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**The Cossacks,  
tr. by E.  
Schuyler**



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THE COSSACKS:

*A TALE OF THE CAUCASUS IN 1852.*

VOL. II.

LONDON:  
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ST. JOHN'S SQUARE.



# THE COSSACKS :

*A TALE OF THE CAUCASUS IN 1852.*

BY

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TRANSLATED FROM THE RUSSIAN BY

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IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.



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# THE COSSACKS.

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## CHAPTER I.

THE next day Olenin went alone, without the old man, to the place where they had started the stag. To avoid going round to the gate, he, like everybody else in the village, crawled through the prickly hedge.

He had not yet succeeded in getting rid of the thorns which pricked through his coat, when his dog, running on in front, started two pheasants. He had only got among the

blackberry-vines, when pheasants began to rise on every side.

The old man had not shown him this place, so as to keep it for hunting with a rest.

Olenin killed five pheasants in twelve shots, and, in crawling after them through the brambles, got so warm, that the perspiration rolled off him like rain.

He called off his dog ; uncocked his gun, and put on top of the shot a ball ; and, brushing the gnats away with the sleeve of his coat, he quietly went to the place where he had been the day before.

It was not possible, however, to keep back the dog, which, even on the road, kept getting on scent ; and he killed still another pair of pheasants ; so that, by being thus delayed, it was noon before he was able to find the place.

The day was perfectly clear, quiet, and warm. The morning freshness had already dried up in the woods ; and myriads of gnats literally covered his face, his back, and his hands.

The dog grew quite black, from being so thickly beset with them. Olenin's coat, through which they could sting, became also black.

Olenin was ready to run away from the gnats : it seemed to him, that, in summer, it would be impossible to live even in the village.

He was already starting for home, but, remembering that people do live, decided to stand it through, and gave himself up to be eaten.

Strange to say, by noon he even began rather to like the buzzing. It even seemed to him, that if there were not this atmosphere of

gnats, surrounding him on all sides, this paste of gnats, which rolled up under his hands on his sweaty face, and this itching over his whole body, the forest would have lost for him its character and its charm.

These myriads of insects so suited this wild, luxuriantly-rich foliage, this abundance of animals and birds which filled the woods, these dark green trees, this odorous, hot air, these ditches of muddy water which everywhere ran down from the Terek, and murmured under the leaves which hung over them, that what had before seemed to him horrible and unendurable now began to be pleasing.

Going around the place where he had the day before come upon the stag, and not meeting with anything, he wished to rest.

The sun stood straight over the woods, and constantly poured down on his head and back,



whenever he came into an opening, or into the road. Seven heavy pheasants painfully weighed down his waist.

He searched out the tracks of the stag which he had seen before, crawled under the bushes into the wood, to the very spot where the stag had lain, and lay down in his bed.

He looked round about him, at the dark-green verdure ; looked at his lair, at the traces of the knees of the stag, at the pieces of black earth turned up by his hoofs, and at his yesterday's tracks : it was cool and comfortable there : he did not think about anything, did not wish for anything.

Suddenly there came over him such a strange feeling of causeless happiness, and of love to everything, that he, with his old, childish habit, began to cross himself, and thank some one.

It suddenly came into his head with a special clearness, "Here I, Dimitri Olenin, an individual distinct from all others, now lie alone, God knows where, in the very place where lay a stag,—a handsome old stag, that has never perhaps seen a man, and in a place where no person has ever sat before, or has even thought about. I sit, and around me stand young and old trees, one of them covered with wreaths of wild grape-vines. Around me whirl pheasants, chasing one another, and groaning, perhaps, over their killed brothers."

He took up his pheasants, looked at them, and wiped his blood-covered hand on his coat.

"Perhaps even the jackals are complaining, and with disappointed faces are going the other way. About me, flying among the leaves, which seem to them immense islands,

gnats dance in the air, and hum,—one, two, three, four, a hundred, a thousand, a million gnats; and all these, for some reason or other, are hanging about me; and each of them is just as much a separate existence, separate from all the rest, as I am.”

It began to seem clear to him what the gnats hummed and thought about.

“Here, here, children! Here’s where you can eat some one,” they hum, and settle down upon him.

It began to seem clear to him that he was not at all a Russian nobleman, a person in Moscow society, and friend and relation of this person and of that person. He thought he was simply just such a gnat, and just such a pheasant, or a stag, as those living now about him.

“Just like them, just like Uncle Eroshka,

I live, I die. He spoke truth indeed, when he said that the end will be only that grass will grow over me."

"Well, what is it when the grass will grow over me?" he thought further. "Everything must live, everything be happy; for I wish only one thing,—happiness. It would be all the same as if I had never existed. I am just such an animal as all of them, over which the grass grows, and nothing more or less; or I am a frame in which is enclosed part of the one divinity. All the same, I must live in the best way I can. How must one live to be happy? and why was not I happy before?"

He began to think over his past life, and began to be sorry for himself. He thought of himself as an egotist, who demanded much; whereas in reality he needed nothing.

Then he looked round him on the verdure

lighted up by the setting sun, and on the clear sky, and felt himself just as happy as he did before.

“Why am I happy? and why did I live before?” he thought. “How I always demanded things for myself, and imagined things, and never did anything for myself, except caused myself shame and sorrow! Now I find out that nothing is necessary for happiness.”

Suddenly a new world seemed to open before him.

“Happiness is not this,” he said. “Happiness consists in living for others: that is clear. Every man has in him a need for happiness: therefore it must be a lawful one. When he satisfies himself in a selfish way, that is, seeks for himself riches, fame, comfort, love, it perhaps may happen so that circumstances will not permit him to satisfy

these wishes : consequently such wishes are unlawful. But the demand for happiness is not unlawful. What wishes can always be satisfied in the eternal conditions of things ? What ? Love, self-abnegation ! ”

He became so glad and excited after having discovered this, as it seemed to him, new truth, that he jumped up, and, in his impatience, began to inquire for whom he should sacrifice himself, to whom he should do good, whom he should love.

“ Nothing is necessary for myself,” he thought ; “ therefore, why should not I live for others ? ”

He took up his gun with the intention of returning home as soon as possible, in order to think all this over to himself, and have an opportunity of doing good, and went out of the woods.

When he had come to the open fields he




looked round. The sun was no longer visible. Beyond the tops of the trees, it seemed colder; and the locality appeared to him quite unknown, and not at all like that which surrounded the village.

All had suddenly changed, both the weather and the character of the forest. The sky was covered with clouds; the wind whistled in the tops of the trees; round him were visible only reeds and old broken trees.

He began to call to his dog, which had run away from him after some animal or other; and his voice seemed empty.

Suddenly he began to feel frightfully oppressed. He began to be frightened. There came into his head thoughts of the Abreks, of the murders about which he had heard; and he expected to see a Circassian come out of every bush, and that he might



have to defend his life, and die—or be cowardly.

He began to think of God, and of the future life, as he had not thought for a long time. Round him was the same sombre, stern, and wild nature.

“Is it worth while living for one’s self,” he thought, “when one dies suddenly in this way, and dies without doing any good to anybody, and in a way that nobody knows about?”

He went on in the direction where he supposed the village to be. About sport he no longer thought anything : he felt almost tired enough to die, and looked with special attention, almost with horror, at every object and tree, expecting every minute a conflict for his life.

After wandering about for a long time he came to a ditch, through which flowed the

sandy, cold water from the Terek, and, in order not to lose his way any longer, resolved to go along it.

He went on, without knowing where the ditch would lead him. Suddenly the reeds began to rustle behind him : he started, and seized his gun. He began to be ashamed of himself. His tired dog, panting heavily, jumped into the cold water of the ditch, and began to lap it.

Olenin drank along with the dog, and went on in the direction where the ditch led him, supposing that it would bring him to the village. But, notwithstanding the companionship of the dog, everything seemed to him to be more sombre.

The forest began to grow darker : the wind played with greater strength and fury in the tops of the old, half-broken-down trees. Some large birds wheeled shrieking about

their nests in the tree-tops. The vegetation seemed to get poorer: he more frequently met with rustling reeds, and bare, sandy fields covered with the tracks of wild animals.

To the howl of the wind was added another sad and monotonous noise. His spirits got heavier and heavier. He felt behind him for his pheasants, and could not find one of them.

A pheasant had got torn off, and had fallen down; and nothing but the bloody head and neck remained fastened to his belt.

He began to feel more frightened than he had ever felt before. He began to pray to God, and feared only one thing,—that he should die without having done any good; and he so much wanted to live, to live so as to accomplish the victory of self-sacrifice.

## CHAPTER II.

SUDDENLY sunlight began to dawn on his soul. He heard sounds of Russian conversation, and the quick and measured flow of the Terek; and, at a few paces before him, he saw the dark-brown, swiftly-flowing surface of the river, with the grey-white sand on the banks and shallows, the distant steppe, the roof of an outpost rising above the water, a saddled horse walking on three legs among the brambles,—and the mountains.

The red sun appeared for an instant from behind the clouds, and with its last rays shone gaily over the river, the reeds, the roof, and the

Cossacks collected in a crowd, among whom Lukashka, by his fearless air, involuntarily attracted his attention.

Olenin felt himself again, without any visible cause, thoroughly happy. He had come to the Lower Prototsk post on the Terek, opposite a peaceable Circassian settlement on the other side.

He saluted the Cossacks, but not having yet found any pretext for doing anybody any good, went into the hut. Even in the hut there was no chance. The Cossacks received him coldly. He went out upon the terrace, and smoked a cigarette.

The Cossacks paid but little attention to Olenin,—in the first place, because he smoked; and, in the second, because they had something very different to think of that evening. The hostile Circassians had come from the mountains,—the relations of the Abrek who



had been killed,—with a flag of truce in order to ransom the body. They were waiting for the Cossack authorities from the village.

The brother of the dead man, a tall, stalwart fellow, with an under-cut beard dyed red, in spite of wearing a ragged coat and cap, was as calm and haughty as a king. He was very similar in features to his dead brother. He honoured no one by a look, and did not even once glance at the dead body.

Sitting on his heels in the shade he did nothing but spit from time to time as he smoked a pipe, and gave occasional commands in a guttural voice, which his companions respectfully obeyed. It was evident that he was a bravo, who had seen the Russians before, not exactly under the same conditions ; and he therefore now was not surprised at

anything he saw in them; and was not even occupied with them.

Olenin went up to the dead body, and began to look at it; but the brother, with a quiet contempt, looking from under his brows at Olenin, abruptly and angrily said something.

The flag-bearer hastened to cover the face of the dead body with his coat.

Olenin was surprised at the majesty and sternness of expression on the face of the bravo. He tried to say something to him, asking him from what village he was; but the Circassian scarcely looked at him, spat on the ground in contempt, and turned away.

Olenin was so surprised that the mountaineer was not interested in him that his equanimity could only explain it by the stupidity of the man, or by his ignorance of the language. He turned to his companion.

The companion—the bearer of the flag of truce, and the interpreter—was just as ragged, but was black, and not red-haired, very agile, with exceedingly white teeth, and with black, sparkling eyes. He willingly entered into conversation, and asked for a cigarette.

“There were five brothers of them,” said the interpreter, in his broken Russian. “This is now the third brother that the Russians have killed. Only two remain. He is a bravo, a very great bravo,” he said, pointing to the Circassian. “When they killed Ahmed Khan (for that was the name of the dead Abrek) he sat on the other side, in the reeds. He saw it all,—saw how they put him in the boat, and how they brought him to the shore. He sat there until night, and wanted to kill the old man ; but the rest would not let him.”

Lukashka went up to the persons who were talking, and sat down by their side.

“From what village?” he asked.

“Over there in those mountains,” answered the interpreter,” pointing beyond the Terek, to a blue, misty defile. “Do you know Suyuk-su? It will be about eight miles from there.”

“In Suyuk-su do you know Ghirei Khan?” asked Lukashka, evidently proud of his acquaintance: “he is a friend of mine.”

“He is my neighbour,” answered the interpreter.

“Splendid fellow!” and Lukashka, evidently much interested, began to talk in Tartar to the interpreter.

The captain and the station-master, with two Cossacks, soon rode up.

The captain, one of the new Cossack officers, saluted the Cossacks: but no one

answered him, as the soldiers do, "We wish your health, your Excellency;" though a few of them saluted him with a simple bow. Some, and among them Lukashka, stood up and stretched themselves.

The corporal reported that all was well at the post.

All this seemed laughable to Olenin, as if these Cossacks were playing at soldiers. But formalities soon gave place to simpler relations; and the captain, who was just as excellent a Cossack as the rest, began to talk Tartar freely with the interpreter.

They drew up some kind of a paper, gave it to the interpreter, received some money from him, and came up to the body.

"Which of you is Luka, the son of Gavrilof?" the captain asked.

Luka took off his cap, and came up.

"I have sent a report about you to the

colonel. What will come of it I don't know. But I have written for a cross, and you will soon be made a corporal. Do you know how to read ? ”

“ No.”

“ What a fine fellow he is ! ” said the captain, still continuing to play at commander. “ Put on your cap ! Of what Gavrilof is he ? Of the broad one ? ”

“ His nephew,” answered the corporal.

“ Oh, yes ! I know, I know,” answered the captain.

“ Now carry it off.—Help him,” turning to the Cossacks.

The face of Lukashka was all radiant with joy, and seemed handsomer than usual.

Going away from the corporal, and again putting on his cap, he sat down by the side of Olenin.

When the body had been put into the

boat, the brother of the dead man went to the bank.

The Cossacks involuntarily separated, so as to make room for him.

With his muscular leg he pushed off from the bank, and jumped into the boat.

There he, for the first time, as Olenin noticed, looked at all the Cossacks with a quick glance, and again abruptly asked something of his companion.

The interpreter replied something or other, and pointed to Lukashka.

The Circassian looked at him for a moment, and, slowly turning away, began to gaze on the other bank. Not hatred, but cold contempt, was expressed in this look. He said something more.

“What did he say?” asked Olenin of the agile interpreter.

“Your people have killed ours; but ours



will be up to you. Altogether it is a sad mess," answered the interpreter, evidently deceiving him.

He laughed, showed his white teeth, and jumped into the boat.

The brother of the dead man sat without moving, and constantly looked at the other bank. He so hated and despised the Cossacks, that he had no curiosity about anything.

The interpreter standing at the end of the boat, moving the oar first to this side, and then to the other, guided it, and talked without cessation.

Cutting obliquely across the current, the boat began to seem smaller and smaller. The voices were now hardly audible ; and finally, quite in the distance, although still in sight, the Circassians came to the other bank, where their horses were.



They took up the body (notwithstanding that the horses snorted at it), placed it across the saddle, got on their horses, and went at a walk along the road, past the village, from which a crowd of people came out to look at them.

The Cossacks on this side were unusually contented and merry : there was laughter and jesting on every side.

The captain and the station-master went to the terrace to have a little snack.

Lukashka with a merry face, though he carefully tried to preserve a moderate expression, sat opposite Olenin, with his elbows on his knees, playing with a little stick.

“ Why do you smoke ? ” he said, as though with curiosity. Is it good ? ”

He evidently said that only because he had noticed that it was awkward for Olenin, and that he was alone among the Cossacks.

“I am accustomed to it,” answered Olenin.  
“Why?”

“H'm! If we fellows should begin to smoke, there would be the deuce to pay. Over there the mountains are not very far off,” said Lukashka, pointing to the defile; “but we can't get to them. How will you go home alone? It is dark. I will show you the way, if you want,” he added. “You just ask the corporal.”

“What a splendid fellow!” thought Olenin, looking at the merry face of the Cossack.

He remembered about Marianka, and about the kiss he had heard behind the gate, and began to be sorry for Lukashka—sorry for his want of education.

“What folly and stupidity!” he thought.  
“One man has killed another, and is as happy and contented as if he had done the

most excellent work in the world. Is there really nothing which tells him that here there is no reason for great joy? that happiness is not in killing some one, but in sacrificing one's self for some one?"

"Come, now, don't fall in his way, brother," said one of the Cossacks who had gone over in the boat, turning to Lukashka.

"Did you hear what he asked about—about you?"

Lukashka raised his head. "My godson?" he said, meaning by that the Circassian.

"Oh! your godson will not rise again, but your red-haired foster-brother."

"Let him pray to God to get off safe himself," said Lukashka, laughing.

"Why are you glad?" said Olenin to Lukashka. "If they had killed your brother, would you have been glad?"

There was a smile on the Cossack's face as

he looked at Olenin. He seemed to understand all that Olenin meant to say, but was far above such ideas.

“Well, what? Is that necessary? Don't they kill some of us fellows occasionally?”

## CHAPTER III.

THE captain and the station-master went away; and Olenin, so as to do a favour to Lukashka, as well as not to go home alone through the dark forest, got permission from the corporal for Lukashka to go with him.

Olenin thought Lukashka wanted to see Marianka, and in general was very glad of the companionship of such a pleasant-looking and talkative Cossack.

Lukashka and Marianka were somehow or another united in his imagination, and he found a certain satisfaction in thinking about them.

“He loves Marianka,” thought Olenin to himself; and I could love her.” And a kind of strong and novel feeling of happiness took possession of him as they went home through the dark wood.

Lukashka was also happy in soul. Something quite like love seemed to spring up between these two young men, who were so different in disposition and manner. Every time they looked at each other they both wanted to smile.

“What gate do you go to?” asked Olenin.

“To the middle. But I will take you to the swamp: there you won’t be afraid of anything.”

Olenin laughed. “Do you suppose I am afraid? Go back. Much obliged to you. I will go alone.”

“That’s nothing. What have I got to

do? Why shouldn't you be afraid? Why *we* are afraid," said Lukashka, also smiling.

"You come to my house: we will talk, and drink some wine, and then you can go home in the morning."

"Don't you suppose I can find a place to stay all night?" laughed Lukashka. "Besides, the corporal told me to come back."

"I heard yesterday how you sang songs; besides, I saw you—"

"Everybody—" and Lukashka nodded.

"So you are going to get married, really?" asked Olenin.

"Mother wants me to marry; but I haven't any horse yet."

"But are you not in the regiment?"

"How? I have only just joined, and I haven't any horse: I don't know how I am

to get one. That is the reason why I do not get married."

"How much does a horse cost?"

"We bargained for a horse the other day, on the other side of the river; but they wanted sixty roubles,—a Tartar horse, too."

"You come to me as an orderly, I will look out for you, and I will give you a horse," suddenly said Olenin. "Really I will. I have two: I don't need them both."

"How not need them?" said Lukashka, laughing. "Why should you give me one? We will live and get one somehow. God will give one."

"Really I will. Don't you want to come as orderly?" said Olenin, delighted that it had come into his head to give a horse to Lukashka.

However, he felt rather awkward and ill



at ease. He wanted to say something, and did not know how to say it.

Lukashka first broke the silence.

“Have you got a house of your own in Russia?” he asked.

Olenin could not keep himself from saying that he had not only one house, but several houses.

“A big house, bigger than ours?” good-humouredly asked Lukashka.

