

## **Sin And Sorrow Are Common To All**

BY ALEXANDER OSTROVSKY  
A DRAMA IN FOUR ACTS

### CHARACTERS

VALENTÍN PÁVLYCH BABÁYEV, *a young landowner; womanish*

LEV RODIÓNYCH KRASNÓV, *a shopkeeper, about thirty years of age*

TATYÁNA DANÍLOVNA (*called TÁNYA*), *his wife*

LUKÉRYA DANÍLOVNA ZHMIGÚLIN (*called, LÚSHA*), *her sister, an old maid and daughter of a government clerk now dead.*

ARKHÍP, *blind old man, grandfather of KRASNÓV*

AFÓNYA (AFANÁSY), *invalid boy about eighteen years of age, brother of KRASNÓV*

MANÚYLO KALÍNYCH KÚRITSYN, *flour dealer about forty-five years of age*

ULYÁNA RODIÓNOVNA KÚRITSYNA, *his wife, sister of KRASNÓV*

SHISHGÁLEV, *government clerk*

ZÁYCHIKHA (*called PROKÓFYEVNA*), *landlady of the lodgings taken by BABÁYEV*

KARP, *BABÁYEV's attendant*

*The action takes place in a district town.*

SIN AND SORROW ARE COMMON TO ALL

ACT I

TABLEAU I

*A room, cheaply papered, shabbily furnished; in the rear two doors, one opening on the street, the other leading into an adjoining room; the windows are hung with chintz curtains.*

SCENE I

*KARP is unfastening a valise, and ZÁYCHIKHA (PROKÓFYEVNA) is looking out of the window.*

PROKÓFYEVNA. Just look, dear sir, how many people have gathered.

KARP. What do they want? Why are they curious?

PROKÓFYEVNA. Every one, dear sir, wishes to know who it is that has arrived.

KARP. They say you're provincials, and you certainly are provincials. Well, tell them that it's Babáyev, Valentin Pávlich, a landowner.

PROKÓFYEVNA. [*Speaking through the window*] Babáyev, a landowner. [*To KARP*] They're asking why you came.

KARP. On business, of course. Did you think we came here for sport? Much chance there would be for that here.

PROKÓFYEVNA. [*Through the window*] For business. [*To KARP*] Will you remain long?

KARP. We certainly haven't come to settle here. We may stay two days; not longer, you may be sure.

PROKÓFYEVNA. [*Through the window*] For two days. [*Withdraws from the window*] Now I've satisfied them. In five minutes the entire city will know.

KARP. Your lodging is all right; it's clean.

PROKÓFYEVNA. Certainly it's clean, sir. No great frills, but it's clean. Of course there's no great travelling to our town.

KARP. It isn't on the highway.

PROKÓFYEVNA. Highway, not much! Yet the best people that do come here, lodge with me. I know a lot of the landowners who come here. They are used to me; very few of them ever go to the hotel.

KARP. Because it's so noisy.

PROKÓFYEVNA. Yes, I should say so! Down-stairs is a bar-room; and on market days the noise is dreadful. Please tell me, wasn't your master's mother Sofya Pavlovna, the wife of General Babáyev?

KARP. Exactly so.

PROKÓFYEVNA. Is their estate called Zavetnoye?

KARP. Yes.

PROKÓFYEVNA. So, so. I recognized him just now. I used to see him as a youngster. He often rode to town with his mother, and they would call on me. Does he live in the country?

KARP. No, we are most of the time in St. Petersburg; but now we have come to the country to arrange business matters.

PROKÓFYEVNA. So, so. But is he a good man to deal with?

KARP. Pretty good.

PROKÓFYEVNA. Well, thank the Lord! May He reward him! What business brought you to our town?

KARP. Oh, those endless legal matters. Petty business, something to bear witness to; but I suppose he'll waste five days over it.

PROKÓFYEVNA. It wouldn't be surprising. Have you called on the judges?

KARP. Yes, we called on them all. Just now they sent us a clerk from court.

PROKÓFYEVNA. They'll probably do it quicker for you than for us. If you need anything, knock on the wall, and I'll come. [*Goes out.*]

BABÁYEV *and* SHISHGÁLEV *enter at the side door.*

## SCENE II

BABÁYEV, SHISHGÁLEV, *and* KARP

BABÁYEV. So you say, my dear sir, that it is absolutely impossible?

SHISHGÁLEV. [*Bowing and continually blowing his nose and covering his mouth with his hand*] But, believe me, sir, if it were at all possible we should have----

BABÁYEV. Maybe it is possible?

SHISHGÁLEV. Judge for yourself, sir. Now the court session has ended, it is quite impossible to assemble the members; to-morrow is a holiday--then comes Saturday and then Sunday.

BABÁYEV. Just think, my dear sir, how you are treating me!

SHISHGÁLEV. How am I to blame? I'm the humblest sort of man.

BABÁYEV. But, my dear sir, what shall I do here for the next four days? It is dreadful!

SHISHGÁLEV. You can look around, sir, and take a glance at our city.

KARP. What's the use of looking at it? What is there to see here? I suppose you'll say that St. Petersburg is not as fine a city as yours.

BABÁYEV. Have you any kind of social life?

SHISHGÁLEV. I beg pardon, sir?

BABÁYEV. I said, have you any social life, any sort of club, entertainment with music, or parties?

SHISHGÁLEV. No, we haven't.

BABÁYEV. But where do the members of the court and the rest of them spend their time?

SHISHGÁLEV. They usually spend it together.

BABÁYEV. How together?

SHISHGÁLEV. Every day is assigned. For instance, to-day they are with the prefect, to-morrow with the judge, day after to-morrow with the attorney; then with the farmer of the spirit tax, and next with the retired police captain--and so all the week goes by.

BABÁYEV. At what time do they meet?

SHISHGÁLEV. About six o'clock.

BABÁYEV. What do they do then?

SHISHGÁLEV. They play preference.

BABÁYEV. And what else, certainly not only preference?

SHISHGÁLEV. That's the truth, just preference. But usually they have tables with drinks and refreshments--just as it should be. They play, and then they take a bite, and so they pass the time.

BABÁYEV. And do they all drink, from six o'clock on?

SHISHGÁLEV. Oh, no, by no means! Only the dealer, or some one who has to pay a fine.

BABÁYEV. Then, my dear sir, I can't help it. I've got to wait.

SHISHGÁLEV. Just wait awhile, sir. On Monday you will please appear in court, and we'll arrange the matter without delay.

BABÁYEV. Very well, I will be in court on Monday. But you'll have some writing to do for me. Then I'll give you--as is proper--I don't like any one to labor for me for nothing.

SHISHGÁLEV. My family is large, Your Honor----

BABÁYEV. What's that?

SHISHGÁLEV. Do have the kindness to bestow a little something----

BABÁYEV. Really, I don't know; how's that? How much do you want?

KARP. Give him one ruble, sir; that'll be enough for him.

BABÁYEV. [*Giving the money*] Here you are--I'm really ashamed.

SHISHGÁLEV. [*Depositing the coin in his pocket*] Not at all. I thank you heartily; I wish you all good fortune. [*Goes out.*]

### SCENE III

BABÁYEV *and* KARP

BABÁYEV. How rude you are, Karp.

KARP. If you begin to be sentimental with 'em, sir, they'll get the habit of calling around here and bewailing their fate. No amount of money will suffice 'em. They're a godless crowd.

BABÁYEV. Well, what'll I do? I'd like to go for a walk, but it's still hot. Karp, what shall I do?

KARP. I'll tell you what, go to sleep; after travelling it's a good thing.

BABÁYEV. But what shall I do at night?

KARP. At night just the same. They say people sleep when they're bored.

BABÁYEV. How stupid I was not to bring any books. If I only had some frivolous intrigue to amuse myself with for four days. [*Goes out through the side door.*]

KARP. So that's what you wish! An intrigue! That's his style! He was his mother's spoiled darling and he was raised with young ladies and in the housemaids' room, and he has a hankering for that kind of thing now. Since I've lived in St. Petersburg with him, what things I have seen; it was shameful! I wonder if he's asleep? I'd like to have a nap. [*He's about to lie down when the door opens*] Who's that?

LUKÉRYA *comes in.*

#### SCENE IV

KARP and LUKÉRYA

KARP. What do you want?

LUKÉRYA. Valentin Pávlich.

KARP. What do you want of him?

LUKÉRYA. If I want to see him, of course it must be necessary.

KARP. Do you want help of some sort?

LUKÉRYA. How rude! Aren't you aware that the Zhmigulin ladies were always welcome at the home of your master's mother? I am also very intimately acquainted with Valentin Pávlich.

KARP. You are? I doubt it.

LUKÉRYA. Maybe you stupidly misunderstand my words in some way that's beyond me. [*Sits down*] Your business is to go right off and announce me.

KARP. I tell you he's asleep now.

LUKÉRYA. That can't be, because I've just seen him through the window.

KARP. Well, I see I can't do anything with you; I'll have to announce you. [*Goes out.*]

LUKÉRYA. In these modern times, these new changes have done a lot to spoil people. He ought to have found out first what my rank was, and then treated me accordingly. And it's not his business whether I came to ask for aid or not. To be sure, people of our station are often engaged in that, but not all. Maybe Valentin Pávlich has become so proud since he has lived in St. Petersburg that he will not wish to see me. But I'm so anxious to show every one here what acquaintances we have. I think he didn't disdain us formerly, especially sister Tánya.

*BABÁYEV comes in.*

SCENE V

BABÁYEV and LUKÉRYA



BABÁYEV. Whom have I the honor of addressing?

LUKÉRYA. I hardly expected, Valentin Pávlich, that you would so soon forget old acquaintances.

BABÁYEV. Be seated, please. [*Both sit down*] I somehow do not recall.

LUKÉRYA. Of course, nowadays feelings are not in vogue; now it's all a matter of calculation; but we provincials aren't like you in St. Petersburg; we remember our former acquaintances, and especially our benefactors.

BABÁYEV. I agree with you--benefactors should always be remembered.

LUKÉRYA. We are so indebted to your mother that words fail me to express it. She did so much for the Zhmigulin family.

BABÁYEV. The Zhmigulins?

LUKÉRYA. Especially for sister Tánya and me.

BABÁYEV. [*Rising*] Tánya--Tatyána Danílovna?

LUKÉRYA. Do you remember, now?

BABÁYEV. So you are her sister?

LUKÉRYA. Lukérya Danílovna Zhmigulin.

BABÁYEV. Pardon me, I beg of you.

LUKÉRYA. I'm not in the least offended because you remember my sister more readily than you do me. She's so beautiful that it's impossible to forget her.

BABÁYEV. Yes, yes, she was an exceedingly beautiful girl; we were great friends.

LUKÉRYA. I'm aware of that. Who should know it if not I? Being the elder sister I had to care for the younger.

BABÁYEV. Yes, yes, to be sure. Tell me, if you please, where is she now? What is she doing?

LUKÉRYA. She's here in the city, married.

BABÁYEV. Married? Does she live happily?

LUKÉRYA. Judge for yourself. She lives in poverty among stupid, ignorant people. It isn't as it was in your mother's house at Zavetnoye. That was an earthly paradise! Your mother was the kindest of ladies, and liked to have everybody happy at her house. There were always lots of young ladies in her house, and likewise young gentlemen, and they played games from morning till night. She made even the chambermaids play tag with us and other games, and she looked on and enjoyed it.

BABÁYEV. Yes, yes, it was but a short time ago. It's no more than three years since I left for St. Petersburg.

LUKÉRYA. I remember it very well. You left three years ago last carnival time. Your mother didn't like any of her guests to be moody or to read books. She would say: "Why, you're spoiling everybody's spirits." Every one was madly gay for her sake, but in the midst of all that gayety anybody who had a keen eye could see quite a little.

BABÁYEV. Nothing more natural! Men, girls, and young ladies continually together--of course they couldn't help falling in love.

LUKÉRYA. You were especially strong in that line. You were continually with Tánya, and you never left her, so they called you the "doves."

BABÁYEV. One's heart's not a stone, Lukérya Danílovna. Even you yourself--do you remember the surveyor?

LUKÉRYA. He isn't worth remembering. Later on he behaved in a very ungentlemanly way to me. But fate has punished him for his lack of courtesy towards a girl of noble birth. He's now in jail for being drunk and disorderly.

BABÁYEV. Kindly tell me how it happened that your sister married?

LUKÉRYA. When your mamma died last summer we had absolutely no one left to help us. Our papa in his old age was of no account in the city. He was a timid man, and so he didn't get on well. Our father was a clerk in the Chancery Office, and he received a salary of thirty rubles a year. How could we live on such a sum? And yet we saw something of society. At first we were hardly ever at home, and your mamma aided us in many ways. Suddenly all that stopped, and soon our father died. At that time Tánya received an offer from--I'm almost ashamed to tell you.

BABÁYEV. Why, what are you ashamed of?

LUKÉRYA. You are receiving me so graciously, and your interest in my sister makes me feel that our actions have been very uncivil.

BABÁYEV. That can't be helped. Probably it was all due to circumstances. What are you to blame for?

LUKÉRYA. You can hardly imagine the degree of embarrassment this relationship causes me. In a word, our circumstances were such that she was forced to marry a petty shopkeeper.

