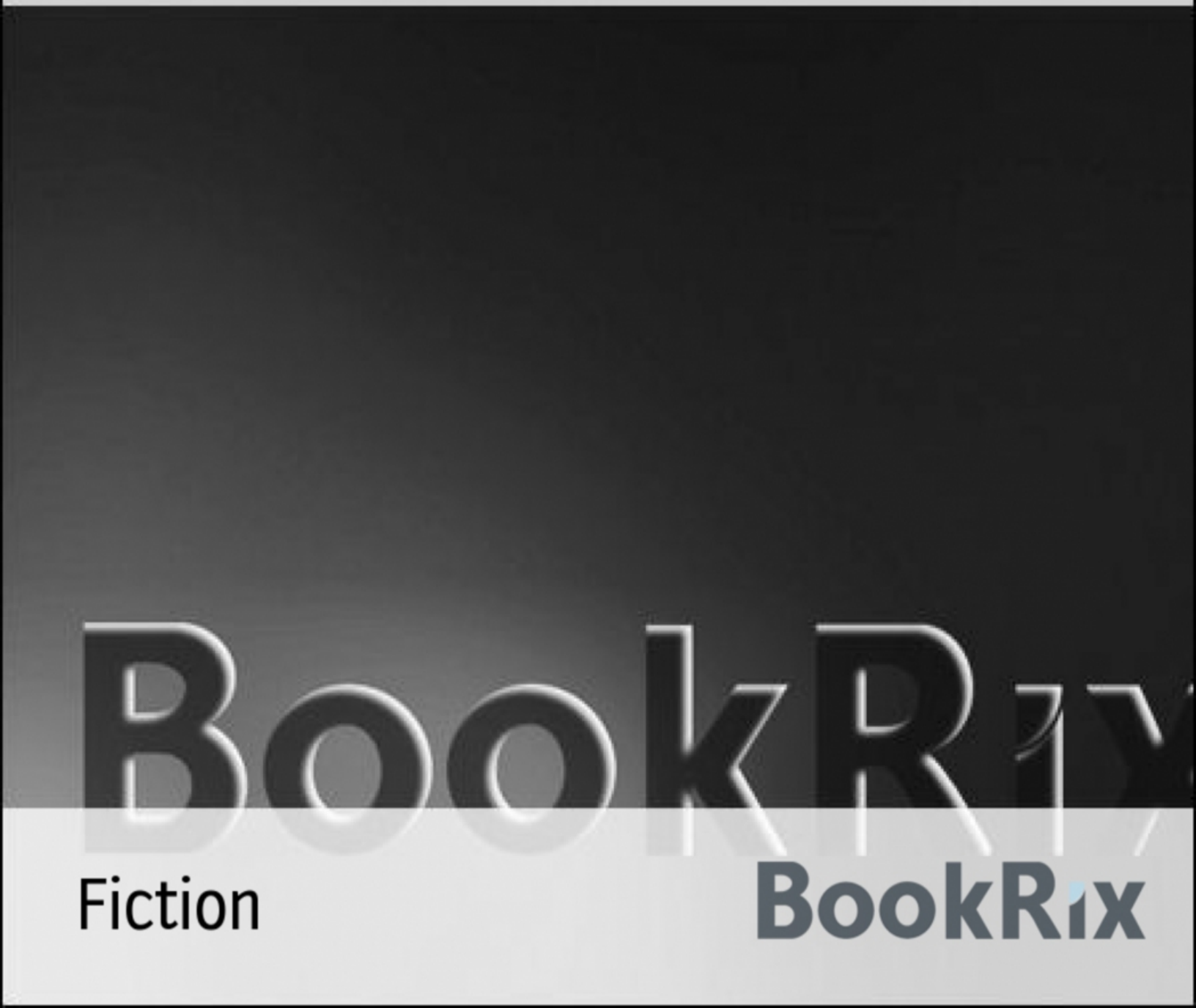
Leo Tolstoy

The Awakening (Illustrated)



