match for the charming Kitty, and that Kitty herself could not love him. In her family's eyes he had no ordinary, definite career and position in society, while his comrades by this time, when he was thirty−two, were already one a colonel, and another a professor, another director of a bank and railways, or

chairman of a board, like Oblonsky. But he (he knew very well how he must appear to others) was a country gentleman, occupied in breeding cattle, shooting game and building barns; in other words, a fellow of no ability, who had not turned out well, and who was doing just what, according to the ideas of the world, is done by people fit for nothing else.

The mysterious, enchanting Kitty herself could not love such an ugly person as he conceived himself to be, and, above all, such an ordinary, in no way striking person. Moreover, his attitude to Kitty in the past the attitude of a grown−up person to a child, arising from his friendship with her brother seemed to him yet another obstacle to love. An ugly, good−natured man, as he considered himself, might, he supposed, be liked as a friend; but to be loved with such a love as that with which he loved Kitty, one would need to be handsome and, still more, a distinguished man.

He had heard that women often did care for ugly and ordinary men, but he did not believe it, for he judged by himself, and he could not himself have loved any but beautiful, mysterious and exceptional women.

But, after spending two months alone in the country, he was convinced that this was not one of those passions of which he had had experience in his early youth; that this feeling gave him not an instant's rest; that he could not live without deciding the question as to whether she would or would not be his wife; that his despair had arisen only from his own imaginings, and that he had no sort of proof that he would be rejected. So he had now come to Moscow with a firm determination to make a proposal, and get married if he were accepted. Or... he could not conceive what would become of him if he were rejected.

VII.

On arriving in Moscow by a morning train, Levin had put up at the house of his elder half−brother, Koznishev. After changing his clothes he went down to his brother's study, intending to talk to him at once about the object of his visit, and to ask his advice; but his brother was not alone. With him there was a well−known professor of philosophy, who had come from Charkov expressly to clear up a difference that had arisen between them on a very important philosophical question. The professor was carrying on a hot crusade against materialists. Sergei Koznishev had been following this crusade with interest, and after reading the professor's last article had written him a letter stating his objections. He accused the professor of making too great concessions to the materialists. And the professor had promptly appeared to argue the matter out. The point in discussion was the question then in vogue: Is there a line to be drawn between psychical and physiological phenomena in man? And if so, where?

Sergei Ivanovich met his brother with the smile of chilly friendliness he always had for everyone, and, introducing him to the professor, went on with the conversation.

A little man in spectacles, with a narrow forehead, tore himself from the discussion for an instant to greet Levin, and then went on talking without paying any further attention to him. Levin sat down to wait till the professor should go, but he soon began to get interested in the subject under discussion.

Levin had come across the magazine articles about which they were disputing, and had read them, interested in them as a development of the first principles of science, familiar to him when a natural science student at the university. But he had never connected these scientific deductions as to the origin of man as an animal, as to reflex action, biology and sociology, with those questions as to the meaning to himself of life and death, which had of late been more and more often in his mind.

As he listened to his brother's argument with the professor, he noticed that they connected these scientific questions with those spiritual problems that at times they almost touched on the latter; but every time they were close upon what seemed to him the chief point they promptly beat a hasty retreat, and plunged again into a sea of

subtle distinctions, reservations, quotations, allusions and appeals to authorities, and it was with difficulty that he understood what they were talking about.

"I cannot admit it," said Sergei Ivanovich, with his habitual clearness and distinctness of expression, and elegance of diction. "I cannot in any case agree with Keiss that my whole conception of the external world has been derived from impressions. The most fundamental idea the idea of existence has not been received by me through sensation; indeed, there is no special sense organ for the transmission of such an idea."

"Yes, but they Wurst, and Knaust, and Pripassov would answer that your consciousness of existence is derived from the conjunction of all your sensations, that that consciousness of existence is the result of your sensations. Wurst, indeed, says plainly that, assuming there are no sensations, it follows that there is no idea of existence."

"I maintain the contrary," began Sergei Ivanovich.

But here it seemed again to Levin that, just as they were close upon the real point of the matter, they were again retreating, and he made up his mind to put a question to the professor.

"According to that, if my senses are annihilated, if my body is dead, I can have no existence of any sort?" he queried.

The professor, in annoyance, and, as it were, mental suffering at the interruption, looked round at the strange inquirer, more like a hauler of a barge than a philosopher, and turned his eyes upon Sergei Ivanovich, as though to ask: What's one to say to him? But Sergei Ivanovich, who had been talking with far less stress and one−sidedness than the professor, and who had sufficient breadth of mind to answer the professor, and at the same time to comprehend the simple and natural point of view from which the question was put, smiled and said:

"That question we have no right to answer as yet...."

"We have not the requisite data," confirmed the professor, and he went back to his argument. "No," he said; "I would point out the fact that if, as Pripassov directly asserts, sensation is based on impression, then we are bound to distinguish sharply between these two conceptions."

Levin listened no more, and simply waited for the professor to go.

VIII.

When the professor had gone, Sergei Ivanovich turned to his brother.

"Delighted that you've come. For how long? How's your farming getting on?"

Levin knew that his elder brother took little interest in farming, and only put the question in deference to him, and therefore he told him only about the sale of his wheat and money matters.

Levin had meant to tell his brother of his determination to get married, and to ask his advice; he had indeed firmly resolved to do so. But after seeing his brother, listening to his conversation with the professor, hearing afterward the unconsciously patronizing tone in which his brother questioned him about agricultural matters (their mother's property had not been divided, and Levin took charge of both their shares), Levin felt that he could not for some reason broach to him his intention of marrying. He felt that his brother would not look on it as he would have wished him.

"Well, how is your Zemstvo doing?" asked Sergei Ivanovich, who was greatly interested in Zemstvo establishments and attached great importance to them.

"I really don't know."

"What! But surely, you're a member of the board?"

"No, I'm not a member now; I've resigned," answered Levin, "and I no longer attend the sessions."

"What a pity!" commented Sergei Ivanovich, frowning.

Levin in self−defense began to describe what took place at the sessions in his district.

"That's how it always is!" Sergei Ivanovich interrupted him. "We Russians are always like that. Perhaps it's our strong point, really this faculty of seeing our own shortcomings; but we overdo it, we comfort ourselves with irony, which we always have on the tip of our tongues. All I say is, give such rights as our Zemstvo establishments to any other European people, and... Why, the Germans or the English would have worked their way to freedom with them, while we simply turn them into ridicule."

"But how can it be helped?" said Levin penitently. "It was my last trial. And I did try with all my soul. I can't. I'm no good at it."

"It's not that you're no good at it," said Sergei Ivanovich, "it is that you don't look at it as you should."

"Perhaps not," Levin answered dejectedly.

"Oh! do you know brother Nikolai's turned up again?"

This brother Nikolai was the elder brother of Constantin Levin, and half−brother of Sergei Ivanovich; a man who was done for, who had dissipated the greater part of his fortune, was living in the strangest and lowest company, and had quarreled with his brothers.

"What did you say?" Levin cried with horror. "How do you know?"

"Procophii saw him in the street."

"Here in Moscow? Where is he? Do you know?" Levin got up from his chair, as though on the point of starting off at once.

"I'm sorry I told you," said Sergei Ivanovich, shaking his head at his younger brother's excitement. "I sent to find out where he is living, and sent him his I O U to Trubin, which I paid. This is the answer he sent me."

And Sergei Ivanovich took a note from under a paperweight and handed it to his brother.

Levin read in the queer, familiar handwriting: "I humbly beg you to leave me in peace. That's the only favor I ask of my gracious brothers. Nikolai Levin."

Levin read it, and without raising his head stood with the note in his hands opposite Sergei Ivanovich.

There was a struggle in his heart between the desire to forget his unhappy brother for the time, and the consciousness that it would be base to do so.

"He obviously wants to offend me," pursued Sergei Ivanovich; "but he cannot offend me, and I should have wished with all my heart to assist him, but I know it's impossible to do that."

"Yes, yes," repeated Levin. "I understand and appreciate your attitude to him; but I shall go and see him."

"If you want to, do; but I shouldn't advise it," said Sergei Ivanovich. "As regards myself, I have no fear of your doing so; he will not make you quarrel with me; but for your own sake, I should say you would do better not to go. You can't do him any good; still, do as you please."

"Very likely I can't do any good, but I feel especially at such a moment but that's another thing I feel I could not be at peace."

"Well, that's something I don't understand," said Sergei Ivanovich. "One thing I do understand," he added, "it's a lesson in humility. I have come to look very differently and more indulgently on what is called infamy since brother Nikolai has become what he is... you know what he did...."

"Oh, it's awful, awful!" repeated Levin.

After obtaining his brother's address from Sergei Ivanovich's footman, Levin was on the point of setting off at once to see him, but on second thought he decided to put off his visit till the evening. The thing to do to set his heart at rest was to accomplish what he had come to Moscow for. From his brother's Levin went to Oblonsky's office, and on getting news of the Shcherbatskys from him, he drove to the place where he had been told he might find Kitty.

IX.

At four o'clock, conscious of his throbbing heart, Levin stepped out of a hired sleigh at the Zoological Gardens and turned along the path to the frozen mounds and the skating ground, knowing that he would certainly find her there, as he had seen the Shcherbatskys' carriage at the entrance.

It was a bright, frosty day. Rows of carriages, sleighs, drivers and gendarmes were standing in the approach. Crowds of well−dressed people, with hats bright in the sun, swarmed about the entrance and along the well−swept paths between the little houses adorned with carving in the Russian style. The old curly birches of the gardens, all their twigs laden with snow, looked as though freshly decked in sacred vestments.

He walked along the path toward the skating ground, and kept saying to himself "You mustn't be excited, you must be calm. What's the matter with you? What do you want? Be still, foolish one," he conjured his heart. And the more he tried to compose himself, the more breathless he found himself. An acquaintance met him and called him by his name, but Levin did not even recognize him. He went toward the mounds, whence came the clank of the chains of sleighs as they slipped down or were dragged up, the rumble of the sliding sleighs and the sounds of merry voices. He walked on a few steps, and the skating ground lay open before him, and at once, amid all the skaters, he recognized her.

He knew she was there by the rapture and the terror that seized his heart. She was standing talking to a lady at the opposite end of the ground. There was apparently nothing striking either in her dress or her attitude, but for Levin she was as easy to find in that crowd as a rose among nettles. Everything was made bright by her. She was the smile that shed light on all around her. "Is it possible I can go over there on the ice approach her?" he thought. The place where she stood seemed to him a holy shrine, unapproachable, and there was one moment when he was almost retreating, so overwhelmed was he with terror. He had to make an effort to master himself, and to remind himself that people of all sorts were moving about her, and that he, too, might have come there to skate. He

descended, for a long while avoiding looking at her as at the sun, yet seeing her, as one does the sun, without looking.

On that day of the week, and at that time of day, people of one set, all acquainted with one another, used to meet on the ice. There were skillful skaters there, showing off their skill, and beginners clinging to chairs with timid, awkward movements, and boys and elderly people skating with hygienic motives. They seemed to Levin an elect band of blissful beings because they were here, near her. All the skaters, it seemed, with perfect self−possession, skated toward her, skated by her, even spoke to her, and were happy, quite apart from her, enjoying the capital ice and the fine weather.

Nikolai Shcherbatsky, Kitty's cousin, in a short jacket and tight trousers, was sitting on a bench with his skates on. Seeing Levin, he shouted to him:

"Ah, the first skater in Russia! Been here long? First−rate ice do put your skates on."

"I haven't got my skates," Levin answered, marveling at this boldness and ease in her presence, and not for one second losing sight of her, though he did not look at her. He felt as though the sun were coming near him. She was in a corner, and turning out her slender feet in their high boots, she, with obvious timidity, skated toward him. A boy in Russian dress, desperately waving his arms and bending down to the ground, overtook her. She skated a little uncertainly; taking her hands out of the little muff that hung on a cord, she held them ready for emergency, and looking toward Levin, whom she had recognized, she smiled at him and at her own fears. When she had got round the turn, she got a start with one foot and skated straight up to Shcherbatsky. Clutching at his arm, she nodded with a smile to Levin. She was more beautiful than he had imagined her.

When he thought of her, he could call up a vivid picture of her to himself, especially the charm of that little fair head, so freely set on the shapely girlish shoulders, and so full of childish brightness and kindness. Her childish countenance, together with the delicate beauty of her figure, made up that special charm of hers, which he appreciated so well. But what always struck him in her as something unlooked for was the expression of her eyes soft, serene and truthful; and, above all, her smile, which always transported Levin to an enchanted world, where he felt moved and tender, as he remembered himself during certain rare days of his early childhood.

"Have you been here long?" she said, giving him her hand. "Thank you," she added, as he picked up the handkerchief that had fallen out of her muff.

"I? Not long ago... yesterday... I mean I arrived... today..." answered Levin, in his emotion not comprehending her question immediately. "I meant to come and see you," he said; and then, recollecting what his intention was in seeking her, he was promptly overcome with confusion, and blushed. "I didn't know you could skate, and skate so well."

She looked at him attentively, as though wishing to make out the cause of his confusion.

"Your praise is worth having. The tradition is kept up here that you are the best of skaters," she said, with her little black−gloved hand brushing some needles of hoarfrost off her muff.

"Yes, I used to skate with passion once upon a time; I wanted to attain perfection."

"You do everything with passion, I think," she said smiling. "I should so like to see how you skate. Do put on skates, and let's skate together."

"Skate together Can that be possible?" thought Levin, gazing at her.

"I'll put them on directly," he said.

And he went off to get skates.

"It's a long while since we've seen you here, sir," said the attendant, supporting his foot, and screwing on the heel of the skate. "Except you, there's none of the gentlemen first−rate skaters. Will that be all right?" said he, tightening the strap.

"Oh, yes, yes; make haste, please," answered Levin, with difficulty restraining the smile of rapture which would overspread his face. "Yes," he thought, "this is life, this is happiness! Together, she said; let us skate together! Speak to her now? But that's just why I'm afraid to speak because I'm happy now, happy even though only in hope.... And then?... But I must! I must! I must! Away, faintheartedness!"

Levin rose to his feet, took off his overcoat, and, gaining speed over the rough ice round the pavilion, came out on the smooth ice and skated without effort, as it were, by, simple exercise of will, increasing and slackening speed and turning his course. He approached her with timidity, but again her smile reassured him.

She gave him her hand, and they set off side by side, going faster and faster, and the more rapidly they moved the more tightly she grasped his hand.

"With you I should soon learn; I somehow feel confidence in you," she said to him.

"And I have confidence in myself when you are leaning on me," he said, but was at once frightened at what he had said, and blushed. And indeed, no sooner had he uttered these words, than all at once, like the sun going behind a cloud, her face lost all its tenderness, and Levin detected the familiar change in her expression that denoted mental concentration; a tiny wrinkle came upon her smooth brow.

"Is there anything troubling you? However, I've no right to ask such a question," he said hurriedly.

"Oh, why so?... No, I have nothing to trouble me," she responded coldly, and immediately added: "You haven't seen Mlle. Linon, have you?"

"Not yet."

"Go and speak to her she likes you so much."

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

"Yes, you see we're growing up," she said to him, glancing toward Kitty, "and growing old. Tiny bear has grown big now!" pursued the Frenchwoman, laughing, and she reminded him of his joke about the three young ladies whom he had compared to the three bears in the English nursery tale. "Do you remember that's what you used to call them?"

He remembered absolutely nothing, but she had been laughing at the joke for ten years now and was fond of it.

"Now, go and skate, go and skate. Our Kitty has learned to skate nicely, hasn't she?"

When Levin darted up to Kitty her face was no longer stern; her eyes looked at him with the same sincerity and tenderness, but Levin fancied that in her tenderness there was a certain note of deliberate composure. And he felt

depressed. After talking a little of her old governess and her peculiarities, she questioned him about his life.

"Surely, you must feel dull in the country in the winter," she said.

"No, I'm not dull I am very busy," he said, feeling that she was making him submit to her composed tone, which he would not have the strength to break through just as had been the case at the beginning of the winter.

"Are you going to stay in town long?" Kitty questioned him.

"I don't know," he answered, not thinking of what he was saying. The thought came into his mind that if he were held in submission by her tone of quiet friendliness he would end by going back again without deciding anything, and he resolved to mutiny against it.

"How is it you don't know?"

"I don't know. It depends upon you," he said, and was immediately horror−stricken at his own words.

Whether it was that she did not hear his words, or that she did not want to hear them, she made a sort of stumble, twice struck out, and hurriedly skated away from him. She skated up to Mlle. Linon, said something to her, and went toward the pavilion where the ladies took off their skates.

"My God! What have I done! Merciful God! Help me, guide me," said Levin, praying inwardly, and at the same time, feeling a need of violent exercise, he skated about, describing concentric and eccentric circles.

At that moment one of the young men, the best of the skaters of the day, came out of the coffeehouse on his skates, with a cigarette in his mouth. Taking a run he dashed down the steps on his skates, crashing and leaping. He flew down, and without even changing the free−and−easy position of his hands, skated away over the ice.

"Ah, that's a new trick!" said Levin, and he promptly ran up to the top to perform this new trick.

"Don't break your neck! This needs practice!" Nikolai Shcherbatsky shouted after him.

Levin went to the steps, took a run from above as best he could, and dashed down, preserving his balance in this unwonted movement with his hands. On the last step he stumbled, but barely touching the ice with his hand, with a violent effort recovered himself, and skated off, laughing.

"What a fine, darling chap he is!" Kitty was thinking at that moment, as she came out of the pavilion with Mlle. Linon and looked toward him with a smile of quiet kindness, as though he were a favorite brother. "And can it be my fault, can I have done anything wrong? They talk of coquetry. I know it's not he that I love; but still I am happy with him, and he's so nice. Only, why did he say that?..." she mused.

Catching sight of Kitty going away, and her mother meeting her at the steps, Levin, flushed from his rapid exercise, stood still and pondered a minute. He took off his skates, and overtook the mother and daughter at the entrance of the gardens.

"Delighted to see you," said Princess Shcherbatskaia. "On Thursdays we are home, as always."

"Today, then?"

"We shall be pleased to see you," the Princess said stiffly.

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

"Good−by till this evening."

At that moment Stepan Arkadyevich, his hat cocked on one side, with beaming face and eyes, strode into the garden like a buoyant conqueror. But as he approached his mother−in−law, he responded to her inquiries about Dolly's health with a mournful and guilty countenance. After a little subdued and dejected conversation with her he set straight his chest again, and took Levin by the arm.

"Well, shall we set off?" he asked. "I've been thinking about you all this time, and I'm very, very glad you've come," he said, looking him in the face with a significant air.

"Yes, come along," answered Levin in ecstasy, hearing unceasingly the sound of that voice saying, "Good−by till this evening," and seeing the smile with which it was said.

"To England or The Hermitage?"

"It's all the same to me."

"Well, then, England it is," said Stepan Arkadyevich, selecting that restaurant because he owed more there than at The Hermitage, and consequently considered it mean to avoid it. "Have you got a sleigh? That's fine for I sent my carriage home."

The friends hardly spoke all the way. Levin was wondering what that change in Kitty's expression had meant, and alternately assuring himself that there was hope, and falling into despair, seeing clearly that his hopes were insane, and yet all the while he felt himself quite another man, utterly unlike what he had been before her smile and those words, "Good−by till this evening."

Stepan Arkadyevich was absorbed during the drive in composing the menu of the dinner.

"You like turbot, don't you?" he said to Levin as they were arriving.

"Eh?" responded Levin. "Turbot? Yes, I'm awfully fond of turbot."

X.

When Levin went into the restaurant with Oblonsky, he could not help noticing a certain peculiarity of expression, as it were, a restrained radiance, about the face and whole figure of Stepan Arkadyevich. Oblonsky took off his overcoat, and with his hat over one ear walked into the dining room, giving directions to the Tatar waiters, who were clustered about him in evening coats, and with napkins under their arms. Bowing right and left to acquaintances who, here as everywhere, greeted him joyously, he went up to the bar, took a little wineglass of vodka and a snack of fish, and said to the painted Frenchwoman decked in ribbons, lace and ringlets, behind the desk, something so amusing that even that Frenchwoman was moved to genuine laughter. Levin for his part refrained from taking any vodka only because he found most offensive this Frenchwoman, all made up, it seemed, of false hair, poudre de riz and vinaigre de toilette. He made haste to move away from her, as from a dirty place. His whole soul was filled with memories of Kitty, and there was a smile of triumph and happiness shining in his eyes.

"This way, Your Excellency, please. Your Excellency won't be disturbed here," said a particularly pertinacious,

white−headed old Tatar with immense hips and coattails gaping widely behind. "Walk in, your Excellency," he said to Levin being attentive to his guest as well, by way of showing his respect to Stepan Arkadyevich.

Instantly flinging a fresh cloth over the round table under the bronze sconce, though it already had a tablecloth on it, he pushed up velvet chairs and came to a standstill before Stepan Arkadyevich with a napkin and a bill of fare in his hands, awaiting his commands.

"If you prefer it, Your Excellency, a private room will be free directly: Prince Golitsin with a lady. Fresh oysters have come in."

"Ah, oysters!" Stepan Arkadyevich became thoughtful.

"How if we were to change our program, Levin?" he said, keeping his finger on the bill of fare. And his face expressed serious hesitation. "Are the oysters good? Mind, now!"

"They're Flensburg, Your Excellency. We've no Ostend."

"Flensburg will do but are they fresh?"

"Only arrived yesterday."

"Well, then, how if we were to begin with oysters, and so change the whole program? Eh?"

"It's all the same to me. I should like cabbage soup and porridge better than anything; but of course there's nothing like that here."

"Porridge a la Russe, Your Honor would like?" said the Tatar, bending down to Levin, like a nurse speaking to a child.

"No, joking apart, whatever you choose is sure to be good. I've been skating, and I'm hungry. And don't imagine," he added, detecting a look of dissatisfaction on Oblonsky's face, "that I shan't appreciate your choice. I don't object to a good dinner."

"I should hope so! After all, it's one of the pleasures of life," said Stepan Arkadyevich. "Well, then, my friend, you give us two or better say three dozen oysters, clear soup with vegetables..."

"Printaniere," prompted the Tatar. But Stepan Arkadyevich apparently did not care to allow him the satisfaction of giving the French names of the dishes.

"With vegetables in it, you know. Then turbot with thick sauce, then... roast beef; and mind it's good. Yes, and capons, perhaps, and then stewed fruit."