BABÁYEV. A petty shopkeeper? What kind of shop has he?

LUKÉRYA. A vegetable shop. You can see it from here, the sign reads, "Lev Krasnóv."

BABÁYEV. Yes, I noticed it. Is he a good man?

LUKÉRYA. Considering the type, he's a very nice man, and he loves sister very dearly. Yet there is something so inherently bad about his calling that, judge as you will, he's still not very far removed from a peasant. That trait of character, if you boil a man for seven years in a

kettle, you cannot boil out. Yet I must give him credit for taking good care of his house. He doesn't give himself any rest day or night; he toils hard all the time. As for my sister, he's willing to give her whatever her heart desires, even his last kopek, just to please her, so that she does absolutely nothing, and lives like a lady. But his manners are boorish, and his conversation embarrasses us very much. Altogether this is not the kind of happiness I wished for Tányá. Judging by her beauty and the standing of her former admirers, she should now be riding in a carriage. As it is, necessity has forced her to marry a peasant, almost for a crust of bread, and to blush for him whenever she sees anybody.

BABÁYEV. So Tatyána Danílovna has married--I'm sorry.

LUKÉRYA. You needn't feel sorry. She's no match for you.

BABÁYEV. Of course.--Here I am in this city, and owing to circumstances I'm forced to remain at least four days, and maybe more. What am I going to do? I'm very much pleased that you have called on me. If it hadn't been for you I don't know what I should have done with myself. Now, just imagine, if your sister weren't married, we'd spend these four days so that we shouldn't know how the time was passing. [*Takes her by the hand*] Isn't that true?

LUKÉRYA. Who's keeping you from that now?

BABÁYEV. Well, you see it's awkward; being married, what will her husband think? It's really provoking.

LUKÉRYA. You don't mean it! It seems to me that you used to have different opinions on such things. You weren't so anxious to know what pleased the husbands and what didn't.

BABÁYEV. Yes, but that was in an entirely different social circle. There manners are much more free.

LUKÉRYA. How do you know whether my sister has freedom or hasn't?

BABÁYEV. [*Taking both her hands*] At all events, I'm so glad, so thankful to you for furnishing me with diversion when I was bored. Don't you want something? Be good enough to make yourself at home; everything is at your service. Will you have some tea?

LUKÉRYA. Thank you, I've just had tea. But I must hurry home now. I have to attend to some matters with sister. Shall I extend her your greetings?

BABÁYEV. Please be so kind.

LUKÉRYA. [*Going to the door*] Why don't you invite sister and me to call on you?

BABÁYEV. I should be so happy to have you, only I really don't know how to arrange it. I should like very much to see Tatyána Danílovna.

LUKÉRYA. If you wish to see her, then where's the obstacle? She isn't a princess imprisoned behind ten locks. You'll go for a walk, no doubt, as you can't remain in your room?

BABÁYEV. I should like to go, but I hardly know in what direction.

LUKÉRYA. You needn't go far. Stroll out of the rear gate to the river-bank, sit down on the bench and enjoy the beauty of nature. It's a quiet, secluded place; few people ever go there. It's a most delightful walk for sentimental young people. Sister and I will go that way, and there you may be able to see her. Good day! [*She goes out.*]

BABÁYEV. What a surprise! Could I have expected such good fortune? Little Tánya, little Tánya! I shall see her again! I'll go mad with joy. She was so charming, so delicate. Some people said that she didn't have much sense, but is that a fault in a woman? And then her beauty, her beauty! It's likely that instead of four days I'll stay four weeks. [*Goes out.*]

TABLEAU II

*The bank of a river; at one side a fence and gate, at the other a corner of a barn; beyond the river stretches the countryside; sunset.*

## SCENE I

*Enter ARKHÍP and AFÓNIA*

AFÓNIA. Grandfather, let's rest here awhile. I feel ill to-day. Sit down here, on the bench.

ARKHÍP. Very well, Afónia, we'll sit down here. You and I are unfortunate: age is overcoming me and sickness you.

AFÓNIA. I'm not ailing. I was born so. Grandfather, I shan't live long in this bright world.

ARKHÍP. Don't listen to old wives' tales. No one knows what fate awaits him.

AFÓNIA. What do I care for old wives! I know that I shall not live long. My appetite is failing. Others have such hearty appetites after working. They eat a whole lot and want more. There's brother Lev, when he's tired--just keep giving him food. But I don't care if I never eat at all. My soul won't take anything. I just swallow a crust--and am satisfied.

ARKHÍP. That helps growth.

AFÓNIA. No, it doesn't. Why should I grow any more, anyhow! As it is, I am tall for my age. But it's a sign that I shall not live. Just listen, grandfather; a man who is alive thinks of living things, but I don't have any interest in anything. Some people like nice clothes, but for me it's all the same--whatever rag is near at hand--just so I'm warm. For instance, all the boys have some hobby; some like fishing, others games, some sing songs; but nothing attracts me. While others are happy I feel depressed. Misery seems to grip my heart.

ARKHÍP. That is God's gift to you. From your childhood you have had no love for this vain world. Some lose their faint-heartedness with years, when woes and afflictions, Afónya, crush and grind a man into powder; but you have never lived, have not yet tasted the world's sorrows or joys, and yet you reason like an old man. Thank God that he has made you wise. The world does not charm you: you do not know temptation, so your sins are less. That is your good fortune. Just listen to me. I, Afónya, have known temptation and have not always turned aside from it, and most often I sought temptation of my own free will. You say everything seems the same to you, that nothing in the world delights you; but to me God's world was good and bright. Everything beckoned and charmed me. An unsated eye and free will command one to taste all the pleasures of the universe. But in the world, Afónya, good and evil go hand in hand. Well, one's sins may be more in number than the sands of the sea. Luckily God prolonged my life, that I might repent, and did not strike me down in my sins. We repent and humble ourselves and hope for mercy; but you will have nothing to repent of; you, Afónya, are a man of God.

AFÓNYA. No, grandfather, no, do not speak so. How am I a man of God? I have seen men of God, but they are good and do not remember evil. They are abused and mocked, but they laugh at it, while I am rough and harsh, just like my brother; only brother is forgiving though quick-tempered, while I am not. I, grandfather, I have an evil temper.

ARKHÍP. At whom should you be angry, my child; who injures you?

AFÓNYA. No one injures me, but my heart aches for every one--for you, for brother, for all of you.

ARKHÍP. Why are you grieving for us? We have nothing to complain of.

AFÓNYA. We didn't have anything to complain of, grandfather, before brother married. Grandfather, why does brother love his wife so?

ARKHÍP. Why shouldn't he love her? Why did he marry her? You should be happy because he loves his wife. What a foolish fellow you are!

AFÓNIA. No, I speak the truth. Formerly brother used to love you and me much more than now.

ARKHÍP. So you are jealous! Probably you are envious.

AFÓNIA. No, it isn't envy; but is my brother blind? Does she love him as he does her? Is she worthy of him? Why is he so servile in the presence of her and her kin? His servility offends me. Is he inferior to her and her sister? One marries a wife to have a helper; but she sits with folded hands. Brother alone works and dances attendance on them. I pity him.

ARKHÍP. What business is it of yours? It's his own choice. He works and doesn't force you to. You and I are fed by his kindness.

AFÓNIA. Don't I know that? Tell me, grandfather, is she any better than brother or not?

ARKHÍP. Better or not, she is of different sort.

AFÓNIA. What do you mean by "different sort"! As it is, brother is obliged to work for them, feed and clothe them, while they give themselves airs. There isn't a better man in the world than brother, and they have made him their drudge.

ARKHÍP. How do you know? Your brother himself may not wish her to work.

AFÓNIA. But if she doesn't work then she'd better not put on airs. Since she married a commoner she should be one like the rest of us. Are we a sort of accursed people? Lord, pardon me for saying it! We too have our communal society and we pay taxes and take part in other obligations. My brother gets money by sweat and toil, and contributes it to the community. She might stay at home and play the lady, but if she marries, then she should know that there is one master in the house--her husband. You see, grandfather, I see and hear everything, since they are so shameless as not to pay any heed to me. Brother gives her kerchiefs and silk dresses, while she and her sister laugh at him and call him a fool. I hear it all; it is bitter to me,



grandfather, bitter. I began to speak to brother about it, but he scolded me. [*Pause*] Grandfather, that is why I can't sleep. What I see by day appears to me at night, gnaws at my heart, and I weep all night. I shan't live long. My health cannot improve now because my temper is altogether too violent. If God would only take me quickly so that I should have less suffering!

ARKHÍP. Don't say such sinful things! You have to live and live! You see, Afónya, I have nothing to live for, yet I keep on living. God knows the reason of all this. What a man I am! I never see the fair sun or the bright moon, and likewise I shall never see the green meadows or the cool waters and all creatures of God. But hardest of all is that I cannot see the bright face of man.

AFÓNYA. It is a pity, grandfather, that you cannot see; but I'm tired of everything, nothing comforts me.

ARKHÍP. The reason you are not comforted is that your heart is not at peace. Look at God's world longer and more often, and less at men and women, and you will become lighter of heart; you will sleep at night and have pleasant dreams. Where are we sitting now, Afónya?

AFÓNYA. On the bank, grandfather, beside Prokófeyvna's house.

ARKHÍP. Is the bridge at our right?

AFÓNYA. Yes, grandfather.

ARKHÍP. Is the sun at our left?

AFÓNYA. Yes, grandfather, but it's almost set.

ARKHÍP. In a cloud?

AFÓNYA. No, it is clear. The twilight is so brilliant. We'll have fine weather.

ARKHÍP. That's it, that's it. I feel it myself. The air is so light and the breeze so fresh that I do not want to leave. Beautiful, Afónya, beautiful is God's world. Now the dew will fall and fragrance will rise

from every flower; and yonder the stars will come out; and above the stars, Afónya, is our merciful Creator. If we remembered more constantly that He is merciful, we ourselves should be more merciful.

AFÓNYA. I will try to subdue my heart, grandfather. [BABÁYEV *comes in*] Let us go. Some strange gentleman is walking here; he would probably laugh at our talk.

ARKHÍP. [*Following AFÓNYA*] My soul magnifies God. *They go out.*

## SCENE II

BABÁYEV *alone*

BABÁYEV. When you are waiting for something pleasant the time seems to drag! I purposely came by the longest road so as not to arrive too early, but nevertheless I got here before they did. How I hate to wait! What a foolish situation! Women generally like to torment: it's their nature; they like to have someone wait for them. Of course, that doesn't apply to Tánya; I believe she's very, very glad that I have arrived. I speak of women of our own sort. I think they torment, because--how shall I express it--the idea is entirely original--in order to compensate themselves in advance for the rights which they lose later. That's the result of being in a lovely landscape face to face with nature! What brilliant thoughts come to one! If this thought were developed at leisure, in the country, it might form a small novel, even a comedy on the order of Alfred de Musset. But such things are not played in our country. They must be presented delicately, very delicately--here the principal thing is the--bouquet. I think some one is coming. Is it they? How shall we meet? Two years of separation mean much.

TATYÁNA *and* LUKÉRYA *come in.*

## SCENE III

BABÁYEV, TATYÁNA, and LUKÉRYA

TATYÁNA. [*Extending her hand to BABÁYEV*] How do you do, Valentin Pávlich! I was so happy when sister told me that you had returned.

BABÁYEV. So, do you still remember me?

TATYÁNA. Indeed I do! We frequently, that is, sister and I, very frequently speak of you. She tells me that you have forgotten us.

BABÁYEV. No, I have not forgotten you. There are memories, my darling Tatyána Danílovna, which are not readily forgotten. My acquaintance with you was of that sort. Isn't that so?

TATYÁNA. [*Dropping her eyes*] Yes, sir.

BABÁYEV. Let me assure you that as soon as I could tear myself away from St. Petersburg, and come to the country, I continually sought an occasion to visit this city and to find you without fail.

LUKÉRYA. Have you never found such an occasion before now? Don't tell me that!

BABÁYEV. I assure you.

LUKÉRYA. Much we believe you! Tánya, do not believe the gentlemen; they always deceive.

BABÁYEV. Why speak so to me?

LUKÉRYA. That doesn't apply just to you, but to all other fine young gentlemen.

TATYÁNA. Shall you remain long in this city?

BABÁYEV. Shall I remain long? At first I thought it would depend upon the clerks who have my affair in hand, but now I see that it will depend upon you, my darling Tatyána Danílovna.

TATYÁNA. That honors me entirely too much. No, tell me, shall you be here three or four days?

BABÁYEV. They promised to arrange my affairs in three days, but maybe I'll stay three or four days longer, if you wish me to.

TATYÁNA. Certainly, I do.

BABÁYEV. There is just one drawback, my darling Tatyána Danílovna: your city is dreadfully lonesome. I will remain on one condition, that I may see you as often as possible.

TATYÁNA. That's very simple. Call on us. We shall be delighted to have you come to tea to-morrow.

BABÁYEV. Yes, but it's impossible to call on you often, as gossip and talk spreads, and then there's your husband----

TATYÁNA. This doesn't concern him. You are my acquaintance; you call on me, not him.

