

THE FRUITS OF ENLIGHTENMENT  
Comedy in Four Acts

by Leo Tolstoy

Translated from the Original Russian and edited by Leo Wiener  
Assistant Professor of Slavic Languages at Harvard University

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DRAMATIS PERSONA

Leonid Fedorovich Zvezdintsev, an ex-lieutenant of the Horse-Guards, owner of twenty-four thousand desyatfnas in various Governments. A well-preserved man, about sixty years of age, – a meek, pleasant gentleman. Believes in spiritualism and likes to amuse others with his stories.

Anna Pavlovna Zvezdintsev, his wife, a plump woman who is trying to appear young. Worrying about worldly proprieties, despising her husband, and blindly trusting her doctor. An irritable lady.

Betsy, their daughter, a worldly girl, about twenty years of age, with loose manners, imitating men, in eye-glasses. A coquette and a giggler. Speaks very rapidly and very distinctly, compressing her lips, like a foreigner.

Vasili Leonidych, their son, twenty-five years old, a bachelor of law, without any special occupation, a member of a bicycle, a racing, and a kennel club. A young man enjoying excellent health and imperturbable self-confidence. Speaks aloud and by jerks. He is either entirely in earnest, almost gloomy, or noisily vivacious, and laughs loud.

Professor Aleksyey Vladimirovich Krugosvyetlov, a savant, about fifty years of age, with quiet, pleasantly self-confident manners and a similarly hesitating and chanting speech. Likes to talk. He treats with gentle contempt those who do not agree with him. Smokes much. A lean, mobile man.

Doctor, about forty, a healthy, stout, red-faced man. Loud and coarse. All the time smiles with self-satisfaction.

Marya Konstantinovna, a maiden of about twenty, a graduate of a conservatory, teacher of music, with tufts of hair over her brow, in an exaggeratedly fashionable attire, flattering and easily confused.

Petrishchev, about twenty-eight years of age, bachelor of philology, in search of an activity, member of the same societies as Vasili Leonidych, and, in addition, of the society for promoting chintz and calico evening parties. Bald, quick in his movements and speech, and

extremely polite.

Baroness, a distinguished lady about fifty, indolent, speaks without intonations.

Princess, a lady of the world, guest.

Young Princess, a young lady of the world, finical, guest. Countess, an ancient lady, barely moving about, with false hair and teeth.

Grossmann, dark-complexioned, of a Jewish type, very mobile, nervous, speaks very loud.

Marya Vasilevna Tolbukhin, a very stout lady, very dignified, rich, and good-natured ; acquainted with all remarkable people, past and present. Speaks very fast, trying to outtalk everybody else. Smokes.

Baron Klingen (Coco), a graduate of the St. Petersburg University, a yunker of the chamber, serving with an embassy. Very correct, and therefore composed and calmly gay.

A Lady.

A Gentleman (without words).

Sergy<sup>y</sup> Ivanovich Sakhatov, about fifty years old, exassociate minister, an elegant gentleman, of broad European culture; has no special occupation, but is interested in everything. Holds himself with dignity and even somewhat severely.

Fedor Ivanych, valet, about sixty years old, an educated man, fond of culture. Misuses his eye-glasses and handkerchief, which he unfolds slowly. Interested in politics. An intelligent and kind man.

Grigori, lackey, twenty-eight years old, fine-looking, dissipated, envious, and bold.

Yakov, butler, about forty, zealous, good-natured, living only for his family interests in the village.

Semen, peasant of the pantry, about twenty years old, a healthy, fresh country lad, blond, without a beard, quiet, smiling.

Coachman, thirty-five years old, a fop, wearing moustache only, coarse and determined.

Old Cook, forty-five years old, shaggy, unshaven, bloated, yellow, trembling, in a torn nankeen summer overcoat, dirty trousers, and torn boots ; speaks hoarsely ; the words escape from him as though over an impediment.

Woman Cook, great talker, dissatisfied, about thirty years old.

Porter, ex-soldier.

Tanya, chambermaid, about nineteen years old, energetic, strong, merry, and quickly passing from one mood to another. Squeaks in moments of strong excitement from joy.

First Peasant, about sixty years old ; has been an elder, thinks that he knows how to treat gentlemen, and likes to hear himself talk.

Second Peasant, about forty-five years old, rude and truthful; does not like to say more than is necessary. Semen's father.

Third Peasant, about seventy years old, in bast shoes, nervous, restless, in haste; easily embarrassed, and covering up his embarrassment by talking.

First Footman of the countess, an old-fashioned old man, with a lackey's pride.

Second Footman, huge, robust, rude.

Shop Messenger, in a blue sleeveless coat, with a fresh ruddy face. Speaks firmly, impressively, and clearly.

Action takes place in the capital, in Zvezdfntsev's house.

## THE FRUITS OF ENLIGHTENMENT

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### ACT I.

The stage represents the antechamber of a rich house in Moscow. Three doors: the outer, into Leonid Fedorovich's private cabin, and into Vasili Leonidych's room. A staircase leading to the upper rooms; back of it, a passage to the butler's pantry.

Scene I. Grigori (a young, handsome lackey, looking in the mirror and primping himself).

Grigori. I am sorry for my moustache. She says a moustache is not good for a lackey. Why ? That you may see that I am a lackey, or else I might look finer than her darling son. Who is he, anyway ? Even though I am without a moustache, he can't come up to me – (Looking in the mirror, smiling.) What a lot of women are after me! But I do not like any of them as much as Tanya – A simple chambermaid, yes, but she is finer than any lady ! (Smiling.) And so sweet! (Listening.) There she is herself! (Smiling.) Just hear her strike the floor with her heels ! Whew!

Scene II. Grigori and Tanya (in fur coat and halfshoes).

Grigori. My respect to Tatyana Makarovna!

Tanya. What, are you looking at yourself? You imagine you are very good-looking !

Grigori. Why, am I not ?

Tanya. Neither good, nor bad-looking, just half and half. What are the furs doing here ?

Grigori. I shall take them away at once, madam. (Takes down a fur coat and covers Tanya with it, embracing her.) Tanya, let me tell you -

Tanya. Go to ! What does this look like ? (Angrily tearing herself away.) I tell you, leave me alone!

Grigori (looking around). Kiss me !

Tanya. What makes you bother me so much ? I will give you a kiss ! - (Raises her hand to strike him.)

Vasili Leonidych (behind the stage a bell is rung, and then a voice is heard). Grigori!

Tanya. Go ! Vasili Leonidych is calling you.

Grigori. He will wait: he has just opened his eyes. Tell me, why do you not love me ?

Tanya. Don't talk about any of your loves! I do not love anybody.

Grigori. It is not so. You love Sem^n. A fine fellow to love! A black-handed peasant of the pantry!

Tanya. Let him be what he may, - but you are envious.

Vasili Leonidych (behind the scene). Grigori!

Grigori. Wait! - What have I to be envious of? You have just begun your education, and see with whom you are keeping company! It would be different if you loved me - Tanya -

Tanya (angrily and sternly). I tell you, you must not expect a thing.

Vasili Leonidych (behind the scene). Grigori!

Grigori. You are dreadfully strict.

Vasili Leonidych (behind the scene, cries stubbornly, evenly, and at the top of his voice). Grigori! Grigori! Grigori! (Tanya and Grigori laugh.)

Grigori. You ought to see the women that have been loving me!  
(Bell.)

Tanya. Go to the master, and leave me alone!

Grigori. You are foolish, when you come to think of it. I am not Semen !

Tanya. Semdn wants to marry, and does not think of foolishness –

Scene III. Grigori, Tanya, and Messenger (carrying a large paper box with a dress).

Messenger. Good morning to you!

Grigori. Good morning. From whom is it ?

Messenger. From Bourdier, with a dress. Here is a note to the lady.

Tanya (taking the note). Sit down here! I will take it in. (Exit.)

Scene IV. Grigori, Messenger, and Vasili Leonidych (putting his head out of the door, in his shirt and slippers).

Vasili LeonIdych. Grigori!

Grigori. Immediately.

Vasili Leonidych. Grigori, do you not hear me ?

Grigori. I have just come in.

Vasili Leonidych. Hot water and tea!

Grigori. Semfn will bring it in a minute.

Vasili Leonidych. What is this? From Bourdier?

Messenger. Yes, sir. (Vasili Leonidych and Grigori exeunt. Bell.)

Scene V. Messenger and Tanya (running in to answer the bell).

Tanya (to the messenger). Wait!

Messenger. That's what I have been doing.

Scene VI. Messenger, Tanya, and Sakhatov (walks in through the door).

Tanya. Pardon me, the lackey has just gone out. But please, let me help you ! (Takes off his fur coat.)

Sakhatov (adjusting his clothes). Is Leonid Fedorovich at home ? Is he up ? (Bell.)

Tanya. Certainly. Long ago.

Scene VII. Messenger, Tanya, Sakhatov, and Doctor (entering).

Doctor (looking for the lackey. Seeing Sakhatov, with familiarity). Ah, my respects to you !

Sakhatov (looking fixedly at him). I think you are the doctor ?

Doctor. I thought you were abroad. Coming to see Leonid Fedorovich?

Sakhatov. Yes. What are you doing here ? Anybody ill ?

Doctor (laughing). Not exactly ill, but, you know – these ladies are in a bad shape. They play cards every day until three o'clock in the morning, and then they take to the wine-glass. The lady is stout and fat, and not so very young, either.

Sakhatov. Do you tell your diagnosis to Anna Pavlovna ? I should think she would not like it.

Doctor (laughing). But it is the truth. They do all these things, and then there is a disorder of the digestive organs, pressure on the liver, the nerves, – and all that rigmarole, and I have to mend them. Lots of trouble with them. (Laughing.) And you ? You are a spiritualist yourself, I think.

Sakhatov. I ? No, I am not a spiritualist myself – Well, my respects to you! (Wants to go, but the doctor stops him.)

Doctor. No, I do not myself absolutely deny, when such a man as Krugosvy^tlov takes part in it. How could I ? A professor, – a European celebrity ! There must be something in it. I should like to take a look at it, but I never have any time, – there is always something else to do.

Sakhatov. Yes, yes. My respects to you! (Walks away, with a light bow.)

Doctor (to Tanya). Is she up ?

Tanya. In the chamber. If you please. (Sakhatov and the doctor go in different directions.)

Scene VIII. Messenger, Tanya, and Fedor Ivanych (entering with a newspaper in his hands).

Fedor Ivanych (to the messenger). What are you doing here ?

Messenger. I am from Bourdier, with a dress and a note. I was told to wait.

Fedor Ivanych. Ah, from Bourdier! (To Tanya.) Who has come ?

Tanya. Sergy<sup>y</sup> Ivanych Sakhdov, and the doctor. They stood here awhile talking all about the spirituality.

Fedor Ivanych (correcting her). About spiritualism.

Tanya. That's what I say, about the spirituality. Did you hear, Fedor Ivanych, how well it all went last time ? (Laughing.) There were raps, and things flew about.

Fedor Ivanych. How do you know ?

Tanya. Lizaveta Leonidovna told me.

Scene IX. Tanya, Fedor Ivanych, Messenger, and Yakov, the butler (running in with a glass of tea).

Yakov (to the messenger). Good morning !

Messenger (sadly). Good morning! (Yakov raps at Vasili Leonidych's door.)

Scene X. The same and Grigori.

Grigori. Let me have it!

Yakov. You have not brought yesterday's glasses back, and the tray is still in Vasili Leonidych's room. I shall be responsible for it.

Grigori. The tray is filled with cigars.

Yakov. Put them elsewhere! I shall have to answer for it.

Grigori. I will bring it, I will.

Yakov. You say you will bring it, but you don't. The other day they asked for it, and I had nothing to serve on.

Grigori. I say I will bring it. What zeal!

Yakov. It is easy for you to say so, but this is the third time I have to serve tea, and get ready for breakfast. I am kept busy all day long. Who in the house has more work to do than I ? And still I am no good!

Grigori. What better could there be ? You are very good!

Tanya. Nobody is good enough for you, but you yourself.

Grigori (to Tanya). Nobody asked you! {Exit.}

Scene XI. Tanya, Yakov, Fedor Ivanych, and Messenger.

Yakov. No, I don't complain— Tatyana Markovna, did the lady not say anything about yesterday ?

Tanya. About the lamp ?

Yakov. God knows how it escaped from my hands. I just began to wipe it off and wanted to put my hand around it, when it jumped out and broke into tiny bits. What a misfortune! It is easy enough for Grigori Mi-khaylych to talk the way he does, for he is a single man, but I have a family — I have to think about everything, and feed them. Work does not trouble me — So she did not say anything? Well, thank God ! — Fedor Ivdnych, have you one spoon or two ?

Fedor Ivanych. One, one! (Reading the newspaper. Yakov exit.)

Scene XII. Tanya, Fedor Ivanych, and Messenger.

Bell is rung. Enter Grigori with tray, and Porter.

Porter (to Grigori). Announce to the master that the peasants from the village are here!

Grigori (pointing to Fedor Ivanych). Tell the valet!

I have no time. (Exit.)

Scene XIII. Tanya, Fedor Ivdnych, Porter, and Messenger.

Tanya. Where are the peasants from ?

Porter. From the Government of Kursk, I think.

Tanya (squeaking). It is they — Semdn's father,— about the land. I will go and meet them. (Running away.)

Scene XIV. Fedor Ivanych, Porter, and Messenger.

Porter. What do you say ? Shall I let them in here or what ? They say they have come in regard to the land, — the master knows.

Fedor Ivanych. Yes, about the purchase of the land.

Yes, yes. He has a guest just now. You tell them to wait.

Porter. Where shall they wait ?

Fedor Ivanych. Let them wait in the courtyard. I will send for them. (Porter exit.)

Scene XV. Fedor Ivanych, Tanya, followed by three peasants, Grigori,

and Messenger.

Tanya. To the right. This way, this way !

Fedor Ivanych. I have ordered you not to let them in.

Grigori. There you have it, hussy !

Tanya. It will not harm, Fedor Ivanych ! They will stand at the very edge.

Fedor Ivanych. They will bring in dirt.

TANYA. They have cleaned their shoes, and I will clean up. (To the peasants.) You stand here!

(Enter the peasants, carrying presents in kerchiefs : white loaves, eggs, towels. They are trying to find something to cross themselves by. Cross themselves at the staircase, bow to Fedor Ivanych, and take a firm stand.)

Grigori (to Fedor Ivanych). Fedor Ivanych! They say that Pironet's half-shoes are the latest fashion, but this fellow has better ones! (Pointing to the Third Peasant in best shoes.)

Fedor Ivanych. You must always make fun of people. (Grigori exit.)

Scene XVI. Tanya, Fedor Ivanych, Messenger, and three peasants.

Fedor Ivanych (rising and walking over to the peasants). So you are from Kursk, and have come in regard to the purchase of the land ?

First Peasant. Yes, sir. It originates, you may take it, in regard to the accomplishment of the land purchase that we are here. Can't you announce us ?

Fedor Ivanych. Yes, yes, I know, I know. Wait here, I will announce you at once. (Exit.)

Scene XVII. Tanya, Messenger, and three peasants. Vasili Leomdych (behind the scene). The peasants look around, not knowing what to do with their presents.

First Peasant. Where, then, so to speak, I do not know what to call it, is the thing to put it on ? Let us do it according to regulations. Can't you let us have a dish, or something ?

Tanya. Immediately, immediately. Let me have them; in the meanwhile I will place them here. (Puts the presents on a small sofa.)

First Peasant. Of what standing, for example, is the worthy one who came up to us ?

Tanya. It is the vally.

First Peasant. That's simple enough, – volly. This means that he is, so to speak, in charge of things– (To Tanya.) And you, for example, are also in the service ?

Tanya. I am a chambermaid. I am myself from Dthnen. I know you and you, only this uncle I do not know. (Pointing to the Third Peasant.)

Third Peasant. These you have recognized, and can't you recognize me ?

Tanya. Are you Efim Antonych ?

First Peasant. In rivalry.

Tanya. And are you Semen's father, Zakhar Trifonych ? , Second Peasant. Correct!

Third Peasant. And I am, you know, Mftri Chilikin. Do you recognize me now ?

Tanya. Now I know you, too.

Second Peasant. Whose are you ?

Tanya. I am the orphan child of Aksinya, the soldier's widow.

First and Third Peasants (in wonderment'). Well!

Second Peasant. Not in vain they say: Pay a penny for a pig, put him in the rye, and he will grow big.

First Peasant. In rivalry. Something like a mam-zelle.

Third Peasant. That's so. 0 Lord !

Vasili Leonidych (rings the bell behind the scene, and then cries). Grigori! Grigori!

First Peasant. Who is disturbing you so much, for example ?

Tanya. This is the young master.

Third Peasant. 0 Lord! He said we had better wait on the outside. (Silence.)

Second Peasant. Is Sem&i going to marry you ?

Tanya. Has he written you about it? (Covers herself with the apron.)

Second Peasant. You see he has! He is not doing right. I see the lad is getting spoiled.

Tanya (lively). No, he is not at all spoiled. Shall I send him to

you ?

Second Peasant. What is the use of sending for him ? There will be plenty of time !

(There are heard the desperate cries of Vasili Leonidych : " Grigori, the devil take you !" )

Scene XVIII. The same and (in the door) Vasili Leonidych (in shirt, putting on his eye-glasses).

Vasili Leonidych. Are they all dead ?

Tanya. He is not here, Vasili Leonidych – I will send him at once. (Goes toward the door.)

Vasili Leonidych. I hear some voices here. Who are these scarecrows ? Eh ?

"The peasants pick up the presents and strike an attitude"

Photogravure from Photograph [Russian Stage Production)

Tanya. These are peasants from the Kursk village, Vasili Leonidych !

Vasili Leonidych (to the messenger). And who is that ? Oh, yes, from Bourdier I

(The peasants bow. Vasili Leonidych pays no attention to them. Grigori meets Tanya at the door. Tanya remains.)

Scene XIX. The same and Grigori.

Vasili Leonidych. I told you the other shoes! I cannot wear these!

Grigori. The others are standing there, too.

Vasili Leonidych. Where ?

Grigori. In the same place.

Vasili Leonidych. You are lying.

Grigori. You will see for yourself. (Vasili Leonidych and Grigori exeunt.)

Scene XX. Tanya, three peasants, and Messenger.

Third Peasant. Maybe, let me say, it is not time now, and we had

better go to our lodging and wait awhile.

Tanya. No, never mind, just wait. I will bring you at once some plates for the presents. (Exit.)

Scene XXL The same, Sakhatov, Leonid Fedorovich, followed by Fedor Ivanych.

(The peasants pick up the presents and strike an attitude.)

Leonid Fedorovich (to the peasants). In a minute, in a minute, just wait! (To the messenger.) And who is this ?

Messenger. From Bourdier.

Leonid Fedorovich. Ah, from Bourdier.

Sakhatov (smiling). I do not deny. But you will admit that, not having seen all that of which you speak, it is hard for one of our kind, who are not initiated in the matter, to believe it.

Leonid Fedorovich. You say you cannot believe it. But we do not even demand faith. We demand that you investigate it. How can I help not believing in this ring ? I received my ring from there.

Sakhatov. From there ? From where ?

Leonid Fedorovich. From the other world. Yes.

Sakhatov (smiling). Very interesting! Very interesting !

Leonid Fedorovich. Granted, you think that I am easily carried away, that I imagine that which is not; but Aleksy Vladimirovich Krugosvytlov is not so easily to be brushed aside, – he is a professor, and he acknowledges all that. Nor is he alone in this. And Crooks ? And Wallace ?

Sakhatov. I do not deny. All I say is that it is very interesting. It would be interesting to know how Krugosvytlov explains it.

