Anna Karenina, v6

Leo Tolstoy

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translated by Constance Garnett

PART SIX

I.

Darya Alexandrovna spent the summer with her children at Pokrovskoe, at her sister Kitty Levin's. The house on her own estate was quite in ruins, and Levin and his wife had persuaded her to spend the summer with them. Stepan Arkadyevich greatly approved of the arrangement. He said he was very sorry his official duties prevented him from spending the summer in the country with his family, which would have been the greatest happiness for him; and remaining in Moscow, he came down to the country from time to time for a day or two. Besides the Oblonskys, with all their children and their governess, the old Princess, too, came to stay that summer with the Levins, as she considered it her duty to watch over her inexperienced daughter in her interesting condition. Moreover, Varenka, Kitty's friend abroad, kept her promise to come to Kitty when she was married, and stayed with her friend. All of these were friends or relations of Levin's wife. And though he liked them all, he rather regretted his own Levin world and ways, which was smothered by this influx of the "Shcherbatsky element," as he called it to himself. Of his own relations there stayed with him only Sergei Ivanovich, but he too was a man of the Koznishev and not the Levin stamp, so that the Levin spirit was utterly obliterated.

In the Levins' house, so long deserted, there were now so many people that almost all the rooms were occupied, and almost every day it happened that the old Princess, sitting down to table, counted them all over, and put the thirteenth grandson or granddaughter at a separate table. And Kitty, with her careful housekeeping, had no little trouble to get all the chickens, turkeys and geese, of which so many were needed to satisfy the summer appetites of the visitors and children.

The whole family were sitting at dinner. Dolly's children, with their governess and Varenka, were making plans for going to look for mushrooms. Sergei Ivanovich, who was looked up to by all the party for his intellect and learning, with a respect that almost amounted to awe, surprised everyone by joining in the conversation about mushrooms.

"Take me with you. I am very fond of picking mushrooms," he said, looking at Varenka; "I think it's a very fine occupation."

"Oh, we shall be delighted," answered Varenka coloring. Kitty exchanged meaning glances with Dolly. The proposal of the learned and intellectual Sergei Ivanovich to go looking for mushrooms with Varenka confirmed certain theories of Kitty's with which her mind had been very busy of late. She made haste to address some remark to her mother, so that her look should not be noticed. After dinner Sergei Ivanovich sat with his cup of coffee at the drawing−room window, and while he took part in a conversation he had begun with his brother, he watched the door through which the children would start on the mushroom−picking expedition. Levin was sitting on the window sill near his brother.

Kitty stood beside her husband, evidently awaiting the end of a conversation that had no interest for her, in order to tell him something.

"You have changed in many respects since your marriage, and for the better," said Sergei Ivanovich, smiling to Kitty, and obviously little interested in the conversation, "but you have remained true to your passion for defending the most paradoxical theories."

"Katia, it's not good for you to stand," her husband said to her, drawing up a chair for her and looking significantly at her.

"Oh, and there's no time either," added Sergei Ivanovich, seeing the children running out.

At the head of them all Tania galloped sideways, in her tightly drawn stockings, and waving a basket and Sergei

Ivanovich's hat, she ran straight up to him.

Boldly running up to Sergei Ivanovich with smiling eyes, so like her father's fine eyes, she handed him his hat and made as though she would put it on for him, softening her freedom by a shy and friendly smile.

"Varenka's waiting," she said, carefully putting his hat on, seeing from Sergei Ivanovich's smile that she might do so.

Varenka was standing at the door, dressed in a yellow print gown, with a white kerchief on her head.

"I'm coming, I'm coming, Varvara Andreevna," said Sergei Ivanovich, finishing his cup of coffee, and putting into their separate pockets his handkerchief and cigar case.

"And how sweet my Varenka is! Eh?" said Kitty to her husband, as soon as Sergei Ivanovich rose. She spoke so that Sergei Ivanovich could hear, and it was clear that she meant him to do so. "And how good−looking she is such a refined beauty! Varenka!" Kitty shouted. "Shall you be in the mill forest? We'll come out to you."

"You certainly forget your condition, Kitty," said the old Princess, hurriedly coming out at the door. "You mustn't shout like that."

Varenka, hearing Kitty's voice and her mother's reprimand, went with light, rapid steps up to Kitty. The rapidity of her movement, her flushed and eager face, everything betrayed that something out of the common was going on in her. Kitty knew what this thing was and had been watching her intently. She called Varenka at that moment merely in order mentally to give her a blessing for the important event which, as Kitty fancied, was bound to come to pass that day after dinner in the forest.

"Varenka, I should be very happy if a certain something were to happen," she whispered as she kissed her.

"And are you coming with us?" Varenka said to Levin in confusion, pretending not to have heard what had been said.

"I am coming, but only as far as the threshing floor, and there I shall stop."

"Why, what do you want there?" said Kitty.

"I must go to have a look at the new wagons, and to make my calculations," said Levin; "and where will you be?"

"On the terrace."

II.

On the terrace were assembled all the ladies of the party. They always liked sitting there after dinner, and that day they had work to do there too. Besides the sewing of baby's chemises and knitting of swaddles, with which all of them were busy, that afternoon jam was being made on the terrace by a method new to Agathya Mikhailovna, without the addition of water. Kitty had introduced this new method, which had been in use in her home. Agathya Mikhailovna, to whom the task of jam making had always been intrusted, considering that what had been done in the Levin household could not be amiss, had nevertheless put water with the strawberries, maintaining that the jam could not be made without it. She had been caught in the act, and was now making raspberry jam before everyone, and it was to be proved to her conclusively that jam could be very well made without water.

Agathya Mikhailovna, her face heated and angry, her hair untidy, and her thin arms bare to the elbows, was swaying the preserving pan in a circular motion over the charcoal stove, looking darkly at the raspberries and devoutly hoping they would stick and not cook properly. The Princess, conscious that Agathya Mikhailovna's wrath must be chiefly directed against her, as the person responsible for the raspberry jam making, tried to appear to be absorbed in other things and not interested in the raspberries, talking of other matters, but cast stealthy glances in the direction of the stove.

"I always buy my maids' dresses myself, at the bargain sale," the Princess said, continuing the previous conversation. "Isn't it time to skim it, my dear?" she added, addressing Agathya Mikhailovna. "There's not the slightest need for you to do it, and it's hot for you," she said, stopping Kitty.

"I'll do it," said Dolly, and, getting up, she carefully passed the spoon over the frothing sugar, and from time to time shook off the clinging jam from the spoon by knocking it on a plate that was covered with yellow−red scum and blood−colored syrup. "How they'll lick this at teatime!" she thought of her children, remembering how she herself as a child had wondered how it was the grown−up people did not eat what was best of all the scum of the jam.

"Stiva says it's much better to give money," Dolly took up meanwhile the weighty subject under discussion of what presents should be made to servants. "But..."

"Money's out of the question!" the Princess and Kitty exclaimed with one voice. "They appreciate a present..."

"Well, last year, for instance, I bought our Matriona Semionovna, not a poplin, but something of that sort," said the Princess.

"I remember she was wearing it on your name day."

"A charming pattern so simple and refined I should have liked it myself, if she hadn't had it. Something like Varenka's. So pretty and inexpensive."

"Well, now I think it's done," said Dolly, dropping the syrup from the spoon.

"When it sets as it drops, it's ready. Cook it a little longer, Agathya Mikhailovna."

"The flies!" said Agathya Mikhailovna angrily. "It'll be just the same," she added.

"Ah! How sweet it is! Don't frighten it!" Kitty said suddenly, looking at a sparrow that had settled on the step and was pecking at the center of a raspberry.

"Yes, but you keep a little further from the stove," said her mother.

"A propos de Varenka," said Kitty, speaking in French, as they had been doing all the while, so that Agathya Mikhailovna should not understand them, "you know, maman, I somehow expect things to be settled today. You know what I mean. How splendid it would be!"

"But what a famous matchmaker she is!" said Dolly. "How carefully and cleverly she throws them together!..."

"No tell me, mamma, what do you think?"

"Why, what is one to think? He" ('he' meant Sergei Ivanovich) "might at any time have been one of the best matches in Russia; now, of course, he's not quite a young man, still I know ever so many girls would be glad to

marry him, even now.... She's a very nice girl, but he might..."

"Oh, no, mamma, do understand why, for him and for her too, nothing better could be imagined. In the first place, she's charming!" said Kitty, crooking one of her fingers.

"He thinks her very attractive, that's certain," assented Dolly.

"Then he occupies such a position in society that he has no need to look for either fortune or position in his wife. All he needs is a good, sweet wife a restful one."

"Well, with her he would certainly be restful," Dolly assented.

"Thirdly, that she should love him. And so it is... that is, it would be so splendid!... I look forward to seeing them coming out of the forest and everything settled. I shall see at once by their eyes. I should be so delighted! What do you think, Dolly?"

"But don't excite yourself. It's not at all the thing for you to be excited," said her mother.

"Oh, I'm not excited, mamma. I fancy he will propose to her today."

"Ah, that's so strange how and when a man proposes!... There is a sort of barrier, and all at once it's broken down," said Dolly, smiling pensively and recalling her past with Stepan Arkadyevich.

"Mamma, how did papa propose to you?" Kitty asked suddenly.

"There was nothing out of the way it was very simple," answered the Princess, but her face beamed all over at the recollection.

"Oh, but how was it? You loved him, at any rate, before you were allowed to speak?"

Kitty felt a peculiar pleasure in being able now to talk to her mother on equal terms about those questions of such paramount interest in a woman's life.

"Of course I did; he had come to stay with us in the country."

"But how was it settled between you, mamma?"

"You imagine, I dare say, that you invented something quite new? It's always just the same: it was settled by the eyes, by smiles..."

"How well you said that, mamma! It's just by the eyes, by smiles that it's done," Dolly assented.

"But what words did he say?"

"What did Kostia say to you?"

"He wrote it in chalk. It was wonderful.... How long ago it seems!" she said.

And the three women all fell to musing on the same thing. Kitty was the first to break the silence. She remembered all that last winter before her marriage, and her passion for Vronsky.

"There's one thing... that old love affair of Varenka's," she said, a natural chain of ideas bringing her to this point. "I should have liked to say something to Sergei Ivanovich, to prepare him. They're all all men, I mean," she added, "awfully jealous over our past."

"Not all," said Dolly. "You judge by your own husband. It makes him miserable even now to remember Vronsky. Eh? that's true, isn't it?"

"Yes", Kitty answered, a pensive smile in her eyes.

"But I really don't know," the mother put in in defense of her motherly care of her daughter, "what there was in your past that could worry him? That Vronsky paid you attentions that happens to every girl."

"Oh, yes, but we didn't mean that," Kitty said, flushing a little

"No, let me speak," her mother went on, "why, you yourself would not let me have a talk with Vronsky. Don't you remember?"

"Oh, mamma!" said Kitty, with an expression of suffering.

"There's no keeping you young people in check nowadays.... Your friendship could not have gone beyond what was suitable. I should myself have called upon him to explain himself. But, my darling, it's not right for you to be agitated. Please remember that, and calm yourself."

"I'm perfectly calm, maman."

"How happy it was for Kitty that Anna came then," said Dolly, "and how unhappy for her. It turned out quite the opposite," she said, struck by her own ideas. "Then Anna was so happy, and Kitty thought herself unhappy. Now it is just the opposite. I often think of her."

"A fine person to think about! Horrid, repulsive woman no heart," said her mother, who could not forget that Kitty had married not Vronsky, but Levin.

"What do you want to talk of it for?" Kitty said with annoyance. "I never think about it, and I don't want to think of it.... And I don't want to think of it," she said, catching the sound of her husband's familiar step on the steps of the terrace.

"What's that you don't want to think about?" inquired Levin, coming onto the terrace.

But no one answered him, and he did not repeat the question.

"I'm sorry I've broken in on your feminine kingdom," he said, looking round on everyone discontentedly, and perceiving that they had been talking of something which they would not talk about before him.

For a second he felt that he was sharing the feeling of Agathya Mikhailovna, vexation at their making jam without water, and, on the whole, at the outside, Shcherbatsky authority. He smiled, however, and went up to Kitty.

"Well, how are you?" he asked her, looking at her with the expression with which everyone looked at her now.

"Oh, very well," said Kitty, smiling, "and how have things gone with you?"

"The wagon held three times as much as the telega did. Well, are we going for the children? I've ordered the horses to be put in."

"What! You want to take Kitty in the wide droshky?" her mother said reproachfully.

"Yes at walking pace, Princess."

Levin never called the princess "maman" as men often do call their mothers−in−law, and the Princess disliked his not doing so. But though he liked and respected the Princess, Levin could not call her so without a sense of profaning his feeling for his dead mother.

"Come with us, maman," said Kitty.

"I don't like to see such imprudence."

"Well, I'll walk then, I'm so well." Kitty got up and went to her husband and took his hand.

"You may be well, but everything in moderation," said the Princess.

"Well, Agathya Mikhailovna, is the jam done?" said Levin, smiling to Agathya Mikhailovna, and trying to cheer her up. "Is it all right in the new way?"

"I suppose it's all right. According to our notions it's boiled too long."

"It'll be all the better, Agathya Mikhailovna, it won't turn sour, even though the ice in our icehouse has begun to melt already, so that we've no cool place to store it," said Kitty, at once divining her husband's motive, and addressing the old housekeeper with the same feeling; "but your pickles are so good, that mamma says she never tasted any like them," she added, smiling, and putting her kerchief straight.

Agathya Mikhailovna looked sulkily at Kitty.

"You needn't try to console me, mistress. I need only to look at you with him, and I feel happy," she said, and something in the rough familiarity of that with him touched Kitty.

"Come along with us to look for mushrooms, you will show us the best places."

Agathya Mikhailovna smiled and shook her head, as though to say: "I would even like to be angry with you, but I can't."

"Do it, please, according to my recipe," said the Princess; "put some paper over the jam, and moisten it with a little rum, and, even without ice, it will never grow moldy."

III.

Kitty was particularly glad of a chance of being alone with her husband, for she had noticed the shade of mortification that had passed over his face always so quick to reflect every feeling at the moment when he had come onto the terrace and asked what they were talking of, and had got no answer.

When they had set off on foot ahead of the others, and had gotten out of sight of the house onto the beaten, dusty road, sprinkled with ears of rye and with separate grains, she clung faster to his arm and pressed it closer to her.

He had quite forgotten the momentary unpleasant impression, and alone with her he felt, now that the thought of her approaching motherhood was never for a moment absent from his mind, a new and delicious bliss, quite pure from all alloy of sense, in being near to the woman he loved. There was no need of speech, yet he longed to hear the sound of her voice, which, like her eyes, had changed since she had become pregnant. In her voice, as in her eyes, there was that softness and gravity which is found in people continually concentrated on some cherished pursuit.

"So you're not tired? Lean more on me," said he.

"No, I'm so glad of a chance of being alone with you, and I must own, though I'm happy with them, I sigh for our winter evenings alone."

"That was good, but this is even better. Both are better," he said, squeezing her hand.

"Do you know what we were talking about when you came in?"

"About jam?"

"Oh, yes, about jam too; but, afterward, about how men propose."

"Ah!" said Levin, listening more to the sound of her voice than to her words, and all the while paying attention to the road, which passed now through the forest, and avoiding places where she might make a false step.

"And about Sergei Ivanovich and Varenka. You've noticed?... I'm very anxious for it," she went on. "What do you think about it?" And she peeped into his face.

"I don't know what to think," Levin answered, smiling. "Sergei seems very strange to me in that way. I told you, you know..."

"Yes, that he was in love with that girl who died...."

"That was when I was a child; I know about it from hearsay and tradition. I remember him then. He was wonderfully sweet. But I've watched him since with women; he is friendly, some of them he likes, but one feels that to him they're simply people, not women."

"Yes, but now with Varenka... I fancy there's something..."

"Perhaps there is.... But one has to know him.... He's a peculiar, wonderful person. He lives a spiritual life only. He's too pure, too exalted a nature."

"Why? Would this lower him, then?"

"No, but he's so used to a spiritual life that he can't reconcile himself with actual fact, and Varenka is after all fact."

Levin had grown used by now to uttering his thought boldly, without taking the trouble of clothing it in exact language. He knew that his wife, in such moments of loving tenderness as now, would understand what he meant to say from a hint, and she did understand him.

"Yes, but there's not so much of that actual fact about her as about me. I can see that he would never have cared for me. She is altogether spiritual."

"Oh, no, he is so fond of you, and I am always so glad when my people like you...."

"Yes, he's very good to me; but..."

"It's not as it was with poor Nikolenka.... You really cared for each other," Levin finished. "Why not speak of him?" he added. "I sometimes blame myself for not doing so; it ends in one's forgetting. Ah, how terrible and dear he was!... Yes, what were we talking about?" Levin said, after a pause.

"You think he can't fall in love," said Kitty, translating into her own language.

"It's not so much that he can't fall in love," Levin said, smiling, "but he has not the weakness necessary.... I've always envied him, and even now, when I'm so happy, I still envy him."

"You envy him for not being able to fall in love?"

"I envy him for being better than me," said Levin. "He does not live for himself. His whole life is subordinated to his duty. And that's why he can be calm and contented."

"And you?" Kitty asked, with an ironical and loving smile.

She could never have explained the chain of thought that made her smile; but the last link in it was that her husband, in exalting his brother and abasing himself, was not quite sincere. Kitty knew that this insincerity came from his love for his brother, from his sense of shame at being too happy, and, above all, from his unflagging craving to be better she loved this trait in him, and so she smiled.

"And you? What are you dissatisfied with?" she asked, with the same smile.

Her disbelief in his self−dissatisfaction delighted him, and unconsciously he tried to draw her into giving utterance to the grounds of her disbelief.

"I am happy, but dissatisfied with myself..." he said.

"Why, how can you be dissatisfied with yourself if you are happy?"

"Well, how shall I say?... In my heart I really care for nothing whatever but that you should not stumble see? Oh, but really you mustn't skip about like that!" he cried, breaking off to scold her for too agile a movement in stepping over a branch that lay in the path. "But when I think about myself, and compare myself with others, especially with my brother, I feel I'm a poor creature."

"But in what way?" Kitty pursued with the same smile. "Don't you, too, work for others? What about your farmsteading, and your agriculture, and your book?..."

"Oh, but I feel, and particularly just now it's your fault," he said, pressing her hand "that all that doesn't count. I do it, in a way, halfheartedly. If I could care for all that as I care for you!... Instead of that, I do it in these days like a task that is set me."

"Well, what would you say about papa?" asked Kitty. "Is he a poor creature then, as he does nothing for the public good?"

"He? No! But then, one must have the simplicity, the straight−forwardness, the goodness of your father: and I haven't got that. I do nothing, and I fret about it. It's all your doing. Before you and this too," he added with a

glance toward her waist that she understood "I put all my energies into work; now I can't, and I'm ashamed; I do it just as though it were a task set me; I'm pretending...."

"Well, but would you like to change this minute with Sergei Ivanovich?" said Kitty. "Would you like to do this work for the general good, and to love the task set you, as he does, and nothing else?"

"Of course not," said Levin. "But I'm so happy that I don't understand anything. So you think he'll propose to her today?" he added after a brief silence.

"I think so, and I don't think so. Only, I'm awfully anxious for it. Here, wait a minute." She stooped down and picked a wild daisy at the edge of the path. "Come, count: he will, he won't," she said, giving him the flower.

"He will, he won't," said Levin, tearing off the white petals.

"No, no!" Kitty, snatching at his hand, stopped him. She had been watching his fingers with agitation. "You picked off two."

"Oh, but see, this little one shan't count to make up," said Levin, tearing off a little half−grown petal. "Here's the droshky overtaking us."

"Aren't you tired, Kitty?" called the Princess.

"Not in the least."

"If you are you can get in, as the horses are quiet and walking."

But it was not worth−while to get in; they were quite near the place, and all walked on together.

IV.

Varenka, with her white kerchief on her black hair, surrounded by the children, gaily and good−humoredly looking after them, and at the same time visibly excited at the possibility of receiving a declaration from the man she cared for, was very attractive. Sergei Ivanovich walked beside her, and never left off admiring her. Looking at her, he recalled all the delightful things he had heard from her lips, all the good he knew about her, and became more and more conscious that the feeling he had for her was something special that he had felt long, long ago, and only once, in his early youth. The feeling of happiness in being near her continually grew, and at last reached such a point that, as he put a huge, slender−stalked mushroom with rolled brims, in her basket, he looked straight into her face, and noticing the flush of glad and alarmed excitement that overspread her face, he was confused himself, and smiled to her in silence a smile that said too much.

"If so," he said to himself, "I ought to think it over and make up my mind, and not give way like a boy to the impulse of a moment."

"I'm going to pick by myself apart from all the rest, or else my efforts will make no show," he said, and he left the edge of the forest where they were walking on low silky grass between old birch trees standing far apart, and went more into the heart of the wood, where between the white birch trunks there were gray trunks of aspen and dark bushes of hazel. Walking some forty paces away, Sergei Ivanovich, knowing he was out of sight, stood still behind a bushy spindle tree in full flower with its rosy−red catkins. It was perfectly still all round him. Only overhead, in the birches under which he stood, the flies, like a swarm of bees, buzzed unceasingly, and from time to time the children's voices floated across to him. All at once he heard, not far from the edge of the wood, the

sound of Varenka's contralto voice, calling Grisha, and a smile of delight passed over Sergei Ivanovich's face. Conscious of this smile, he shook his head disapprovingly at his own state and, taking out a cigar, he began lighting it. For a long while he could not get a match to light against the trunk of a birch tree. The soft pellicle of the white bark stuck around the phosphorus, and the light went out. At last one of the matches burned, and the fragrant cigar smoke, hovering uncertainly in flat, wide coils, stretched away forward and upward over a bush under the overhanging branches of a birch tree. Watching the streak of smoke, Sergei Ivanovich walked gently on, deliberating on his position.

"Why not?" he thought. "If it were only a flash in the pan, or a passion, if it were only this attraction this mutual attraction (I can call it a mutual attraction), yet if I felt that it was in contradiction with the whole bent of my life; if I felt that in giving way to this attraction I should be false to my vocation and my duty... But it's not so. The only thing I can say against it is that, when I lost Marie, I said to myself that I would remain faithful to her memory. That's the only thing I can say against my feeling.... That's a great thing," Sergei Ivanovich said to himself, feeling at the same time that this consideration had not the slightest importance for him personally, but would only perhaps detract from his romantic character in the eyes of others. "But apart from that, however much I searched, I should never find anything to say against my feeling. If I were choosing by considerations of intellect alone, I could not have found anything better."

However many women and girls he thought of whom he knew, he could not think of a girl who united to such a degree all positively all the qualities he would wish to see in his wife. She had all the charm and freshness of youth, but she was not a child; and if she loved him, she loved him consciously, as a woman ought to love; that was one thing. Another point: she was not only far from being worldly, but had an unmistakable distaste for worldly society, and at the same time she knew the world, and had all the ways of a woman of the best society, which were absolutely essential to Sergei Ivanovich's conception of the woman who was to share his life. Thirdly: she was religious, and not like a child, unconsciously religious and good, as Kitty, for example, was, but her life was founded on religious principles. Even in trifling matters, Sergei Ivanovich found in her all that he wanted in his wife: she was poor and alone in the world, so she would not bring with her a mass of relations and their influence into her husband's house, as he saw now in Kitty's case. She would owe everything to her husband, which was what he had always desired, too, for his future family life. And this girl, who united all these qualities, loved him. He was a modest man, but he could not help seeing it. And he loved her. There was one consideration against it his age. But he came of a long−lived family, he had not a single gray hair, no one would have taken him for forty, and he remembered Varenka's saying that it was only in Russia that men of fifty thought themselves old, and that in France a man of fifty considers himself dans la force de l'age, while a man of forty is un jeune homme. But what did the mere reckoning of years matter when he felt as young in heart as he had been twenty years ago? Was it not youth to feel as he felt now, when coming from the other side to the edge of the wood he saw in the glowing light of the slanting sunbeams the graceful figure of Varenka in her yellow gown with her basket, walking lightly by the trunk of an old birch tree, and when this impression of the sight of Varenka blended so harmoniously with the beauty of the view, of the yellow oat field lying bathed in the slanting sunshine, and, beyond it, the distant ancient forest, flecked with yellow and melting into the blue of the distance? His heart throbbed joyously. A softened feeling came over him. He felt that he had made up his mind. Varenka, who had just crouched down to pick a mushroom, rose with a supple movement and looked round. Flinging away the cigar, Sergei Ivanovich advanced with resolute steps toward her.

V.

"Varvara Andreevna, when I was very young, I set before myself the ideal of the woman I loved and should be happy to call my wife. I have lived through a long life, and now for the first time I have met what I sought in you. I love you, and offer you my hand."

Sergei Ivanovich was saying this to himself while he was ten paces from Varenka. Kneeling down, with her hands

over the mushrooms to guard them from Grisha, she was calling little Masha.

"Come here, little ones! There are so many!" she was saying in her sweet, deep voice.

Seeing Sergei Ivanovich approaching, she did not get up and did not change her position, but everything told him that she felt his presence and was glad of it.

"Well, did you find some?" she asked from under the white kerchief, turning her handsome, gently smiling face to him.

"Not one," said Sergei Ivanovich. "Did you?"

She did not answer, busy with the children who thronged about her.

"That one too, near the twig," she pointed out to little Masha a little fungus, split in half across its rosy cap by the dry grass from under which it thrust itself. Varenka got up while Masha picked the fungus, breaking it into two white halves. "This brings back my childhood," she added, moving apart from the children, to Sergei Ivanovich's side.

They walked on for a few steps in silence. Varenka saw that he wanted to speak; she guessed of what, and felt faint with joy and panic. They had walked so far away that no one could hear them now, but still he did not begin. It would have been better for Varenka to be silent. After a silence it would have been easier for them to say what they wanted to say, than after talking about mushrooms. But against her own will, as it were accidentally, Varenka said:

"So you found nothing? In the middle of the wood there are always fewer, though."

Sergei Ivanovich sighed and made no answer. He was annoyed that she had spoken about the mushrooms. He wanted to bring her back to the first words she had uttered about her childhood; but after a pause of some length, as though against his own will, he made an observation in response to her last words.

"I have heard that the white edible fungi are found principally at the edge of the wood, though I can't tell them apart."

Some minutes more passed; they moved still farther away from the children, and were quite alone. Varenka's heart throbbed so that she heard it beating, and felt that she was turning red, and pale, and red again.

To be the wife of a man like Koznishev, after her position with Madame Stahl, was to her imagination the height of happiness. Besides, she was almost certain that she was in love with him. And this moment it would have to be decided. She felt frightened. She dreaded both his speaking and his not speaking.

Now or never it must be said Sergei Ivanovich felt that too. Everything in the expression, the flushed cheeks and the downcast eyes of Varenka betrayed a painful suspense. Sergei Ivanovich saw it, and felt sorry for her. He felt even that to say nothing now would be a slight to her. Rapidly in his own mind he ran over all the arguments in support of his decision. He even said over to himself the words in which he meant to put his proposal, but instead of those words, some utterly unexpected reflection that occurred to him made him ask:

"What is the difference between the 'birch' mushroom and the 'white' mushroom?"

Varenka's lips quivered with emotion as she answered:

"In the top part there is scarcely any difference it's in the stalk."

And as soon as these words were uttered, both he and she felt that it was over, that what was to have been said would not be said; and their emotion, which up to then had been continually growing more intense, began to subside.

"The birch mushroom's stalk suggests a dark man's chin after two days without shaving," said Sergei Ivanovich, speaking quite calmly now.

"Yes, that's true," answered Varenka smiling, and unconsciously the direction of their walk changed. They began to turn toward the children. Varenka felt both hurt and ashamed; at the same time she felt a sense of relief.

When he had got home again, and went over the whole set of arguments, Sergei Ivanovich thought his previous decision had been a mistaken one. He could not be false to the memory of Marie.

"Gently, children, gently!" Levin shouted quite angrily to the children, standing before his wife to protect her when the crowd of children flew with shrieks of delight to meet them.

Behind the children Sergei Ivanovich and Varenka walked out of the forest. Kitty had no need to ask Varenka; she saw from the calm and somewhat crestfallen faces of both that her plans had not come off.

"Well?" her husband questioned her as they were going home again.

"No bites," said Kitty, her smile and manner of speaking recalling her father, a likeness Levin often noticed with pleasure.

"No bites, how?"

"I'll show you," she said, taking her husband's hand, lifting it to her mouth, and just faintly brushing it with closed lips. "Like a kiss on a priest's hand."

