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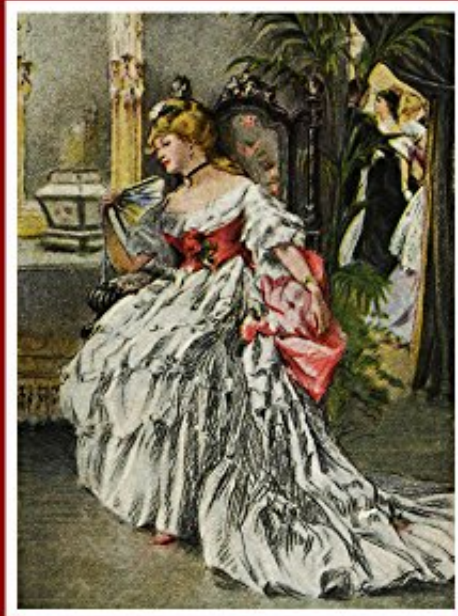
Anna Karenina ÿ Unabridged and Illustratedÿ

by
Leo Tolstoy

ANNA KARENINA

LEO TOLSTOY

Translated by Constance Garnett



Unabridged With Illustrations by Helen Mason Grose



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Synopsis

Anna Karenina is Tolstoy's classic tale of love and adultery, set against the backdrop of high society in Moscow and Saint Petersburg, Russia. This cultural clash unfolds in a compelling, emotional drama of seduction, betrayal, and redemption. The novel charts the disastrous course of a love affair between Anna, a beautiful married woman, and Count Vronsky, a wealthy army officer. Tolstoy seamlessly weaves together the lives of dozens of characters, and in doing so captures a breathtaking tapestry of late-nineteenth-century Russian society. This novel marks a turning point in the author's career, the juncture at which he turned from fiction toward faith.

Look inside the book

Anna Kareninaby Leo TolstoyTranslated by Constance GarnettIllustrated by Helen Mason GroseTable of ContentsPART ONEChapter 1Chapter 2Chapter 3Chapter 4Chapter 5Chapter 6Chapter 7Chapter 8Chapter 9Chapter 10Chapter 11Chapter 12Chapter 13Chapter 14Chapter 15Chapter 16Chapter 17Chapter 18Chapter 19Chapter 20Chapter 21Chapter 22Chapter 23Chapter 24Chapter 25Chapter 26Chapter 27Chapter 28Chapter 29Chapter 30Chapter 31Chapter 32Chapter 33Chapter 34PART TWOChapter 1Chapter 2Chapter 3Chapter 4Chapter 5Chapter 6Chapter 7Chapter 8Chapter 9Chapter 10Chapter 11Chapter 12Chapter 13Chapter 14Chapter 15Chapter 16Chapter 17Chapter 18Chapter 19Chapter 20Chapter 21Chapter 22Chapter 23Chapter 24Chapter 25Chapter 26Chapter 27Chapter 28Chapter 29Chapter 30Chapter 31Chapter 32Chapter 33Chapter 34Chapter 35PART THREEChapter 1Chapter 2Chapter 3Chapter 4Chapter 5Chapter 6Chapter 7Chapter 8Chapter 9Chapter 10Chapter 11Chapter 12Chapter 13Chapter 14Chapter 15Chapter 16Chapter 17Chapter 18Chapter 19Chapter 20Chapter 21Chapter 22Chapter 23Chapter 24Chapter 25Chapter 26Chapter 27Chapter 28Chapter 29Chapter 30Chapter 31Chapter 32PART FOURChapter 1Chapter 2Chapter 3Chapter 4Chapter 5Chapter 6Chapter 7Chapter 8Chapter 9Chapter 10Chapter 11Chapter 12Chapter 13Chapter 14Chapter 15Chapter 16Chapter 17Chapter 18Chapter 19Chapter 20Chapter 21Chapter 22Chapter 23PART FIVEChapter 1Chapter 2Chapter 3Chapter 4Chapter 5Chapter 6Chapter 7Chapter 8Chapter 9Chapter 10Chapter 11Chapter 12Chapter 13Chapter 14Chapter 15Chapter 16Chapter 17Chapter 18Chapter 19Chapter 20Chapter 21Chapter 22Chapter 23Chapter 24Chapter 25Chapter 26Chapter 27Chapter 28Chapter 29Chapter 30Chapter 31Chapter 32Chapter 33PART SIXChapter 1Chapter 2Chapter 3Chapter 4Chapter 5Chapter 6Chapter 7Chapter 8Chapter 9Chapter 10Chapter 11Chapter 12Chapter 13Chapter 14Chapter 15Chapter 16Chapter 17Chapter 18Chapter 19Chapter 20Chapter 21Chapter 22Chapter 23Chapter 24Chapter 25Chapter 26Chapter 27Chapter 28Chapter 29Chapter 30Chapter 31Chapter 32PART SEVENChapter 1Chapter 2Chapter 3Chapter 4Chapter 5Chapter 6Chapter 7Chapter 8Chapter 9Chapter 10Chapter 11Chapter 12Chapter 13Chapter 14Chapter 15Chapter 16Chapter 17Chapter 18Chapter 19Chapter 20Chapter 21Chapter 22Chapter 23Chapter 24Chapter 25Chapter 26Chapter 27Chapter 28Chapter 29Chapter 30Chapter 31PART EIGHTChapter 1Chapter 2Chapter 3Chapter 4Chapter 5Chapter 6Chapter 7Chapter 8Chapter 9Chapter 10Chapter 11Chapter 12Chapter 13Chapter 14Chapter 15Chapter 16Chapter 17Chapter 18Chapter 19PART ONEChapter 1Happy families are all alike; every unhappy family is unhappy in its own way.Everything was in confusion in the Oblonskys' house. The wife had discovered that the husband was carrying on an intrigue with a French girl, who had been a governess in their family, and she had announced to her husband that she could not go on living in the same house with him. This position of affairs had now lasted three days, and not only the husband and wife themselves, but all the members of their family and household, were painfully conscious of it. Every person in the house felt that there was no sense in their living together, and that the stray people brought together by chance in any inn had more in common with one another than they, the members of the family and household of the Oblonskys. The wife did not leave her own room, the husband had not been at home for three days. The children ran wild all over the house; the English governess quarreled with the housekeeper, and wrote to a friend asking her to look out for a new situation for her; the man-cook had walked off the day before just at dinner time; the kitchen-maid, and the coachman had given warning.Three days after the quarrel, Prince Stepan Arkadyevitch Oblonsky—Stiva, as he was

called in the fashionable world—woke up at his usual hour, that is, at eight o'clock in the morning, not in his wife's bedroom, but on the leather-covered sofa in his study. He turned over his stout, well-cared-for person on the springy sofa, as though he would sink into a long sleep again; he vigorously embraced the pillow on the other side and buried his face in it; but all at once he jumped up, sat up on the sofa, and opened his eyes. "Yes, yes, how was it now?" he thought, going over his dream. "Now, how was it? To be sure! Alabin was giving a dinner at Darmstadt; no, not Darmstadt, but something American. Yes, but then, Darmstadt was in America. Yes, Alabin was giving a dinner on glass tables, and the tables sang, *Il mio tesoro*—not *Il mio tesoro* though, but something better, and there were some sort of little decanters on the table, and they were women, too," he remembered. Stepan Arkadyevitch's eyes twinkled gaily, and he pondered with a smile. "Yes, it was nice, very nice. There was a great deal more that was delightful, only there's no putting it into words, or even expressing it in one's thoughts awake." And noticing a gleam of light peeping in beside one of the serge curtains, he cheerfully dropped his feet over the edge of the sofa, and felt about with them for his slippers, a present on his last birthday, worked for him by his wife on gold-colored morocco. And, as he had done every day for the last nine years, he stretched out his hand, without getting up, towards the place where his dressing-gown always hung in his bedroom. And thereupon he suddenly remembered that he was not sleeping in his wife's room, but in his study, and why: the smile vanished from his face, he knitted his brows. "Ah, ah, ah! Oo!..." he muttered, recalling everything that had happened. And again every detail of his quarrel with his wife was present to his imagination, all the hopelessness of his position, and worst of all, his own fault. "Yes, she won't forgive me, and she can't forgive me. And the most awful thing about it is that it's all my fault—all my fault, though I'm not to blame. That's the point of the whole situation," he reflected. "Oh, oh, oh!" he kept repeating in despair, as he remembered the acutely painful sensations caused him by this quarrel. Most unpleasant of all was the first minute when, on coming, happy and good-humored, from the theater, with a huge pear in his hand for his wife, he had not found his wife in the drawing-room, to his surprise had not found her in the study either, and saw her at last in her bedroom with the unlucky letter that revealed everything in her hand. She, his Dolly, forever fussing and worrying over household details, and limited in her ideas, as he considered, was sitting perfectly still with the letter in her hand, looking at him with an expression of horror, despair, and indignation. "What's this? this?" she asked, pointing to the letter. And at this recollection, Stepan Arkadyevitch, as is so often the case, was not so much annoyed at the fact itself as at the way in which he had met his wife's words. There happened to him at that instant what does happen to people when they are unexpectedly caught in something very disgraceful. He did not succeed in adapting his face to the position in which he was placed towards his wife by the discovery of his fault. Instead of being hurt, denying, defending himself, begging forgiveness, instead of remaining indifferent even—anything would have been better than what he did do—his face utterly involuntarily (reflex spinal action, reflected Stepan Arkadyevitch, who was fond of physiology)—utterly involuntarily assumed its habitual, good-humored, and therefore idiotic smile. This idiotic smile he could not forgive himself. Catching sight of that smile, Dolly shuddered as though at physical pain, broke out with her characteristic heat into a flood of cruel words, and rushed out of the room. Since then she had refused to see her husband. "It's that idiotic smile that's to blame for it all," thought Stepan Arkadyevitch. "But what's to be done? What's to be done?" he said to himself in despair, and found no answer.

Chapter 2 Stepan Arkadyevitch was a truthful man in his relations with himself. He was incapable of deceiving himself and persuading himself that he repented of his conduct. He could not at this date repent of the fact that he, a handsome, susceptible man of thirty-four,

was not in love with his wife, the mother of five living and two dead children, and only a year younger than himself. All he repented of was that he had not succeeded better in hiding it from his wife. But he felt all the difficulty of his position and was sorry for his wife, his children, and himself. Possibly he might have managed to conceal his sins better from his wife if he had anticipated that the knowledge of them would have had such an effect on her. He had never clearly thought out the subject, but he had vaguely conceived that his wife must long ago have suspected him of being unfaithful to her, and shut her eyes to the fact. He had even supposed that she, a worn-out woman no longer young or good-looking, and in no way remarkable or interesting, merely a good mother, ought from a sense of fairness to take an indulgent view. It had turned out quite the other way. "Oh, it's awful! oh dear, oh dear! awful!" Stepan Arkadyevitch kept repeating to himself, and he could think of nothing to be done. "And how well things were going up till now! how well we got on! She was contented and happy in her children; I never interfered with her in anything; I let her manage the children and the house just as she liked. It's true it's bad her having been a governess in our house. That's bad! There's something common, vulgar, in flirting with one's governess. But what a governess!" (He vividly recalled the roguish black eyes of Mlle. Roland and her smile.) "But after all, while she was in the house, I kept myself in hand. And the worst of it all is that she's already ... it seems as if ill-luck would have it so! Oh, oh! But what, what is to be done?" There was no solution, but that universal solution which life gives to all questions, even the most complex and insoluble. That answer is: one must live in the needs of the day—that is, forget oneself. To forget himself in sleep was impossible now, at least till nighttime; he could not go back now to the music sung by the decanter-women; so he must forget himself in the dream of daily life. "Then we shall see," Stepan Arkadyevitch said to himself, and getting up he put on a gray dressing-gown lined with blue silk, tied the tassels in a knot, and, drawing a deep breath of air into his broad, bare chest, he walked to the window with his usual confident step, turning out his feet that carried his full frame so easily. He pulled up the blind and rang the bell loudly. It was at once answered by the appearance of an old friend, his valet, Matvey, carrying his clothes, his boots, and a telegram. Matvey was followed by the barber with all the necessaries for shaving. "Are there any papers from the office?" asked Stepan Arkadyevitch, taking the telegram and seating himself at the looking-glass. "On the table," replied Matvey, glancing with inquiring sympathy at his master; and, after a short pause, he added with a sly smile, "They've sent from the carriage-jobbers." Stepan Arkadyevitch made no reply, he merely glanced at Matvey in the looking-glass. In the glance, in which their eyes met in the looking-glass, it was clear that they understood one another. Stepan Arkadyevitch's eyes asked: "Why do you tell me that? don't you know?" Matvey put his hands in his jacket pockets, thrust out one leg, and gazed silently, good-humoredly, with a faint smile, at his master. "I told them to come on Sunday, and till then not to trouble you or themselves for nothing," he said. He had obviously prepared the sentence beforehand. Stepan Arkadyevitch saw Matvey wanted to make a joke and attract attention to himself. Tearing open the telegram, he read it through, guessing at the words, misspelt as they always are in telegrams, and his face brightened. "Matvey, my sister Anna Arkadyevna will be here tomorrow," he said, checking for a minute the sleek, plump hand of the barber, cutting a pink path through his long, curly whiskers. "Thank God!" said Matvey, showing by this response that he, like his master, realized the significance of this arrival—that is, that Anna Arkadyevna, the sister he was so fond of, might bring about a reconciliation between husband and wife. "Alone, or with her husband?" inquired Matvey. Stepan Arkadyevitch could not answer, as the barber was at work on his upper lip, and he raised one finger. Matvey nodded at the looking-glass. "Alone. Is the room to be got ready upstairs?" "Inform Darya Alexandrovna: where she

orders." "Darya Alexandrovna?" Matvey repeated, as though in doubt. "Yes, inform her. Here, take the telegram; give it to her, and then do what she tells you." "You want to try it on," Matvey understood, but he only said, "Yes sir." Stepan Arkadyevitch was already washed and combed and ready to be dressed, when Matvey, stepping deliberately in his creaky boots, came back into the room with the telegram in his hand. The barber had gone. "Darya Alexandrovna told me to inform you that she is going away. Let him do—that is you—do as he likes," he said, laughing only with his eyes, and putting his hands in his pockets, he watched his master with his head on one side. Stepan Arkadyevitch was silent a minute. Then a good-humored and rather pitiful smile showed itself on his handsome face. "Eh, Matvey?" he said, shaking his head. "It's all right, sir; she will come round," said Matvey. "Come round?" "Yes, sir." "Do you think so? Who's there?" asked Stepan Arkadyevitch, hearing the rustle of a woman's dress at the door. "It's I," said a firm, pleasant, woman's voice, and the stern, pockmarked face of Matrona Philimonovna, the nurse, was thrust in at the doorway. "Well, what is it, Matrona?" queried Stepan Arkadyevitch, going up to her at the door. Although Stepan Arkadyevitch was completely in the wrong as regards his wife, and was conscious of this himself, almost every one in the house (even the nurse, Darya Alexandrovna's chief ally) was on his side. "Well, what now?" he asked disconsolately. "Go to her, sir; own your fault again. Maybe God will aid you. She is suffering so, it's sad to see her; and besides, everything in the house is topsy-turvy. You must have pity, sir, on the children. Beg her forgiveness, sir. There's no help for it! One must take the consequences..." "But she won't see me." "You do your part. God is merciful; pray to God, sir, pray to God." "Come, that'll do, you can go," said Stepan Arkadyevitch, blushing suddenly. "Well now, do dress me." He turned to Matvey and threw off his dressing-gown decisively. Matvey was already holding up the shirt like a horse's collar, and, blowing off some invisible speck, he slipped it with obvious pleasure over the well-groomed body of his master. Chapter 3 When he was dressed, Stepan Arkadyevitch sprinkled some scent on himself, pulled down his shirt-cuffs, distributed into his pockets his cigarettes, pocketbook, matches, and watch with its double chain and seals, and shaking out his handkerchief, feeling himself clean, fragrant, healthy, and physically at ease, in spite of his unhappiness, he walked with a slight swing on each leg into the dining-room, where coffee was already waiting for him, and beside the coffee, letters and papers from the office. He read the letters. One was very unpleasant, from a merchant who was buying a forest on his wife's property. To sell this forest was absolutely essential; but at present, until he was reconciled with his wife, the subject could not be discussed. The most unpleasant thing of all was that his pecuniary interests should in this way enter into the question of his reconciliation with his wife. And the idea that he might be led on by his interests, that he might seek a reconciliation with his wife on account of the sale of the forest—that idea hurt him. When he had finished his letters, Stepan Arkadyevitch moved the office-papers close to him, rapidly looked through two pieces of business, made a few notes with a big pencil, and pushing away the papers, turned to his coffee. As he sipped his coffee, he opened a still damp morning paper, and began reading it. Stepan Arkadyevitch took in and read a liberal paper, not an extreme one, but one advocating the views held by the majority. And in spite of the fact that science, art, and politics had no special interest for him, he firmly held those views on all these subjects which were held by the majority and by his paper, and he only changed them when the majority changed them—or, more strictly speaking, he did not change them, but they imperceptibly changed of themselves within him. Stepan Arkadyevitch had not chosen his political opinions or his views; these political opinions and views had come to him of themselves, just as he did not choose the shapes of his hat and coat, but simply took those that were being worn. And for him, living in a certain society—owing

to the need, ordinarily developed at years of discretion, for some degree of mental activity—to have views was just as indispensable as to have a hat. If there was a reason for his preferring liberal to conservative views, which were held also by many of his circle, it arose not from his considering liberalism more rational, but from its being in closer accordance with his manner of life. The liberal party said that in Russia everything is wrong, and certainly Stepan Arkadyevitch had many debts and was decidedly short of money. The liberal party said that marriage is an institution quite out of date, and that it needs reconstruction; and family life certainly afforded Stepan Arkadyevitch little gratification, and forced him into lying and hypocrisy, which was so repulsive to his nature. The liberal party said, or rather allowed it to be understood, that religion is only a curb to keep in check the barbarous classes of the people; and Stepan Arkadyevitch could not get through even a short service without his legs aching from standing up, and could never make out what was the object of all the terrible and high-flown language about another world when life might be so very amusing in this world. And with all this, Stepan Arkadyevitch, who liked a joke, was fond of puzzling a plain man by saying that if he prided himself on his origin, he ought not to stop at Rurik and disown the first founder of his family—the monkey. And so Liberalism had become a habit of Stepan Arkadyevitch's, and he liked his newspaper, as he did his cigar after dinner, for the slight fog it diffused in his brain. He read the leading article, in which it was maintained that it was quite senseless in our day to raise an outcry that radicalism was threatening to swallow up all conservative elements, and that the government ought to take measures to crush the revolutionary hydra; that, on the contrary, "in our opinion the danger lies not in that fantastic revolutionary hydra, but in the obstinacy of traditionalism clogging progress," etc., etc. He read another article, too, a financial one, which alluded to Bentham and Mill, and dropped some innuendoes reflecting on the ministry. With his characteristic quickwittedness he caught the drift of each innuendo, divined whence it came, at whom and on what ground it was aimed, and that afforded him, as it always did, a certain satisfaction. But today that satisfaction was embittered by Matrona Philimonovna's advice and the unsatisfactory state of the household. He read, too, that Count Beist was rumored to have left for Wiesbaden, and that one need have no more gray hair, and of the sale of a light carriage, and of a young person seeking a situation; but these items of information did not give him, as usual, a quiet, ironical gratification. Having finished the paper, a second cup of coffee and a roll and butter, he got up, shaking the crumbs of the roll off his waistcoat; and, squaring his broad chest, he smiled joyously: not because there was anything particularly agreeable in his mind—the joyous smile was evoked by a good digestion. But this joyous smile at once recalled everything to him, and he grew thoughtful. Two childish voices (Stepan Arkadyevitch recognized the voices of Grisha, his youngest boy, and Tanya, his eldest girl) were heard outside the door. They were carrying something, and dropped it. "I told you not to sit passengers on the roof," said the little girl in English; "there, pick them up!" "Everything's in confusion," thought Stepan Arkadyevitch; "there are the children running about by themselves." And going to the door, he called them. They threw down the box, that represented a train, and came in to their father. The little girl, her father's favorite, ran up boldly, embraced him, and hung laughingly on his neck, enjoying as she always did the smell of scent that came from his whiskers. At last the little girl kissed his face, which was flushed from his stooping posture and beaming with tenderness, loosed her hands, and was about to run away again; but her father held her back. "How is mamma?" he asked, passing his hand over his daughter's smooth, soft little neck. "Good morning," he said, smiling to the boy, who had come up to greet him. He was conscious that he loved the boy less, and always tried to be fair; but the boy felt it, and did not respond with a smile to his father's chilly smile. "Mamma? She is up," answered the girl. Stepan

