

THE WORLD'S CLASSICS

LEO TOLSTOY

THE RAID
AND OTHER STORIES



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and Other Stories



Translated by

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With an introduction by

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Oxford New York

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

1982

Oxford University Press, Walton Street, Oxford OX2 6DP

London Glasgow New York Toronto
Delhi Bombay Calcutta Madras Karachi
Kuala Lumpur Singapore Hong Kong Tokyo
Nairobi Dar es Salaam Cape Town
Melbourne Auckland

and associate companies in
Beirut Berlin Ibadan Mexico City

*These translations first published by Oxford University Press
in the World's Classics hardback series between 1906 and 1935*

*This selection first published, with a new introduction,
as a World's Classics paperback 1982*

Introduction © P. N. Furbank 1982

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British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

Tolstoi, L. N.

The Raid and other stories.—(The World's classics)

I. Title

891.73'3[F] PG3366

ISBN 0-19-281584-9

*Printed in Great Britain by
Hazell Watson & Viney Limited
Aylesbury, Bucks*

INTRODUCTION

THIS selection from Tolstoy's short stories falls into two well-defined parts, one belonging to the 1850s and the other to the 1880s and 1890s. The explanation of this, from one point of view, is the quite simple one that during the period of the great novels *War and Peace* (written 1863-9) and *Anna Karenina* (written 1873-7) Tolstoy largely stopped writing short stories. This indeed was natural, since his early stories were closely akin to his novels and could be thought of in a sense as a preparation for them. Take, for instance, *The Raid* (1852), in the present selection. It is perfectly easy to imagine it, with a few changes in externals, as a chapter in *War and Peace*; and this says much both about it and about *War and Peace*. For the Tolstoy of this period is determined, for profound reasons, to do without 'plot'. *The Raid* has shape, through and through, just as *War and Peace* has, but in both there is a refusal of contrivance. Nothing is 'planted' for later use; there is no suspense; the reader is stationed squarely in a moment, or a succession of moments, with no more power to see round and beyond it than the characters. And it is for these very reasons that events in Tolstoy's stories can have such a shattering effect. For the reader is unprepared; he or she can make no calculation, based on past experience of plot devices, as to what kind of thing lies ahead. Most nineteenth-century novels – shall we say, for instance, *Mansfield Park* or *Wuthering Heights* or *The Idiot* – are guessing-games, in which at least we know where the enigma lies. It is 'What are the Crawfords really like?' or 'What lies hidden in Heathcliff's heart?'. There are no such games played in Tolstoy.

On the other hand, this does not (as you might for a moment be tempted to think) make him a twentieth-century novelist before his time. For, though resolutely psychological in his method, he is not what used to be called (in a now rather *démodé* phrase) a 'psychological novelist'. For the assumption of the 'psychological novel' (in the hands of Woolf or Lawrence) is that only psychological events count. No such assumption was made by Tolstoy. He aspired to be an epic novelist, and this meant opening his mind impartially to events of every kind. (It so happened that, despite efforts by certain poets in the eighteenth century, Russia did not possess a classical epic, and it

was left to Tolstoy to produce one, in the age of the railways and newspapers.)

That gap or pause between our two groups of stories is, however, from another point of view intensely significant. For during that pause Tolstoy went through a devastating middle-life crisis, far-reaching in its consequences. The story, as related in his *Confession* of 1879-82, is well known: how, during the time that he was writing *Anna Karenina* he began to experience strange moments of 'perplexity and arrest of life', when he asked himself what his existence was for, what sense it could possibly have - seeing that, whatever he did, it would end equally in death; and how the moments came more and more often, until his life came to a standstill, and the thought that death made life pointless made him want to end his life here and now.

It had come to this, that I, a healthy, fortunate man, felt I could no longer live: some irresistible power impelled me to rid myself one way or another of life . . . The power which drew me away from life was stronger, fuller and more widespread than any mere wish. It was a force similar to the force striving to live, only in a contrary direction.

