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Fathers and Sons

IVAN SERGEYEVICH TURGENEV

COMPLETE AND UNABRIDGED

FATHERS AND SONS

Ivan S. Turgenev

With Introduction and Notes by

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WORDSWORTH CLASSICS

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Wordsworth Classics are inexpensive editions designed to appeal to the general reader and students. We commissioned teachers and specialists to write wide ranging, jargon-free introductions and to provide notes that would assist the understanding of our readers rather than interpret the stories for them. In the same spirit, because the pleasures of reading are inseparable from the surprises, secrets and revelations that all narratives contain, we strongly advise you to enjoy this book before turning to the Introduction.

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INTRODUCTION

In *Fathers and Sons*, Turgenev creates the character of a young revolutionary and sets him down as a guest in a rural estate at some distance from the metropolitan centres of St Petersburg and Moscow. Displacing Bazarov from the urban centres of revolutionary enthusiasm, he puts him in a social context where his political imperatives are subordinated to other compulsions, culminating in a hopeless love affair with the wealthy widow Anna Sergievna Odintsov. Turgenev's representation of Bazarov as the type of new young revolutionary earned him the contempt of the generation of young political radicals in the 1860s for what they saw as his failure to do justice to their cause. Since then the status of Bazarov as an authentic type of the revolutionary has continually been challenged. Writing in the 1950s, the American critic Irving Howe saw Bazarov as 'a revolutionary personality, but without revolutionary ideas or

commitments. He is all potentiality and 'no possibility';[1] and it is often argued that for a man of action Bazarov does little else but cut up frogs. If there is a germ of truth in Howe's view I should rather see Bazarov, as Turgenev saw him, as a figure on the cusp of a revolutionary programme whose time and place has yet to come, whose robust vigour and intellectual will anticipates the revolutionaries of later Russian history. Writing of his central character in a letter of April 1862, Turgenev imagined him a 'gloomy, wild, large figure, half grown out of the soil, strong, spiteful, honest – and one all the same doomed to perish – because that figure is none the less still in the anteroom of the future'.[2] Bazarov is 'a man born ahead of his time' standing for 'the triumph of democracy over the aristocracy'. In any case, he has 'commitments', expressed in Arkady's definition of their mutual position as 'nihilists'. Strictly speaking, a nihilist believes in nothing, but as we are told, they believe in the denial of all authorities in the cause of freedom and social justice. Turgenev came to regret his revival of the word nihilist – it had first been used to designate political radicalism in Russia in 1840 – because he thought he had given his opponents a stick to beat him with. Howe's view of Bazarov's impoverishment as a revolutionary is itself a twentieth-century echo of contemporary objections to the novel on its first appearance. The context of its publication is vital.

I

Fathers and Sons is deliberately set in 1859, two years before the Emancipation of the Serfs in February 1861. The Kirsanov country seat and the circumstances of the gentleman landowner of modest means whose lands are in considerable disrepair is a familiar milieu in Turgenev's work as in his earlier novel, *A Nest of Gentlefolk* (1859). Kirsanov's circumstances are characteristic of the landowning classes in mid-nineteenth-century Russia, plagued by financial problems and the difficulties of depending upon a recalcitrant peasant workforce held in the bondage of serfdom. Kirsanov represents that sector of the Russian population called the 'gentry' whose social and cultural significance in nineteenth-century Russia was out of all proportion to their number, for they represented little more than one per cent of the population as against the

1 Irving Howe, *Politics and the Novel*, 1962, p. 130

2 *Turgenev's Letters*, ed. and translated by David Lowe, 1983, Vol. 1, p. 213

peasant population of over eighty per cent. Permitted to own serfs by legal provision, the gentry enjoyed many privileges, such as freedom from conscription and personal taxation, and prior to the Emancipation were responsible for administering local justice and the collection of peasant taxes. If Kirsanov is a well-meaning and humane version of the Russian gentry, they were commonly despotic in the treatment of their peasants, and ill-educated in the skills necessary to manage their estates efficiently. Thus Kirsanov's cattle are 'weak pitiful beasts' and his reorganised system of estate management, administered by a paid steward whose only concern is to line his own pockets, 'was creaking as loudly as an ungreased cartwheel or furniture which has been fashioned of unseasoned wood' (p. 34) and is administered by a paid steward whose only concern is to line his own pockets.