Arkadyevitch sighed. "That means that she's not slept again all night," he thought. "Well, is she cheerful?" The little girl knew that there was a quarrel between her father and mother, and that her mother could not be cheerful, and that her father must be aware of this, and that he was pretending when he asked about it so lightly. And she blushed for her father. He at once perceived it, and blushed too. "I don't know," she said. "She did not say we must do our lessons, but she said we were to go for a walk with Miss Hoole to grandmamma's." "Well, go, Tanya, my darling. Oh, wait a minute, though," he said, still holding her and stroking her soft little hand. He took off the mantelpiece, where he had put it yesterday, a little box of sweets, and gave her two, picking out her favorites, a chocolate and a fondant. "For Grisha?" said the little girl, pointing to the chocolate. "Yes, yes." And still stroking her little shoulder, he kissed her on the roots of her hair and neck, and let her go. "The carriage is ready," said Matvey; "but there's some one to see you with a petition." "Been here long?" asked Stepan Arkadyevitch. "Half an hour." "How many times have I told you to tell me at once?" "One must let you drink your coffee in peace, at least," said Matvey, in the affectionately gruff tone with which it was impossible to be angry. "Well, show the person up at once," said Oblonsky, frowning with vexation. The petitioner, the widow of a staff captain Kalinin, came with a request impossible and unreasonable; but Stepan Arkadyevitch, as he generally did, made her sit down, heard her to the end attentively without interrupting her, and gave her detailed advice as to how and to whom to apply, and even wrote her, in his large, sprawling, good and legible hand, a confident and fluent little note to a personage who might be of use to her. Having got rid of the staff captain's widow, Stepan Arkadyevitch took his hat and stopped to recollect whether he had forgotten anything. It appeared that he had forgotten nothing except what he wanted to forget—his wife. "Ah, yes!" He bowed his head, and his handsome face assumed a harassed expression. "To go, or not to go!" he said to himself; and an inner voice told him he must not go, that nothing could come of it but falsity; that to amend, to set right their relations was impossible, because it was impossible to make her attractive again and able to inspire love, or to make him an old man, not susceptible to love. Except deceit and lying nothing could come of it now; and deceit and lying were opposed to his nature. "It must be some time, though: it can't go on like this," he said, trying to give himself courage. He squared his chest, took out a cigarette, took two whiffs at it, flung it into a mother-of-pearl ashtray, and with rapid steps walked through the drawing room, and opened the other door into his wife's bedroom. Chapter 4 Darya Alexandrovna, in a dressing jacket, and with her now scanty, once luxuriant and beautiful hair fastened up with hairpins on the nape of her neck, with a sunken, thin face and large, startled eyes, which looked prominent from the thinness of her face, was standing among a litter of all sorts of things scattered all over the room, before an open bureau, from which she was taking something. Hearing her husband's steps, she stopped, looking towards the door, and trying assiduously to give her features a severe and contemptuous expression. She felt she was afraid of him, and afraid of the coming interview. She was just attempting to do what she had attempted to do ten times already in these last three days—to sort out the children's things and her own, so as to take them to her mother's—and again she could not bring herself to do this; but now again, as each time before, she kept saying to herself, "that things cannot go on like this, that she must take some step" to punish him, put him to shame, avenge on him some little part at least of the suffering he had caused her. She still continued to tell herself that she should leave him, but she was conscious that this was impossible; it was impossible because she could not get out of the habit of regarding him as her husband and loving him. Besides this, she realized that if even here in her own house she could hardly manage to look after her five children properly, they would be still worse off where she was

going with them all. As it was, even in the course of these three days, the youngest was unwell from being given unwholesome soup, and the others had almost gone without their dinner the day before. She was conscious that it was impossible to go away; but, cheating herself, she went on all the same sorting out her things and pretending she was going. Seeing her husband, she dropped her hands into the drawer of the bureau as though looking for something, and only looked round at him when he had come quite up to her. But her face, to which she tried to give a severe and resolute expression, betrayed bewilderment and suffering. "Dolly!" he said in a subdued and timid voice. He bent his head towards his shoulder and tried to look pitiful and humble, but for all that he was radiant with freshness and health. In a rapid glance she scanned his figure that beamed with health and freshness. "Yes, he is happy and content!" she thought; "while I.... And that disgusting good nature, which every one likes him for and praises—I hate that good nature of his," she thought. Her mouth stiffened, the muscles of the cheek contracted on the right side of her pale, nervous face. "What do you want?" she said in a rapid, deep, unnatural voice. "Dolly!" he repeated, with a quiver in his voice. "Anna is coming today." "Well, what is that to me? I can't see her!" she cried. "But you must, really, Dolly..." "Go away, go away, go away!" she shrieked, not looking at him, as though this shriek were called up by physical pain. Stepan Arkadyevitch could be calm when he thought of his wife, he could hope that she would come round, as Matvey expressed it, and could quietly go on reading his paper and drinking his coffee; but when he saw her tortured, suffering face, heard the tone of her voice, submissive to fate and full of despair, there was a catch in his breath and a lump in his throat, and his eyes began to shine with tears. "My God! what have I done? Dolly! For God's sake!.... You know...." He could not go on; there was a sob in his throat. She shut the bureau with a slam, and glanced at him. "Dolly, what can I say?.... One thing: forgive... Remember, cannot nine years of my life atone for an instant..." She dropped her eyes and listened, expecting what he would say, as it were beseeching him in some way or other to make her believe differently.—"instant of passion?" he said, and would have gone on, but at that word, as at a pang of physical pain, her lips stiffened again, and again the muscles of her right cheek worked. "Go away, go out of the room!" she shrieked still more shrilly, "and don't talk to me of your passion and your loathsomeness." She tried to go out, but tottered, and clung to the back of a chair to support herself. His face relaxed, his lips swelled, his eyes were swimming with tears. "Dolly!" he said, sobbing now; "for mercy's sake, think of the children; they are not to blame! I am to blame, and punish me, make me expiate my fault. Anything I can do, I am ready to do anything! I am to blame, no words can express how much I am to blame! But, Dolly, forgive me!" She sat down. He listened to her hard, heavy breathing, and he was unutterably sorry for her. She tried several times to begin to speak, but could not. He waited. "You remember the children, Stiva, to play with them; but I remember them, and know that this means their ruin," she said—obviously one of the phrases she had more than once repeated to herself in the course of the last few days. She had called him "Stiva," and he glanced at her with gratitude, and moved to take her hand, but she drew back from him with aversion. "I think of the children, and for that reason I would do anything in the world to save them, but I don't myself know how to save them. By taking them away from their father, or by leaving them with a vicious father—yes, a vicious father.... Tell me, after what ... has happened, can we live together? Is that possible? Tell me, eh, is it possible?" she repeated, raising her voice, "after my husband, the father of my children, enters into a love affair with his own children's governess?" "But what could I do? what could I do?" he kept saying in a pitiful voice, not knowing what he was saying, as his head sank lower and lower. "You are loathsome to me, repulsive!" she shrieked, getting more and more heated. "Your tears mean nothing! You have

never loved me; you have neither heart nor honorable feeling! You are hateful to me, disgusting, a stranger—yes, a complete stranger!" With pain and wrath she uttered the word so terrible to herself—stranger. He looked at her, and the fury expressed in her face alarmed and amazed him. He did not understand how his pity for her exasperated her. She saw in him sympathy for her, but not love. "No, she hates me. She will not forgive me," he thought. "It is awful! awful!" he said. At that moment in the next room a child began to cry; probably it had fallen down. Darya Alexandrovna listened, and her face suddenly softened. She seemed to be pulling herself together for a few seconds, as though she did not know where she was, and what she was doing, and getting up rapidly, she moved towards the door. "Well, she loves my child," he thought, noticing the change of her face at the child's cry, "my child: how can she hate me?" "Dolly, one word more," he said, following her. "If you come near me, I will call in the servants, the children! They may all know you are a scoundrel! I am going away at once, and you may live here with your mistress!" And she went out, slamming the door. Stepan Arkadyevitch sighed, wiped his face, and with a subdued tread walked out of the room. "Matvey says she will come round; but how? I don't see the least chance of it. Ah, oh, how horrible it is! And how vulgarly she shouted," he said to himself, remembering her shriek and the words—"scoundrel" and "mistress." "And very likely the maids were listening! Horribly vulgar! horrible!" Stepan Arkadyevitch stood a few seconds alone, wiped his face, squared his chest, and walked out of the room. It was Friday, and in the dining room the German watchmaker was winding up the clock. Stepan Arkadyevitch remembered his joke about this punctual, bald watchmaker, "that the German was wound up for a whole lifetime himself, to wind up watches," and he smiled. Stepan Arkadyevitch was fond of a joke: "And maybe she will come round! That's a good expression, 'come round,'" he thought. "I must repeat that." "Matvey!" he shouted. "Arrange everything with Darya in the sitting room for Anna Arkadyevna," he said to Matvey when he came in. "Yes, sir." Stepan Arkadyevitch put on his fur coat and went out onto the steps. "You won't dine at home?" said Matvey, seeing him off. "That's as it happens. But here's for the housekeeping," he said, taking ten roubles from his pocketbook. "That'll be enough." "Enough or not enough, we must make it do," said Matvey, slamming the carriage door and stepping back onto the steps. Darya Alexandrovna meanwhile having pacified the child, and knowing from the sound of the carriage that he had gone off, went back again to her bedroom. It was her solitary refuge from the household cares which crowded upon her directly she went out from it. Even now, in the short time she had been in the nursery, the English governess and Matrona Philimonovna had succeeded in putting several questions to her, which did not admit of delay, and which only she could answer: "What were the children to put on for their walk? Should they have any milk? Should not a new cook be sent for?" "Ah, let me alone, let me alone!" she said, and going back to her bedroom she sat down in the same place as she had sat when talking to her husband, clasping tightly her thin hands with the rings that slipped down on her bony fingers, and fell to going over in her memory all the conversation. "He has gone! But has he broken it off with her?" she thought. "Can it be he sees her? Why didn't I ask him! No, no, reconciliation is impossible. Even if we remain in the same house, we are strangers—strangers forever!" She repeated again with special significance the word so dreadful to her. "And how I loved him! my God, how I loved him!.... How I loved him! And now don't I love him? Don't I love him more than before? The most horrible thing is," she began, but did not finish her thought, because Matrona Philimonovna put her head in at the door. "Let us send for my brother," she said; "he can get a dinner anyway, or we shall have the children getting nothing to eat till six again, like yesterday." "Very well, I will come directly and see about it. But did you send for some new milk?" And Darya Alexandrovna plunged into the duties of the

day, and drowned her grief in them for a time. Chapter 5 Stepan Arkadyevitch had learned easily at school, thanks to his excellent abilities, but he had been idle and mischievous, and therefore was one of the lowest in his class. But in spite of his habitually dissipated mode of life, his inferior grade in the service, and his comparative youth, he occupied the honorable and lucrative position of president of one of the government boards at Moscow. This post he had received through his sister Anna's husband, Alexey Alexandrovitch Karenin, who held one of the most important positions in the ministry to whose department the Moscow office belonged. But if Karenin had not got his brother-in-law this berth, then through a hundred other personages—brothers, sisters, cousins, uncles, and aunts—Stiva Oblonsky would have received this post, or some other similar one, together with the salary of six thousand absolutely needful for him, as his affairs, in spite of his wife's considerable property, were in an embarrassed condition. Half Moscow and Petersburg were friends and relations of Stepan Arkadyevitch. He was born in the midst of those who had been and are the powerful ones of this world. One-third of the men in the government, the older men, had been friends of his father's, and had known him in petticoats; another third were his intimate chums, and the remainder were friendly acquaintances. Consequently the distributors of earthly blessings in the shape of places, rents, shares, and such, were all his friends, and could not overlook one of their own set; and Oblonsky had no need to make any special exertion to get a lucrative post. He had only not to refuse things, not to show jealousy, not to be quarrelsome or take offense, all of which from his characteristic good nature he never did. It would have struck him as absurd if he had been told that he would not get a position with the salary he required, especially as he expected nothing out of the way; he only wanted what the men of his own age and standing did get, and he was no worse qualified for performing duties of the kind than any other man. Stepan Arkadyevitch was not merely liked by all who knew him for his good humor, but for his bright disposition, and his unquestionable honesty. In him, in his handsome, radiant figure, his sparkling eyes, black hair and eyebrows, and the white and red of his face, there was something which produced a physical effect of kindness and good humor on the people who met him. "Aha! Stiva! Oblonsky! Here he is!" was almost always said with a smile of delight on meeting him. Even though it happened at times that after a conversation with him it seemed that nothing particularly delightful had happened, the next day, and the next, every one was just as delighted at meeting him again. After filling for three years the post of president of one of the government boards at Moscow, Stepan Arkadyevitch had won the respect, as well as the liking, of his fellow-officials, subordinates, and superiors, and all who had had business with him. The principal qualities in Stepan Arkadyevitch which had gained him this universal respect in the service consisted, in the first place, of his extreme indulgence for others, founded on a consciousness of his own shortcomings; secondly, of his perfect liberalism—not the liberalism he read of in the papers, but the liberalism that was in his blood, in virtue of which he treated all men perfectly equally and exactly the same, whatever their fortune or calling might be; and thirdly—the most important point—his complete indifference to the business in which he was engaged, in consequence of which he was never carried away, and never made mistakes. On reaching the offices of the board, Stepan Arkadyevitch, escorted by a deferential porter with a portfolio, went into his little private room, put on his uniform, and went into the boardroom. The clerks and copyists all rose, greeting him with good-humored deference. Stepan Arkadyevitch moved quickly, as ever, to his place, shook hands with his colleagues, and sat down. He made a joke or two, and talked just as much as was consistent with due decorum, and began work. No one knew better than Stepan Arkadyevitch how to hit on the exact line between freedom, simplicity, and official stiffness necessary for the agreeable

conduct of business. A secretary, with the good-humored deference common to every one in Stepan Arkadyevitch's office, came up with papers, and began to speak in the familiar and easy tone which had been introduced by Stepan Arkadyevitch. "We have succeeded in getting the information from the government department of Penza. Here, would you care?...""You've got them at last?" said Stepan Arkadyevitch, laying his finger on the paper. "Now, gentlemen...." And the sitting of the board began. "If they knew," he thought, bending his head with a significant air as he listened to the report, "what a guilty little boy their president was half an hour ago." And his eyes were laughing during the reading of the report. Till two o'clock the sitting would go on without a break, and at two o'clock there would be an interval and luncheon. It was not yet two, when the large glass doors of the boardroom suddenly opened and someone came in. All the officials sitting on the further side under the portrait of the Tsar and the eagle, delighted at any distraction, looked round at the door; but the doorkeeper standing at the door at once drove out the intruder, and closed the glass door after him. When the case had been read through, Stepan Arkadyevitch got up and stretched, and by way of tribute to the liberalism of the times took out a cigarette in the boardroom and went into his private room. Two of the members of the board, the old veteran in the service, Nikitin, and the Kammerjunker Grinevitch, went in with him. "We shall have time to finish after lunch," said Stepan Arkadyevitch. "To be sure we shall!" said Nikitin. "A pretty sharp fellow this Fomin must be," said Grinevitch of one of the persons taking part in the case they were examining. Stepan Arkadyevitch frowned at Grinevitch's words, giving him thereby to understand that it was improper to pass judgment prematurely, and made him no reply. "Who was that came in?" he asked the doorkeeper. "Someone, your excellency, crept in without permission directly my back was turned. He was asking for you. I told him: when the members come out, then....""Where is he?""Maybe he's gone into the passage, but here he comes anyway. That is he," said the doorkeeper, pointing to a strongly built, broad-shouldered man with a curly beard, who, without taking off his sheepskin cap, was running lightly and rapidly up the worn steps of the stone staircase. One of the members going down—a lean official with a portfolio—stood out of his way and looked disapprovingly at the legs of the stranger, then glanced inquiringly at Oblonsky. Stepan Arkadyevitch was standing at the top of the stairs. His good-naturedly beaming face above the embroidered collar of his uniform beamed more than ever when he recognized the man coming up. "Why, it's actually you, Levin, at last!" he said with a friendly mocking smile, scanning Levin as he approached. "How is it you have deigned to look me up in this den?" said Stepan Arkadyevitch, and not content with shaking hands, he kissed his friend. "Have you been here long?""I have just come, and very much wanted to see you," said Levin, looking shyly and at the same time angrily and uneasily around. "Well, let's go into my room," said Stepan Arkadyevitch, who knew his friend's sensitive and irritable shyness, and, taking his arm, he drew him along, as though guiding him through dangers. Stepan Arkadyevitch was on familiar terms with almost all his acquaintances, and called almost all of them by their Christian names: old men of sixty, boys of twenty, actors, ministers, merchants, and adjutant-generals, so that many of his intimate chums were to be found at the extreme ends of the social ladder, and would have been very much surprised to learn that they had, through the medium of Oblonsky, something in common. He was the familiar friend of everyone with whom he took a glass of champagne, and he took a glass of champagne with everyone, and when in consequence he met any of his disreputable chums, as he used in joke to call many of his friends, in the presence of his subordinates, he well knew how, with his characteristic tact, to diminish the disagreeable impression made on them. Levin was not a disreputable chum, but Oblonsky, with his ready tact, felt that Levin fancied he might not care to show his intimacy with him before his

subordinates, and so he made haste to take him off into his room. Levin was almost of the same age as Oblonsky; their intimacy did not rest merely on champagne. Levin had been the friend and companion of his early youth. They were fond of one another in spite of the difference of their characters and tastes, as friends are fond of one another who have been together in early youth. But in spite of this, each of them—as is often the way with men who have selected careers of different kinds—though in discussion he would even justify the other's career, in his heart despised it. It seemed to each of them that the life he led himself was the only real life, and the life led by his friend was a mere phantasm. Oblonsky could not restrain a slight mocking smile at the sight of Levin. How often he had seen him come up to Moscow from the country where he was doing something, but what precisely Stepan Arkadyevitch could never quite make out, and indeed he took no interest in the matter. Levin arrived in Moscow always excited and in a hurry, rather ill at ease and irritated by his own want of ease, and for the most part with a perfectly new, unexpected view of things. Stepan Arkadyevitch laughed at this, and liked it. In the same way Levin in his heart despised the town mode of life of his friend, and his official duties, which he laughed at, and regarded as trifling. But the difference was that Oblonsky, as he was doing the same as every one did, laughed complacently and good-humoredly, while Levin laughed without complacency and sometimes angrily. "We have long been expecting you," said Stepan Arkadyevitch, going into his room and letting Levin's hand go as though to show that here all danger was over. "I am very, very glad to see you," he went on. "Well, how are you? Eh? When did you come?" Levin was silent, looking at the unknown faces of Oblonsky's two companions, and especially at the hand of the elegant Grinevitch, which had such long white fingers, such long yellow filbert-shaped nails, and such huge shining studs on the shirt-cuff, that apparently they absorbed all his attention, and allowed him no freedom of thought. Oblonsky noticed this at once, and smiled. "Ah, to be sure, let me introduce you," he said. "My colleagues: Philip Ivanitch Nikitin, Mihail Stanislavitch Grinevitch"—and turning to Levin—"a district councilor, a modern district councilman, a gymnast who lifts thirteen stone with one hand, a cattle-breeder and sportsman, and my friend, Konstantin Dmitrievitch Levin, the brother of Sergey Ivanovitch Koznishev." "Delighted," said the veteran. "I have the honor of knowing your brother, Sergey Ivanovitch," said Grinevitch, holding out his slender hand with its long nails. Levin frowned, shook hands coldly, and at once turned to Oblonsky. Though he had a great respect for his half-brother, an author well known to all Russia, he could not endure it when people treated him not as Konstantin Levin, but as the brother of the celebrated Koznishev. "No, I am no longer a district councilor. I have quarreled with them all, and don't go to the meetings any more," he said, turning to Oblonsky. "You've been quick about it!" said Oblonsky with a smile. "But how? why?" "It's a long story. I will tell you some time," said Levin, but he began telling him at once. "Well, to put it shortly, I was convinced that nothing was really done by the district councils, or ever could be," he began, as though some one had just insulted him. "On one side it's a plaything; they play at being a parliament, and I'm neither young enough nor old enough to find amusement in playthings; and on the other side" (he stammered) "it's a means for the coterie of the district to make money. Formerly they had wardships, courts of justice, now they have the district council—not in the form of bribes, but in the form of unearned salary," he said, as hotly as though someone of those present had opposed his opinion. "Aha! You're in a new phase again, I see—a conservative," said Stepan Arkadyevitch. "However, we can go into that later." "Yes, later. But I wanted to see you," said Levin, looking with hatred at Grinevitch's hand. Stepan Arkadyevitch gave a scarcely perceptible smile. "How was it you used to say you would never wear European dress again?" he said, scanning his new suit, obviously cut by a French tailor. "Ah! I see: a new phase." Levin

suddenly blushed, not as grown men blush, slightly, without being themselves aware of it, but as boys blush, feeling that they are ridiculous through their shyness, and consequently ashamed of it and blushing still more, almost to the point of tears. And it was so strange to see this sensible, manly face in such a childish plight, that Oblonsky left off looking at him. "Oh, where shall we meet? You know I want very much to talk to you," said Levin. Oblonsky seemed to ponder. "I'll tell you what: let's go to Gurin's to lunch, and there we can talk. I am free till three." "No," answered Levin, after an instant's thought, "I have got to go on somewhere else." "All right, then, let's dine together." "Dine together? But I have nothing very particular, only a few words to say, and a question I want to ask you, and we can have a talk afterwards." "Well, say the few words, then, at once, and we'll gossip after dinner." "Well, it's this," said Levin; "but it's of no importance, though." His face all at once took an expression of anger from the effort he was making to surmount his shyness. "What are the Shtcherbatskys doing? Everything as it used to be?" he said. Stepan Arkadyevitch, who had long known that Levin was in love with his sister-in-law, Kitty, gave a hardly perceptible smile, and his eyes sparkled merrily. "You said a few words, but I can't answer in a few words, because.... Excuse me a minute..." A secretary came in, with respectful familiarity and the modest consciousness, characteristic of every secretary, of superiority to his chief in the knowledge of their business; he went up to Oblonsky with some papers, and began, under pretense of asking a question, to explain some objection. Stepan Arkadyevitch, without hearing him out, laid his hand genially on the secretary's sleeve. "No, you do as I told you," he said, softening his words with a smile, and with a brief explanation of his view of the matter he turned away from the papers, and said: "So do it that way, if you please, Zahar Nikititch." The secretary retired in confusion. During the consultation with the secretary Levin had completely recovered from his embarrassment. He was standing with his elbows on the back of a chair, and on his face was a look of ironical attention. "I don't understand it, I don't understand it," he said. "What don't you understand?" said Oblonsky, smiling as brightly as ever, and picking up a cigarette. He expected some queer outburst from Levin. "I don't understand what you are doing," said Levin, shrugging his shoulders. "How can you do it seriously?" "Why not?" "Why, because there's nothing in it." "You think so, but we're overwhelmed with work." "On paper. But, there, you've a gift for it," added Levin. "That's to say, you think there's a lack of something in me?" "Perhaps so," said Levin. "But all the same I admire your grandeur, and am proud that I've a friend in such a great person. You've not answered my question, though," he went on, with a desperate effort looking Oblonsky straight in the face. "Oh, that's all very well. You wait a bit, and you'll come to this yourself. It's very nice for you to have over six thousand acres in the Karazinsky district, and such muscles, and the freshness of a girl of twelve; still you'll be one of us one day. Yes, as to your question, there is no change, but it's a pity you've been away so long." "Oh, why so?" Levin queried, panic-stricken. "Oh, nothing," responded Oblonsky. "We'll talk it over. But what's brought you up to town?" "Oh, we'll talk about that, too, later on," said Levin, reddening again up to his ears. "All right. I see," said Stepan Arkadyevitch. "I should ask you to come to us, you know, but my wife's not quite the thing. But I tell you what; if you want to see them, they're sure now to be at the Zoological Gardens from four to five. Kitty skates. You drive along there, and I'll come and fetch you, and we'll go and dine somewhere together." "Capital. So good-bye till then." "Now mind, you'll forget, I know you, or rush off home to the country!" Stepan Arkadyevitch called out laughing. "No, truly!" And Levin went out of the room, only when he was in the doorway remembering that he had forgotten to take leave of Oblonsky's colleagues. "That gentleman must be a man of great energy," said Grinevitch, when Levin had gone away. "Yes, my dear boy," said Stepan Arkadyevitch, nodding his head, "he's a lucky fellow! Over six thousand acres