"Which one didn't bite?" he said, laughing.

"Both. But it should have been like this..."

"There are some peasants coming..."

"Oh, they didn't see."

VI.

During the time of the children's tea the grownups sat on the balcony and talked as though nothing had happened though they all, especially Sergei Ivanovich and Varenka, were very well aware that there had happened an event which, though negative, was of very great importance. They both had the same feeling, rather like that of a schoolboy after an unlucky examination, which has left him in the same class or shut him out of school forever. Everyone present, also feeling that something had happened, talked eagerly about extraneous subjects. Levin and Kitty were particularly happy and conscious of their love that evening. And their happiness in their love seemed to imply a disagreeable reference to those who would have liked to feel the same and could not and they felt a prick of conscience.

"Mark my words, Alexandre will not come," said the old Princess.

That evening they were expecting Stepan Arkadyevich to come down by train, and the old Prince had written that possibly he might come too.

"And I know why," the Princess went on; "he says that newly married couples ought to be left alone for a while at first."

"But papa has left us alone. We've never seen him," said Kitty. "Besides, we're not newly married! we're old married people by now.

"Only if he doesn't come, I shall say good−by to you, children," said the Princess, sighing mournfully.

"What nonsense, mamma!" both the daughters fell upon her at once. "How do you suppose he is feeling? Why, now..."

And suddenly there was an unexpected quiver in the Princess's voice. Her daughters were silent, and looked at one another. "Maman always finds something to be miserable about," they said in that glance. They did not know that happy as the Princess was in her daughter's house, and useful as she felt herself to be there, she had been extremely miserable, both on her own account and her husband's, ever since they had married off their last and favorite daughter, and their family nest had been left empty.

"What is it, Agathya Mikhailovna?" Kitty asked suddenly of Agathya Mikhailovna, who was standing with a mysterious air, and a face full of meaning.

"About supper."

"Well, that's right," said Dolly; "you go and arrange about it, and I'll go and hear Grisha repeat his lesson, or else he will have done nothing all day."

"That's my duty! No, Dolly, I'm going," said Levin, jumping up.

Grisha, who was by now at a high school, had to go over the lessons of the term in the summer holidays. Darya Alexandrovna, who had been studying Latin with her son in Moscow before, had made it a rule on coming to the Levins' to go over with him, at least once a day, the most difficult lessons of Latin and arithmetic. Levin had offered to take her place, but the mother, having once overheard Levin's lesson, and noticing that it was not given exactly as the teacher in Moscow had given it, said resolutely, though with much embarrassment and anxiety not to mortify Levin, that they must keep strictly to the book as the teacher had done, and that she had better undertake it again herself. Levin was amazed both at Stepan Arkadyevich, who, by neglecting his duty, threw upon the mother the supervision of studies of which she had no comprehension, and at the teachers for teaching the children so badly. But he promised his sister−in−law to give the lessons exactly as she wished. And he went on teaching Grisha, not in his own way, but by the book, and so took little interest in it, and often forgot the hour of the lesson. So it had been today.

"No, I'm going, Dolly, you sit still," he said. "We'll do it all properly, according to the book. Only when Stiva comes, and we go out shooting, then we shall have to miss it."

And Levin went to Grisha.

Varenka was saying the same thing to Kitty. Even in the happy, well−ordered household of the Levins, Varenka had succeeded in making herself useful.

"I'll see to the supper, you sit still," she said, and got up to go to Agathya Mikhailovna.

"Yes, yes, most likely they've not been able to get chickens. If so, our..."

"Agathya Mikhailovna and I will see about it," and Varenka vanished with her.

"What a fine girl!" said the Princess.

"Not merely fine, maman; she's an exquisite girl; there's no one else like her."

"So you are expecting Stepan Arkadyevich today?" said Sergei Ivanovich, evidently not disposed to pursue the conversation about Varenka. "It would be difficult to find two sons−in−law more unlike than yours," he said with a subtle smile. "One mobility itself, only living in society, like a fish in water; the other our Kostia, lively, alert, quick in everything, but, as soon as he is in society, he either sinks into apathy, or struggles helplessly like a fish on land."

"Yes, he's very heedless," said the Princess, addressing Sergei Ivanovich. "I've intended, indeed, to ask you to tell him that it's out of the question for her" (she indicated Kitty) "to stay here; that she positively must come to Moscow. He talks of getting a doctor down..."

"Maman, he'll do everything; he has agreed to everything," Kitty said, angry with her mother for appealing to Sergei Ivanovich to judge in such a matter.

In the middle of their conversation they heard the snorting of horses and the sound of wheels on the gravel.

Dolly had not time to get up to go and meet her husband, when from the window of the room below, where Grisha was having his lesson, Levin leaped out and helped Grisha out after him.

"It's Stiva!" Levin shouted from under the balcony. "We've finished, Dolly, don't be afraid!" he added, and started running like a boy to meet the carriage.

"Is, ea, id, ejus, ejus, ejus!" shouted Grisha, skipping along the avenue.

"And someone else too! Papa, of course!" cried Levin, stopping at the entrance of the avenue. "Kitty, don't come down the steep staircase go around."

But Levin had been mistaken in taking the person sitting in the carriage for the old Prince. As he got nearer to the carriage he saw beside Stepan Arkadyevich not the Prince, but a handsome, stout young man in a Scotch cap, with long ends of ribbon behind. This was Vassenka Veslovsky, a distant cousin of the Shcherbatskys, a brilliant young gentleman in Peterburg and Moscow society a capital fellow, and a keen sportsman," as Stepan Arkadyevich said, introducing him.

Not a whit abashed by the disappointment caused by his having come in place of the old Prince, Veslovsky greeted Levin gaily, claiming acquaintance with him in the past, and snatching up Grisha into the carriage, lifted him over the pointer that Stepan Arkadyevich had brought with him.

Levin did not get into the carriage, but walked behind. He was rather vexed at the nonarrival of the old Prince, whom he liked more and more the more he saw him, and also the arrival of this Vassenka Veslovsky, a quite alien and superfluous person. He seemed to him still more alien and superfluous when, on approaching the steps where the whole party, children and grownups, were gathered together in much animation, Levin saw Vassenka Veslovsky, with a particularly warm and gallant air, kissing Kitty's hand.

"Your wife and I are cousins and very old friends," said Vassenka Veslovsky, once more shaking Levin's hand with great warmth.

"Well, are there plenty of birds?" Stepan Arkadyevich said to Levin, hardly leaving time for everyone to exchange greetings. "We've come with the most savage intentions. Why, maman, they've not been in Moscow since! Look, Tania, here's something for you! Get it, please, it's in the carriage, behind!" he talked in all directions. "How pretty you've grown, Dollenka," he said to his wife, once more kissing her hand, holding it in one of his, and patting it with the other.

Levin, who a minute before had been in the happiest frame of mind, now looked darkly at everyone, and everything displeased him.

"Who was it he kissed yesterday with these lips?" he thought, looking at Stepan Arkadyevich's tender demonstrations to his wife. He looked at Dolly, and he did not like her either.

"She doesn't believe in his love. So what is she pleased about? Revolting!" thought Levin.

He looked at the Princess, who had been so dear to him a minute before, and he did not like the manner in which she welcomed this Vassenka, with his ribbons, just as though she were in her own house.

Even Sergei Ivanovich, who had come out too on the steps, seemed to him unpleasant with the show of cordiality with which he met Stepan Arkadyevich, though Levin knew that his brother neither liked nor respected Oblonsky.

And Varenka even she seemed hateful, with her air sainte nitouche making the acquaintance of this gentleman, while all the while she was thinking of nothing but getting married.

And more hateful than anyone was Kitty, for falling in with the tone of gaiety with which this gentleman regarded his visit in the country, as though it were a holiday for himself and everyone else. And, more unpleasant than everything else, was that peculiar smile with which she responded to his smile.

Noisily talking, they all went into the house; but as soon as they were all seated, Levin turned and went out.

Kitty saw something was wrong with her husband. She tried to seize a moment to speak to him alone, but he made haste to get away from her, saying he was wanted at the countinghouse. It was long since his own work on the estate had seemed to him so important as at that moment. "It's all holiday for them," he thought; "but these are no holiday matters, they won't wait, and there's no living without them."

VII.

Levin came back to the house only when they sent to summon to supper. On the stairs were standing Kitty and Agathya Mikhailovna, consulting about wines for supper.

"But why are you making all this fuss? Have what we usually do."

"No, Stiva doesn't drink... Kostia, stop, what's the matter?" Kitty began, hurrying after him, but he strode ruthlessly away to the dining room without waiting for her, and at once joined in the lively general conversation which was being maintained there by Vassenka Veslovsky and Stepan Arkadyevich.

"Well, what do you say, are we going shooting tomorrow?" said Stepan Arkadyevich.

"Please, do let's go," said Veslovsky, moving to another chair, where he sat down sideways, with one fat leg crossed under him.

"I shall be delighted, we will go. And have you had any shooting yet this year?" said Levin to Veslovsky, looking intently at his leg, but speaking with that forced amiability that Kitty knew so well in him, and that was so out of keeping with him. "I can't answer for our finding double snipe, but there are plenty of jacksnipe. Only we ought to start early. You're not tired? Aren't you tired, Stiva?"

"Me tired? I've never been tired yet. Suppose we stay up all night. Let's go for a walk!"

"Yes, really, let's not go to bed at all! Capital!" Veslovsky chimed in.

"Oh, we all know you can do without sleep, and keep other people up too," Dolly said to her husband, with that faint note of irony in her voice which she almost always had now with her husband. "But to my thinking, it's time for bed now... I'm going, I don't want supper."

"No, do stay a little, Dollenka," said Stepan Arkadyevich, going round to her side behind the table where they were having supper. "I've so much still to tell you."

"Nothing really, I suppose."

"Do you know Veslovsky has been at Anna's, and he's going to them again? You know they're hardly seventy verstas from you, and I too must certainly go over there. Veslovsky, come here!"

Vassenka crossed over to the ladies, and sat down beside Kitty.

"Ah, do tell me, please; you have visited her? How was she?" Darya Alexandrovna appealed to him.

Levin was left at the other end of the table, and though never pausing in his conversation with the Princess and Varenka, he saw that there was an eager and mysterious conversation going on between Stepan Arkadyevich, Dolly, Kitty, and Veslovsky. And that was not all. He saw on his wife's face an expression of real feeling as she gazed with fixed eyes on the handsome face of Vassenka, who was telling them something with great animation.

"It's exceedingly nice at their place," Veslovsky was telling them about Vronsky and Anna. "I can't, of course, take it upon myself to judge, but in their house you feel the real feeling of home."

"What do they intend doing?"

"I believe they think of going to Moscow for the winter."

"How jolly it would be for us all to go over to them together! When are you going there?" Stepan Arkadyevich asked Vassenka.

"I'm spending July there."

"Will you go?" Stepan Arkadyevich said to his wife.

"I've been wanting to a long while; I shall certainly go," said Dolly. "I am sorry for her, and I know her. She's a splendid woman. I will go alone, when you go back, and then I shall be in no one's way. And it will be better indeed without you."

"To be sure," said Stepan Arkadyevich. "And you, Kitty?"

"I? Why should I go?" Kitty said, flushing all over, and she glanced round at her husband.

"Do you know Anna Arkadyevna, then?" Veslovsky asked her. "She's a very fascinating woman?"

"Yes," she answered Veslovsky, crimsoning still more. She got up and walked across to her husband.

"Are you going shooting, then, tomorrow?" she said.

His jealousy had in these few moments, especially at the flush that had overspread her cheeks while she was talking to Veslovsky, gone far indeed. Now as he heard her words, he construed them in his own fashion. Strange as it was to him afterward to recall it, it seemed to him at the moment clear that in asking whether he was going shooting, all she cared to know was whether he would give that pleasure to Vassenka Veslovsky, with whom, as he fancied, she was in love.

"Yes, I'm going," he answered her in an unnatural voice, disagreeable to himself.

"No, better spend the day here tomorrow, or Dolly won't see anything of her husband, and set off the day after," said Kitty.

The motive of Kitty's words was interpreted by Levin thus: "Don't separate me from him. I don't care about your going, but do let me enjoy the society of this delightful young man."

"Oh, if you wish, we'll stay here tomorrow," Levin answered, with peculiar amiability.

Vassenka meanwhile, utterly unsuspecting the misery his presence had occasioned, got up from the table after Kitty, and watching her with smiling and admiring eyes, he followed her.

Levin saw that look. He turned white, and for a minute he could hardly breathe. "How dare he look at my wife like that!" was the feeling that boiled within him.

"Tomorrow, then? Do, please, let us go," said Vassenka, sitting down on a chair, and again crossing his leg as his habit was.

Levin's jealousy went further still. Already he saw himself a deceived husband, looked upon by his wife and her lover as simply necessary to provide them with the conveniences and pleasures of life.... But in spite of that he made polite and hospitable inquiries of Vassenka about his shooting, his gun, and his boots, and agreed to go shooting next day.

Happily for Levin, the old Princess cut short his agonies by getting up herself and advising Kitty to go to bed. But even at this point Levin could not escape another agony. As he said good night to his hostess, Vassenka would again have kissed her hand, but Kitty, reddening, drew back her hand and said with a naive bluntness, for which the old Princess scolded her afterward:

"We don't like that fashion."

In Levin's eyes she was to blame for having allowed such relations to arise, and still more to blame for showing so awkwardly that she did not like them.

"Why, how can one want to go to bed!" said Stepan Arkadyevich, who, after drinking several glasses of wine at supper, was now in his most charming and lyrical humor. "Look, Kitty," he said, pointing to the moon, which had just risen behind the linden trees, "how exquisite! Veslovsky, this is the time for a serenade. You know, he has a splendid voice; we practised songs together along the road. He has brought some lovely songs with him two new ones. Varvara Andreevna and he must sing some duets."

When the party had broken up, Stepan Arkadyevich walked a long while about the avenue with Veslovsky; their voices could be heard singing one of the new songs.

Levin, hearing these voices, sat scowling in an easy chair in his wife's bedroom, and maintained an obstinate silence when she asked him what was wrong. But when at last with a timid glance she hazarded the question: "Was there perhaps something you disliked about Veslovsky?" it all burst out, and he told her all. He was hurt himself by what he was saying, and that exasperated him all the more.

He stood facing her with his eyes glittering menacingly under his scowling brows, and he squeezed his strong arms across his chest, as though he were straining every nerve to hold himself in. The expression of his face would have been grim, and even cruel, if it had not at the same time had a look of suffering which touched her. His jaws were twitching, and his voice kept breaking.

"You must understand that I'm not jealous, that's a nasty word. I can't be jealous, and believe that... I can't say what I feel, but this is awful... I'm not jealous, but I'm wounded, humiliated that anybody dare think, that anybody dare look at you with eyes like that...."

"Eyes like what?" said Kitty, trying as conscientiously as possible to recall every word and gesture of that evening and every shade implied in them.

At the very bottom of her heart she did think there had been something, precisely at the moment when he had crossed over after her to the other end of the table; but she dared not own it even to herself, and would have been even more unable to bring herself to say so to him, and so increase his suffering.

"And what can there possibly be attractive about me as I am now?..."

"Ah!" he cried, clutching at his head, "You shouldn't say that!... If you had been attractive, then..."

"Oh, no, Kostia, oh, wait a minute, oh, do listen!" she said, looking at him with an expression of pained commiseration. "Why, what can you be thinking about! When for me there's no one in the world, no one, no one!... Would you like me never to see anyone?

For the first minute she had been offended at his jealousy; she was angry that the slightest amusement, even the most innocent, should be forbidden her; but now she would readily have sacrificed, not merely such trifles, but everything, for his peace of mind, to save him from the agony he was suffering.

"You must understand the horror and comedy of my position," he went on in a desperate whisper; "that he's in my house, that he's done nothing positively improper one can take exception only to his free and easy airs and the way he tucks his legs in under him. He thinks it's the best possible form, and so I'm obliged to be civil to him."

"But, Kostia, you're exaggerating," said Kitty, at the bottom of her heart rejoicing at the depth of his love for her, shown now in his jealousy.

"The most awful part of it all is that you're just as you always are, and especially now when to me you're something sacred, and we're so happy, so particularly happy and all of a sudden a little wretch... He's not a little

wretch; why should I abuse him? I have nothing to do with him. But why should my, and your, happiness..."

"Do you know, I understand now what it all came from," Kitty was beginning.

"Well, what? What?"

"I saw how you looked while we were talking at supper."

"Well, well!" Levin said in dismay.

She told him what they had been talking about. And as she told him, she was breathless with emotion. Levin was silent for a space, then he scanned her pale and distressed face, and suddenly he clutched at his head.

"Katia, I've been worrying you! Darling, forgive me! It's madness! Katia, I'm a criminal. And how could you be so distressed at such idiocy?"

"Oh, I was sorry for you."

"For me? For me? How mad I am!... But why make you miserable? It's awful to think that any outsider can shatter our happiness."

"It's humiliating too, of course."

"Oh, then I'll keep him here all the summer, and will overwhelm him with civility," said Levin, kissing her hands. "You shall see. Tomorrow... oh, yes, we are going tomorrow."

VIII.

Next day, before the ladies were up, the carriages for the shooting party, the droshky and a trap, were at the door, and Laska, aware since early morning that they were going shooting, after much whining and darting to and fro, had sat herself down in the droshky beside the coachman, and, disapproving of the delay, was excitedly watching the door from which the sportsmen still did not issue. The first to come out was Vassenka Veslovsky, in new high boots that reached halfway up his thick thighs, in a green blouse, with a new cartridge belt, redolent of leather, and in his Scotch cap with ribbons, with a brand−new English gun without a sling. Laska flew up to him, welcomed him, and, jumping up, asked him in her own way whether the others were coming soon; but getting no answer from him, she returned to her post of observation and sank into repose again, her head on one side, and one ear pricked up to listen. At last the door opened with a creak, and Stepan Arkadyevich's spot−and−tan pointer Krak flew out, running round and round and turning over in the air. Stepan Arkadyevich himself followed with a gun in his hand and a cigar in his mouth. "Soho, soho, Krak!" he cried encouragingly to the dog, who put his paws up on his chest, catching at his gamebag. Stepan Arkadyevich was dressed in brogues and puttees, in torn trousers and a short coat. On his head there was a wreck of a hat of indefinite form, but his gun of a new patent was a perfect gem, and his gamebag and cartridge belt, though worn, were of the very best quality.

Vassenka Veslovsky had had no notion before that it was truly chic for a sportsman to be in tatters, but to have his shooting outfit of the best quality. He saw it now as he looked at Stepan Arkadyevich, radiant in his rags, graceful, well−fed, and joyous, a typical Russian nobleman. And he made up his mind that next time he went shooting he would certainly adopt the same getup.

"Well, and what about our host?" he asked.

"A young wife," said Stepan Arkadyevich, smiling.

"Yes, and such a charming one!"

"He came down dressed. No doubt he's run up to her again."

Stepan Arkadyevich guessed right. Levin had run up again to his wife to ask her once more if she forgave him for his idiocy yesterday, and, moreover, to beg her in Christ's name to be more careful. The great thing was for her to keep away from the children they might any minute jostle against her. Then he had once more to hear her declare that she was not angry with him for going away for two days, and to beg her to be sure to send a note next morning by a servant on horseback, to write him, if it were but two words only, to let him know that all was well with her.

Kitty was distressed, as she always was, at parting for a couple of days from her husband, but when she saw his eager figure, looking big and strong in his shooting boots and his white blouse, and a sort of sportsman elation and excitement incomprehensible to her, she forgot her own chagrin for the sake of his pleasure, and said good−by to him cheerfully.

"Pardon, gentlemen!" he said, running out on the steps. "Have you put the lunch in? Why is the chestnut on the right? Well, it doesn't matter. Laska, down; go and lie down!"

"Put them with the herd of heifers," he said to the herdsman who was waiting for him at the steps to ask him what was to be done with the geld oxen. "Excuse me, here comes another villain."

Levin jumped out of the droshky, in which he had already taken his seat, to meet the carpenter, who came toward the steps with a rule in his hand.

"You didn't come to the countinghouse yesterday, and now you're detaining me. Well, what is it?"

"Would your honor let me make another turning? There's only three steps to add. And we make it just fit at the same time. It will be much more convenient."

"You should have listened to me," Levin answered with annoyance. "I said: Put the lines and then fit in the steps. Now there's no setting it right. Do as I told you, and make a new staircase."

The point was that in the wing that was being built the carpenter had spoiled the staircase, fitting it together without calculating the space it was to fill, so that the steps were all sloping when it was put in place. Now the carpenter wanted to keep the same staircase, by adding three steps.

"It will be much better."

"But where's your staircase coming out with its three steps?"

"Why, upon my word, sir," the carpenter said with a contemptuous smile. "It comes out right at the very spot. It starts here," he said, with a persuasive gesture, "then it'll go up, and go up and come out."

"But three steps will add to the length too... where is it to come out?"

"Why, to be sure, it'll go up, and come out," the carpenter said obstinately and convincingly.

"It'll reach the ceiling and the wall."

"Upon my word! Why, it'll go up, and go up, and come out like this."

Levin took out a ramrod and began sketching him the staircase in the dust.

"There, do you see?"

"As your honor likes," said the carpenter, with a sudden gleam in his eyes, obviously understanding the thing at last. "It seems it'll be best to make a new one."

"Well, then, do it as you're told," Levin shouted, seating himself in the droshky. "Down! Hold the dogs, Philip!"

Levin felt now at leaving behind all his family and household cares such an eager sense of joy in life and expectation that he was not disposed to talk. Besides that, he had that feeling of concentrated excitement that every sportsman experiences as he approaches the scene of action. If he had anything on his mind at that moment, it was only the doubt whether they would start anything in the Kolpensky marsh, whether Laska would show to advantage in comparison with Krak, and whether he would shoot well that day himself. Not to disgrace himself before a new spectator not to be outdone by Oblonsky that too was a thought that crossed his brain.

Oblonsky was feeling the same, and he too was not talkative. Vassenka Veslovsky alone kept up a ceaseless flow of cheerful chatter. As he listened to him now, Levin felt ashamed to think how unfair he had been to him the day before. Vassenka was really a fine fellow, simple, goodhearted, and very good−humored. If Levin had met him before he was married, he would have made friends with him. Levin rather disliked his holiday attitude to life and a sort of free and easy assumption of elegance. It was as though he assumed a high degree of importance in himself that could not be disputed, because he had long nails and a stylish cap, and everything else to correspond; but this could be forgiven for the sake of his good nature and good breeding. Levin liked him for his good education, for speaking French and English with such an excellent accent, and for being a man of his world.

Vassenka was extremely delighted with the left outrigger, a horse of the Don steppes. He kept praising him enthusiastically. "How fine it must be galloping over the steppes on a steppe horse! Eh? Isn't it?" he said. He had imagined riding on a steppe horse as something wild and romantic, and it turned out nothing of the sort. But his simplicity, particularly in conjunction with his good looks, his amiable smile, and the grace of his movements, was very attractive. Either because his nature was sympathetic to Levin, or because Levin was trying to atone for his sins of the previous evening by seeing nothing but what was good in him at any rate, he liked his society.

After they had driven three verstas from home, Veslovsky all at once felt for a cigar and his pocketbook, and did not know whether he had lost them or left them on the table. In the pocketbook there were three hundred and seventy roubles, and so the matter could not be left in uncertainty.

"Do you know what, Levin, I'll gallop home on that outrigger. That will be splendid. Eh?" he said, preparing to get out.

"No, why should you?" answered Levin, calculating that Vassenka could hardly weigh less than six poods. "I'll send the coachman."

The coachman rode back on the outrigger, and Levin himself drove the remaining pair.

IX.

"Well, now, what's our plan of campaign? Tell us all about it," said Stepan Arkadyevich.

"Our plan is this. Now we're driving to Gvozdiov. In Gvozdiov there's a double snipe marsh on this side, and beyond Gvozdiov come some magnificent jacksnipe marshes, where there are double snipe too. It's hot now, and we'll get there it's twenty verstas toward evening, and have some evening shooting; we'll spend the night there and go on tomorrow to the bigger moors."

"And is there nothing on the way?"

"Yes; but we'll save ourselves; besides, it's hot. There are two good little places, but I doubt there being anything to shoot."

Levin would himself have liked to go into these little places, but they were near home; he could shoot them over any time, and they were only little places there would hardly be room for three to shoot. And so, with some insincerity, he said that he doubted there being anything to shoot. When they reached a little marsh Levin would have driven by, but Stepan Arkadyevich, with the experienced eye of a sportsman, at once detected a soggy spot visible from the road.

"Shan't we try that?" he said, pointing to the little marsh.

"Levin, do, please! How delightful!" Vassenka Veslovsky began begging, and Levin could not but consent.

Before they had time to stop, the dogs had flown one before the other into the marsh.

"Krak! Laska!..."

The dogs came back.

"There won't be room for three. I'll stay here," said Levin, hoping they would find nothing but pewits, which had been startled by the dogs, and, turning over in their flight, were plaintively wailing over the marsh.

"No! Come along, Levin, let's go together!" Veslovsky called.

"Really, there's no room. Laska, back, Laska! You won't want another dog, will you?"

Levin remained with the droshky, and looked enviously at the sportsmen. They walked across the marsh. Except one moor hen and pewits, of which Vassenka killed one, there was nothing in the marsh.

"Come, you see now that it was not that I grudged the marsh," said Levin, "only it's wasting time."

"Oh, no, it was jolly all the same. Did you see us?" said Vassenka Veslovsky, clambering awkwardly into the droshky with his gun and his pewit in his hands. "How splendidly I shot this bird! Didn't I? Well, shall we soon be getting to the real place?"

The horses started off suddenly, Levin knocked his head against the stock of someone's gun, and there was the report of a shot. The gun did actually go off first, but that was how it seemed to Levin. It appeared that Vassenka Veslovsky making the cocks safe had pressed one trigger, and had held back the other cock. The charge flew into the ground without doing harm to anyone. Stepan Arkadyevich shook his head and laughed reprovingly at Veslovsky. But Levin had not the heart to reprove him. In the first place, any reproach would have seemed to be called forth by the danger he had incurred and the bump that had come up on Levin's forehead. And besides, Veslovsky was at first so naively distressed, and then laughed so good−humoredly and infectiously at their general dismay, that one could not but laugh with him.

When they reached the second marsh, which was fairly large, and would inevitably take some time to shoot over, Levin tried to persuade them to pass it by. But Veslovsky again talked him over. Again, as the marsh was narrow, Levin, like a good host, remained with the carriages.

Krak made straight for hummocks; Vassenka Veslovsky was the first to run after the dog. Before Stepan Arkadyevich had time to come up, a double snipe flew out. Veslovsky missed it and it flew into an unmown meadow. This double snipe was left for Veslovsky to follow up. Krak found it again and pointed, and Veslovsky shot it and went back to the carriages.

"Now you go and I'll stay with the horses," he said.

Levin had begun to feel the pangs of a sportsman's envy. He handed the reins to Veslovsky and walked into the marsh.

Laska, who had been plaintively whining and fretting against the injustice of her treatment, flew straight ahead to an unfailing place, covered with mossy hummocks, that Levin knew well, and that Krak had not yet come upon.

"Why don't you stop her?" shouted Stepan Arkadyevich.

"She won't scare them," answered Levin, sympathizing with his bitch's pleasure and hurrying after her.

As she came nearer and nearer to the familiar hummocks there was more and more earnestness in Laska's exploration. A little marsh bird did not divert her attention for more than an instant. She made one circuit round the hummocks, was beginning a second, and suddenly quivered with excitement and stood stock−still.

"Come, come, Stiva!" shouted Levin, feeling his heart beginning to beat more violently; and all of a sudden, as though some sort of shutter had been drawn back from his straining ears, all sounds, confused but loud, began to beat on his hearing, losing all sense of distance. He heard the steps of Stepan Arkadyevich, mistaking them for the tramp of the horses in the distance; he heard the brittle sound of the tussock which came off with its roots when he had trodden on a hummock, and he took this sound for the flight of a double snipe. He heard too, not far behind him, a splashing in the water, which he could not explain to himself.

Picking his steps, he moved up to the dog.

"Fetch it!"

Not a double but a jacksnipe flew up from beside the dog. Levin had lifted his gun, but at the very instant when he was taking aim, the sound of splashing grew louder, came closer, and was joined with the sound of Veslovsky's voice, shouting something with strange loudness. Levin saw he had his gun pointed behind the snipe, but still he fired.