The Tatar, recollecting that it was Stepan Arkadyevich's way not to call the dishes by the names in the French bill of fare, did not repeat them after him, but could not resist rehearsing the whole menu to himself according to the bill: "Soupe printaniere, turbot sauce Beaumarchais, poulard a l'estragon, Macedoine de fruits..." and then instantly, as though worked by springs, laying down one bound bill of fare, he took up another, the list of wines, and submitted it to Stepan Arkadyevich.

"What shall we drink?"

"What you like, only not too much. Champagne," said Levin.

"What! to start with? You're right though, I dare say. Do you like the white seal?"

"Cachet blanc," prompted the Tatar.

"Very well, then, give us that brand with the oysters, and then we'll see."

"Yes, sir. And what table wine?"

"You can give us Nuits. Oh, no better the classic Chablis."

"Yes, sir. And your cheese, Your Excellency?"

"Oh, yes, Parmesan. Or would you like another?"

"No, it's all the same to me," said Levin, unable to suppress a smile.

And the Tatar ran off with flying coattails, and in five minutes darted in with a dish of opened oysters in their nacreous shells, and a bottle between his fingers.

Stepan Arkadyevich crushed the starchy napkin, tucked it into his waistcoat, and, settling his arms comfortably, started on the oysters.

"Not bad," he said, detaching the jellied oysters from their pearly shells with a small silver fork, and swallowing them one after another. "Not bad," he repeated, turning his dewy, brilliant eyes now upon Levin, now upon the Tatar.

Levin ate the oysters too, though white bread and cheese pleased him better. But he was admiring Oblonsky. Even the Tatar, uncorking the bottle and pouring the sparkling wine into the delicate funnel−shaped glasses, and adjusting his white cravat, kept on glancing at Stepan Arkadyevich with a perceptible smile of satisfaction.

"You don't care much for oysters, do you?" said Stepan Arkadyevich, emptying his wineglass, "or are you worried about something. Eh?"

He wanted Levin to be in good spirits. But it was not that Levin was not in good spirits, he was ill at ease. With what he had in his soul, he felt hard and awkward in the restaurant, in the midst of private rooms where men were dining with ladies, in all this fuss and bustle; the surroundings of bronzes, looking glasses, gas and Tatars all of this was offensive to him. He was afraid of sullying what his soul was brimful of.

"I? Yes, I am worried; but besides that, all this bothers me," he said. "You can't conceive how queer it all seems to a countryman like me, as queer as that gentleman's nails I saw at your office...."

"Yes, I saw how much interested you were in poor Grinevich's nails," said Stepan Arkadyevich, laughing.

"It's too much for me," responded Levin. "Do try, now, to put yourself in my place take the point of view of a countryman. We in the country try to bring our hands into such a state as will be most convenient for working with. So we cut our nails; sometimes we tuck up our sleeves. And here people purposely let their nails grow as long as possible, and link on small saucers by way of studs, so that they can do nothing with their hands."

Stepan Arkadyevich smiled gaily.

"Oh, yes, that's just a sign that he has no need to do coarse work. His work is with the mind...."

"Maybe. But still it's queer to me, just as at this moment it seems queer to me that we countryfolks try to satiate ourselves as soon as we can, so as to be ready for work, while here are we trying to delay satiety as long as possible, and with that object are eating oysters...."

"Why, of course," objected Stepan Arkadyevich. "But that's just the aim of culture to make everything a source of enjoyment."

"Well, if that's its aim, I'd rather be a savage."

"You are a savage, as it is. All you Levins are savages."

Levin sighed. He remembered his brother Nikolai, and felt ashamed and pained, and he scowled; but Oblonsky began speaking of a subject which at once drew his attention.

"Oh, I say, are you going tonight to our people the Shcherbatskys', I mean?" he said, his eyes sparkling significantly as he pushed away the empty rough shells, and drew the cheese toward him.

"Yes, I shall certainly go," replied Levin; "though I fancied the Princess was not very warm in her invitation."

"What nonsense! That's her manner.... Come, boy, the soup!... That's her manner grande dame," said Stepan Arkadyevich. "I'm coming, too, but I have to go to the Countess Bonin's rehearsal. Come, isn't it true that you're a savage? How do you explain the sudden way in which you vanished from Moscow? The Shcherbatskys were continually asking me about you, as though I ought to know. The only thing I know is that you always do what no one else does."

"Yes," said Levin, slowly and with emotion, "you're right. I am a savage. Only, my savageness is not in having gone away, but in coming now. Now I have come..."

"Oh, what a lucky fellow you are!" broke in Stepan Arkadyevich, looking into Levin's eyes.

"Why?"

"I can tell the gallant steeds," by some... I don't know what... 'paces'; I can tell youths 'by their faces,'" declaimed Stepan Arkadyevich. "Everything is before you."

"Why, is it over for you already?"

"No; not over exactly, but the future is yours, and the present is mine, and the present well, it's only fair to middling."

"How so?"

"Oh, things aren't right. But I don't want to talk of myself, besides I can't explain it all," said Stepan Arkadyevich. "Well, why have you come to Moscow, then?... Hi! clear the table!" he called to the Tatar.

"Are you trying to surmise?" responded Levin, his eyes, gleaming in their depth, fixed on Stepan Arkadyevich.

"I am, but I can't be the first to talk about it. You can see by that whether I surmise right or wrong," said Stepan Arkadyevich, gazing at Levin with a subtle smile.

"Well, and what have you to say to me?" said Levin in a quivering voice, feeling that all the muscles of his face were quivering too. "How do you look at it?

Stepan Arkadyevich slowly emptied his glass of Chablis, never taking his eyes off Levin.

"I?" said Stepan Arkadyevich. "There's nothing I desire so much as that nothing! It would be the best thing that could happen."

"But you're not making a mistake? You know what we're speaking of?" said Levin, piercing him with his eyes. "You think it's possible?"

"I think it's possible. Why not?"

"No! Do you really think it's possible? No tell me all you think! Oh, but if... If refusal's in store for me!... Indeed I feel sure..."

"What makes you think so?" said Stepan Arkadyevich, smiling at his excitement.

"It seems so to me sometimes. That will be awful for me, and for her too."

"Oh, well, anyway there's nothing awful in it for a girl. Every girl's proud of a proposal."

"Yes, every girl, but not she."

Stepan Arkadyevich smiled. He so well knew that feeling of Levin's, that for him all the girls in the world were divided into two classes: one class all the girls in the world except her, and those girls with all sorts of human failings, and very ordinary girls: the other class she alone, having no failings of any sort and higher than all humanity.

"Stay, take some sauce," he said, holding back Levin's hand, who was pushing the sauce away.

Levin obediently helped himself to sauce, but would not let Stepan Arkadyevich go on with his dinner.

"No, stop a minute, stop a minute," he said. "You must understand that it's a question of life and death for me. I have never spoken to anyone of this. And there's no one to whom I could speak of it, except yourself. You know we're utterly unlike each other, different in tastes, and views, and everything; but I know you're fond of me and understand me, and that's why I like you awfully. But for God's sake, be quite straightforward with me."

"I tell you what I think," said Stepan Arkadyevich, smiling. "But I'll say more: my wife is a wonderful woman..." Stepan Arkadyevich sighed, recalling his relations with his wife, and, after a moment's silence, resumed "She has a gift of foreseeing things. She sees right through people; but that's not all; she knows what will come to pass, especially in the way of marriages. She foretold, for instance, that Princess Shahovskaia would marry Brenteln. No one would believe it, but it came to pass. And she's on your side."

"How do you mean?"

"It's not only that she likes you she says that Kitty is certain to be your wife."

At these words Levin's face suddenly lighted up with a smile, a smile not far from touching tears.

"She says that!" cried out Levin. "I always said she was charming, your wife. There, that's enough said about it," he said, getting up from his seat.

"Well, but do sit down."

But Levin could not sit down. He walked with his firm tread twice up and down the little cage of a room, blinked his eyelids that his tears might not fall, and only then sat down to the table.

"You must understand," said he, "it's not love. I've been in love, but it's not that. It's not my feeling, but a sort of force outside me that has taken possession of me. I went away, you see, because I made up my mind that it could never be you understand, like a happiness which is not of this earth; but I've struggled with myself, and I see there's no living without it. And it must be settled."

"What did you go away for?"

"Ah, stop a minute! Ah, the thoughts that come crowding on one! The questions one must ask oneself! Listen. You can't imagine what you've done for me by what you said. I'm so happy that I've become positively hateful; I've forgotten everything. I heard today that my brother Nikolai... you know, he's here... I had forgotten even him. It seems to me that he's happy too. It's a sort of madness. But one thing's awful.... Here, you've been married, you know the feeling.... It's awful that we fully mature with a past... a past not of love, but of sins... are brought all at once so near to a creature pure and innocent; it's loathsome, and that's why one can't help feeling oneself unworthy."

"Oh, well, you haven't many sins on your conscience."

"Ah, still," said Levin, "'When, with loathing, I go o'er my life, I shudder and I curse and bitterly regret...' Yes."

"What would you have? That's the way of the world," said Stepan Arkadyevich.

"There's one comfort, like that of the prayer which I always liked: 'Forgive me not according to my deeds, but according to Thy loving−kindness.' That's the only way she can forgive me."

XI.

Levin emptied his glass, and they were silent for a while.

"There's one other thing I ought to tell you. Do you know Vronsky?" Stepan Arkadyevich asked Levin.

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

"Give us another bottle," Stepan Arkadyevich directed the Tatar, who was filling up their glasses and fidgeting round them just when he was least wanted.

"Why, you ought to know Vronsky because he's one of your rivals."

"Who's Vronsky?" said Levin, and his face was suddenly transformed from the look of childlike ecstasy which Oblonsky had just been admiring to an angry and unpleasant expression.

"Vronsky is one of the sons of Count Kirill Ivanovich Vronsky, and one of the finest specimens of the gilded youth of Peterburg. I made his acquaintance in Tver, when I was there on official business, and he came there for

the levy of recruits. Fearfully rich, handsome, great connections, an aide−de−camp, and with all that a very fine good−natured fellow. But he's more than simply a good−natured fellow, as I've found out here he's a cultured man, too, and very intelligent; he's a man who'll make his mark."

Levin scowled and kept silent.

"Well, he turned up here soon after you'd gone, and, as I can see, he's over head and ears in love with Kitty, and you know that her mother..."

"Excuse me, but I know nothing," said Levin, frowning gloomily. And immediately he recalled his brother Nikolai, and how vile he was to have been able to forget him.

"You wait a bit wait a bit," said Stepan Arkadyevich, smiling and touching his hand. "I've told you what I know, and I repeat that in this delicate and tender matter, as far as one can conjecture, I believe the chances are in your favor."

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

"But I would advise you to settle the thing as soon as possible," pursued Oblonsky, filling up his glass.

"No, thanks, I can't drink any more," said Levin, pushing away his glass. "I shall get drunk.... Come, tell me how are you getting on?" he went on, obviously anxious to change the conversation.

"One word more: in any case I advise you to settle the question soon. Tonight I don't advise you to speak," said Stepan Arkadyevich. "Go round tomorrow morning, make a proposal in classic form, and God bless you...."

"Oh, do you still think of coming to me for some shooting? Come next spring, do," said Levin.

Now his whole soul was full of remorse that he had begun this conversation with Stepan Arkadyevich. His peculiar feeling was profaned by talk of the rivalry of some Peterburg officer, of the suppositions and the counsels of Stepan Arkadyevich.

Stepan Arkadyevich smiled. He knew what was passing in Levin's soul.

"I'll come some day," he said. "Yes, my dear, women they're the pivot everything turns upon. Things are in a bad way with me, very bad. And it's all through women. Tell me frankly, now," he pursued, picking up a cigar and keeping one hand on his glass; "give me your advice."

"Why, what is it?"

"I'll tell you. Suppose you're married; you love your wife, but are fascinated by another woman..."

"Excuse me, but I'm absolutely unable to comprehend how just as I can't comprehend how I could now, after my dinner, go straight to a baker's shop and steal a loaf."

Stepan Arkadyevich's eyes sparkled more than usual.

"Why not? A loaf will sometimes smell so good that one can't resist it.

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"Himmlisch ist's wenn ich bezwungen
   Meine irdische Begier;
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Aber doch wenn's nicht gelungen
  Hatt' ich auch recht hubsch Plaisir!"
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As he said this, Stepan Arkadyevich smiled subtly. Levin, too, could not help smiling.

"Yes, but joking apart," resumed Oblonsky, "you must understand that the woman, a sweet, gentle, loving creature, poor and lonely, has sacrificed everything. Now, when the thing's done, don't you see, can one possibly cast her off? Even supposing one parts from her, so as not to break up one's family life, still, can one help feeling for her, setting her on her feet, lightening her lot?"

"Well, you must excuse me there. You know to me all women are divided into two classes.... Well, no... it would be truer to say: there are women, and there are... I've never seen charming fallen beings, and I never shall see them, but such creatures as that painted Frenchwoman at the counter with the ringlets are vermin to my mind, and all fallen women are like her."

"But the Magdalen?"

"Ah, drop that! Christ would never have said those words if He had known how they would be abused. Of all the Gospel those words are the only ones remembered. However, I'm not saying so much what I think, as what I feel. I have a loathing for fallen women. You're afraid of spiders, and I of these vermin. Most likely you've not made a study of spiders and don't know their character; and so it is with me."

"It's very well for you to talk like that; it's very much like that gentleman in Dickens who used to fling all difficult questions over his right shoulder with his left hand. But denying the facts is no answer. What's to be done you tell me that; what's to be done? Your wife gets older, while you're full of life. Before you've time to look round, you feel that you can't love your wife with love, however much you may esteem her. And then all at once love turns up and you're done for; you're done for," Stepan Arkadyevich said with weary despair.

Levin smiled slightly.

"Yes, you're done for," resumed Oblonsky. "But what's to be done?"

"Don't steal loaves."

Stepan Arkadyevich laughed outright.

"Oh, moralist! But you must understand, there are two women; one insists only on her rights, and those rights are your love, which you can't give her; while the other sacrifices everything for you and asks for nothing. What are you to do? How are you to act? There's a fearful tragedy in it."

"If you care for my profession of faith as regards that, I'll tell you that I don't believe there was any tragedy about it. And this is why. To my mind, love... both sorts of love, which you remember Plato defines in his Banquet, serve as the touchstone of men. Some men only understand one sort, and some only the other. And those who only know the nonplatonic love talk in vain of tragedy. In such love there can be no sort of tragedy. 'I'm much obliged for the gratification, my humble respects,' that's all the tragedy. And in platonic love there can be no tragedy, because in that love all is clear and pure, because..."

At that instant Levin recollected his own sins and the inner conflict he had lived through. And he added unexpectedly:

"But perhaps you are right. Very likely... I don't know I positively don't know."

"You see," said Stepan Arkadyevich, "you're very much all of a piece. That's your quality and your failing. You have a character that's all of a piece, and you want the whole of life to be of a piece too but that's not how it is. You despise public official work because you want the reality to be constantly corresponding with the aim and that's not how it is. You want a man's work, too, always to have a defined aim, and love and family life always to be undivided and that's not how it is. All the variety, all the charm, all the beauty of life is made up of light and shadow."

Levin sighed and made no reply. He was thinking of his own affairs, and was not listening to Oblonsky.

And suddenly both of them felt that though they were friends, though they had been dining together, and drunk wine which should have drawn them closer, yet each was thinking only of his own affairs, and they had nothing to do with one another. Oblonsky had more than once experienced this extreme sense of aloofness, instead of intimacy, coming on after dinner, and he knew what to do in such cases.

"Let's have the check!" he called, and he went into the next room, where he promptly came across an aide−de−camp of his acquaintance and dropped into conversation with him about an actress and her protector. And at once, in this conversation with the aide−de−camp, Oblonsky had a sense of relaxation and relief after his conversation with Levin, which always put him to too great a mental and spiritual strain.

When the Tatar appeared with a check of twenty−six roubles and some kopecks, besides a tip for himself, Levin, who would another time have been horrified, like anyone from the country, at his share of fourteen roubles, did not notice it, paid, and set off homeward to dress and go to the Shcherbatskys', where his fate was to be decided.

XII.

The young princess Kitty Shcherbatskaia was eighteen. It was the first winter that she had been out in the world. Her success in society had been greater than that of either of her elder sisters, and greater even than her mother had anticipated. To say nothing of the young men who danced at the Moscow balls being almost all in love with Kitty, two serious suitors had already, the first winter, made their appearance: Levin, and, immediately after his departure, Count Vronsky.

Levin's appearance at the beginning of the winter, his frequent visits, and evident love for Kitty, had led to the first serious conversations between Kitty's parents as to her future, and to disputes between them. The Prince was on Levin's side; he said he wished for nothing better for Kitty. The Princess for her part, going round the question in the manner peculiar to women, maintained that Kitty was too young, that Levin had done nothing to prove that he had serious intentions, that Kitty felt no great attraction to him, and there were some other reasons too; but she did not state the principal point, which was that she looked for a better match for her daughter, that Levin was not to her liking, and that she did not understand him. When Levin had abruptly departed, the Princess was delighted, and said to her husband triumphantly: 'You see, I was right.' When Vronsky appeared on the scene, she was still more delighted, confirmed in her opinion that Kitty was to make not simply a good, but a brilliant match.

In the mother's eyes there could be no comparison between Vronsky and Levin. The mother disliked in Levin his strange and uncompromising opinions and his shyness in society, founded on his pride, as she supposed, and his queer sort of life, as she considered it, absorbed in cattle and peasants. She did not very much like it that he, who was in love with her daughter, had kept coming to the house for six weeks, as though he were waiting for something, inspecting, as though he were afraid he might be doing them too great an honor by making a proposal, and did not realize that a man who continually visits at a house where there is a young unmarried girl, is bound to make his intentions clear. And suddenly, without doing so, he disappeared. "It's as well he's not attractive enough for Kitty to have fallen in love with him," thought the mother.

Vronsky satisfied all the mother's desires. Very wealthy, clever, of aristocratic family, on the highroad to a brilliant career in the army and at court, and a fascinating man. Nothing better could be wished for.

Vronsky openly flirted with Kitty at balls, danced with her, and came continually to the house; consequently there could be no doubt of the seriousness of his intentions. But, in spite of that, the mother had spent the whole of that winter in a state of terrible anxiety and agitation.

Princess Shcherbatskaia had herself been married thirty years ago, her aunt arranging the match. The wooer, about whom everything was well known beforehand, had come, looked at his intended, and been looked at. The matchmaking aunt had ascertained and communicated their mutual impression. That impression had been favorable. Afterward, on a day fixed beforehand, the expected proposal was made to her parents, and accepted. All had passed very simply and easily. So it seemed, at least, to the Princess. But over her own daughters she had felt how far from simple and easy is the business, apparently so commonplace, of marrying off one's daughters. The panics that had been lived through, the thoughts that had been brooded over, the money that had been wasted, and the disputes with her husband over marrying the two elder girls, Darya and Natalya! Now, since the youngest began to come out in the world, the Princess was going through the same terrors, the same doubts, and still more violent quarrels with her husband, than she had over the elder girls. The old Prince, like all fathers indeed, was exceedingly scrupulous on the score of the honor and reputation of his daughters; he was unreasonably jealous over his daughters, especially over Kitty, who was his favorite, and at every turn he had scenes with the Princess for compromising her daughter. The Princess had grown accustomed to this already with her other daughters, but now she felt that there was more ground for the Prince's scrupulousness. She saw that of late years much was changed in the manners of society, that a mother's duties had become still more difficult. She saw that girls of Kitty's age formed some sort of clubs, went to some sort of lectures, mixed freely in men's society, drove about the streets alone; many of them did not curtsy; and, what was the most important thing, all of them were firmly convinced that to choose their husband was their own affair, and not their parents'. "Marriages aren't made nowadays as they used to be," was thought and said by all these young girls, and even by their elders. But just how marriages were made nowadays, the Princess could not learn from anyone. The French fashion of the parents arranging their children's future was not accepted; it was condemned. The English fashion of the complete independence of girls was also not accepted, and not possible in Russian society. The Russian fashion of matchmaking was considered unseemly; it was ridiculed by everyone even by the Princess herself. But how girls were to be married, and how parents were to marry them, no one knew. Everyone with whom the Princess had chanced to discuss the matter said the same thing: "Mercy on us, it's high time in our day to cast off all that old−fashioned business. It's the young people have to marry, and not their parents; and so we ought to leave the young people to arrange it as they choose." It was very easy for anyone to say who had no daughters, but the Princess realized that, in the process of getting to know each other, her daughter might fall in love, and fall in love with someone who did not care to marry her, or who was quite unfit to be her husband. And, however much it was instilled into the Princess that in our times young people ought to arrange their lives for themselves, she was unable to believe it, just as she would have been unable to believe that, at any time whatever, loaded pistols were the most suitable playthings for children five years old. And so the Princess was more uneasy over Kitty than she had been over the elder daughters.

Now she was afraid that Vronsky might confine himself to simply flirting with her daughter. She saw that her daughter was in love with him, but tried to comfort herself with the thought that he was an honorable man, and would not do this. But at the same time she knew how easy it is, with the freedom of manners of today, to turn a girl's head, and how lightly men generally regard such a crime. The week before, Kitty had told her mother of a conversation she had with Vronsky during a mazurka. This conversation had partly reassured the Princess; yet her assurance could not be perfect. Vronsky had told Kitty that both he and his brother were so used to obeying their mother that they never made up their minds to any important undertaking without consulting her. "And, just now, I am impatiently awaiting my mother's coming from Peterburg, as a peculiar piece of luck," he had told her.

Kitty had repeated this without attaching any significance to the words. But her mother saw them in a different light. She knew that the old lady was expected from day to day, that she would be pleased at her son's choice, and she felt it strange that he should not make his proposal through fear of vexing his mother. However, she was so anxious for the marriage itself, and still more for relief from her fears, that she believed it was so. Bitter as it was for the Princess to see the unhappiness of her eldest daughter, Dolly, on the point of leaving her husband, her anxiety over the decision of her youngest daughter's fate engrossed all her feelings. Today, with Levin's reappearance, a fresh source of anxiety arose. She was afraid that her daughter, who had at one time, as she fancied, a feeling for Levin, might, from an extreme sense of honesty, refuse Vronsky, and that Levin's arrival might generally complicate and delay the affair, now so near conclusion.

"Why, has he been here long?" the Princess asked about Levin, as they returned home.

"He came today, maman."

"There's one thing I want to say..." began the Princess, and from her serious and alert face, Kitty guessed what it would be.

"Mamma," she said, flushing hotly and turning quickly to her, "please, please don't say anything about that. I know, I know all about it."

She wished what her mother wished for, but the motives of her mother's wishes hurt her.

"I only want to say that to raise hopes..."

"Mamma, darling, for goodness' sake, don't talk about it. It's so horrible to talk about it."

