TOLSTOY LEO

ANNA KARENINA

Leo Tolstoy

Anna Karenina

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1877

Tolstoy L. N.

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Содержание

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PART ONE

Chapter 1

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

Everything was in confusion in the Oblonskys' house. The wife had discovered that the husband was carrying on an intrigue with a French girl, who had been a governess in their family, and she had announced to her husband that she could not go on living in the same house with him. This position of affairs had now lasted 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 kindliness 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, Koznishev. After changing his clothes he went down to his brother's study, intending to talk to him at once about the object of his visit, and to ask his advice; but his brother was not alone. With him there was a well-known professor of philosophy, who had come from 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 Koznishev 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 sullying 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."

"Himmlisch 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 curtsey, 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 curtsey 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 16

Vronsky had never had a real home life. His mother had been in her youth a brilliant society woman, who had had during her married life, and still more 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 a 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 Mezhkovs' it's always dull. Haven't you noticed it?"

"No, my dear, for me there are no balls now where one enjoys oneself," said Anna, and Kitty detected in her eyes that 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 *châine*, 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 Eletsky 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.

"Ah, Kostya!" he exclaimed suddenly, recognizing his brother, and his eyes lit up with joy. But the same second he looked round at the young man, and gave the nervous jerk of his head and neck that Konstantin knew so well, as if his neckband hurt him; and a quite different expression, wild, suffering, and cruel, rested on his emaciated face.

"I wrote to you and Sergey Ivanovitch both that I don't know you and don't want to know you. What is it you want?"

He was not at all the same as Konstantin had been fancying him. The worst and most tiresome part of his character, what made all relations with him so difficult, had been forgotten by Konstantin Levin when he thought of him, and now, when he saw his face, and especially that nervous twitching of his head, he remembered it all.

"I didn't want to see you for anything," he answered timidly. "I've simply come to see you."

His brother's timidity obviously softened Nikolay. His lips twitched.

"Oh, so that's it?" he said. "Well, come in; sit down. Like some supper? Masha, bring supper for three. No, stop a minute. Do you know who this is?" he said, addressing his brother, and indicating the gentleman in the jerkin: "This is Mr. Kritsky, my friend from Kiev, a very remarkable man. He's persecuted by the police, of course, because he's not a scoundrel."

And he looked round in the way he always did at everyone in the room. Seeing that the woman standing in the doorway was moving to go, he shouted to her, "Wait a minute, I said." And with the inability to express himself, the incoherence that Konstantin knew so well, he began, with another look round at everyone, to tell his brother Kritsky's story: how he had been expelled from the university for starting a benefit society for the poor students and Sunday schools; and how he had afterwards been a teacher in a peasant school, and how he had been driven out of that too, and had afterwards been condemned for something.

"You're of the Kiev university?" said Konstantin Levin to Kritsky, to break the awkward silence that followed.

"Yes, I was of Kiev," Kritsky replied angrily, his face darkening.

"And this woman," Nikolay Levin interrupted him, pointing to her, "is the partner of my life, Marya Nikolaevna. I took her out of a bad house," and he jerked his neck saying this; "but I love her and respect her, and any one who wants to know me," he added, raising his voice and knitting his brows, "I beg to love her and respect her. She's just the same as my wife, just the same. So now you know whom you've to do with. And if you think you're lowering yourself, well, here's the floor, there's the door."

And again his eyes traveled inquiringly over all of them.

"Why I should be lowering myself, I don't understand."

"Then, Masha, tell them to bring supper; three portions, spirits and wine… No, wait a minute… No, it doesn't matter… Go along."

Chapter 25

"So you see," pursued Nikolay Levin, painfully wrinkling his forehead and twitching.

It was obviously difficult for him to think of what to say and do.

"Here, do you see?"… He pointed to some sort of iron bars, fastened together with strings, lying in a corner of the room. "Do you see that? That's the beginning of a new thing we're going into. It's a productive association…"

Konstantin scarcely heard him. He looked into his sickly, consumptive face, and he was more and more sorry for him, and he could not force himself to listen to what his brother was telling him about the association. He saw that this association was a mere anchor to save him from self-contempt. Nikolay Levin went on talking:

"You know that capital oppresses the laborer. The laborers with us, the peasants, bear all the burden of labor, and are so placed that however much they work they can't escape from their position of beasts of burden. All the profits of labor, on which they might improve their position, and gain leisure for themselves, and after that education, all the surplus values are taken from them by the capitalists. And society's so constituted that the harder they work, the greater the profit of the merchants and landowners, while they stay beasts of burden to the end. And that state of things must be changed," he finished up, and he looked questioningly at his brother.

"Yes, of course," said Konstantin, looking at the patch of red that had come out on his brother's projecting cheek bones.

"And so we're founding a locksmiths' association, where all the production and profit and the chief instruments of production will be in common."

"Where is the association to be?" asked Konstantin Levin.

"In the village of Vozdrem, Kazan government."

"But why in a village? In the villages, I think, there is plenty of work as it is. Why a locksmiths' association in a village?"

"Why? Because the peasants are just as much slaves as they ever were, and that's why you and Sergey Ivanovitch don't like people to try and get them out of their slavery," said Nikolay Levin, exasperated by the objection.

Konstantin Levin sighed, looking meanwhile about the cheerless and dirty room. This sigh seemed to exasperate Nikolay still more.

"I know your and Sergey Ivanovitch's aristocratic views. I know that he applies all the power of his intellect to justify existing evils."

"No; and what do you talk of Sergey Ivanovitch for?" said Levin, smiling.

"Sergey Ivanovitch? I'll tell you what for!" Nikolay Levin shrieked suddenly at the name of Sergey Ivanovitch. "I'll tell you what for… But what's the use of talking? There's only one thing… What did you come to me for? You look down on this, and you're welcome to, – and go away, in God's name go away!" he shrieked, getting up from his chair. "And go away, and go away!"

"I don't look down on it at all," said Konstantin Levin timidly. "I don't even dispute it."

At that instant Marya Nikolaevna came back. Nikolay Levin looked round angrily at her. She went quickly to him, and whispered something.

"I'm not well; I've grown irritable," said Nikolay Levin, getting calmer and breathing painfully; "and then you talk to me of Sergey Ivanovitch and his article. It's such rubbish, such lying, such self-deception. What can a man write of justice who knows nothing of it? Have you read his article?" he asked Kritsky, sitting down again at the table, and moving back off half of it the scattered cigarettes, so as to clear a space.

"I've not read it," Kritsky responded gloomily, obviously not desiring to enter into the conversation.

"Why not?" said Nikolay Levin, now turning with exasperation upon Kritsky.

"Because I didn't see the use of wasting my time over it."

"Oh, but excuse me, how did you know it would be wasting your time? That article's too deep for many people – that's to say it's over their heads. But with me, it's another thing; I see through his ideas, and I know where its weakness lies."

Everyone was mute. Kritsky got up deliberately and reached his cap.

"Won't you have supper? All right, good-bye! Come round tomorrow with the locksmith."

Kritsky had hardly gone out when Nikolay Levin smiled and winked.

"He's no good either," he said. "I see, of course…"

But at that instant Kritsky, at the door, called him…

"What do you want now?" he said, and went out to him in the passage. Left alone with Marya Nikolaevna, Levin turned to her.

"Have you been long with my brother?" he said to her.

"Yes, more than a year. Nikolay Dmitrievitch's health has become very poor. Nikolay Dmitrievitch drinks a great deal," she said.

"That is … how does he drink?"

"Drinks vodka, and it's bad for him."

"And a great deal?" whispered Levin.

"Yes," she said, looking timidly towards the doorway, where Nikolay Levin had reappeared.

"What were you talking about?" he said, knitting his brows, and turning his scared eyes from one to the other. "What was it?"

"Oh, nothing," Konstantin answered in confusion.

"Oh, if you don't want to say, don't. Only it's no good your talking to her. She's a wench, and you're a gentleman," he said with a jerk of the neck. "You understand everything, I see, and have taken stock of everything, and look with commiseration on my shortcomings," he began again, raising his voice.

"Nikolay Dmitrievitch, Nikolay Dmitrievitch," whispered Marya Nikolaevna, again going up to him.

"Oh, very well, very well!.. But where's the supper? Ah, here it is," he said, seeing a waiter with a tray. "Here, set it here," he added angrily, and promptly seizing the vodka, he poured out a glassful and drank it greedily. "Like a drink?" he turned to his brother, and at once became better humored.

"Well, enough of Sergey Ivanovitch. I'm glad to see you, anyway. After all's said and done, we're not strangers. Come, have a drink. Tell me what you're doing," he went on, greedily munching a piece of bread, and pouring out another glassful. "How are you living?"

"I live alone in the country, as I used to. I'm busy looking after the land," answered Konstantin, watching with horror the greediness with which his brother ate and drank, and trying to conceal that he noticed it.

"Why don't you get married?"

"It hasn't happened so," Konstantin answered, reddening a little.

"Why not? For me now … everything's at an end! I've made a mess of my life. But this I've said, and I say still, that if my share had been given me when I needed it, my whole life would have been different."

Konstantin made haste to change the conversation.

"Do you know your little Vanya's with me, a clerk in the countinghouse at Pokrovskoe."

Nikolay jerked his neck, and sank into thought.

"Yes, tell me what's going on at Pokrovskoe. Is the house standing still, and the birch trees, and our schoolroom? And Philip the gardener, is he living? How I remember the arbor and the seat! Now mind and don't alter anything in the house, but make haste and get married, and make everything as it used to be again. Then I'll come and see you, if your wife is nice."

"But come to me now," said Levin. "How nicely we would arrange it!"

"I'd come and see you if I were sure I should not find Sergey Ivanovitch."

"You wouldn't find him there. I live quite independently of him."

"Yes, but say what you like, you will have to choose between me and him," he said, looking timidly into his brother's face.

This timidity touched Konstantin.

"If you want to hear my confession of faith on the subject, I tell you that in your quarrel with Sergey Ivanovitch I take neither side. You're both wrong. You're more wrong externally, and he inwardly."

"Ah, ah! You see that, you see that!" Nikolay shouted joyfully.

"But I personally value friendly relations with you more because…"

"Why, why?"

Konstantin could not say that he valued it more because Nikolay was unhappy, and needed affection. But Nikolay knew that this was just what he meant to say, and scowling he took up the vodka again.

"Enough, Nikolay Dmitrievitch!" said Marya Nikolaevna, stretching out her plump, bare arm towards the decanter.

"Let it be! Don't insist! I'll beat you!" he shouted.

Marya Nikolaevna smiled a sweet and good-humored smile, which was at once reflected on Nikolay's face, and she took the bottle.

"And do you suppose she understands nothing?" said Nikolay. "She understands it all better than any of us. Isn't it true there's something good and sweet in her?"

"Were you never before in Moscow?" Konstantin said to her, for the sake of saying something.

"Only you mustn't be polite and stiff with her. It frightens her. No one ever spoke to her so but the justices of the peace who tried her for trying to get out of a house of ill-fame. Mercy on us, the senselessness in the world!" he cried suddenly. "These new institutions, these justices of the peace, rural councils, what hideousness it all is!"

And he began to enlarge on his encounters with the new institutions.

Konstantin Levin heard him, and the disbelief in the sense of all public institutions, which he shared with him, and often expressed, was distasteful to him now from his brother's lips.

"In another world we shall understand it all," he said lightly.

"In another world! Ah, I don't like that other world! I don't like it," he said, letting his scared eyes rest on his brother's eyes. "Here one would think that to get out of all the baseness and the mess, one's own and other people's, would be a good thing, and yet I'm afraid of death, awfully afraid of death." He shuddered. "But do drink something. Would you like some champagne? Or shall we go somewhere? Let's go to the Gypsies! Do you know I have got so fond of the Gypsies and Russian songs."

His speech had begun to falter, and he passed abruptly from one subject to another. Konstantin with the help of Masha persuaded him not to go out anywhere, and got him to bed hopelessly drunk.

Masha promised to write to Konstantin in case of need, and to persuade Nikolay Levin to go and stay with his brother.

Chapter 26

In the morning Konstantin Levin left Moscow, and towards evening he reached home. On the journey in the train he talked to his neighbors about politics and the new railways, and, just as in Moscow, he was overcome by a sense of confusion of ideas, dissatisfaction with himself, shame of something or other. But when he got out at his own station, when he saw his one-eyed coachman, Ignat, with the collar of his coat turned up; when, in the dim light reflected by the station fires, he saw his own sledge, his own horses with their tails tied up, in their harness trimmed with rings and tassels; when the coachman Ignat, as he put in his luggage, told him the village news, that the contractor had arrived, and that Pava had calved, – he felt that little by little the confusion was clearing up, and the shame and self-dissatisfaction were passing away. He felt this at the mere sight of Ignat and the horses; but when he had put on the sheepskin brought for him, had sat down wrapped up in the sledge, and had driven off pondering on the work that lay before him in the village, and staring at the side-horse, that had been his saddle-horse, past his prime now, but a spirited beast from the Don, he began to see what had happened to him in quite a different light. He felt himself, and did not want to be any one else. All he wanted now was to be better than before. In the first place he resolved that from that day he would give up hoping for any extraordinary happiness, such as marriage must have given him, and consequently he would not so disdain what he really had. Secondly, he would never again let himself give way to low passion, the memory of which had so tortured him when he had been making up his mind to make an offer. Then remembering his brother Nikolay, he resolved to himself that he would never allow himself to forget him, that he would follow him up, and not lose sight of him, so as to be ready to help when things should go ill with him. And that would be soon, he felt. Then, too, his brother's talk of communism, which he had treated so lightly at the time, now made him think. He considered a revolution in economic conditions nonsense. But he always felt the injustice of his own abundance in comparison with the poverty of the peasants, and now he determined that so as to feel quite in the right, though he had worked hard and lived by no means luxuriously before, he would now work still harder, and would allow himself even less luxury. And all this seemed to him so easy a conquest over himself that he spent the whole drive in the pleasantest daydreams. With a resolute feeling of hope in a new, better life, he reached home before nine o'clock at night.

The snow of the little quadrangle before the house was lit up by a light in the bedroom windows of his old nurse, Agafea Mihalovna, who performed the duties of housekeeper in his house. She was not yet asleep. Kouzma, waked up by her, came sidling sleepily out onto the steps. A setter bitch, Laska, ran out too, almost upsetting Kouzma, and whining, turned round about Levin's knees, jumping up and longing, but not daring, to put her forepaws on his chest.

"You're soon back again, sir," said Agafea Mihalovna.

"I got tired of it, Agafea Mihalovna. With friends, one is well; but at home, one is better," he answered, and went into his study.

The study was slowly lit up as the candle was brought in. The familiar details came out: the stag's horns, the bookshelves, the looking-glass, the stove with its ventilator, which had long wanted mending, his father's sofa, a large table, on the table an open book, a broken ash tray, a manuscript book with his handwriting. As he saw all this, there came over him for an instant a doubt of the possibility of arranging the new life, of which he had been dreaming on the road. All these traces of his life seemed to clutch him, and to say to him: "No, you're not going to get away from us, and you're not going to be different, but you're going to be the same as you've always been; with doubts, everlasting dissatisfaction with yourself, vain efforts to amend, and falls, and everlasting expectation, of a happiness which you won't get, and which isn't possible for you."

This the things said to him, but another voice in his heart was telling him that he must not fall under the sway of the past, and that one can do anything with oneself. And hearing that voice,

he went into the corner where stood his two heavy dumbbells, and began brandishing them like a gymnast, trying to restore his confident temper. There was a creak of steps at the door. He hastily put down the dumbbells.

The bailiff came in, and said everything, thank God, was doing well; but informed him that the buckwheat in the new drying machine had been a little scorched. This piece of news irritated Levin. The new drying machine had been constructed and partly invented by Levin. The bailiff had always been against the drying machine, and now it was with suppressed triumph that he announced that the buckwheat had been scorched. Levin was firmly convinced that if the buckwheat had been scorched, it was only because the precautions had not been taken, for which he had hundreds of times given orders. He was annoyed, and reprimanded the bailiff. But there had been an important and joyful event: Pava, his best cow, an expensive beast, bought at a show, had calved.

"Kouzma, give me my sheepskin. And you tell them to take a lantern. I'll come and look at her," he said to the bailiff.

The cowhouse for the more valuable cows was just behind the house. Walking across the yard, passing a snowdrift by the lilac tree, he went into the cowhouse. There was the warm, steamy smell of dung when the frozen door was opened, and the cows, astonished at the unfamiliar light of the lantern, stirred on the fresh straw. He caught a glimpse of the broad, smooth, black and piebald back of Hollandka. Berkoot, the bull, was lying down with his ring in his lip, and seemed about to get up, but thought better of it, and only gave two snorts as they passed by him. Pava, a perfect beauty, huge as a hippopotamus, with her back turned to them, prevented their seeing the calf, as she sniffed her all over.

Levin went into the pen, looked Pava over, and lifted the red and spotted calf onto her long, tottering legs. Pava, uneasy, began lowing, but when Levin put the calf close to her she was soothed, and, sighing heavily, began licking her with her rough tongue. The calf, fumbling, poked her nose under her mother's udder, and stiffened her tail out straight.

"Here, bring the light, Fyodor, this way," said Levin, examining the calf. "Like the mother! though the color takes after the father; but that's nothing. Very good. Long and broad in the haunch. Vassily Fedorovitch, isn't she splendid?" he said to the bailiff, quite forgiving him for the buckwheat under the influence of his delight in the calf.

"How could she fail to be? Oh, Semyon the contractor came the day after you left. You must settle with him, Konstantin Dmitrievitch," said the bailiff. "I did inform you about the machine."

This question was enough to take Levin back to all the details of his work on the estate, which was on a large scale, and complicated. He went straight from the cowhouse to the counting house, and after a little conversation with the bailiff and Semyon the contractor, he went back to the house and straight upstairs to the drawing room.

Chapter 27

The house was big and old-fashioned, and Levin, though he lived alone, had the whole house heated and used. He knew that this was stupid, he knew that it was positively not right, and contrary to his present new plans, but this house was a whole world to Levin. It was the world in which his father and mother had lived and died. They had lived just the life that to Levin seemed the ideal of perfection, and that he had dreamed of beginning with his wife, his family.

Levin scarcely remembered his mother. His conception of her was for him a sacred memory, and his future wife was bound to be in his imagination a repetition of that exquisite, holy ideal of a woman that his mother had been.

He was so far from conceiving of love for woman apart from marriage that he positively pictured to himself first the family, and only secondarily the woman who would give him a family. His ideas of marriage were, consequently, quite unlike those of the great majority of his acquaintances, for whom getting married was one of the numerous facts of social life. For Levin it was the chief affair of life, on which its whole happiness turned. And now he had to give up that.

When he had gone into the little drawing room, where he always had tea, and had settled himself in his armchair with a book, and Agafea Mihalovna had brought him tea, and with her usual, "Well, I'll stay a while, sir," had taken a chair in the window, he felt that, however strange it might be, he had not parted from his daydreams, and that he could not live without them. Whether with her, or with another, still it would be. He was reading a book, and thinking of what he was reading, and stopping to listen to Agafea Mihalovna, who gossiped away without flagging, and yet with all that, all sorts of pictures of family life and work in the future rose disconnectedly before his imagination. He felt that in the depth of his soul something had been put in its place, settled down, and laid to rest.

He heard Agafea Mihalovna talking of how Prohor had forgotten his duty to God, and with the money Levin had given him to buy a horse, had been drinking without stopping, and had beaten his wife till he'd half killed her. He listened, and read his book, and recalled the whole train of ideas suggested by his reading. It was Tyndall's *Treatise on Heat*. He recalled his own criticisms of Tyndall of his complacent satisfaction in the cleverness of his experiments, and for his lack of philosophic insight. And suddenly there floated into his mind the joyful thought: "In two years' time I shall have two Dutch cows; Pava herself will perhaps still be alive, a dozen young daughters of Berkoot and the three others – how lovely!"

He took up his book again. "Very good, electricity and heat are the same thing; but is it possible to substitute the one quantity for the other in the equation for the solution of any problem? No. Well, then what of it? The connection between all the forces of nature is felt instinctively… It's particulary nice if Pava's daughter should be a red-spotted cow, and all the herd will take after her, and the other three, too! Splendid! To go out with my wife and visitors to meet the herd… My wife says, 'Kostya and I looked after that calf like a child.' 'How can it interest you so much?' says a visitor. 'Everything that interests him, interests me.' But who will she be?" And he remembered what had happened at Moscow… "Well, there's nothing to be done… It's not my fault. But now everything shall go on in a new way. It's nonsense to pretend that life won't let one, that the past won't let one. One must struggle to live better, much better."… He raised his head, and fell to dreaming. Old Laska, who had not yet fully digested her delight at his return, and had run out into the yard to bark, came back wagging her tail, and crept up to him, bringing in the scent of fresh air, put her head under his hand, and whined plaintively, asking to be stroked.

"There, who'd have thought it?" said Agafea Mihalovna. "The dog now … why, she understands that her master's come home, and that he's low-spirited."

"Why low-spirited?"

"Do you suppose I don't see it, sir? It's high time I should know the gentry. Why, I've grown up from a little thing with them. It's nothing, sir, so long as there's health and a clear conscience."

Levin looked intently at her, surprised at how well she knew his thought.

"Shall I fetch you another cup?" said she, and taking his cup she went out.

Laska kept poking her head under his hand. He stroked her, and she promptly curled up at his feet, laying her head on a hindpaw. And in token of all now being well and satisfactory, she opened her mouth a little, smacked her lips, and settling her sticky lips more comfortably about her old teeth, she sank into blissful repose. Levin watched all her movements attentively.

"That's what I'll do," he said to himself; "that's what I'll do! Nothing's amiss… All's well."

Chapter 28

After the ball, early next morning, Anna Arkadyevna sent her husband a telegram that she was leaving Moscow the same day.

"No, I must go, I must go"; she explained to her sister-in-law the change in her plans in a tone that suggested that she had to remember so many things that there was no enumerating them: "no, it had really better be today!"

Stepan Arkadyevitch was not dining at home, but he promised to come and see his sister off at seven o'clock.

Kitty, too, did not come, sending a note that she had a headache. Dolly and Anna dined alone with the children and the English governess. Whether it was that the children were fickle, or that they had acute senses, and felt that Anna was quite different that day from what she had been when they had taken such a fancy to her, that she was not now interested in them, – but they had abruptly dropped their play with their aunt, and their love for her, and were quite indifferent that she was going away. Anna was absorbed the whole morning in preparations for her departure. She wrote notes to her Moscow acquaintances, put down her accounts, and packed. Altogether Dolly fancied she was not in a placid state of mind, but in that worried mood, which Dolly knew well with herself, and which does not come without cause, and for the most part covers dissatisfaction with self. After dinner, Anna went up to her room to dress, and Dolly followed her.

"How queer you are today!" Dolly said to her.

"I? Do you think so? I'm not queer, but I'm nasty. I am like that sometimes. I keep feeling as if I could cry. It's very stupid, but it'll pass off," said Anna quickly, and she bent her flushed face over a tiny bag in which she was packing a nightcap and some cambric handkerchiefs. Her eyes were particularly bright, and were continually swimming with tears. "In the same way I didn't want to leave Petersburg, and now I don't want to go away from here."

"You came here and did a good deed," said Dolly, looking intently at her.

Anna looked at her with eyes wet with tears.

"Don't say that, Dolly. I've done nothing, and could do nothing. I often wonder why people are all in league to spoil me. What have I done, and what could I do? In your heart there was found love enough to forgive…"

"If it had not been for you, God knows what would have happened! How happy you are, Anna!" said Dolly. "Everything is clear and good in your heart."

"Every heart has its own *skeletons*, as the English say."

"You have no sort of *skeleton*, have you? Everything is so clear in you."

"I have!" said Anna suddenly, and, unexpectedly after her tears, a sly, ironical smile curved her lips.

"Come, he's amusing, anyway, your *skeleton*, and not depressing," said Dolly, smiling.

"No, he's depressing. Do you know why I'm going today instead of tomorrow? It's a confession that weighs on me; I want to make it to you," said Anna, letting herself drop definitely into an armchair, and looking straight into Dolly's face.

And to her surprise Dolly saw that Anna was blushing up to her ears, up to the curly black ringlets on her neck.

"Yes," Anna went on. "Do you know why Kitty didn't come to dinner? She's jealous of me. I have spoiled … I've been the cause of that ball being a torture to her instead of a pleasure. But truly, truly, it's not my fault, or only my fault a little bit," she said, daintily drawling the words "a little bit."

"Oh, how like Stiva you said that!" said Dolly, laughing.

Anna was hurt.

"Oh no, oh no! I'm not Stiva," she said, knitting her brows. "That's why I'm telling you, just because I could never let myself doubt myself for an instant," said Anna.

But at the very moment she was uttering the words, she felt that they were not true. She was not merely doubting herself, she felt emotion at the thought of Vronsky, and was going away sooner than she had meant, simply to avoid meeting him.

"Yes, Stiva told me you danced the mazurka with him, and that he…"

"You can't imagine how absurdly it all came about. I only meant to be matchmaking, and all at once it turned out quite differently. Possibly against my own will…"

She crimsoned and stopped.

"Oh, they feel it directly?" said Dolly.

"But I should be in despair if there were anything serious in it on his side," Anna interrupted her. "And I am certain it will all be forgotten, and Kitty will leave off hating me."

"All the same, Anna, to tell you the truth, I'm not very anxious for this marriage for Kitty. And it's better it should come to nothing, if he, Vronsky, is capable of falling in love with you in a single day."

"Oh, heavens, that would be too silly!" said Anna, and again a deep flush of pleasure came out on her face, when she heard the idea, that absorbed her, put into words. "And so here I am going away, having made an enemy of Kitty, whom I liked so much! Ah, how sweet she is! But you'll make it right, Dolly? Eh?"

Dolly could scarcely suppress a smile. She loved Anna, but she enjoyed seeing that she too had her weaknesses.

"An enemy? That can't be."

"I did so want you all to care for me, as I do for you, and now I care for you more than ever," said Anna, with tears in her eyes. "Ah, how silly I am today!"

She passed her handkerchief over her face and began dressing.

At the very moment of starting Stepan Arkadyevitch arrived, late, rosy and good-humored, smelling of wine and cigars.

Anna's emotionalism infected Dolly, and when she embraced her sister-in-law for the last time, she whispered: "Remember, Anna, what you've done for me – I shall never forget. And remember that I love you, and shall always love you as my dearest friend!"

"I don't know why," said Anna, kissing her and hiding her tears.

"You understood me, and you understand. Good-bye, my darling!"

Chapter 29

"Come, it's all over, and thank God!" was the first thought that came to Anna Arkadyevna, when she had said good-bye for the last time to her brother, who had stood blocking up the entrance to the carriage till the third bell rang. She sat down on her lounge beside Annushka, and looked about her in the twilight of the sleeping-carriage. "Thank God! tomorrow I shall see Seryozha and Alexey Alexandrovitch, and my life will go on in the old way, all nice and as usual."