LUKÉRYA. Then we on our side will observe the courtesies and will return your call. Besides, we often visit your landlady, so if it's pleasant for you to see us, you can call in there.

BABÁYEV. [*Withdrawing to one side with TATYÁNA*] Doesn't married life bore you?

TATYÁNA. [*After a pause*] I don't know; what can I say to that?

BABÁYEV. My darling Tatyána Danílovna, be perfectly frank with me. You know what kind feelings I've always had for you.

TATYÁNA. Why should I be so frank with you? What good can come of it? It's too late to mend things now.

BABÁYEV. If you can't mend things entirely, at least, darling Tatyána Danílovna, you can sweeten your existence for a time, so that you will not be entirely smothered by the vulgar life around you.

TATYÁNA. For a time, yes! Then life will be harder than ever.

BABÁYEV. Do you know, I want to move to the country; then we could be near to one another. I am even ready to move to this town, if only you----

TATYÁNA. [*Turning away*] Please don't talk to me like that! I didn't expect to hear such things from you, Valentin Pávlich.

LUKÉRYA. [*To BABÁYEV*] You're getting in pretty deep there. I hear everything you're saying.

BABÁYEV. Lukérya Danílovna, I think some one is coming. Take a look out on the bank there. I'm anxious that we should not be seen here together.

LUKÉRYA. Oh, you're a sly gentleman! [*Goes away.*]

TATYÁNA. So you will have tea with us to-morrow, Valentin Pávlich?

BABÁYEV. I really don't know--very likely.

TATYÁNA. No, don't fail to come! [*Pause*] Well, how shall I invite you? [*Takes BABÁYEV by the hand*] Well, my darling! Well, my precious!

BABÁYEV. It seems to me that you have changed, Tatyána Danílovna.

TATYÁNA. I, changed! Honestly I haven't. Not a bit. Why are you so cruel to me?

BABÁYEV. Do you remember Zavetnoye, Tatyána Danílovna?

TATYÁNA. Why? I remember it all.

BABÁYEV. Do you remember the garden? Do you remember the linden walk? Do you remember how, after supper, while mother slept, we used to sit on the terrace? Do you recall the narrow ribbon?

TATYÁNA. [*In a low voice*] Which one?

BABÁYEV. With which you tied my hands.

TATYÁNA. [*Embarrassed*] Well, what of that? Yes, I remember absolutely everything.

BABÁYEV. Just that you, my precious, are now entirely different; you have met me so coldly.

TATYÁNA. Ah, Valentin Pávlich! Then I was a girl and could love any one I wished; now I am married. Just think!

BABÁYEV. Why, certainly. Yet I can't imagine you belonging to any one else. Do what you will, I can hardly control my desire to call you Tánya, as I used to.

TATYÁNA. Why control yourself? Call me Tánya.

BABÁYEV. But what's the use, my dear! You don't love me any more!

TATYÁNA. Who told you that? I love you as much, even more than before.

BABÁYEV. [*Bending towards her*] Is it possible, Tanechka, that that is the truth?

TATYÁNA. [*Kissing him*] Well, here's my evidence! *Now* do you believe? But, darling Valentin Pávlich, if you don't wish me unhappiness for the rest of my life, we must love one another as we are doing now; but you mustn't think of more than that. Otherwise, good-by to you--away from temptation!

BABÁYEV. Set your mind at rest, darling, about that.

TATYÁNA. No, you swear to me! Swear, so that I may not fear you.

BABÁYEV. How foolish you are!

TATYÁNA. Yes, I am foolish, certainly. If I should listen to the opinions of older people, then I am committing a great wrong. According to the old law, I must love no one other than my husband. But since I can't love him--and loved you before my marriage, and can't change my heart, so I--only God preserve you from--and I won't in any respect--because I wish to live right.

BABÁYEV. Calm yourself.

TATYÁNA. That's the way, my dear Valentin Pávlich. It means that we shall now have a very pleasant love-affair, without sinning against God, or feeling shame before men.

BABÁYEV. Yes, yes, that'll be splendid!

TATYÁNA. Now I'll give you a kiss because you're so clever! [*Kisses him*] So you will come to-morrow evening?

BABÁYEV. And then you'll visit me?

TATYÁNA. Be sure to come! Then we'll visit you. Now I'm not afraid of you.

BABÁYEV. How beautiful you are! You're even lovelier than you used to be.

TATYÁNA. Let that be a secret. Good-by. Come on, Lusha!

LUKÉRYA. [*Approaching*] Good-by! Good night, pleasant dreams--of plucking roses, of watering jasmine! [*Going*] But what a man you are! Oh, oh, oh! He's clever, I must say! I just looked and wondered. [*They go out.*]

BABÁYEV. Now the novel is beginning; I wonder how it'll end!

ACT II

## TABLEAU I

*A room in KRASNÓV's house; directly in front a door leading to a vestibule; to the right a window and a bed with chintz curtains; to the left a stove-couch and a door into the kitchen; in the foreground a plain board table and several chairs; along the back wall and window benches; along the left wall a cupboard with cups, a small mirror, and a wall clock.*

## SCENE I

TATYÁNA *stands before the mirror putting on a kerchief*; AFÓNIA *is lying on the stove-couch*; LUKÉRYA *comes in with a figured table-cloth.*

LUKÉRYA. There, Tánya, I've borrowed a cloth from the neighbor to cover our table. Ours is awfully poor. [*Lays the cloth on the table.*]

TATYÁNA. Have you started the samovar?

LUKÉRYA. Long ago; it'll boil soon. Well, you see it's just as I told you; that kerchief is much more becoming to you. But why did you stick the pin through it? [*Adjusting it*] There, that's much better.

AFÓNIA. Where are you dressing up to go to? Why are you prinking so at that mirror?

TATYÁNA. Nowhere; we're going to stay at home.

LUKÉRYA. What business is it of yours? Do you think we ought to be as slovenly as yourself?

AFÓNIA. But who are you fixing up for? For your husband? He loves you more than you deserve even without the fine clothes. Or is it for some one else?

LUKÉRYA. Hear him! A fool, a fool! yet he understands that she's dressing up for some one else.



TATYÁNA. Why should I dress for my husband? He knows me anyway. When I dress, of course it's for a stranger.

AFÓNIA. Who are you going to flirt with? Who are you going to charm? Have you no conscience?

LUKÉRYA. What's the use of arguing with a fool! All he has to do is to chatter. Lies on the stove-couch and plots trouble.

TATYÁNA. What kind of judge are you, anyway? My husband never says anything to me, and yet you dare to put in your opinion!

AFÓNIA. Yes, but he's blinded by you, blinded. You've given him some sort of love-charm.

LUKÉRYA. Keep still, seeing that God has made you a sick man. Tend to your own business; keep on coughing, there's no sin in that.

AFÓNIA. Fool--brother is a fool! He's ruined himself.

LUKÉRYA. Tánya, shouldn't I bring the samovar in here?

TATYÁNA. Yes, and I'll set the cups. [*Puts cups on the table.*  
LUKÉRYA *goes out*] You'd better go into the kitchen.

AFÓNIA. I'm all right here.

TATYÁNA. Strangers are coming and you'll make us gloomy.

AFÓNIA. I won't go.

TATYÁNA. It's a true proverb: "There's no brewing beer with a fool." Our guest is no cheap shopkeeper like your brother. A gentleman is coming, do you hear? What are you fussing about?

AFÓNIA. What sort of a gentleman? Why is he coming?

TATYÁNA. Just the same kind of gentleman as all the rest. He's our acquaintance, a rich landowner; well, now get out!

AFÓNIA. He's a gentleman in his own house, but I'm one here. I'm not going to him, but he's coming here. I'm in my own house, and sick, so I won't consider anybody. Was it him you dressed up for?

TATYÁNA. That's my business, not yours.

LUKÉRYA *brings in the samovar.*

LUKÉRYA. [*Placing the samovar on the table*] Lev Rodionych is coming with some people.

TATYÁNA. I guess some of his relatives; what a horrid nuisance!

AFÓNIA. Nuisance! Why did you ever intrude into our family?

*Enter* KRASNÓV, KÚRITSYN, ULYÁNA.

## SCENE II

KRASNÓV, TATYÁNA, LUKÉRYA, AFÓNIA, KÚRITSYN, *and* ULYÁNA.

KRASNÓV. [*To his wife*] How are you? [*Kisses her.*

TATYÁNA. How affectionate!

KRASNÓV. Never mind. We have a perfect right to! Let me treat you. We've just received fresh grapes. [*Gives her a bunch*] Here I have brought you some company. The samovar is all ready--that's good.

ULYÁNA. How do you do, sister? You are so proud you never call on us! But we're common folks; so we picked ourselves up and came, uninvited.

KÚRITSYN. How do you do, sister? Why are you so contemptuous of your relatives? You might run over once in a while for tea; your feet are able to carry you!

KRASNÓV. How has she time to go visiting? She has so much to do at home. She's just beginning to get used to the household!

ULYÁNA. Yes, sister, you must get used to the household. That's our woman's duty. You didn't marry a millionaire, so you needn't put on airs.

KÚRITSYN. Yes, you'd better learn, and well.

ULYÁNA. [*Approaching AFÓNIA*] Ah, Afónya, are you still sick? You ought to take something!

KÚRITSYN. [*Also approaching AFÓNIA*] You eat more--then you'll get well. If you don't want to, then force yourself to eat; that's what I tell you! [*Speaks in a low voice to AFÓNIA*].

TATYÁNA. [*To her husband*] What have you done! What sort of company have you brought?

LUKÉRYA. To be frank, you've spoiled everything. How embarrassing, how awfully embarrassing!

KRASNÓV. What, embarrassing? Is some lord coming? What's the odds! Nothing to get excited over! Let him see our relatives.

LUKÉRYA. Much he's interested!

KRASNÓV. I can't chase my sister away for him. So there's nothing more to be said about it. I haven't set eyes on him yet, I don't know what he's like; these, at any rate, are our own. And, besides, they'll not stay long. [*To his wife*] Be seated; pour the tea! Brother, sister, have a cup of tea.

*All excepting AFÓNIA seat themselves at the table.*

KÚRITSYN. Brother, this is a holiday occasion, so it is customary before tea to--just a little. Don't you drink, yourself?

KRASNÓV. From the day I married Tatyána Danílovna I stopped all that. Tatyána Danílovna, treat brother and sister with some vodka.

TATYÁNA. [*Takes out of the cupboard and places on the table decanter, glasses, and refreshments*] Have some, sister! [ULYÁNA *drinks*] Have some, brother!

KÚRITSYN. That's no invitation, you don't know how to do it.

KRASNÓV. Brother, don't be quite so particular! My wife doesn't know your common ways, and there's no use knowing them. Please, without ceremony.

KÚRITSYN. [*After drinking*] You are spoiling your wife, that's what I tell you. Freedom spoils even a good wife. You ought to take example from me, and teach her common sense; that would be lots better. Ask your sister how I trained her; we had a hot time of it.

ULYÁNA. Yes, you, Manuylo Kalinich, are a terrible barbarian, and a blood-sucker! You spend your whole life bossing your wife and showing your authority.

KÚRITSYN. What words are those? Who's talking? What's that you say? [*Looking around*] Is any stranger here? Seems to me, my people in my own house don't dare to speak that way!

ULYÁNA. [*With a start*] I just said that for instance, Manuylo Kalinich. Because, sister, women like us can't live without strict discipline. It's a true proverb: "If you beat your wife, the soup tastes better."

TATYÁNA. Every one to his own taste! You, sister, like such treatment, while I consider it the height of rudeness.

LUKÉRYA. Nowadays, such peasant's conduct is discarded everywhere; it's getting out of fashion.

KÚRITSYN. You lie! Such treatment of women can never get out of fashion, because you can't get along without it. Brother, listen to what point I've brought Ulyana. We used to have disputes among ourselves, among acquaintances or relatives, whose wife was more attentive; I'd bring 'em to my house, sit on the bench, and push my foot out, so--and say to wife, "What does my foot want?" and she understood because she'd been trained. Of course she at once fell at my feet.

ULYÁNA. Yes, that's so, that used to happen. I can say that without shame, to everybody.

KRASNÓV. There's nothing good in that, just swagger.

KÚRITSYN. Ah, brother! Beat your overcoat and it will be warmer; beat a wife--she'll be smarter.

TATYÁNA. Not every wife will allow herself to be beaten, and the one that allows it, isn't worth any other treatment.

ULYÁNA. Why are you giving yourself such airs all of a sudden, sister? Am I worse than you? You just wait awhile, you'll taste all that. We can clip your wings, too.

KRASNÓV. Yes, but be careful.

ULYÁNA. What are you saying? Married a beggar and you're putting on airs. Do you think that you've married the daughter of a distinguished landowner?

KRASNÓV. What I think--is my business, and you can't understand it with your wits. You'd better keep still.

LUKÉRYA. What an interesting conversation--worth while hearing!

ULYÁNA. It seems to me she doesn't come from nobles but from government clerks. Not a very great lady! Goats and government clerks are the devil's own kin.

KRASNÓV. I told you to keep still! I shouldn't have to tell you ten times. You ought to understand it at once.

KÚRITSYN. Leave them alone. I like it when the women start a row.

KRASNÓV. But I don't like it.

