

【 插图 · 中文导读英文版 】



My Childhood

童年

[俄] 高尔基 著
王勋 纪飞 等 编译

清华大学出版社





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内 容 简 介

《童年》是高尔基自传三部曲中的第一部，是世界文学史上的经典之作。主要描写主人公阿廖沙三岁至十岁这一时期的童年生活。小说从“我”随母亲去投奔外祖父写起，到外祖父叫“我”去“人间”混饭吃结束，生动地再现了十九世纪七八十年代俄罗斯下层人民的生活状况。阿廖沙三岁的时候，父亲死于霍乱，母亲带着他到外祖父家生活。这是一个充满仇恨，笼罩着浓厚小市民习气且令人窒息的家庭。外祖父喜怒无常，脾气暴躁，他经常毒打外祖母，甚至把阿廖沙也打得失去知觉；外祖母却很慈爱，她关心、庇护阿廖沙，给予他无限的温情和钟爱。母亲被迫改嫁，几年后患肺结核病去世。后来外祖父破产，阿廖沙被迫流落人间，开始独立谋生。作品一经发表，便引起极大的轰动，自出版以来被译成世界上几十种语言，还被改编成电影和电视剧。

无论作为语言学习的课本，还是作为通俗的文学读本，本书对当代中国的青少年都将产生积极的影响。为了使读者能够了解英文故事概况，进而提高阅读速度和阅读水平，在每章的开始部分增加了中文导读。

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玛克西姆·高尔基 (Maksim Gorky, 1868—1936), 原名阿廖沙·马克西莫维奇·彼什科夫, 是世界上伟大的文学家、杰出的社会活动家。

1868年3月28日, 高尔基出生在俄国下诺夫哥罗德(曾名高尔基城)的一个普通家庭。3岁时父亲去世, 随后高尔基随母亲寄居于外祖父家, 他的童年是在外祖父家度过的。为了减轻家庭负担, 在11岁的时候他就开始走入“人间”, 曾当过学徒、搬运工、面包工人等。贫民窟和码头成了他的“社会”大学的课堂, 这对他的思想和创作发展产生了重要影响。在艰难困苦的生活中, 高尔基自学了欧洲古典文学、哲学和自然科学等方面的知识。

1892年, 他在《高加索报》上用高尔基的笔名发表了第一部短篇小说《马卡尔·楚德拉》, 从此开始专职写作。1895年, 出版了《依则吉尔的老婆子》和《鹰之歌》。1898年, 他出版了自己的第一个作品集《随笔与短篇小说集》, 该书一出版便引起了国内外的广泛关注。1901年, 他出版了著名的散文诗《海燕之歌》, 塑造了象征大智大勇的革命者搏风击浪的勇敢的海燕形象, 预告革命风暴即将到来, 鼓舞人们去迎接伟大的战斗, 这是一篇无产阶级革命战斗的檄文与颂歌, 受到了列宁的热情称赞。1905年, 俄国革命前夕, 高尔基的创作转向了戏剧, 先后出版了《小市民》、《底层》、《避暑客》、《太阳的孩子们》和《野蛮人》等剧本, 特别是《小市民》、《底层》展现了现实生活中工人的新形象与新的精神面貌, 表现了他们为自己的权利而斗争的决心与乐观情绪, 在当时俄国的剧坛引起了轰动。1906年, 高尔基写成长篇小说《母亲》和剧本《敌人》两部重要的作品, 标志着他的创作达到了新的高峰。1905年革命失败后, 高尔基赴美国及意大利, 写了一系列政论文章。之后创作了《奥古洛夫镇》(1909)、《夏天》(1909)、《马特维·柯热米亚金的一生》(1910—1911)、《意大利童话》(1911—1913)、《俄罗斯童话》(1912—1917)以及自传体三部曲《童年》、《在人间》(1913



—1916）、《我的大学》（1922—1923）等。1934年，高尔基主持召开苏联作家第一次代表大会，并当选为主席。1936年6月18日，高尔基离开人世，享年68岁。

高尔基一生创作了无数的作品，其中包括散文、诗歌、小说、戏剧、评论等，对世界文学产生了巨大影响。而使他名扬世界的是他的长篇自传体小说：《童年》、《在人间》和《我的大学》，这三部作品都是世界公认的文学名著。一个世纪以来，这三部作品被译成数十种文字，风靡世界；同时还多次被改编成电影、电视剧等，影响和感染了一代又一代世界各地的人们。