Leonid Fedorovich. He has a theory of his own. Come to see us this evening. At first Grossman will – you know he is a famous mind-reader.

Sakhatov. Yes, I have heard of him, but have never had a chance of seeing him.

Leonid Fedorovich. So come ! At first Grossman, and then Kdpchich, and our mediumistic stance – (To Ivanych). Has the messenger come back from Kap-chich ?

Fedor Ivanych. Not yet.

Sakhatov. How am I to find out ?

Fedor Ivanych. Come, come all the same! If Kdp-chicb will not come, we will find another medium. Marya Ignatevna is a medium, not so strong as Kapchich, but still a medium.

Scene XXII. The same and Tanya (coming with the plates for the presents. Listening to the conversation).

Sakhatov (smiling). Yes, yes. Here is a circumstance that puzzles me: why are the mediums always from what we would call the educated class? Both Kapchich and Marya Ignatevna. If it is a special power they possess, it ought to be met with everywhere, even among peasants.

Leonid Fedorovich. And so it is. This occurs quite often: we have a peasant in our house who has proved to be a medium. The other day we called him in during the stance. It was necessary to move a divan, and we had all forgotten about him. He had evidently fallen asleep. And just imagine: our stance was over, Kdpchich awoke, and suddenly we noticed mediumistic manifestations in the other corner of the room, near the peasant, – the table moved.

Tanya (aside). That was when I crawled out from under the table.

Leonid Fedorovich. Apparently he, too, is a medium, – the more so since he resembles Hume in face. Do you remember Hume? The naive blond.

Sakhatov (shrugging his shoulders). I declare! This is very interesting. Then you ought to test him.

Leonid Fedorovich. We are testing him. But he is not the only one. There are no end of mediums. We simply do not know them. Only the other day a sickly old woman moved a stone wall.

Sakhatov. Moved a stone wall?

Leonid Fedorovich. Yes, yes. She was lying in bed and did not at all know that she was a medium. She pressed her hand against the wall, and the wall gave way.

Sakhatov. And did not cave in?

Leonid Fedorovich. And did not cave in.

Sakhatov. Strange— Well, I will be here in the evening.

Leonid Fedorovich. Do come! There will be a stance in any case.

(Sakhatov puts on his overcoat. Leonid Fedorovich sees him out.)

Scene XXIII. The same, without Sakhatov.

Messenger (to Tanya). Tell the lady! Am I to stay here overnight?

Tanya. Wait a little! She is going to drive out with the young lady, and so she will be out soon. (Exit.)

Scene XXIV. The same, without Tdnya.

Leonid Fedorovich (walks over to the peasants. The peasants bow and offer him the presents). There is no need of that!

First Peasant (smiling). This originates from our first duty. Thus even the Commune has ordered us.

Second Peasant. This is the proper thing.

Third Peasant. Don't mention it! Because we are very much satisfied – As our parents, let me say, served your parents, even thus we wish with all our hearts, and not merely– (Bows.)

Leonid Fedorovich. What is it? What is it you want ?

First Peasant. We have come to your Grace, so to speak.

Scene XXV. The same and Petrishchev (quickly mtns in in his overcoat).

Petrishchev. Is Vasili Leonidych up ? (Seeing Leonid Fedorovich, he bows to him with his head only.)

Leonid Fedorovich. Are you going to my son ?

Petrishchev. I? Yes, I want to see Vovo for a minute.

Leonid Fedorovich. Go on, go on!

(Petrishchev takes off his overcoat and walks away rapidly.)

Scene XXVI. The same, without Petrishchev.

Leonid Fedorovich (to the peasants). Yes. Well, so what do you want ?

Second Peasant. Accept our presents!

First Peasant (smiling). So to speak, the country prepositions.

Third Peasant. Don't even mention it 1 We greet you as a father. So, don't mention it!

Leonid Fedorovich. Well.– F&lor, receive these things!

Fedor Ivanych. Well, give them to me! (Takes the presents.)

Leonid Fedorovich. Now, what business is it ?

First Peasant. We have come to your Grace.

Leonid Fedorovich. I see you have come to see me. But what do you wish ?

First Peasant. To make a motion in regard to the accomplishment of the sale of the land. It originates –

Leonid Fedorovich. What is it? Are you buying land ?

First Peasant. In rivalry, it is so. It originates – So to speak in regard to the purchase of the proprietorship of land. Thus, for example, the Commune has empowered us to enter it, so to speak, as is proper, through the government bank, with adhesion of a stamp of the legalized date.

Leonid Fedorovich. That is, you wish to buy land through the bank, – am I right ?

First Peasant. That is as you had made the proposition to us last year. It originates, so to speak, from the sum in its totality of 32,864 roubles for the purchase of the proprietorship of the land.

Leonid Fedorovich. That is so. How about the pay ?

First Peasant. In respect to the pay the Commune proposes, as has been said last year, to depone, so to speak, the reception of the cash, by the laws of the statutes, in the totality of four thousand roubles.

Second Peasant. That is, you will get four thousand now, and for the rest you are to wait.

Third Peasant (unrolling the money'). You may be sure we will pawn ourselves, but we will not do, let me say, in any slipshod manner, but, let me say, so to speak, as is proper.

Leonid Fedorovich. But I wrote to you that I should be willing only in case you had collected all the money.

First Peasant. This would, in rivalry, be pleasanter, but it is not in the possibilities, so to speak.

Leonid Fedorovich. I cannot help it.

First Peasant. The Commune, for example, has been relying on your proposition of last year to depone the payment –

Leonid Fedorovich. That was last year; then I was willing, but now I cannot –

Second Peasant. How is that? You had given us hope, and we had the paper written up, and the money collected.

Third Peasant. Have pity on us, father. Our land is small, there is not enough room to drive out a cow, nay, not even a chick, let me say. (Bows.) Don't sin, father! (Bows.)

Leonid Fedorovich. I must say it is true that I was willing last year to postpone the payment, but something has happened – and so it is not convenient for me now.

Second Peasant. Without the land we shall have to give up living.

First Peasant. In rivalry, without the land our domicility must weaken and ruin will originate.

Third Peasant (bowing). Father! The land is small: there is no place to drive out a cow, nay, not even a chick. Father, have pity on us! Accept the money, father!

Leonid Fedorovich (in the meanwhile looks through the document). I understand. I should like to do you a kindness. Wait. I will give you an answer in half an hour– F6dor, tell them not to receive anybody.

Fedor Ivanych. Very well. (Leonid Fedorovich exit.)

Scene XXVII. The same, without Leonid Fedorovich.

(The peasants are downcast.)

Second Peasant. What a business! He says: " Hand us the whole amount!" Where shall we take it from ?

First Peasant. If he had not given us hope last year. For we have, in rivalry, been relaying on what he told us last year.

Third Peasant. 0 Lord! I had already unrolled the money. (Wraps up the money.) What are we going to do now ?

F6dor Ivanych. What is the matter with you ?

First Peasant. Our business, honourable man, depends, for example, like this: he had preposed to us last year to depone the payments. The Commune met in opinion and inpowered us; and now, for example, he preposes to give him the whole sum in totality. But the business comes out impossibly.

Fedor Ivanych. How much money is it ?

First Peasant. The whole sum in entrance is four thousand roubles, so to speak.

Fedor Ivanych. Well, hump yourselves and get some more!

First Peasant. We have collected this with difficulty. There is not enough powder for these considerations, sir.

Second Peasant. When there is none, you can't get it with your teeth.

Third Peasant. We should like to, but, we will say, we have swept this up with a broom, as it is.

Scene XXVIII. The same, Vasili Leonidych, and Petrishchev (at the door, both with cigarettes).

Vasili Leonidych. I told you I would try. I will do my level best. Ah, what ?

Petrishchev. You must know that if you do not get it, the devil knows what a nasty affair it will be!

Vasili Leonidych. I told you I would try, and I will. Ah, what ?

Petrishchev. Nothing. I only say I want you to be sure and get it. I will wait. (Goes away, closing the door.)

Scene XXIX. The same, without Petrishchev.

Vasili Leonidych (waving his hand). The devil knows what it is!

(The peasants bow.)

Vasili Leonidych (looking at the messenger. To Fedor Ivanych). Why don't you let off this man from Bour-dier ? He has come to stay here. Look there, he is asleep. Ah, what ?

Fedor Ivanych. He brought a note – He was told to wait until Anna Pavlovna would come out.

Vasili Leonidych (looking at the peasants and gazing at the money). What is this, – money ? For whom ?

Money for us ? (To Fedor Ivanych.) Who are these people ?

Fedor Ivanych. The Kursk peasants. They have come to buy land.

Vasili Leonidych. Is it sold ?

Fedor Ivanych. No, they have not come to any agreement yet. They are stingy.

Vasili Leonidych. Ah ? I must persuade them. (To the peasants.) Well, are you buying, ah ?

First Peasant. In rivalry we propose as to how to acquire the ownership of the possession of land.

Vasili Leonidych. You must not be too stingy. You know, I will tell you how a peasant needs the land! Ah, what ? Does he need it very

much ?

First Peasant. In rivalry, the land is necessitous to a peasant, A number one. That is so.

Vasili Leonidych. Well, then don't be so stingy. What is the land ? You may sow the wheat in rows upon it. You can take three hundred puds, at a rouble a pud, which is three hundred roubles. Ah, what ? And if you plant mint, you can skin a thousand roubles out of a desyatfna, I tell you.

First Peasant. In rivalry, this is complete, – all the produces may be advanced into action, if one has a comprehension.

Vasili Leonidych. Then sow mint by all means. I have studied it. They print that way in books. I will show it to you. Ah, what ?

First Peasant. In rivalry, regardly this subject,– you can see better in books. It is intelligentness, so to speak.

Vasili Leonidych. Buy it then, and don't be so stingy ! Give the money ! (To Fedor Ivanych.) Where is papa ?

Fedor Ivanych. At home. He asked not to be disturbed now.

Vasili Leonidych. Well, I suppose he is asking the spirit whether to sell the land or not. Ah, what ?

Fedor Ivanych. I can't say. I know that he went away in indecision.

Vasili Leonidych. What do you think, Fedor Ivanych, has he any money ? Ah, what ?

Fedor Ivanych. I don't know. Hardly. Why do you want to know ? You took a good slice of it last week!

Vasili Leonidych. But I gave that away for the dogs. You know we have a new society: Petrfshech has been elected, and I have taken some money from Petrfshech, so I have to pay now for him and for myself. Ah, what ? •

Fedor Ivanych. What kind of a new society is it ? Of bicyclists ?

Vasili Leonidych. No. I will tell you in a minute: it is a new society. Let me tell you, a very serious society. And do you know who is the president of it ? Ah, what ?

Fedor Ivanych. What does this new society consist in ?

Vasili Leonidych. A society for the encouragement of breeding ancient Russian stout-bodied dogs. Ah, what ? Let me tell you: to-day is the first meeting and a lunch. And I have no money. I will go to him, and will try. {Exit through the door.'}

Scene XXX. The peasants, Fedor Ivanych, and Messenger.

First Peasant {to Fedor Ivanych}. Honourable man, who is this ?

Fedor Ivanych {smiling}. The young gentleman.

Third Peasant. The heir, let us say. O Lord! {Hides the money.} I had better put it away in time.

First Peasant. We were told that he was a military man, in the meritoriousness of the cavalry, for example.

Fedor Ivanych. No. Being an only son, he is free from military service.

Third Peasant. He is left to take care of his parents, let us say. That is regular.

Second Peasant {shaking his head}. Nice care he will take of them!

Third Peasant. O Lord!

Scene XXXI. Fedor Ivanych, three peasants, Vasili Leonidych, and {after him at the door} Leonid Fedorovich.

Vasili Leonidych. It is always that way. Really it is wonderful. At first they say that I have no occupation, and when I find an activity and am busy, – a serious society has been founded pursuing noble aims, – you begrudge me some paltry three hundred roubles!

Leonid Fedorovich. I told you I could not, and that is the end of it. I have none.

Vasili Leonidych. But you have sold the land!

Leonid Fedorovich. In the first place, I have not sold it; and, above everything else, leave me in peace! You were told that I was busy. {Slams the door.}

Scene XXXII. The same, without Leonid Fedorovich.

Fedor Ivanych. I told you this was not the time for it.

Vasili Leonidych. I tell you this is a bad business for me, ah? I will go to mamma, – this will be my only salvation. He is raving with his spiritualism, and is forgetting everybody. {Goes up-stairs. Fedor Ivanych sits down to read his paper.}

Scene XXXIII. The same. Betsy and Marya Konstantinovna come down-stairs, followed by Grigori.

Betsy. Is the carriage ready ?

Grigori. It is driving up.

Betsy (to Marya Konstantinovna). Come, come! I saw that it was he!

Marya Konstantinovna. What he ?

Betsy. You know very well that it is Be trish chev.

Marya Konstantinovna. Where is he?

Betsy. He is sitting in Vovd's room. You will see yourself.

Marya Konstantinovna. But suppose it is not he ? (The peasants and the messenger bow.)

Betsy (to the messenger). Ah, you are from Bourdier, with the dress ?

Messenger. Yes, madam. May I go now ?

Betsy. I do not know. This is for mamma.

Messenger. I do not know for whom. I was ordered to bring it here and get the money for it.

Betsy. Well, then wait!

Marya Konstantinovna. Is this the same costume for the charade ?

Betsy. Yes, a superb costume! But mamma does not take it, and does not wish to pay for it.

Marya Konstantinovna. Why ?

Betsy. You ask mamma. For Vovd's dogs it is not too much to pay five hundred roubles, but for a dress one hundred is too much. I certainly can't play as a scarecrow ! (To the peasants.) Who are these ?

Grigori. Peasants. They have come to buy some land.

Betsy. I thought they were hunters. Are you not hunters ?

First Peasant. Not by any means, madam. We are here in regard to the accomplishment of the sale of the transfer of the land. We came to see Leonid Fedorovich.

Betsy. But how is that ? I am sure hunters were to come for Vovd. Truly, you are no hunters? (The peasants keep silent.) How stupid they are ! ( Walks over to the door.) Vovd! (Laughs.)

Marya Konstantinovna. We met him just a little while ago.

Betsy. Who asks you to remember that ? Vovd, are you here ?

Scene XXXIV. The same and Petrishchev.

Petrishchev. Vovd is not here, but I am ready to do all that is expected of him. Good morning! Good morning, Marya Konstantinovna! (For a long time firmly presses Betsy's and then Marya Konstantinovna's hand.)

Second Peasant. I declare, he looks as though he were pumping water!

Betsy. You can't take his place, but still you are better than nothing. (Laughing.) What kind of business have you with Vovd?

Petrishchev. Business? Financial business, that is, our business is financial and at the same time financial, besides being financial.

Betsy. What do you mean by financial?

Petrishchev. That is the question! The trick is it does not mean anything!

Betsy. Now, that was not a success, not at all! (Laughs.)

Petrishchev. You can't make it a success every time. It is like a raffle. At first it is nothing, and again nothing, and then there is a prize.

(Fedor Ivdnych walks into the cabinet of Leonid Fedorovich.)

Scene XXXV. The same without Fedor Ivanych.

Betsy. This was not a success. Tell me, were you yesterday at the Mergasovs'?

Petrishchev. Not so much at mere Gassof as at pere Gassof, and not even pere Gassof as fils Gassof.

Betsy. Can't you get along without puns? It is a disease. Were there any gipsies there? (Laughs.)

Petrishchev (sings). " Birds upon her apron fair, golden combs upon her hair! "

Betsy. How fortunate you are! It was so dull for us at Fofd's.

Petrishchev (continuing to chant). " And she swore most solemnly, she would stay – " What is the rest? Marya Konstantinovna, what is the rest?

Marya Konstantinovna. « An hour with me – "

Petrishchev. How? How is it, Marya Konstantinovna? (Laughs.)

Betsy. Cesscz, vous devcncz impossible!

Petrishchev. J'ai ccse, f ai bebt, fai dede –

Betsy. I see only one means of getting rid of your puns, and that is to make you sing. Let us go to Vovd's room I There is a guitar there. Come, Marya Konstantinovna, come!

(Betsy, Marya Konstantinovna, and Petrishchev walk into the room of Vasili Leonidych.)

Scene XXXVI. Grigori, three peasants, and Messenger.

First Peasant. Who are these people ?

Grigori. One is the young lady, and the other a mam-zelle who teaches music.

First Peasant. She promotes into science, so to speak. And how accurate she is, a regular portrait!

Second Peasant. Why don't they marry them off ? They are advanced in years, it seems.

Grigori. You expect them to marry at fifteen, as with you ?

First Peasant. And the man, for example, is a musi-cianist ?

Grigori (mocking him). A musicianist! You do not understand a thing !

First Peasant. This is, in rivalry, our stupidity, so to speak, our ignorance.

Third Peasant. O Lord!

(Gipsy songs accompanied with a guitar are heard in Vasili Leonidych's room.)

Scene XXXVII. Grigori, three peasants, Messenger. Enter Semdn and, after him, Tanya. (Tanya watches the meeting of father and son.)

Grigori (to Semen). What do you want ?

Semen. I was sent to Mr. Kapchich's.

Grigori. Well ?

Semen. He gave me the oral message that he could not come under any consideration.

Grigori. All right. I will report so. (Exit.)

Scene XXXVIII. The same, without Grigori.

Semfn (to his father). You are welcome, father ! My respects to

Uncle Efim and Uncle Mitri! All well at home ?

Second Peasant. Welcome, Semdn !

First Peasant. Welcome, friend !

Third Peasant. Welcome, lad ! Doing well ?

Semen (smiling). Well, father, come and have some tea with me!

Second Peasant. Wait till we get through here. Don't you see we are busy ?

Semen. Very well, I will wait near the steps. (Exit.)

Tanya (running after him). Why did you not say anything ?

Semen. How could I say anything in presence of people ? Give me a chance ! I will tell him at tea. (Exit.)

Scene XXXIX. The same, without Sem6n. (Fedor Ivdnych comes out and sits down near the window with his newspaper.)

First Peasant. Well, honourable man, how does our affair originate ?

Fedor Ivanych. Wait ! He will be out soon, he is getting through.

Tanya (to Fedor Ivdnych). How do you know he is getting through ?

Fedor Ivanych. I know, because when he gets through with a question he reads aloud the question and the answer.

Tanya. Is it true that you can talk with spirits by means of the saucer ?

Fedor Ivanych. It seems so.

Tanya. Will he sign if they tell him to ?

Fedor Ivanych. Of course, he will.

Tanya. But they don't talk with words ?

Fedor Ivanych. No, by means of the alphabet. He notices opposite what letter it stops.

Tanya. Well, and if a stance ?

Scene XL. The same and Leonid Fedorovich.

Leonid Fedorovich. Well, my friends, I can't. I should like to very much, but I can't by any means. If you had all the money, it would be different.

First Peasant. Nothing would be better in rivalry. But the people are not well-to-do, they can't do it.

Leonid Fedorovich. I can't, I can't by any means. Here is your paper. I can't sign it.

Third Peasant. Father, pity us, take mercy on us!

Second Peasant. Why do you do so ? This is an offence.

Leonid Fedorovich. There is no offence meant, friends. I told you then, in the summer, " If you want to, all right! " You did not want to, and now I cannot.

Third Peasant. Father, have mercy on us! How are we to live ? The land is small: there is not enough room to drive out a cow, nay, a chick, let me say. (Leonid Fedorovich walks away and stops in the door.)

Scene XLI. The same, Anna Pavlovna, and Doctor, descending the stairs. Followed by Vasili Leonidych, in a happy and playful frame of mind, putting the money into his pocketbook.

Anna Pavlovna (tightly laced, wearing a hat). So shall I take them ?