(*A Confession*, trans. A. Maude, section IV)

The Tolstoy who emerged from this crisis was, superficially at least, a totally altered man - a rigid moralist who held that ethics were, not merely the most important thing in life, but the *only* important one. He was the prophetic Tolstoy who dressed in peasant blouse and made his own shoes, the man who inspired innumerable disciples, among them Gandhi and Wittgenstein, but also the one towards whom we occasionally feel as did G. K. Chesterton:

When we put beside [Tolstoy's fables] the trumpeting and tearing nonsense of the didactic Tolstoy, screaming for an inhuman peace, hacking up human life into small sins with a chopper, sneering at men, women and children out of respect to humanity, combining in one chaos of contradictions an unmanly Puritan and uncivilised prig, then, indeed, we scarcely know whither Tolstoy has vanished. We know not what to do with this small and noisy moralist who is inhabiting one corner of a great and good man.

(G. K. Chesterton, *Twelve Types* (1902), p. 149)

The new Tolstoy condemned his *War and Peace* and *Anna Karenina* as frivolous and worthless. 'What difficulty is there in writing about how an officer fell in love with a married woman?' he would grumble. 'There is no difficulty in it, and, above all, no good in it.' Literature, to be of any profit, he now held, must have an absolutely clear moral

purpose, and moreover should be simple and direct and understandable by anyone able to read. The greatness of Tolstoy as a man, you might say, was that, for him, the only point of forming an opinion was that you should act on it. Thus he set to and wrote a number of tales according to his new prescription – of which *What Men Live By*, first published in a children's magazine in 1881, was the precursor (becoming perhaps the most famous of them all), and of which *The Three Hermits* and *How Much Land Does a Man Need?* (both 1886) are also examples. (He got the basic idea for several of them, including *What Men Live By* and *The Three Hermits*, from an itinerant story-teller.) And if we doubted whether his new-found convictions were genuine, no better proof of their genuineness need be looked for than these tales; for they are fairly plainly works of genius, and such works cannot be produced dishonestly. (For me, just at moments, *What Men Live By* dips into cloying religiosity; but only at moments, and that first smile of the angel has always haunted me.) No question, then, of Tolstoy's being a hypocrite. His weakness lay elsewhere, in the region of wilfulness. This vehement philosophical opponent of the Will and the Napoleonic will-to-power was himself an excessively wilful man, capable of wilfully deceiving himself on a vast scale – for a time at least, for there was another underlying Tolstoy which did not bother with consistency and which reaffirmed opposite and balancing truths.

No serious crisis, whether spiritual or psychological, arrives out of the blue; the materials for it will have been there, in the victim's life, and this is markedly so in the case of Tolstoy. Already in 1869, several years before his crisis, he had passed a terrifying night at an inn at Arzamas during which, so it seemed to him, the mind's normal censorship of the thought of death had relaxed and he had looked at death face to face. But indeed we need only consider that early story *The Raid* (based on his own experience as an artillery cadet in the Caucasus) to observe a perennial pattern in his thought. We could express it thus: he equated life with unconsciousness and carefree ignorance, and death with knowledge. The look of 'astonishment and reproof' that the dying young ensign Alanin gives to the army doctor attending him is, as we sense, not just directed at the doctor's drunken clumsiness but at life itself, the truth about which he is only just grasping. Hitherto he has existed (and this is his charm) in almost complete unconsciousness, or in naïve self-consciousness and self-admiration which are the same thing.

He smiled in passing, nodded to the captain, and flourished his whip. I only had time to notice that he sat his horse and held his reins with peculiar grace, that he had beautiful black eyes, a fine nose, and only the first indications of a moustache. What specially pleased me about him was that he could not repress a smile when he noticed our admiration. This smile alone showed him to be very young.