“Much bigger, ten times bigger,” said Olenin.

“And have you horses like ours?”

“I have a hundred head of horses, worth three hundred and four hundred roubles each. Only not like yours,—three hundred roubles silver; trotters, you know. Still I like these horses here better.”

“Why do you come here? Were you sent, or did you come of your own free will?”

asked Lukashka, still smiling. "Here is where you lost your way," he said, pointing to the path beside which they passed. "You should have gone to the right."

"So, because I wished," answered Olenin. "I wanted to look at your country, and to go on a campaign."

"You are going on a campaign now," said Lukashka.

"The jackals are fighting," he added listening.

"Are you not frightened that you have killed a man?" asked Olenin.

"What should I be frightened of?" If I could only go on a campaign!" repeated Lukashka. "That is what I want; that is what I want."

"Perhaps we will go together. Our company is going before the holidays, and your sotnia too."

“And you want to go there?—you, with a house and horses and serfs? I should have amused myself. What rank have you?”

“I am a yunker, just presented for promotion.”

“Well, if you are not bragging, when you say you are so well off in your place, I should never have gone away from home. I am sure I should never have come to such a country as this. Do they live well where you are?”

“Yes, very well,” said Olenin.

It was already dark, when, talking in this way, they came to the village. The dark mist of the forest still surrounded them; the wind still howled aloft in the trees; the jackals, it seemed, walked along beside them, and laughed and yelled.

In advance of them, at the village, voices

were already heard, together with the barking of dogs. The profiles of the huts were visible against the sky. Lights burned in the windows; and there came on the air the odour of the smoke of burning dung.

It seemed to Olenin, especially this evening, that here in this village would be all his happiness, his house, his family, and that never would he live so happily as here. He so loved everybody, and especially Lukashka, this evening.

Coming home, Olenin, to the astonishment of Lukashka, himself brought out from the shed a horse which he had bought in Gronzy, —not the one on which he always rode, but another, not a bad horse, although not young, and gave it to him.

“Why do you give it to me?” said Lukashka. “I have not done anything for you.”

“Really it is not worth anything to me,” answered Olenin. “Take it, and then you can give me something or other. We will go, perhaps, on a campaign together.”

Lukashka was confused. “I do not understand. The horse, certainly, is worth a good deal,” he said, after looking at it.

“Take it, take it! If you do not take it, you will insult me.—Vanusha, lead the grey horse home for him.”

Lukashka took it by the halter. “Well, thank you! This was something that I did not expect.”

Olenin was as happy as a twelve-year-old boy. “Tie her up here. She is a good horse. I bought her in Grozny, and she gallops splendidly.—Vanusha, give us some wine. Let us go into the house.”

The wine was served.

Lukashka ate something, and took a glass of wine.

“God grant that I serve you in some way!” he said, as he finished his glass.

“What am I to call you?”

“Dimitri Andreitch.”

“Well, Mitri Andreitch, God keep you! We will be good friends. Now, come to us sometimes. Though we are not rich people, still, as good friends, we will entertain you. Yes; and I will tell mother if you want anything, curds, or grapes; and if you come out to the post, I am your servant for hunting, or for the river, just as you want. Pity I did not know you a day or two ago! I killed such a boar! I had to divide it round among the Cossacks. I might have brought it to you.”

“Very well, thank you! Much obliged!

Only don't harness her to a cart: she has never gone that way."

"*Harness* a horse! Well, I will tell you," said Lukashka, raising his voice. "If you like, I have a friend, Ghirei Khan. He invited me to go on the road there, where you go down from the mountains. We will go there together. I won't give you up to him: I will be your protector."

"Well, let us go; let us go some time."

Lukashka seemed to have quite calmed down, and perfectly to understand the relations of Olenin to him.

His quiet simplicity perfectly astonished Olenin, and even seemed unpleasant to him. They talked for a long time, and it was already quite late; and Lukashka, not drunk (for he was never drunk), but having drunk a good deal, grasped Olenin's hand, and went away.



Olenin looked out of his window, to see what he would do as he went away.

Lukashka went along quickly, with bowed head. Afterwards, letting the horse out of the gate, he suddenly shook his head, slapped the horse with the end of the halter, and, whistling, ran down the street.

Olenin thought he was going to share his joy with Marianka ; but, in spite of the fact that Lukashka did not do this, he felt gladder at heart than ever he had before.

He rejoiced like a boy, and could not restrain himself from telling Vanusha, not only that he had given a horse to Lukashka, but why he had done so, and of his new theory of happiness.

Vanusha did not approve of this theory, and declared that *largin ilny apa*, and that, therefore, all this was nonsense.

Lukashka went home, jumped down from



his horse, and gave it to his mother, ordering her to send it out to the Cossack pasture. He himself had to return to the post that night.

The dumb girl came up to lead away the horse, and showed by signs that she knew the man who had given the horse, and bowed down to his feet.

The old woman only shook her head at her son's story, and in her very heart made up her mind that Lukashka had stolen the horse; and therefore she ordered the dumb girl to take it to the pasture before daylight.

Lukashka went back alone to the post, and constantly thought over the conduct of Olenin.

Although the horse was not good, in his opinion, yet still it must have cost at least forty roubles; and he was very glad of the

present. But why this present should have been given he could not understand, and therefore he had not the least feeling of gratitude: on the contrary, there were running in his head confused suspicions of bad designs in the yunker. In what these designs consisted he could not explain to himself; but he could not admit, for a moment, the thought, that, merely out of good feeling, an unknown man had given him a horse worth forty roubles. This seemed to him impossible.

If he had been drunk, why, then he could have understood it: he had done it out of brag. But the yunker was sober, and probably wanted to buy him up for some bad business.

“Oh, well, this is all nonsense!” thought Lukashka. “The horse is mine; and it will soon be seen what he is after. I cannot be easily fooled. We shall see,” he thought,

feeling the need of being on his guard against Olenin, and therefore trying to awaken in himself some unfriendly feeling.

He did not tell anybody how he got the horse. He said to one, that he had bought it; and to others he replied in an evasive way. In the village, however, they soon knew the truth.

Lukashka's mother, Marianka, Ilya Vasilievitch, and other Cossacks, when they knew of the present which Olenin had given, did not know what to make of it, and began to be afraid of the yunker. Notwithstanding this suspicion, Olenin's action caused in them great respect for his simplicity and wealth.

"Have you heard that the yunker who lives with Ilya Vasilievitch has given Lukashka a horse worth fifty roubles?" said one. "He must be a rich fellow.

"Yes, I have heard of it," answered the

other, "what of that? He must have done him some service. We shall see. We shall see what will come of it. Ah! that Urvan is a lucky fellow."

## CHAPTER IV.

THE life of Olenin went on calmly and monotonously. With his superior officers and comrades he had little to do.

The position of a rich yunker in the Caucasus is very advantageous in this way. He was never sent after for work or drill. For the late expedition he was presented for promotion as an officer, and up to that time he had been left quiet. The officers considered him an aristocrat, and therefore kept a little at a distance. The card-playing and drinking and singing parties of the officers, of which he had had some experience, were

not attractive to him; and he, in his turn, kept clear of the officers' society, and lived at the village.

The life of officers in a village station has long had its special character. As every yunker or officer in a fortress regularly drinks porter and faro, and talks about promotions and decorations, so in the station he regularly drinks wine with his landlord, flirts with the girls, gives them suppers and mead, and goes about with them, and gradually falls in love with them, and sometimes even marries them.

Olenin had always lived in his own way, and had an unconscious aversion for beaten tracks. Here, too, he did not go along the beaten track of the life of an officer in the Caucasus.

Naturally he woke up at daylight.

After he had drunk tea, and had satiated

himself with the sight of the mountains from the porch, with the freshness of the morning and with occasional glimpses of Marianka, he used to put on his ragged coat and his damp wolf-skin sandals, gird on his dagger, take his gun, a little bag with lunch and tobacco, call his dog, and set out at six o'clock in the morning for the forest behind the village.

At seven o'clock in the evening he would return, well tired and hungry, with five or six pheasants in his belt, sometimes with bigger game, and his bag, containing his lunch and cigarettes, untouched.

If the thoughts had lain in his head as the cigarettes in his bag, one could have seen, that, in all these fourteen hours, not a single one had moved in him. He used to come home morally fresh, strong, and perfectly happy.

He could not even tell what he had thought

about in that time. Neither thoughts, nor reflections nor dreams floated in his head; only fragments of all these were there.

He would stop to think, and ask himself what he had been thinking about.

He would imagine himself a Cossack, working in the gardens with his wife, or an Abrek in the mountains, or a boar, running away from himself. He would listen to everything, look at everything, and watch for a pheasant, a boar, or a deer.

In the evenings Uncle Eroshka used constantly to sit with him.

Vanusha brought them a quart of wine; and they quietly talked and drank, and went off to sleep, both contented.

Next day there was again shooting, again healthy weariness, again they drank over their talk, and again they were happy.

Sometimes, on a festival, or for a day of



rest, Olenin would remain at home all day. Then his chief occupation was Marianka, every movement of whom, although without perceiving himself that he did so, he anxiously followed from his windows or porch.

He used to look at Marianka, and love her (so it seemed to him) just as he loved the beauty of the mountains and the sky, and never thought of coming into any relations with her.

It seemed to him there could not exist between him and her such relations as were possible between her and the Cossack Lukashka, and still less those which would be possible between a rich officer and a Cossack girl.

It seemed to him that, if he had tried to do what his comrades did, he would have exchanged his feelings of meditation and

contemplation, which formed his chief delight, for an abyss of torture, disenchantment, and despair.

Besides, in regard to this woman he had already gained a victory of self-sacrifice, which afforded him great satisfaction. But chiefly he somehow feared and respected Marianka, and nothing would have tempted him to say to her a word of love in jest.

Once in the summer Olenin did not go shooting, and was sitting at home.

Very unexpectedly a Moscow acquaintance came in,—a very young man, whom he had met in society.

“ Ah, *mon cher*, my dear fellow ! How glad it made me to learn that you were here ! ” he began in Moscow French, and continued in the same way, interspersing his talk with French words.

“ They told me ‘ Olenin. ’ What Olenin ?

I was so glad.—So fate has brought us to meet. Well, how are you? What are you doing? Why are you here?”

And Prince Beletsky began to tell his own story,—how he had entered for a while into this regiment, how the commander-in-chief had asked him to be his aide-de-camp, and how he was going to accept the place after the campaign, although he did not at all care for it.

“Serving here, in this hole, one must at least make one’s career,—get a cross, or a promotion, be transferred to the Guards. All that is indispensable, though not for me, but for my family and my friends. The prince received me very well.

“He is a very good kind of a man,” said Beletsky, without an instant’s silence.

“For the expedition I was presented for a St. Anne. And now I am living here until

the campaign begins. It is splendid here. What women ! Well, and how do you live ? Our captain told me,—you know Startsef, a good-hearted, stupid fellow,—he told me that you live a horribly lonely life ; that you see nobody. I can imagine that you don't care about being intimate with these officers here. I am glad, because we'll see more of each other. I am living over there with the corporal. What a girl there is there, —Ustenka ! I tell you, she's charming !”

And faster and faster flowed on French and Russian words from that world which Olenin thought he had left for ever.

The common opinion about Beletsky was, that he was a pleasant, good-natured little fellow.

Perhaps he really was so ; but to Olenin, notwithstanding his handsome, good-humoured face, he seemed in the highest degree

repulsive. He seemed so impregnated with all that worldly nonsense of which he had tried to rid himself.

What vexed him more than all was that he was not able, that he really had not strength enough, decisively to repel this man, coming from that world, as though that old world in which he had formerly moved had irresistible claims on him.

He was angry with Beletsky and with himself, and against his will introduced French phrases into his talk, got interested in the commander-in-chief and his Moscow acquaintances; and because they two, in a Cossack village, talked in a Frenchified dialect, began again to look with contempt on his comrades and on the Cossacks, and became very friendly with Beletsky, promised to go and see him, and asked him to come frequently.

Olenin, however, did not go near Beletsky.

Vanusha approved of him, saying that he was really a gentleman.

Beletsky immediately fell into the usual life of a rich Caucasus officer at a station. To the eyes of Olenin, in a single month he had become like an old inhabitant of the village.

He got the old men drunk, gave evening entertainments, and went himself to the parties of the Cossack girls, boasted of his conquests, and even got so far that the girls and the old women somehow called him "Grandfather;" and the Cossacks, who clearly recognized him as a man fond of wine and women, got accustomed to him, and even liked him better than Olenin, who was a puzzle for them.

## CHAPTER V.

It was five o'clock in the morning. Vanusha was fanning the coals in the *samovar* with the toe of his boot in the porch. Olenin had already gone to bathe on horseback in the Terek. He had not long before invented a new amusement,—swimming his horse in the Terek. The old woman was in her cottage, from the chimney of which rose the thick black smoke of the freshly-lighted stove. Marianka was milking a buffalo cow in the cattle-pen. Her impatient voice was heard saying, “Stand still, you beast!” and immediately after the measured sound of the milking began again.



The quick step of a horse was heard in the street ; and Olenin, on a handsome, dark-grey horse, still wet and shining from his bath, rode up to the gate.

The pretty head of Marianka, covered with a simple red kerchief, appeared over the fence, and disappeared again.

Olenin wore a red silk blouse, a white Circassian coat girt with a strap, and a dagger, and a tall cap. He sat somewhat affectedly on the wet back of his full-fed horse, and, holding his rifle over his back, bent over to open the gate. His hair was still wet ; his face shone with youth and health.

He thought that he was handsome, adroit, and like a bravo ; but this last was wrong. At a glance, every experienced Caucasus man would see that he was merely a " soldier."

Noticing the head of Marianka as she



peered over the fence, he bent boldly down, threw open the gate, and, holding the bridle, gave a crack with his whip, and rode into the yard.

“Is tea ready, Vanusha?” he cried gaily, not looking towards the door of the cattle-yard.

He felt with satisfaction, how, pressing his loins, straining at the bridle, and stretching every muscle, the handsome horse, ready to leap with all his legs through the fence, pawed the dry clay floor of the court.

“*C’e pre!*” answered Vanusha.

It seemed to Olenin that the pretty head of Marianka was still looking out of the cattle-yard; but he did not look at her.

Jumping off his horse, Olenin hung up his rifle in the porch, made an awkward movement, and glanced in a frightened way toward the cattle-yard; but no one was

visible, and the same regular sounds of milking were to be heard.

Going into the house, he came out a little while after into the porch, and, with a book and a pipe, sat down to his glass of tea on the side not yet glaring with the oblique rays of the morning sun.

He was going nowhere that day before dinner, and intended to write some long-put-off letters ; but he somehow hated to leave his place in the porch, and had no more desire to go back into the house than into a dungeon.

The old woman heated her stove. Marianka drove the cattle to pasture, and, on coming back, began to collect and mould the *kizyak*, or dung fuel, along the fence.

Olenin read, but understood nothing of the book that lay open before him. He constantly lifted his eyes from it, and looked

at the motions of the young and stalwart woman in front of him. Whether she was in the damp morning shadow which fell from the house, or went out into the middle of the court, illuminated by the joyous light, where her shapely figure in its bright costume shone in the sun, and cast a dark shadow, he nevertheless feared losing a single one of her movements.

He delighted in seeing how freely and gracefully she bent over ; how her pink shirt, which was her only clothing, draped itself over her breast, and along her muscular legs ; how, when she straightened herself up, the outlines of her heaving bosom were strongly marked under her tightly-drawn shirt ; how her narrow feet, shod in old red slippers, stood firmly on the ground without losing their form ; how her strong arms, with sleeves rolled up, straining the muscles angrily,

as it were, threw the hoe; and how her deep black eyes looked sometimes at him. Although her thin brows frowned, yet in her eyes there was expressed satisfaction and a feeling of her own beauty.

“Well, Olenin, have you been up long?” said Beletsky, in the uniform of a Caucasus officer, coming into the court, and turning to Olenin.

“Ah, Beletsky!” exclaimed Olenin, stretching out his head. “How early you are!”

“What can I do! They drove me away. I am going to have a ball to-day.—Marianka, you’ll come to Ustenka’s?” he said, turning to the girl.

Olenin was astonished that Beletsky could address this girl so simply.

But Marianka bent her head as though she had not heard, and, putting her hoe over her shoulder, went with her bold, muscular step into the house.

"Ashamed, sister, ashamed!" called out Beletsky after her. "You are ashamed to be caught so," and, smiling merrily, ran up into the porch.

"You are going to have a ball? Who drove you away?"

"There is to be a ball at Ustenka's, at my landlady's; and you are invited. A ball; that is a pie, and an assembly of the girls."

"But what are we to do there?"

Beletsky smiled knowingly, and, winking, motioned with his head to the cottage where Marianka had gone.

Olenin shrugged his shoulders, and grew red.

"By God! you are a strange fellow," he said. "Well, tell me about it!"

Olenin frowned. Beletsky noticed it, and smiled insinuatingly.

"Well, really," he said, "you live in one

house; and she is such a splendid girl, such a fine girl!—a perfect beauty.”

“A wonderful beauty! I never saw such women,” said Olenin.

“Well, what now?” asked Beletsky, having no idea of the state of the case,

“It is perhaps strange,” answered Olenin; “but why shouldn’t I tell you how I feel? Since I have been living here, it is just as if women did not exist for me. And I feel so free and well, really I do! Then what is there in common between us and these women? Eroshka—that’s another thing: we have a common passion,—hunting.”

“Well, what is there in common? But what is there in common between me and Amalia Ivanovna? It is just the same. You may say that they are not very clean; but that is another matter: *à la guerre, comme à la guerre!*”

“I never knew Amalia Ivanovna, and never had anything to do with such people,” replied Olenin. “Those it was impossible to respect: these I respect.”

“Well, respect them if you want. Who prevents you?”

Olenin did not reply. He evidently wanted to say what he had begun. It was too much on his heart.

“I know I am an exception (he was evidently agitated); but my life has become so ordered, that I see no need of altering my rules. But I could not live here—I do not only say live as happily as I live now,—if I lived as you do; and, besides, I seek something altogether different: I see something different in them from what you see.”

Beletsky raised his brows as though he did not quite believe him.

“Well, all the same, come to see me to-



night. Marianka will be there. I'll make you acquainted. Please come. If it is stupid, you can go away. Will you come?"

"I would come; but, to tell you the truth, I am seriously afraid of being led away."

"Oh, oh, oh!" cried Beletsky. "Only come, I'll quiet you. Will you come? Word of honour?"

"I would come; but really I don't understand what *rôle* we will play there."

"Come, I beg of you. Will you?"

"Well, I'll come, perhaps," said Olenin.

"Well, now, here are charming women as nowhere else, and you live like a monk. What is the pleasure in that? Why should you spoil your life, and not enjoy what there is? Have you heard that our company is going to Vozdvizhensky?"

"Really? They told me the Eighth company was going," said Olenin.



