"The Death of Ivan Ilich": An Electronic Study Edition of the Russian Text
"The Death of Ivan Ilich": An Electronic Study Edition of the Russian Text

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Preface

The materials presented in this book were developed over many years of teaching about Tolstoy and the *Death of Ivan Ilich* (Смерть Ивана Ильича, 1886), both in English translation and in the original Russian. The primary intended audience of the book is students of Russian language and literature. The work is mainly oriented toward those reading the text in the original, but the novel is presented in various formats to accommodate readers possessing various degrees of proficiency in Russian, from little to none all the way up to the advanced level of instruction.

The book opens with an Introduction to Tolstoy's life and times and to *The Death of Ivan Ilich*, adapted for this publication from that which appeared in my book, *Tolstoy's The Death of Ivan Il'ich: A Critical Companion* (Evanston IL: Northwestern University Press, 1999). A brief presentation of the historical background of Russia in the 1860's, 70's, and 80's and Tolstoy's place in it, is followed by an account of the writing and publication of the novel, a discussion of the reception and analysis of the novel in its own time and later, in both Russia and abroad. The *Introduction* ends with a presentation of data on the physical proportions of the novel (the number and relative sizes of the chapters) and their significance in understanding the artistic strategy of the work.

To accommodate the needs of readers at various levels of readiness, the text is offered in four different formats.

1. **Russian only:**

The text presented here is that found in Volume 26 of the *Complete Collected Works of L. N. Tolstoy in 90 Volumes* (Полное собрание сочинений Л. Н. Толстого в 90 томах, Москва-Ленинград: ГИХЛ, 1928-58). This is the "Jubilee Edition," so-called because its publication began on the one-hundredth anniversary of Tolstoy's birth. It is recognized as the canonical version of the text of the novel (Vol. 26, pp. 61-113), and the volume also contains alternate readings of some passages in the text (pp. 505-528) as well as extensive commentary, including a history of the writing and publication of the novel by L. P. Grossman (pp. 679-91). A link to a digitized copy of Volume 26 can be found in the Bibliography of Primary Sources at the end of this book. The full-text version is offered for reasons of convenience to readers who may prefer it, but also in order to permit streamlined searching of the text for those with an interest in investigating lexical or syntactic frequencies as an aspect of the novel's style. It is more efficient to be able to search the entire text at once, rather than to deal with the twelve individual chapters. The same reasoning pertains to the English full-text version.

2. **English translation only:**

The text offered here is that prepared by Louise and Aylmer Maude. It provides a contemporary translation of the text by persons who were close friends of Tolstoy and who had the benefit of his advice with respect to the translation of difficult passages (Tolstoy had a passable knowledge of English). The Maudes were also the translators and editors of the 21-volume “The Works of Tolstoy” (the so-called Centenary Edition), published by Oxford University Press 1928-37.
3. Russian and English texts (as described above) are presented side by side, accompanied by explanatory and interpretive annotations:

The texts are presented in matching paragraphs. When necessary, the paragraphing of the English translation has been tacitly adjusted to match that of the Russian original in order to make clear which English paragraph belongs with which Russian paragraph. This version is intended primarily for readers who have no or little knowledge of Russian, and who might benefit from the hints and helps provided by a parallel translation, as well as the extensive annotations attached to both the Russian and English texts. These annotations are the same as those to be found in the last of the four formats of presentation (see below).

4. Stressed and fully glossed Russian text with explanatory and interpretive annotations:

Any student of the Russian language will confirm that, because Russian is a “free-stress” language, the position of the stress, even in individual forms of the same word, is difficult to master. And since the strength of the stressed syllable in a Russian word is emphatically greater than that of the other syllables, the pronunciation of the words can be greatly distorted by misplacing the stress. To help students at the earlier stages of instruction to read with correct pronunciation, the text presented here has been stressed throughout.

The text is also fully glossed. These glosses are not intended to be “translations” in the usual meaning of that word. That is, they are not intended to provide colloquial equivalents in English of the Russian phrases. The intention is rather to provide an understanding of both the grammar and meaning of the Russian phrases by, insofar as possible, presenting the English words in the grammatical order characteristic of the Russian phrase. I use the phrase “in so far as possible” advisedly; Tolstoy's grammar, and Russian grammar generally, is often of such complexity that following the intention as described would be unhelpful, and a basic translation must suffice. Another way of describing the purpose of the glosses is to say that they intend to show not so much what the Russian says as the way a Russian says it.

Here are some examples. The title of the novel is Смерть Ивана Ильича. If you select any one of those three words, the entire phrase will be highlighted, and a window will open, displaying the words “The Death of Ivan Ilich.” The presumption is that the function of the word “of” in English is carried out by the form of the Russian words “Ивáна Ильичá.” A few lines further down we see “подавáя емý свéжий, пахýчий ещë нóмер.” Clicking on any word in this phrase produces the gloss “giving him the fresh, still fragrant (issue of the paper).” Here the words in parentheses provide an explanation of one or more of the Russian words, or of words understood in, but absent from, the Russian. Often this manner of presentation can accommodate even rather lengthy phrases: “так все казáвшиеся тогда рáдости тепéрь на глазáх его тáяли и превращáлись во чтó-то ничтóжное и чáсто гáдкое” produces the gloss “so (also) all (of the things which) seemed then (to be) joys now before his eyes melted (away) and turned into something completely trivial (lit., into nothing) and often repulsive.”