在中国，《童年》、《在人间》和《我的大学》是读者最熟悉、最喜爱的外国文学名著之一。时至今日，在中国这些被世界公认的文学名著仍然散发着永恒的魅力。为此，我们决定编译这三部作品，并采用中文导读英文版的形式出版。在中文导读中，我们尽力使其贴近原作的精髓，也尽可能保留原作故事主线。我们希望能够编出为当代中国读者所喜爱的经典读本。读者在阅读英文故事之前，可以先阅读中文导读部分，这样有利于了解故事背景，从而加快阅读速度。我们相信，该经典著作的引进对加强当代中国读者，特别是青少年读者的人文修养是非常有帮助的。

本书主要内容由王勋、纪飞编译。参加本书故事素材搜集整理及编译工作的还有郑佳、刘乃亚、赵雪、熊金玉、李丽秀、李智能、李鑫、熊红华、傅颖、乐贵明、王婷婷、熊志勇、聂利生、傅建平、蔡红昌、孟宪行、胡国平、李晓红、胡武荣、贡东兴、张镇、熊建国、张文绮、王多多、陈楠、彭勇、王婷婷、邵舒丽、黄福成、冯洁、熊红华、王晓旭、王业伟、龚桂平、徐鑫、王晓旭、周丽萍、徐平国、肖洁、王小红等。限于我们的科学、人文素养和英语水平，书中可能会有一些不当之处，衷心希望读者朋友批评指正。



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第一章

Chapter 1



父亲躺在小屋的地板上，穿着白色的衣服，身体有些扭曲，双眼紧闭，牙齿龋裂，样子有些吓人。母亲则在一旁帮父亲梳着头发，眼泪不停地流下来，外婆拉着阿廖沙的手，也在一旁配合着母亲哭。外婆告诉阿廖沙：他的父亲去世了，他再也见不到父亲了。

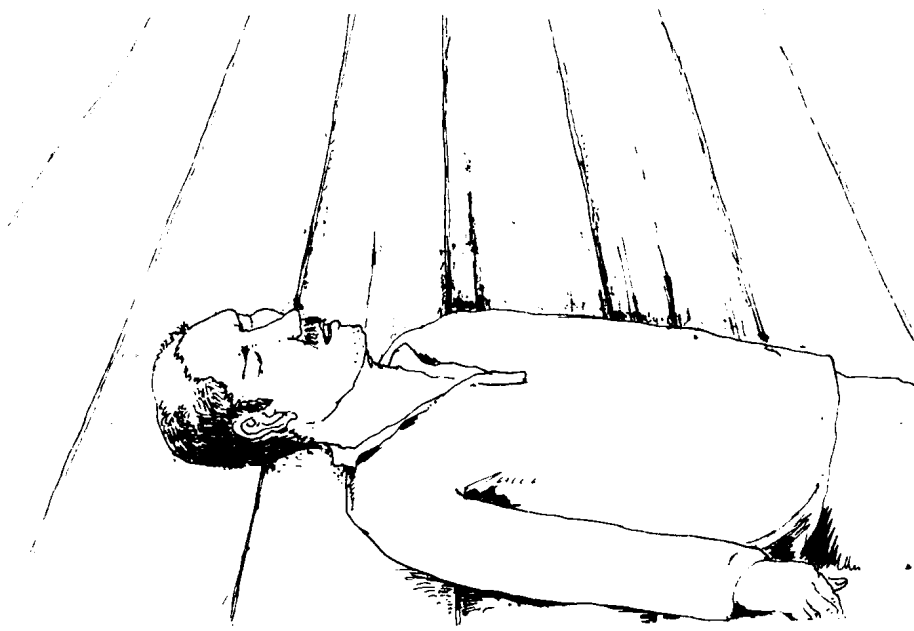
阿廖沙生病的时候本来是由父亲照顾的，后来父亲不见了，外婆就来了。外婆说她是从上游的尼耶尼来的，阿廖沙不明白外婆的意思，不过外婆和蔼友善，他们很快成了朋友。

阿廖沙现在觉得很压抑，想让外婆立刻带走他，尤其是看见母亲的样子。他从来没有见过母亲像今天这样衣衫不整、头发散乱的样子，母亲甚至都没有看阿廖沙一眼。

这时候有人在外面催促着快点收拾，母亲艰难地爬了起来又倒了下去，她脸色发青，让阿廖沙把门关上。外婆也对外面喊着，告诉他们母亲要生孩子了。阿廖沙趁机躲了起来，看着母亲在地板上可怕地扭动着，外婆在一旁不停地鼓励着母亲。