Agitation for the reform of Russia's feudal autocratic rule and the repeal of serfdom was increasingly evident from the late 1840s, and these issues became the primary concern of Russian writers in the nineteenth century, with particular attention to the everyday life of the peasant community. Turgenev's earliest contribution to the study of the peasant world is *A Sportsman's Sketches* (1852), where he offers a sympathetic version of the peasant community in contrast to their indolent, violent and repressive masters. The work earned him the displeasure of the authorities, though it was a considerable literary success. Turgenev's reformist sympathies were nourished by his early friendship with Vissarion Belinsky (1811–48), the most famous Russian literary critic of the nineteenth century, who recognised the importance of a national literary culture as a means of awakening a people to its social and political potential, the sort of culture he nurtured through his critical commentaries on such writers as Mikhail Lermontov, Nikolai Gogol and Ivan Goncharov. On its first publication in book form, *Fathers and Sons* was dedicated to Belinsky. Another of Turgenev's friends was Alexander Herzen (1812–70), a man of pre-revolutionary socialist ideals who left Russia for self-imposed exile in the West and set up the 'Free Russian Press' in London. Together, Belinsky, Herzen, Turgenev and others of like persuasion came to be known as the 'men of the forties', the 'fathers' of radical culture in mid-nineteenth-century Russia, soon to be displaced by the 'sons', the 'men of the sixties', the generation of the radical young who came to prominence in the years after the Crimean War, and of which Bazarov is a version. The 'men of the forties' worked for reform under the particularly repressive regime of Tsar Nicolas I, when unwelcome political

agitation could earn long prison sentences, exile to Siberia and, in many cases, execution: hence the exile from Russia of men like Herzen. With the death of Nicolas I in 1855 and Russia's humiliating defeat in the Crimean War (1853–6), the new Tsar Alexander II and his government were more open to the need for reforms, particularly with regard to serfdom and the associated issue of land ownership, and it became possible to debate these matters more publicly than before, though still within the limits allowed by an autocratic state.

Two opposed philosophies of social and political thought dominated mid-nineteenth-century Russia, Westernism and Slavophilism. Westerners argued that Russia was essentially European and should model itself on Western Europe, whilst Slavophiles were ultra-patriotic and politically conservative, and created the first ideology of Russian nationalism. They were ardent nationalists, committed to the essentially Russian quality of all institutions from the village commune through to the Orthodox Russian Church and the autocracy of the state, a theocratic view of Russia and its peoples crystallised in the somewhat mystical concept of 'Holy Mother Russia'. Like his friend Belinsky, Turgenev was a committed Westerner, and his memoir of Belinsky provides a broadly defined view of Westernism. Belinsky, he writes, was a 'Westerner not only because he acknowledged the superiority of Western science, Western art and the Western social order, but also because he was deeply convinced of the need for Russia to absorb everything the West had produced for the development of her own powers and her own importance. He believed that there was no salvation for us other than to follow the path pointed out to us by Peter the Great upon whom the Slavophils hurled their choicest execrations at that time.'[3] Peter the Great (1672–1725) was Tsar of Russia from 1682 and assumed control of the government in 1689; he founded St Petersburg on the Gulf of Finland in order to provide access to the West and to create an administrative and bureaucratic capitol. He attempted to reorganise Russia on Western lines, modernising the army, organising a naval fleet, reforming the administrative and legal systems and encouraging education, whilst bringing the church under state control. His influence on Russia's development was deplored by the Slavophiles. By the 1860s Slavophilism had lost much of its impetus, and though Turgenev and his older friends held firm to their beliefs

3 *Turgenev's Literary Reminiscences*, translated by David Magarshack, 1959, pp. 121–2

in Westernism, their convictions were now challenged by a young generation of political activists for whom social and political reform entailed violent insurrection under varying ideological clarion calls for action.