Still in the same anxious frame of mind, as she had been all that day, Anna took pleasure in arranging herself for the journey with great care. With her little deft hands she opened and shut her little red bag, took out a cushion, laid it on her knees, and carefully wrapping up her feet, settled herself comfortably. An invalid lady had already lain down to sleep. Two other ladies began talking to Anna, and a stout elderly lady tucked up her feet, and made observations about the heating of the train. Anna answered a few words, but not foreseeing any entertainment from the conversation, she asked Annushka to get a lamp, hooked it onto the arm of her seat, and took from her bag a paper knife and an English novel. At first her reading made no progress. The fuss and bustle were disturbing; then when the train had started, she could not help listening to the noises; then the snow beating on the left window and sticking to the pane, and the sight of the muffled guard passing by, covered with snow on one side, and the conversations about the terrible snowstorm raging outside, distracted her attention. Farther on, it was continually the same again and again: the same shaking and rattling, the same snow on the window, the same rapid transitions from steaming heat to cold, and back again to heat, the same passing glimpses of the same figures in the twilight, and the same voices, and Anna began to read and to understand what she read. Annushka was already dozing, the red bag on her lap, clutched by her broad hands, in gloves, of which one was torn. Anna Arkadyevna read and understood, but it was distasteful to her to read, that is, to follow the reflection of other people's lives. She had too great a desire to live herself. If she read that the heroine of the novel was nursing a sick man, she longed to move with noiseless steps about the room of a sick man; if she read of a member of Parliament making a speech, she longed to be delivering the speech; if she read of how Lady Mary had ridden after the hounds, and had provoked her sister-in-law, and had surprised everyone by her boldness, she too wished to be doing the same. But there was no chance of doing anything; and twisting the smooth paper knife in her little hands, she forced herself to read.

The hero of the novel was already almost reaching his English happiness, a baronetcy and an estate, and Anna was feeling a desire to go with him to the estate, when she suddenly felt that *he* ought to feel ashamed, and that she was ashamed of the same thing. But what had he to be ashamed of? "What have I to be ashamed of?" she asked herself in injured surprise. She laid down the book and sank against the back of the chair, tightly gripping the paper cutter in both hands. There was nothing. She went over all her Moscow recollections. All were good, pleasant. She remembered the ball, remembered Vronsky and his face of slavish adoration, remembered all her conduct with him: there was nothing shameful. And for all that, at the same point in her memories, the feeling of shame was intensified, as though some inner voice, just at the point when she thought of Vronsky, were saying to her, "Warm, very warm, hot." "Well, what is it?" she said to herself resolutely, shifting her seat in the lounge. "What does it mean? Am I afraid to look it straight in the face? Why, what is it? Can it be that between me and this officer boy there exist, or can exist, any other relations than such as are common with every acquaintance?" She laughed contemptuously and took up her book again; but now she was definitely unable to follow what she read. She passed the paper knife over the window pane, then laid its smooth, cool surface to her cheek, and almost laughed aloud at the feeling of delight that all at once without cause came over her. She felt as though her nerves were strings being strained tighter and tighter on some sort of screwing peg. She felt her eyes opening wider and wider, her fingers and toes twitching nervously, something within oppressing her breathing, while

all shapes and sounds seemed in the uncertain half-light to strike her with unaccustomed vividness. Moments of doubt were continually coming upon her, when she was uncertain whether the train were going forwards or backwards, or were standing still altogether; whether it were Annushka at her side or a stranger. "What's that on the arm of the chair, a fur cloak or some beast? And what am I myself? Myself or some other woman?" She was afraid of giving way to this delirium. But something drew her towards it, and she could yield to it or resist it at will. She got up to rouse herself, and slipped off her plaid and the cape of her warm dress. For a moment she regained her self-possession, and realized that the thin peasant who had come in wearing a long overcoat, with buttons missing from it, was the stoveheater, that he was looking at the thermometer, that it was the wind and snow bursting in after him at the door; but then everything grew blurred again… That peasant with the long waist seemed to be gnawing something on the wall, the old lady began stretching her legs the whole length of the carriage, and filling it with a black cloud; then there was a fearful shrieking and banging, as though someone were being torn to pieces; then there was a blinding dazzle of red fire before her eyes and a wall seemed to rise up and hide everything. Anna felt as though she were sinking down. But it was not terrible, but delightful. The voice of a man muffled up and covered with snow shouted something in her ear. She got up and pulled herself together; she realized that they had reached a station and that this was the guard. She asked Annushka to hand her the cape she had taken off and her shawl, put them on and moved towards the door.

"Do you wish to get out?" asked Annushka.

"Yes, I want a little air. It's very hot in here." And she opened the door. The driving snow and the wind rushed to meet her and struggled with her over the door. But she enjoyed the struggle.

She opened the door and went out. The wind seemed as though lying in wait for her; with gleeful whistle it tried to snatch her up and bear her off, but she clung to the cold door post, and holding her skirt got down onto the platform and under the shelter of the carriages. The wind had been powerful on the steps, but on the platform, under the lee of the carriages, there was a lull. With enjoyment she drew deep breaths of the frozen, snowy air, and standing near the carriage looked about the platform and the lighted station.

Chapter 30

The raging tempest rushed whistling between the wheels of the carriages, about the scaffolding, and round the corner of the station. The carriages, posts, people, everything that was to be seen was covered with snow on one side, and was getting more and more thickly covered. For a moment there would come a lull in the storm, but then it would swoop down again with such onslaughts that it seemed impossible to stand against it. Meanwhile men ran to and fro, talking merrily together, their steps crackling on the platform as they continually opened and closed the big doors. The bent shadow of a man glided by at her feet, and she heard sounds of a hammer upon iron. "Hand over that telegram!" came an angry voice out of the stormy darkness on the other side. "This way! No. 28!" several different voices shouted again, and muffled figures ran by covered with snow. Two gentlemen with lighted cigarettes passed by her. She drew one more deep breath of the fresh air, and had just put her hand out of her muff to take hold of the door post and get back into the carriage, when another man in a military overcoat, quite close beside her, stepped between her and the flickering light of the lamp post. She looked round, and the same instant recognized Vronsky's face. Putting his hand to the peak of his cap, he bowed to her and asked, Was there anything she wanted? Could he be of any service to her? She gazed rather a long while at him without answering, and, in spite of the shadow in which he was standing, she saw, or fancied she saw, both the expression of his face and his eyes. It was again that expression of reverential ecstasy which had so worked upon her the day before. More than once she had told herself during the past few days, and again only a few moments before, that Vronsky was for her only one of the hundreds of young men, forever exactly the same, that are met everywhere, that she would never allow herself to bestow a thought upon him. But now at the first instant of meeting him, she was seized by a feeling of joyful pride. She had no need to ask why he had come. She knew as certainly as if he had told her that he was here to be where she was.

"I didn't know you were going. What are you coming for?" she said, letting fall the hand with which she had grasped the door post. And irrepressible delight and eagerness shone in her face.

"What am I coming for?" he repeated, looking straight into her eyes. "You know that I have come to be where you are," he said; "I can't help it."

At that moment the wind, as it were, surmounting all obstacles, sent the snow flying from the carriage roofs, and clanked some sheet of iron it had torn off, while the hoarse whistle of the engine roared in front, plaintively and gloomily. All the awfulness of the storm seemed to her more splendid now. He had said what her soul longed to hear, though she feared it with her reason. She made no answer, and in her face he saw conflict.

"Forgive me, if you dislike what I said," he said humbly.

He had spoken courteously, deferentially, yet so firmly, so stubbornly, that for a long while she could make no answer.

"It's wrong, what you say, and I beg you, if you're a good man, to forget what you've said, as I forget it," she said at last.

"Not one word, not one gesture of yours shall I, could I, ever forget…"

"Enough, enough!" she cried trying assiduously to give a stern expression to her face, into which he was gazing greedily. And clutching at the cold door post, she clambered up the steps and got rapidly into the corridor of the carriage. But in the little corridor she paused, going over in her imagination what had happened. Though she could not recall her own words or his, she realized instinctively that the momentary conversation had brought them fearfully closer; and she was panic-stricken and blissful at it. After standing still a few seconds, she went into the carriage and sat down in her place. The overstrained condition which had tormented her before did not only come back, but was intensified, and reached such a pitch that she was afraid every minute that something would snap within her from the excessive tension. She did not sleep all night. But in that nervous tension, and

in the visions that filled her imagination, there was nothing disagreeable or gloomy: on the contrary there was something blissful, glowing, and exhilarating. Towards morning Anna sank into a doze, sitting in her place, and when she waked it was daylight and the train was near Petersburg. At once thoughts of home, of husband and of son, and the details of that day and the following came upon her.

At Petersburg, as soon as the train stopped and she got out, the first person that attracted her attention was her husband. "Oh, mercy! why do his ears look like that?" she thought, looking at his frigid and imposing figure, and especially the ears that struck her at the moment as propping up the brim of his round hat. Catching sight of her, he came to meet her, his lips falling into their habitual sarcastic smile, and his big, tired eyes looking straight at her. An unpleasant sensation gripped at her heart when she met his obstinate and weary glance, as though she had expected to see him different. She was especially struck by the feeling of dissatisfaction with herself that she experienced on meeting him. That feeling was an intimate, familiar feeling, like a consciousness of hypocrisy, which she experienced in her relations with her husband. But hitherto she had not taken note of the feeling, now she was clearly and painfully aware of it.

"Yes, as you see, your tender spouse, as devoted as the first year after marriage, burned with impatience to see you," he said in his deliberate, high-pitched voice, and in that tone which he almost always took with her, a tone of jeering at anyone who should say in earnest what he said.

"Is Seryozha quite well?" she asked.

"And is this all the reward," said he, "for my ardor? He's quite well…"

Chapter 31

Vronsky had not even tried to sleep all that night. He sat in his armchair, looking straight before him or scanning the people who got in and out. If he had indeed on previous occasions struck and impressed people who did not know him by his air of unhesitating composure, he seemed now more haughty and self-possessed than ever. He looked at people as if they were things. A nervous young man, a clerk in a law court, sitting opposite him, hated him for that look. The young man asked him for a light, and entered into conversation with him, and even pushed against him, to make him feel that he was not a thing, but a person. But Vronsky gazed at him exactly as he did at the lamp, and the young man made a wry face, feeling that he was losing his self-possession under the oppression of this refusal to recognize him as a person.

Vronsky saw nothing and no one. He felt himself a king, not because he believed that he had made an impression on Anna – he did not yet believe that, – but because the impression she had made on him gave him happiness and pride.

What would come of it all he did not know, he did not even think. He felt that all his forces, hitherto dissipated, wasted, were centered on one thing, and bent with fearful energy on one blissful goal. And he was happy at it. He knew only that he had told her the truth, that he had come where she was, that all the happiness of his life, the only meaning in life for him, now lay in seeing and hearing her. And when he got out of the carriage at Bologova to get some seltzer water, and caught sight of Anna, involuntarily his first word had told her just what he thought. And he was glad he had told her it, that she knew it now and was thinking of it. He did not sleep all night. When he was back in the carriage, he kept unceasingly going over every position in which he had seen her, every word she had uttered, and before his fancy, making his heart faint with emotion, floated pictures of a possible future.

When he got out of the train at Petersburg, he felt after his sleepless night as keen and fresh as after a cold bath. He paused near his compartment, waiting for her to get out. "Once more," he said to himself, smiling unconsciously, "once more I shall see her walk, her face; she will say something, turn her head, glance, smile, maybe." But before he caught sight of her, he saw her husband, whom the station-master was deferentially escorting through the crowd. "Ah, yes! The husband." Only now for the first time did Vronsky realize clearly the fact that there was a person attached to her, a husband. He knew that she had a husband, but had hardly believed in his existence, and only now fully believed in him, with his head and shoulders, and his legs clad in black trousers; especially when he saw this husband calmly take her arm with a sense of property.

Seeing Alexey Alexandrovitch with his Petersburg face and severely self-confident figure, in his round hat, with his rather prominent spine, he believed in him, and was aware of a disagreeable sensation, such as a man might feel tortured by thirst, who, on reaching a spring, should find a dog, a sheep, or a pig, who has drunk of it and muddied the water. Alexey Alexandrovitch's manner of walking, with a swing of the hips and flat feet, particularly annoyed Vronsky. He could recognize in no one but himself an indubitable right to love her. But she was still the same, and the sight of her affected him the same way, physically reviving him, stirring him, and filling his soul with rapture. He told his German valet, who ran up to him from the second class, to take his things and go on, and he himself went up to her. He saw the first meeting between the husband and wife, and noted with a lover's insight the signs of slight reserve with which she spoke to her husband. "No, she does not love him and cannot love him," he decided to himself.

At the moment when he was approaching Anna Arkadyevna he noticed too with joy that she was conscious of his being near, and looked round, and seeing him, turned again to her husband.

"Have you passed a good night?" he asked, bowing to her and her husband together, and leaving it up to Alexey Alexandrovitch to accept the bow on his own account, and to recognize it or not, as he might see fit.

"Thank you, very good," she answered.

Her face looked weary, and there was not that play of eagerness in it, peeping out in her smile and her eyes; but for a single instant, as she glanced at him, there was a flash of something in her eyes, and although the flash died away at once, he was happy for that moment. She glanced at her husband to find out whether he knew Vronsky. Alexey Alexandrovitch looked at Vronsky with displeasure, vaguely recalling who this was. Vronsky's composure and self-confidence here struck, like a scythe against a stone, upon the cold self-confidence of Alexey Alexandrovitch.

"Count Vronsky," said Anna.

"Ah! We are acquainted, I believe," said Alexey Alexandrovitch indifferently, giving his hand.

"You set off with the mother and you return with the son," he said, articulating each syllable, as though each were a separate favor he was bestowing.

"You're back from leave, I suppose?" he said, and without waiting for a reply, he turned to his wife in his jesting tone: "Well, were a great many tears shed at Moscow at parting?"

By addressing his wife like this he gave Vronsky to understand that he wished to be left alone, and, turning slightly towards him, he touched his hat; but Vronsky turned to Anna Arkadyevna.

"I hope I may have the honor of calling on you," he said.

Alexey Alexandrovitch glanced with his weary eyes at Vronsky.

"Delighted," he said coldly. "On Mondays we're at home. Most fortunate," he said to his wife, dismissing Vronsky altogether, "that I should just have half an hour to meet you, so that I can prove my devotion," he went on in the same jesting tone.

"You lay too much stress on your devotion for me to value it much," she responded in the same jesting tone, involuntarily listening to the sound of Vronsky's steps behind them. "But what has it to do with me?" she said to herself, and she began asking her husband how Seryozha had got on without her.

"Oh, capitally! Mariette says he has been very good, And … I must disappoint you … but he has not missed you as your husband has. But once more *merci,* my dear, for giving me a day. Our dear *Samovar* will be delighted." (He used to call the Countess Lidia Ivanovna, well known in society, a samovar, because she was always bubbling over with excitement.) "She has been continually asking after you. And, do you know, if I may venture to advise you, you should go and see her today. You know how she takes everything to heart. Just now, with all her own cares, she's anxious about the Oblonskys being brought together."

The Countess Lidia Ivanovna was a friend of her husband's, and the center of that one of the coteries of the Petersburg world with which Anna was, through her husband, in the closest relations.

"But you know I wrote to her?"

"Still she'll want to hear details. Go and see her, if you're not too tired, my dear. Well, Kondraty will take you in the carriage, while I go to my committee. I shall not be alone at dinner again," Alexey Alexandrovitch went on, no longer in a sarcastic tone. "You wouldn't believe how I've missed…" And with a long pressure of her hand and a meaning smile, he put her in her carriage.

Chapter 32

The first person to meet Anna at home was her son. He dashed down the stairs to her, in spite of the governess's call, and with desperate joy shrieked: "Mother! mother!" Running up to her, he hung on her neck.

"I told you it was mother!" he shouted to the governess. "I knew!"

And her son, like her husband, aroused in Anna a feeling akin to disappointment. She had imagined him better than he was in reality. She had to let herself drop down to the reality to enjoy him as he really was. But even as he was, he was charming, with his fair curls, his blue eyes, and his plump, graceful little legs in tightly pulled-up stockings. Anna experienced almost physical pleasure in the sensation of his nearness, and his caresses, and moral soothing, when she met his simple, confiding, and loving glance, and heard his naïve questions. Anna took out the presents Dolly's children had sent him, and told her son what sort of little girl was Tanya at Moscow, and how Tanya could read, and even taught the other children.

"Why, am I not so nice as she?" asked Seryozha.

"To me you're nicer than anyone in the world."

"I know that," said Seryozha, smiling.

Anna had not had time to drink her coffee when the Countess Lidia Ivanovna was announced. The Countess Lidia Ivanovna was a tall, stout woman, with an unhealthily sallow face and splendid, pensive black eyes. Anna liked her, but today she seemed to be seeing her for the first time with all her defects.

"Well, my dear, so you took the olive branch?" inquired Countess Lidia Ivanovna, as soon as she came into the room.

"Yes, it's all over, but it was all much less serious than we had supposed," answered Anna. "My *belle-soeur* is in general too hasty."

But Countess Lidia Ivanovna, though she was interested in everything that did not concern her, had a habit of never listening to what interested her; she interrupted Anna:

"Yes, there's plenty of sorrow and evil in the world. I am so worried today."

"Oh, why?" asked Anna, trying to suppress a smile.

"I'm beginning to be weary of fruitlessly championing the truth, and sometimes I'm quite unhinged by it. The Society of the Little Sisters" (this was a religiously-patriotic, philanthropic institution) "was going splendidly, but with these gentlemen it's impossible to do anything," added Countess Lidia Ivanovna in a tone of ironical submission to destiny. "They pounce on the idea, and distort it, and then work it out so pettily and unworthily. Two or three people, your husband among them, understand all the importance of the thing, but the others simply drag it down. Yesterday Pravdin wrote to me…"

Pravdin was a well-known Panslavist abroad, and Countess Lidia Ivanovna described the purport of his letter.

Then the countess told her of more disagreements and intrigues against the work of the unification of the churches, and departed in haste, as she had that day to be at the meeting of some society and also at the Slavonic committee.

"It was all the same before, of course; but why was it I didn't notice it before?" Anna asked herself. "Or has she been very much irritated today? It's really ludicrous; her object is doing good; she a Christian, yet she's always angry; and she always has enemies, and always enemies in the name of Christianity and doing good."

After Countess Lidia Ivanovna another friend came, the wife of a chief secretary, who told her all the news of the town. At three o'clock she too went away, promising to come to dinner. Alexey Alexandrovitch was at the ministry. Anna, left alone, spent the time till dinner in assisting at her

son's dinner (he dined apart from his parents) and in putting her things in order, and in reading and answering the notes and letters which had accumulated on her table.

The feeling of causeless shame, which she had felt on the journey, and her excitement, too, had completely vanished. In the habitual conditions of her life she felt again resolute and irreproachable.

She recalled with wonder her state of mind on the previous day. "What was it? Nothing. Vronsky said something silly, which it was easy to put a stop to, and I answered as I ought to have done. To speak of it to my husband would be unnecessary and out of the question. To speak of it would be to attach importance to what has no importance." She remembered how she had told her husband of what was almost a declaration made her at Petersburg by a young man, one of her husband's subordinates, and how Alexey Alexandrovitch had answered that every woman living in the world was exposed to such incidents, but that he had the fullest confidence in her tact, and could never lower her and himself by jealousy. "So then there's no reason to speak of it? And indeed, thank God, there's nothing to speak of," she told herself.

Chapter 33

Alexey Alexandrovitch came back from the meeting of the ministers at four o'clock, but as often happened, he had not time to come in to her. He went into his study to see the people waiting for him with petitions, and to sign some papers brought him by his chief secretary. At dinner time (there were always a few people dining with the Karenins) there arrived an old lady, a cousin of Alexey Alexandrovitch, the chief secretary of the department and his wife, and a young man who had been recommended to Alexey Alexandrovitch for the service. Anna went into the drawing room to receive these guests. Precisely at five o'clock, before the bronze Peter the First clock had struck the fifth stroke, Alexey Alexandrovitch came in, wearing a white tie and evening coat with two stars, as he had to go out directly after dinner. Every minute of Alexey Alexandrovitch's life was portioned out and occupied. And to make time to get through all that lay before him every day, he adhered to the strictest punctuality. "Unhasting and unresting," was his motto. He came into the dining hall, greeted everyone, and hurriedly sat down, smiling to his wife.

"Yes, my solitude is over. You wouldn't believe how uncomfortable" (he laid stress on the word *uncomfortable*) "it is to dine alone."

At dinner he talked a little to his wife about Moscow matters, and, with a sarcastic smile, asked her after Stepan Arkadyevitch; but the conversation was for the most part general, dealing with Petersburg official and public news. After dinner he spent half an hour with his guests, and again, with a smile, pressed his wife's hand, withdrew, and drove off to the council. Anna did not go out that evening either to the Princess Betsy Tverskaya, who, hearing of her return, had invited her, nor to the theater, where she had a box for that evening. She did not go out principally because the dress she had reckoned upon was not ready. Altogether, Anna, on turning, after the departure of her guests, to the consideration of her attire, was very much annoyed. She was generally a mistress of the art of dressing well without great expense, and before leaving Moscow she had given her dressmaker three dresses to transform. The dresses had to be altered so that they could not be recognized, and they ought to have been ready three days before. It appeared that two dresses had not been done at all, while the other one had not been altered as Anna had intended. The dressmaker came to explain, declaring that it would be better as she had done it, and Anna was so furious that she felt ashamed when she thought of it afterwards. To regain her serenity completely she went into the nursery, and spent the whole evening with her son, put him to bed herself, signed him with the cross, and tucked him up. She was glad she had not gone out anywhere, and had spent the evening so well. She felt so light-hearted and serene, she saw so clearly that all that had seemed to her so important on her railway journey was only one of the common trivial incidents of fashionable life, and that she had no reason to feel ashamed before anyone else or before herself. Anna sat down at the hearth with an English novel and waited for her husband. Exactly at half-past nine she heard his ring, and he came into the room.

"Here you are at last!" she observed, holding out her hand to him.

He kissed her hand and sat down beside her.

"Altogether then, I see your visit was a success," he said to her.

"Oh, yes," she said, and she began telling him about everything from the beginning: her journey with Countess Vronskaya, her arrival, the accident at the station. Then she described the pity she had felt, first for her brother, and afterwards for Dolly.

"I imagine one cannot exonerate such a man from blame, though he is your brother," said Alexey Alexandrovitch severely.

Anna smiled. She knew that he said that simply to show that family considerations could not prevent him from expressing his genuine opinion. She knew that characteristic in her husband, and liked it.

"I am glad it has all ended so satisfactorily, and that you are back again," he went on. "Come, what do they say about the new act I have got passed in the council?"

Anna had heard nothing of this act, and she felt conscience-stricken at having been able so readily to forget what was to him of such importance.

"Here, on the other hand, it has made a great sensation," he said, with a complacent smile.

She saw that Alexey Alexandrovitch wanted to tell her something pleasant to him about it, and she brought him by questions to telling it. With the same complacent smile he told her of the ovations he had received in consequence of the act he had passed.

"I was very, very glad. It shows that at last a reasonable and steady view of the matter is becoming prevalent among us."

Having drunk his second cup of tea with cream, and bread, Alexey Alexandrovitch got up, and was going towards his study.

"And you've not been anywhere this evening? You've been dull, I expect?" he said.

"Oh, no!" she answered, getting up after him and accompanying him across the room to his study. "What are you reading now?" she asked.

"Just now I'm reading Duc de Lille, *Poésie des Enfers,*" he answered. "A very remarkable book."

Anna smiled, as people smile at the weaknesses of those they love, and, putting her hand under his, she escorted him to the door of the study. She knew his habit, that had grown into a necessity, of reading in the evening. She knew, too, that in spite of his official duties, which swallowed up almost the whole of his time, he considered it his duty to keep up with everything of note that appeared in the intellectual world. She knew, too, that he was really interested in books dealing with politics, philosophy, and theology, that art was utterly foreign to his nature; but, in spite of this, or rather, in consequence of it, Alexey Alexandrovitch never passed over anything in the world of art, but made it his duty to read everything. She knew that in politics, in philosophy, in theology, Alexey Alexandrovitch often had doubts, and made investigations; but on questions of art and poetry, and, above all, of music, of which he was totally devoid of understanding, he had the most distinct and decided opinions. He was fond of talking about Shakespeare, Raphael, Beethoven, of the significance of new schools of poetry and music, all of which were classified by him with very conspicuous consistency.

"Well, God be with you," she said at the door of the study, where a shaded candle and a decanter of water were already put by his armchair. "And I'll write to Moscow."

He pressed her hand, and again kissed it.

"All the same he's a good man; truthful, good-hearted, and remarkable in his own line," Anna said to herself going back to her room, as though she were defending him to someone who had attacked him and said that one could not love him. "But why is it his ears stick out so strangely? Or has he had his hair cut?"

Precisely at twelve o'clock, when Anna was still sitting at her writing table, finishing a letter to Dolly, she heard the sound of measured steps in slippers, and Alexey Alexandrovitch, freshly washed and combed, with a book under his arm, came in to her.

"It's time, it's time," said he, with a meaning smile, and he went into their bedroom.

"And what right had he to look at him like that?" thought Anna, recalling Vronsky's glance at Alexey Alexandrovitch.

Undressing, she went into the bedroom; but her face had none of the eagerness which, during her stay in Moscow, had fairly flashed from her eyes and her smile; on the contrary, now the fire seemed quenched in her, hidden somewhere far away.

Chapter 34

When Vronsky went to Moscow from Petersburg, he had left his large set of rooms in Morskaia to his friend and favorite comrade Petritsky.

Petritsky was a young lieutenant, not particularly well-connected, and not merely not wealthy, but always hopelessly in debt. Towards evening he was always drunk, and he had often been locked up after all sorts of ludicrous and disgraceful scandals, but he was a favorite both of his comrades and his superior officers. On arriving at twelve o'clock from the station at his flat, Vronsky saw, at the outer door, a hired carriage familiar to him. While still outside his own door, as he rang, he heard masculine laughter, the lisp of a feminine voice, and Petritsky's voice. "If that's one of the villains, don't let him in!" Vronsky told the servant not to announce him, and slipped quietly into the first room. Baroness Shilton, a friend of Petritsky's, with a rosy little face and flaxen hair, resplendent in a lilac satin gown, and filling the whole room, like a canary, with her Parisian chatter, sat at the round table making coffee. Petritsky, in his overcoat, and the cavalry captain Kamerovsky, in full uniform, probably just come from duty, were sitting each side of her.

"Bravo! Vronsky!" shouted Petritsky, jumping up, scraping his chair. "Our host himself! Baroness, some coffee for him out of the new coffee pot. Why, we didn't expect you! Hope you're satisfied with the ornament of your study," he said, indicating the baroness. "You know each other, of course?"

"I should think so," said Vronsky, with a bright smile, pressing the baroness's little hand. "What next! I'm an old friend."

"You're home after a journey," said the baroness, "so I'm flying. Oh, I'll be off this minute, if I'm in the way."