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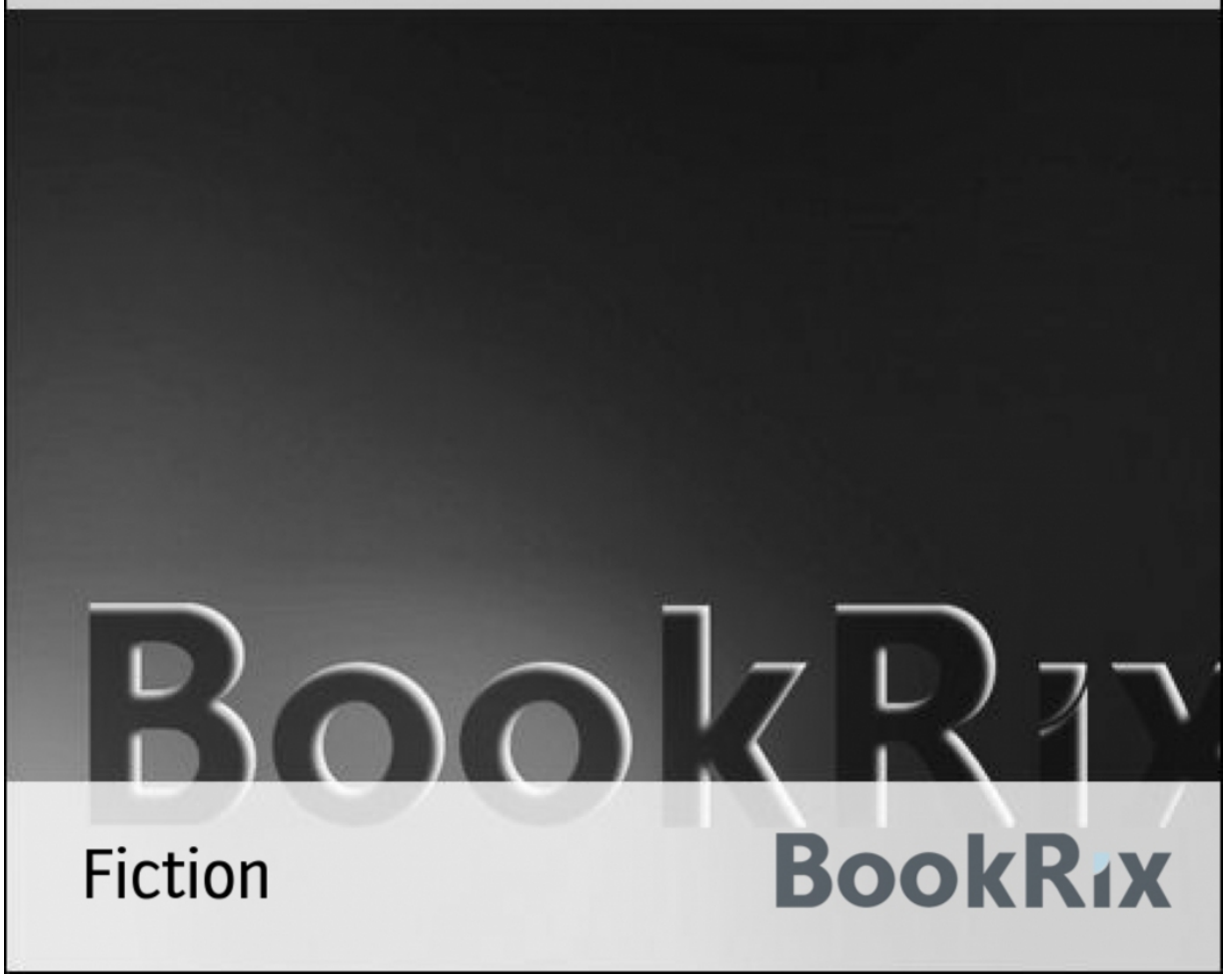

Fiction

BookRix

Leo Tolstoy

The Awakening (Illustrated)

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80331 Munich

CHAPTER I.

All the efforts of several hundred thousand people, crowded in a small space, to disfigure the land on which they lived; all the stone they covered it with to keep it barren; how so diligently every sprouting blade of grass was removed; all the smoke of coal and naphtha; all the cutting down of trees and driving off of cattle could not shut out the spring, even from the city. The sun was shedding its light; the grass, revivified, was blooming forth, where it was left uncut, not only on the greenswards of the boulevard, but between the flag-stones, and the birches, poplars and wild-berry trees were unfolding their viscous leaves; the limes were unfolding their buds; the daws, sparrows and pigeons were joyfully making their customary nests, and the flies were buzzing on the sun-warmed walls. Plants, birds, insects and children were equally joyful. Only men--grown-up men--continued cheating and tormenting themselves and each

other. People saw nothing holy in this spring morning, in this beauty of God's world--a gift to all living creatures--inclining to peace, good-will and love, but worshiped their own inventions for imposing their will on each other.