This was an essential insight of Tolstoy's, from his earliest writings, the insubstantialness and volatility of young men's characters – no more than a few quickly acquired notions and conventions, stretched over an abyss of unknowingness and unconsciousness. In the fragment *The Cossacks* (the greatest of his fictions before *War and Peace*, though too long to include here) the hero Olenin, a young cadet – sanguine, commonplace and full of young-mannish *savoir-faire* – sets out from Moscow to take up duty in a Cossack village, and already by the end of his journey, by dint of continuous daydreaming, his fluid personality has been altered. And when, many months later, after adventures outward and inward of every kind, he leaves his village, we see that his vaunted 'experience' and 'development' have amounted to nothing at all. Whatever really happened is something quite different, and something he will never understand. As he leaves, he turns round to look at his two old village acquaintances, and neither is looking his way; they have already forgotten him.

Tolstoy had much tenderness for this, and other, kinds of unconsciousness. His friend and biographer Aylmer Maude recorded of him that he could never bring himself to wake a sleeping person. And, by contrast, if he thought of death as knowledge, it was as the most dangerous of knowledges. *A Confession* shows him trying to come to terms with this knowledge and to turn it to profit. And it is curious to notice how what is said about mortal illness, for the purposes of simile, in *A Confession* is a few years later translated into literal terms in the harrowing story *The Death of Ivan Ilych* (1886). 'Then occurred what happens to everyone sickening with a mortal internal disease,' he writes in *A Confession*.

At first trivial signs of indisposition appear to which the sick man pays no attention; then these signs reappear more and more often and merge into one uninterrupted period of suffering. The suffering increases and, before the sick man can look round, what he took for a mere indisposition has already become more important to him than anything else in the world – it is death!

This illustrates the strength of Tolstoy's 'Realist' fictional principles. It is a realism which achieves all the benefits of allegory without the need to adopt the allegorical mode. The snow-storm in *Master and Man* (1895) is a similar case. We instinctively read into it an allegorical reference to the mental storm and bewilderment of his crisis years, without any need to think of this aspect of the story as more 'profound' than the literal one.

The wish to turn the 'knowledge' of death to profit very plainly underlies many of his later tales – for instance *The Death of Ivan Ilych* and *Master and Man*, both of them tales of death-bed redemption. And we should notice that, in both tales, this redemption, only to be achieved through dying, serves also as a solution of the social problem, the question of master and worker. This is the central point of *Master and Man*, and indirectly suggested too in the dying Ivan Ilych's new-found friendship with his servant Gerasim.

Many of the later Tolstoy's attitudes, indeed, relate to a determination to put the 'knowledge' of death to profit. It was this, for instance, that underlay his pacifism. In a sense Tolstoy was a pacifist most of his life, but in another sense it is just here that the later Tolstoy differs from the earlier. At the time of the Crimean war, having been serving with the Army of the Danube, Tolstoy (as he wrote to his brother at the time) suffered a 'bad attack' of patriotism and volunteered for transfer to Sevastopol, then under fierce siege from the Allies. His motive was also partly curiosity, and he went about note-taking in Sevastopol with great recklessness and fearlessness and not much respect for authority, altogether rather puzzling his fellow-officers. His first sketch, written at the time, was read and admired by the new emperor Alexander II, who sent instructions to 'take care of the life of that young man'. However, by the time of his second sketch (the one printed in this selection) his patriotism had been much quenched; and this impartial account of the horrors, inefficiencies and casual human vanities of war so shocked the censors that they not only mangled it (as they had done previously with *The Raid*) but practically rewrote it for him. It also effectively wrecked his army career. His theme was by now Truth, truth at all costs; and we need to ask what he meant by this. It is helpful to compare a comment he made in 1908, in a Preface to another writer's *Recollections of Sevastopol*:

Here are all the horrors of war – they are in this lad with his fresh face, his little shoulder-straps (under which the ends of his hood are so

neatly tucked), his well-cleaned boots, his naïve eyes, and with so perverted a conception of life.

This is the real horror of war!