一番折腾之后，终于听到了婴儿的啼哭——阿廖沙的弟弟降生了，外婆很高兴，阿廖沙却在一旁睡着了。后来的事情，阿廖沙只记得埋葬父亲的时候农夫们往父亲的坟里填土，眼看着几只青蛙也被埋在了父亲的坟墓里。

坟墓被填平了，外婆带着阿廖沙离开了这里，一路上外婆责怪阿廖沙为什么不哭。阿廖沙不想哭，小时候他一哭就会被母亲训斥。阿廖沙还在



父亲去世

惦记那几只青蛙，外婆就在一旁为小生灵祈祷了一阵子。

阿廖沙一家要坐轮船去尼耶尼，这时弟弟已经夭折了。阿廖沙望着船舱的窗外，河水拍击着窗户让他很害怕。母亲这时贴着船壁站着，不出声，也不睁眼，阿廖沙都觉得母亲有些陌生了。外婆劝母亲吃东西，母亲依然不作声。

忽然母亲喊了一声“萨拉多夫”，还叫来了水手。水手带来一只装着弟弟尸体的匣子，母亲和外婆装好了匣子便出去了。水手告诉阿廖沙船外的城市就是萨拉多夫，他们谈起了弟弟的埋葬，阿廖沙又想起了那些青蛙，水手便安慰着他。

这时候轮船的汽笛响了，水手跑了出去，阿廖沙看到很多人带着行李下船了，也就跟着要下船。在拥挤的人群中，水手又把阿廖沙抱了回去，不让他乱跑。

外面渐渐安静了，阿廖沙在船舱里觉得很闷，想要把门打开，却扳不动把手，他就用奶瓶砸门，奶水泼到了靴子里。阿廖沙哭了起来，哭着哭着便睡着了。

醒来的时候阿廖沙发现外婆正在旁边梳头发，她的头发很长很多，阿廖沙问她为什么头发那么长，外婆就开起了玩笑，还悄悄地问阿廖沙为什么奶瓶打碎了。外婆说起话来让阿廖沙感觉很温馨，外婆的眼睛、神情和样子都深深地烙在他的记忆里。

没有外婆的时候阿廖沙感觉世界仿佛是黑暗的，正是外婆给他带来了奇幻的色彩，用她的爱给了阿廖沙坚强的力量。

他们坐船行驶在秋天的伏尔加河上，两岸风景变幻，外婆带着阿廖沙在甲板上欣赏着美丽的秋景，她自己也往往会沉迷其中，甚至还会流出眼泪。

外婆喜欢讲故事，阿廖沙很爱听外婆温柔的声音，外婆还会一边讲一边配合动作，旁边的农夫也被吸引住了，就叫他们一起去吃饭。

母亲一般不到甲板上，寡言少语。母亲个子高，但是脸色很暗，母亲那时的形象一直被阿廖沙记着。母亲偶尔也会提醒手舞足蹈的外婆，但是外婆并不在意。

当船舶到达尼耶尼的时候外婆非常高兴，让阿廖沙和母亲都到甲板上去看。轮船停在了河心，这里密密麻麻停了好多船。这时有一个长着棕红色大胡子的老头从另一个船来到了轮船甲板上，这就是阿廖沙的外公。

外公是带着舅舅、舅妈和表哥表姐们一起来的，跟外婆一番互相拥抱

亲吻之后，外公带着大家下了船，沿着斜坡走去。外公和母亲走在了最前面，阿廖沙跟着外婆和娜塔莉亚舅母一起走，舅母很胖，走了一会儿就走不动了，外婆嗔怪着为什么要让娜塔莉亚来受这份罪。

现在阿廖沙不喜欢这里所有的人，包括外婆，也让他感觉陌生了很多，他觉得自己好像是个外人。阿廖沙尤其不喜欢外公，因为外公似乎对他有些敌意。

大家很快就回到了家，房子里面很拥挤，还有刺鼻的气味，而院子里到处都是湿布和颜料，还有奇怪的吆喝声，这些阿廖沙都不喜欢。

人物事件词汇表

Alexis	阿廖沙	小说主人公，一个没有父亲的孤儿
Nijni	尼耶尼	阿廖沙外婆的家乡
Saratov	萨拉多夫	苏联伏尔加河流域的重要城市，俄罗斯联邦萨拉多夫州首府
Volga	伏尔加河	位于俄罗斯西南部，全长 3690 公里，是欧洲最长的河流，也是世界最长的内流河，流入里海
Natalia	娜塔莉亚	阿廖沙的舅母

In a narrow, darkened room, my father, dressed in a white and unusually long garment, lay on the floor under the window. The toes of his bare feet were curiously extended, and the fingers of the still hands, which rested peacefully upon his breast, were curved; his merry eyes were tightly closed by the black disks of two copper coins; the light had gone out of his still face, and I was frightened by the ugly way he showed his teeth.