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

"Never, mamma none," answered Kitty, flushing and looking her mother straight in the face; "but I have nothing to tell you now, and I... I... If I wanted to, I don't know what to say or how... I don't know..."

"No, she could not tell an untruth with those eyes," thought the mother, smiling at her agitation and happiness. The Princess smiled: so immense and so important seemed to the poor child everything that was taking place just now in her soul.

XIII.

After dinner, and till the beginning of the evening, Kitty was experiencing a sensation akin to that of a young man before a battle. Her heart throbbed violently, and her thoughts would not rest on anything.

She felt that this evening, when both these men would meet for the first time, would be a turning point in her life. And she was continually picturing them to herself, at one moment each individually, and then both together. When she mused on the past, she dwelt with pleasure, with tenderness, on the memories of her relations with Levin. The memories of childhood and of Levin's friendship with her dead brother have a special poetic charm to her relations with him. His love for her, of which she felt certain, was flattering and delightful to her; and it was easy for her to think of Levin. In her memories of Vronsky there always entered a certain element of awkwardness, though he was in the highest degree a fashionable and even−tempered man, as though there were some false note not in Vronsky, he was very simple and charming but in herself; while with Levin she felt herself perfectly simple and clear. But, on the other hand, directly she thought of the future with Vronsky, there

arose before her a perspective of brilliant happiness; with Levin the future seemed misty.

When she went upstairs to dress, and looked into the looking glass, she noticed with joy that it was one of her good days, and that she was in complete possession of all her forces she needed this so for what lay before her: she was conscious of external composure and free grace in her movements.

At half−past seven she had only just gone down into the drawing room, when the footman announced, "Constantin Dmitrievich Levin." The Princess was still in her room, and the Prince had not come in. "So it is to be," thought Kitty, and all the blood seemed to rush to her heart. She was horrified at her paleness, as she glanced into the looking glass.

At that moment she knew beyond doubt that he had come early on purpose to find her alone and to propose to her. And only then for the first time the whole thing presented itself in a new, different aspect; only then she realized that the question did not affect her only with whom she would be happy, and whom she loved but that she would have that moment to wound a man whom she liked. And to wound him cruelly... Wherefore? Because he, dear fellow, loved her, was in love with her. But there was no help for it; it must be so it would have to be so.

"My God! shall I myself really have to say it to him?" she thought. "Can I tell him I don't love him? That will be a lie. What am I to say to him? That I love someone else? No, that's impossible. I'm going away I'm going away."

She had reached the door, when she heard his step. "No It's not honest. What have I to be afraid of? I have done nothing wrong. What is to be, will be! I'll tell the truth. And with him one can't be ill at ease. Here he is," she said to herself, seeing his powerful and timid figure, with his shining eyes fixed on her. She looked straight into his face, as though imploring him to spare her, and gave him her hand.

"It's not time yet; I think I'm too early," he said glancing round the empty drawing room. When he saw that his expectations were realized, that there was nothing to prevent him from speaking, his face became somber.

"Oh, no," said Kitty, and sat down at a table.

"But this was just what I wanted, to find you alone," he began, without sitting down, and not looking at her, so as not to lose courage.

"Mamma will be down directly. She was very much tired yesterday. Yesterday..."

She talked on, not knowing what her lips were uttering, and not taking her supplicating and caressing eyes off him.

He glanced at her; she blushed, and ceased speaking.

"I told you I did not know whether I should be here long... that it depended on you..."

She dropped her head lower and lower, not knowing herself what answer she should make to what was coming.

"That it depended on you," he repeated. "I meant to say... I meant to say... I came for this... To have you be my wife!" he blurted out, not knowing what he was saying, but feeling that the most terrible thing was said, he stopped short and looked at her.

She was breathing heavily, without looking at him. She was feeling ecstasy. Her soul was flooded with happiness. She had never anticipated that his utterance of love would produce such a powerful effect on her. But it lasted only an instant. She remembered Vronsky. She lifted her clear, truthful eyes, and, seeing Levin's desperate face,

she answered hastily:

"That cannot be... Forgive me."

A moment ago, and how close she had been to him, of what importance in his life! And how aloof and remote from him she had become now!

"It could not have been otherwise," he said, without looking at her. He bowed, and was about to leave.

XIV.

But at that very moment the Princess came in. There was a look of horror on her face when she beheld them alone, and saw their disturbed faces. Levin bowed to her, and said nothing. Kitty neither spoke nor lifted her eyes. "Thank God, she has refused him," thought the mother, and her face lighted up with the habitual smile with which she greeted her guests on Thursdays. She sat down and began questioning Levin about his life in the country. He sat down again, waiting for other visitors to arrive, in order to go off unnoticed.

Five minutes later there came in a friend of Kitty's, married the preceding winter Countess Nordstone.

She was a thin, sallow, sickly and nervous woman, with brilliant black eyes. She was fond of Kitty, and her affection for her showed itself, as the affection of married women for girls always does, in the desire to make a match for Kitty after her own ideal of married happiness; she wanted her to marry Vronsky. Levin she had often met at the Shcherbatskys' early in the winter, and she had always disliked him. Her invariable and favorite pursuit, when they met, consisted in making fun of him.

"I do like it when he looks down at me from the height of his grandeur, or breaks off his wise conversation with me because I'm a fool, or is condescending to me. I like that so to see him condescending! I am so glad he can't bear me," she used to say of him.

She was right, for Levin actually could not bear her, and despised her for what she was proud of and regarded as a fine characteristic her nervousness, her refined contempt and indifference for everything coarse and earthly.

The Countess Nordstone and Levin had got into that mutual relation not infrequently seen in society, when two persons, who remain externally on friendly terms, despise each other to such a degree that they cannot even take each other seriously, and cannot even be offended by each other.

The Countess Nordstone pounced upon Levin at once.

"Ah, Constantin Dmitrievich! So you've come back to our corrupt Babylon," she said, giving him her tiny, yellow hand and recalling what he had chanced to say early in the winter, that Moscow was a Babylon. "Come, is Babylon reformed, or have you degenerated?" she added, glancing with a simper at Kitty.

"It's very flattering for me, Countess, that you remember my words so well," responded Levin, who had succeeded in recovering his composure, and at once from habit dropped into his tone of joking hostility to the Countess Nordstone. "They must certainly make a great impression on you."

"Oh, I should think so! I always note everything down. Well, Kitty, have you been skating again?..."

And she began talking to Kitty. Awkward as it was for Levin to withdraw now, it would still have been easier for him to perpetrate this awkwardness than to remain all the evening and see Kitty, who glanced at him now and

then and avoided his eyes. He was on the point of getting up, when the Princess, noticing that he was silent, addressed him.

"Shall you be long in Moscow? You're busy with the Zemstvo, though, aren't you, and can't be away for long?"

"No, Princess, I'm no longer a member of the board," he said. "I have come up for a few days."

"There's something the matter with him," thought Countess Nordstone, glancing at his stern, serious face. "He isn't in his old argumentative mood. But I'll draw him out. I do love making a fool of him before Kitty, and I'll do it."

"Constantin Dmitrievich," she said to him, "do explain to me please, what does it mean you know all about such things in our village of Kaluga all the peasants and all the women have drunk up all they possessed, and now they can't pay us any rent. What's the meaning of that? You always praise the mouzhiks so."

At that instant another lady came into the room, and Levin got up.

"Excuse me, Countess, but I really know nothing about it, and can't tell you anything," he said, and looked round at the officer who came in behind the lady.

"That must be Vronsky," thought Levin, and, to be sure of it, glanced at Kitty. She had already had time to look at Vronsky, and looked round at Levin. And, simply from the look in her eyes, that grew unconsciously brighter, Levin knew that she loved this man knew it as surely as if she had told him in so many words. But what sort of a man was he?

Now, whether for good or for ill, Levin could not choose but remain; he must find out what the man was like whom she loved.

There are people who, on meeting a successful rival, no matter in what, are at once disposed to turn their backs on everything good in him, and to see only what is bad. There are people who, on the contrary, desire above all to find in that successful rival the qualities by which he has worsted them, and seek with a throbbing ache at heart only what is good. Levin belonged to the second class. But he had no difficulty in finding what was good and attractive in Vronsky. It was apparent at the first glance. Vronsky was a squarely built, dark man, not very tall, with a good−humored, handsome and exceedingly calm and firm face. Everything about his face and figure, from his short−cropped black hair and freshly shaven chin down to his loosely fitting, brand−new uniform, was simple and at the same time elegant. Making way for the lady who had come in, Vronsky went up to the Princess and then to Kitty.

As he approached her, his beautiful eyes shone with an especially tender light, and with a faint, happy and modestly triumphant smile (so it seemed to Levin), bowing carefully and respectfully over her, he held out his small broad hand to her.

Greeting and saying a few words to everyone, he sat down without once glancing at Levin, who had never taken his eyes off him.

"Let me introduce you," said the Princess, indicating Levin. "Constantin Dmitrievich Levin, Count Alexei Kirillovich Vronsky."

Vronsky got up and, looking cordially at Levin, shook hands with him.

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

"Constantin Dmitrievich despises and hates the town, and us townspeople," said Countess Nordstone.

"My words must make a deep impression on you, since you remember them so well," said Levin, and, suddenly becoming conscious that he had said just the same thing before, he reddened.

Vronsky looked at Levin and Countess Nordstone, and smiled.

"Are you always in the country?" he inquired. "I should think it must be dull in the winter."

"It's not dull if one has work to do; besides, one's not dull by oneself," Levin replied abruptly.

"I am fond of the country," said Vronsky, noticing, yet affecting not to notice, Levin's tone.

"But I hope, Count, you would not consent to live in the country always," said Countess Nordstone.

"I don't know; I have never tried for long. I experienced a queer feeling once," he went on. "I never longed so for the country Russian country, with bast shoes and peasants as when I was spending a winter with my mother in Nice. Nice itself is dull enough, you know. And, indeed, Naples and Sorrento are only pleasant for a short time. And it's just there that Russia comes back to one's mind most vividly, and especially the country. It's as though..."

He talked on, addressing both Kitty and Levin, turning his serene, friendly eyes from one to the other, and saying obviously just what came into his head.

Noticing that Countess Nordstone wanted to say something, he stopped short without finishing what he had begun, and listened attentively to her.

The conversation did not flag for an instant, so that the old Princess, who always kept in reserve, in case a subject should be lacking, two heavy guns the classical and professional education, and universal military service had not to move out either of them, while Countess Nordstone had no chance of chaffing Levin.

Levin wanted to, and could not, take part in the general conversation; saying to himself every instant, "Now go," he still did not go, as though waiting for something.

The conversation fell upon table turning and spirits, and Countess Nordstone, who believed in spiritualism, began to describe the miracles she had seen.

"Ah, Countess, you really must take me; for pity's sake do take me to see them! I have never seen anything extraordinary, though I am always on the lookout for it everywhere," said Vronsky, smiling.

"Very well next Saturday," answered Countess Nordstone. "But you, Constantin Dmitrievich are you a believer?" she asked Levin.

"Why do you ask me? You know what I shall say."

"But I want to hear your opinion."

"My opinion," answered Levin, "is merely that this table turning proves that educated society so called is no higher than the peasants. They believe in the evil eye, and in witchcraft and conjurations, while we..."

"Oh, then you aren't a believer?"

"I can't believe, Countess."

"But if I've seen for myself?"

"The peasant women, too, tell us they have seen hobgoblins."

"Then you think I tell a lie?"

And she laughed a mirthless laugh.

"Oh, no, Masha, Constantin Dmitrievich merely said he could not believe," said Kitty, blushing for Levin, and Levin saw this, and, still more exasperated, would have answered; but Vronsky with his bright frank smile rushed to the support of the conversation, which was threatening to become disagreeable.

"You do not admit the possibility at all?" he queried. "But why not? We admit the existence of electricity, of which we know nothing. Why should there not be some new force, still unknown to us, which..."

"When electricity was discovered," Levin interrupted hurriedly, "it was only the phenomenon that was discovered, and it was unknown from what it proceeded and what were its effects, and ages passed before its applications were conceived. But the spiritualists, on the contrary, have begun with tables writing for them, and spirits appearing to them, and have only later started saying that it is an unknown force."

Vronsky listened attentively to Levin, as he always did listen, obviously interested in his words.

"Yes, but the spiritualists say we don't know at present what this force is, but there is a force, and these are the conditions in which it acts. Let the scientific men find out what the force consists of. No, I don't see why there should not be a new force, if it..."

"Why, because with electricity," Levin interrupted again, "every time you rub tar against wool, a certain phenomenon is manifested; but in this case it does not happen every time, and so it follows it is not a natural phenomenon."

Feeling probably that the conversation was taking a tone too serious for a drawing room, Vronsky made no rejoinder, but by way of trying to change the conversation, he smiled brightly, and turned to the ladies.

"Do let us try at once, Countess," he said; but Levin would finish saying what he thought.

"I think," he went on, "that this attempt of the spiritualists to explain their miracles as some sort of new natural force is most futile. They boldly talk of spiritual force, and then try to subject it to material experiment."

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

"Why, I think you would be a first−rate medium," said Countess Nordstone, "there's something enthusiastic about you."

Levin opened his mouth, was about to say something, reddened, and said nothing.

"Do let us try table turning at once, please," said Vronsky. "Princess, will you allow it?

And Vronsky stood up, looking about for a little table.

Kitty got up to fetch a table, and, as she passed, her eyes met Levin's. She felt for him with her whole heart, the more because she was pitying him for a suffering of which she was herself the cause. "If you can forgive me, forgive me," said her eyes, "I am so happy."

"I hate them all, and you, and myself," his eyes responded, and he took up his hat. But he was not destined to escape. just as they were arranging themselves round the table, and Levin was on the point of retiring, the old Prince came in, and, after greeting the ladies, addressed Levin.

"Ah!" he began joyously. "Been here long, my boy? I didn't even know you were in town. Very glad to see you." The old Prince embraced Levin, and, talking to him, did not observe Vronsky, who had risen, and was calmly waiting till the Prince should turn to him.

Kitty felt how grievous her father's cordiality was to Levin after what had happened. She saw, too, how coldly her father responded at last to Vronsky's bow, and how Vronsky looked with amiable perplexity at her father, trying and failing to understand how and why anyone could be hostilely disposed toward him, and she flushed.

"Prince, let us have Constantin Dmitrievich," said Countess Nordstone, "we want to try an experiment."

"What experiment? Table turning? Well, you must excuse me, ladies and gentlemen, but to my mind it is better fun to play the ring game," said the old Prince, looking at Vronsky, and guessing that it had been his suggestion. "There's some sense in that, anyway."

Vronsky looked wonderingly at the Prince with his firm eyes, and, with a faint smile, began immediately talking to Countess Nordstone of the great ball that was to come off next week.

"I hope you will be there?" he said to Kitty. As soon as the old Prince turned away from him, Levin slipped out unnoticed, and the last impression he carried away with him of that evening was the smiling, happy face of Kitty answering Vronsky's inquiry about the ball.

XV.

At the end of the evening Kitty told her mother of her conversation with Levin, and in spite of all the pity she felt for Levin, she was glad at the thought that she had received a proposal. She had no doubt that she had acted rightly. But after she had gone to bed, she could not sleep for a long while. One impression pursued her relentlessly. It was Levin's face, with his scowling brows, and his kind eyes looking out in dark dejection below them, as he stood listening to her father, and glancing at her and at Vronsky. And she felt so sorry for him that tears came into her eyes. But immediately she thought of the man for whom she had given him up. She vividly recalled his manly, firm face, his noble calmness, and the good nature so conspicuous toward everyone. She remembered the love for her of the man she loved, and once more all was gladness in her soul, and she lay on the pillow smiling with happiness. "I'm sorry, I'm sorry; but what could I do? It's not my fault," she said to herself; but an inner voice told her otherwise. Whether she felt remorse at having captivated Levin, or at having refused him, she did not know. But her happiness was poisoned by doubts. "Lord, have pity on us; Lord, have pity, Lord, have pity!" she said over to herself till she fell asleep.

Meanwhile there took place below, in the Prince's little study, one of the scenes so often repeated between the parents on account of their favorite daughter.

"What? I'll tell you what!" shouted the Prince, brandishing his arms, and at once wrapping his squirrel−lined

dressing gown round him again. "That you've no pride, no dignity; that you're disgracing, ruining your daughter by this vulgar, stupid matchmaking!"

"But, really, for mercy's sake, Prince, what have I done?" said the Princess, almost crying.

She, pleased and happy after her conversation with her daughter, had gone to the Prince to say good night as usual, and though she had no intention of telling him of Levin's proposal and Kitty's refusal, still she hinted to her husband that she fancied things were practically settled with Vronsky, and would be definitely so as soon as his mother arrived. And thereupon, at those words, the Prince had all at once flown into a passion, and begun to use unseemly language.

"What have you done? I'll tell you what. First of all, you're trying to allure an eligible gentleman, and all Moscow will be talking of it, and with good reason. If you have evening parties, invite everyone, don't pick out the possible suitors. Invite all these whelps [so the Prince styled the youths of Moscow]; engage a piano player, and let them dance and not as you did tonight: only the wooers, and doing your matching. It makes me sick sick to see it and you've gone on till you've turned the poor lass's head. Levin's a thousand times the better man. As for this Peterburg swell they're turned out by machinery, all on one pattern, and all precious rubbish. But if he were a prince of the blood, my daughter need not run after anyone."

"But what have I done?"

"Why, you've..." The Prince was yelling wrathfully.

"I know if one were to listen to you," interrupted the Princess, "we should never marry off our daughter. If it's to be so, we'd better go into the country."

"Well, we had better."

"But do wait a minute. Do I wheedle them? I don't wheedle them in the least. A young man, and a very nice one, has fallen in love with her, and she, I fancy..."

"Oh, yes, you fancy! And how if she really is in love, and he's no more thinking of marriage than I am!... Oh, that I should live to see it!... "Ah spiritualism! Ah Nice! Ah the ball!'" And the Prince, imagining that he was mimicking his wife, made a mincing curtsy at each word. "And this is how we prepare wretchedness for Katenka; and she's really got the notion into her head...."

"But what makes you suppose so?"

"I don't suppose; I know. For such things we have eyes; womenfolk haven't. I see a man who has serious intentions, that's Levin: and I see a quail, like this cackler, who's only amusing himself."

"Oh, well, when once you get an idea into your head!..."

"Well, you'll remember my words, but too late, just as with Dashenka."

"Well, well, we won't talk of it," the Princess stopped him, recollecting her unlucky Dolly.

"By all means, and good night!"

And signing each other with the cross, the husband and wife parted with a kiss, feeling that each remained of his or her own opinion.

The Princess had at first been quite certain that that evening had settled Kitty's fortune, and that there could be no doubt of Vronsky's intentions, but her husband's words had disturbed her. And returning to her own room, in terror before the unknown future, she, too, like Kitty, repeated several times in her heart, "Lord, have pity; Lord, have pity; Lord, have pity!"

XVI.

Vronsky had never had a real home life. His mother had been in her youth a brilliant society woman, who had had during her married life, and still more afterward, many love affairs notorious in the whole fashionable world. His father he scarcely remembered, and he had been educated in the Corps of Pages.

Leaving the school very young as a brilliant officer, he had at once got into the circle of wealthy Peterburg army men. Although he did go more or less into Peterburg society, his love affairs had always hitherto been outside it.

In Moscow he had for the first time felt, after his luxurious and coarse life at Peterburg, all the charm of intimacy with a sweet and innocent girl of his own rank, who cared for him. It never even entered his head that there could be any harm in his relations with Kitty. At balls he danced principally with her. He was a constant visitor at her house. He talked to her as people commonly do talk in society all sorts of nonsense, but nonsense to which he could not help attaching a special meaning in her case. Although he said nothing to her that he could not have said before everybody, he felt that she was becoming more and more dependent upon him, and the more he felt this, the better he liked it, and the tenderer was his feeling for her. He did not know that this mode of behavior in relation to Kitty had a definite character, that it is courting young girls with no intention of marriage, and that such courting is one of the evil actions common among brilliant young men such as he was. It seemed to him that he was the first who had discovered this pleasure, and he was enjoying his discovery.

If he could have heard what her parents were saying that evening, if he could have put himself at the point of view of the family, and have heard that Kitty would be unhappy if he did not marry her, he would have been greatly astonished, and would not have believed it. He could not believe that what gave such great and delicate pleasure to him, and above all to her, could be wrong. Still less could he have believed that he ought to marry.

Marriage had never presented itself to him as a possibility. He not only disliked family life, but a family, and especially a husband, in accordance with the views general in the bachelor world in which he lived, were conceived as something alien, repellent, and, above all, ridiculous. But though Vronsky had not the least suspicion of what the parents were saying, he felt on coming away from the Shcherbatskys' that the secret spiritual bond which existed between him and Kitty had grown so much stronger that evening that some step must be taken. But what step could and should be taken he could not imagine.

"What is so exquisite," he thought, as he returned from the Shcherbatskys', carrying away with him, as he always did, a delicious feeling of purity and freshness, arising partly from the fact that he had not been smoking for a whole evening, and with it a new feeling of tenderness at her love for him "what is so exquisite is that not a word has been said by me or by her, yet we understand each other so well in this unseen language of looks and tones, that this evening more clearly than ever she told me she loves me. And how sweetly, simply, and most of all, how trustfully! I feel myself better, purer. I feel that I have a heart, and that there is a great deal of good in me Those sweet, loving eyes! When she said: 'Indeed I do...'"

"Well, what then? Oh, nothing. It's good for me, and good for her." And he began wondering where to finish the evening.

He passed in review the places he might go to. "Club? a game of bezique; champagne with Ignatov? No, I'm not going. Chateau des Fleurs; there I shall find Oblonsky, songs, the cancan. No, I'm sick of it. That's why I like the

Shcherbatskys', because I'm growing better. I'll go home." He went straight to his room at Dussot's Hotel, ordered supper, and then undressed, and as soon as his head touched the pillow, fell into a sound sleep.

XVII.

Next day, at eleven o'clock in the morning, Vronsky drove to the station of the Peterburg railway to meet his mother, and the first person he came across on the great flight of steps was Oblonsky, who was expecting his sister by the same train.

"Ah! Your Excellency!" cried Oblonsky, "Whom are you meeting?"

"My mother," Vronsky responded, smiling, as everyone did who met Oblonsky. He shook hands with him, and together they ascended the steps. "She is to be here from Peterburg today."

"I was looking out for you till two o'clock last night. Where did you go from the Shcherbatskys'?"

"Home," answered Vronsky. "I must own I felt so well content yesterday after the Shcherbatskys' that I didn't care to go anywhere."