This reminds us of *The Raid*, and again of parts of *Sevastopol in May 1855* (1855), and yet it is not after all the same thought, but the thought of the later Tolstoy. In *Sevastopol in May 1855* only a child picking flowers suddenly appreciates the full horrors of war – he and the *writer*, who makes them the basis of his credo as a novelist:

There, I have said what I wished to say this time. But I am seized by an oppressive doubt. Perhaps I ought to have left it unsaid. What I have said perhaps belongs to that class of evil truths that lie unconsciously hidden in the soul of each man and should not be uttered lest they become harmful, as the dregs in a bottle must not be disturbed for fear of spoiling the wine. . . .

Where in this tale is the evil that should be avoided, and where is the good that should be imitated? Who is the villain and who the hero of the story? All are good and all are bad.

Not Kalugin, with his brilliant courage – *bravoure de gentilhomme* – and the vanity that influences all his actions, not Praskukhin, the empty harmless fellow (though he fell in battle for faith, throne, and fatherland), not Mikhaylov with his shyness, nor Pesth, a child without firm principles or convictions, can be either the villain or the hero of the tale.

The hero of my tale – whom I love with all the power of my soul, whom I have tried to portray in all his beauty, who has been, is, and will be beautiful – is Truth.

And in this (the point is) the ‘oppressive doubt’ he speaks of is meant to have some force. He is clear that the *writer* must dwell on evil truths as much as any other truths. But it is not clear that it is the duty of the acting and suffering man. There is a most expressive touch or device in *Sevastopol in May 1855*. We read how Prince Galtsin, though not at all a coward, halts in the first room of the field hospital at the sight of the wounded and dead and ‘involuntarily turned back and ran out into the street: it was too terrible’; and then the next words (after a paragraph sign) imperturbably proceed to delineate the appalling scene. Thus, the soldier flees, and the reader is compelled to stay; it is his plain duty – and an easy enough one, after all, for a mere *novel-reader*. Any wish to have rubbed Prince Galtsin’s nose into that hospital’s horrors would have been quite alien to the Tolstoy of 1855. Nor is Tolstoy intending, in *The Raid*,

to expose ensign Alanin's 'perverted conception of life'. Such thoughts belong to the later and didactic Tolstoy.

Yet there is a fact which reassures us that the later Tolstoy was still essentially the same man, and still ready to admit the claims of unconsciousness as well as of consciousness and knowledge. In his very last years he wrote (though significantly he did not publish) the great short novel *Hadji Murad*, which is in a sense a direct counterblast or complement to *Master and Man* and *The Death of Ivan Ilych*. For this story of the Chechen leader who surrendered to the Russians (for devious motives) and later died a violent death at their hands, is a tribute to joyous and savage energies, glorious exactly in proportion to the hero's utter indifference to the idea of death.

Tolstoy, for all his grumbles at high art and vilification of Shakespeare and Beethoven, never abandoned high art himself. And one reason why I have included the story *Albert* (1858) is because it epitomizes his notion of art and its value. The point is put explicitly in a story closely akin to *Albert, Lucerne*. In this, the well-fed occupants of a Swiss hotel, having listened entranced to an itinerant Tyrolean street-singer, meanly pay him not a penny. The narrator is enraged, rushes out and hauls the singer back into the hotel, fills him with champagne, and picks a violent quarrel with the waiters, who look down on this shabby intruder – and all with no result save dreadfully to embarrass the hapless singer, who has borne the hotel-guests no malice and whose one idea is to escape as fast as he decently can. The narrator soon realizes he has made a fool of himself. Nevertheless, as he reflects, the truth remains:

This is the strange fate of Art! All seek it and love it – it is the one thing everybody wants and tries to find in life, yet nobody acknowledges its power, nobody values this greatest blessing in the world, nor esteems or is grateful to those who give it to mankind.