The joy of spring felt by animals and men did not penetrate the office of the county jail, but the one thing of supreme importance there was a document received the previous evening, with title, number and seal, which ordered the bringing into court for trial, this 28th day of April, at nine o'clock in the morning, three prisoners--two women and one man. One of the women, as the more dangerous criminal, was to be brought separately. So, in pursuance of that order, on the 28th day of April, at eight o'clock in the morning, the jail warden entered the dingy corridor of the woman's ward. Immediately behind him came a woman with weary countenance and disheveled gray hair, wearing a crown-laced jacket, and girdled with a blue-edged sash. She was the matron.

"You want Maslova?" she asked the warden, as they neared one of the cells opening into the corridor.

The warden, with a loud clanking of iron, unlocked and opened the door of the cell, releasing an even fouler odor than permeated the corridor, and shouted:

"Maslova to the court!" and again closing the door he waited for her appearance.

The fresh, vivifying air of the fields, carried to the city by the wind, filled even the court-yard of the jail. But in the corridor the oppressive air, laden with the smell of tar and putrescence, saddened and dejected the spirit of every new-comer. The same feeling was experienced by the jail matron, notwithstanding she was accustomed to bad air. On

entering the corridor she suddenly felt a weariness coming over her that inclined her to slumber.

There was a bustling in the cell; women's voices and steps of bare feet were heard.

"Hurry up, Maslova! Come on, I say!" shouted the warden into the cell-door.

Presently at the cell-door appeared a middle-sized, full-breasted young woman, dressed in a long, gray coat over a white waist and skirt. She approached with firm step, and, facing about, stood before the warden. Over her linen stockings she wore jail shoes; her head was covered with a white 'kerchief, from under which black curls were evidently purposely brushed over the forehead. The face of the woman was of that whiteness peculiar to people who have been a long time in confinement, and which reminds one of potato-sprouts in a cellar. Her small, wide hands, her white, full neck, showing from under the large collar of the coat, were of a similar hue. On the dull pallor of that face the most striking feature was the black, sparkling eyes, somewhat swollen, but very bright eyes, one of which slightly squinted. She held herself erect, putting forth her full chest. Emerging into the corridor, throwing her head back a little, she looked into the eyes of the warden and stood ready to do his bidding. The warden was about to shut the door, when a pale, severe, wrinkled face of an old woman with disheveled hair was thrust out. The old woman began to say something to Maslova. But the warden pressed the door against the head of the woman, and she disappeared. In the cell a woman's voice burst into laughter. Maslova also smiled, and turned to the grated little opening in the door. The old woman pressed her forehead to the grating, and said in a hoarse voice:

"Above all, don't speak too much; stick to one thing, and that is all."

"Of course. It cannot be any worse," said Maslova.

"You certainly cannot stick to two things," said the chief warden, with official assurance of his own wit. "Follow me, now! Forward! March!"

The eye looking from behind the grating disappeared, and Maslova took to the middle of the corridor, and with short, but rapid strides, followed the warden. They descended the stone stairway, and as they passed the men's ward, noisy and more noisome even than the woman's ward, scores of eyes followed them from behind the gratings. They entered the office, where an armed escort of two soldiers stood. The clerk handed one of the soldiers a document, reeking of tobacco smoke, and, pointing to the prisoner, said:

"Take her."

The soldier, a Nijhni peasant with a red and pock-marked face, placed the paper into the cuff of his coat sleeve, and, smiling, winked to his muscular comrade. The soldiers and prisoner descended the stairs and went in the direction of the main entrance.

A small door in the gate opened, and, crossing the threshold, they passed through the inclosure and took the middle of the paved street.

Drivers, shop-keepers, kitchen maids, laborers and officials halted and gazed with curiosity at the prisoner. Some shook their heads and thought: "There is the result of evil conduct--how unlike ours!" Children looked with horror

at the cut-throat, but the presence of the soldiers reassured them, for she was now powerless to do harm. A villager, returning from the mart, where he had disposed of his charcoal and visited an inn, offered her a kopeck. The prisoner blushed, drooped her head and murmured something.

Conscious of the attention that was shown her, without turning her head she looked askance at the onlookers and rather enjoyed it. She also enjoyed the comparatively pure spring air, but the walking on the cobblestones was painful to her feet, unused as they were to walking, and shod in clumsy prison shoes. She looked at her feet and endeavored to step as lightly as possible. Passing by a food store, in front of which some pigeons were picking grain, she came near striking with her foot a dove-colored bird. It rose with a flutter of its wings, and flew past the very ear of the prisoner, fanning her face with its wings. She smiled, then sighed deeply, remembering her own condition.