To the extent that Bazarov was intended as a portrait of a revolutionary, some aspects of his treatment in the novel were bound to offend such activists and thinkers, and their response to the novel was hostile. They were offended by what they saw as the accidental death of Bazarov and with it the failure of his revolutionary ambitions, and the survival of the gentry class in the novel. What they wanted was a novel written to a thesis in support of their revolutionary ideals, and this was duly provided by Nikolay Chernyshevsky (1828–89), a radical activist who believed in the inevitability and necessity of revolution by force, though he also subscribed to Westernism. Known to Turgenev through their mutual connection with the monthly journal *The Contemporary* (1838–66), the foremost agency for the dissemination of radical thought in mid-nineteenth-century Russia, Chernyshevsky was eventually imprisoned for his views and there wrote a novel answering the question he felt *Fathers and Sons* had evaded, whose title is *What is to be Done?* (1863). Widely regarded as one of the worst novels ever published, it yet made a deep and lasting impression on Russia's dispossessed young radicals, including eventually Vladimir Lenin, leader of the 1917 revolution in Russia. But as we shall see, Turgenev's novel is not written to embody a thesis, nor to extol an idealised young hero. He addressed this problem in a letter to his friend A. A. Fet, responding to Fet's view of the novel's suspect thesis: 'Thesis! And what, may I ask, is the thesis in *Fathers and Sons*? Did I want to pour abuse on Bazarov or exalt him? *I don't know that myself*, since I don't know whether I love him or hate him! How's that for a thesis for you!'[4] If this suggests an ambivalence on Turgenev's part towards his central character, an ambivalence shared by the other characters in the novel and by many amongst the community of contemporary readers, that is because no single overall view of Bazarov is tenable. He is a complex figure who generates quite different responses from all those who come into contact with him, in keeping with demands of fictional realism. At the same time, we should exercise some caution in treating these authorial comments, because in the months after the novel was published Turgenev was markedly defensive in his letters to adverse

4 *Turgenev's Letters*, op. cit., Vol. 1, p. 209

views of Bazarov and the novel, though he finally came to believe he had accomplished what he wanted, despite the hostility of his young contemporaries. His convictions were supported by a letter about *Fathers and Sons* from his great contemporary, the novelist Fyodor Dostoevsky, and though this letter no longer exists, it is clear from Turgenev's reply in March 1862 that Dostoevsky fully understood the presentation of Bazarov and had a high opinion of the novel's quality. Turgenev writes to Dostoevsky:

> You have grasped so completely and keenly what I wanted to express in Bazarov that I could only spread my arms in amazement – and pleasure. It's as if you had entered my soul and felt even those things that I didn't consider it necessary to say. May God grant that that shows not just the subtle perspicacity of a master, but the simple understanding of a reader as well – that is, God grant that everyone see at least a part of what you did! I'm now calm as regards the fate of my povest: it has done its work – and I have no reason to repent. [5]

Turgenev's desire for the 'simple understanding of a reader' is evident in his letter of April 1862 to the young writer K. K. Sluchevsky, who alas seems to have considered Madame Kukshin the most successful character in the novel, a failure of reading Turgenev answered with some asperity. More importantly, in refusing the simplifications of good and bad characters in the making of novels, he writes to Sluchevsky: 'To present bribe-takers on the one hand, and on the other – an ideal youth – that's a picture that I'll let others draw . . . I wanted something larger.'[6] That something larger is the representation of characters true to the psychological complexity of real life in authentically realised social situations, those crucial ingredients central to the tradition of the nineteenth-century realist novel, in which characters and their contexts are not given in black and white terms, but through all the shadings of the spectrum. To this end, and in exploring the distance between characters' perceptions of themselves and the ways they are seen by others, Turgenev makes persistent use of the rhetorical practice of irony. *Fathers and Sons* is not a work of satire, though there are satirical portraits in it, but a realist novel whose shifts of mood and tone are marked by its occasional lyricism and a descriptive vocabulary as much poetic as it is realist, a subtle

5 ibid., p. 206

6 ibid., p. 212

complex of writerly effects that makes considerable demands on its readers.