Doctor. Take them if the symptoms are repeated. Above everything else, conduct yourself properly. How can you expect thick syrup to pass through a capillary tube, especially if you compress that tube ? Impossible ! Just so it is with the simple.

biliary ducts. This is all very

Anna Pavlovna. Well, all right, all right.

Doctor. You say it is all right, and go on as of old. Madam, you can't do it, you can't. Well, goodbye!

Anna Pavlovna. Not good-bye, but au revoir. I shall be waiting for you in the evening, - without you I sha'n't risk it.

Doctor. Very well, very well. If I have time, I will call. (Exit.)

Scene XLII. The same, without Doctor.

Anna Pavlovna (seeing the peasants). What is this ? What is this ? What kind of people are these ? {Peasants bow.}

Fedor Ivanych. These are peasants from the Kursk estate: they have come to see Leonid Fedorovich about the purchase of some land.

Anna Pavlovna. I see that they are peasants. But who has admitted them ?

Fedor Ivanych. Leonid Fedorovich has ordered them to come. Leonid Fedorovich has just been talking with them about the sale of the land.

Anna Pavlovna. What sale ? There is no need of selling it. Above everything else, how could you let the people from the street straight into the house ? How could you let people in from the street ? People that sleep God knows where must not be admitted to the house— (Becoming ever more excited.) The folds of their dresses are full of all kinds of microbes: of scarlet fever microbes, of smallpox microbes, of diphtheria microbes! They are from Kursk, from the Government of Kursk, where there is an epidemic of diphtheria! — Doctor, doctor ! Bring back the doctor —

{Leonid Fedorovich goes away, closing the door. Grigori exit for the doctor.)

Scene XLIII. The same, without Leonid Fedorovich and Grigori.

Vasili Leonidych {smoking into the peasants' faces). Never mind, mamma! If you want to, I will fumigate them so that all the microbes will give up their ghost. Ah, what ?

{Anna Pavlovna keeps strict silence awaiting the return of the doctor.)

Vasili Leonidych {to the peasants). Do you fatten pigs ? That is profitable!

First Peasant. In rivalry, we now and then let loose on the pig business.

Vasili Leonidych. Like this — yoo, yood. {Grunts like a young pig.)

Anna Pavlovna. Vovo, Vovo! Stop!

Vasili Leonidych. Is it correct ? Ah, what ?

First Peasant. In rivalry, there is similarity.

Anna Pavlovna. Vov6, stop, I tell you !

Second Peasant. What is that for ?

Third Peasant. I told you we had better stay in our lodging —

Scene XLIV. The same, Doctor, and Grigori.

Doctor. What is it again ? What ?

Anna Pavlovna. You tell me not to be agitated. How can I be calm ? I have not seen my sister for two months; I beware of every suspicious visitor, — and suddenly these people come from Kursk, — straight

from Kursk, where there is an epidemic of diphtheria, – and straight into my house !

Doctor. You refer to these good fellows ?

Anna Pavlovna. Yes, straight from a locality where there is diphtheria!

Doctor. Of course, if they come from a diphtheria centre, it is careless, but there is no cause for agitation.

Anna Pavlovna. But you yourself prescribe caution !

Doctor. Yes, yes, but there is no cause for being so agitated.

Anna Pavlovna. But there will have to be a complete disinfection.

Doctor. No, not complete, – that is too expensive, something like three hundred roubles, and even more. But I will fix it cheaply and just as efficaciously. To a big bottle of water take –

Anna Pavlovna. Boiled water ? .

Doctor. Makes no difference. Boiled water is better. To a bottle of water take a tablespoon of salicylic acid, and have them wash everything which they have touched, and the good fellows, of course, must be sent away. That is all. Then you need have no fear. Sprinkle two or three glasses of the same composition through the air by means of the atomizer, and you will see how good it will all be. It is quite harmless!

Anna Pavlovna. Where is Tanya ? Call Tanya!

Scene XLV. The same and Tanya.

Tanya. What do you wish ?

Anna Pavlovna. Do you know the big bottle in the boudoir ?

Tanya. From which they have been sprinkling on the laundress yesterday ?

Anna Pavlovna. Yes, yes. What else could I mean ? Take this bottle and wash out first the place where they are standing with soap and then with that –

Tanya. Yes, madam. I know how.

Anna Pavlovna. Then take the atomizer – Still, I will be back and will do it myself.

Doctor. Do as I tell you, and have no fear! Well, good-bye, until the evening. (Exit.)

Scene XLVI. The same, without Doctor.

Anna Pavlovna. And drive them out, so that their breath even shall not be here ! Get out, get out! Go! What are you waiting for ?

First Peasant. In rivalry, we, in our foolishness, as it preposes –

Grigori (taking the peasants out). Come now, come now!

Second Peasant. Give me my kerchief!

Third Peasant. O Lord! I told you that we ought to have gone in the meanwhile to our lodging. (Grigori pushes them out.)

Scene XLVII. Anna Pavlovna, Grigori, Fedor Ivanych, Tanya, Vasili Leonidych, and Messenger.

Messenger (having made several attempts at saying something.) Will there be any answer ?

Anna Pavlovna. Ah, this is from Bourdier ? (Excitedly.) Not any, not any, and take it back ! I told her I had not ordered any such costume, and I will not allow my daughter to wear it.

Messenger. I can't help it. I was sent.

Anna Pavlovna. Go, go, and take it back! I will call there myself.

Vasili Leonidych (solemnly). Mr. Ambassador from Bourdier, go!

Messenger. You might have said so long ago. I have been sitting here five hours.

Vasili Leonidych. Emissary of Bourdier, go !

Anna Pavlovna. Please, stop ! (Messenger exit.)

Scene XLVIII. The same, without Messenger.

Anna Pavlovna. Betsy! Where is she ? I am eternally having to wait for her!

Vasili Leonidych (yells at the top of his voice). Betsy ! Petrishchev ! Come quick ! Quick ! Quick! Ah, what ?

Scene XLIX. The same, Petrishchev, Betsy, and Marya Konstantinovna.

Anna Pavlovna. I am eternally having to wait for you.

Betsy. On the contrary, it is I who have been waiting for you. (Petrishchev bows with his head only and kisses Anna Pavlovna's hand.)

Anna Pavlovna. Good morning! (To Betsy.) You always answer back!

Betsy. If you are not in good humour, mother, I prefer not to drive out.

Anna Pavlovna. Are we going or not ?

Betsy. Yes, let us go ! What is to be done ?

Anna Pavlovna. Have you seen the costume from Bourdier ?

Betsy. I have, and I like it very much. I ordered the costume, and I will put it on, when it is paid for.

Anna Pavlovna. I will not pay for it, and I will not permit you to put on an indecent costume.

Betsy. What has made it indecent all at once ? At first it was proper, and now you are prudish –

Anna Pavlovna. Not prudish, but you will have to get the whole waist made over, and then you may.

Betsy. Mamma, really, that can't be done!

Anna Pavlovna. Well, put on your wraps ! {They sit down. Grigori puts on their overshoes.}

Vasili Leonidych. Marya Konstantinovna ! Do you see what emptiness there is in the antechamber ?

Marya Konstantinovna. Why ? {Laughs in advance.}

Vasili Leonidych. The fellow from Bourdier has gone. Ah, what ? Is it good ? {Boars.}

Anna Pavlovna. Well, let us go ! {Goes out through the door and immediately comes back.} Tanya'

Tanya. What do you wish ?

Anna Pavlovna. Don't let Fifi catch cold while I am away! If it asks to be let out, be sure and put on the yellow capote. It is not very well.

Tanya. Yes, madam. {Anna Pavlovna, Betsy, and Grigori exeunt.}

Scene L. Petrishchev, Vasili Leonidych, Tanya, and F6dor Ivdnych.

Petrishchev. Well, did you get it ?

Vasili Leonidych. Let me tell you, I got it with difficulty. At first I approached my male parent, – he bellowed and kicked me out. Then I went to my maternal parent, – and I got it! Here it is ! {Slaps his pocket.} When I undertake a thing, they don't get away

from me, – it's a dead grip. Ah, what ? They will bring my wolf-dogs to-day ?

{Petrishchev and Vasili Leonidych put on their wraps and, exeunt. Tanya follows them.)

Scene LI. Fedor Ivanych {alone}.

Fedor Ivanych. Yes, nothing but unpleasantness. How can they live in such discord ? I must say the younger generation is not exactly right. And the rule of the women ? When lately Leonid Fedorovich wanted to interfere and saw that she was in ecstasy, he slammed the door. He is a man of rare kindness! Yes, of rare kindness – What is that ? Is Tanya bringing them in again ?

Scene LII. Fedor Ivanych, Tanya, and the three peasants.

Tanya. Go, go, uncle, never mind !

Fedor Ivanych. Why did you bring them in again ?

Tanya. But, Fedor Ivanych, we must do something for them. I will wash it all off' later.

Fedor Ivanych. I see, nothing will come of it.

First Peasant. How, honourable man, are we to introduce our affair into action? You, your Honour, intercede for us, and we will be able to represent gratitude in full from the Commune as a reward for the trouble.

Third Peasant. Try, little falcon, – we can't get along without it. The land is small, and there is not room enough to let out a cow, nay, not even a chick, let me say. (Bows.)

Fedor Ivanych. I am sorry for you, friends, but I do not know how to do it. I understand it all very well, – but he has refused. How is it to be done now ? And the lady does not consent, either. Hardly! Well, let me have the paper, – I will go and try. I will ask him. (Exit.)

Scene LIII. Tanya and the three peasants (sighing).

Tanya. Uncles, tell me what the matter now is.

First Peasant. If only we could get the signature of the application of his hand !

Tanya. You want the master to sign the paper, yes ?

First Peasant. We want him to apply his hand to the paper, and take the money, – and that would be the solution.

Third Peasant. If he only wrote down: " As the peasants wish, let me

say, so, let me say, I, too, wish." And that would be all: he would sign it, and – the end of it.

Tanya. Only to sign it ? All you want is for the master to sign ? (In thought.)

First Peasant. In rivalry, the whole affair depends on it: he signs, so to speak, and no more of it.

Tanya. Wait and let us hear what Ilydor Ivanych has to say. If he cannot persuade him, I will try a trick.

First Peasant. You will trick him ?

Tanya. I will try.

Third Peasant. Oh, the girl wants to intercede for us ? You get our request granted, and, let me say, we will agree to take care of you at the Commune's charge. That's it.

First Peasant. If this affair will be introduced into action, in rivalry, we can pay you with gold.

Second Peasant. Of course !

Tanya. I can't promise for sure. As the proverb says: a trial is no joke, and –

First Peasant. And a request is no misfortune. That is so in rivalry.

Scene LIV. The same and Fedor Ivanych.

Fedor Ivanych. No, my friends, you will not succeed. He does not consent, and he will not. Take your paper! Go, go!

First Peasant (takes the paper to Tanya). So, for example, we will be relying on you.

Tanya. In a minute, in a minute. Go and wait in the street for me! I will be there at once, and I will tell you something. (Peasants exeunt.)

Scene LV. Fedor Ivanych and Tanya.

Tanya. Fedor Ivanych, my dear, please ask the master to come out for a minute. I have to tell him a word or two.

Fedor Ivanych. What news is this ?

Tanya. It is important, Fedor Ivanych. Ask him, Fedor Ivanych ! There is nothing bad about it, upon my word!

Fedor Ivanych (smiling). I can't understand what you are up to! Yes,

I will tell him, I will. (Exit.)

Scene LVI Tanya (alone).

Tanya. Really, I will do it. He said himself that there is a power in Sem&i, and I know how to do it all. Nobody caught on then. Now I will teach Sem&n how to do it. And if it does not succeed, there will be no sin in doing it. There is no sin in doing it.

Scene LVII. Tanya, Leonid Fedorovich followed by Fedor Ivanych.

Leonid Fedorovich (smiling). So you have a request to make! What kind of an affair have you ?

Tanya. A little secret, Leonid Fedorovich. Permit me to tell it to you in private.

Leonid Fedorovich. Indeed! Fedor, go out for a minute!

Scene LVIII. Leonid Fedorovich and Tanya.

Tanya. As I have been living in your house, Leonid Fedorovich, and have grown up here, and as I am grateful to you for so much, I will tell you everything, as if you were my own father. Semen, who is living in your house, wants to marry me.

Leonid Fedorovich. Indeed ?

Tanya. I will tell you everything, as before God. I am an orphan, and I have no one to consult –

Leonid Fedorovich. Why not ? He seems to be a nice fellow.

Tanya. Yes, he is. That would be all right, but I have fears about one thing. I should like to ask you about this matter: there is something about him which I cannot understand, and I am afraid it might be something bad.

Leonid Fedorovich. What is it ? He drinks ?

Tanya. No, God forbid! But as I know that there is such a thing as spirituality –

Leonid Fedorovich. You do?

Tanya. Of course I do! I understand it very well. Others, being ignorant, do not understand it –

Leonid Fedorovich. Well, what of it ?

Tanya. I have my fears about Semen. Such things happen with him.

Leonid Fedorovich. What things ?

Tanya. Something like spirituality. You ask the servants! The moment he falls asleep at the table the table begins to shake ; it begins to creak like this: tick, ti-tick! All the people have heard it.

Leonid Fedorovich. That's precisely what I told Ser-gy6y Ivanovich this morning. Well ?

Tanya. So – when was it ? Oh, yes, on Wednesday. We sat down to dinner. No sooner did he sit down than the spoon came right into his hand, – it just jumped into his hand.

Leonid Fedorovich. Ah, this is interesting ! It just jumped into his hand ? Well, did he fall asleep ?

Tanya. I did not notice. I think he did.

Leonid FEdorovich. Well ?

Tanya. Well, I am afraid there might be some harm from it, and so I wanted to ask you about it. I did not know whether I could risk it to live with him, because he has such a thing.

Leonid FEdorovich (smiling). No, don't be afraid: there is no harm from it. This only means that he is a medium, simply a medium. I knew before that he was a medium.

Tanya. That's all. I was so afraid !

Leonid Fedorovich. No, don't be afraid, it won't hurt.

(Aside.) That is nice. Kapchich can't be here to-day, so we will test him – No, my dear, don't be afraid, he will make you a good husband, and all that. This is a special power which is in everybody, – only weaker in some, and stronger in others.

Tanya. Very much obliged to you. I sha'n't give it any thought now. But before, I was afraid. This comes from our ignorance!

Leonid Fedorovich. No, no, don't be afraid! F4dor!

Scene LIX. The same and Fddor Ivanych.

Leonid Fedorovich. I am going away. Have everything ready for the stance this evening!

Fedor Ivanych. But Kapchich cannot be here.

Leonid Fedorovich. That does not matter. We will have it all the same. (Puts on his overcoat.) There will be a trial stance with our own medium. (Exit. Fedor Ivanych sees him off.)

Scene LX. Tdnya (alone).

Tanya. He believed me, he believed me! (Squeaks and leaps about.)

Upon my word, he believed me! What a wonder ! (Squeaks.) I will do it now, if only Semfn is not shy.

Scene LXI. Tanya and Fedor Ivanych (returning).

Fedor Ivanych. Well, have you told him your secret ?

Tanya. I have. I will tell it to you, too, only later.

I have a request to make of you, Fedor Ivanych.

Fedor Ivanych. What request is it ?

Tanya (abashed). You have been like a second father to me, and so I will tell you everything, as before God.

Fedor Ivanych. Don't beat around the bush, but talk business !

Tanya. Business ? Well, the business is that Semfn wants to marry me.

Fedor Ivanych. Indeed. I thought I noticed something.

Tanya. Why should I conceal it ? I am an orphan, and you know yourself how it is here in the city: everybody annoys me with his attentions. Take, for example, Grigori Mikhaylych. He gives me no peace. They all think that I have no soul, that I am intended for a toy for them –

Fedor Ivanych. You are clever, – I like that! Well, what of it ?

Tanya. Semfn wrote to his father, and when his father saw me to-day, he said that his son was spoilt – Fedor Ivanych! (Bows.) Be in place of my father, and speak with the old man, with Semen's father. I will take them to the kitchen, if you will come there and talk with the old man.

Fedor Ivanych (smiling). Oh, you mean to have me for a match-maker ? I do not object.

Tanya. Dear Fedor Ivanych, be in place of my father, and I will all my life pray to God for you.

Fedor Ivanych. All right, all right, I will be there.

I will do as I promise. (Takes the newspaper.)

Tanya. Be my second father!

Fedor Ivanych. All right, all right!

Tanya. Then I will hope. (Exit.)

Scene LXII. Fedor Ivanych (alone. Shaking his head).

Fedor Ivanych. She is a good, kindly girl. When you think of it, how many of them get ruined! Let them make one false step, and down they go. Then you can't pick them out from the mire. Take, for example,

dear Natalya. She was a nice girl, and a mother had borne and brought her up – (Takes his paper.) Well, Ferdinand, how is she getting on ?

Curtain.

## ACT II.

The scene represents the interior of the servants' kitchen. The peasants, having taken off their wraps, are seated at the table and, perspiring, are drinking tea. Fedor Ivanych, with a cigar, at the other end of the stage. On the oven is the old cook, not visible during the first four scenes.

Scene I. Three peasants and Fedor Ivanych.

Fedor Ivanych. My advice is for you not to interfere with him. If he wants it, and she wants it, may God help them! She is a good girl. Don't pay any attention to her being so dressed up! This is city style, – she can't help it! She is a clever girl.

Second Peasant. Well, if he wants her, let him! It is not I who will live with her, but he. Only she looks too clean. How can we take her to the hut ? She won't even let her mother-in-law pat her.

Fedor Ivanych. My friend, it does not depend upon the cleanliness, but on the character. If she has a good character, she will be submissive and respectful.

Second Peasant. I will take her if the lad has set his heart upon her. Of course, it is bad to live with one you do not love! I will take counsel with the old woman, and God aid them!

Fedor Ivanych. Agreed ?

Second Peasant. I suppose so.

First Peasant. How it fortunes you, Zakhar: you have come for the accomplishment of business, and be-

hold, what a queen of a girl you have gotten for a wife for your

son. Now you ought to set up the drinks, to do it according to property.

Fedor Ivanych. That is entirely unnecessary. (An awkward silence.)

Fedor Ivanych. I understand your peasant life quite well. I must tell you, I am myself considering about some land somewhere. I should like to build me a little house, and take to farming. I would not mind out your way.

Second Peasant. It is a very good thing!

First Peasant. In rivalry, with money you can receive all kinds of pleasures in the village.

Third Peasant. I should say so! The life in the country, let me say, is in any case freer than in the city.

Fedor Ivanych. Well, will you take me into your Commune, if I should settle in your village ?

Second Peasant. Why not ? You will treat the old men to liquor, and they will take you at once.

First Peasant. You will open a wine establishment, for example, or an inn, and you will live such a life that you won't have to die. You will lord it, and nothing more.

Fedor Ivanych. We will see about that later. All I want is to live out my days in peace. I live comfortably here, and I should hate to leave the place: Leonid Fedorovich is a man of rare kindness.

First Peasant. This is so in rivalry. But how is it about our affair ? Will it really be without consequences ?

Fedor Ivanych. He would like to help you.

Second Peasant. Evidently he is afraid of his wife.

Fedor Ivanych. He is not afraid, but there is no agreement.

Third Peasant. You ought to try for us, father, for how can we get along without it ? – The land is small –

Fedor Ivanych. We will see what will come of Tatyana's attempt. She has undertaken to help you.

Third Peasant (drinking tea). Father, take pity on us ! The land is small, there is not enough room to drive out a cow, nay, not even a chick.