When he had made sure he had missed, Levin looked round and saw the horses and the droshky not on the road but in the marsh.

Veslovsky, eager to see the shooting, had driven into the marsh, and got the horses stuck in the mud.

"Damn the fellow!" Levin said to himself, as he went back to the carriage that had sunk in the mire. "What did you drive in for?" he said to him dryly, and, calling the coachman he began pulling the horses out.

Levin was vexed both at being hindered from shooting and at his horses getting stuck in the mud, and still more at the fact that neither Stepan Arkadyevich nor Veslovsky helped him and the coachman to unharness the horses and

get them out, since neither of them had the slightest notion of harnessing. Without answering a syllable to Vassenka's protestations that it had been quite dry there, Levin worked in silence with the coachman at extricating the horses. But then, as he got warm at the work and saw how assiduously Veslovsky was tugging at the droshky by one of the splashboards, so that he broke it indeed, Levin blamed himself for having under the influence of yesterday's feelings been too cold to Veslovsky, and tried to be particularly genial so as to smooth over his chilliness. When everything had been put right, and the vehicles had been brought back to the road, Levin had the lunch served.

"Bon appetit bonne conscience! Ce poulet va tomber jusqu'au fond de mes bottes," Vassenka, who had recovered his spirits, quoted the French saying as he finished his second chicken. "Well, now our troubles are over, now everything's going to go well. Only, to atone for my sins, I'm bound to sit on the box. That's so? Eh? No, no! I'll be your Automedon. You shall see how I'll get you along," he answered, without letting go the rein, when Levin begged him to let the coachman drive. "No, I must atone for my sins, and I'm very comfortable on the box." And he drove.

Levin was a little afraid he would exhaust the horses, especially the left of them, the chestnut, whom he did not know how to hold in; but unconsciously he fell under the influence of his gaiety and listened to the songs he sang all the way on the box, or the descriptions and representations he gave of driving in the English fashion, four−in−hand; and it was in the very best of spirits that after lunch they drove to the Gvozdiov marsh.

X.

Vassenka drove the horses so fast that they reached the marsh too early, while it was still hot.

As they drew near this more important marsh, the chief aim of their expedition, Levin could not help considering how he could get rid of Vassenka and be free in his movements. Stepan Arkadyevich evidently had the same desire, and on his face Levin saw the look of anxiety always present in a true sportsman when beginning shooting, together with a certain good−humored slyness peculiar to him.

"How shall we go? It's a splendid marsh, I see, and there are hawks," said Stepan Arkadyevich, pointing to two great birds hovering over the sedge. "Where there are hawks, there is sure to be game."

"Now, gentlemen," said Levin, pulling up his boots and examining the lock of his gun with a somewhat somber expression, "do you see that sedge?" He pointed to an oasis of blackish green in the huge half−mown wet meadow that stretched along the right bank of the river. "The marsh begins here, straight in front of us, do you see where it is greener? From here it runs to the right where the horses are; there are hummocks there, and double snipe, and all round that sedge as far as that alder tree, and right up to the mill. Over there, do you see, where the creek is? That's the best place. There I once shot seventeen jacksnipe. We'll separate with the dogs and go in different directions, and then meet over there at the mill."

"Well, who'll go left, and who to the right?" asked Stepan Arkadyevich. "It's wider to the right; you two go that way and I'll take the left," he said with apparent carelessness.

"Capital! We'll make the bigger bag! Yes, come along, come along!" Vassenka exclaimed.

Levin could do nothing but agree, and they divided.

As soon as they entered the marsh, the two dogs began hunting about together and made toward the rust−colored spot. Levin knew Laska's method, wary and indefinite; he knew the place too, and expected a whole covey of snipe.

"Veslovsky, walk beside me beside me!" he said in a faint voice to his companion splashing in the water behind him. Levin could not help feeling an interest in the direction his gun was pointed, after that casual shot near the Kolpensky marsh.

"Oh, I won't get in your way, don't trouble about me."

But Levin could not help troubling, and recalled Kitty's words at parting: "Mind you don't shoot one another." The dogs came nearer and nearer, passed each other, each pursuing its own scent. The expectation of snipe was so intense that to Levin the smacking sound of his own heel, as he drew it up out of the rusty mire, seemed to be the call of a snipe, and he clutched and pressed the butt of his gun.

Bang! bang! sounded almost in his ear. Vassenka had fired at a flock of ducks which was hovering over the marsh and flying at that moment toward the sportsmen, far out of range. Before Levin had time to look round, there was the whir of one snipe, another, a third, and some eight more rose one after another.

Stepan Arkadyevich hit one at the very moment when it was beginning its zigzag movements, and the snipe fell as a clod into the quagmire. Oblonsky aimed deliberately at another, still flying low toward the sedge, and together with the report of the shot, that snipe too fell, and it could be seen fluttering out where the sedge had been cut, its unhurt wing showing white beneath.

Levin was not so lucky: he aimed at his first bird too low, and missed; he aimed at it again, just as it was rising, but at that instant another snipe flew up at his very feet, distracting him so that he missed again.

While they were reloading their guns, another snipe rose, and Veslovsky, who had had time to reload again, sent two charges of small shot into the water. Stepan Arkadyevich picked up his snipe, and with sparkling eyes looked at Levin.

"Well, now let us separate," said Stepan Arkadyevich, and limping on his left foot, holding his gun in readiness and whistling to his dog, he walked off in one direction. Levin and Veslovsky walked off in the other.

It always happened with Levin that when his first shots were a failure he got heated and out of temper, and shot badly the whole day. So was it that day. The snipe showed themselves in numbers. They kept flying up from just under the dogs, from under the sportsmen's legs, and Levin might have retrieved his ill luck. But the more he shot, the more he felt disgraced in the eyes of Veslovsky, who kept popping away merrily and indiscriminately, killing nothing, and not in the slightest abashed by his ill success. Levin, in feverish haste, could not restrain himself, got more and more out of temper, and ended by shooting almost without a hope of hitting. Laska, indeed, seemed to understand this. She began searching more listlessly, and gazed back at the sportsmen with apparent perplexity or reproach in her eyes. Shots followed shots in rapid succession. The smoke of the powder hung about the sportsmen, while in the great roomy net of the gamebag there were only three light, small snipe. And of these one had been killed by Veslovsky alone, and one by both of them together. Meanwhile, from the other side of the marsh, came the sound of Stepan Arkadyevich's shots, not frequent, but, as Levin fancied, well directed, for almost after each they heard "Krak, Krak, apporte!"

This excited Levin still more. The snipe were floating continually in the air over the sedge. Their whirring wings close to the earth, and their harsh cries high in the air, could be heard on all sides; the snipe that had risen first and flown up into the air, settled again before the sportsmen. Instead of two hawks there were now dozens of them hovering with shrill cries over the marsh.

After walking through the larger half of the marsh, Levin and Veslovsky reached the place where the peasants' mowing grass was divided into long strips reaching to the sedge, marked off in one place by the trampled grass, in another by a path mown through it. Half of these strips had already been mown.

Though there was not so much hope of finding birds in the uncut part as the cut part, Levin had promised Stepan Arkadyevich to meet him, and so he walked on with his companion through the cut and uncut patches.

"Hi, hunters!" shouted one of a group of peasants, sitting on an unharnessed telega: "Come and have some lunch with us! Have a drop of wine!"

Levin looked round.

"Come along, it's all right!" shouted a good−humored−looking bearded peasant with a red face, showing his white teeth in a grin, and holding up a greenish bottle that flashed in the sunlight.

"Qu'est−ce qu'ils disent?" asked Veslovsky.

"They invite you to have some vodka. Most likely they've been dividing the meadow into lots. I should have some," said Levin, not without some guile, hoping Veslovsky would be tempted by the vodka, and would go off to them.

"Why do they offer it?"

"Oh, they're merrymaking. Really, you should join them. You would be interested."

"Allons, c'est curieux."

"You go, you go, you'll find the way to the mill!" cried Levin, and looking round he perceived with satisfaction that Veslovsky, bent and stumbling with weariness, holding his gun out at arm's length, was making his way out of the marsh toward the peasants.

"You come too!" the peasant shouted to Levin. "Never fear! Taste our pie!"

Levin felt a strong inclination for a drink of vodka and a bite of bread. He was exhausted, and felt it a great effort to drag his staggering legs out of the mire, and for a minute he hesitated. But Laska was pointing. And immediately all his weariness vanished, and he walked lightly through the swamp toward the dog. A snipe flew up at his feet; he fired and killed it. Laska still pointed. "Fetch it!" Another bird flew up close to the dog. Levin fired. But it was an unlucky day for him; he missed it, and when he went to look for the one he had shot, he could not find that either. He wandered all about the sedge, but Laska did not believe he had shot it, and when he sent her to find it, she pretended to hunt for it, but did not really do so.

And in the absence of Vassenka, on whom Levin threw the blame of his failure, things went no better. There was plenty of snipe still, but Levin made one miss after another.

The slanting rays of the sun were still hot; his clothes, soaked through with perspiration, stuck to his body; his left boot full of water weighed heavily on his leg and squelched at every step; the sweat ran in drops down his powder−grimed face, his mouth was full of a bitter taste, his nose of the smell of powder and stagnant water, his ears were ringing with the incessant whir of the snipe; he could not touch the barrel of his gun, it was so hot; his heart beat with short, rapid throbs; his hands shook with excitement, and his weary legs stumbled and staggered over the hummocks and in the swamp, but still he walked on and still he shot. At last, after a disgraceful miss, he flung his gun and his hat on the ground.

"No, I must control myself," he said to himself. Picking up his gun and his hat, he called Laska, and went out of the swamp. When he got onto dry ground he sat down on a hummock, pulled off his boot and emptied it, then walked to the marsh, drank some rust−tasting water, moistened the burning hot barrel of his gun, and washed his

face and hands. Feeling refreshed, he went back to the spot where a snipe had settled, firmly resolved to keep cool.

He tried to be calm, but it was the same again. His finger pressed the trigger before he had taken a good aim at the bird. It got worse and worse.

He had only five birds in his gamebag when he walked out of the marsh toward the alders, where he was to rejoin Stepan Arkadyevich.

Before he caught sight of Stepan Arkadyevich he saw his dog. Krak, black all over with the stinking mire of the marsh, darted out from behind the twisted root of an alder, and, with the air of a conqueror, sniffed Laska. Behind Krak there came into view in the shade of the alder tree the shapely figure of Stepan Arkadyevich. He came to meet him, red and perspiring, with unbuttoned neckband, still limping in the same way.

"Well? You have been popping away!" he said, smiling good−humoredly.

"How have you got on?" queried Levin. But there was no need to ask, for he had already seen the full gamebag.

"Oh, pretty fair."

He had fourteen birds.

"A splendid marsh! I've no doubt Veslovsky got in your way. It's awkward too, shooting with one dog," said Stepan Arkadyevich, to soften his triumph.

XI.

When Levin and Stepan Arkadyevich reached the peasant's hut where Levin always used to stay, Veslovsky was already there. He was sitting in the middle of the hut, clinging with both hands to the bench from which he was being pulled by a soldier, the brother of the peasant's wife, who was helping him off with his miry boots. Veslovsky was laughing his infectious, good−humored laugh.

"I've only just come. Ils ont ete charmants. Just fancy they gave me drink, and fed me! Such bread it was exquisite! Dilicieux! And the vodka I never tasted any better. And they would not take a penny for anything. And they kept saying: 'Excuse our homely ways.'"

"What should they take anything for? They were entertaining you, to be sure. Do you suppose they keep vodka for sale?" said the soldier, succeeding at last in pulling the soaked boot off, together with the blackened stocking.

In spite of the dirtiness of the hut, which was all muddied by their boots and the filthy dogs licking themselves clean, and the smells of the marsh and the powder that filled the room, and the absence of knives and forks, the party drank their tea and ate their supper with a relish only known to sportsmen. Washed and clean, they went into a hay barn swept ready for them, where the coachmen had been making up beds for the gentlemen.

Though it was dusk, not one of them wanted to go to sleep.

After wavering among reminiscences and anecdotes of guns, of dogs, and of former shooting parties, the conversation rested on a topic that interested all of them. After Vassenka had several times over expressed his appreciation of this delightful sleeping place among the fragrant hay, this delightful broken telega (he supposed it to be broken because the shafts had been taken out), of the good nature of the peasants who had treated him to

vodka, of the dogs who lay at the feet of their respective masters, Oblonsky began telling them of a delightful shooting party at Malthus's where he had stayed the previous summer. Malthus was a well−known capitalist, who had made his money by speculation in railway shares. Stepan Arkadyevich described what snipe moors this Malthus had taken on lease in the Tver province, and how they were preserved, and of the carriages and dogcarts in which the shooting party had been driven, and the luncheon pavilion that had been rigged up at the marsh.

"I don't understand you," said Levin, sitting up in the hay; "how is it such people don't disgust you? I can understand a lunch with Lafitte is all very pleasant, but don't you dislike just that very sumptuousness? All these people, just like our tax farmers in the old days, get their money in a way that gains them the contempt of everyone. They don't care for their contempt, and then they use their dishonest gains to buy off the contempt they have deserved."

"Perfectly true!" chimed in Vassenka Veslovsky. "Perfectly! Oblonsky, of course, goes out of bonhomie, but other people say: 'Well, Oblonsky stays with them.'"

"Not a bit of it." Levin could hear that Oblonsky was smiling as he spoke. "I simply don't consider him more dishonest than any other wealthy merchant or nobleman. They've all made their money alike by their work and their intelligence."

"Oh, by what work? Do you call it work to get hold of concessions and speculate with them?"

"Of course it's work. Work in this sense, that if it were not for him and others like him, there would have been no railways."

"But that's not work, like the work of a peasant, or in a learned profession."

"Granted, but it's work in the sense that his activity produces a result the railways. But of course you think the railways useless."

"No, that's another question; I am disposed to admit that they're useful. But all profit that is out of proportion to the labor expended is dishonest."

"But who is to define what is proportionate?"

"Making profit by dishonest means, by trickery," said Levin, conscious that he could not draw a distinct line between honesty and dishonesty. "Such as banking, for instance," he went on. "It's an evil the amassing of huge fortunes without labor, just the same thing as with the tax farmers it's only the form that's changed. Le roi est mort, vive le roi! No sooner were the tax farmers abolished than the railways came up, and banking companies; that, too, is profit without work."

"Yes, that may all be very true and clever.... Lie down, Krak!" Stepan Arkadyevich called to his dog, who was scratching and turning over all the hay. He was obviously convinced of the correctness of his position, and so talked serenely and without haste. "But you have not drawn the line between honest and dishonest work. That I receive a bigger salary than my chief clerk, though he knows more about the work than I do that's dishonest, I suppose?"

"I can't say."

"Well, but I can tell you: your receiving some five thousand, let's say, for your work on the land, while our host, the peasant here, however hard he works, can never get more than fifty roubles, is just as dishonest as my earning more than my chief clerk, and Malthus getting more than a railway expert. No, quite the contrary; I see that

society takes up a sort of antagonistic attitude to these people, which is utterly baseless, and I fancy there's envy at the bottom of it...."

"No, that's unfair," said Veslovsky; "how could envy come in? There is something unclean about that sort of business."

"You say," Levin went on, "that it's unjust for me to receive five thousand, while the peasant has fifty roubles; that's true. It is unfair, and I feel it, but..."

"It really is. Why is it we spend our time riding, drinking, shooting, doing nothing while they are forever at work?" said Vassenka Veslovsky, obviously for the first time in his life reflecting on the question, and consequently considering it with perfect sincerity.

"Yes, you feel it, but you don't give him your property," said Stepan Arkadyevich, intentionally, as it seemed, provoking Levin.

There had arisen of late something like a secret antagonism between the two brothers−in−law; as though, since they had married sisters, a kind of rivalry had sprung up between them as to which was ordering his life best, and now this hostility showed itself in the conversation, as it began to take a personal note.

"I don't give it away, because no one demands that from me, and if I wanted to, I could not give it away," answered Levin, "and have no one to give it to."

"Give it to this peasant, he would not refuse it."

"Yes, but how am I to give it up? Am I to go to him and make a title deed?"

"I don't know; but if you are convinced that you have no right..."

"I'm not at all convinced. On the contrary, I feel have no right to give it up, that I have duties both to the land and to my family."

"No, excuse me, but if you consider this inequality is unjust, why is it you don't act accordingly?..."

"Well, I do act negatively on that idea, so far as not trying to increase the difference of position existing between him and me."

"No, excuse me, that's a paradox."

"Yes, there's something of a sophistry about that," Veslovsky agreed. "Ah! Our host!" he said to the peasant who came into the barn, opening the creaking door. "How is it you're not asleep yet?"

"No, how's one to sleep! I thought our gentlemen would be asleep, but I heard them chattering. I want to get a hook from here. She won't bite?" he added, stepping cautiously with his bare feet.

"And where are you going to sleep?"

"We are going out for night watching."

"Ah, what a night!" said Veslovsky, looking out at the edge of the hut and the unharnessed droshky that could be seen in the faint light of the evening glow in the great frame of the open doors. "But listen, there are women's

voices singing, and, on my word, not badly too! Who's that singing, my friend?"

"That's the housemaids from hard by here."

"Let's go let's take a walk! We shan't go to sleep, you know. Oblonsky, come along!"

"If one could only do both, lie here and go," answered Oblonsky, stretching. "It's capital lying here."

"Well, I shall go by myself," said Veslovsky, getting up eagerly, and putting on his boots and stockings. "Good−by, gentlemen. If it's fun, I'll fetch you. You've treated me to some good sport, and I won't forget you."

"He really is a capital fellow, isn't he?" said Stepan Arkadyevich when Veslovsky had gone out and the peasant had closed the door after him.

"Yes, capital," answered Levin, still thinking of the subject of their conversation just before. It seemed to him that he had clearly expressed his thoughts and feelings to the best of his capacity, and yet both of them, straightforward men and not fools, had said with one voice that he was comforting himself with sophistries. This disconcerted him.

"It's just this, my dear boy. One must do one of two things: either admit that the existing order of society is just, and then stick up for one's rights in it; or acknowledge that you are enjoying unjust privileges, as I do, and then enjoy them and be satisfied."

"No, if it were unjust, you could not enjoy these advantages and be satisfied at least I could not. The great thing for me is to feel that I'm not to blame."

"What do you say why not go after all?" said Stepan Arkadyevich, evidently weary of the strain of thought. "We shan't go to sleep, you know. Come, let's go!"

Levin did not answer. What they had said in the conversation that he acted justly only in a negative sense absorbed his thoughts. "Can it be that it's only possible to be just negatively?" he was asking himself.

"How strong the smell of the fresh hay is, though," said Stepan Arkadyevich, getting up. "There's not a chance of sleeping. Vassenka has been getting up some fun there. Do you hear the laughter and his voice? Hadn't we better go? Come along!"

"No, I'm not coming," answered Levin.

"Surely that's not a matter of principle too," said Stepan Arkadyevich, smiling, as he felt about in the dark for his cap.

"It's not a matter of principle, but why should I go?"

"But do you know you are preparing trouble for yourself," said Stepan Arkadyevich, finding his cap and getting up.

"How so?"

"Do you suppose I don't see the line you've taken up with your wife? I heard how it's a question of the greatest consequence, whether or not you're to be away for a couple of days' shooting. That's all very well as an idyllic episode, but for your whole life that won't answer. A man must be independent; he has his masculine interests. A

man has to be manly," said Oblonsky, opening the door.

"In what way? To go running after servant girls?" said Levin.

"Why not, if it amuses him? Ca ne tire pas a consequence. It won't do my wife any harm, and it'll amuse me. The great thing is to respect the sanctity of the home. There should be nothing in the home. But don't tie your own hands."

"Perhaps so," said Levin dryly, and he turned on his side. "Tomorrow, early, I want to go shooting, and I won't wake anyone, and shall set off at daybreak."

"Messieurs, venez vite!" they heard the voice of Veslovsky coming back. "Charmante! I've made such a discovery. Charmante! A perfect Gretchen, and I've already made friends with her. Really, exceedingly pretty," he declared in a tone of approval, as though she had been made pretty entirely on his account, and he were expressing his satisfaction with the entertainment that had been provided for him.

Levin pretended to be asleep, while Oblonsky, putting on his slippers, and lighting a cigar, walked out of the barn, and soon their voices were lost.

For a long while Levin could not get to sleep. He heard his horses munching hay, then he heard the peasant and his elder boy getting ready, and then going off for the night watching, then he heard the soldier arranging his bed on the other side of the barn, with his nephew, the younger son of their peasant host. He heard the boy in his shrill little voice telling his uncle what he thought about the dogs, who seemed to him huge and terrible creatures, and asking what the dogs were going to hunt next day, and the soldier in a husky, sleepy voice, telling him the sportsmen were going in the morning to the marsh, and would shoot with their guns; and then, to check the boy's questions, he said, "Go to sleep, Vaska; go to sleep or you'll catch it," and soon after he began snoring himself, and everything was still. He could only hear the neigh of the horses, and the guttural cry of a snipe. "Is it really only negative? he repeated to himself. "Well, what of it? It's not my fault." And he began thinking about the next day.

"Tomorrow I'll go out early, and I'll make a point of keeping cool. There are lots of snipe; and there are double snipe too. When I come back there'll be the note from Kitty. Yes, Stiva may be right, I'm not manly with her, I'm tied to her apron strings.... Well, it can't be helped! Negative again...."

Half asleep, he heard the laughter and mirthful talk of Veslovsky and Stepan Arkadyevich. For an instant he opened his eyes: the moon was up, and in the open doorway, brightly lighted up by the moonlight, they were standing talking. Stepan Arkadyevich was saying something of the freshness of one girl, comparing her to a freshly peeled nut, and Veslovsky with his infectious laugh was repeating some words, probably said to him by a peasant: "Ah, you'd better get round your own wife!" Levin, half asleep, said:

"Gentlemen, tomorrow before daylight!" and fell asleep.

XII.

Waking up at earliest dawn, Levin tried to wake his companions. Vassenka, lying on his stomach, with one leg in a stocking thrust out, was sleeping so soundly that he could elicit no response. Oblonsky, half asleep, declined to get up so early. Even Laska, who was asleep, curled up in the hay, got up unwillingly, and lazily stretched out and straightened her hind legs one after the other. Getting on his boots, taking his gun, and carefully opening the creaking door of the barn, Levin went out into the road. The coachmen were sleeping near their carriages; the horses were dozing. Only one was lazily eating oats, scattering them in the manger when snorting. It was still gray

out−of−doors.

"Why are you up so early, my dear?" the old woman, their hostess, said, coming out of the hut and addressing him affectionately as an old friend.

"Going shooting, auntie. Do I go this way to the marsh?"

"Straight out at the back; by our threshing floor, my dear, and hemp patches; there's a little footpath."

Stepping carefully with her sunburned, bare feet, the old woman conducted Levin, and moved back the gate for him by the threshing floor.

"Straight ahead, and you'll come to the marsh. Our lads drove the horses there yesterday evening."

Laska ran eagerly forward along the little path. Levin followed her with a light, rapid step, continually looking at the sky. He hoped the sun would not be up before he reached the marsh. But the sun did not delay. The moon, which had been bright when he went out, by now shone only like a crescent of quicksilver. The rosy flush of dawn, which one could not help seeing before, now had to be sought to be discerned at all. What before had been undefined, vague blurs in the distant countryside, could now be distinctly seen. They were sheaves of rye. The dew, not visible till the sun was up, wetted Levin's legs and his blouse above his belt in the high−growing, fragrant hemp patch, from which the male plants had already been gathered in. In the transparent stillness of morning the smallest sounds were audible. A bee flew by Levin's ear with the whizzing sound of a bullet. He looked carefully, and saw a second and a third. They were all flying from the beehives behind the hedge, and they disappeared over the hemp patch in the direction of the marsh. The path led straight to the marsh. The marsh could be recognized by the mist which rose from it, thicker in one place and thinner in another, so that the sedge and willow bushes swayed like islands in this mist. At the edge of the marsh and the road peasant boys and men, who had been herding for the night, were lying, and in the dawn all were asleep under their coats. Not far from them were three hobbled horses. One of them clanked a chain. Laska walked beside her master, pressing a little forward and looking round. Passing the sleeping peasants and reaching the first reeds, Levin examined his percussion caps and unleashed his dog. One of the horses, a sleek, dark−brown three−year−old, seeing the dog, started away, switched its tail and snorted. The other horses too were frightened, and splashing through the water with their hobbled legs, and drawing their hoofs out of the thick mud with a squelching sound, they bounded out of the marsh. Laska stopped, looking ironically at the horses and inquiringly at Levin. Levin patted Laska, and whistled as a sign that she might begin.

Laska ran joyfully and anxiously through the quagmire that quaked under her.

Running into the marsh among the familiar scents of roots, marsh plants, and dross, and the extraneous smell of horse manure, Laska detected at once a smell that pervaded the whole marsh, the scent of that strong−smelling bird that always excited her more than any other. Here and there among the moss and marsh plants this scent was very strong, but it was impossible to determine in which direction it grew stronger or fainter. To find the direction, she had to get farther away from the wind. Not feeling the motion of her legs, Laska bounded with a still gallop, so that at each bound she could stop short, to the right, away from the wind that blew from the east before sunrise, and turned facing the wind. Sniffing in the air with dilated nostrils, she felt at once that not their traces only, but they themselves, were here before her not one, but many. Laska slackened her speed. They were here, but where precisely she could not yet determine. To find the very spot, she began to make a circle, when suddenly her master's voice drew her off. "Laska! Here!" he said, pointing her to a different direction. She stopped, asking him if she had better not go on doing as she had begun. But he repeated his command in an angry voice, pointing to a hummock spot covered with water, where there could not be anything. She obeyed him, pretending she was searching so as to please him, went round it, and went back to her former position, and was at once aware of the scent again. Now when he was not hindering her, she knew what to do, and, without looking at

what was under her feet, and to her vexation stumbling over a hummock into the water, but righting herself with her strong, supple legs, she began making the circuit which was to make all clear to her. The scent of them reached her, stronger and stronger, and more and more defined, and all at once it became perfectly clear to her that one of them was here, behind this hummock, five paces in front of her; she stopped, and her whole body was still and rigid. On her short legs she could see nothing in front of her, but by the scent she knew it was sitting not more than five paces off. She stood still, feeling more and more conscious of it, and enjoying it in anticipation. Her tail was stretched straight and tense, and only wagged at the extreme tip. Her mouth was slightly open, her ears raised. One ear had been turned wrong side out as she ran up, and she breathed heavily but warily, and still more warily she turned around, but more with her eyes than her head, to her master. He was coming along with the face she knew so well, though the eyes were always terrible to her. He stumbled over the hummocks as he came, and moved, as she thought, extraordinarily slowly. She thought he came slowly, but he was running.

Noticing Laska's special attitude as she crouched on the ground, as it were, scratching big prints with her hind paws, and with her mouth slightly open, Levin knew she was pointing at double snipe, and with an inward prayer for luck, especially with the first bird, he ran up to her. Coming quite close up to her, he could from his height look beyond her, and he saw with his eyes what she was seeing with her nose. In a space between two little hummocks, at a couple of yards' distance, he could see a double snipe. Turning its head, it was listening. Then lightly preening and folding its wings, it disappeared round a corner with a clumsy wag of its tail.

"Fetch it, fetch it!" shouted Levin, giving Laska a shove from behind.

"But I can't go," thought Laska. "Where am I to go? From here I feel them, but if I move forward I shall know nothing of where they are, or who they are." But then he shoved her with his knee, and in an excited whisper said, "Fetch it, Lassochka, fetch it."

"Well, if that's what he wishes, I'll do it, but I can't answer for myself now," she thought, and darted forward as fast as her legs would carry her between the hummocks. She scented nothing now; she could only see and hear, without understanding anything.

Ten paces from her former place a double snipe rose with a guttural cry and the peculiar convex sound of its wings. And immediately after the shot it splashed heavily with its white breast on the wet mire. Another bird did not linger, but rose behind Levin, without the dog's offices.

When Levin turned toward it, it was already some way off. But his shot caught it. Flying twenty paces farther, the second double snipe rose upward, and, whirling round like a ball, dropped heavily on a dry place.

"Come, this is going to be some good!" thought Levin, packing the warm and fat snipe into his gamebag. "Eh, Laska, will it be good?"