in the Karazinsky district; everything before him; and what youth and vigor! Not like some of us." "You have a great deal to complain of, haven't you, Stepan Arkadyevitch?" "Ah, yes, I'm in a poor way, a bad way," said Stepan Arkadyevitch with a heavy sigh. Chapter 6 When Oblonsky asked Levin what had brought him to town, Levin blushed, and was furious with himself for blushing, because he could not answer, "I have come to make your sister-in-law an offer," though that was precisely what he had come for. The families of the Levins and the Shtcherbatskys were old, noble Moscow families, and had always been on intimate and friendly terms. This intimacy had grown still closer during Levin's student days. He had both prepared for the university with the young Prince Shtcherbatsky, the brother of Kitty and Dolly, and had entered at the same time with him. In those days Levin used often to be in the Shtcherbatskys' house, and he was in love with the Shtcherbatsky household. Strange as it may appear, it was with the household, the family, that Konstantin Levin was in love, especially with the feminine half of the household. Levin did not remember his own mother, and his only sister was older than he was, so that it was in the Shtcherbatskys' house that he saw for the first time that inner life of an old, noble, cultivated, and honorable family of which he had been deprived by the death of his father and mother. All the members of that family, especially the feminine half, were pictured by him, as it were, wrapped about with a mysterious poetical veil, and he not only perceived no defects whatever in them, but under the poetical veil that shrouded them he assumed the existence of the loftiest sentiments and every possible perfection. Why it was the three young ladies had one day to speak French, and the next English; why it was that at certain hours they played by turns on the piano, the sounds of which were audible in their brother's room above, where the students used to work; why they were visited by those professors of French literature, of music, of drawing, of dancing; why at certain hours all the three young ladies, with Mademoiselle Linon, drove in the coach to the Tversky boulevard, dressed in their satin cloaks, Dolly in a long one, Natalia in a half-long one, and Kitty in one so short that her shapely legs in tightly-drawn red stockings were visible to all beholders; why it was they had to walk about the Tversky boulevard escorted by a footman with a gold cockade in his hat—all this and much more that was done in their mysterious world he did not understand, but he was sure that everything that was done there was very good, and he was in love precisely with the mystery of the proceedings. In his student days he had all but been in love with the eldest, Dolly, but she was soon married to Oblonsky. Then he began being in love with the second. He felt, as it were, that he had to be in love with one of the sisters, only he could not quite make out which. But Natalia, too, had hardly made her appearance in the world when she married the diplomat Lvov. Kitty was still a child when Levin left the university. Young Shtcherbatsky went into the navy, was drowned in the Baltic, and Levin's relations with the Shtcherbatskys, in spite of his friendship with Oblonsky, became less intimate. But when early in the winter of this year Levin came to Moscow, after a year in the country, and saw the Shtcherbatskys, he realized which of the three sisters he was indeed destined to love. One would have thought that nothing could be simpler than for him, a man of good family, rather rich than poor, and thirty-two years old, to make the young Princess Shtcherbatskaya an offer of marriage; in all likelihood he would at once have been looked upon as a good match. But Levin was in love, and so it seemed to him that Kitty was so perfect in every respect that she was a creature far above everything earthly; and that he was a creature so low and so earthly that it could not even be conceived that other people and she herself could regard him as worthy of her. After spending two months in Moscow in a state of enchantment, seeing Kitty almost every day in society, into which he went so as to meet her, he abruptly decided that it could not be, and went back to the country. Levin's conviction that it

could not be was founded on the idea that in the eyes of her family he was a disadvantageous and worthless match for the charming Kitty, and that Kitty herself could not love him. In her family's eyes he had no ordinary, definite career and position in society, while his contemporaries by this time, when he was thirty-two, were already, one a colonel, and another a professor, another director of a bank and railways, or president of a board like Oblonsky. But he (he knew very well how he must appear to others) was a country gentleman, occupied in breeding cattle, shooting game, and building barns; in other words, a fellow of no ability, who had not turned out well, and who was doing just what, according to the ideas of the world, is done by people fit for nothing else. The mysterious, enchanting Kitty herself could not love such an ugly person as he conceived himself to be, and, above all, such an ordinary, in no way striking person. Moreover, his attitude to Kitty in the past—the attitude of a grown-up person to a child, arising from his friendship with her brother—seemed to him yet another obstacle to love. An ugly, good-natured man, as he considered himself, might, he supposed, be liked as a friend; but to be loved with such a love as that with which he loved Kitty, one would need to be a handsome and, still more, a distinguished man. He had heard that women often did care for ugly and ordinary men, but he did not believe it, for he judged by himself, and he could not himself have loved any but beautiful, mysterious, and exceptional women. But after spending two months alone in the country, he was convinced that this was not one of those passions of which he had had experience in his early youth; that this feeling gave him not an instant's rest; that he could not live without deciding the question, would she or would she not be his wife, and that his despair had arisen only from his own imaginings, that he had no sort of proof that he would be rejected. And he had now come to Moscow with a firm determination to make an offer, and get married if he were accepted. Or ... he could not conceive what would become of him if he were rejected.

Chapter 7 On arriving in Moscow by a morning train, Levin had put up at the house of his elder half-brother, Koznischev. After changing his clothes he went down to his brother's study, intending to talk to him at once about the object of his visit, and to ask his advice; but his brother was not alone. With him there was a well-known professor of philosophy, who had come from Harkov expressly to clear up a difference that had arisen between them on a very important philosophical question. The professor was carrying on a hot crusade against materialists. Sergey Koznischev had been following this crusade with interest, and after reading the professor's last article, he had written him a letter stating his objections. He accused the professor of making too great concessions to the materialists. And the professor had promptly appeared to argue the matter out. The point in discussion was the question then in vogue: Is there a line to be drawn between psychological and physiological phenomena in man? and if so, where? Sergey Ivanovitch met his brother with the smile of chilly friendliness he always had for everyone, and introducing him to the professor, went on with the conversation. A little man in spectacles, with a narrow forehead, tore himself from the discussion for an instant to greet Levin, and then went on talking without paying any further attention to him. Levin sat down to wait till the professor should go, but he soon began to get interested in the subject under discussion. Levin had come across the magazine articles about which they were disputing, and had read them, interested in them as a development of the first principles of science, familiar to him as a natural science student at the university. But he had never connected these scientific deductions as to the origin of man as an animal, as to reflex action, biology, and sociology, with those questions as to the meaning of life and death to himself, which had of late been more and more often in his mind. As he listened to his brother's argument with the professor, he noticed that they connected these scientific questions with those spiritual problems, that at times they almost touched on the latter; but every time they were close upon what seemed to

him the chief point, they promptly beat a hasty retreat, and plunged again into a sea of subtle distinctions, reservations, quotations, allusions, and appeals to authorities, and it was with difficulty that he understood what they were talking about. "I cannot admit it," said Sergey Ivanovitch, with his habitual clearness, precision of expression, and elegance of phrase. "I cannot in any case agree with Keiss that my whole conception of the external world has been derived from perceptions. The most fundamental idea, the idea of existence, has not been received by me through sensation; indeed, there is no special sense-organ for the transmission of such an idea." "Yes, but they—Wurt, and Knaust, and Pripasov—would answer that your consciousness of existence is derived from the conjunction of all your sensations, that that consciousness of existence is the result of your sensations. Wurt, indeed, says plainly that, assuming there are no sensations, it follows that there is no idea of existence." "I maintain the contrary," began Sergey Ivanovitch. But here it seemed to Levin that just as they were close upon the real point of the matter, they were again retreating, and he made up his mind to put a question to the professor. "According to that, if my senses are annihilated, if my body is dead, I can have no existence of any sort?" he queried. The professor, in annoyance, and, as it were, mental suffering at the interruption, looked round at the strange inquirer, more like a bargeman than a philosopher, and turned his eyes upon Sergey Ivanovitch, as though to ask: What's one to say to him? But Sergey Ivanovitch, who had been talking with far less heat and one-sidedness than the professor, and who had sufficient breadth of mind to answer the professor, and at the same time to comprehend the simple and natural point of view from which the question was put, smiled and said: "That question we have no right to answer as yet." "We have not the requisite data," chimed in the professor, and he went back to his argument. "No," he said; "I would point out the fact that if, as Pripasov directly asserts, perception is based on sensation, then we are bound to distinguish sharply between these two conceptions." Levin listened no more, and simply waited for the professor to go.

Chapter 8

When the professor had gone, Sergey Ivanovitch turned to his brother. "Delighted that you've come. For some time, is it? How's your farming getting on?" Levin knew that his elder brother took little interest in farming, and only put the question in deference to him, and so he only told him about the sale of his wheat and money matters. Levin had meant to tell his brother of his determination to get married, and to ask his advice; he had indeed firmly resolved to do so. But after seeing his brother, listening to his conversation with the professor, hearing afterwards the unconsciously patronizing tone in which his brother questioned him about agricultural matters (their mother's property had not been divided, and Levin took charge of both their shares), Levin felt that he could not for some reason begin to talk to him of his intention of marrying. He felt that his brother would not look at it as he would have wished him to. "Well, how is your district council doing?" asked Sergey Ivanovitch, who was greatly interested in these local boards and attached great importance to them. "I really don't know." "What! Why, surely you're a member of the board?" "No, I'm not a member now; I've resigned," answered Levin, "and I no longer attend the meetings." "What a pity!" commented Sergey Ivanovitch, frowning. Levin in self-defense began to describe what took place in the meetings in his district. "That's how it always is!" Sergey Ivanovitch interrupted him. "We Russians are always like that. Perhaps it's our strong point, really, the faculty of seeing our own shortcomings; but we overdo it, we comfort ourselves with irony which we always have on the tip of our tongues. All I say is, give such rights as our local self-government to any other European people—why, the Germans or the English would have worked their way to freedom from them, while we simply turn them into ridicule." "But how can it be helped?" said Levin penitently. "It was my last effort. And I did try with all my soul. I can't. I'm no good at it." "It's not that you're no good at it," said Sergey Ivanovitch; "it is that you

don't look at it as you should." "Perhaps not," Levin answered dejectedly. "Oh! do you know brother Nikolay's turned up again?" This brother Nikolay was the elder brother of Konstantin Levin, and half-brother of Sergey Ivanovitch; a man utterly ruined, who had dissipated the greater part of his fortune, was living in the strangest and lowest company, and had quarreled with his brothers. "What did you say?" Levin cried with horror. "How do you know?" "Prokofy saw him in the street." "Here in Moscow? Where is he? Do you know?" Levin got up from his chair, as though on the point of starting off at once. "I am sorry I told you," said Sergey Ivanovitch, shaking his head at his younger brother's excitement. "I sent to find out where he is living, and sent him his IOU to Trubin, which I paid. This is the answer he sent me." And Sergey Ivanovitch took a note from under a paper-weight and handed it to his brother. Levin read in the queer, familiar handwriting: "I humbly beg you to leave me in peace. That's the only favor I ask of my gracious brothers.—Nikolay Levin." Levin read it, and without raising his head stood with the note in his hands opposite Sergey Ivanovitch. There was a struggle in his heart between the desire to forget his unhappy brother for the time, and the consciousness that it would be base to do so. "He obviously wants to offend me," pursued Sergey Ivanovitch; "but he cannot offend me, and I should have wished with all my heart to assist him, but I know it's impossible to do that." "Yes, yes," repeated Levin. "I understand and appreciate your attitude to him; but I shall go and see him." "If you want to, do; but I shouldn't advise it," said Sergey Ivanovitch. "As regards myself, I have no fear of your doing so; he will not make you quarrel with me; but for your own sake, I should say you would do better not to go. You can't do him any good; still, do as you please." "Very likely I can't do any good, but I feel—especially at such a moment—but that's another thing—I feel I could not be at peace." "Well, that I don't understand," said Sergey Ivanovitch. "One thing I do understand," he added; "it's a lesson in humility. I have come to look very differently and more charitably on what is called infamous since brother Nikolay has become what he is ... you know what he did..." "Oh, it's awful, awful!" repeated Levin. After obtaining his brother's address from Sergey Ivanovitch's footman, Levin was on the point of setting off at once to see him, but on second thought he decided to put off his visit till the evening. The first thing to do to set his heart at rest was to accomplish what he had come to Moscow for. From his brother's Levin went to Oblonsky's office, and on getting news of the Shtcherbatskys from him, he drove to the place where he had been told he might find Kitty. Chapter 9 At four o'clock, conscious of his throbbing heart, Levin stepped out of a hired sledge at the Zoological Gardens, and turned along the path to the frozen mounds and the skating ground, knowing that he would certainly find her there, as he had seen the Shtcherbatskys' carriage at the entrance. It was a bright, frosty day. Rows of carriages, sledges, drivers, and policemen were standing in the approach. Crowds of well-dressed people, with hats bright in the sun, swarmed about the entrance and along the well-swept little paths between the little houses adorned with carving in the Russian style. The old curly birches of the gardens, all their twigs laden with snow, looked as though freshly decked in sacred vestments. He walked along the path towards the skating-ground, and kept saying to himself—"You mustn't be excited, you must be calm. What's the matter with you? What do you want? Be quiet, stupid," he conjured his heart. And the more he tried to compose himself, the more breathless he found himself. An acquaintance met him and called him by his name, but Levin did not even recognize him. He went towards the mounds, whence came the clank of the chains of sledges as they slipped down or were dragged up, the rumble of the sliding sledges, and the sounds of merry voices. He walked on a few steps, and the skating-ground lay open before his eyes, and at once, amidst all the skaters, he knew her. He knew she was there by the rapture and the terror that seized on his heart. She was standing talking to a lady at the

opposite end of the ground. There was apparently nothing striking either in her dress or her attitude. But for Levin she was as easy to find in that crowd as a rose among nettles. Everything was made bright by her. She was the smile that shed light on all round her. "Is it possible I can go over there on the ice, go up to her?" he thought. The place where she stood seemed to him a holy shrine, unapproachable, and there was one moment when he was almost retreating, so overwhelmed was he with terror. He had to make an effort to master himself, and to remind himself that people of all sorts were moving about her, and that he too might come there to skate. He walked down, for a long while avoiding looking at her as at the sun, but seeing her, as one does the sun, without looking. On that day of the week and at that time of day people of one set, all acquainted with one another, used to meet on the ice. There were crack skaters there, showing off their skill, and learners clinging to chairs with timid, awkward movements, boys, and elderly people skating with hygienic motives. They seemed to Levin an elect band of blissful beings because they were here, near her. All the skaters, it seemed, with perfect self-possession, skated towards her, skated by her, even spoke to her, and were happy, quite apart from her, enjoying the capital ice and the fine weather. Nikolay Shtcherbatsky, Kitty's cousin, in a short jacket and tight trousers, was sitting on a garden seat with his skates on. Seeing Levin, he shouted to him: "Ah, the first skater in Russia! Been here long? First-rate ice—do put your skates on." "I haven't got my skates," Levin answered, marveling at this boldness and ease in her presence, and not for one second losing sight of her, though he did not look at her. He felt as though the sun were coming near him. She was in a corner, and turning out her slender feet in their high boots with obvious timidity, she skated towards him. A boy in Russian dress, desperately waving his arms and bowed down to the ground, overtook her. She skated a little uncertainly; taking her hands out of the little muff that hung on a cord, she held them ready for emergency, and looking towards Levin, whom she had recognized, she smiled at him, and at her own fears. When she had got round the turn, she gave herself a push off with one foot, and skated straight up to Shtcherbatsky. Clutching at his arm, she nodded smiling to Levin. She was more splendid than he had imagined her. When he thought of her, he could call up a vivid picture of her to himself, especially the charm of that little fair head, so freely set on the shapely girlish shoulders, and so full of childish brightness and good humor. The childishness of her expression, together with the delicate beauty of her figure, made up her special charm, and that he fully realized. But what always struck him in her as something unlooked for, was the expression of her eyes, soft, serene, and truthful, and above all, her smile, which always transported Levin to an enchanted world, where he felt himself softened and tender, as he remembered himself in some days of his early childhood. "Have you been here long?" she said, giving him her hand. "Thank you," she added, as he picked up the handkerchief that had fallen out of her muff. "I? I've not long ... yesterday ... I mean today ... I arrived," answered Levin, in his emotion not at once understanding her question. "I was meaning to come and see you," he said; and then, recollecting with what intention he was trying to see her, he was promptly overcome with confusion and blushed. "I didn't know you could skate, and skate so well." She looked at him earnestly, as though wishing to make out the cause of his confusion. "Your praise is worth having. The tradition is kept up here that you are the best of skaters," she said, with her little black-gloved hand brushing a grain of hoarfrost off her muff. "Yes, I used once to skate with passion; I wanted to reach perfection." "You do everything with passion, I think," she said smiling. "I should so like to see how you skate. Put on skates, and let us skate together." "Skate together! Can that be possible?" thought Levin, gazing at her. "I'll put them on directly," he said. And he went off to get skates. "It's a long while since we've seen you here, sir," said the attendant, supporting his foot,

and screwing on the heel of the skate. "Except you, there's none of the gentlemen first-rate skaters. Will that be all right?" said he, tightening the strap. "Oh, yes, yes; make haste, please," answered Levin, with difficulty restraining the smile of rapture which would overspread his face. "Yes," he thought, "this now is life, this is happiness! Together, she said; let us skate together! Speak to her now? But that's just why I'm afraid to speak—because I'm happy now, happy in hope, anyway.... And then?.... But I must! I must! I must! Away with weakness!" Levin rose to his feet, took off his overcoat, and scurrying over the rough ice round the hut, came out on the smooth ice and skated without effort, as it were, by simple exercise of will, increasing and slackening speed and turning his course. He approached with timidity, but again her smile reassured him. She gave him her hand, and they set off side by side, going faster and faster, and the more rapidly they moved the more tightly she grasped his hand. "With you I should soon learn; I somehow feel confidence in you," she said to him. "And I have confidence in myself when you are leaning on me," he said, but was at once panic-stricken at what he had said, and blushed. And indeed, no sooner had he uttered these words, when all at once, like the sun going behind a cloud, her face lost all its friendliness, and Levin detected the familiar change in her expression that denoted the working of thought; a crease showed on her smooth brow. "Is there anything troubling you?—though I've no right to ask such a question," he added hurriedly. "Oh, why so?.... No, I have nothing to trouble me," she responded coldly; and she added immediately: "You haven't seen Mlle. Linon, have you?" "Not yet." "Go and speak to her, she likes you so much." "What's wrong? I have offended her. Lord help me!" thought Levin, and he flew towards the old Frenchwoman with the gray ringlets, who was sitting on a bench. Smiling and showing her false teeth, she greeted him as an old friend. "Yes, you see we're growing up," she said to him, glancing towards Kitty, "and growing old. Tiny bear has grown big now!" pursued the Frenchwoman, laughing, and she reminded him of his joke about the three young ladies whom he had compared to the three bears in the English nursery tale. "Do you remember that's what you used to call them?" He remembered absolutely nothing, but she had been laughing at the joke for ten years now, and was fond of it. "Now, go and skate, go and skate. Our Kitty has learned to skate nicely, hasn't she?" When Levin darted up to Kitty her face was no longer stern; her eyes looked at him with the same sincerity and friendliness, but Levin fancied that in her friendliness there was a certain note of deliberate composure. And he felt depressed. After talking a little of her old governess and her peculiarities, she questioned him about his life. "Surely you must be dull in the country in the winter, aren't you?" she said. "No, I'm not dull, I am very busy," he said, feeling that she was holding him in check by her composed tone, which he would not have the force to break through, just as it had been at the beginning of the winter. "Are you going to stay in town long?" Kitty questioned him. "I don't know," he answered, not thinking of what he was saying. The thought that if he were held in check by her tone of quiet friendliness he would end by going back again without deciding anything came into his mind, and he resolved to make a struggle against it. "How is it you don't know?" "I don't know. It depends upon you," he said, and was immediately horror-stricken at his own words. Whether it was that she had heard his words, or that she did not want to hear them, she made a sort of stumble, twice struck out, and hurriedly skated away from him. She skated up to Mlle. Linon, said something to her, and went towards the pavilion where the ladies took off their skates. "My God! what have I done! Merciful God! help me, guide me," said Levin, praying inwardly, and at the same time, feeling a need of violent exercise, he skated about describing inner and outer circles. At that moment one of the young men, the best of the skaters of the day, came out of the coffee-house in his skates, with a cigarette in his mouth. Taking a run, he dashed down the steps in his skates, crashing and bounding up and down. He

flew down, and without even changing the position of his hands, skated away over the ice. "Ah, that's a new trick!" said Levin, and he promptly ran up to the top to do this new trick. "Don't break your neck! it needs practice!" Nikolay Shtcherbatsky shouted after him. Levin went to the steps, took a run from above as best he could, and dashed down, preserving his balance in this unwonted movement with his hands. On the last step he stumbled, but barely touching the ice with his hand, with a violent effort recovered himself, and skated off, laughing. "How splendid, how nice he is!" Kitty was thinking at that time, as she came out of the pavilion with Mlle. Linon, and looked towards him with a smile of quiet affection, as though he were a favorite brother. "And can it be my fault, can I have done anything wrong? They talk of flirtation. I know it's not he that I love; but still I am happy with him, and he's so jolly. Only, why did he say that?..." she mused. Catching sight of Kitty going away, and her mother meeting her at the steps, Levin, flushed from his rapid exercise, stood still and pondered a minute. He took off his skates, and overtook the mother and daughter at the entrance of the gardens. "Delighted to see you," said Princess Shtcherbatskaya. "On Thursdays we are home, as always." "Today, then?" "We shall be pleased to see you," the princess said stiffly. This stiffness hurt Kitty, and she could not resist the desire to smooth over her mother's coldness. She turned her head, and with a smile said: "Good-bye till this evening." At that moment Stepan Arkadyevitch, his hat cocked on one side, with beaming face and eyes, strode into the garden like a conquering hero. But as he approached his mother-in-law, he responded in a mournful and crestfallen tone to her inquiries about Dolly's health. After a little subdued and dejected conversation with his mother-in-law, he threw out his chest again, and put his arm in Levin's. "Well, shall we set off?" he asked. "I've been thinking about you all this time, and I'm very, very glad you've come," he said, looking him in the face with a significant air. "Yes, come along," answered Levin in ecstasy, hearing unceasingly the sound of that voice saying, "Good-bye till this evening," and seeing the smile with which it was said. "To the England or the Hermitage?" "I don't mind which." "All right, then, the England," said Stepan Arkadyevitch, selecting that restaurant because he owed more there than at the Hermitage, and consequently considered it mean to avoid it. "Have you got a sledge? That's first-rate, for I sent my carriage home." The friends hardly spoke all the way. Levin was wondering what that change in Kitty's expression had meant, and alternately assuring himself that there was hope, and falling into despair, seeing clearly that his hopes were insane, and yet all the while he felt himself quite another man, utterly unlike what he had been before her smile and those words, "Good-bye till this evening." Stepan Arkadyevitch was absorbed during the drive in composing the menu of the dinner. "You like turbot, don't you?" he said to Levin as they were arriving. "Eh?" responded Levin. "Turbot? Yes, I'm awfully fond of turbot." Chapter 10 When Levin went into the restaurant with Oblonsky, he could not help noticing a certain peculiarity of expression, as it were, a restrained radiance, about the face and whole figure of Stepan Arkadyevitch. Oblonsky took off his overcoat, and with his hat over one ear walked into the dining room, giving directions to the Tatar waiters, who were clustered about him in evening coats, bearing napkins. Bowing to right and left to the people he met, and here as everywhere joyously greeting acquaintances, he went up to the sideboard for a preliminary appetizer of fish and vodka, and said to the painted Frenchwoman decked in ribbons, lace, and ringlets, behind the counter, something so amusing that even that Frenchwoman was moved to genuine laughter. Levin for his part refrained from taking any vodka simply because he felt such a loathing of that Frenchwoman, all made up, it seemed, of false hair, poudre de riz, and vinaigre de toilette. He made haste to move away from her, as from a dirty place. His whole soul was filled with memories of Kitty, and there was a smile of triumph and happiness shining in his eyes. "This way, your excellency, please. Your excellency