Fedor Ivanych. The affair is not in my hands. (To the Second Peasant.) Well, well, friend, so we are the match-makers I Tdnya's affair is settled, is it not ?

Second Peasant. I have told you, and I will not back out, even without the drinks. If only our affair came out right!

Scene II. The same. Enter Woman Cook. She looks into the stove, makes signs into that direction, and immediately begins to speak with animation to Fedor Ivanych.

Cook. They have just called Sem<sup>n</sup> away from the family kitchen, and have taken him up-stairs; the master and the other fellow, the one that is bald and who makes them come, have put him down in a chair and have ordered him to act in Kapchich's place.

Fedor Ivanych. What nonsense !

Cook. It is the truth! Ydkov has just told Tdnya about it.

Fedor Ivanych. This is wonderful!

Scene III. The same and Coachman.

Fedor Ivanych. What do you want ?

Coachman (to Fedor Ivanych). Do tell them that I was not hired to live with dogs. Let anybody else live who wants to, but I am not willing.

Fedor Ivanych. With what dogs ?

Coachman. They brought three dogs from Vasili Leomdych to the coachman's room. They have dirtied it, and they howl, and you can't get near them, for they bite. They are angry devils, and they will eat me up if I do not look out. I feel like breaking their legs with a stick.

Fedor Ivanych. When was that done ?

Coachman. They brought them to-day from the exposition : they are expensive beasts: pout-bodied they call them, or some such name, - the devil take them ! Either the dogs or the coachmen stay in the coachman's room. You tell them so !

Fedor Ivanych. Yes, that is improper. I will go and ask about it.

Coachman. They ought to be here. I suppose Lu-kdrya would Eke to have them.

Cook (excitedly). People eat here, and you want to shut up dogs. As it is -

Coachman. But I have caftans, rugs, harness. And they demand that it be clean. Well, take them to the servants' room.

Fedor Ivanych. I must tell Vasili Leonidych about it.

Coachman (angrily). Let him hang the dogs around his neck, and walk around with them! Anyway, he likes too much to ride around : he has spoiled Beauty for nothing. It was such a fine horse! What a life ! (Exit, slamming the door.)

Scene IV. The same without Coachman.

Fedor Ivanych. Yes, disorder, disorder! (To the peasants.) Well, in the meantime, good-bye, good people !

Peasants. God be with you ! (Fedor Ivanych exit.)

Scene V. The same, without Fedor Ivanych.

(The moment Fedor Ivanych has left, groans are heard on the oven.)

Second Peasant. He is as smooth as a general.

Cook. What is the use of talking ? He has a separate room ; he gets his linen from the masters ; sugar, tea, – all from the masters, and the food is from the table.

Old Cook. How can the devil help living when he has swiped a lot.

Second Peasant. Who is the man there on the oven ?

Cook. Oh, just a man. (Silence.)

First Peasant. Well, I saw you lately eating supper, and it was a mighty good capital.

Cook. We can't complain. She is not stingy on that. White bread on Sundays, fish on holiday fasts, and if you want to, you may eat meat.

Second Peasant. Do they not keep the fasts ?

Cook. Hardly one of them does. The only ones who keep the fasts are the coachman (not the one that was here, but an old fellow), and Sem6n, and I, and the housekeeper ; the rest chew meat.

Second Peasant. Well, and he himself ?

Cook. What are you about ? He has even forgotten what a fast means.

Third Peasant. 0 Lord!

First Peasant. That is the gentlemen's way, – they have come to it from books, because it is intelligentness !

Third Peasant. Bolted bread every day, I suppose ?

Cook. Oh, bolted bread! They don't know what your bolted bread is!

You ought to see their food! What do they not have ?

First Peasant. The gentlemen's food, naturally, is airlike.

Cook. That's it, airlike, and they are great hands at chewing.

First Peasant. That means that they have appekites, so to speak.

Cook. And so they wash it down. All those sweet wines, brandy, frothing liquors, at every course a different one. They eat and wash it down, they eat and wash it down.

First Peasant. That, so to speak, carries the food into the preportion.

Cook. They are great hands at chewing, – it is just terrible ! They don't know anything about sitting down, eating, crossing themselves, and getting up. No, they eat without stopping.

Second Peasant. Like pigs, with their feet in the trough. (Peasants laugh.)

Cook. God bless them, the moment they open their eyes they immediately want their samovar, their tea, coffee, or chocolate. No sooner have they emptied two samovars than they want a third. Then comes breakfast, then dinner, then again coffee. No sooner have they rested than they begin to drink tea again. And then all the dainties: confectionery, jams, – oh, there is no end to it. They eat even while lying in bed.

Third Peasant. Well, I declare ! (Roars.)

First and Second Peasants. What is the matter with you ?

Third Peasant. I should like to live just one day like that!

Second Peasant. When do they attend to business ?

Cook. What business ? All the business they have is cards and the piano. The moment the young lady opens her eyes, she makes for the piano, and begins to bang. And the one that lives here, the teacher, stands and waits for the piano to get disengaged. The moment one drops off, the other one lets herself loose. Sometimes they put up two pianos, and two of them, and even four persons, bang away at it. They bang so that we can hear it here.

Third Peasant. 0 Lord!

Cook. That's all the business they have: the piano and cards. The moment they come together, they begin playing cards, drinking wine, and smoking, – and so it goes all night. The moment they get up, they begin to eat!

Scene VI. The same and Sem6n.

Semen. Tea and sugar !

First Peasant. Do us the favour and sit down.

Semen (walking up to the table). My humblest thanks !

(First Peasant pours out a glass of tea for him.)

Second Peasant. Where have you been ?

Semen. Up-stairs.

Second Peasant. What were you doing there ?

Semen. I can't make it out. I don't know how to tell it.

Second Peasant. What kind of a thing was it ?

Semen. I do not know how to tell it. They were testing some power in me. I can't make it out. Tatyana said to me: " Do it," says she, " and we will get him to sell the land to our peasants."

Second Peasant. How is she going to do it ?

Semen. I can't make it out, for she does not tell. All she says is: " Do as I tell you !"

Second Peasant. Do what ?

Semen. Really nothing at all. They put me in a chair, then they put out the lights, and told me to sleep. Tatyana was hid near by. They did not see her, but I did.

Second Peasant. What was that for ?

Semen. God knows, – I can't make it out.

First Peasant. Of course, for pastime.

Second Peasant. Evidently you and I can't understand it. Tell me: how much money have you spent ?

Semen. Not any. I have saved everything: twentyeight roubles, I think.

Second Peasant. That is good. If God grants us to get the land, Sem6n, I will take you home with me.

Semen. That would please me.

Second Peasant. You are spoilt, I am afraid. You won't like to do the ploughing.

Semen. Ploughing ? I would do it this minute. Mowing and ploughing is not so easily forgotten.

First Peasant. After the city life you will not, for example, have the patience.

Semen. One can live well in the village, too.

First Peasant. Now here is Uncle Mitri, and he is covetous of your delicate life.

Semen. Uncle Mitri, you would get tired of it. It looks easy, but there is a great deal of running about. One gets all mixed up.

Cook. Uncle Mitri, you ought just to see their balls,  
– you would be surprised !

Third Peasant. Why, do they eat all the time ?

Cook. No! You ought to have seen it! Fddor Ivanych took me to see it. When I looked, I got scared. Oh, how they were fitted out! You never saw the like! Naked down to here, and their arms bare.

Third Peasant. Ø Lord!

Second Peasant. Fie, what nastiness !

First Peasant. The ch mate, so to speak, permits it.

Cook. So, uncle, I looked at them, and I saw they were all of them naked. Would you believe it, the old ones

– even our lady who has grandchildren – were bare, too.

Second Peasant. Ø Lord !

Cook. What do you think ? When the music struck up, and they began to play, the gentlemen came up and embraced the ladies and began to whirl around.

Second Peasant. The old women, too ?

Cook. The old women, too.

Semen. No, the old women remain sitting.

Cook. What are you saying ? I saw them myself.

Semfn. I tell you, no.

Old Cook (.sticking his head out, in a hoarse voice). This is the polka-mazurka. Oh, you fool, you don't know anything: that's the way they dance –

Cook. You, dancer, keep quiet! Somebody is coming.

Scene VII. The same and Grigori. (The old cook hastens to hide himself.)

Grigori (to the cook). Let me have sour cabbage !

Cook. I have just come back from the cellar, and I have to go there again. Who needs it ?

Grigori. The young ladies want sour soup with croutons. Lively there! Send it up with Semdn, for I have no time!

Cook. They stuff themselves with sweets, until they can't swallow any more, and then they want cabbage.

First Peasant. For cleaning out, so to speak.

Cook. Yes, they make room for more stuffing ! (Takes a bowl and exit.)

Scene VIII. The same without Cook.

Grigori (to the peasants). How comfortable you look here! Look out! The lady will find it out, and then she will give you an overhauling which will be worse than what it was in the morning. (Laughs and exit.)

Scene IX. The peasants, Semdn, and Old Cook (on the oven).

First Peasant. In rivalry, she did storm then, – it was just terrible!

Second Peasant. At that time he wanted to take our part, but when he saw that she was tearing the roof down, he slammed the door, as much as to say: " All right, carry on as you please! "

Third Peasant (waving his hand). There is not much difference. Many a time, let me say, my old woman flames up terribly. Then I leave the house. Let her carry on! At such times I am afraid that she might hit me with the oven-fork. Ø Lord!

Scene X. The same and Yakov (running in with a prescription).

Yakov. Semfn, run to the apothecary's, lively! Get these powders for

the lady!

Semen. But he told me not to leave.

Yakov. You will have plenty of time. Your business begins after tea. Tea and sugar!

First Peasant. You are welcome! (Semin exit.)

Scene XI. The same, without Sem^u.

Yakov. I have no time ! Fill up a cup for company's sake!

First Peasant. We have preposed a conversation how that your lady acted so proudly in the morning.

Yakov. Oh, she is dreadfully hot! She is so hot, she forgets herself. Sometimes she bursts out weeping.

First Peasant. Here is, for example, what I wanted to ask. In the morning she preposed something about microtes: " You have brought microtes, microtes with you," she said. What is this microte to be applied to ?

Yakov. Oh, you mean the microves. They say they are a kind of bugs from which all diseases come. She meant to say that you had them on you. Oh, how they washed and sprinkled the place where you had been standing! There is a medicine from which they all die, – I mean the bugs.

Second Peasant. Where are these bugs on us ?

Yakov (drinking tea). They say they are so tiny, you can't see them even through glasses.

Second Peasant. How does she know they are on me ? Maybe there is more of that nastiness upon her.

Yakov. Go and ask them!

Second Peasant. I suppose it is all nonsense.

Yakov. Of course, nonsense. But the doctors have to invent something, else what would they get the money for ? He comes to see us every day. He comes, says something, and gets ten roubles.

Second Peasant. Is it possible ?

Yakov. There is one of them who gets one hundred.

First Peasant. In rivalry, one hundred ?

Yakov. One hundred ! You say : one hundred ? He takes a thousand, if he goes out of the city. " Give me a thousand," says he, " or you

may give up the ghost!"

Third Peasant. O Lord!

Second Peasant. Does he know some charm ?

Yakov. I suppose he does. I used to live at the house of a general, not far from Moscow. This general was such a high-tempered man, oh, so high-tempered! So once his daughter grew ill. They sent at once for this doctor. " A thousand roubles, and I will come." They agreed to it, and he came. In some way they did not please the doctor: well, you ought to have heard him yell out at the general! " Ah," says he, " so this is the way you treat me? Ah, I will not cure her!" Would you believe it ? The general forgot his pride, -and tried every way to quiet him down. " Sir, don't abandon me! "

First Peasant. Did they give him the thousand ?

Yakov. I should say they did.

Second Peasant. What a heap of money! What a peasant could do with it!

Third Peasant. But I think it is all nonsense. At one time my leg was sore. I doctored it, and doctored it, - I spent about five roubles on doctoring. Then I gave up doctoring, and it healed up by itself. (The Old Cook on the oven coughs.)

Yakov. Our friend is there again !

First Peasant. Who is that man ?

Yakov. He used to be our master's cook. He comes to see Luk<sup>^</sup>rya.

First Peasant. Chef, so to speak. Does he live here ?

Yakov. No. He is not allowed to stay here. He is in one place in the daytime, and in another in the night. If he has three kopeks, he stays in a night lodging-house ; and if he has spent it on drinks, he comes here.

Second Peasant. What is the matter with him ?

Yakov. He is weak. What a man he used to be! A real gentleman. He used to wear a gold watch, and received as high as forty roubles a month in wages. And now he would have starved long ago, if Lukdrya had not helped him out.

Scene XII. The same and Cook (with the cabbage).

Yakov (to Luker ya). I see, Pavel Petrovich is here again.

Cook. Where shall he go to ? Shall he freeze to death ?

Third Peasant. See what liquor will do! The liquor, let me say –  
(Clicks his tongue in compassion.)

Second Peasant. Of course: if a man wants to be firm, he is firmer than rock; if he weakens, he is weaker than water.

Old Cook (crawls down from the oven, trembling with his legs and arms). Luk<sup>^</sup>rya, I say, – let me have a wine-glass!

Cook. Where are you going ? I will let you have such a wine-glass –

Old Cook. For the love of God! I am dying. Friends, let me have five kopeks!

Cook. I tell you, climb back on the oven !

Old Cook. Cook! Half a glass! For Christ's sake, I say, – you understand ? I beg you, for Christ's sake.

Cook. Go, go ! You may have some tea.

Old Cook. What tea ? What is tea ? A stupid and weak drink. Let me have liquor, only a swallow! Luk<sup>^</sup>rya!

Third Peasant. How the poor fellow is suffering!

Second Peasant. Had you not better let him have some ?

Cook (goes to the safe and pours out a wine-glassful). Here! That is all I will give you !

Old Cook (seizes it, and drinks it with trembling hands). Luk<sup>^</sup>rya! Cook! I drink, but you must understand –

Cook. That will do! Climb on the oven, and let me not hear a word from you !

(The Old Cook submissively climbs on the oven, and continues to grumble something to himself.)

Second Peasant. Just see what it means for a man to weaken!

First Peasant. In rivalry, what is human weakness ?

Third Peasant. What is the use of mentioning it? (The Old Cook lies downy continuing to grumble. Silence.)

Second Peasant. I wanted to ask you: there is a girl from our village, Aksinya's daughter, living here; well, – how is she ? Is she a good girl, so to speak ?

Yakov. Yes, she is, – I may honestly say so.

Cook. Let me tell you truthfully, uncle, for I know the conditions

here pretty well, – if you want to marry your son to her, take her away at once, before she has a chance to get spoiled, – or else it is bound to happen.

Yakov. That is so. For example, last year there was a girl, Natalya by name, living in our house. She was a nice girl. She was completely ruined, just like this fellow. (Points to the Old Cook.)

Cook. A whole lot of us women go to ruin here. They all hanker for light work and sweet food. Behold, before they know it, the sweet food leads them astray, and when they are led astray, nobody wants them. They are at once sent away, and fresh ones take their place. Just so it happened with poor Natalya: she went wrong, and so she was immediately sent away. She had a child, then grew ill, and last spring she died in the hospital. What a fine girl she was !

Third Peasant. O Lord! They are weak creatures, and ought to be pitied.

Old Cook. Yes, you wait for the devils to pity them ! (.Dangles his legs over the oven.) I had been roasting at the stove for thirty years. When I became useless to them, they left me to die like a dog. Yes, they will pity a soul!

First Peasant. This, in rivalry, is a well-known situation.

Second Peasant. While eating and drinking they call you curly-head; through eating and drinking, goodbye, scald-head!

Third Peasant. O Lord!

Old Cook. You don't know much. What means saute a la Beaumont ? What means bavasari ? That's what I was able to do! Think of it! The emperor used to eat my dishes. And now I am of no use to the devils. But I will not submit!

Cook. Don't talk so much ! Look out! Crawl back into your corner so that you can't be seen, or else F&lor Ivanych will come in, or somebody else, and then they will drive me away with you.

{Silence.}

Yakov. Do you know my village, Voznes<sup>^</sup>nskoe

Second Peasant. Certainly I do. It is about seventeen versts, not more than that, from us, and by crossroads it is even less. Do you have any land there ?

Yakov. My brother has, and I send him money. Although I am staying here, I am dying to be at home.

First Peasant. In rivalry!

Second Peasant. Anisim, then, is your brother ?

Yakov. Yes, he! At the farther end.

Second Peasant. I know, the third farm.

Scene XIII. The same and Tanya (running in).

Tanya. Yakov Ivanych! Don't take it easy here! She is calling!

Yakov. I am coming. What is up?

Tanya. Fifi is barking and wants to eat. She is scolding you. "What a bad man he is," she says. "He has no pity at all," says she. "It wants to eat, and he does not bring anything!" {Laughs.}

Yakov {about to go}. Oh, she is angry? I hope there won't be anything bad!

Cook {to Yakov}. Take the cabbage along!

Yakov. Let me have it! {Takes the cabbage, and exit.}

Scene XIV. The same, without Ydkov.

First Peasant. Who is going to dine now?

Tanya. The dog. That is her dog. {Sits down and takes hold of the teapot.} Have you any tea? I have brought some more. {Pours it in.}

Second Peasant. Dinner for a dog?

Tanya. Why, of course! They prepare a special cutlet for the dog, one that is not too fat. I wash the dog's linen.

Third Peasant. O Lord!

Tanya. Like that gentleman who buried his dog.

Second Peasant. What about him?

Tanya. A man was telling that a gentleman's dog had died. It was in winter, and he drove out to bury him. He buried him, and he drove back again, and kept weeping. It was a biting frost, and the coachman's nose was running all the time, and he wiped it off – Let me fill you the glass. {Fills the glass.} His nose ran, and he kept wiping it. His master saw it, and says he: "What is it? What makes you weep?" And the coachman said: "How can I help weeping when I think of the dog?" (.Laughs.)

Second Peasant. And, I suppose, he was all the time thinking: "I would not weep even if you gave up the ghost." (Laughs.)

Old Cook (on the oven). That is correct! That is so!

Tanya. Very well. The master came home, and says he to the lady: " What a kind man our coachman is! He has been crying all the way home: he is so sorry for my dog. Call him in ! Here, take some brandy! And here is a rouble as a reward ! " And just so she carries on, because Yakov does not take care of her dog.

(Peasants roar.)

First Peasant. As is properly!

Second Peasant. Well, I declare!

Third Peasant. O girl, you have given us some fun!

Tanya (pouring out more tea). Drink some more! And so, although you may think we are having a good time, it makes me sick to clean up all their nastiness. Pshaw ! It is better in the village.

(The peasants turn their cups upside down.)

Tanya (filling them). Drink, and may it give you health ! Efim Antonych ! Let me pour you out another glass, Mftri Vlasevich!

Third Peasant. Well, fill it, fill it!

First Peasant. Well, how does our affair originate, clever girl ?

Tanya. All right, it is progressing –

First Peasant. Semdn said –

Tanya (rapidly). He said ?

Second Peasant. But I can't make him out.

Tanya. I can't tell you now, but I will try, I xyll Here is your document! (Points to the document under her apron.) If just one thing goes right! (Squeaks.) Oh, how good it would be!

Second Peasant. Look out and don't lose the paper. It has cost us a little something.

Tanya. Have no fear ! All you want is for him to sign it ?

Third Peasant. What else ? If he has signed it, let me say, that is the end of it! (Turns his cup upside dozen.) That will do.

Tanya (aside). He will sign it. You will see, he will. Drink some more ! (Fills the glass.)

First Peasant. You just fix the accomplishment of the sale of the land, and we will get you married at the Commune's expense. (Refuses the tea.)

Tanya (filling a glass and handing it). Drink !