My mother, only half clad in a red petticoat, knelt and combed my father's long, soft hair, from his brow to the nape of his neck, with the same black comb which I loved to use to tear the rind of watermelons; she talked unceasingly in her low, husky voice, and it seemed as if her swollen eyes must be washed away by the incessant flow of tears.

Holding me by the hand was my grandmother, who had a big, round head,

large eyes, and a nose like a sponge a dark, tender, wonderfully interesting person. She also was weeping, and her grief formed a fitting accompaniment to my mother's, as, shuddering the while, she pushed me towards my father; but I, terrified and uneasy, obstinately tried to hide myself against her. I had never seen grown-up people cry before, and I did not understand the words which my grandmother uttered again and again:

"Say good-by to daddy. You will never see him any more. He is dead before his time."

I had been very ill, had only just left my bed in fact, and I remember perfectly well that at the beginning of my illness my father used to merrily bustle about me. Then he suddenly disappeared and his place was taken by my grandmother, a stranger to me.

"Where did you come from?" I asked her.

"From up there, from Nijni," she answered; "but I did not walk here, I came by boat. One does not walk on water, you little imp."

This was ludicrous, incomprehensible, and untrue; upstairs there lived a bearded, gaudy Persian, and in the cellar an old, yellow Kalmuck who sold sheepskins. One could get upstairs by riding on the banisters, or if one fell that way, one could roll. I knew this by experience. But where was there room for water? It was all untrue and delightfully muddled.

"And why am I a little imp?"

"Why? Because you are so noisy," she said, laughing.

She spoke sweetly, merrily, melodiously, and from the very first day I made friends with her; all I wanted now was for her to make haste and take me out of that room.

My mother pressed me to her; her tears and groans created in me a strange feeling of disquietude. It was the first time I had seen her like this. She had always appeared a stern woman of few words; neat, glossy, and strongly built like a horse, with a body of almost savage strength, and terribly strong arms. But now she was swollen and palpitating, and utterly desolate. Her hair, which was always coiled so neatly about her head, with her large, gaily trimmed cap, was tumbled about her bare shoulders, fell over her face, and part of it which remained plaited, trailed across my father's sleeping face. Although I had been

in the room a long time she had not once looked at me; she could do nothing but dress my father's hair, sobbing and choking with tears the while.

Presently some swarthy gravediggers and a soldier peeped in at the door.

The latter shouted angrily:

"Clear out now ! Hurry up !"

The window was curtained by a dark shawl, which the wind inflated like a sail. I knew this because one day my father had taken me out in a sailing-boat, and without warning there had come a peal of thunder. He laughed, and holding me against his knees, cried, "It is nothing. Don't be frightened, Luke!"

Suddenly my mother threw herself heavily on the floor, but almost at once turned over on her back, dragging her hair in the dust; her impassive, white face had become livid, and showing her teeth like my father, she said in a terrible voice, "Close the door! ...Alexis ... go away!"

Thrusting me on one side, grandmother rushed to the door crying:

"Friends ! Don't be frightened; don't interfere, but go away, for the love of Christ. This is not cholera but childbirth. ... I beg of you to go, good people!"

I hid myself in a dark corner behind a box, and thence I saw how my mother writhed upon the floor, panting and gnashing her teeth; and grandmother, kneeling beside her, talked lovingly and hopefully.

"In the name of the Father and of the Son...! Be patient, Varusha! Holy Mother of God! ...Our Defense...!"

I was terrified. They crept about on the floor close to my father, touching him, groaning and shrieking, and he remained unmoved and actually smiling. This creeping about on the floor lasted a long time; several times my mother stood up, only to fall down again, and grandmother rolled in and out of the room like a large, black, soft ball. All of a sudden a child cried.

"Thank God!" said grandmother. "It is a boy!" And she lighted a candle.

I must have fallen asleep in the corner, for I remember nothing more.

The next impression which my memory retains is a deserted corner in a cemetery on a rainy day. I am standing by a slippery mound of sticky earth and looking into the pit wherein they have thrown the coffin of my father. At the bottom there is a quantity of water, and there are also frogs, two of which have even jumped on to the yellow lid of the coffin.