won't be disturbed here," said a particularly pertinacious, white-headed old Tatar with immense hips and coat-tails gaping widely behind. "Walk in, your excellency," he said to Levin; by way of showing his respect to Stepan Arkadyevitch, being attentive to his guest as well. Instantly flinging a fresh cloth over the round table under the bronze chandelier, though it already had a table cloth on it, he pushed up velvet chairs, and came to a standstill before Stepan Arkadyevitch with a napkin and a bill of fare in his hands, awaiting his commands. "If you prefer it, your excellency, a private room will be free directly; Prince Golistin with a lady. Fresh oysters have come in." "Ah! oysters." Stepan Arkadyevitch became thoughtful. "How if we were to change our program, Levin?" he said, keeping his finger on the bill of fare. And his face expressed serious hesitation. "Are the oysters good? Mind now." "They're Flensburg, your excellency. We've no Ostend." "Flensburg will do, but are they fresh?" "Only arrived yesterday." "Well, then, how if we were to begin with oysters, and so change the whole program? Eh?" "It's all the same to me. I should like cabbage soup and porridge better than anything; but of course there's nothing like that here." "Porridge à la Russe, your honor would like?" said the Tatar, bending down to Levin, like a nurse speaking to a child. "No, joking apart, whatever you choose is sure to be good. I've been skating, and I'm hungry. And don't imagine," he added, detecting a look of dissatisfaction on Oblonsky's face, "that I shan't appreciate your choice. I am fond of good things." "I should hope so! After all, it's one of the pleasures of life," said Stepan Arkadyevitch. "Well, then, my friend, you give us two—or better say three—dozen oysters, clear soup with vegetables..." "Printanière," prompted the Tatar. But Stepan Arkadyevitch apparently did not care to allow him the satisfaction of giving the French names of the dishes. "With vegetables in it, you know. Then turbot with thick sauce, then ... roast beef; and mind it's good. Yes, and capons, perhaps, and then sweets." The Tatar, recollecting that it was Stepan Arkadyevitch's way not to call the dishes by the names in the French bill of fare, did not repeat them after him, but could not resist rehearsing the whole menu to himself according to the bill:—"Soupe printanière, turbot, sauce Beaumarchais, poulard à l'estragon, macédoine de fruits ... etc.," and then instantly, as though worked by springs, laying down one bound bill of fare, he took up another, the list of wines, and submitted it to Stepan Arkadyevitch. "What shall we drink?" "What you like, only not too much. Champagne," said Levin. "What! to start with? You're right though, I dare say. Do you like the white seal?" "Cachet blanc," prompted the Tatar. "Very well, then, give us that brand with the oysters, and then we'll see." "Yes, sir. And what table wine?" "You can give us Nuits. Oh, no, better the classic Chablis." "Yes, sir. And your cheese, your excellency?" "Oh, yes, Parmesan. Or would you like another?" "No, it's all the same to me," said Levin, unable to suppress a smile. And the Tatar ran off with flying coat-tails, and in five minutes darted in with a dish of opened oysters on mother-of-pearl shells, and a bottle between his fingers. Stepan Arkadyevitch crushed the starchy napkin, tucked it into his waistcoat, and settling his arms comfortably, started on the oysters. "Not bad," he said, stripping the oysters from the pearly shell with a silver fork, and swallowing them one after another. "Not bad," he repeated, turning his dewy, brilliant eyes from Levin to the Tatar. Levin ate the oysters indeed, though white bread and cheese would have pleased him better. But he was admiring Oblonsky. Even the Tatar, uncorking the bottle and pouring the sparkling wine into the delicate glasses, glanced at Stepan Arkadyevitch, and settled his white cravat with a perceptible smile of satisfaction. "You don't care much for oysters, do you?" said Stepan Arkadyevitch, emptying his wine glass, "or you're worried about something. Eh?" He wanted Levin to be in good spirits. But it was not that Levin was not in good spirits; he was ill at ease. With what he had in his soul, he felt sore and uncomfortable in the restaurant, in the midst of private rooms where men were dining with ladies, in all this fuss and

bustle; the surroundings of bronzes, looking glasses, gas, and waiters—all of it was offensive to him. He was afraid of sullyng what his soul was brimful of."I? Yes, I am; but besides, all this bothers me," he said. "You can't conceive how queer it all seems to a country person like me, as queer as that gentleman's nails I saw at your place..." "Yes, I saw how much interested you were in poor Grinevitch's nails," said Stepan Arkadyevitch, laughing. "It's too much for me," responded Levin. "Do try, now, and put yourself in my place, take the point of view of a country person. We in the country try to bring our hands into such a state as will be most convenient for working with. So we cut our nails; sometimes we turn up our sleeves. And here people purposely let their nails grow as long as they will, and link on small saucers by way of studs, so that they can do nothing with their hands." Stepan Arkadyevitch smiled gaily. "Oh, yes, that's just a sign that he has no need to do coarse work. His work is with the mind..." "Maybe. But still it's queer to me, just as at this moment it seems queer to me that we country folks try to get our meals over as soon as we can, so as to be ready for our work, while here are we trying to drag out our meal as long as possible, and with that object eating oysters..." "Why, of course," objected Stepan Arkadyevitch. "But that's just the aim of civilization—to make everything a source of enjoyment." "Well, if that's its aim, I'd rather be a savage." "And so you are a savage. All you Levins are savages." Levin sighed. He remembered his brother Nikolay, and felt ashamed and sore, and he scowled; but Oblonsky began speaking of a subject which at once drew his attention. "Oh, I say, are you going tonight to our people, the Shtcherbatskys', I mean?" he said, his eyes sparkling significantly as he pushed away the empty rough shells, and drew the cheese towards him. "Yes, I shall certainly go," replied Levin; "though I fancied the princess was not very warm in her invitation." "What nonsense! That's her manner.... Come, boy, the soup!.... That's her manner—grande dame," said Stepan Arkadyevitch. "I'm coming, too, but I have to go to the Countess Bonina's rehearsal. Come, isn't it true that you're a savage? How do you explain the sudden way in which you vanished from Moscow? The Shtcherbatskys were continually asking me about you, as though I ought to know. The only thing I know is that you always do what no one else does." "Yes," said Levin, slowly and with emotion, "you're right. I am a savage. Only, my savageness is not in having gone away, but in coming now. Now I have come..." "Oh, what a lucky fellow you are!" broke in Stepan Arkadyevitch, looking into Levin's eyes. "Why?" "I know a gallant steed by tokens sure, And by his eyes I know a youth in love," declaimed Stepan Arkadyevitch. "Everything is before you." "Why, is it over for you already?" "No; not over exactly, but the future is yours, and the present is mine, and the present—well, it's not all that it might be." "How so?" "Oh, things go wrong. But I don't want to talk of myself, and besides I can't explain it all," said Stepan Arkadyevitch. "Well, why have you come to Moscow, then?.... Hi! take away!" he called to the Tatar. "You guess?" responded Levin, his eyes like deep wells of light fixed on Stepan Arkadyevitch. "I guess, but I can't be the first to talk about it. You can see by that whether I guess right or wrong," said Stepan Arkadyevitch, gazing at Levin with a subtle smile. "Well, and what have you to say to me?" said Levin in a quivering voice, feeling that all the muscles of his face were quivering too. "How do you look at the question?" Stepan Arkadyevitch slowly emptied his glass of Chablis, never taking his eyes off Levin. "I?" said Stepan Arkadyevitch, "there's nothing I desire so much as that—nothing! It would be the best thing that could be." "But you're not making a mistake? You know what we're speaking of?" said Levin, piercing him with his eyes. "You think it's possible?" "I think it's possible. Why not possible?" "No! do you really think it's possible? No, tell me all you think! Oh, but if ... if refusal's in store for me!... Indeed I feel sure..." "Why should you think that?" said Stepan Arkadyevitch, smiling at his excitement. "It seems so to me sometimes. That will be awful for me, and for her too." "Oh, well,

anyway there's nothing awful in it for a girl. Every girl's proud of an offer." "Yes, every girl, but not she." Stepan Arkadyevitch smiled. He so well knew that feeling of Levin's, that for him all the girls in the world were divided into two classes: one class—all the girls in the world except her, and those girls with all sorts of human weaknesses, and very ordinary girls: the other class—she alone, having no weaknesses of any sort and higher than all humanity. "Stay, take some sauce," he said, holding back Levin's hand as it pushed away the sauce. Levin obediently helped himself to sauce, but would not let Stepan Arkadyevitch go on with his dinner. "No, stop a minute, stop a minute," he said. "You must understand that it's a question of life and death for me. I have never spoken to any one of this. And there's no one I could speak of it to, except you. You know we're utterly unlike each other, different tastes and views and everything; but I know you're fond of me and understand me, and that's why I like you awfully. But for God's sake, be quite straightforward with me." "I tell you what I think," said Stepan Arkadyevitch, smiling. "But I'll say more: my wife is a wonderful woman..." Stepan Arkadyevitch sighed, remembering his position with his wife, and, after a moment's silence, resumed—"She has a gift of foreseeing things. She sees right through people; but that's not all; she knows what will come to pass, especially in the way of marriages. She foretold, for instance, that Princess Shahovskaya would marry Brenteln. No one would believe it, but it came to pass. And she's on your side." "How do you mean?" "It's not only that she likes you—she says that Kitty is certain to be your wife." At these words Levin's face suddenly lighted up with a smile, a smile not far from tears of emotion. "She says that!" cried Levin. "I always said she was exquisite, your wife. There, that's enough, enough said about it," he said, getting up from his seat. "All right, but do sit down." But Levin could not sit down. He walked with his firm tread twice up and down the little cage of a room, blinked his eyelids that his tears might not fall, and only then sat down to the table. "You must understand," said he, "it's not love. I've been in love, but it's not that. It's not my feeling, but a sort of force outside me has taken possession of me. I went away, you see, because I made up my mind that it could never be, you understand, as a happiness that does not come on earth; but I've struggled with myself, I see there's no living without it. And it must be settled." "What did you go away for?" "Ah, stop a minute! Ah, the thoughts that come crowding on one! The questions one must ask oneself! Listen. You can't imagine what you've done for me by what you said. I'm so happy that I've become positively hateful; I've forgotten everything. I heard today that my brother Nikolay ... you know, he's here ... I had even forgotten him. It seems to me that he's happy too. It's a sort of madness. But one thing's awful.... Here, you've been married, you know the feeling ... it's awful that we—old—with a past ... not of love, but of sins ... are brought all at once so near to a creature pure and innocent; it's loathsome, and that's why one can't help feeling oneself unworthy." "Oh, well, you've not many sins on your conscience." "Alas! all the same," said Levin, "when with loathing I go over my life, I shudder and curse and bitterly regret it.... Yes." "What would you have? The world's made so," said Stepan Arkadyevitch. "The one comfort is like that prayer, which I always liked: 'Forgive me not according to my unworthiness, but according to Thy lovingkindness.' That's the only way she can forgive me." Chapter 11 Levin emptied his glass, and they were silent for a while. "There's one other thing I ought to tell you. Do you know Vronsky?" Stepan Arkadyevitch asked Levin. "No, I don't. Why do you ask?" "Give us another bottle," Stepan Arkadyevitch directed the Tatar, who was filling up their glasses and fidgeting round them just when he was not wanted. "Why you ought to know Vronsky is that he's one of your rivals." "Who's Vronsky?" said Levin, and his face was suddenly transformed from the look of childlike ecstasy which Oblonsky had just been admiring to an angry and unpleasant expression. "Vronsky is one of the sons of Count Kirill Ivanovitch Vronsky, and one of the finest specimens of the gilded youth

of Petersburg. I made his acquaintance in Tver when I was there on official business, and he came there for the levy of recruits. Fearfully rich, handsome, great connections, an aide-de-camp, and with all that a very nice, good-natured fellow. But he's more than simply a good-natured fellow, as I've found out here—he's a cultivated man, too, and very intelligent; he's a man who'll make his mark." Levin scowled and was dumb. "Well, he turned up here soon after you'd gone, and as I can see, he's over head and ears in love with Kitty, and you know that her mother..." "Excuse me, but I know nothing," said Levin, frowning gloomily. And immediately he recollected his brother Nikolay and how hateful he was to have been able to forget him. "You wait a bit, wait a bit," said Stepan Arkadyevitch, smiling and touching his hand. "I've told you what I know, and I repeat that in this delicate and tender matter, as far as one can conjecture, I believe the chances are in your favor." Levin dropped back in his chair; his face was pale. "But I would advise you to settle the thing as soon as may be," pursued Oblonsky, filling up his glass. "No, thanks, I can't drink any more," said Levin, pushing away his glass. "I shall be drunk.... Come, tell me how are you getting on?" he went on, obviously anxious to change the conversation. "One word more: in any case I advise you to settle the question soon. Tonight I don't advise you to speak," said Stepan Arkadyevitch. "Go round tomorrow morning, make an offer in due form, and God bless you..." "Oh, do you still think of coming to me for some shooting? Come next spring, do," said Levin. Now his whole soul was full of remorse that he had begun this conversation with Stepan Arkadyevitch. A feeling such as his was profaned by talk of the rivalry of some Petersburg officer, of the suppositions and the counsels of Stepan Arkadyevitch. Stepan Arkadyevitch smiled. He knew what was passing in Levin's soul. "I'll come some day," he said. "But women, my boy, they're the pivot everything turns upon. Things are in a bad way with me, very bad. And it's all through women. Tell me frankly now," he pursued, picking up a cigar and keeping one hand on his glass; "give me your advice." "Why, what is it?" "I'll tell you. Suppose you're married, you love your wife, but you're fascinated by another woman..." "Excuse me, but I'm absolutely unable to comprehend how ... just as I can't comprehend how I could now, after my dinner, go straight to a baker's shop and steal a roll." Stepan Arkadyevitch's eyes sparkled more than usual. "Why not? A roll will sometimes smell so good one can't resist it." "Himmlich ist's, wenn ich bezwungen Meine irdische Begier; Aber doch wenn's nich gelungen Hatt' ich auch recht huebsch Plaisir!" As he said this, Stepan Arkadyevitch smiled subtly. Levin, too, could not help smiling. "Yes, but joking apart," resumed Stepan Arkadyevitch, "you must understand that the woman is a sweet, gentle loving creature, poor and lonely, and has sacrificed everything. Now, when the thing's done, don't you see, can one possibly cast her off? Even supposing one parts from her, so as not to break up one's family life, still, can one help feeling for her, setting her on her feet, softening her lot?" "Well, you must excuse me there. You know to me all women are divided into two classes ... at least no ... truer to say: there are women and there are ... I've never seen exquisite fallen beings, and I never shall see them, but such creatures as that painted Frenchwoman at the counter with the ringlets are vermin to my mind, and all fallen women are the same." "But the Magdalen?" "Ah, drop that! Christ would never have said those words if He had known how they would be abused. Of all the Gospel those words are the only ones remembered. However, I'm not saying so much what I think, as what I feel. I have a loathing for fallen women. You're afraid of spiders, and I of these vermin. Most likely you've not made a study of spiders and don't know their character; and so it is with me." "It's very well for you to talk like that; it's very much like that gentleman in Dickens who used to fling all difficult questions over his right shoulder. But to deny the facts is no answer. What's to be done—you tell me that, what's to be done? Your wife gets older, while you're full of life. Before you've time

to look round, you feel that you can't love your wife with love, however much you may esteem her. And then all at once love turns up, and you're done for, done for," Stepan Arkadyevitch said with weary despair. Levin half smiled. "Yes, you're done for," resumed Oblonsky. "But what's to be done?" "Don't steal rolls." Stepan Arkadyevitch laughed outright. "Oh, moralist! But you must understand, there are two women; one insists only on her rights, and those rights are your love, which you can't give her; and the other sacrifices everything for you and asks for nothing. What are you to do? How are you to act? There's a fearful tragedy in it." "If you care for my profession of faith as regards that, I'll tell you that I don't believe there was any tragedy about it. And this is why. To my mind, love ... both the sorts of love, which you remember Plato defines in his Banquet, served as the test of men. Some men only understand one sort, and some only the other. And those who only know the non-platonic love have no need to talk of tragedy. In such love there can be no sort of tragedy. 'I'm much obliged for the gratification, my humble respects'—that's all the tragedy. And in platonic love there can be no tragedy, because in that love all is clear and pure, because..." At that instant Levin recollected his own sins and the inner conflict he had lived through. And he added unexpectedly: "But perhaps you are right. Very likely ... I don't know, I don't know." "It's this, don't you see," said Stepan Arkadyevitch, "you're very much all of a piece. That's your strong point and your failing. You have a character that's all of a piece, and you want the whole of life to be of a piece too—but that's not how it is. You despise public official work because you want the reality to be invariably corresponding all the while with the aim—and that's not how it is. You want a man's work, too, always to have a defined aim, and love and family life always to be undivided—and that's not how it is. All the variety, all the charm, all the beauty of life is made up of light and shadow." Levin sighed and made no reply. He was thinking of his own affairs, and did not hear Oblonsky. And suddenly both of them felt that though they were friends, though they had been dining and drinking together, which should have drawn them closer, yet each was thinking only of his own affairs, and they had nothing to do with one another. Oblonsky had more than once experienced this extreme sense of aloofness, instead of intimacy, coming on after dinner, and he knew what to do in such cases. "Bill!" he called, and he went into the next room where he promptly came across an aide-de-camp of his acquaintance and dropped into conversation with him about an actress and her protector. And at once in the conversation with the aide-de-camp Oblonsky had a sense of relaxation and relief after the conversation with Levin, which always put him to too great a mental and spiritual strain. When the Tatar appeared with a bill for twenty-six roubles and odd kopecks, besides a tip for himself, Levin, who would another time have been horrified, like any one from the country, at his share of fourteen roubles, did not notice it, paid, and set off homewards to dress and go to the Shtcherbatskys' there to decide his fate.

Chapter 12

The young Princess Kitty Shtcherbatskaya was eighteen. It was the first winter that she had been out in the world. Her success in society had been greater than that of either of her elder sisters, and greater even than her mother had anticipated. To say nothing of the young men who danced at the Moscow balls being almost all in love with Kitty, two serious suitors had already this first winter made their appearance: Levin, and immediately after his departure, Count Vronsky. Levin's appearance at the beginning of the winter, his frequent visits, and evident love for Kitty, had led to the first serious conversations between Kitty's parents as to her future, and to disputes between them. The prince was on Levin's side; he said he wished for nothing better for Kitty. The princess for her part, going round the question in the manner peculiar to women, maintained that Kitty was too young, that Levin had done nothing to prove that he had serious intentions, that Kitty felt no great attraction to him, and other side issues; but she did not state the principal point, which was that she looked for a better match for her

daughter, and that Levin was not to her liking, and she did not understand him. When Levin had abruptly departed, the princess was delighted, and said to her husband triumphantly: "You see I was right." When Vronsky appeared on the scene, she was still more delighted, confirmed in her opinion that Kitty was to make not simply a good, but a brilliant match. In the mother's eyes there could be no comparison between Vronsky and Levin. She disliked in Levin his strange and uncompromising opinions and his shyness in society, founded, as she supposed, on his pride and his queer sort of life, as she considered it, absorbed in cattle and peasants. She did not very much like it that he, who was in love with her daughter, had kept coming to the house for six weeks, as though he were waiting for something, inspecting, as though he were afraid he might be doing them too great an honor by making an offer, and did not realize that a man, who continually visits at a house where there is a young unmarried girl, is bound to make his intentions clear. And suddenly, without doing so, he disappeared. "It's as well he's not attractive enough for Kitty to have fallen in love with him," thought the mother. Vronsky satisfied all the mother's desires. Very wealthy, clever, of aristocratic family, on the highroad to a brilliant career in the army and at court, and a fascinating man. Nothing better could be wished for. Vronsky openly flirted with Kitty at balls, danced with her, and came continually to the house, consequently there could be no doubt of the seriousness of his intentions. But, in spite of that, the mother had spent the whole of that winter in a state of terrible anxiety and agitation. Princess Shtcherbatskaya had herself been married thirty years ago, her aunt arranging the match. Her husband, about whom everything was well known before hand, had come, looked at his future bride, and been looked at. The match-making aunt had ascertained and communicated their mutual impression. That impression had been favorable. Afterwards, on a day fixed beforehand, the expected offer was made to her parents, and accepted. All had passed very simply and easily. So it seemed, at least, to the princess. But over her own daughters she had felt how far from simple and easy is the business, apparently so commonplace, of marrying off one's daughters. The panics that had been lived through, the thoughts that had been brooded over, the money that had been wasted, and the disputes with her husband over marrying the two elder girls, Darya and Natalia! Now, since the youngest had come out, she was going through the same terrors, the same doubts, and still more violent quarrels with her husband than she had over the elder girls. The old prince, like all fathers indeed, was exceedingly punctilious on the score of the honor and reputation of his daughters. He was irrationally jealous over his daughters, especially over Kitty, who was his favorite. At every turn he had scenes with the princess for compromising her daughter. The princess had grown accustomed to this already with her other daughters, but now she felt that there was more ground for the prince's touchiness. She saw that of late years much was changed in the manners of society, that a mother's duties had become still more difficult. She saw that girls of Kitty's age formed some sort of clubs, went to some sort of lectures, mixed freely in men's society; drove about the streets alone, many of them did not curtsy, and, what was the most important thing, all the girls were firmly convinced that to choose their husbands was their own affair, and not their parents'. "Marriages aren't made nowadays as they used to be," was thought and said by all these young girls, and even by their elders. But how marriages were made now, the princess could not learn from any one. The French fashion—of the parents arranging their children's future—was not accepted; it was condemned. The English fashion of the complete independence of girls was also not accepted, and not possible in Russian society. The Russian fashion of match-making by the offices of intermediate persons was for some reason considered unseemly; it was ridiculed by every one, and by the princess herself. But how girls were to be married, and how parents were to marry them, no one knew.