If the pervasive view of Bazarov within the novel is of a man of steadfast purpose, whose features express 'self-assurance and intellect', the reaction of others to him is determined by familiarity and location, as with his parents and their aged servant Timotheitch, or by his capacity to disturb the apparent harmony of social situations as at the Kirsanov household where Paul takes an instant dislike to him because of his physical appearance and long hair. However, Thenichka is quickly won over by Bazarov when he takes her baby in his arms to examine his swollen gums, pacifies the child and makes Thenichka at ease with him, while his effect on Duniasha is to make her giggle. Madame Odintsova is excited by him and enjoys the combative vigour of his unorthodox opinions when he is her guest at Nikolsköe, yet she retains her self-possession and retires to bed at night 'a cold spotless figure in spotless, fragrant white' (p. 87), whilst Bazarov's self-possession is unnerved by the uncontrollable swell of his feelings for her. His first view of her at the Governor's ball provokes an expression of cynical sexual opportunism in keeping with his ideological kind as he remarks that 'she has such a pair of shoulders as I have not seen this many a day' (p. 73), and later, 'what a body – the very thing for a dissecting theatre'. But the more he comes to love her the more his pride is stung and he pours scorn upon everything 'romantic', confounded by the recognition of his own capacity for romantic love. 'And at such times there was nothing for it but to rush out of doors into the woods, and to stride along at a pace which snapped off chance-met boughs, and found vent in curses at both them and himself.' (p. 92). Late in the novel Bazarov amuses himself with some bantering talk with an aged peasant in the village near his father's home and says he is told that in the peasants 'lie the whole strength and the whole future of Russia – that you are going to begin a new epoch in our history, and to give us both a real language and new laws'. He jestlingly asks, 'The world stands on three fishes, does it not?' citing an ancient Russian folklore belief. The old man agrees, with the 'quiet, good-humoured sweetness of the patriarchal age', yet rebukes Bazarov with the assertion that 'above it stands the will of the masters', at which Bazarov turns contemptuously away. Asked by another peasant what Bazarov said, the old man answers derisively, 'He was chattering just for chattering's sake – he likes to hear his own tongue wag. Do not all of us know what a *barin* and the likes of him are good for?' (p. 183) Here the narrative voice adds that it had

never dawned on this young Nihilist, with his boastful knowledge of the ways of the peasants, that in their eyes 'he was no better than a pease-pudding'. This authorial impartiality underlines the multiple perspectives the novel offers on Bazarov, giving us a fully rounded representation of him. Yet Turgenev retains his faith in his central character, and in the letter to Sluchevsky claims that Bazarov's death puts 'the final trait on his tragic figure. But your young people even find his death accidental! . . . if the reader doesn't come to love Bazarov, with all his coarseness, callousness, pitiless dryness and harshness – I repeat – if he doesn't come to love him, then I'm at fault and have missed the mark.'[7] Bazarov's death is accidental in the strict sense that it results from an accident, but it is imaginatively convincing, for the organic health of his body is fatally invaded by typhoid, an image in little of the diseased body politic it was Bazarov's ambition to cure.

II

Turgenev's novel is developed through a series of oppositions of which the most obvious is the generational divide between age and youth, especially that between parents and their children. There is a moment in Chapter 10 when Nikolai Kirsanov recalls a quarrel years ago with his mother who refused to listen to his words until he capped the row by telling her it was impossible for her to understand him because they 'came of different generations'. It was, he recalls, a bitter pill for her to swallow, and now he in turn, with his brother Paul, must swallow that bitter pill. As I have made clear this generational divide applies not only to parents and children but by implication to the ideological opposition between Turgenev's generation of writers and thinkers and their younger radical contemporaries. There is a further opposition between what seems the novel's primary concern with conflicting political ideologies as it opens and the love stories whose unfolding becomes the central focus of the narrative. *Fathers and Sons* engages with the conflict between an idea of life lived according to an abstract theory of being, nihilism, against the messy reality of the situations his characters find themselves in where political imperatives become subordinated to emotional and private concerns.

As the novel opens the opposition is between affection and

7 ibid., p. 213

affectation. Affection is presented in Turgenev's sympathetic portrait of a father impatiently awaiting the return of his absent son where affection is a quality of love: and affection as a quality of friendship denotes the bond between Arkady and Bazarov. Affectation is a mode of self-presentation which is artificial, stilted, 'got up' in such matters as dress, physical appearance and speech, and in Paul Kirsanov seems to embrace the whole personality. It is first noted in the novel's second paragraph with Kirsanov's servant who is dressed in the manner of 'the modern, the rising generation', signified here by his 'turquoise ear-ring', 'dyed, pomaded hair' and 'mincing gait' (p. 3). The 'rising generation' here refers not to young men like Arkady and Bazarov, but to young peasants anticipating the repeal of serfdom and the freedoms they imagined this would entail. Affectation of appearance and manner is enlarged upon when Paul Kirsanov is introduced, dressed 'in a dark English suit, a fashionably low collar, and a pair of patent leather boots . . . his every well-bred refined feature [showing] that symmetry of youth, that air of superiority to the rest of the world which usually disappears when once the twenties have been passed' (p. 16) – a moment of quiet irony in the generational motif, as though his youthful appearance is 'put on'. Paul's air of superiority is soon undermined through the incursion of Bazarov into his gentlemanly retreat. In contrast to the servant's expression of the 'modern', Bazarov's long hair indicates his disdain of all niceties of dress and his manner is direct and brusque. Thus though Bazarov's manners and appearance seem native to him, they are typical of the self-presentation of the radical young, signalling their difference from the gentry.