"'I can tell the gallant steeds' by some... I don't know what... 'paces'; I can tell youths 'by their faces,'" declaimed Stepan Arkadyevich, just as he had done before to Levin.

Vronsky smiled with a look that seemed to say that he did not deny it, but he promptly changed the subject.

"And whom are you meeting?" he asked.

"I? I've come to meet a pretty woman," said Oblonsky.

"So that's it!"

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

"Ah! that's Madame Karenina," said Vronsky.

"You know her, no doubt?"

"I think I do. Or perhaps not... I really am not sure," Vronsky answered heedlessly, with a vague recollection of something stiff and tedious evoked by the name Karenina.

"But Alexei Alexandrovich, my celebrated brother−in−law, you surely must know. All the world knows him."

"I know him by reputation and by sight. I know that he's clever, learned, religious somewhat... But you know that's not... not in my line," said Vronsky in English.

"Yes, he's a very remarkable man; rather a conservative, but a very nice man," observed Stepan Arkadyevich, "a very nice man."

"Oh, well, so much the better for him," said Vronsky smiling. "Oh, you've come," he said, addressing a tall old footman of his mother's standing at the door; "come here."

Besides the charm Oblonsky had in general for everyone, Vronsky had felt of late specially drawn to him by the fact that in his imagination he was associated with Kitty.

"Well, what do you say? Shall we give a supper on Sunday for the diva?" he said to him with a smile, taking his arm.

"Of course. I'm collecting subscriptions. Oh, did you make the acquaintance of my friend Levin?" asked Stepan Arkadyevich.

"Yes; but he left rather early."

"He's a capital fellow," pursued Oblonsky. "Isn't he?"

"I don't know why it is," responded Vronsky, "in all Moscow people present company of course excepted," he put in jestingly, "there's something uncompromising. They are all on the defensive, lose their tempers, as though they all want to make one feel something...."

"Yes, that's true, it's so," said Stepan Arkadyevich, laughing cheerfully.

"Will the train be in soon?" Vronsky asked a railway official.

"The train's signaled," answered the man.

The approach of the train was more and more evident by the preparatory bustle in the station, the rush of porters, the movement of gendarmes and attendants, and crowding people meeting the train. Through the frosty vapor could be seen workmen in short sheepskins and soft felt boots crossing the rails of the curving line. The hiss of the boiler could be heard on the distant rails, and the rumble of something heavy.

"No," said Stepan Arkadyevich, who felt a great inclination to tell Vronsky of Levin's intentions in regard to Kitty. "No, you haven't got a true impression of Levin. He's a very nervous man, and is sometimes out of humor, it's true, but then he is often very charming. He has such a true, honest nature, and a heart of gold. But yesterday there were special reasons," pursued Stepan Arkadyevich, with a meaning smile, totally oblivious of the genuine sympathy he had felt the day before for his friend, and feeling the same sympathy now, only for Vronsky. "Yes, there were reasons why he could not help being either particularly happy or particularly unhappy."

Vronsky stood still and asked directly: "How so? Do you mean he proposed to your belle−soeur yesterday?"

"Maybe," said Stepan Arkadyevich. "I fancied something of the sort yesterday. Yes, if he went away early, and was out of humor too, such must be the case.... He's been so long in love, and I'm very sorry for him."

"So that's it!... I should imagine, though, she might reckon on a better match," said Vronsky, setting his chest straight and walking about again, "though I don't know him, of course," he added. "Yes, that is a hateful position! That's why most fellows prefer to have to do with the Claras. If you don't succeed with them it only proves that you've not enough cash, but in this case one's dignity is in the balance. But here's the train."

The engine had already whistled in the distance. A few instants later the platform began to shake, and, with puffs of steam hanging low in the air from the frost, the engine rolled up, with the rod of the middle wheel rhythmically moving up and down, and the bowed, muffled figure of the engine driver covered with hoarfrost. Behind the tender, setting the platform more and more slowly and more powerfully shaking, came the luggage van with a dog whining in it. At last the passenger carriages rolled in, quivering before coming to a standstill.

A smart guard jumped out, giving a whistle, and after him one by one the impatient passengers began to get down: an officer of the guards, holding himself erect, and looking severely about him; a nimble young merchant with a bag, smiling gaily; a peasant with a sack over his shoulder.

Vronsky, standing beside Oblonsky, watched the carriages and the passengers, totally oblivious of his mother. What he had just heard about Kitty excited and delighted him. Unconsciously he straightened his chest, and his eyes flashed. He felt himself a conqueror.

"Countess Vronskaia is in that compartment," said the smart guard, going up to Vronsky.

The guard's words roused him, and forced him to think of his mother and his approaching meeting with her. He did not in his heart respect his mother, and, without acknowledging it to himself, he did not love her, though in accordance with the ideas of the set in which he lived, and with his own upbringing, he could not have conceived of any behavior to his mother not in the highest degree respectful and obedient, and the more externally obedient and respectful, the less in his heart he respected and loved her.

XVIII.

Vronsky followed the guard to the carriage, and at the door of the compartment he stopped short to make room for a lady who was getting out.

With the habitual feeling of a man of the world, from one glance at this lady's appearance Vronsky classified her as belonging to the best society. He begged pardon, and was getting into the carriage, but felt he must glance at her once more; not because she was very beautiful, not because of that elegance and modest grace which were apparent in her whole figure, but because in the expression of her charming face, as she passed close by him, there was something peculiarly caressing and soft. As he looked round, she too turned her head. Her shining gray eyes, that looked dark because of her thick lashes, rested with friendly attention on his face, as though she were recognizing him, and then promptly turned away to the passing crowd, as though seeking someone. In that brief look Vronsky had time to notice the suppressed animation which played over her face, and flitted between the brilliant eyes and the faint smile that curved her red lips. It was as though her nature were so brimming over with something that, against her will, it showed itself now in the flash of her eyes, and now in her smile. Deliberately she shrouded the light in her eyes, but it shone against her will in her faintly perceptible smile.

Vronsky stepped into the carriage. His mother, a dried−up old lady with black eyes and ringlets, screwed up her eyes, scanning her son, and smiled slightly with her thin lips. Getting up from the seat and handing her maid a handbag, she gave her little wrinkled hand to her son to kiss, and lifting his head from her hand, kissed him on the cheek.

"You got my telegram? Quite well? Thank God."

"You had a good journey?" said her son, sitting down beside her, and involuntarily listening to a woman's voice outside the door. He knew it was the voice of the lady he had met at the door.

"All the same I don't agree with you," said the lady's voice.

"It's the Peterburg view, madame."

"Not Peterburg, but simply feminine," she responded.

"Well, well, allow me to kiss your hand."

"Good−by, Ivan Petrovich. And would you see if my brother is here, and send him to me?" said the lady in the doorway, and stepped back again into the compartment.

"Well, have you found your brother?" said Countess Vronskaia, addressing the lady.

Vronsky understood now that this was Madame Karenina.

"Your brother is here," he said, standing up. "Excuse me, I did not know you, and, indeed, our acquaintance was so slight," said Vronsky bowing, "that no doubt you do not remember me."

"Oh, no," said she, "I should have known you because your mother and I have been talking, I think, of nothing but you all the way." As she spoke she let the animation that would insist on coming out show itself in her smile. "And still no sign of my brother."

"Do call him, Aliosha," said the old countess.

Vronsky stepped out onto the platform and shouted: "Oblonsky! Here!"

Madame Karenina, however, did not wait for her brother, but catching sight of him she stepped out with her light, resolute step. And as soon as her brother had reached her, with a gesture that struck Vronsky by its decision and its grace, she flung her left arm around his neck, drew him rapidly to her, and kissed him warmly. Vronsky looked on, never taking his eyes from her, and smiled, he could not have said why. But recollecting that his mother was waiting for him, he went back again into the carriage.

"She's very sweet, isn't she?" said the Countess of Madame Karenina. "Her husband put her with me, and I was delighted to have her. We've been talking all the way. And so you, I hear... vous filez le parfait amour. Tant mieux, mon cher, tant mieux."

"I don't know what you are referring to, maman," he answered coldly. "Come, maman, let us go."

Madame Karenina entered the carriage again to say good−by to the Countess.

"Well, Countess, you have met your son, and I my brother," she said gaily. "And all my stories are exhausted; I should have nothing more to tell you."

"Oh, no," said the Countess, taking her hand. "I could go all around the world with you and never be dull. You are one of those delightful women in whose company it's sweet either to be silent or to chat. Now please don't fret over your son; you can't expect never to be parted."

Madame Karenina stood quite still, holding herself very erect, and her eyes were smiling.

"Anna Arkadyevna," the Countess said in explanation to her son, "has a little son eight years old, I believe, and she has never been parted from him before, and she keeps fretting over leaving him."

"Yes, the Countess and I have been talking all the time, I of my son and she of hers," said Madame Karenina, and again a smile lighted up her face a caressing smile intended for him.

"I am afraid that you must have been dreadfully bored," he said, promptly catching the ball of coquetry she had flung him. But apparently she did not care to pursue the conversation in that strain, and she turned to the old Countess.

"Thank you so much. The time has passed so quickly. Good−by, Countess."

"Good−by, my love," answered the Countess. "Let me kiss your pretty face. I speak plainly, at my age, and I tell you simply that I've lost my heart to you."

Stereotyped as the phrase was, Madame Karenina obviously believed it and was delighted by it. She flushed, bent down slightly, and put her cheek to the Countess's lips, drew herself up again, and, with the same smile fluttering between her lips and her eyes, she gave her hand to Vronsky. He pressed the little hand she gave him, and was delighted, as though at something special, by the energetic squeeze with which she freely and vigorously shook his hand. She went out with the rapid step which bore her rather fully developed figure with such strange lightness.

"Very charming," said the Countess.

That was precisely what her son was thinking. His eyes followed her till her graceful figure was out of sight, and then the smile remained on his face. He saw out of the window how she went up to her brother, put her arm in his, and began telling him something animatedly obviously something that had nothing to do with him, Vronsky, and at that he felt annoyed.

"Well, maman, are you perfectly well?" he repeated, turning to his mother.

"Everything has been delightful. Alexandre has been very good, and Marie has grown very pretty. She's very interesting."

And she began telling him again of what interested her most the christening of her grandson, for which she had been staying in Peterburg, and the special favor shown her elder son by the Czar.

"Here's Lavrentii," said Vronsky, looking out of the window; "now we can go, if you like."

The old butler who had traveled with the Countess came to the carriage to announce that everything was ready, and the Countess got up to go.

"Come; there's not such a crowd now," said Vronsky.

The maid took a handbag and the lap dog, the butler and a porter the other baggage. Vronsky gave his mother his arm; but just as they were getting out of the carriage several men ran suddenly by with panic−stricken faces. The stationmaster, too, ran by in his extraordinarily colored cap. Obviously something unusual had happened. The crowd was running to the tail end of the train.

"What?... What?... Where?... Flung himself!... Crushed!..." was heard among the crowd.

Stepan Arkadyevich, with his sister on his arm, turned back. They too looked scared, and stopped at the carriage door to avoid the crowd.

The ladies got in, while Vronsky and Stepan Arkadyevich followed the crowd to find out details of the disaster.

A watchman, either drunk or too much muffled up in the bitter frost, had not heard the train moving back, and had been crushed.

Before Vronsky and Oblonsky came back the ladies heard the facts from the butler.

Oblonsky and Vronsky had both seen the mutilated corpse. Oblonsky was evidently distressed. He frowned and seemed ready to cry.

"Ah, how awful! Ah, Anna, if you had seen it! Ah, how awful!" he kept repeating.

Vronsky did not speak; his handsome face was serious, but perfectly calm.

"Ah, if you had seen it, Countess," said Stepan Arkadyevich. "And his wife was there.... It was awful to see her!... She flung herself on the body. They say he was the only support of an immense family. How awful!"

"Couldn't one do anything for her?" said Madame Karenina in an agitated whisper.

Vronsky glanced at her, and immediately got out of the carriage.

"I'll be back directly, maman," he remarked, turning round in the doorway.

When he came back a few minutes later, Stepan Arkadyevich was already in conversation with the Countess about a new singer, while she was impatiently looking toward the door, waiting for her son.

"Now let us be off," said Vronsky, coming in.

They went out together. Vronsky was in front with his mother. Behind walked Madame Karenina with her brother. Just as they were going out of the station the stationmaster overtook Vronsky.

"You gave my assistant two hundred roubles. Would you kindly explain for whose benefit you intend them?"

"For the widow," said Vronsky, shrugging his shoulders. "I should have thought there was no need to ask."

"You gave that?" cried Oblonsky behind, and, pressing his sister's hand, he added: "Most charming, most charming! Isn't he a fine fellow? Good−by, Countess."

And he and his sister stood still, looking for her maid.

When they went out the Vronskys' carriage had already driven away. People coming in were still talking of what had happened.

"What a horrible death!" said a gentleman, passing by. "They say he was cut in two."

"On the contrary, I think it's the easiest instantaneous," observed another.

"How is it they don't take proper precautions?" a third was saying.

Madame Karenina seated herself in the carriage, and Stepan Arkadyevich saw with surprise that her lips were quivering, and that she was with difficulty restraining her tears.

"What is it, Anna?" he asked, when they had driven a few hundred sagenes.

"It's an omen of evil," she said.

"What nonsense!" said Stepan Arkadyevich. "You've come, that's the chief thing. You can't conceive how I'm resting my hopes on you."

"Have you known Vronsky long? she asked.

"Yes. You know we're hoping he will marry Kitty."

"Yes?" said Anna softly. "Come now, let us talk of you," she added, tossing her head, as though she would physically shake off something superfluous oppressing her. "Let us talk of your affairs. I got your letter, and here I am."

"Yes, all my hopes are in you," said Stepan Arkadyevich.

"Well, tell me all about it."

And Stepan Arkadyevich began his story.

On reaching home Oblonsky helped his sister out, sighed, pressed her hand, and set off to his office.

XIX.

When Anna entered the tiny drawing room, she found Dolly sitting there with a white−headed plump little boy, already resembling his father; she was listening to a lesson in French reading. As the boy read, he kept twisting and trying to tear off a button that was nearly off his jacket. His mother had several times taken his hand from it, but the plump little hand went back to the button again. His mother pulled the button off and put it in her pocket.

"Keep your hands still, Grisha," she said, and she took up her work, a coverlet she had long been making. She always set to work on it at depressed moments, and now she knitted at it nervously, twitching her fingers and counting the stitches. Though she had sent word the day before to her husband that it was nothing to her whether his sister came or not, she had made everything ready for her arrival, and was expecting her sister−in−law with agitation.

Dolly was crushed by her sorrow, utterly swallowed up by it. Still she did not forget that Anna, her sister−in−law, was the wife of one of the most important personages in Peterburg, and was a Peterburg grande dame. And, thanks to this circumstance, she did not carry out her threat to her husband that is to say, she had not forgotten that her sister−in−law was coming. "And, after all, Anna is in no wise to blame," thought Dolly. "I know nothing save the very best about her, and I have seen nothing but kindness and affection from her toward myself." It was true that as far as she could recall her impressions at Peterburg at the Karenins', she did not like their household itself; there was something artificial about the whole arrangement of their family life. "But why should I not receive her? If only she doesn't take it into her head to console me!" thought Dolly. "All consolations and exhortations and Christian forgiveness I have thought all this over a thousand times, and it's all no use."

All these days Dolly had been alone with her children. She did not want to talk of her sorrow, but with that sorrow in her heart she could not talk of outside matters.

She knew that in one way or another she would tell Anna everything, and she was alternately glad at the thought of speaking freely, and angry at the necessity of speaking of her humiliation with her, his sister, and of hearing her ready−made phrases of exhortation and consolation.

She had been on the lookout for her, glancing at her watch every minute, and, as often happens, let slip that precise minute when her visitor arrived, so that she did not hear the bell.

Catching the sound of skirts and of light steps at the door, she looked round, and her careworn face unconsciously

expressed not gladness, but wonder. She got up and embraced her sister−in−law.

"What, here already?" she said as she kissed her.

"Dolly, how glad I am to see you!"

"I am glad, too," said Dolly, faintly smiling, and trying by the expression of Anna's face to find out whether she knew. "Most likely she knows," she thought, noticing the sympathy in Anna's face. "Well, come along, I'll take you to your room," she went on, trying to defer as long as possible the time of explanation.

"Is this Grisha? Heavens, how he's grown!" said Anna; and kissing him, never taking her eyes off Dolly, she stood still and flushed. "No, please, let us stay here."

She took off her shawl and her hat, and catching it in a lock of her black hair, which was a mass of curls, she tossed her head and shook her hair down.

"You are radiant with health and happiness!" said Dolly, almost with envy.

"I?... Yes," said Anna. "Merciful heavens, Tania! You're the same age as my Seriozha," she added, addressing the little girl as she ran in. She took her in her arms and kissed her. "Delightful child, delightful! Show me them all."

She mentioned them, not only remembering the names, but the years, months, characters, illnesses of all the children, and Dolly could not but appreciate that.

"Very well, we will go to them," she said. "It's a pity Vassia's asleep."

After seeing the children, they sat down, alone now, in the drawing room, to coffee. Anna took the tray, and then pushed it away from her.

"Dolly," she said, "he has told me."

Dolly looked coldly at Anna; she was waiting now for hypocritically sympathetic phrases, but Anna said nothing of the sort.

"Dolly, darling," she said, "I don't want to intercede for him, nor to try to comfort you that's impossible. But, my dearest, I'm simply sorry, sorry from my heart for you!"

Under the thick lashes of her shining eyes tears suddenly glittered. She moved nearer to her sister−in−law and took her hand in her own, vigorous and little. Dolly did not shrink away, but her face did not lose its frigid expression. She said:

"To comfort me is impossible. Everything's lost after what has happened, everything's over!"

And directly she had said this, her face suddenly softened. Anna lifted the wasted, thin hand of Dolly, kissed it and said:

"But, Dolly, what's to be done, what's to be done? How is it best to act in this awful position that's what you must think of."

"All's over, and there's nothing more," said Dolly. "And the worst of it all is, you see, that I can't cast him off: there are the children my hands are tied. And I can't live with him! It's a torture for me to see him."

"Dolly, darling, he has spoken to me, but I want to hear it from you: tell me all about it."

Dolly looked at her inquiringly.

Sympathy and love unfeigned were apparent on Anna's face.

"Very well," she suddenly said. "But I will begin at the beginning. You know how I was married. With the education maman gave us I was more than innocent I was foolish. I knew nothing. They say, I know, men tell their wives of their former lives, but Stiva" she corrected herself "Stepan Arkadyevich told me nothing. You'll hardly believe it, but till now I imagined that I was the only woman he had known. So I lived eight years. You must understand that I was not only far from suspecting infidelity, but I regarded it as impossible, and then try to imagine it with such conceptions to find out suddenly all the horror, all the loathsomeness... You must try and understand me. To be fully convinced of one's happiness, and all at once..." continued Dolly, holding back her sobs, "To get a letter... His letter to his mistress, a governess in my employ. No, it's too awful!" She hastily pulled out her handkerchief and hid her face in it. "I can understand if it were passion," she went on, after a brief silence, "but to deceive me deliberately, slyly... And with whom?... To go on being my husband while he and she... It's awful! You can't understand..."

"Oh, yes, I understand! I understand! Dolly, dearest, I do understand," said Anna, pressing her hand.

"And do you imagine he realizes all the awfulness of my position? Dolly resumed. "Not in the slightest! He's happy and contented."

"Oh, no!" Anna interposed quickly. "He's to be pitied, he's weighed down by remorse..."

"Is he capable of remorse?" Dolly interrupted, gazing intently into her sister−in−law's face.

"Yes. I know him. I could not look at him without feeling sorry for him. We both know him. He's good−natured, but he's proud, and now he's so humiliated. What touched me most..." (And here Anna guessed what would touch Dolly most.) "He's tortured by two things: that he's ashamed for the children's sake, and that, loving you yes, yes, loving you beyond everything on earth," she hurriedly interrupted Dolly, who would have rejoined "he has hurt you, pierced you to the heart. 'No, no, she cannot forgive me,' he keeps on saying."

Dolly looked pensively past her sister−in−law as she listened to her words.

"Yes, I can see that his position is awful; it's worse for the guilty than the innocent," she said, "if he feels that all the misery comes from his fault. But how am I to forgive him, how am I to be his wife again after her? For me to live with him now would be torture, just because I love my past love for him..."

And sobs cut short her words.

But as though of set design, each time she was softened she began to speak again of what exasperated her.

"She's young, you see, she's pretty," she went on. "Do you know, Anna, my youth and my beauty are gone, taken by whom? By him and his children. I have worked for him, and all I had has gone in his service, and now of course any fresh, vulgar creature has more charm for him. No doubt they talked of me together, or, worse still, they were silent about me.... Do you understand?"

Again her eyes glowed with hatred.

"And after that he will tell me... What! Am I to believe him? Never! No, everything is over, everything that once constituted my comfort, the reward of my work and of my sufferings... Would you believe it? I was teaching Grisha just now: once this was a joy to me, now it is a torture. What have I to strive and toil for? Why to have children? What's so awful is that all at once my heart's turned, and instead of love and tenderness, I have nothing but hatred for him; yes, hatred. I could kill him and..."

"Darling Dolly, I understand, but don't torture yourself You are so insulted, so excited, that you look at many things mistakenly."

Dolly grew calmer, and for two minutes both were silent.

"What's to be done? Think for me, Anna, help me. I have thought over everything, and I see nothing."

Anna could not find anything, but her heart echoed instantly to each word, to each change of expression on her sister−in−law's face.

"One thing I would say," began Anna. "I am his sister, I know his character, that faculty of forgetting everything, everything" (she waved her hand before her forehead), "that faculty for being completely carried away, but for completely repenting, too. He cannot believe it, he cannot comprehend now, how he could have acted as he did."

"No; he understands, and understood!" Dolly broke in. "But I... You are forgetting me... Does that make it easier for me?"

"Wait a minute. When he told me, I will own I did not realize all the horror of your position. I saw nothing but him, and that the family was broken up. I felt sorry for him, but after talking to you, I see it, as a woman, quite differently. I see your agony, and I can't tell you how sorry I am for you! But, Dolly, darling, while I fully realize your sufferings, there is one thing I don't know; I don't know... I don't know how much love there is still in your heart for him. That you know whether there is enough for you to be able to forgive him. If there is forgive him!"

"No," Dolly was beginning, but Anna cut her short, kissing her hand once more.

"I know more of the world than you do," she said. I know how men like Stiva look at it. You speak of his talking of you with her. That never happened. Such men are unfaithful, but their own home and wife are sacred to them. Somehow or other these women are still looked on with contempt by them, and do not touch on their feeling for their family. They draw a sort of line that can't be crossed between them and their families. I don't understand it, but it is so."