"You're home, wherever you are, baroness," said Vronsky. "How do you do, Kamerovsky?" he added, coldly shaking hands with Kamerovsky.

"There, you never know how to say such pretty things," said the baroness, turning to Petritsky.

"No; what's that for? After dinner I say things quite as good."

"After dinner there's no credit in them? Well, then, I'll make you some coffee, so go and wash and get ready," said the baroness, sitting down again, and anxiously turning the screw in the new coffee pot. "Pierre, give me the coffee," she said, addressing Petritsky, whom she called Pierre as a contraction of his surname, making no secret of her relations with him. "I'll put it in."

"You'll spoil it!"

"No, I won't spoil it! Well, and your wife?" said the baroness suddenly, interrupting Vronsky's conversation with his comrade. "We've been marrying you here. Have you brought your wife?"

"No, baroness. I was born a Bohemian, and a Bohemian I shall die."

"So much the better, so much the better. Shake hands on it."

And the baroness, detaining Vronsky, began telling him, with many jokes, about her last new plans of life, asking his advice.

"He persists in refusing to give me a divorce! Well, what am I to do?" (*He* was her husband.) "Now I want to begin a suit against him. What do you advise? Kamerovsky, look after the coffee; it's boiling over. You see, I'm engrossed with business! I want a lawsuit, because I must have my property. Do you understand the folly of it, that on the pretext of my being unfaithful to him," she said contemptuously, "he wants to get the benefit of my fortune."

Vronsky heard with pleasure this light-hearted prattle of a pretty woman, agreed with her, gave her half-joking counsel, and altogether dropped at once into the tone habitual to him in talking to such women. In his Petersburg world all people were divided into utterly opposed classes. One, the lower class, vulgar, stupid, and, above all, ridiculous people, who believe that one husband ought to live with the one wife whom he has lawfully married; that a girl should be innocent, a woman modest, and a

man manly, self-controlled, and strong; that one ought to bring up one's children, earn one's bread, and pay one's debts; and various similar absurdities. This was the class of old-fashioned and ridiculous people. But there was another class of people, the real people. To this class they all belonged, and in it the great thing was to be elegant, generous, plucky, gay, to abandon oneself without a blush to every passion, and to laugh at everything else.

For the first moment only, Vronsky was startled after the impression of a quite different world that he had brought with him from Moscow. But immediately as though slipping his feet into old slippers, he dropped back into the light-hearted, pleasant world he had always lived in.

The coffee was never really made, but spluttered over every one, and boiled away, doing just what was required of it – that is, providing much cause for much noise and laughter, and spoiling a costly rug and the baroness's gown.

"Well now, good-bye, or you'll never get washed, and I shall have on my conscience the worst sin a gentleman can commit. So you would advise a knife to his throat?"

"To be sure, and manage that your hand may not be far from his lips. He'll kiss your hand, and all will end satisfactorily," answered Vronsky.

"So at the Francais!" and, with a rustle of her skirts, she vanished.

Kamerovsky got up too, and Vronsky, not waiting for him to go, shook hands and went off to his dressing room.

While he was washing, Petritsky described to him in brief outlines his position, as far as it had changed since Vronsky had left Petersburg. No money at all. His father said he wouldn't give him any and pay his debts. His tailor was trying to get him locked up, and another fellow, too, was threatening to get him locked up. The colonel of the regiment had announced that if these scandals did not cease he would have to leave. As for the baroness, he was sick to death of her, especially since she'd taken to offering continually to lend him money. But he had found a girl – he'd show her to Vronsky – a marvel, exquisite, in the strict Oriental style, "genre of the slave Rebecca, don't you know." He'd had a row, too, with Berkoshov, and was going to send seconds to him, but of course it would come to nothing. Altogether everything was supremely amusing and jolly. And, not letting his comrade enter into further details of his position, Petritsky proceeded to tell him all the interesting news. As he listened to Petritsky's familiar stories in the familiar setting of the rooms he had spent the last three years in, Vronsky felt a delightful sense of coming back to the careless Petersburg life that he was used to.

"Impossible!" he cried, letting down the pedal of the washing basin in which he had been sousing his healthy red neck. "Impossible!" he cried, at the news that Laura had flung over Fertinghof and had made up to Mileev. "And is he as stupid and pleased as ever? Well, and how's Buzulukov?"

"Oh, there is a tale about Buzulukov – simply lovely!" cried Petritsky. "You know his weakness for balls, and he never misses a single court ball. He went to a big ball in a new helmet. Have you seen the new helmets? Very nice, lighter. Well, so he's standing… No, I say, do listen."

"I am listening," answered Vronsky, rubbing himself with a rough towel.

"Up comes the Grand Duchess with some ambassador or other, and, as ill-luck would have it, she begins talking to him about the new helmets. The Grand Duchess positively wanted to show the new helmet to the ambassador. They see our friend standing there." (Petritsky mimicked how he was standing with the helmet.) "The Grand Duchess asked him to give her the helmet; he doesn't give it to her. What do you think of that? Well, every one's winking at him, nodding, frowning – give it to her, do! He doesn't give it to her. He's mute as a fish. Only picture it!.. Well, the … what's his name, whatever he was … tries to take the helmet from him … he won't give it up!.. He pulls it from him, and hands it to the Grand Duchess. 'Here, your Highness,' says he, 'is the new helmet.' She turned the helmet the other side up, And – just picture it! – plop went a pear and sweetmeats out of it, two pounds of sweetmeats!.. He'd been storing them up, the darling!"

Vronsky burst into roars of laughter. And long afterwards, when he was talking of other things, he broke out into his healthy laugh, showing his strong, close rows of teeth, when he thought of the helmet.

Having heard all the news, Vronsky, with the assistance of his valet, got into his uniform, and went off to report himself. He intended, when he had done that, to drive to his brother's and to Betsy's and to pay several visits with a view to beginning to go into that society where he might meet Madame Karenina. As he always did in Petersburg, he left home not meaning to return till late at night.

PART TWO

Chapter 1

At the end of the winter, in the Shtcherbatskys' house, a consultation was being held, which was to pronounce on the state of Kitty's health and the measures to be taken to restore her failing strength. She had been ill, and as spring came on she grew worse. The family doctor gave her cod liver oil, then iron, then nitrate of silver, but as the first and the second and the third were alike in doing no good, and as his advice when spring came was to go abroad, a celebrated physician was called in. The celebrated physician, a very handsome man, still youngish, asked to examine the patient. He maintained, with peculiar satisfaction, it seemed, that maiden modesty is a mere relic of barbarism, and that nothing could be more natural than for a man still youngish to handle a young girl naked. He thought it natural because he did it every day, and felt and thought, as it seemed to him, no harm as he did it and consequently he considered modesty in the girl not merely as a relic of barbarism, but also as an insult to himself.

There was nothing for it but to submit, since, although all the doctors had studied in the same school, had read the same books, and learned the same science, and though some people said this celebrated doctor was a bad doctor, in the princess's household and circle it was for some reason accepted that this celebrated doctor alone had some special knowledge, and that he alone could save Kitty. After a careful examination and sounding of the bewildered patient, dazed with shame, the celebrated doctor, having scrupulously washed his hands, was standing in the drawing room talking to the prince. The prince frowned and coughed, listening to the doctor. As a man who had seen something of life, and neither a fool nor an invalid, he had no faith in medicine, and in his heart was furious at the whole farce, specially as he was perhaps the only one who fully comprehended the cause of Kitty's illness. "Conceited blockhead!" he thought, as he listened to the celebrated doctor's chatter about his daughter's symptoms. The doctor was meantime with difficulty restraining the expression of his contempt for this old gentleman, and with difficulty condescending to the level of his intelligence. He perceived that it was no good talking to the old man, and that the principal person in the house was the mother. Before her he decided to scatter his pearls. At that instant the princess came into the drawing room with the family doctor. The prince withdrew, trying not to show how ridiculous he thought the whole performance. The princess was distracted, and did not know what to do. She felt she had sinned against Kitty.

"Well, doctor, decide our fate," said the princess. "Tell me everything."

"Is there hope?" she meant to say, but her lips quivered, and she could not utter the question. "Well, doctor?"

"Immediately, princess. I will talk it over with my colleague, and then I will have the honor of laying my opinion before you."

"So we had better leave you?"

"As you please."

The princess went out with a sigh.

When the doctors were left alone, the family doctor began timidly explaining his opinion, that there was a commencement of tuberculous trouble, but … and so on. The celebrated doctor listened to him, and in the middle of his sentence looked at his big gold watch.

"Yes," said he. "But…"

The family doctor respectfully ceased in the middle of his observations.

"The commencement of the tuberculous process we are not, as you are aware, able to define; till there are cavities, there is nothing definite. But we may suspect it. And there are indications;

malnutrition, nervous excitability, and so on. The question stands thus: in presence of indications of tuberculous process, what is to be done to maintain nutrition?"

"But, you know, there are always moral, spiritual causes at the back in these cases," the family doctor permitted himself to interpolate with a subtle smile.

"Yes, that's an understood thing," responded the celebrated physician, again glancing at his watch. "Beg pardon, is the Yausky bridge done yet, or shall I have to drive around?" he asked. "Ah! it is. Oh, well, then I can do it in twenty minutes. So we were saying the problem may be put thus: to maintain nutrition and to give tone to the nerves. The one is in close connection with the other, one must attack both sides at once."

"And how about a tour abroad?" asked the family doctor.

"I've no liking for foreign tours. And take note: if there is an early stage of tuberculous process, of which we cannot be certain, a foreign tour will be of no use. What is wanted is means of improving nutrition, and not for lowering it." And the celebrated doctor expounded his plan of treatment with Soden waters, a remedy obviously prescribed primarily on the ground that they could do no harm.

The family doctor listened attentively and respectfully.

"But in favor of foreign travel I would urge the change of habits, the removal from conditions calling up reminiscences. And then the mother wishes it," he added.

"Ah! Well, in that case, to be sure, let them go. Only, those German quacks are mischievous… They ought to be persuaded… Well, let them go then."

He glanced once more at his watch.

"Oh! time's up already," And he went to the door. The celebrated doctor announced to the princess (a feeling of what was due from him dictated his doing so) that he ought to see the patient once more.

"What! another examination!" cried the mother, with horror.

"Oh, no, only a few details, princess."

"Come this way."

And the mother, accompanied by the doctor, went into the drawing room to Kitty. Wasted and flushed, with a peculiar glitter in her eyes, left there by the agony of shame she had been put through, Kitty stood in the middle of the room. When the doctor came in she flushed crimson, and her eyes filled with tears. All her illness and treatment struck her as a thing so stupid, ludicrous even! Doctoring her seemed to her as absurd as putting together the pieces of a broken vase. Her heart was broken. Why would they try to cure her with pills and powders? But she could not grieve her mother, especially as her mother considered herself to blame.

"May I trouble you to sit down, princess?" the celebrated doctor said to her.

He sat down with a smile, facing her, felt her pulse, and again began asking her tiresome questions. She answered him, and all at once got up, furious.

"Excuse me, doctor, but there is really no object in this. This is the third time you've asked me the same thing."

The celebrated doctor did not take offense.

"Nervous irritability," he said to the princess, when Kitty had left the room. "However, I had finished…"

And the doctor began scientifically explaining to the princess, as an exceptionally intelligent woman, the condition of the young princess, and concluded by insisting on the drinking of the waters, which were certainly harmless. At the question: Should they go abroad? the doctor plunged into deep meditation, as though resolving a weighty problem. Finally his decision was pronounced: they were to go abroad, but to put no faith in foreign quacks, and to apply to him in any need.

It seemed as though some piece of good fortune had come to pass after the doctor had gone. The mother was much more cheerful when she went back to her daughter, and Kitty pretended to be more cheerful. She had often, almost always, to be pretending now.

"Really, I'm quite well, mamma. But if you want to go abroad, let's go!" she said, and trying to appear interested in the proposed tour, she began talking of the preparations for the journey.

Chapter 2

Soon after the doctor, Dolly had arrived. She knew that there was to be a consultation that day, and though she was only just up after her confinement (she had another baby, a little girl, born at the end of the winter), though she had trouble and anxiety enough of her own, she had left her tiny baby and a sick child, to come and hear Kitty's fate, which was to be decided that day.

"Well, well?" she said, coming into the drawing room, without taking off her hat. "You're all in good spirits. Good news, then?"

They tried to tell her what the doctor had said, but it appeared that though the doctor had talked distinctly enough and at great length, it was utterly impossible to report what he had said. The only point of interest was that it was settled they should go abroad.

Dolly could not help sighing. Her dearest friend, her sister, was going away. And her life was not a cheerful one. Her relations with Stepan Arkadyevitch after their reconciliation had become humiliating. The union Anna had cemented turned out to be of no solid character, and family harmony was breaking down again at the same point. There had been nothing definite, but Stepan Arkadyevitch was hardly ever at home; money, too, was hardly ever forthcoming, and Dolly was continually tortured by suspicions of infidelity, which she tried to dismiss, dreading the agonies of jealousy she had been through already. The first onslaught of jealousy, once lived through, could never come back again, and even the discovery of infidelities could never now affect her as it had the first time. Such a discovery now would only mean breaking up family habits, and she let herself be deceived, despising him and still more herself, for the weakness. Besides this, the care of her large family was a constant worry to her: first, the nursing of her young baby did not go well, then the nurse had gone away, now one of the children had fallen ill.

"Well, how are all of you?" asked her mother.

"Ah, mamma, we have plenty of troubles of our own. Lili is ill, and I'm afraid it's scarlatina. I have come here now to hear about Kitty, and then I shall shut myself up entirely, if – God forbid – it should be scarlatina."

The old prince too had come in from his study after the doctor's departure, and after presenting his cheek to Dolly, and saying a few words to her, he turned to his wife:

"How have you settled it? you're going? Well, and what do you mean to do with me?"

"I suppose you had better stay here, Alexander," said his wife.

"That's as you like."

"Mamma, why shouldn't father come with us?" said Kitty. "It would be nicer for him and for us too."

The old prince got up and stroked Kitty's hair. She lifted her head and looked at him with a forced smile. It always seemed to her that he understood her better than anyone in the family, though he did not say much about her. Being the youngest, she was her father's favorite, and she fancied that his love gave him insight. When now her glance met his blue kindly eyes looking intently at her, it seemed to her that he saw right through her, and understood all that was not good that was passing within her. Reddening, she stretched out towards him expecting a kiss, but he only patted her hair and said:

"These stupid chignons! There's no getting at the real daughter. One simply strokes the bristles of dead women. Well, Dolinka," he turned to his elder daughter, "what's your young buck about, hey?"

"Nothing, father," answered Dolly, understanding that her husband was meant. "He's always out; I scarcely ever see him," she could not resist adding with a sarcastic smile.

"Why, hasn't he gone into the country yet – to see about selling that forest?"

"No, he's still getting ready for the journey."

"Oh, that's it!" said the prince. "And so am I to be getting ready for a journey too? At your service," he said to his wife, sitting down. "And I tell you what, Katia," he went on to his younger daughter, "you must wake up one fine day and say to yourself: Why, I'm quite well, and merry, and going out again with father for an early morning walk in the frost. Hey?"

What her father said seemed simple enough, yet at these words Kitty became confused and overcome like a detected criminal. "Yes, he sees it all, he understands it all, and in these words he's telling me that though I'm ashamed, I must get over my shame." She could not pluck up spirit to make any answer. She tried to begin, and all at once burst into tears, and rushed out of the room.

"See what comes of your jokes!" the princess pounced down on her husband. "You're always…" she began a string of reproaches.

The prince listened to the princess's scolding rather a long while without speaking, but his face was more and more frowning.

"She's so much to be pitied, poor child, so much to be pitied, and you don't feel how it hurts her to hear the slightest reference to the cause of it. Ah! to be so mistaken in people!" said the princess, and by the change in her tone both Dolly and the prince knew she was speaking of Vronsky. "I don't know why there aren't laws against such base, dishonorable people."

"Ah, I can't bear to hear you!" said the prince gloomily, getting up from his low chair, and seeming anxious to get away, yet stopping in the doorway. "There are laws, madam, and since you've challenged me to it, I'll tell you who's to blame for it all: you and you, you and nobody else. Laws against such young gallants there have always been, and there still are! Yes, if there has been nothing that ought not to have been, old as I am, I'd have called him out to the barrier, the young dandy. Yes, and now you physic her and call in these quacks."

The prince apparently had plenty more to say, but as soon as the princess heard his tone she subsided at once, and became penitent, as she always did on serious occasions.

"Alexander, Alexander," she whispered, moving to him and beginning to weep.

As soon as she began to cry the prince too calmed down. He went up to her.

"There, that's enough, that's enough! You're wretched too, I know. It can't be helped. There's no great harm done. God is merciful … thanks…" he said, not knowing what he was saying, as he responded to the tearful kiss of the princess that he felt on his hand. And the prince went out of the room.

Before this, as soon as Kitty went out of the room in tears, Dolly, with her motherly, family instincts, had promptly perceived that here a woman's work lay before her, and she prepared to do it. She took off her hat, and, morally speaking, tucked up her sleeves and prepared for action. While her mother was attacking her father, she tried to restrain her mother, so far as filial reverence would allow. During the prince's outburst she was silent; she felt ashamed for her mother, and tender towards her father for so quickly being kind again. But when her father left them she made ready for what was the chief thing needful – to go to Kitty and console her.

"I'd been meaning to tell you something for a long while, mamma: did you know that Levin meant to make Kitty an offer when he was here the last time? He told Stiva so."

"Well, what then? I don't understand…"

"So did Kitty perhaps refuse him?.. She didn't tell you so?"

"No, she has said nothing to me either of one or the other; she's too proud. But I know it's all on account of the other."

"Yes, but suppose she has refused Levin, and she wouldn't have refused him if it hadn't been for the other, I know. And then, he has deceived her so horribly."

It was too terrible for the princess to think how she had sinned against her daughter, and she broke out angrily.

"Oh, I really don't understand! Nowadays they will all go their own way, and mothers haven't a word to say in anything, and then…"

"Mamma, I'll go up to her."
"Well, do. Did I tell you not to?" said her mother.

Chapter 3

When she went into Kitty's little room, a pretty, pink little room, full of knick-knacks in *vieux saxe,* as fresh, and pink, and white, and gay as Kitty herself had been two months ago, Dolly remembered how they had decorated the room the year before together, with what love and gaiety. Her heart turned cold when she saw Kitty sitting on a low chair near the door, her eyes fixed immovably on a corner of the rug. Kitty glanced at her sister, and the cold, rather ill-tempered expression of her face did not change.

"I'm just going now, and I shall have to keep in and you won't be able to come to see me," said Dolly, sitting down beside her. "I want to talk to you."

"What about?" Kitty asked swiftly, lifting her head in dismay.

"What should it be, but your trouble?"

"I have no trouble."

"Nonsense, Kitty. Do you suppose I could help knowing? I know all about it. And believe me, it's of so little consequence… We've all been through it."

Kitty did not speak, and her face had a stern expression.

"He's not worth your grieving over him," pursued Darya Alexandrovna, coming straight to the point.

"No, because he has treated me with contempt," said Kitty, in a breaking voice. "Don't talk of it! Please, don't talk of it!"

"But who can have told you so? No one has said that. I'm certain he was in love with you, and would still be in love with you, if it hadn't…

"Oh, the most awful thing of all for me is this sympathizing!" shrieked Kitty, suddenly flying into a passion. She turned round on her chair, flushed crimson, and rapidly moving her fingers, pinched the clasp of her belt first with one hand and then with the other. Dolly knew this trick her sister had of clenching her hands when she was much excited; she knew, too, that in moments of excitement Kitty was capable of forgetting herself and saying a great deal too much, and Dolly would have soothed her, but it was too late.

"What, what is it you want to make me feel, eh?" said Kitty quickly. "That I've been in love with a man who didn't care a straw for me, and that I'm dying of love for him? And this is said to me by my own sister, who imagines that … that … that she's sympathizing with me!.. I don't want these condolences and humbug!"

"Kitty, you're unjust."

"Why are you tormenting me?"

"But I … quite the contrary … I see you're unhappy…"

But Kitty in her fury did not hear her.

"I've nothing to grieve over and be comforted about. I am too proud ever to allow myself to care for a man who does not love me."

"Yes, I don't say so either… Only one thing. Tell me the truth," said Darya Alexandrovna, taking her by the hand: "tell me, did Levin speak to you?.."

The mention of Levin's name seemed to deprive Kitty of the last vestige of self-control. She leaped up from her chair, and flinging her clasp on the ground, she gesticulated rapidly with her hands and said:

"Why bring Levin in too? I can't understand what you want to torment me for. I've told you, and I say it again, that I have some pride, and never, *never* would I do as you're doing – go back to a man who's deceived you, who has cared for another woman. I can't understand it! You may, but I can't!"

And saying these words she glanced at her sister, and seeing that Dolly sat silent, her head mournfully bowed, Kitty, instead of running out of the room as she had meant to do, sat down near the door, and hid her face in her handkerchief.

The silence lasted for two minutes: Dolly was thinking of herself. That humiliation of which she was always conscious came back to her with a peculiar bitterness when her sister reminded her of it. She had not looked for such cruelty in her sister, and she was angry with her. But suddenly she heard the rustle of a skirt, and with it the sound of heart-rending, smothered sobbing, and felt arms about her neck. Kitty was on her knees before her.

"Dolinka, I am so, so wretched!" she whispered penitently. And the sweet face covered with tears hid itself in Darya Alexandrovna's skirt.

As though tears were the indispensable oil, without which the machinery of mutual confidence could not run smoothly between the two sisters, the sisters after their tears talked, not of what was uppermost in their minds, but, though they talked of outside matters, they understood each other. Kitty knew that the words she had uttered in anger about her husband's infidelity and her humiliating position had cut her poor sister to the heart, but that she had forgiven her. Dolly for her part knew all she had wanted to find out. She felt certain that her surmises were correct; that Kitty's misery, her inconsolable misery, was due precisely to the fact that Levin had made her an offer and she had refused him, and Vronsky had deceived her, and that she was fully prepared to love Levin and to detest Vronsky. Kitty said not a word of that; she talked of nothing but her spiritual condition.

"I have nothing to make me miserable," she said, getting calmer; "but can you understand that everything has become hateful, loathsome, coarse to me, and I myself most of all? You can't imagine what loathsome thoughts I have about everything."

"Why, whatever loathsome thoughts can you have?" asked Dolly, smiling.

"The most utterly loathsome and coarse: I can't tell you. It's not unhappiness, or low spirits, but much worse. As though everything that was good in me was all hidden away, and nothing was left but the most loathsome. Come, how am I to tell you?" she went on, seeing the puzzled look in her sister's eyes. "Father began saying something to me just now… It seems to me he thinks all I want is to be married. Mother takes me to a ball: it seems to me she only takes me to get me married off as soon as may be, and be rid of me. I know it's not the truth, but I can't drive away such thoughts. Eligible suitors, as they call them – I can't bear to see them. It seems to me they're taking stock of me and summing me up. In old days to go anywhere in a ball dress was a simple joy to me, I admired myself; now I feel ashamed and awkward. And then! The doctor… Then…" Kitty hesitated; she wanted to say further that ever since this change had taken place in her, Stepan Arkadyevitch had become insufferably repulsive to her, and that she could not see him without the grossest and most hideous conceptions rising before her imagination.

"Oh, well, everything presents itself to me, in the coarsest, most loathsome light," she went on. "That's my illness. Perhaps it will pass off."

"But you mustn't think about it."

"I can't help it. I'm never happy except with the children at your house."

"What a pity you can't be with me!"

"Oh, yes, I'm coming. I've had scarlatina, and I'll persuade mamma to let me."

Kitty insisted on having her way, and went to stay at her sister's and nursed the children all through the scarlatina, for scarlatina it turned out to be. The two sisters brought all the six children successfully through it, but Kitty was no better in health, and in Lent the Shtcherbatskys went abroad.

Chapter 4

The highest Petersburg society is essentially one: in it everyone knows everyone else, everyone even visits everyone else. But this great set has its subdivisions. Anna Arkadyevna Karenina had friends and close ties in three different circles of this highest society. One circle was her husband's government official set, consisting of his colleagues and subordinates, brought together in the most various and capricious manner, and belonging to different social strata. Anna found it difficult now to recall the feeling of almost awe-stricken reverence which she had at first entertained for these persons. Now she knew all of them as people know one another in a country town; she knew their habits and weaknesses, and where the shoe pinched each one of them. She knew their relations with one another and with the head authorities, knew who was for whom, and how each one maintained his position, and where they agreed and disagreed. But the circle of political, masculine interests had never interested her, in spite of countess Lidia Ivanovna's influence, and she avoided it.

Another little set with which Anna was in close relations was the one by means of which Alexey Alexandrovitch had made his career. The center of this circle was the Countess Lidia Ivanovna. It was a set made up of elderly, ugly, benevolent, and godly women, and clever, learned, and ambitious men. One of the clever people belonging to the set had called it "the conscience of Petersburg society." Alexey Alexandrovitch had the highest esteem for this circle, and Anna with her special gift for getting on with everyone, had in the early days of her life in Petersburg made friends in this circle also. Now, since her return from Moscow, she had come to feel this set insufferable. It seemed to her that both she and all of them were insincere, and she felt so bored and ill at ease in that world that she went to see the Countess Lidia Ivanovna as little as possible.

The third circle with which Anna had ties was preeminently the fashionable world – the world of balls, of dinners, of sumptuous dresses, the world that hung on to the court with one hand, so as to avoid sinking to the level of the demi-monde. For the demi-monde the members of that fashionable world believed that they despised, though their tastes were not merely similar, but in fact identical. Her connection with this circle was kept up through Princess Betsy Tverskaya, her cousin's wife, who had an income of a hundred and twenty thousand roubles, and who had taken a great fancy to Anna ever since she first came out, showed her much attention, and drew her into her set, making fun of Countess Lidia Ivanovna's coterie.

"When I'm old and ugly I'll be the same," Betsy used to say; "but for a pretty young woman like you it's early days for that house of charity."

Anna had at first avoided as far as she could Princess Tverskaya's world, because it necessitated an expenditure beyond her means, and besides in her heart she preferred the first circle. But since her visit to Moscow she had done quite the contrary. She avoided her serious-minded friends, and went out into the fashionable world. There she met Vronsky, and experienced an agitating joy at those meetings. She met Vronsky specially often at Betsy's for Betsy was a Vronsky by birth and his cousin. Vronsky was everywhere where he had any chance of meeting Anna, and speaking to her, when he could, of his love. She gave him no encouragement, but every time she met him there surged up in her heart that same feeling of quickened life that had come upon her that day in the railway carriage when she saw him for the first time. She was conscious herself that her delight sparkled in her eyes and curved her lips into a smile, and she could not quench the expression of this delight.

At first Anna sincerely believed that she was displeased with him for daring to pursue her. Soon after her return from Moscow, on arriving at a *soirée* where she had expected to meet him, and not finding him there, she realized distinctly from the rush of disappointment that she had been deceiving herself, and that this pursuit was not merely not distasteful to her, but that it made the whole interest of her life.