Third Peasant. Do it, and we will get you married, and, let me say, we will dance at your wedding. Although I have never danced in all my life, I will then.

Tanya (laughing). I shall expect that. (Silence.)

Second Peasant (examining Tanya). All right, but you are not good for peasant work.

Tanya. Who, I ? You think I am not strong enough ? You ought to see me pull in the lady. Many a peasant could not pull her in that way.

Second Peasant. Where do you pull her in ?

Tanya. It is made of bone, like a jacket, as high as this. It is laced with cords, and you have to pull it in, just as people spit in their hands and hitch up.

Second Peasant. That is, you pull in the girth ?

Tanya. Yes, yes, I pull in the girth. But I dare not put my foot on her. (Laughing.)

Second Peasant. Why do you pull her in ?

Tanya. Because.

Second Peasant. Has she made such a vow ?

Tanya. No, for beauty's sake.

First Peasant. That is, you lace her belly for form's sake.

Tanya. I pull her in so that her eyes all bulge out, but she says : " More ! " It makes both my hands smart, and you say I have no strength. (The peasants laugh and shake their heads.)

Tanya. I have chatted too long. (Runs away, laughing.)

Third Peasant. How the girl has amused us!

First Peasant. How accurate she is !

Second Peasant. She is all right.

Scene XV. Three peasants, Cook, Old Cook (on the oven). Enter Sakhatov and Vasili Leonfdych. Sakhatov has a teaspoon in his hand.

Vasili Leonidych. Not exactly a dinner, but a dejeuner dinatoire. It was a fine breakfast, let me tell you ! The ham was glorious ! Roulier feeds you nicely. I have just come back. (Seeing the peasants.) The peasants are again here ?

Sakhatov. Yes, yes, that is all very beautiful, but we have come to conceal an object. So, where had we better put it ?

Vasili Leonidych. Pardon me, I will at once – (To the Cook.) Where are the dogs?

Cook. The dogs are in the coachman's room. How could we keep them in the servants' room ?

Vasili Leonidych. Ah, in the coachman's room? Very well.

Sakhatov. I am waiting.

Vasili Leonidych. Pardon, pardon. Ah, what ? Con-

“Do you know why he is so frightened? I will tell you why: he has a lot of money”

Photogravure from Photograph (Russian Stage Production)

ceal it ? Yes, Sergy<sup>y</sup> Ivanovich, so let me tell you: let us put it into the pocket of one of these peasants. Into this fellow's pocket. Say ! Ah, what ? Where is your pocket ?

Third Peasant. What do you want with my pocket ?

I declare, my pocket! I have money in my pocket.

Vasili Leonidych. Well, and where is your purse ?

Third Peasant. What do you want with it ?

Cook. What are you doing ? This is the young master.

Vasili Leonidych (laughing). Do you know why he is so frightened ? I will tell you why: he has a lot of money. Ah, what ?

Sakhatov. Yes, yes, I understand. You talk with them, and in the meantime I will put it into this wallet, so that they shall not know anything and shall not be able to tell him. You talk with them.

Vasili Leonidych. At once, at once. Well, boys, are you going to buy the land ? Ah, what ?

First Peasant. We have preposed so with all our hearts. But somehow the affair does not originate into motion.

Vasili Leonidych. Don't be stingy ! The land is an important matter. I told you to sow mint. You might plant tobacco, too.

First Peasant. This is so, in rivalry. We can sow all kinds of produces.

Third Peasant. Good sir, can't you ask your father for us ? Else how are we to live ? Our land is small: there is not enough room, let me say, to drive out a cow, nay, not even a chick.

Sakhatov (having placed the spoon in the wallet of the Third Peasant). (Test fait. Ready. Let us go! (Exit.)

Vasili Leonidych. Don't be stingy, ah? Well, good-bye! (Exit.)

Scene XVI. Three peasants, Cook, and Old Cook (on the oven).

Third Peasant. I told you, we ought to have gone to the lodging. We should have paid a dime each, and would have had our peace; but God save us from what they are doing here. " Give me the money," says he. " What is this for ?"

Second Peasant. He must have drunk a little too much. (The peasants tarn over their clips, get up, and cross themselves.)

First Peasant. Don't forget the words he has cast about sowing mint! You must understand this !

Second Peasant. Yes, sow mint! You try and bend your back, and you won't ask for any mint, I am sure! Thank you! Well, clever woman, where shall we lie down ?

Cook. One of you can lie down on the oven, and the other two on the benches.

Third Peasant. Christ save us ! (Prays.)

First Peasant. If God should give us the accomplishment of the affair (lying down), we could slide down on the train to-morrow, and on Tuesday we should be at home.

Second Peasant. Will you put out the light ?

Cook. Indeed not! They will be running in all the time: now for one thing, now for another. Lie down, and I will turn down the light.

Second Peasant. How can one live on a small plot ? I have been buying grain ever since Christmas. The oat straw is giving out, too. If I could, I should get four desyatfnas, and would take Sem^n home.

First Peasant. You have a family. You will have no trouble looking after the land, if you get it. If only the affair were accomplished.

Third Peasant. We must ask the Queen of Heaven. Maybe She will take pity on us.

Scene XVII. Silence. Sighs. Then are heard the thud of footsteps, the din of voices, and the door is opened wide, and there rush in headlong: Grossmann with tied up eyes, holding Sakhatov's hand, the Professor and Doctor, Stout Lady and Leonid Fedorovich, Betsy and Petrishchev, Vasili Leonidych and Marya Konstantinovna, Anna Pavlovna and Baroness, Fedor Ivanych and Tanya. Three peasants, Cook, and Old Cook (invisible). (Peasants jump up. Grossmann enters with rapid steps, then stops.)

Stout Lady. Don't worry! I have undertaken to watch it, and I strictly fulfil my duty. Sergey Ivanovich, you are not leading him ?

Sakhatov. No.

Stout Lady. Don't lead him, but, on the other hand, don't oppose yourself! (To Leonid Fedorovich.) I know these experiments, I used to make them myself. I would feel the efilux, and the moment I felt —

Leonid Fedorovich. Permit me to ask you to observe silence.

Stout Lady. Ah, I understand that well! I have experienced it myself. The moment my attention was distracted, I could not —

Leonid Fedorovich. Hush —

(They walk around, searching near First and Second Peasant, and then walk over to Third Peasant. Grossmann runs up against a bench.)

Baroness. Mais dites-moi, on le paye ? Anna Pavlovna. Je ne saurais vous dire. Baroness. Mais e'est un monsieur ? Anna Pavlovna. Oh! oui.

Baroness. Ca tient du miraculeux. N'est-ce pas ? Comment est-ce quit trouve ?

Anna Pavlovna. Je ne saurais vous dire. Mon mari vous Vexpliquera. (Seeing the peasants, looks around and sees the Cook.) Pardon ? What is this ? (Baroness walks over to the group.)

Anna Pavlovna (to Cook). Who let in the peasants ?

Cook. Yakov brought them here.

Anna Pavlovna. Who told Yakov to bring them ?

Cook. I can't tell you. Fddor Ivanych has seen them.

Anna Pavlovna. Leonid!

(Leonid Fedorovich does not hear, being busy with mind-reading, and says : " Hush ! ")

Anna Pavlovna. Fddor Ivanych! What does this mean ? Did you not see

me disinfect the antechamber ? And now you have infected the whole kitchen! Black bread, kvas,-

Fedor Ivanych. I thought that it was not dangerous in here, and the men have come on business. It is far for them to go elsewhere, and they are away from their village.

Anna Pavlovna. That is the trouble: they are from a Kursk village, where they are dying from diphtheria like flies. The main thing is I ordered them away from the house ! Did I order so or not ? ( Walks over to the group gathered about the peasants.) Be careful! Don't touch them! They are infected with diphtheria 1

(Nobody pays any attention to her. She walks away with dignity, and stands motionless, in expectation.)

Petrishchev (snuffles aloud). I don't know about diphtheria, but there is some other infection in the air. Do you smell it ?

Betsy. Stop your nonsense! Vovd, in which wallet is it ?

Vasili Leonidych. In that one, in that. He is going up to it, he is going up !

Petrisiichev. What is this ? Spirits or spirit ?

Betsy. Now your cigarettes would be in place. Smoke, smoke, and nearer to me! (Petrishchev bends down and smokes over her.)

Vasili Leonidych. He is getting near it, I tell you. Ah, what ?

Grossmann (restlessly groping around the Third Peasant). Here, here. I feel that it is here.

Stout Lady. Do you feel an efflux? (Grossmann bends down to the wallet and takes the spoon out of it.)

All. Bravo ! (Universal ecstasy.)

Vasili Leonidych. So this is where our spoon was ? (To the Peasant.) So that's what you did ?

Third Peasant. What did I do ? I did not take your spoon. Don't accuse me ! I did not take it, I did not, and my soul knows nothing about it. Let him say what he please! I knew, when he came, that it would not lead to anything good. " Give me your purse," he said. I did not take it, so help me Christ, I did not! (The young people surround him and laugh.)

Leonid Fedorovich (angrily to his son). Eternally your foolishness ! (To Third Peasant.) Don't worry, my friend! We know that you did not take it. It was only a trial.

Grossmann (takes off his bandage and pretends to be waking up). A

little water, if you please. (Everybody is busy about him.)

Vasili Leonidych. Let us go from here to the coachman's room. I will show you a bitch I have there! Epatant ! Ah, what!

Betsy. What a nasty word ! Can't you say " dog " ?

Vasili Leonidych. Impossible. One could not say about you : What an epdtant man Betsy is ? One has to say "girl," just so in this case. Ah, what? Marya Konstantinovna, is it so ? Was it good ? (.Laughs.)

Marya Konstantinovna. Well, let us go!

(Marya Konstantinovna, Betsy, Petrishchev, and Vasili Leonidych exeunt.)

Scene XVIII. The same, without Betsy, Marya Konstantinovna, Petrishchev, and Vasili Lconidych.

Stout Lady (to Grossmann). What ? How ? Are you rested ? (Grossmann does not answer. To Sakhatov.) Sergydy Ivanych, did you feel the eflux ?

Sakhatov. I did not feel anything. But it was nice, very nice, - quite a success.

Baroness. Admirable ! Ca ne le fait pas souffrir ?

Leonid Fedorovich. Pas le moins du monde.

Professor (to Grossmann). Permit me to ask you. (Giving him the thermometer.) At the beginning of the test it was thirty-seven and two. (To the doctor.) That is correct, I think ? Be so kind as to verify the pulse. A loss is unavoidable.

Doctor (to Grossmann). Well, sir, let me take your pulse. We will verify it, we will. (Takes out his watch and holds his hand.)

Stout Lady (to Grossmann). Excuse me! The condition in which you were cannot be called sleep ?

Grossmann (tired). It is the same hypnosis.

Sakhatov. Then we must understand it in the sense of your having hypnotized yourself ?

Grossmann. Why not ? Hypnosis can take place not • only through association, as, for example, at the sound of a tam-tam, as with Charcot, but by a mere entrance into a hypnogenic zone.

Sakhatov. I shall admit that that is correct, but it is desirable more clearly to define what hypnosis is.

Professor. Hypnosis is the phenomenon of the transmutation of one

energy into another.

Grossmann. Charcot did not define it thus.

Sakhatov. Excuse me, excuse me. Such is your definition, but Libot told me himself –

Doctor (giving up the pulse). Ah, it is all right, all right. Now the temperature.

Stout Lady (interposing). No, excuse me! I agree with Aleksy<sup>y</sup> Vladimirovich. Here you have the best proof of all. When, after my illness, I lay senseless, I was overcome by a desire to talk. I am in general reserved, but suddenly the desire to talk developed in me, and they tell me I talked so that they all wondered. (To Sakhatov.) However, I think I interrupted you.

Sakhatov (with dignitg). Not in the least. Proceed !

Doctor. The pulse is eighty-two, the temperature has risen by three-tenths.

Professor. So here you have the proof. That is what it ought to be. (Takes out a note-book and makes a memorandum.) Eighty-two, am I right ? And thirty-seven and five ? As soon as hypnosis is caused, there is at once an intensified action of the heart.

Doctor. I can testify, as a doctor, that your prediction has fully been realized.

Professor (to Sakhdto). And you said ? –

Sakhatov. I wanted to say that Libot himself told me that hypnosis is only a special psychic condition which increases suggestion.

Professor. However, Libot is not an authority, while Charcot has made an all-around investigation of the subject and has proved that hypnosis produced by a blow, trauma –

Sakhatov. I do not deny Charcot's labours. I' know him, too. All I say is that Libot told me so.

Grossmann (hotly). In the Salpetriere there are J three thousand patients, and I have taken a full > course. §

Professor. Excuse me, gentlemen, that is not the point.

Stout Lady (interposing). I will explain it to you in two words. When my husband was ill, all the doctors refused –

Leonid Fedorovich. Let us go back to the house. Baroness, if you please.

(Exeunt all speaking together and interrupting each other.)

Scene XIX. Three peasants, Cook, Fedor Ivanych, Tanya, Old Cook (on the oven), Leonid Fedorovich, and Anna Pavlovna.

Anna Pavlovna (pulling Leonid Fedorovich's sleeve and stopping him). How many times have I told you not to give orders in the house ! You know only your foolishness, and the house is on my shoulders. You will infect everybody.

Leonid Fedorovich. Who ? What ? I do not understand a word.

Anna Pavlovna. You ask? People sick with diphtheria sleep in the kitchen, where there is a constant intercourse with the house!

Leonid Fedorovich. I –

Anna Pavlovna. What I?

Leonid Fedorovich. I do not know anything.

Anna Pavlovna. You ought to know, since you are the father of a family. You ought not to do this.

Leonid Fedorovich. I did not think – I thought –

Anna Pavlovna. It makes me sick to listen to you!

(Leonid Fedorovich remains silent.)

Anna Pavlovna (to Fedor Ivanych). Out with them this very minute! Let them not be in my kitchen! This is terrible. Nobody obeys me ! Everything against me – I drive them away from one place, and they let them in here. (Becomes ever more agitated until tears appear.) Everything to spite me! Everything to spite me! And with my ailing – Doctor, doctor! Peter Petrovich! He has gone !

(Sobs and exit, followed by Leonid Fedorovich.)

Scene XX. Three peasants, Tanya, Fedor Ivanych, Cook, and Old Cook (on oven).

(Tableau. All stand for a long while in silence.)

Third Peasant. God be merciful with them! Before you know it a man will here be hauled up by the police. I have not been in court in all my life. Let us go to a lodging, boys !

Fedor Ivanych (to Tanya). What is to be done ?

Tanya. Nothing, Fedor Ivanych. Let them go to the coachman's room.

Fedor Ivanych. How can they go to the coachman's room ? The coachman has been complaining, as it is, that there are too many dogs there.

Tanya. Well, then, to the male servants' room.

Fedor Ivanych. But if they should find out ?

Tanya. They will not find out. Have no fear, Fedor Ivanych. How can we drive them away at night ? They would not even find a place.

Fedor Ivanych. Well, do as you think best, so they are away from here. (Exit.)

Scene XXI Three Peasants, Tanya, Cook, and Old Cook. (Peasants pick up their wallets.)

Old Cook. I declare, they are accursed devils ! They are having too good a time ! The devils !

Cook. You shut up! Thank the Lord they did not see you!

Tanya. Come, my uncles, to the servants' room !

First Peasant. Well, how is our affair ? How, for example, is it in regard to the signature, the application of the hand ? Well, are we to be in hope ?

Tanya. You will find out in an hour.

Second Peasant. Shall you be sly enough ?

Tanya (laughing). If God is willing.

(Curtain.)

ACT III.

Action takes place, the same evening, in a small drawingroom, where all the tests of Leonid Fedorovich are made.

Scene I. Leonid Fedorovich and Professor.

Leonid Fedorovich. Well, shall we risk a stance with our new medium ?

Professor. By all means. The medium is unquestionably a powerful one. Besides, it is desirable that the mediumistic seance should be this evening and with the same composition of the audience. Grossmann will, no doubt, have an effect on the mediumistic energy, and then the connection and oneness of the phenomena will be much more manifest. You will see that if the medium will be as strong as before, Grossmann will vibrate.

Leonid Fedorovich. In that case, you know, I will send for Sem6n, and will invite volunteers.

Professor. Yes, yes. In the meantime I want to make a few notes. (Takes out a note-book and writes.)

Scene II. The same and Sakhatov.

Sakhatov. They have just sat down to cards in Anna Pavlovna's apartments. Being an odd number, and, besides, having an interest in the stance, I have made my appearance here. Well, will there be a stance ?

Leonid Fedorovich. There will be, by all means.

Sakhatov. What, without Mr. Kapchich's mediumis-tic power ?

Leonid Fedorovich. Vous avez la main hcureuse. Just imagine, the peasant of whom I told you turns out to be a real medium.

Sakhatov. I declare! Oh, but that is particularly interesting!

Leonid Fedorovich. Yes, yes. After dinner we made a little preliminary test with him.

Sakhatov. You have had time to have it and to convince yourself ?

Leonid Fedorovich. Completely so. He has proved to be a medium of wonderful power.

Sakhatov (incredulously). I declare !

Leonid Fedorovich. It now turns out that this had been known quite awhile in the servants' room. When he sits down to a cup, the spoon jumps into his hand. (To the Professor.) Have you heard this ?

Professor. No, I have not heard this particular thing.

Sakhatov (to the Professor). Still, you admit the possibility of such phenomena ?

Professor. Of what phenomena ?

Sakhatov. Well, in general, the spiritualistic, the mediumistic, in general, the supernatural phenomena.

Professor. The question is what do we call supernatural ? When not a living man, but a piece of stone, attracted a nail, how did such a phenomenon seem to the spectators, natural or supernatural ?

Sakhatov. Yes, of course. Only, such phenomena, as the attraction of the magnet, are continually repeated.

Professor. The same thing happens here. The phenomenon is repeated,

and we subject it to investigation. More than that, we subject the phenomena under investigation to the laws which are common to other phenomena. Phenomena seem to be supernatural only, because the causes of the phenomena are ascribed to the medium himself. But this is incorrect. The phenomena are produced, not by the medium, but by a spiritual energy working in the medium, and that is a great difference. The whole matter lies in the law of equivalency.

Sakhatov. Yes, of course, but –

Scene III. The same and Tanya (who enters and stands behind the portiere).

Leonid Fedorovich. You must remember this much : as with Hume and Kdpchich, so even now you can't count on anything for certain with this medium. There may be a failure, and there may be a complete materialization.

Sakhatov. Even materialization? What kind of a materialization can it be ?

Leonid Fedorovich. For example, a dead person may come: your father or grandfather will take your hand and will give you something; or somebody will rise in the air, as was last time the case with Aleksy6y Vladimirovich.

Professor. Of course, of course. But the main thing is to explain all these phenomena and to bring them under common laws.

Scene IV. The same and Stout Lady.

Stout Lady. Anna Pavlovna permitted me to come to see you.

Leonid Fedorovich. You are welcome!

Stout Lady. How tired out this Grossmann is ! He could not hold a cup. Did you notice how pale he grew (to the Professor) as he came near it ? I noticed it at once, and I was the first to mention it to Anna Pavlovna.

Professor. No doubt. There was a loss of vital energy.

Stout Lady. That's what I say, – we ought not to misuse it. A hypnotizer had suggested to a friend of mine, Vydrochka Konshin, – you know her, – to stop smoking, and her spine began to ache.

Professor (wants to begin speaking'). The measurement of the temperature and of the pulse show obviously –

Stout Lady. Just a minute, excuse me. So I told her it would be better to smoke than to suffer from the nerves. Of course, smoking is harmful, and I should like to give it up, but do what you please, I can't. I once stopped for two weeks, but I could not stand it any longer.