The annotations are more or less extended commentaries designated by superscript numbers. Many of them are explanatory in nature, elaborating more exactly the significance of the Russian text which may not have been fully captured by the English translation or the glosses. Many others are interpretive in nature, describing the significance of particular passages for an organized understanding of the artistry and thematic significance of the novel as a whole. The intention has been to develop an overall interpretation of the text which is directly linked to and justified by detailed commentary on particular passages.

The final section of the book offers an extensive bibliography of primary sources and secondary scholarship on the novel.

This book would not have come into being without the support and assistance of people and organizations at the
University of Minnesota. Thanks are owed to Lisa German, our University Librarian; to the Library’s Digital Arts, Sciences, and Humanities Program; and to the UMN Libraries Publishing Services for their support of the book’s publication. I am grateful also to the University’s College of Liberal Arts for the award of sabbatical leave during the Fall Semester of 2020, which provided me with the time to complete my work and see the volume through to publication. Professors Charlotte Melin and Leslie Morris, the two most recent chairs of the Department of German, Nordic, Slavic, and Dutch, have been consistently and effectively supportive of my efforts to see this work completed.

I want in particular to acknowledge the crucial contribution of four University of Minnesota colleagues to this book. My thanks to Brian Vetruba, European Studies and Digital Scholarship Librarian, Arts and Humanities, for his many contributions, especially the breadth of his linguistic knowledge and the depth of his professional experience, to the creation of the Bibliography of Studies which forms the final section of the book. Shane Nackerud, Co-Interim Director of Content Services of University Libraries Publishing, and Laureen Boutang, Publishing Services Coordinator, have done a really outstanding job in creating an efficient and attractive electronic format for the book. Without them the book would not exist. Going back further in time (the origin of the idea for this book dates back to the 1990’s) I owe especially warm thanks to Earl Schleske, now retired from the University, whose enthusiastic support and brilliance as a programmer made possible the first web-based versions of this material. I thank all of them for their support and encouragement, their collegiality and expertise. Whatever distinction this book may have owes a great deal to their talent, support, and collaboration. Its shortcomings belong to me, and I would be pleased to receive constructive criticism and suggestions for improvement at gjahn@umn.edu.

Gary R. Jahn, December 2020
INTRODUCTION: LEO TOLSTOY AND "THE DEATH OF IVAN ILICH"

The introduction to this presentation of Leo Tolstoy's “Смерть Ивана Ильича” (“The Death of Ivan Ilich,” 1886) consists of four parts: “General Historical and Biographical Background,” “The Writing and Publication of the Novel,” “The Reception of the Novel,” and “The Proportions of the Text.” This material has been adapted from its original publication in Tolstoy's The Death of Ivan Il'ich: A Critical Companion, Gary R. Jahn, ed. (Evanston IL: Northwestern University Press, 1999).

The works referred to in the footnotes and parenthetical references in the material that follows can all be found in the extensive Bibliography at the end of this book.
The accession of Tsar Alexander II to the throne of the Russian empire in 1855 followed by three years the appearance of Leo Tolstoy's first published work and had been celebrated with hopes for a more liberal, more European future for the political life of the nation. These hopes were realized at least in part as Alexander carried through a number of basic reforms in the first half of the 1860s, most notably the emancipation of the serfs (1861). As often happens, a taste of reform became a hunger for reform, a hunger that Alexander in the late 1860s and 1870s was increasingly unwilling to satisfy. Disaffection from the “Tsar-Liberator” culminated in 1881 with his assassination on the streets of St. Petersburg during a royal procession.

Alexander III succeeded his murdered father, determined not to meet a similar fate. Where his father had been educated by the gentle poet Zhukovsky, Alexander III had been tutored by Konstantin Pobedonostsev, a theoretician of arch-conservatism, who would become one of the new tsar's main advisers and the chief architect of Russia's final renunciation of the liberal promise of the early reign of Alexander II. Many repressive measures were adopted by the government of Alexander III: some university departments were closed for “free-thinking,” the censorship of printed materials was strengthened, school curricula were impoverished. Tolstoy's younger contemporary, Anton Chekhov, chronicled the effects of these changes in such stories as “Sergeant Prishibeiev” and “The Man in a Shell.” He portrays a public life in which the main rule of action is “what is not expressly permitted is forbidden.”