A celebrated singer was singing for the second time, and all the fashionable world was in the theater. Vronsky, seeing his cousin from his stall in the front row, did not wait till the entr'acte, but went to her box.

"Why didn't you come to dinner?" she said to him. "I marvel at the second sight of lovers," she added with a smile, so that no one but he could hear; "*she wasn't there*. But come after the opera."

Vronsky looked inquiringly at her. She nodded. He thanked her by a smile, and sat down beside her.

"But how I remember your jeers!" continued Princess Betsy, who took a peculiar pleasure in following up this passion to a successful issue. "What's become of all that? You're caught, my dear boy."

"That's my one desire, to be caught," answered Vronsky, with his serene, good-humored smile. "If I complain of anything it's only that I'm not caught enough, to tell the truth. I begin to lose hope."

"Why, whatever hope can you have?" said Betsy, offended on behalf of her friend. "*Entendons nous…*" But in her eyes there were gleams of light that betrayed that she understood perfectly and precisely as he did what hope he might have.

"None whatever," said Vronsky, laughing and showing his even rows of teeth. "Excuse me," he added, taking an opera glass out of her hand, and proceeding to scrutinize, over her bare shoulder, the row of boxes facing them. "I'm afraid I'm becoming ridiculous."

He was very well aware that he ran no risk of being ridiculous in the eyes of Betsy or any other fashionable people. He was very well aware that in their eyes the position of an unsuccessful lover of a girl, or of any woman free to marry, might be ridiculous. But the position of a man pursuing a married woman, and, regardless of everything, staking his life on drawing her into adultery, has something fine and grand about it, and can never be ridiculous; and so it was with a proud and gay smile under his mustaches that he lowered the opera glass and looked at his cousin.

"But why was it you didn't come to dinner?" she said, admiring him.

"I must tell you about that. I was busily employed, and doing what, do you suppose? I'll give you a hundred guesses, a thousand … you'd never guess. I've been reconciling a husband with a man who'd insulted his wife. Yes, really!"

"Well, did you succeed?"

"Almost."

"You really must tell me about it," she said, getting up. "Come to me in the next *entr'acte.*"

"I can't; I'm going to the French theater."

"From Nilsson?" Betsy queried in horror, though she could not herself have distinguished Nilsson's voice from any chorus girl's.

"Can't help it. I've an appointment there, all to do with my mission of peace."

"'Blessed are the peacemakers; theirs is the kingdom of heaven,'" said Betsy, vaguely recollecting she had heard some similar saying from someone. "Very well, then, sit down, and tell me what it's all about."

And she sat down again.

Chapter 5

"This is rather indiscreet, but it's so good it's an awful temptation to tell the story," said Vronsky, looking at her with his laughing eyes. "I'm not going to mention any names."

"But I shall guess, so much the better."

"Well, listen: two festive young men were driving – "

"Officers of your regiment, of course?"

"I didn't say they were officers, – two young men who had been lunching."

"In other words, drinking."

"Possibly. They were driving on their way to dinner with a friend in the most festive state of mind. And they beheld a pretty woman in a hired sledge; she overtakes them, looks round at them, and, so they fancy anyway, nods to them and laughs. They, of course, follow her. They gallop at full speed. To their amazement, the fair one alights at the entrance of the very house to which they were going. The fair one darts upstairs to the top story. They get a glimpse of red lips under a short veil, and exquisite little feet."

"You describe it with such feeling that I fancy you must be one of the two."

"And after what you said, just now! Well, the young men go in to their comrade's; he was giving a farewell dinner. There they certainly did drink a little too much, as one always does at farewell dinners. And at dinner they inquire who lives at the top in that house. No one knows; only their host's valet, in answer to their inquiry whether any 'young ladies' are living on the top floor, answered that there were a great many of them about there. After dinner the two young men go into their host's study, and write a letter to the unknown fair one. They compose an ardent epistle, a declaration in fact, and they carry the letter upstairs themselves, so as to elucidate whatever might appear not perfectly intelligible in the letter."

"Why are you telling me these horrible stories? Well?"

"They ring. A maid-servant opens the door, they hand her the letter, and assure the maid that they're both so in love that they'll die on the spot at the door. The maid, stupefied, carries in their messages. All at once a gentleman appears with whiskers like sausages, as red as a lobster, announces that there is no one living in the flat except his wife, and sends them both about their business."

"How do you know he had whiskers like sausages, as you say?"

"Ah, you shall hear. I've just been to make peace between them."

"Well, and what then?"

"That's the most interesting part of the story. It appears that it's a happy couple, a government clerk and his lady. The government clerk lodges a complaint, and I became a mediator, and such a mediator!.. I assure you Talleyrand couldn't hold a candle to me."

"Why, where was the difficulty?"

"Ah, you shall hear… We apologize in due form: we are in despair, we entreat forgiveness for the unfortunate misunderstanding. The government clerk with the sausages begins to melt, but he, too, desires to express his sentiments, and as soon as ever he begins to express them, he begins to get hot and say nasty things, and again I'm obliged to trot out all my diplomatic talents. I allowed that their conduct was bad, but I urged him to take into consideration their heedlessness, their youth; then, too, the young men had only just been lunching together. 'You understand. They regret it deeply, and beg you to overlook their misbehavior.' The government clerk was softened once more. 'I consent, count, and am ready to overlook it; but you perceive that my wife – my wife's a respectable woman – has been exposed to the persecution, and insults, and effrontery of young upstarts, scoundrels…' And you must understand, the young upstarts are present all the while, and I have to keep the peace between them. Again I call out all my diplomacy, and again as soon as the thing was about at an end,

our friend the government clerk gets hot and red, and his sausages stand on end with wrath, and once more I launch out into diplomatic wiles."

"Ah, he must tell you this story!" said Betsy, laughing, to a lady who came into her box. "He has been making me laugh so."

"Well, *bonne chance*!" she added, giving Vronsky one finger of the hand in which she held her fan, and with a shrug of her shoulders she twitched down the bodice of her gown that had worked up, so as to be duly naked as she moved forward towards the footlights into the light of the gas, and the sight of all eyes.

Vronsky drove to the French theater, where he really had to see the colonel of his regiment, who never missed a single performance there. He wanted to see him, to report on the result of his mediation, which had occupied and amused him for the last three days. Petritsky, whom he liked, was implicated in the affair, and the other culprit was a capital fellow and first-rate comrade, who had lately joined the regiment, the young Prince Kedrov. And what was most important, the interests of the regiment were involved in it too.

Both the young men were in Vronsky's company. The colonel of the regiment was waited upon by the government clerk, Venden, with a complaint against his officers, who had insulted his wife. His young wife, so Venden told the story – he had been married half a year – was at church with her mother, and suddenly overcome by indisposition, arising from her interesting condition, she could not remain standing, she drove home in the first sledge, a smart-looking one, she came across. On the spot the officers set off in pursuit of her; she was alarmed, and feeling still more unwell, ran up the staircase home. Venden himself, on returning from his office, heard a ring at their bell and voices, went out, and seeing the intoxicated officers with a letter, he had turned them out. He asked for exemplary punishment.

"Yes, it's all very well," said the colonel to Vronsky, whom he had invited to come and see him. "Petritsky's becoming impossible. Not a week goes by without some scandal. This government clerk won't let it drop, he'll go on with the thing."

Vronsky saw all the thanklessness of the business, and that there could be no question of a duel in it, that everything must be done to soften the government clerk, and hush the matter up. The colonel had called in Vronsky just because he knew him to be an honorable and intelligent man, and, more than all, a man who cared for the honor of the regiment. They talked it over, and decided that Petritsky and Kedrov must go with Vronsky to Venden's to apologize. The colonel and Vronsky were both fully aware that Vronsky's name and rank would be sure to contribute greatly to the softening of the injured husband's feelings.

And these two influences were not in fact without effect; though the result remained, as Vronsky had described, uncertain.

On reaching the French theater, Vronsky retired to the foyer with the colonel, and reported to him his success, or non-success. The colonel, thinking it all over, made up his mind not to pursue the matter further, but then for his own satisfaction proceeded to cross-examine Vronsky about his interview; and it was a long while before he could restrain his laughter, as Vronsky described how the government clerk, after subsiding for a while, would suddenly flare up again, as he recalled the details, and how Vronsky, at the last half word of conciliation, skillfully maneuvered a retreat, shoving Petritsky out before him.

"It's a disgraceful story, but killing. Kedrov really can't fight the gentleman! Was he so awfully hot?" he commented, laughing. "But what do you say to Claire today? She's marvelous," he went on, speaking of a new French actress. "However often you see her, every day she's different. It's only the French who can do that."

Chapter 6

Princess Betsy drove home from the theater, without waiting for the end of the last act. She had only just time to go into her dressing room, sprinkle her long, pale face with powder, rub it, set her dress to rights, and order tea in the big drawing room, when one after another carriages drove up to her huge house in Bolshaia Morskaia. Her guests stepped out at the wide entrance, and the stout porter, who used to read the newspapers in the mornings behind the glass door, to the edification of the passers-by, noiselessly opened the immense door, letting the visitors pass by him into the house.

Almost at the same instant the hostess, with freshly arranged coiffure and freshened face, walked in at one door and her guests at the other door of the drawing room, a large room with dark walls, downy rugs, and a brightly lighted table, gleaming with the light of candles, white cloth, silver samovar, and transparent china tea things.

The hostess sat down at the table and took off her gloves. Chairs were set with the aid of footmen, moving almost imperceptibly about the room; the party settled itself, divided into two groups: one round the samovar near the hostess, the other at the opposite end of the drawing room, round the handsome wife of an ambassador, in black velvet, with sharply defined black eyebrows. In both groups conversation wavered, as it always does, for the first few minutes, broken up by meetings, greetings, offers of tea, and as it were, feeling about for something to rest upon.

"She's exceptionally good as an actress; one can see she's studied Kaulbach," said a diplomatic attache in the group round the ambassador's wife. "Did you notice how she fell down?.."

"Oh, please, don't let us talk about Nilsson! No one can possibly say anything new about her," said a fat, red-faced, flaxen-headed lady, without eyebrows and chignon, wearing an old silk dress. This was Princess Myakaya, noted for her simplicity and the roughness of her manners, and nicknamed *enfant terrible*. Princess Myakaya, sitting in the middle between the two groups, and listening to both, took part in the conversation first of one and then of the other. "Three people have used that very phrase about Kaulbach to me today already, just as though they had made a compact about it. And I can't see why they liked that remark so."

The conversation was cut short by this observation, and a new subject had to be thought of again.

"Do tell me something amusing but not spiteful," said the ambassador's wife, a great proficient in the art of that elegant conversation called by the English, *small talk*. She addressed the attache, who was at a loss now what to begin upon.

"They say that that's a difficult task, that nothing's amusing that isn't spiteful," he began with a smile. "But I'll try. Get me a subject. It all lies in the subject. If a subject's given me, it's easy to spin something round it. I often think that the celebrated talkers of the last century would have found it difficult to talk cleverly now. Everything clever is so stale…"

"That has been said long ago," the ambassador's wife interrupted him, laughing.

The conversation began amiably, but just because it was too amiable, it came to a stop again. They had to have recourse to the sure, never-failing topic – gossip.

"Don't you think there's something Louis Quinze about Tushkevitch?" he said, glancing towards a handsome, fair-haired young man, standing at the table.

"Oh, yes! He's in the same style as the drawing room and that's why it is he's so often here."

This conversation was maintained, since it rested on allusions to what could not be talked of in that room – that is to say, of the relations of Tushkevitch with their hostess.

Round the samovar and the hostess the conversation had been meanwhile vacillating in just the same way between three inevitable topics: the latest piece of public news, the theater, and scandal. It, too, came finally to rest on the last topic, that is, ill-natured gossip.

"Have you heard the Maltishtcheva woman – the mother, not the daughter – has ordered a costume in *diable rose* color?"

"Nonsense! No, that's too lovely!"

"I wonder that with her sense – for she's not a fool, you know – that she doesn't see how funny she is."

Everyone had something to say in censure or ridicule of the luckless Madame Maltishtcheva, and the conversation crackled merrily, like a burning faggot-stack.

The husband of Princess Betsy, a good-natured fat man, an ardent collector of engravings, hearing that his wife had visitors, came into the drawing room before going to his club. Stepping noiselessly over the thick rugs, he went up to Princess Myakaya.

"How did you like Nilsson?" he asked.

"Oh, how can you steal upon anyone like that! How you startled me!" she responded. "Please don't talk to me about the opera; you know nothing about music. I'd better meet you on your own ground, and talk about your majolica and engravings. Come now, what treasure have you been buying lately at the old curiosity shops?"

"Would you like me to show you? But you don't understand such things."

"Oh, do show me! I've been learning about them at those – what's their names?.. the bankers … they've some splendid engravings. They showed them to us."

"Why, have you been at the Schützburgs?" asked the hostess from the samovar.

"Yes, *ma chère*. They asked my husband and me to dinner, and told us the sauce at that dinner cost a hundred pounds," Princess Myakaya said, speaking loudly, and conscious everyone was listening; "and very nasty sauce it was, some green mess. We had to ask them, and I made them sauce for eighteen pence, and everybody was very much pleased with it. I can't run to hundred-pound sauces."

"She's unique!" said the lady of the house.

"Marvelous!" said someone.

The sensation produced by Princess Myakaya's speeches was always unique, and the secret of the sensation she produced lay in the fact that though she spoke not always appropriately, as now, she said simple things with some sense in them. In the society in which she lived such plain statements produced the effect of the wittiest epigram. Princess Myakaya could never see why it had that effect, but she knew it had, and took advantage of it.

As everyone had been listening while Princess Myakaya spoke, and so the conversation around the ambassador's wife had dropped, Princess Betsy tried to bring the whole party together, and turned to the ambassador's wife.

"Will you really not have tea? You should come over here by us."

"No, we're very happy here," the ambassador's wife responded with a smile, and she went on with the conversation that had been begun.

It was a very agreeable conversation. They were criticizing the Karenins, husband and wife.

"Anna is quite changed since her stay in Moscow. There's something strange about her," said her friend.

"The great change is that she brought back with her the shadow of Alexey Vronsky," said the ambassador's wife.

"Well, what of it? There's a fable of Grimm's about a man without a shadow, a man who's lost his shadow. And that's his punishment for something. I never could understand how it was a punishment. But a woman must dislike being without a shadow."

"Yes, but women with a shadow usually come to a bad end," said Anna's friend.

"Bad luck to your tongue!" said Princess Myakaya suddenly. "Madame Karenina's a splendid woman. I don't like her husband, but I like her very much."

"Why don't you like her husband? He's such a remarkable man," said the ambassador's wife. "My husband says there are few statesmen like him in Europe."

"And my husband tells me just the same, but I don't believe it," said Princess Myakaya. "If our husbands didn't talk to us, we should see the facts as they are. Alexey Alexandrovitch, to my thinking, is simply a fool. I say it in a whisper … but doesn't it really make everything clear? Before, when I was told to consider him clever, I kept looking for his ability, and thought myself a fool for not seeing it; but directly I said, *he's a fool,* though only in a whisper, everything's explained, isn't it?"

"How spiteful you are today!"

"Not a bit. I'd no other way out of it. One of the two had to be a fool. And, well, you know one can't say that of oneself."

"'No one is satisfied with his fortune, and everyone is satisfied with his wit.'" The attaché repeated the French saying.

"That's just it, just it," Princess Myakaya turned to him. "But the point is that I won't abandon Anna to your mercies. She's so nice, so charming. How can she help it if they're all in love with her, and follow her about like shadows?"

"Oh, I had no idea of blaming her for it," Anna's friend said in self-defense.

"If no one follows us about like a shadow, that's no proof that we've any right to blame her."

And having duly disposed of Anna's friend, the Princess Myakaya got up, and together with the ambassador's wife, joined the group at the table, where the conversation was dealing with the king of Prussia.

"What wicked gossip were you talking over there?" asked Betsy.

"About the Karenins. The princess gave us a sketch of Alexey Alexandrovitch," said the ambassador's wife with a smile, as she sat down at the table.

"Pity we didn't hear it!" said Princess Betsy, glancing towards the door. "Ah, here you are at last!" she said, turning with a smile to Vronsky, as he came in.

Vronsky was not merely acquainted with all the persons whom he was meeting here; he saw them all every day; and so he came in with the quiet manner with which one enters a room full of people from whom one has only just parted.

"Where do I come from?" he said, in answer to a question from the ambassador's wife. "Well, there's no help for it, I must confess. From the *opera bouffé*. I do believe I've seen it a hundred times, and always with fresh enjoyment. It's exquisite! I know it's disgraceful, but I go to sleep at the opera, and I sit out the *opera bouffé* to the last minute, and enjoy it. This evening…"

He mentioned a French actress, and was going to tell something about her; but the ambassador's wife, with playful horror, cut him short.

"Please don't tell us about that horror."

"All right, I won't especially as everyone knows those horrors."

"And we should all go to see them if it were accepted as the correct thing, like the opera," chimed in Princess Myakaya.

Chapter 7

Steps were heard at the door, and Princess Betsy, knowing it was Madame Karenina, glanced at Vronsky. He was looking towards the door, and his face wore a strange new expression. Joyfully, intently, and at the same time timidly, he gazed at the approaching figure, and slowly he rose to his feet. Anna walked into the drawing room. Holding herself extremely erect, as always, looking straight before her, and moving with her swift, resolute, and light step, that distinguished her from all other society women, she crossed the short space to her hostess, shook hands with her, smiled, and with the same smile looked around at Vronsky. Vronsky bowed low and pushed a chair up for her.

She acknowledged this only by a slight nod, flushed a little, and frowned. But immediately, while rapidly greeting her acquaintances, and shaking the hands proffered to her, she addressed Princess Betsy:

"I have been at Countess Lidia's, and meant to have come here earlier, but I stayed on. Sir John was there. He's very interesting."

"Oh, that's this missionary?"

"Yes; he told us about the life in India, most interesting things."

The conversation, interrupted by her coming in, flickered up again like the light of a lamp being blown out.

"Sir John! Yes, Sir John; I've seen him. He speaks well. The Vlassieva girl's quite in love with him."

"And is it true the younger Vlassieva girl's to marry Topov?"

"Yes, they say it's quite a settled thing."

"I wonder at the parents! They say it's a marriage for love."

"For love? What antediluvian notions you have! Can one talk of love in these days?" said the ambassador's wife.

"What's to be done? It's a foolish old fashion that's kept up still," said Vronsky.

"So much the worse for those who keep up the fashion. The only happy marriages I know are marriages of prudence."

"Yes, but then how often the happiness of these prudent marriages flies away like dust just because that passion turns up that they have refused to recognize," said Vronsky.

"But by marriages of prudence we mean those in which both parties have sown their wild oats already. That's like scarlatina – one has to go through it and get it over."

"Then they ought to find out how to vaccinate for love, like smallpox."

"I was in love in my young days with a deacon," said the Princess Myakaya. "I don't know that it did me any good."

"No; I imagine, joking apart, that to know love, one must make mistakes and then correct them," said Princess Betsy.

"Even after marriage?" said the ambassador's wife playfully.

"'It's never too late to mend.'" The attaché repeated the English proverb.

"Just so," Betsy agreed; "one must make mistakes and correct them. What do you think about it?" she turned to Anna, who, with a faintly perceptible resolute smile on her lips, was listening in silence to the conversation.

"I think," said Anna, playing with the glove she had taken off, "I think … of so many men, so many minds, certainly so many hearts, so many kinds of love."

Vronsky was gazing at Anna, and with a fainting heart waiting for what she would say. He sighed as after a danger escaped when she uttered these words.

Anna suddenly turned to him.

"Oh, I have had a letter from Moscow. They write me that Kitty Shtcherbatskaya's very ill."

"Really?" said Vronsky, knitting his brows.

Anna looked sternly at him.

"That doesn't interest you?"

"On the contrary, it does, very much. What was it exactly they told you, if I may know?" he questioned.

Anna got up and went to Betsy.

"Give me a cup of tea," she said, standing at her table.

While Betsy was pouring out the tea, Vronsky went up to Anna.

"What is it they write to you?" he repeated.

"I often think men have no understanding of what's not honorable though they're always talking of it," said Anna, without answering him. "I've wanted to tell you so a long while," she added, and moving a few steps away, she sat down at a table in a corner covered with albums.

"I don't quite understand the meaning of your words," he said, handing her the cup.

She glanced towards the sofa beside her, and he instantly sat down.

"Yes, I have been wanting to tell you," she said, not looking at him. "You behaved wrongly, very wrongly."

"Do you suppose I don't know that I've acted wrongly? But who was the cause of my doing so?"

"What do you say that to me for?" she said, glancing severely at him.

"You know what for," he answered boldly and joyfully, meeting her glance and not dropping his eyes.

Not he, but she, was confused.

"That only shows you have no heart," she said. But her eyes said that she knew he had a heart, and that was why she was afraid of him.

"What you spoke of just now was a mistake, and not love."

"Remember that I have forbidden you to utter that word, that hateful word," said Anna, with a shudder. But at once she felt that by that very word "forbidden" she had shown that she acknowledged certain rights over him, and by that very fact was encouraging him to speak of love. "I have long meant to tell you this," she went on, looking resolutely into his eyes, and hot all over from the burning flush on her cheeks. "I've come on purpose this evening, knowing I should meet you. I have come to tell you that this must end. I have never blushed before anyone, and you force me to feel to blame for something."

He looked at her and was struck by a new spiritual beauty in her face.

"What do you wish of me?" he said simply and seriously.

"I want you to go to Moscow and ask for Kitty's forgiveness," she said.

"You don't wish that?" he said.

He saw she was saying what she forced herself to say, not what she wanted to say.

"If you love me, as you say," she whispered, "do so that I may be at peace."

His face grew radiant.

"Don't you know that you're all my life to me? But I know no peace, and I can't give it to you; all myself – and love … yes. I can't think of you and myself apart. You and I are one to me. And I see no chance before us of peace for me or for you. I see a chance of despair, of wretchedness … or I see a chance of bliss, what bliss!.. Can it be there's no chance of it?" he murmured with his lips; but she heard.

She strained every effort of her mind to say what ought to be said. But instead of that she let her eyes rest on him, full of love, and made no answer.

"It's come!" he thought in ecstasy. "When I was beginning to despair, and it seemed there would be no end – it's come! She loves me! She owns it!"

"Then do this for me: never say such things to me, and let us be friends," she said in words; but her eyes spoke quite differently.

"Friends we shall never be, you know that yourself. Whether we shall be the happiest or the wretchedest of people – that's in your hands."

She would have said something, but he interrupted her.

"I ask one thing only: I ask for the right to hope, to suffer as I do. But if even that cannot be, command me to disappear, and I disappear. You shall not see me if my presence is distasteful to you."

"I don't want to drive you away."

"Only don't change anything, leave everything as it is," he said in a shaky voice. "Here's your husband."

At that instant Alexey Alexandrovitch did in fact walk into the room with his calm, awkward gait.

Glancing at his wife and Vronsky, he went up to the lady of the house, and sitting down for a cup of tea, began talking in his deliberate, always audible voice, in his habitual tone of banter, ridiculing someone.

"Your Rambouillet is in full conclave," he said, looking round at all the party; "the graces and the muses."

But Princess Betsy could not endure that tone of his – "sneering," as she called it, using the English word, and like a skillful hostess she at once brought him into a serious conversation on the subject of universal conscription. Alexey Alexandrovitch was immediately interested in the subject, and began seriously defending the new imperial decree against Princess Betsy, who had attacked it.

Vronsky and Anna still sat at the little table.

"This is getting indecorous," whispered one lady, with an expressive glance at Madame Karenina, Vronsky, and her husband.

"What did I tell you?" said Anna's friend.

But not only those ladies, almost everyone in the room, even the Princess Myakaya and Betsy herself, looked several times in the direction of the two who had withdrawn from the general circle, as though that were a disturbing fact. Alexey Alexandrovitch was the only person who did not once look in that direction, and was not diverted from the interesting discussion he had entered upon.

Noticing the disagreeable impression that was being made on everyone, Princess Betsy slipped someone else into her place to listen to Alexey Alexandrovitch, and went up to Anna.

"I'm always amazed at the clearness and precision of your husband's language," she said. "The most transcendental ideas seem to be within my grasp when he's speaking."

"Oh, yes!" said Anna, radiant with a smile of happiness, and not understanding a word of what Betsy had said. She crossed over to the big table and took part in the general conversation.

Alexey Alexandrovitch, after staying half an hour, went up to his wife and suggested that they should go home together. But she answered, not looking at him, that she was staying to supper. Alexey Alexandrovitch made his bows and withdrew.

The fat old Tatar, Madame Karenina's coachman, was with difficulty holding one of her pair of grays, chilled with the cold and rearing at the entrance. A footman stood opening the carriage door. The hall porter stood holding open the great door of the house. Anna Arkadyevna, with her quick little hand, was unfastening the lace of her sleeve, caught in the hook of her fur cloak, and with bent head listening to the words Vronsky murmured as he escorted her down.

"You've said nothing, of course, and I ask nothing," he was saying; "but you know that friendship's not what I want: that there's only one happiness in life for me, that word that you dislike so … yes, love!.."

"Love," she repeated slowly, in an inner voice, and suddenly, at the very instant she unhooked the lace, she added, "Why I don't like the word is that it means too much to me, far more than you can understand," and she glanced into his face. "*Au revoir!*"

She gave him her hand, and with her rapid, springy step she passed by the porter and vanished into the carriage.

Her glance, the touch of her hand, set him aflame. He kissed the palm of his hand where she had touched it, and went home, happy in the sense that he had got nearer to the attainment of his aims that evening than during the last two months.

Chapter 8

Alexey Alexandrovitch had seen nothing striking or improper in the fact that his wife was sitting with Vronsky at a table apart, in eager conversation with him about something. But he noticed that to the rest of the party this appeared something striking and improper, and for that reason it seemed to him too to be improper. He made up his mind that he must speak of it to his wife.

On reaching home Alexey Alexandrovitch went to his study, as he usually did, seated himself in his low chair, opened a book on the Papacy at the place where he had laid the paper-knife in it, and read till one o'clock, just as he usually did. But from time to time he rubbed his high forehead and shook his head, as though to drive away something. At his usual time he got up and made his toilet for the night. Anna Arkadyevna had not yet come in. With a book under his arm he went upstairs. But this evening, instead of his usual thoughts and meditations upon official details, his thoughts were absorbed by his wife and something disagreeable connected with her. Contrary to his usual habit, he did not get into bed, but fell to walking up and down the rooms with his hands clasped behind his back. He could not go to bed, feeling that it was absolutely needful for him first to think thoroughly over the position that had just arisen.

When Alexey Alexandrovitch had made up his mind that he must talk to his wife about it, it had seemed a very easy and simple matter. But now, when he began to think over the question that had just presented itself, it seemed to him very complicated and difficult.