"Yes, but he has kissed her..."

"Dolly, hush, darling. I saw Stiva when he was in love with you. I remember the time when he came to me and cried, talking of you, and of what a poetry and loftiness you were for him, and I know that the longer he has lived with you the loftier you have been in his eyes. You know we have sometimes laughed at him for putting in at every word: "Dolly's a marvelous woman." have always been a divinity for him, and you are that still, and this has not been a passion of the heart...

"But if it be repeated?"

"It cannot be, as I understand it...

"Yes, but could you forgive it?"

"I don't know, I can't judge... No, I can judge," said Anna, thinking a moment; and grasping the position in her thought and weighing it in her inner balance, she added: "Yes, I can, I can, I can. Yes, I could forgive. I could not be the same, no; but I could forgive, and forgive as though it had never been, never been at all...."

"Oh, of course," Dolly interposed quickly, as though saying what she had more than once thought, "else it would not be forgiveness. If one forgives, it must be completely, completely. Come, let us go; I'll take you to your room," she said, getting up, and on the way she embraced Anna. "My dear, how glad I am you came. It has made things better, ever so much better."

XX.

The whole of that day Anna spent at home that is, at the Oblonskys', and received no one, though some of her acquaintances had already heard of her arrival, and came to call the same day. Anna spent the whole morning with Dolly and the children. She merely sent a brief note to her brother to tell him that he must not fail to dine at home. "Come, God is merciful," she wrote.

Oblonsky did dine at home: the conversation was general, and his wife, speaking to him, addressed him as "Stiva," as she had not done for some time past. In the relations of husband and wife the same estrangement still remained, but there was no talk of separation, and Stepan Arkadyevich saw the possibility of explanation and reconciliation.

Immediately after dinner Kitty came in. She knew Anna Arkadyevna, but only very slightly, and she came now to her sister's with some trepidation, at the prospect of meeting this fashionable Peterburg lady, of whom everyone spoke so highly. But she made a favorable impression on Anna Arkadyevna she perceived that at once. Anna was unmistakably admiring her loveliness and her youth: before Kitty knew where she was she found herself not merely under Anna's sway, but in love with her, as young girls do fall in love with older and married women. Anna did not resemble a fashionable lady, or the mother of a boy eight years old. In the elasticity of her movements, the freshness and the animation which persisted in her face and broke out in her smile and her glance, she would rather have passed for a girl of twenty, had it not been for a serious and, at times, a mournful look in her eyes, which struck and attracted Kitty. Kitty felt that Anna was perfectly simple and was concealing nothing, but that she had another higher world of interests, complex and poetic, which were inaccessible to Kitty.

After dinner, when Dolly withdrew to her own room, Anna rose quickly and went up to her brother, who was just lighting a cigar.

"Stiva," she said to him, winking gaily, making the sign of the cross over him, and glancing toward the door, "go, and God help you.

He tossed away his cigar, having understood her, and departed through the doorway.

When Stepan Arkadyevich had disappeared, she went back to the sofa where she had been sitting, surrounded by the children. Either because the children saw that their mother was fond of this aunt, or that they themselves sensed a special charm in her, the two elder ones, and the younger following their lead, as children so often do, had clung about their new aunt since before dinner, and would not leave her side. And it had become a sort of game among them to sit as close as possible to their aunt, to touch her, hold her little hand, kiss it, play with her ring, or even touch the flounce of her skirt.

"Come, come, as we were sitting before," said Anna Arkadyevna, sitting down in her place.

And again Grisha poked his little face under her arm, and nestled with his head on her gown, beaming with pride

and happiness.

"And when is your next ball?" she asked Kitty.

"Next week and a splendid ball. One of those balls where one always enjoys oneself."

"Why, are there balls where one always enjoys oneself?" Anna said, with tender irony.

"It's strange, but there are. At the Bobrishchevs' one always enjoys oneself, and at the Nikitins' too, while at the Mezhkovs' it's always dull. Haven't you noticed it?"

"No, my dear, for me there are no balls now where one enjoys oneself," said Anna, and Kitty detected in her eyes that peculiar world which was not revealed to her. "For me there are some which are less dull and tiresome than others."

"How can you be dull at a ball?"

"Why should not I be dull at a ball?" inquired Anna.

Kitty perceived that Anna knew what answer would follow.

"Because you always look the loveliest of all."

Anna had the faculty of blushing. She blushed, and said:

"In the first place it's never so; and secondly, if it were, what difference would it make to me?"

"Are you coming to this ball? asked Kitty.

"I imagine it won't be possible to avoid going. Here, take it," she said to Tania, who was pulling the loosely fitting ring off her white, slender−tipped finger.

"I shall be so glad if you go. I should so like to see you at a ball."

"Anyway, if I do go, I shall comfort myself with the thought that it's a pleasure to you.... Grisha, don't pull my hair. It's untidy enough without that," she said, putting up a straying lock, which Grisha had been playing with.

"I imagine you at the ball in lilac."

"And why in lilac, precisely?" asked Anna, smiling. "Now, children, run along, run along. Do you hear? Miss Hoole is calling you to tea," she said tearing the children from her, and sending them off to the dining room.

"I know why you press me to come to the ball. You expect a great deal of this ball, and you want everyone to be there and take part in it."

"How do you know? Yes!"

"Oh! What a happy time you are at," pursued Anna. "I remember, and I know this blue haze, like the mist on the mountains in Switzerland. This mist, which covers everything in that blissful time when childhood is just ending, and out of that vast circle, happy and gay, there is a path growing narrower and narrower, and it is delightful and alarming to enter the ballroom, bright and splendid as it is.... Who has not been through it?"

Kitty smiled without speaking. "But how did she go through it? How I should like to know all her love story!" thought Kitty, recalling the unromantic appearance of Alexei Alexandrovich, her husband.

"I know something. Stiva told me, and I congratulate you. I liked him so much," Anna continued. "I met Vronsky at the railway station."

"Oh, was he there?" asked Kitty, blushing. "What was it Stiva told you?"

"Stiva blabbed about it all. And I should be so glad. I traveled yesterday with Vronsky's mother," she went on; "and his mother talked without a pause of him; he's her favorite. I know mothers are partial, but..."

"What did his mother tell you?"

"Oh, a great deal! And although I know that he's her favorite, one can still see how chivalrous he is.... Well, for instance, she told me that he had wanted to give up all his property to his brother; that he had done something extraordinary when he was quite a child saved a woman from the water. He's a hero, in fact," said Anna, smiling and recollecting the two hundred roubles he had given at the station.

But she did not tell Kitty about the two hundred roubles. For some reason it was disagreeable to her to think of it. She felt that there was something that had to do with her in it, and something that ought not to have been.

"She pressed me very much to go and see her," Anna went on; "and I shall be glad to go to see her tomorrow. Stiva is staying a long while in Dolly's room, thank God," Anna added, changing the subject, and getting up, Kitty fancied, displeased with something.

"No, I'm first! No, I!" screamed the children, who had finished tea, running up to their Aunt Anna.

"All together," said Anna, and she ran laughing to meet them, and, embracing them, threw all the children, shrieking with delight, into a swarming heap.

XXI.

Dolly came out of her room to the tea of the grownups. Stepan Arkadyevich did not come out. He must have left his wife's room by a back door.

"I am afraid you'll be cold upstairs," observed Dolly, addressing Anna; "I want to move you downstairs, and we shall be nearer."

"Oh, please, don't trouble about me," answered Anna, looking intently into Dolly's face, trying to make out whether there had been a reconciliation or not.

"It will be lighter for you here," answered her sister−in−law.

"I assure you that I can sleep like a marmot anywhere and any time."

"What's all this?" inquired Stepan Arkadyevich, coming out of his room and addressing his wife.

From his tone both Kitty and Anna at once gathered that a reconciliation had taken place.

"I want to move Anna downstairs, but we must hang up blinds. No one knows how to do it; I must see to it

myself," answered Dolly addressing him.

"God knows whether they are fully reconciled," thought Anna, hearing her tone, cold and composed.

"Come, Dolly, why be always making difficulties," answered her husband. "There, I'll do it all, if you like..."

"I know how you do everything," answered Dolly. "You tell Matvei to do what can't be done, and go away yourself, leaving him to make a muddle of everything," and her habitual, mocking smile curved the corners of Dolly's lips as she spoke.

"Full, full reconciliation full," thought Anna, "thank God!" and rejoicing that she was the cause of it, she went up to Dolly and kissed her.

"Not at all. Why do you always look down on me and Matvei?" said Stepan Arkadyevich, smiling hardly perceptibly, and addressing his wife.

The whole evening Dolly was, as always, a little mocking in her tone to her husband, while Stepan Arkadyevich was happy and cheerful, yet not so as to seem as if, having been forgiven, he had forgotten his fault.

At half−past nine o'clock a particularly joyful and pleasant family conversation over the tea table at the Oblonskys' was broken up by an apparently simple incident. But this simple incident for some reason struck everyone as strange. Having begun talking about common acquaintances in Peterburg, Anna got up quickly.

"She is in my album," she said; "and, by the way, I'll show you my Seriozha," she added, with a mother's smile of pride.

Toward ten o'clock, when she usually said good night to her son, and often, before going to a ball put him to bed herself, she felt depressed at being so far from him; and whatever she was talking about, she kept coming back in thought to her curly−headed Seriozha. She longed to look at his photograph and talk of him. Seizing the first pretext, she got up, and with her light, resolute step went for her album. The stairs up to her room came out on the landing of the great warm main staircase.

Just as she was leaving the drawing room, a ring was heard in the hall.

"Who can that be?" said Dolly.

"It's too early for me to be fetched, and for anyone else it's too late," observed Kitty.

"It's sure to be someone with papers for me," put in Stepan Arkadyevich. When Anna was passing the top of the staircase, a servant was running up to announce the visitor, while the visitor himself was standing under a lamp. Anna, glancing down, at once recognized Vronsky, and a strange feeling of pleasure and, at the same time, of some dread, stirred in her heart. He stood there, without taking off his coat, and pulling something out of his pocket. At the instant when she was just halfway up the stairs he raised his eyes, caught sight of her, and the expression of his face changed to embarrassment and dismay. With a slight inclination of her head she passed, hearing behind her Stepan Arkadyevich's loud voice calling him to come up, and the quiet, soft, and calm voice of Vronsky refusing.

When Anna returned with the album he was already gone, and Stepan Arkadyevich was telling them that he had called to inquire about the dinner they were giving next day to a foreign celebrity.

"And nothing would induce him to come up. What a queer fellow he is!" added Stepan Arkadyevich.

Kitty blushed. She thought that she was the only person who knew why he had come, and why he would not come up. "He has been at home," she thought, "and didn't find me, and thought I should be here, but he did not come up because he thought it late, and Anna's here."

All of them looked at each other, saying nothing, and began to look at Anna's album.

There was nothing either exceptional or strange in a man's calling at half−past nine on a friend to inquire details of a proposed dinner party and not coming in, yet it seemed strange to all of them. And to Anna it seemed stranger and more unpleasant than to any of the others.

XXII.

The ball was only just beginning as Kitty and her mother walked up the great staircase, flooded with light, and lined with flowers and footmen in powder and red coats. From the rooms came a constant, steady noise, like that of a hive aswarm; and as they were giving the final little touches to hair and dresses before a mirror on the landing between potted trees, they heard, coming from the ballroom, the gently distinct notes of the fiddles of the orchestra, beginning the first waltz. A little ancient in civilian dress, arranging his gray curls before another mirror, and diffusing an odor of scent, stumbled against them on the stairs, and stood aside, evidently admiring Kitty, whom he did not know. A beardless youth, one of those society youths whom the old Prince Shcherbatsky called whelps, in an exceedingly open waistcoat, straightening his white tie as he went, bowed to them and after running by, came back to ask Kitty for a quadrille. As the first quadrille had already been given to Vronsky, she had to promise this youth the second. An officer, buttoning his glove, stood aside in the doorway, and, stroking his mustache, admired the rosy Kitty.

Although her dress, her coiffure, and all the preparations for the ball had cost Kitty much trouble and planning, at this moment she walked into the ballroom in the elaborate tulle dress over a pink slip as unconcernedly and simply as though all the rosettes and lace, all the minute details of her attire, had not cost her or her family a moment's attention, as though she had been born in this tulle and lace, with this towering coiffure, surmounted by a rose and two small leaves.

When, just before entering the ballroom, the old Princess tried to adjust a sash ribbon that had become twisted, Kitty had drawn back a little. She felt that everything must be right of itself, and graceful, and that nothing could need setting straight.

Kitty had one of her good days. Her dress was not uncomfortable anywhere; her lace bertha did not droop anywhere; her rosettes were neither crushed nor torn off; her pink slippers with high, curving heels did not pinch, but gladdened her tiny feet; and the thick bandeaux of fair hair kept up on her head. All the three buttons buttoned up without tearing on the long glove that covered her hand without concealing its lines. The black velvet ribbon of her locket nestled with special tenderness round her neck. This velvet ribbon was a darling; at home, regarding her neck in the looking glass, Kitty had felt that that velvet was speaking. About all the rest there might be a doubt, but the velvet ribbon was a darling. Kitty smiled here too, at the ball, when she glanced at it in the glass. Her bare shoulders and arms gave Kitty a sensation of chill marble a sensation she particularly liked. Her eyes sparkled, and her rosy lips could not help but smile from the consciousness of their own attractiveness. She had scarcely entered the ballroom and reached the tulle−ribbon−lace−colored throng of ladies, waiting to be asked to dance Kitty was never one of that throng when she was asked for a waltz, and asked by the best partner, the first star in the hierarchy of the ballroom, a renowned conductor of the dances and master of ceremonies, married man, handsome and well built, Iegorushka Korsunsky. He had only just left the Countess Banina, with whom he had danced the first turn of the waltz, and, scanning his demesne that is to say, a few couples who had started dancing he caught sight of Kitty entering, and flew up to her with that peculiar, easy amble which is confined to conductors of the dances. Bowing and without even asking her if she cared to dance, he put out his arm to encircle

her slender waist. She looked round for someone to give her fan to, and their hostess, smiling to her, took it.

"How good of you to come in good time," he said to her, embracing her waist; "such a bad habit to be late."

Bending her left arm, she laid it on his shoulder, and her little feet in their pink slippers began swiftly, lightly, and rhythmically moving over the slippery floor in time to the music.

"It's a rest to waltz with you," he said to her, as they fell into the first slow steps of the waltz. "It's charming such lightness, precision." He said to her the same thing he said to almost all his partners whom he knew well.

She smiled at his praise, and continued to look about the room over his shoulder. She was not like a girl at her first ball, for whom all faces in the ballroom melt into one vision of fairyland. And she was not a girl who had gone the stale round of balls till every face in the ballroom was familiar and tiresome. But she was in the middle stage between these two; she was excited, and at the same time she had sufficient self−possession to be able to observe. In the left corner of the ballroom she saw the very flower of society grouped together.
There impossibly naked was the beauty Liddy, Korsunsky's wife; there was the lady of the house; there shone the bald pate of Krivin, always to be found wherever the best people were; in that direction gazed the young men, not venturing to approach; there, too, she descried Stiva, and there she saw the charming figure and head of Anna in a black velvet gown. And he was there. Kitty had not seen him since the evening she refused Levin. With her farsighted eyes, knew him at once, and was even aware that he was looking at her.

"Another turn, eh? You're not tired?" said Korsunsky, a little out of breath.

"No, thank you!"

"Where shall I take you?"

"Madame Karenina's here, I think.... Take me to her."

"Wherever you command."

And Korsunsky began waltzing with measured steps straight toward the group in the left corner, continually saying, "Pardon, mesdames, pardon, pardon, mesdames," and steering his course through the sea of lace, tulle and ribbon, and not disarranging a feather, he turned his partner sharply round, so that her slim ankles, in light, transparent stockings, were exposed to view, and her train floated out in fan shape and covered Krivin's knees. Korsunsky bowed, set straight his open shirt front, and gave her his arm to conduct her to Anna Arkadyevna. Kitty, flushed, took her train from Krivin's knees, and, a little giddy, looked round, seeking Anna. Anna was not in lilac, as Kitty had so urgently wished, but in a black, low−cut, velvet gown, showing her full shoulders and bosom, that looked as though carved in old ivory, and her rounded arms, with tiny, slender hands. The whole gown was trimmed with Venetian guipure. On her head, among her black hair her own, with no false additions was a little wreath of pansies, and a similar one on the black ribbon of her sash, among white lace. Her coiffure was not striking. All that was noticeable was the little willful tendrils of her curly hair that persisted in escaping on the nape of her neck, and on her temples. Encircling her sculptured, strong neck was a thread of pearls.

Kitty had been seeing Anna every day; she adored her, and had pictured her invariably in lilac. But now, seeing her in black, she felt that she had not fully perceived her charm. She saw her now as someone quite new and surprising to her. Now she understood that Anna could not have been in lilac, and that her charm was precisely in that she always stood out against her attire, that her dress could never be noticeable on her. And her black dress, with its sumptuous lace, was not noticeable on her; it was only the frame and all that was seen was she simple,

natural, elegant, and at the same time gay and animated.

She was standing, as always, very erect, and when Kitty drew near the group she was speaking to the master of the house, her head slightly turned toward him.

"No, I won't cast a stone," she was saying, in answer to something, "though I can't understand it she went on, shrugging her shoulders, and she turned at once with a soft smile of protection toward Kitty. With a cursory feminine glance she scanned her attire, and made a movement of her head, hardly perceptible, but understood by Kitty, signifying approval of her dress and her looks. "You came into the room dancing," she added.

"This is one of my most faithful supporters," said Korsunsky, bowing to Anna Arkadyevna, whom he had not yet seen. "The Princess helps to make any ball festive and successful. Anna Arkadyevna, a waltz?" he said, bending down to her.

"Why, have you met?" inquired their host.

"Is there anyone we have not met? My wife and I are like white wolves everyone knows us," answered Korsunsky. "A waltz, Anna Arkadyevna?"

"I don't dance whenever it's possible not to," she said.

"But tonight it's impossible," answered Korsunsky.

During the conversation Vronsky was approaching them.

"Well, since it's impossible tonight, let us start," she said, not noticing Vronsky's bow, and hastily put her hand on Korsunsky's shoulder.

"What is she vexed with him about?" thought Kitty, discerning that Anna had intentionally not responded to Vronsky's bow. Vronsky went up to Kitty, reminding her of the first quadrille, and expressing his regret at not having seen her all this time. Kitty gazed in admiration at Anna waltzing, as she listened to him. She expected him to ask her for a waltz, but he did not, and she glanced wonderingly at him. He flushed, and hurriedly asked her to waltz, but he had barely put his arm round her slender waist and taken the first step when the music suddenly stopped. Kitty looked into his face, which was so close to her own, and long afterward for several years this look, full of love, to which he made no response, cut her to the heart with an agony of shame.

"Pardon! Pardon! Waltz! Waltz!" shouted Korsunsky from the other side of the room, and, seizing the first young lady he came across he began dancing.

XXIII.

Vronsky and Kitty waltzed several times round the room. After the waltz Kitty went to her mother, and she had hardly time to say a few words to Countess Nordstone when Vronsky came up again for the first quadrille. During the quadrille nothing of any significance was said: there was disjointed talk between them of the Korsunskys, husband and wife, whom he described very amusingly, as delightful children at forty, and of the future popular theater; and only once did the conversation touch her to the quick when he asked her whether Levin were here, and added that he liked him very much. But Kitty did not expect much from the quadrille. She looked forward with a sinking heart to the mazurka. She fancied that the mazurka would decide everything. The fact that he did not during the quadrille ask her for the mazurka did not trouble her. She felt sure she would dance it with him, as she had done at former balls, and refused five young men, saying she was engaged for the mazurka. The whole

ball up to the last quadrille was for Kitty an enchanted vision of delightful colors, sounds and motions. She only sat down when she felt too tired and begged for a rest. But as she was dancing the last quadrille with one of the tiresome young men whom she could not refuse, she chanced to be vis−a−vis with Vronsky and Anna. She had not been near Anna since the beginning of the evening, and now she again suddenly saw her as quite new and surprising. She saw in her the signs of that excitement of success she knew so well in herself; she saw that she was intoxicated with the delighted admiration she was exciting. She knew that feeling and knew its signs, and saw them in Anna; saw the quivering, flashing light in her eyes, and the smile of happiness and excitement unconsciously curving her lips, and the distinct grace, precision and lightness of her movements.

"Who is it?" she asked herself. "All or one?" And without keeping up her end of the conversation, the thread of which the harassed young man she was dancing with lost and could not pick up again, she obeyed with external liveliness the peremptory shouts of Korsunsky starting them all into the grand rond, and then into the chaine, and at the same time she kept watch with a growing pang at her heart. "No, it's not admiration of the crowd that has intoxicated her, but the adoration of one. And that one? Can it be he?" Every time he spoke to Anna the joyous light flashed into her eyes, and the smile of happiness curved her red lips. She seemed to make an effort to control herself, in order not to show these signs of delight, but they appeared on her face of themselves. "But what of him?" Kitty looked at him and was horrified. What was pictured so clearly to Kitty in the mirror of Anna's face she saw in him. What had become of his always calm, firm manner, and the carelessly calm expression of his face? Now every time he turned to her he bent his head, as though he would have fallen at her feet, and in his eyes there was nothing but humble submission and dread. "I would not offend you," his eyes seemed to be saying each time, "but I want to save myself, and I don't know how." On his face was a look such as Kitty had never seen before.

They were speaking of common acquaintances, keeping up the smallest of small talk, but to Kitty it seemed that every word they said was determining their fate and hers. And strangely enough, although they were actually talking of how absurd Ivan Ivanovich was with his French, and how the Eletsky girl might have made a better match, these words were yet fraught with significance for them, and they sensed this as much as Kitty did. The whole ball, the whole world, everything seemed screened by a fog within Kitty's soul. Nothing but the stern discipline of her bringing−up supported her and forced her to do what was expected of her that is, to dance, to answer questions, to talk, even to smile. But before the mazurka, when they were beginning to rearrange the chairs and a few couples moved out of the smaller rooms into the big room, a moment of despair and horror came for Kitty. She had refused five partners, and now she was not dancing the mazurka. She had not even a hope of being asked for it, because she was so successful in society that the idea would never occur to anyone that she had remained disengaged till now. She would have to tell her mother she felt ill and go home, yet she had not the strength to do this. She felt crushed.