Professor (again makes an attempt to speak). Show conclusively –

Stout Lady. No, just let me finish. I have only two words more to say. You say it is a loss of strength ? I wanted to tell you that when I travelled post– The roads were dreadful then, – you can't remember that, but I have noticed that all our nervousness comes from the railroads. For example, I can't sleep on the road,– kill me, but I can't fall asleep.

Professor (begins again, but the Stout Lady gives him no chance to speak). The loss of strength –

Sakhatov (smiling). Yes, yes.

(Leonid Fedorovich rings the bell.)

Stout Lady. Though I have been without sleep, one, two, three nights, I cannot fall asleep.

Scene V. The same and Grigori.

Leonid Fedorovich. Please, tell Fddor to prepare everything for the stance and call Semfn here, – Semfn, the peasant of the pantry, – do you hear ?

Grigori. Yes, sir! (Exit.)

Scene VI. Leonid Fedorovich, Professor, Stout Lady, and Tanya (concealed).

Professor (to Sakhatov). The measurement of the temperature and pulse show a loss of vital energy. The same will happen at mediumistic phenomena. The law of the preservation of energy –

Stout Lady. Yes, yes. I wanted to say that I am very glad to see that a common peasant has turned out to be a medium. That is nice. I always said that the Slavophiles –

Leonid Fedorovich. Let us meanwhile go to the drawing-room!

Stout Lady. Permit me to say just two words. The Slavophiles are right, but I always tell my husband that there is no reason for exaggerating. The golden means, you know– How can one affirm that everything is good with the masses, when I myself saw –

Leonid Fedorovich. Won't you, please, go to the drawing-room ?

Stout Lady. A boy not bigger than this, and he drinks. I scolded him. He was grateful to me for it later on. They are children, and children, so I always said, need love and severity – (All exeunt, talking.)

Scene VII. Tanya (alone, coming out from behind the door).

Tanya. Oh, if I only may succeed ! (Ties twine.)

Scene VIII. Tanya and Betsy (walks in hurriedly).

Betsy. Is papa not here ? (Looking at Tanya.) What are you doing here ?

Tanya. Oh, Lizaveta Leonidovna, I just came in – I wanted – I just came in – (Confused.)

Betsy. Isn't there going to be a stance here at once ? {Noticing that Tanya is gathering up the twine, looks fixedly at her, and bursts out laughing.} Tanya ! You have been doing it all! Don't deny it! And you did it last time! Yes, you did, you did!

Tanya. Dear Lizaveta Leonidovna!

Betsy (in ecstasy). Ah, how good that is! I did not expect that I Why did you do it all ?

Tanya. My dear Lizaveta Leonidovna, don't give me away !

Betsy. 'No, not for anything in the world. I am so glad ! How do you do it ?

Tanya. Like this: I will hide myself, and then, when they put out the lights, I will crawl out and do it.

Betsy (pointing to the twine). What is this for? Yes, I understand, you don't have to tell me: you catch them –

Tanya. Dear Lizaveta Leonidovna, I will tell you everything. Before this I only joked, but now I want to get something done.

Betsy. How ? What ? Something done ?

Tanya. You have seen the peasants that have come to buy some land. Now, your papa will not sell it to them, and he has returned the document to them without signing it. Fedor Ivdnych says he did so because the spirits have told him to. So I am trying it this way.

Betsy. Ah, what a clever girl you are ! Do it, do it! How are you going to do it ?

Tanya. Like this: the moment they put out the lights, I will begin to rap, to throw the twine on their heads, and finally to hurl the paper on the floor, and on the table, – I have it with me.

Betsy. Well, and – ?

Tanya. Well, they will be astonished. The paper was in the hands of the peasants, and suddenly it is here. I will order –

Betsy. Oh, yes, Semfn is the medium to-day!

Tanya. I will order him (Can't speak for laughter.) – will order him to choke anybody that gets into his hands, – only not your papa, – that he will not dare to do, – and to choke them until the paper is signed.

Betsy (laughing). But that is not the way it is done. A medium does not do anything himself.

Tanya. Oh, that won't hurt, – maybe it will be all right.

Scene IX. Tdnya and Fddor Ivanych. (Betsy makes a sign to Tanya and exit.)

Fedor Ivanych (to Tanya). What are you doing here ?

Tanya. My dear F^dor Ivanych, I have come to see you –

Fedor Ivanych. What is it ?

Tanya. About what I have been asking you.

Fedor Ivanych (laughing). I have made the match, I have. We have shaken hands, but we have not drunk anything.

Tanya (squeaking). Is it really so ?

Fedor Ivanych. I tell you it is. He said he would take counsel with the old woman, and God aid you !

Tanya. He did say that ? (Squeaking.) Ah, my dear F&lor Ivanych, I will pray all my life for you!

Fedor Ivanych. All right, all right! I am busy now. I was told to fix things for the stance.

Tanya. Let me help you ! How do you want to fix it ?

Fedor Ivanych. How ? Like this: the table in the middle of the room, chairs, the guitar, the accordion. No lamps, – just candles.

Tanya (arranges things with Fedor Ivanych). Is this right ? The guitar here, the inkstand here – (Placing things.) Like this ?

Fedor Ivanych. Will they really put Sem^n down?

Tanya. I suppose so. They have had him in the chair once.

Fedor Ivanych. Wonderful! (Putting on his eyeglasses.) But is he clean ?

Tanya. How do I know ?

Fedor Ivanych. So you had better –

Tanya. What, Fedor Ivanych ?

Fedor Ivanych. Go, take a nail-brush and scented soap, – take mine, if you want to, – and cut his nails and wash them clean.

Tanya. He will wash them himself.

Fedor Ivanych. Well, tell him to do so. And let him put on clean linen.

Tanya. All right, Fedor Ivanych. (Exit.)

Scene X. Fedor Ivanych (alone, sitting down in an armchair).

Fedor Ivanych. He is learned, yes, Aleksyey Vladimirovich is a professor, but I often have my doubts about him. Popular superstitions are coarse, and they are destroyed : the superstitions about house-spirits, wizards, witches – And when you come to think of it, this is just such a superstition. Really, is it possible for the spirits of the dead to speak and play the guitar ? Somebody is fooling them, or maybe they are fooling themselves. I can't make it out about Semdn. (Looking through the album.) Here is their spiritualistic album. How can one take a photograph of a spirit ? Here is a picture of a Turk sitting with Leonid Fedorovich – A wonderful human weakness!

Scene XI. Fedor Ivanych and Leonid Fedorovich.

Leonid Fedorovich (entering). Well, is everything ready ?

Fedor Ivanych (rising without haste). Yes. (Smiling.) Only I am afraid your new medium may disgrace himself, Leonid Fedorovich.

Leonid Fedorovich. No, Aleksyey Vladimirovich and I have tested him. He is a wonderfully strong medium!

Fedor Ivanych. I do not know about that. But is he clean ? You have not troubled yourself about ordering him to wash his hands. It might cause some inconvenience.

Leonid Fedorovich. His hands? Oh, yes! You think they might be dirty ?

Fedor Ivanych. Yes, he being a peasant. And there will be ladies present, and Marya Vasilevna.

Leonid Fedorovich. Let them be !

Fedor Ivanych. I wanted to tell you something else : Timofey, the coachman, came to complain about the dogs; he says it is impossible to keep clean on account of them.

Leonid Fedorovich (placing things on the table, distractedly). What dogs ?

Fedor Ivanych. They brought three greyhounds from Vasili Leonidych this morning, and they were put in the coachman's room.

Leonid Fedorovich (annoyed). Tell Anna Pavlovna about it ! Let her do as she pleases ! I have no time.

Fedor Ivanych. You know her weakness for Vasili Leonidych –

Leonid Fedorovich. Let her do as she pleases. From him nothing but annoyance – Well, I have no time.

Scene XII. The same and Semën (in sleeveless coat, enters smiling).

Semen. Did you call me ?

Leonid Fedorovich. Yes, yes. Let me see your hands! All right, all right! So, my dear, you do just as you did before ! Sit down and abandon yourself to your feeling! Don't do any thinking.

Semes. Why should I think? It is only worse if you do.

Leonid Fedorovich. That's it, that's it! The less you are conscious, the stronger it will be. Don't do any thinking, and abandon yourself to your mood : if you feel like sleeping, sleep; if you feel like walking, walk; you understand ?

Semen. Why should I not understand ? There is no cunning in this!

Leonid Fedorovich. The main thing is not to get confused, for you might be surprised at yourself. You must understand that just as we live, so the invisible world of spirits lives with us.

Fedor Ivanych (correcting him). Unseen feelings, you understand ?

Semën (laughing). Why should I not? What you say is so simple.

Leonid Fedorovich. If you feel like rising in the air, or something like it, don't lose courage.

Semën. Why should I lose courage ? What do I care ?

Leonid Fedorovich. Well, then I will go and call them all. Is everything ready ?

Fedor Ivanych. I think, yes.

Leonid Fedorovich. And the slates ?

Fedor Ivanych. They are down-stairs. I will bring them in at once. (Exit.)

Scene XIII. Leonid Fedorovich and Semen.

Leonid Fedorovich. Well, all right, then. So don't get confused, and be at your ease!

Semen. Shall I take off my coat ? That will make me more at my ease.

Leonid Fedorovich. Your coat ? No, no, keep it on ! (Exit.)

Scene XIV. Semen (alone).

Semen. She told me to do the same again, and she will hurl around things as then. I wonder how it is she is not afraid.

Scene XV. Semen and Tanya (comes in without shoes in a dress of the colour of the wall-paper. Semen roars).

Tanya. Hush! They will hear us! Rub some matches on your fingers as you did the last time. (Rubs them on.) Well, do you remember everything ?

Semen (bending his fingers). First, to moisten the matches. Wave the hands, – that is one thing. Then to gnash my teeth, – that is the second. I have forgotten the third.

Tanya. The third thing is the most important. Listen : when the paper falls on the table, and I ring a bell, you stretch out your arms like this. Stretch them out as far as you can and catch a person. Catch anybody that is sitting nearest to you. And when you get hold of some one, press as hard as you can. (Laughs.) Whether it be a lady or a gentleman, press as hard as you can, and don't let the person get away! Do it, as though you were asleep, and gnash your teeth, or bellow, like this – (Bellows.) When I begin to play on the guitar, act as though you were waking up ! Stretch yourself, and wake up ! Do you remember everything ?

Semen. I do, but it is too funny.

Tanya. Don't laugh ! If you do, that will not be so bad. They will think you are doing it in your sleep. Only don't fall asleep for good, when they put out the lights.

Semen. Don't be afraid ! I will be pinching my ears.

Tanya. Do everything right, Semen dear. Only do everything, and don't be afraid ! He will sign the paper, you will see he will. They are coming. (Crawls under the sofa.)

Scene XVI. Semen and Tanya. Enter: Grossmann, Professor, Leonid Fedorovich, Stout Lady, Sakhatov, and Anna Pavlovna. Semen stands at the door.

Leonid Fedorovich. If you please, all unbelievers! Notwithstanding the fact that to-night we have a new, casual medium, I expect some

remarkable manifestations.

Sakhatov. Very, very interesting!

Stout Lady (pointing to Semen). Mais il est tres bien !

Anna Pavlovna. As a peasant of the pantry, only –

Sakhatov. Wives never believe in the affairs of their husbands. You do not admit at all ?

Anna Pavlovna. Of course not. In Kdpchich, it is true, there is something especial, but not so much, either.

Stout Lady. Excuse me, Anna Pavlovna, you must not judge this way. Before I was married I once had a remarkable dream. You know, there are dreams of such a kind that you do not know when they begin and when they end. So I had such a dream –

Scene XVII. The same, Vasili Leonidych and Pe-tshchev (enter).

Stout Lady. I had much revealed to me in that dream. Nowadays these young people (pointing to Pctrishchev and to Vasili Leonidych) deny everything.

Vasili Leonidych. I never deny anything, let me tell you. Ah, what ?

Scene XVIII. The same. Enter Betsy and Marya Konstantinovna. They begin to talk with Petrshchev.

Stout Lady. How can one deny the supernatural ? They say that it does not agree with reason. But there may be a stupid reason, then what ? Now, on Sadovaya Street, – have you heard about it ? – there was an apparition which came every night. The brother of my husband, – what do you call him ? – not beau frere, but in Russian, – oh, I never can remember those Russian family relations, – well, he went there three nights in succession, and could not see anything, so I said –

Leonid Fedorovich. So, who will stay ?

Stout Lady. I, I!

Sakhatov. I!

Anna Pavlovna (to Doctor). And you, too, will stay ?

Doctor. I want to see at least once what it is Aleksyly Vladimirovich finds here. I can't deny without having had any proofs.

Anna Pavlovna. And so you want me by all means to take them to-night ?

Doctor. Take whom ? Oh, the pills ! Yes, take them, if you please!  
Yes, yes, take them – I will call again.

Anna Pavlovna. If you please. (Aloud.) When you get through,  
messieurs et mesdames, please come to my apartment to rest from your  
emotion, and to finish the game of cards.

Stout Lady. By all means.

Sakhatov. Yes, yes! (Anna Pavlovna exit.)

Scene XIX. The same, without Anna Pavlovna.

Betsy (to Petrishchev). I tell you, stay. I promise you unusual  
things. Will you wager ?

Marya Konstantinovna. Do you believe in it ?

Betsy. To-night I do.

Marya Konstantinovna (to Petrishchev). And do you believe ?

Petrishchev. " I believe not, I believe not thy cunning vows." Well,  
if Elizaveta Leonidovna commands –

Vasili Leonidych. Let us stay, Marya Konstantinovna ! Ah, what ? I  
will concoct something epatant.

Marya Konstantinovna. No, don't make me laugh.

I can't keep from laughing.

Vasili Leonidych (alozul). I will stay !

Leonid Fedorovich (sternly). All I ask is that those who stay will  
not turn this into a joke. This is a serious matter.

Petrishchev. You hear? Well, we will stay. Vovo, sit down here, and  
don't you lose your courage I

Betsy. You are laughing, but wait and see!

Vasili Leonidych. Well, what is it indeed ? It will be a fine thing  
– Ah, what ?

Petrishchev (trembling). Oh, I am afraid, I am afraid. Marya  
Konstantinovna, I am afraid! My little legs are trembling.

Betsy (laughing). Hush up ! (All sit down.)

LEONID Fedorovich. Sit down, if you please! Semdn, sit down!

Semen. Yes, sir. (Sits down on the edge of the chair.)

Leonid Fedorovich. Sit down better!

Professor. Sit down regularly, on the middle of the chair, at your ease. (Seats Semen.)

(Betsy, Marya Konstantinovna, and Vasili Leonidych laugh.)

Leonid Fedorovich (raising his voice). I ask those who remain not to jest, but to take the matter seriously. There might be evil consequences. Vovo, do you hear? If you can't sit quietly, go out!

Vasili Leonidych. Quiet! (Hides himself behind the back of Stout Lady.)

Leonid Fedorovich. Aleksy6y Vladimirovich, put him in a trance !

Professor. No, Anton Borisovich is here, and he has more practice in this matter than I, and power – Antdn Borisovich !

Grossmann. Ladies and gentlemen, I am not really a spiritualist. I have only studied hypnosis. Hypnosis I have studied, it is true, in all its known manifestations, but that which is called spiritualism is entirely unknown to me. From the trance of a subject I may expect certain familiar phenomena of hypnosis: lethargy, aboulia, anaesthesia, analgesia, catalepsy, and all kinds of suggestion. But here not these, but other phenomena are to be subjected to investigation, and so it would be desirable to know what these expected phenomena are, and what scientific significance they have.

Sakhatov. I fully concur with Mr. Grossmann's opinion. Such an elucidation would be very interesting.

Leonid Fedorovich (to the Professor). I think, Alek-sydy Vladimirovich, you will not refuse to make a short explanation.

Professor. I do not object. I can explain it, if you so wish. (To the Doctor.) You, please, measure the temperature and pulse. My exposition will, unavoidably, be superficial and brief.

Leonid Fedorovich. Yes, brief, brief.

Doctor. Directly. (Takes out a thermometer and gives it to Semen.) Well, my good fellow! (Places it in his mouth.)

Semen. Yes, sir.

Professor (rising and turning to the Stout Lady, then sitting down). Ladies and gentlemen ! The phenomenon which we are investigating generally represents itself, on the one hand, as something novel, and, on the other, as something transcending the natural order of things. Neither the one nor the other is correct. This phenomenon is not new, but as old as the world, and not supernatural, but is subject to the same eternal laws to which everything in existence is subject. This phenomenon has usually been defined as a communion

with the spiritual world. This definition is not exact. According to this definition, the spiritual world is opposed to the material world, but this is not right: there is no such opposition. Both worlds are contiguous, so that it is impossible to draw a line of demarcation, which should separate the one world from the other. We say that matter is composed of molecules –

Petrishchev. Dull matter! (Whispering, laughter.)

Professor (stopping, and then continuing). Molecules of atoms, but atoms, having no extension, are in reality nothing but points of application of forces, that is, strictly speaking, not of forces, but of energy, – of that same energy which is as one and indestructible as matter. But just as matter is one and its forms are different, even so it is with energy. Within recent time we have been acquainted with only four forms of energy, which change one into another. We know the dynamic, thermic, electrical, and chemical energies. But these four forms of energy are far from exhausting all the varieties of its manifestations. The forms of the manifestations of energy are manifold, and one of these new, little known forms of energy is now to be investigated by us. I am speaking of the energy of mediumism.

{Again whispers and laughter in the corner of the young people.}

Professor (stops and, looking sternly around him, continues). The mediumistic energy has been known to humanity since time immemorial: predictions, presentiments, visions, and many others, – all those are nothing else but manifestations of mediumistic energy. The phenomena produced by it have been known since time immemorial. But the energy itself has not been acknowledged as such until recently, when, at last, we came to acknowledge the medium, the vibration of which produces the mediumistic phenomena. And just as the phenomena of light remained inexplicable until the existence of an imponderable substance, that of ether, was accepted, even so mediumistic phenomena seemed mysterious as long as we did not accept the now undoubted truth that in the interstices of the ether there is another even more delicate and imponderable substance, which is not subject to the law of the three dimensions –

{Again whisper, laughter, and squeaking.}

Professor {again looking sternly around him}. And just as mathematical calculations have irrefragably confirmed the existence of imponderable ether which produces the phenomena of light and electricity, even so a brilliant series of most exact investigations of Hermann, Schmidt, and Joseph Schmatzofen have undeniably confirmed the existence of that substance which fills the universe and which may be denominated as spiritual ether.

Stout Lady. Now I understand. How thankful I am –

Leonid Fedorovich. Yes. But, Aleksy6y Vladimirovich, can't you – abbreviate – a little ?

Professor {without replying to him). And thus, a series of strictly scientific experiments and investigations, as I have had the honour of informing you, has made clear to us the laws of mediumistic phenomena. These experiments have made it clear to us that the putting of certain individuals into a hypnotic state, which differs from common sleep only in that by falling into this sleep the physiological activity is not only not lowered, but always raised, as we have just seen, – it has become manifest that the putting into this condition of any subject whatsoever invariably causes certain perturbations in the spiritual ether, – perturbations which completely resemble those

perturbations which are produced by the immersion of a solid body in a liquid. These perturbations are what we call mediumistic phenomena – (Laughter, whisper-ing.)

Sakhatov. This is quite just and intelligible; but permit me to ask you: If, as you have said, putting a medium to sleep produces perturbations of the spiritual ether, why, then, do these perturbations find their expressions, as is generally understood in spiritualistic stances, in manifestations of the activity of dead persons ?