Alexey Alexandrovitch was not jealous. Jealousy according to his notions was an insult to one's wife, and one ought to have confidence in one's wife. Why one ought to have confidence – that is to say, complete conviction that his young wife would always love him – he did not ask himself. But he had no experience of lack of confidence, because he had confidence in her, and told himself that he ought to have it. Now, though his conviction that jealousy was a shameful feeling and that one ought to feel confidence, had not broken down, he felt that he was standing face to face with something illogical and irrational, and did not know what was to be done. Alexey Alexandrovitch was standing face to face with life, with the possibility of his wife's loving someone other than himself, and this seemed to him very irrational and incomprehensible because it was life itself. All his life Alexey Alexandrovitch had lived and worked in official spheres, having to do with the reflection of life. And every time he had stumbled against life itself he had shrunk away from it. Now he experienced a feeling akin to that of a man who, while calmly crossing a precipice by a bridge, should suddenly discover that the bridge is broken, and that there is a chasm below. That chasm was life itself, the bridge that artificial life in which Alexey Alexandrovitch had lived. For the first time the question presented itself to him of the possibility of his wife's loving someone else, and he was horrified at it.

He did not undress, but walked up and down with his regular tread over the resounding parquet of the dining room, where one lamp was burning, over the carpet of the dark drawing room, in which the light was reflected on the big new portrait of himself hanging over the sofa, and across her boudoir, where two candles burned, lighting up the portraits of her parents and woman friends, and the pretty knick-knacks of her writing table, that he knew so well. He walked across her boudoir to the bedroom door, and turned back again. At each turn in his walk, especially at the parquet of the lighted dining room, he halted and said to himself, "Yes, this I must decide and put a stop to; I must express my view of it and my decision." And he turned back again. "But express what – what decision?" he said to himself in the drawing room, and he found no reply. "But after all," he asked himself before turning into the boudoir, "what has occurred? Nothing. She was talking a long while with him. But what of that? Surely women in society can talk to whom they please. And then, jealousy means lowering both myself and her," he told himself as he went into her boudoir; but this dictum, which had always had such weight with him before, had now no weight and no meaning at all. And from the bedroom door he turned back again; but as he entered the dark drawing room some inner voice told him that it was

not so, and that if others noticed it that showed that there was something. And he said to himself again in the dining room, "Yes, I must decide and put a stop to it, and express my view of it…" And again at the turn in the drawing room he asked himself, "Decide how?" And again he asked himself, "What had occurred?" and answered, "Nothing," and recollected that jealousy was a feeling insulting to his wife; but again in the drawing room he was convinced that something had happened. His thoughts, like his body, went round a complete circle, without coming upon anything new. He noticed this, rubbed his forehead, and sat down in her boudoir.

There, looking at her table, with the malachite blotting case lying at the top and an unfinished letter, his thoughts suddenly changed. He began to think of her, of what she was thinking and feeling. For the first time he pictured vividly to himself her personal life, her ideas, her desires, and the idea that she could and should have a separate life of her own seemed to him so alarming that he made haste to dispel it. It was the chasm which he was afraid to peep into. To put himself in thought and feeling in another person's place was a spiritual exercise not natural to Alexey Alexandrovitch. He looked on this spiritual exercise as a harmful and dangerous abuse of the fancy.

"And the worst of it all," thought he, "is that just now, at the very moment when my great work is approaching completion" (he was thinking of the project he was bringing forward at the time), "when I stand in need of all my mental peace and all my energies, just now this stupid worry should fall foul of me. But what's to be done? I'm not one of those men who submit to uneasiness and worry without having the force of character to face them.

"I must think it over, come to a decision, and put it out of my mind," he said aloud.

"The question of her feelings, of what has passed and may be passing in her soul, that's not my affair; that's the affair of her conscience, and falls under the head of religion," he said to himself, feeling consolation in the sense that he had found to which division of regulating principles this new circumstance could be properly referred.

"And so," Alexey Alexandrovitch said to himself, "questions as to her feelings, and so on, are questions for her conscience, with which I can have nothing to do. My duty is clearly defined. As the head of the family, I am a person bound in duty to guide her, and consequently, in part the person responsible; I am bound to point out the danger I perceive, to warn her, even to use my authority. I ought to speak plainly to her." And everything that he would say tonight to his wife took clear shape in Alexey Alexandrovitch's head. Thinking over what he would say, he somewhat regretted that he should have to use his time and mental powers for domestic consumption, with so little to show for it, but, in spite of that, the form and contents of the speech before him shaped itself as clearly and distinctly in his head as a ministerial report.

"I must say and express fully the following points: first, exposition of the value to be attached to public opinion and to decorum; secondly, exposition of religious significance of marriage; thirdly, if need be, reference to the calamity possibly ensuing to our son; fourthly, reference to the unhappiness likely to result to herself." And, interlacing his fingers, Alexey Alexandrovitch stretched them, and the joints of the fingers cracked. This trick, a bad habit, the cracking of his fingers, always soothed him, and gave precision to his thoughts, so needful to him at this juncture.

There was the sound of a carriage driving up to the front door. Alexey Alexandrovitch halted in the middle of the room.

A woman's step was heard mounting the stairs. Alexey Alexandrovitch, ready for his speech, stood compressing his crossed fingers, waiting to see if the crack would not come again. One joint cracked.

Already, from the sound of light steps on the stairs, he was aware that she was close, and though he was satisfied with his speech, he felt frightened of the explanation confronting him…

Chapter 9

Anna came in with hanging head, playing with the tassels of her hood. Her face was brilliant and glowing; but this glow was not one of brightness; it suggested the fearful glow of a conflagration in the midst of a dark night. On seeing her husband, Anna raised her head and smiled, as though she had just waked up.

"You're not in bed? What a wonder!" she said, letting fall her hood, and without stopping, she went on into the dressing room. "It's late, Alexey Alexandrovitch," she said, when she had gone through the doorway.

"Anna, it's necessary for me to have a talk with you."

"With me?" she said, wonderingly. She came out from behind the door of the dressing room, and looked at him. "Why, what is it? What about?" she asked, sitting down. "Well, let's talk, if it's so necessary. But it would be better to get to sleep."

Anna said what came to her lips, and marveled, hearing herself, at her own capacity for lying. How simple and natural were her words, and how likely that she was simply sleepy! She felt herself clad in an impenetrable armor of falsehood. She felt that some unseen force had come to her aid and was supporting her.

"Anna, I must warn you," he began.

"Warn me?" she said. "Of what?"

She looked at him so simply, so brightly, that anyone who did not know her as her husband knew her could not have noticed anything unnatural, either in the sound or the sense of her words. But to him, knowing her, knowing that whenever he went to bed five minutes later than usual, she noticed it, and asked him the reason; to him, knowing that every joy, every pleasure and pain that she felt she communicated to him at once; to him, now to see that she did not care to notice his state of mind, that she did not care to say a word about herself, meant a great deal. He saw that the inmost recesses of her soul, that had always hitherto lain open before him, were closed against him. More than that, he saw from her tone that she was not even perturbed at that, but as it were said straight out to him: "Yes, it's shut up, and so it must be, and will be in future." Now he experienced a feeling such as a man might have, returning home and finding his own house locked up. "But perhaps the key may yet be found," thought Alexey Alexandrovitch.

"I want to warn you," he said in a low voice, "that through thoughtlessness and lack of caution you may cause yourself to be talked about in society. Your too animated conversation this evening with Count Vronsky" (he enunciated the name firmly and with deliberate emphasis) "attracted attention."

He talked and looked at her laughing eyes, which frightened him now with their impenetrable look, and, as he talked, he felt all the uselessness and idleness of his words.

"You're always like that," she answered, as though completely misapprehending him, and of all he had said only taking in the last phrase. "One time you don't like my being dull, and another time you don't like my being lively. I wasn't dull. Does that offend you?"

Alexey Alexandrovitch shivered, and bent his hands to make the joints crack.

"Oh, please, don't do that, I do so dislike it," she said.

"Anna, is this you?" said Alexey Alexandrovitch, quietly making an effort over himself, and restraining the motion of his fingers.

"But what is it all about?" she said, with such genuine and droll wonder. "What do you want of me?"

Alexey Alexandrovitch paused, and rubbed his forehead and his eyes. He saw that instead of doing as he had intended – that is to say, warning his wife against a mistake in the eyes of the world –

he had unconsciously become agitated over what was the affair of her conscience, and was struggling against the barrier he fancied between them.

"This is what I meant to say to you," he went on coldly and composedly, "and I beg you to listen to it. I consider jealousy, as you know, a humiliating and degrading feeling, and I shall never allow myself to be influenced by it; but there are certain rules of decorum which cannot be disregarded with impunity. This evening it was not I observed it, but judging by the impression made on the company, everyone observed that your conduct and deportment were not altogether what could be desired."

"I positively don't understand," said Anna, shrugging her shoulders – "He doesn't care," she thought. "But other people noticed it, and that's what upsets him." – "You're not well, Alexey Alexandrovitch," she added, and she got up, and would have gone towards the door; but he moved forward as though he would stop her.

His face was ugly and forbidding, as Anna had never seen him. She stopped, and bending her head back and on one side, began with her rapid hand taking out her hairpins.

"Well, I'm listening to what's to come," she said, calmly and ironically; "and indeed I listen with interest, for I should like to understand what's the matter."

She spoke, and marveled at the confident, calm, and natural tone in which she was speaking, and the choice of the words she used.

"To enter into all the details of your feelings I have no right, and besides, I regard that as useless and even harmful," began Alexey Alexandrovitch. "Ferreting in one's soul, one often ferrets out something that might have lain there unnoticed. Your feelings are an affair of your own conscience; but I am in duty bound to you, to myself, and to God, to point out to you your duties. Our life has been joined, not by man, but by God. That union can only be severed by a crime, and a crime of that nature brings its own chastisement."

"I don't understand a word. And, oh dear! how sleepy I am, unluckily," she said, rapidly passing her hand through her hair, feeling for the remaining hairpins.

"Anna, for God's sake don't speak like that!" he said gently. "Perhaps I am mistaken, but believe me, what I say, I say as much for myself as for you. I am your husband, and I love you."

For an instant her face fell, and the mocking gleam in her eyes died away; but the word *love* threw her into revolt again. She thought: "Love? Can he love? If he hadn't heard there was such a thing as love, he would never have used the word. He doesn't even know what love is."

"Alexey Alexandrovitch, really I don't understand," she said. "Define what it is you find…"

"Pardon, let me say all I have to say. I love you. But I am not speaking of myself; the most important persons in this matter are our son and yourself. It may very well be, I repeat, that my words seem to you utterly unnecessary and out of place; it may be that they are called forth by my mistaken impression. In that case, I beg you to forgive me. But if you are conscious yourself of even the smallest foundation for them, then I beg you to think a little, and if your heart prompts you, to speak out to me…"

Alexey Alexandrovitch was unconsciously saying something utterly unlike what he had prepared.

"I have nothing to say. And besides," she said hurriedly, with difficulty repressing a smile, "it's really time to be in bed."

Alexey Alexandrovitch sighed, and, without saying more, went into the bedroom.

When she came into the bedroom, he was already in bed. His lips were sternly compressed, and his eyes looked away from her. Anna got into her bed, and lay expecting every minute that he would begin to speak to her again. She both feared his speaking and wished for it. But he was silent. She waited for a long while without moving, and had forgotten about him. She thought of that other; she pictured him, and felt how her heart was flooded with emotion and guilty delight at the thought of him. Suddenly she heard an even, tranquil snore. For the first instant Alexey Alexandrovitch seemed,

as it were, appalled at his own snoring, and ceased; but after an interval of two breathings the snore sounded again, with a new tranquil rhythm.

"It's late, it's late," she whispered with a smile. A long while she lay, not moving, with open eyes, whose brilliance she almost fancied she could herself see in the darkness.

Chapter 10

From that time a new life began for Alexey Alexandrovitch and for his wife. Nothing special happened. Anna went out into society, as she had always done, was particularly often at Princess Betsy's, and met Vronsky everywhere. Alexey Alexandrovitch saw this, but could do nothing. All his efforts to draw her into open discussion she confronted with a barrier which he could not penetrate, made up of a sort of amused perplexity. Outwardly everything was the same, but their inner relations were completely changed. Alexey Alexandrovitch, a man of great power in the world of politics, felt himself helpless in this. Like an ox with head bent, submissively he awaited the blow which he felt was lifted over him. Every time he began to think about it, he felt that he must try once more, that by kindness, tenderness, and persuasion there was still hope of saving her, of bringing her back to herself, and every day he made ready to talk to her. But every time he began talking to her, he felt that the spirit of evil and deceit, which had taken possession of her, had possession of him too, and he talked to her in a tone quite unlike that in which he had meant to talk. Involuntarily he talked to her in his habitual tone of jeering at anyone who should say what he was saying. And in that tone it was impossible to say what needed to be said to her.

Chapter 11

That which for Vronsky had been almost a whole year the one absorbing desire of his life, replacing all his old desires; that which for Anna had been an impossible, terrible, and even for that reason more entrancing dream of bliss, that desire had been fulfilled. He stood before her, pale, his lower jaw quivering, and besought her to be calm, not knowing how or why.

"Anna! Anna!" he said with a choking voice, "Anna, for pity's sake!.."

But the louder he spoke, the lower she dropped her once proud and gay, now shame-stricken head, and she bowed down and sank from the sofa where she was sitting, down on the floor, at his feet; she would have fallen on the carpet if he had not held her.

"My God! Forgive me!" she said, sobbing, pressing his hands to her bosom.

She felt so sinful, so guilty, that nothing was left her but to humiliate herself and beg forgiveness; and as now there was no one in her life but him, to him she addressed her prayer for forgiveness. Looking at him, she had a physical sense of her humiliation, and she could say nothing more. He felt what a murderer must feel, when he sees the body he has robbed of life. That body, robbed by him of life, was their love, the first stage of their love. There was something awful and revolting in the memory of what had been bought at this fearful price of shame. Shame at their spiritual nakedness crushed her and infected him. But in spite of all the murderer's horror before the body of his victim, he must hack it to pieces, hide the body, must use what he has gained by his murder.

And with fury, as it were with passion, the murderer falls on the body, and drags it and hacks at it; so he covered her face and shoulders with kisses. She held his hand, and did not stir. "Yes, these kisses – that is what has been bought by this shame. Yes, and one hand, which will always be mine – the hand of my accomplice." She lifted up that hand and kissed it. He sank on his knees and tried to see her face; but she hid it, and said nothing. At last, as though making an effort over herself, she got up and pushed him away. Her face was still as beautiful, but it was only the more pitiful for that.

"All is over," she said; "I have nothing but you. Remember that."

"I can never forget what is my whole life. For one instant of this happiness…"

"Happiness!" she said with horror and loathing and her horror unconsciously infected him. "For pity's sake, not a word, not a word more."

She rose quickly and moved away from him.

"Not a word more," she repeated, and with a look of chill despair, incomprehensible to him, she parted from him. She felt that at that moment she could not put into words the sense of shame, of rapture, and of horror at this stepping into a new life, and she did not want to speak of it, to vulgarize this feeling by inappropriate words. But later too, and the next day and the third day, she still found no words in which she could express the complexity of her feelings; indeed, she could not even find thoughts in which she could clearly think out all that was in her soul.

She said to herself: "No, just now I can't think of it, later on, when I am calmer." But this calm for thought never came; every time the thought rose of what she had done and what would happen to her, and what she ought to do, a horror came over her and she drove those thoughts away.

"Later, later," she said – "when I am calmer."

But in dreams, when she had no control over her thoughts, her position presented itself to her in all its hideous nakedness. One dream haunted her almost every night. She dreamed that both were her husbands at once, that both were lavishing caresses on her. Alexey Alexandrovitch was weeping, kissing her hands, and saying, "How happy we are now!" And Alexey Vronsky was there too, and he too was her husband. And she was marveling that it had once seemed impossible to her, was explaining to them, laughing, that this was ever so much simpler, and that now both of them were happy and contented. But this dream weighed on her like a nightmare, and she awoke from it in terror.

Chapter 12

In the early days after his return from Moscow, whenever Levin shuddered and grew red, remembering the disgrace of his rejection, he said to himself: "This was just how I used to shudder and blush, thinking myself utterly lost, when I was plucked in physics and did not get my remove; and how I thought myself utterly ruined after I had mismanaged that affair of my sister's that was entrusted to me. And yet, now that years have passed, I recall it and wonder that it could distress me so much. It will be the same thing too with this trouble. Time will go by and I shall not mind about this either."

But three months had passed and he had not left off minding about it; and it was as painful for him to think of it as it had been those first days. He could not be at peace because after dreaming so long of family life, and feeling himself so ripe for it, he was still not married, and was further than ever from marriage. He was painfully conscious himself, as were all about him, that at his years it is not well for man to be alone. He remembered how before starting for Moscow he had once said to his cowman Nikolay, a simple-hearted peasant, whom he liked talking to: "Well, Nikolay! I mean to get married," and how Nikolay had promptly answered, as of a matter on which there could be no possible doubt: "And high time too, Konstantin Demitrievitch." But marriage had now become further off than ever. The place was taken, and whenever he tried to imagine any of the girls he knew in that place, he felt that it was utterly impossible. Moreover, the recollection of the rejection and the part he had played in the affair tortured him with shame. However often he told himself that he was in no wise to blame in it, that recollection, like other humiliating reminiscences of a similar kind, made him twinge and blush. There had been in his past, as in every man's, actions, recognized by him as bad, for which his conscience ought to have tormented him; but the memory of these evil actions was far from causing him so much suffering as those trivial but humiliating reminiscences. These wounds never healed. And with these memories was now ranged his rejection and the pitiful position in which he must have appeared to others that evening. But time and work did their part. Bitter memories were more and more covered up by the incidents – paltry in his eyes, but really important – of his country life. Every week he thought less often of Kitty. He was impatiently looking forward to the news that she was married, or just going to be married, hoping that such news would, like having a tooth out, completely cure him.

Meanwhile spring came on, beautiful and kindly, without the delays and treacheries of spring, – one of those rare springs in which plants, beasts, and man rejoice alike. This lovely spring roused Levin still more, and strengthened him in his resolution of renouncing all his past and building up his lonely life firmly and independently. Though many of the plans with which he had returned to the country had not been carried out, still his most important resolution – that of purity – had been kept by him. He was free from that shame, which had usually harassed him after a fall; and he could look everyone straight in the face. In February he had received a letter from Marya Nikolaevna telling him that his brother Nikolay's health was getting worse, but that he would not take advice, and in consequence of this letter Levin went to Moscow to his brother's and succeeded in persuading him to see a doctor and to go to a watering-place abroad. He succeeded so well in persuading his brother, and in lending him money for the journey without irritating him, that he was satisfied with himself in that matter. In addition to his farming, which called for special attention in spring, and in addition to reading, Levin had begun that winter a work on agriculture, the plan of which turned on taking into account the character of the laborer on the land as one of the unalterable data of the question, like the climate and the soil, and consequently deducing all the principles of scientific culture, not simply from the data of soil and climate, but from the data of soil, climate, and a certain unalterable character of the laborer. Thus, in spite of his solitude, or in consequence of his solitude, his life was exceedingly full. Only rarely he suffered from an unsatisfied desire to communicate his stray ideas to someone

besides Agafea Mihalovna. With her indeed he not infrequently fell into discussion upon physics, the theory of agriculture, and especially philosophy; philosophy was Agafea Mihalovna's favorite subject.

Spring was slow in unfolding. For the last few weeks it had been steadily fine frosty weather. In the daytime it thawed in the sun, but at night there were even seven degrees of frost. There was such a frozen surface on the snow that they drove the wagons anywhere off the roads. Easter came in the snow. Then all of a sudden, on Easter Monday, a warm wind sprang up, storm clouds swooped down, and for three days and three nights the warm, driving rain fell in streams. On Thursday the wind dropped, and a thick gray fog brooded over the land as though hiding the mysteries of the transformations that were being wrought in nature. Behind the fog there was the flowing of water, the cracking and floating of ice, the swift rush of turbid, foaming torrents; and on the following Monday, in the evening, the fog parted, the storm clouds split up into little curling crests of cloud, the sky cleared, and the real spring had come. In the morning the sun rose brilliant and quickly wore away the thin layer of ice that covered the water, and all the warm air was quivering with the steam that rose up from the quickened earth. The old grass looked greener, and the young grass thrust up its tiny blades; the buds of the guelder-rose and of the currant and the sticky birch-buds were swollen with sap, and an exploring bee was humming about the golden blossoms that studded the willow. Larks trilled unseen above the velvety green fields and the ice-covered stubble-land; peewits wailed over the low lands and marshes flooded by the pools; cranes and wild geese flew high across the sky uttering their spring calls. The cattle, bald in patches where the new hair had not grown yet, lowed in the pastures; the bowlegged lambs frisked round their bleating mothers. Nimble children ran about the drying paths, covered with the prints of bare feet. There was a merry chatter of peasant women over their linen at the pond, and the ring of axes in the yard, where the peasants were repairing ploughs and harrows. The real spring had come.

Chapter 13

Levin put on his big boots, and, for the first time, a cloth jacket, instead of his fur cloak, and went out to look after his farm, stepping over streams of water that flashed in the sunshine and dazzled his eyes, and treading one minute on ice and the next into sticky mud.

Spring is the time of plans and projects. And, as he came out into the farmyard, Levin, like a tree in spring that knows not what form will be taken by the young shoots and twigs imprisoned in its swelling buds, hardly knew what undertakings he was going to begin upon now in the farm work that was so dear to him. But he felt that he was full of the most splendid plans and projects. First of all he went to the cattle. The cows had been let out into their paddock, and their smooth sides were already shining with their new, sleek, spring coats; they basked in the sunshine and lowed to go to the meadow. Levin gazed admiringly at the cows he knew so intimately to the minutest detail of their condition, and gave orders for them to be driven out into the meadow, and the calves to be let into the paddock. The herdsman ran gaily to get ready for the meadow. The cowherd girls, picking up their petticoats, ran splashing through the mud with bare legs, still white, not yet brown from the sun, waving brush wood in their hands, chasing the calves that frolicked in the mirth of spring.

After admiring the young ones of that year, who were particularly fine – the early calves were the size of a peasant's cow, and Pava's daughter, at three months old, was as big as a yearling – Levin gave orders for a trough to be brought out and for them to be fed in the paddock. But it appeared that as the paddock had not been used during the winter, the hurdles made in the autumn for it were broken. He sent for the carpenter, who, according to his orders, ought to have been at work at the thrashing machine. But it appeared that the carpenter was repairing the harrows, which ought to have been repaired before Lent. This was very annoying to Levin. It was annoying to come upon that everlasting slovenliness in the farm work against which he had been striving with all his might for so many years. The hurdles, as he ascertained, being not wanted in winter, had been carried to the cart-horses' stable; and there broken, as they were of light construction, only meant for feeding calves. Moreover, it was apparent also that the harrows and all the agricultural implements, which he had directed to be looked over and repaired in the winter, for which very purpose he had hired three carpenters, had not been put into repair, and the harrows were being repaired when they ought to have been harrowing the field. Levin sent for his bailiff, but immediately went off himself to look for him. The bailiff, beaming all over, like everyone that day, in a sheepskin bordered with astrachan, came out of the barn, twisting a bit of straw in his hands.

"Why isn't the carpenter at the thrashing machine?"

"Oh, I meant to tell you yesterday, the harrows want repairing. Here it's time they got to work in the fields."

"But what were they doing in the winter, then?"

"But what did you want the carpenter for?"

"Where are the hurdles for the calves' paddock?"

"I ordered them to be got ready. What would you have with those peasants!" said the bailiff, with a wave of his hand.

"It's not those peasants but this bailiff!" said Levin, getting angry. "Why, what do I keep you for?" he cried. But, bethinking himself that this would not help matters, he stopped short in the middle of a sentence, and merely sighed. "Well, what do you say? Can sowing begin?" he asked, after a pause.

"Behind Turkin tomorrow or the next day they might begin."

"And the clover?"

"I've sent Vassily and Mishka; they're sowing. Only I don't know if they'll manage to get through; it's so slushy."

"How many acres?"

"About fifteen."

"Why not sow all?" cried Levin.

That they were only sowing the clover on fifteen acres, not on all the forty-five, was still more annoying to him. Clover, as he knew, both from books and from his own experience, never did well except when it was sown as early as possible, almost in the snow. And yet Levin could never get this done.

"There's no one to send. What would you have with such a set of peasants? Three haven't turned up. And there's Semyon…"

"Well, you should have taken some men from the thatching."

"And so I have, as it is."

"Where are the peasants, then?"

"Five are making compôte" (which meant compost), "four are shifting the oats for fear of a touch of mildew, Konstantin Dmitrievitch."

Levin knew very well that "a touch of mildew" meant that his English seed oats were already ruined. Again they had not done as he had ordered.

"Why, but I told you during Lent to put in pipes," he cried.

"Don't put yourself out; we shall get it all done in time."

Levin waved his hand angrily, went into the granary to glance at the oats, and then to the stable. The oats were not yet spoiled. But the peasants were carrying the oats in spades when they might simply let them slide down into the lower granary; and arranging for this to be done, and taking two workmen from there for sowing clover, Levin got over his vexation with the bailiff. Indeed, it was such a lovely day that one could not be angry.

"Ignat!" he called to the coachman, who, with his sleeves tucked up, was washing the carriage wheels, "saddle me…"

"Which, sir?"

"Well, let it be Kolpik."

"Yes, sir."

While they were saddling his horse, Levin again called up the bailiff, who was hanging about in sight, to make it up with him, and began talking to him about the spring operations before them, and his plans for the farm.

The wagons were to begin carting manure earlier, so as to get all done before the early mowing. And the ploughing of the further land to go on without a break so as to let it ripen lying fallow. And the mowing to be all done by hired labor, not on half-profits. The bailiff listened attentively, and obviously made an effort to approve of his employer's projects. But still he had that look Levin knew so well that always irritated him, a look of hopelessness and despondency. That look said: "That's all very well, but as God wills."

Nothing mortified Levin so much as that tone. But it was the tone common to all the bailiffs he had ever had. They had all taken up that attitude to his plans, and so now he was not angered by it, but mortified, and felt all the more roused to struggle against this, as it seemed, elemental force continually ranged against him, for which he could find no other expression than "as God wills."

"If we can manage it, Konstantin Dmitrievitch," said the bailiff.

"Why ever shouldn't you manage it?"

"We positively must have another fifteen laborers. And they don't turn up. There were some here today asking seventy roubles for the summer."

Levin was silent. Again he was brought face to face with that opposing force. He knew that however much they tried, they could not hire more than forty – thirty-seven perhaps or thirty-eight – laborers for a reasonable sum. Some forty had been taken on, and there were no more. But still he could not help struggling against it.

"Send to Sury, to Tchefirovka; if they don't come we must look for them."

"Oh, I'll send, to be sure," said Vassily Fedorovitch despondently. "But there are the horses, too, they're not good for much."

"We'll get some more. I know, of course," Levin added laughing, "you always want to do with as little and as poor quality as possible; but this year I'm not going to let you have things your own way. I'll see to everything myself."