Everyone with whom the princess had chanced to discuss the matter said the same thing: "Mercy on us, it's high time in our day to cast off all that old-fashioned business. It's the young people have to marry; and not their parents; and so we ought to leave the young people to arrange it as they choose." It was very easy for anyone to say that who had no daughters, but the princess realized that in the process of getting to know each other, her daughter might fall in love, and fall in love with someone who did not care to marry her or who was quite unfit to be her husband. And, however much it was instilled into the princess that in our times young people ought to arrange their lives for themselves, she was unable to believe it, just as she would have been unable to believe that, at any time whatever, the most suitable playthings for children five years old ought to be loaded pistols. And so the princess was more uneasy over Kitty than she had been over her elder sisters. Now she was afraid that Vronsky might confine himself to simply flirting with her daughter. She saw that her daughter was in love with him, but tried to comfort herself with the thought that he was an honorable man, and would not do this. But at the same time she knew how easy it is, with the freedom of manners of today, to turn a girl's head, and how lightly men generally regard such a crime. The week before, Kitty had told her mother of a conversation she had with Vronsky during a mazurka. This conversation had partly reassured the princess; but perfectly at ease she could not be. Vronsky had told Kitty that both he and his brother were so used to obeying their mother that they never made up their minds to any important undertaking without consulting her. "And just now, I am impatiently awaiting my mother's arrival from Petersburg, as peculiarly fortunate," he told her. Kitty had repeated this without attaching any significance to the words. But her mother saw them in a different light. She knew that the old lady was expected from day to day, that she would be pleased at her son's choice, and she felt it strange that he should not make his offer through fear of vexing his mother. However, she was so anxious for the marriage itself, and still more for relief from her fears, that she believed it was so. Bitter as it was for the princess to see the unhappiness of her eldest daughter, Dolly, on the point of leaving her husband, her anxiety over the decision of her youngest daughter's fate engrossed all her feelings. Today, with Levin's reappearance, a fresh source of anxiety arose. She was afraid that her daughter, who had at one time, as she fancied, a feeling for Levin, might, from extreme sense of honor, refuse Vronsky, and that Levin's arrival might generally complicate and delay the affair so near being concluded. "Why, has he been here long?" the princess asked about Levin, as they returned home. "He came today, mamma." "There's one thing I want to say..." began the princess, and from her serious and alert face, Kitty guessed what it would be. "Mamma," she said, flushing hotly and turning quickly to her, "please, please don't say anything about that. I know, I know all about it." She wished for what her mother wished for, but the motives of her mother's wishes wounded her. "I only want to say that to raise hopes..." "Mamma, darling, for goodness' sake, don't talk about it. It's so horrible to talk about it." "I won't," said her mother, seeing the tears in her daughter's eyes; "but one thing, my love; you promised me you would have no secrets from me. You won't?" "Never, mamma, none," answered Kitty, flushing a little, and looking her mother straight in the face, "but there's no use in my telling you anything, and I ... I ... if I wanted to, I don't know what to say or how ... I don't know..." "No, she could not tell an untruth with those eyes," thought the mother, smiling at her agitation and happiness. The princess smiled that what was taking place just now in her soul seemed to the poor child so immense and so important. Chapter 13 After dinner, and till the beginning of the evening, Kitty was feeling a sensation akin to the sensation of a young man before a battle. Her heart throbbed violently, and her thoughts would not rest on anything. She felt that this evening, when they would both meet for the first time, would be a turning point in her life. And she was continually picturing

them to herself, at one moment each separately, and then both together. When she mused on the past, she dwelt with pleasure, with tenderness, on the memories of her relations with Levin. The memories of childhood and of Levin's friendship with her dead brother gave a special poetic charm to her relations with him. His love for her, of which she felt certain, was flattering and delightful to her; and it was pleasant for her to think of Levin. In her memories of Vronsky there always entered a certain element of awkwardness, though he was in the highest degree well-bred and at ease, as though there were some false note—not in Vronsky, he was very simple and nice, but in herself, while with Levin she felt perfectly simple and clear. But, on the other hand, directly she thought of the future with Vronsky, there arose before her a perspective of brilliant happiness; with Levin the future seemed misty. When she went upstairs to dress, and looked into the looking-glass, she noticed with joy that it was one of her good days, and that she was in complete possession of all her forces,—she needed this so for what lay before her: she was conscious of external composure and free grace in her movements. At half-past seven she had only just gone down into the drawing room, when the footman announced, "Konstantin Dmitrievitch Levin." The princess was still in her room, and the prince had not come in. "So it is to be," thought Kitty, and all the blood seemed to rush to her heart. She was horrified at her paleness, as she glanced into the looking-glass. At that moment she knew beyond doubt that he had come early on purpose to find her alone and to make her an offer. And only then for the first time the whole thing presented itself in a new, different aspect; only then she realized that the question did not affect her only—with whom she would be happy, and whom she loved—but that she would have that moment to wound a man whom she liked. And to wound him cruelly. What for? Because he, dear fellow, loved her, was in love with her. But there was no help for it, so it must be, so it would have to be. "My God! shall I myself really have to say it to him?" she thought. "Can I tell him I don't love him? That will be a lie. What am I to say to him? That I love someone else? No, that's impossible. I'm going away, I'm going away." She had reached the door, when she heard his step. "No! it's not honest. What have I to be afraid of? I have done nothing wrong. What is to be, will be! I'll tell the truth. And with him one can't be ill at ease. Here he is," she said to herself, seeing his powerful, shy figure, with his shining eyes fixed on her. She looked straight into his face, as though imploring him to spare her, and gave her hand. "It's not time yet; I think I'm too early," he said glancing round the empty drawing room. When he saw that his expectations were realized, that there was nothing to prevent him from speaking, his face became gloomy. "Oh, no," said Kitty, and sat down at the table. "But this was just what I wanted, to find you alone," he began, not sitting down, and not looking at her, so as not to lose courage. "Mamma will be down directly. She was very much tired.... Yesterday..." She talked on, not knowing what her lips were uttering, and not taking her supplicating and caressing eyes off him. He glanced at her; she blushed, and ceased speaking. "I told you I did not know whether I should be here long ... that it depended on you..." She dropped her head lower and lower, not knowing herself what answer she should make to what was coming. "That it depended on you," he repeated. "I meant to say ... I meant to say ... I came for this ... to be my wife!" he brought out, not knowing what he was saying; but feeling that the most terrible thing was said, he stopped short and looked at her... She was breathing heavily, not looking at him. She was feeling ecstasy. Her soul was flooded with happiness. She had never anticipated that the utterance of love would produce such a powerful effect on her. But it lasted only an instant. She remembered Vronsky. She lifted her clear, truthful eyes, and seeing his desperate face, she answered hastily: "That cannot be ... forgive me." A moment ago, and how close she had been to him, of what importance in his life! And how aloof and remote from him she had become now! "It was bound to be so," he said, not

looking at her. He bowed, and was meaning to retreat. Chapter 14 But at that very moment the princess came in. There was a look of horror on her face when she saw them alone, and their disturbed faces. Levin bowed to her, and said nothing. Kitty did not speak nor lift her eyes. "Thank God, she has refused him," thought the mother, and her face lighted up with the habitual smile with which she greeted her guests on Thursdays. She sat down and began questioning Levin about his life in the country. He sat down again, waiting for other visitors to arrive, in order to retreat unnoticed. Five minutes later there came in a friend of Kitty's, married the preceding winter, Countess Nordston. She was a thin, sallow, sickly, and nervous woman, with brilliant black eyes. She was fond of Kitty, and her affection for her showed itself, as the affection of married women for girls always does, in the desire to make a match for Kitty after her own ideal of married happiness; she wanted her to marry Vronsky. Levin she had often met at the Shtcherbatskys' early in the winter, and she had always disliked him. Her invariable and favorite pursuit, when they met, consisted in making fun of him. "I do like it when he looks down at me from the height of his grandeur, or breaks off his learned conversation with me because I'm a fool, or is condescending to me. I like that so; to see him condescending! I am so glad he can't bear me," she used to say of him. She was right, for Levin actually could not bear her, and despised her for what she was proud of and regarded as a fine characteristic—her nervousness, her delicate contempt and indifference for everything coarse and earthly. The Countess Nordston and Levin got into that relation with one another not seldom seen in society, when two persons, who remain externally on friendly terms, despise each other to such a degree that they cannot even take each other seriously, and cannot even be offended by each other. The Countess Nordston pounced upon Levin at once. "Ah, Konstantin Dmitrievitch! So you've come back to our corrupt Babylon," she said, giving him her tiny, yellow hand, and recalling what he had chanced to say early in the winter, that Moscow was a Babylon. "Come, is Babylon reformed, or have you degenerated?" she added, glancing with a simper at Kitty. "It's very flattering for me, countess, that you remember my words so well," responded Levin, who had succeeded in recovering his composure, and at once from habit dropped into his tone of joking hostility to the Countess Nordston. "They must certainly make a great impression on you." "Oh, I should think so! I always note them all down. Well, Kitty, have you been skating again?..." And she began talking to Kitty. Awkward as it was for Levin to withdraw now, it would still have been easier for him to perpetrate this awkwardness than to remain all the evening and see Kitty, who glanced at him now and then and avoided his eyes. He was on the point of getting up, when the princess, noticing that he was silent, addressed him. "Shall you be long in Moscow? You're busy with the district council, though, aren't you, and can't be away for long?" "No, princess, I'm no longer a member of the council," he said. "I have come up for a few days." "There's something the matter with him," thought Countess Nordston, glancing at his stern, serious face. "He isn't in his old argumentative mood. But I'll draw him out. I do love making a fool of him before Kitty, and I'll do it." "Konstantin Dmitrievitch," she said to him, "do explain to me, please, what's the meaning of it. You know all about such things. At home in our village of Kaluga all the peasants and all the women have drunk up all they possessed, and now they can't pay us any rent. What's the meaning of that? You always praise the peasants so." At that instant another lady came into the room, and Levin got up. "Excuse me, countess, but I really know nothing about it, and can't tell you anything," he said, and looked round at the officer who came in behind the lady. "That must be Vronsky," thought Levin, and, to be sure of it, glanced at Kitty. She had already had time to look at Vronsky, and looked round at Levin. And simply from the look in her eyes, that grew unconsciously brighter, Levin knew that she loved that man, knew it as surely as if she had told him so in words. But what

sort of a man was he? Now, whether for good or for ill, Levin could not choose but remain; he must find out what the man was like whom she loved. There are people who, on meeting a successful rival, no matter in what, are at once disposed to turn their backs on everything good in him, and to see only what is bad. There are people, on the other hand, who desire above all to find in that lucky rival the qualities by which he has outstripped them, and seek with a throbbing ache at heart only what is good. Levin belonged to the second class. But he had no difficulty in finding what was good and attractive in Vronsky. It was apparent at the first glance. Vronsky was a squarely built, dark man, not very tall, with a good-humored, handsome, and exceedingly calm and resolute face. Everything about his face and figure, from his short-cropped black hair and freshly shaven chin down to his loosely fitting, brand-new uniform, was simple and at the same time elegant. Making way for the lady who had come in, Vronsky went up to the princess and then to Kitty. As he approached her, his beautiful eyes shone with a specially tender light, and with a faint, happy, and modestly triumphant smile (so it seemed to Levin), bowing carefully and respectfully over her, he held out his small broad hand to her. Greeting and saying a few words to everyone, he sat down without once glancing at Levin, who had never taken his eyes off him. "Let me introduce you," said the princess, indicating Levin. "Konstantin Dmitrievitch Levin, Count Alexey Kirillovitch Vronsky." Vronsky got up and, looking cordially at Levin, shook hands with him. "I believe I was to have dined with you this winter," he said, smiling his simple and open smile; "but you had unexpectedly left for the country." "Konstantin Dmitrievitch despises and hates town and us townspeople," said Countess Nordston. "My words must make a deep impression on you, since you remember them so well," said Levin, and, suddenly conscious that he had said just the same thing before, he reddened. Vronsky looked at Levin and Countess Nordston, and smiled. "Are you always in the country?" he inquired. "I should think it must be dull in the winter." "It's not dull if one has work to do; besides, one's not dull by oneself," Levin replied abruptly. "I am fond of the country," said Vronsky, noticing, and affecting not to notice, Levin's tone. "But I hope, count, you would not consent to live in the country always," said Countess Nordston. "I don't know; I have never tried for long. I experienced a queer feeling once," he went on. "I never longed so for the country, Russian country, with bast shoes and peasants, as when I was spending a winter with my mother in Nice. Nice itself is dull enough, you know. And indeed, Naples and Sorrento are only pleasant for a short time. And it's just there that Russia comes back to me most vividly, and especially the country. It's as though..." He talked on, addressing both Kitty and Levin, turning his serene, friendly eyes from one to the other, and saying obviously just what came into his head. Noticing that Countess Nordston wanted to say something, he stopped short without finishing what he had begun, and listened attentively to her. The conversation did not flag for an instant, so that the princess, who always kept in reserve, in case a subject should be lacking, two heavy guns—the relative advantages of classical and of modern education, and universal military service—had not to move out either of them, while Countess Nordston had not a chance of chaffing Levin. Levin wanted to, and could not, take part in the general conversation; saying to himself every instant, "Now go," he still did not go, as though waiting for something. The conversation fell upon table-turning and spirits, and Countess Nordston, who believed in spiritualism, began to describe the marvels she had seen. "Ah, countess, you really must take me, for pity's sake do take me to see them! I have never seen anything extraordinary, though I am always on the lookout for it everywhere," said Vronsky, smiling. "Very well, next Saturday," answered Countess Nordston. "But you, Konstantin Dmitrievitch, do you believe in it?" she asked Levin. "Why do you ask me? You know what I shall say." "But I want to hear your opinion." "My opinion," answered Levin, "is only that this table-turning simply proves that

educated society—so called—is no higher than the peasants. They believe in the evil eye, and in witchcraft and omens, while we..."Oh, then you don't believe in it?" "I can't believe in it, countess." "But if I've seen it myself?" "The peasant women too tell us they have seen goblins." "Then you think I tell a lie?" And she laughed a mirthless laugh. "Oh, no, Masha, Konstantin Dmitrievitch said he could not believe in it," said Kitty, blushing for Levin, and Levin saw this, and, still more exasperated, would have answered, but Vronsky with his bright frank smile rushed to the support of the conversation, which was threatening to become disagreeable. "You do not admit the conceivability at all?" he queried. "But why not? We admit the existence of electricity, of which we know nothing. Why should there not be some new force, still unknown to us, which..." "When electricity was discovered," Levin interrupted hurriedly, "it was only the phenomenon that was discovered, and it was unknown from what it proceeded and what were its effects, and ages passed before its applications were conceived. But the spiritualists have begun with tables writing for them, and spirits appearing to them, and have only later started saying that it is an unknown force." Vronsky listened attentively to Levin, as he always did listen, obviously interested in his words. "Yes, but the spiritualists say we don't know at present what this force is, but there is a force, and these are the conditions in which it acts. Let the scientific men find out what the force consists in. No, I don't see why there should not be a new force, if it..." "Why, because with electricity," Levin interrupted again, "every time you rub tar against wool, a recognized phenomenon is manifested, but in this case it does not happen every time, and so it follows it is not a natural phenomenon." Feeling probably that the conversation was taking a tone too serious for a drawing room, Vronsky made no rejoinder, but by way of trying to change the conversation, he smiled brightly, and turned to the ladies. "Do let us try at once, countess," he said; but Levin would finish saying what he thought. "I think," he went on, "that this attempt of the spiritualists to explain their marvels as some sort of new natural force is most futile. They boldly talk of spiritual force, and then try to subject it to material experiment." Every one was waiting for him to finish, and he felt it. "And I think you would be a first-rate medium," said Countess Nordston; "there's something enthusiastic in you." Levin opened his mouth, was about to say something, reddened, and said nothing. "Do let us try table-turning at once, please," said Vronsky. "Princess, will you allow it?" And Vronsky stood up, looking for a little table. Kitty got up to fetch a table, and as she passed, her eyes met Levin's. She felt for him with her whole heart, the more because she was pitying him for suffering of which she was herself the cause. "If you can forgive me, forgive me," said her eyes, "I am so happy." "I hate them all, and you, and myself," his eyes responded, and he took up his hat. But he was not destined to escape. Just as they were arranging themselves round the table, and Levin was on the point of retiring, the old prince came in, and after greeting the ladies, addressed Levin. "Ah!" he began joyously. "Been here long, my boy? I didn't even know you were in town. Very glad to see you." The old prince embraced Levin, and talking to him did not observe Vronsky, who had risen, and was serenely waiting till the prince should turn to him. Kitty felt how distasteful her father's warmth was to Levin after what had happened. She saw, too, how coldly her father responded at last to Vronsky's bow, and how Vronsky looked with amiable perplexity at her father, as though trying and failing to understand how and why anyone could be hostilely disposed towards him, and she flushed. "Prince, let us have Konstantin Dmitrievitch," said Countess Nordston; "we want to try an experiment." "What experiment? Table-turning? Well, you must excuse me, ladies and gentlemen, but to my mind it is better fun to play the ring game," said the old prince, looking at Vronsky, and guessing that it had been his suggestion. "There's some sense in that, anyway." Vronsky looked wonderingly at the prince with his resolute eyes, and, with a faint smile, began immediately talking to

Countess Nordston of the great ball that was to come off next week. "I hope you will be there?" he said to Kitty. As soon as the old prince turned away from him, Levin went out unnoticed, and the last impression he carried away with him of that evening was the smiling, happy face of Kitty answering Vronsky's inquiry about the ball. Chapter 15 At the end of the evening Kitty told her mother of her conversation with Levin, and in spite of all the pity she felt for Levin, she was glad at the thought that she had received an offer. She had no doubt that she had acted rightly. But after she had gone to bed, for a long while she could not sleep. One impression pursued her relentlessly. It was Levin's face, with his scowling brows, and his kind eyes looking out in dark dejection below them, as he stood listening to her father, and glancing at her and at Vronsky. And she felt so sorry for him that tears came into her eyes. But immediately she thought of the man for whom she had given him up. She vividly recalled his manly, resolute face, his noble self-possession, and the good nature conspicuous in everything towards everyone. She remembered the love for her of the man she loved, and once more all was gladness in her soul, and she lay on the pillow, smiling with happiness. "I'm sorry, I'm sorry; but what could I do? It's not my fault," she said to herself; but an inner voice told her something else. Whether she felt remorse at having won Levin's love, or at having refused him, she did not know. But her happiness was poisoned by doubts. "Lord, have pity on us; Lord, have pity on us; Lord, have pity on us!" she repeated to herself, till she fell asleep. Meanwhile there took place below, in the prince's little library, one of the scenes so often repeated between the parents on account of their favorite daughter. "What? I'll tell you what!" shouted the prince, waving his arms, and at once wrapping his squirrel-lined dressing-gown round him again. "That you've no pride, no dignity; that you're disgracing, ruining your daughter by this vulgar, stupid match-making!" "But, really, for mercy's sake, prince, what have I done?" said the princess, almost crying. She, pleased and happy after her conversation with her daughter, had gone to the prince to say good-night as usual, and though she had no intention of telling him of Levin's offer and Kitty's refusal, still she hinted to her husband that she fancied things were practically settled with Vronsky, and that he would declare himself so soon as his mother arrived. And thereupon, at those words, the prince had all at once flown into a passion, and began to use unseemly language. "What have you done? I'll tell you what. First of all, you're trying to catch an eligible gentleman, and all Moscow will be talking of it, and with good reason. If you have evening parties, invite everyone, don't pick out the possible suitors. Invite all the young bucks. Engage a piano player, and let them dance, and not as you do things nowadays, hunting up good matches. It makes me sick, sick to see it, and you've gone on till you've turned the poor wench's head. Levin's a thousand times the better man. As for this little Petersburg swell, they're turned out by machinery, all on one pattern, and all precious rubbish. But if he were a prince of the blood, my daughter need not run after anyone." "But what have I done?" "Why, you've..." The prince was crying wrathfully. "I know if one were to listen to you," interrupted the princess, "we should never marry our daughter. If it's to be so, we'd better go into the country." "Well, and we had better." "But do wait a minute. Do I try and catch them? I don't try to catch them in the least. A young man, and a very nice one, has fallen in love with her, and she, I fancy..." "Oh, yes, you fancy! And how if she really is in love, and he's no more thinking of marriage than I am!... Oh, that I should live to see it! Ah! spiritualism! Ah! Nice! Ah! the ball!" And the prince, imagining that he was mimicking his wife, made a mincing curtsy at each word. "And this is how we're preparing wretchedness for Kitty; and she's really got the notion into her head..." "But what makes you suppose so?" "I don't suppose; I know. We have eyes for such things, though women-folk haven't. I see a man who has serious intentions, that's Levin: and I see a peacock, like this feather-head, who's only amusing himself." "Oh, well, when once

you get an idea into your head!..."Well, you'll remember my words, but too late, just as with Dolly."Well, well, we won't talk of it," the princess stopped him, recollecting her unlucky Dolly."By all means, and good night!"And signing each other with the cross, the husband and wife parted with a kiss, feeling that they each remained of their own opinion.The princess had at first been quite certain that that evening had settled Kitty's future, and that there could be no doubt of Vronsky's intentions, but her husband's words had disturbed her. And returning to her own room, in terror before the unknown future, she, too, like Kitty, repeated several times in her heart, "Lord, have pity; Lord, have pity; Lord, have pity."Chapter 16Vronsky had never had a real home life. His mother had been in her youth a brilliant society woman, who had had during her married life, and still more afterwards, many love affairs notorious in the whole fashionable world. His father he scarcely remembered, and he had been educated in the Corps of Pages.Leaving the school very young as a brilliant officer, he had at once got into the circle of wealthy Petersburg army men. Although he did go more or less into Petersburg society, his love affairs had always hitherto been outside it.In Moscow he had for the first time felt, after his luxurious and coarse life at Petersburg, all the charm of intimacy with a sweet and innocent girl of his own rank, who cared for him. It never even entered his head that there could be any harm in his relations with Kitty. At balls he danced principally with her. He was a constant visitor at their house. He talked to her as people commonly do talk in society—all sorts of nonsense, but nonsense to which he could not help attaching a special meaning in her case. Although he said nothing to her that he could not have said before everybody, he felt that she was becoming more and more dependent upon him, and the more he felt this, the better he liked it, and the tenderer was his feeling for her. He did not know that his mode of behavior in relation to Kitty had a definite character, that it is courting young girls with no intention of marriage, and that such courting is one of the evil actions common among brilliant young men such as he was. It seemed to him that he was the first who had discovered this pleasure, and he was enjoying his discovery.If he could have heard what her parents were saying that evening, if he could have put himself at the point of view of the family and have heard that Kitty would be unhappy if he did not marry her, he would have been greatly astonished, and would not have believed it. He could not believe that what gave such great and delicate pleasure to him, and above all to her, could be wrong. Still less could he have believed that he ought to marry.Marriage had never presented itself to him as a possibility. He not only disliked family life, but a family, and especially a husband was, in accordance with the views general in the bachelor world in which he lived, conceived as something alien, repellant, and, above all, ridiculous.But though Vronsky had not the least suspicion what the parents were saying, he felt on coming away from the Shtcherbatskys' that the secret spiritual bond which existed between him and Kitty had grown so much stronger that evening that some step must be taken. But what step could and ought to be taken he could not imagine."What is so exquisite," he thought, as he returned from the Shtcherbatskys', carrying away with him, as he always did, a delicious feeling of purity and freshness, arising partly from the fact that he had not been smoking for a whole evening, and with it a new feeling of tenderness at her love for him—"what is so exquisite is that not a word has been said by me or by her, but we understand each other so well in this unseen language of looks and tones, that this evening more clearly than ever she told me she loves me. And how secretly, simply, and most of all, how trustfully! I feel myself better, purer. I feel that I have a heart, and that there is a great deal of good in me. Those sweet, loving eyes! When she said: 'Indeed I do...'"Well, what then? Oh, nothing. It's good for me, and good for her." And he began wondering where to finish the evening.He passed in review of the places he might go to. "Club? a game of bezique, champagne with Ignatov? No,

I'm not going. Château des Fleurs; there I shall find Oblonsky, songs, the cancan. No, I'm sick of it. That's why I like the Shtcherbatskys', that I'm growing better. I'll go home." He went straight to his room at Dussot's Hotel, ordered supper, and then undressed, and as soon as his head touched the pillow, fell into a sound sleep.