The generational conflict between age and youth in the Kirsanov household is developed in Chapters 6 and 10. The argument between Bazarov and Paul Kirsanov in Chapter 6 is brief but pointed and centres on Bazarov's preference for the natural sciences above all else, his willingness to accept facts when presented with them, and his distrust of all authorities. Against this Paul offers only the aggrieved hauteur of one of refined manners and a vague enthusiasm for the writings of Schiller and Goethe. In Chapter 10 this conflict becomes more heated because more personal as Bazarov challenges Paul's idleness and a way of life lived according to his idea of what constitutes the 'aristocratic' principle. For Bazarov the 'aristocratic idea' and the associated versions of 'Liberalism, progress, and principles' are all vanities, useless for the 'Russian of today'. He and his contemporaries 'recognise no basis for action save the useful', and, 'At present the course most useful is denial. Therefore

we deny' (p. 49). As I have already indicated, Turgenev, who came of age in the 1840s, was ideologically committed to Western liberalism and ideals of social progress and reform. So to make the Russian version of these 'principles' the object of Bazarov's contempt is then a necessary aspect of his representation of the conflict of the generations, and the alarming prospect of revolutionary fervour in contemporary Russia. In the most explicit expression of his recognition of the need for absolutely radical change, Bazarov provides an extensive list of the contemporary afflictions of the body politic in public and private institutions that reaches from the government through to the village commune and the institution of the family and includes corrupt civil servants, the 'lack of highways, commerce, and a single upright judge', and the futility of parliamentary and legal debates about freedom, 'when all the time it is the bread of subsistence alone that really matters' (p. 51). Bazarov then feels he has needlessly exposed himself to an unworthy opponent in these exchanges, and in response to Paul's affirmation that 'Civilisation and its fruits are what we value' and the 'sacred beliefs' of the people, there comes a hint of that incendiary element common to the youthful revolutionary cause in Bazarov's reply, 'From a little candle there arose, as you know, the conflagration of Moscow' (p. 52), the most explicit expression of revolutionary violence that Bazarov makes. The argument ends with Bazarov's subtly ironic innuendo that Paul's defence of the institution of the family is compromised by living in a household where the *barin* has an illegitimate child by the daughter of his former housekeeper.

Where affectation can be seen as a desire to express uniqueness or singularity it is opposed to expressions of unity or bonding, and in *Fathers and Sons* this is most often figured in the novel through the important notion of sympathy. We meet it first in Nikolai Kirsanov's embarrassed confession about Thenichka and her baby, and Thenichka's hesitation in presenting herself to Arkady and his guest in Chapter 5. The matter is resolved by Arkady's sympathetic response insisting that 'it is not for a son to summon his father to judgement' (p. 20), though this note of 'magnanimity' is mildly ironised by Arkady's self-conscious weight of emphasis in his tone of voice. There are several moments when sympathy is expressed physically, as on the two occasions when Arkady presses Bazarov's hand in recognition and reconciliation. Arkady is under the illusion that he too is in love with Madame Odintsov and in competition with Bazarov, and their friendship is challenged by 'those half-