"Why, I don't think you take much rest as it is. It cheers us up to work under the master's eye…"

"So they're sowing clover behind the Birch Dale? I'll go and have a look at them," he said, getting on to the little bay cob, Kolpik, who was led up by the coachman.

"You can't get across the streams, Konstantin Dmitrievitch," the coachman shouted.

"All right, I'll go by the forest."

And Levin rode through the slush of the farmyard to the gate and out into the open country, his good little horse, after his long inactivity, stepping out gallantly, snorting over the pools, and asking, as it were, for guidance. If Levin had felt happy before in the cattle pens and farmyard, he felt happier yet in the open country. Swaying rhythmically with the ambling paces of his good little cob, drinking in the warm yet fresh scent of the snow and the air, as he rode through his forest over the crumbling, wasted snow, still left in parts, and covered with dissolving tracks, he rejoiced over every tree, with the moss reviving on its bark and the buds swelling on its shoots. When he came out of the forest, in the immense plain before him, his grass fields stretched in an unbroken carpet of green, without one bare place or swamp, only spotted here and there in the hollows with patches of melting snow. He was not put out of temper even by the sight of the peasants' horses and colts trampling down his young grass (he told a peasant he met to drive them out), nor by the sarcastic and stupid reply of the peasant Ipat, whom he met on the way, and asked, "Well, Ipat, shall we soon be sowing?" "We must get the ploughing done first, Konstantin Dmitrievitch," answered Ipat. The further he rode, the happier he became, and plans for the land rose to his mind each better than the last; to plant all his fields with hedges along the southern borders, so that the snow should not lie under them; to divide them up into six fields of arable and three of pasture and hay; to build a cattle yard at the further end of the estate, and to dig a pond and to construct movable pens for the cattle as a means of manuring the land. And then eight hundred acres of wheat, three hundred of potatoes, and four hundred of clover, and not one acre exhausted.

Absorbed in such dreams, carefully keeping his horse by the hedges, so as not to trample his young crops, he rode up to the laborers who had been sent to sow clover. A cart with the seed in it was standing, not at the edge, but in the middle of the crop, and the winter corn had been torn up by the wheels and trampled by the horse. Both the laborers were sitting in the hedge, probably smoking a pipe together. The earth in the cart, with which the seed was mixed, was not crushed to powder, but crusted together or adhering in clods. Seeing the master, the laborer, Vassily, went towards the cart, while Mishka set to work sowing. This was not as it should be, but with the laborers Levin seldom lost his temper. When Vassily came up, Levin told him to lead the horse to the hedge.

"It's all right, sir, it'll spring up again," responded Vassily.

"Please don't argue," said Levin, "but do as you're told."

"Yes, sir," answered Vassily, and he took the horse's head. "What a sowing, Konstantin Dmitrievitch," he said, hesitating; "first rate. Only it's a work to get about! You drag a ton of earth on your shoes."

"Why is it you have earth that's not sifted?" said Levin.

"Well, we crumble it up," answered Vassily, taking up some seed and rolling the earth in his palms.

Vassily was not to blame for their having filled up his cart with unsifted earth, but still it was annoying.

Levin had more than once already tried a way he knew for stifling his anger, and turning all that seemed dark right again, and he tried that way now. He watched how Mishka strode along, swinging

the huge clods of earth that clung to each foot; and getting off his horse, he took the sieve from Vassily and started sowing himself.

"Where did you stop?"

Vassily pointed to the mark with his foot, and Levin went forward as best he could, scattering the seed on the land. Walking was as difficult as on a bog, and by the time Levin had ended the row he was in a great heat, and he stopped and gave up the sieve to Vassily.

"Well, master, when summer's here, mind you don't scold me for these rows," said Vassily.

"Eh?" said Levin cheerily, already feeling the effect of his method.

"Why, you'll see in the summer time. It'll look different. Look you where I sowed last spring. How I did work at it! I do my best, Konstantin Dmitrievitch, d'ye see, as I would for my own father. I don't like bad work myself, nor would I let another man do it. What's good for the master's good for us too. To look out yonder now," said Vassily, pointing, "it does one's heart good."

"It's a lovely spring, Vassily."

"Why, it's a spring such as the old men don't remember the like of. I was up home; an old man up there has sown wheat too, about an acre of it. He was saying you wouldn't know it from rye."

"Have you been sowing wheat long?"

"Why, sir, it was you taught us the year before last. You gave me two measures. We sold about eight bushels and sowed a rood."

"Well, mind you crumble up the clods," said Levin, going towards his horse, "and keep an eye on Mishka. And if there's a good crop you shall have half a rouble for every acre."

"Humbly thankful. We are very well content, sir, as it is."

Levin got on his horse and rode towards the field where was last year's clover, and the one which was ploughed ready for the spring corn.

The crop of clover coming up in the stubble was magnificent. It had survived everything, and stood up vividly green through the broken stalks of last year's wheat. The horse sank in up to the pasterns, and he drew each hoof with a sucking sound out of the half-thawed ground. Over the ploughland riding was utterly impossible; the horse could only keep a foothold where there was ice, and in the thawing furrows he sank deep in at each step. The ploughland was in splendid condition; in a couple of days it would be fit for harrowing and sowing. Everything was capital, everything was cheering. Levin rode back across the streams, hoping the water would have gone down. And he did in fact get across, and startled two ducks. "There must be snipe too," he thought, and just as he reached the turning homewards he met the forest keeper, who confirmed his theory about the snipe.

Levin went home at a trot, so as to have time to eat his dinner and get his gun ready for the evening.

Chapter 14

As he rode up to the house in the happiest frame of mind, Levin heard the bell ring at the side of the principal entrance of the house.

"Yes, that's someone from the railway station," he thought, "just the time to be here from the Moscow train … Who could it be? What if it's brother Nikolay? He did say: 'Maybe I'll go to the waters, or maybe I'll come down to you.'" He felt dismayed and vexed for the first minute, that his brother Nikolay's presence should come to disturb his happy mood of spring. But he felt ashamed of the feeling, and at once he opened, as it were, the arms of his soul, and with a softened feeling of joy and expectation, now he hoped with all his heart that it was his brother. He pricked up his horse, and riding out from behind the acacias he saw a hired three-horse sledge from the railway station, and a gentleman in a fur coat. It was not his brother. "Oh, if it were only some nice person one could talk to a little!" he thought.

"Ah," cried Levin joyfully, flinging up both his hands. "Here's a delightful visitor! Ah, how glad I am to see you!" he shouted, recognizing Stepan Arkadyevitch.

"I shall find out for certain whether she's married, or when she's going to be married," he thought. And on that delicious spring day he felt that the thought of her did not hurt him at all.

"Well, you didn't expect me, eh?" said Stepan Arkadyevitch, getting out of the sledge, splashed with mud on the bridge of his nose, on his cheek, and on his eyebrows, but radiant with health and good spirits. "I've come to see you in the first place," he said, embracing and kissing him, "to have some stand-shooting second, and to sell the forest at Ergushovo third."

"Delightful! What a spring we're having! How ever did you get along in a sledge?"

"In a cart it would have been worse still, Konstantin Dmitrievitch," answered the driver, who knew him.

"Well, I'm very, very glad to see you," said Levin, with a genuine smile of childlike delight.

Levin led his friend to the room set apart for visitors, where Stepan Arkadyevitch's things were carried also – a bag, a gun in a case, a satchel for cigars. Leaving him there to wash and change his clothes, Levin went off to the counting house to speak about the ploughing and clover. Agafea Mihalovna, always very anxious for the credit of the house, met him in the hall with inquiries about dinner.

"Do just as you like, only let it be as soon as possible," he said, and went to the bailiff.

When he came back, Stepan Arkadyevitch, washed and combed, came out of his room with a beaming smile, and they went upstairs together.

"Well, I am glad I managed to get away to you! Now I shall understand what the mysterious business is that you are always absorbed in here. No, really, I envy you. What a house, how nice it all is! So bright, so cheerful!" said Stepan Arkadyevitch, forgetting that it was not always spring and fine weather like that day. "And your nurse is simply charming! A pretty maid in an apron might be even more agreeable, perhaps; but for your severe monastic style it does very well."

Stepan Arkadyevitch told him many interesting pieces of news; especially interesting to Levin was the news that his brother, Sergey Ivanovitch, was intending to pay him a visit in the summer.

Not one word did Stepan Arkadyevitch say in reference to Kitty and the Shtcherbatskys; he merely gave him greetings from his wife. Levin was grateful to him for his delicacy and was very glad of his visitor. As always happened with him during his solitude, a mass of ideas and feelings had been accumulating within him, which he could not communicate to those about him. And now he poured out upon Stepan Arkadyevitch his poetic joy in the spring, and his failures and plans for the land, and his thoughts and criticisms on the books he had been reading, and the idea of his own book, the basis of which really was, though he was unaware of it himself, a criticism of all the old books on agriculture. Stepan Arkadyevitch, always charming, understanding everything at

the slightest reference, was particularly charming on this visit, and Levin noticed in him a special tenderness, as it were, and a new tone of respect that flattered him.

The efforts of Agafea Mihalovna and the cook, that the dinner should be particularly good, only ended in the two famished friends attacking the preliminary course, eating a great deal of bread and butter, salt goose and salted mushrooms, and in Levin's finally ordering the soup to be served without the accompaniment of little pies, with which the cook had particularly meant to impress their visitor. But though Stepan Arkadyevitch was accustomed to very different dinners, he thought everything excellent: the herb brandy, and the bread, and the butter, and above all the salt goose and the mushrooms, and the nettle soup, and the chicken in white sauce, and the white Crimean wine – everything was superb and delicious.

"Splendid, splendid!" he said, lighting a fat cigar after the roast. "I feel as if, coming to you, I had landed on a peaceful shore after the noise and jolting of a steamer. And so you maintain that the laborer himself is an element to be studied and to regulate the choice of methods in agriculture. Of course, I'm an ignorant outsider; but I should fancy theory and its application will have its influence on the laborer too."

"Yes, but wait a bit. I'm not talking of political economy, I'm talking of the science of agriculture. It ought to be like the natural sciences, and to observe given phenomena and the laborer in his economic, ethnographical…"

At that instant Agafea Mihalovna came in with jam.

"Oh, Agafea Mihalovna," said Stepan Arkadyevitch, kissing the tips of his plump fingers, "what salt goose, what herb brandy!.. What do you think, isn't it time to start, Kostya?" he added.

Levin looked out of the window at the sun sinking behind the bare tree-tops of the forest.

"Yes, it's time," he said. "Kouzma, get ready the trap," and he ran downstairs.

Stepan Arkadyevitch, going down, carefully took the canvas cover off his varnished gun case with his own hands, and opening it, began to get ready his expensive new-fashioned gun. Kouzma, who already scented a big tip, never left Stepan Arkadyevitch's side, and put on him both his stockings and boots, a task which Stepan Arkadyevitch readily left him.

"Kostya, give orders that if the merchant Ryabinin comes … I told him to come today, he's to be brought in and to wait for me…"

"Why, do you mean to say you're selling the forest to Ryabinin?"

"Yes. Do you know him?"

"To be sure I do. I have had to do business with him, 'positively and conclusively.'"

Stepan Arkadyevitch laughed. "Positively and conclusively" were the merchant's favorite words.

"Yes, it's wonderfully funny the way he talks. She knows where her master's going!" he added, patting Laska, who hung about Levin, whining and licking his hands, his boots, and his gun.

The trap was already at the steps when they went out.

"I told them to bring the trap round; or would you rather walk?"

"No, we'd better drive," said Stepan Arkadyevitch, getting into the trap. He sat down, tucked the tiger-skin rug round him, and lighted a cigar. "How is it you don't smoke? A cigar is a sort of thing, not exactly a pleasure, but the crown and outward sign of pleasure. Come, this is life! How splendid it is! This is how I should like to live!"

"Why, who prevents you?" said Levin, smiling.

"No, you're a lucky man! You've got everything you like. You like horses – and you have them; dogs – you have them; shooting – you have it; farming – you have it."

"Perhaps because I rejoice in what I have, and don't fret for what I haven't," said Levin, thinking of Kitty.

Stepan Arkadyevitch comprehended, looked at him, but said nothing.

Levin was grateful to Oblonsky for noticing, with his never-failing tact, that he dreaded conversation about the Shtcherbatskys, and so saying nothing about them. But now Levin was longing to find out what was tormenting him so, yet he had not the courage to begin.

"Come, tell me how things are going with you," said Levin, bethinking himself that it was not nice of him to think only of himself.

Stepan Arkadyevitch's eyes sparkled merrily.

"You don't admit, I know, that one can be fond of new rolls when one has had one's rations of bread – to your mind it's a crime; but I don't count life as life without love," he said, taking Levin's question his own way. "What am I to do? I'm made that way. And really, one does so little harm to anyone, and gives oneself so much pleasure…"

"What! is there something new, then?" queried Levin.

"Yes, my boy, there is! There, do you see, you know the type of Ossian's women… Women, such as one sees in dreams… Well, these women are sometimes to be met in reality … and these women are terrible. Woman, don't you know, is such a subject that however much you study it, it's always perfectly new."

"Well, then, it would be better not to study it."

"No. Some mathematician has said that enjoyment lies in the search for truth, not in the finding it."

Levin listened in silence, and in spite of all the efforts he made, he could not in the least enter into the feelings of his friend and understand his sentiments and the charm of studying such women.

Chapter 15

The place fixed on for the stand-shooting was not far above a stream in a little aspen copse. On reaching the copse, Levin got out of the trap and led Oblonsky to a corner of a mossy, swampy glade, already quite free from snow. He went back himself to a double birch tree on the other side, and leaning his gun on the fork of a dead lower branch, he took off his full overcoat, fastened his belt again, and worked his arms to see if they were free.

Gray old Laska, who had followed them, sat down warily opposite him and pricked up her ears. The sun was setting behind a thick forest, and in the glow of sunset the birch trees, dotted about in the aspen copse, stood out clearly with their hanging twigs, and their buds swollen almost to bursting.

From the thickest parts of the copse, where the snow still remained, came the faint sound of narrow winding threads of water running away. Tiny birds twittered, and now and then fluttered from tree to tree.

In the pauses of complete stillness there came the rustle of last year's leaves, stirred by the thawing of the earth and the growth of the grass.

"Imagine! One can hear and see the grass growing!" Levin said to himself, noticing a wet, slate-colored aspen leaf moving beside a blade of young grass. He stood, listened, and gazed sometimes down at the wet mossy ground, sometimes at Laska listening all alert, sometimes at the sea of bare tree tops that stretched on the slope below him, sometimes at the darkening sky, covered with white streaks of cloud.

A hawk flew high over a forest far away with slow sweep of its wings; another flew with exactly the same motion in the same direction and vanished. The birds twittered more and more loudly and busily in the thicket. An owl hooted not far off, and Laska, starting, stepped cautiously a few steps forward, and putting her head on one side, began to listen intently. Beyond the stream was heard the cuckoo. Twice she uttered her usual cuckoo call, and then gave a hoarse, hurried call and broke down.

"Imagine! the cuckoo already!" said Stepan Arkadyevitch, coming out from behind a bush.

"Yes, I hear it," answered Levin, reluctantly breaking the stillness with his voice, which sounded disagreeable to himself. "Now it's coming!"

Stepan Arkadyevitch's figure again went behind the bush, and Levin saw nothing but the bright flash of a match, followed by the red glow and blue smoke of a cigarette.

"Tchk! tchk!" came the snapping sound of Stepan Arkadyevitch cocking his gun.

"What's that cry?" asked Oblonsky, drawing Levin's attention to a prolonged cry, as though a colt were whinnying in a high voice, in play.

"Oh, don't you know it? That's the hare. But enough talking! Listen, it's flying!" almost shrieked Levin, cocking his gun.

They heard a shrill whistle in the distance, and in the exact time, so well known to the sportsman, two seconds later – another, a third, and after the third whistle the hoarse, guttural cry could be heard.

Levin looked about him to right and to left, and there, just facing him against the dusky blue sky above the confused mass of tender shoots of the aspens, he saw the flying bird. It was flying straight towards him; the guttural cry, like the even tearing of some strong stuff, sounded close to his ear; the long beak and neck of the bird could be seen, and at the very instant when Levin was taking aim, behind the bush where Oblonsky stood, there was a flash of red lightning: the bird dropped like an arrow, and darted upwards again. Again came the red flash and the sound of a blow, and fluttering its wings as though trying to keep up in the air, the bird halted, stopped still an instant, and fell with a heavy splash on the slushy ground.

"Can I have missed it?" shouted Stepan Arkadyevitch, who could not see for the smoke.

"Here it is!" said Levin, pointing to Laska, who with one ear raised, wagging the end of her shaggy tail, came slowly back as though she would prolong the pleasure, and as it were smiling,

brought the dead bird to her master. "Well, I'm glad you were successful," said Levin, who, at the same time, had a sense of envy that he had not succeeded in shooting the snipe.

"It was a bad shot from the right barrel," responded Stepan Arkadyevitch, loading his gun. "Sh… it's flying!"

The shrill whistles rapidly following one another were heard again. Two snipe, playing and chasing one another, and only whistling, not crying, flew straight at the very heads of the sportsmen. There was the report of four shots, and like swallows the snipe turned swift somersaults in the air and vanished from sight.

The stand-shooting was capital. Stepan Arkadyevitch shot two more birds and Levin two, of which one was not found. It began to get dark. Venus, bright and silvery, shone with her soft light low down in the west behind the birch trees, and high up in the east twinkled the red lights of Arcturus. Over his head Levin made out the stars of the Great Bear and lost them again. The snipe had ceased flying; but Levin resolved to stay a little longer, till Venus, which he saw below a branch of birch, should be above it, and the stars of the Great Bear should be perfectly plain. Venus had risen above the branch, and the ear of the Great Bear with its shaft was now all plainly visible against the dark blue sky, yet still he waited.

"Isn't it time to go home?" said Stepan Arkadyevitch.

It was quite still now in the copse, and not a bird was stirring.

"Let's stay a little while," answered Levin.

"As you like."

They were standing now about fifteen paces from one another.

"Stiva!" said Levin unexpectedly; "how is it you don't tell me whether your sister-in-law's married yet, or when she's going to be?"

Levin felt so resolute and serene that no answer, he fancied, could affect him. But he had never dreamed of what Stepan Arkadyevitch replied.

"She's never thought of being married, and isn't thinking of it; but she's very ill, and the doctors have sent her abroad. They're positively afraid she may not live."

"What!" cried Levin. "Very ill? What is wrong with her? How has she…?"

While they were saying this, Laska, with ears pricked up, was looking upwards at the sky, and reproachfully at them.

"They have chosen a time to talk," she was thinking. "It's on the wing… Here it is, yes, it is. They'll miss it," thought Laska.

But at that very instant both suddenly heard a shrill whistle which, as it were, smote on their ears, and both suddenly seized their guns and two flashes gleamed, and two bangs sounded at the very same instant. The snipe flying high above instantly folded its wings and fell into a thicket, bending down the delicate shoots.

"Splendid! Together!" cried Levin, and he ran with Laska into the thicket to look for the snipe.

"Oh, yes, what was it that was unpleasant?" he wondered. "Yes, Kitty's ill… Well, it can't be helped; I'm very sorry," he thought.

"She's found it! Isn't she a clever thing?" he said, taking the warm bird from Laska's mouth and packing it into the almost full game bag. "I've got it, Stiva!" he shouted.

Chapter 16

On the way home Levin asked all details of Kitty's illness and the Shtcherbatskys' plans, and though he would have been ashamed to admit it, he was pleased at what he heard. He was pleased that there was still hope, and still more pleased that she should be suffering who had made him suffer so much. But when Stepan Arkadyevitch began to speak of the causes of Kitty's illness, and mentioned Vronsky's name, Levin cut him short.

"I have no right whatever to know family matters, and, to tell the truth, no interest in them either."

Stepan Arkadyevitch smiled hardly perceptibly, catching the instantaneous change he knew so well in Levin's face, which had become as gloomy as it had been bright a minute before.

"Have you quite settled about the forest with Ryabinin?" asked Levin.

"Yes, it's settled. The price is magnificent; thirty-eight thousand. Eight straight away, and the rest in six years. I've been bothering about it for ever so long. No one would give more."

"Then you've as good as given away your forest for nothing," said Levin gloomily.

"How do you mean for nothing?" said Stepan Arkadyevitch with a good-humored smile, knowing that nothing would be right in Levin's eyes now.

"Because the forest is worth at least a hundred and fifty roubles the acre," answered Levin.

"Oh, these farmers!" said Stepan Arkadyevitch playfully. "Your tone of contempt for us poor townsfolk!.. But when it comes to business, we do it better than anyone. I assure you I have reckoned it all out," he said, "and the forest is fetching a very good price – so much so that I'm afraid of this fellow's crying off, in fact. You know it's not 'timber,'" said Stepan Arkadyevitch, hoping by this distinction to convince Levin completely of the unfairness of his doubts. "And it won't run to more than twenty-five yards of fagots per acre, and he's giving me at the rate of seventy roubles the acre."

Levin smiled contemptuously. "I know," he thought, "that fashion not only in him, but in all city people, who, after being twice in ten years in the country, pick up two or three phrases and use them in season and out of season, firmly persuaded that they know all about it. '*Timber, run to so many yards the acre.*' He says those words without understanding them himself."

"I wouldn't attempt to teach you what you write about in your office," said he, "and if need arose, I should come to you to ask about it. But you're so positive you know all the lore of the forest. It's difficult. Have you counted the trees?"

"How count the trees?" said Stepan Arkadyevitch, laughing, still trying to draw his friend out of his ill-temper. "Count the sands of the sea, number the stars. Some higher power might do it."

"Oh, well, the higher power of Ryabinin can. Not a single merchant ever buys a forest without counting the trees, unless they get it given them for nothing, as you're doing now. I know your forest. I go there every year shooting, and your forest's worth a hundred and fifty roubles an acre paid down, while he's giving you sixty by installments. So that in fact you're making him a present of thirty thousand."

"Come, don't let your imagination run away with you," said Stepan Arkadyevitch piteously. "Why was it none would give it, then?"

"Why, because he has an understanding with the merchants; he's bought them off. I've had to do with all of them; I know them. They're not merchants, you know: they're speculators. He wouldn't look at a bargain that gave him ten, fifteen per cent profit, but holds back to buy a rouble's worth for twenty kopecks."

"Well, enough of it! You're out of temper."

"Not the least," said Levin gloomily, as they drove up to the house.

At the steps there stood a trap tightly covered with iron and leather, with a sleek horse tightly harnessed with broad collar-straps. In the trap sat the chubby, tightly belted clerk who served Ryabinin

as coachman. Ryabinin himself was already in the house, and met the friends in the hall. Ryabinin was a tall, thinnish, middle-aged man, with mustache and a projecting clean-shaven chin, and prominent muddy-looking eyes. He was dressed in a long-skirted blue coat, with buttons below the waist at the back, and wore high boots wrinkled over the ankles and straight over the calf, with big galoshes drawn over them. He rubbed his face with his handkerchief, and wrapping round him his coat, which sat extremely well as it was, he greeted them with a smile, holding out his hand to Stepan Arkadyevitch, as though he wanted to catch something.

"So here you are," said Stepan Arkadyevitch, giving him his hand. "That's capital."

"I did not venture to disregard your excellency's commands, though the road was extremely bad. I positively walked the whole way, but I am here at my time. Konstantin Dmitrievitch, my respects"; he turned to Levin, trying to seize his hand too. But Levin, scowling, made as though he did not notice his hand, and took out the snipe. "Your honors have been diverting yourselves with the chase? What kind of bird may it be, pray?" added Ryabinin, looking contemptuously at the snipe: "a great delicacy, I suppose." And he shook his head disapprovingly, as though he had grave doubts whether this game were worth the candle.

"Would you like to go into my study?" Levin said in French to Stepan Arkadyevitch, scowling morosely. "Go into my study; you can talk there."

"Quite so, where you please," said Ryabinin with contemptuous dignity, as though wishing to make it felt that others might be in difficulties as to how to behave, but that he could never be in any difficulty about anything.

On entering the study Ryabinin looked about, as his habit was, as though seeking the holy picture, but when he had found it, he did not cross himself. He scanned the bookcases and bookshelves, and with the same dubious air with which he had regarded the snipe, he smiled contemptuously and shook his head disapprovingly, as though by no means willing to allow that this game were worth the candle.

"Well, have you brought the money?" asked Oblonsky. "Sit down."

"Oh, don't trouble about the money. I've come to see you to talk it over."

"What is there to talk over? But do sit down."

"I don't mind if I do," said Ryabinin, sitting down and leaning his elbows on the back of his chair in a position of the intensest discomfort to himself. "You must knock it down a bit, prince. It would be too bad. The money is ready conclusively to the last farthing. As to paying the money down, there'll be no hitch there."

Levin, who had meanwhile been putting his gun away in the cupboard, was just going out of the door, but catching the merchant's words, he stopped.

"Why, you've got the forest for nothing as it is," he said. "He came to me too late, or I'd have fixed the price for him."

Ryabinin got up, and in silence, with a smile, he looked Levin down and up.

"Very close about money is Konstantin Dmitrievitch," he said with a smile, turning to Stepan Arkadyevitch; "there's positively no dealing with him. I was bargaining for some wheat of him, and a pretty price I offered too."

"Why should I give you my goods for nothing? I didn't pick it up on the ground, nor steal it either."

"Mercy on us! nowadays there's no chance at all of stealing. With the open courts and everything done in style, nowadays there's no question of stealing. We are just talking things over like gentlemen. His excellency's asking too much for the forest. I can't make both ends meet over it. I must ask for a little concession."

"But is the thing settled between you or not? If it's settled, it's useless haggling; but if it's not," said Levin, "I'll buy the forest."

The smile vanished at once from Ryabinin's face. A hawklike, greedy, cruel expression was left upon it. With rapid, bony fingers he unbuttoned his coat, revealing a shirt, bronze waistcoat buttons, and a watch chain, and quickly pulled out a fat old pocketbook.

"Here you are, the forest is mine," he said, crossing himself quickly, and holding out his hand. "Take the money; it's my forest. That's Ryabinin's way of doing business; he doesn't haggle over every half-penny," he added, scowling and waving the pocketbook.

"I wouldn't be in a hurry if I were you," said Levin.

"Come, really," said Oblonsky in surprise. "I've given my word, you know."

Levin went out of the room, slamming the door. Ryabinin looked towards the door and shook his head with a smile.

"It's all youthfulness – positively nothing but boyishness. Why, I'm buying it, upon my honor, simply, believe me, for the glory of it, that Ryabinin, and no one else, should have bought the copse of Oblonsky. And as to the profits, why, I must make what God gives. In God's name. If you would kindly sign the title-deed…"

Within an hour the merchant, stroking his big overcoat neatly down, and hooking up his jacket, with the agreement in his pocket, seated himself in his tightly covered trap, and drove homewards.

"Ugh, these gentlefolks!" he said to the clerk. "They – they're a nice lot!"

"That's so," responded the clerk, handing him the reins and buttoning the leather apron. "But I can congratulate you on the purchase, Mihail Ignatitch?"