“No, I received a letter from the adjutant. He writes that the prince himself will be in the campaign. I shall be glad to see him. I’m already beginning to get bored here.”

“They say that there will be an invasion soon.”

“I haven’t heard that; but I heard that Krinovitsin got a St. Anne for the last. He expected to be made a captain,” said Beletsky, laughing.

“He missed it. He has gone on the staff.”

It began to grow dark, and Olenin thought about the evening. The invitation tormented him. He wanted to go; but it was strange, uncomfortable, and a little frightful to think of what might be done there.

He knew that neither the Cossacks, nor the old women, nor any one but girls would be there. What would it be? How should

he act? What would he say? What would they talk about? What relations could he have with these wild Cossack girls?

Beletsky told of such strange, cynical, and at the same time strict relations. It was strange to him to think that he would be in the same room with Marianka, and would, perhaps, talk with her.

That seemed to him impossible, when he remembered her haughty bearing. Beletsky, indeed, said that all this was very simple. Could Beletsky act in that way with Marianka too?

“This is interesting,” he thought. “No, better not go. All that is bad and cowardly, and, more than all, with no object.” But again the question tormented him, what it all would be like; and his promise, too, seemed to bind him.

He started without deciding on anything;

but, when he arrived at Beletsky's, he went in.

The house in which Beletsky lived was just such a cabin as that of Olenin. It stood on posts, raised up four or five feet from the ground, and contained two rooms.

In the first, into which Olenin entered by steep steps, there lay feather-beds, rugs, coverlets, Cossack pillows, prettily and elegantly arranged, one next to the other, along one of the walls. On the side-walls hung brass basins and arms; under the bench were water-melons and gourds.

In the second room was a large stove, a table, benches, and "old-believer" images.

Here Beletsky was settled, with his camp-bed, his pack-horse trunks, a carpet, over which hung a rifle, and with toilet articles and portraits scattered over the table.

A silk dressing-gown was thrown on a

bench. Beletsky himself, looking clean and handsome, lay on the bed in his shirt and drawers, reading "Les Trois Mousquetaires."

Beletsky jumped up. "You see how I am settled. Good! I am glad that you have come. They are already hard at work. Do you know what the pie is made of? Of dough, with pork and grapes. But that is not the important thing. Look! what an excitement they are in!"

In truth, on looking out of the window, they saw an unusual bustle in the landlady's cottage.

The girls, one with one thing, and one with another, kept running out into the porch, and back again.

"Soon?" cried Beletsky.

"Immediately. Are you hungry already, grandfather?"

And a loud laugh was heard in the cottage.

Ustenka, chubby, red-faced, and pretty, with her sleeves rolled up, ran to Beletsky's cabin for plates.

"Oh, you! Take care, I'll break the plates," she squealed to Beletsky.

"You should come and help us," she cried, laughing, to Olenin. "And you ought to prepare some goodies for the girls."

"Has Marianka come?" asked Beletsky.

"Of course. She brought the dough."

"Do you know," said Beletsky, "if this Ustenka were dressed up, cleaned up, and set off a little, she would be better than all our beauties? Did you ever see the Cossack woman, Borstchef? She married the colonel. It is charming, what *dignité*! Where she got it is—"

"I never saw Bortschef; and I don't believe anything could be prettier than this costume."

“ Ah ! I can adapt myself so to every kind of life ! ” said Beletsky, merrily sighing.

“ I’ll go see what they’re doing.”

He threw on his dressing-gown, and ran off.

“ You send to buy the goodies,” he said.

Olenin sent the soldier-servant after gingerbread and honey ; and it suddenly seemed to him so wrong to give money, as though he were buying up some one, that he made no decided answer to the question of the soldier, as to how many mint-cakes and how much honey he should buy.

“ As you please.”

“ For all of them ? ” meaningly asked the old soldier. “ Mint-cakes are dearer : they ask sixteen for them.”

“ For all, for all,” said Olenin, and sat down at the window, astonished that his heart beat so hard, as though something important and bad were going to happen.

He heard the cry and noise in the cottage when Beletsky went in, and, some minutes after, saw how he jumped out with cries, laughter, and noise, and ran away from the steps.

“They chased me out,” he said.

Some minutes after, Ustenka came into the room, and triumphantly invited the guests, explaining that everything was ready.

When they went into the cottage, all was indeed ready; and Ustenka was arranging the beds along the wall.

On the table, which was not half covered with a small napkin, were placed a decanter of wine and a dried fish.

In the room there was a smell of pastry and of grapes. Half-a-dozen girls in holiday gowns, and with their heads not tied up in kerchiefs, as usual, crowded themselves in the corner behind the stove, whispered, laughed, and giggled.



“We humbly beg you to pray to my angel,” said Ustenka, inviting the guests to the table.

In the crowd of girls, who were all, without exception, pretty, Olenin looked for Marianka; and he began to feel sad and vexed that he should meet her under such wretched and awkward conditions.

He felt himself stupid and awkward, and resolved to do whatever Beletsky did.

Beletsky rather solemnly, but with self-assurance and ease, went to the table, drank a glass of wine to the health of Ustenka, and invited the others to do the same.

Ustenka declared that girls did not drink.

“With honey we could,” said some one’s voice from the crowd of girls.

They called out to the soldier, who had only just returned from the shop with the honey and cakes.



The soldier, looking out of the corners of his eyes, but not with envy or contempt, at his superiors, who, in his opinion, were having a spree, carefully and conscientiously handed over the piece of honeycomb and the cakes, which were wrapped up in coarse grey paper, and began to explain at length about the price and the change ; but Beletsky sent him out.

Mixing the honey in the glasses filled with wine, and sumptuously emptying out three pounds of cake and ginger-bread on the table, Beletsky forcibly pulled out the girls from their corner, made them sit down at the table, and began to help them to cakes.

Olenin involuntarily noticed how the sun-burnt but small hand of Marianka seized two round mint-cakes, and one cinnamon-cake, without knowing what to do with them.

The talk was awkward and not pleasant,

in spite of the freedom of Ustenka and Beletsky, and of their desire to enliven the company.

Olenin became confused, thought over what to say, hesitated, felt that he inspired curiosity, and perhaps was causing a laugh, and communicating his shyness to others.

He became red, and it seemed to him that it was especially awkward for Marianka.

“They are probably expecting us to give them some money,” he thought. “How shall we give it? and how shall we give it most quickly, and go away?”

## CHAPTER VI.

“WHY, don’t you know your lodger?” said Beletsky, turning to Marianka.

“How should I know him, when he never comes to see us?” said Marianka, looking at Olenin.

Olenin was in a way frightened, started, and, without quite knowing what he was saying, replied,—

“I am afraid of your mother. She scolded me so the first time I came.”

Marianka burst out laughing. “So you got frightened?” she said, glanced at him, and turned away.

Then, for the first time, Olenin saw the whole face of the beauty ; for before that he had seen her covered with a kerchief down to her eyes.

Not without reason was she considered the first beauty in the village.

Ustenka was a pretty girl, small, full-faced, rosy, with merry hazel eyes, with a constant smile on her red lips, always laughing and chattering.

Marianka, on the contrary, was not merely *pretty*, she was a *beauty*.

Her features might seem too masculine, and almost coarse, were it not for her tall, shapely form, and her powerful chest and shoulders, and especially the stern, and, at the same time, tender expression of her long black eyes, surrounded with a dark shadow under her black brows, and the caressing expression of her mouth and smile.

She smiled rarely; but her smile always charmed.

She glowed with virginal force and with health.

All the girls were pretty; but even they, as well Beletsky and the old soldier who brought the cakes, all involuntarily looked at Marianka, and then, turning to the other girls, turned back to her.

She seemed a proud and merry queen among the others.

Beletsky, trying to keep up the proprieties of the *soirée*, talked incessantly, made the girls pour out and hand the wine, and constantly made to Olenin unbecoming remarks about the beauty of Marianka, calling her "Yours," *La vôtre*, and urging him to follow his example.

Olenin felt more and more uncomfortable. He tried to think of an excuse for going out

and running away ; when Beletsky proposed that, as it was Ustenka's name-day, she ought to pass the wine with kisses.

She consented, but on condition that money should be put on her plate, as is done at weddings.

"What devil brought me to this repulsive feast ?" said Olenin to himself ; and, standing up, wanted to go away.

"Where are you going to ?"

"I am going to get some tobacco," he said, intending to run away ; but Beletsky seized him by the arm.

"I have some money," he said in French.

"I can't go away ; for I must pay something," thought Olenin, and got vexed at his own awkwardness.

"Can't I act like Beletsky ? It wasn't necessary to come ; but, once come, there is no need of spoiling their enjoyment. I must

drink in the Cossack way;" and, taking up a big wooden cup, which held eight glasses, poured out the wine, and drank nearly all of it.

The girls did not understand it, and looked almost with horror at him as he drank. It seemed to them strange and improper.

Ustenka brought every one a glass of wine more, and kissed them.

"Come, girls, let us amuse ourselves," she said, rattling on the plate the four roubles which they had put on it.

Olenin no longer felt awkward. He began to talk.

"Now, you come, Marianka; bring some wine with kisses," said Beletsky, seizing her by the hand.

"Well, I'll kiss you, so!" she said, jestingly raising her hand against him.

"We can kiss 'grandfather' even without money," interposed another girl.

“You’re sensible !” said Beletsky, and kissed the girl, who tried to get away from him.

“No ; you pass it,” insisted Beletsky, turning to Marianka.

“Pass it to your lodger ;” and, taking her by the hand, he led her up to the bench, and made her sit by the side of Olenin.

“What a beauty !” he said, turning her head so as to show her profile.

Marianka did not try to get away, but, smiling haughtily, turned her long eyes full on Olenin.

“A lovely girl !” repeated Beletsky.

“What a beauty I am !” the glance of Marianka seemed to repeat.

Olenin, without really accounting for what he was doing, put his arms around Marianka, and tried to kiss her.

She suddenly tore herself away, pulled



Beletsky off his legs, and the cloth from the table, and ran off to the stove. Then began a cry, and a burst of laughter.

Beletsky whispered something to the girls; and suddenly they all ran out of the cabin into the porch, and shut the door.

“Why did you kiss Beletsky and don’t want to kiss me?” asked Olenin.

“So, I don’t kiss everybody,” she answered, pouting her lower lip, and raising her brows.

“He is ‘grandfather,’ ” she added, smiling.

She went to the door, and began to knock on it.

“What did you shut it for, you wretches?”

“Oh! let them be there, and we’ll stay here,” said Olenin, drawing near her.

She frowned, and sternly motioned him away with her hand.

Again she seemed to Olenin so majestically beautiful, that he remembered himself, and began to be ashamed of himself.

He went to the door, and began to push it.

“Beletsky, open the door! What foolish trick is this?”

Marianka again laughed her radiant, happy laugh.

“Ah! you are afraid of me?” she said.

“Yes: you’re as cross as your mother.”

“Well, you sit a little more with Eroshka, and the girls will begin to like you.” And she smiled, looking him straight and close in the eyes.

He did not know what to say.

“And if I came to see you?” he said suddenly.

“That would be another thing,” she said, shaking her head.

At that time Beletsky opened the door sud-

denly ; and Marianka jumped away, hitting Olenin's leg with hers.

“ What I thought before was all nonsense, —love, and self-sacrifice, and Lukashka. There is only one happiness : he who is happy is right,” confusedly whirled in Olenin's head. And with a force which he himself did not expect he seized Marianka, and kissed her on the forehead and cheek.

Marianka did not get angry, but only burst into a loud laugh, and ran away to the other girls.

With this the evening ended.

The old woman—Ustenka's mother—coming back from her work, began to scold, and drove away all the girls.

## CHAPTER VII.

“YES,” thought Olenin, on returning home, “if I only gave myself the rein a little, I should become madly in love with that girl.”

He went to sleep with these ideas, but thought that all would pass, and that he would return to his old life.

But the old life did not come back.

His relations to Marianka became different. The wall which before divided them had been broken down.

Olenin already exchanged a word with her every time that he met her.

The landlord, when he came to receive his

rent, and learned about the wealth and generosity of Olenin, invited him to come and see them.

The old woman received him kindly ; and from that time Olenin frequently went of an evening to the family cabin, and sat there till night.

He apparently lived as before in the village ; but in his soul everything was turned upside down.

His days he passed in the woods. But about eight o'clock, as it began to get dark, he used to go to the landlord's, either alone, or with Uncle Eroshka.

The family had already got so used to him, that they were astonished when he did not come. He paid well for his wine, and was a quiet fellow.

Vanusha would bring him in tea, and he would sit in the corner by the stove.

The old woman, without minding him, went on with her work, and they talked over the tea and the wine about Cossack affairs, about the neighbours, about Russia, concerning which they asked questions and Olenin told stories.

Sometimes he brought a book, and read to himself.

Marianka—like a wild goat, drawing her feet up under her—used to sit on the stove, or in a dark corner. She took no part in the conversation ; but Olenin saw her eyes and face, listened to her movements, her crunching of seeds, and felt that she was listening with her whole being when he talked, and felt her presence when he silently read.

Sometimes it seemed to him that her eyes were turned towards him, and, meeting with their bright glance, he involuntarily became silent, and looked at her. Then she imme-

diately turned away; and he, pretending that he was very much taken up with the talk of the old woman, listened to her breathing, to all her movements, and again waited for her look. Before others she was generally gay and pleasant with him; but alone she was wild and rude.

Sometimes he went to the family when Marianka had not yet come in: suddenly her strong steps are heard, and her blue calico dress appears through the open door.

She comes into the middle of the room, sees him, and her eyes smile tenderly, but scarcely noticeably, and he begins to feel happy, but strange.

He sought nothing, wished for nothing, from her; but with every day her presence became more and more necessary to him.

Olenin so entered into the life of the station



that the past seemed wholly foreign to him, and the future, especially outside of that world in which he lived, never occupied him at all.

On receiving letters from home, from his relations and friends, he felt offended that they should so evidently be afflicted over him as a lost man ; while he at his station felt that every one was lost who did not lead a life like his own.

He felt assured that he should never repent of having torn himself away from his former life, and of having settled down in such lonely and peculiar way at his station.

In the campaigns, in the forts, it was well enough ; but only here, only under the wing of Uncle Eroshka, in his forest, in his cottage, on the edge of the village, and especially with his recollections of Marianka and Lukashka, did all that world in which he had



formerly lived seem false to him. Even then it had troubled him : now it seemed inexpressibly wretched and ridiculous.

Every day he felt himself more and more free, more and more of a man.

The Caucasus appeared to him very different from what he had imagined. He found here nothing like all his dreams, or like all the descriptions of the Caucasus he had heard or read.

“Here there are no dark-brown steeds, or precipices, or Amalat-Beks, or heroes and villains,” he thought. “People live as Nature lives : they die and are born, get married, others are born ; they fight, drink, eat, enjoy themselves, and die ; and there are no special conditions, except those unchangeable ones which Nature has set to the sun, the grass, to animals and trees. Other laws they do not have.”

And, for that reason, these people, in comparison with himself, seemed excellent, strong, and free; and when he looked at them, he felt ashamed and sad.

Sometimes it seriously came into his head to throw up everything, to inscribe himself among the Cossacks, buy a cottage and cattle, and marry a Cossack girl (only not Marianka, whom he had given up to Lukashka), and live with Uncle Eroshka, go hunting and fishing with him and on expeditions with the Cossacks.

“Why shouldn’t I do this? What do I expect?” he would ask himself. And he would torment himself, and be ashamed of himself.

“Am I afraid to do what I consider reasonable and right? Is the wish to be a simple Cossack, to live near nature, to do no harm to any one, but, more than that, do

good to people,—is to dream of this more foolish than to dream, as I did before, of being, for instance, a minister, or the commander of a regiment?”

But a sort of voice seemed to tell him to wait, and not to decide: a confused consciousness restrained him, that he could not wholly live the life of Eroshka and Lukashka, because he had another idea of happiness: he was restrained by the idea that happiness consisted in self-sacrifice.

His gift to Lukashka had never ceased to make him feel happy. He was constantly on the look-out for an opportunity of sacrificing himself for others; but this opportunity never came. Sometimes he would forget his newly-discovered receipt for happiness, and feel himself able to live the life of Uncle Eroshka; but afterwards he would suddenly remember himself, and immediately seize

hold again of his idea of conscious self-sacrifice, and on its basis would look calmly and proudly on everybody else, and on the happiness of others.

## CHAPTER VIII.

LUKASHKA, before the vintage, came to Olenin's on horseback. He looked still more like a bravo than ever.

"Well, what is it? Are you going to get married?" asked Olenin, gaily meeting him.

Lukashka did not answer directly.

"See, I have swapped your horse on the other side of the river. This is a splendid horse, a Kabarda from the Tavro breed. I know all about them."

They looked at the new horse, and trotted it about the yard. The horse was really un-

usually good. It was iron grey, broad and long, with a shining coat, and a feathery tail, and a fine mane. It was so well fed, that, as Lukashka expressed it, "you could just lie down on his back and sleep." His hoofs, his eyes, his lips, everything about him, expressed plainly and decidedly that he was a horse of the very purest blood. Olenin could not help feeling in love with him : he had never met such a beauty in the Caucasus.

"But his gait," said Lukashka, patting him on the neck. "His gait is so good ! and he is such a knowing horse ! He runs after his master so !"

"Did you give much to boot ?"

"Well, I did not count it," answered Lukashka. "I got it from my good friend over there."

"Really, it is a beauty of a horse. What will you take for it ?" asked Olenin.

“I gave one hundred and fifty roubles, and I will sell it to you for that,” said Lukaskha merrily. “Only say the word, and I will give it to you. I will unsaddle it, and you can take it. Let me serve you some way or other.”

“No, not for anything.”

“Well, so I brought you a present;” and Lukashka untied his belt, and took out one of two daggers which hung on the strap. “I got it over the river.”

“Thank you very much.”

“And mother promised herself to bring some wine.”

“All that is not necessary. We will make up our accounts some other time. I am not going to give you any money for your dagger.”

“How can you? We are friends. Ghirei Khan invited me beyond the river to his

house, and said, 'Choose something;' and I took this dagger. It is our custom."

They went into the cottage, and took a drink.

"Well, are you going to live here now?" asked Olenin.

"No, I came to bid you good-bye. They have sent me from the outpost to the sotnia, beyond the Terek. To-day I am going with Nazarka, my comrade."

"When is the wedding to be?"

"Well, I am coming again soon, and there will be a talk about it, and then I must go again to service," answered Lukashka unwillingly.

"What, don't you even see your bride?"

"Well, what is the use of looking at her? When you come on the campaign, ask at our sotnia for Lukashka the broad-shouldered. There are plenty of wild boars there too. I



have killed two ; and I will take you to the place."

" Well, good-bye ! God preserve you ! "

Lukashka sat on his horse, and without going into Marianka's, rode away, caracoling along the street, where Nazarka was already waiting for him.

" Shall not we go there ? " asked Nazarka, pointing in the direction in which Yamka lived.