Chapter 17

Next day at eleven o'clock in the morning Vronsky drove to the station of the Petersburg railway to meet his mother, and the first person he came across on the great flight of steps was Oblonsky, who was expecting his sister by the same train. "Ah! your excellency!" cried Oblonsky, "whom are you meeting?" "My mother," Vronsky responded, smiling, as everyone did who met Oblonsky. He shook hands with him, and together they ascended the steps. "She is to be here from Petersburg today." "I was looking out for you till two o'clock last night. Where did you go after the Shtcherbatskys'?" "Home," answered Vronsky. "I must own I felt so well content yesterday after the Shtcherbatskys' that I didn't care to go anywhere." "I know a gallant steed by tokens sure, And by his eyes I know a youth in love," declaimed Stepan Arkadyevitch, just as he had done before to Levin. Vronsky smiled with a look that seemed to say that he did not deny it, but he promptly changed the subject. "And whom are you meeting?" he asked. "I? I've come to meet a pretty woman," said Oblonsky. "You don't say so!" "Honi soit qui mal y pense! My sister Anna." "Ah! that's Madame Karenina," said Vronsky. "You know her, no doubt?" "I think I do. Or perhaps not ... I really am not sure," Vronsky answered heedlessly, with a vague recollection of something stiff and tedious evoked by the name Karenina. "But Alexey Alexandrovitch, my celebrated brother-in-law, you surely must know. All the world knows him." "I know him by reputation and by sight. I know that he's clever, learned, religious somewhat.... But you know that's not ... not in my line," said Vronsky in English. "Yes, he's a very remarkable man; rather a conservative, but a splendid man," observed Stepan Arkadyevitch, "a splendid man." "Oh, well, so much the better for him," said Vronsky smiling. "Oh, you've come," he said, addressing a tall old footman of his mother's, standing at the door; "come here." Besides the charm Oblonsky had in general for everyone, Vronsky had felt of late specially drawn to him by the fact that in his imagination he was associated with Kitty. "Well, what do you say? Shall we give a supper on Sunday for the diva?" he said to him with a smile, taking his arm. "Of course. I'm collecting subscriptions. Oh, did you make the acquaintance of my friend Levin?" asked Stepan Arkadyevitch. "Yes; but he left rather early." "He's a capital fellow," pursued Oblonsky. "Isn't he?" "I don't know why it is," responded Vronsky, "in all Moscow people—present company of course excepted," he put in jestingly, "there's something uncompromising. They are all on the defensive, lose their tempers, as though they all want to make one feel something..." "Yes, that's true, it is so," said Stepan Arkadyevitch, laughing good-humoredly. "Will the train soon be in?" Vronsky asked a railway official. "The train's signaled," answered the man. The approach of the train was more and more evident by the preparatory bustle in the station, the rush of porters, the movement of policemen and attendants, and people meeting the train. Through the frosty vapor could be seen workmen in short sheepskins and soft felt boots crossing the rails of the curving line. The hiss of the boiler could be heard on the distant rails, and the rumble of something heavy. "No," said Stepan Arkadyevitch, who felt a great inclination to tell Vronsky of Levin's intentions in regard to Kitty. "No, you've not got a true impression of Levin. He's a very nervous man, and is sometimes out of humor, it's true, but then he is often very nice. He's such a true, honest nature, and a heart of gold. But yesterday there were special reasons," pursued Stepan Arkadyevitch, with a meaning smile, totally oblivious of the genuine sympathy he had felt the day before for his friend, and feeling the same sympathy now, only for Vronsky. "Yes, there were reasons why he could not help being either particularly happy or particularly unhappy." Vronsky stood still and asked directly: "How so? Do you mean he made your belle-

soeur an offer yesterday?" "Maybe," said Stepan Arkadyevitch. "I fancied something of the sort yesterday. Yes, if he went away early, and was out of humor too, it must mean it.... He's been so long in love, and I'm very sorry for him." "So that's it! I should imagine, though, she might reckon on a better match," said Vronsky, drawing himself up and walking about again, "though I don't know him, of course," he added. "Yes, that is a hateful position! That's why most fellows prefer to have to do with Klaras. If you don't succeed with them it only proves that you've not enough cash, but in this case one's dignity's at stake. But here's the train." The engine had already whistled in the distance. A few instants later the platform was quivering, and with puffs of steam hanging low in the air from the frost, the engine rolled up, with the lever of the middle wheel rhythmically moving up and down, and the stooping figure of the engine-driver covered with frost. Behind the tender, setting the platform more and more slowly swaying, came the luggage van with a dog whining in it. At last the passenger carriages rolled in, oscillating before coming to a standstill. A smart guard jumped out, giving a whistle, and after him one by one the impatient passengers began to get down: an officer of the guards, holding himself erect, and looking severely about him; a nimble little merchant with a satchel, smiling gaily; a peasant with a sack over his shoulder. Vronsky, standing beside Oblonsky, watched the carriages and the passengers, totally oblivious of his mother. What he had just heard about Kitty excited and delighted him. Unconsciously he arched his chest, and his eyes flashed. He felt himself a conqueror. "Countess Vronskaya is in that compartment," said the smart guard, going up to Vronsky. The guard's words roused him, and forced him to think of his mother and his approaching meeting with her. He did not in his heart respect his mother, and without acknowledging it to himself, he did not love her, though in accordance with the ideas of the set in which he lived, and with his own education, he could not have conceived of any behavior to his mother not in the highest degree respectful and obedient, and the more externally obedient and respectful his behavior, the less in his heart he respected and loved her.

Chapter 18

Vronsky followed the guard to the carriage, and at the door of the compartment he stopped short to make room for a lady who was getting out. With the insight of a man of the world, from one glance at this lady's appearance Vronsky classified her as belonging to the best society. He begged pardon, and was getting into the carriage, but felt he must glance at her once more; not that she was very beautiful, not on account of the elegance and modest grace which were apparent in her whole figure, but because in the expression of her charming face, as she passed close by him, there was something peculiarly caressing and soft. As he looked round, she too turned her head. Her shining gray eyes, that looked dark from the thick lashes, rested with friendly attention on his face, as though she were recognizing him, and then promptly turned away to the passing crowd, as though seeking someone. In that brief look Vronsky had time to notice the suppressed eagerness which played over her face, and flitted between the brilliant eyes and the faint smile that curved her red lips. It was as though her nature were so brimming over with something that against her will it showed itself now in the flash of her eyes, and now in her smile. Deliberately she shrouded the light in her eyes, but it shone against her will in the faintly perceptible smile. Vronsky stepped into the carriage. His mother, a dried-up old lady with black eyes and ringlets, screwed up her eyes, scanning her son, and smiled slightly with her thin lips. Getting up from the seat and handing her maid a bag, she gave her little wrinkled hand to her son to kiss, and lifting his head from her hand, kissed him on the cheek. "You got my telegram? Quite well? Thank God." "You had a good journey?" said her son, sitting down beside her, and involuntarily listening to a woman's voice outside the door. He knew it was the voice of the lady he had met at the door. "All the same I don't agree with you," said the lady's voice. "It's the Petersburg view, madame." "Not Petersburg, but simply feminine,"

she responded. "Well, well, allow me to kiss your hand." "Good-bye, Ivan Petrovitch. And could you see if my brother is here, and send him to me?" said the lady in the doorway, and stepped back again into the compartment. "Well, have you found your brother?" said Countess Vronskaya, addressing the lady. Vronsky understood now that this was Madame Karenina. "Your brother is here," he said, standing up. "Excuse me, I did not know you, and, indeed, our acquaintance was so slight," said Vronsky, bowing, "that no doubt you do not remember me." "Oh, no," said she, "I should have known you because your mother and I have been talking, I think, of nothing but you all the way." As she spoke she let the eagerness that would insist on coming out show itself in her smile. "And still no sign of my brother." "Do call him, Alexey," said the old countess. Vronsky stepped out onto the platform and shouted: "Oblonsky! Here!" Madame Karenina, however, did not wait for her brother, but catching sight of him she stepped out with her light, resolute step. And as soon as her brother had reached her, with a gesture that struck Vronsky by its decision and its grace, she flung her left arm around his neck, drew him rapidly to her, and kissed him warmly. Vronsky gazed, never taking his eyes from her, and smiled, he could not have said why. But recollecting that his mother was waiting for him, he went back again into the carriage. "She's very sweet, isn't she?" said the countess of Madame Karenina. "Her husband put her with me, and I was delighted to have her. We've been talking all the way. And so you, I hear ... vous filez le parfait amour. Tant mieux, mon cher, tant mieux." "I don't know what you are referring to, maman," he answered coldly. "Come, maman, let us go." Madame Karenina entered the carriage again to say good-bye to the countess. "Well, countess, you have met your son, and I my brother," she said. "And all my gossip is exhausted. I should have nothing more to tell you." "Oh, no," said the countess, taking her hand. "I could go all around the world with you and never be dull. You are one of those delightful women in whose company it's sweet to be silent as well as to talk. Now please don't fret over your son; you can't expect never to be parted." Madame Karenina stood quite still, holding herself very erect, and her eyes were smiling. "Anna Arkadyevna," the countess said in explanation to her son, "has a little son eight years old, I believe, and she has never been parted from him before, and she keeps fretting over leaving him." "Yes, the countess and I have been talking all the time, I of my son and she of hers," said Madame Karenina, and again a smile lighted up her face, a caressing smile intended for him. "I am afraid that you must have been dreadfully bored," he said, promptly catching the ball of coquetry she had flung him. But apparently she did not care to pursue the conversation in that strain, and she turned to the old countess. "Thank you so much. The time has passed so quickly. Good-bye, countess." "Good-bye, my love," answered the countess. "Let me have a kiss of your pretty face. I speak plainly, at my age, and I tell you simply that I've lost my heart to you." Stereotyped as the phrase was, Madame Karenina obviously believed it and was delighted by it. She flushed, bent down slightly, and put her cheek to the countess's lips, drew herself up again, and with the same smile fluttering between her lips and her eyes, she gave her hand to Vronsky. He pressed the little hand she gave him, and was delighted, as though at something special, by the energetic squeeze with which she freely and vigorously shook his hand. She went out with the rapid step which bore her rather fully-developed figure with such strange lightness. "Very charming," said the countess. That was just what her son was thinking. His eyes followed her till her graceful figure was out of sight, and then the smile remained on his face. He saw out of the window how she went up to her brother, put her arm in his, and began telling him something eagerly, obviously something that had nothing to do with him, Vronsky, and at that he felt annoyed. "Well, maman, are you perfectly well?" he repeated, turning to his mother. "Everything has been delightful. Alexander has been very good, and Marie has grown very pretty. She's

very interesting. "And she began telling him again of what interested her most—the christening of her grandson, for which she had been staying in Petersburg, and the special favor shown her elder son by the Tsar." "Here's Lavrenty," said Vronsky, looking out of the window; "now we can go, if you like." The old butler who had traveled with the countess, came to the carriage to announce that everything was ready, and the countess got up to go. "Come; there's not such a crowd now," said Vronsky. The maid took a handbag and the lap dog, the butler and a porter the other baggage. Vronsky gave his mother his arm; but just as they were getting out of the carriage several men ran suddenly by with panic-stricken faces. The station-master, too, ran by in his extraordinary colored cap. Obviously something unusual had happened. The crowd who had left the train were running back again. "What?... What?... Where?... Flung himself!... Crushed!..." was heard among the crowd. Stepan Arkadyevitch, with his sister on his arm, turned back. They too looked scared, and stopped at the carriage door to avoid the crowd. The ladies got in, while Vronsky and Stepan Arkadyevitch followed the crowd to find out details of the disaster. A guard, either drunk or too much muffled up in the bitter frost, had not heard the train moving back, and had been crushed. Before Vronsky and Oblonsky came back the ladies heard the facts from the butler. Oblonsky and Vronsky had both seen the mutilated corpse. Oblonsky was evidently upset. He frowned and seemed ready to cry. "Ah, how awful! Ah, Anna, if you had seen it! Ah, how awful!" he said. Vronsky did not speak; his handsome face was serious, but perfectly composed. "Oh, if you had seen it, countess," said Stepan Arkadyevitch. "And his wife was there.... It was awful to see her!.... She flung herself on the body. They say he was the only support of an immense family. How awful!" "Couldn't one do anything for her?" said Madame Karenina in an agitated whisper. Vronsky glanced at her, and immediately got out of the carriage. "I'll be back directly, maman," he remarked, turning round in the doorway. When he came back a few minutes later, Stepan Arkadyevitch was already in conversation with the countess about the new singer, while the countess was impatiently looking towards the door, waiting for her son. "Now let us be off," said Vronsky, coming in. They went out together. Vronsky was in front with his mother. Behind walked Madame Karenina with her brother. Just as they were going out of the station the station-master overtook Vronsky. "You gave my assistant two hundred roubles. Would you kindly explain for whose benefit you intend them?" "For the widow," said Vronsky, shrugging his shoulders. "I should have thought there was no need to ask." "You gave that?" cried Oblonsky, behind, and, pressing his sister's hand, he added: "Very nice, very nice! Isn't he a splendid fellow? Good-bye, countess." And he and his sister stood still, looking for her maid. When they went out the Vronsky's carriage had already driven away. People coming in were still talking of what happened. "What a horrible death!" said a gentleman, passing by. "They say he was cut in two pieces." "On the contrary, I think it's the easiest—instantaneous," observed another. "How is it they don't take proper precautions?" said a third. Madame Karenina seated herself in the carriage, and Stepan Arkadyevitch saw with surprise that her lips were quivering, and she was with difficulty restraining her tears. "What is it, Anna?" he asked, when they had driven a few hundred yards. "It's an omen of evil," she said. "What nonsense!" said Stepan Arkadyevitch. "You've come, that's the chief thing. You can't conceive how I'm resting my hopes on you." "Have you known Vronsky long?" she asked. "Yes. You know we're hoping he will marry Kitty." "Yes?" said Anna softly. "Come now, let us talk of you," she added, tossing her head, as though she would physically shake off something superfluous oppressing her. "Let us talk of your affairs. I got your letter, and here I am." "Yes, all my hopes are in you," said Stepan Arkadyevitch. "Well, tell me all about it." And Stepan Arkadyevitch began to tell his story. On reaching home Oblonsky helped his sister out, sighed, pressed her hand, and set off to his office. Chapter 19 When Anna

went into the room, Dolly was sitting in the little drawing-room with a white-headed fat little boy, already like his father, giving him a lesson in French reading. As the boy read, he kept twisting and trying to tear off a button that was nearly off his jacket. His mother had several times taken his hand from it, but the fat little hand went back to the button again. His mother pulled the button off and put it in her pocket. "Keep your hands still, Grisha," she said, and she took up her work, a coverlet she had long been making. She always set to work on it at depressed moments, and now she knitted at it nervously, twitching her fingers and counting the stitches. Though she had sent word the day before to her husband that it was nothing to her whether his sister came or not, she had made everything ready for her arrival, and was expecting her sister-in-law with emotion. Dolly was crushed by her sorrow, utterly swallowed up by it. Still she did not forget that Anna, her sister-in-law, was the wife of one of the most important personages in Petersburg, and was a Petersburg grande dame. And, thanks to this circumstance, she did not carry out her threat to her husband—that is to say, she remembered that her sister-in-law was coming. "And, after all, Anna is in no wise to blame," thought Dolly. "I know nothing of her except the very best, and I have seen nothing but kindness and affection from her towards myself." It was true that as far as she could recall her impressions at Petersburg at the Karenins', she did not like their household itself; there was something artificial in the whole framework of their family life. "But why should I not receive her? If only she doesn't take it into her head to console me!" thought Dolly. "All consolation and counsel and Christian forgiveness, all that I have thought over a thousand times, and it's all no use." All these days Dolly had been alone with her children. She did not want to talk of her sorrow, but with that sorrow in her heart she could not talk of outside matters. She knew that in one way or another she would tell Anna everything, and she was alternately glad at the thought of speaking freely, and angry at the necessity of speaking of her humiliation with her, his sister, and of hearing her ready-made phrases of good advice and comfort. She had been on the lookout for her, glancing at her watch every minute, and, as so often happens, let slip just that minute when her visitor arrived, so that she did not hear the bell. Catching a sound of skirts and light steps at the door, she looked round, and her care-worn face unconsciously expressed not gladness, but wonder. She got up and embraced her sister-in-law. "What, here already!" she said as she kissed her. "Dolly, how glad I am to see you!" "I am glad, too," said Dolly, faintly smiling, and trying by the expression of Anna's face to find out whether she knew. "Most likely she knows," she thought, noticing the sympathy in Anna's face. "Well, come along, I'll take you to your room," she went on, trying to defer as long as possible the moment of confidences. "Is this Grisha? Heavens, how he's grown!" said Anna; and kissing him, never taking her eyes off Dolly, she stood still and flushed a little. "No, please, let us stay here." She took off her kerchief and her hat, and catching it in a lock of her black hair, which was a mass of curls, she tossed her head and shook her hair down. "You are radiant with health and happiness!" said Dolly, almost with envy. "I?... Yes," said Anna. "Merciful heavens, Tanya! You're the same age as my Seryozha," she added, addressing the little girl as she ran in. She took her in her arms and kissed her. "Delightful child, delightful! Show me them all." She mentioned them, not only remembering the names, but the years, months, characters, illnesses of all the children, and Dolly could not but appreciate that. "Very well, we will go to them," she said. "It's a pity Vassya's asleep." After seeing the children, they sat down, alone now, in the drawing room, to coffee. Anna took the tray, and then pushed it away from her. "Dolly," she said, "he has told me." Dolly looked coldly at Anna; she was waiting now for phrases of conventional sympathy, but Anna said nothing of the sort. "Dolly, dear," she said, "I don't want to speak for him to you, nor to try to comfort you; that's impossible. But, darling, I'm simply sorry, sorry from my heart for you!" Under the thick lashes of

her shining eyes tears suddenly glittered. She moved nearer to her sister-in-law and took her hand in her vigorous little hand. Dolly did not shrink away, but her face did not lose its frigid expression. She said: "To comfort me's impossible. Everything's lost after what has happened, everything's over!" And directly she had said this, her face suddenly softened. Anna lifted the wasted, thin hand of Dolly, kissed it and said: "But, Dolly, what's to be done, what's to be done? How is it best to act in this awful position—that's what you must think of." "All's over, and there's nothing more," said Dolly. "And the worst of all is, you see, that I can't cast him off: there are the children, I am tied. And I can't live with him! it's a torture to me to see him." "Dolly, darling, he has spoken to me, but I want to hear it from you: tell me about it." Dolly looked at her inquiringly. Sympathy and love unfeigned were visible on Anna's face. "Very well," she said all at once. "But I will tell you it from the beginning. You know how I was married. With the education mamma gave us I was more than innocent, I was stupid. I knew nothing. I know they say men tell their wives of their former lives, but Stiva"—she corrected herself—"Stepan Arkadyevitch told me nothing. You'll hardly believe it, but till now I imagined that I was the only woman he had known. So I lived eight years. You must understand that I was so far from suspecting infidelity, I regarded it as impossible, and then—try to imagine it—with such ideas, to find out suddenly all the horror, all the loathsomeness.... You must try and understand me. To be fully convinced of one's happiness, and all at once..." continued Dolly, holding back her sobs, "to get a letter ... his letter to his mistress, my governess. No, it's too awful!" She hastily pulled out her handkerchief and hid her face in it. "I can understand being carried away by feeling," she went on after a brief silence, "but deliberately, slyly deceiving me ... and with whom?... To go on being my husband together with her ... it's awful! You can't understand..." "Oh, yes, I understand! I understand! Dolly, dearest, I do understand," said Anna, pressing her hand. "And do you imagine he realizes all the awfulness of my position?" Dolly resumed. "Not the slightest! He's happy and contented." "Oh, no!" Anna interposed quickly. "He's to be pitied, he's weighed down by remorse..." "Is he capable of remorse?" Dolly interrupted, gazing intently into her sister-in-law's face. "Yes. I know him. I could not look at him without feeling sorry for him. We both know him. He's good-hearted, but he's proud, and now he's so humiliated. What touched me most..." (and here Anna guessed what would touch Dolly most) "he's tortured by two things: that he's ashamed for the children's sake, and that, loving you—yes, yes, loving you beyond everything on earth," she hurriedly interrupted Dolly, who would have answered—"he has hurt you, pierced you to the heart. 'No, no, she cannot forgive me,' he keeps saying." Dolly looked dreamily away beyond her sister-in-law as she listened to her words. "Yes, I can see that his position is awful; it's worse for the guilty than the innocent," she said, "if he feels that all the misery comes from his fault. But how am I to forgive him, how am I to be his wife again after her? For me to live with him now would be torture, just because I love my past love for him..." And sobs cut short her words. But as though of set design, each time she was softened she began to speak again of what exasperated her. "She's young, you see, she's pretty," she went on. "Do you know, Anna, my youth and my beauty are gone, taken by whom? By him and his children. I have worked for him, and all I had has gone in his service, and now of course any fresh, vulgar creature has more charm for him. No doubt they talked of me together, or, worse still, they were silent. Do you understand?" Again her eyes glowed with hatred. "And after that he will tell me.... What! can I believe him? Never! No, everything is over, everything that once made my comfort, the reward of my work, and my sufferings.... Would you believe it, I was teaching Grisha just now: once this was a joy to me, now it is a torture. What have I to strive and toil for? Why are the children here? What's so awful is that all at once my heart's turned, and instead of love and tenderness, I have nothing but hatred for him; yes, hatred. I could kill