"Well, well…"

Chapter 17

Stepan Arkadyevitch went upstairs with his pocket bulging with notes, which the merchant had paid him for three months in advance. The business of the forest was over, the money in his pocket; their shooting had been excellent, and Stepan Arkadyevitch was in the happiest frame of mind, and so he felt specially anxious to dissipate the ill-humor that had come upon Levin. He wanted to finish the day at supper as pleasantly as it had been begun.

Levin certainly was out of humor, and in spite of all his desire to be affectionate and cordial to his charming visitor, he could not control his mood. The intoxication of the news that Kitty was not married had gradually begun to work upon him.

Kitty was not married, but ill, and ill from love for a man who had slighted her. This slight, as it were, rebounded upon him. Vronsky had slighted her, and she had slighted him, Levin. Consequently Vronsky had the right to despise Levin, and therefore he was his enemy. But all this Levin did not think out. He vaguely felt that there was something in it insulting to him, and he was not angry now at what had disturbed him, but he fell foul of everything that presented itself. The stupid sale of the forest, the fraud practiced upon Oblonsky and concluded in his house, exasperated him.

"Well, finished?" he said, meeting Stepan Arkadyevitch upstairs. "Would you like supper?"

"Well, I wouldn't say no to it. What an appetite I get in the country! Wonderful! Why didn't you offer Ryabinin something?"

"Oh, damn him!"

"Still, how you do treat him!" said Oblonsky. "You didn't even shake hands with him. Why not shake hands with him?"

"Because I don't shake hands with a waiter, and a waiter's a hundred times better than he is."

"What a reactionist you are, really! What about the amalgamation of classes?" said Oblonsky.

"Anyone who likes amalgamating is welcome to it, but it sickens me."

"You're a regular reactionist, I see."

"Really, I have never considered what I am. I am Konstantin Levin, and nothing else."

"And Konstantin Levin very much out of temper," said Stepan Arkadyevitch, smiling.

"Yes, I am out of temper, and do you know why? Because – excuse me – of your stupid sale…"

Stepan Arkadyevitch frowned good-humoredly, like one who feels himself teased and attacked for no fault of his own.

"Come, enough about it!" he said. "When did anybody ever sell anything without being told immediately after the sale, 'It was worth much more'? But when one wants to sell, no one will give anything… No, I see you've a grudge against that unlucky Ryabinin."

"Maybe I have. And do you know why? You'll say again that I'm a reactionist, or some other terrible word; but all the same it does annoy and anger me to see on all sides the impoverishing of the nobility to which I belong, and, in spite of the amalgamation of classes, I'm glad to belong. And their impoverishment is not due to extravagance – that would be nothing; living in good style – that's the proper thing for noblemen; it's only the nobles who know how to do it. Now the peasants about us buy land, and I don't mind that. The gentleman does nothing, while the peasant works and supplants the idle man. That's as it ought to be. And I'm very glad for the peasant. But I do mind seeing the process of impoverishment from a sort of – I don't know what to call it – innocence. Here a Polish speculator bought for half its value a magnificent estate from a young lady who lives in Nice. And there a merchant will get three acres of land, worth ten roubles, as security for the loan of one rouble. Here, for no kind of reason, you've made that rascal a present of thirty thousand roubles."

"Well, what should I have done? Counted every tree?"

"Of course, they must be counted. You didn't count them, but Ryabinin did. Ryabinin's children will have means of livelihood and education, while yours maybe will not!"

"Well, you must excuse me, but there's something mean in this counting. We have our business and they have theirs, and they must make their profit. Anyway, the thing's done, and there's an end of it. And here come some poached eggs, my favorite dish. And Agafea Mihalovna will give us that marvelous herb-brandy…"

Stepan Arkadyevitch sat down at the table and began joking with Agafea Mihalovna, assuring her that it was long since he had tasted such a dinner and such a supper.

"Well, you do praise it, anyway," said Agafea Mihalovna, "but Konstantin Dmitrievitch, give him what you will – a crust of bread – he'll eat it and walk away."

Though Levin tried to control himself, he was gloomy and silent. He wanted to put one question to Stepan Arkadyevitch, but he could not bring himself to the point, and could not find the words or the moment in which to put it. Stepan Arkadyevitch had gone down to his room, undressed, again washed, and attired in a nightshirt with goffered frills, he had got into bed, but Levin still lingered in his room, talking of various trifling matters, and not daring to ask what he wanted to know.

"How wonderfully they make this soap," he said gazing at a piece of soap he was handling, which Agafea Mihalovna had put ready for the visitor but Oblonsky had not used. "Only look; why, it's a work of art."

"Yes, everything's brought to such a pitch of perfection nowadays," said Stepan Arkadyevitch, with a moist and blissful yawn. "The theater, for instance, and the entertainments … a – a – a!" he yawned. "The electric light everywhere … a – a – a!"

"Yes, the electric light," said Levin. "Yes. Oh, and where's Vronsky now?" he asked suddenly, laying down the soap.

"Vronsky?" said Stepan Arkadyevitch, checking his yawn; "he's in Petersburg. He left soon after you did, and he's not once been in Moscow since. And do you know, Kostya, I'll tell you the truth," he went on, leaning his elbow on the table, and propping on his hand his handsome ruddy face, in which his moist, good-natured, sleepy eyes shone like stars. "It's your own fault. You took fright at the sight of your rival. But, as I told you at the time, I couldn't say which had the better chance. Why didn't you fight it out? I told you at the time that…" He yawned inwardly, without opening his mouth.

"Does he know, or doesn't he, that I did make an offer?" Levin wondered, gazing at him. "Yes, there's something humbugging, diplomatic in his face," and feeling he was blushing, he looked Stepan Arkadyevitch straight in the face without speaking.

"If there was anything on her side at the time, it was nothing but a superficial attraction," pursued Oblonsky. "His being such a perfect aristocrat, don't you know, and his future position in society, had an influence not with her, but with her mother."

Levin scowled. The humiliation of his rejection stung him to the heart, as though it were a fresh wound he had only just received. But he was at home, and the walls of home are a support.

"Stay, stay," he began, interrupting Oblonsky. "You talk of his being an aristocrat. But allow me to ask what it consists in, that aristocracy of Vronsky or of anybody else, beside which I can be looked down upon? You consider Vronsky an aristocrat, but I don't. A man whose father crawled up from nothing at all by intrigue, and whose mother – God knows whom she wasn't mixed up with… No, excuse me, but I consider myself aristocratic, and people like me, who can point back in the past to three or four honorable generations of their family, of the highest degree of breeding (talent and intellect, of course that's another matter), and have never curried favor with anyone, never depended on anyone for anything, like my father and my grandfather. And I know many such. You think it mean of me to count the trees in my forest, while you make Ryabinin a present of thirty thousand; but you get rents from your lands and I don't know what, while I don't and so I prize what's come to me from my ancestors or been won by hard work… We are aristocrats, and not those who can only exist by favor of the powerful of this world, and who can be bought for twopence halfpenny."

"Well, but whom are you attacking? I agree with you," said Stepan Arkadyevitch, sincerely and genially; though he was aware that in the class of those who could be bought for twopence halfpenny

Levin was reckoning him too. Levin's warmth gave him genuine pleasure. "Whom are you attacking? Though a good deal is not true that you say about Vronsky, but I won't talk about that. I tell you straight out, if I were you, I should go back with me to Moscow, and…"

"No; I don't know whether you know it or not, but I don't care. And I tell you – I did make an offer and was rejected, and Katerina Alexandrovna is nothing now to me but a painful and humiliating reminiscence."

"What ever for? What nonsense!"

"But we won't talk about it. Please forgive me, if I've been nasty," said Levin. Now that he had opened his heart, he became as he had been in the morning. "You're not angry with me, Stiva? Please don't be angry," he said, and smiling, he took his hand.

"Of course not; not a bit, and no reason to be. I'm glad we've spoken openly. And do you know, stand-shooting in the morning is unusually good – why not go? I couldn't sleep the night anyway, but I might go straight from shooting to the station."

"Capital."

Chapter 18

Although all Vronsky's inner life was absorbed in his passion, his external life unalterably and inevitably followed along the old accustomed lines of his social and regimental ties and interests. The interests of his regiment took an important place in Vronsky's life, both because he was fond of the regiment, and because the regiment was fond of him. They were not only fond of Vronsky in his regiment, they respected him too, and were proud of him; proud that this man, with his immense wealth, his brilliant education and abilities, and the path open before him to every kind of success, distinction, and ambition, had disregarded all that, and of all the interests of life had the interests of his regiment and his comrades nearest to his heart. Vronsky was aware of his comrades' view of him, and in addition to his liking for the life, he felt bound to keep up that reputation.

It need not be said that he did not speak of his love to any of his comrades, nor did he betray his secret even in the wildest drinking bouts (though indeed he was never so drunk as to lose all control of himself). And he shut up any of his thoughtless comrades who attempted to allude to his connection. But in spite of that, his love was known to all the town; everyone guessed with more or less confidence at his relations with Madame Karenina. The majority of the younger men envied him for just what was the most irksome factor in his love – the exalted position of Karenin, and the consequent publicity of their connection in society.

The greater number of the young women, who envied Anna and had long been weary of hearing her called *virtuous*, rejoiced at the fulfillment of their predictions, and were only waiting for a decisive turn in public opinion to fall upon her with all the weight of their scorn. They were already making ready their handfuls of mud to fling at her when the right moment arrived. The greater number of the middle-aged people and certain great personages were displeased at the prospect of the impending scandal in society.

Vronsky's mother, on hearing of his connection, was at first pleased at it, because nothing to her mind gave such a finishing touch to a brilliant young man as a *liaison* in the highest society; she was pleased, too, that Madame Karenina, who had so taken her fancy, and had talked so much of her son, was, after all, just like all other pretty and well-bred women, – at least according to the Countess Vronskaya's ideas. But she had heard of late that her son had refused a position offered him of great importance to his career, simply in order to remain in the regiment, where he could be constantly seeing Madame Karenina. She learned that great personages were displeased with him on this account, and she changed her opinion. She was vexed, too, that from all she could learn of this connection it was not that brilliant, graceful, worldly *liaison* which she would have welcomed, but a sort of Wertherish, desperate passion, so she was told, which might well lead him into imprudence. She had not seen him since his abrupt departure from Moscow, and she sent her elder son to bid him come to see her.

This elder son, too, was displeased with his younger brother. He did not distinguish what sort of love his might be, big or little, passionate or passionless, lasting or passing (he kept a ballet girl himself, though he was the father of a family, so he was lenient in these matters), but he knew that this love affair was viewed with displeasure by those whom it was necessary to please, and therefore he did not approve of his brother's conduct.

Besides the service and society, Vronsky had another great interest – horses; he was passionately fond of horses.

That year races and a steeplechase had been arranged for the officers. Vronsky had put his name down, bought a thoroughbred English mare, and in spite of his love affair, he was looking forward to the races with intense, though reserved, excitement…

These two passions did not interfere with one another. On the contrary, he needed occupation and distraction quite apart from his love, so as to recruit and rest himself from the violent emotions that agitated him.

Chapter 19

On the day of the races at Krasnoe Selo, Vronsky had come earlier than usual to eat beefsteak in the common messroom of the regiment. He had no need to be strict with himself, as he had very quickly been brought down to the required light weight; but still he had to avoid gaining flesh, and so he eschewed farinaceous and sweet dishes. He sat with his coat unbuttoned over a white waistcoat, resting both elbows on the table, and while waiting for the steak he had ordered he looked at a French novel that lay open on his plate. He was only looking at the book to avoid conversation with the officers coming in and out; he was thinking.

He was thinking of Anna's promise to see him that day after the races. But he had not seen her for three days, and as her husband had just returned from abroad, he did not know whether she would be able to meet him today or not, and he did not know how to find out. He had had his last interview with her at his cousin Betsy's summer villa. He visited the Karenins' summer villa as rarely as possible. Now he wanted to go there, and he pondered the question how to do it.

"Of course I shall say Betsy has sent me to ask whether she's coming to the races. Of course, I'll go," he decided, lifting his head from the book. And as he vividly pictured the happiness of seeing her, his face lighted up.

"Send to my house, and tell them to have out the carriage and three horses as quick as they can," he said to the servant, who handed him the steak on a hot silver dish, and moving the dish up he began eating.

From the billiard room next door came the sound of balls knocking, of talk and laughter. Two officers appeared at the entrance-door: one, a young fellow, with a feeble, delicate face, who had lately joined the regiment from the Corps of Pages; the other, a plump, elderly officer, with a bracelet on his wrist, and little eyes, lost in fat.

Vronsky glanced at them, frowned, and looking down at his book as though he had not noticed them, he proceeded to eat and read at the same time.

"What? Fortifying yourself for your work?" said the plump officer, sitting down beside him.

"As you see," responded Vronsky, knitting his brows, wiping his mouth, and not looking at the officer.

"So you're not afraid of getting fat?" said the latter, turning a chair round for the young officer.

"What?" said Vronsky angrily, making a wry face of disgust, and showing his even teeth.

"You're not afraid of getting fat?"

"Waiter, sherry!" said Vronsky, without replying, and moving the book to the other side of him, he went on reading.

The plump officer took up the list of wines and turned to the young officer.

"You choose what we're to drink," he said, handing him the card, and looking at him.

"Rhine wine, please," said the young officer, stealing a timid glance at Vronsky, and trying to pull his scarcely visible mustache. Seeing that Vronsky did not turn round, the young officer got up.

"Let's go into the billiard room," he said.

The plump officer rose submissively, and they moved towards the door.

At that moment there walked into the room the tall and well-built Captain Yashvin. Nodding with an air of lofty contempt to the two officers, he went up to Vronsky.

"Ah! here he is!" he cried, bringing his big hand down heavily on his epaulet. Vronsky looked round angrily, but his face lighted up immediately with his characteristic expression of genial and manly serenity.

"That's it, Alexey," said the captain, in his loud baritone. "You must just eat a mouthful, now, and drink only one tiny glass."

"Oh, I'm not hungry."

"There go the inseparables," Yashvin dropped, glancing sarcastically at the two officers who were at that instant leaving the room. And he bent his long legs, swathed in tight riding breeches, and sat down in the chair, too low for him, so that his knees were cramped up in a sharp angle.

"Why didn't you turn up at the Red Theater yesterday? Numerova wasn't at all bad. Where were you?"

"I was late at the Tverskoys'," said Vronsky.

"Ah!" responded Yashvin.

Yashvin, a gambler and a rake, a man not merely without moral principles, but of immoral principles, Yashvin was Vronsky's greatest friend in the regiment. Vronsky liked him both for his exceptional physical strength, which he showed for the most part by being able to drink like a fish, and do without sleep without being in the slightest degree affected by it; and for his great strength of character, which he showed in his relations with his comrades and superior officers, commanding both fear and respect, and also at cards, when he would play for tens of thousands and however much he might have drunk, always with such skill and decision that he was reckoned the best player in the English Club. Vronsky respected and liked Yashvin particularly because he felt Yashvin liked him, not for his name and his money, but for himself. And of all men he was the only one with whom Vronsky would have liked to speak of his love. He felt that Yashvin, in spite of his apparent contempt for every sort of feeling, was the only man who could, so he fancied, comprehend the intense passion which now filled his whole life. Moreover, he felt certain that Yashvin, as it was, took no delight in gossip and scandal, and interpreted his feeling rightly, that is to say, knew and believed that this passion was not a jest, not a pastime, but something more serious and important.

Vronsky had never spoken to him of his passion, but he was aware that he knew all about it, and that he put the right interpretation on it, and he was glad to see that in his eyes.

"Ah! yes," he said, to the announcement that Vronsky had been at the Tverskoys'; and his black eyes shining, he plucked at his left mustache, and began twisting it into his mouth, a bad habit he had.

"Well, and what did you do yesterday? Win anything?" asked Vronsky.

"Eight thousand. But three don't count; he won't pay up."

"Oh, then you can afford to lose over me," said Vronsky, laughing. (Yashvin had bet heavily on Vronsky in the races.)

"No chance of my losing. Mahotin's the only one that's risky."

And the conversation passed to forecasts of the coming race, the only thing Vronsky could think of just now.

"Come along, I've finished," said Vronsky, and getting up he went to the door. Yashvin got up too, stretching his long legs and his long back.

"It's too early for me to dine, but I must have a drink. I'll come along directly. Hi, wine!" he shouted, in his rich voice, that always rang out so loudly at drill, and set the windows shaking now.

"No, all right," he shouted again immediately after. "You're going home, so I'll go with you."

And he walked out with Vronsky.

Chapter 20

Vronsky was staying in a roomy, clean, Finnish hut, divided into two by a partition. Petritsky lived with him in camp too. Petritsky was asleep when Vronsky and Yashvin came into the hut.

"Get up, don't go on sleeping," said Yashvin, going behind the partition and giving Petritsky, who was lying with ruffled hair and with his nose in the pillow, a prod on the shoulder.

Petritsky jumped up suddenly onto his knees and looked round.

"Your brother's been here," he said to Vronsky. "He waked me up, damn him, and said he'd look in again." And pulling up the rug he flung himself back on the pillow. "Oh, do shut up, Yashvin!" he said, getting furious with Yashvin, who was pulling the rug off him. "Shut up!" He turned over and opened his eyes. "You'd better tell me what to drink; such a nasty taste in my mouth, that…"

"Brandy's better than anything," boomed Yashvin. "Tereshtchenko! brandy for your master and cucumbers," he shouted, obviously taking pleasure in the sound of his own voice.

"Brandy, do you think? Eh?" queried Petritsky, blinking and rubbing his eyes. "And you'll drink something? All right then, we'll have a drink together! Vronsky, have a drink?" said Petritsky, getting up and wrapping the tiger-skin rug round him. He went to the door of the partition wall, raised his hands, and hummed in French, "There was a king in Thule." "Vronsky, will you have a drink?"

"Go along," said Vronsky, putting on the coat his valet handed to him.

"Where are you off to?" asked Yashvin. "Oh, here are your three horses," he added, seeing the carriage drive up.

"To the stables, and I've got to see Bryansky, too, about the horses," said Vronsky.

Vronsky had as a fact promised to call at Bryansky's, some eight miles from Peterhof, and to bring him some money owing for some horses; and he hoped to have time to get that in too. But his comrades were at once aware that he was not only going there.

Petritsky, still humming, winked and made a pout with his lips, as though he would say: "Oh, yes, we know your Bryansky."

"Mind you're not late!" was Yashvin's only comment; and to change the conversation: "How's my roan? is he doing all right?" he inquired, looking out of the window at the middle one of the three horses, which he had sold Vronsky.

"Stop!" cried Petritsky to Vronsky as he was just going out. "Your brother left a letter and a note for you. Wait a bit; where are they?"

Vronsky stopped.

"Well, where are they?"

"Where are they? That's just the question!" said Petritsky solemnly, moving his forefinger upwards from his nose.

"Come, tell me; this is silly!" said Vronsky smiling.

"I have not lighted the fire. Here somewhere about."

"Come, enough fooling! Where is the letter?"

"No, I've forgotten really. Or was it a dream? Wait a bit, wait a bit! But what's the use of getting in a rage. If you'd drunk four bottles yesterday as I did you'd forget where you were lying. Wait a bit, I'll remember!"

Petritsky went behind the partition and lay down on his bed.

"Wait a bit! This was how I was lying, and this was how he was standing. Yes – yes – yes… Here it is!" – and Petritsky pulled a letter out from under the mattress, where he had hidden it.

Vronsky took the letter and his brother's note. It was the letter he was expecting – from his mother, reproaching him for not having been to see her – and the note was from his brother to say that he must have a little talk with him. Vronsky knew that it was all about the same thing. "What business is it of theirs!" thought Vronsky, and crumpling up the letters he thrust them between the

buttons of his coat so as to read them carefully on the road. In the porch of the hut he was met by two officers; one of his regiment and one of another.

Vronsky's quarters were always a meeting place for all the officers.

"Where are you off to?"

"I must go to Peterhof."

"Has the mare come from Tsarskoe?"

"Yes, but I've not seen her yet."

"They say Mahotin's Gladiator's lame."

"Nonsense! But however are you going to race in this mud?" said the other.

"Here are my saviors!" cried Petritsky, seeing them come in. Before him stood the orderly with a tray of brandy and salted cucumbers. "Here's Yashvin ordering me to drink a pick-me-up."

"Well, you did give it to us yesterday," said one of those who had come in; "you didn't let us get a wink of sleep all night."

"Oh, didn't we make a pretty finish!" said Petritsky. "Volkov climbed onto the roof and began telling us how sad he was. I said: 'Let's have music, the funeral march!' He fairly dropped asleep on the roof over the funeral march."

"Drink it up; you positively must drink the brandy, and then seltzer water and a lot of lemon," said Yashvin, standing over Petritsky like a mother making a child take medicine, "and then a little champagne – just a small bottle."

"Come, there's some sense in that. Stop a bit, Vronsky. We'll all have a drink."

"No; good-bye all of you. I'm not going to drink today."

"Why, are you gaining weight? All right, then we must have it alone. Give us the seltzer water and lemon."

"Vronsky!" shouted someone when he was already outside.

"Well?"

"You'd better get your hair cut, it'll weigh you down, especially at the top."

Vronsky was in fact beginning, prematurely, to get a little bald. He laughed gaily, showing his even teeth, and pulling his cap over the thin place, went out and got into his carriage.

"To the stables!" he said, and was just pulling out the letters to read them through, but he thought better of it, and put off reading them so as not to distract his attention before looking at the mare. "Later!"

Chapter 21

The temporary stable, a wooden shed, had been put up close to the race course, and there his mare was to have been taken the previous day. He had not yet seen her there.

During the last few days he had not ridden her out for exercise himself, but had put her in the charge of the trainer, and so now he positively did not know in what condition his mare had arrived yesterday and was today. He had scarcely got out of his carriage when his groom, the so-called "stable boy," recognizing the carriage some way off, called the trainer. A dry-looking Englishman, in high boots and a short jacket, clean-shaven, except for a tuft below his chin, came to meet him, walking with the uncouth gait of jockey, turning his elbows out and swaying from side to side.

"Well, how's Frou-Frou?" Vronsky asked in English.

"All right, sir," the Englishman's voice responded somewhere in the inside of his throat. "Better not go in," he added, touching his hat. "I've put a muzzle on her, and the mare's fidgety. Better not go in, it'll excite the mare."

"No, I'm going in. I want to look at her."

"Come along, then," said the Englishman, frowning, and speaking with his mouth shut, and, with swinging elbows, he went on in front with his disjointed gait.

They went into the little yard in front of the shed. A stable boy, spruce and smart in his holiday attire, met them with a broom in his hand, and followed them. In the shed there were five horses in their separate stalls, and Vronsky knew that his chief rival, Gladiator, a very tall chestnut horse, had been brought there, and must be standing among them. Even more than his mare, Vronsky longed to see Gladiator, whom he had never seen. But he knew that by the etiquette of the race course it was not merely impossible for him to see the horse, but improper even to ask questions about him. Just as he was passing along the passage, the boy opened the door into the second horse-box on the left, and Vronsky caught a glimpse of a big chestnut horse with white legs. He knew that this was Gladiator, but, with the feeling of a man turning away from the sight of another man's open letter, he turned round and went into Frou-Frou's stall.

"The horse is here belonging to Mak… Mak… I never can say the name," said the Englishman, over his shoulder, pointing his big finger and dirty nail towards Gladiator's stall.

"Mahotin? Yes, he's my most serious rival," said Vronsky.

"If you were riding him," said the Englishman, "I'd bet on you."

"Frou-Frou's more nervous; he's stronger," said Vronsky, smiling at the compliment to his riding.

"In a steeplechase it all depends on riding and on pluck," said the Englishman.

Of pluck – that is, energy and courage – Vronsky did not merely feel that he had enough; what was of far more importance, he was firmly convinced that no one in the world could have more of this "pluck" than he had.

"Don't you think I want more thinning down?"

"Oh, no," answered the Englishman. "Please, don't speak loud. The mare's fidgety," he added, nodding towards the horse-box, before which they were standing, and from which came the sound of restless stamping in the straw.

He opened the door, and Vronsky went into the horse-box, dimly lighted by one little window. In the horse-box stood a dark bay mare, with a muzzle on, picking at the fresh straw with her hoofs. Looking round him in the twilight of the horse-box, Vronsky unconsciously took in once more in a comprehensive glance all the points of his favorite mare. Frou-Frou was a beast of medium size, not altogether free from reproach, from a breeder's point of view. She was small-boned all over; though her chest was extremely prominent in front, it was narrow. Her hind-quarters were a little drooping, and in her fore-legs, and still more in her hind-legs, there was a noticeable curvature. The muscles

of both hind- and fore-legs were not very thick; but across her shoulders the mare was exceptionally broad, a peculiarity specially striking now that she was lean from training. The bones of her legs below the knees looked no thicker than a finger from in front, but were extraordinarily thick seen from the side. She looked altogether, except across the shoulders, as it were, pinched in at the sides and pressed out in depth. But she had in the highest degree the quality that makes all defects forgotten: that quality was *blood*, the blood*that tells*, as the English expression has it. The muscles stood up sharply under the network of sinews, covered with the delicate, mobile skin, soft as satin, and they were hard as bone. Her clean-cut head, with prominent, bright, spirited eyes, broadened out at the open nostrils, that showed the red blood in the cartilage within. About all her figure, and especially her head, there was a certain expression of energy, and, at the same time, of softness. She was one of those creatures which seem only not to speak because the mechanism of their mouth does not allow them to.

To Vronsky, at any rate, it seemed that she understood all he felt at that moment, looking at her.

Directly Vronsky went towards her, she drew in a deep breath, and, turning back her prominent eye till the white looked bloodshot, she started at the approaching figures from the opposite side, shaking her muzzle, and shifting lightly from one leg to the other.

"There, you see how fidgety she is," said the Englishman.

"There, darling! There!" said Vronsky, going up to the mare and speaking soothingly to her.

But the nearer he came, the more excited she grew. Only when he stood by her head, she was suddenly quieter, while the muscles quivered under her soft, delicate coat. Vronsky patted her strong neck, straightened over her sharp withers a stray lock of her mane that had fallen on the other side, and moved his face near her dilated nostrils, transparent as a bat's wing. She drew a loud breath and snorted out through her tense nostrils, started, pricked up her sharp ear, and put out her strong, black lip towards Vronsky, as though she would nip hold of his sleeve. But remembering the muzzle, she shook it and again began restlessly stamping one after the other her shapely legs.

"Quiet, darling, quiet!" he said, patting her again over her hind-quarters; and with a glad sense that his mare was in the best possible condition, he went out of the horse-box.

The mare's excitement had infected Vronsky. He felt that his heart was throbbing, and that he, too, like the mare, longed to move, to bite; it was both dreadful and delicious.

"Well, I rely on you, then," he said to the Englishman; "half-past six on the ground."

"All right," said the Englishman. "Oh, where are you going, my lord?" he asked suddenly, using the title "my lord," which he had scarcely ever used before.