quizzical relations which are always a sign of tacit distrust and a smouldering grudge' (p. 106). As they leave Madame Odintsov's for home and Arkady eventually moves into Bazarov's carriage, Arkady 'pressed his hand, and Bazarov seemed to divine the meaning of the silent hand-clasp, and to appreciate it' (p. 108) and is restored to his customary rough humour. Later, in the hayrick scene in Chapter 21, a handclasp again resolves division between them after their wrestling bout suddenly turns menacing before it is interrupted by Vasili Ivanitch and his talk of Arkady and Bazarov as being like Castor and Pollux, the mythical prototypes of twinned brothers, a beautifully placed misreading of the situation by Bazarov's father. In the domestic environments of the Kirsanov home, at Nikolsköe and the Bazarovs' home, Bazarov grows more aware that Arkady will not survive as his accomplice in the Nihilist agenda, and this hayrick scene displays their increasingly combative relationship. Divided by their mutual fascination with Anna Sergievna, Bazarov is now overwhelmed by 'weariness and rancour', a deep discontent within himself in comparison to his parents' pleasure in their busy humdrum lives. He sees himself as a 'fine futility' and as he watches an ant towing a half-dead fly in its wake, he calls out, 'Pull, brother, pull! Never mind that the fly hangs back, but avail yourself of your animal right to abjure all sympathy, seeing that our friend has only himself to thank for his trouble' (p. 124). It is characteristic of Bazarov that his gaze on the natural world falls on this tooth-and-claw conflict of the battle for survival, whereas Arkady sees a withered maple leaf 'fluttering to the ground', like the movements of a butterfly (p. 127). Bazarov, however, disdains Arkady's sympathetic view of nature, his 'beautiful language', and his defence of family honour when Bazarov calls his uncle an idiot. Nature, Bazarov argues, is not a church but a workshop wherein men and women must toil. In the sphere of morals he insists that there are no principles, that only 'instincts exist, and upon them everything depends', as in the ant's instinct to haul off its prey. Bazarov's skill in dialectical argument, in linguistic niceties, and philosophical pragmatism outwits Arkady at almost every turn, though he is not subdued. When they grapple in a playful fight Arkady catches sight of Bazarov's face 'with its expression of malice and non-jesting menace which lurked in the twisted smile and the flashing eyes', a sight which fills Arkady with 'involuntary awe' (p. 128). A moment later Arkady accepts Bazarov's apology for hurting him by covertly pressing his friend's hand. Note how the presentation of the ebb and flow of sympathy between these young men is framed by

Turgenev's setting of the scene:

> Later, when the noontide sun was glowing from behind a thin canopy of dense, pale vapour, and all was still save that the chirping of a few birds in the trees lulled the hearer to a curious, drowsy lethargy, and the incessant call of a young hawk on a topmost bough made the air ring with its strident note, Arkady and Bazarov made for themselves pillows of sweet, dry, fragrant, crackling hay, and stretched themselves in the shadow of a rick.
> [p. 123]

Here it seems as though the world of nature cooperates in a mood of sympathetic languour with the young men. The incessant and strident call of the young hawk, however, unmistakably suggests Bazarov, and chimes with Turgenev's repeated use of bird imagery in this novel as an adjunct to his representation of character, as in the way Bazarov later describes himself as like a jackdaw, that bird noted for its habit of thieving bright shining objects. The lyricism of this passage is characteristic of Turgenev, especially in his rendering of idyllic scenes of courtship or social harmony where nature and human nature seem at one.

One of the most important explorations of sympathy comes in Chapter 18 during Bazarov's declaration of love for Anna Odintsova, a passage replete with the tension of sympathies offered, explored and withdrawn. Turgenev's handling of this relationship is masterly, making his characters behave in ways which are true to nature, even if their actions seem contradictory to themselves. As readers we are compelled to believe her interest in Bazarov is more personal than the duties of a hostess commands. In this chapter they come together in a charged emotional atmosphere heightened by her probings of his interest as she turns their talk away from textbooks on science to that of happiness:

> The reason why I mention happiness is the following. Why is it that when one is enjoying, say, a piece of music, or a beautiful summer evening, or a conversation with a sympathetic companion, the occasion seems rather a hint at an infinite felicity existent elsewhere than a real felicity actually being experienced?
> [p. 100]

This is a subtle passage, an opening gambit in the chess play of love's game, hinting at 'infinite felicity' against the reality of the present. She inexorably draws Bazarov on by challenging his 'secretiveness and reserve' until, with his back to her, he declares

his love for her. Her response is to stretch out her arms before her as though to embrace him, though the gesture evokes no response, for he remains turned away from her, his head pressed to the window-pane under the tension of the moment. When he finally turns to her and clasps her to him, there is a momentary complicity before she withdraws to a corner and tells him he has mistaken her intentions. This chapter ends with a chilling self-assessment by Anna, whose vision of herself in a mirror suggests a capacity for the sensuous which confounds her, and from which she withdraws to the assertion that 'freedom from worry is the chief thing in the world', a bourgeois assertion and a deeply ironic inflection of the meanings of freedom in the context of this novel's political concerns. And it is a predictable irony that when Anna finally crosses the boundary-line of chilling self-possession into marriage, it is neither for love nor duty , but to 'a severely practical thinker' who as a lover has a 'temperament as cold as ice'.