She went to the farthest end of the second drawing room and sank into a low chair. Her light, transparent skirts rose like a cloud about her slender waist; one bare, thin, soft, girlish arm, hanging listlessly, was lost in the folds of her pink tunic; in the other she held her fan and with rapid, short strokes fanned her burning face. Yet, while she looked like a butterfly clinging to a blade of grass, and just about to open its rainbow wings for fresh flight, her heart ached with a horrible despair.

"But perhaps I am wrong perhaps it was not so?" And again she recalled all she had seen.

"Kitty, what is it?" said Countess Nordstone, stepping noiselessly over the carpet toward her. "I don't understand it."

Kitty's lower lip began to quiver; she got up quickly.

"Kitty, you're not dancing the mazurka?"

"No, no," said Kitty in a voice shaking with tears.

"He asked her for the mazurka in my presence," said Countess Nordstone, knowing Kitty would understand who he and her were. "She said: 'Why, aren't you going to dance it with Princess Shcherbatskaia?'"

"Oh, it doesn't matter to me!" answered Kitty.

No one but she herself understood her position; no one knew that she had refused yesterday the man whom perhaps she loved, and refused him because she had put her faith in another.

Countess Nordstone found Korsunsky, with whom she was to dance the mazurka, and told him to ask Kitty.

Kitty danced in the first couple, and luckily for her she had not to talk because Korsunsky was all the time running about, overseeing his demesne. Vronsky and Anna were sitting almost opposite her. She saw them with her farsighted eyes, and saw them, too, close by when they met in the figures, and the more she saw of them the more convinced was she that her unhappiness was consummated. She saw that they felt themselves alone in this crowded room. And on Vronsky's face, always so firm and independent, she saw the look that had struck her, of bewilderment and humble submissiveness, like the expression of an intelligent dog when it has done wrong.

Anna smiled and her smile was reflected by him. She grew thoughtful and he became serious. Some supernatural force drew Kitty's eyes to Anna's face. She was charming in her simple black dress; charming were her round arms with their bracelets; charming was her firm neck with its thread of pearls; charming the straying curls of her loose hair; charming the graceful, light movements of her little feet and hands, charming was that lovely face in its animation yet there was something terrible and cruel in her charm.

Kitty admired her more than ever, and more and more acute did her suffering grow. Kitty felt crushed, and her face showed it. When Vronsky caught sight of her, coming upon her in the mazurka, he did not at once recognize her, so changed was she.

"Delightful ball!" he said to her, merely for the sake of saying something.

"Yes," she answered.

In the middle of the mazurka, repeating a complicated figure, newly invented by Korsunsky, Anna came forward into the center of the circle, chose two gentlemen, and summoned Kitty and another lady. Kitty gazed at her in dismay as she went up. Anna looked at her with drooping eyelids, and smiled, pressing her hand. But, noticing that Kitty only responded to her smile by a look of despair and amazement, she turned away from her, and began gaily talking to the other lady.

"Yes, there is something uncanny, devilish and charming about her," said Kitty to herself.

Anna did not want to stay for supper, but the master of the house began urging her.

"Nonsense, Anna Arkadyevna," said Korsunsky placing her bare hand upon his coat sleeve. "I've such an idea for a cotillon! Un bijou!"

And he moved gradually on, trying to draw her along with him. Their host smiled approvingly.

"No, I'm not going to stay," answered Anna, smiling, but, in spite of her smile, both Korsunsky and the master of the house saw from her resolute tone that she would not stay.

"No; why, as it is, I have danced more at your ball in Moscow than I have all the winter in Peterburg," said Anna, looking round at Vronsky, who stood near her. "I must rest a little before my journey."

"Are you definitely going tomorrow then?" asked Vronsky.

"Yes, I suppose so," answered Anna, as though wondering at the boldness of his question; but the irrepressible, quivering brilliance of her eyes and her smile set him on fire as she said it.

Anna Arkadyevna did not stay to supper, but went home.

XXIV.

"Yes, there must be something disgusting, repulsive about me," reflected Levin, as he left the Shcherbatskys', and set out on foot for his brother's lodgings. "And I don't get on with other people. Pride, they say. No, I haven't even pride. If I had any pride, I should not have put myself in such a position." And he pictured to himself Vronsky, happy, good−natured, clever and calm certainly never placed in the awful position in which he had been that evening. "Yes, she was bound to choose him. It must be so, and I cannot complain of anyone or anything. I am myself to blame. What right had I to imagine she would care to join her life to mine? Who am I, and what am I? A nobody, not wanted by anyone, nor of use to anybody." And he recalled his brother Nikolai, and dwelt with pleasure on the thought of him. "Isn't he right in saying that everything in the world is bad and vile? And are we fair in our judgment, present and past, of brother Nikolai? Of course, from the point of view of Procophii, seeing him in a torn cloak and tipsy, he's a despicable person. But I know him differently. I know his soul, and know that we are alike. And I, instead of going to seek him out, went out to dinner, and then came here." Levin walked up to a lamppost, read his brother's address, which was in his pocketbook, and called a cabby. All the long way to his brother's Levin vividly recalled all the facts, familiar to him, of his brother Nikolai's life. He remembered how his brother, while at the university, and for a year afterward, had, in spite of the jeers of his companions, lived like a monk, strictly observing all religious rites, services and fasts, and avoiding every sort of pleasure especially women. And now, afterward, he had all at once broken out: had associated with the most horrible people, and rushed into the most senseless debauchery. He remembered later the scandal over a boy, whom he had taken from the country to bring up, and, in a fit of rage, had so violently beaten that proceedings were brought against him for personal injury. Then he remembered the scandal with a sharper, to whom he had lost money, and given a promissory note, and against whom he had himself lodged a complaint, asserting that he had cheated him. (This was the money Sergei Ivanovich had paid.) Then he remembered how he had spent a night in a police station for disorderly conduct in the street. He remembered the shameful proceedings he had instituted against his brother Sergei Ivanovich, accusing him of not having paid him, apparently, his share of his mother's estate; and the last scandal, when he had gone to a Western province in an official capacity, and there had got into trouble for assaulting a village elder.... It was all horribly vile, yet to Levin it appeared not at all as vile as it inevitably would to those who did not know Nikolai, did not know all his story, did not know his heart.

Levin remembered that when Nikolai had been in the devout stage, the period of fasts and monks and church services, when he was seeking in religion a support and a curb for his passionate temperament, everyone, far from encouraging him, had jeered at him and Levin had, too, with the others. They had teased him, calling him Noah and Monk; yet, when he had broken out, no one had helped him, but had all turned away from him, with horror and loathing.

Levin felt that brother Nikolai, in spite of all the ugliness of his life, in his soul, in the very depths of his soul, was no more in the wrong than the people who despised him. He was not to blame for having been born with his unbridled character and some pressure upon his intellect. For he had always wanted to be good. "I will tell him everything, without reserve, and I will make him speak without reserve, too, and I'll show him that I love him, and therefore understand him," Levin resolved to himself, as, toward eleven o'clock, he reached the hotel of which he

had the address.

"At the top, twelve and thirteen," the porter answered Levin's inquiry.

"At home?"

"Probably he is at home."

The door of No. 12 was half open, and, together with a streak of light, there issued thick fumes of cheap, poor tobacco, and the sound of a voice, unknown to Levin; but he knew at once that his brother was there: he recognized his cough.

As he went in at the door, the unknown voice was saying:

"It all depends with how much judgment and knowledge the thing's done."

Konstantin Levin looked in at the door, and saw that the speaker was a young man with an immense shock of hair, wearing a Russian coat, and that a pock−marked young woman in a woolen gown, without collar or cuffs, was sitting on the sofa. His brother was not to be seen. Konstantin felt a sharp pang at his heart at the thought of the strange company in which his brother spent his life. No one had heard him, and Konstantin, taking off his galoshes, listened to what the gentleman in the Russian coat was saying. He was speaking of some enterprise.

"Well, the devil flay them, these privileged classes," his brother's voice responded, with a cough. "Masha! get us some supper, and serve up some wine, if there's any left; or else send for some."

The woman rose, came out from behind the partition, and saw Konstantin.

"There's some gentleman here, Nikolai Dmitrievich," she said.

"Whom do you want?" said the voice of Nikolai Levin, angrily.

"It's I," answered Konstantin Levin, coming forward into the light.

"Who's I?" Nikolai's voice said again, still more angrily. He could be heard getting up hurriedly, stumbling against something, and Levin saw, facing him in the doorway, the big scared eyes, and the huge, gaunt, stooping figure of his brother, so familiar, and yet astonishing in its oddity and sickliness.

He was even thinner than three years before, when Konstantin Levin had seen him last. He was wearing a short coat, and his hands and big bones seemed huger than ever. His hair had grown thinner, the same straight mustache hid his lips, the same eyes gazed strangely and naively at his visitor.

"Ah, Kostia!" he exclaimed suddenly, recognizing his brother, and his eyes lighted up with joy. But the same second he looked round at the young man, and gave the nervous jerk of his head and neck that Konstantin knew so well, as if his cravat were choking him; and a quite different expression wild, suffering and cruel rested on his emaciated face.

"I wrote to you and Sergei Ivanovich both that I don't know you, and don't want to know you. What is it you want?"

He was not at all the same as Konstantin had been fancying him. The worst and most oppressive part of his character, which made all relations with him so difficult, had been forgotten by Konstantin Levin when he thought

of him; and now, when he saw his face, and especially that nervous twitching of his head, he remembered it all.

"I didn't want to see you for anything," he answered timidly. "I've simply come to see you."

His brother's timidity obviously softened Nikolai. His lips twitched.

"Oh, so that's it?" he said. "Well, come in; sit down. Like some supper? Masha, bring supper for three. No, stop a minute. Do you know who this is?" he said, addressing his brother, and indicating the gentleman in the Russian coat: "This is Mr. Kritsky, a friend of my Kiev days a very remarkable man. He's persecuted by the police, of course, since he's not a scoundrel."

And he surveyed, as it was a habit of his, everyone in the room. Seeing that the woman standing in the doorway was starting to go, he shouted to her. "Wait a minute, I said." And with that inability to express himself, the incoherence that Konstantin knew so well, he began, with another look round at everyone, to tell Kritsky's story to his brother: how he had been expelled from the university for starting a benevolent society for the poor students, and classes on Sunday, and how he had afterward been a teacher in a rural school, and had been driven out of that, too; and had afterward been on trial for something or other.

"You're of the Kiev University?" said Konstantin Levin to Kritsky, to break the awkward silence that followed.

"Yes I was in Kiev," Kritsky replied angrily, his face darkening.

"And this woman," Nikolai Levin interrupted him, pointing to her, "is my lifemate, Marya Nikolaevna. I took her out of a dive, and he jerked his neck as he said it. "But I love her and respect her, and anyone who wants to know me," he added, raising his voice and knitting his brows, "is requested to love her and respect her. She's precisely the same as a wife to me precisely. So now you know whom you've got to do with. And if you think you're lowering yourself well, there's the door, and God speed thee!"

And again his eyes traveled inquiringly over all of them.

"But how will I lower myself? I don't understand."

"Then, Masha, tell them to bring supper; three portions, and vodka and wine... No, wait a minute... No, it doesn't matter... Go ahead."

XXV.

"So you see," pursued Nikolai Levin, painfully wrinkling his forehead and twitching.

It was obviously difficult for him to think of what to say and do.

"Here, do you see?... He pointed to some sort of short iron bars, fastened together with twine, lying in a corner of the room. "Do you see that? That's the beginning of a new enterprise we're going into. This enterprise will be an industrial association...."

Konstantin scarcely heard him. He looked into his sickly, consumptive face, and he was more and more sorry for him, and he could not force himself to listen to what his brother was telling him about the association. He saw that this association was a mere anchor to save him from self−contempt. Nikolai Levin went on talking:

"You know that capital oppresses the worker. Our workers, the mouzhiks, bear all the burden of labor, and are so

placed that, no matter how much they work, they can't escape from their position of beasts of burden. All the profits of labor, on which they might improve their position, and gain leisure for themselves, and after that education all the surplus values, are taken from them by the capitalists. And society is so constituted that the harder they work, the greater the profit of the merchants and landowners, while they stay beasts of burden to the end. And that state of things must be changed," he finished up, and looked questioningly at his brother.

"Yes, of course," said Konstantin, looking at the patch of red that had come out on his brother's projecting cheekbones.

"And so we're founding a locksmiths' association, where all the production and profit, and the chief instruments of production everything will be in common."

"Where is the association to be?" asked Konstantin Levin.

"In the village of Vozdrem, government of Kazan."

"But why in a village? In the villages, I think, there is plenty of work as it is. Why a locksmiths' association in a village?"

"Why? Because the peasants are just as much slaves as they ever were, and that's why you and Sergei Ivanovich don't like people to try and get them out of their slavery," said Nikolai Levin, exasperated by the objection.

Konstantin Levin sighed, looking meanwhile about the cheerless and dirty room. This sigh seemed to exasperate Nikolai still more.

"I know Sergei Ivanovich's, and your, aristocratic views. I know that he applies all the power of his intellect to justify existing evils."

"I say, why do you talk of Sergei Ivanovich?" Levin let drop, smiling.

"Sergei Ivanovich? I'll tell you why!" Nikolai Levin shrieked suddenly at the name of Sergei Ivanovich. "I'll tell you why... But what's the use of talking? There's only one thing... What did you come to me for? You look down on all this; very well, then; but go away, in God's name go away!" he shrieked, getting up from his chair. "Go away go away!"

"I don't look down on it at all," said Konstantin Levin timidly. "I don't even dispute it."

At that instant Marya Nikolaevna came back. Nikolai Levin looked round angrily at her. She went quickly to him, and whispered something.

"I'm not well; I've grown irritable," said Nikolai Levin, getting calmer and breathing painfully; "and then you talk to me of Sergei Ivanovich and his essay. It's such rubbish, such lying, such self−deception! What can a man write about justice who knows nothing of it? Have you read his essay?" he turned to Kritsky, sitting down again at the table, and clearing a space for himself by pushing back some half−made cigarettes.

"I haven't," Kritsky responded gloomily, obviously not desiring to enter into the conversation.

"Why not?" said Nikolai Levin, now turning with exasperation upon Kritsky.

"Because I didn't see the use of wasting my time over it."

"Oh, if you please how did you know it would be wasting your time? That essay's too deep for many people that is to say, it's over their heads. But it's different with me, I see through his ideas, and I know wherein the essay's weakness lies."

They all fell silent. Kritsky got up sluggishly and reached for his cap.

"Won't you have supper? All right, good−by! Come round tomorrow with the locksmith."

Kritsky had hardly gone out when Nikolai Levin smiled and winked.

"He, too, is poor stuff," he said. "For I can see..."

But at that instant Kritsky, at the door, called him.

"What do you want now?" he said, and went out to him in the passage. Left alone with Marya Nikolaevna, Levin turned to her.

"Have you been long with my brother?" he said to her.

"Yes, more than a year. His health has become very poor. He drinks a great deal," she said.

"Just how?"

"He drinks vodka, and it's bad for him."

"And a great deal?" whispered Levin.

"Yes," she said, looking timidly toward the doorway, where Nikolai Levin had reappeared.

"What were you talking about?" he said, knitting his brows, and turning his scared eyes from one to the other. "What was it?"

"Oh, nothing," Konstantin answered in confusion.

"Oh, if you don't want to say, don't. Only it's no good your talking to her. She's a wench, and you're a gentleman," he said, with a jerk of the neck. "You understand everything, I see, and have taken stock of everything, and look with commiseration on my transgressions," he began again, raising his voice.

"Nikolai Dmitrich, Nikolai Dmitrich," whispered Marya Nikolaevna, again going up to him.

"Oh, very well, very well!... But where's the supper? Ah, here it is," he said, seeing a waiter with a tray. "Here, set it here," he added angrily, and promptly seizing the vodka, he poured out a pony and drank it greedily. "Like a drink?" he turned to his brother, and at once became better−humored. "Well, enough of Sergei Ivanovich. I'm glad to see you, anyway. After all's said and done, we're not strangers. Come, have a drink. Tell me what you're doing," he went on, greedily munching a piece of bread, and pouring out another pony. "How are things with you?"

"I live alone in the country, as I always have. I'm busy looking after the land," answered Konstantin, watching with horror the greediness with which his brother ate and drank, and trying to conceal that he noticed it.

"Why don't you get married?"

"No opportunity has presented itself," Konstantin answered, reddening.

"Why not? For me now, everything's at an end! I've made a mess of my life. But this I've said, and I say still, that if my share had been given me when I needed it, my whole life would have been different."

Konstantin made haste to change the conversation.

"Do you know your little Vania's with me a clerk in the countinghouse at Pokrovskoe?"

Nikolai jerked his neck, and sank into thought.

"Yes, tell me what's going on at Pokrovskoe. Is the house still standing, and the birch trees, and our schoolroom? And Philip the gardener is he living? How I remember the summerhouse and the sofa! Now mind and don't alter anything in the house, but make haste and get married, and make everything as it used to be again. Then I'll come and see you, if your wife is a fine woman."

"Why, come to me now," said Levin. "How snugly we could settle down!"

"I'd come and see you if I were sure I shouldn't find Sergei Ivanovich."

"You wouldn't find him there. I live quite independently of him."

"Yes, but say what you like, you have to choose between me and him," he said, looking timidly into his brother's face.

This timidity touched Konstantin.

"If you want to hear my confession of faith on the subject, I tell you that in your quarrel with Sergei Ivanovich I take neither side. You're both wrong. You're rather wrong outwardly, and he, rather inwardly."

"Ah, ah! You see that, you see that!" Nikolai shouted joyfully.

"But I personally value friendly relations with you more because..."

"Why, why?"

Konstantin could not say that he valued it more because Nikolai was unhappy, and needed affection. But Nikolai knew that this was just what he meant to say, and scowling he took to the vodka again.

"Enough, Nikolai Dmitrich!" said Marya Nikolaevna, stretching out her plump, bare arm toward the decanter.

"Let it be! Don't annoy me! I'll beat you!" he shouted.

Marya Nikolaevna smiled a sweet and good−humored smile, which was at once reflected on Nikolai's face, and whisked the decanter off.

"And do you suppose she understands nothing?" said Nikolai. "She understands everything better than all of us. Tell the truth isn't there something good and sweet about her?"

"Were you never before in Moscow?" Konstantin said to her, for the sake of saying something.

"Only you mustn't be formal with her. It frightens her. No one ever spoke to her so but the justice of the peace who tried her for trying to get out of a house of ill fame. My God, what senselessness there is in this world!" he cried suddenly. "These new institutions, these justices of the peace, these Zemstvo what hideousness it all is!"

And he began to enlarge on his encounters with the new institutions.

Konstantin Levin listened to him, and that disbelief in the sense of all public institutions, which he shared with him, and often expressed, was now distasteful to him, coming from his brother's lips.

"In the other world we shall understand it all," he said lightly.

"In the other world? Ah, I don't like that other world! I don't like it," he said, letting his scared wild eyes rest on his brother's face. "Here one would think that to get out of all the baseness and the mess, one's own and other people's, would be a good thing, and yet I'm afraid of death, awfully afraid of death." He shuddered. "But do drink something. Would you like some champagne? Or shall we go somewhere? Let's go to the gypsies! Do you know, I've gotten very fond of the gypsies, and of Russian songs."

His speech had begun to falter, and he skipped at random from one subject to another. Konstantin, with the help of Masha, persuaded him not to go out anywhere, and got him to bed hopelessly drunk.

Masha promised to write to Konstantin in case of need, and to persuade Nikolai to go and stay with his brother.

XXVI.

In the morning Konstantin Levin left Moscow, and toward evening he reached home. On the journey in the train he talked to his fellow travelers about politics and the new railways, and, just as in Moscow, he was overcome by a sense of confusion of ideas, by dissatisfaction with himself, and shame of something or other. But when he got out at his own station, when he saw his one−eyed coachman Ignat, with the collar of his coat turned up; when, in the dim light falling through the station windows, he saw his own carpeted sledge, his own horses with their tails up, in their harness trimmed with rings and tassels; when the coachman Ignat, as he put in his luggage, told him the village news that the contractor had arrived, and that Pava had calved he felt that little by little the confusion was clearing up, and the shame and self−dissatisfaction were passing away. He felt this at the mere sight of Ignat and the horses; but he began to see what had happened to him in quite a different light, when he had put on the sheepskin coat brought for him, and, all muffled up, had taken his seat in the sleigh and started off, pondering on the work that lay before him in the village, and staring at the off horse, that had been formerly his saddle horse, overridden, but a spirited animal from the Don. He felt himself, and did not want to be anyone else. All he wanted now was to be better than before. In the first place, he resolved that from that day on he would give up hoping for the extraordinary happiness which the marriage was to afford him, and consequently he would not disdain the present so. In the second place, he would never again let himself give way to low passion, the memory of which had so tortured him when he had been making up his mind to propose. Then, remembering his brother Nikolai, he resolved that he would never allow himself to forget him, that he would watch him, and not lose sight of him, so as to be ready to help should things go ill with him. And that would be soon, he felt. Then, too, his brother's talk of communism, which he had treated so lightly at the time, now made him reflect. He considered an alteration in economic conditions nonsense; yet he had always felt the injustice of his own abundance in comparison with the poverty of the common folk, and he now determined that, in order to feel quite in the right, though he had worked hard and lived by no means luxuriously before, he would now work still harder, and would allow himself even less luxury. And all this seemed to him so easy a conquest over himself that he spent the whole drive in most pleasant reveries. With a lively feeling of hope in a new, better life, he drove up to his house about nine o'clock at night.

The snow of the little quadrangle before the house was lit up by light falling from the windows in the room of his old nurse, Agathya Mikhailovna, who performed the duties of housekeeper in his house. She was not yet asleep. Kouzma, awakened by her, sleepy and barefooted, ran out onto the steps. A setter bitch, Laska, leaped out too, almost upsetting Kouzma, and whining, rubbed against Levin's knees, jumping up and longing, yet not daring, to put her forepaws on his chest.

"You're soon returned, my dear," said Agathya Mikhailovna.

"I grew homesick, Agathya Mikhailovna. East or West, home is best," he answered, and went into his study.

The study was gradually lit up as the candle was brought in. The familiar details came out: the stag's horns; the bookshelves; the plain stove with its warm−hole, which had long wanted mending; his father's sofa, a large table, and, on the table, an open book, a broken ash tray, a notebook with his handwriting. As he saw all this, there came over him for an instant a doubt of the possibility of arranging the new life, of which he had been dreaming on the road. All these traces of his life seemed to clutch him, and to say to him: "No, you're not going to get away from us, and you're not going to be different but you're going to be the same as you've always been: with doubts, everlasting dissatisfaction with yourself, vain efforts to amend, and lapses, and everlasting expectation of a happiness which you won't get, and which isn't possible for you."