" You go," said Lukashka, " and take the horse there ; and if I do not come for a long time, give him some hay. And in the morning I will come to the sotnia."

" Did the yunker make a present to you of something else besides ? "

" No. I paid my thanks to him with a dagger : and even then he began to ask me for the horse," said Lukashka, getting off from the animal and giving the reins over to Nazarka.

Under the very window of Olenin he walked quietly through the yard, and came to the window of the family cottage. It was already quite dark.

Marianka, in nothing but her shirt, was combing her hair, and getting ready to go to bed.

"It is I," whispered the Cossack.

The face of Marianka had been very indifferent ; but it suddenly grew animated as soon as she heard her name.

She opened the window, and, with a frightened but glad look, peered out of it.

"What do you want ?" she said.

"Open the door," said Lukashka. "Let me in for a minute. I am tired of living without you."

He embraced her through the window, and, taking her face in his hands, he kissed her. "Come, do let me in."

“What stupid things you are saying! I have said I won’t let you in. What is it to wait a little?”

He did not answer, but only kissed her; and she made no further resistance.

“You see it is not easy to kiss one through the window,” said Lukashka.

“Marianushka!” was heard the voice of the old woman, “whom are you talking with?”

Lukashka took off his cap, so that he should not be known by it, and sat down under the window.

“Go away as quick as you can,” whispered Marianka.

“Lukashka came for a moment,” she answered her mother. “He asked for father.”

“Well, send him away.”

“He has gone away. He said he had not got time.”

In reality, Lukashka, with quick steps, bending down under the windows, ran through the yard, and off to Yamka's. No one saw him, except Olenin.

After drinking a couple of pints of wine, he and Nazarka went off beyond the village. The night was warm, dark, and still.

They rode along silently, hearing nothing but the horses' steps. Lukashka then began to sing a song about the Cossack Mingal, but, after finishing the first verse, stopped and turned to Nazarka.

"She would not let me in," he said.

"Oh!" answered Nazarka. "I knew she would not let you in. Yamka told me that the yunker is always going there. Uncle Eroshka has been bragging that he got a musket from the yunker for Marianka."

"He lies, the old devil!" angrily answered Lukashka. "She is not a girl of that kind.

I will smash that old fellow's sides ;" and he began to sing his favourite song, popular throughout Russia :—

“ Out of the village of Ismailovo,  
Out of the queen's cherished garden,  
Flew a swift, keen-eyed falcon.  
After him soon rode out a young huntsman,  
Called to the falcon to sit on his right hand.  
Answered him then the keen falcon :  
‘ In a golden cage you knew not how to keep me ;  
On your right hand you cannot retain me.  
Now I shall fly to the dark, dark blue ocean ;  
There I shall kill me a white, white swan,  
Shall gorge myself with sweet flesh, with swan's  
flesh.’ ”

## CHAPTER IX.

THERE was company at the cornet's.

Lukashka came to the village, but did not go to see Olenin ; and Olenin would not go to the company at the cornet's invitation. He was sadder than he had been at any time since he had been in the village. He saw how Lukashka, in his best clothes, together with his mother, went, a little before evening, to the cornet's ; and the thought troubled him why Lukashka was apparently angry with him.

Olenin shut himself up in his rooms, and began to write his diary.

“ Much I have reflected, and much I have changed in this last time,” thought Olenin, “ and have come to what is written in the primer : in order to be happy one thing is necessary,—to love, and to love with self-sacrifice, to love all, everybody, everything, to spread on all sides the spider-web of love : whoever falls into it is your brother. Thus I have caught Vanusha, Uncle Eroshka, Lukashka, and Marianka.”

While Olenin was writing, Uncle Eroshka came to him.

Eroshka was in his merriest mood.

A few days before, on going to him, Olenin found him in the yard, before the carcass of a wild boar, which, with a happy and proud face, he was skinning with a small knife.

The dogs—and among them his favourite Lam—lay about him, and slightly wagged

their tails, while they looked at what he was doing.

The little boys peeped at him through the fence with great respect, and did not now mock at him, as they usually did.

His women-neighbours, who were not at all well-disposed towards him, exchanged greetings with him, and brought him,—one a pitcher of fresh wine ; another, some curdled milk ; and another, some wheat-cakes.

The next morning, Eroshka sat at his gate all covered with blood, and gave out his boar's meat by the pound—to some for money, to some for wine. On his face was written, “God has given good luck. I have killed a wild boar. Now Uncle Eroshka has become necessary to everybody.”

In consequence of this he naturally became drunk.

This was the fourth day that he had been



drunk without going out of the village. Besides that he had been drinking at the company at the cornet's.

Uncle Eroshka came out of the cornet's cottage to Olenin, nearly dead drunk, with a red face and dishevelled beard, but in a new red coat decorated with galloon, and with a guitar, which he had brought from across the river. He had long ago promised Olenin this amusement, and he was in the mood for it. Seeing Olenin was writing, he became excited.

"Write, write, my father!" he said in a whisper, supposing, it seemed, that there was some sort of spirit sitting between him and the paper; and fearing to drive it away, he noiselessly and quietly sat down on the floor.

When Uncle Eroshka was drunk, his favourite seat was upon the floor.

Olenin looked at him, ordered some wine to be given to him, and continued to write.

It bored Eroshka to drink alone; he wanted to talk.

“I was at the cornet’s party. What swine they are! I did not like it: I came to you.”

“Where did you get your guitar?” asked Olenin, continuing to write.

“Oh! I was across the river, my father, and I got the guitar there,” he said very quietly.

“I am a great fellow for playing. I will play you a Tartar, a Cossack’s, a gentleman’s, or a soldier’s song, just as you wish.”

Olenin looked at him again, laughed, and continued writing.

This smile assured the old man.

“Oh, now, stop, my father, stop!” he said suddenly, in a decided way. “And have they insulted you? Oh let them go; spit at them. Now, why do you write? what is the use of

it?" And he gave a little nudge to Olenin, beating time with his thick fingers on the floor, and twisting his thick lips into a derisive grimace.

"What is the use of writing charms? Better go and amuse yourself, and be a gay young fellow."

He had no idea in his head about writing, except for charms and witchcraft.

Olenin burst out into a laugh, Eroshka also.

He jumped up from the floor, and began to show his skill in playing on the guitar, and singing Tartar songs.

"What are you writing, my good fellow? You had better listen: I will sing to you. If you died of writing, then you would not hear any songs. Come, amuse yourself."

Then he sang a song of his own composition, with accompaniment:—

“ Ah, di-di-di-di-di,  
When did you see him ?  
At a shop in the market :  
He was selling pins.”

After this he sang a song which he had learned from his former friend, the sergeant-major :—

“ ’Twas Monday when I fell in love ;  
All Tuesday did I suffer ;  
On Wednesday I spoke out my love ;  
On Thursday got my answer ;  
On Friday the decision came,  
No comfort then to wait for ;  
I then on holy Saturday  
To end my life resolved ;  
But, luckily for all of us,  
On Sunday changed my mind.”

Then, again :—

“ Ah, di-di-di-di-di,  
When did you see him ?”

Then winking, shrugging his shoulders, and dancing, he sang :—

“I will kiss you ; I'll hug you ;  
Bright red ribbons will give you ;  
Nadezhenka I'll call you ;—  
Nadezhenka, my dearest :  
Do you really love me ?”


He then walked about ; so that, while playing vigorously, he made a leap in the air, and again began to dance about the room.

“What he thought gentlemen's songs, such as “di-di-di,” he sang for Olenin only ; but afterwards, having drunk two or three more glasses of wine, he remembered the good old times, and began to sing really good old Tartar and Cossack songs.

In the middle of one of his favourite songs his voice began to tremble, and he stopped, continuing only to strum upon the guitar.

“Oh, my friend !” he said.

Olenin looked up at the strange sound of his voice.



The old man was crying. Tears started in his eyes, and one rolled down his cheek.

“You have passed, my good old times, and will not return !” he continued, with a sudden burst of energy, and then grew calm again.

“Drink !” why don’t you drink ?” he suddenly cried out in his deafening voice, without wiping away his tears.

One song of Tavlin was especially moving to him. There were few words in it ; but all its charm consisted in its sad refrain,—  
“Ai, dai, dalalai !”

Eroshka translated the words of the song.

“A young man drove his booty from the village to the mountains. The Russians came, burned the village, killed all the men, and took the women prisoners. A young hero came down from the mountains : where there had been a village, there was

now an empty place. He had no mother, no village, no home. One tree alone remained. The hero sat beneath the tree and wept. 'Alone like thee, alone it has remained,' the hero sang, 'Ai, dai, dalalai!'" And this refrain, which was affecting, and involuntarily remained in the memory, the old man repeated several times.

After singing the last refrain, Eroshka suddenly took down a gun from the wall, ran into the yard, and fired both barrels into the air.

Again, in a still sadder voice, he sang the same refrain, and then became silent.

Olenin, coming out after him into the porch, suddenly looked into the dark starry sky, in the direction where the shots had been fired.

Lights were still visible in the windows of the cornet's house, and voices were heard.



In the yard girls were crowding about the porch and the windows, and running from the cottage into the anteroom.

Several Cossacks jumped down from the porch, and could not help taking up the refrain, and repeating the end of the song, and the shots of Uncle Eroshka.

“Why are you not at the party?” said Olenin.

“God be with them ! God be with them !” answered the old man, whom they had evidently offended in some way. “I do not love them. I do not love them. Oh, what people they are ! Let us go into the house. They are having a good time there, and we will amuse ourselves together.”

Olenin returned into the house.

“Well, is Lukashka merry ? Won’t he come to me ?” he asked.

“What, Lukashka ? They have lied to



him, and told him I was bringing the girl to you," said the old man in a whisper. "What sort of a girl is she? She is ours when we want her. Give her a little more money, and she will be ours. I will do it for you; really I will."

"No, uncle: money won't do anything, so long as she does not love. I will not talk about it."

"Oh, what poor orphans we are!" suddenly exclaimed Uncle Eroshka; and again he began to cry.

Olenin drank more than usual as he listened to the tales of the old man.

"How happy Lukashka is now!" he thought; but still he himself felt sad. The old man drank so much that evening that he staggered about on the floor, and Vanusha was obliged to call some soldiers to help drag him off.

He was so angry with the old man for his bad conduct, that he did not even say anything in French.

## CHAPTER X.

It was the month of August. For several days in succession there had not been a cloud in the sky. The rays of the sun were unendurable, and from morning to evening there blew a warm breeze, which raised up clouds of dust and heated sand along the plains, along the roads and gardens, and scattered them through the air, the reeds, the trees, and the village.

The grass and the leaves of the trees were covered with dust. The fields and the salt-marshes were all dry and bare, and sounded hard under the feet. The water had long

since fallen in the Terek, and was quickly disappearing, and drying up in the ditches. The muddy banks of the pond near the village were trodden hard by the cattle ; and the whole day there one could hear the cries of the little boys and girls as they splashed in the water.

On the steppes the reeds and the rushes were already withered ; and the cattle, overpowered by the heat of the day, ran into the fields. The wild beasts had decamped to the farther reeds and to the mountains beyond the Terek. Gnats and mosquitoes hovered in crowds over the villages and the fields.

The snowy mountains were covered with a grey mist ; the air was thin and pestiferous. The Abreks, it was said, had crossed over the shallows of the river, and were galloping about on this side. The sun set every evening in a warm, red glow. It was, too, the season for the harvest-work.

All the population of the village was busy in the water-melon fields and in the vineyards. The gardens had grown quite thick with rank vegetation, and were full of cool, thick shade. Everywhere ripe bunches of grapes hung down black from the broad, semi-transparent leaves. Along the dusty road which led to the gardens were slowly dragged creaking carts, heaped to the very top with black grapes. Everywhere in the dust of the road lay bunches of grapes, mashed by the wheels.

Little boys and girls, in shirts spotted with grape-juice, with bunches in their hands, ran after their mothers.

Along the road one constantly met with ragged workmen, carrying baskets of grapes on their strong shoulders, and stained to their eyes with grape-juice.

Wrapped up to their eyes in kerchiefs, the young girls led along the oxen, harnessed to tall carts heavily laden with grapes.

The soldiers, on meeting the carts, would ask the girls for some clusters ; and a Cossack girl, jumping on the cart as it was in motion, would get a handful of grapes, and scatter them over the soldiers.

In some court-yards they had even begun to press the grapes. The odour of new wine filled the air. Casks, red, as if covered with blood, were seen under the awnings ; and Tartar workmen, with rolled-up sleeves and trousers, and with stained legs, were seen in the yards. The hogs, snorting, fell upon the pressed grape-skins, and wallowed in them.

The flat roofs of the cottages were quite covered with the large, black clusters, which were drying in the sun. Daws and crows, picking up the seeds, collected about the roofs, and flew cawing about from place to place.

The results of the year's labour were all

being collected ; and this year the harvest was unusually abundant and good.

In the shady, green gardens, in the midst of the sea of vines, one heard on every side laughter, sounds of merriment, and women's voices ; and one got glimpses of the light-coloured garments of the women.

Just at mid-day Marianka was sitting in her garden in the shade of a peach-tree, and was getting the dinner for her family from out of the laden cart.

Opposite to her, on a blanket spread out on the ground, sat the cornet, who had just returned from school, and was pouring water from the pitcher on his hands.

Her little boy-brother, who had just run in from the pond, was wiping himself with his sleeves, and unquietly looking at his sister and mother, in expectation of his dinner, breathing heavily all the while.

The old woman, her mother, turning up the sleeves over her brown, sun-burnt arms, was setting out grapes, dried fish, curdled milk, and bread on the low round Tartar table.

The cornet, after washing his hands, took off his cap, crossed himself, and came up to the table. The boy seized hold of the pitcher, and eagerly began to drink. The mother and daughter, crossing their legs under them, sat down at the table.

Even in the shade the heat was unendurable. The air over the garden was hazy and heavy. The strong, warm breeze which came between the branches and twigs brought no coolness, but only a monotonous sound of the waving branches of the pear, peach, and mulberry trees.

The cornet again crossed himself, took from behind him a pitcher of fresh wine



covered with vine-leaves, and, after drinking a long draught, gave it to the old woman.

The cornet was stripped to his shirt, which was open at the neck, and disclosed his muscular and hairy chest. His thin, cunning face wore a very merry expression. Neither in his pose nor in his conduct was there seen anything of his usual politic bearing: he was simply merry and natural.

“And by evening we shall finish the whole vineyard,” he said, wiping his wet beard.

“We shall pick them all,” answered the old woman, “provided the weather does not prevent us. The Demkins have not yet picked half of their grapes,” she added. “No one but Ustenka is working; and she is half dead.”

“How could they?” said the old man.

“Come, take a drink, Marianka,” said the old woman, handing the pitcher to the girl.

“God grant that we shall have something for the wedding !” she added.

“That is for the future,” said the cornet, slightly frowning.

The girl hung down her head.

“Why do you say that ?” said the old woman. “The matter is all concluded, and the time is not far off.”

“Don’t you make guesses about that,” said the old man. “Now it is time to clear off.”

“Did you see Lukashka’s new horse ?” asked the old woman. “The one that Mitri Andreivitch gave him he has not any more : he has swapped it off.”

“No, I have not seen it. But I have been talking to-day with the servant of our lodger,” said the cornet ; “and he says his master has just received another thousand roubles.”

"In one word, he is a rich fellow," said the old woman.

The whole family was merry and contented.

The work went on successfully. There were more grapes and better than they expected.

Marianka, after having eaten her dinner, gave some grass to the oxen, turned her dress over her head, and lay down under the cart on the trodden-down and juicy grass.

She had a red silk kerchief on her head, and wore a long blue calico shirt; but she was fearfully warm. Her face glowed, and her feet found no place to rest upon; her eyes were overcome with heat and weariness; her lips involuntarily opened, and her breast heaved.

The working-season had begun already

two weeks before : and heavy, constant work occupied the whole life of the young girl.

At day-break she jumped out of bed, washed her face with cold water, bound her kerchief over her head, and ran barefooted after the cattle. Soon she put on her shoes and her dress, and, taking a little bread in her satchel, harnessed the cattle, and went out to the vineyard for the whole day.

There she rested only for a short hour from cutting off and pulling down the bunches of grapes ; and at evening she returned to the village, merry, and not tired, leading the oxen by a rope, or driving them on with a switch.

After unharnessing the cattle in the twilight, she would take a few seeds in the sleeves of her shirt, and go out to the corner to laugh and chat with the other girls. But,

as soon as twilight had died out, she had already gone back to the hut, and was supping in the dark room with her father, mother, and brother, and, careless and healthy, sat down on the stove, and half dreamingly listened to the talk of Olenin.

As soon as he went out, she threw herself upon the bed, and slept until morning,—a quiet and unbroken sleep.

Lukashka she had not seen since the day of her betrothal, and was quietly waiting for the time of the wedding. She had got accustomed to Olenin, and she felt with satisfaction his constant gaze upon her.

## CHAPTER XI.

NOTWITHSTANDING that there was no refuge from the heat, and that the gnats were wheeling about in swarms under the cool shade of the cart, and that the little boy in turning about disturbed her, Marianka put her kerchief over her face, and was already beginning to doze, when suddenly Ustenka, her neighbour, came up, and, crawling under the cart, lay down by her side.

“Now, sleep, girl, sleep,” said Ustenka, getting down under the cart.

“Wait a minute,” she said, starting up again : “it is not comfortable so.”

She jumped up, tore down some green branches, fastened them to the wheels of the cart, and threw her gown over them.

“You clear out!” she cried to the boy, as she crawled again under the cart. “Are Cossacks allowed to be in the same place with the girls? Clear out!”

When they were under the cart together, Ustenka suddenly embraced Marianka with both arms, and, drawing her towards herself, began to kiss her on her cheeks and neck.

“The dear little brother!” she said, bursting into her little thin, precise laugh.

“You have learned that from ‘grandfather,’” said Marianka, trying to get away. “Come, stop!” and they both laughed; so that Marianka’s mother cried out to them.

“Are you envious?” said Ustenka.

“You stupid, let me sleep! Why did you come?”



But Ustenka did not move. "I will tell you why," she said. "Come now."

Marianka raising herself up on her elbow, and adjusting her kerchief, which fell down on her face, said, "Well, why?"

"I know something about your lodger."

"There is nothing to know," answered Marianka.

"Ho, what a hypocrite you are!" said Ustenka, nudging her with her elbow, and laughing. "You won't tell anything. Does he come to see you?"

"Yes, he comes sometimes. What of that?" said Marianka, and suddenly blushed.

"Well, I am a simple-minded girl: I believe in everybody. Why should I conceal anything?" said Ustenka. And her merry rosy face took a thoughtful expression.

"Do I do wrong to anybody? I love him; and that is all."



“Who? ‘grandfather’?”

“Yes.”

“That is a sin,” exclaimed Marianka.

“Ah, Marianka! When can you have a good time, except when you are a girl? You get married to a Cossack, begin to have children, and have a bad time of it. Now, you go and get married to Lukashka, and then there will be no happiness come to you: you will have children and hard work.”