At the graveside were myself, grandmother, a drenched sexton, and two cross gravediggers with shovels.

We were all soaked with the warm rain which fell in fine drops like glass beads.

"Fill in the grave," commanded the sexton, moving away.

Grandmother began to cry, covering her face with a corner of the shawl which she wore for a head-covering. The gravediggers, bending nearly double, began to fling the lumps of earth on the coffin rapidly, striking the frogs, which were leaping against the sides of the pit, down to the bottom.

"Come along, Lenia," said grandmother, taking hold of my shoulder; but having no desire to depart, I wriggled out of her hands.

"What next, O Lord?" grumbled grandmother, partly to me, and partly to God, and she remained for some time silent, with her head drooping dejectedly.

The grave was filled in, yet still she stood there, till the gravediggers threw their shovels to the ground with a resounding clangor, and a breeze suddenly arose and died away, scattering the raindrops ; then she took me by the hand and led me to a church some distance away, by a path which lay between a number of dark crosses.

"Why don't you cry?" she asked, as we came away from the burial-ground. "You ought to cry."

"I don't want to," was my reply.

"Well, if you don't want to, you need not," she said gently.

This greatly surprised me, because I seldom cried, and when I did it was more from anger than sorrow; moreover, my father used to laugh at my tears, while my mother would exclaim, "Don't you dare to cry!"

After this we rode in a droshky through a broad but squalid street, between rows of houses which were painted dark red.

As we went along, I asked grandmother, "Will those frogs ever be able to get out?"

"Never!" she answered. "God bless them!" I reflected that my father and my mother never spoke so often or so familiarly of God.

A few days later my mother and grandmother took me aboard a steamboat, where we had a tiny cabin.

My little brother Maxim was dead, and lay on a table in the corner, wrapped in white and wound about with red tape. Climbing on to the bundles and trunks I looked out of the porthole, which seemed to me exactly like the eye of a horse. Muddy, frothy water streamed unceasingly down the pane. Once it dashed against the glass with such violence that it splashed me, and I involuntarily jumped back to the floor.

"Don't be afraid," said grandmother, and lifting me lightly in her kind arms, restored me to my place on the bundles.

A gray, moist fog brooded over the water; from time to time a shadowy land was visible in the distance, only to be obscured again by the fog and the foam. Everything about us seemed to vibrate, except my mother who, with her hands folded behind her head, leaned against the wall fixed and still, with a face that was grim and hard as iron, and as expressionless. Standing thus, mute, with closed eyes, she appeared to me as an absolute stranger. Her very frock was unfamiliar to me.

More than once grandmother said to her softly "Varia, won't you have something to eat?"

My mother neither broke the silence nor stirred from her position.

Grandmother spoke to me in whispers, but to my mother she spoke aloud, and at the same time cautiously and timidly, and very seldom. I thought she was afraid of her, which was quite intelligible, and seemed to draw us closer together.

"Saratov !" loudly and fiercely exclaimed my mother with startling suddenness. "Where is the sailor?"

Strange, new words to me! Saratov? Sailor?

A broad-shouldered, gray-headed individual dressed in blue now entered, carrying a small box which grandmother took from him, and in which she proceeded to place the body of my brother. Having done this she bore the box and its burden to the door on her outstretched hands; but, alas! being so stout she could only get through the narrow doorway of the cabin sideways, and now halted before it in ludicrous uncertainty.

"Really, Mama!" exclaimed my mother impatiently, taking the tiny coffin from her. Then they both disappeared, while I stayed behind in the cabin

regarding the man in blue.

"Well, mate, so the little brother has gone?" he said, bending down to me.

"Who are you?"

"I am a sailor."

"And who is Saratov?"

"Saratov is a town. Look out of the window. There it is!"

Observed from the window, the land seemed to oscillate; and revealing itself obscurely and in a fragmentary fashion, as it lay steaming in the fog, it reminded me of a large piece of bread just cut off a hot loaf.

"Where has grandmother gone to?"

"To bury her little grandson."

"Are they going to bury him in the ground?"

"Yes, of course they are."

I then told the sailor about the live frogs that had been buried with my father.

He lifted me up, and hugging and kissing me, cried, "Oh, my poor little fellow, you don't understand. It is not the frogs who are to be pitied, but your mother. Think how she is bowed down by her sorrow."