CHAPTER II.

The history of the prisoner Maslova was a very common one. Maslova was the daughter of an unmarried menial who lived with her mother, a cowherd, on the estate of two spinsters. This unmarried woman gave birth to a child every year, and, as is the custom in the villages, baptized them; then neglected the troublesome newcomers, and they finally starved to death.

Thus five children died. Every one of these was baptized, then it starved and finally died. The sixth child, begotten of a passing gypsy, was a girl, who would have shared the same fate, but it happened that one of the two old maidens entered the cow-shed to reprimand the milkmaids for carelessness in skimming the cream, and there saw the mother with the healthy and beautiful child. The old maiden chided them for the cream and for permitting the woman to lie in the cow-shed, and was on the point of departing, but noticing the child, was moved to pity, and afterward consented to stand godmother to the child. She baptized the child, and in pity for her god-daughter, furnished her with milk, gave the mother some money, and the babe thrived. Wherefore the old maidens called it "the saved one."

The child was three years old when the mother fell ill and died. She was a great burden to her grandmother, so the old maidens adopted her. The dark-eyed girl became unusually lively and pretty, and her presence cheered them.

Of the two old maidens, the younger one--Sophia Ivanovna--was the kindlier, while the older one--Maria Ivanovna--was of austere disposition. Sophia Ivanovna kept the girl in decent clothes, taught her to read and intended to give her an education. Maria Ivanovna said that the girl ought to be taught to work that she might become a useful servant, was exacting, punished, and even beat her when in bad humor. Under such conditions the girl grew up half servant, half lady. Her position was reflected even in her name, for she was not called by the gentle Katinka, nor yet by the disdainful Katka, but Katiousha, which stands sentimentally between the two. She sewed, cleaned the rooms, cleaned the ikons with chalk, ground, cooked and served coffee, washed, and sometimes she read for the ladies.

She was wooed, but would marry no one, feeling that life with any one of her wooers would be hard, spoiled, as she was, more or less, by the comparative ease she enjoyed in the manor.

She had just passed her sixteenth year when the ladies were visited by their nephew, a rich student, and Katiousha, without daring to confess it to him, or even to herself, fell in love with him. Two years afterward, while on his way to the war, he again visited his aunts, and during his four days' stay, consummated her ruin. Before his departure he thrust a hundred ruble bill into her hand.

Thenceforward life ceased to have any charms for her, and her only thought was to escape the shame which

awaited her, and not only did she become lax in her duties, but--and she did not know herself how it happened--all of a sudden she gave vent to her ill temper. She said some rude things to the ladies, of which she afterward repented, and left them.

Dissatisfied with her behavior, they did not detain her. She then obtained employment as servant in the house of the commissary of rural police, but was obliged to give up the position at the end of the third month, for the commissary, a fifty-year old man, pursued her with his attentions, and when, on one occasion, he became too persistent, she flared up, called him an old fool, and threw him to the ground. Then she was driven from the house. She was now so far advanced on the road to maternity that to look for a position was out of the question. Hence she took lodgings with an old midwife, who was also a wine dealer. The confinement came off painlessly. But the midwife was attending a sick woman in the village, infected Katiousha with puerperal fever, and the child, a boy, was taken to a foundling asylum where, she was told, he died immediately after his arrival there.

When Katiousha took lodgings with the midwife she had 127 rubles; 27 rubles of which she had earned, and 100 rubles which had been given her by her seducer. When she left her she had but six rubles left. She was not economical, and spent on herself as well as others. She paid 40 rubles to the midwife for two months' board; 25 rubles it cost her to have the child taken away; 40 rubles the midwife borrowed of her to buy a cow with; the balance was spent on dresses, presents, etc., so that after the confinement she was practically penniless, and was compelled to look for a position. She was soon installed in the house of a forester

who was married, and who, like the commissary, began to pay court to her. His wife became aware of it, and when, on one occasion, she found them both in the room, she fell on Katiousha and began to beat her. The latter resented it, and the result was a scrimmage, after which she was driven out of the house, without being paid the wages due her. Katiousha went to the city, where she stopped with her aunt. Her aunt's husband was a bookbinder. Formerly he used to earn a competence, but had lost his customers, and was now given to drink, spending everything that came into his hands.