When Levin, after reloading his gun, moved on, the sun had fully risen, though unseen behind clouds. The moon had lost all of its luster, and was like a white cloud in the sky. Not a single star could be seen. The soggy places, silvery with dew before, now shone like gold. The rusty pools were all like amber. The blue of the grass had changed to yellow green. The marsh birds twittered and swarmed about the brook and upon the bushes that glittered with dew and cast long shadows. A hawk woke up and settled on a haycock, turning its head from side to side and looking discontentedly at the marsh. Crows were flying about the field, and a barelegged boy was driving the horses to an old man, who had got up from under his long coat and was combing his hair. The smoke from the gun was white as milk over the green of the grass.

One of the boys ran up to Levin.

"Uncle, there were ducks here yesterday!" he shouted to him, and he walked a little way off behind him.

And Levin was doubly pleased, in sight of the boy, who expressed his approval, at killing three jacksnipe, one after another, straight off.

XIII.

The sportsman's saying, that if the first beast or the first bird is not missed, the shooting will be lucky, turned out correct.

At ten o'clock Levin, weary, hungry, and happy after a tramp of thirty verstas, returned to his night's lodging with nineteen head of fine game and one duck, which he tied to his belt, as it would not go into the gamebag. His companions had long been awake, and had had time to get hungry and have breakfast.

"Wait a bit, wait a bit, I know there are nineteen," said Levin, counting a second time over the double snipe and jacksnipe, that looked so much less important now, bent and dry and bloodstained, with heads crookedly to one side, than they did when they were flying.

The number was verified, and Stepan Arkadyevich's envy pleased Levin. He was pleased too on returning to find that the man sent by Kitty with a note was already here.

"I am perfectly well and happy. If you were uneasy about me, you can feel easier than ever. I've a new bodyguard, Marya Vlassyevna." (This was the midwife, a new and important personage in Levin's domestic life.) "She has come to have a look at me. She found me perfectly well, and we are holding her till you are back. All are happy and well, and please, don't be in a hurry to come back, but, if the sport is good, stay another day."

These two pleasures, his lucky shooting and the letter from his wife, were so great that two slightly disagreeable incidents passed lightly over Levin. One was that the chestnut trace horse, who had been unmistakably overworked on the previous day, was off his feed and out of sorts. The coachman said the horse was overstrained.

"Overdriven yesterday, Konstantin Dmitrievich!" he said. "Yes, indeed! Driving ten miles without any sense!"

The other unpleasant incident, which for the first minute destroyed his good humor, though later he laughed at it a great deal, was to find that of all the provisions which Kitty had provided in such abundance, that one would have thought there was enough for a week, nothing was left. On his way back, tired and hungry, from shooting, Levin had so distinct a vision of meat pies that as he approached the hut he seemed to smell and taste them, as Laska had smelt the game, and he immediately told Philip to give him some. It appeared that there were no pies left nor even any chicken.

"Well, this fellow's appetite!" said Stepan Arkadyevich, laughing and pointing at Vassenka Veslovsky. "I never suffer from loss of appetite, but he's really marvelous!..."

"Well, it can't be helped," said Levin, looking gloomily at Veslovsky. "Well, Philip, give me some beef, then."

"The beef's been eaten, and the bones given to the dogs," answered Philip.

Levin was so hurt that he said, in a tone of vexation: "You might have left me something!" and he felt ready to cry.

"Then disembowel the game," he said in a shaking voice to Philip, trying not to look at Vassenka, "and cover them with some nettles. And you might at least ask for some milk for me."

But when he had drunk some milk, he felt ashamed immediately at having shown his annoyance to a stranger, and he began to laugh at his hungry mortification.

In the evening they went shooting again, and Veslovsky, too, had several successful shots, and in the night they drove home.

Their homeward journey was as lively as their drive out had been. Veslovsky sang songs and related with enjoyment his adventures with the peasants, who had regaled him with vodka, and said to him, "Excuse our homely ways," and his night's adventures with tug of war, and the servant girl, and the peasant, who had asked him was he married and on learning that he was not, said to him: "Well, mind you don't run after other men's wives you'd better get round your own." These words had particularly amused Veslovsky.

"Altogether, I've enjoyed our outing awfully. And you, Levin?"

"I have, very much," Levin said quite sincerely. It was particularly delightful to him to have got rid of the hostility he had been feeling toward Vassenka Veslovsky at home, and to feel instead the most friendly disposition to him.

XIV.

Next day at ten o'clock Levin, who had already gone his rounds, knocked at the room where Vassenka had been put for the night.

"Entrez!" Veslovsky called to him. "Excuse me, I've only just finished my ablutions," he said, smiling, standing before him in his underclothes only.

"Don't mind me, please," Levin sat down in the window. "Have you slept well?"

"Like the dead. What sort of day is it for shooting?"

"What will you take, tea or coffee?"

"Neither. I'll wait till lunch. I'm really ashamed. I suppose the ladies are down? A walk now would be capital. You show me your horses."

After walking about the garden, visiting the stable, and even doing some gymnastic exercises together on the parallel bars, Levin returned to the house with his guest, and went with him into the drawing room.

"We had splendid shooting, and so many delightful experiences!" said Veslovsky, going up to Kitty, who was sitting at the samovar. "What a pity ladies are cut off from these delights!"

"Well, I suppose he must say something to the lady of the house," Levin said to himself. Again he fancied something in the smile, in the all−conquering air with which their guest addressed Kitty...

The Princess, sitting on the other side of the table with Marya Vlassyevna and Stepan Arkadyevich, called Levin to her side, and began to talk to him about moving to Moscow for Kitty's confinement, and getting ready rooms for them. Just as Levin had disliked all the trivial preparations for his wedding, as derogatory to the grandeur of the event, now he felt still more offensive the preparations for the approaching birth, the date of which they reckoned, it seemed, on their fingers. He tried to turn a deaf ear to these discussions of the best patterns of long clothes for the coming baby; tried to turn away and avoid seeing the mysterious, endless strips of knitting, the triangles of linen, to which Dolly attached special importance, and so on. The birth of a son (he was certain it

would be a son) which was promised him, but which he still could not believe in so marvelous it seemed presented itself to his mind, on one hand, as a happiness so immense, and therefore so incredible; on the other, as an event so mysterious, that this assumption of a definite knowledge of what would be, and consequent preparation for it, as for something ordinary that did happen to people, jarred on him as confusing and humiliating.

But the Princess did not understand his feelings, and put down his reluctance to think and talk about it to carelessness and indifference, and so she gave him no peace. She had commissioned Stepan Arkadyevich to look at an apartment, and now she called Levin to her.

"I know nothing about it, Princess. Do as you think fit," he said.

"You must decide when you will move."

"I really don't know. I know millions of children are born away from Moscow, and doctors... Why..."

"But if so..."

"Oh, no, as Kitty wishes."

"We can't talk to Kitty about it! Do you want me to frighten her? Why, this spring Natalie Golitzina died from having an ignorant doctor."

"I will do just what you say," he said gloomily.

The Princess began talking to him, but he did not hear her. Though the conversation with the Princess had indeed jarred upon him, he was gloomy not on account of that conversation, but from what he saw at the samovar.

"No, it's impossible," he thought, glancing now and then at Vassenka bending over Kitty, telling her something with his charming smile, and at her, flushed and disturbed.

There was something unclean in Vassenka's attitude, in his eyes, in his smile. Levin even saw something unclean in Kitty's attitude and look. And again the light died away in his eyes. Again, as before, all of a sudden, without the slightest transition, he felt cast down from a pinnacle of happiness, peace, and dignity, into an abyss of despair, rage, and humiliation. Again everything and everyone had become hateful to him.

"You do just as you think best, Princess," he said again, looking round.

"Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown!" Stepan Arkadyevich said playfully, hinting, evidently, not simply at the Princess's conversation, but at the cause of Levin's agitation, which he had noticed. "How late you are today, Dolly!"

Everyone got up to greet Darya Alexandrovna. Vassenka only rose for an instant, and, with the lack of courtesy to ladies characteristic of the modern young man, he scarcely bowed, and resumed his conversation again, laughing at something.

"Masha has been almost the end of me. She did not sleep well, and is dreadfully capricious today," said Dolly.

The conversation Vassenka had started with Kitty was running on the same lines as on the previous evening discussing Anna, and whether love is to be put higher than worldly considerations. Kitty disliked the conversation, and she was disturbed both by the subject and the tone in which it was conducted, and especially by

the knowledge of the effect it would have on her husband. But she was too simple and unsophisticated to know how to cut short this conversation, or even to conceal the superficial pleasure afforded her by the young man's very obvious admiration. She wanted to stop this conversation, but she did not know what to do. Whatever she did, she knew it would be observed by her husband, and the worst interpretation put on it. And, in fact, when she asked Dolly what was wrong with Masha, and Vassenka, waiting till this uninteresting conversation was over, began to gaze indifferently at Dolly, the question struck Levin as an unnatural and disgusting piece of hypocrisy.

"What do you say, shall we go and look for mushrooms today?" said Dolly.

"By all means, please, and I shall come too," said Kitty, and she blushed. She wanted from politeness to ask Vassenka whether he would come, and she did not ask him. "Where are you going, Kostia?" she asked her husband with a guilty face, as he passed by her with a resolute step. This guilty air confirmed all his suspicions.

"The mechanician came when I was away; I haven't seen him yet," he said, not looking at her.

He went downstairs, but before he had time to leave his study he heard his wife's familiar footsteps running with reckless speed to him.

"What do you want?" he said to her shortly. "We are busy."

"I beg your pardon," she said to the German mechanician; "I want a few words with my husband."

The German would have left the room, but Levin said to him:

"Don't disturb yourself"

"The train is at three?" queried the German. "I mustn't be late."

Levin did not answer him, but walked out himself with his wife.

"Well, what have you to say to me?" he said to her in French.

He did not look her in the face, and did not care to see that she in her condition was trembling all over, and had a piteous, crushed look.

"I... I want to say that we can't go on like this; that this is misery..." she said.

"The servants are here at the buttery," he said angrily; "don't make a scene."

"Well, let's go in here!"

They were standing in the passage room. Kitty would have gone into the next room, but there the English governess was giving Tania a lesson.

"Well, come into the garden."

In the garden they came upon a peasant weeding the path. And no longer considering that the peasant could see her tear−stained and his agitated face, that they looked like people fleeing from some disaster, they went on with rapid steps, feeling that they must speak out and clear up misunderstandings, must be alone together, and so get rid of the misery they were both feeling.

"We can't go on like this! It's misery! I am wretched; you are wretched. What for?" she said, when they had at last reached a solitary garden seat at a turn in the linden tree avenue.

"But tell me one thing: was there in his tone anything unseemly, unclean, humiliatingly horrible?" he said, standing before her again in the same position, with his clenched fists on his chest, as he had stood before her that night.

"Yes," she said in a shaking voice; "but, Kostia, surely you see I'm not to blame? All the morning I've been trying to take a tone... But such people... Why did he come? How happy we were!" she said, breathless with the sobs that shook her.

Although nothing had been pursuing them, and there was nothing to run away from, and they could not possibly have found anything very delightful on that garden seat, the gardener saw with astonishment that they passed him on their way home with comforted and radiant faces.

XV.

After escorting his wife upstairs, Levin went to Dolly's part of the house. Darya Alexandrovna, for her part, was also in great distress that day. She was walking about the room, talking angrily to a little girl, who stood in the corner bawling.

"And you shall stand all day in the corner, and have your dinner all alone, and not see one of your dolls, and I won't make you a new frock," she said, not knowing how to punish her.

"Oh, she is a disgusting child!" she turned to Levin. "Where does she get such wicked propensities?"

"Why, what has she done?" Levin said without much interest, for he had wanted to ask her advice, and so was annoyed that he had come at an unlucky moment.

"Grisha and she went into the raspberries, and there... I can't tell you really what she did. It's a thousand pities Miss Elliot's not with us. This one sees to nothing she's a machine.... Figurez−vous que la petite?..."

And Darya Alexandrovna described Masha's crime.

"That proves nothing; it's not a question of evil propensities at all, it's simply mischief," Levin assured her.

"But you are upset about something? What have you come for?" asked Dolly. "What's going on there?"

And in the tone of her question Levin heard that it would be easy for him to say what he had meant to say.

"I've not been in there, I've been alone in the garden with Kitty. We've had a quarrel for the second time since... Stiva came."

Dolly looked at him with her shrewd, comprehending eyes.

"Come, tell me, honor bright, has there been... Not in Kitty, but in that gentleman's behavior, a tone which might be unpleasant not unpleasant, but horrible, offensive to a husband?"

"You mean, how shall I say... Stand there stand in the corner!" she said to Masha, who, detecting a faint smile on her mother's face, had been turning round. "The opinion of the world would be that he is behaving as young

men do behave. Il fait le cour a une jeune et jolie femme, and a husband who's a man of the world should only be flattered by it."

"Yes, yes," said Levin gloomily; "but you noticed it?"

"Not only I, but Stiva noticed it. Just after breakfast he said to me: Je crois que Veslovsky fait un petit brin de cour a Kitty."

"Well, that's all right then; now I'm satisfied. I'll send him away," said Levin.

"What do you mean! Are you crazy?" Dolly cried in horror. "Nonsense, Kostia, only think!" she said, laughing. "You can go now to Fanny," she said to Masha. "No, if you wish it, I'll speak to Stiva. He'll take him away. He can say you're expecting visitors. Altogether he doesn't fit into the house."

"No, no, I'll do it myself."

"But you'll quarrel with him?"

"Not a bit. I shall so enjoy it," Levin said, his eyes flashing with real enjoyment. "Come, forgive her, Dolly, she won't do it again," he said of the little sinner, who had not gone to Fanny, but was standing irresolutely before her mother, waiting and looking up from under her brows to catch her mother's eye.

The mother glanced at her. The child broke into sobs, hid her face on her mother's lap, and Dolly laid her thin, tender hand on her head.

"And what is there in common between us and him?" thought Levin, and he went off to look for Veslovsky.

As he passed through the hall he gave orders for the carriage to be got ready to drive to the station.

"The spring was broken yesterday," said the footman.

"Well, the tarantass then, and make haste. Where's the visitor?"

"The gentleman's gone to his room."

Levin came upon Vassenka at the moment when the latter, having unpacked his things from his trunk, and laid out some new songs, was putting on his leather gaiters to go out riding.

Whether there was something exceptional in Levin's face, or that Vassenka was himself conscious that ce petit brin de cour he was making was out of place in this family; he was somewhat (as much as a young man in society can be) disconcerted at Levin's entrance.

"You ride in gaiters?"

"Yes, it's much cleaner," said Vassenka, putting his fat leg on a chair, fastening the bottom hook, and smiling with simplehearted good humor.

He was undoubtedly a good−natured fellow, and Levin felt sorry for him and ashamed of himself, as his host, when he saw the shy look on Vassenka's face.

On the table lay a piece of stick which they had broken together that morning at gymnastics, trying to raise up the swollen bars. Levin took the fragment in his hands and began breaking off the split end of the stick, not knowing how to begin.

"I wanted..." He paused, but suddenly, remembering Kitty and everything that had happened, he said, looking him resolutely in the face: "I have ordered the horses to be put to for you."

"How so?" Vassenka began in surprise. "To drive where?"

"For you to drive to the station," Levin said gloomily pinching off the end of the stick.

"Are you going away, or has something happened?"

"It happens that I expect visitors," said Levin, his strong fingers more and more rapidly breaking off the ends of the split stick. "And I'm not expecting visitors, and nothing has happened, but I beg you to go away. You can explain my rudeness as you like."

Vassenka drew himself up.

"I beg you to explain..." he said with dignity, understanding at last.

"I can't explain," Levin said softly and deliberately, trying to control the trembling of his jaw; "and you'd better not ask."

And as the split ends were all broken off, Levin clutched the thick ends in his finger, split the stick in two, and carefully caught the end as it fell.

Probably the sight of those tense hands, of the same muscles he had proved that morning at gymnastics, of the glittering eyes, the soft voice, and quivering jaws, convinced Vassenka better than any words. He bowed, shrugging his shoulders, and smiling contemptuously.

"May I not see Oblonsky?"

The shrug and the smile did not irritate Levin. "What else was there for him to do?" he thought.

"I'll send him to you at once."

"What madness is this?" Stepan Arkadyevich said when, after hearing from his friend that he was being turned out of the house, he found Levin in the garden, where he was walking about waiting for his guest's departure. "Mais c'est ridicule! What flea has bitten you? Mais c'est du dernier ridicule! What did you think, if a young man..."

But the place where Levin had been bitten was evidently still sore, for he turned pale again, when Stepan Arkadyevich would have enlarged on the reason, and he himself cut him short.

"Please don't go into it! I can't help it. I feel ashamed of the way I'm treating you and him. But it won't be, I imagine, a great grief to him to go, and his presence was distasteful to me and to my wife."

"But it's insulting to him! Et puis c'est ridicule."

"And to me it's both insulting and distressing! And I'm not in fault in any way, and there's no need for me to suffer."

"Well, this I didn't expect of you! On peut etre jaloux, mais a ce point c'est du dernier ridicule!"

Levin turned quickly, and walked away from him into the depths of the avenue, and he went on walking up and down alone. Soon he heard the rumble of the tarantass, and saw from behind the trees how Vassenka, sitting in the hay (unluckily there was no seat in the tarantass) in his Scotch cap, was driven along the avenue, jolting up and down over the ruts.

"What's this?" Levin thought, when a footman ran out of the house and stopped the tarantass. It was the mechanician, whom Levin had totally forgotten. The mechanician, bowing low, said something to Veslovsky, then clambered into the tarantass and they drove off together.

Stepan Arkadyevich and the Princess were much upset by Levin's action. And he himself felt not only in the highest degree ridicule, but also utterly guilty and disgraced. But remembering what sufferings he and his wife had been through, when he asked himself how he should act another time, he answered that he would do precisely the same.

In spite of all this, toward the end of that day, everyone, except the Princess, who could not pardon Levin's action, became extraordinarily lively and good−humored, like children after a punishment, or grown−up people after a dreary, ceremonious reception, so that by the evening Vassenka's dismissal was spoken of, in the absence of the Princess, as though it were some remote event. And Dolly, who had inherited her father's gift of humorous storytelling, made Varenka helpless with laughter as she related for the third and fourth time, always with fresh humorous additions, how she had just put on her new ribands for the benefit of the visitor, and, on going into the drawing room, had suddenly heard the rumble of the chariot. And who should be in the chariot but Vassenka himself, with his Scotch cap, and his songs, and his gaiters, and all, sitting in the hay.

"If only you'd ordered out the carriage! But no! And then I hear: 'Stop!' Oh, I thought they've relented. I look out and a fat German is being sat down by him, and they're driving away... And my new ribands all for nothing!..."

XVI.

Darya Alexandrovna carried out her intention and went to see Anna. She was sorry to annoy her sister and to do anything Levin disliked. She quite understood how right the Levins were in not wishing to have anything to do with Vronsky. But she felt she must go and see Anna, and show her that her feelings could not be changed, in spite of the change in her position.

That she might be independent of the Levins in this expedition, Darya Alexandrovna sent to the village to hire horses for the drive; but Levin learning of it went to her to protest.

"What makes you suppose that I dislike your going? But, even if did dislike it, I should still more dislike your not taking my horses," he said. "You never told me that you were going definitely. Hiring horses in the village is disagreeable to me, and, what's of more importance, they'll undertake the job and never get you there. I have horses. And if you don't want to wound me, you'll take mine."

Darya Alexandrovna had to consent, and on the day fixed Levin had ready for his sister−in−law a set of four horses and relays, getting them together from the farm and saddle horses not at all a smart−looking set, but capable of taking Darya Alexandrovna the whole distance in a single day. At that moment, when horses were wanted for the Princess, who was going, and for the midwife, it was a difficult matter for Levin to make up the number, but the duties of hospitality would not let him allow Darya Alexandrovna to hire horses when staying in his house. Moreover, he was well aware that the twenty roubles that would be asked for the journey were a

serious matter for her; Darya Alexandrovna's pecuniary affairs, which were in a very unsatisfactory state, were taken to heart by the Levins as if they were their own.

Darya Alexandrovna, by Levin's advice, started before daybreak. The road was good, the carriage comfortable, the horses trotted along merrily, and on the box, beside the coachman, sat the countinghouse clerk, whom Levin was sending instead of a groom for greater security. Darya Alexandrovna dozed and waked up only on reaching the inn where the horses were to be changed.

After drinking tea at the same well−to−do peasant's with whom Levin had stayed on the way to Sviiazhsky's, and chatting with the women about their children, and with the old man about Count Vronsky, whom the latter praised very highly, Darya Alexandrovna, at ten o'clock, went on again. At home, looking after her children, she had no time to think. So now, after this journey of four hours, all the thoughts she had suppressed before rushed swarming into her brain, and she thought over all her life as she never had before, and from the most different points of view. Her thoughts seemed strange even to herself. At first she thought about the children, about whom she was uneasy, although the Princess and Kitty (she reckoned more upon her) had promised to look after them. "If only Masha does not begin her naughty tricks, if Grisha isn't kicked by a horse, and Lily's stomach isn't upset again!" But these questions of the present were succeeded by questions of the immediate future. She began thinking how she had to get a new flat in Moscow for the coming winter, to renew the drawing−room furniture, and to make her elder girl a cloak. Then questions of the more remote future occurred to her: how she was to place her children in the world. "The girls are all right," she thought; "but the boys?"

"It's all very fine for me to be teaching Grisha, but of course that's only because I am free myself now, I'm not with child. Stiva, of course, there's no counting on. And with the help of good−natured friends I can bring them up; but if there's another baby coming?..." And the thought struck her how unjustly it was said, that the curse laid on woman was that in sorrow she should bring forth children. "The birth itself, that's nothing; but the months of carrying the child that's what's so intolerable," she thought, picturing to herself her last pregnancy, and the death of the last baby. And she recalled the conversation she had just had with the young woman at the inn. On being asked whether she had any children, the handsome young woman had answered cheerfully.

"I had a girl baby, but God set me free; I buried her last Lent."

"Well, did you grieve very much for her?" asked Darya Alexandrovna.

"Why grieve? The old man has grandchildren enough as it is. It was only a trouble. No working, nor nothing. Only a tie."

This answer had struck Darya Alexandrovna as revolting in spite of the good−natured and pleasing face of the young woman; but now she could not help recalling these words. In those cynical words there was indeed a grain of truth.

"Yes, in general," thought Darya Alexandrovna, looking back over her whole existence during those fifteen years of her married life, "pregnancy, sickness, mental incapacity, indifference to everything and, most of all, hideousness. Kitty, young and pretty as she is, even Kitty has lost her looks; and I, when I'm with child, become hideous, I know it. The birth, the agony, the hideous agonies, that last moment... Then the nursing, the sleepless nights, the fearful pains..."

Darya Alexandrovna shuddered at the mere recollection of the pain from sore breasts which she had suffered with almost every child. "Then the children's illnesses, that everlasting apprehension; then bringing them up; evil propensities" (she thought of little Masha's crime among the raspberries), "education, Latin it's all so incomprehensible and difficult. And, on the top of it all, the death of these children." And there rose again before her imagination the cruel memory that always tore her mother's heart, of the death of her last little baby, who had

died of croup; his funeral, the callous indifference of all at the little pink coffin, and her own torn heart, and her lonely anguish at the sight of the pale little brow with the curls falling on temples, and the open, wondering little mouth seen in the coffin at the moment when it was being covered with the little pink lid with a gallooned cross on it.

"And all this what's it for? What is to come of it all? This: I'm wasting my life, never having a moment's peace, either with child, or nursing a child, forever irritable, peevish, wretched myself and worrying others, repulsive to my husband, while the children are growing up unhappy, badly educated and penniless. Even now, if it weren't for spending the summer at the Levins', I don't know how we should be managing to live. Of course Kostia and Kitty have so much tact that we don't feel it; but it can't go on. They'll have children, they won't be able to keep us; it's a drag on them as it is. How is papa, who has hardly anything left for himself, to help us? So that I can't even bring the children up by myself, and may find it hard with the help of other people, at the cost of humiliation. Why, even if we suppose the greatest good luck, that the children don't die, and I bring them up somehow. At the very best they'll simply be decent people. That's all I can hope for. And to gain simply that what agonies, what toil!... One's whole life ruined!" Again she recalled what the young peasant woman had said, and again she was revolted at the thought; but she could not help admitting that there was a grain of brutal truth in the words.

"Is it far now, Mikhaila?" Darya Alexandrovna asked the countinghouse clerk, to turn her mind from thoughts that were frightening her.

"From this village, they say, it's seven verstas."

The carriage drove along the village street and onto a bridge. On the bridge was a crowd of peasant women with coils of ties for the sheaves on their shoulders, cheerfully chattering. They stood still on the bridge, staring inquisitively at the carriage. All the faces turned to Darya Alexandrovna looked to her healthy and happy, making her envious of their enjoyment of life. "They're all living, they're all enjoying life," Darya Alexandrovna still mused when she had passed the peasant women and was driving uphill again at a trot, seated comfortably on the soft springs of the old carriage, "while I, let out, as it were from prison, from the world of worries that fret me to death, am only looking about me now for an instant. They all live; those peasant women, and my sister Natalie, and Varenka, and Anna, whom I am going to see all, but not I."

"And they attack Anna. What for? Am I any better? I have, at any rate, a husband I love not as I should like to love him still, I do love him; while Anna never loved hers. How is she to blame? She wants to live. God has put that in our hearts. Very likely I should have done the same. Even to this day I don't feel sure I did right in listening to her at that terrible time when she came to me in Moscow. I ought then to have cast off my husband and have begun my life anew. I might have loved and have been loved in reality. And is it any better as it is? I don't respect him. He's necessary to me," she thought about her husband, "and I put up with him. Is that any better? At that time I could still have been admired, I had beauty left me still," Darya Alexandrovna pursued her thoughts, and she would have liked to look at herself in the looking glass. She had a traveling looking glass in her handbag, and she wanted to take it out; but looking at the backs of the coachman and the swaying countinghouse clerk, she felt that she would be ashamed if either of them were to look round, and she did not take out the glass.

But, without looking in the glass, she thought that even now it was not too late; and she thought of Sergei Ivanovich, who was always particularly attentive to her, of Stiva's goodhearted friend, Turovtsin, who had helped her nurse her children through the scarlatina, and was in love with her. And there was someone else, quite a young man, who her husband had told her it as a joke thought her more beautiful than either of her sisters. And the most passionate and impossible romances rose before Darya Alexandrovna's imagination. "Anna did quite right, and certainly I shall never reproach her for it. She is happy, she makes another person happy, and she's not broken down as I am, but most likely just as she always was, bright, clever, open to every impression," thought Darya Alexandrovna and a sly smile curved her lips, for, as she pondered on Anna's love affair, Darya Alexandrovna constructed on parallel lines an almost identical love affair for herself, with an imaginary composite figure, the

ideal man who was in love with her. She, like Anna, confessed the whole affair to her husband. And the amazement and perplexity of Stepan Arkadyevich at this avowal made her smile.

In such daydreams she reached the turning of the highroad that led to Vozdivzhenskoe.

XVII.

The coachman pulled up his four horses and looked round to the right, to a field of rye, where some peasants were sitting near a telega. The countinghouse clerk was just going to jump down, but on second thought he shouted peremptorily to the peasants instead, and beckoned to them to come up. The wind, that seemed to blow as they drove, dropped when the carriage stood still; gadflies settled on the steaming horses that angrily shook them off. The metallic clank of a whetstone against a scythe, that came to them from the telega, ceased. One of the peasants got up and came toward the carriage.

"Well, you are slow!" the countinghouse clerk shouted angrily to the peasant who was stepping slowly with his bare feet over the ruts of the unbeaten, sun−baked road. "Come along, do!"

A curly−headed old man with a bit of bast tied round his hair, and his bent back dark with perspiration, came toward the carriage, quickening his steps, and took hold of the mudguard with his sunburned hand.

"Vozdvizhenskoe the manor house? The Count's?" he repeated. "Go on to the end of this slope. Then turn to the left. Straight along the avenue, and you'll come right upon it. But whom do you want? The Count himself?"

"Well, are they at home, my good man?" Darya Alexandrovna said vaguely, not knowing how to ask about Anna, even of this peasant.

"At home for sure," said the peasant, shifting from one bare foot to the other, and leaving a distinct print of five toes and a heel in the dust. "Sure to be at home," he repeated, evidently eager to talk. "Only yesterday visitors arrived. There's a sight of visitors come. What do you want?" He turned round and called to a lad, who was shouting something to him from the telega. "Oh! They all rode by here not long since, to look at a reaping machine. They'll be home by now. And who may you belong to?..."

"We've come a long way," said the coachman, climbing onto the box. "So it's not far?"