In *Albert* Tolstoy imagines the alternative outcome. Say that, unlike the mean-minded Lucerne tourists, you feel a proper gratitude for art – as Delesov does, when Albert's playing has reduced him to tears. What then? What do you do about it? All Delesov can think of is to take Albert over, to clean him up and settle him down and 'in general rescue him from his sordid condition'. It is one of those passing impulses for good, which, so commonly in Tolstoy, are shown to bear no fruit, because they do not fit the facts of existence. (We remember Karenin's abortive 'redemption' and forgiveness of his enemies in *Anna Karenina*.) Delesov's feeling, genuine in itself, quickly

turns into self-satisfaction ('Really I'm not altogether a bad fellow'), then into irritation, and by the third day it has almost got forgotten, in the press of other ordinary concerns. And anyway it was all absurd, and his gratitude was useless to Albert. Important as art is, there is nothing you can, or need, 'do' about it; it does not belong in the sphere of obligation and exchange and is its own reward, as virtue is supposed to be. Indeed as soon as we enter Albert's rapturous and drunken daydream we get a sense of the nature of this reward.

If, as *Albert* implies, it is impossible and wrong to dream of possessing or annexing others, it is perhaps on some similar principle (of non-possessiveness and non-interference) that Tolstoy never writes in a comic mode, a mode *asking* you to laugh (like, say, Dickens) – indeed never writes in any mode save that of impartial realism. For it is a cardinal principle with him to allow his characters full rights and full freedom – so that if they condemn themselves, it must be out of their own mouths. But this should not blind us to the fact that Tolstoy has an admirable comic vein. Typically, even in that anguished and heartfelt socio-political tract *What Then Must We Do?* there is one splendidly funny touch. Tolstoy is describing how he recruited aristocratic acquaintances for a hare-brained scheme of his, according to which, while acting as census-takers, they should solve the problem of urban poverty in Moscow by each adopting so many of the poor. His recruits, in their hearts, don't believe a word of it, but they are ashamed not to show enthusiasm, and for their visit to night-lodging-houses they dress themselves in 'shooting jackets and high travelling boots' (which they somehow feel appropriate) and equip themselves with 'peculiar notebooks and extraordinary pencils'.

I need hardly dwell on the fine sardonic humour of *How Much Land Does a Man Need?*, of which James Joyce once wrote to his daughter that it was 'the greatest story that the literature of the world knows'. The effect, of course, depends on Tolstoy's imperturbable neutrality of tone, sustained even to those implacable final sentences: 'His servant picked up the spade and dug a grave long enough for Pakhom to lie in, and buried him in it. Six feet from his head to his heels was all he needed.' As for *The Three Hermits*, it so happens I had never read it till I was making this selection, and it charmed me greatly. It strikes me as a wonderful and profound little joke; and in the unforced way it unfolds it seems a perfect specimen of Tolstoy's very personal, wholly uncoercive, style of humour.

P. N. FURBANK

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THE RAID

A VOLUNTEER'S STORY

Haßer

I

[WAR always interested me: not war in the sense of manœuvres devised by great generals – my imagination refused to follow such immense movements, I did not understand them – but the reality of war, the actual killing. I was more interested to know in what way and under the influence of what feeling one soldier kills another than to know how the armies were arranged at Austerlitz and Borodino.

I had long passed the time when, pacing the room alone and waving my arms, I imagined myself a hero instantaneously slaughtering an immense number of men and receiving a generalship as well as imperishable glory for so doing. The question now occupying me was different: under the influence of what feeling does a man, with no apparent advantage to himself, decide to subject himself to danger and, what is more surprising still, to kill his fellow men? I always wished to think that this is done under the influence of anger, but we cannot suppose that all those who fight are angry all the time, and I had to postulate feelings of self-preservation and duty.