ULYÁNA. What do I care what you like! I'm not trying to please you. My, how stern you are! You'd better scold your own wife, not me; I'm not under your orders; you aren't my boss. I have a good husband who can boss me, not you. I'm not to blame because your wife wanders around highways and byways, and flirts with young gentlemen for hours.

KRASNÓV. [*Jumping up*] What's that!

TATYÁNA. I know nothing of highways and byways; I have told you, Lev Rodionych, that I met Valentin Pávlich on the bank, and even everything that we said.

LUKÉRYA. Yes, I was there with them.

ULYÁNA. Yes, you're the same sort.

KRASNÓV. You're a regular snake in the grass! And you call yourself a sister. What do you want? To make trouble between us? You're spiteful because I love my wife! You may rest assured that I wouldn't change her for anybody. For thirty years I've slaved for my family, labored till I sweated blood, and I thought of marriage only when I'd provided for the whole family. For thirty years I haven't known any pleasures. That's why I have to be thankful to my wife, who has beauty and education, for loving me, a peasant. Formerly I worked for you; now I will work for her forever. I'll perish working, but I'll give her every comfort. I should kiss her feet, because I very well understand that I and my whole household aren't worth her little finger. Do you think after this I will allow her to be abused! I respect her--and you all must respect her!

LUKÉRYA. Sister herself understands that she deserves all respect.

KRASNÓV. What's that you were saying, Ulyana? If you're right, then it's all up with me! See here! I have only one joy, one

consolation, and I should have to give it up. Is that easy? Is it? I'm not made of stone that I can look at such wifely doings through my fingers! Your foolish words have entered my ears and wrenched my heart. If I believed you, then--God keep me from it--I should soon do some violence! One can't vouch for himself as to what may happen. Maybe the devil will jog my elbow. God save us! This is not a joking matter! If you wanted to hurt me, you should have taken a knife and thrust it into my side--that would have been easier for me. After such words it's better that I never see you again, you breaker-up of families. I'd rather disown all my people than endure your poison.

ULYÁNA. I'm not the cause of separation. It's she that's breaking up families.

KÚRITSYN. Well, brother! Evidently, if it's the wife's kin--open the door; but if it's the husband's kin--then shut the door. You visit us and we'll show you hospitality. Come, wife, we'd better go home!

ULYÁNA. Well, good-by, sister, but remember! And you, brother, just wait; we'll settle accounts somehow. [*They go out.*]

### SCENE III

KRASNÓV, TATYÁNA, LUKÉRYA, and AFÓNIA

KRASNÓV. [*Approaching his wife*] Tatyána Danílovna, I hope you won't take that to heart, because they're a rough lot.

TATYÁNA. That's the kind of relatives you have! I lived better beyond comparison as a girl; at least I knew that no one dared to insult me.

LUKÉRYA. [*Clearing the table*] We didn't associate with the common people.

KRASNÓV. And I'll never let you be insulted. You saw I didn't spare my own sister, and drove her out of my house; but if it had been a

stranger, he wouldn't have got off alive. You don't know my character yet; at times I'm afraid of myself.

TATYÁNA. What, do you become dreadfully furious?

KRASNÓV. Not that I'm furious, I'm hot-tempered. I'm beside myself, and don't see people at such times.

TATYÁNA. How terribly you talk! Why didn't you tell me about your character before? I wouldn't have married you.

KRASNÓV. There's nothing bad in a man's being hot-tempered. That means that he's eager in all things, even in his work, and he can love better, because he has more feeling than others.

TATYÁNA. Now I shall be afraid of you.

KRASNÓV. I don't want you to fear me. But I should like to know when you are going to love me?

TATYÁNA. What sort of love do you want to have from me?

KRASNÓV. You know yourself what sort; but maybe you don't feel it. What's to be done? We'll wait, perhaps it'll come later. Everything can happen in this world! There have been cases where love has come the fifth or sixth year after marriage. And what love! Better than if it came at first.

TATYÁNA. Keep on waiting.

LUKÉRYA. You're very hot in your love; but we're of entirely different bringing up.

KRASNÓV. You speak of bringing up? I'll tell you this, that if I were younger, I'd take up and study for Tatyána Danílovna. I know, myself, what I lack, but now it's too late. I've a soul but no training. If I were trained----

LUKÉRYA. [*Glancing towards the window*] He's coming, Tánya; he's coming! [*Both run out of the room.*]



KRASNÓV. Where so suddenly? What are you running after?

LUKÉRYA. What do you mean? Recollect yourself. We must be courteous and go to meet him. [*They go out.*]

AFÓNIA. Brother! You drove sister away. Whether right or not, let God judge you! But I tell you, you'd better watch the gentleman.

KRASNÓV. What the deuce have you got to do with this? You hiss like a snake. You want to wound me. Get out of here! Go, I tell you, or I'll kill you.

AFÓNIA. Well, kill! My life isn't very sweet to me, and I haven't long to live, anyway. But don't be blind! Don't be blind! [*Goes out.*]

KRASNÓV. What are they doing to me? Must I really be on my guard, or are they just frightening me? Where then is love! Is it possible, Lord, that I have taken unto me not a joy but a torture! Rouse yourself, Lev Rodionych, rouse yourself. Hearken not to the fiend. You have one joy--he's seizing it, and draining your heart. You will ruin your whole life! You will perish for no cause. All those are slanderous words. They're spiteful because my wife is good, and we get along together--so they begin to stir up trouble. That's clearly seen. It's so in every family. The best way is to drop it and not think about it. The gentleman will have to be gotten rid of; I must see that he never looks our way any more. "Come oftener," I'll tell him, "we like it better when you aren't here." So there'll be less talk and my heart will be calmer.

*Enter* BABÁYEV, TATYÁNA, *and* LUKÉRYA.

#### SCENE IV

BABÁYEV, KRASNÓV, TATYÁNA, *and* LUKÉRYA

BABÁYEV. So this is where you live! Is this your own little house?

TATYÁNA. Our own. This is my husband.

BABÁYEV. I'm delighted. I've known your wife a long while.

KRASNÓV. That's your affair.

BABÁYEV. You're in business?

KRASNÓV. That's my affair.

TATYÁNA. Won't you be seated? [BABÁYEV *and* KRASNÓV *take seats*] Shouldn't you like some tea?

BABÁYEV. No, thank you; I don't care for tea now.

LUKÉRYA. Ah, Tánya, we've forgotten that now in St. Petersburg they have different tastes. [To BABÁYEV] We can have coffee immediately.

BABÁYEV. No, please do not trouble yourself; I've already had some. Let us rather sit and talk. Are you happy here? Have you any amusements here?

TATYÁNA. No. What sort of amusements can one have here?

BABÁYEV. How do you spend your time? Is it possible you are always at home?

TATYÁNA. Mostly.

KRASNÓV. And that is proper among such as us. Our Russian way is: husband and dog in the yard, and wife and cat in the house.

LUKÉRYA. [In a low voice to KRASNÓV] Can't you speak more politely?

KRASNÓV. I know my business.

BABÁYEV. So you're a housekeeper. I should think it must have been hard for you to get used to your new duties.

TATYÁNA. [*Glancing at her husband*] Yes; of course I can't say--of course--at first----

BABÁYEV. [*To LUKÉRYA*] I'm asking, but I don't really know myself what these duties consist of.

LUKÉRYA. But considering your noble birth, that's beneath your knowledge.

KRASNÓV. There's nothing vulgar about it.

BABÁYEV. Really, what is there vulgar in it?

LUKÉRYA. The words are low and even quite coarse, and they aren't usually spoken before people of good breeding.

BABÁYEV. Well, imagine that I'm a man of no breeding. What are the words, tell me?

LUKÉRYA. You're embarrassing Tánya and me. But if you're interested to hear those words, all right! The kitchen and other common things belong to the household: the frying-pan, the handle, the oven fork. Isn't that low?

KRASNÓV. Whether the oven fork is high or low, if you put the soup in the stove you've got to get it out.

TATYÁNA. You might spare your wife before guests.

KRASNÓV. I haven't insulted you a hair's breadth either before guests or without guests. When you're asked what sort of a housekeeper you are for your husband, right before him, then I should think you'd answer, that you're a good housekeeper, and aren't ashamed of your position, because among such as us that is the first duty.

LUKÉRYA. [*In a low voice to KRASNÓV*] You're disturbing our conversation with our guest.

BABÁYEV. [*In a low voice to TATYÁNA*] Is he always like this?

TATYÁNA. [*In a low voice*] I don't know what's the matter with him.

BABÁYEV. [*In a low voice*] You see for yourself that I've no business here. You'd better come to me to-day, and I'll go home now. [*Aloud*] Well, good-by. I hope this isn't the last time we meet.

LUKÉRYA. Certainly, certainly.

TATYÁNA. We are most grateful for your visit!

KRASNÓV. [*Bowing*] Good-by to you! Are you going away from here soon?

BABÁYEV. I don't know. Whenever my affairs are settled.

KRASNÓV. But when, do you think?

BABÁYEV. They tell me, at court, the day after to-morrow.

KRASNÓV. So, when that's over you're going directly?

BABÁYEV. I think so. What is there to do here?

KRASNÓV. Yes, there's nothing to do here. My regards to you! [*BABÁYEV, TATYÁNA, and LUKÉRYA go out*] An unbidden guest is worse than a Tatar. What do we want with him? What use is he to us? I won't have his help; we aren't beggars. Well, be off with you! Go to St. Petersburg, and good luck to you.

*Enter TATYÁNA and LUKÉRYA.*

SCENE V

KRASNÓV, TATYÁNA, *and* LUKÉRYA

TATYÁNA. What are you doing? Why did you go and insult me so?

KRASNÓV. There's no insult! Now, look here! We haven't quarrelled once since our wedding, and I hope that we may never do so, but may always live in love.

LUKÉRYA. Fine love, I must say!

[KRASNÓV *looks at her sharply.*

TATYÁNA. Where is your love? Now we see it very plainly. I must serve your relatives and friends like a cook; but when our friend came, a gentleman, then you almost drove him away.

LUKÉRYA. You did drive him away, only in a roundabout fashion.

TATYÁNA. You'd better not speak of your love. What do I want with your love when you disgrace me at every step.

KRASNÓV. I don't understand the reason for this argument! The whole affair isn't worth discussing. We probably won't ever see him again, and we have no need of him; he went with what he came. We have to live our life together; it isn't worth our having trouble over him.

TATYÁNA. Ah, Lusha, what a disgrace! I wonder what he'll think of us now?

LUKÉRYA. Yes. He'll soon go back to St. Petersburg; a fine opinion of us he'll take away with him!

KRASNÓV. I tell you again, that you should dismiss him and his opinions from your mind. The whole affair isn't worth a kopek. I think that whether he's alive or no, it's all the same to us.

TATYÁNA. It may be all the same for you, but not so for us. Sister and I have promised to visit him and we want to go to-day.

KRASNÓV. There's no need.

TATYÁNA. How, no need? I tell you that I want to see him.

KRASNÓV. You want to, but I'm not anxious. Ought you to consider my wishes or not?

TATYÁNA. You seem to have assumed authority all of a sudden. You certainly don't imagine that we'll obey you.--No, indeed, *we won't*.

KRASNÓV. [*Striking the table*] What do you mean by "no, indeed"? No, if I tell you something, then that has to go. I'm talking sense and what's good for you, and that's why I give you strict orders. [*Again strikes the table*].

TATYÁNA. [*Crying*] What tyranny! What torture!

LUKÉRYA. [*With a laugh*] Oh, what a fearful, oh, what a terrible man, ha, ha, ha!

KRASNÓV. What are you cackling about? I'll fire you out so fast that your skirts will squeak on the gate.

TATYÁNA. Well, do what you like, even kill us, but we'll go. We don't want to show him we're boors. We surely have to thank him for remembering us, and wish him a pleasant journey.

KRASNÓV. Tatyána Danílovna, please understand what you are told.

TATYÁNA. I hope you aren't going to fight? That'll be just like you. That's what's to be expected.

KRASNÓV. You're mistaken. You'll never see me do that. I love you so much that this time I'll even respect your caprices. Go along, but never set your foot there again. Only one more thing, Tatyána Danílovna: you see this clock! [*Points to the wall clock*] Look at the clock when you leave, and be back in half an hour! [*Pointing to the floor*] On this very spot. Understand?

TATYÁNA. Come, Lusha, let's dress. [*Both go out*].

KRASNÓV. I think everything will be all right now. They were a little spoiled; in that case sternness will do no harm. If I hold on she'll come to love me. Then when the gentleman is gone, I can humor her again; then our misunderstanding will be forgotten. What wouldn't I give for the half-hour they're with the gentleman? But what's to be done? I can't cut her off sharp--that'd entirely turn her away from me. Whatever I try to think of, horrid things come into my head. But he certainly isn't a bandit. And then my wife, a little while ago--I'm just an enemy to myself! There surely can't be anything bad; but I think of all sorts of nonsense! I'd better go and have a chat with my friends at the tavern. What did he whisper to her just now? Well, they're old acquaintances; just something! [Takes his cap] Tatyána Danílovna! I pined for you until I married you; and now that I have married you, all my heart aches. Don't ruin me, poor lad that I am; it will be a sin for you! [Goes out.]