With the aid of a small laundry she was keeping, her aunt supported her children as well as her husband. She offered Maslova work as a washerwoman, but seeing what a hard life the washerwomen at her aunt's establishment were leading, she searched through the intelligence offices for a position as servant. She found such a place with a lady who was living with her two student boys. A week after she had entered upon her duties, the oldest son neglected his studies and made life miserable for Maslova. The mother threw all blame upon Maslova and discharged her. She was some time without any occupation. In one of these intelligence offices she once met a lady richly dressed and adorned with diamonds. This lady, learning of the condition of Maslova, who was looking for a position, gave her her card and invited her to call. The lady received Maslova affectionately, treated her to choice cakes and sweet wine, while she dispatched her servant somewhere with a note. In the evening a tall man with long hair just turning gray, and gray beard, came into the room. The old man immediately seated himself beside Maslova and began to jest. The hostess called him into an adjoining room, and Maslova overheard her say: "As fresh as a rose; just from the country." Then the hostess called in Maslova and told her

that the man was an author, very rich, and will be very generous if he takes a liking to her. He did take a liking to her, gave her twenty-five rubles, and promised to call on her often. The money was soon spent in settling for her board at her aunt's, for a new dress, hat and ribbons. A few days afterward the author sent for her a second time. She called. He gave her another twenty-five ruble bill and offered to rent apartments for her where she could reside separately.

While living in the apartments rented by the author, Maslova became infatuated with a jolly clerk living in the same house. She herself told the author of her infatuation, and moved into a smaller apartment. The clerk, who had promised to marry her, without saying anything, left for Nijhni, evidently casting her off, and Maslova remained alone. She wished to remain in the apartment, but the landlord would not permit a single woman to occupy it, and she returned to her aunt. Her fashionable dress, cape and hat won her the respect of her aunt, who no longer dared to offer her work as a washerwoman, considering her present position far above it. The question of working in the laundry did not even occur to Maslova now. She looked with compassion on the life of drudgery led by these pale, emaciated washerwomen, some of whom showed symptoms of consumption, washing and ironing in a stifling, steam-laden atmosphere with the windows open summer and winter, and she was horrified at the thought that she, too, might be driven to such drudgery.

Maslova had for a long time been addicted to cigarette smoking, but of late she had been getting more and more accustomed to drink. The wine attracted her, not because of its taste, but because it enabled her to forget her past life, to comfort herself with ease, and the confidence of her own

worth that it gave her. Without wine she was despondent and abashed. There was the choice of two things before her; either the humiliating occupation of a servant, with the certain unwelcome attentions of the men, or a secure, quiet and legitimatized position of everybody's mistress. She wished to revenge herself on her seducer, as well as the clerk, and all those that brought misfortune upon her. Besides, she could not withstand the temptation of having all the dresses her heart desired--dresses made of velvet, gauze and silk--ball dresses, with open neck and short sleeves. And when Maslova imagined herself in a bright yellow silk dress, with velvet trimmings, decolette, she made her choice.

From this day on Maslova began to lead a life to which hundreds of thousands of women are driven, and which, in nine cases out of ten, ends in painful disease, premature decrepitude and death.

After a night's orgies there would come a deep slumber till three or four o'clock in the afternoon; then the weary rising from a dirty couch; seltzer-water to remove the effect of excessive drinking, coffee. Then came the sauntering through the rooms in dressing-gown, looking through the windows; the languid quarrels; then the perfuming of her body and hair, the trying on of dresses, and the quarrels with the mistress which they occasioned; contemplating herself in the mirror, rouging her face, darkening her eyebrows. Then came the sweet, rich food, the bright silk dress, the entry into the brightly lighted parlor, the arrival of the guests, music, dancing, confectionery, wine and cigarettes.

Thus Maslova lived for seven years. On the eighth, when she had reached her twenty-sixth year, there happened that for which she had been jailed, and for which she was now led to the court, after six months of confinement among thieves and murderers.

CHAPTER III.