Arkady's declaration of love for Katia is made in the formalised pastoral of the imitation Greek temple at Nikolsköe, made however of 'undeniable Russian bricks', a site where nature has asserted her primacy for 'the front wall of the temple had become so overgrown with bushes that only the capitals of the supporting columns remained visible above the mass of verdure' (p. 173). Anna dislikes the place because she was once disturbed there by an adder, suggesting her fear of the natural, an anxiety implicitly associated with the snake and temptation in biblical narrative. But Katia goes there frequently to read or to work or to 'surrender herself to the influence of that perfect restfulness . . . a silent, half-unconscious contemplation of the great waves of life as they break for ever around and against us'. The scene is set in the hour before noon, when 'the dew and the freshness of the morning had already given place to the sultriness and the aridity of noontide', and Katia is depressed, in keeping with the arid moment, because she has been urged to keep her distance from Arkady and avoid solitary meetings with him. Arkady's stumbling attempts to tell her of his feelings are accompanied by the 'unstudied song' of a chaffinch, as though nature is urging him on, and when they finally confess their love for each other they embrace, and Katia sheds a few tears. Of this moment Turgenev writes that the 'man who has not seen such tears in the eyes of his beloved does not know the height of happiness to which, with mingled joy and gratitude and modesty, a woman can attain' (p. 177). 'Modesty' is indicative, I think, suggesting Katia's decorous anticipation of the pleasures of married life in contrast to

her sister whose first marriage excluded conjugal relations by mutual agreement. Throughout this scene Turgenev deploys his characters in an artful conjunction, with Anna Sergievna and Bazarov walking within hearing but just out of sight of Katia and Arkady. It will be their last meeting until Anna's hurried visit to Bazarov's sick-bed in the penultimate chapter, and whilst she pleads with him to stay at Nikolsköe a little longer because she finds his talk stimulating – 'like walking on the edge of a precipice: at first one is afraid, then one gathers courage. Do not go' – he is determined to leave. Bazarov's response is couched in characterstically imaginative language, for his mind works figuratively, despite his apparent contempt for all that smacks of Romanticism and the arts of poetry and music. 'I have tarried overlong in a sphere which is alien to my personality. Only for a while can flying fish support themselves in the air. Then they relapse into their natural element. Allow me to flop back into mine' (p. 178). At this Anna thinks to herself, 'The man still loves me', and 'she extended a sympathetic hand' from which Bazarov withdraws. Anna comes to consider Bazarov's bitter assessment of love as a 'mere empirical sentiment' when she is confronted with the mutual happiness of Katia and Arkady, and reflects that 'Bazarov was right . . . It was mere curiosity, mere love of ease, mere egoism, mere – ', and asks of them, 'Children, is love an empirical sentiment?' But they are unable to respond because 'neither of the pair understood her meaning' (p. 180), a silence indicative of the difference between their realisation of love together and her disappointed theoretical talk about it.

This chapter marks Bazarov's parting from Arkady when he finally dismisses his friend's Nihilism as skin-deep in a brutal telling of home truths. ' . . . we are parting for ever,' says Bazarov (an unconscious irony this, for Arkady will not see him alive again) ' . . . you were not meant to live the hard, bitter, reckless life of Nihilism – you lack at once the necessary coolness and the necessary venom.' He condemns Arkady as a 'fine young fellow enough', but nothing more than a 'liberal-minded *baritch* – what my father calls a "product of evolution" ' (p. 179). Arkady, as Bazarov understands, will create his own 'nest of gentlefolk' with Katia, and as his name suggests, is much more suited to the Arcadian life of a country estate than the volatile world of radical politics.

Bazarov's role is governed by two central ironies, his falling in love with Anna and his failure of due care in the examination of a cadaver infected with typhus. His love affair belies his status as an