## TABLEAU II

Same room as in ACT I

## SCENE I

KARP and PROKÓFYEVNA come in

PROKÓFYEVNA. Is he asleep?

KARP. Don't know. I guess not; he hasn't that habit. It isn't time yet, anyway. What do you think? In St. Petersburg it isn't dinner-time yet, it's still morning.

PROKÓFYEVNA. What's that, good heavens!

KARP. Why, at times in the winter, when it's already dusk and the lights are lit everywhere, it's still considered morning.

PROKÓFYEVNA. What's the wonder! It's a big city, the capital, not like this. I just came in to see if anything was needed. [Glancing out of the window] I believe some one is coming here. I'll go and meet them. [Goes out.]

KARP. One is bored to extinction here. If he'd grease the palms of the principal men at the court, then they'd have done it in a jiffy. At least we'd now be home, at business. I wonder how it is he isn't bored! I wonder if he hasn't found some prey here! He surely doesn't go about town for nothing! I know his ways: he walks and walks past the windows, and casts his eye around for some brunette.

PROKÓFYEVNA *comes in.*

PROKÓFYEVNA. Go and tell him that he is wanted, my dear sir.

KARP. Why is he wanted?

PROKÓFYEVNA. You tell him; he knows why.

KARP. [*Through the door*] Please, sir, you have visitors.

BABÁYEV. [*From the door*] Who?

PROKÓFYEVNA. Come out, sir, for a minute; you're wanted!

BABÁYEV *enters.*

## SCENE II

KARP, PROKÓFYEVNA, BABÁYEV

PROKÓFYEVNA. Listen! Tatyána Danílovna, the wife of the shopkeeper, has come with her sister, and wants to know if they may come in.

BABÁYEV. Ask them in. I'll tell you what! Listen, landlady! Please avoid gossip! It's possible that she'll come again, so you'll please say



that she comes to see you. If any one asks you, you know; the city is small, and every one knows every one else, and every one watches every one else, where each goes, and what each does.

PROKÓFYEVNA. Oh, sir! What's that to me! I looked but I didn't see. You're a stranger, not of this place.

BABÁYEV. Ask them in! You and I, dear landlady, are old friends. [*Pats her on the shoulder.*]

PROKÓFYEVNA. Indeed we are, sir, friends! [*Goes out.*]

KARP. [*With an impatient wave of his hand*] Sins! [*Goes out.*]

TATYÁNA and LUKÉRYA *come in.*

### SCENE III

BABÁYEV, TATYÁNA, LUKÉRYA

LUKÉRYA. How do you do, again! Were you looking for us?

BABÁYEV. To be frank, I didn't expect you so soon. Be seated; why are you standing? [*They all sit down.*]

LUKÉRYA. We fairly ran over here. We had such a time getting away.

TATYÁNA. That's enough, Lusha; stop!

LUKÉRYA. There's no use concealing matters! You can't do it. Valentin Pávlich has seen our local gentry to-day, himself. You should see what a rumpus we had after you left!

TATYÁNA. Ah, Lusha, those things happen in every family; there's no need telling every one! It's no one's affair how we live.

LUKÉRYA. Now you understand, Valentin Pávlich, what a peasant is when he assumes importance?

TATYÁNA. It's well for you to talk, since you aren't concerned. You might spare me! He's my husband, and I have to live with him till the brink of the grave.

BABÁYEV. You weren't careful in your marriage, Tatyána Danílovna; you weren't careful.

TATYÁNA. How queer you are! What are you reproaching me for? Where were you when we had nothing to eat? But now there is no going back. All that remains for me to do is to cry all the rest of my life. [*Cries.*]

BABÁYEV. Why are you crying now?

TATYÁNA. What have I to rejoice over? You? I might be happy if I had freedom. Understand this: on your account I quarrelled with my husband; you'll be going away to-day or to-morrow, while I have to remain with him. You only made matters worse by coming; until you came he didn't seem so bad, and suddenly he has changed entirely. Before he saw you he fulfilled my every wish, he licked my hands like a dog; but now he has begun to look askance at me and to scold. How can I endure torment all my life with the man I loathe! [*Cries.*]

BABÁYEV. Now, please stop! Why do you grieve! [*To LUKÉRYA*] Listen, Lukérya Danílovna! You go to the landlady, I can calm her better alone.

LUKÉRYA. All right, but don't be too sly! [*Goes out.*]

#### SCENE IV

BABÁYEV *and* TATYÁNA

BABÁYEV. [*Draws nearer and puts one arm around TATYÁNA*] Darling, Tanechka, now stop! Why do you weep so! Let's think, together, how we can help your grief.

TATYÁNA. There's no use thinking! There's no way.

BABÁYEV. Is that so? But what if I take you off to the village?

TATYÁNA. Which one? Where?

BABÁYEV. To my own village. There everything is the same as when mother lived: the same lanes, ponds, and arbors; everything is familiar to you, and will remind you of the past. There you'd be my housekeeper.

TATYÁNA. [*Freeing herself from his arm*] What ideas you do get, my dear sir! How could you get such a foolish notion into your head! Do you think my husband would allow such a thing! Why, he'd find me, at the bottom of the sea!

BABÁYEV. For a time we'll be able to hide you so that he won't find you; and meanwhile we can smooth it over with him.

TATYÁNA. What! What! That's a bright idea! Stop talking such nonsense! You'd better advise me how to live with my husband the rest of my life.

BABÁYEV. Why so! Much I care for that!

TATYÁNA. So, you don't love me a little bit! You're just making believe! Yes, that's it!

BABÁYEV. Tánya, isn't it a sin for you to talk so? Now, tell me, isn't it?

TATYÁNA. What?

BABÁYEV. Isn't it a sin to suspect me?

TATYÁNA. Oh, you! One can't tell whether you're making believe or not.

BABÁYEV. Why should you tell, my angel! Don't worry about me! Just ask your own heart what it tells you! [*Embraces her.*]

TATYÁNA. But what does yours tell you?

BABÁYEV. Yes, but, Tánya, you don't believe me; you say that I'm making believe, and yet you are asking questions. But how could I deceive you?

TATYÁNA. You aren't a bit interested! You're just talking.

BABÁYEV. Don't be afraid; I'll not deceive! Why should I deceive you? [*Leans towards her; she listens with downcast eyes*] I'll tell you what, Tánya! My heart tells me that I have never loved any one as I do you. It's all the same whether you believe me or not. But I will prove that it is the truth, and you yourself will agree with me. Why, I don't tell you that I've never seen women more beautiful than you, or cleverer. Then you might tell me to my face that I lied. No, I have seen more beautiful women than you, and cleverer; but I have never seen such a darling, charming, artless little woman as you.

TATYÁNA. [*Sighing*] Artless--Ah, you speak the truth.

BABÁYEV. Well, I've told you what I feel. Why don't you tell me?

TATYÁNA. What should I say? I don't know how. I might say more than you. But why say anything--you know yourself.

BABÁYEV. That is, possibly, I guess, but----

TATYÁNA. Why "but"? There's nothing to be said!

BABÁYEV. Yes, there is. I guess the secret but I get no good from it. [*Pause*] Tell me yourself that you love me! Well, how about it, Tánya?

TATYÁNA. What do you want?

BABÁYEV. Do you love me? [*Pause*] Do you love me?

TATYÁNA. [*Dropping her eyes*] Well, yes.

BABÁYEV. Very much? [*Pause*] Why are you silent? Do you love me very much?

TATYÁNA. Yes.

BABÁYEV. Will you go to the village with me?

TATYÁNA. Ah, stop urging me!

BABÁYEV. Well, you needn't go to the village then. I know what we'll do: I'll rent a lodging here in the city, and will come here every other week. Do you agree to that?

TATYÁNA. Yes.

BABÁYEV. Now you see, my darling Tanechka, I'm ready to do anything for you.

TATYÁNA. I see.

BABÁYEV. And you? [*Pause*] Why are you silent?

TATYÁNA. But our compact?

BABÁYEV. What compact?

TATYÁNA. Yesterday's. You remember, on the bank.

BABÁYEV. What's there to remember? There wasn't any compact.

TATYÁNA. Shameless, you're shameless! Can you forget so soon!

BABÁYEV. I don't want to know of any compacts. [*Embraces and kisses her.*]

TATYÁNA. [*Rising*] Oh! Stop, please!

BABÁYEV. Why "stop"? What do you mean by "stop"?

TATYÁNA. I mean, stop.

BABÁYEV. What whims!

TATYÁNA. No whims at all, only please move a little further off.

BABÁYEV. If you're going to be so whimsical, then I'll go away. I'll drop the business for which I came and will go away immediately.

TATYÁNA. Very well, go.

BABÁYEV. I'm not joking. Karp! [*KARP comes in*] Pack up and then go order horses.

KARP. Yes, sir.

TATYÁNA. So that's the way? Well, good luck to you! Good-by!  
[*Runs out.*]

KARP. Well, sir, do you want me to pack up?

BABÁYEV. Pack up, for where? You make me tired, man! [*Goes to the window*] I wonder if they've gone home?

KARP. They won't leave.

BABÁYEV. That's none of your business! Get out!

KARP *goes out*; LUKÉRYA *comes in*.

SCENE V

BABÁYEV and LUKÉRYA

LUKÉRYA. Sister has asked me to tell you to put off your going. An acquaintance is visiting the landlady; so you'll understand that it's awkward for her to come to you. But when she goes away sister will come to you. She has something to talk over with you.

BABÁYEV. You're very kind, Lukérya Danílovna! LUKÉRYA. I can't believe my ears! Is it possible that I hear such compliments from you! [*Courtesies.*]

### ACT III

#### TABLEAU I

*Same room as in ACT II*

#### SCENE I

TATYÁNA *is lying on the bed*; LUKÉRYA *comes in*

LUKÉRYA. Tánya, are you asleep?

TATYÁNA. No.

LUKÉRYA. Then you'd better get up! What are you lying around for all day? You've been in bed all the morning, and still not up.

TATYÁNA. What's the use of getting up? What's there to do?

LUKÉRYA. If you were only asleep--but to lie in bed and cry just rends your heart. Better get up and let's talk it over!

TATYÁNA. [*Getting up*] Oh, what an unhappy, gloomy day this is! [*Sits down*] How unfortunate I am! What have I done to myself? Why did I marry? I've drowned my happiness, simply drowned it!

LUKÉRYA. Who could have told? As a suitor he was as quiet as water and as meek as the grass; now I don't know what has happened to him. Why, yesterday I thought he was joking when he told us to be back in a half-hour.

TATYÁNA. I did, too. If you only had seen how he pounced on me, and how terrible he's become. He looked daggers all the morning, left without saying good-by, and now he hasn't even come back for dinner.

LUKÉRYA. What did he say to you when you were left alone yesterday?

TATYÁNA. He scolded and abused, got all wrought up, and wept himself; what didn't he do! "For all my love for you," he said, "I ask you only one thing in return: soothe me, give me back my peace of mind, because I am jealous."

LUKÉRYA. What an affliction!

TATYÁNA. He said he wasn't jealous of any one but this gentleman.

LUKÉRYA. The idea of his being jealous of every one! That would be a great idea!

TATYÁNA. "When that man leaves," he said, "then you may do anything you like, and go anywhere, but because you didn't heed my command, don't dare cross the threshold until he has left the city for good."

LUKÉRYA. What did you say to that?

TATYÁNA. He kept shouting but I kept still through it all; but it hurts me because he lords it over me so. At first he was sly as a fox, but now he has started to order me about, and talk to me in his vulgar, peasant's way. He doesn't care that he has insulted me, but I've been crying all day. I couldn't love him if he killed me. If he gave me freedom, then I might have some affection for him; but now I'll do everything he doesn't want me to, just for meanness; even if I had



wronged him, I wouldn't regret it. I must get even with him some way. I can't fight with him; I haven't the strength for that.

LUKÉRYA. Certainly. He ought to be satisfied that you married him; and now he's got the notion of watching your deportment.

TATYÁNA. Since yesterday I've begun to fear him so. You won't believe me; why, I shudder when he looks at me.

LUKÉRYA. What do you think you'll do now?

TATYÁNA. What's the use of thinking? My head's all in a muddle. It's bad, no matter how you look at it. I sold my very youth to one I cannot love, just for a piece of bread, and from one day to another he becomes more repulsive to me.

LUKÉRYA. After such actions on his part, it's no wonder he's repulsive. Especially when you compare him with others. The other man is a born gentleman in every sense of the word.

TATYÁNA. Now what shall I do? If I could break off all connection with Valentin Pávlich, I should be very glad. But I see I should have thought of that before, and attended to the matter earlier; but now it's too late. It's beyond my strength.

LUKÉRYA. But he loves you very much, Tánya.

TATYÁNA. Is that so? Oh, bother him. That's just it; at first I haven't enough sense, then I have to cry over it. My mother used to say to me: "Be careful, daughter, your lack of common sense will be your ruin."

LUKÉRYA. You want to see him, I suppose? I think he's waiting.

TATYÁNA. Well, of course. If it depended on me, I'd fly to him.

LUKÉRYA. We'll have to rack our brains how we may work that.

TATYÁNA. No matter how I rack my brain, I can't think of anything.