At the time when Maslova, exhausted by the long walk, was approaching with the armed convoy the building in which court was held, the same nephew of the ladies that brought her up, Prince Dmitri Ivanovitch Nekhludoff, who deceived her, lay on his high, soft, spring feather-bed, in spotless Holland linen, smoking a cigarette. He was gazing before him, contemplating the events of the previous day and considering what he had before him for that day. As he thought of the previous evening, spent at the Korchagins, a wealthy and influential family, whose daughter, rumor had it, he was to marry, he sighed, and throwing away the butt of his cigarette, he was on the point of taking another from the silver cigarette holder, but changed his mind. Half rising, he slipped his smooth, white feet into the slippers, threw a silk morning gown over his broad shoulders, and with quick and heavy stride, walked into the adjoining dressing-room, which was permeated with the artificial odors of elixirs, perfumes, cosmetics. There he washed his partly gold-filled teeth with a tooth-powder, rinsed them with a perfumed mouth-wash, then began to sponge himself and dry his body with Turkish towels. After washing his hands with perfumed soap, carefully brushing his trimmed nails and washing his face and stout neck in a marble basin, he walked into a third room, where a shower-bath was ready. Here he received a cold-water douche, and after rubbing his white and muscular body with coarse towels and donning his white linen, he seated himself before the mirror and began to brush his short, curly beard and the thinning curls of his forehead.

Everything used by him--the linen, clothing, shoes, scarfs, scarf-pins, cuff-buttons, were of the very best quality, simple, tasteful and expensive.

He then picked out the first of a dozen scarfs and pins that came into his hand--it was no more novel and amusing, as it used to be--and he was quite indifferent as to which he put on. He dressed himself in his brushed clothes which lay on the chair and went out, though not quite refreshed, yet clean and fragrant. In the oblong dining-room, the inlaid floor of which had been polished by three of his men the day before, and containing a massive oaken sideboard and a similar extension table, the legs of which were carved in the shape of lion's paws, giving it a pompous appearance, breakfast stood ready for him. A fine, starched cloth with large monograms was spread on the table, on which stood a silver coffee-pot, containing fragrant, steaming coffee, a sugar bowl and cream pitcher to match, fresh rolls and various kinds of biscuits. Beside them lay the last number of the "Revue des deux Mondes," newspapers and his mail. Nekhludoff was about to open the letters, when a middle-aged woman, with a lace head-gear over her unevenly parted hair, glided into the room. This was Agrippina Petrovna, servant of his mother, who died in this very house. She was now stewardess to the son.

Agrippina Petrovna had traveled many years abroad with Nekhludoff's mother, and had acquired the manners of a lady. She had lived in the house of the Nekhludoffs since childhood, and knew Dmitri Ivanovitch when he was called by the diminutive Mitenka.

"Good-morning, Dmitri Ivanovitch."

"How do you do, Agrippina Petrovna? What's the news?" asked Nekhludoff, jesting.

"A letter from the old Princess, or the young one, perhaps. The maid brought it long ago, and is now waiting in my room," said Agrippina Petrovna, handing him the letter with a significant smile.

"Very well; I will attend to it immediately," said Nekhludoff, taking the letter and then, noticing the smile on Agrippina's face, he frowned.

The smile on Agrippina's face signified that the letter came from Princess Korchagin, whom, according to Agrippina Petrovna, he was to marry. And this supposition, expressed by her smile, displeased Nekhludoff.

"Then I will bid her wait," and Agrippina Petrovna glided out of the dining-room, first replacing the crumb-brush, which lay on the table, in its holder.

Nekhludoff opened the perfumed letter and began to read:

"In fulfillment of the duty I assumed of being your memory,"

the letter ran, "I call to your mind that you have been summoned to serve as juror to-day, the 28th of April, and that, therefore, you cannot accompany us and Kolosoff to the art exhibition, as you promised yesterday in your customary forgetfulness; à moins que vous ne soyez disposé à payer à la cour d'assises les 300 rubles d'amende que vous vous refusez pour votre cheval, for your failure to appear in time. I remembered it yesterday, when you had left. So keep it in mind.

"PRINCESS M. KORCHAGIN."

On the other side was a postscript:

"Maman vous fait dire que votre couvert vous attendra jusqu' à la nuit. Venez absolument à quelle heure que cela soit. M. K."

Nekhludoff knit his brows. The note was the continuation of a skillful strategem whereby the Princess sought, for the last two months, to fasten him with invisible bonds. But Nekhludoff, besides the usual irresoluteness before marriage of people of his age, and who are not passionately in love, had an important reason for withholding his offer of marriage for the time being. The reason was not that ten years before he had ruined and abandoned Katiousha, which incident he had entirely forgotten, but that at this very time

he was sustaining relations with a married woman, and though he now considered them at an end, they were not so considered by her.