him." "Darling Dolly, I understand, but don't torture yourself. You are so distressed, so overwrought, that you look at many things mistakenly." Dolly grew calmer, and for two minutes both were silent. "What's to be done? Think for me, Anna, help me. I have thought over everything, and I see nothing." Anna could think of nothing, but her heart responded instantly to each word, to each change of expression of her sister-in-law. "One thing I would say," began Anna. "I am his sister, I know his character, that faculty of forgetting everything, everything" (she waved her hand before her forehead), "that faculty for being completely carried away, but for completely repenting too. He cannot believe it, he cannot comprehend now how he can have acted as he did." "No; he understands, he understood!" Dolly broke in. "But I ... you are forgetting me ... does it make it easier for me?" "Wait a minute. When he told me, I will own I did not realize all the awfulness of your position. I saw nothing but him, and that the family was broken up. I felt sorry for him, but after talking to you, I see it, as a woman, quite differently. I see your agony, and I can't tell you how sorry I am for you! But, Dolly, darling, I fully realize your sufferings, only there is one thing I don't know; I don't know ... I don't know how much love there is still in your heart for him. That you know—whether there is enough for you to be able to forgive him. If there is, forgive him!" "No," Dolly was beginning, but Anna cut her short, kissing her hand once more. "I know more of the world than you do," she said. "I know how men like Stiva look at it. You speak of his talking of you with her. That never happened. Such men are unfaithful, but their home and wife are sacred to them. Somehow or other these women are still looked on with contempt by them, and do not touch on their feeling for their family. They draw a sort of line that can't be crossed between them and their families. I don't understand it, but it is so." "Yes, but he has kissed her..." "Dolly, hush, darling. I saw Stiva when he was in love with you. I remember the time when he came to me and cried, talking of you, and all the poetry and loftiness of his feeling for you, and I know that the longer he has lived with you the loftier you have been in his eyes. You know we have sometimes laughed at him for putting in at every word: 'Dolly's a marvelous woman.' You have always been a divinity for him, and you are that still, and this has not been an infidelity of the heart..." "But if it is repeated?" "It cannot be, as I understand it..." "Yes, but could you forgive it?" "I don't know, I can't judge.... Yes, I can," said Anna, thinking a moment; and grasping the position in her thought and weighing it in her inner balance, she added: "Yes, I can, I can, I can. Yes, I could forgive it. I could not be the same, no; but I could forgive it, and forgive it as though it had never been, never been at all..." "Oh, of course," Dolly interposed quickly, as though saying what she had more than once thought, "else it would not be forgiveness. If one forgives, it must be completely, completely. Come, let us go; I'll take you to your room," she said, getting up, and on the way she embraced Anna. "My dear, how glad I am you came. It has made things better, ever so much better." Chapter 20 The whole of that day Anna spent at home, that's to say at the Oblonskys', and received no one, though some of her acquaintances had already heard of her arrival, and came to call the same day. Anna spent the whole morning with Dolly and the children. She merely sent a brief note to her brother to tell him that he must not fail to dine at home. "Come, God is merciful," she wrote. Oblonsky did dine at home: the conversation was general, and his wife, speaking to him, addressed him as "Stiva," as she had not done before. In the relations of the husband and wife the same estrangement still remained, but there was no talk now of separation, and Stepan Arkadyevitch saw the possibility of explanation and reconciliation. Immediately after dinner Kitty came in. She knew Anna Arkadyevna, but only very slightly, and she came now to her sister's with some trepidation, at the prospect of meeting this fashionable Petersburg lady, whom everyone spoke so highly of. But she made a favorable impression on Anna Arkadyevna—she saw that at once. Anna was unmistakably

admiring her loveliness and her youth: before Kitty knew where she was she found herself not merely under Anna's sway, but in love with her, as young girls do fall in love with older and married women. Anna was not like a fashionable lady, nor the mother of a boy of eight years old. In the elasticity of her movements, the freshness and the unflagging eagerness which persisted in her face, and broke out in her smile and her glance, she would rather have passed for a girl of twenty, had it not been for a serious and at times mournful look in her eyes, which struck and attracted Kitty. Kitty felt that Anna was perfectly simple and was concealing nothing, but that she had another higher world of interests inaccessible to her, complex and poetic. After dinner, when Dolly went away to her own room, Anna rose quickly and went up to her brother, who was just lighting a cigar. "Stiva," she said to him, winking gaily, crossing him and glancing towards the door, "go, and God help you." He threw down the cigar, understanding her, and departed through the doorway. When Stepan Arkadyevitch had disappeared, she went back to the sofa where she had been sitting, surrounded by the children. Either because the children saw that their mother was fond of this aunt, or that they felt a special charm in her themselves, the two elder ones, and the younger following their lead, as children so often do, had clung about their new aunt since before dinner, and would not leave her side. And it had become a sort of game among them to sit as close as possible to their aunt, to touch her, hold her little hand, kiss it, play with her ring, or even touch the flounce of her skirt. "Come, come, as we were sitting before," said Anna Arkadyevna, sitting down in her place. And again Grisha poked his little face under her arm, and nestled with his head on her gown, beaming with pride and happiness. "And when is your next ball?" she asked Kitty. "Next week, and a splendid ball. One of those balls where one always enjoys oneself." "Why, are there balls where one always enjoys oneself?" Anna said, with tender irony. "It's strange, but there are. At the Bobrishtchevs' one always enjoys oneself, and at the Nikitins' too, while at the Mezchkovs' it's always dull. Haven't you noticed it?" "No, my dear, for me there are no balls now where one enjoys oneself," said Anna, and Kitty detected in her eyes that mysterious world which was not open to her. "For me there are some less dull and tiresome." "How can you be dull at a ball?" "Why should not I be dull at a ball?" inquired Anna. Kitty perceived that Anna knew what answer would follow. "Because you always look nicer than anyone." Anna had the faculty of blushing. She blushed a little, and said: "In the first place it's never so; and secondly, if it were, what difference would it make to me?" "Are you coming to this ball?" asked Kitty. "I imagine it won't be possible to avoid going. Here, take it," she said to Tanya, who was pulling the loosely-fitting ring off her white, slender-tipped finger. "I shall be so glad if you go. I should so like to see you at a ball." "Anyway, if I do go, I shall comfort myself with the thought that it's a pleasure to you ... Grisha, don't pull my hair. It's untidy enough without that," she said, putting up a straying lock, which Grisha had been playing with. "I imagine you at the ball in lilac." "And why in lilac precisely?" asked Anna, smiling. "Now, children, run along, run along. Do you hear? Miss Hoole is calling you to tea," she said, tearing the children from her, and sending them off to the dining room. "I know why you press me to come to the ball. You expect a great deal of this ball, and you want everyone to be there to take part in it." "How do you know? Yes." "Oh! what a happy time you are at," pursued Anna. "I remember, and I know that blue haze like the mist on the mountains in Switzerland. That mist which covers everything in that blissful time when childhood is just ending, and out of that vast circle, happy and gay, there is a path growing narrower and narrower, and it is delightful and alarming to enter the ballroom, bright and splendid as it is.... Who has not been through it?" Kitty smiled without speaking. "But how did she go through it? How I should like to know all her love story!" thought Kitty, recalling the unromantic appearance of Alexey Alexandrovitch, her husband. "I know something. Stiva told

me, and I congratulate you. I liked him so much," Anna continued. "I met Vronsky at the railway station." "Oh, was he there?" asked Kitty, blushing. "What was it Stiva told you?" "Stiva gossiped about it all. And I should be so glad ... I traveled yesterday with Vronsky's mother," she went on; "and his mother talked without a pause of him, he's her favorite. I know mothers are partial, but..." "What did his mother tell you?" "Oh, a great deal! And I know that he's her favorite; still one can see how chivalrous he is.... Well, for instance, she told me that he had wanted to give up all his property to his brother, that he had done something extraordinary when he was quite a child, saved a woman out of the water. He's a hero, in fact," said Anna, smiling and recollecting the two hundred roubles he had given at the station. But she did not tell Kitty about the two hundred roubles. For some reason it was disagreeable to her to think of it. She felt that there was something that had to do with her in it, and something that ought not to have been. "She pressed me very much to go and see her," Anna went on; "and I shall be glad to go to see her tomorrow. Stiva is staying a long while in Dolly's room, thank God," Anna added, changing the subject, and getting up, Kitty fancied, displeased with something. "No, I'm first! No, I!" screamed the children, who had finished tea, running up to their Aunt Anna. "All together," said Anna, and she ran laughing to meet them, and embraced and swung round all the throng of swarming children, shrieking with delight. Chapter 21 Dolly came out of her room to the tea of the grown-up people. Stepan Arkadyevitch did not come out. He must have left his wife's room by the other door. "I am afraid you'll be cold upstairs," observed Dolly, addressing Anna; "I want to move you downstairs, and we shall be nearer." "Oh, please, don't trouble about me," answered Anna, looking intently into Dolly's face, trying to make out whether there had been a reconciliation or not. "It will be lighter for you here," answered her sister-in-law. "I assure you that I sleep everywhere, and always like a marmot." "What's the question?" inquired Stepan Arkadyevitch, coming out of his room and addressing his wife. From his tone both Kitty and Anna knew that a reconciliation had taken place. "I want to move Anna downstairs, but we must hang up blinds. No one knows how to do it; I must see to it myself," answered Dolly addressing him. "God knows whether they are fully reconciled," thought Anna, hearing her tone, cold and composed. "Oh, nonsense, Dolly, always making difficulties," answered her husband. "Come, I'll do it all, if you like..." "Yes, they must be reconciled," thought Anna. "I know how you do everything," answered Dolly. "You tell Matvey to do what can't be done, and go away yourself, leaving him to make a muddle of everything," and her habitual, mocking smile curved the corners of Dolly's lips as she spoke. "Full, full reconciliation, full," thought Anna; "thank God!" and rejoicing that she was the cause of it, she went up to Dolly and kissed her. "Not at all. Why do you always look down on me and Matvey?" said Stepan Arkadyevitch, smiling hardly perceptibly, and addressing his wife. The whole evening Dolly was, as always, a little mocking in her tone to her husband, while Stepan Arkadyevitch was happy and cheerful, but not so as to seem as though, having been forgiven, he had forgotten his offense. At half-past nine o'clock a particularly joyful and pleasant family conversation over the tea-table at the Oblonskys' was broken up by an apparently simple incident. But this simple incident for some reason struck everyone as strange. Talking about common acquaintances in Petersburg, Anna got up quickly. "She is in my album," she said; "and, by the way, I'll show you my Seryozha," she added, with a mother's smile of pride. Towards ten o'clock, when she usually said good-night to her son, and often before going to a ball put him to bed herself, she felt depressed at being so far from him; and whatever she was talking about, she kept coming back in thought to her curly-headed Seryozha. She longed to look at his photograph and talk of him. Seizing the first pretext, she got up, and with her light, resolute step went for her album. The stairs up to her room came out on the landing of the great warm main staircase. Just as she was leaving the

drawing room, a ring was heard in the hall. "Who can that be?" said Dolly. "It's early for me to be fetched, and for anyone else it's late," observed Kitty. "Sure to be someone with papers for me," put in Stepan Arkadyevitch. When Anna was passing the top of the staircase, a servant was running up to announce the visitor, while the visitor himself was standing under a lamp. Anna glancing down at once recognized Vronsky, and a strange feeling of pleasure and at the same time of dread of something stirred in her heart. He was standing still, not taking off his coat, pulling something out of his pocket. At the instant when she was just facing the stairs, he raised his eyes, caught sight of her, and into the expression of his face there passed a shade of embarrassment and dismay. With a slight inclination of her head she passed, hearing behind her Stepan Arkadyevitch's loud voice calling him to come up, and the quiet, soft, and composed voice of Vronsky refusing. When Anna returned with the album, he was already gone, and Stepan Arkadyevitch was telling them that he had called to inquire about the dinner they were giving next day to a celebrity who had just arrived. "And nothing would induce him to come up. What a queer fellow he is!" added Stepan Arkadyevitch. Kitty blushed. She thought that she was the only person who knew why he had come, and why he would not come up. "He has been at home," she thought, "and didn't find me, and thought I should be here, but he did not come up because he thought it late, and Anna's here." All of them looked at each other, saying nothing, and began to look at Anna's album. There was nothing either exceptional or strange in a man's calling at half-past nine on a friend to inquire details of a proposed dinner party and not coming in, but it seemed strange to all of them. Above all, it seemed strange and not right to Anna.

Chapter 22

The ball was only just beginning as Kitty and her mother walked up the great staircase, flooded with light, and lined with flowers and footmen in powder and red coats. From the rooms came a constant, steady hum, as from a hive, and the rustle of movement; and while on the landing between trees they gave last touches to their hair and dresses before the mirror, they heard from the ballroom the careful, distinct notes of the fiddles of the orchestra beginning the first waltz. A little old man in civilian dress, arranging his gray curls before another mirror, and diffusing an odor of scent, stumbled against them on the stairs, and stood aside, evidently admiring Kitty, whom he did not know. A beardless youth, one of those society youths whom the old Prince Shtcherbatsky called "young bucks," in an exceedingly open waistcoat, straightening his white tie as he went, bowed to them, and after running by, came back to ask Kitty for a quadrille. As the first quadrille had already been given to Vronsky, she had to promise this youth the second. An officer, buttoning his glove, stood aside in the doorway, and stroking his mustache, admired rosy Kitty. Although her dress, her coiffure, and all the preparations for the ball had cost Kitty great trouble and consideration, at this moment she walked into the ballroom in her elaborate tulle dress over a pink slip as easily and simply as though all the rosettes and lace, all the minute details of her attire, had not cost her or her family a moment's attention, as though she had been born in that tulle and lace, with her hair done up high on her head, and a rose and two leaves on the top of it. When, just before entering the ballroom, the princess, her mother, tried to turn right side out of the ribbon of her sash, Kitty had drawn back a little. She felt that everything must be right of itself, and graceful, and nothing could need setting straight. It was one of Kitty's best days. Her dress was not uncomfortable anywhere; her lace berthe did not droop anywhere; her rosettes were not crushed nor torn off; her pink slippers with high, hollowed-out heels did not pinch, but gladdened her feet; and the thick rolls of fair chignon kept up on her head as if they were her own hair. All the three buttons buttoned up without tearing on the long glove that covered her hand without concealing its lines. The black velvet of her locket nestled with special softness round her neck. That velvet was delicious; at home, looking at her neck in the looking glass,

Kitty had felt that that velvet was speaking. About all the rest there might be a doubt, but the velvet was delicious. Kitty smiled here too, at the ball, when she glanced at it in the glass. Her bare shoulders and arms gave Kitty a sense of chill marble, a feeling she particularly liked. Her eyes sparkled, and her rosy lips could not keep from smiling from the consciousness of her own attractiveness. She had scarcely entered the ballroom and reached the throng of ladies, all tulle, ribbons, lace, and flowers, waiting to be asked to dance—Kitty was never one of that throng—when she was asked for a waltz, and asked by the best partner, the first star in the hierarchy of the ballroom, a renowned director of dances, a married man, handsome and well-built, Yegorushka Korsunsky. He had only just left the Countess Bonina, with whom he had danced the first half of the waltz, and, scanning his kingdom—that is to say, a few couples who had started dancing—he caught sight of Kitty, entering, and flew up to her with that peculiar, easy amble which is confined to directors of balls. Without even asking her if she cared to dance, he put out his arm to encircle her slender waist. She looked round for someone to give her fan to, and their hostess, smiling to her, took it. "How nice you've come in good time," he said to her, embracing her waist; "such a bad habit to be late." Bending her left hand, she laid it on his shoulder, and her little feet in their pink slippers began swiftly, lightly, and rhythmically moving over the slippery floor in time to the music. "It's a rest to waltz with you," he said to her, as they fell into the first slow steps of the waltz. "It's exquisite—such lightness, precision." He said to her the same thing he said to almost all his partners whom he knew well. She smiled at his praise, and continued to look about the room over his shoulder. She was not like a girl at her first ball, for whom all faces in the ballroom melt into one vision of fairyland. And she was not a girl who had gone the stale round of balls till every face in the ballroom was familiar and tiresome. But she was in the middle stage between these two; she was excited, and at the same time she had sufficient self-possession to be able to observe. In the left corner of the ballroom she saw the cream of society gathered together. There—incredibly naked—was the beauty Lidi, Korsunsky's wife; there was the lady of the house; there shone the bald head of Krivin, always to be found where the best people were. In that direction gazed the young men, not venturing to approach. There, too, she descried Stiva, and there she saw the exquisite figure and head of Anna in a black velvet gown. And he was there. Kitty had not seen him since the evening she refused Levin. With her long-sighted eyes, she knew him at once, and was even aware that he was looking at her. "Another turn, eh? You're not tired?" said Korsunsky, a little out of breath. "No, thank you!" "Where shall I take you?" "Madame Karenina's here, I think ... take me to her." "Wherever you command." And Korsunsky began waltzing with measured steps straight towards the group in the left corner, continually saying, "Pardon, mesdames, pardon, pardon, mesdames"; and steering his course through the sea of lace, tulle, and ribbon, and not disarranging a feather, he turned his partner sharply round, so that her slim ankles, in light transparent stockings, were exposed to view, and her train floated out in fan shape and covered Krivin's knees. Korsunsky bowed, set straight his open shirt front, and gave her his arm to conduct her to Anna Arkadyevna. Kitty, flushed, took her train from Krivin's knees, and, a little giddy, looked round, seeking Anna. Anna was not in lilac, as Kitty had so urgently wished, but in a black, low-cut, velvet gown, showing her full throat and shoulders, that looked as though carved in old ivory, and her rounded arms, with tiny, slender wrists. The whole gown was trimmed with Venetian guipure. On her head, among her black hair—her own, with no false additions—was a little wreath of pansies, and a bouquet of the same in the black ribbon of her sash among white lace. Her coiffure was not striking. All that was noticeable was the little wilful tendrils of her curly hair that would always break free about her neck and temples. Round her well-cut, strong neck was a thread of pearls. Kitty had been seeing Anna every day;

she adored her, and had pictured her invariably in lilac. But now seeing her in black, she felt that she had not fully seen her charm. She saw her now as someone quite new and surprising to her. Now she understood that Anna could not have been in lilac, and that her charm was just that she always stood out against her attire, that her dress could never be noticeable on her. And her black dress, with its sumptuous lace, was not noticeable on her; it was only the frame, and all that was seen was she—simple, natural, elegant, and at the same time gay and eager. She was standing holding herself, as always, very erect, and when Kitty drew near the group she was speaking to the master of the house, her head slightly turned towards him. "No, I don't throw stones," she was saying, in answer to something, "though I can't understand it," she went on, shrugging her shoulders, and she turned at once with a soft smile of protection towards Kitty. With a flying, feminine glance she scanned her attire, and made a movement of her head, hardly perceptible, but understood by Kitty, signifying approval of her dress and her looks. "You came into the room dancing," she added. "This is one of my most faithful supporters," said Korsunsky, bowing to Anna Arkadyevna, whom he had not yet seen. "The princess helps to make balls happy and successful. Anna Arkadyevna, a waltz?" he said, bending down to her. "Why, have you met?" inquired their host. "Is there anyone we have not met? My wife and I are like white wolves—everyone knows us," answered Korsunsky. "A waltz, Anna Arkadyevna?" "I don't dance when it's possible not to dance," she said. "But tonight it's impossible," answered Korsunsky. At that instant Vronsky came up. "Well, since it's impossible tonight, let us start," she said, not noticing Vronsky's bow, and she hastily put her hand on Korsunsky's shoulder. "What is she vexed with him about?" thought Kitty, discerning that Anna had intentionally not responded to Vronsky's bow. Vronsky went up to Kitty reminding her of the first quadrille, and expressing his regret that he had not seen her all this time. Kitty gazed in admiration at Anna waltzing, and listened to him. She expected him to ask her for a waltz, but he did not, and she glanced wonderingly at him. He flushed slightly, and hurriedly asked her to waltz, but he had only just put his arm round her waist and taken the first step when the music suddenly stopped. Kitty looked into his face, which was so close to her own, and long afterwards—for several years after—that look, full of love, to which he made no response, cut her to the heart with an agony of shame. "Pardon! pardon! Waltz! waltz!" shouted Korsunsky from the other side of the room, and seizing the first young lady he came across he began dancing himself. Chapter 23 Vronsky and Kitty waltzed several times round the room. After the first waltz Kitty went to her mother, and she had hardly time to say a few words to Countess Nordston when Vronsky came up again for the first quadrille. During the quadrille nothing of any significance was said: there was disjointed talk between them of the Korsunskys, husband and wife, whom he described very amusingly, as delightful children at forty, and of the future town theater; and only once the conversation touched her to the quick, when he asked her about Levin, whether he was here, and added that he liked him so much. But Kitty did not expect much from the quadrille. She looked forward with a thrill at her heart to the mazurka. She fancied that in the mazurka everything must be decided. The fact that he did not during the quadrille ask her for the mazurka did not trouble her. She felt sure she would dance the mazurka with him as she had done at former balls, and refused five young men, saying she was engaged for the mazurka. The whole ball up to the last quadrille was for Kitty an enchanted vision of delightful colors, sounds, and motions. She only sat down when she felt too tired and begged for a rest. But as she was dancing the last quadrille with one of the tiresome young men whom she could not refuse, she chanced to be vis-a-vis with Vronsky and Anna. She had not been near Anna again since the beginning of the evening, and now again she saw her suddenly quite new and surprising. She saw in her the signs of that excitement of