“Why, others get married, and live happily. It is all the same,” quietly answered Marianka.

“Now you tell me what has happened between you and Lukashka.”

“What has happened? Why, he has proposed for me. Father put him off for a year; and now they have betrothed me to him, and we are going to be married in the autumn.”

“And what did he tell you?”

Marianka smiled. “Everybody knows

what he said. He said he was in love with me. He was always asking me to go out and walk with him in the garden."

"What a fool you are! And you did not go, of course? And now he has become such a fine young fellow, the first bravo there is. He amuses himself everywhere in the sotnia. Not long ago, our Kirka came and said that he had got such a fine horse in a swap, and he is all the time lonesome on your account. Well, what else did he say?" Ustenka asked Marianka.

"So you want to know everything," she replied. "Once he came up to the window at night, drunk, and wanted to come in."

"Did you let him in?"

"Why should I let him in? I told him so once, and I will keep it. I am as firm as a rock," seriously answered Marianka.

"Oh, he is a splendid fellow! But you

look out ! No other girl would despise him that way."

"Then let him go to the others," proudly answered Marianka.

"Are not you sorry for him ?"

"Yes, I am sorry ; but I am not going to make a fool of myself with him. That would be wrong."

Ustenka suddenly let her head fall on the breast of her friend, hugged her with both arms, and trembled all over with restrained laughter.

"What a stupid fool you are !" she suddenly exclaimed, bursting out. "You don't want to have happiness," and she began to tickle Marianka.

"Let me go !" said Marianka, crying out through her laughter. "You have crushed Lazutka."

"Why can't you devils keep still, instead

of making such a noise ? ” asked the sleepy voice of the old woman behind the cart.

“ You do not want happiness,” again said Ustenka in a whisper, “ and by heavens ! you are happy. How do they love you ? You are all marked with the small-pox ; and yet they love you. Now, if I were in your place I would have got hold of your lodger. I looked at him when he was at our house, and it seemed to me that he was devouring you with his eyes. They say he is the richest of all the Russians here, and the servant said he had his own serfs.”

Marianka got up, and smiled in a meditative way.

“ What did he say to me once ? ” she said, biting a piece of grass. “ He said, ‘ I wish I were the Cossack Lukashka, or your brother Lazutka.’ Why should he say that ? ”

“ He only said just what happened to come

into his head," answered Ustenka. "What does not mine say! He is such a funny fellow!"

Marianka put her head in her skirt, and both her hands on the shoulders of Ustenka, and shut her eyes.

"To-day he wanted to come into the gardens to work; father invited him too," she said after a little silence,—and she went to sleep.

## CHAPTER XII.

THE sun came out from behind the pear-tree which overshadowed the cart, and with its oblique rays, even through the branches woven together by Ustenka, burned the faces of the sleeping girls.

Marianka woke up, and began to bind up her head with her kerchief. Looking round, she saw beyond the pear-trees Olenin, who, with his gun over his shoulder, was standing still there, and talking with her father.

She nudged Ustenka, and, smiling silently, pointed to him.

“ I came yesterday and did not find one,”

said Olenin, uneasily looking about, and not seeing Marianka under the branches.

“But you go over there to that corner strip, cross the circle there, in that overgrown garden you will always find hares,” said the cornet, immediately changing his voice.

“Is it easy to find hares in working times? You had much better come and help us. You can work with the girls,” merrily called out the old woman.

“Come, girls, get up!” she cried.

Marianka and Ustenka whispered together, and scarcely kept from laughing under the cart.

As soon as it had become known that Olenin had given a horse worth fifty roubles to Lukashka, the people of his house had been more amiable to him. The cornet especially had seen with satisfaction Olenin’s growing acquaintance with his daughter.

“But I do not know how to work,” said Olenin, trying not to look through the green branches under the cart, where he noticed the blue shirt and red kerchief of Marianka.

“Come, I will give you some peaches,” answered the old woman.

“That’s an old woman’s stupidity, though according to Cossack hospitality of old times,” said the cornet, explaining, and, as it were, correcting, the words of the old woman. “In Russia you would eat for your satisfaction not only peaches but pine-apple preserves.”

“So there are some in the abandoned gardens, are there?” asked Olenin. “I will go there,” and, casting a quick glance through the branches, he adjusted his cap, and went off through the straight green rows of the vines.

The sun had already become hidden behind the green vines, and with broken rays was



shining through the transparent leaves, when Olenin returned to the garden. The wind had quieted down, and a fresh coolness began to spread over the vineyard.

While still far off, by some instinct or other, Olenin recognized the blue shirt of Marianka through the rows of vines, and, picking off grapes as he walked, he went up to her. His tired dog also sometimes with his foaming mouth snapped at the bunches which hung low down.

Blushing, and turning down her sleeves, and adjusting her kerchief lower upon her forehead, Marianka quickly cut off the bunches, and arranged them in a basket. Still keeping hold of the branch she was stripping, she stopped, smiled pleasantly, and again set to work.

Olenin came near, and threw his gun over his shoulder, so as to set his hands at liberty.

“Where are your people? God help them. Are you alone?” he wished to say, but said nothing at all, and only pushed up his cap.

It was very awkward for him to find himself alone with Marianka; but still, as though purposely tormenting himself, he went straight up to her.

“If you do like that, you will shoot the women with your gun,” said Marianka.

“No, I won’t shoot;” and then both grew silent.

“You should help us.”

He took a knife, and began quickly cutting off the clusters.

Cutting off from beneath the leaves a heavy bunch, weighing fully three pounds, on which all the grapes were pressed hard against one another, not finding place enough for themselves, he showed it to Marianka.

“Cut them all off? It is not ripe, is it?”

“Give it here.”

Their hands met.

Olenin took her hand, and she looked at him, smiling.

“So you are soon going to get married,” he said.

Without answering, she turned, and looked at him with her silent eyes.

“Well, do you love Lukashka?”

“What affair is that of yours?”

“I am envious.”

“Absurd!”

“Really, you are such a beauty!”

And suddenly he felt very conscience-stricken for what he had said. His words seemed to him so cowardly.

He drew a long breath, summoned up his courage, and took her by both hands.

“Well, whatever I may be, I am not for

you. What are you joking about ?” answered Marianka.

But her glance said how deeply she knew he was not jesting.

“ How joking ? If you knew how I—”

His words sounded still more cowardly, still more discordant with what he felt ; but he continued, “ I do not know what I am not ready to do for you.”

“ Go away !”

But her face, her burning eyes, her heaving breast, her shapely legs, said something quite otherwise.

It seemed to him that she understood how cowardly was all he said to her, and stood far above such ideas.

It seemed to him that she had long ago known all that he wished, and had not dared, to say to her, but still that she wished to hear how he would say it.

And why should not she know, he thought, when he only wished to say exactly what she herself was? But she would not understand, would not answer, he thought.

"Oh!" was suddenly heard not far off, behind the vines, in the voice of Ustenka, and her thin laugh.

"Come here, Mitri Andreitch, and help me, I am alone!" she cried to Olenin, showing through the leaves her round, childish face.

Olenin did not answer, and did not move from his place.

Marianka continued to cut off the grapes, but constantly looked at him.

He began to say something or other, stopped, shrugged his shoulders, and, adjusting his gun, went with quick steps out of the vineyard.

## CHAPTER XIII.

TWICE he stopped, listening to the light laughter of Marianka and Ustenka, who were crying out something or other to each other.

The whole afternoon Olenin passed in the woods, and, without having killed anything, returned home in the twilight.

Passing through the yard, he noticed the door of his landlord's cottage open, and saw through it a blue shirt.

He immediately called to Vanusha, so as to let them know that he had arrived, and sat down in his usual place in the porch.

The people of the house had already come

back from the vineyards; they came out into the yard, and then went back into the house, and did not invite him.

Marianka twice went out of the gate. Once in the half-light it seemed to him that she looked at him. He eagerly followed with his eyes her every movement, but could not decide to go up to her.

When she had become concealed in the cottage he came from the porch, and began to walk up and down the yard, but Marianka did not come out again.

Olenin passed the whole night sleeplessly in the yard, listening to every sound in the cornet's cottage.

He heard how they talked in the evening; how they took supper; how they pulled out the mattresses and pillows, and lay down to sleep.

He heard how Marianka laughed at

something or other, and how all grew still again.

The cornet talked over something in whispers with the old woman, and somebody drew a long breath.

He went into his own rooms. Vanusha was asleep, without having undressed.

Olenin envied him, and again took to walking up and down the yard, always expecting something or other; but nobody came, and nobody moved.

He heard nothing but the heavy breathing of three people. He recognized the breathing of Marianka, and constantly listened to it, and heard the beating of his own heart.

All was quiet in the village. The late moon had risen; and the cattle became more visible as they went breathing loudly through the yards, lying down, and silently standing up again.



Olenin angrily asked himself, "What do I want?" but could not tear himself away from the night.

Suddenly he clearly heard steps, and the creak of the floor in the cornet's house.

He rushed to the door, but again nothing was heard but the even breathing; in the yard a heavy buffalo turned about, rose on his fore-legs, and then on all his legs, whisked his tail about, walked measuredly over the dry clay soil, and again with a sigh laid down in a place shaded from the moon.

He asked himself, "What am I about?" and at last resolved to go to sleep.

But again he heard sounds; and in imagination rose up before him the form of Marianka, coming out into this moonlight but misty night; and again he drew near the window, and listened to her steps.

At last, just before dawn, he went to

the window, and knocked silently on the pane.

He ran to the door, and really heard the deep-drawn breath of Marianka, and her steps.

He took hold of the latch, and moved it gently.

Bare, cautious feet, scarcely making a creak, drew near the door.

The latch moved; the door slightly opened: there was an odour of gourds and of warm air, and the whole figure of Marianka appeared on the threshold.

He saw her only for a moment in the light of the moon.

She shut to the door, and, whispering something, ran back with light steps.

Olenin began to knock slightly; but no one answered. He went to the window, and listened.

Suddenly a sharp, shrill man's voice astounded him.

"Very well," said a small Cossack in a white cap, coming from the yard near Olenin. "I have seen it all. Very well!"

Olenin recognized Nazarka, and became silent, not knowing what to do or say.

"Splendid! I am going to the station-house, I'll tell, and I'll let her father know about this. Oh! what a girl for a cornet's daughter!"

"What do you want from me, how much?" said Olenin.

"Nothing. I will only tell the head of the village," Nazarka said, and laughed on purpose. "Oh, what an adroit yunker this is!"

Olenin trembled, and grew pale.

"Come away, come here." He seized him firmly by the arm, and took him round to his rooms.

"Come, nothing happened at all. She would not let me in, and I did not do anything. . . . She is perfectly honest."

"Well, they will settle it there," said Nazarka.

"I will give you something, all the same."

Nazarka became silent.

Olenin went into his room, and brought out ten roubles to the Cossack.

"Come, now, nothing whatever happened ; but, all the same, I am to blame, and so I will give you something : only, for God's sake ! let nobody know it. Really there was not anything."

"Good-bye," said Nazarka, laughing, and went away.

Nazarka had ridden that night to the village, commissioned by Lukashka to get ready a place for a stolen horse, and, going

home through the street, had heard the sound of Olenin's steps.

Next day he returned to his company, and bragged about it, and told his comrades how cleverly he had made ten roubles.

Olenin the next morning saw the people of the house, and evidently nobody knew anything about it. With Marianka he had no conversation; and she merely laughed as she looked at him.

That night he again passed sleeplessly, walking uneasily up and down the yard.

The following day he purposely spent in hunting, and at evening, in order to escape from himself, he went to Beletsky's. He was afraid of himself, and even gave himself solemn promises not to go any more to Marianka's.

The next night Olenin was waked up by

the sergeant. The company was ordered to go at once on a campaign.

Olenin was very glad of this occurrence, for he thought that he would never come back again to the village,

The expedition lasted four days.

The commander was anxious to see Olenin, who was a distant relation of his; and he proposed to him to stay on the staff.

Olenin refused. He could not live without his village, and asked to go home.

For the expedition he was decorated with the soldier's cross of St. George, which he had so much desired before; now he was perfectly indifferent to this cross, and was still more indifferent to his promotion as an officer, which had not yet taken place.

Without any reason he rode out in advance with Vanusha, and preceded his company by some hours.

The whole evening he passed on the porch, looking at Marianka: the whole night he again walked up and down the yard aimlessly and thoughtlessly.

## CHAPTER XIV.

THE next morning Olenin woke up late. None of the people of the house were visible. He did not go shooting, but went out with a book to the porch, and again went into the house, and lay down on his bed.

Vanusha thought he was ill.

Before evening, he at last got up, sat down to write, and continued writing until late at night.

He wrote a letter ; but he did not send it, because no one would have understood what he wanted to say ; and why should any one understand that, except Olenin himself ?



This is what he wrote :—

“ They write me sympathetic letters from Russia. They fear I am going to ruin, burying myself in this wilderness. They say of me, ‘ He is growing coarse and wild : he is letting everything go ; he is beginning to drink ; and, what is worse, he is going to marry a Cossack girl.’ They say that it was not without reason that Yermolof remarked, ‘ A man who lives for ten years in the Caucasus will either drink himself to death, or marry a woman of bad character.’ How terrible !

“ In fact, am I not ruining myself when there might fall to my lot the great happiness of being a husband of Countess B——, of becoming chamberlain, or marshal of nobility ? You all seem to me wretched and pitiable. You do not know what happiness is, or what life is. It is necessary to ex-

perience life once in all its unartificial beauty. It is necessary to see and to understand what I see before me every day,—the eternal, inaccessible snows of the mountains, and the magnificent women, of that original and simple beauty which the first woman must have had from the hands of the Creator, and then you would clearly understand who is ruining himself, and who is living rightly or wrongly,—you, or I. If you only knew how wretched and sad you all seem to me in your illusions !

“The moment that instead of my cottage, my woods, and my love, there come up before me those drawing-rooms, those women with hair dressed by the coiffeur, with plenty of false curls mixed in, those unnaturally heaving breasts pressed together and squeezed out of shape, those weak limbs, and all that gossip of the *salon*, which must be considered

as conversation, though it has no right to be so, I become utterly wretched.

“ I imagine now those stupid faces ; those rich brides,—with an expression of face which says, ‘ This is nothing ; it is all right ; you can approach me even though I am a rich girl ;’—that sitting down and changing places ; the effrontery with which couples plot together and make love to each other ; that eternal gossip and pretence ; those rules to whom to give your hand, and to whom to nod, with whom to exchange a few words of talk ; and, finally, that eternal ennui in the blood which descends from generation to generation, quite consciously, too, with the full belief that it cannot be avoided.

“ Remember one thing, it is necessary to see and to understand what truth and beauty are ; and all that you think and talk, all your wishes of happiness for me or for yourself,

fall to dust. This happiness is to be with Nature, to see, to hear, and to talk with her. 'And besides which, God forbid ! he is going to marry a simple Cossack girl, and will become lost to the world,' I can imagine they are saying now about me with sincere compassion. While I wish only one thing, really to be lost in your sense, I wish to marry a simple Cossack girl ; and I don't dare to do it, because it would be an acme of happiness, of which I am not worthy.

"Three months have passed since I first saw the Cossack girl Marianka. The ideas and prejudices of that world from which I came were still fresh within me. I did not then believe that I ever could love this girl. I came to love her as I grew to love the beauty of the mountains and of the sky ; and I cannot help loving her, because she was as beautiful as they are.

“Then I felt that the contemplation of this beauty became necessary to my life; and I began to ask myself, ‘Do I not love her?’ But I found in myself nothing like that feeling as I had imagined it to be. This feeling was not at all like the sadness of a lonely life, and the desire of marriage, nor like the Platonic, nor still less like the sensual love that I had already experienced. I needed to see her, to listen to her, to know that she was near, and I did not become by that so happy as I did disquieted.

“After an evening in which I had been together with her, and had sat by her side, I felt, that, between me and this woman, there existed an indissoluble although an unacknowledged bond, against which it was impossible to struggle. But still I struggled. I said to myself, ‘Can I really love a woman who will never understand the spiritual

interests of my life? Can I really love a woman for her beauty alone,—love a female statue?’ I asked myself. But I already loved her, although I did not believe in the feeling.

“After the evening in which I for the first time spoke with her, our relations changed. Before that she was for me a strange but magnificent object of external nature. After that evening, she became for me a human being. I began to meet her, to talk with her, to go sometimes to her father’s, and to sit there the whole evening with them; and in these near relations she remained in my eyes just as pure, as unapproachable, and as magnificent, as before.

“To every question, and at all times, she answered in the same way,—quietly, proudly, and with a joyous equanimity. Sometimes she was affectionate; but generally every



look, every word, every movement that she made, showed an equanimity that was not contemptuous, but crushing and enchanting.

“Every day, with a pretended smile on my lips, I tried to conceal my feelings ; and, with the torture of passion and desire in my heart, I laughed and jested with her. She saw that I was pretending ; but merely looked at me, and smiled.

“My position became unendurable. I did not wish to lie to her : I wished to say all that I thought, all that I felt. I was particularly excited. This was in the garden. I began to speak to her of my love in such words as I now am ashamed to recollect. I am ashamed to recollect them, because I ought never to have dared to say them to her, because she stood immeasurably higher than those words, and that feeling which I wished to express by them.

The old man was crying in his eyes, and one rolled

"You have passed, and will not return!" a sudden burst of energy again.

"Drink!" why do suddenly cried out in without wiping away

One song of Tavlin to him. There were all its charm consisted "Ai, dai, dalalai!"

Eroshka translated

"A young man (village to the man came, burned the men, and took the young hero came where there had

of my life? Can I really love woman for her beauty alone.—love a thing like that?" I asked myself. But I had loved her, although I did not believe in love feeling.

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d to express by them.

“ I became silent ; and from that day my situation has become still more unendurable. I do not wish to lower myself by remaining in my former relations of mere good companionship, and I felt that I had not yet grown to direct and simple relations with her. In despair I asked myself, ‘ What am I to do ? ’

“ In my disturbed dreams I imagined her sometimes my mistress, sometimes my wife ; and, in despair, I repulsed both one and the other idea. To make her my mistress would be horrible : it would be murder. To make her a lady, the wife of Dimitri Andreivitch Olenin, just like one of the Cossack women here, whom one of our officers married, would be still worse.

“ Now, if I could make myself a Lukashka, could steal horses, could drink new wine, sing songs, kill people, creep up to her

window at night, when drunk, without any thought of what I am, or why I exist, that would be another thing. Then we could understand each other; then I might be happy.

“I have tried to give myself up to this kind of life, and still more strongly have I felt my weakness and my incapacity. I could not forget myself and my complicated, inharmonious, monstrous past. My future appears to me still more hopeless. Every day I see before me the distant mountains, and this magnificent, happy woman. Not for me is the only happiness possible in the world, and not for me this woman. What is at the same time the most horrible and the most pleasing thing in my position is that I feel that I understand her, and that she will never understand me.