Vronsky in amazement raised his head, and stared, as he knew how to stare, not into the Englishman's eyes, but at his forehead, astounded at the impertinence of his question. But realizing that in asking this the Englishman had been looking at him not as an employer, but as a jockey, he answered:

"I've got to go to Bryansky's; I shall be home within an hour."

"How often I'm asked that question today!" he said to himself, and he blushed, a thing which rarely happened to him. The Englishman looked gravely at him; and, as though he, too, knew where Vronsky was going, he added:

"The great thing's to keep quiet before a race," said he; "don't get out of temper or upset about anything."

"All right," answered Vronsky, smiling; and jumping into his carriage, he told the man to drive to Peterhof.

Before he had driven many paces away, the dark clouds that had been threatening rain all day broke, and there was a heavy downpour of rain.

"What a pity!" thought Vronsky, putting up the roof of the carriage. "It was muddy before, now it will be a perfect swamp." As he sat in solitude in the closed carriage, he took out his mother's letter and his brother's note, and read them through.

Yes, it was the same thing over and over again. Everyone, his mother, his brother, everyone thought fit to interfere in the affairs of his heart. This interference aroused in him a feeling of angry hatred – a feeling he had rarely known before. "What business is it of theirs? Why does everybody feel called upon to concern himself about me? And why do they worry me so? Just because they see that this is something they can't understand. If it were a common, vulgar, worldly intrigue, they would have left me alone. They feel that this is something different, that this is not a mere pastime, that this woman is dearer to me than life. And this is incomprehensible, and that's why it annoys them. Whatever our destiny is or may be, we have made it ourselves, and we do not complain of it," he said, in the word*we* linking himself with Anna. "No, they must needs teach us how to live. They haven't an idea of what happiness is; they don't know that without our love, for us there is neither happiness nor unhappiness – no life at all," he thought.

He was angry with all of them for their interference just because he felt in his soul that they, all these people, were right. He felt that the love that bound him to Anna was not a momentary impulse, which would pass, as worldly intrigues do pass, leaving no other traces in the life of either but pleasant or unpleasant memories. He felt all the torture of his own and her position, all the difficulty there was for them, conspicuous as they were in the eye of all the world, in concealing their love, in lying and deceiving; and in lying, deceiving, feigning, and continually thinking of others, when the passion that united them was so intense that they were both oblivious of everything else but their love.

He vividly recalled all the constantly recurring instances of inevitable necessity for lying and deceit, which were so against his natural bent. He recalled particularly vividly the shame he had more than once detected in her at this necessity for lying and deceit. And he experienced the strange feeling that had sometimes come upon him since his secret love for Anna. This was a feeling of loathing for something – whether for Alexey Alexandrovitch, or for himself, or for the whole world, he could not have said. But he always drove away this strange feeling. Now, too, he shook it off and continued the thread of his thoughts.

"Yes, she was unhappy before, but proud and at peace; and now she cannot be at peace and feel secure in her dignity, though she does not show it. Yes, we must put an end to it," he decided.

And for the first time the idea clearly presented itself that it was essential to put an end to this false position, and the sooner the better. "Throw up everything, she and I, and hide ourselves somewhere alone with our love," he said to himself.

Chapter 22

The rain did not last long, and by the time Vronsky arrived, his shaft-horse trotting at full speed and dragging the trace-horses galloping through the mud, with their reins hanging loose, the sun had peeped out again, the roofs of the summer villas and the old limetrees in the gardens on both sides of the principal streets sparkled with wet brilliance, and from the twigs came a pleasant drip and from the roofs rushing streams of water. He thought no more of the shower spoiling the race course, but was rejoicing now that – thanks to the rain – he would be sure to find her at home and alone, as he knew that Alexey Alexandrovitch, who had lately returned from a foreign watering place, had not moved from Petersburg.

Hoping to find her alone, Vronsky alighted, as he always did, to avoid attracting attention, before crossing the bridge, and walked to the house. He did not go up the steps to the street door, but went into the court.

"Has your master come?" he asked a gardener.

"No, sir. The mistress is at home. But will you please go to the front door; there are servants there," the gardener answered. "They'll open the door."

"No, I'll go in from the garden."

And feeling satisfied that she was alone, and wanting to take her by surprise, since he had not promised to be there today, and she would certainly not expect him to come before the races, he walked, holding his sword and stepping cautiously over the sandy path, bordered with flowers, to the terrace that looked out upon the garden. Vronsky forgot now all that he had thought on the way of the hardships and difficulties of their position. He thought of nothing but that he would see her directly, not in imagination, but living, all of her, as she was in reality. He was just going in, stepping on his whole foot so as not to creak, up the worn steps of the terrace, when he suddenly remembered what he always forgot, and what caused the most torturing side of his relations with her, her son with his questioning – hostile, as he fancied – eyes.

This boy was more often than anyone else a check upon their freedom. When he was present, both Vronsky and Anna did not merely avoid speaking of anything that they could not have repeated before everyone; they did not even allow themselves to refer by hints to anything the boy did not understand. They had made no agreement about this, it had settled itself. They would have felt it wounding themselves to deceive the child. In his presence they talked like acquaintances. But in spite of this caution, Vronsky often saw the child's intent, bewildered glance fixed upon him, and a strange shyness, uncertainty, at one time friendliness, at another, coldness and reserve, in the boy's manner to him; as though the child felt that between this man and his mother there existed some important bond, the significance of which he could not understand.

As a fact, the boy did feel that he could not understand this relation, and he tried painfully, and was not able to make clear to himself what feeling he ought to have for this man. With a child's keen instinct for every manifestation of feeling, he saw distinctly that his father, his governess, his nurse, – all did not merely dislike Vronsky, but looked on him with horror and aversion, though they never said anything about him, while his mother looked on him as her greatest friend.

"What does it mean? Who is he? How ought I to love him? If I don't know, it's my fault; either I'm stupid or a naughty boy," thought the child. And this was what caused his dubious, inquiring, sometimes hostile, expression, and the shyness and uncertainty which Vronsky found so irksome. This child's presence always and infallibly called up in Vronsky that strange feeling of inexplicable loathing which he had experienced of late. This child's presence called up both in Vronsky and in Anna a feeling akin to the feeling of a sailor who sees by the compass that the direction in which he is swiftly moving is far from the right one, but that to arrest his motion is not in his power, that every

instant is carrying him further and further away, and that to admit to himself his deviation from the right direction is the same as admitting his certain ruin.

This child, with his innocent outlook upon life, was the compass that showed them the point to which they had departed from what they knew, but did not want to know.

This time Seryozha was not at home, and she was completely alone. She was sitting on the terrace waiting for the return of her son, who had gone out for his walk and been caught in the rain. She had sent a manservant and a maid out to look for him. Dressed in a white gown, deeply embroidered, she was sitting in a corner of the terrace behind some flowers, and did not hear him. Bending her curly black head, she pressed her forehead against a cool watering pot that stood on the parapet, and both her lovely hands, with the rings he knew so well, clasped the pot. The beauty of her whole figure, her head, her neck, her hands, struck Vronsky every time as something new and unexpected. He stood still, gazing at her in ecstasy. But, directly he would have made a step to come nearer to her, she was aware of his presence, pushed away the watering pot, and turned her flushed face towards him.

"What's the matter? You are ill?" he said to her in French, going up to her. He would have run to her, but remembering that there might be spectators, he looked round towards the balcony door, and reddened a little, as he always reddened, feeling that he had to be afraid and be on his guard.

"No, I'm quite well," she said, getting up and pressing his outstretched hand tightly. "I did not expect … thee."

"Mercy! what cold hands!" he said.

"You startled me," she said. "I'm alone, and expecting Seryozha; he's out for a walk; they'll come in from this side."

But, in spite of her efforts to be calm, her lips were quivering.

"Forgive me for coming, but I couldn't pass the day without seeing you," he went on, speaking French, as he always did to avoid using the stiff Russian plural form, so impossibly frigid between them, and the dangerously intimate singular.

"Forgive you? I'm so glad!"

"But you're ill or worried," he went on, not letting go her hands and bending over her. "What were you thinking of?"

"Always the same thing," she said, with a smile.

She spoke the truth. If ever at any moment she had been asked what she was thinking of, she could have answered truly: of the same thing, of her happiness and her unhappiness. She was thinking, just when he came upon her, of this: why was it, she wondered, that to others, to Betsy (she knew of her secret connection with Tushkevitch) it was all easy, while to her it was such torture? Today this thought gained special poignancy from certain other considerations. She asked him about the races. He answered her questions, and, seeing that she was agitated, trying to calm her, he began telling her in the simplest tone the details of his preparations for the races.

"Tell him or not tell him?" she thought, looking into his quiet, affectionate eyes. "He is so happy, so absorbed in his races that he won't understand as he ought, he won't understand all the gravity of this fact to us."

"But you haven't told me what you were thinking of when I came in," he said, interrupting his narrative; "please tell me!"

She did not answer, and, bending her head a little, she looked inquiringly at him from under her brows, her eyes shining under their long lashes. Her hand shook as it played with a leaf she had picked. He saw it, and his face expressed that utter subjection, that slavish devotion, which had done so much to win her.

"I see something has happened. Do you suppose I can be at peace, knowing you have a trouble I am not sharing? Tell me, for God's sake," he repeated imploringly.

"Yes, I shan't be able to forgive him if he does not realize all the gravity of it. Better not tell; why put him to the proof?" she thought, still staring at him in the same way, and feeling the hand that held the leaf was trembling more and more.

"For God's sake!" he repeated, taking her hand.

"Shall I tell you?"

"Yes, yes, yes."

"I'm with child," she said, softly and deliberately. The leaf in her hand shook more violently, but she did not take her eyes off him, watching how he would take it. He turned white, would have said something, but stopped; he dropped her hand, and his head sank on his breast. "Yes, he realizes all the gravity of it," she thought, and gratefully she pressed his hand.

But she was mistaken in thinking he realized the gravity of the fact as she, a woman, realized it. On hearing it, he felt come upon him with tenfold intensity that strange feeling of loathing of someone. But at the same time, he felt that the turning-point he had been longing for had come now; that it was impossible to go on concealing things from her husband, and it was inevitable in one way or another that they should soon put an end to their unnatural position. But, besides that, her emotion physically affected him in the same way. He looked at her with a look of submissive tenderness, kissed her hand, got up, and, in silence, paced up and down the terrace.

"Yes," he said, going up to her resolutely. "Neither you nor I have looked on our relations as a passing amusement, and now our fate is sealed. It is absolutely necessary to put an end" – he looked round as he spoke – "to the deception in which we are living."

"Put an end? How put an end, Alexey?" she said softly.

She was calmer now, and her face lighted up with a tender smile.

"Leave your husband and make our life one."

"It is one as it is," she answered, scarcely audibly.

"Yes, but altogether; altogether."

"But how, Alexey, tell me how?" she said in melancholy mockery at the hopelessness of her own position. "Is there any way out of such a position? Am I not the wife of my husband?"

"There is a way out of every position. We must take our line," he said. "Anything's better than the position in which you're living. Of course, I see how you torture yourself over everything – the world and your son and your husband."

"Oh, not over my husband," she said, with a quiet smile. "I don't know him, I don't think of him. He doesn't exist."

"You're not speaking sincerely. I know you. You worry about him too."

"Oh, he doesn't even know," she said, and suddenly a hot flush came over her face; her cheeks, her brow, her neck crimsoned, and tears of shame came into her eyes. "But we won't talk of him."

Chapter 23

Vronsky had several times already, though not so resolutely as now, tried to bring her to consider their position, and every time he had been confronted by the same superficiality and triviality with which she met his appeal now. It was as though there were something in this which she could not or would not face, as though directly she began to speak of this, she, the real Anna, retreated somehow into herself, and another strange and unaccountable woman came out, whom he did not love, and whom he feared, and who was in opposition to him. But today he was resolved to have it out.

"Whether he knows or not," said Vronsky, in his usual quiet and resolute tone, "that's nothing to do with us. We cannot … you cannot stay like this, especially now."

"What's to be done, according to you?" she asked with the same frivolous irony. She who had so feared he would take her condition too lightly was now vexed with him for deducing from it the necessity of taking some step.

"Tell him everything, and leave him."

"Very well, let us suppose I do that," she said. "Do you know what the result of that would be? I can tell you it all beforehand," and a wicked light gleamed in her eyes, that had been so soft a minute before. "'Eh, you love another man, and have entered into criminal intrigues with him?'" (Mimicking her husband, she threw an emphasis on the word "criminal," as Alexey Alexandrovitch did.) "'I warned you of the results in the religious, the civil, and the domestic relation. You have not listened to me. Now I cannot let you disgrace my name, – '" "and my son," she had meant to say, but about her son she could not jest, – "'disgrace my name, and' – and more in the same style," she added. "In general terms, he'll say in his official manner, and with all distinctness and precision, that he cannot let me go, but will take all measures in his power to prevent scandal. And he will calmly and punctually act in accordance with his words. That's what will happen. He's not a man, but a machine, and a spiteful machine when he's angry," she added, recalling Alexey Alexandrovitch as she spoke, with all the peculiarities of his figure and manner of speaking, and reckoning against him every defect she could find in him, softening nothing for the great wrong she herself was doing him.

"But, Anna," said Vronsky, in a soft and persuasive voice, trying to soothe her, "we absolutely must, anyway, tell him, and then be guided by the line he takes."

"What, run away?"

"And why not run away? I don't see how we can keep on like this. And not for my sake – I see that you suffer."

"Yes, run away, and become your mistress," she said angrily.

"Anna," he said, with reproachful tenderness.

"Yes," she went on, "become your mistress, and complete the ruin of…"

Again she would have said "my son," but she could not utter that word.

Vronsky could not understand how she, with her strong and truthful nature, could endure this state of deceit, and not long to get out of it. But he did not suspect that the chief cause of it was the word —*son*, which she could not bring herself to pronounce. When she thought of her son, and his future attitude to his mother, who had abandoned his father, she felt such terror at what she had done, that she could not face it; but, like a woman, could only try to comfort herself with lying assurances that everything would remain as it always had been, and that it was possible to forget the fearful question of how it would be with her son.

"I beg you, I entreat you," she said suddenly, taking his hand, and speaking in quite a different tone, sincere and tender, "never speak to me of that!"

"But, Anna…"

"Never. Leave it to me. I know all the baseness, all the horror of my position; but it's not so easy to arrange as you think. And leave it to me, and do what I say. Never speak to me of it. Do you promise me?.. No, no, promise!.."

"I promise everything, but I can't be at peace, especially after what you have told me. I can't be at peace, when you can't be at peace…"

"I?" she repeated. "Yes, I am worried sometimes; but that will pass, if you will never talk about this. When you talk about it – it's only then it worries me."

"I don't understand," he said.

"I know," she interrupted him, "how hard it is for your truthful nature to lie, and I grieve for you. I often think that you have ruined your whole life for me."

"I was just thinking the very same thing," he said; "how could you sacrifice everything for my sake? I can't forgive myself that you're unhappy!"

"I unhappy?" she said, coming closer to him, and looking at him with an ecstatic smile of love. "I am like a hungry man who has been given food. He may be cold, and dressed in rags, and ashamed, but he is not unhappy. I unhappy? No, this is my unhappiness…"

She could hear the sound of her son's voice coming towards them, and glancing swiftly round the terrace, she got up impulsively. Her eyes glowed with the fire he knew so well; with a rapid movement she raised her lovely hands, covered with rings, took his head, looked a long look into his face, and, putting up her face with smiling, parted lips, swiftly kissed his mouth and both eyes, and pushed him away. She would have gone, but he held her back.

"When?" he murmured in a whisper, gazing in ecstasy at her.

"Tonight, at one o'clock," she whispered, and, with a heavy sigh, she walked with her light, swift step to meet her son.

Seryozha had been caught by the rain in the big garden, and he and his nurse had taken shelter in an arbor.

"Well, *au revoir*," she said to Vronsky. "I must soon be getting ready for the races. Betsy promised to fetch me."

Vronsky, looking at his watch, went away hurriedly.

Chapter 24

When Vronsky looked at his watch on the Karenins' balcony, he was so greatly agitated and lost in his thoughts that he saw the figures on the watch's face, but could not take in what time it was. He came out on to the high road and walked, picking his way carefully through the mud, to his carriage. He was so completely absorbed in his feeling for Anna, that he did not even think what o'clock it was, and whether he had time to go to Bryansky's. He had left him, as often happens, only the external faculty of memory, that points out each step one has to take, one after the other. He went up to his coachman, who was dozing on the box in the shadow, already lengthening, of a thick limetree; he admired the shifting clouds of midges circling over the hot horses, and, waking the coachman, he jumped into the carriage, and told him to drive to Bryansky's. It was only after driving nearly five miles that he had sufficiently recovered himself to look at his watch, and realize that it was half-past five, and he was late.

There were several races fixed for that day: the Mounted Guards' race, then the officers' mile-and-a-half race, then the three-mile race, and then the race for which he was entered. He could still be in time for his race, but if he went to Bryansky's he could only just be in time, and he would arrive when the whole of the court would be in their places. That would be a pity. But he had promised Bryansky to come, and so he decided to drive on, telling the coachman not to spare the horses.

He reached Bryansky's, spent five minutes there, and galloped back. This rapid drive calmed him. All that was painful in his relations with Anna, all the feeling of indefiniteness left by their conversation, had slipped out of his mind. He was thinking now with pleasure and excitement of the race, of his being anyhow, in time, and now and then the thought of the blissful interview awaiting him that night flashed across his imagination like a flaming light.

The excitement of the approaching race gained upon him as he drove further and further into the atmosphere of the races, overtaking carriages driving up from the summer villas or out of Petersburg.

At his quarters no one was left at home; all were at the races, and his valet was looking out for him at the gate. While he was changing his clothes, his valet told him that the second race had begun already, that a lot of gentlemen had been to ask for him, and a boy had twice run up from the stables. Dressing without hurry (he never hurried himself, and never lost his self-possession), Vronsky drove to the sheds. From the sheds he could see a perfect sea of carriages, and people on foot, soldiers surrounding the race course, and pavilions swarming with people. The second race was apparently going on, for just as he went into the sheds he heard a bell ringing. Going towards the stable, he met the white-legged chestnut, Mahotin's Gladiator, being led to the race-course in a blue forage horsecloth, with what looked like huge ears edged with blue.

"Where's Cord?" he asked the stable-boy.

"In the stable, putting on the saddle."

In the open horse-box stood Frou-Frou, saddled ready. They were just going to lead her out.

"I'm not too late?"

"All right! All right!" said the Englishman; "don't upset yourself!"

Vronsky once more took in in one glance the exquisite lines of his favorite mare; who was quivering all over, and with an effort he tore himself from the sight of her, and went out of the stable. He went towards the pavilions at the most favorable moment for escaping attention. The mile-and-a-half race was just finishing, and all eyes were fixed on the horse-guard in front and the light hussar behind, urging their horses on with a last effort close to the winning post. From the center and outside of the ring all were crowding to the winning post, and a group of soldiers and officers of the horse-guards were shouting loudly their delight at the expected triumph of their officer and comrade. Vronsky moved into the middle of the crowd unnoticed, almost at the very moment when the bell

rang at the finish of the race, and the tall, mudspattered horse-guard who came in first, bending over the saddle, let go the reins of his panting gray horse that looked dark with sweat.

The horse, stiffening out its legs, with an effort stopped its rapid course, and the officer of the horse-guards looked round him like a man waking up from a heavy sleep, and just managed to smile. A crowd of friends and outsiders pressed round him.

Vronsky intentionally avoided that select crowd of the upper world, which was moving and talking with discreet freedom before the pavilions. He knew that Madame Karenina was there, and Betsy, and his brother's wife, and he purposely did not go near them for fear of something distracting his attention. But he was continually met and stopped by acquaintances, who told him about the previous races, and kept asking him why he was so late.

At the time when the racers had to go to the pavilion to receive the prizes, and all attention was directed to that point, Vronsky's elder brother, Alexander, a colonel with heavy fringed epaulets, came up to him. He was not tall, though as broadly built as Alexey, and handsomer and rosier than he; he had a red nose, and an open, drunken-looking face.

"Did you get my note?" he said. "There's never any finding you."

Alexander Vronsky, in spite of the dissolute life, and in especial the drunken habits, for which he was notorious, was quite one of the court circle.

Now, as he talked to his brother of a matter bound to be exceedingly disagreeable to him, knowing that the eyes of many people might be fixed upon him, he kept a smiling countenance, as though he were jesting with his brother about something of little moment.

"I got it, and I really can't make out what *you* are worrying yourself about," said Alexey.

"I'm worrying myself because the remark has just been made to me that you weren't here, and that you were seen in Peterhof on Monday."

"There are matters which only concern those directly interested in them, and the matter you are so worried about is…"

"Yes, but if so, you may as well cut the service…"

"I beg you not to meddle, and that's all I have to say."

Alexey Vronsky's frowning face turned white, and his prominent lower jaw quivered, which happened rarely with him. Being a man of very warm heart, he was seldom angry; but when he was angry, and when his chin quivered, then, as Alexander Vronsky knew, he was dangerous. Alexander Vronsky smiled gaily.

"I only wanted to give you Mother's letter. Answer it, and don't worry about anything just before the race. *Bonne chance,*" he added, smiling and he moved away from him. But after him another friendly greeting brought Vronsky to a standstill.

"So you won't recognize your friends! How are you, *mon cher?*" said Stepan Arkadyevitch, as conspicuously brilliant in the midst of all the Petersburg brilliance as he was in Moscow, his face rosy, and his whiskers sleek and glossy. "I came up yesterday, and I'm delighted that I shall see your triumph. When shall we meet?"

"Come tomorrow to the messroom," said Vronsky, and squeezing him by the sleeve of his coat, with apologies, he moved away to the center of the race course, where the horses were being led for the great steeplechase.

The horses who had run in the last race were being led home, steaming and exhausted, by the stable-boys, and one after another the fresh horses for the coming race made their appearance, for the most part English racers, wearing horsecloths, and looking with their drawn-up bellies like strange, huge birds. On the right was led in Frou-Frou, lean and beautiful, lifting up her elastic, rather long pasterns, as though moved by springs. Not far from her they were taking the rug off the lop-eared Gladiator. The strong, exquisite, perfectly correct lines of the stallion, with his superb hind-quarters and excessively short pasterns almost over his hoofs, attracted Vronsky's attention in spite of himself. He would have gone up to his mare, but he was again detained by an acquaintance.

"Oh, there's Karenin!" said the acquaintance with whom he was chatting. "He's looking for his wife, and she's in the middle of the pavilion. Didn't you see her?"

"No," answered Vronsky, and without even glancing round towards the pavilion where his friend was pointing out Madame Karenina, he went up to his mare.

Vronsky had not had time to look at the saddle, about which he had to give some direction, when the competitors were summoned to the pavilion to receive their numbers and places in the row at starting. Seventeen officers, looking serious and severe, many with pale faces, met together in the pavilion and drew the numbers. Vronsky drew the number seven. The cry was heard: "Mount!"

Feeling that with the others riding in the race, he was the center upon which all eyes were fastened, Vronsky walked up to his mare in that state of nervous tension in which he usually became deliberate and composed in his movements. Cord, in honor of the races, had put on his best clothes, a black coat buttoned up, a stiffly starched collar, which propped up his cheeks, a round black hat, and top boots. He was calm and dignified as ever, and was with his own hands holding Frou-Frou by both reins, standing straight in front of her. Frou-Frou was still trembling as though in a fever. Her eye, full of fire, glanced sideways at Vronsky. Vronsky slipped his finger under the saddle-girth. The mare glanced aslant at him, drew up her lip, and twitched her ear. The Englishman puckered up his lips, intending to indicate a smile that anyone should verify his saddling.

"Get up; you won't feel so excited."

Vronsky looked round for the last time at his rivals. He knew that he would not see them during the race. Two were already riding forward to the point from which they were to start. Galtsin, a friend of Vronsky's and one of his more formidable rivals, was moving round a bay horse that would not let him mount. A little light hussar in tight riding breeches rode off at a gallop, crouched up like a cat on the saddle, in imitation of English jockeys. Prince Kuzovlev sat with a white face on his thoroughbred mare from the Grabovsky stud, while an English groom led her by the bridle. Vronsky and all his comrades knew Kuzovlev and his peculiarity of "weak nerves" and terrible vanity. They knew that he was afraid of everything, afraid of riding a spirited horse. But now, just because it was terrible, because people broke their necks, and there was a doctor standing at each obstacle, and an ambulance with a cross on it, and a sister of mercy, he had made up his mind to take part in the race. Their eyes met, and Vronsky gave him a friendly and encouraging nod. Only one he did not see, his chief rival, Mahotin on Gladiator.

"Don't be in a hurry," said Cord to Vronsky, "and remember one thing: don't hold her in at the fences, and don't urge her on; let her go as she likes."

"All right, all right," said Vronsky, taking the reins.

"If you can, lead the race; but don't lose heart till the last minute, even if you're behind."

Before the mare had time to move, Vronsky stepped with an agile, vigorous movement into the steel-toothed stirrup, and lightly and firmly seated himself on the creaking leather of the saddle. Getting his right foot in the stirrup, he smoothed the double reins, as he always did, between his fingers, and Cord let go.

As though she did not know which foot to put first, Frou-Frou started, dragging at the reins with her long neck, and as though she were on springs, shaking her rider from side to side. Cord quickened his step, following him. The excited mare, trying to shake off her rider first on one side and then the other, pulled at the reins, and Vronsky tried in vain with voice and hand to soothe her.

They were just reaching the dammed-up stream on their way to the starting point. Several of the riders were in front and several behind, when suddenly Vronsky heard the sound of a horse galloping in the mud behind him, and he was overtaken by Mahotin on his white-legged, lop-eared Gladiator. Mahotin smiled, showing his long teeth, but Vronsky looked angrily at him. He did not like him, and regarded him now as his most formidable rival. He was angry with him for galloping past and exciting his mare. Frou-Frou started into a gallop, her left foot forward, made two bounds, and fretting at the

tightened reins, passed into a jolting trot, bumping her rider up and down. Cord, too, scowled, and followed Vronsky almost at a trot.

Chapter 25

There were seventeen officers in all riding in this race. The race course was a large three-mile ring of the form of an ellipse in front of the pavilion. On this course nine obstacles had been arranged: the stream, a big and solid barrier five feet high, just before the pavilion, a dry ditch, a ditch full of water, a precipitous slope, an Irish barricade (one of the most difficult obstacles, consisting of a mound fenced with brushwood, beyond which was a ditch out of sight for the horses, so that the horse had to clear both obstacles or might be killed); then two more ditches filled with water, and one dry one; and the end of the race was just facing the pavilion. But the race began not in the ring, but two hundred yards away from it, and in that part of the course was the first obstacle, a dammed-up stream, seven feet in breadth, which the racers could leap or wade through as they preferred.

Three times they were ranged ready to start, but each time some horse thrust itself out of line, and they had to begin again. The umpire who was starting them, Colonel Sestrin, was beginning to lose his temper, when at last for the fourth time he shouted "Away!" and the racers started.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.