But it was his things that said this to him, while another voice in his heart was telling him that he must not fall under the sway of the past, and that one can do anything with oneself. And hearing that voice, he went into the corner where stood his two dumbbells, of one pood each, and began jerking and pushing them up, trying to induce a state of well−being. There was a creak of steps at the door. He hastily put down the dumbbells.

The bailiff came in, and said that everything, thank God, was well, but also informed him that the buckwheat in the new drying machine had been a little scorched. This piece of news irritated Levin. The new drying machine had been constructed and partly invented by Levin. The bailiff had always been against this drying machine, and now it was with suppressed triumph that he announced that the buckwheat had been scorched. Levin was firmly convinced that if the buckwheat had been scorched it was only because precautions had not been taken, for which he had hundreds of times given orders. He was annoyed, and reprimanded the bailiff. But there had been an important and joyful event: Pava, his best cow, an expensive beast, bought at a show, had calved.

"Kouzma, give me my sheepskin coat. And you, do tell them to fetch a lantern I'm going to have a look at her," he said to the bailiff.

The cowhouse for the more valuable cows was just behind the house. Walking across the yard, passing a snowdrift by the lilac tree, he went into the cowhouse. There came a warm, steamy smell of dung when the frozen door was opened, and the cows, astonished at the unfamiliar light of the lantern, stirred on their fresh straw. He caught a glimpse of the broad, smooth, black and piebald back of a Dutch cow. Berkoot, the bull, was lying down with his ring in his lip, and seemed about to get up, but thought better of it, and only gave two snorts as they passed by him. Pava, the reddish beauty, huge as a hippopotamus, with her back turned to them, screened her calf from the arrivals and sniffed it all over.

Levin went into the stall, looked Pava over, and hefted the reddish and red−dappled calf up on its unsteady, spindly legs. Pava, uneasy, began lowing, but when Levin put the calf close to her she was soothed, and, sighing heavily, began licking her with her rough tongue. The calf fumbling, poked its nose under its mother's groin, and twirled its tiny tail.

"Bring the light here, Fiodor bring the lantern here," said Levin, examining the heifer. "Like the dam! though the color takes after the sire. A perfect beauty! Long, and broad in the haunch. Isn't she a beauty now, Vassilii Fiodorovich?" he addressed the bailiff, quite forgiving him for the buckwheat under the influence of his delight in

the heifer.

"What bad blood could she take after? Semion the contractor came the day after you left. You must settle with him, Konstantin Dmitrich," said the bailiff. "And I have already told you about the machine."

This matter alone was enough to bring Levin back to all the details of his estate, which was on a large scale, and complicated. He went straight from the cowhouse to the countinghouse, and, after a short talk with the bailiff and Semion the contractor, he went back to the house and straight upstairs to the drawing room.

XXVII.

The house was big and old−fashioned, and Levin, though he lived alone, heated and used the whole house. He knew that this was stupid, he knew that it was even wrong, and contrary to his present new plans, but this house was a whole world to Levin. It was the world in which his father and mother had lived and died. They had lived just the life that to Levin seemed the ideal of perfection, and that he had dreamed of renewing with his wife, with his family.

Levin scarcely remembered his mother. His conception of her was for him a sacred memory, and his future wife was bound to be, in his imagination, a repetition of that exquisite, holy ideal of a woman that his mother had been.

He was so far from conceiving of love for woman apart from marriage that he positively pictured to himself first the family, and only secondarily the woman who would give him a family. His ideas of marriage were, consequently, quite unlike those of the great majority of his acquaintances, for whom getting married was merely one of the many affairs of everyday life. For Levin it was the chief affair of life, on which its whole happiness turned. And now he had to give up that!

When he had gone into the second drawing room, where he always had tea, and had settled himself in his armchair with a book, and Agathya Mikhailovna had brought him tea, and with her usual, "Well, I'll stay a while, my dear," had taken a chair at the window, he felt that, however strange it might be, he had not parted from his daydreams, and that he could not live without them. Whether with her, or with another it was still bound to be. He was reading his book, pondering on what he was reading, and pausing to listen to Agathya Mikhailovna, who gossiped away without flagging, and yet, with all that, all sorts of pictures of his work and a future family life rose disconnectedly before his imagination. He felt that in the depth of his soul something was steadying, settling down, and abating.

He heard Agathya Mikhailovna talking of how Prokhor had forgotten his duty to God, and, with the money Levin had given him to buy a horse, had been drinking without a letup, and had beaten his wife till he'd half−killed her. He listened, and read his book, and recalled the whole train of ideas suggested by his reading. It was Tyndall's Treatise on Heat. He recalled his own criticisms of Tyndall for his self−complacency in the cleverness of his experiments, and for his lack of philosophic insight. And suddenly there floated into his mind the joyful thought: "In two years' time I shall have two Dutch cows in my herd; Pava herself will perhaps still be alive; a dozen young daughters of Berkoot, and these three added for show it would be marvelous!" He took up his book again. "Now well, electricity and heat are the same thing; but is it possible to substitute one quantity for the other in an equation for the solution of any problem? No. Well, then what of it? The connection between all the forces of nature is felt instinctively, anyway.... It'll be particularly pleasant when Pava's daughter will be a red−dappled cow like all the herd, to which the other three should be added! Splendid! I'll go out with my wife and visitors to meet the herd.... My wife says, 'Kostia and I looked after that heifer like a child.' 'How can it interest you so much?' says a visitor. 'Everything that interests him, interests me.' But who will she be?" And he remembered what had happened at Moscow.... "Well, there's nothing to be done.... It's not my fault. But now everything shall go on in a new way. It's nonsense to pretend that life won't let one, that the past won't let one. One must struggle

to live better far better...." He raised his head, and sank into thought. Old Laska, who had not yet fully digested her delight at his return, and had run out into the yard to bark, came back wagging her tail, and crept up to him, bringing in the scent of the fresh air, put her head under his hand, and yelped plaintively, asking to be stroked.

"If she could but speak," said Agathya Mikhailovna. "Even though it's a dog... Yet she understands that her master's come home, and that he's low−spirited."

"Why low−spirited?"

"Do you suppose I don't see it, my dear? It's high time I should know the gentlefolk. Why, I've grown up from a little thing with them. Never mind, sir, so long as one has health and a clear conscience."

Levin looked intently at her, surprised at how well she had fathomed his thoughts.

"Shall I fetch you another cup?" she asked and, taking his cup, went out.

Laska kept poking her head under his hand. He stroked her, and she promptly curled up at his feet, laying her head on a protruding hand−paw. And in token of all now being well and satisfactory, she opened her mouth a little, smacked her lips, and settling her sticky lips more comfortably about her old teeth, she sank into blissful respose. Levin watched her last movements attentively.

"That's what I'll do," he said to himself; "that's what I'll do! Never mind.... All's well."

XXVIII.

After the ball, early next morning, Anna Arkadyevna sent her husband a telegram that she was leaving Moscow the same day.

"No, I must go, I must go"; she explained the change in her plans to her sister−in−law, in a tone that suggested that she had to remember so many things that there was no enumerating them: "no, really, it had better be today!"

Stepan Arkadyevich was not dining at home, but he promised to come and see his sister off at seven o'clock.

Kitty, too, did not come, sending a note that she had a headache. Dolly and Anna dined alone with the children and the English governess. Whether it was because children are fickle, or because they have acute senses, and they felt that Anna was quite different that day from what she had been when they had taken such a fancy to her, that she was not now interested in them they had abruptly dropped their play with their aunt, and their love for her, and were quite indifferent to her leaving. Anna was absorbed the whole morning in preparations for her departure. She wrote notes to her Moscow acquaintances, jotted down her accounts, and packed. Altogether Dolly fancied she was not in a placid state of mind, but in that worried mood which Dolly knew so well in her own case, and which does not come without cause, and for the most part covers dissatisfaction with oneself. After dinner, Anna went up to her room to dress, and Dolly followed her.

"How queer you are today!" Dolly said to her.

"I? Do you think so? I'm not queer, but I'm nasty. I am like that sometimes. I keep feeling as if I could cry. It's very stupid, but it'll pass off," said Anna quickly, and she bent her flushed face over a tiny bag in which she was packing a nightcap and some cambric handkerchiefs. Her eyes were particularly bright, and were continually dimmed with tears. "In the same way I didn't want to leave Peterburg and now I don't want to go away from here."

"You came here and did a good deed," said Dolly, looking intently at her.

Anna's eyes were wet with tears as she looked at her.

"Don't say that, Dolly. I've done nothing, and could do nothing. I often wonder why people are all in league to spoil me. What have I done, and what could I do? In your heart there was found love enough to forgive...."

If it had not been for you, God knows what would have happened! How happy you are, Anna!" said Dolly. "Everything is clear and good in your heart."

"Every heart has its own skeleton, as the English say."

"You have no sort of skeleton, have you? Everything is so clear in you."

"I have!" said Anna suddenly, and, unexpectedly after her tears, a sly, mocking smile puckered her lips.

"Come, he's amusing, anyway, your skeleton, and not depressing," said Dolly, smiling.

"No, he is depressing. Do you know why I'm going today instead of tomorrow? This is a confession that weighs on me; I want to make you its recipient," said Anna resolutely letting herself drop into an armchair, and looking straight into Dolly's face.

And to her surprise Dolly saw that Anna was blushing up to her ears, up to the curly black ringlets on her neck.

"Yes," Anna went on. "Do you know why Kitty didn't come to dinner? She's jealous of me. I have spoiled... I've been the cause of that ball being a torture to her instead of a pleasure. But truly, truly, it's not my fault, or only my fault a little bit," she said, daintily drawling the words "a little bit."

"Oh, how like Stiva you said that!" said Dolly, laughing.

Anna was hurt.

"Oh no, oh no! I'm not Stiva," she said, knitting her brows. "That's why I'm telling you, just because I do not even for an instant permit myself to doubt about myself," said Anna.

But at the very moment she was uttering the words, she felt that they were not true. She was not merely doubting about herself she felt emotion at the thought of Vronsky, and was going away sooner than she had meant, solely to avoid meeting him.

"Yes, Stiva told me you danced the mazurka with him, and that he..."

"You can't imagine how absurdly it all came about. I only meant to be matchmaking, and all at once it turned out quite differently. Possibly against my own will..."

She flushed and stopped.

"Oh, they feel it immediately!" said Dolly.

"But I should be in despair if there were anything serious in it on his side," Anna interrupted her. "And I'm certain it will all be forgotten, and Kitty will leave off hating me."

"All the same, Anna, to tell you the truth, I'm not very anxious for this marriage for Kitty. And it's better it should come to nothing, if he, Vronsky, is capable of falling in love with you in a single day."

"Oh, heavens, that would be too silly!" said Anna, and again a deep flush of pleasure appeared on her face, as she heard the idea that absorbed her put into words. "And so here I am, going away, having made an enemy of Kitty, whom I liked so much! Ah, how sweet she is! But you'll make it right, Dolly? Eh?"

Dolly could scarcely suppress a smile. She loved Anna, but she was pleased to see that she, too, had her weaknesses.

"An enemy? That can't be."

"I did so want you all to care for me, as I do for you, and now I care for you more than ever," said Anna, with tears in her eyes. "Ah, how silly I am today!"

She passed her handkerchief over her face and began dressing.

At the very moment of starting Stepan Arkadyevich arrived, late, rosy and good−humored, smelling of wine and cigars.

Anna's emotionalism infected Dolly, and when she embraced her sister−in−law for the last time, she whispered:

"Remember, Anna, what you've done for me I shall never forget. And remember that I love you, and shall always love you as my dearest friend!"

"I don't know why," said Anna, kissing her and hiding her tears.

"You understand me, and still understand. Good−by, my darling!"

XXIX.

"Now, it's all over God be praised!" was the first thought that came to Anna Arkadyevna, when she had said good−by for the last time to her brother, who had stood blocking up the entrance to the carriage till the third bell rang. She sat down on her lounge beside Annushka, and looked about her in the twilight of the sleeping carriage. "Thank God! tomorrow I shall see Seriozha and Alexei Alexandrovich, and my life, good and familiar, will go on in the old way."

Still in the same anxious frame of mind in which she had been all that day, Anna took a meticulous pleasure in making herself comfortable for the journey. With her tiny, deft hands she opened and shut her little red bag, took out a cushion, laid it on her knees, and, carefully wrapping up her feet, settled herself comfortably. An invalid lady had already lain down to sleep. Two other ladies began talking to Anna, and a stout elderly lady tucked up her feet, and made observations about the heating of the train. Anna answered the ladies in a few words, but not foreseeing any entertainment from the conversation, she asked Annushka to get a small lantern, hooked it on the arm of her seat, and took from her bag a paper knife and an English novel. At first she could not get interested in her reading. The fuss and stir were disturbing; then, when the train had started, she could not help listening to the noises; then the snow beating on the left window and sticking to the pane, and the sight of the muffled guard passing by, covered with snow on one side, and the conversations about the terrible blizzard raging outside, distracted her attention. And after that everything was the same and the same: the same jouncing and rattling, the same snow lashing the window, the same rapid transitions from steaming heat to cold, and back again to heat, the same flitting of the same faces in the half−murk, and the same voices; and then Anna began to read, and to grasp

what she read. Annushka was already dozing, the red bag on her lap, clutched by her broad hands, in gloves, of which one was torn. Anna Arkadyevna read and grasped the sense, yet it was annoying to her to read that is, to follow the reflection of other people's lives. She had too great a desire to live herself. If she read that the heroine of the novel were nursing a sick man, she longed to move with noiseless steps about his sickroom; if she read of a member of Parliament delivering a speech, she longed to deliver it; if she read of how Lady Mary had ridden after the hounds, and had provoked her sister−in−law, and had surprised everyone by her daring she, too, longed to be doing the same. But there was no chance of doing anything; and, her little hands toying with the smooth paper knife, she forced herself to read.

The hero of the novel was already beginning to attain his English happiness, a baronetcy, and an estate, and Anna was feeling a desire to go with him to his estate, when she suddenly felt that he ought to feel ashamed, and that she was ashamed of the same thing. But what was it he was ashamed of? "What have I to be ashamed of?" she asked herself in injured surprise. She abandoned the book and sank against the back of her chair, tightly gripping the paper knife in both hands. There was nothing to be ashamed of. She went over all her Moscow recollections. All were fine, pleasant. She recalled the ball, recalled Vronsky and his enamored, submissive face; she recalled all her conduct with him there was nothing shameful. Yet, with all that, at this very point in her reminiscences, the feeling of shame was intensified, as though some inner voice, precisely here, when she recalled Vronsky, were saying to her: "Warm, very warm hot!" "Well, what is it?" she said to herself resolutely, shifting on her seat. "What does it mean? Am I afraid to look at this without blinking? Well, what is it? Can it be that between me and this boy−officer there exist, or can exist, any other relations than such as are common with every acquaintance?" She laughed contemptuously and took up her book again; but now she was absolutely unable to make sense of what she read. She passed the paper knife over the windowpane, then laid its smooth, cool surface to her cheek, and almost laughed aloud at the unreasoning joy that all at once possessed her. She felt that her nerves, like strings, were being tautened more and more upon some kind of tightening peg. She felt her eyes opening wider and wider, her fingers and toes twitching nervously, something within stopping her breathing, while all images and sounds seemed in the swaying half−murk to strike her with extraordinary vividness. Moments of doubt were continually besetting her: was the car going forward, or back, or was it standing absolutely still? Was it really Annushka at her side, or a stranger? "What's that on the arm of the chair a fur cloak or some beast? And what am I myself: is it I, or some other woman?" She was afraid of yielding to this trance but something was drawing her into it, and, at will, she could yield to it or resist it. She got up to rouse herself, and slipped off her plaid and the cape of warm dress. For a moment she regained her self−possession, and realized that the thin peasant who had come in wearing a long nankeen overcoat, with a button missing from it, was the fireman, that he was looking at the thermometer, that the wind and snow had burst in after him through the door; but then everything grew confused again.... That peasant with the long waist took to gnawing something within the wall; the little crone started stretching her legs the whole length of the car and filled it with a black cloud; then there was a dreadful screeching and banging, as though someone were being rent into pieces; then a red blaze blinded her eyes, and, at last, everything was screened by a wall. Anna felt that she had plunged downward. Yet all this was not terrible, but joyful. The voice of a man muffled up and covered with snow shouted something in her very ear. She arose and came to, realizing that they had come to a station, and that this was the conductor. She requested Annushka to hand her the cape she had taken off, and her shawl, put them on, and went toward the door.

"Do you wish to get out?" asked Annushka.

"Yes, I want to get a breath of air. It's very hot in here."

And she opened the door. The blizzard and the wind rushed to meet her and began to contend with her for the door. And even this seemed joyful to her. She opened the door and stepped out. This seemed to be all that the wind had been lying in wait for; it set up a gleeful whistle and was about to snatch her up and whirl her away, but she clutched the cold doorpost and, holding on to her shawl, descended to the platform and the shelter of the car. The wind had been mighty on the steps, but on the platform, in the lee of the train, there was a lull. With

enjoyment she drew deep breaths of the snowy, frosty air and, standing near the car, looked about the platform and the lighted station.

XXX.

The frightful storm raged and whistled between the wheels of the cars, along the posts, around the corner of the station. The cars, posts, people everything in sight were covered with snow on one side, and were getting more and more snowed under. For a moment there would come a lull in the storm, but then it would again swoop down with such gusts that it seemed impossible to withstand it. Meanwhile some men or other were dashing about, gaily talking to one another, making the boards of the platform creak and ceaselessly opening and shutting the big doors. A stooping human shadow glided by at her feet, and she heard a hammer tapping upon iron. "Let's have the telegram!" came an angry voice out of the stormy murk on the other side. "This way! No. 28!" other voices were also shouting, and muffled figures scurried by, plastered with snow. Two gentlemen passed by her, cigarettes glowing in their mouths. She drew in one more deep breath, and had just taken her hand out of her muff to grasp the doorpost and enter the car, when still another man in a military overcoat, quite close beside her, stepped between her and the flickering light of a lantern. She looked round, and the same instant recognized Vronsky's face. Putting his hand to the peak of his cap, he bowed to her and asked if there weren't anything she wanted, whether he could not be of some service to her? She gazed rather long at him, without any answer, and, in spite of the shadow in which he was standing, she saw (or fancied she saw) the expression both of his face and his eyes. It was again that expression of reverent rapture which had affected her so yesterday. More than once she had told herself during the past few days, and only just now, that Vronsky was for her only one of the hundreds of young men, forever exactly the same, that one meets everywhere; that she would never permit herself even to think of him; yet now at the first flush of meeting him, she was seized by an emotion of joyous pride. She had no need to ask why he was here. She knew, as surely as if he had told her, that he was here only to be where she was.

"I didn't know you were going. And why are you going?" she said, letting fall the hand which had grasped the doorpost. And irrepressible joy and animation shone in her face.

"Why am I going?" he repeated, looking straight into her eyes. "You know that I am going to be where you are," he said; "I cannot do otherwise."

And at this very point, as though it had overcome all obstacles, the wind scattered the snow from the car roofs, and began to flutter some sheet of iron it had torn off, while the low−pitched whistle of the engine set up a roar in front, dismal and lamenting. All the awesomeness of the blizzard now seemed still more splendid to her. He had uttered precisely what her soul yearned for, but which her reason dreaded. She made no answer, and in her face he beheld a struggle.

"Forgive me, if what I have said displeases you," he said humbly.

He had spoken courteously, deferentially, yet so firmly, so obdurately that, for long, she could find no answer.

"What you say is wrong, and I beg of you, if you are a good man, to forget what you have said, even as I shall forget it," she said at last.

"Not a single word of yours, nor a single gesture, shall I ever forget nor could I forget...."

"Enough, enough!" she cried, vainly attempting to give a stern expression to her face, which he was avidly scrutinizing. Clutching at the cold doorpost, she clambered up the steps and quickly entered the corridor of the car. But in this little corridor she paused, reviewing in her imagination all that had occurred. Without recalling her own words or his, she realized instinctively that that conversation had brought them fearfully closer; and she was

both frightened and made happy thereby. After standing thus a few seconds, she went into the car and sat down in her place. That tensed state which had tormented her at first was not only renewed, but grew greater and reached such a pitch that she was afraid that, at any moment, something would snap within her from the excessive tension. She did not sleep all night. But in that nervous tension, and in the reveries that filled her imagination, there was nothing unpleasant or gloomy; on the contrary, there was something joyous, glowing and exhilarating. Toward morning Anna dozed off as she sat, and when she awoke it was already light, and the train was nearing Peterburg. At once thoughts of home, of her husband and son, and the details of the day ahead, and days to follow, came thronging upon her.

At Peterburg, as soon as the train stopped and she got out, the first face that attracted her attention was that of her husband. "Oh, my God! What has happened to his ears?" she thought looking at his frigid and imposing figure, and especially the ears, that struck her so now, as they propped up the brim of his round hat. Catching sight of her he went to meet her, pursing his lips into their habitual mocking smile, and fixing her with his big, tired eyes. Some unpleasant sensation contracted her heart as she met his obdurate and tired glance, as though she had expected to see him a different man. She was particularly struck by that feeling of dissatisfaction with herself which she experienced on meeting him. This was an intimate, familiar feeling, like that state of dissimulation which she experienced in her relations with her husband; but hitherto she had not taken note of the feeling; now she was clearly and painfully aware of it.

"Yes, as you see, your tender spouse, as devoted as he was during the second year after marriage, was consumed by the desire of seeing you," he said in his dilatory, high−pitched voice, and in that tone which he almost always used to her a tone of bantering at anyone who should speak thus in earnest.

"Is Seriozha quite well?" she asked.

"And is this all the reward," said he, "for my ardor? He's well quite well...."

XXXI.

Vronsky had not even attempted to fall asleep all that night. He sat in his armchair, his eyes fixed before him or scanning the people who got in and out, and if he had indeed, on previous occasions, struck and aroused people who did not know him by his air of unshakable calmness, he now seemed prouder and more self−sufficient than ever. He regarded people as if they were things. A nervous young man, a clerk in a law court, who had the seat opposite his, conceived a hatred for him because of this air. The young man asked him for a light, and entered into conversation with him, and even jostled him, to make him feel that he was not a thing, but a man. But Vronsky kept on regarding him as if he were a lamppost, and the young man grimaced, feeling that he was losing his self−possession under the oppressiveness of this refusal to recognize him as a human being.

Vronsky saw nothing and no one. He felt himself a king, not because he believed that he had made any impression on Anna he did not yet believe that but because the impression she had made on him afforded him happiness and pride.