“She does not understand me, not because

she is beneath me: on the contrary, she ought not to understand me. She is happy. She, like nature, is even, calm, and herself. I am a broken, weak being; and yet I wish her to understand my monstrous nature, and my sufferings. Nights I could not sleep, and, without any aim, walked up and down under her windows, giving myself no account for what was the matter with me.

“On the 18th, our company went on a little campaign. I passed three days outside of the village. I was sad, but indifferent. On the march, the songs, the cards, the drinking-parties, the talk about decorations, were all more hateful to me than usual. Now I have returned here I have seen her, my cottage, Uncle Eroshka, the snowy mountains from my porch; and such a strong, new feeling of delight has seized hold of me, that I understood everything.

“I love this woman with real love,—the first and only time of my life. I know now what is the matter with me. I do not dare to relieve myself of this feeling. I am not ashamed of my love: I am proud of it. I am not to blame that I love. It has come about without my will. I saved myself from my love by self-sacrifice. I imagined that I would take delight in the love of Lukashka for Marianka; and I have only exasperated my love and my jealousy.

“This is not the ideal, so-called exalted love which I felt before; not that feeling of inclination in which one loves one’s love, and one feels in one’s self the source of one’s feeling, and does everything one’s self. I have experienced also that. This is still less a wish for satisfaction. It is something else. Perhaps in her I love nature, the incarnation of all that is beautiful in nature: but I do

not have my own will ; and through me some elementary force, as it were, loves her. The whole world of God, all nature possesses this love in my soul and says,—love. I love her, not with my intellect, not with my imagination, but with my whole being. Loving her, I feel myself an inseparable part of all the happy world of God.

“I wrote before of my new beliefs which I had brought from my lonely life : but no one can know with what trouble they have worked themselves out in me ; with what delight I have recognized them, and I have seen a new path in life opened. Nothing was ever dearer to me than these beliefs. Now, love has come, and I have them no longer ; and I have no regret for them. It is even hard for me to understand that I ever could prize such a one-sided, cold, and intellectual condition of mind.

“Beauty has come, and has burst asunder all the Egyptian, internal work of life; and I have no regret for what has disappeared. Self-sacrifice!—that is all nonsense, wild ideas. It is all pride, and a refuge from deserved misfortune,—refuge from envy of another’s happiness. Live for others! Do good! Why?—when in my soul there is nothing but love for myself, and one wish,—to love her and live with her, and with her life? Not for others, not for Lukashka, do I now wish happiness.

“Now I do not love these others. I should have said to myself before, that this was a bad feeling. I would have tortured myself with questions,—what will happen to her? to me? to Lukashka? Now, that is all the same to me. I live not for myself; but there is something stronger than me which controls me. I torment myself; but

formerly I was dead, and now only do I live.  
I am going now to her, and I will tell her  
all."



## CHAPTER XV.

AFTER writing this letter, Olenin went, late in the evening, to visit the cornet's family.

The old woman sat on a bench behind the stove and reeled cocoons.

Marianka, with uncovered hair, was sewing by the candle-light.

As soon as she saw Olenin she jumped up, seized her kerchief, and went towards the stove.

"What's the matter? Sit down with us, Marianushka," said her mother.

"No, I am bareheaded;" and she jumped upon the stove.

Olenin could see nothing but her knee and her shapely leg.

He treated the old woman to some tea. The old woman set out for him some clotted cream, for which she sent Marianka. But Marianka jumped up again on the stove as soon as she had placed the plate on the table ; and Olenin merely felt her eyes upon him. They talked about housekeeping and farming.

Mother Ulitka came and went, and became enthusiastically hospitable. She brought Olenin pickled grapes, grape shortcake, the best wine ; all with that especial, simple, rough and proud hospitality which is met with only among people who get their bread by physical labour.

The old woman, who had at first so surprised Olenin by her rudeness, now often touched him by her simple tenderness to her daughter.

“Why anger God, father? We’ve got everything, thank God. We have poured out our wine, and salted down and shall sell three casks of grapes, and shall still have enough to drink. You wait awhile. We’ll make you amuse yourself at the wedding.”

“When will the wedding be?” asked Olenin, feeling how all his blood suddenly rushed to his face, and his heart beat unevenly and painfully.

He heard behind the stove a movement, and the crunching of seeds.

“We might have it next week. We’re ready,” answered the old woman simply and quietly, as though Olenin did not exist. “I have provided everything, and got everything ready for Marianushka. We’ll give her away well. But there’s a little hitch. Our Lukashka is too wild, quite too wild! He

does foolish things. Not long ago a Cossack came from the sotnia, and said he had gone into the Nogai country."

"He must look out not to get caught," said Olenin.

"So I say. Take care, Lukashka; don't be foolish! To be sure, he's a young man, and must be up to something. But there's a time for everything. He has defended himself, has stolen horses, has killed an Abrek, a bravo. Now he should live quietly: otherwise it will be altogether bad."

"Yes; I saw him twice on the expedition. He was always up to some lark. He has sold another horse," said Olenin, and looked at the stove.

The large black eyes glittered at him in a stern and unfriendly way. He began to be sorry for what he had said.

"What of it? He doesn't do harm to any

one," suddenly said Marianka. "He amuses himself with his own money," and, putting down her feet, she jumped down from the stove, and went out, slamming the door violently after her.

Olenin followed her with his eyes so long as she was in the cottage, afterwards he looked at the door and waited, and understood scarcely a word of what Mother Ulitka said to him.

A few minutes afterwards visitors came in,—an old man, the brother of Mother Ulitka, and Uncle Eroshka, and, after them, Marianka and Ustenka.

"Have you passed the day well?" whispered Ustenka. "You are always amusing yourself," turning to Olenin.

"Yes, I amuse myself," he answered, and, for some reason, felt ashamed of himself, and awkward.

He wanted to go away, and could not. It also seemed to him impossible to keep silent.

The old man aided him ; for he asked him to drink, and they drank together.

Then Olenin drank with Eroshka, then with the other Cossack again, and then again with Eroshka. The more he drank, the heavier his heart became. The old men were enjoying it.

The girls sat on the stove, and whispered as they looked at them.

Olenin said nothing, but drank more than the others.

Finally the Cossacks began to cry out ; and the old woman drove them away, and refused to give them any more wine.

The girls laughed at Uncle Eroshka ; and it was already ten o'clock when they all went out into the porch. The old men invited

themselves to go drink the night out at Olenin's.

Ustenka ran away home.

Eroshka took the other Cossack to Vanusha. The old woman went out to the cellar; and Marianka remained alone in the cottage.

Olenin felt himself fresh and bold as though he had just waked up. He noticed everything; and, letting the old men go on ahead, turned back to the cottage.

Marianka had lain down to go to sleep. He went up to her, wished to say something; but his voice broke down. She sat up in the bed, drew her feet up under her, getting away from him into the farthest corner, and silently looked at him with a wild, frightened look. She was evidently afraid of him.

Olenin felt this. He began to be sorry and ashamed, and at the same time felt a



proud satisfaction that he had aroused even this feeling in her.

“Marianka,” he said, “will you never take pity on me? I can’t tell you how much I love you !”

She moved still farther off.

“It’s the wine makes you talk so. You shall get nothing !”

“No, it is not the wine. Don’t marry Lukashka. I will marry you. What is that I am saying?” he thought at the same time that he pronounced the words. “Shall I say the thing to-morrow? I shall say it, for truth I shall; and now I repeat it,” an inner voice answered. “Will you marry me?”

She looked at him seriously; and her fright seemed to pass.

“Marianka, I shall go out of my mind. I am not my own master. Whatever you



order, I will do ;” and senselessly tender words came of themselves, without any control or volition of his.

“Now, don’t talk nonsense,” she interrupted him, suddenly grasping his hand, which he extended to her.

She did not push away his hand, but pressed it vigorously in her strong, rough fingers. “Do gentlemen ever marry Cossack girls? Come now !”

“Will you marry me? I will do all—”

“But what shall we do with Lukashka?” she said, laughing.

He tore away his hand, which she was still holding, and gave her a close embrace. But she started up like a young fawn, jumped down barefooted, and ran out into the porch.

Olenin remembered himself, and was horrified at himself. He again seemed to himself

inexpressibly vile in comparison with her. But, without repenting a moment for what he had said, he went home, and, without glancing at the old men who were drinking there, lay down, and slept sounder than he had done for a long, long time.

## CHAPTER XVI.

THE next day was a holiday. Towards evening, everybody was out in the street, their holiday attire brilliant in the rays of the setting sun. More wine had been pressed than usual, and everybody had finished his work.

The Cossacks were getting ready for an expedition in a month, and in many families preparations were being made for weddings.

On the square in front of the government house of the village, and about two shops, one of which sold seeds and cakes, while the

other was provided with prints and kerchiefs, larger crowds were collected.

On the turf terrace which surrounded the government house sat and stood old men in long grey and black coats, such as are worn on the steppe, without braid or embroidery.

These old men, quietly and with measured voices, talked with one another about harvests, and young children, about family affairs, and about the good old times, haughtily and sneeringly looking on the young generation.

In passing by them the women and the girls sometimes stopped, and bowed their heads. The young Cossacks respectfully slackened their pace, and taking off their caps, kept them for some moments in front of their faces.

The old men grew silent. Some sternly, and some affectionately, looked at the passers-

by, and slowly took off, and again put on, their caps.

The Cossack girls had not yet begun their dances, and collecting in groups, in their bright-coloured gowns, with white kerchiefs bound round their heads, sat on the ground, and on the terraces of the houses, shaded from the oblique rays of the sun, and noisily chattered and laughed.

Little boys and girls played at *lapta*, tossing the ball high up into the clear sky, and running in all directions over the square with cries and yells.

Some girls who were just growing up were already beginning their dances on the other corner of the square, and were starting their songs with shrill and timorous voices.

The clerks and the boys who were being educated at the government expense, and had come back for the festival in fine white and

new red coats, edged with galloon, and with merry holiday faces, in twos and threes, hand in hand, were going from one group of women and girls to another, jesting and playing with them.

The Armenian shop-keeper, in a blue coat of fine cloth edged with galloon, stood at his open door, through which were seen rows of coloured kerchiefs spread out to view, and with a consciousness of his own importance was waiting for customers.

Two black-bearded, barefooted Circasians, who had come from beyond the Terek to amuse themselves at the festival, sat at the porch of the house of one of their acquaintances, and carelessly smoking their small pipes, and spitting from time to time, exchanged an occasional word with each other in guttural sounds as they looked at the people.

Once in a while a soldier on duty, wearing an old overcoat, passed between the diversified groups on the square. Sometimes, also, were heard the drunken songs of carousing Cossacks.

All the cottages were shut up, their porches having been washed clean the evening before. Even the old women were in the street. Along the streets, everywhere in the dust under the feet, were scattered the skins of melon and pumpkin seeds. The air was warm and motionless. The clear sky was blue and transparent. The range of mountains seen beyond the roofs appeared very near, and grew rosy in the rays of the setting sun. Once in a while there was heard across the river the distant report of a musket-shot ; but in the village nothing was to be heard but the confused, varied, and merry noises of the festival.

Olenin walked about the court-yard all that morning, waiting to see Marianka. But, when she got ready, she went to service at the church, and afterwards sat on the terrace with the girls, crunching seeds, and then ran back home with her companions, looking merrily and carelessly at the lodger.

Olenin was afraid of talking with her in a jesting manner before the rest. He wanted to say over again what he had said the night before, and to get from her a decisive answer.

He watched again for such a minute as he had had the previous evening ; but the minute did not come, and he felt himself no longer able to remain in such an undecided state.

He went out again into the street, and after waiting a little while, without knowing whither he was going, he followed her.

He passed the corner where she sat radiant in her blue satin gown, and with a pain in



his heart listened to the laughter of the girls as he passed.

The cottage of Beletsky was on the square. Olenin, in passing by it, heard voices; and Beletsky said, "Come in."

He went in. They both sat down at the window, and talked.

Uncle Eroshka in a new coat joined them, and sat down on the floor beside them.

"There is an aristocratic crowd for you!" said Beletsky, pointing with his cigarette to the variegated group at the corner, and smiling.

"My girl is there too, in a red dress,—a new one which she has just had made. Why don't they begin the dancing?" cried Beletsky, looking out of the window. "Just wait until it begins to get dark, and we will go too. Afterwards we will invite them to Ustenka's. We ought to give them a ball."

“I will go to Ustenka’s too,” said Olenin, in a decisive way.

“Will Marianka be there ? ”

“She will be there. Will you come ? ” said Beletsky, not being in the slightest degree astonished.

“Look ! It is really very pretty,” he added, pointing to the crowds of various colours.

“Yes,” assented Olenin, trying to appear indifferent. “On such festivals,” he added, “I am always astonished. For instance, it is now the fifteenth. Everybody has become contented and merry ; the festival is visible in everything,—in the eyes, the face, the voices, and the movements of the girls. The air, the sun, all is holiday like. But *we* do not have any holidays any more.”

“Yes,” Beletsky said, not liking such reasonings ; “but you are not drinking, old man,” turning to Eroshka.

Eroshka winked to Olenin at Beletsky ;  
“Is your comrade a proud fellow ?”

Beletsky took a glass.

“*Allah birdi*,” he said, and drank. (*Allah birdi* means God gave, and is the usual compliment made by Cossacks when they drink together.)

“*Sau bul!*” “Be in good health!” said Eroshka, smiling, and drinking off his glass.

“You talk about holidays,” he said to Olenin rising, and looking out of the window.  
“What sort of a holiday is this? You ought to have seen how they caroused in old times! The women used to come out dressed in sarafans, all embroidered with gold braid. Their breasts were covered with gold in two rows. They had gold tiaras on their heads, and went past with a noise like ‘frr-frr!’

“Every one was like a princess. They used to come out like a whole herd of horses,

and sing songs ; and there was such a noise as they made merry all night. The Cossacks brought barrels of wine out into the courts, sat down opposite to them, and drank all night, until dawn. Then they joined hand in hand, and went about the village, and took with them everybody that they met. They never went away from each other. Sometimes they would carouse in this way for three whole days.

“ I still remember how my father used to come home quite red and swollen up, without his cap, all in rags, and done up ; and then he would lie down. Mother knew very well what had happened ; and she would bring out a little fresh caviare and new wine for him to get sober on, while she went down to the village to find his cap. He would sleep in that way for two whole days. That is the kind of people you used to see. Now what do you see ? ”

“ And the girls in their sarafans—what did they do ? Did they amuse themselves alone ? ” asked Beletsky.

“ Alone ? The Cossacks would come sometimes ; or they would get on horseback, and say, ‘ Let us go and break up the dances ; ’ and they would go there, and the girls would take up sticks.

“ One carnival it happened, that, as a young fellow burst in on them, they beat him and his horse hard. He broke down the fences, and he seized whoever he pleased, and carried her off.

“ How the girls used to love us too ! yes, and what girls they were,—queens ! ”

## CHAPTER XVII.

MEANWHILE, out of a side street there came two men on horseback. One of them was Nazarka, the other Lukashka.

Lukashka sat a little sideways on his well-fed Kabarda horse, which trotted lightly along the road, and tossed up and down its handsome head, with its glossy, thin mane. The rifle, skilfully slung over his shoulder in its case, the pistol at his back, and the sheep-skin coat twisted round his saddle, showed that Lukashka had not come from a peaceful or a neighbouring locality. By the *nonchalant* manner in which he sat sideways on his saddle

and the careless movement of his hands, which always insensibly hit the horse's belly with his whip, and especially by his shining and proudly-looking black eyes, which carelessly looked around, was expressed the consciousness of youthful strength and self-reliance.

“Have you seen this brave young fellow?” his eyes seemed to say, as they looked first on one side and then on another. His well-built horse, with its silver ornamented bridle, his gun, and the handsome Cossack himself, drew to him the attention of everybody in the square.

Nazarka, ugly and half-grown, was dressed far worse than Lukashka.

As they went past the old men, Lukashka stopped, and raised his white sheepskin cap from his black, shaven head.

“Well, did you drive off many Tartar



horses ? ” said a little old man with a dark, frowning look.

“ You counted them, uncle : why do you ask ? ” answered Lukashka, turning away.

“ It is no use taking along that fellow with you,” said the old man still more crossly.

“ Oh ! the old devil knows everything,” Lukashka muttered to himself ; and his face took a thoughtful expression.

Looking over to the corner, where a number of Cossack girls were standing, he turned his horse in that direction.

“ Have you had a good day of it, girls ? ” he cried in a strong, sonorous voice, suddenly stopping his horse. “ Why you have grown old without me, you witches.”

And he began to laugh.

“ How do you do, Lukashka ? How are you, old fellow ? ” repeated merry voices. “ Did



you bring much money? You ought to buy some sweets for the girls. Have you come for long? We have not seen you for an age."

"Oh! We have come on a flying visit, —for the night,—to amuse ourselves a little," answered Lukashka, striking his horse with his whip, and riding straight at the girls.

"Marianka has quite forgotten you already," hissed out Ustenka, nudging Marianka with her elbow, and bursting into a shrill laugh.

Marianka moved away from the horse, and, throwing her head back, quietly looked at the Cossack with her large shining eyes.

"You have not been here for a long time. Why do you beat your horse like that?" she said dryly, turning away.

Lukashka seemed particularly merry. His

countenance was radiant with the knowledge of his worth, and with delight. The cold answer of Marianka evidently touched him.

“Step on the stirrup, and I will take you up, sister,” he cried suddenly, as if to drive away his bad thoughts ; and, curveting down amongst the girls, he bent down towards Marianka. “I’ll kiss you, I’ll kiss you ! Come now.”

Marianka looked him straight in the face, and suddenly blushed and turned away.

“Well, it is just like you. You will crush my feet ;” and, bending down her head, she looked at her shapely feet, on which she wore blue stockings with white stripes, and new red leather shoes embroidered with silver braid.

Lukashka turned to Ustenka, and Marianka sat down by the side of a Cossack girl, who held a child in her arms.

The child reached out to her, and, with its fat little hands, seized hold of the string of her necklace, which hung over her blue dress.

Marianka bent down over it, and looked at Lukashka out of the corners of her eyes.

Meanwhile Lukashka brought out from under his coat, from the pocket of his black beshmet, a packet of sweets and some seeds.

“I will give you all some,” he said, giving over the packet to Ustenka, and looking at Marianka with a smile.

The girl's face again showed great embarrassment. Her beautiful eyes were as dark as a thunder-cloud! She pulled her kerchief down below her lips, and suddenly put her face down to the white face of the child that was holding her necklace, and began to kiss it wildly.

The child seized hold of her neck, and

screamed out, opening its toothless little mouth.

“What are you smothering the boy for?” said the mother of the child, taking it away from her, and unhooking her gown so as to suckle him. “You would do better to kiss this young fellow.”

“I will only put up my horse; and then I’ll come back with Nazarka, and we will amuse ourselves all night,” said Lukashka.