"I tell you, it's just here. As soon as you get out..." he said, keeping hold all the while of the mudguard of the carriage.

A healthy−looking, broad−shouldered young fellow came up too.

"What, is it laborers they want for the harvest?" he asked.

"I don't know, my boy."

"So you keep to the left, and you'll come right on it," said the peasant, unmistakably loath to let the travelers go, and eager to converse.

The coachman started the horses, but they were only just turning off when the peasant shouted: "Stop! Hi, friend! Stop!" The coachman stopped.

"They're coming! They're yonder!" shouted the peasant. "See what a turnout!" he said, pointing to four persons on

horseback, and two in a charabanc, coming along the road.

They were Vronsky with a jockey, Veslovsky, and Anna on horseback, and Princess Varvara and Sviiazhsky in the charabanc. They had gone out to look at the working of a new reaping machine.

When the carriage stopped, the party on horseback were coming at a walking pace. Anna was in front beside Veslovsky. Anna was quietly walking her horse, a sturdy English cob with cropped mane and short tail; Anna, with her beautiful head, her black hair straying loose under her high hat, her full shoulders, her slender waist in her black riding habit, and all the ease and grace of her deportment, impressed Dolly.

For the first minute it seemed to her unsuitable for Anna to be on horseback. The conception of riding on horseback for a lady was, in Darva Alexandrovna's mind, associated with ideas of youthful flirtation and frivolity, which, in her opinion, was unbecoming in Anna's position. But when she had scrutinized her, seeing her closer, she was at once reconciled to her riding. In spite of her elegance, everything was so simple, quiet and dignified in the attitude, the dress and the movements of Anna, that nothing could have been more natural.

By the side of Anna, on a hot−looking gray cavalry horse, was Vassenka Veslovsky in his Scotch cap with floating ribbons, his stout legs stretched out in front, obviously pleased with his own appearance. Darya Alexandrovna could not suppress a good−humored smile as she recognized him. Behind rode Vronsky on a dark bay mare, obviously heated from galloping. He was holding her in, pulling at the reins.

After him rode a little man in the dress of a jockey. Sviiazhsky and Princess Varvara in a new charabanc with a big, raven−black trotting horse, overtook the party on horseback.

Anna's face suddenly beamed with a joyful smile at the instant when, in the little figure huddled in a corner of the old carriage, she recognized Dolly. She uttered a cry, started in the saddle, and set her horse into a gallop. On reaching the carriage she jumped off without assistance, and, holding up her riding habit, she ran up to greet Dolly.

"I thought it was you and dared not think it. How delightful! You can't fancy how glad I am!" she said, at one moment pressing her face against Dolly and kissing her, and at the next holding her off and examining her with a smile. "Here's a delightful surprise, Alexei!" she said, looking round at Vronsky, who had dismounted, and was walking toward them.

Vronsky, taking off his tall gray hat, went up to Dolly.

"You wouldn't believe how glad we are to see you," he said, giving peculiar significance to the words, and showing his strong white teeth in a smile.

Vassenka Veslovsky, without getting off his horse, took off his cap and greeted the visitor by gleefully waving the ribbons over his head.

"That's Princess Varvara," Anna said in reply to a glance of inquiry from Dolly as the charabanc drove up.

"Ah!" said Darya Alexandrovna, and unconsciously her face betrayed her dissatisfaction.

Princess Varvara was her husband's aunt, and she had long known her, and did not respect her. She knew that Princess Varvara had passed her whole life toadying to her rich relations, but that she should now be sponging on Vronsky, a man who was nothing to her, mortified Dolly on account of her kinship with her husband. Anna noticed Dolly's expression, and was disconcerted by it. She blushed, dropped her riding habit, and stumbled over it.

Darya Alexandrovna went up to the charabanc and coldly greeted Princess Varvara. Sviiazhsky, too, she knew. He inquired how his queer friend with the young wife was, and running his eyes over the ill−matched horses and the carriage with its patched mudguards, proposed to the ladies that they should get into the charabanc.

"And I'll get in this vehicle," he said. "The horse is quiet, and the Princess drives capitally."

"No, stay as you were," said Anna, coming up, "and we'll go in the carriage," and, taking Dolly's arm, she drew her away.

Darya Alexandrovna's eyes were fairly dazzled by the elegant carriage of a pattern she had never seen before, the splendid horses, and the elegant and gorgeous people surrounding her. But what struck her most of all was the change that had taken place in Anna, whom she knew so well and loved. Any other woman, a less close observer, not knowing Anna before, and particularly not having thought as Darya Alexandrovna had been thinking on the road, would not have noticed anything special in Anna. But now Dolly was struck by that temporary beauty, which is only found in women during the moments of love, and which she saw now in Anna's face. Everything in her face, the clearly marked dimples in her cheeks and chin, the line of her lips, the smile which, as it were, fluttered about her face, the brilliance of her eyes, the grace and rapidity of her movements, the fullness of the notes of her voice, even the manner in which, with a sort of angry friendliness, she answered Veslovsky when he asked permission to get on her cob, so as to teach it to gallop with the right leg foremost it was all peculiarly fascinating, and it seemed as if Anna herself were aware of it, and rejoicing in it.

When both the women were seated in the carriage, a sudden embarrassment came over both of them. Anna was disconcerted by the intent look of inquiry Dolly fixed upon her. Dolly was embarrassed because after Sviiazhsky's phrase about "this vehicle," she could not help feeling ashamed of the dirty old carriage in which Anna was sitting with her. The coachman Philip and the countinghouse clerk were experiencing the same sensation. The countinghouse clerk, to conceal his confusion, busied himself settling the ladies, but Philip the coachman became sullen, and was bracing himself not to be overawed in future by this external superiority. He smiled ironically, looking at the raven horse, and was already deciding in his own mind that this smart trotter in the charabanc was only good for promenade, and wouldn't do forty verstas straight off in the heat.

The peasants had all got up from the telega and were inquisitively and mirthfully staring at the meeting of the friends, making their comments on it.

"They're pleased, too; haven't seen each other for a long while," said the curly−headed old man with the bast round his hair.

"I say, Uncle Gherasim, if we could take that raven horse now, to cart the corn, that 'ud be quick work!"

"Look−ee! Is that a woman in breeches?" said one of them, pointing to Vassenka Veslovsky sitting in a sidesaddle.

"Nay, a man! See how smartly he's going it!"

"Eh, lads! Seems we're not going to sleep, then?"

"What chance of sleep today!" said the old man, with a sidelong look at the sun. "Midday's past, look−ee! Get your hooks, and come along!"

XVIII.

Anna looked at Dolly's thin, careworn face, with its wrinkles filled with dust from the road, and she was on the point of saying what she was thinking that is, that Dolly had grown thinner. But, conscious that she herself had grown handsomer, and that Dolly's eyes were telling her so, she sighed and began to speak about herself.

"You are looking at me," she said, "and wondering how I can be happy in my position? Well! It's shameful to confess, but I... I'm inexcusably happy. Something magical has happened to me, like a dream, when you're frightened, panic−stricken, and all of a sudden you wake up and all the horrors are no more. I have waked up. I have lived through the misery, the dread, and now for a long while past, especially since we've been here, I've been so happy!..." she said, with a timid smile of inquiry looking at Dolly.

"How glad I am!" said Dolly smiling, involuntarily speaking more coldly than she wanted to. "I'm very glad for you. Why haven't you written to me?"

"Why?... Because I hadn't the courage.... You forget my position...."

"To me? Hadn't the courage? If you knew how I... I look at..."

Darya Alexandrovna wanted to express her thoughts of the morning, but for some reason it seemed to her now out of place to do so.

"But of that we'll talk later. What's this what are all these buildings?" she asked, wanting to change the conversation and pointing to the red and green roofs that came into view behind the green hedges of acacia and lilac. "Quite a little town."

But Anna did not answer.

"No, no! How do you look at my position, what do you think of it?" she asked.

"I consider..." Darya Alexandrovna was beginning, but at that instant Vassenka Veslovsky, having brought the cob to gallop with the right leg foremost, galloped past them, bumping heavily up and down in his short jacket on the chamois leather of the sidesaddle. "He's doing it, Anna Arkadyevna!" he shouted. Anna did not even glance at him; but again it seemed to Darya Alexandrovna out of place to enter upon such a long conversation in the carriage, and so she cut short her thought.

"I don't think anything," she said, "but I always loved you, and if one loves anyone, one loves the whole person, just as that person is, and not as one would like her or him to be...."

Anna, taking her eyes off her friend's face and dropping her eyelids (this was a new habit Dolly had not seen in her before), pondered, trying to penetrate the full significance of the words. And obviously interpreting them as she would have wished, she glanced at Dolly.

"If you had any sins," she said, "they would all be forgiven you for your coming to see me, and these words."

And Dolly saw that the tears stood in her eyes. She pressed Anna's hand in silence.

"Well, what are these buildings? How many there are of them!" After a moment's silence she repeated her question.

"These are the servant's houses, stud farm, and stables," answered Anna. "And there the park begins. It had all gone to ruin, but Alexei had everything renewed. He is very fond of this place, and, what I never expected, he has become intensely interested in looking after it. But his is such a rich nature! Whatever he takes up, he does splendidly. So far from being bored by it, he works with passionate interest. He with his temperament as I know it he has become careful and businesslike, a first−rate manager, he positively reckons every penny in his management of the land. But only in that. When it's a question of tens of thousands, he doesn't think of money." She spoke with that gleefully sly smile with which women often talk of the secret characteristics only known to them of those they love. "Do you see that big building? That's the new hospital. I believe it will cost over a hundred thousand; that's his dada just now. And do you know how it all came about? The peasants asked him for some meadowland, I think it was, at a cheaper rate, and he refused, and I accused him of being miserly. Of course it was not really because of that, but because of everything together he began this hospital to prove, do you see, that he was not miserly about money. C'est une petitesse, if you like, but I love him all the more for it. And now you'll see the house in a moment. It was his grandfather's house, and he has had nothing changed outside."

"How beautiful!" said Dolly, looking with involuntary admiration at the handsome house with columns, standing out among the different−colored greens of the old trees in the garden.

"Isn't it fine? And from the house, from the top, the view is wonderful."

They drove into a courtyard strewn with gravel and bright with flowers, in which two laborers were at work putting an edging of stones round the light mold of a flower bed, and drew up in a covered entry.

"Ah, they're here already!" said Anna, looking at the saddle horses, which were just being led away from the steps. "It is a good horse, isn't it? It's my cob; my favorite. Lead him here and bring me some sugar. Where is the Count?" she inquired of two smart footmen who darted out. "Ah, there he is!" she said, seeing Vronsky coming to meet her with Veslovsky.

"Where are you going to put the Princess?" said Vronsky in French, addressing Anna, and without waiting for a reply, he once more greeted Darya Alexandrovna, and this time he kissed her hand. "I think the big balcony room."

"Oh, no, that's too far off! Better in the corner room, we shall see each other more. Come, let's go up," said Anna, as she gave her favorite horse the sugar the footman had brought her.

"Et vous oubliez votre devoir," she said to Veslovsky, who came out too on the steps.

"Pardon, j'en ai tout plein les poches," he answered, smiling, putting his fingers in his waistcoat pocket.

"Mais vous venez trop tard," she said, rubbing her handkerchief on her hand, which the horse had made wet in taking the sugar.

Anna turned to Dolly, "You can stay some time? For one day only? That's impossible!"

"I promised to be back, and the children..." said Dolly, feeling embarrassed both because she had to get her bag out of the carriage, and because she knew her face must be covered with dust.

"No, Dolly, darling!... Well, we'll see. Come along, come along!" and Anna led Dolly to her room.

That room was not the smart guestchamber Vronsky had suggested, but the one which Anna had said Dolly would surely excuse. And this room, for which excuse was needed, was more full of luxury than any in which Dolly had ever stayed, a luxury that reminded her of the best hotels abroad.

"Well, darling, how happy I am!" Anna said, sitting down in her riding habit for a moment beside Dolly. "Tell me about all of you. Stiva I had only a glimpse of, and he cannot tell one about the children. How is my favorite, Tania? Quite a big girl, I expect?"

"Yes, she's very tall," Darya Alexandrovna answered shortly, surprised herself that she should respond so coolly about her children. "We are having a delightful stay at the Levins'," she added.

"Oh, if I had known," said Anna, "that you do not despise me!... You might have all come to us. Stiva's an old friend and a great friend of Alexei's, you know," she added, and suddenly she blushed.

"Yes, but we are all..." Dolly answered in confusion.

"But in my delight I'm talking nonsense. The one thing, darling, is that I am so glad to have you!" said Anna, kissing her again. "You haven't told me yet how and what you think about me, and I keep wanting to know. But I'm glad you will see me as I am. The chief thing I shouldn't like would be for people to imagine I want to prove anything. I don't want to prove anything; I merely want to live, to do no one harm but myself. I have the right to do that, haven't I? But it is a big subject, and we'll talk over everything properly later. Now I'll go and dress and send a maid to you."

XIX.

Left alone, Darya Alexandrovna, with a good housewife's eye, scanned her room. All she had seen in entering the house and walking through it, and all she saw now in her room, gave her an impression of wealth and sumptuousness and of that modern European luxury of which she had only read in English novels, but had never seen in Russia and in the country. Everything was new, from the new French hangings on the walls to the carpet which covered the whole floor. The bed had a spring mattress, and a special sort of bolster and taffeta pillowcases on the small pillows. The marble washstand, the dressing table, the little sofa, the tables, the bronze clock on the chimney piece, the window curtains and the portieres were all new and expensive.

The smart maid, who came in to offer her services, with her hair done up high, and a gown more fashionable that Dolly's, was as new and expensive as the whole room. Darya Alexandrovna liked her neatness, her deferential and obliging manners, but she felt ill at ease with her. She felt ashamed of her seeing the patched dressing jacket that had unluckily been packed by mistake for her. She was ashamed of the very patches and darned places of which she had been so proud at home. At home it had been so clear that for six dressing jackets there would be needed twenty−four arsheenes of nainsook at sixty−five kopecks the yard, which was a matter of fifteen roubles, besides the cutting out and making, and these fifteen roubles had been saved. But before the maid she felt, if not exactly ashamed, at least uncomfortable.

Darya Alexandrovna had a great sense of relief when Annushka, whom she had known for years, walked in. The smart maid was sent for to go to her mistress, and Annushka remained with Darya Alexandrovna.

Annushka was obviously much pleased at that lady's arrival, and began to chatter away without a pause. Dolly observed that she was longing to express her opinion in regard to her mistress's position, especially as to the love and devotion of the Count to Anna Arkadyevna, but Dolly carefully interrupted her whenever she began to speak about this.

"I grew up with Anna Arkadyevna; my lady's dearer to me than anything. Well, it's not for us to judge. And, to be sure, there seems so much love..."

"Kindly order these things washed for me, please," Darya Alexandrovna cut her short.

"Certainly. We've two women kept specially for washing small things, but most of the linen's done by machinery. The Count goes into everything himself. Ah, what a husband he would make!..."

Dolly was glad when Anna came in, and by her entrance put a stop to Annushka's gossip.

Anna had put on a very simple batiste gown. Dolly scrutinized that simple gown attentively. She knew what it meant, and the price at which such simplicity was obtained.

"An old friend," said Anna of Annushka.

Anna was not embarrassed now. She was perfectly composed and at ease. Dolly saw that she had now completely recovered from the impression her arrival had made on her, and had assumed that superficial, careless tone which, as it were, closed the door on that compartment in which her deeper feelings and intimate meditations were kept.

"Well, Anna, and how is your little girl?" asked Dolly.

"Annie?" (This was what she called her little daughter Anna.) "Very well. She has got on wonderfully. Would you like to see her? Come, I'll show her to you. We had a terrible bother," she began telling her, "over nurses. We had an Italian wet nurse. A good creature, but so stupid! We wanted to get rid of her, but the baby is so used to her that we've gone on keeping her still."

"But how have you managed?..." Dolly was beginning a question as to what name the little girl would have; but noticing a sudden frown on Anna's face, she changed the drift of her question. "How did you manage? Have you weaned her yet?"

But Anna had understood.

"You didn't mean to ask that? You meant to ask about her surname. Yes? That worries Alexei. She has no name that is, she's a Karenina," said Anna, dropping her eyelids till nothing could be seen but the eyelashes meeting. "But we'll talk about all that later," her face suddenly brightening. "Come, I'll show her to you. Elle est tres gentille. She crawls now."

In the nursery the luxury which had impressed Dolly in the whole house struck her still more. There were little gocarts ordered from England, and appliances for learning to walk, and a sofa after the fashion of a billiard table, purposely constructed for crawling, and swings, and baths, all of special pattern, and modern. They were all English, solid, and of good make, and obviously very expensive. The room was large, and very light and lofty.

When they went in, the baby, with nothing on but her little smock, was sitting in a little elbowchair at the table, having her dinner of broth, which she was spilling all over her little chest. The baby was being fed, and the Russian nurserymaid was evidently sharing her meal. Neither the wet nurse nor the head nurse were there; they were in the next room, from which came the sound of their conversation in the queer French which was their only means of communication.

Hearing Anna's voice, a smart, tall English nurse with a disagreeable face and a dissolute expression walked in at the door, hurriedly shaking her fair curls, and immediately began to defend herself though Anna had not found fault with her. At every word Anna said the English nurse said hurriedly several times, "Yes, my lady."

The rosy baby with her black eyebrows and hair, her sturdy red little body with tight goose−flesh skin, delighted Darya Alexandrovna in spite of the cross expression with which she stared at the stranger. She positively envied the baby's healthy appearance. She was delighted, too, at the baby's crawling. Not one of her own children had crawled like that. When the baby was put on the carpet and its little dress tucked up behind, it was wonderfully

charming. Looking round like some little wild animal at the grown−up big people with her bright black eyes, she smiled, unmistakably pleased at their admiring her, and, holding her legs sideways, she pressed vigorously on her arms, and rapidly drew her whole back up after, and then made another step forward with her little arms.

But the whole atmosphere of the nursery, and especially the English nurse, Darya Alexandrovna did not like at all. It was only on the supposition that no good nurse would have entered so irregular a household as Anna's that Darya Alexandrovna could explain to herself how Anna with her insight into people could take such an unprepossessing, indecorous woman as nurse to her child. Besides, from a few words that were dropped, Darya Alexandrovna saw at once that Anna, the two nurses, and the child, had no existence in common, and that the mother's visit was something exceptional. Anna wanted to get the baby her plaything, and could not find it.

Most amazing of all was the fact that on being asked how many teeth the baby had, Anna answered wrong, and knew nothing about the two last teeth.

"I sometimes feel sorry I'm, as it were, superfluous here," said Anna, going out of the nursery, and holding up her skirt so as to escape the plaything standing near the doorway. "It was very different with my first child."

"I expected it to be the other way," said Darya Alexandrovna shyly.

"Oh, no! By the way, do you know I saw Seriozha?" said Anna, screwing up her eyes, as though looking at something far away. "But we'll talk about that later. You wouldn't believe it, I'm like a hungry beggar woman when a full dinner is set before her, and she does not know what to begin on first. The full dinner is you, and the talks I have before me with you, which I could never have with anyone else; and I don't know which subject to begin upon first. Mais je ne vous ferai grace de rien. I must have everything out with you. Oh, I ought to give you a sketch of the company you will meet with us," she began. "I'll begin with the ladies. Princess Varvara you know her, and I know your opinion and Stiva's about her. Stiva says the whole aim of her existence is to prove her superiority over Auntie Katerina Pavlovna: that's all true; but she's a good−natured woman, and I am so grateful to her. In Peterburg there was a moment when un chaperon was absolutely essential for me. Then she turned up. But, really, she is good−natured. She did a great deal to alleviate my position. I see you don't understand all the difficulty of my position... there in Peterburg," she added. "Here I'm perfectly at ease and happy. Well, of that later on, though. Then Sviiazhsky he's the marshal of the district, and he's a very good sort of a man, but he wants to get something out of Alexei. You understand, with his property, now that we are settled in the country, Alexei can exercise great influence. Then there's Tushkevich you have seen him, you know Betsy's admirer. Now he's been thrown over, and he's come to see us. As Alexei says, he's one of those people who are very pleasant if one accepts them for what they try to appear to be, et puis, il est comme il faut, as Princess Varvara says. Then Veslovsky... you know him. A very charming boy," she said, and a sly smile curved her lips. "What's this wild story about him and the Levins? Veslovsky told Alexei about it, and we don't believe it. Il est tres gentil et naif," she said again with the same smile. "Men need occupation, and Alexei needs a circle, so I value all these people. We have to have the house lively and gay, so that Alexei may not long for any novelty. Then you'll see the steward a German, a very good fellow, and he understands his work. Alexei has a very high opinion of him. Then the doctor, a young man, not quite a Nihilist perhaps, but, you know, he eats with his knife... But a very good doctor. Then the architect... Une petite cour."

XX.

"Here's Dolly for you, Princess, you were so anxious to see her," said Anna, coming out with Darya Alexandrovna on the stone terrace where Princess Varvara was sitting in the shade at an embroidery frame, working at a cover for Count Alexei Kirillovich's easy chair. "She says she doesn't want anything before dinner, but please order some lunch for her, and I'll go look for Alexei and bring them all in."

Princess Varvara gave Dolly a cordial and rather patronizing reception, and began at once explaining to her that she was living with Anna because she had always cared more for her than her sister, that aunt that had brought Anna up; and that now, when everyone had abandoned Anna, she thought it her duty to help her in this most difficult period of transition.

"Her husband will give her a divorce, and then I shall go back to my solitude; but now I can be of use, and I am doing my duty, however difficult it may be for me not like some other people. And how sweet it is of you, how right of you to have come! They live like the best of married couples; it's for God to judge them, not for us. And didn't Biriuzovsky and Madame Avenieva... and Nikandrov himself, and Vassiliev with Madame Mamonova, and Liza Neptunova... Did no one say anything about them? And it has ended by their being received by everyone. And then, c'est un interieur si joli, si comme il faut. Tout−a−fait a l'anglaise. On se reunit le matin au breakfast, et puis on se separe. Everyone does as he pleases till dinnertime. Dinner at seven o'clock. Stiva did very rightly to send you. He needs their support. You know that through his mother and brother he can do everything. And then they do so much good. He didn't tell you about his hospital? Ce sera admirable everything from Paris."

Their conversation was interrupted by Anna, who had found the men of the party in the billiard room, and returned with them to the terrace. There was still a long time before the dinner hour, it was exquisite weather, and so several different methods of spending the next two hours were proposed. There were very many methods of passing the time at Vozdvizhenskoe, and these were all unlike those in use at Pokrovskoe.

"Une partie de lawn tennis," Veslovsky proposed, with his handsome smile. "We'll be partners again, Anna Arkadyevna."

"No, it's too hot; better stroll about the garden and have a row in the boat show Darya Alexandrovna the riverbanks," Vronsky proposed.

"I agree to anything," said Sviiazhsky.

"I imagine that what Dolly would like best would be a stroll wouldn't you? And then the boat, perhaps," said Anna.

So it was decided. Veslovsky and Tushkevich went off to the bathing place, promising to get the boat ready and to wait there for them.

They walked along the path in two couples, Anna with Sviiazhsky, and Dolly with Vronsky. Dolly was a little embarrassed and anxious in the new surroundings in which she found herself Abstractly, theoretically, she did not merely justify she positively approved of Anna's conduct. As is indeed not infrequent with women of unimpeachable virtue, weary of the monotony of virtuous existence, at a distance she not only excused illicit love she positively envied it. Besides, she loved Anna with all her heart. But seeing Anna in actual life among these strangers, with this fashionable tone that was so new to Darya Alexandrovna, she felt ill at ease. What she disliked particularly was seeing Princess Varvara ready to overlook everything for the sake of the comforts she enjoyed.

As a general principle, abstractly, Dolly approved of Anna's action; but to see the man for whose sake her action had been taken was disagreeable to her. Moreover, she had never liked Vronsky. She thought him very proud, and saw nothing in him of which he could be proud except his wealth. But against her own will, here in his own house, he imposed upon her more than ever, and she could not be at ease with him. She experienced with him the same feeling she had had the maid about her dressing jacket. Just as with the maid she had felt not exactly ashamed, but embarrassed at her darns, so she felt with him not exactly ashamed, but embarrassed at herself.

Dolly was ill at ease, and tried to find a subject of conversation. Even though she supposed that, through his pride, praise of his house and garden would be sure to be disagreeable to him, she did all the same tell him how much she liked his house.

"Yes, it's a very fine building, and in the good old−fashioned style," he said.

"I like so much the court in front of the steps. Was that always so?"

"Oh, no!" he said, and his face beamed with pleasure. "If you could only have seen the court last spring!"

And he began, at first rather diffidently, but more and more carried away by the subject as he went on, to draw her attention to the various details of the decoration of his house and garden. It was evident that, having devoted a great deal of trouble to improve and beautify his home, Vronsky felt a need to show off the improvements to a new person, and was genuinely delighted at Darya Alexandrovna's praise.

"If you would care to look at the hospital, and are not really tired, it's not far. Shall we go?" he said, glancing into her face to convince himself that she was not bored. "Are you coming, Anna?" he turned to her.

"We will come, won't we?" she said, addressing Sviiazhsky. "Mais il ne faut pas laisser le pauvre Veslovsky et Tushkevich se morfondre la dans le bateau. We must send and tell them."

"Yes, this is a monument he is setting up here," said Anna, turning to Dolly with that sly smile of comprehension with which she had previously talked about the hospital.

"Oh, it's a work of real importance!" said Sviiazhsky. But to show he was not trying to ingratiate himself with Vronsky, he promptly added some slightly critical remarks. "I wonder, though, Count," he said, "that while you do so much for the health of the peasants, you take so little interest in the schools."

"C'est devenu tellement commun les ecoles," said Vronsky. "You understand it's not on that account, but it just happens so, my interest has been diverted elsewhere. This way, then, to the hospital," he said to Darya Alexandrovna, pointing to a side path leading out of the avenue.

The ladies put up their parasols and turned into the side path. After going down several turnings, and going through a little gate, Darya Alexandrovna saw standing on rising ground before her a large pretentious−looking red building, almost finished. The iron roof, which was not yet painted, shone with dazzling brightness in the sunshine. Beside the finished building another had been begun, surrounded by scaffolding. Workmen in aprons, standing on scaffolds, were laying bricks, pouring mortar out of vats, and smoothing it with trowels.

"How quickly work gets done with you!" said Sviiazhsky. "When I was here last time the roof was not on."

"By the autumn it will all be ready. Inside almost everything is done," said Anna.

"And what's this new building?"

"That's the house for the doctor and the dispensary," answered Vronsky; seeing the architect in a short jacket coming toward him, and excusing himself to the ladies, he went to meet him.

Going round a hole where the workmen were slaking lime, he stood still with the architect and began talking rather warmly.

"The pediment looks still too low," he said to Anna, who had asked what was the matter.

"I said the foundation ought to be raised," said Anna.

"Yes, of course, it would have been much better, Anna Arkadyevna," said the architect, "but now it's too late."

"Yes, I take a great interest in it," Anna answered Sviiazhsky, who was expressing his surprise at her knowledge of architecture. "This new building ought to have been in harmony with the hospital. It was an afterthought, and was begun without a plan."

Vronsky, having finished his talk with the architect, joined the ladies, and led them inside the hospital.

Although they were still at work on the cornices outside and were painting on the ground floor, upstairs almost all the rooms were finished. Going up the broad cast−iron staircase to the landing, they walked into the first large room. The walls were stuccoed to look like marble, the huge plate−glass windows were already in, only the parquet floor was not yet finished, and the carpenters, who were planing a block of it, left their work, taking off the bands that fastened their hair, to greet the gentry.

"This is the reception room," said Vronsky. "Here there will be a desk, a cupboard, and benches, and nothing more."

"This way; let us go in here. Don't go near the window," said Anna, trying the paint to see if it were dry. "Alexei, the paint's dry already," she added.

From the reception room they went into the corridor. Here Vronsky showed them the mechanism for ventilation on a novel system. Then he showed them marble baths, and beds with extraordinary springs. Then he showed them the wards one after another, the storeroom, the linen room, then the heating stove of a new pattern, then the trolleys, which would make no noise as they carried everything needed along the corridors, and many other things. Sviiazhsky, as a connoisseur in the latest mechanical improvements, appreciated everything fully. Dolly simply wondered at all as something she had not seen before, and, anxious to understand it all, made minute inquiries about everything, which gave Vronsky apparent satisfaction.

"Yes, I imagine that this will be the solitary example of a properly fitted hospital in Russia," said Sviiazhsky.