What is courage – that quality respected in all ages and among all nations? Why is this good quality – contrary to all others – sometimes met with in vicious men? Can it be that to endure danger calmly is merely a physical capacity and that people respect it in the same way that they do a man's tall stature or robust frame? Can a horse be called brave, which fearing the whip throws itself down a steep place where it will be smashed to pieces; or a child who fearing to be punished runs into a forest where it will lose itself; or a woman who for fear of shame kills her baby and has to endure penal prosecution; or a man who from vanity resolves to kill a fellow creature and exposes himself to the danger of being killed?

In every danger there is a choice. Does it not depend on whether

the choice is prompted by a noble feeling or a base one whether it should be called courage or cowardice? These were the questions and the doubts that occupied my mind and to decide which I intended to avail myself of the first opportunity to go into action.

In the summer of 184— I was living in the Caucasus at the small fortified post of N——.]¹

On the twelfth of July Captain Khlopov entered the low door of my earth-hut. He was wearing epaulettes and carrying a sword, which I had never before seen him do since I had reached the Caucasus.

'I come straight from the colonel's,' he said in answer to my questioning look. 'Tomorrow our battalion is to march.'

'Where to?' I asked.

'To M. The forces are to assemble there.'

'And from there I suppose they will go into action?'

'I expect so.'

'In what direction? What do you think?'

'What is there to think about? I am telling you what I know. A Tartar galloped here last night and brought orders from the general for the battalion to march with two days' rations of rusks. But where to, why, and for how long, we do not ask, my friend. We are told to go — and that's enough.'

'But if you are to take only two days' rations of rusks it proves that the troops won't be out longer than that.'

'It proves nothing at all!'

'How is that?' I asked with surprise.

'Because it is so. We went to Dargo and took one week's rations of rusks, but we stayed there nearly a month.'

'Can I go with you?' I asked after a pause.

'You could, no doubt, but my advice is, don't. Why run risks?'

'Oh, but you must allow me not to take your advice. I have been here a whole month solely on the chance of seeing an action, and you wish me to miss it!'

'Well, you must please yourself. But really you had better stay behind. You could wait for us here and might go hunting — and we would go our way, and it would be splendid,' he said with such con-

¹ The parts of this story enclosed in square brackets are those originally suppressed by the censor.

viction that for a moment it really seemed to me too that it would be 'splendid'. However, I told him decidedly that nothing would induce me to stay behind.

'But what is there for you to see?' the captain went on, still trying to dissuade me. 'Do you want to know what battles are like? Read Mikhaylovski Danilevski's *Description of War*. It's a fine book, it gives a detailed account of everything. It gives the position of every corps and describes how battles are fought.'

'All that does not interest me,' I replied.

'What is it then? Do you simply wish to see how people are killed? - In 1832 we had a fellow here, also a civilian, a Spaniard I think he was. He took part with us in two campaigns, wearing some kind of blue mantle. Well, they did for the fine fellow. You won't astonish anyone here, friend!'

Humiliating though it was that the captain so misjudged my motives, I did not try to disabuse him.

'Was he brave?' I asked.

'Heaven only knows: he always used to ride in front, and where there was firing there he always was.'

'Then he must have been brave,' said I.

'No. Pushing oneself in where one is not needed does not prove one to be brave.'

'Then what do you call brave?'

'Brave? . . . Brave?' repeated the captain with the air of one to whom such a question presents itself for the first time. 'He who does what he ought to do is brave,' he said after thinking awhile.

I remembered that Plato defines courage as 'The knowledge of what should and what should not be feared', and despite the looseness and vagueness of the captain's definition I thought that the fundamental ideas of the two were not so different as they might appear, and that the captain's definition was even more correct than that of the Greek philosopher. For if the captain had been able to express himself like Plato he would no doubt have said that, 'He is brave who fears only what should be feared and not what should not be feared'.

I wished to explain my idea to the captain.

'Yes,' said I, 'it seems to me that in every danger there is a choice, and a choice made under the influence of a sense of duty is courage, but a choice made under the influence of a base motive is cowardice. Therefore a man who risks his life from vanity, curiosity, or greed, cannot be called brave; while on the other hand he who avoids a

danger from honest consideration for his family, or simply from conviction, cannot be called a coward.'