LUKÉRYA. I know what, Tánya! You'll have to fool your husband.

TATYÁNA. How?

LUKÉRYA. We women couldn't live without cunning, because we're the weaker sex, and abused on all sides.

TATYÁNA. But what cunning? Tell me!

LUKÉRYA. Now that you and your husband live like cats and dogs, he can't help getting the notion into his noddle that you don't love him, but do love another.

TATYÁNA. How shall I manage?

LUKÉRYA. You'll have to change your tactics. Be very submissive; peasants like that. Make believe that you're in love with him; give him all sorts of humbug and he'll prick up his ears at it. Flatter him with all sorts of flatteries--that'll be a new thing for him.

TATYÁNA. I'll have to say what I don't feel.

LUKÉRYA. Where's the harm in that? How does he know what's in your heart? He doesn't need to understand that your action is make-believe, and not sincere. You'll see, after such actions, he'll believe in you so much that even though you made love before his very eyes, he wouldn't notice it.

TATYÁNA. One can't make such a sudden change in oneself.

LUKÉRYA. It certainly must be sudden. What's there to wait for?

TATYÁNA. He's angry with me now; how can I approach him? I can't beg his pardon!

LUKÉRYA. Why pardon? [*She thinks*] Do it this way: you tell grandfather Arkhíp that you'd like to make up with your husband, so that you'd have no misunderstandings, that you love your husband, and that you feel his displeasure very much.

TATYÁNA. Well, I'll try.

LUKÉRYA. It's all the same to me! I'm talking for your own good.

TATYÁNA. Go and bring grandfather; he's sitting in the garden.  
[LUKÉRYA *goes out*] That's what it is for a woman to have wits!  
Even if she takes a fancy to a man she won't let anybody guess it.  
She'll so fool her husband that he'll just dote on her. But without wit  
one is lost.

LUKÉRYA *comes in leading* ARKHÍP.

## SCENE II

TATYÁNA, LUKÉRYA, ARKHÍP

ARKHÍP. Do you need me? What do you want me for? Tatyána, are  
you here?

TATYÁNA. Yes, grandfather.

ARKHÍP. Lukérya is leading me, and she says: "Grandfather Arkhíp,  
we need you!" What business can you have of me in my old age?

LUKÉRYA. You see, grandfather, sister is displeased with her  
husband.

ARKHÍP. Well, what of that? Who is the judge between husband and  
wife? Let them live as they wish.

TATYÁNA. What happiness is there in living so? It is better to live in  
harmony.

ARKHÍP. Then what's the matter? Live in harmony! Who's  
preventing you?

LUKÉRYA. You see, he has a very crude manner, and we're not used  
to it.

ARKHÍP. Wait, don't put in your word. She has a tongue of her own. You tell me, Tatyána.

TATYÁNA. My husband is now angry with me and doesn't even look at me; he thinks I don't love him, and in that he's mistaken.

LUKÉRYA. [*Motioning to TATYÁNA to talk*] She's afraid of his temper.

TATYÁNA. I love him as my duty requires. If he thinks badly of me, I don't deserve it. Does he think I could betray him for any one else? I would never do such a thing in my life.

LUKÉRYA. And such a splendid man! Doesn't she realize it?

TATYÁNA. If I had wronged him in any way, then he might scold, and be done with it. But if he'll only be kind to me, then I'll show him all respect. I'll indulge him as he never dared hope.

LUKÉRYA. How many times she's told me: "I love my husband very much, very, very much."

ARKHÍP. What do you keep backing each other up for? Have you been plotting together?

LUKÉRYA. Why should I be silent? Is it pleasant for me to see that my sister, whom I adore, lives in such discord with her husband?  
[*Signals to TATYÁNA.*]

TATYÁNA. Grandfather Arkhíp, I want to ask you to have a talk with my husband-----

ARKHÍP. Wait! Wait! Give me time--don't take me off my feet! You say that your husband is angry with you? Then you're to blame?

TATYÁNA. Much I am to blame!

ARKHÍP. Much or little, you're certainly to blame. You don't want to humble yourself; you're ashamed to--so you ask me. Is that so?

TATYÁNA. Yes, grandfather Arkhíp.

ARKHÍP. Are you speaking sincerely, or just words?

TATYÁNA. Sincerely, grandfather.

ARKHÍP. But what's that to me! It's not my business. If you lie, then you'll answer to God! But I will speak to him. Why not? If you stop quarrelling, then it will be pleasant for all of us.

LUKÉRYA. You talk to him to-day.

ARKHÍP. I'll talk to him when he comes home. *Enter AFÓNIA.*

### SCENE III

TATYÁNA, LUKÉRYA, ARKHÍP, and AFÓNIA

ARKHÍP. Who came in?

AFÓNIA. I, Grandfather Arkhíp.

ARKHÍP. To-day we have a holiday, Afónia. Tatyána wishes to make peace with her husband, and to submit to him.

AFÓNIA. Submit? Submit? Don't believe her, Grandfather Arkhíp, she's fooling you.

ARKHÍP. That's enough from you!

TATYÁNA. Why should I fool you? What's the use?

AFÓNIA. You came to your senses when brother frightened you a little. You ought to have done it long ago. If you're in earnest, then drop your proud ways. You ought to bow down to your husband's feet, right to his feet. And to all of us, to all. You have wronged all of us.

LUKÉRYA. [*In a low voice*] That would be entirely too much honor.

TATYÁNA. Why should I bow down to my husband?

AFÓNIA. For everything that he's done for you. I saw myself how he kneeled before you! It's a shame! [*Covers his face with his hands.*]

LUKÉRYA. What of it, if he wanted to?

AFÓNIA. He's no worse than you, yet he bowed down to you; now you bow down to him. Make up to him for his humiliation. It won't hurt you! And bow down to all of us, even to our brother-in-law and sister.

TATYÁNA. Bowing down to my husband has some sense in it, but why should I to you?

AFÓNIA. Because brother insulted all of us on your account. On account of you our family has been broken up. You're dearer to him than anybody, dearer than all his own.

ARKHÍP. Calm yourself! Try to control this fit of anger! We want to make peace, and you are starting a quarrel again.

LUKÉRYA. He's not even her husband, yet what awful things he says! If you gave him his way, he would make our life unbearable.

ARKHÍP. [*Patting AFÓNIA on the head*] What do you expect of him? He's a sick man.

KRASNÓV *comes in.*

#### SCENE IV

KRASNÓV, TATYÁNA, LUKÉRYA, ARKHÍP, *and* AFÓNIA

LUKÉRYA. [*In a low voice to ARKHÍP*] Lev Rodionych is here.

ARKHÍP. Lev, you haven't had any dinner to-day.

KRASNÓV. I had no time.

TATYÁNA. If you wish, we'll serve you now.

KRASNÓV. [*Sitting down to the table*] Certainly. I can't get along without eating!

TATYÁNA. Set the table, sister! [*Goes to the kitchen. LUKÉRYA sets the table.*]

ARKHÍP. Lev, are you going back to the shop?

KRASNÓV. No, I'm all through there.

ARKHÍP. Will you stay at home?

KRASNÓV. I'll be here for an hour, then I have to go across the river to make a collection.

TATYÁNA *brings a plate of cabbage soup, puts it on the table, and goes out with LUKÉRYA. KRASNÓV, after eating several spoonfuls, is lost in thought.*

ARKHÍP. Lev! I can't see you, but it seems as if you weren't happy.

KRASNÓV. What's there to be happy about?

ARKHÍP. Why are you so sad? What's your sorrow?

KRASNÓV. It's my sorrow, grandfather, mine. My very own. It's for me to judge of it.

ARKHÍP. Well, as you choose! It's your sorrow, and for you to bear. [*Pause*] If I say anything, you know I'm not your enemy; if you scold me, there's no harm in it. I've lived longer than you, and I've seen more sorrow; maybe what I say will be good for you.

KRASNÓV. It isn't the kind of affair, grandfather, that needs advice! You can't tell me anything.

ARKHÍP. You're foolish, foolish! How do you know? Are you wiser than the rest of us?

KRASNÓV. Please stop. I can't discuss with you. What do you want? *Strikes the spoon against the bowl angrily.* LUKÉRYA *enters, places a bowl of mush on the table, and goes out.*

ARKHÍP. Your wife is wiser than you, really wiser.

KRASNÓV. If she were wise she'd obey her husband.

ARKHÍP. Not necessarily! One can't be on one's guard every minute! Don't you hold anger for every little thing. One wrong--is no wrong; and two wrongs--a half wrong; it takes three wrongs to make a whole wrong.

KRASNÓV. What wrongs! All wrongs aren't the same. For some wrongs strangling would be mild.

ARKHÍP. What makes you so fierce? Nowadays, they don't hang a man even for highway robbery.

KRASNÓV. I can't even eat my food.

ARKHÍP. You have a terrible temper! I began to talk about your wife; that wasn't just for the sake of saying something. She came to her senses before you did. [KRASNÓV *listens*] "Grandfather Arkhíp," says she, "put in a word for me to my husband! I love him," says she, "but I'm afraid of his temper. He seems to think me bad without any reason. I wouldn't exchange him for any one," says she. "I'd try to please him in every way, just so he forgives me and doesn't get angry."

KRASNÓV. Is that true?



ARKHÍP. Have you gone absolutely crazy? Do you think I'd turn liar in my old age? She'd have told you herself; she wants to bow down to you but, you see, she's ashamed, and then she's afraid.

KRASNÓV. [*Rising*] Grandfather Arkhíp, understand me! You know how I love her, there's no need telling! Until this happened, we lived together very comfortably; you all saw how I simply doted on her. Now that this gentleman has come I see that he talks in too free and easy a way with her; and that made me angry. Would you believe me, I didn't know what I was doing or saying. When she went to him, I waited half an hour--she didn't return; I waited an hour--she didn't return; I became furious; my very teeth began to chatter. Here I was imagining all sorts of things! Maybe I'm doing her wrong, am unjust to her; maybe she meant nothing; but what was there to do? I'm consumed with a fire, absolutely consumed, I wronged her, I admit; but was it easy for me? If you'd told me that she'd just died--I don't know what I'd do with myself, but it would be easier; then no one could take her from me. [*Weeps*] Some want money or reputation, but I need nothing except her love. Give me the choice: Here, Krasnóv, you can have gold-mines and royal castles, if you'll only give up your wife; or here, you can have a roofless mud hut, all sorts of hard work, but you may live with your wife. I won't utter a sound. I'll carry water on my back, just to be with her always. So listen, grandfather! Is it strange that with my hot temper I hurt her? If there's no love, then there's no anger. But you tell me that she herself wants to bow down to me! Such happiness can't come to me even in a dream. Certainly that is a load off my shoulders. It seems as though I'd just been born into the world! Thank you, grandfather Arkhíp! I was a dead man and you brought me to life again! I had such thoughts in my head that I can't make up for them by praying all my life. The devil was surely near me. Not only did he whisper in my ear, but--it's a sin to say it--*[in a low voice]* he might have made me raise my arm.

ARKHÍP. What! At whom?

KRASNÓV. Well, what's past is past. God preserve me from such torment in the future! I wouldn't wish such for my enemy.

ARKHÍP. You'd better calm your heart!

KRASNÓV. Ah, grandfather! I'd be glad to, but one can't restrain oneself. All at once your eyes become clouded, your head whirls, it seems as if some one were gripping your heart with his hand and you can think only of misfortune and sin. You walk about as if half crazed, and see nothing all around you. But now when your anger has calmed down, then you're at ease, as if nothing had happened. [LUKÉRYA comes in and takes the bowl from the table] Where's Tatyána Danílovna?

LUKÉRYA. She's there, in the kitchen.

KRASNÓV. Why in the kitchen? What is she doing there? The kitchen is no place for her to sit in! Call her in here.

LUKÉRYA goes out.

AFÓNIA. [*In a low voice to ARKHÍP*] Grandfather, will she bow down to brother's feet or not? If not, then I'll leave.

ARKHÍP. As they please, that's not our business!

*Enter TATYÁNA and LUKÉRYA.*

## SCENE V

KRASNÓV, TATYÁNA, LUKÉRYA, ARKHÍP, and AFÓNIA

TATYÁNA. Did you call me?

KRASNÓV. Yes, because the kitchen is no fit place for you to sit in.

ARKHÍP. I have spoken to him, Tatyána; now do as you like yourself.

TATYÁNA. Lev Rodionych! If I've done you any wrong whatever, please pardon me. If you wish it, I'll bow down to your feet.

KRASNÓV. No, why should you? I can feel it without your doing that. I could never allow you to do that--to bow down before me! What kind of man would I be then?

TATYÁNA. I'm willing to do anything, only do not be angry with me.

KRASNÓV. I need nothing but your word. You gave your word--that's enough; it's my duty to believe you.

TATYÁNA. Then you're not angry with me?

KRASNÓV. Not at all! I'm not a man of polished manners; in my excitement I stormed--but don't take it ill of me; I did it because I was fond of you.

LUKÉRYA. Oh, stop! Who could take it ill of you?

TATYÁNA. I've already forgotten it. Your words didn't hurt me so much as that you didn't even look at me to-day.