"And won't you have a lying−in ward?" asked Dolly. "That's so much needed in the country. I have often..."

In spite of his usual courtesy, Vronsky interrupted her.

"This is not a lying−in home, but a hospital for the sick, and is intended for all diseases, except infectious complaints," he said. "Ah! Look at this," and he rolled up to Darya Alexandrovna an invalid chair that had just been ordered for convalescents. "Look!" He sat down in the chair and began moving it. "The patient can't walk still too weak, perhaps, or something wrong with his legs, but he must have air, and he moves, rolls himself along...."

Darya Alexandrovna was interested by everything. She liked everything very much, but most of all she liked Vronsky himself, with his natural, simplehearted enthusiasm. "Yes, he's a very dear, good man," she thought several times, not hearing what he said, but looking at him and penetrating into his expression, while she mentally put herself in Anna's place. She liked him so much just now with his eager interest that she saw how Anna could be in love with him.

XXI.

"No, I think the Princess is tired, and horses don't interest her," Vronsky said to Anna, who wanted to go on to the stud farm, where Sviiazhsky wished to see the new stallion. "You go on, while I escort the Princess home, and we'll have a little talk," he said. "If you would like that?" he added, turning to her.

"I know nothing about horses, and I shall be delighted to go back with you," answered Darya Alexandrovna, rather astonished.

She saw by Vronsky's face that he wanted something from her. She was not mistaken. As soon as they had passed through the little gate back into the garden, he looked in the direction Anna had taken, and, having made sure that she could neither hear nor see them, he began:

"You guess that I have something I want to say to you," he said, looking at her with laughing eyes. "I am not wrong in believing you to be a friend of Anna's." He took off his hat, and taking out his handkerchief, wiped his head, which was growing bald.

Darya Alexandrovna made no answer, and merely stared at him with dismay. When she was left alone with him, she suddenly felt afraid; his laughing eyes and stern expression scared her.

The most diverse suppositions as to what he was about to say to her flashed into her brain. "He is going to beg me to come to stay with them with the children, and I shall have to refuse; or to create a set that will receive Anna in Moscow.... Or isn't it Vassenka Veslovsky and his relations with Anna? Or perhaps about Kitty that he feels he was to blame?" All her conjectures were unpleasant, but she did not guess what he really wanted to talk about to her.

"You have so much influence with Anna, she is so fond of you," he said; "do help me."

Darya Alexandrovna looked with timid inquiry into his energetic face, which under the linden trees was continually being lighted up in patches by the sunshine, and then passing into complete shadow again. She waited for him to say more, but he walked in silence beside her, scratching with his cane in the gravel.

"You have come to see us, you, the only woman of Anna's former friends I don't count Princess Varvara but I know that you have done this not because you regard our position as normal, but because, understanding all the difficulty of the position, you still love her and want to be a help to her. Have I understood you rightly?" he asked, looking round at her.

"Oh, yes," answered Darya Alexandrovna, putting down her sunshade, "but..."

"No," he broke in, and unconsciously, oblivious of the awkward position in which he was putting his companion, he stopped abruptly, so that she had to stop short too. "No one feels more deeply and intensely than I do all the difficulty of Anna's position; and that you may well understand, if you do me the honor of supposing I have any heart. I am to blame for that position, and that is why I feel it."

"I understand," said Darya Alexandrovna, involuntarily admiring the sincerity and firmness with which he said this. "But just because you feel yourself responsible, you exaggerate it, I am afraid," she said. "Her position in the world is difficult, I can well understand."

"In the world it is hell!" he brought out quickly, frowning darkly. "You can't imagine moral sufferings greater than what she went through in Peterburg during that fortnight.... And I beg you to believe it."

"Yes, but here, so long as neither Anna... nor you want society..."

"Society!" he said contemptuously. "How could I want society?"

"So far and it may be so always you are happy and at peace. I see in Anna that she is happy, perfectly happy she has had time to tell me so much already," said Darya Alexandrovna, smiling; and involuntarily, as she said this, at the same moment a doubt entered her mind whether Anna really were happy.

But Vronsky, it appeared, had no doubts on that score.

"Yes, yes," he said, "I know that she has revived after all her sufferings; she is happy. She is happy in the present. But I?... I am afraid of what is before us... I beg your pardon you would like to walk on?"

"No, I don't mind."

"Well, then, let us sit here."

Darya Alexandrovna sat down on a garden seat in a corner of the avenue. He stood up, facing her.

"I see that she is happy," he repeated, and the doubt whether she were happy sank more deeply into Darya Alexandrovna's mind. "But can it last? Whether we have acted rightly or wrongly is another question, but the die is cast," he said, passing from Russian to French, "and we are bound together for life. We are united by all the ties of love that we hold most sacred. We have a child, we may have other children. But the law and all the conditions of our position are such that thousands of complications arise which she does not see at present, and does not want to see, setting her heart at rest after all these sufferings and ordeals. And that one can well understand. But I can't help seeing them. My daughter is by law not my daughter, but Karenin's. I cannot bear this falsity!" he said, with a vigorous gesture of refusal, and he looked with gloomy inquiry toward Darya Alexandrovna.

She made no answer, but simply gazed at him. He went on:

"One day a son may be born, my son, and he will be legally a Karenin; he will not be the heir of my name nor of my property; and however happy we may be in our home life, and however many children we may have, there will be no real tie between us. They will be Karenin's. You will understand the bitterness and horror of this position! I have tried to speak of this to Anna. It irritates her. She does not understand, and to her I cannot speak plainly of all this. Now look at another side. I am happy, happy in her love, but I must have occupation. I have found occupation, and am proud of what I am doing, and consider it nobler than the pursuits of my former companions at Court and in the army. And most certainly I would not change the work I am doing for theirs. I am working here, settled in my own place, and I am happy and contented, and we need nothing more to make us happy. I love my work here. Ce n'est pas un pis−aller, on the contrary..."

Darya Alexandrovna noticed that at this point in his explanation he grew confused, and she did not quite understand this digression, but she felt that having once begun to speak of matters near his heart, of which he could not speak to Anna, he was now making a clean breast of everything, and that the question of his pursuits in the country fell into the same compartment of his intimate meditations as the question of his relations with Anna.

"Well, I will go on," he said, collecting himself. "The great thing is that as I work I want to have a conviction that what I am doing will not die with me, that I shall have heirs to come after me and this I have not. Conceive the position of a man who knows that his children, the children of the woman he loves, will not be his, but will belong to someone who hates them and cares nothing about them! It is awful!

He paused, evidently much moved.

"Yes, indeed, I see that. But what can Anna do?" queried Darya Alexandrovna.

"Yes, that brings me to the object of my conversation," he said, calming himself with an effort. "Anna can, it depends on her.... Even to petition the Czar for legitimization, a divorce is essential. And that depends on Anna. Her husband agreed to a divorce at that time your husband had arranged it completely. And now, I know, he would not refuse it. It is only a matter of writing to him. He said plainly at that time that if she expressed the desire, he would not refuse. Of course," he said gloomily, "it is one of those Pharisaical cruelties of which only such heartless men are capable. He knows what agony any recollection of him must give her, and knowing her, he must have a letter from her. I can understand that it is agony to her. But the matter is of such importance, that one must passer pardessus toutes ces finesses de sentiment. Il y va du bonheur et de l'existence d'Anne et de ses enfants. I won't speak of myself, though it's hard for me, very hard," he said, with an expression as though he were threatening someone for its being hard for him. "And so it is, Princess, that I am shamelessly clutching at you as an anchor of salvation. Help me to persuade her to write to him and ask for a divorce."

"Yes, of course," Darya Alexandrovna said dreamily, as she vividly recalled her last interview with Alexei Alexandrovich. "Yes, of course," she repeated with decision, thinking of Anna.

"Use your influence with her, make her write. I don't like I'm almost unable to speak about this to her."

"Very well, I will talk to her. But how is it she does not think of it herself?" said Darya Alexandrovna, and for some reason she suddenly at that point recalled Anna's strange new habit of half−closing her eyes. And she remembered that Anna drooped her eyelids just when the deeper questions of life were touched upon. "Just as though she half−shut her eyes to her own life, so as not to see everything," thought Dolly. "Yes, indeed, for my own sake and for hers, I will talk to her," Dolly said in reply to his expression of gratitude.

They got up and walked to the house.

XXII.

When Anna found Dolly at home before her, she looked intently in her eyes, as though questioning her about the talk she had had with Vronsky, but she made no inquiry in words.

"I believe it's dinnertime," she said. "We've not seen each other at all yet. I am reckoning on the evening. Now I want to go and dress. I expect you do too; we all got splashed at the buildings."

Dolly went to her room and she felt amused. To change her dress was impossible, for she had already put on her best dress. But in order to signify in some way her preparation for dinner, she asked the maid to brush her dress, changed her cuffs and rosette, and put some lace on her head.

"This is all I can do," she said with a smile to Anna, who came in to her in a third dress, again of extreme simplicity.

"Yes, we are too prim here," she said, as it were apologizing for her finery. "Alexei is delighted at your visit, as he rarely is at anything. He has completely lost his heart to you," she added. "You're not tired?"

There was no time for talking about anything before dinner. Going into the drawing room they found Princess Varvara already there, and the gentlemen of the party in black frock coats. The architect wore a swallow−tailed coat. Vronsky presented the doctor and the steward to his guest. The architect he had already introduced to her at the hospital.

A stout butler, resplendent with a smoothly shaven round chin and a starched white cravat, announced that dinner was ready, and the ladies got up. Vronsky asked Sviiazhsky to take in Anna Arkadyevna, and himself offered his arm to Dolly. Veslovsky was before Tushkevich in offering his arm to Princess Varvara, so that Tushkevich with the steward and the doctor walked in alone.

The dinner, the dining room, the service, the waiting at table, the wine and the food, were not simply in keeping with the general tone of modern luxury throughout the house, but seemed even more sumptuous and modern. Darya Alexandrovna watched this luxury which was novel to her, and as a good housekeeper used to managing a household though she never dreamed of adapting anything she saw to her own household, as it was all in a style of luxury far above her own manner of living she could not help scrutinizing every detail, and wondering how and by whom it was all done. Vassenka Veslovsky, her husband, and even Sviiazhsky, and many other people she knew, would never have considered this question, and would have readily believed what every well−bred host tries to make his guests feel, that is, that all that is well−ordered in his house has cost him, the host, no trouble whatever, but comes of itself. Darya Alexandrovna was well aware that even porridge for the children's breakfast does not come of itself, and that therefore, where so complicated and magnificent a style of luxury was maintained, someone must give earnest attention to its organization. And from the glance with which Alexei Kirillovich scanned the table, from the way he nodded to the butler, and offered Darya Alexandrovna her choice between cold soup and hot soup, she saw that it was all organized and maintained by the care of the master of the house himself. It was evident that it all rested no more upon Anna than upon Veslovsky. She, Sviiazhsky, the Princess, and Veslovsky, were equally guests, with light hearts enjoying what had been arranged for them.

Anna was the hostess only in conducting the conversation. The conversation was a difficult one for the lady of the house at a small table with persons present, like the steward and the architect, belonging to a completely different world, struggling not to be overawed by an elegance to which they were unaccustomed, and unable to sustain a large share in the general conversation. But this difficult conversation Anna directed with her usual tact and naturalness, and indeed she did so with actual enjoyment, as Darya Alexandrovna observed.

The conversation began about the row Tushkevich and Veslovsky had taken alone together in the boat, and Tushkevich began describing the last boat races in Peterburg at the Yacht Club. But Anna, seizing the first pause, at once turned to the architect to draw him out of his silence.

"Nikolai Ivanich was struck," she said meaning Sviiazhsky, "at the progress the new building had made since he was here last; but I am there every day, and every day I wonder at the rate at which it grows."

"It's first−rate working with His Excellency," said the architect with a smile (he was respectful and composed, though with a sense of his own dignity). "It's a very different matter to have to do with the district authorities. Where one would have to write out sheaves of papers, here I call upon the Count, and in three words we settle the business."

"The American way of doing business," said Sviiazhsky, with a smile.

"Yes, there they build in a rational fashion...."

The conversation passed to the misuse of political power in the United States, but Anna quickly brought it round to another topic, so as to draw the steward into talk.

"Have you ever seen a reaping machine?" she said, addressing Darya Alexandrovna. "We had just ridden over to look at one when we met. It's the first time I ever saw one."

"How do they work?" asked Dolly.

"Exactly like scissors. A plank and a lot of little scissors. Like this."

Anna took a knife and fork in her beautiful white hands, covered with rings, and began showing how the machine worked. It was clear that she saw nothing would be understood from her explanation; but aware that her talk was pleasant, and her hands beautiful, she went on explaining.

"More like little penknives," Veslovsky said playfully, never taking his eyes off her.

Anna gave a just perceptible smile, but made no answer. "Isn't it true, Karl Fedorich, that it's just like scissors?" she said to the steward.

"Oh, ja," answered the German. "Es ist ein ganz einfaches Ding," and he began to explain the construction of the machine.

"It's a pity it doesn't bind too. I saw one at the Vienna exhibition, which binds with a wire," said Sviiazhsky. "They would be more profitable in use."

"Es kommt drauf an... Der Preis vom Draht muss ausgerechnet werden." And the German, roused from his taciturnity, turned to Vronsky. "Das lasst sich ausrechnen, Erlaucht." The German was just feeling in the pocket where were his pencil and the notebook he always wrote in, but recollecting that he was at a dinner, and observing Vronsky's chilly glance, he checked himself. "Zu compliziert, macht zu viel pains," he concluded.

"Wunscht man gains, so hat man auch pains," said Vassenka Veslovsky, bantering the German. "J'adore l'allemand," he addressed Anna again with the same smile.

"Cessez," she said with playful severity.

"We expected to find you in the fields, Vassilii Semionich," she said to the doctor, a sickly−looking man; "have you been there?"

"I went there, but I evaporated," the doctor answered with gloomy jocoseness.

"Then you've taken a good constitutional?"

"Splendid!"

"Well, and how was the old woman? I hope it's not typhus?"

"Typhus it isn't, but she's not to be found to the best advantage."

"What a pity!" said Anna, and having thus paid the dues of civility to her domestic circle, she turned to her own friends.

"It would be a hard task, though, to construct a machine from your description, Anna Arkadyevna," Sviiazhsky said jestingly.

"Oh, no, why so?" said Anna with a smile that betrayed that she knew there was something charming in her disquisitions upon the machine, that had been noticed by Sviiazhsky too. This new trait of girlish coquettishness made an unpleasant impression on Dolly.

"But Anna Arkadyevna's knowledge of architecture is marvelous," said Tushkevich.

"To be sure, I heard Anna Arkadyevna saying yesterday: 'by cramp' and 'plinths,'" said Veslovsky. "Have I got it right?"

"There's nothing marvelous about it, when one sees and hears so much of it," said Anna. "But, I dare say, you don't even know what houses are made of?"

Darya Alexandrovna saw that Anna disliked the tone of playfulness that existed between her and Veslovsky, but fell in with it against her will.

Vronsky acted in this matter quite differently from Levin. He obviously attached no significance to Veslovsky's chattering; on the contrary, he encouraged his jests.

"Come now, tell us, Veslovsky, how are the stones held together?"

"By cement, of course."

"Bravo! And what is cement?"

"Oh, some sort of paste.... No, putty," said Veslovsky, raising a general laugh.

The company at dinner, with the exception of the doctor, the architect, and the steward, who remained plunged in gloomy silence, kept up a conversation that never paused, glancing off one subject, fastening on another, and at times stinging one or the other of the company to the quick. Once Darya Alexandrovna felt wounded to the quick, and got so hot that she positively flushed and wondered afterward whether she had said anything extreme or unpleasant. Sviiazhsky began talking of Levin, describing his strange view that machinery is simply pernicious in its effects on Russian agriculture.

"I have not the pleasure of knowing this M. Levin," Vronsky said, smiling, "but most likely he has never seen the machines he condemns; or if he has seen and tried any, it must have been after a queer fashion, some Russian imitation, not a machine from abroad. What sort of views can anyone have on such a subject?"

"Turkish views, in general," Veslovsky said, turning to Anna with a smile.

"I can't defend his opinions," Darya Alexandrovna said, flaring up; "but I can say that he's a highly cultivated man, and if he were here he would know very well how to answer you, though I am not capable of doing so."

"I like him extremely, and we are great friends," Sviiazhsky said, smiling good−naturedly. "Mais pardon, il est un petit peu toque; he maintains, for instance, that zemstvoes and justices of the peace are all of no use, and he is unwilling to take part in anything."

"It's our Russian apathy," said Vronsky, pouring water from an iced decanter into a delicate glass on a high stem; "we've no sense of the duties our privileges impose upon us, and so we refuse to recognize these duties."

"I know no man more strict in the performance of his duties," said Darya Alexandrovna, irritated by Vronsky's tone of superiority.

"For my part," pursued Vronsky, who was evidently for some reason or other keenly affected by this conversation, "such as I am, I am, on the contrary, extremely grateful for the honor they have done me, thanks to Nikolai Ivanich" (he indicated Sviiazhsky), "in electing me an honorary justice of the peace. I consider that for me the duty of being present at the session, of judging some peasants' quarrel about a horse, is as important as anything I can do. And I shall regard it as an honor if they elect me for the district council. It's only in that way I

can pay for the advantages I enjoy as a landowner. Unluckily they don't understand the importance that the big landowners ought to have in the state."

It was strange to Darya Alexandrovna to hear how serenely confident he was of being right at his own table. She thought how Levin, who believed the opposite, was just as positive in his opinions at his own table. But she loved Levin, and so she was on his side.

"So we can reckon upon you, Count, for the coming elections?" said Sviiazhsky. "But you must come a little beforehand, so as to be on the spot by the eighth. If you would do me the honor to stop with me!"

"I rather agree with your beau−frere", said Anna, "though not quite on the same ground as he," she added with a smile. "I'm afraid that we have too many of these public duties in these latter days. Just as in the old days there were so many government functionaries that one had to call in a functionary for every single thing, so now everyone's doing some sort of public duty. Alexei has been here now six months, and he's a member, I do believe, of five or six different public bodies, a guardian, a justice of the peace, a member of the council, a juryman, an equine something. Du train que cela va, his whole time will be wasted on it. And I'm afraid that with such a multiplicity of these bodies, they'll end in being a mere form. How many are you a member of, Nikolai Ivanich?" she turned to Sviiazhsky. "Over twenty, I fancy."

Anna spoke lightly, but irritation could be discerned in her tone. Darya Alexandrovna, watching Anna and Vronsky attentively, detected it instantly. She noticed, too, that as she spoke Vronsky's face had immediately taken a serious and obstinate expression. Noticing this, and that Princess Varvara at once made haste to change the conversation by talking of Peterburg acquaintances, and remembering what Vronsky had without apparent connection said in the garden of his work in the country, Dolly surmised that this question of public activity was connected with some deep private disagreement between Anna and Vronsky.

The dinner, the wine, the dinner set, were all very good; but it was all like what Darya Alexandrovna had seen at formal dinners and balls which of late years had become quite unfamiliar to her; it all had the same impersonal and constrained character, and so on an ordinary day and in a little circle of friends it made a disagreeable impression on her.

After dinner they sat on the terrace; then they proceeded to play lawn tennis. The players, divided into two parties, stood on opposite sides of a tightly drawn net with gilt poles, on the carefully leveled and rolled croquet ground. Darya Alexandrovna made an attempt to play, but it was a long time before she could understand the game, and by the time she did understand it she was so tired that she sat down with Princess Varvara and simply looked on at the players. Her partner, Tushkevich, gave up playing too, but the others kept the game up for a long time. Sviiazhsky and Vronsky both played very well and seriously. They kept a sharp lookout on the balls served to them, and without loitering, they ran adroitly up to them, waited for the rebound, and neatly and accurately returned them over the net. Veslovsky played worse than the others. He was too eager, but he kept the players lively with his high spirits. His laughter and outcries never paused. Like the other men of the party, with the ladies' permission, he took off his coat, and his solid, comely figure in his white shirt sleeves, with his red perspiring face and his impulsive movements, made a picture that imprinted itself vividly on the memory.

When Darya Alexandrovna lay in bed that night, as soon as she closed her eyes, she saw Vassenka Veslovsky flying about the croquet ground.

During the game Darya Alexandrovna was not enjoying herself. She did not like the light tone of playfulness that was kept up all the time between Vassenka Veslovsky and Anna, and the unnaturalness, altogether, of grown−up people, all alone without children, playing at a child's game. But to avoid breaking up the party and to get through the time somehow, after a rest she joined the game again, and pretended to be enjoying it. All that day it seemed to her as though she were acting in a theater with actors cleverer than she, and that her bad acting was spoiling the

whole performance.

She had come with the intention of staying two days, if all went well. But in the evening, during the game, she made up her mind that she would go home next day. The maternal cares and worries, which she had so hated on the way, now, after a day spent without them struck her in quite another light, and tempted her back to them.

When, after evening tea and a row by night in the boat, Darya Alexandrovna went alone to her room, took off her dress, and began arranging her thin hair for the night, she had a great sense of relief.

It was positively disagreeable to her to think that Anna would be coming to see her immediately. She longed to be alone with her own thoughts.

XXIII.

Dolly was just about to go to bed when Anna came in to see her, attired for the night.

In the course of the day Anna had several times begun to speak of matters near her heart, and every time after a few words she had stopped: "Afterward, by ourselves, we'll talk about everything. I've got so much I want to tell you," she had said.

Now they were by themselves, and Anna did not know what to talk about. She sat in the window looking at Dolly, and going over in her own mind all the stores of intimate talk which had seemed so inexhaustible beforehand, and she found nothing. At that moment it seemed to her that everything had been said already.

"Well, what of Kitty?" she said with a heavy sigh, looking penitently at Dolly. "Tell me the truth, Dolly: isn't she angry with me?"

"Angry? Oh, no!" said Darya Alexandrovna, smiling.

"But she hates me, despises me?"

"Oh, no! But you know that sort of thing isn't forgiven."

"Yes, yes," said Anna, turning away and looking out of the open window. "But I was not to blame. And who is to blame? What's the meaning of being to blame? Could it have been otherwise? What do you think? Could it possibly have happened otherwise than that you should become the wife of Stiva?"

"Really, I don't know. But this is what I want you to tell me..."

"Yes, yes, but we've not finished about Kitty. Is she happy? He's a very fine man, they say."

"He's much more than very fine. I don't know a better man."

"Ah, how glad I am! I'm so glad! Much more than very fine," she repeated.

Dolly smiled.

"But tell me about yourself. We've a great deal to talk about. And I've had a talk with..." Dolly did not know what to call him. She felt it awkward to call him either the Count or Alexei Kirillovich.

"With Alexei," said Anna, "I know what you talked about. But I wanted to ask you directly what you think of me, of my life?"

"How am I to say anything so suddenly? I really don't know."

"No, tell me all the same.... You see my life. But you mustn't forget that you're seeing us in the summer, when you have come to us and we are not alone.... But we came here early in the spring, lived quite alone, and shall be alone again, and I desire nothing better. But imagine me living alone without him, alone, and that will be... I see by everything that it will often be repeated, that he will be half the time away from home," she said, getting up and sitting down close by Dolly. "Of course," she interrupted Dolly, who would have answered, "of course I won't try to keep him by force. I don't keep him indeed. The races are just coming, his horses are running, he will go. I'm very glad. But think of me, fancy my position.... But what's the use of talking about it!" She smiled. "Well, what did he talk about with you?"

"He spoke of what I want to speak about myself, and it's easy for me to be his advocate; of whether there is not a possibility... whether you could not..." (Darya Alexandrovna hesitated) "correct, or improve your position.... You know how I look at it... But all the same, if possible, you should get married...."

"Divorce, you mean?" said Anna. "Do you know, the only woman who came to see me in Peterburg was Betsy Tverskaia? You know her, of course? Au fond, c'est la femme la plus dipravee qui existe. She had an intrigue with Tushkevich, deceiving her husband in the basest way. And she told me that she did not care to know me so long as my position was irregular. Don't imagine I would compare... I know you, darling. But I could not help remembering... Well, so what did he say to you?" she repeated.

"He said that he was unhappy on your account and his own. Perhaps you will say that it's egoism, but what a legitimate and noble egoism. He wants first of all to legitimize his daughter, and to be your husband, to have a legal right to you."

"What wife, what slave can be so utterly a slave as I, in my position?" she put in gloomily.

"The chief thing he desires... he desires that you should not suffer."

"That's impossible. Well?"

"Well, and the most legitimate desire he wishes that your children should have a name."

"What children?" Anna said, not looking at Dolly, and half closing her eyes.

"Annie and those to come..."

"He need not trouble on that score; I shall have no more children."

"How can you tell that you won't?"

"I shall not, because I don't wish it." And, in spite of all her emotion, Anna smiled, as she caught the naive expression of curiosity, wonder, and horror on Dolly's face.

"The doctor told me after my illness..."

"Impossible!" said Dolly, opening her eyes wide. For here this was one of those discoveries the consequences and deductions from which are so immense that all that one feels for the first instant is that it is impossible to take it

all in, and that one will have to reflect a great, great deal upon it.

This discovery, suddenly throwing light on all those families of one or two children, which had hitherto been so incomprehensible to her, aroused so many ideas, reflections, and contradictory emotions, that she had nothing to say, and simply gazed with wide−open eyes of wonder at Anna. This was the very thing she had been dreaming of, but now learning that it was possible, she was horrified. She felt that it was too simple a solution of too complicated a problem.

"N'est−ce pas immoral?" was all she said, after a brief pause.

"Why so? Think I have a choice between two alternatives: either to be with child, that is an invalid, or to be the friend and companion of my husband practically my husband," Anna said in a tone intentionally superficial and frivolous.

"Yes, yes," said Darya Alexandrovna, hearing the very arguments she had used to herself, and not finding the same force in them as before.

"For you, for other people," said Anna, as though divining her thoughts, "there may be reason to hesitate; but for me... You must consider I am not his wife; he loves me as long as he loves me. And how am I to keep his love? Not like this!"

She moved her white hands in a curve before her waist.

With extraordinary rapidity, as happens during moments of excitement, ideas and memories rushed into Darya Alexandrovna's head. "I," she thought, "did not keep my attraction for Stiva; he left me for others, and the first woman for whom he betrayed me did not keep him by being always pretty and lively. He deserted her and took another. And can Anna attract and keep Count Vronsky in that way? If that is what he looks for, he will find dresses and manners still more attractive and charming. And, however white and beautiful her bare arms are, however beautiful her full figure and her eager face under her black curls, he will find something better still, just as my disgusting, pitiful, and charming husband does."

Dolly made no answer, she merely sighed. Anna noticed this sigh, indicating dissent, and she went on. In her armory she had other arguments so strong that no answer could be made to them.

"Do you say that it's not right? But you must consider," she went on; "you forget my position. How can I desire children? I'm not speaking of the suffering I'm not afraid of that. Think, only what are my children to be? Ill−fated children, who will have to bear a stranger's name. For the very fact of their birth they will be forced to be ashamed of their mother, their father, their birth."

"But that is just why a divorce is necessary."

But Anna did not hear her. She longed to give utterance to all the arguments with which she had so many times convinced herself.

"What is reason given me for, if I am not to use it to avoid bringing unhappy beings into the world!"

She looked at Dolly, but without waiting for a reply she went on:

"I should always feel I had wronged these unhappy children," she said. "If there are none, at any rate they are not unhappy; while if they are unhappy, I alone should be to blame for it."

These were the very arguments Darya Alexandrovna had used in her own reflections; but she heard them now without understanding them. "How can one wrong creatures that don't exist?" she thought. And all at once the idea struck her. Could it possibly, under any circumstances, have been better for her favorite Grisha if he had never existed? And this seemed to her so wild, so strange, that she shook her head to drive away this tangle of whirling, mad ideas.

"No, I don't know; it's not right," was all she said, with an expression of disgust on her face.

"Yes, but you mustn't forget what you are and what I am.... And besides that," added Anna, in spite of the wealth of her arguments and the poverty of Dolly's objections, seeming still to admit that it was not right, "don't forget the chief point, that I am not now in the same position as you. For you the question is: Do you desire not to have any more children? While for me it is: Do I desire to have them? And that's a great difference. You must see that I can't desire them in my position."

Darya Alexandrovna made no reply. She suddenly felt that she had got away from Anna so far, that there lay between them a barrier of questions on which they could never agree, and about which it was better not to speak.

XXIV.

"Then there is all the more reason for you to legalize your position, if possible," said Dolly.