Professor. Because the particles of this spiritual ether are nothing but the souls of the living, the dead, and those not born, so that every concussion of this spiritual ether inevitably causes a certain motion of its particles. But these particles are nothing but the souls of men which by this motion are brought into communion.

Stout Lady (to Sakhatov). What is there here not to understand? This is so simple– I thank you very, very much!

Leonid Fedorovich. It seems to me that everything is clear now, and that we can begin.

Doctor. The lad is in the most normal of conditions: temperature, 37.2 ; pulse, 74.

Professor (takes out a note-book, and makes a memorandum). As a confirmation of that which I have had the honour of presenting to you will be the fact that putting the medium to sleep inevitably brings with it, as we shall soon see, a rise in temperature and pulse, just as in the case of hypnosis.

Leonid Fedorovich. Pardon me, but I should like to answer Sergydy Ivan y ch's question as to how it is we know that the spirits of deceased persons are communing with us. We know this because the spirit who comes tells us so straight out, – just as simply as I am saying this, – he tells us who he is, why he has come, where he is, and whether he is happy. At the last stance came the Spaniard Don Castillos, and he told us everything. He told us who he was, and when he died, and that he was suffering for having taken part in the Inquisition. More than that: he informed us of what was taking place

during the very time he was speaking with us, namely, while he was speaking with us he had to be reborn upon earth, and so he could not finish the conversation which he had begun – Well, you will see for yourself.

Stout Lady (interrupting him). Ah, how interesting ! Maybe the Spaniard was born in our house, and is now a baby.

Leonid Fedorovich. Not impossible.

Professor. I think it is time to begin.

Leonid Fedorovich. I only wanted to say – Professor. It is late already.

Leonid Fedorovich. Well, all right. So we can begin. Antdn Borisovich, please, put the medium to sleep –

Grossmann. How do you wish me to put the subject to sleep ? There are many possible means. There is Brede's system, there is the Egyptian symbol, there is Charcot's system.

Leonid Fedorovich (to Professor). That makes no difference, I think.

Professor. It is a matter of indifference.

Grossmann. Then I will apply my own system, which I have demonstrated in Odessa.

Leonid Fedorovich. If you please!

( Grossmann waves his hands over Semen. Semen closes his eyes and stretches himself.)

Grossmann (looking closely at him). He is falling asleep– He is asleep. A remarkably quick appearance of hypnosis ! The subject has apparently already entered upon his anaesthetic condition. A remarkably, unusually receptive subject, and he might be subjected to interesting experiments! (Sits down, gets up, and again sits down.) We now could put a needle through his hand. If you wish –

Professor (to Leonid Fedorovich). Do you notice how the medium's sleep is affecting Grossmann ? He is beginning to vibrate.

Leonid Fedorovich. Yes, yes– Can we now put out the lights ?

Sakhatov. But why must we have darkness ?

Professor. Darkness ? Because darkness is one of the conditions under which mediumistic energy is manifested, just as a certain temperature is the condition for certain manifestations of chemical and dynamic energy.

Leonid Fedorovich. Not always. Many people have things happen to

them at candle-light, and even in daylight. They have happened to me.

Professor (interrupting him). May we now have the lights out ?

Leonid Fedorovich. Yes, yes. (Puts out the lights.) Ladies and gentlemen ! Please pay attention now !

(Tanya crawls out from under the sofa and takes hold of the thread which is attached to the candelabrum.)

PEIRIS lie ii EV. Really, I like the Spaniard. How, during the conversation, he – down his head – how do you translate piquer une tete ?

Betsy. No, you just wait, and you will see what will happen!

Petrishchev. I am afraid of one thing only, and that is, that Vovo will grunt like a pig.

Vasili Leonidych. Do you want me to do it? I will grab –

Leonid Fedorovich. Ladies and gentlemen! I ask you not to speak –

(Silence. Semen sucks his finger, rubs the spittle on his knuckles, and waves his hands.)

Leonid Fedorovich. A light! Do you see a light ?

Sakhatov. A light? Yes, yes, I see, but permit me –

Stout Lady. Where, where ? Ah, I have not seen it I There it is ! Ah!

Professor (to Leonid Fedorovich, in a whisper, pointing to Grossmann, who is moving abozet). Notice how he is vibrating ! A double force ! (Again a phosphorescence.)

Leonid Fedorovich (to Professor). That is he ?

Sakhatov. What he?

Leonid Fedorovich. The Greek Nicholas. It is his light. Is it not so, Aleksydy Vladimirovich ?

Sakhatov. Who is this Greek Nicholas ?

Professor. A certain Greek, who was a monk in the time of Constantine at Constantinople and who visited us last time.

Stout Lady. Where is he, where ? I do not see.

Leonid Fedorovich. He cannot be seen yet – Aleksyey Vladimirovich, he is always especially well disposed to you. Ask him !

Professor (in a peculiar voice). Nicholas, is it you ?

(Tanya raps twice against the wall.)

Leonid Fedorovich (joyfully). He, he !

Stout Lady. Oh, oh ! I am going away !

Sakhatov. On what ground is it assumed that it is he ?

Leonid Fedorovich. Two raps are an affirmative answer. Else there would have been a silence.

(Silence. Repressed laughter in the young people's corner. Tanya throws upon the table a lampshade, a pencil, and a pen-wiper.)

Leonid Fedorovich (in a whisper). Notice, ladies and gentlemen, here is a lamp-shade. Something else. A pencil! Aleksyey Vladimirovich, a pencil r

Professor. All right, all right. I am watching him and Grossmann. Do you notice ?

(Grossmann rises and looks at the objects which have fallen on the table.)

Sakhatov. Excuse me, excuse me ! I should like to see whether the medium is not doing it all himself.

Leonid Fedorovich. Do you think so ? Then sit down near him, and hold his hands. But you may be sure he is asleep.

Sakhatov (walks over, catches with his head into the thread, which Tanya has lowered, and stoops in fright). Yes! Strange, strange! (Goes up, takes Semen by the elbow. Semen bellows.)

Professor (to Leonid Fedorovich). Do you hear how Grossmann's presence affects him ? A new phenomenon, – I must note it down – (Luns out of the room, notes it down, and returns.)

Leonid Fedorovich. Yes. But we ought not to leave Nicholas without an answer. We ought to begin –

Grossmann (gets up, walks over to Semen, raises and drops his hand). Now it would be interesting to produce a contracture. The subject is in a state of absolute hypnosis.

Professor (to Leonid Fedorovich). Do you see, do you see ?

Grossmann. If you wish –

Doctor. Permit, sir, Aleksyey Vladimirovich to go through with it: it is a serious matter.

Professor. Leave him alone ! He is already speaking in his sleep.

Stout Lady. How glad I am I have decided to stay! It frightens me, but still I am glad, because I always told my husband –

Leonid Fedorovich. I beg you to keep quiet.

(Tanya passes the thread over the head of the Stout Lady.)

Stout Lady. Ouch!

Leonid Fedorovich. What, what is it ?

Stout Lady. He took me by my hair!

Leonid Fedorovich (in a whisper). Don't be afraid ! It will not hurt! Give him your hand! The hand is generally cold, but I like it.

Stout Lady (hiding her hands). Not for the world !

Sakhatov. Yes, it is strange, it is strange.

Leonid Fedorovich. He is here and wants to communicate. Who wants to ask any question ?

Sakhatov. Please let me ask ? – Do I believe, or not? (Tanya raps twice.)

Professor. An affirmative answer.

Sakhatov. Allow me to ask again. Have I a ten-rouble bill in my pocket ?

(Tanya raps several times and passes the thread over Sakhatov's head.)

Sakhatov. Ah! (Catches the thread and breaks it

Professor. I should like those present not to put any indefinite or jocular remarks. He does not like it.

Sakhatov. Excuse me, but I have a thread in my hand.

Leonid Fedorovich. A thread ? Keep it! That frequently happens. Not only threads, but silk cords, very antique cords, too.

Sakhatov. Still, where does the thread come from ?

(Tanya throws a cushion at him.)

Sakhatov. Excuse me, excuse me! Something soft has struck my head. Let us have some light. There is something here –

Professor. We beg you not to interfere with the manifestations.

Stout Lady. For the Lord's sake, don't interfere! I want to ask something. May I ?

Leonid Fedorovich. You may, you may. Ask him!

Stout Lady. I want to ask about my stomach. May I? I want to ask what I had better take, aconite or belladonna ?

(,Silence. Whispering in the young people's corner, and suddenly Vasili Leoniclych cries like a szcck-ling babe : " Ooah, ooah ! " Laughter. Holding their noses and mouths, and snorting, the young women run out with Pctrishchev.)

Stout Lady. Ah, no doubt, this monk is born anew! Leonid Fedorovich (furious, in an angry whisper). You can't do anything but foolish things! If you can't behave, go out! ( Vasili Leonidych exit.)

Scene XX. Leonid Fedorovich, Professor, Stout Lady, Sakhatov, Grossmann. Doctor, Semen, and Tanya. Darkness and silence.

Stout Lady. Oh, what a pity! Now I can't ask any more! lie is born now !

Leonid Fedorovich. Not at all. That was Vovd's foolishness. He is here. Ask him!

Professor. This often happens: these jests and this ridicule are a very common phenomenon. I assume that he is still here. Anyway, we may ask. Leonid Fedorovich, you ask!

Leonid Fedorovich. No, if you please, you ask! This has put me out. It is so disagreeable! This tactlessness –

Professor. All right! All right! Nicholas, are you here ?

(Tanya raps twice and rings the bell. Semen begins to bellow and to wave his hands. Gets hold of Sakhatov and of the Professor and chokes them.) Professor. Such an unexpected manifestation! An interaction on the medium himself. This is entirely new. Leonid Fedorovich, you keep watch, I am in an uncomfortable position. He is choking me. See what Grossmann is doing. Now you must be as attentive as possible.

(Tanya throws the peasants' paper on the table.) Leonid Fedorovich. Something has fallen on the table.

Professor. See what it is.

Leonid Fedorovich. A paper! A folded sheet of paper I (Tanya throws a pocket inkstand on the table.) Leonid Fedorovich. An inkstand !

(Tanya throws a pen on the table.) Leonid Fedorovich. A pen !

(Semen bellows and chokes them.) Professor (out of breath). Excuse me, this is an absolutely new phenomenon. Not the elicited medium-istic energy is here at work, but the medium himself. Open the inkstand, and put the pen on the paper! He will write.

(Tanya walks zip to Leonid Fedorovich from behind, and bangs his head with the guitar.)

Leonid Fedorovich. He has struck my head! (Looking at the table) The pen is not writing yet, and the paper is folded.

Professor. See what kind of paper it is, and be quick about it! Apparently a double force, his and Grossmann's, is producing the perturbations.

Leonid Fedorovich (goes out with the paper, and immediately returns). Extraordinary ! This paper is a contract with the peasants, which I declined this morning to sign, and which I gave back to the peasants. Apparently he wants me to sign it.

Professor. Of course! Of course ! You ask him ! Leonid Fedorovich. Nicholas ! Shall I do so ?

(Tanya raps twice.) Professor. Do you hear? There is no doubt about it!

('Leonid Fedorovich takes the pen and goes out. Tanya raps, plays on the guitar and accordion, and again creeps under the sofa. Leonid Fedorovich returns. Semen stretches himself and coughs.)

Leonid Fedorovich. He is waking up. May I light the candles ?

Professor (hurriedly). Doctor, doctor, if you please, the temperature and pulse! You will see that there will prove to be a rise.

Leonid Fedorovich (lights the candles). Well, unbelievers ?

Doctor (going up to Semen and putting the thermometer into his mouth). Well, my good fellow? Have you slept well ? Put this in your mouth, and let me have your hand ! (Looks at his watch.)

Sakhatov (shrugging his shoulders). I can affirm that the medium did not do any of these things. But the thread ? I should like to have an explanation of the thread.

Leonid Fedorovich. The thread, the thread ! There were more serious phenomena than that!

Sakhatov. I do not know. But, in any case, je reserve mon opinion.

Stout Lady (to Sakhatov). How can you say: Je reserve mon opinion ? And what about the baby with the wings ? Did you not see him ? At

first I thought I was only dreaming; but later it was as clear, as clear, as though he were alive –

Sakhatov. I can speak only of what I have seen. I did not see that, I did not.

Stout Lady. Well! It was so plain. On the left side the monk in black attire leaned down over him –

Sakhatov (walking away). What exaggeration !

Stout Lady (turning to the Doctor). You must have seen it. He rose on your side. (Doctor, paying no attention to her, continues to count the pulsed)

Stout Lady (to Grossmann). And there was a light from him, especially around the face. And his expression was so gentle, so truly angelic ! (Smiles gently herself.)

Grossmann. I saw a phosphorescent light and that objects changed places, but nothing else.

Stout Lady. Don't say that! You are just joking. You do so because you, learned men of the school of Charcot, do not believe in the life after death. Nobody will now make me change my faith in a future life! (Grossmann walks away from her.)

Stout Lady. No, you may say what you please, but this is one of the happiest moments of my life. When Sara sate played, and this one – Yes ! (Nobody pays any attention to her. She goes up to Semen.) Tell me, my friend, how did you feel ? Was it hard for you ?

Semen (laughing). Yes, madam.

Stout Lady. Still, you could stand it ?

Semen. Yes, madam. (To Leonid Fedorovich.) May I go?

Leonid Fedorovich. Go, go!

Doctor (to Professor). The pulse is the same, but the temperature is lower.

Professor. Lower ? (In thought and suddenly making it out.) That is what it ought to be, – there ought to be a fall! The double energy, crossing, ought to have produced something in the nature of an interference. Yes, yes.

Leonid Fedorovich. I am sorry that there was x no complete materialization, but still – Ladies and gentlemen, please go to the drawing-room ! &

Stout Lady. I was particularly impressed by g the flapping of his wings, and I could see him rise in ~ the air. 'X

Grossmann (to Sakhatov). If one were to stick Z to hypnosis alone, one might produce complete epi-lepsy. The success might be absolute.

Sakhatov. Interesting, but not convincing, – that is all I can say!

Scene XXI. Leonid Fedorovich with the paper. Enter Fedor Ivanych.

Leonid Fedorovich. Well, Fedor, it was a remarkable seance! It now turns out that I must give the peasants the land upon their own conditions.

Fedor Ivanych. Indeed!

Leonid Fedorovich. I should say so! (Shows the paper to him.) Just think of it! The paper which I had returned to them was thrown down on the table. I signed it.

Fedor Ivanych. How did it get there ?

Leonid Fedorovich. It just got there. (Exit, Fedor Ivanych follows him out.)

Scene XXII. Tanya (alone, creeping out from under-neath the sofa, and laughing).

Tanya. My saints! How frightened I got when he caught hold of the thread! (Squeaking.) Still, it has come out all right, – he has signed it!

Scene XXIII. Tanya and Grigori.

Grigori. So it is you who has been fooling them ?

Tanya. What is that to you ?

Grigori. Do you suppose the lady will praise you for it ? No, you are mistaken ! Now you are caught. I will tell of your tricks, if you will not do as I want you to.

Tanya. I will not do as you want me to, and you won't dare to do anything to me.

Curtain.

ACT IV.

The theatre represents the scene of the First Act.

Scene I. Two footmen in liveries, Fedor Ivanych, and Grigori.

First Footman (with gray side-boots). You are the third to-day. I am glad the receptions are all in the same part of the city. You used to have them on Thursdays.

Fedor Ivanych. Then we changed it to Saturday, so as to have it on the same day with the Golovkins, and with Grade-von-Grabe –

Second Footman. It is so nice at the Shcherbakovs: the lackeys are treated as though there were a ball there.

Scene II. The same. The Princess and her Daughter descend the stairs. Betsy sees them off. The Princess looks into a note-book and at the clock, and sits doivn on the clothes-chcst. Grigori pzits on her overshoes.

Young Princess. Yes, be sure and come! If you don't come, and Dodo does not, – there will nothing come of it.

Betsy. I do not know. I must go to the Shubins anyway. Then comes the rehearsal.

Young Princess. You will have time. Do come! Ne nous fais pas faux bond ! Fedya and Coco will be there.

Betsy. J'en ai par dessus la tete de votre Coco.

Young Princess. I thought I should find him here. Ordinairement il est d'une exactitude.

Betsy. He certainly will be here.

Young Princess. When I see him with you, I always thiuk that he has just proposed to you, or that he will do so in a minute.

Betsy. I suppose I shall have to go through it. It is so unpleasant!

Young Princess. Poor Coco! He is so in love !

Betsy. Cessez, les gens !

(Young Princess sits down on the sofa, speaking in a whisper. Grigori puts on her overshoes.)

Young Princess. Good-bye until evening!

Betsy. I will try.

Princess. Tell your papa that I do not believe a thing, but that I will come to see his new medium, if he will let me know when. Good-bye, ma toute telle ! (Kisses her and exit with Young Princess. Betsy goes up-stairs.)

Scene III. The two footmen, F^dor Ivanych, and Grigori.

Grigori. I do not like to put overshoes on old women: they don't bend, and they can't see anything, because their bellies are so large, and so they keep sticking their feet anywhere but into the

overshoes. It is quite different with a young woman : it is pleasant to take her foot into the hand.

Second Footman. How dainty he is !

First Lackey. It is not for people of our class to be dainty.

Grigori. Why should we not be dainty ? Are we not human beings ? They think we do not understand anything: when they began to talk, they looked at me, and immediately said "les gens"

Second Footman. What does that mean ?

Grigori. That means in Russian: " Don't say it, for they will understand! " They say the same thing at dinner, but I understand it. You say there is a difference, but I say there is none.

First Footman. There is a great difference, if a person understands anything.

Grigori. There is no difference whatsoever. To-day I am a lackey, and to-morrow I may be living as well as they. Fine women sometimes marry lackeys: such things have happened. I will go and take a smoke. (Exit.)

Scene IV. The same, without Grigori.

Second Footman. That young fellow of yours is a bold chap.

Fedor Ivanych. A worthless lad and unfit for service : he has served in an office, and that has spoiled him. I advised against taking him, but the lady wanted him because he makes such a fine appearance in the carriage.

First Footman. I should like to see him serving under our count: he would straighten him out in no time. Ob, how he hates such sleek fellows! If you are a lackey, stay a lackey, and do justice to your calling! This pride does not become him.

Scene V. The same. Petrishchev runs down-stairs and takes out a cigarette.

Petrishchev (in thought). Yes, yes. No " ta " – my second. No-ta-ry. My whole– Yes, yes. (Coco Kling-en, in eye-glasses, enters, and goes up to him.) Ah, Coco-late, Choco-late! Where do you come from ?

Coco Kling-en. From the Shcherbakovs. Will you never stop your foolishness ?

Petrishchev. Just listen to my charade : My first is no " rial" ; no " ta " – my second ; my whole is quite contrary.

Coco Kling-en. I don't know, I don't know, and I have no time.

Petrishciiev. Where are you going ?

Coco Klingen. Where am I going ? To the Ivins, to practise singing. Then to the Shubins, and then to the rehearsal. Aren't you going to be there ?

Petrishiichev. Of course I will. I will be at the re-hearse-al and at the re-burial. I was a savage before, and now lam both a savage and a general.

Coco Klingen. Well, how was the stance last night ?

Petrishciiev. It was killing! There was a peasant there; but the main thing is it was all in the dark. Vovd mewled like a baby, the professor explained, and Marya Vasilevna made glosses. It was great fun ! What a pity you were not there!

Coco Klingen. I am afraid, mon cher. You manage to keep out of trouble with all your jokes; but it seems to me that the moment I say a word, they will make me out as having proposed. Et ga ne m'arrange pas du tout, du tout. Mais du tout, du tout !