ARKHÍP. Well, now they've made up! What's the use of thrashing over old scandals! Now kiss, as you should. Now everything will go on as it ought.

TATYÁNA. We won't fuss over that, grandfather. I'll be very glad to. I wanted to long ago, but I didn't know how it would please Lev Rodionych.

KRASNÓV. If it's a pleasure to you, it's a double one for me! [*They kiss each other.*]

LUKÉRYA. I've always marvelled, Lev Rodionych, to see how sister loves you.

KRASNÓV. What's there to marvel at?

LUKÉRYA. I know her, Lev Rodionych, better than you do. She's of a quiet temperament and can't tell you everything; but you just ought to know what her real feelings are.

KRASNÓV. That makes it more pleasant still.

LUKÉRYA. She would have liked to tell you how much she loved you; but she's so timid that she can't.

KRASNÓV. [*To his wife*] Why are you timid with me? I'm only an ordinary man.

LUKÉRYA. We are so naturally.

KRASNÓV. [*To his wife*] Then be kind enough not to be afraid of me in the future. That would trouble my conscience. Am I a bogie?

TATYÁNA. I'll not be afraid of you any more, Lev Rodionych; I'll love you.

LUKÉRYA. Other women would make you all sorts of promises that they didn't mean a bit, but my sister--she's different.

KRASNÓV. Now I can understand you. There were times when I didn't know just how to approach you--whether you'd be pleased or not!

TATYÁNA. You always please me.

AFÓNIA. Come, Grandfather Arkhíp, let's go out on the street!

ARKHÍP. As you wish; come on! Now, thank God, we again have peace and love. It's good when there's agreement in the house! It's good, children, good! [*Going out*] The demon has vanished under the earth, and God walks on the earth! [*Goes out.*]

LUKÉRYA. I just looked in here and now I must go somewhere else. [*Goes out.*]

## SCENE VI

KRASNÓV and TATYÁNA

KRASNÓV. [*Sitting down on the bench*] Ah, Tatyána Danílovna, if God would only grant that we might live our entire lives in such harmony as now!

TATYÁNA. [*Sitting down beside him*] We will.

KRASNÓV. If you were always so kind, you could fairly twist me round your finger. You can do anything with me by kindness, Tatyána Danílovna.

TATYÁNA. [*Placing her hand on his shoulder*] I don't need anything from you; I'm satisfied with everything. But don't think ill of me. Why were you so jealous?

KRASNÓV. [*Embracing her*] So you were offended! [*Looking at her lovingly*] You're my dear! Whatever is dear to one he guards. Why, you're dearer to me than everything in the world! What a wife you are! Who else has such a one? You're the envy of the whole city--don't I see that? Who would want to lose such a wife? In the first place, it's just like tearing a piece out of his heart; and secondly with their taunts and reproaches they would give me no peace, drive me wild. I must tell you, I love you more than my soul, and I had no intention of abusing you, but--how can I explain it?--I can't help having notions.

TATYÁNA. Don't have them.

KRASNÓV. That's all over now.

TATYÁNA. [*Kindly*] Don't you insult me by watching me!

KRASNÓV. I tell you that's all past! Give me a good hard kiss! [*They kiss each other*] That's right! Now tell me why you love me? How can you be so attached to me?

TATYÁNA. I just love you, that's all.

KRASNÓV. No, do tell me! It does me good to hear it from you. I want to know what there is in me that could make such a beauty fall in love with me. Did I please you by my wit or by something else?

TATYÁNA. By everything. Who could say anything bad of you? Everybody knows you're a good man.

KRASNÓV. And what else?

TATYÁNA. You're very kind, and you don't begrudge me anything.

KRASNÓV. That's the talk! [*Embraces her fervently and kisses her*] Well, love me still more and then I'll be still kinder. What are you frowning at? Did I muss you a little?

TATYÁNA. You're holding me too tight.

KRASNÓV. Oh, for the Lord's sake! I just can't help it! I squeeze you the way I love you. It's right from the heart, no humbug. I don't suppose you're made of sugar; you won't fall to pieces.

TATYÁNA. That's all right.

KRASNÓV. I know you didn't mean anything. What's there to complain of! No need to get angry at such treatment! Isn't that so?

TATYÁNA. You know yourself, why ask!

KRASNÓV. Such is life with a good woman! Peaches and cream! Simply lovely! Nothing on earth is better! What is the reason that you're so precious to us men?

TATYÁNA. I don't know.

KRASNÓV. It's the work of Providence--truly, of Providence! It's beyond our understanding! We know one thing, that--if you're attached to your wife, that's enough. If you're once attached, then that's all. Now that we're friends, the house might burn down over my head. [*Kisses her*] To-day I'll go and collect some money, and tomorrow I'll buy you a new outfit.

TATYÁNA. What for? You don't need to.

KRASNÓV. If I say I'll buy it, then that's my affair. So I do need to buy it. You attend to your business; comfort your husband! And I'll attend to mine. [*Looking at his watch*] Oh, there's lots of time! I'd better go! I wish I didn't have to leave you.

TATYÁNA. Don't go!

KRASNÓV. Don't you really want me to go? Don't act spoiled! Business before pleasure! If I don't make the collection to-day, I can't get my money for a whole week. It's so far to go, too! I wish he'd-- Why, it's on the other side of the river! It'll take an hour; confound him! [*Takes his cap*] So you don't want me to go?

TATYÁNA. Of course not!

KRASNÓV. Oh, what a woman you are! [*Embraces her*] I know your kind, and very well too! You just wait for me an hour, you'll live through it! [*Kisses her*] Good-by! Otherwise I'd really be bound to stay with you. You women were created for man's temptation in this world! [*Starts off*].

TATYÁNA. Come back soon!

KRASNÓV. I'll be back 'fore you can count ten! Speaking seriously, I can't return within an hour. [*He goes out*].

## SCENE VII

TATYÁNA *alone*

TATYÁNA. [*As soon as her husband goes*] Well, good-by! At last he's gone! I'm unfortunate, unfortunate! They say one ought to love one's husband; but how can I love him? He's vulgar, uneducated--and he fondles me as a bear would! Sits there--and swaggers like a peasant; and I have to pretend to love him, to humor him; how disgusting! I'd give anything on earth not to have to do that. But how can I help it! I have to submit to one I don't love! [*Silence*] I wonder where everybody is? Here I am all alone! Such loneliness! [*Sits down*]

*at the window*] Even the streets are deserted, and there's no one to look at. Where's my sister? [*Sings softly.*

"O, mother I'm sad! Sad, my lady! My heart is cast down, Cast down and aching; My beloved knows not How my heart is bleeding."

## SCENE VIII

TATYÁNA *and* LUKÉRYA

LUKÉRYA. What, is he gone?

TATYÁNA. Yes.

LUKÉRYA. Far?

TATYÁNA. Across the river.

LUKÉRYA. Will he be long?

TATYÁNA. He said, not sooner than an hour.

LUKÉRYA. Now you might run over. I was just there--he's waiting. He leaves to-day.

TATYÁNA. Surely not to-day? How can that be, Lusha, my dear? He didn't tell me. If I could only see him!

LUKÉRYA. Take my kerchief and cover yourself all up with it. It's so dark outside that no one will know you.

TATYÁNA. You think it'll be all right?

LUKÉRYA. If you're afraid of the wolf don't go into the woods. It isn't far, you can run over in a minute. But don't stay too long!

TATYÁNA. No, no, of course I shan't. [*Puts the kerchief on.*



LUKÉRYA. You'd better be watching out! God forbid that Lev Rodionych should return first. What should I do then! Shall I say that you went for some thread to a neighbor? It'll be lucky if he believes it. What did you say to him when you were alone?

TATYÁNA. What did I say--I don't know; and what I'm doing now--I can't understand.

LUKÉRYA. Well, run along! run along!

TATYÁNA *goes out.*

## SCENE IX

LUKÉRYA *and later* AFÓNIA

LUKÉRYA. [*At the window*] Just look at her! She's flying like an arrow. Who'd scheme for her if I didn't? She's a pretty girl, only she hasn't any sense, and that's bad. She has to be taught everything; she has to be looked after as though she were a small child. If I hadn't advised her to make up with her husband, what would have happened? Quarrel and abuse. She probably wouldn't have wanted to give in; then there'd have been a continual squabble in the house and scandal among the neighbors. But now she can do as she likes; everything will be smoothed over. *Enter* AFÓNIA.

AFÓNIA. Where is Tatyána? Where is she, where is she?

LUKÉRYA. What do you want her for?

AFÓNIA. I need her. Tell me, where? Tell me, where?

LUKÉRYA. Probably in the garden.

AFÓNIA. Why are you fooling me? For once in your life tell the truth! Has she gone? Speak, has she gone?

LUKÉRYA. Maybe she has gone.

AFÓNYA. Did she just slip out of the gate?

LUKÉRYA. Probably it was she. Wasn't it for thread she went? She's been wanting to run over to the neighbor's for some time.

AFÓNYA. For thread?

LUKÉRYA. Well, yes, for thread.

AFÓNYA. You lie, lie!

LUKÉRYA. Leave me alone! Why are you worrying me? Why did you leave grandfather?

AFÓNYA. That's none of your business. I know where she went. You're devils. You've deceived brother. I saw it long ago in your eyes; in your eyes flames flickered, devilish flames!

LUKÉRYA. My, but you're a malicious imp!

AFÓNYA. You just wait, just wait! You'll get sick of deceiving us; I'll show you up.

LUKÉRYA. Don't threaten! We're not afraid of you.

AFÓNYA. [*With tears*] Heavens! My God! What's all this? What a man it is they're deceiving before his very eyes! [*Runs out.*]

## ACT IV

### TABLEAU I

*A street before PROKÓFYEVNA's house. Twilight*

### SCENE I

ULYÁNA *and* PROKÓFYEVNA *come out of the gate*

PROKÓFYEVNA. What is it, Ulyana! What is it! How is it possible! Don't think of such a thing! You just imagined it. Believe me, you just imagined it.

ULYÁNA. Say what you like about imagining! Thank Heaven, I'm not blind yet. Not to recognize her! Why, I'd pick her out of a thousand by her dress. We have only one style for our clothes; on holidays we don't wear the clothes she does on week-days. You and I were just coming out of the door, and she was just going in to see him.

PROKÓFYEVNA. I tell you it's a mistake. It's true, she isn't without faults. There's a woman here who comes to him, and looks like her, but it isn't she. What's that to me! Wouldn't I tell you? But if it isn't true, then why talk nonsense?

ULYÁNA. You're just helping them out.

PROKÓFYEVNA. Don't tell wrong stories, Ulyana; don't tell wrong stories!

ULYÁNA. But where's the wrong, Prokofyevna! She's equal to it; because I know her. It's too bad brother has given her so much freedom. I wouldn't have thought of saying such a thing of another, but it isn't a sin to say it of her. If not to-day then to-morrow she'll begin to raise trouble that will never come to an end. She'll hoodwink brother. If you only knew how she's insulted me.

PROKÓFYEVNA. Is that so?

ULYÁNA. May I die in my tracks if she didn't! She's changed brother so that now he fairly growls at me. "I won't have anything to do with you," says he. That's the sort she is! Just you wait, my dear! I'm not like some.

PROKÓFYEVNA. That's enough for you! What's the good of your mixing in! She's the mistress in her house, and you are in yours.

ULYÁNA. To the deuce with her! I've nothing to do with her. But it hurts me, Prokófyeвна, that she upsets brother, and estranges him from his whole family.

PROKÓFYEVNA. Well, that's your business; you'll settle accounts somehow. Are you going home now?

ULYÁNA. Yes, my dear; it's supper-time. My boss is probably storming and pacing the floor by now. Come and see us!

PROKÓFYEVNA. Good-by.

*They kiss each other. PROKÓFYEVNA goes out through the gate.*

## SCENE II

ULYÁNA and later AFÓNIA

ULYÁNA. Who knows whether Prokófyeвна was lying or not. You can't believe her; she's a rogue. I'd give a lot to find out for certain if she's now with the gentleman or not. Will it hurt to wait? If she stays long, my husband will make such a fuss that I won't forget it for a month of Sundays. You're lucky that I'm in a hurry, or I'd watch out for you. [*Goes out. She meets AFÓNIA*] Afónia, where are you going?

AFÓNIA. Go away, leave me alone! Leave me alone!

ULYÁNA. Is Tatyána at home?

AFÓNIA. No, she's gone.

ULYÁNA. Then she's here at the gentleman's; I just saw her.

AFÓNIA. At the gentleman's? Heavens! Have people no sense of shame!

ULYÁNA. I've got to run home; I'll tell my husband, then I'll call at your house. [*Going away*] Wait, brother, wait! I'll get even with you for your insults! [*Goes out.*]

AFÓNIA. Heavens! I haven't any strength! How is one to live in such a world? This is a punishment for our sins! Left her husband for a stranger! She was sitting in a corner starving; we took care of her, gave her fine clothes bought with hard-earned money! Brother denies himself, denies his family, and gives her cash to buy rags, and now she and a stranger are cursing us for the shelter we gave her. It makes me sick! Why don't I die! I'm shedding tears of blood. We've warmed a viper in our bosom. [*Leans against the fence*] I'll wait, I'll wait. I'll tell her everything, everything that's seething in my heart.