"Yes, if possible," said Anna, speaking all at once in an utterly different tone, subdued and mournful.

"Surely you don't mean a divorce is impossible? I was told your husband had consented to it."

"Dolly, I don't want to talk about that."

"Oh, we won't then," Darya Alexandrovna hastened to say, noticing the expression of suffering on Anna's face. "All I see is that you take too gloomy a view of things."

"I? Not at all! I'm very satisfied and happy. You see, je fais passions. Veslovsky..."

"Yes, to tell the truth, I don't like Veslovsky's tone," said Darya Alexandrovna, anxious to change the subject.

"Oh, that's nonsense! It amuses Alexei, and that's all; but he's a boy, and quite under control. You know, I turn him as I please. It's just as it might be with your Grisha.... Dolly!" she suddenly changed the subject. "You say I take too gloomy a view of things. You can't understand. It's too awful! I try not to take any view of it at all."

"But I think you ought to. You ought to do all you can."

"But what can I do? Nothing. You tell me to marry Alexei, and say I don't think about it. I don't think about it!" she repeated, and a flush rose into her face. She got up, straightening her chest, and sighed heavily. With her light step she began pacing up and down the room, stopping now and then. "I don't think of it? Not a day, not an hour passes that I don't think of it, and blame myself for what I think... because thinking of that may drive me mad. Drive me mad!" she repeated. "When I think of it, I can't sleep without morphine. But never mind. Let us talk quietly. They tell me divorce. In the first place, he won't give me a divorce. He's under the influence of Countess Lidia Ivanovna now."

Darya Alexandrovna, sitting erect on a chair, turned her head following Anna with a face of sympathetic suffering.

"You ought to make the attempt," she said softly.

"Suppose I make the attempt. What does it mean?" she said, evidently giving utterance to a thought, a thousand times thought over and learned by heart. "It means that I, hating him, but still recognizing that I have wronged him and I consider him magnanimous that I humiliate myself to write to him.... Well, suppose I make the effort; I do it. Either I receive a humiliating refusal, or consent. Well, I have received his consent, say..." Anna was at that moment at the farthest end of the room, and she stopped there, doing something to the curtain at the window. "I receive his consent, but my... my son? They won't give him up to me. He will grow up despising me, with his father, whom I've abandoned. Do you see, I love equally, I think, but both more than myself, two beings Seriozha and Alexei."

She came out into the middle of the room and stood facing Dolly, with her arms pressed tightly across her chest. In her white dressing gown her figure seemed more than usually grand and broad. She bent her head, and with shining, wet eyes looked from under her brows at Dolly, a thin little pitiful figure in her patched dressing jacket and nightcap, shaking all over with emotion.

"It is only those two beings whom I love, and one excludes the other. I can't have them together, and that's the only thing I want. And since I can't have that, I don't care about the rest. I don't care about anything anything. And it will end one way or another, and so I can't, I don't like to talk of it. So don't blame me, don't judge me for anything. You can't with your pure heart understand all that I'm suffering."

She went up, sat down beside Dolly, and, with a guilty look, peeped into her face and took her hand.

"What are you thinking? What are you thinking about me? Don't despise me. I don't deserve contempt. I'm simply unhappy. If anyone is unhappy, I am," she uttered, and turning away, she burst into tears.

Left alone, Dolly said her prayers and went to bed. She had felt for Anna with all her heart while she was speaking to her, but now she could not force herself to think of her. The memories of home and of her children rose up in her imagination with a peculiar charm quite new to her, with a sort of new brilliance. That world of her own seemed to her now so sweet and precious that she would not on any account spend an extra day outside it, and she made up her mind that she would certainly go back the next day.

Anna meantime went back to her boudoir, took a wineglass, and dropped into it several drops of a medicine, of which the principal ingredient was morphine. After drinking it off and sitting still a little while, she went into her bedroom in a soothed and more cheerful frame of mind.

When she went into the bedroom, Vronsky looked intently at her. He was looking for traces of the conversation which he knew, staying so long in Dolly's room, she must have had with her. But in her expression of restrained excitement, and of a sort of reserve, he could find nothing but the beauty that always bewitched him afresh though he was used to it, the consciousness of it, and the desire that it should affect him. He did not want to ask her what they had been talking of, but he hoped that she would tell him something of her own accord. But she only said:

"I am so glad you like Dolly. You do, don't you?"

"Oh, I've known her a long while. She's very goodhearted, I suppose, mais excessivement terre−a−terre. Still, I'm very glad to see her."

He took Anna's hand and looked inquiringly into her eyes.

Misinterpreting the look, she smiled to him.

Next morning, in spite of the protests of her hosts, Darya Alexandrovna prepared for her homeward journey. Levin's coachman, in his by no means new coat and shabby hat, with his ill−matched horses and his carriage with the patched mudguards, drove with gloomy determination into the covered gravel approach.

Darya Alexandrovna disliked taking leave of Princess Varvara and the gentlemen of the party. After a day spent together, both she and her hosts were distinctly aware that they did not get on together, and that it was better for them not to meet. Only Anna was sad. She knew that now, after Dolly's departure, no one again would stir up within her soul the feelings that had been roused by their conversation. It hurt her to stir up these feelings, but yet she knew that that was the best part of her soul, and that that part of her soul would quickly grow weedy in the life she was leading.

As she drove out into the open country, Darya Alexandrovna had a delightful sense of relief, and she felt tempted to ask the two men how they had liked being at Vronsky's, when suddenly the coachman, Philip, expressed himself unasked:

"Rolling in wealth they may be, but three pots of oats was all they gave us. Everything cleared up till there wasn't a grain left by cock−crow. What are three pots? A mere mouthful! And oats now you could get from innkeepers for forty−five kopecks. At our place, no fear, all comers may have as much as they can eat."

"The master's a screw," put in the countinghouse clerk.

"Well, did you like their horses?" asked Dolly.

"The horses! There's no two opinions about them. And the food was good. But it seemed to me sort of dreary there, Darya Alexandrovna. I don't know what you thought," he said, turning his handsome, good−natured face to her.

"I thought so too. Well, shall we get home by evening?"

"Eh, we must!"

On reaching home and finding everyone entirely safe and particularly charming, Darya Alexandrovna began with great liveliness telling them about her arrival, her warm reception, about the luxury and good taste in which the Vronskys lived, and about their recreations, and she would not allow a word to be said against them.

"One has to know Anna and Vronsky I have got to know him better now to see how fine they are, and how touching," she said, speaking now with perfect sincerity, and forgetting the vague feeling of dissatisfaction and awkwardness she had experienced there.

XXV.

Vronsky and Anna spent the whole summer and part of the autumn in the country, living in just the same condition, and still taking no steps to obtain a divorce. It was a decided thing between them that they should not go away anywhere; but both felt, the longer they lived alone, especially in the autumn, and without guests in the house, that they could not stand this existence, and that they would have to change it.

Their life was apparently such that nothing better could be desired. They had the fullest abundance of everything; they had a child, and both had occupation. Anna devoted just as much care to her appearance when they had no visitors, and she did a great deal of reading, both of novels and of what serious literature was in fashion. She ordered all the books that were praised in the foreign papers and journals she received, and read them with that

concentrated attention which is only given to what is read in seclusion. Moreover, every subject that was of interest to Vronsky, she studied in books and special journals, so that he often went straight to her with questions relating to agriculture or architecture, sometimes even with questions relating to horse breeding or sport. He was amazed at her knowledge, her memory, and at first was disposed to doubt it, to ask for confirmation of her facts; and she would find what he asked for in some book, and show it to him.

The building of the hospital, too, interested her. She did not merely assist, but planned and suggested a great deal herself. But her chief thought was still of herself how far she was dear to Vronsky, how far she could make up to him for all he had given up. Vronsky appreciated this desire not only to please, but to serve him, which had become the sole aim of her existence, but at the same time he wearied of the loving snares in which she tried to hold him fast. As time went on, and he saw himself more and more often held fast in these snares, he had an ever−growing desire, not so much to escape from them, as to try whether they hindered his freedom. Had it not been for this growing desire to be free, not to have scenes every time he wanted to go to the town to a session or a race, Vronsky would have been perfectly satisfied with his life. The role he had taken up, the role of a wealthy landowner, one of that class which ought to be the very heart of the Russian aristocracy, was entirely to his taste; and now, after spending six months in that role, he derived even greater satisfaction from it. And his management of his estate, which occupied and absorbed him more and more, was most successful. In spite of the immense sums which the hospital, the machinery, the cows ordered from Switzerland, and many other things, cost him, he was convinced that he was not wasting but increasing his substance. In all matters affecting income, the sales of timber, wheat, and wool, the letting of lands, Vronsky was hard as a rock, and knew well how to keep up prices. In all operations on a large scale on this and his other estates, he kept to the simplest methods involving no risk, and in trifling details he was careful and exacting to an extreme degree. In spite of all the cunning and ingenuity of the German steward, who would try to tempt him into purchases by making his original estimate always far larger than really required, and then representing to Vronsky that he might get the thing cheaper, and so make a profit, Vronsky did not give in. He listened to his steward, cross−examined him, and only agreed to his suggestions when the implement to be ordered or constructed was the very newest, not yet known in Russia, and likely to excite wonder. Apart from such exceptions, he resolved upon an increased outlay only where there was a surplus, and in making such an outlay he went into the minutest details, and insisted on getting the very best for his money; so that by the method on which he managed his affairs, it was clear that he was not wasting, but increasing his substance.

In October there were the provincial nobility elections in the Kashinsky province, where were the estates of Vronsky, Sviiazhsky, Koznishev, Oblonsky, and a small part of Levin's land.

These elections were attracting public attention from several circumstances connected with them, and also from the people taking part in them. There had been a great deal of talk about these elections, and great preparations were being made for them. Persons who never attended the elections were coming from Moscow, from Peterburg, and from abroad to attend these.

Vronsky had long before promised Sviiazhsky to go to them.

Before the elections Sviiazhsky, who often visited Vozdvizhenskoe, drove over to fetch Vronsky.

On the day before there had been almost a quarrel between Vronsky and Anna over this proposed expedition. It was the very dullest autumn weather, which is so dreary in the country, and so, preparing himself for a struggle, Vronsky, with a hard and cold expression, informed Anna of his departure as he had never spoken to her before. But, to his surprise, Anna accepted the information with great composure, and merely asked when he would be back. He looked intently at her, at a loss to explain this composure. She smiled at his look. He knew that way she had of withdrawing into herself, and knew that it only happened when she had determined upon something without letting him know her plans. He was afraid of this; but he was so anxious to avoid a scene that he kept up appearances, and half sincerely believed in what he longed to believe in her reasonableness.

"I hope you won't be dull?"

"I hope not," said Anna. "I got a box of books yesterday from Gautier's. No, I shan't be dull."

"She's trying to take that tone, and so much the better," he thought, "or else it would be the same thing over and over again."

And he set off for the elections without appealing to her for a candid explanation. It was the first time since the beginning of their intimacy that he had parted from her without a full explanation. From one point of view this troubled him, but on the other side he felt that it was better so. "At first there will be, as this time, something undefined, kept back, and then she will get used to it. In any case I can give up anything for her, but not my masculine independence," he thought.

XXVI.

In September Levin moved to Moscow for Kitty's confinement. He had spent a whole month in Moscow with nothing to do, when Sergei Ivanovich, who had property in the Kashinsky province, and took great interest in the question of the approaching elections, made ready to set off to the elections. He invited his brother, who had a vote in the Selezniovsky district, to come with him. Levin had, moreover, to transact in Kashin some extremely important business relating to the wardship, and to the receiving of certain redemption money for his sister, who was abroad.

Levin still hesitated, but Kitty, who saw that he was bored in Moscow, and urged him to go, on her own authority ordered him the proper nobleman's uniform, costing eighty roubles. And this eighty roubles paid for the uniform was the chief reason that finally decided Levin to go. He went to Kashin.

Levin had been five days in Kashin, visiting the assembly each day, and busily engaged about his sister's business, which still dragged on. The district marshals of nobility were all occupied with the elections, and it was impossible to get the simplest thing done that depended upon the court of wardship. The other matter, the receipt of the sums due, was also met by difficulties. After long negotiations over the lifting of the prohibition, the money was at last ready to be paid; but the notary, a most obliging person, could not hand over the order, because it must have the signature of the president, and the president, though he had not given over his duties to a deputy, was at the elections. All these worrying negotiations, this endless going from place to place, and talking with pleasant and excellent people, who quite saw the unpleasantness of the petitioner's position, but were powerless to assist him all these efforts that yielded no result, led to a feeling of misery in Levin akin to the mortifying helplessness one experiences in dreams, when one tries to use physical force. He felt this frequently as he talked to his exceedingly good−natured solicitor. This solicitor did, it seemed, everything possible, and strained every nerve to get him out of his difficulties. "I tell you what you might try," he said more than once; "go to so−and−so and so−and−so," and the solicitor drew up a regular plan for getting round the fatal point that hindered everything. But he would add immediately, "It'll mean some delay, anyway, but you might try it." And Levin did try, and did go. Everyone was kind and civil, but the point evaded seemed to crop up again in the end, and again to bar the way. What was particularly trying, was that Levin could not make out with whom he was struggling, to whose interest it was that his business should not be done. That no one seemed to know; the solicitor certainly did not know. If Levin could have understood why, just as he saw why one can only approach the booking office of a railway station in single file, it would not have been so vexatious and tiresome to him. But in the case of the hindrances that confronted him in his business, no one could explain why they existed.

But Levin had changed a good deal since his marriage; he was patient, and if he could not see why it was all arranged like this, he told himself that he could not judge without knowing all about it, and that most likely it must be so, and he tried not to resent it.

In attending the elections, too, and taking part in them, he tried now not to judge, not to fall foul of them, but to comprehend as fully as he could the question which was so earnestly and ardently absorbing honest and excellent men whom he respected. Since his marriage there had been revealed to Levin so many new and serious aspects of life which had previously, through his frivolous attitude to them, seemed of no importance, that in the question of the elections, too, he assumed and tried to find some serious significance.

Sergei Ivanovich explained to him the meaning and object of the proposed radical change at the elections. The marshal of the province in whose hands the law had placed the control of so many important public functions the guardianship of wards (the very department which was giving Levin so much trouble just now), the disposal of large sums subscribed by the nobility of the province, the high schools, for girls, for boys, and military, and primary instruction on the new statute and finally, the Zemstvo the marshal of the province, Snetkov, was a nobleman of the old school, dissipating an immense fortune, a goodhearted man, honest after his own fashion, but utterly without any comprehension of the needs of modern days. He always took, in every question, the side of the nobility; he was positively antagonistic to the spread of primary education, and he succeeded in giving a purely party character to the Zemstvo which ought by rights to be of such an immense importance. What was needed was to put in his place a fresh, capable, perfectly modern man, of contemporary ideas, and to frame their policy so as to derive, from the rights conferred upon the nobles (not as the nobility, but as an element of the Zemstvo), all the benefits of self−government that could possibly be derived from them. In the wealthy Kashinsky province, which always took the lead of other provinces in everything, there was now such a preponderance of forces that this policy, once carried through properly there, might serve as a model for other provinces for all Russia. And hence the whole question was of the greatest importance. It was proposed to elect as marshal in place of Snetkov either Sviiazhsky, or, better still, Neviedovsky, a former university professor, a man of remarkable intelligence, and a great friend of Sergei Ivanovich.

The meeting was opened by the governor, who made a speech to the nobles, urging them to elect the public functionaries, not from regard for persons, but for the service and welfare of the native country, and hoping that the honorable nobility of the Kashinsky province would, as at all former elections, hold their duty as sacred, and vindicate the exalted confidence of the Monarch.

When he had finished his speech, the governor walked out of the hall, and the noblemen noisily and eagerly some even enthusiastically followed him and thronged round him while he put on his fur coat and conversed amicably with the marshal of the province. Levin, anxious to see into everything and not miss anything, also stood there in the crowd, and heard the governor say: "Please, tell Marya Ivanovna my wife is very sorry she could not visit the charity school." And thereupon the nobles in high good humor sorted out their fur coats and all drove off to the cathedral.

In the cathedral Levin, lifting his hand like the rest, and repeating the words of the dean, vowed with the most awesome oaths to do all the governor had hoped they would do. Church services always affected Levin, and as he uttered the words: "I kiss the cross," and glanced round at the crowd of young and old men repeating the same, he felt touched.

On the second and third days there was business relating to the finances of the nobility, and the high school for girls, of no importance whatever, as Sergei Ivanovich explained, and Levin, busy seeing after his own affairs, did not attend the meetings. On the fourth day the auditing of the marshal's accounts took place at the high table of the marshal of the province. And then there occurred the first skirmish between the new party and the old. The committee which had been deputed to verify the accounts reported to the meeting that all was in order. The marshal of the province got up, thanked the nobility for their confidence, and shed tears. The nobles gave him a loud welcome and shook hands with him. But at that instant a nobleman of Sergei Ivanovich's party said that he had heard that the committee had not verified the accounts, considering such a verification an insult to the marshal of the province. One of the members of the committee incautiously admitted this. Then a small gentleman, very young−looking but very venomous, began to say that it would probably be agreeable to the marshal of the

province to give an account of his expenditures of the public moneys, and that the misplaced delicacy of the members of the committee was depriving him of this moral satisfaction. Then the members of the committee tried to withdraw their admission, and Sergei Ivanovich began to prove that they must logically admit either that they had verified the accounts or that they had not, and he developed this dilemma in detail. Sergei Ivanovich was answered by the talker of the opposite party. Then Sviiazhsky spoke, and then the venomous gentleman again. The discussion lasted a long time and ended in nothing. Levin was surprised that they should dispute upon this subject so long, especially as, when he asked Sergei Ivanovich whether he supposed that money had been misappropriated, Sergei Ivanovich answered:

"Oh, no! He's an honest man. But those old−fashioned methods of paternal family arrangements in the management of nobility affairs must be broken down."

On the fifth day came the elections of the district marshals. It was rather a stormy day in several districts. In the Selezniovsky district Sviiazhsky was elected unanimously without a ballot, and he gave a dinner that evening.

XXVII.

The sixth day was fixed for the election of the marshal of the province. The rooms, large and small, were full of nobleman in all sorts of uniforms. Many had come only for that day. Men who had not seen each other for years, some from the Crimea, some from Peterburg, some from abroad, met in the rooms of the Hall of Nobility. There was much discussion around the province table under the portrait of the Czar.

The nobles, both in the larger and in the smaller rooms, grouped themselves in camps, and from their hostile and suspicious glances, from the silence that fell upon them when outsiders approached a group, and from the way that some, whispering together, retreated to the farther corridor, it was evident that each side had secrets from the other. In appearance the noblemen were sharply divided into two classes: the old and the new. The old were for the most part either in the old uniform of the nobility, buttoned up closely, with spurs and hats, or in their own special naval, cavalry, infantry uniforms, earned by their former service. The uniforms of the older men were embroidered in the old−fashioned way with small puffs on their shoulders; they were unmistakably tight and short in the waists, as though their wearers had grown out of them. The younger men wore the uniform of the nobility with long waists and broad shoulders, unbuttoned over white waistcoats, or uniforms with black collars and with the embroidered laurel leaves of justices of the peace. To the younger men belonged the Court uniforms that here and there brightened up the crowd.

But the division into young and old did not correspond with the division of parties. Some of the young men, as Levin observed, belonged to the old party; and some of the very oldest noblemen, on the contrary, were whispering with Sviiazhsky, and were evidently ardent partisans of the new party.

Levin stood in the smaller room, where they were smoking and taking light refreshments, close to his own friends, and, listening to what they were saying, he vainly exerted all his intelligence trying to understand what was said. Sergei Ivanovich was the center round which the others grouped themselves. He was listening at that moment to Sviiazhsky and Khliustov, the marshal of another district, who belonged to their party. Khliustov would not agree to go with his district to ask Snetkov to be a candidate, while Sviiazhsky was persuading him to do so, and Sergei Ivanovich was approving of the plan. Levin could not make out why the opposition had to ask the marshal to be a candidate when they wanted to supersede him.

Stepan Arkadyevich, who had just been drinking and taking some snack lunch, came up to them in his uniform of a gentleman of the bedchamber, wiping his lips with a perfumed handkerchief of bordered batiste.

"We are placing our forces," he said, pulling out his side whiskers, "Sergei Ivanovich!"

And listening to the conversation, he supported Sviiazhsky's contention.

"One district's enough, and Sviiazhsky's obviously of the opposition," he said, words evidently intelligible to all except Levin.

"Why, Kostia, you, it seems, get the taste for these affairs too!" he added, turning to Levin and drawing his arm through his. Levin would have been glad indeed to get the taste for these affairs, but could not make out what the point was, and retreating a few steps from the speakers, he explained to Stepan Arkadyevich his inability to understand why the marshal of the province should be asked to be a candidate.

"O sancta simplicitas!" said Stepan Arkadyevich, and briefly and clearly he explained it to Levin.

If, as at previous elections, all the districts asked the marshal of the province to be a candidate, then he would be elected without a ballot. That must not be. Now eight districts had agreed to call upon him: if two refused to do so, Snetkov might decline the candidacy entirely; and then the old party might choose another of their party, which would throw them completely out in their reckoning. But if only one district, Sviiazhsky's, did not call upon him to be a candidate, Snetkov would let himself be balloted for. They were even, some of them, going to vote for him, and purposely to let him get a good many votes, so that the enemy might be thrown off the scent, and when a candidate of the other side was put up, they too might give him some votes. Levin understood to some extent, but not fully, and would have put a few more questions, when suddenly everyone began talking and making a noise, and they moved toward the big room.

"What is it? Eh? Whom?... Proxy? Whose? What?... They won't pass him?... No proxy?... They won't let Fliorov in?... Eh, because of the charge against him?... Why, at this rate, they won't admit anyone. It's a swindle!... The law!" Levin heard exclamations on all sides, and he moved into the big room together with the others, all hurrying somewhere and afraid of missing something. Squeezed by the crowding noblemen, he drew near the high table where the marshal of the province, Sviiazhsky, and the other leaders, were hotly disputing about something.

XXVIII.

Levin was standing rather far off. A nobleman breathing heavily and hoarsely at his side, and another whose thick boots were creaking, prevented him from hearing distinctly. He could only hear the soft voice of the marshal faintly, then the shrill voice of the venomous gentleman, and then the voice of Sviiazhsky. They were disputing, as far as he could make out, as to the interpretation to be put on the act and the exact meaning of the words: "liable to be called up for trial."

The crowd parted to make way for Sergei Ivanovich approaching the table. Sergei Ivanovich, waiting till the venomous gentleman had finished speaking, said that he thought the best solution would be to refer to the act itself, and asked the secretary to find the act. The act said that in case of difference of opinion, there must be a ballot.

Sergei Ivanovich read the act and began to explain its meaning, but at that point a tall, stout, stoop−shouldered landowner, with dyed mustache, in a tight uniform that made the back of his neck bulge up, interrupted him. He went up to the table, and striking it with his finger ring, he shouted loudly:

"A ballot! Put it to the vote! No need for more talking!"

Then several voices began to talk all at once, and the tall nobleman with the ring, getting more and more exasperated, shouted more and more loudly. But it was impossible to make out what he said.

He was shouting for the very course Sergei Ivanovich had proposed; but it was evident that he hated him and all his party, and this feeling of hatred spread through the whole party and roused in opposition to it the same vindictiveness, though in a more seemly form, on the other side. Shouts were raised, and for a moment all was confusion, so that the marshal of the province had to call for order.

"A ballot! A ballot! Whoever is a nobleman understands! We shed our blood for our country!... The confidence of the Monarch.... No checking of the accounts of the marshal he's not a cashier!... But that's not the point.... Votes, please! What vileness!..." shouted furious and violent voices on all sides. Looks and faces were even more violent and furious than their words. They expressed the most implacable hatred. Levin did not in the least understand what it was all about, and he marveled at the passion with which it was disputed whether or not the decision about Fliorov should be put to the vote. He forgot, as Sergei Ivanovich explained to him afterward, this syllogism: that it was necessary for the public good to get rid of the marshal of the province; that to get rid of the marshal it was necessary to have a majority of votes; that to get a majority of votes it was necessary to secure Fliorov's right to vote; that to secure the recognition of Fliorov's right to vote they must decide on the interpretation to be put on the act.

"And one vote may decide the whole question, and one must be serious and consecutive, if one wants to be of use in public life," concluded Sergei Ivanovich. But Levin forgot all that, and it was painful to him to see all these excellent persons, for whom he had respect, in such an unpleasant and vicious state of excitement. To escape from this painful feeling he went away into the other room where there was nobody except the waiters at the refreshment bar. Seeing the waiters busy washing up the crockery and setting in order their plates and wineglasses, seeing their alert and vivacious faces, Levin felt an unexpected sense of relief, as though he had come out of a stuffy room into the fresh air. He began walking up and down, looking with pleasure at the waiters. He particularly liked the way one gray−whiskered waiter, who showed his scorn for the other younger ones, and was jeered at by them, was teaching them how to fold napkins properly. Levin was just about to enter into conversation with the old waiter, when the secretary of the court of wardship, a little old man whose speciality it was to know all the noblemen of the province by name and patronymic, drew him away.

"Please come, Konstantin Dmitrievich," he said, "your brother's looking for you. They are voting on the legal point."

Levin walked into the room, received a white ball, and followed his brother, Sergei Ivanovich, to the table where Sviiazhsky was standing with a significant and ironical face, holding his beard in his fist and sniffing at it. Sergei Ivanovich put his hand into the box, put the ball somewhere, and, making room for Levin, stopped. Levin advanced, but utterly forgetting what he was to do, and much embarrassed, he turned to Sergei Ivanovich with the question, "Where am I to put it?" He asked this softly, at a moment when there was talking going on near, so that he had hoped his question would not be overheard. But the persons speaking paused, and his improper question was overheard. Sergei Ivanovich frowned.

"That is a matter for each man's own decision," he said severely.

Several people smiled. Levin crimsoned, hurriedly thrust his hand under the cloth, and put the ball to the right as it was in his right hand. Having put it in, he recollected that he ought to have thrust his left hand in too, and so he thrust it in though too late, and, still more overcome with confusion, he beat a hasty retreat into the background.

"A hund'ed and twenty−six fo' admission! Ninety−eight against!" sang out the voice of the secretary, who could not pronounce the letter r. Then there was a laugh; a button and two hazelnuts were found in the box. The nobleman was allowed the right to vote, and the new party had conquered.

But the old party did not consider themselves conquered. Levin heard that they were asking Snetkov to be candidate, and he saw that a crowd of noblemen was surrounding the marshal, who was saying something. Levin

went nearer. In reply Snetkov spoke of the trust the noblemen of the province had placed in him, the affection they had shown him, which he did not deserve, as his only merit had been his attachment to the nobility, to whom he had devoted twelve years of service. Several times he repeated the words: "I have served to the best of my powers with truth and good faith; I value your goodness and thank you," and suddenly he stopped short from the tears that choked him, and went out of the room. Whether these tears came from a sense of the injustice being done him, from his love for the nobility, or from the strain of the position he was placed in, feeling himself surrounded by enemies, his emotion infected the assembly, the majority were touched, and Levin felt a tenderness for Snetkov.

In the doorway the marshal of the province jostled against Levin.

"Beg pardon excuse me, please," he said as to a stranger, but, recognizing Levin, he smiled timidly. It seemed to Levin that he would have liked to say something, but could not speak for emotion. His face and his whole figure in his uniform with the crosses, and white trousers striped with galloons, as he moved hurriedly along, reminded Levin of some hunted beast who sees that he is in evil plight. This expression on the marshal's face was particularly touching to Levin, because, only the day before, he had been at his house about his guardianship business and had seen him in all his grandeur, a kindhearted, fatherly man. The big house with the old family furniture; the rather slovenly, far from stylish, but respectful footmen unmistakably old house serfs who had stuck to their master; the stout, good−natured wife in a cap with lace and a Turkish shawl, petting her pretty grandchild, her daughter's daughter; the young son, a sixth−form high school boy, coming home from school, and greeting his father by kissing his big hand; the genuine, cordial words and gestures of the old man all this had the day before roused an instinctive feeling of respect and sympathy in Levin. This old man was a touching and pathetic figure to Levin now, and he longed to say something pleasant to him.

"So you're our marshal again," he said.

"It's not likely," said the marshal, looking round with a scared expression. "I'm worn−out, I'm old. If there are men younger and more deserving than I, let them serve."

And the marshal disappeared through a side door.

The most solemn moment was at hand. They were to proceed immediately to the election. The leaders of both parties were reckoning white and black on their fingers.