In the presence of women, Nekhludoff was very shy, but it was this very shyness that determined the married woman to conquer him. This woman was the wife of the commander of the district in which Nekhludoff was one of the electors. She led him into relations with her which held him fast, and at the same time grew more and more repulsive to him. At first Nekhludoff could not resist her wiles, then, feeling himself at fault, he could not break off the relations against her will. This was the reason why Nekhludoff considered that he had no right, even if he desired, to ask for the hand of Korchagin. A letter from the husband of that woman happened to lay on the table. Recognizing the handwriting and the stamp, Nekhludoff flushed and immediately felt an influx of that energy which he always experienced in the face of danger. But there was no cause for his agitation; the husband, as commander of the district where Nekhludoff's estates were situated, informed the latter of a special meeting of the local governing body, and asked him to be present without fail, and donner un coup d'épaule in the important measures to be submitted concerning the schools and roads, and that the reactionary party was expected to offer strong opposition.

The commander was a liberal-minded man, entirely absorbed with the struggles, and knew nothing about his wretched family life.

Nekhludoff recalled all the tortures this man had occasioned him; how on one occasion he thought that the husband had discovered all, and he was preparing to fight a duel with him, intending to use a blank cartridge, and the ensuing scene where she, in despair, ran to the pond, intending to drown herself, while he ran to search for her. "I cannot go now, and can undertake nothing until I have heard from her," thought Nekhludoff. The preceding week he had written to her a decisive letter, acknowledging his guilt, and expressing his readiness to redeem it in any manner she should suggest, but for her own good, considered their relations ended. It is to this letter that he expected a reply. He considered it a favorable sign that no reply came. If she had not consented to a separation, she would have answered long ago, or would have come personally, as she often did before. Nekhludoff had heard that an army officer was courting her, and while he was tormented by jealousy, he was at the same time gladdened by the hope of release from the oppressive lie.

The other letter was from the steward in charge of his estates. Nekhludoff was requested to return and establish his right to the inheritance and also to decide on the future management of the estates; whether the same system of letting out to the peasants, which prevailed during the lifetime of his mother, was to be continued, or, as the steward had strongly advised the deceased Princess, and now advised the young Prince, to augment the stock and work all the land himself. The steward wrote that the land could thus best be exploited. He also apologized for his failure to send the three thousand rubles due on the first of the month, which he would send by the next mail, explaining it by the difficulty of collecting the rents from the peasants whose bad faith had reached a point where it became necessary to resort to the courts to collect them.

This letter was partly agreeable and partly disagreeable to Nekhludoff. It was agreeable to feel the power of authority over so vast an estate, and it was disagreeable, because in his youth he was an enthusiastic adherent of Herbert Spencer, and being himself a large land owner, was struck by the proposition in Social Statics that private ownership of land is contrary to the dictates of justice. With the frankness and boldness of youth, he not only then spoke of the injustice of private ownership of land; not only did he compose theses in the university on the subject, but he actually distributed among the peasants the few hundred acres of land left him by his father, not desiring to own land contrary to his convictions. Now that he found himself the owner of vast estates, he was confronted by two alternatives: either to waive his ownership in favor of the peasants, as he did ten years ago with the two hundred acres, or, by tacit acquiescence, confess that all his former ideas were erroneous and false.

He could not carry out the first, because he possessed no resources outside of the land. He did not wish to go into service, and yet he had luxurious habits of life which he thought he could not abandon. Indeed, there was no necessity of abandoning these habits, since he had lost the strength of conviction as well as the resolution, the vanity and the desire to astonish people that he had possessed in his youth. The other alternative--to reject all the arguments against private ownership of land which he gathered from Spencer's Social Statics, and of which he found confirmation in the works of Henry George--he could follow even less.

For this reason the steward's letter was disagreeable to him.

CHAPTER IV.

Having breakfasted, Nekhludoff went to the cabinet to see for what hour he was summoned to appear at court, and to answer the Princess' note. In the work-room stood an easel with a half-finished painting turned face downward, and on the wall hung studies in drawing. On seeing that painting, on which he had worked two years, and those drawings, he called to mind the feeling of impotence, which he experienced of late with greatest force, to make further advance in the art. He explained this feeling by the development of a fine aesthetic taste, and yet this consciousness caused him unpleasant sensations.

Seven years before he had retired from active service he decided that his true vocation in life was painting, and from the height of his artistic activity he looked down upon all other occupations. And now it appeared that he had no right to do so, and every recollection of it was disagreeable to him. He looked on all the luxurious appointments of the work-room with heavy heart, and walked into the cabinet in ill humor. The cabinet was a high room, profusely ornamented, and containing every imaginable device of comfort and necessity.