What would come of it all he did not know, or even think. He felt that all his forces, hitherto dissolute, scattered, were centered on one thing, and bent with fearful energy toward one blissful goal. And therein lay his happiness. He did but know that he had told her the truth, that he had come where she was, that all the happiness of life, the sole meaning in life for him, now lay in seeing her and hearing her voice. And when he got out of his car at Bologovo to get some seltzer water, and had caught sight of Anna, his very first word had involuntarily told her his very thoughts. And he was glad he had told her, that she knew now, and was thinking of it. He did not sleep all night. Back in his compartment, he incessantly kept ruminating upon every posture in which he had seen her, every word she had uttered; and, in his imagination, making his heart swoon, floated pictures of a possible future.

When he got out of the train at Peterburg, he felt after his sleepless night as lively and fresh as after a cold bath. He paused near his car, waiting for her to emerge. "Once more," he said to himself, smiling unconsciously, "once more I shall see her walk, her face; she may say something, turn her head, glance, smile, perhaps." But before he caught sight of her, he saw her husband, whom the stationmaster was deferentially escorting through the crowd. "Ah, yes. The husband." Only now, for the first time, did Vronsky realize clearly the fact that there was someone attached to her a husband. He had known that she had a husband, but had hardly believed in his existence, and only now, when he saw him, did he fully believe in him, with his head, and shoulders, and his black−trousered legs; especially when he saw this husband placidly take her arm, with a consciousness of proprietorship.

Seeing Alexei Alexandrovich with his spick−and−span Peterburg face and austerely self−confident figure, in his round hat, with his rather prominent spine, he believed in him, and was aware of a disagreeable sensation, such as might be felt by a man who, tortured by thirst, finds, on reaching a spring, a dog, a sheep or a pig therein that has not only drunk of it, but also muddied the water. Alexei Alexandrovich's manner of walking, gyrating his whole pelvis and his flat feet, was especially offensive to Vronsky. He could recognize in no one but himself an indubitable right to love her. But she was still the same, and the sight of her affected him the same way, physically reviving him, stirring him, and filling his soul with happiness. He told his German valet, who ran up to him from the second class, to take his things and go on, he himself went up to her. He saw the first meeting between the husband and wife, and noted, with a lover's insight, the sign of the slight embarrassment with which she spoke to her husband. "No, she does not love him, and cannot love him," he decided to himself.

At the very moment that he was approaching Anna Arkadyevna from the back, he noticed with joy that she was conscious of his drawing near, and that she looked round; after which, seeing him, she turned again to her husband.

"Have you had a good night?" he said, bowing both to her and to her husband, and leaving it to Alexei Alexandrovich to accept the bow on his own account, and to return it or not, as he might see fit.

"Thank you a very good one," she answered.

Her face seemed tired, and lacking in that play of animation which usually hovered between her smile and her eyes; but for a single instant, as she glanced at him, something flashed in her eyes, and although this flash died away at once, he was made happy by that moment. She glanced at her husband, to find out whether he knew Vronsky. Alexei Alexandrovich was regarding Vronsky with displeasure, absent−mindedly trying to recall who he was. Vronsky's calmness and self−confidence had here run up, like a scythe against a stone, on the frigid self−confidence of Alexei Alexandrovich.

"Count Vronsky," said Anna.

"Ah! We are acquainted, I believe," said Alexei Alexandrovich apathetically, proffering his hand. "You set out with the mother and return with the son," he said to Anna, articulating distinctly, as though each word were a coin of high value bestowed by him on his hearers. "You're back from leave, I suppose?" he said, and without waiting for a reply, he addressed his wife in his bantering tone: "Well, were a great many tears shed in Moscow at parting?"

By addressing his wife thus he meant Vronsky to perceive that he wished to be left alone, and, turning slightly toward him, he touched his hat; but Vronsky turned to Anna Arkadyevna:

"I hope to have the honor of calling on you," he said.

Alexei Alexandrovich glanced with his weary eyes at Vronsky.

"Delighted," he said coldly. "We're at home Mondays." Then, dismissing Vronsky entirely, he said to his wife: "I am rather lucky to have just half an hour to meet you, so that I can prove to you my fondness," he went on, in the same bantering tone.

"You lay too great a stress on your fondness for me to value it very much," she responded in the same bantering tone, involuntarily listening to the sound of Vronsky's steps behind them. "But what have I to do with that?" she said to herself, and began questioning her husband as to how Seriozha had got on without her.

"Oh, capitally! Mariette says he has been a very darling boy, and... I must disappoint you... But he has not languished for you as your husband has. But once more merci, my dear, for bestowing a whole day upon me. Our dear Samovar will be enraptured." (He called the Countess Lidia Ivanovna, well known in society, a samovar, because she was bubbling over with excitement on any and every occasion.) "She has been asking for you. And, d'you know, if I may venture to advise you, you ought to go to see her today. You know how she takes everything to heart. Just now, with all her own cares, she's anxious about the reconciliation of the Oblonskys."

The Countess Lidia Ivanovna was a friend of her husband's, and the center of that one of the coteries of the Peterburg beau monde with which Anna was, through her husband, in the closest rapport.

"But I wrote to her."

"Yes, but she must have full details. Go to see her, if you're not too tired, my dear. Well, Kondratii will take you in the carriage, while I go to my committee. Once more I shall not be alone at dinner," Alexei Alexandrovich continued, but no longer in a jesting tone. "You wouldn't believe how I've grown used to you...."

And, with a prolonged pressure of her hand, and a particular smile, he helped her into her carriage.

XXXII.

The first person to meet Anna at home was her son. He dashed down the stairs to her, in spite of the governess's call, and with frenzied rapture shrieked: "Mother! mother!" Running up to her, he hung on her neck.

"I told you it was mother!" he shouted to the governess. "I knew it!"

And her son, like her husband, aroused in Anna a feeling akin to disappointment. In her imagination he had been better than he was in reality. She had to descend to reality to enjoy him as he was. But, even so, he was charming, with his fair curls, his blue eyes and his chubby, graceful little legs in tightly pulled−up stockings. Anna experienced an almost physical delight in the sensation of his nearness, and his caresses; and a moral reassurance, when she met his ingenuous, trusting and loving glance, and heard his naive questions. Anna took out the presents Dolly's children had sent him, and told her son about Tania, a little girl in Moscow, and how Tania could read, and even taught the other children.

"Why, am I not as good as she?" asked Seriozha.

"To me you're better than anyone else in the whole world."

"I know that," said Seriozha, smiling.

Anna had scarcely drunk her coffee when the Countess Lidia Ivanovna was announced. The Countess Lidia Ivanovna was a tall, fleshy woman, with an unwholesomely yellow complexion and beautiful, pensive black eyes. Anna liked her, but today she seemed, for the first time, to see her with all her shortcomings.

"Well, my friend, were you the bearer of the olive branch?" asked Countess Lidia Ivanovna, the minute she entered the room.

"Yes, it's all over, but it was not at all as serious as we thought," answered Anna. "My belle−soeur is, in general, much too categorical."

But Countess Lidia Ivanovna, who was interested in everything that did not concern her, had a habit of never listening to what interested her; she interrupted Anna:

"Yes, there's plenty of sorrow and evil in the world and I am so fatigued today!"

"Oh, why?" asked Anna, trying to repress a smile.

"I'm beginning to weary of vainly breaking lances for the truth, and at times I'm altogether unstrung. The affair with our Dear Sisters [this was a religiously patriotic, philanthropic institution] started off splendidly, but it's impossible to do anything with such people," added Countess Lidia Ivanovna, with a mocking submissiveness to fate. "They pounced on the idea, and mangled it, and afterward they thrash it out so pettily and trivially. Two or three people, your husband among them, grasp all the significance of this affair but the others merely degrade it. Yesterday Pravdin wrote to me..."

Pravdin was a well−known Pan−Slavist abroad, and Countess Lidia Ivanovna told the gist of his letter.

Next the Countess spoke of other unpleasantnesses and intrigues against the work of the unification of the churches, and departed in haste, since that day she had to attend the meeting of another society, and also a Slavonic committee.

"All this is as it has always been; but how is it I didn't notice it before?" Anna asked herself. "Or has she been very much irritated today? It's really ludicrous: her object is to do good; she's a Christian; yet she's forever angry, and forever having enemies and always enemies in the name of Christianity and doing good."

After Countess Lidia Ivanovna another friend came, the wife of a director of the Department, who told her all the news of the town. At three o'clock she too went away, promising to come to dinner. Alexei Alexandrovich was at the Ministry. Anna, left alone, spent the time till dinner in lending her presence to her son's dinner (he dined apart from his parents), in putting her things in order, and in reading and answering the notes and letters which had accumulated on her escritoire.

The feeling of unreasoning shame, which she had felt during the journey, and her agitation, had completely vanished. In the accustomed conditions of her life she again felt herself firm and irreproachable.

She recalled with wonder her state of mind only yesterday. "What was it? Nothing. Vronsky said something silly, which it was easy to put an end to, and I answered just as I should have. To speak of it to my husband would be unnecessary and impermissible. To speak of it would be to attach importance to that which has none." She remembered how she had told her husband of what was almost declaration made her in Peterburg by a young man, a subordinate of her husband's, and how Alexei Alexandrovich had answered that every woman of the world was exposed to this sort of thing, but that he had the fullest confidence in her tact, and would never permit himself to degrade her and himself by jealousy. "So then, there's no reason to say anything? And, thank God, there isn't anything to say," she told herself.

XXXIII.

Alexei Alexandrovich came back from the Ministry at four o'clock, but as often happened, had no chance to drop in at her room. He went into his study to see the people waiting for him with petitions, and to sign certain papers brought him by his head clerk. At dinnertime (there were always at least three people dining with the Karenins) there arrived an old lady, a cousin of Alexei Alexandrovich; the director of the Department and his wife; and a young man who had been recommended to Alexei Alexandrovich for a post. Anna went into the drawing room to entertain these guests. Precisely at five o'clock, before the bronze Peter the First clock had finished the fifth stroke, Alexei Alexandrovich made his entry, in white tie and evening coat with two stars, as he had to go out directly after dinner. Every minute of Alexei Alexandrovich's life was taken up and apportioned. And in order to accomplish all that each day held for him, he adhered to the strictest orderliness. "Nor haste nor rest," was his device. He entered the dining hall, bowed to all, and hurriedly sat down, smiling to his wife:

"Yes, my solitude is over. You wouldn't believe how uncomfortable [he laid stress on the word uncomfortable] it is to dine alone."

At dinner he chatted with his wife about things at Moscow, and asked, with his mocking smile, about Stepan Arkadyevich; but the conversation was for the most part general, dealing with the official and public news of Peterburg. After dinner he spent half an hour with his guests, and, again with a smile, pressed his wife's hand, withdrew, and drove off to the Council. Anna went that evening neither to the Princess Betsy Tverskaia, who, hearing of her return, had invited her, nor to the theater, where she had a box for that evening. Her principal reason for not going out was because the dress she had expected to wear was not ready. All in all, Anna was exceedingly annoyed when she started to dress for the evening after the departure of her guests. Before her departure for Moscow she, who was generally a mistress of the art of dressing well yet inexpensively, had given her dressmaker three dresses to make over. The dresses were to be made over so that their old selves would be unrecognizable, and they should have been ready three days ago. It turned out that two dresses were nowhere near ready, while the other one had not been made over to Anna's liking. The dressmaker came to explain, asserting that her way was best, and Anna had become so heated that she blushed at the recollection. To regain her composure fully she went into the nursery and spent the whole evening with her son, putting him to bed herself, making the sign of the cross over him, and tucking him in. She was glad she had not gone out anywhere, and had spent the evening so well. She felt so lighthearted and calm, she saw so clearly that all that had seemed to her so significant on her railway journey was merely one of the ordinary trivial incidents of fashionable life, and that she had no cause to feel ashamed before anyone else or before herself. Anna sat down near the fireplace with an English novel and waited for her husband. Exactly at half−past nine she heard his ring, and he entered the room.

"Here you are at last!" she observed, extending her hand to him.

He kissed her hand and sat down beside her.

"All in all, I can see your trip was a success," he said to her.

"Yes, very much so," said she, and she began telling him everything from the beginning: her journey with Countess Vronskaia, her arrival, the accident at the station. Then she described the pity she had felt, first for her brother, and, afterward, for Dolly.

"I do not suppose there is any excuse for such a man, even though he is your brother," said Alexei Alexandrovich sternly.

Anna smiled. She knew that he said this precisely to show that family considerations could not prevent him from expressing his sincere opinion. She knew this trait in her husband and liked it.

"I am glad everything has ended so well, and that you have returned," he went on. "Well, and what do they say there about the new bill I have got passed in the Council?"

Anna had heard nothing of this bill, and she felt conscience−stricken that she could so readily forget what was to him of such importance.

"Here, on the other hand, this has created a great deal of talk," said he, with a self−satisfied smile.

She saw that Alexei Alexandrovich wanted to tell her something that pleased him about it, and she brought him by questions to telling it. With the same self−satisfied smile he told her of the ovations he had received as a consequence of the bill he had passed.

"I was very, very happy. It shows that at last an intelligent and firm view of the matter is forming among us."

After his second cup of tea, with cream and bread, Alexei Alexandrovich got up, and went toward his study.

"And you went nowhere this evening? Weren't You really bored?" he said.

"Oh, no!" she answered, getting up after him and accompanying him across the room to his study. "What are you reading now?" she asked.

"Just now I'm reading Duc de Lille Poisie des enfers," he answered. "A most remarkable book."

Anna smiled, as people smile at the weaknesses of those they love, and, putting her hand in his, she kept him company to the door of his study. She knew his habit, now become a necessity, of reading in the evening. She knew, too, that in spite of his official duties, which engrossed almost all his time, he deemed it his duty to keep up with everything of note that appeared in the intellectual sphere. She knew, too, that his actual interest lay in books dealing with politics, philosophy and theology, that art was utterly foreign to his nature; but, in spite of this or rather, in consequence of it Alexei Alexandrovich never missed anything which created a sensation in the world of art, but made it his duty to read everything. She knew that in politics, in philosophy, in theology, Alexei Alexandrovich was a doubter and a seeker; yet in matters of art and poetry and, above all, of music, of which he was totally devoid of understanding he had the most definite and decided opinions. He was fond of discoursing on Shakespeare, Raphael, Beethoven, on the significance of new schools of poetry and music, all of which were classified by him with most obvious consistency.

"Well, God be with you," she said at the door of the study, where a shaded candle and a decanter of water were already placed near his armchair. "As for me, I'm going to write to Moscow."

He squeezed her hand, and again kissed it.

"Still, he's a good man; truthful, kindhearted, and remarkable in his own sphere," Anna said to herself, back in her room, as though defending him before someone who accused him, saying that one could not love him. "But why is it his ears stick out so queerly? Or has he had his hair cut?..."

Exactly at twelve, as Anna was still sitting at her desk finishing a letter to Dolly, she heard the sound of measured, slippered steps, and Alexei Alexandrovich, washed and combed, a book under his arm, approached her.

"Come, come," said he, with a particular smile, and passed on into their bedroom.

"And what right had he to look at him like that?" reflected Anna, recalling how Vronsky had looked at Alexei Alexandrovich.

Having disrobed, she went into the bedroom; but her face had none of the animation which, during her stay at Moscow, had fairly spurted from her eyes and her smile; on the contrary, now the fire seemed extinct in her, or hidden somewhere far away.

XXXIV.

Upon his departure from Peterburg Vronsky had left his large apartments on Morskaia to his friend and favorite comrade Petritsky.

Petritsky was a young lieutenant, not particularly well−connected, and not merely not wealthy, but in debt all around. Toward evening he was always drunk, and he had often found himself in the guardhouse because of sorts of ludicrous and disgraceful scrapes, but he was a favorite both of his comrades and his superior officers. At twelve o'clock, as Vronsky was driving up from the station to his quarters, he saw, near the entrance of the house, a hired carriage familiar to him. Even as he rang he heard, beyond the door, masculine laughter, the twitter of a feminine voice, and Petritsky's shout: "If that's one of the villains, don't let him in!" Vronsky told the servant not to announce him, and slipped noiselessly into the first room. Baroness Shilton, a friend of Petritsky's, with a rosy little face and flaxen−fair, resplendent in a lilac satin gown, and filling the whole room, like a canary, with her Parisian accents, sat at a round table, brewing coffee. Petritsky, in his overcoat, and the cavalry captain Kamerovsky, in full uniform, probably just come from duty, were sitting near her.

"Bravo! Vronsky!" shouted Petritsky, jumping up, scraping his chair. "Our host himself! Baroness, some coffee for him out of the new coffeepot. There, we didn't expect you! I Hope you're satisfied with the adornment of your study," he said, indicating the Baroness. "You know each other, of course?"

"I should say so!" said Vronsky, with a bright smile, squeezing the Baroness's little hand. "Why, we're old friends."

"You've just returned after traveling," said the Baroness, "so I'll run along. Oh, I'll be off this minute, if I'm in the way!"

"You're home, wherever you are, Baroness," said Vronsky. "How do you do, Kamerovsky?" he added, coldly shaking hands with Kamerovsky.

"There, you can never say such charming things," said the Baroness, turning to Petritsky.

"No why not? After dinner even I can say things quite as good."

"After dinner there's no merit in them! Well, then, I'll give you some coffee; go wash and tidy up," said the Baroness, sitting down again, and anxiously turning a gadget in the new coffee urn. "Pierre, give me the coffee," she said, addressing Petritsky, whom she called Pierre, playing on his surname, making no secret of her relations with him. "I want to put some more in."

"You'll spoil it!"

"No, I won't spoil it! Well, and how is your wife?" said the Baroness suddenly, interrupting Vronsky's conversation with his comrade. "We've been marrying you off here. Have you brought your wife along?"

"No, Baroness. I was born a gypsy, and a gypsy I'll die."

"So much the better so much the better. Shake hands on it."

And the Baroness, detaining Vronsky, began telling him, interspersing her story with many jokes, about her latest plans of life, and seeking his counsel.

"He persists in refusing to give me a divorce! Well, what am I to do?" (He was her husband.) "Now I want to begin a suit against him. What would you advise? Kamerovsky, look after the coffee it's boiled out; you can see I'm taken up with business! I want a lawsuit, because I must have my property. You can understand the stupidity of his saying that I am unfaithful to him," she said contemptuously, "yet through it he wants to get the benefit of my fortune."

Vronsky heard with pleasure this lighthearted prattle of a pretty woman, said yes to everything, gave her half−joking counsel, and altogether dropped at once into the tone habitual to him in talking to such women. In his Peterburg world all people were divided into two utterly opposed kinds. One, the lower, consisted of vulgar, stupid and, above all, ridiculous people, who believe that one husband ought to live with the one wife whom he has lawfully wedded; that a girl should be innocent, a woman modest, and a man manly, self−controlled, and strong; that one ought to bring up one's children, earn one's bread and pay one's debts; and various similar absurdities. Those people were of an old−fashioned and ridiculous kind. But there was another kind of people real people, to which they all belonged, and here the chief thing was to be elegant, magnanimous, daring, gay, and to abandon oneself without a blush to every passion, and to laugh at everything else.

For the first moment only, Vronsky was startled, after the impressions of a quite different world that he had brought with him from Moscow; but immediately, as though he had thrust his feet into old slippers, he stepped into his former lighthearted, pleasant world.

The coffee was really never made, but spluttered over everyone and boiled away, doing just what was required of it that is, providing cause for much noise and laughter, and spoiling a costly rug and the Baroness's gown.

"Well, good−by now or else you'll never get washed, and I shall have on my conscience the worst offense any decent person can commit uncleanliness. So you would advise a knife at his throat?"

"Absolutely and in such a way that your little hand may not be far from his lips. He'll kiss it, and all will end well," answered Vronsky.

"So, the Francais tonight!" and, with a rustle of her skirts, she vanished.

Kamerovsky got up too, and Vronsky, without waiting for him to go, shook hands and went off to his dressing room. While he was washing, Petritsky briefly outlined to him his position, as far as it had changed since Vronsky's departure from Peterburg. No money whatsoever. His father said he wouldn't give him any, nor pay his debts. His tailor was trying to get him locked up, and another fellow, too, was threatening to do so without fail. The colonel of his regiment had announced that if these scandals did not cease a resignation would be inevitable. As for the Baroness, he was fed up with her, particularly because she was forever wanting to give him money. But there was another girl he intended showing her to Vronsky a marvel, exquisite, in the strict Oriental style, "genre of the slave Rebecca, you see." He had had a row, too, with Berkoshev, and the latter intended sending seconds, but, of course, it would all come to nothing. Altogether everything was going splendidly and was most jolly. And, without letting his comrade enter into further details of his position, Petritsky proceeded to tell him all the interesting news. As he listened to Petritsky's familiar stories, in the familiar setting of the rooms he had spent the last three years in, Vronsky felt the delightful sensation of coming back to the insouciant and customary life of Peterburg.

"Impossible!" he cried, releasing the pedal of the wash basin in which he had been sousing his stalwart red neck. "Impossible!" he cried, at the news that Laura had dropped Fertinghof and had tied up with Mileev. "And is he as stupid and satisfied as ever? Well, and what's Buzulukov doing?"

"Oh, Buzulukov got into a scrape simply lovely!" cried Petritsky. "You know his passion for balls and he never misses a single one at court. He went to a big ball in a new casque. Have you seen the new casques? Very good, and lighter. Well, he's standing... No do listen."

"I am listening," answered Vronsky, rubbing himself with a rough towel.

"The Grand Duchess passes by with some ambassador or other, and, as ill luck would have it, their talk veers to the new casques. And so the Grand Duchess wanted to show the new casque to the ambassador.... Just then they catch sight of our dear boy standing there." (Petritsky mimicked him, standing with his casque.) "The Grand Duchess requested him to give her the casque he doesn't do so. What's up? Well, they all wink at him, and nod and frown give it to her, do! He still doesn't. Just stands there, stock−still. You can picture it to yourself!... Well, this... what's his name... tries to take the casque from him... He won't give it up!... This chap tore it from him, and hands it to the Grand Duchess. "This is the new casque," says the Grand Duchess. She turned the casque over, and just picture it! bang went a pear and candy out of it two pounds of candy!... He'd collected all that our dear boy!"

Vronsky rolled with laughter. And, long afterward, even when he was talking of other things, he would go off into peals of his hearty laughter baring his strong, closely set teeth, whenever he thought of the casque.

Having learned all the news, Vronsky, with the assistance of his valet, got into his uniform, and went off to report himself. He intended, afterward, to go to his brother and to Betsy, and to pay several visits, as an entering wedge into that society where he might meet Madame Karenina. As always in Peterburg, he left home without any intention of returning before very late at night.