Petrishciiev. You make a proposition with a predicate, and nothing will happen to you. Go in to Vovo's, and we will go together to the re-burial.

Coco Klingen. I can't understand how you can keep company with such an ass. He is so stupid, – such a real good-for-nothing!

Petrishciiev. I love him. I love Vovd, but " with a strange love," " to him the people's path will not be overgrown – " (Goes into Vasili Leonidych's room.)

Scene VI. The two lackeys, Fddor Ivanych, and Coco Klingen. Betsy secs Lady off

(Coco makes a deep Low.)

Betsy (shakes his head sidewise. To the Lady). Are you not acquainted ?

Lady. No.

Betsy. Baron Klingen – Why were you not here yesterday ?

Coco Klingen. I could not, – I was so busy.

Betsy. What a pity! It was so interesting. (Laughing.) You ought to have seen what manifestations there were ! Well, how is our charade getting on ?

Coco Klingen. Oh, yes! The verses for my second are ready. Nik has made them up, and I have added the music.

Betsy. How is it, how ? Let me hear them !

Coco Klingen. Aature is so beautiful

Where bananas native are,

Manna, Manna ! Ma, na, na !

Lady. My second is na, and what is my first ?

Coco Klingen. My first is Arc, the name of a savage woman.

Betsy. Are, you see, is a savage, who wants to eat up the object of her love. (Laughs loud.) She walks around, and pines, and sings.

Ah, my appetite!

Coco Klingen (interrupting her).

If I but had a bite !

Betsy (continues).

I want some one to eat,

I walk with saddened mind –

Coco Klingen.

No person do I find –

Betsy.

No flesh to chew, no meat–

Coco Klingen.

Behold, a raft I see –

Betsy.

It is swimming to me,

On it two generals are –

Coco Klingen.

Generals we are,

Fate has brought us from afar,

Fate has brought us, – here we are !

And again the refrain:

Fate has brought us from afar,

Fate has brought us, – here we are !

Lady. Charmant!

Betsy. Do you perceive how stupid it is ?

Coco Klingen. But that is where the charm of it is !

Lady. Who is Are ?

Betsy. I. I have had a costume made, but mamma says it is indecent. It is not a bit more indecent than a ball-dress. (To Fedor lx any ch.) Well, is the man here from Bourdier ?

Fedor Ivanych. Yes, he is sitting in the kitchen.

Lady. Well, and how is the Arena going to be ?

Betsy. You will see. I do not wish to spoil your pleasure. Au revoir.

Lady. Good-bye! (They bow to each other. Lady exit.)

Betsy (to Coco Klingen). Let us go to mamma! (Betsy and Coco Klingen ascend the stairs.)

Scene VII. Fedor Ivanych, the two lackeys, and Yakov (comes out of the butlers room, with a tray, on which there are glasses of tea and pastry. Walks through

the anteroom, out of breath).

Yakov (to the lackeys'). My regards to you, my regards !

(The lackeys bow.)

Yakov (to Fedor Ivanych). Can't you tell Grigori Mi-khaylych to give me a lift ? Getting things ready has tired me out. (Exit.)

Scene VIII. The same, without Yakov.

First Footman. He is a hard-working man !

Fedor Ivanych. He is a good man, but the lady does not like him. She says he does not make a good appearance. They accused him yesterday of

letting some peasants into the kitchen, and I am afraid they will discharge him. And he is such a nice

fellow.

Second Footman. What peasants ?

Fedor Ivanych. Some peasants from our Kursk village came to buy some land. It was night-time, and they are his countrymen. One of them is also the father of the peasant of the pantry. So they took them to the kitchen. They happened to have mind-reading here last night: they hid something in the kitchen. Then all the company went into the kitchen, and there the lady saw them. Well, it was terrible! " These people,"

says she, " might be infected, and you let them stay in the kitchen!" She is dreadfully afraid of the infection.

Scene IX. The same and Grigori.

Fedor Ivanych. Go, Grigori, and help Yakov Ivanych, while I will stay here by myself. He can't get it done himself.

Grigori. He can't get it done because he is awkward. (Exit.)

Scene X. The same, without Grigori.

First Footman. A new fashion they have started with this infection ! And so your lady is afraid of it, too ?

Fedor Ivanych. She is afraid of it worse than of fire. We are doing nothing now but fumigating, washing, and sprinkling.

First Footman. I thought I smelled something strong. (With animation.) It is a perfect shame how they carry on with these infections. Perfectly disgraceful ! They have forgotten God. The daughter of Princess Mosolov, the sister of our master, died. What do you suppose they did ? Neither father nor mother came into the room to bid her farewell. And the daughter kept weeping and begging for her parents to tell them good-bye, but they did not go in. The doctor had discovered some kind of an infection. And yet the chambermaid and a nurse attended to her, and they are alive !

Scene XI. The same, Vasili Leonidych, and Petrishchev (coming out of the door with cigarettes).

Petrishchev. Let us go! I just want to fetch Coco-late – Chocolate.

Vasili Leonidych. Your Cocolate is a stupid! Let me tell you: I can't bear him. He is such a brainless fellow, a genuine loafer! He does nothing but loaf. Ah, what ?

Petrishchev. Wait, anyway! I want to tell him good-bye.

Vasili Leonidych. All right. I will go and take a look in the coachman's room. One of the dogs is so vicious that the coachman

says he has almost eaten him up. Ah, what ?

Petrishchev. Who has eaten whom ? Do you mean to tell me that the coachman has eaten up the dog?

Vasili Leonidych. Your eternal jokes— (Puts on his wraps and exit.)

Petrishchev (in thought). Ma-no-rial, no-ta-ry — Yes, yes. (Goes upstairs.)

Scene XII. The two footmen, Fedor Ivanych, and Yakov (who runs over the stage in the beginning and at the end of the scene).

Fedor Ivanych (to Yakov). What is it again ?

Yakov. I did not bring the sandwiches! I said — (Exit.)

Second Footman. Then our young master fell ill, so they took him with a nurse to a hotel, and there he died without his mother.

First Footman. They are forgetting God; but I think you can't get away from God.

Fedor Ivanych. I think so myself. (Yakov runs upstairs with the sandwiches.)

First Footman. You must consider that if you are to be afraid of everything, you will have to shut yourself up within four walls, as in a prison, and stay there.

Scene XIII. The same and Tanya, then Yakov.

Tanya (bowing to the footmen). Good evening! (The footmen bow.)

Tanya. Fedor Ivanych, I have a word or two to tell you. Fedor Ivanych. Well, what is it ?

Tanya. Fedor Ivanych, the peasants have come back —

Fedor Ivanych. What of it? I gave the paper to Sem^n —

Tanya. I gave them the paper. I can't tell you how thankful they are. Now they ask that their money be accepted.

Fedor Ivanych. Where are they ?

• Tanya. They are standing near the porch.

Fedor Ivanych. Well, I will report it.

Tanya. I, too, want to ask you for something, dear Fedor Ivanych.

Fedor Ivanych. What is it ?

Tanya. Fedor Ivanych, I can't stay here any longer. Will you ask for my dismissal? (Yakov running in.)

Fedor Ivanych (to Yakov). What do you want?

Yakov. Another samovar, and some oranges.

Fedor Ivanych. Ask the housekeeper for them!

(Yakov runs away.)

Fedor Ivanych. What is that for?

Tanya. Why, you know what I want to do!

Yakov (running in). There are not enough oranges there.

Fedor Ivanych. Serve as many as there are. (Yakov runs away.) You have chosen a bad time: you see what an upheaval there is here now –

Tanya. You know yourself, Fedor Ivanych, that there will be no end to this upheaval, no matter how long I may wait, and what I am about to do is for a lifetime – You, dear Fedor Ivanych, have already done me a great favour. Be now again in place of my own father, and choose the right time and tell the master about it. Or else he will get angry, and will not let me have my papers.

Fedor Ivanych. You are in a terrible hurry!

Tanya. Everything has been settled, Fedor Ivanych, and I should like to go back to godmother, and get ready. The wedding is to be after Quasimodo Sunday. Do tell him, Fedor Ivanych!

Fedor Ivanych. Go now, – this is not the place for you just now. –

(An elderly gentleman comes down-stairs and, without saying a word, goes away with Second Footman. Tanya exit.)

Scene XIV. Fedor Ivanych, First Footman, and Yakov (who enters).

Yakov. \* Fedor Ivanych, this is a burning shame! She wants to discharge me. She says: "You are bungling everything, and you do not attend to Fifi, and you took the peasants to the kitchen against my order." You know yourself that I did not know anything about it. Tatyana told me to take them to the kitchen, and I did not know by whose order it was.

Fedor Ivanych. Did she talk to you about it?

Yakov. This very minute. Fedor Ivanych, intercede for me! My family has just been getting on its legs, and if I should lose this place, who knows when I should find another? Fedor Ivanych, do me the favour!

Scene XV. F&lor Ivanych, First Footman, and Anna Pavlovna seeing off Old Countess, with false teeth and hair. First Footman puts the wraps on the Countess.

Anna Pavlovna. Of course. I am truly touched.

Countess. If it were not for my ill health, I should come to see you more frequently.

Anna Pavlovna. Really, you ought to try Peter Petrovich. He is rough, but no one will soothe you better. Everything is so simple and clear with him.

Countess. No, I am used to my own doctor.

Anna Pavlovna. Look out!

Countess. Merci, mille fois merci !

Scene XVI. The same and Grigori (dishevelled, in agitation, runs out from the butler's room. Behind him is seen Semen).

Semfn. You leave her alone !

Grigori. I will teach you, rascal, how to fight! You good-for-nothing!

Anna Pavlovna. What is this ? \* Are you in an inn ?

Grigori. I can't stand this coarse peasant.

Anna Pavlovna. You are crazy! Don't you see ? (To the Countess.)  
Merci, mille fois merci I A mardi ! (Countess and First Footman exeunt.)

Scene XVII. Fddor Ivanych, Anna Pavlovna, Gridri, and Semdn.

Anna Pavlovna (to Grigori). What is this ?

Grigori. Although I am only a lackey, I have my pride, and I will not allow any peasant to push me.

Anna Pavlovna. But what has happened ?

Grigori. Semdn has become stuck up from having sat with gentlemen, and now he fights.

Anna Pavlovna. What is it ? For what ?

Grigori. God knows.

Anna Pavlovna (to Semen). What does this mean ?

Semen. Let him keep away from her!

Anna Pavlovna. What has happened between you ?

Semen (smiling). It is like this: he keeps grabbing chambermaid Tanya, and she does not want him to do it. So I pushed him a little aside.

Grigori. I should say he did .push me aside! He nearly broke my ribs. He has torn my dress coat. He said: " My strength of yesterday has come back to me," and he began to choke me.

Anna Pavlovna (to Semen). How dare you fight in my house ?

Fedor Ivanych. Permit me to inform you, Anna Pavlovna, that Semdn has certain feelings for Tanya, and as they are engaged to be married, and Grigori – I must tell you the truth – acts badly and dishonourably, I suppose, Semdn would not stand his behaviour.

Grigori. Not at all. It is all because they are angry, knowing that I am up to their trickery.

Anna Pavlovna. What trickery ?

Grigori. At the stance. All the tricks of last night

were not done by Semdn, but by Tatyana. I saw her myself creeping out from under the sofa.

Anna Pavlovna. What ? She crept out from under the sofa ?

Grigori. My word of honour. She also brought the paper and threw it on the table. If it had not been for her, the paper would not have been signed, and the land would not have been sold to them.

Anna Pavlovna. You saw it yourself ?

Grigori. With my own eyes. Have her come in, and she will not deny it.

Anna Pavlovna. Call her in! (Grigori exit.)

Scene XVIII. The same, without Grigori. Noise behind the scenes; the Porter's voice: " You can't get in ! Stop there! " The Porter appears, and the three peasants break in, past him. Second Peasant in front. Third Peasant stumbles, falls, and clasps his nose.

Porter. You can't go there ! Get out!

Second Peasant. No harm is meant! We are not up to any trouble. We want to give him the money.

First Peasant. In rivalry, since by the signature of the application of the hand our affair has come into a finishing, we wish to present the money with our gratitude.

Anna Pavlovna. Wait, wait! Don't thank ! It was all a trick. It is not ended yet. The land is not sold yet. Leonid ! Call Leonid Fedorovich ! (Porter exit.)

Scene XIX. The same and Leonid Fedorovich, who, seeing the peasants and Anna Pavlovna, wants to withdraw.

Anna Pavlovna. No, no, please come here! I told you that the land must not be sold with an outstanding indebtedness, and everybody else told you so. And then you are deceived like a most stupid man.

Leonid Fedorovich. That is, how ? I do not understand what deception you are speaking about.

Anna Pavlovna. You ought to be ashamed! You have gray hair, and yet they deceive you like a boy and make fun of you. You begrudge your son some paltry three hundred roubles to help him in his social standing, and you yourself are cheated out of thousands like the greatest fool.

Leonid Fedorovich. Annette, calm yourself!

First Peasant. We are only in the reception of the sum, so to speak –

Third Peasant (draws out the money). Send us away, for Christ's sake!

Anna Pavlovna. Wait, wait!

Scene XX. The same, Grigori, and Tanya.

Anna Pavlovna (sternly to Tanya). Were you in the drawing-room last night during the stance ?

(Tanya, sighing, looks at Fedor Ivdnych, Leonid Fedorovich, and Semen.)

Grigori. You needn't beat around the bush. I saw you there myself –

Anna Pavlovna. Speak ! Were you there ? I know everything, so you had better confess. I only want to accuse him (pointing to Leonid Fedorovich) – the master. Did you throw the paper on the table ?

Tanya. I do not know what to answer, except to ask you to let me go home.

Anna Pavlovna (to Leonid Fedorovich). Now, you see, they have been fooling you.

Scene XXL The same. Enter Betsy in the beginning of the scene and stands unnoticed.

Tanya. Let me go, Anna Pavlovna !

Anna Pavlovna. No, my dear! You may have caused a loss of several thousand. He sold the land which ought not to have been sold.

Tanya. Let me go, Anna Pavlovna!

Anna Pavlovna. No, you will have to answer. You can't cheat like that. I will take you before a justice of the peace.

Betsy (stepping forward). Let her go, mother! If you wish to sue her, you will have to sue me, too: I did it all with her last night.

Anna Pavlovna. Of course, if you had anything to do with it, it could have been nothing but the nastiest thing.

Scene XXII. The same and Professor.

Professor. Good day, Anna Pavlovna! Good day, madam! I am bringing you, Leonid Fedorovich, the report of the thirteenth meeting of the spiritualists at Chicago. Schmidt delivered a wonderful speech !

Leonid Fedorovich. Ah, that will be interesting !

Anna Pavlovna. I will tell you something which is more interesting still. It turns out that this girl has been fooling you and my husband. Betsy takes it upon herself, but that is only to tease me; it was really this illiterate girl who has been fooling you, and you believed it all. There were none of your mediumistic phenomena last night, but this girl here (pointing to Tanya) has done it all.

Professor (angrily). What do you mean ?

Anna Pavlovna. I mean that it was she who played the guitar in the dark, and who struck my husband on the head, and who did all that foolishness. She has just confessed.

Professor (smiling). What does that prove ?

Anna Pavlovna. It proves that your mediumism is nonsense, that is what it proves!

Professor. Because this girl wanted to cheat, mediumism is nonsense, as you have deigned to express yourself ? (Smiling.) A strange conclusion! It may well be that this girl wanted to cheat: this often happens ; and it may be that she really did do something; but what she did, she did, and that which was a manifestation of mediumistic energy was a manifestation of mediumistic energy. It is even very probable that that which this girl did, evoked, solicited, so to speak, the manifestation of mediumistic energy, and gave it definite form.

Anna Pavlovna. Another lecture!

Professor (sternly). You say, Anna Pavlovna, that this girl, and maybe this charming young lady, did something ; but the light which we all saw, and in the first case the fall, and in the second the rise of the temperature, and Grossmann's agitation and vibration, – well, did the girl do that, too ? But these are facts, facts, Anna Pavlovna! Anna Pavlovna, there are things which must be investigated and fully understood in order to speak of them, – things which are too serious, too serious –

Leonid Fedorovich. And the child whom Mdrya Vasflevna saw plainly ? I myself saw it. This girl could not do that!

Anna Pavlovna. You think that you are clever ? But I tell you you are a fool!

Leonid Fedorovich. Well, I will go away – Aleksy^y Vladimirovich, come to my room. (Goes into the cabinet.)

Professor (shrugging his shoulders, follows him). Oh, how far removed from Europe we still are!

Scene XXIII. Anna Pavlovna, three peasants, F6dor Ivanych, Tanya, Betsy, Grigori, Semfn, and Yakov (enter).

Anna Pavlovna (to retreating Leonid Fedorovich). They have cheated him like a fool, and he does not see anything. (To Yakov.) What do you want?

YAicov. For how many persons shall I set the table ?

Anna Pavlovna. For how many ? F^dor Ivanych, take the silver away from him ! Out with him ! He is the cause of everything. This man will bring me to the grave. Yesterday he came very near starving my dog, which had done him no harm. He is not satisfied with that. Last night he took the infected peasants to the kitchen, and now they are here again. He is the cause of everything. Out with him, this very minute! Discharge him, discharge him! (To Semen.) If you ever dare to make a noise in my house again, I will teach you !

Second Peasant. If he is not a good man, don't keep him ! Discharge him, and that will be the end of it.

Anna Pavlovna (listening to him, looks at the Third Peasant). Look there! He has an eruption on his nose, an eruption ! He is a sick man, a reservoir of infection ! I told you yesterday not to let them in, and they are here again. Drive them out!

Fedor Ivanych. Well, will you not order me to accept their money ?

Anna Pavlovna. The money ? Take the money, but drive them out this very minute, particularly that sick man ! He is all rotten !

Third Peasant. In vain do you say this, motherkin, in vain! Let me say, ask my old woman and she will tell you that I am not rotten. I

am like glass, let me say.

Anna Pavlovna. He dares discuss it. Out with them, out with them! They want to spite me! No, I cannot stand it, I cannot! Send for Peter Petrovich. (Runs out, sobbing. Yakov and Grigori exeunt.)

Scene XXIV. The same, without Anna Pavlovna, Yakov, and Grigori.

Tanya (to Betsy). My dear Lizaveta Leonidovna, what shall I do now ?

Betsy. Nothing, nothing. Go with them to the village ! I will arrange it all (Exit.)

Scene XXV. Fedor Ivanych, three peasants, Tanya, and Porter.

First Peasant. How is it, honourable man, about the reception of the sum ?

Second Peasant. Let us depart!

Third Peasant (pushes forward with the money). If I had known this, I would never have undertaken it. This will dry me up worse than consumption.

Fedor Ivanych (to Porter). Take them to my room. I have an abacus there. There I will receive it. Go, go!

Porter. Come, come!

Fedor Ivanych. Thank Tanya for it! If it had not been for her, you would not have the land now.

First Peasant. In rivalry, as she made the preposition, just so she advanced it into motion.

Third Peasant. She has made men of us. What should we have done without it ? The land is small, there is not room enough to drive out a cow, nay, let me say, not even a chick. Good-bye, clever girl! When you come to the village, you will eat honey with us.

Second Peasant. When I get home, I will get ready for the wedding, and I will brew the beer. Be sure and come soon !

Tanya. I will, I will! (Squeaking.) Semfn, isn't it nice ? (Peasants exeunt.)

Scene XXVI. Fedor Ivanych, Tanya, and Semfn.

Fedor Ivanych. God be with you ! Remember this, Tanya! When you have your own house, I will come to be your guest. Will you receive me ?

Tanya. My dear Fedor Ivanych, I will receive you like a father! (Embraces and kisses him.)

Curtain.