The discussion upon Fliorov had given the new party not only Fliorov's vote, but had also gained time for them, so that they could send to fetch three noblemen who had been rendered unable to take part in the elections by the wiles of the other party. Two noble gentlemen, who had a weakness for strong drink, had been made drunk by the partisans of Snetkov, and a third had been relieved of his uniform.

On learning this, the new party had made haste, during the dispute about Fliorov, to send some of their men in a cab to clothe the stripped gentleman, and to bring along one of the intoxicated to the meeting.

"I've brought one after bringing him to by throwing water over him," said the landowner who had gone on this errand, to Sviiazhsky. "Never mind he'll do."

"Not too drunk he won't fall down?" said Sviiazhsky, shaking his head.

"No, he's first−rate. If only they don't give him any more here.... I've told the barman not to give him anything, on any account."

XXIX.

The narrow room, in which they were smoking and taking refreshment, was full of noblemen. The excitement grew more intense, and every face betrayed some uneasiness. The excitement was specially keen for the leaders of each party, who knew every detail, and had reckoned up every vote. They were the generals organizing the approaching battle. The rest, like the rank and file before an engagement, though they were getting ready for the fight, sought for other distractions in the interval. Some were lunching, standing at the bar, or sitting at the table; others were walking up and down the long room, smoking cigarettes, and talking with friends whom they had not seen for a long while.

Levin did not care to eat, and he was not a smoker; he did not want to join his own friends that is Sergei Ivanovich, Stepan Arkadyevich, Sviiazhsky, and the rest, because Vronsky in his equerry's uniform was standing with them in eager conversation. Levin had seen him already at the meeting on the previous day, and he had studiously avoided him, not caring to greet him. He went to the window and sat down, scanning the groups, and listening to what was being said around him. He felt depressed, especially because everyone else was, as he saw, eager, anxious, and interested, and he alone, with an old, toothless little man with mumbling lips, wearing a naval uniform who sat beside him, had no interest in it, and nothing to do.

"He's such a blackguard! I have told him so, but it makes no difference. Only think of it! He couldn't collect it in three years!" he heard vigorously uttered by a stoop−shouldered, short country gentleman, who had pomaded hair hanging over his embroidered collar, and new boots obviously put on for the occasion, with heels that tapped energetically as he spoke. Casting a displeased glance at Levin, this gentleman sharply turned his back.

"Yes, it's a dirty business, there's no denying," another puny landowner assented in a high voice.

Next, a whole crowd of country gentlemen, surrounding a stout general, hurriedly came near Levin. These persons were unmistakably seeking a place where they could talk without being overheard.

"How dare he say I had his breeches stolen! Pawned them for drink, I expect. Damn the fellow Prince indeed! He'd better not say it that's swinish!"

"But excuse me! They take their stand on the act," was being said in another group; "the wife must be registered as a noble."

"Oh, damn your acts! I speak from my heart. We're all gentlemen, aren't we? Have trust in us."

"Shall we go on, Your Excellency fine champagne?"

Another group was following a nobleman who was shouting something in a loud voice; it was one of the three intoxicated gentlemen.

"I always advised Marya Semionovna to let for a fair rent, for she can never save a profit," he heard a pleasant voice say. The speaker was a country gentleman with white mustache, wearing the regimental uniform of an old general staff officer. It was the very landowner Levin had met at Sviiazhsky's. He knew him at once. The landowner too stared at Levin, and they exchanged greetings.

"Very glad to see you! To be sure! I remember you very well. Last year at our district marshal's, Nikolai Ivanovich's."

"Well, and how is your land doing?" asked Levin.

"Oh, still just the same, always at a loss," the landowner answered with a resigned smile, but with an expression of serenity and conviction that it must be thus. "And how do you come to be in our province?" he asked. "Come to take part in our coup d'etat?" he said, confidently pronouncing the French words with a bad accent.

"All Russia's here gentlemen of the bedchamber, and everything short of the ministry." He pointed to the imposing figure of Stepan Arkadyevich in white trousers and his court uniform, walking by with a general.

"I ought to own that I don't very well understand the drift of the provincial elections," said Levin.

The landowner looked at him.

"Why, what is there to understand? There's no meaning in it at all. It's a decaying institution that goes on running only by the force of inertia. Just look, the very uniforms tell you that it's an assembly of justices of the peace, permanent members of the boards, and so on, but not of noblemen."

"Then why do you come?" asked Levin.

"From habit, nothing else. Then, too, one must keep up connections. It's a moral obligation of a sort. And then, to tell the truth, there are one's own interests. My son−in−law wants to run as a permanent member; they're not rich people, and he must be brought forward. These gentlemen, now what do they come for?" he said, pointing to the venomous gentleman, who was talking at the high table.

"That's the new generation of nobility."

"New it may be, but nobility it isn't. They're landed proprietors but we're the landowners. As noblemen, they're cutting their own throats."

"But you say it's an institution that's served its time."

"That it may be, but still, it ought to be treated a little more respectfully. Snetkov, now... We may be of use, or we may not, but we're the growth of a thousand years. If we're laying out a garden, planning one before the house, you know, and there you've a tree that's stood for centuries in the very spot... Old and gnarled it may be, and yet you don't cut down the old fellow to make room for the flowerbeds, but lay out your beds so as to take advantage of the tree. You won't grow him again in a year," he said cautiously, and he immediately changed the conversation. "Well, and how is your estate doing?"

"Oh, not very well. I make about five per cent."

"Yes, but you don't reckon your own work. Aren't you worth something too? I'll tell you my own case. Before I took to seeing after the land, I had a salary of three thousand roubles from the service. Now I do more work than I did in the service, and, like you, I get five per cent on the land, and thank God for that. But one's work is thrown in for nothing."

"Then why do you do it, if it's a clear loss?"

"Oh, well, one does it! What would you have? It's habit, and one knows it's as it should be. And what's more," the landowner went on, leaning on the window and chatting on, "my son, I must tell you, has no taste for it. There's no doubt he'll be a savant. So there'll be no one to keep it up. And yet one does it. Here this year I've planted an orchard."

"Yes, yes," said Levin, "that's perfectly true. I always feel there's no real balance of gain in my work on the land, and yet one does it.... It's a sort of duty one feels to the land."

"But I tell you what," the landowner pursued; "a neighbor of mine, a merchant, was at my place. We walked about the fields and the park. 'No,' said he, 'Stepan Vassilyevich everything's well looked after but your garden's neglected.' But, as a fact, it's well kept up. 'To my thinking, I'd cut down the linden trees. Only do it when they're running sap. Here's a thousand lindens, and each would make two good bundles of bast. And nowadays that bast's worth something. And you'd cut down the lot of the linden shells.'"

"And with what he made he'd buy up livestock, or buy some land for a trifle, and let it out to the peasants," Levin added, smiling. He had evidently more than once come across those commercial calculations. "And he'd make his fortune. But you and I must thank God if we keep what we've got and leave it to our children."

"You're married, I've heard?" said the landowner.

"Yes," Levin answered, with proud satisfaction. "Yes, all this is rather strange," he went on. "So we live on without any reckoning, as though we were the vestals of antiquity, set to guard a sacred fire or something."

The landowner chuckled under his white mustaches.

"There are some among us, too, like our friend Nikolai Ivanovich, or Count Vronsky, who's settled here lately they try to set up an agronomic industry; but so far it leads to nothing but making away with capital."

"But why is it we don't do like the merchants? Why don't we cut down our parks for bast?" said Levin, returning to a thought that had struck him.

"Why, as you said, to guard the fire. Besides, that's not work for a nobleman. And our work as noblemen isn't done here at the elections, but yonder, each in his own nook. There's a class instinct, too, of what one ought and oughtn't to do. There are the peasants, too I wonder at them sometimes; any good peasant tries to take all the land he can. However bad the land is, he'll work it. Without a reckoning too. At a simple loss."

"Just as we do," said Levin. "Very, very glad to have met you," he added, seeing Sviiazhsky approaching him.

"And here we've met for the first time since we met at your place," said the landowner to Sviiazhsky, "and we've had a good talk, too."

"Well, have you been attacking the new order of things?" said Sviiazhsky with a smile.

"That we're bound to do."

"You've been relieving your feelings."

XXX.

Sviiazhsky took Levin's arm, and went with him to his own friends. This time there was no avoiding Vronsky. He was standing with Stepan Arkadyevich and Sergei Ivanovich, and looking straight at Levin as he drew near.

"Delighted! I believe I've had the pleasure of meeting you... at Princess Shcherbatskaia's," he said, giving Levin his hand.

"Yes, I quite remember our meeting," said Levin, and, blushing crimson, he turned away immediately, and began talking to his brother.

With a slight smile Vronsky went on talking to Sviiazhsky, obviously without the slightest inclination to enter into conversation with Levin. But Levin, as he talked to his brother, was continually looking round at Vronsky, trying to think of something to say to him to smooth over his rudeness.

"What are we waiting for now?" asked Levin, looking at Sviiazhsky and Vronsky.

"For Snetkov. He has to refuse or accept the candidacy," answered Sviiazhsky.

"Well, and what has he done consented or not?"

"That's the point: he's done neither," said Vronsky.

"And if he refuses, who will run then?" asked Levin, looking at Vronsky.

"Whoever chooses to," said Sviiazhsky.

"Shall you?" asked Levin.

"Certainly not I," said Sviiazhsky, looking confused, and turning an alarmed glance at the venomous gentleman, who was standing beside Sergei Ivanovich.

"Who then? Neviedovsky?" said Levin, feeling he was putting his foot into it.

But this was worse still. Neviedovsky and Sviiazhsky were the two candidates.

"I certainly shall not, under any circumstances," answered the venomous gentleman.

This was Neviedovsky himself. Sviiazhsky introduced him to Levin.

"Well, do you find it exciting too?" said Stepan Arkadyevich, winking at Vronsky. "It's something like a race. One might bet on it."

"Yes, it is keenly exciting," said Vronsky. "And once taking the thing up, one's eager to see it through. It's a fight!" he said, scowling and setting his powerful jaws.

"What a businessman Sviiazhsky is! Sees it all so clearly."

"Oh, yes!" Vronsky assented indifferently.

A silence followed, during which Vronsky since he had to look at something looked at Levin, at his feet, at his frock coat, then at his face, and noticing his gloomy eyes fixed upon him, he said, in order to say something:

"How is it that you, living constantly in the country, are not a justice of the peace? You are not in the uniform of one."

"It's because I consider the justice of the peace a silly institution," morosely answered Levin, who had been all the time looking for an opportunity to enter into conversation with Vronsky, so as to smooth over his rudeness at their first meeting.

"I don't think so quite the contrary," Vronsky said, with calm surprise.

"It's a plaything," Levin cut him short. "We don't want justices of the peace. I've never had a single thing to do with them during eight years. And what I have had, was decided wrongly by them. The justice of the peace is over thirty miles from me. For a matter of two roubles or so, I should have to send a lawyer, who costs me fifteen."

And he related how a peasant had stolen some flour from the miller, and when the miller told him of it, had lodged a complaint for slander. All this was utterly uncalled−for and stupid, and Levin felt it himself as he said it.

"Oh, this is such an original fellow!" said Stepan Arkadyevich with his most soothing, almond−oil smile. "But come along; I think they're voting...."

And they separated.

"I can't understand," said Sergei Ivanovich, who had observed his brother's gaucherie, "I can't understand how anyone can be so absolutely devoid of political tact. That's where we Russians are so deficient. The marshal of the province is our opponent, and with him you're ami cochon, and you beg him to be candidate. Count Vronsky, now... I'm not making a friend of him he's asked me to dinner, and I'm not going; but he's one of our side why make an enemy of him? Then you ask Neviedovsky if he's going to run. That's not done."

"Oh, I don't understand it at all! And it's all such nonsense," Levin answered somberly.

"You say it's all such nonsense yet as soon as you have anything to do with it, you make a muddle."

Levin did not answer, and they walked together into the big room.

The marshal of the province, though he was vaguely conscious in the air of some trap being prepared for him, and though he had not been called upon by all to run, had nevertheless made up his mind to run for office. All was silence in the room. The secretary announced in a loud voice that Mikhail Stepanovich Snetkov, captain of the guards, would now be balloted for as marshal of the province.

The district marshals walked carrying plates, on which were balls, from their tables to the province table, and the election began.

"Put it in the right side," whispered Stepan Arkadyevich, as Levin with his brother followed the marshal of his district to the table. But Levin had forgotten by now the machination that had been explained to him, and was afraid Stepan Arkadyevich might be mistaken in saying "the right side." Surely Snetkov was the enemy. As he went up, he held the ball in his right hand, but thinking he was wrong, just at the box he changed to the left hand, and undoubtedly put the ball to the left. An adept in the business, standing at the box and seeing by the mere action of the elbow where each put his ball, scowled with annoyance. It was no good for him to use his insight.

Everything was still, and the counting of the balls was heard. Then a single voice rose and proclaimed the numbers for and against.

The marshal had been voted for by a considerable majority. All was noise and eager movement toward the doors. Snetkov came in, and the nobles thronged round him, congratulating him.

"Well, now, is it over?" Levin asked Sergei Ivanovich.

"It's only just beginning," Sviiazhsky said, replying for Sergei Ivanovich with a smile. "Some other candidate may receive more votes than the marshal."

Levin had quite forgotten about that again. Now he could only remember that there was some sort of trickery in it, but he was too bored to think what it was exactly. He felt depressed, and longed to get out of the crowd.

As no one was paying any attention to him, and no one apparently needed him, he quietly slipped away into the little room where the refreshments were, and again had a great sense of comfort when he saw the waiters. The little old waiter pressed him to have something, and Levin agreed. After eating a cutlet with beans and talking to the waiters of their former masters, Levin, not wishing to go back to the hall, where it was all so distasteful to him, proceeded to walk through the galleries.

The galleries were full of fashionably dressed ladies, leaning over the balustrade and trying not to lose a single word of what was being said below. With the ladies were sitting and standing smart lawyers, high school teachers in spectacles, and officers. Everywhere they were talking of the election, and of how worried the marshal was, and how splendid the discussions had been. In one group Levin heard his brother's praises. One lady was telling a lawyer:

"How glad I am I heard Koznishev! It's worth missing one's lunch. He's exquisite! So clear and distinct all of it! There's not one of you in the law courts that speaks like that. The only one is Meidel, and he's very far from being so eloquent."

Finding a free place, Levin leaned over the balustrade and began looking and listening.

All the noblemen were sitting railed off behind barriers, according to their districts. In the middle of the room stood a man in a uniform, who shouted in a loud high voice:

"As a candidate for the marshalship of the nobility of the province we call upon staff captain Eugenii Ivanovich Apukhtin!" A dead silence followed, and then a weak old voice was heard:

"Declined!"

"We call upon the privy councilor Piotr Petrovich Bol," the voice began again.

"Declined!" a high boyish voice replied.

Again it began, and again came the "Declined." And so it went on for about an hour. Levin, with his elbows on the balustrade, looked and listened. At first he wondered and wanted to know what it meant; then feeling sure that he could not make it out he began to be bored. Then, recalling all the excitement and vindictiveness he had seen on all the faces, he felt sad; he made up his mind to go, and went downstairs. As he passed through the entry to the galleries he met a dejected high school boy walking up and down with tired−looking eyes. On the stairs he met a couple a lady running quickly on her high heels and the jaunty deputy prosecutor.

"I told you you weren't late," the deputy prosecutor was saying at the moment when Levin moved aside to let the lady pass.

Levin was on the stairs to the way out, and was just feeling in his waistcoat pocket for his overcoat check, when the secretary overtook him. "This way, please, Konstantin Dmitrievich; they are voting."

The candidate who was being voted on was Neviedovsky, who had so stoutly denied all idea of candidacy.

Levin went up to the door of the room; it was locked. The secretary knocked, the door opened, and Levin was met by two red−faced gentlemen, who darted out.

"I can't stand any more of it," said one red−faced gentleman.

After them the face of the marshal of the province was poked out. His face was dreadful−looking from exhaustion and dismay.

"I told you not to let anyone out!" he cried to the doorkeeper.

"I let someone in, Your Excellency!"

"Mercy on us!" And with a heavy sigh the marshal of the province walked with downcast head to the high table in the middle of the room, his white−trousered legs wavering from fatigue.

Neviedovsky had scored a higher majority, as they had planned, and he was the new marshal of the province. Many people were amused, many were pleased and happy, many were in ecstasies, many were disgusted and unhappy. The former marshal of the province was in a state of despair which he could not conceal. When Neviedovsky went out of the room, the crowd thronged round him and followed him enthusiastically, just as they had followed the governor on the first day, when he had opened the meetings, and just as they had followed Snetkov when he had been elected.

XXXI.

The newly elected marshal and many of the successful party dined that day with Vronsky.

Vronsky had come to the elections partly because he was bored in the country and wanted to show Anna his right to independence, and also to repay Sviiazhsky by his support at the election for all the trouble he had taken for Vronsky at the Zemstvo election, but chiefly for the strict performance of all those duties of a nobleman and landowner which he had taken upon himself. But he had not in the least expected that the election would interest him so, so keenly excite him, and that he would be so good at this kind of thing. He was quite a new man in the circle of the nobility of the province, but his success was unmistakable, and he was not wrong in supposing that he had already obtained a certain influence. This influence was due to his wealth and aristocracy; the capital house in the town lent him by his old friend Shirkov, who had a post in the department of finances and was director of a flourishing bank in Kashin; the excellent cook Vronsky had brought from the country; and his friendship with the governor, who was a schoolfellow of Vronsky a schoolfellow he had patronized and protected indeed. But what contributed more than all to his success was his direct, equable manner with everyone, which very quickly made the majority of the noblemen reverse the current opinion of his supposed haughtiness. He was himself conscious that, except for that mad gentleman married to Kitty Shcherbatskaia, who had a propos de bottes poured out a stream of irrelevant absurdities with such spiteful fury, every nobleman with whom he had made acquaintance had become his adherent. He saw clearly, and other people recognized it, too, that he had done a great deal to secure the success of Neviedovsky. And now at his own table, celebrating Neviedovsky's election, he was experiencing an agreeable sense of triumph over the success of his candidate. The election itself had so fascinated him that, if he could succeed in getting married during the next three years, he began to think of running for office himself much as, after winning a race ridden by a jockey, he had longed to ride a race himself.

Today he was celebrating the success of his jockey. Vronsky sat at the head of the table, on his right hand sat the young governor, a general of high rank. To all the rest he was the master of the province, who had solemnly opened the elections with his speech, and aroused a feeling of respect and even of awe in many people, as Vronsky saw; to Vronsky he was Katka Maslov that had been his nickname in the Pages' Corps whom he felt to be shy and tried to put at ease. On the left hand sat Neviedovsky with his youthful, stubborn, and venomous countenance. With him Vronsky was simple and deferential.

Sviiazhsky took his failure very lightheartedly. It was indeed no failure in his eyes, as he said himself, turning, glass in hand, to Neviedovsky: they could not have found a better representative of the new movement, which the nobility ought to follow. And so every honest person, as he said, was on the side of today's success and was celebrating over it.

Stepan Arkadyevich was glad, too, because he was having a good time, and because everyone was pleased. The episodes of the elections served as a good occasion for a capital dinner. Sviiazhsky comically imitated the tearful discourse of marshal, and observed, addressing Neviedovsky, that His Excellency would have to select another, more complicated method of auditing accounts than tears. Another nobleman jocosely described how footmen in stockings had been imported for the marshal's ball, and how now they would have to be sent back unless the new marshal would give a ball with footmen in stockings.

Continually during dinner they said of Neviedovsky: "Our Marshal" and "Your Excellency."

This was said with the same pleasure with which a young wife is called "Madame" and by her husband's name. Neviedovsky affected to be not merely indifferent but scornful of this appellation, but it was obvious that he was highly delighted, and had to keep a curb on himself not to betray the triumph which was unsuitable to their new, liberal party.

In the course of dinner several telegrams were sent to people interested in the result of the election. And Stepan Arkadyevich, who was in high spirits, sent Darya Alexandrovna a telegram: "Neviedovsky elected by twenty votes. Congratulations. Tell people." He dictated it aloud, saying: "We must let them share our rejoicing." Darya Alexandrovna, getting the message, simply sighed over the rouble wasted on it, and understood that it was an afterdinner affair. She knew Stiva had a weakness after dining for faire jouer le telegraphe.

Everything, together with the excellent dinner and the wine, not from Russian merchants, but imported direct from abroad, was extremely dignified, simple, and enjoyable. The party some twenty had been selected by Sviiazhsky from among the more active new liberals, all of the same way of thinking, who were at the same time clever and well−bred. They drank, also half in jest, to the health of the new marshal of the province, of the governor, of the bank director, and of "our amiable host."

Vronsky was satisfied. He had never expected to find so pleasant a tone in the provinces.

Toward the end of dinner it was still more lively. The governor asked Vronsky to come to a concert for the benefit of the brethren which his wife, who was anxious to make his acquaintance, had been getting up:

"There'll be a ball, and you'll see the belle of the province. Worth seeing, really."

"Not in my line," Vronsky answered. He liked that English phrase. But he smiled, and promised to come.

Before they rose from the table, when all of them were smoking, Vronsky's valet went up to him with a letter on a tray.

"From Vozdvizhenskoe by special messenger," he said with a significant expression.

"Astonishing! How like he is to the deputy prosecutor Sventitsky," said one of the guests in French of the valet, while Vronsky, frowning, read the letter.

The letter was from Anna. Before he read the letter, he knew its contents. Expecting the elections to be over in five days, he had promised to be back on Friday. Today was Saturday, and he knew that the letter contained reproaches for not being back at the time fixed. The letter he had sent the previous evening had probably not

reached her yet.

The letter was what he had expected, but the form of it was unexpected, and particularly disagreeable to him. "Annie is very ill, the doctor says it may be inflammation of the lungs. I am losing my head all alone. Princess Varvara is no help, but a hindrance. I expected you the day before yesterday, and yesterday, and now I am sending to find out where you are and what you are doing. I wanted to come myself, but thought better of it, knowing you would dislike it. Send some answer, that I may know what to do."

The child ill, yet she had thought of coming herself. Their daughter ill and this hostile tone.

The innocent festivities over the election, and this gloomy, burdensome love to which he had to return, struck Vronsky by their contrast. But he had to go, and by the first train that night he set off home.

XXXII.

Before Vronsky's departure for the elections, Anna had reflected that the scenes constantly repeated between them each time he left home might only make him cold to her instead of attaching him to her, and resolved to do all she could to control herself so as to bear the parting with composure. But the cold, severe glance with which he had looked at her when he came to tell her he was going had wounded her, and before he had started her peace of mind was destroyed.

In solitude, later, thinking over that glance which had expressed his right to freedom, she came, as she always did, to the same point the sense of her own humiliation. "He has the right to go away when and where he chooses. Not simply to go away, but to leave me. He has every right, and I have none. But knowing that, he ought not to do it. What has he done, though?... He looked at me with a cold, severe expression. Of course that is something indefinable, impalpable, but it has never been so before, and that glance means a great deal," she thought. "That glance shows the beginning of coolness."

And though she felt sure that a coolness was beginning, there was nothing she could do; she could not in any way alter her relations to him. Just as before, only by love and by charm could she keep him. And so, just as before, only by occupation in the day, by morphine at night, could she stifle the fearful thought of what would come if he ceased to love her. It is true there was still one means; not to keep him for that she wanted nothing more than his love but to be nearer to him, to be in such a position that he would not leave her. That means was divorce and marriage. And she began to long for that, and made up her mind to agree to it the first time he or Stiva approached her on the subject.

Absorbed in such thoughts, she passed five days without him, the five days that he was to be absent.

Walks, conversation with Princess Varvara, visits to the hospital, and, most of all, reading reading of one book after another filled up her time. But on the sixth day, when the coachman came back without him, and she felt that now she was utterly incapable of stifling the thought of him and of what he was doing there just at that time her little girl was taken ill. Anna began to look after her, but even that did not distract her mind, especially as the illness was not serious. However hard she tried, she could not love this little child, and to feign love was beyond her powers. Toward the evening of that day, still alone, Anna was in such a panic about him that she decided to start for the town, but on second thought wrote him the contradictory letter that Vronsky received, and, without reading it through, sent it off by a special messenger. The next morning she received his letter and regretted her own. She dreaded a repetition of the severe look he had flung at her at parting, especially when he would learn that the baby was not dangerously ill. But still, she was glad she had written to him. By now Anna was admitting to herself that she was a burden to him, that he would relinquish his freedom regretfully to return to her, and in spite of that she was glad he was coming. Let him weary of her, but he would be here with her, so that she would

see him, would know of every action he took.

She was sitting in the drawing room near a lamp, with a new volume of Taine, and, as she read, listening to the sound of the wind outside, and every minute expecting the carriage to arrive. Several times she had fancied she heard the sound of wheels, but she had been mistaken. At last she heard not the sound of wheels, but the coachman's shout and the dull rumble in the covered entry. Even Princess Varvara, playing solitaire, confirmed this, and Anna, flushing hotly, got up; but, instead of going down, as she had done twice before, she stood still. She suddenly felt ashamed of her duplicity, but even more she dreaded how he might meet her. All feeling of wounded pride had passed now; she was only afraid of the expression of his displeasure. She remembered that her child had been perfectly well again for the last day. She felt positively vexed with her for getting better from the very moment her letter was sent off. Then she thought of him, that he was here all of him, with his hands, his eyes. She heard his voice. And forgetting everything, she ran joyfully to meet him.

"Well, how is Annie?" he said apprehensively from below, looking up to Anna as she ran down to him.

He was sitting on a chair, and a footman was pulling off his warm overboots.

"Oh, she is better."

"And you?" he said, shaking himself.

She took his hand in both of hers, and drew it to her waist, never taking her eyes off him.

"Well, I'm glad," he said, coldly scanning her, her hair, her dress, which he knew she had put on for him. All was charming, but how many times it had charmed him! And the stern, stony expression that she so dreaded settled upon his face.

"Well, I'm glad. And are you well?" he said, wiping his damp beard with his handkerchief and kissing her hand.

"Never mind," she thought, "only let him be here, and so long as he's here he cannot, he dare not, cease to love me."

The evening was spent happily and gaily in the presence of Princess Varvara, who complained to him that Anna had been taking morphine in his absence.

"What am I to do? I couldn't sleep.... My thoughts prevented me. When he's here I never take it hardly ever."

He told her about the election, and Anna knew how by adroit questions to bring him to what gave him most pleasure his own success. She told him of everything that interested him at home; and all that she told him was of the most cheerful description.

But late in the evening, when they were alone, Anna, seeing that she had regained complete possession of him, wanted to erase the painful impression of the glance he had given her for her letter. She said:

"Tell me frankly, you were vexed at getting my letter, and you didn't believe me?"

As soon as she had said it, she felt that however warm his feelings were to her, he had not forgiven her for that.

"Yes," he said, "the letter was so strange. First, Annie ill, and then you thought of coming yourself."

"It was all the truth."

"Oh, I don't doubt it."

"Yes, you do doubt it. You are vexed, I see."

"Not for one moment. I'm only vexed, that's true, that you seem somehow unwilling to admit that there are duties..."

"The duty of going to a concert...."

"But we won't talk about it," he said.

"Why not talk about it?" she said.

"I only meant to say that matters of real importance may turn up. Now, for instance, I shall have to go to Moscow to arrange about the house.... Oh, Anna, why are you so irritable? Don't you know that I can't live without you?"

"If so," said Anna, her voice suddenly changing, "it means that you are sick of this life.... Yes, you will come for a day and go away, as men do...."

"Anna, that's cruel. I am ready to give up my whole life."

But she did not hear him.

"If you go to Moscow, I will go too. I will not stay here. Either we must separate or else live together."

"Why, you know, that's my one desire. But to do that..."

"We must get a divorce. I will write to him. I see I cannot go on like this.... But I will come with you to Moscow."

"You talk as if you were threatening me. But I desire nothing so much as never to be parted from you," said Vronsky, smiling.

But as he said these words there gleamed in his eyes not merely a cold look, but the vindictive look of a man persecuted and made cruel.

She saw the look and correctly divined its meaning.

"And, if things have come to such a pass, it's a calamity!" that glance told her. It was a moment's impression, but she never forgot it.

Anna wrote to her husband asking him about a divorce, and toward the end of November, taking leave of Princess Varvara, who wanted to go to Peterburg, she went with Vronsky to Moscow. Expecting every day an answer from Alexei Alexandrovich, and after that the divorce, they now established themselves together, like married people.