The captain looked at me with a curious expression while I was speaking.

'Well, that I cannot prove to you,' he said, filling his pipe, 'but we have a cadet here who is fond of philosophizing. You should have a talk with him. He also writes verses.'

I had known of the captain before I left Russia, but I had only made his acquaintance in the Caucasus. His mother, Mary Ivanovna Khlopova, a small and poor landowner, lives within two miles of my estate. Before I left for the Caucasus I had called on her. The old lady was very glad to hear that I should see her 'Pashenka', by which pet name she called the grey-haired elderly captain, and that I, 'a living letter', could tell him all about her and take him a small parcel from her. Having treated me to excellent pie and smoked goose, Mary Ivanovna went into her bedroom and returned with a black bag to which a black silk ribbon was attached.

'Here, this is the icon of our Mother Mediatress of the Burning Bush,' said she, crossing herself and kissing the icon of the Virgin and placing it in my hands. 'Please let him have it. You see, when he went to the Caucasus I had a Mass said for him and promised, if he remained alive and safe, to order this icon of the Mother of God for him. And now for eighteen years the Mediatress and the Holy Saints have had mercy on him, he has not been wounded once, and yet in what battles has he not taken part? . . . What Michael who went with him told me was enough, believe me, to make one's hair stand on end. You see, what I know about him is only from others. He, my pet, never writes me about his campaigns for fear of frightening me.'

(After I reached the Caucasus I learnt, and then not from the captain himself, that he had been severely wounded four times and of course never wrote to his mother either about his wounds or his campaigns.)

'So let him now wear this holy image,' she continued. 'I give it him with my blessing. May the Most Holy Mediatress guard him. Especially when going into battle let him wear it. Tell him so, dear friend. Say "Your mother wishes it."'

I promised to carry out her instructions carefully.

'I know you will grow fond of my Pashenka,' continued the old lady. 'He is such a splendid fellow. Will you believe it, he never lets a year pass without sending me some money, and he also helps my

daughter Annushka a good deal, and all out of his pay! I thank God for having given me such a child,' she continued with tears in her eyes.

'Does he often write to you?' I asked.

'Seldom, my dear: perhaps once a year. Only when he sends the money, not otherwise. He says, "If I don't write to you, mother, that means I am alive and well. Should anything befall me, which God forbid, they'll tell you without me."'

When I handed his mother's present to the captain (it was in my own quarters) he asked for a bit of paper, carefully wrapped it up, and then put it away. I told him many things about his mother's life. He remained silent, and when I had finished speaking he went to a corner of the room and busied himself for what seemed a long time, filling his pipe.

'Yes, she's a splendid old woman!' he said from there in a rather muffled voice. 'Will God ever let me see her again?'

These simple words expressed much love and sadness.

'Why do you serve here?' I asked.

'One has to serve,' he answered with conviction.

['You should transfer to Russia. You would then be nearer to her.'

'To Russia? To Russia?' repeated the captain, dubiously swaying his head and smiling mournfully. 'Here I am still of some use, but there I should be the least of the officers. And besides, the double pay we get here also means something to a poor man.'

'Can it be, Pavel Ivanovich, that living as you do the ordinary pay would not suffice?'

'And does the double pay suffice?' interjected the captain. 'Look at our officers! Have any of them a brass farthing? They all go on tick at the sutler's, and are all up to their ears in debt. You say "living as I do". . . . Do you really think that living as I do I have anything over out of my salary? Not a farthing! You don't yet know what prices are like here; everything is three times dearer. . . .']

The captain lived economically, did not play cards, rarely went carousing, and smoked the cheapest tobacco (which for some reason he called home-grown tobacco). I had liked him before - he had one of those simple, calm, Russian faces which are easy and pleasant to look straight in the eyes - and after this talk I felt a sincere regard for him.