Then came a resounding howl overhead. Having already learned that it was the steamer which made this noise, I was not afraid; but the sailor hastily set me down on the floor and darted away, exclaiming, "I must run!"

The desire to escape seized me. I ventured out of the door. The dark, narrow space outside was empty, and not far away shone the brass on the steps of the staircase. Glancing upwards, I saw people with wallets and bundles in their hands, evidently going off the boat. This meant that I must go off too.

But when I appeared in front of the gangway, amidst the crowd of peasants, they all began to yell at me.

"Who does he belong to? Who do you belong to?"

No one knew.

For a long time they jostled and shook and poked me about, until the gray-haired sailor appeared and seized me, with the explanation:

"It is the Astrakhan boy from the cabin."

And he ran off with me to the cabin, deposited me on the bundles and

went away, shaking his finger at me, as he threatened, "I'll give you something!"

The noise overhead became less and less. The boat had ceased to vibrate, or to be agitated by the motion of the water. The window of the cabin was shut in by damp walls; within it was dark, and the air was stifling. It seemed to me that the very bundles grew larger and began to press upon me; it was all horrible, and I began to wonder if I was going to be left alone forever in that empty boat.

I went to the door, but it would not open ; the brass handle refused to turn, so I took a bottle of milk and with all my force struck at it. The only result was that the bottle broke and the milk spilled over my legs, and trickled into my boots. Crushed by this failure, I threw myself on the bundles crying softly, and so fell asleep.

When I awoke the boat was again in motion, and the window of the cabin shone like the sun.

Grandmother, sitting near me, was combing her hair and muttering something with knitted brow. She had an extraordinary amount of hair which fell over her shoulders and breast to her knees, and even touched the floor. It was blue-black. Lifting it up from the floor with one hand and holding it with difficulty, she introduced an almost toothless wooden comb into its thick strands. Her lips were twisted, her dark eyes sparkled fiercely, while her face, encircled in that mass of hair, looked comically small. Her expression was almost malignant, but when I asked her why she had such long hair she answered in her usual mellow, tender voice:

"Surely God gave it to me as a punishment ... Even when it is combed, just look at it! ... When I was young I was proud of my mane, but now I am old I curse it. But you go to sleep. It is quite early. The sun has only just risen."

"But I don't want to go to sleep again."

"Very well, then don't go to sleep," she agreed at once, plaiting her hair and glancing at the berth on which my mother lay rigid, with upturned face. "How did you smash that bottle last evening? Tell me about it quietly."

So she always talked, using such peculiarly harmonious words that they took root in my memory like fragrant, bright, everlasting flowers. When she

smiled the pupils of her dark, luscious eyes dilated and beamed with an inexpressible charm, and her strong white teeth gleamed cheerfully. Apart from her multitudinous wrinkles and her swarthy complexion, she had a youthful and brilliant appearance. What spoiled her was her bulbous nose, with its distended nostrils, and red lips, caused by her habit of taking pinches of snuff from her black snuff-box mounted with silver, and by her fondness for drink. Everything about her was dark, but within she was luminous with an inextinguishable, joyful and ardent flame, which revealed itself in her eyes. Although she was bent, almost humpbacked, in fact, she moved lightly and softly, for all the world like a huge cat, and was just as gentle as that caressing animal.

Until she came into my life I seemed to have been asleep, and hidden away in obscurity; but when she appeared she woke me and led me to the light of day.

Connecting all my impressions by a single thread, she wove them into a pattern of many colors, thus making herself my friend for life, the being nearest my heart, the dearest and best known of all; while her disinterested love for all creation enriched me, and built up the strength needful for a hard life.

Forty years ago boats traveled slowly; we were a long time getting to Nijni, and I shall never forget those days almost overlaid with beauty.

Good weather had set in. From morning till night I was on the deck with grandmother, under a clear sky, gliding between the autumn-gilded shores of the Volga, without hurry, lazily; and, with many resounding groans, as she rose and fell on the gray-blue water, a barge attached by a long rope was being drawn along by the bright red steamer. The barge was gray, and reminded me of a wood-louse.

Unperceived, the sun floated over the Volga. Every hour we were in the midst of fresh scenes; the green hills rose up like rich folds on earth's sumptuous vesture; on the shore stood towns and villages; the golden autumn leaves floated on the water.

"Look how beautiful it all is!" grandmother exclaimed every minute, going from one side of the boat to the other, with a radiant face, and eyes wide with joy. Very often, gazing at the shore, she would forget me; she would stand on the deck, her hands folded on her breast, smiling and in silence, with