BABÁYEV and TATYÁNA come out of the gate; AFÓNIA hides behind a corner.

### SCENE III

AFÓNIA, BABÁYEV, and TATYÁNA

BABÁYEV. What are you afraid of? There's not a soul on the street. Why are you in such a hurry? It isn't half an hour since you came.

TATYÁNA. No, no! Somehow I feel uneasy.

BABÁYEV. I don't understand why you are so afraid. Well, your husband will scold and that's all.

TATYÁNA. I was late the time before; how terribly he acted; I thought he'd kill me. He makes me afraid, frightfully afraid! [*Silence*] Shall you return soon?

BABÁYEV. In a week, in ten days at most.

TATYÁNA. Oh, how has this come about! Oh, if we had what we wanted: you'd go to the country--and I'd go there too; you'd go to St. Petersburg--and I'd follow you.

BABÁYEV. I asked you to come with me.

TATYÁNA. It's all right for you. You're a free man, while I'm no better than a captive. That's my trouble. I've thought more than once how I could run away to you.

BABÁYEV. That's good.

TATYÁNA. Just think how unfortunate my life is: in order to have a little pleasure I have to deceive my husband. It's all deceit and deceit! But what's the use of deceiving? It disgusts me; it's not in my character. If my husband guessed that I didn't love him, then he'd kill me with scolding and reproaches. I very well understand that I can't be a real wife to him, and that I'm not wanted by his family; and they'd rather I were anywhere else; but who can I explain that to, who'd understand it! Just see how rough and stern they are, and I'm not used to sternness. What a life, when there's no freedom!

BABÁYEV. Tánya, I'll tell you what to do! Tell him outright that you don't want to live with him. You and your sister rent a house, and I'll send you the money.

TATYÁNA. That's impossible. Not to be thought of! Do you think he'd let me go? He doesn't care if I die--so long as I'm with him--before his eyes. It would be better for me to leave quietly.

BABÁYEV. Very well, leave quietly.

TATYÁNA. Really, I don't know. We're all brave when it's a matter of words, but when it comes to action, then you lose your reason, especially such as I. Do as you wish. I'll do as you advise me. If you love me, you won't want to cause my ruin.

BABÁYEV. Of course not.

TATYÁNA. They're right when they say that all women are insane; I married of my own accord--nobody forced me--so now I ought to live according to my vows; but I'm drawn to you, and want to escape from my home. It's all your fault, Valentin Pávlich; home has become

disgusting to me because of you. If it weren't for you, I'd manage to live somehow with my husband; at least I shouldn't know this sorrow.

BABÁYEV. A fine life! You have much to regret!

TATYÁNA. But is my life agreeable now? Of course I ought not to blame you much, because I'm entirely to blame myself. You have nothing to worry about! Yours is a man's affair, and no one will condemn you; but we have to suffer for every single thing. But what's to be done! It's too late to argue who's in the right and who's to blame; but I guess this affair had to happen. But don't you deceive me; come back!

BABÁYEV. Oh, stop; what do you mean! Certainly I'll come back.

TATYÁNA. [*Kissing him*] Good-by! It's time for me to go! My, how I'm shivering! My legs fairly totter under me.

BABÁYEV. Calm yourself a little. Come, I'll walk along the bank with you; you'll get home in time. [*They go out.*]

AFÓNIA. So this, brother Lev, is what you deserted us for! Just look, and enjoy it! You act like a wild beast to those who love you with their whole soul. I'm burning up like a candle, I'm wasting away because of love and pity for you, and yet I haven't once heard a kind word from you. You doted on your wife, and see what she's up to, the wretch! No, there's no truth in the world, none. [*Goes out.*]

## TABLEAU II

*Same room as in ACT III*

## SCENE I

LUKÉRYA *enters with a candle and places it on a table; later AFÓNIA comes in.*

LUKÉRYA. Why doesn't Tánya return! It's high time, She's insane! She's just glad that she got out of here; she doesn't realize that suddenly, when you least expect it, her husband may return. Here I am on pins and needles. When I hear any one at the door my heart almost stops. Every minute seems a year. Afónya torments me too. I wonder where he went. Isn't he spying on her? Of course I can find ten replies to every word he says; yet he may rouse suspicion. Ah, some one is coming! Is it possible that it's Lev! Heaven forbid! I do believe I'll die. [AFÓNYA comes in, and, groaning, lies down on the stove-couch] Where have you been?

AFÓNYA. Never you mind.

LUKÉRYA. Speak, it won't hurt your voice.

AFÓNYA. I don't want to talk to you.

LUKÉRYA. [*Caressingly*] Don't you feel well, Afónya?

AFÓNYA. Oh, Heavens! don't touch me, don't touch! You can't fool me.

LUKÉRYA. I don't in the least wish to fool you.

AFÓNYA. You fooled brother, but you can't fool me. No, no!

LUKÉRYA. I don't understand a bit what you're talking about.

AFÓNYA. Oh, I'm exhausted! Go away: out of my sight. Don't torment me.

LUKÉRYA. You feel worse because you don't appreciate kindness.

AFÓNYA. I don't need it! I don't need anything.

LUKÉRYA. Well, then just lie on your couch. Do you think I want anything from you? I only spoke out of sympathy. [*Silence*] What a senseless girl; how senseless! I'm all a-tremble.

KRASNÓV comes in.



SCENE II

The same and KRASNÓV

KRASNÓV. Well, here I am. What a trick I've played! The joke's on Tatyána Danílovna. "Expect me in an hour," I said, and here I am in half an hour, so she'd be surprised. I was invited to tea, but I didn't stay. "Do you think I want tea," I said, "when I have a young wife at home who's waiting for me!" But where is she?

LUKÉRYA. I don't know. Somewhere around. Isn't she in the garden?

KRASNÓV. Send her in right away, I want to give her a present for her kindness to-day.

LUKÉRYA. Right away, right away. [*Goes out*]

KRASNÓV. [*Paces up and down in silence; then speaks to himself*] Fifty-seven rubles, six and three, nine to Peter Ananyev. [*Pause*] Has she disappeared? [*Paces up and down in silence*] Afónya, do you know where my wife went?

AFÓNYA. Don't know. Oh, I feel sick.

KRASNÓV. What's she dallying around for? [*Goes to the door*] Tatyána Danílovna! Lukérya Danílovna! They don't even answer. What does that mean now? Afanásy, where's my wife?

AFÓNYA. Are you lonesome without her? She'll come, don't be afraid. No matter where she's strolling, she'll come home.

KRASNÓV. [*At the door*] Tatyána Danílovna!

ULYÁNA *comes in.*

SCENE III

*The same and* ULYÁNA

KRASNÓV. Who's that? Is that you, Ulyana?

ULYÁNA. Yes, brother.

KRASNÓV. What do you want?

ULYÁNA. Just to call on you, brother, as a relative should.

KRASNÓV. I'm in no great need of your calls.

ULYÁNA. My feelings, brother, are different from yours; I can't help remembering my kindred. Where's your bride?

KRASNÓV. She seems to have gotten lost somewhere here. I keep calling her, but can't raise her.

ULYÁNA. Maybe she's far away from here, so she can't hear your call

KRASNÓV. What do you mean by "far"? I tell you she's at home.

ULYÁNA. Who said that? Wasn't it her sister, Lukérya Danílovna?

KRASNÓV. Yes, maybe it was she.

ULYÁNA. And you believed her. Oh, you're simple, simple!

KRASNÓV. Go away, sister! Keep out of trouble!

ULYÁNA. Come to your senses; what are you shouting for? I saw with my own eyes how she went to the gentleman.

KRASNÓV. So that's the kind of family I have! My luck sticks in their throats. You're a barbarian, you jealous woman. To kill you would be small penalty for your cursed tongue! [*Raises his arm to strike her.*]

AFÓNIA. [*Getting up from the couch*] Quieter, you; quieter! What are you making a row for?

KRASNÓV. I'll hang you both on the same poplar!

AFÓNIA. [*Shielding his sister*] Don't touch her, don't lay a finger on her! She's telling the truth, the absolute truth.

KRASNÓV. You lie, you're jealous, both of you! It isn't an hour, I tell you; it isn't an hour since we sat here, kissing and embracing, looking into each other's eyes and couldn't get enough of it.

ULYÁNA. Heavens, he's out of his head! You've lost your mind! Go and see for yourself if you don't believe us.

KRASNÓV. [*At the door*] Lukéria Danílovna!

ULYÁNA. Call, call; she ran over there, too. *Enter* KÚRITSYN.

#### SCENE IV

*The same and* KÚRITSYN

KÚRITSYN. What are you yelling for, are you teaching your wife? That's good for her, so she won't run away from home.

KRASNÓV. But where is she? Where is she? Spare me; you're tearing me to pieces.

KÚRITSYN. She'll come back; she doesn't spend the night there.

ULYÁNA. You'd better calm yourself, brother; sit down.

KÚRITSYN. We'll all wait for her, the lady.

KRASNÓV. She petted me, fondled me, pressed me close to her heart.

TATYÁNA *enters quietly and looks around.*

SCENE V

*The same and* TATYÁNA

KRASNÓV. Where have you been? Have you had a good time? Speak, don't hide it! Why are you silent? Speak! You see: everybody has come to view my shame.

ULYÁNA. Why don't you talk, you shameless creature! You think you can get out of it by silence? We saw how you went over there and came back.

KÚRITSYN. Trample on her, brother, trample on her hard; she'll talk.

KRASNÓV. Don't torment me! Tell me, what am I to think of you? What? Are these people lying? Then I'll turn 'em out, head over heels! Or maybe they're telling the truth? Deliver me from my sinful thoughts! Tell me, which of you is my enemy? Were you there?

TATYÁNA. What's the use of lying, since you've all seen me. I was there.

KRASNÓV. [*Beside himself*] There, good people, there--that's how it is! What shall I do now? What can I--pardon me, a sinner, for doing you wrong! How other men's wives behave, I don't know; but this is the way in our family.

ULYÁNA. Now we'll watch your pride. How will you show yourself among people now, shameless woman? You've disgraced our brother, disgraced him!

AFÓNYA. Viper, viper!

KÚRITSYN. What's the use of looking at her! She ought to pay the penalty right off.

*ARKHÍP comes in.*

SCENE VI

*The same and ARKHÍP*

ARKHÍP. What punishment has God sent us? Why so much noise? Is there a fire? You know I can't see.

ULYÁNA. The sweet bride has been up to mischief! If I were in brother's place, I'd take her and crush her.

KRASNÓV. Away, away! Don't, don't anybody lay a finger on her! I'm her husband, so I'm her judge. Now tell me, why did you do it? Why did you go astray? Were you drawn into the net of sin? Perhaps you didn't dream of such a thing of your own accord. Perhaps you didn't expect it? Or did you rush into sin of your own free will? How about you now? Do you repent or not? Or maybe you think that was the right thing to do? Speak! Why are you silent? Are you abashed before people, or are you happy? Are you ashamed, or are you glad of what you've done? Are you made of stone? Roll at every one's feet, crucify yourself! Or will you tell me outright that you did it to spite me! I want to know what to do with you--spare you, or kill you. Did you love me at least a little bit; is there any reason for my sparing you? Or did you cheat me all the time? Did I only dream of happy days?

TATYÁNA. [*With tears*] I'm guilty, Lev Rodionych. I deceived you. I never loved you, and don't love you now. You'd better leave me, rather than have both of us suffer. Better that we part!

KRASNÓV. How part? Where shall we go? No, you lie! Whom shall I punish for my shame? You say you don't love me, and never did, while I went around town and boasted that a beautiful lady loved me. How shall I take revenge for this insult? Go in the kitchen! You can't be a wife, so be a cook! You couldn't walk hand in hand with your husband, so fetch water for him. You have aged me in a day, and now

I'll make sport of your beauty! Every day that the fair sun rises, you'll get nothing from me but slaps and curses all your life; maybe some time when I'm angry, I'll kill you like a dog. Some one give me a knife!

TATYÁNA *runs out.*

AFÓNIA. Brother! brother! She's going, she's going away.

KRASNÓV. She won't escape me!

AFÓNIA. She's going to the gentleman. I heard them planning to go away to the country.

KRASNÓV. Who'll take her from me, if I won't give her up? Who in the whole world is strong enough to take her from me? If they take her they'll have to tear my arms off.

AFÓNIA. [*Looking out of the door*] Brother, she's getting ready! She's leaving, brother!

KRASNÓV. [*Pushing him aside*] Stand aside! A woman leaves her husband only for the grave, for nowhere else! [*Goes out. The cry of TATYÁNA is heard: "Let me go!" He comes back*] Bind me! I've killed her.

AFÓNIA. Serves her right.

ULYÁNA. Ah, my dear! What will happen to you now?

ARKHÍP. Where is he? Where is he? [AFÓNIA *leads him*] What have you done? Who gave you the right? Is she guilty only towards you? First of all, she is guilty before God; and you, a proud and willful man, have taken it upon yourself to judge? You couldn't wait for the merciful judgment of God; so now go to the judgment of man, yourself! Bind him!

KÚRITSYN. He didn't expect it, he didn't foresee it, but he fell into sorrow! Sorrow walks not through the woods, but among men.