Hitting his horse with his whip he rode off from the girls.

Turning into a by-street with Nazarka, they went up to two houses which stood side by side.

“We have come back. Come as soon as you can,” cried Lukashka to his companion as he got down at the next yard, and carefully led his horse through the wickerwork gates.

“How are you, Stepka?” he said to the

dumb girl, who, also dressed up in holiday style, came out to take the horse.

He showed her by signs, that she must give the horse some hay, and not unsaddle him.

The dumb girl gave a chuckle, pointed at the horse, and kissed him on the nose. This meant that she loved the horse, and that it was a good one.

“How are you, mother? What, have not you gone out in the street yet?” cried Lukashka, taking off his gun, and going into the porch.

The old mother opened the door for him.

“Well, I was not guessing you would come,” she said; “and Kirka said you wouldn’t come.”

“Bring us some wine, mother. Nazarka is coming to me. We are going to keep holiday a little.”

“Immediately, Lukashka, immediately,” the old woman answered. “The women are all out holiday-making. The dumb one and I were just going out.”

And, taking the keys, she hastily went to the cellar.

Nazarka, having put up his horse, and taken off his gun, came over to Lukashka's.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

“HERE’S your health,” said Lukashka, taking from his mother a full bowl of wine, and carefully bringing it up to his mouth, as he craned his head over.

“There is something the matter,” said Nazarka. “That old boatman said, ‘Did you steal many horses?’ Evidently he knows something about it.”

“He is in league with the witches,” Lukashka said shortly.

“What of it?” he added, shaking his head. “They are already beyond the river. Let them look for them.”

“But it is not all right.”

“How not all right? Take him some wine to-morrow. That is the best way to do; and then nothing will happen. Now is the time for amusing ourselves. Drink!” Lukashka cried, with the same accent that old Eroshka pronounced the word. “Let us go off into the streets for a while, to the girls. You go and get some mead, or else I will send the dumb girl for it. We’ll carouse till morning.”

Nazarka smiled. “Shall we be long about it?” he said.

“Oh, come! let us have a good time. Run round for some vodka. Here’s money.”

Nazarka obediently ran off to Yamka’s.

Uncle Eroshka and Ergushof, like birds of prey, scenting out where there would be some amusement, came into the cottage, one after another, both drunk.

“Give us another half-gallon,” cried Lu-



kashka to his mother, in answer to their salutations.

“Now, tell me, devil, where did you steal it?” Uncle Eroshka cried out. “You are a brave fellow. I love you!”

“Love?” answered Lukashka, laughing. “You bring the girls treats from the officers, you do. Ah, you old villain!”

“It is not true; it is not true; eh, Marka!” The old man burst out into a laugh.

“I don’t know how many times this fellow begged me to arrange things for him. ‘Come,’ he said, ‘and arrange things a little for me.’ He gave me a gun. No, God be with him! I would have done it; but I was sorry for you. Come, tell me, where have you been?” and the old man began to speak in Tartar.

Lukashka answered him without any concealment.

Ergushof, who did not know Tartar well, from time to time put in a word in Russian.

“I say you have been driving off some horses. I know it for sure,” he insisted.

“We went off, I and Ghireika,” Lukashka went on to say.

In calling Ghirei Khan Ghireika he displayed a peculiar intimacy, and at the same time a desire to show off. “He was all the time boasting that he knew the whole steppe, and could go straight to the place: so we went out one dark night, and my Ghireika got lost, and began to wander about. It was no use talking about the matter, we could not find the village, and all was confusion. We had evidently gone too much to the right. We looked for it until midnight, when unluckily the dogs began to howl.”

“Fools that you were!” said Uncle Eroshka. “So we get lost at night on the steppe,

do we? Devil take them! Once on a time I got lost on the steppe that way; and how the wolves barked all about!" and he immediately began to howl like a pack of wolves on one note. "The dogs immediately began to answer to it. Well, go on, what did you find?"

"We got off with our skins. The old Tartar women came awfully near catching Nazarka."

"Yes, they did catch me," said in an offended tone Nazarka, who had just come back.

"We went out, and got lost again. We got entirely confused among the reeds. Everything looked as though we were going towards the Terek; but, on the contrary, we were going quite the other way."

"But you ought to have looked at the stars," said Uncle Eroshka.

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do we? Devil take them! I got lost on the steppes; the wolves barked and immediately began to howl on one note. "The time to answer to it. Will you find?"

"We got off with our Tartar women came with Nazarka."

"Yes, they did catch the offended tone Nazarka, with back.

"We went out, and got entirely confused. Everything looked as if towards the Terek; we were going quite the wrong way."

"But you ought to have stopped," said Uzun-bashi.

“ So I say,” added Ergushof.

“ See here, it was quite dark. I wandered about, and wandered about, and finally I got hold of the mare, turned about, and let my horse go. I thought he would take us back ; and then what do you think ? Why, he began to smell about with his nose to the ground, and then ran off ahead, and brought us straight to the station ; and then, by ill luck, it had already begun to be light, and we were only just able to hide our horses in the woods. Nazim came out from beyond the river and took them.”

Ergushof nodded. “ Well, I say, very well done. Many of them ? ”

“ Oh ! they are all here,” said Lukashka, patting his pocket.

Just then the old woman came back into the cottage ; and Lukashka stopped talking.

“ Drink ! ” he cried.

“So once, we and Girtchik went out late,” Eroshka began.

“Come now, nobody will listen to you. I am going away,” and finishing the wine bowl, and drawing tighter the strap of his belt, Lukashka went out into the street.

## CHAPTER XIX.

It was already dark when Lukashka went out into the street. The autumn night was fresh and still. The full golden moon sailed out from under the dark poplar-trees which stood on one side of the square. Smoke came out of the chimneys, and, mingling with the mist, hung over the village.

In some of the windows lights were burning. Talking, laughing, songs, and the crunching of seeds, were heard confusedly, but more plainly than during the day.

The white kerchiefs and caps were visible



through the darkness in little groups, and about the fences and the houses.

On the square, opposite the open doors of the lighted shop, appeared a black-and-white crowd of Cossacks and girls, from which came noisy sounds of laughter and talking.

Holding each other's hands, the girls circled about with a wave-like motion on the square. A thin girl, one of the ugliest of all of them, led the song :—

“ Out from the forest, the dark, dim forest,

Ai, da, liuli !

Out from the garden, the gay, green garden,

Ai, da, liuli !

There came and went two brave young fellows,—

Two brave young fellows, both batchelors ;

They came and went, and then they stood still,

Then they stood still, and to quarrel began.

Approached them then a maiden fair,

Approached and talked a maiden fair :

‘ Come, I’ll marry one of you two.’

Chose she then the fair-haired youth,

The fair-haired youth with curly locks ;

He takes her by her white right hand ;  
He leads her, leads her round the ring,  
And to his comrades boasting shows :  
' See, brothers, what a splendid bride !'  
Ai, da, liuli !"<sup>1</sup>

The old women stood round about, listening to the songs. Little boys and girls ran about in the darkness, chasing one another. The Cossacks stood in the square around them, pinching the girls as they passed by, and sometimes breaking apart the ring, and entering into it.

On the dark side of the door stood Beletsky and Olenin, in Circassian coats and caps, and talked with each other with an un-Cossack accent, not loudly, but audibly, feeling that they were attracting general attention.

The fat Ustenka, dressed in a red gown, and the stately figure of Marianka in a new

<sup>1</sup> This and the following are specimens of the Russian *khorovod*, or popular choral song and dance.

shirt and gown, were seen side by side in the dance.

Olenin and Beletsky were consulting how to get them away. Beletsky thought that Olenin merely wished to amuse himself a little; but Olenin was thirsting for the decision of his fate.

He desired at any cost to see Marianka alone that night, to tell her all, and to ask her whether she could, and whether she would, be his wife.

Notwithstanding the fact that this question had been long ago decided against him, he hoped that he would be able to tell her all that he felt, and that she would understand him.

“Why did you not tell me sooner?” said Beletsky: “I would have arranged it for you through Ustenka. You are such an odd fellow!”

“What is to be done? Some time or other, soon, I will tell you all about it, only now, arrange somehow for her to come to Ustenka’s.”

“Very well, that is easy. Why do you not take that white fellow, Marianka, and not Lukashka,” said Beletsky, turning first, for the sake of politeness, to Marianka, and, without waiting for an answer, went up to Ustenka, and began to ask her to bring Marianka along with her.

He had not finished talking, when another song was struck up, and the girls dragged each other along.

They sang :—

“Back of the garden, back of the orchard,  
A brave young fellow walked and walked  
Along the street to its very end.  
As the first time he went by,  
With his right hand beckoned he ;  
The second time that he went by,

Beckoned with his sheep-skin cap ;  
And the third time that he passed,  
Waiting, stood stock-still,—  
Stood stock-still, then turned around.  
' I was coming to you, was coming  
To reproach you, darling mine !  
Why don't you come, O darling mine,  
Out for a walk in the garden green ?  
Can it be true, O darling mine,  
That you have grown too proud for me ?  
Put yourself at rest, my dear,  
Give yourself no worry more ;  
I shall send to woo you,  
I shall come to woo you ;  
I shall marry you ;  
Then I will make you weep.'  
Though I knew what I should say,  
Yet I dared not make reply.  
In the garden I went to walk.  
When I came to the garden green,  
To the ring I bowed me down :  
' I, too, maiden, make my bow,  
Throw my kerchief from my hand,  
Come, my darling, take it now,  
Take into your white, white hand.  
Taking in your lily-white hand,  
Love *me*, girl, love *me*.  
I don't know why I feel strange,

Nor what I shall give my love.  
To my darling I shall give  
A large kerchief, like a shawl.  
For this kerchief her I'll kiss,  
Kiss her full five times.'"

Lukashka and Nazarka, breaking apart the ring, began to walk about between the girls.

Lukashka kept up the song in a high voice, and, waving his hands, walked about the middle of the ring.

"Come out, some one," he said. The girls pushed Marianka; but she did not wish to go out.

Through the singing one would hear shrill laughter, blows, kisses, and scuffling.

Passing by Olenin, Lukashka nodded to him in a familiar, pleasant way: "Mitri Andreitch, so you have come to look."

"Yes," answered Olenin decidedly and dryly.

Beletsky leaned over to Ustenka. She wished to answer, but had no time; and, when she came round the second time, she said, "Very well, we will come."

"And Marianka too?"

Olenin bent over to Marianka, and said, "Will you come? Please do, if only for a minute; I have something I must say to you."

"The girls will come, and so I will come."

"Will you tell me what I asked you?" he asked, again bending towards her. "You are in a good humour now."

She had already got away from him. He went along after her.

"Will you answer?"

"Answer what?"

"What I asked you the day before yesterday," said Olenin, bending close to her ear.

"Will you marry me?"

Marianka thought a moment. "Yes, I will tell you," she said. "I will tell you to-night;" and in the darkness her eyes looked joyously and affectionately at the young man.

He kept coming all the time behind her. It was delightful to him to come a little nearer to her.

Lukashka, continuing to sing, seized her firmly by the hand, and pulled her out of the chain into the middle.

Olenin was able only to say, "Come to Ustenka's," and then went away to his comrade.

The songs at last ended. Lukashka wiped his lips; Marianka did so also, and they kissed each other.

"No, full five times," said Lukashka.

Talking, laughing, and running about took the place of the waving movement and the waving sounds.



Lukashka, who seemed to be already pretty well drunk, began to divide the sweets up among the girls.

"I will give everybody some," he said, with a proud, half-comical, half-touching expression, and with satisfaction.

"But let any one that goes after the soldiers clear out of the ring," he added suddenly looking maliciously at Olenin.

The girls seized on his treats, and, laughing, snatched them away from one another.

Beletsky and Olenin went off to one side.

Lukashka, as if ashamed of his liberality, took off his cap, wiped his brow with his sleeve, and went up to Marianka and Us-tenka.

"Oh, you are very proud, my dear!" he repeated, in the words of the song which he had just sung, and, turning to Marianka, repeated again angrily, "You are very proud."

“If you get married, I will make you weep,” he added, hugging Ustenka and Marianka at the same time.

Ustenka tore herself away, by fighting against him, and hit him on the back so hard that she almost put her wrist out of joint.

“Aren’t you going to have another dance?” he asked.

“Just what the other girls want,” answered Ustenka. “I am going home ; and Marianka wanted to come to us for a while.”

The Cossack, continuing to hug Marianka, took her out of the crowd to a dark corner of the house.

“Do not go, Mashinka,” he said. “This is the last time we shall be amusing ourselves. Go home, and I will come to you.”

“What have I got to do at home ? What is the use of a holiday, except to enjoy one’s

self? I am going to Ustenka's," said Marianka.

"Well, it is all the same to me, I am going to get married."

"All right," said Marianka, "then we will know all about it."

"Are you going?" asked Lukashka sternly, and, clasping her to himself, he kissed her on the cheek.

"Oh, stop! now what have you begun to do?" cried Marianka, and, breaking loose, she ran away from him.

"Eh, girl? it will be bad," said Lukashka reproachfully, standing still, and shaking his head. "I will make you weep."

Turning away from her, he cried to the girls to play something or other.

What he had said half frightened Marianka, and half made her angry: she stood still.

“What will be bad?”

“Why, that.”

“Well, what?”

“Why, that you are going on amusing yourself with the soldier who is your lodger, and not loving me any more.”

“If I choose, I will stop loving you. You are not my father, nor my mother. What do you want? Whom I choose, him I will love.”

“So, so!” said Lukashka. “There now.” He went up to the shop.

“Girls,” he cried, “why do you stand still? Have another dance.—Nazarka, run and bring some wine.”

“Well, will they come?” asked Olenin of Beletsky.

“Yes, they will come immediately,” answered Beletsky. “Let us go. We have to get the ball ready.”

## CHAPTER XX.

It was already late at night when Olenin went out of Beletsky's cottage after Marianka and Ustenka. The white kerchief of the girl was visible along the street; and the moon, of a glowing yellow, was setting out on the steppe.

A silvery mist hung over the village. All was quiet. Lights were nowhere visible. Nothing was heard but the steps of the girls as they went away.

The heart of Olenin beat violently: his face began to cool in the damp air. He looked at the sky, looked at the cottage out

of which he had come : the candle which was in it had just been put out, and he began to look at the distant, shadowy form of the girls. The white kerchiefs became hid in the mist.

It was terrible to him to remain alone, he was so happy ! He jumped down from the porch, and ran after the girls.

“ Some one sees us,” said Ustenka.

“ Nothing.”

Olenin ran up to Marianka, and embraced her. Marianka made no resistance.

“ Do not kiss each other,” said Ustenka. “ Get married, and then you can kiss ; but now, wait.”

“ Good-bye, Marianka. To-morrow I will go to your father, and tell him myself. Don’t you say anything.”

“ What is there for me to say ? ” answered Marianka.

Both girls ran away.

Olenin went on alone, remembering all that had happened. He had passed the whole evening alone with her in the corner, near the stove.

Ustenka had not gone for one minute out of the cottage, and had been carrying on with the other girls and with Beletsky.

Olenin had talked with Marianka in a whisper.

“Will you marry me?” he asked.

“You are deceiving me: you won’t take me,” she answered merrily and quietly.

“But do you love me? Tell me, for heaven’s sake.

“Why should I not love you? You are not crooked,” answered Marianka, laughing, and pressing his hand with her firm and muscular fingers. “How white, how very white and soft, your hands are! just like clotted cream!”

“I am not joking. Tell me, will you?”



“ Why should I not marry you, if my father will give me to you ? ”

“ Remember, I shall go out of my mind if you deceive me. To-morrow I will tell your mother and your father that I have come to woo you.”

Marianka suddenly burst out laughing.

“ What is the matter with you ? ”

“ Why, it is so funny ! ”

“ Really, I will buy a house and a garden, and inscribe myself among the Cossacks.”

“ You will have to look out, then, and not fall in love with other women. I should get angry at that.”

Olenin with satisfaction repeated in his imagination all these words.

At these recollections sometimes he became sad, sometimes his spirit was almost bursting with happiness. He was sad because she was so calm all the time, and talked with him



just the same as always. It seemed as if this new decision had not at all excited her. She almost seemed not to believe him, and had no thoughts about the future. He was happy, because all her words seemed to him so true, and because she had consented to belong to him.

“Yes,” he said to himself, “only then shall we understand each other, when she is wholly mine. For such love, not words are necessary, but life, a whole life. To-morrow the whole will be explained. I cannot live so any more. To-morrow I will tell all to her father, to Beletsky, and to the whole village.”

Lukashka, after two sleepless nights, had drunk so much during the holiday, that, for the first time in his life, he was off his legs, and slept at Yamka's.

## CHAPTER XXI.

THE next day Olenin woke up earlier than usual; and in the first instant of waking the thought came to him of what was before him, and he remembered with joy her kisses, the pressure of her hands, and her words, "How white your hands are!"

He jumped out of bed, and wanted to go at once to the other cottage, and ask for the hand of Marianka. The sun had not yet risen, and it seemed to Olenin that there was an unusual excitement in the street: people were walking and riding about, and talking together.

He hastily threw on his Circassian coat, and sprang out into the porch. The people of the house were not yet up. Five Cossacks were riding along, and noisily talking about something or other.

In front of them all, on his broad Kabarda horse, rode Lukashka. The Cossacks were all talking and crying together; and it was impossible to make out what they said.

“ Ride on to the upper post ! ” cried one.

“ Saddle your horses, and chase them quick ! ” said another. “ It is nearer to go out from this gate ! ”

“ What nonsense ! ” cried Lukashka. “ We must go by the middle gate. ”

“ That is the nearest road ! ” said another Cossack, covered with dust, and on a reeking horse.

Lukashka's face was swollen from his yesterday's drinking; his cap was pushed

back on the nape of his neck ; he cried with an air of command, as though he were the leader of the party.

“What is the row? Where are you going?” asked Olenin, getting with difficulty the attention of the Cossacks.

“We are going to hunt for Abreks. They have made an ambush in the reeds. We are going immediately ; and we can’t have too many.”

The Cossacks, continuing to cry and to assemble, rode farther down the street.

It came into the head of Olenin, that it would not look well, unless he went himself ; besides, he thought he would come back early. He dressed himself, loaded his rifle with ball, and jumped on his horse (which Vanusha had somehow saddled), and caught up to the Cossacks just as they were going out of the village.

The Cossacks, though they were in a hurry, stood about in a circle, and pouring some wine from a little keg they had brought into a wooden bowl, handed it to each other, and *prayed* for the success of their expedition.

Among them was a young dandy of a cornet, who had accidentally come into the station, and from his rank took command over the nine or ten Cossacks that had collected. Although the cornet tried to put on the airs of a commanding officer, yet the Cossacks obeyed no one but Lukashka. To Olenin they did not pay the least attention.

When they had all mounted their horses, and had started, Olenin went up to the cornet, and asked what was the matter.

The cornet, who was usually very polite and affable, treated him with all the dignity that he supposed his importance commanded.