He produced from one of the drawers of a large table the summons, and, ascertaining that he must appear at eleven o'clock, he sat down and wrote to the Princess, thanking her for the invitation, and saying that he should try to call for dinner. The tone of the note seemed to him too intimate, and he tore it up; he wrote another, but that was too formal, almost offensive. Again he tore it up, and touched a button on the wall. A servant, morose, with flowing side-whiskers and in a gray apron, entered.

"Please send for a carriage."

"Yes, sir."

"And tell the Korchagins' maid that I thank them; I will try to call."

"Yes, sir."

"It is impolite, but I cannot write. But I will see her to-day," thought Nekhludoff, and started to dress himself.

When he emerged from the house a carriage with rubber tires awaited him.

"You had scarcely left Prince Korchagin's house yesterday when I called for you," said the driver, half-turning his stout,

sun-burned neck in the white collar of his shirt, "and the footman said that you had just gone."

"Even the drivers know of my relations to the Korchagins," thought Nekhludoff, and the unsolved question which continually occupied his mind of late--whether or not he ought to marry Princess Korchagin--again occurred to him, and, like most questions that he was called upon to decide at that time, it remained unsolved.

He had many reasons for, and as many against, marriage. There was the pleasure of domestic life, which made it possible to lead a moral life, as he called married life; then, and principally, the family and children would infuse his present aimless life with a purpose. This was for marriage generally. On the other hand there was, first, the loss of freedom which all elderly bachelors fear so much; and, second, an unconscious awe of that mysterious creature, woman.

However, in favor of marrying Missy in particular (Korchagin's name was Maria, but, as usual in families of the higher classes, she received a nickname) there was, first, the fact that she came of good stock, and was in everything, from her dress to her manner of speaking, walking and laughing, distinguished not by any exceptional qualities, but by "good breeding"--he knew no other expression for the quality which he prized very highly. Second, she valued him above all other men, hence, he thought she understood him. And this appreciation of him, that is, acknowledging his high qualities, was proof to Nekhludoff of her intelligence and correct judgment. Finally, against marrying Missy in particular, was, first, the extreme probability of his finding a

girl of much better qualities than Missy, and, consequently, more worthy of him; and, second, Missy was twenty-seven years old and had probably loved other men before him. This thought tormented him. His pride could not reconcile itself to the thought that she could love some one else, even in the past. Of course, she could not be expected to know that she would meet him, but the very thought that she could have loved some one else before offended him.

So that there were as many reasons for as there were against marriage in general and marrying Missy in particular. At all events the arguments were equally strong on both sides, and Nekhludoff laughed as he compared himself to the ass in the fable who, while deciding which of the two bales of hay before him he should have his meal from, starved himself.

"However, until I have heard from Maria Vasilieona, the wife of the commander, and have done with her for good, I can do nothing," he said to himself.

And the consciousness that he could and must defer his decision pleased him.

"Ah, but I will consider it all later," he said to himself, as his cabriolet silently approached the asphalt pavement of the court-house.

"And now I must do my duty to the community conscientiously, as I always do, and think it one's duty to do.

Besides, it is often interesting," he said, and went past the door-keeper into the vestibule of the court.

CHAPTER V.

There was great commotion in the corridors of the court when Nekhludoff entered.

The attendants flitted to and fro breathlessly, delivering orders and documents. Police captains, lawyers and clerks passed now one way, now the other; complainants and defendants under bail leaned sadly against the walls, or were sitting and waiting.

"Where is the Circuit Court?" asked Nekhludoff of one of the attendants.

"Which one? There is a civil division and a criminal one."

"I am a juror."

"Criminal division. You should have said so. This way, to the right, then turn to your left. The second door."

Nekhludoff went as directed.

At the door two men stood waiting. One was a tall, stout merchant, a good-natured man, who had evidently partaken of some liquor and was in very high spirits; the other was a clerk of Jewish extraction. They were talking about the price of wool when Nekhludoff approached them and asked if that was the jury's room.

"Here, sir, here. Are you also one of the jurymen?" mirthfully winking his eyes, the good-natured merchant asked.

"Well, we will drudge together, I suppose," he continued in response to Nekhludoff's affirmative answer. "My name is Baklashoff, merchant of the second guild," he introduced himself, extending his soft, broad hand; "we must do our duty. Whom have I the honor of addressing?"

Nekhludoff gave his name and passed into the jury-room.

In the small jury-room there were about ten men of every description. They had just arrived; some were sitting, others walked about, eyeing, and making each other's acquaintance. One was a retired officer in uniform; others were in short coats, and but one in peasant garb.