success she knew so well in herself; she saw that she was intoxicated with the delighted admiration she was exciting. She knew that feeling and knew its signs, and saw them in Anna; saw the quivering, flashing light in her eyes, and the smile of happiness and excitement unconsciously playing on her lips, and the deliberate grace, precision, and lightness of her movements. "Who?" she asked herself. "All or one?" And not assisting the harassed young man she was dancing with in the conversation, the thread of which he had lost and could not pick up again, she obeyed with external liveliness the peremptory shouts of Korsunsky starting them all into the grand rond, and then into the chaîne, and at the same time she kept watch with a growing pang at her heart. "No, it's not the admiration of the crowd has intoxicated her, but the adoration of one. And that one? can it be he?" Every time he spoke to Anna the joyous light flashed into her eyes, and the smile of happiness curved her red lips. she seemed to make an effort to control herself, to try not to show these signs of delight, but they came out on her face of themselves. "But what of him?" Kitty looked at him and was filled with terror. What was pictured so clearly to Kitty in the mirror of Anna's face she saw in him. What had become of his always self-possessed resolute manner, and the carelessly serene expression of his face? Now every time he turned to her, he bent his head, as though he would have fallen at her feet, and in his eyes there was nothing but humble submission and dread. "I would not offend you," his eyes seemed every time to be saying, "but I want to save myself, and I don't know how." On his face was a look such as Kitty had never seen before. They were speaking of common acquaintances, keeping up the most trivial conversation, but to Kitty it seemed that every word they said was determining their fate and hers. And strange it was that they were actually talking of how absurd Ivan Ivanovitch was with his French, and how the Eletsy girl might have made a better match, yet these words had all the while consequence for them, and they were feeling just as Kitty did. The whole ball, the whole world, everything seemed lost in fog in Kitty's soul. Nothing but the stern discipline of her bringing-up supported her and forced her to do what was expected of her, that is, to dance, to answer questions, to talk, even to smile. But before the mazurka, when they were beginning to rearrange the chairs and a few couples moved out of the smaller rooms into the big room, a moment of despair and horror came for Kitty. She had refused five partners, and now she was not dancing the mazurka. She had not even a hope of being asked for it, because she was so successful in society that the idea would never occur to anyone that she had remained disengaged till now. She would have to tell her mother she felt ill and go home, but she had not the strength to do this. She felt crushed. She went to the furthest end of the little drawing room and sank into a low chair. Her light, transparent skirts rose like a cloud about her slender waist; one bare, thin, soft, girlish arm, hanging listlessly, was lost in the folds of her pink tunic; in the other she held her fan, and with rapid, short strokes fanned her burning face. But while she looked like a butterfly, clinging to a blade of grass, and just about to open its rainbow wings for fresh flight, her heart ached with a horrible despair. "But perhaps I am wrong, perhaps it was not so?" And again she recalled all she had seen. "Kitty, what is it?" said Countess Nordston, stepping noiselessly over the carpet towards her. "I don't understand it." Kitty's lower lip began to quiver; she got up quickly. "Kitty, you're not dancing the mazurka?" "No, no," said Kitty in a voice shaking with tears. "He asked her for the mazurka before me," said Countess Nordston, knowing Kitty would understand who were "he" and "her." "She said: 'Why, aren't you going to dance it with Princess Shtcherbatskaya?'" "Oh, I don't care!" answered Kitty. No one but she herself understood her position; no one knew that she had just refused the man whom perhaps she loved, and refused him because she had put her faith in another. Countess Nordston found Korsunsky, with whom she was to dance the mazurka, and told him to ask Kitty. Kitty danced in the first couple, and luckily for her she had

not to talk, because Korsunsky was all the time running about directing the figure. Vronsky and Anna sat almost opposite her. She saw them with her long-sighted eyes, and saw them, too, close by, when they met in the figures, and the more she saw of them the more convinced was she that her unhappiness was complete. She saw that they felt themselves alone in that crowded room. And on Vronsky's face, always so firm and independent, she saw that look that had struck her, of bewilderment and humble submissiveness, like the expression of an intelligent dog when it has done wrong. Anna smiled, and her smile was reflected by him. She grew thoughtful, and he became serious. Some supernatural force drew Kitty's eyes to Anna's face. She was fascinating in her simple black dress, fascinating were her round arms with their bracelets, fascinating was her firm neck with its thread of pearls, fascinating the straying curls of her loose hair, fascinating the graceful, light movements of her little feet and hands, fascinating was that lovely face in its eagerness, but there was something terrible and cruel in her fascination. Kitty admired her more than ever, and more and more acute was her suffering. Kitty felt overwhelmed, and her face showed it. When Vronsky saw her, coming across her in the mazurka, he did not at once recognize her, she was so changed. "Delightful ball!" he said to her, for the sake of saying something. "Yes," she answered. In the middle of the mazurka, repeating a complicated figure, newly invented by Korsunsky, Anna came forward into the center of the circle, chose two gentlemen, and summoned a lady and Kitty. Kitty gazed at her in dismay as she went up. Anna looked at her with drooping eyelids, and smiled, pressing her hand. But, noticing that Kitty only responded to her smile by a look of despair and amazement, she turned away from her, and began gaily talking to the other lady. "Yes, there is something uncanny, devilish and fascinating in her," Kitty said to herself. Anna did not mean to stay to supper, but the master of the house began to press her to do so. "Nonsense, Anna Arkadyevna," said Korsunsky, drawing her bare arm under the sleeve of his dress coat, "I've such an idea for a cotillion! Un bijou!" And he moved gradually on, trying to draw her along with him. Their host smiled approvingly. "No, I am not going to stay," answered Anna, smiling, but in spite of her smile, both Korsunsky and the master of the house saw from her resolute tone that she would not stay. "No; why, as it is, I have danced more at your ball in Moscow than I have all the winter in Petersburg," said Anna, looking round at Vronsky, who stood near her. "I must rest a little before my journey." "Are you certainly going tomorrow then?" asked Vronsky. "Yes, I suppose so," answered Anna, as it were wondering at the boldness of his question; but the irrepressible, quivering brilliance of her eyes and her smile set him on fire as she said it. Anna Arkadyevna did not stay to supper, but went home. Chapter 24 "Yes, there is something in me hateful, repulsive," thought Levin, as he came away from the Shtcherbatskys', and walked in the direction of his brother's lodgings. "And I don't get on with other people. Pride, they say. No, I have no pride. If I had any pride, I should not have put myself in such a position." And he pictured to himself Vronsky, happy, good-natured, clever, and self-possessed, certainly never placed in the awful position in which he had been that evening. "Yes, she was bound to choose him. So it had to be, and I cannot complain of anyone or anything. I am myself to blame. What right had I to imagine she would care to join her life to mine? Who am I and what am I? A nobody, not wanted by any one, nor of use to anybody." And he recalled his brother Nikolay, and dwelt with pleasure on the thought of him. "Isn't he right that everything in the world is base and loathsome? And are we fair in our judgment of brother Nikolay? Of course, from the point of view of Prokofy, seeing him in a torn cloak and tipsy, he's a despicable person. But I know him differently. I know his soul, and know that we are like him. And I, instead of going to seek him out, went out to dinner, and came here." Levin walked up to a lamppost, read his brother's address, which was in his pocketbook, and called a sledge. All the long way to his

brother's, Levin vividly recalled all the facts familiar to him of his brother Nikolay's life. He remembered how his brother, while at the university, and for a year afterwards, had, in spite of the jeers of his companions, lived like a monk, strictly observing all religious rites, services, and fasts, and avoiding every sort of pleasure, especially women. And afterwards, how he had all at once broken out: he had associated with the most horrible people, and rushed into the most senseless debauchery. He remembered later the scandal over a boy, whom he had taken from the country to bring up, and, in a fit of rage, had so violently beaten that proceedings were brought against him for unlawfully wounding. Then he recalled the scandal with a sharper, to whom he had lost money, and given a promissory note, and against whom he had himself lodged a complaint, asserting that he had cheated him. (This was the money Sergey Ivanovitch had paid.) Then he remembered how he had spent a night in the lockup for disorderly conduct in the street. He remembered the shameful proceedings he had tried to get up against his brother Sergey Ivanovitch, accusing him of not having paid him his share of his mother's fortune, and the last scandal, when he had gone to a western province in an official capacity, and there had got into trouble for assaulting a village elder.... It was all horribly disgusting, yet to Levin it appeared not at all in the same disgusting light as it inevitably would to those who did not know Nikolay, did not know all his story, did not know his heart. Levin remembered that when Nikolay had been in the devout stage, the period of fasts and monks and church services, when he was seeking in religion a support and a curb for his passionate temperament, everyone, far from encouraging him, had jeered at him, and he, too, with the others. They had teased him, called him Noah and Monk; and, when he had broken out, no one had helped him, but everyone had turned away from him with horror and disgust. Levin felt that, in spite of all the ugliness of his life, his brother Nikolay, in his soul, in the very depths of his soul, was no more in the wrong than the people who despised him. He was not to blame for having been born with his unbridled temperament and his somehow limited intelligence. But he had always wanted to be good. "I will tell him everything, without reserve, and I will make him speak without reserve, too, and I'll show him that I love him, and so understand him," Levin resolved to himself, as, towards eleven o'clock, he reached the hotel of which he had the address. "At the top, 12 and 13," the porter answered Levin's inquiry. "At home?" "Sure to be at home." The door of No. 12 was half open, and there came out into the streak of light thick fumes of cheap, poor tobacco, and the sound of a voice, unknown to Levin; but he knew at once that his brother was there; he heard his cough. As he went in the door, the unknown voice was saying: "It all depends with how much judgment and knowledge the thing's done." Konstantin Levin looked in at the door, and saw that the speaker was a young man with an immense shock of hair, wearing a Russian jerkin, and that a pockmarked woman in a woolen gown, without collar or cuffs, was sitting on the sofa. His brother was not to be seen. Konstantin felt a sharp pang at his heart at the thought of the strange company in which his brother spent his life. No one had heard him, and Konstantin, taking off his galoshes, listened to what the gentleman in the jerkin was saying. He was speaking of some enterprise. "Well, the devil flay them, the privileged classes," his brother's voice responded, with a cough. "Masha! get us some supper and some wine if there's any left; or else go and get some." The woman rose, came out from behind the screen, and saw Konstantin. "There's some gentleman, Nikolay Dmitrievitch," she said. "Whom do you want?" said the voice of Nikolay Levin, angrily. "It's I," answered Konstantin Levin, coming forward into the light. "Who's I?" Nikolay's voice said again, still more angrily. He could be heard getting up hurriedly, stumbling against something, and Levin saw, facing him in the doorway, the big, scared eyes, and the huge, thin, stooping figure of his brother, so familiar, and yet astonishing in its weirdness and sickliness. He was even

thinner than three years before, when Konstantin Levin had seen him last. He was wearing a short coat, and his hands and big bones seemed huger than ever. His hair had grown thinner, the same straight mustaches hid his lips, the same eyes gazed strangely and naively at his visitor.

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What people say about this book

Ryan, "Good book. I feel I'm not qualified to review this book. I'm just a regular guy, not a literature professor, but maybe my comments will be helpful to some. This book is really good. It's all about the characters. Many times while I was reading I wondered how all of this was going to end. It wasn't like a regular story where there's a pretty clear end goal, like get the bad guy, or solve the mystery. It was more like things are just happening and I wonder what's going to happen next. I thought maybe it's just going to stop abruptly, as if Tolstoy would just suddenly be done writing about all these characters, but it really did have a solid ending to conclude everything. Thinking back on the story I remember many ups and downs and tense moments and light hearted moments, it was very enjoyable and pretty easy to read. One thing that really amazed me was how well Tolstoy could switch between different characters and settings. Everyone had distinct personalities and the way they were all portrayed was with so much compassion and understanding that as a reader I could really see parts of myself in everyone. There was no one character that I related to more than any other. I was able to relate to every single one of them differently. I believe this is the reason Tolstoy is considered a master. The pace of the book is a little slow for me because I'm a slow reader, but in retrospect I feel like the pace was actually pretty good and it only felt slow because I had absolutely no idea where the story was going. Every chapter had something new happening and the story just strolled right along. Probably like riding a tractor for 50 miles. You've got plenty of time to look at all the flowers and clouds and barns and animals along the way, it takes forever, but it never stops moving. It helped a lot to have this book on my kindle because towards the end there was more and more french that was easy to translate with the kindle. The port to the kindle was perfect. I saw no strange spacing or oddly misspelled words. Overall I recommend giving this book a shot. Don't be discouraged by the length. I realize a reader may feel compelled to read this particular book just so they can say that they did. It's got that trophy book status. I feel like that's a bad thing though. If you find yourself a few hundred pages in and are interested in what's going on, then keep going. If however after a few hundred pages you feel like it's a chore to read, then don't bother, it's not going to suddenly become more interesting after any point in the book. It's very consistent, you can trust this author and the translation, the ending won't let you down, there will be no long lulls. What you get in the beginning is what you get through the entire book, it's very steady and very high quality writing."

BrizeBooks, "Best book I ever read. I have never enjoyed a book more than this one. From beginning to end, every part, every sentence, every word. It was surprisingly easy to read as well, although I suppose some credit should go to the translator for that aspect. The Russian names are a bit tricky, of course, i usually said them out loud to try and get them down. Actually I read most of the book aloud, just to slow me down and make sure I didn't miss anything, plus

it sounds so good hearing the elegance of his writing. As a matter of fact, when I heard that they made this into a movie, my idea of the best way to appreciate this book in a movie was to have a microphone, a chair and an excellent reader just reading the words into the camera. Nothing else, because you don't NEED anything else. If you're looking for a thrilling story line with lots of twists and unexpected turns, this is probably not the book for you. I mean it's an interesting enough story, but it involves things that happen all the time to ordinary people. What's so enjoyable is the way he DESCRIBES what's going on in each scene, each conversation, the thoughts and emotions of the characters as they deal with whatever unfolds in their lives. Especially I like the way he jumps around in his descriptions, what's going through her mind, what she says, what's her body language, what he sees, what he thinks, how it affects him, descriptions of the little physical clues to their feelings. He's moving around from character to character, from dialogue to thoughts to physical descriptions, and as you read, all of a sudden YOU'RE THERE! Actually you're more than there, because you see it from many different perspectives, and you just know exactly what they're feeling, thinking. It's really breathtaking is the best way to describe it as he's moving you around the scene seeing both the surface and deep into the character's thoughts and feelings. He even gets into the mind of the damn hunting dog, and after I got done rolling on the floor with laughter I got up and said "YES, YES, that's exactly how they think!" This was my first Russian novel (other than something on Crime and Punishment years ago that I never finished and can't really recall) but it won't be my last, I'll read this again at least once, then will explore whatever else is out there. In fact the only downside to reading this book is that it may have ruined me for less compelling writers. Charles Dickens has always been one of my favorite writers, but I can't seem to get through David Copperfield all of a sudden...maybe happy people ARE all pretty much the same."

Aran Joseph Canes, "Thoughts on Reading Anna Karenina. George Saunders once opined that we write the best part of ourselves. That is, we write the moral life we aspire to, not the rather mundane ethics we actually live. I also remember a similar line from Jonathan Franzen; he said he felt like he best knew David Foster Wallace when reading Infinite Jest even though he had known him personally for years. The same can be said for Lev Tolstoy. You can read a biography and learn of his many inhumanities to his wife and other moral misdeeds. Or you can read Anna Karenina and see the life he aspired to. Essential goodness above all worldly concerns, the primacy of human love and the ethical teachings of Jesus as the acme of morality. Styling himself a modern day prophet he saw in the simple faith of the Russian peasantry the antidote to many of the modern world's many ills. That he didn't live up to this could be ascribed to his rejection of any form of historical or embodied Christianity; or, more likely, the difference between anyone's ascent to ideals and the messiness of human life. I believe readers are closer to the real Lev Tolstoy when reading Anna Karenina than in the many biographies enumerating his ethical breaches. It enfleshes the life he wanted to lead far beyond his moral achievements (or lack thereof). Worth reading by all who are open-minded enough to think that some of the problems of modernity may actually be healed by those who may be lowly but who contain thousands of years of wisdom."

Mondoro, "A good adaptation. Trying to adapt a novel so rich in character and detail as 'Anna Karenina' in such a short compass is a daunting task, and inevitably there must be omissions. The secondary plot line of Levin and the Princess Kitty was chosen, and they are referred to only briefly on the third disc. This is a pity, as their relationship makes an important contrast to

that of Anna and Vronsky. However, the adaptation successfully tells the central story of three essentially good people, Anna, Vronsky and Karenin, who become victims of a repressive social order that enshrines propriety and honour, and yet employs double standards to judge the behaviour of men and women. It uses Tolstoy's own technique of using multiple narrators providing different perspectives on the actions of the main characters, while linking together the various short scenes that make up the story. I would single out Alison Pettit's portrayal of the maid Annushka, a warm and sympathetic commentator on her mistress's plight. Turning to the three main characters, Teresa Gallagher has the dramatic range to move from peacemaker to her sister in law Dolly and her husband on the first disc to the woman driven to the depths of despair in the last disc. The last fifteen minutes of the recording are dramatically and brilliantly realised. Toby Stephens' presentation of Vronsky catches the complexity of the character suggested by Tolstoy; he is far from being the typical army officer. But it is Nicholas Farrell who emerges as the star in his portrayal of the conscientious but emotionally detached Karenin, labouring to create the new Russia in a period of rapid change. To these principals I would add Cartolyn Jones' Princess Lydia, exhibiting the disingenuous piety of someone determined to do good, and the brittle nature of the sophisticated aristocratic milieu represented by Janet Maw's Princess Betsy. Credit should be given to Ed Thomason for including not just Tolstoy's remark about happy and unhappy families, but his observations about marriage relationships and the nature of Russian society, and indeed in conveying the essence of the novel in such a short space. I was minded to award four stars when Levin did not make an appearance, but the quality of the performance on disc has inclined me to give five stars."

bookmuncher, "Tolstoy's characters are endearingly human. I read War and Peace because I wanted to read it before watching the recent adaptation. I loved it so much that I wanted to keep reading Tolstoy and so, logically, turned to Anna Karenina. For me, Tolstoy's strength is in his immediately engaging and flawed characters, and their vulnerability forces me to take them under my wing. Because it's such a famous book, I knew how it ended before I picked it up. Nevertheless I was intrigued to see how that ending came about, and the story did not disappoint. He is still very relevant in terms of the secret to a happy and fulfilling life and focusing on what is important. I skipped the parts about agriculture in nineteenth century Russia as this did not interest me and I didn't see what bearing it had on the fates of the characters."

Katie Stevens, "A wonderfully true, insightful classic. This book was my first foray into Russian literature, and I could not have had a better introduction. Tolstoy has a way of phrasing the thoughts and feelings of the characters that is so insightful, precise and identifiable that it easily transcends the innumerable differences between a modern reader and the selection of people he focuses on living in nineteenth century Russia. They are all incredibly psychologically developed and I felt as if I knew them all personally and could predict how they might react in any given situation. Tolstoy also colours his narrative so that it is seen through the eyes of the different characters, giving the reader many different viewpoints from which to perceive events and settings and so making the novel very rich. A scene from the perspective of Oblonsky, for example, is light, frivolous and faintly cynical, whereas the same situation seen through Levin's eyes is thoughtful and earnest. Unfortunately, while the human drama of the novel has stood the test of time admirably, much of Tolstoy's social commentary has not fared so well. The sections on social economy, agriculture and political systems may have been fascinating to a contemporary Russian reader but I found them lengthy, tedious, unnecessary

and, dare I say it, dull. However, I'm more than willing to ignore the effect of these passages in light of the sheer brilliance of the rest of the book. This particular translation (Penguin, 1954, this edition 2000) by Rosemary Edmonds is fantastic. Her prose is readable and appropriate, so that the book does not read like translated literature at all, but like any other nineteenth century novel. The illusion was so well-executed that the only time I was made aware that I wasn't reading original language literature was when characters discussed which pronouns to use to refer to one another, an aspect of language which is absent from modern English. Both the translation and the original writing make this a thoroughly excellent book."

Sarah KL, "Kindle Edition - Wonderful!. I'm reading this book due to being part of a book club. I probably would never have read it if it wasn't a) for the club and b) it's a free download on the kindle. While I appreciate that the free edition is probably not as well translated as the more expensive editions, the story itself that Tolstoy creates goes beyond the mere difference in translation. The way he weaves a very complex yet deeply stimulating image of Russian society, politics, economics, history, values etc, and how that impacts on the normal lives of various people is incredible and realistic. How I wonder what Tolstoy would make of our modern society now! What I also love is how Tolstoy gives us not just the actions of the characters, but their innermost thoughts and feelings as well - including the odd dog or two!!! Utterly wonderful to feel and know exactly what each character is going through and when a character such as Anna does not think of something, it shows just how far into denial she really is. I'm totally spellbound by this book and encourage others to eat it up too. It's a free kindle download, so you'd be daft not to!"

Rachel Thacker, "Anna Karenina for the Kindle. Downloading books on a kindle is so easy, thank goodness. I wanted to read this book having seen the trailers for the recent film however, I really didn't want to carry around a large book and so putting it on the kindle was the ideal option. The draw back however is that in trying to refer back to earlier pages (at the start of the book you have a list of characters which also explain who is related to who.) it is then complicated to get back to the last page read. Perhaps I need a little more practice on this, however a paper book is so much easier to do this. I am only 22% through the book and I am really enjoying it so far, it's not as 'heavy' as I thought it would be. The story so far is of forbidden love, how Anna is pursued by Vronsky even though she is married. She falls for him and so the turmoil starts... The book also gives us an insight into what life was like in 1800's Russia, which is something I knew very little of. Further more after reading the short biography of Tolstoy (at the start of this book) you can see how he has used elements of himself in his male characters, Levin I think being the man he strives to be, working hard on his land not just for himself but for the good of all. Trying always to do the right thing be a good person. Vronsky who is more like the 'young' Tolstoy, a military man, out to satisfy himself, thinking little of others feelings we see this in the way Vronsky treats Kitty. If you like a good love story with a good smattering of history thrown in, along with a host of supporting characters with their own little stories this is the book for you. This is a 'readable' book, not too heavy."

The book by Leo Tolstoy has a rating of 5 out of 4.3. 4,186 people have provided feedback.

PART ONE PART TWO PART THREE PART FOUR PART FIVE PART SIX PART SEVEN
PART EIGHT

Book Information

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