It was only with the greatest difficulty that Olenin could get out of him what it was all about.

A patrol which had been sent to look for Abreks had found several Circassians in the reeds, only about six miles from the village.

The Abreks, who were hidden in a ditch, shot at them, and threatened never to surrender alive.

The corporal, who, with two Cossacks, had gone on the patrol, remained there to watch them, and sent one Cossack to the station for reinforcements.

The sun had only just begun to rise. On every side of the station, for a couple of miles, the ground consisted of an open and level steppe; and nothing was to be seen except a dry, monotonous, lonely plain, the sand being cut up in many places by cattle-tracks, and the uniformity of the aspect

being occasionally relieved by patches of grass, by small pools surrounded by low reeds, and by a few scarcely noticeable paths. Some Tartar encampments were scarcely visible on the distant horizon.

One was everywhere unpleasantly impressed with the absence of shade, and with the sterile look of the locality. The sun on the steppe is invariably red when it rises and when it sets. When there is wind the wind brings along whole mountains of sand. When it is calm, as it was that morning, then the stillness, unbroken by a movement or a sound, is especially striking.

This morning on the steppe all was still and sombre, notwithstanding that the sun had risen: it seemed somehow especially deserted. There was no movement in the air. Nothing was heard except the steps and the snorting of the horses; and even



this sound seemed to be very feeble, and immediately to die away.

The Cossacks rode along generally in silence. A Cossack's arms are always so arranged as not to rattle or resound. To have his arms heard is for a Cossack a great disgrace.

Two men from the village met them on the way, and exchanged two or three words with them.

Lukashka's horse neither stumbled, nor snatched at the grass, but seemed to hasten on. This is a bad sign among the Cossacks. They looked at one another, and hastily turned away, trying to avoid giving attention to this circumstance, which had at the moment special importance.

Lukashka drew up the reins, frowned, set his teeth, and cut the horse over the head with his whip.



The good Kabarda horse gave a sudden bound on all his feet, not knowing on which to step, and wishing seemingly to rise on wings. But Lukashka gave him a sharp cut on his fat sides, a second, and a third; and the horse, showing his teeth, and extending his tail, snorted, stood on his hind legs, and went a few steps in advance of the other Cossacks.

“Oh, that is a good horse!” said the cornet.

“A lion of a horse!” said one of the old Cossacks.

The Cossacks rode along, sometimes at a walk, and sometimes at a trot; and the change of pace was all that broke for an instant the quiet and solemnity of their movements.

Along the whole road through the steppe, for six miles, the only living thing they met

was a Tartar kибitka, which, placed upon a cart, moved slowly on, a mile away from them. This was a Nogai Tartar, who was moving with his family from one camping-ground to another.

Farther on they met at a pool two ragged, high-cheek-boned Tartar women, who, with baskets on their backs, were collecting for fuel the droppings of the cattle which pastured on the steppe.

The cornet, who spoke the Kumyk dialect very badly, began to ask the women some questions; but they could not understand him, and evidently exchanged less timid glances with each other.

Lukashka came up, stopped his horse, gave the usual salutation, in an off-hand way, to the Tartar women, who were evidently pleased, and began to talk with him as with a brother.

“*Ai, ai, kop Abrek!*” they said plaintively, pointing in the direction where the Cossacks were going. Olenin understood that they said, “Many Abreks.”

Never having seen any such affairs, and having an idea of them only from the stories of Uncle Eroshka, Olenin wished to keep up with the Cossacks, and see everything. He acted in a most friendly way with them, looked about at everything, listened to everything, and made his observations.

Although he had taken with him a sabre and a loaded rifle, yet, noticing how the Cossacks seemed shy of him, he decided to take no part in the affair; the more so, because, in his opinion, his bravery had already been shown on the expedition, and especially because he was then very happy.

Suddenly in the far distance a shot was heard. The cornet became excited, and

immediately began to arrange how to divide up the Cossacks, and on which side to approach.

The Cossacks evidently did not pay the slightest attention to his directions, and listened only to Lukashka, and looked only at him.

In the face and figure of Lukashka were expressed composure and solemnity. He passed them with his good horse (the others not being able to keep up), and, contracting his brows, looked constantly ahead.

“There goes a man on horseback!” he said, checking his horse, and falling into the line of the others.

Olenin looked with all his eyes, but could see nothing.

The Cossacks soon distinguished two horses, and at a quiet pace went straight towards them.

“Are these Abreks?” asked Olenin.

The Cossacks made no answer to this question, which seemed in their eyes to be devoid of all sense. As if Abreks would be such fools as to come over, mounted, to this side of the river!

“Uncle Rodka cannot wait,” said Lukashka, pointing to the two horsemen, who were now far more plainly visible. “See! he is now coming to meet us.”

In reality, a few minutes afterwards it was clearly seen that the horsemen were the Cossacks on patrol; and the corporal came straight up to Luka.

## CHAPTER XXII.

“MUCH farther?” asked Lukashka only.

At this very time, about thirty steps off, they heard a sharp, quick shot. The corporal slightly smiled.

“Our Gurka is firing at them,” he said, pointing with his hand in the direction of the shot.

After going on a few steps more, they saw Gurka sitting on a hillock of sand, and loading his gun.

Gurka, to keep from being bored, was exchanging shots with the Abreks, who sat on another sand-hill. A bullet from there

whistled by them. The cornet became pale and confused.

Lukashka got off his horse, threw the reins to another Cossack, and went up to Gurka. Olenin did the same, and, bending down, went after him. They had no sooner come up to Gurka than two balls whistled over them.

Lukashka laughed, looked at Olenin, and bent towards him.

"They'll shoot at you again, Andreitch," he said. "You had better go away. This is not the kind of affair for you."

But Olenin wished by all means to look at the Abreks. From behind the hillock he saw, at two hundred paces off, their coats and their rifles.

Suddenly a cloud of smoke rose from there, and another bullet whistled by. The Abreks sat in the swamp beneath the hillock.

Olenin was astonished at the place they had chosen. The place was just like the steppe everywhere; but, because the Abreks were sitting there, it seemed to be distinguished from all the rest, and to be in some way remarkable. It seemed to him somehow as if it were the very kind of a place in which the Abreks ought to sit.

Lukashka returned to his horse, and Olenin went after him.

“We ought to bring up a cart, with some hay,” said Lukashka, “or else they’ll kill us. See! over there, behind that hillock, is a Tartar cart with a load of hay.”

The cornet listened to him, and the corporal consented.

The load of hay was brought; and the Cossacks, concealing themselves behind it, set to work to move it in front of them.

Olenin went up on the hillock, so that he



could see everything. The load of hay began to move: the Cossacks crowded close together behind it, while they moved on.

The Abreks—there were nine of them—sat in a row, knee against knee, and did not shoot. All was quiet. Suddenly, from the side of the Abreks, there was heard the strange sound of a melancholy song similar to the “Ai-da-la-lai,” of Uncle Eroshka.

The Abreks knew that they could not get away; and to save themselves from the temptation of flight, they had tied themselves with straps, knee to knee, had prepared their guns, and had begun to sing their death-song.

The Cossacks, with the load of hay, came still nearer and nearer; and Olenin every minute expected shots: but the stillness was broken only by the melancholy song of the Abreks.

Suddenly the song stopped. There was a quick shot ! a ball struck the pole of the cart ; and the swearing and cries of the Circassians were heard.

Shot followed shot, and ball after ball whistled through the load. The Cossacks did not fire, and were now only five paces off.

Another instant passed ; and the Cossacks, with a cry, started out to each side of the cart, Lukashka was in front.

Olenin heard several shots, a cry, and a groan. He saw smoke and blood, as it seemed to him ; and, letting his horse go, he went up to the Cossacks. Horror came upon his eyes. He did not clearly perceive anything, but only understood that all was over.

Lukashka, white as a handkerchief, held in his arms a wounded Abrek, and cried, " Do not kill him. I will take him alive."

This Abrek was the red-bearded one, the

brother of the one he had killed, and who had come after his body. Lukashka twisted his arms.

Suddenly the Abrek tore himself away, and fired a pistol. Lukashka fell. Blood appeared on his breast. He jumped up, but fell down again, swearing in Russian and Tartar. More and more blood appeared on him and under him. The Cossacks went up to him, and began to undo his belt.

One of them, Nazarka, before taking hold of him, for a long time could not put his sword into its scabbard, as it always came down on the other side. The blade of the sword was covered with blood.

The Abreks, red-haired, with shaved moustaches, lay on the ground, cold, and cut to pieces. Only one of them—our acquaintance, all covered with wounds, the very one who had shot at Lukashka—was alive.

Like a wounded falcon, all covered with blood, which was flowing down from his left eye, with set teeth, pale and lowering, threatening with his terrible eyes, and looking round on all sides, he knelt down, and held up his dagger, ready to defend himself to the very last.

The cornet went up to him; and from behind, as if he were going round him, with a quick movement, fired his pistol into his ear.

The Abrek started up, but fell down at once.

The Cossacks, all out of breath, dragged off the dead, and took away their arms.

Each of these red-headed Abreks was a man who had his own peculiar expression.

They took Lukashka to the cart: he constantly scolded and swore in Russian and Tartar: "You liar, I will smother you with my hands! You won't get away from me,

*Ana seni!*" he cried with an effort. Soon he became silent from weakness.

Olenin went home. In the evening they told him that Lukashka was at the point of death, but that a Tartar from beyond the river had offered to cure him with herbs.

They had taken the bodies to the Government house. The women and children were going there in crowds to look at them.

Olenin came back in the twilight, and for a long time could not forget all that he had seen. But by night his recollections of the day before came strongly on him. He looked out of the window.

Marianka was going from the house to the cellar, doing house-work. Her mother had gone out to the vineyard; her father was at the Government house.

Olenin did not even wait till she had finished her work, but went straight to her.

She was in the little cellar, and stood with her back to him.

Olenin thought she was bashful.

“Marianka!” he said, “O Marianka! Can I come in here?”

She suddenly turned round: scarcely noticeable tears were in her eyes. Lovely grief was expressed on her face. She looked at him silently and proudly.

Olenin repeated, “Marianka, I have come.”

“Stop,” she said. Her face did not change in any way; but tears started out from her eyes.

“What is the matter with you?”

“What!” she repeated with a hoarse and deep voice. “They have been killing Cossacks. That is what is the matter.”

“Lukashka?” said Olenin.

“Go away, I don’t want you!”

“Marianka,” said Olenin, coming up to her.

“You will never have anything from me.”

“Marianka, don’t say that,” begged Olenin.

“Go away, you hateful man!” cried the girl, stamping on the ground, and moving towards him with a threatening look.

Such disgust, hatred, and anger were expressed on her face, that Olenin suddenly understood that he had nothing to hope for, and that what he had previously thought of the inaccessibility of this woman was perfectly true.

Olenin said nothing more to her, but went away.



## CHAPTER XXIII.

AFTER returning home, Olenin lay on his bed for a couple of hours without moving, and then went to the commander of the company, and asked to be allowed to go to the staff. Not bidding good-bye to anybody, and settling his account with the landlord through Vanusha, he started to go to the fortress where the regimental head-quarters were.

No one but Uncle Eroshka saw him off. They took a drink, took a second, and even a third. Just as when he was being seen off at Moscow, a three-horse post-waggon stood by the door. But Olenin did not now consider



with himself, as he did then, and say that all he had thought or done here was not right. He did not again promise himself a new life.

He loved Marianka more than ever, and now knew that he could never be loved by her.

“Good-bye, my father,” said Uncle Eroshka. “When you go on the campaign, be as sensible as you can, and mind what an old man like me tells you. When you have to go on a campaign, or anywhere—you see I am an old wolf, who has seen everything—where they fire at you, do not go into a crowd, where there are many people. You see, when your fellows are a little afraid, all get together in a crowd; and, though it is pleasanter to be together, it is more dangerous, because they aim at a crowd. I always get away as far as possible from a crowd. I used to go alone: that is the reason I never got wounded. What have I not seen in my time?”

“ There is a ball right in your back,” said Vanusha, as he was packing up in the room.

“ Oh, that is a joke of the Cossacks ! ” answered Eroshka.

“ How a joke of the Cossacks ? ” asked Olenin.

“ Why, they were drunk ; and one Cossack, Vanka Sitkin, who was very drunk, shot me right there with his pistol, just as if he had stuck a bayonet into me.”

“ Did it hurt ? ” asked Olenin.

“ Vanusha, are you almost ready ? ” he added.

“ Eh ! What is your hurry ? Wait, and I’ll tell you. Well, he trembled as he fired, and the ball did not go through the bone, and stayed there. I said, ‘ So you have killed me, my brother ! What is that you have done with me ? I won’t let you off so easily. You’ll have to give me a gallon of wine.’ ”

“Well, didn’t it hurt?” again Olenin asked, scarcely listening to the story.

“Wait, and I’ll tell you. He gave us a gallon of wine. We all drank it, and the blood still flowed. All the floor of the hut was covered with blood. Uncle Burlak said then, ‘See! the little fellow is going to die. Give us another gallon of sweet wine, or else we will judge you.’ So they brought some more. They got as drunk as drunk—”

“Well, did it hurt?” asked Olenin again.

“Hurt me? I did not like it. Wait until I tell you. They drank and drank, and carried on till morning. I went to sleep on the stove, quite dead drunk. I woke up in the morning, and could not move any way.”

“It must have hurt a great deal,” said Olenin, supposing that he had now got an answer to his question.

“ Do I say to you that it hurt? No, it didn't hurt. But I could not stretch myself, and I was unable to walk.”

“ And so you lived through it,” said Olenin, not even laughing; for he was so heavy at heart.

“ Yes, I lived through it. But the ball is still there. Just feel it;” and, turning down the collar of his shirt, he showed his healthy back, in which a ball could be seen near the bone.

“ See how it moves about,” he said, evidently as proud of the ball as of a plaything. “ See! it is moving backwards.”

“ Will Lukashka live, do you think?” asked Olenin.

“ God knows! There is no doctor. They have gone after one.”

“ Where will they bring one from? From Grozny?” asked Olenin.

“ No, my father. I would have hanged all

your Russian doctors long ago, if I were Tsar. They don't know how to do anything but cut your legs off. They left our Cossack Baklashef in an inhuman condition, and cut off his leg. It is evident that they are fools. What is Baklashef good for now? No, father, up in the mountains there are real doctors.

“Once my chum Gortchik got wounded up in the mountains, right here in the breast; and your doctors all refused to do anything for him, and a fellow named Saib came from the mountains, and cured him. Yes, my father, they know the kind of herbs.”

“Come now, you have said nonsense enough,” said Olenin. “I will send a surgeon from the staff.

“Nonsense!” said the old man angrily. “Fool, fool! nonsense! send a surgeon. Yes, if your surgeons could cure anybody, the Cossacks and the Abreks would all go to you to get cured; but your officers, and even your

colonels, all send to the mountains for doctors. Yours are all cheats, nothing but cheats."

Olenin did not answer. He was too well convinced that everything was a cheat in that world in which he had lived, and to which he was returning.

"How about Lukashka? Have you seen him?" he asked.

"Yes : he lies like a dead man. He does not eat; he does not drink, but only takes a little vodka, and breathes heavily. If he should drink a little, it would be all right. It is a pity for the fellow. He was a good fellow,—just such a bravo as I was. I nearly died in the same way once. The old women were already beginning to groan over me. My head was all hot inside. They put me down under the holy pictures. I lay that way; and over me, on the stove, everything seemed like little beats of drums, beating as hard as they could. I tried to cry out, and

they beat harder than ever ; and then the old women brought me the undertaker, and wanted to bury me. “ He was very jolly over it, and began to amuse himself with the women, and hugged and kissed them, and began to dance about, and wanted a guitar.

“ ‘ Repent,’ they say ; and so I began to repent. ‘ This is sin,’ I say : ‘ what will the priest say ? ’ He still went on asking for the guitar, and stood up. ‘ This is a sin,’ I say. ‘ Where is your cursed guitar ? ’ he said. ‘ Show it, or else I will break it for you.’ I said, ‘ I have not got any ; ’ but I had hid it in the porch, under a sieve, where I knew they could not find it, and so they let me lie there. Then I rested. Then he began to play on the guitar. What was I saying ? ” he continued. “ You listen to me. Go out as far as possible from the crowd of people ; otherwise they will kill you for sure. Really I am very sorry for you ; you are a drinker,



and that is the reason why I love you. All your fellows like to go about on the sand-hills. There was one left here with us; he came from Russia, and he was always going about on the sand-hills. As soon as he saw one, he would run up to the top of it. It somehow pleased him to get on the top of them; but an Abrek saw him, and shot at him, and killed him. Oh! those Abreks shoot very well when they have a rest for their guns,—even better than I do. I don't like it when they kill a fellow.

“I say, when I look at your soldiers sometimes, I wonder at them. What stupidity! They go straight on there, all in a crowd; and, what is more, they have on red colours. It is just running into danger. They kill one, and he falls, and they drag off the dead one, and another takes his place. What folly!” repeated the old man, shaking his head, “Why don't they go off to one side,



each one by himself? That is the best way to go: then they won't know you. You do like that."

"I am much obliged to you. Good-bye, uncle! God grant we shall see each other again!" said Olenin, rising, and going out into the porch.

The old man sat still on the floor, and did not get up.

"Is that the way they bid good-bye? O fool, fool!" he said. "Oh! what kind of people is that? Kept company together a whole year. 'Good-bye'—went off so. Come, now, I love you: you don't know how I pity you. You are so sad; you are all alone, alone. Somehow or other nobody loves you. Sometimes I do not sleep, thinking of you. I am so sorry for you! As the song says, 'It is sad, beloved brother, to live in a foreign land.' It is just so with you."

"Well, good-bye!" said Olenin again.

The old man rose, and gave him his hand. He clasped it, and wished to go.

“Give us your mug. Here, your mug!” The old man took his head between his hands, kissed him three times, with moist moustaches and lips, and began to cry, “Oh, how I love you! Good-bye!”

Olenin took his seat in the cart.

“Well, are you going off like that? You might make me a present, if only out of remembrance to my father. Give me your gun, for instance; especially, since you have two,” said the old man, bursting into real tears.

Olenin took his gun, and handed it over to him.

“What made you give it to that old fellow?” burst out Vanusha. “Nothing is enough for him. He is a regular old beggar. These people are never satisfied,” he added, buttoning up his coat, and sitting down on the front seat.

“Shut your mouth, you hog !” cried the old man, laughing. “It is evident you are a stingy fellow.”

Marianka came out of the house, looked indifferently at the post-cart, and, making a slight bow, went into the cellar.

“*La fille*,” said Vanusha, winking, and laughing to himself.

“Go on !” cried Olenin angrily.

“Good-bye, father !”

“Good-bye ! I will remember you,” cried Eroshka.

Olenin looked round once. Uncle Eroshka was talking with Marianka, evidently about his own affairs ; and neither the old man nor the girl paid the slightest attention to him.

THE END.

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