Tolstoy brought himself to the unfavorable attention of the new tsar almost at once by writing him an open letter in which he urged Alexander III to set a radically new example for his nation and the world by pardoning the murderers of his father. The tsar refused to grant Tolstoy's request, and, in the years that followed, the tsar's censors refused to permit the publication of works by Tolstoy that expressed in detail the beliefs that had inspired his dramatic plea for royal clemency. These works occupied Tolstoy's attention as a writer almost exclusively in the late 1870s and the early 1880s, and no example of Tolstoy's fiction written in the 1880s or later (including The Death of Ivan Il'ich [Smert' Ivana Il'icha, 1886]) can be fully understood in isolation from the ideas that he presented in them. Tolstoy was by no means the first to hold the ideas of brotherly love, mutual support, and Christian charity that became so precious to him in the second half of his life; in fact, he came to believe that they were none other than the central tenets of a perennially fresh philosophy of life that had been subscribed to throughout history and in every corner of the earth by the great sages from Socrates to Schopenhauer.

No other representative of the “perennial philosophy,”
however, has left so clear and vivid an account of the spiritual and psychological travail amidst which his new convictions were born. In A Confession(Ispoved'), written mainly in 1879–80 but not completed until 1882, Tolstoy wrote that the factor that before all others prompted the psychological crisis he endured in the mid-1870s (and which is reflected in the character of Konstantin Levin in Anna Karenina) was his inability to find an acceptable meaning in human life. Every formulation of life's meaning with which he experimented was wrecked by his long-standing and by now almost overwhelming sense of the

1. I use this term, apparently first coined by the philosopher Gottfried Leibniz, following the example of Guy de Mallac, who has been kind enough to share with me his unpublished monograph on Tolstoy's philosophy.
dreadful inevitability of death. He writes in _A Confession_: “My life came to a standstill. I could breathe, eat, drink, and sleep, and I could not help doing these things; but there was no life, for there were no wishes, the fulfillment of which I could consider reasonable.”\(^2\) Tolstoy describes several attempts he made to shake off the feelings of depression and despair from which he had increasingly suffered since his first experience of what he called the “Arzamas terror” in 1868 (vividly described in his unfinished short story “The Notes of a Madman”). \(^3\) His reading of the great philosophers of the past only confirmed the apparent meaninglessness of life that so troubled him. Turning from his library to his friends and acquaintances for help was also of no avail; either his contemporaries did not concern themselves at all with the questions he found so perplexing or their answers were no more comforting than those given by the philosophers.

Finally, he turned to the broad masses of the Russian people, the peasants, for help. It seemed to him that these illiterate and uneducated folk nevertheless possessed a definite conception of the meaning of life. He wrote in _A Confession_ that “it became clear that mankind as a whole had a kind of knowledge, unacknowledged and scorned by me, of the meaning of life... They find this meaning in irrational knowledge. And this irrational knowledge is faith, the very same faith [that is, the theology and cult practices of the Russian Orthodox Church] which I could not but reject” (23:32-33). He saw that the faith of the Russian peasants gave meaning to their lives and protected them from the despair from which he suffered; their faith itself, however, both in its dogma and its cult, had long been abhorrent to him.\(^1\) “Faith still remained for me as irrational as it was before, but I could not but admit that it alone gives people a reply to the questions of life, and that consequently it makes life possible” (23:35).

He first attempted to renew his connection with the church of his childhood. For a time he carefully and conscientiously observed all the Orthodox rites, but the superstition he detected in that faith, especially as practiced by the peasants whose life he declared otherwise so admirable, soon proved fatal to his resolve. He abandoned the attempt to find a place for himself within the existing system of religion and determined to develop a system of his own. This task occupied him intensively for about four years (1878–1882) and resulted in the preparation of four works that Tolstoy thereafter considered to be his most important achievement. After _A Confession_, which is a brief account and interpretation of his life and moral struggle through the mid-1870s, he wrote _A Critique of Dogmatic Theology_ (Issledovanie dogmaticheskogo bogoslovia); _A Harmony and Translation of the Four Gospels_ (Soedinienie i perevod chetyrekh evangelii), and _What I Believe_ (V chem moia vera). Once completed, these works formed the conscious intellectual center of his thought and action for his remaining 30 years of life.

The central, indeed the only, article of Tolstoy's faith was a belief in the existence of a creator God: “But here I examined myself, examined what was taking place within me; and I recalled all those hundreds of dyings and quickenings which had taken place within me. I recalled that I lived only when I believed in God. As before, so now, I said to myself: ‘I need only to know about God, and I live; I need only forget, disbelieve in God, and I die.’ I am alive, really alive, only when I sense God and search for God. ‘Then for what should I look further?’ cried a voice within me. ‘That is God. God is that without which it is impossible to live. To know God and to live are one and the same. God is life’” (23:45-46).

2. Lev Tolstoy, _Polnoe sobranie sochinenii_ (Moscow and Leningrad: Gosudarstvennoe Izdatel'stvo Khudozhestvennoi Literatury, 1928-58), vol. 23, 32. References to the Russian originals of Tolstoy's works, including letters, are to those works as published in this, the "Jubilee Edition" of Tolstoy's complete collected works. All translations from the Russian are my own, except those from the text of _The Death of Ivan Ilich_. Hereafter, all references to the Russian originals of Tolstoy's works will be given parenthetically in the text in the form (volume number:page number); thus, the present reference would be (23:32).

3. On a business trip in that year to the small town of Arzamas Tolstoy was obliged to pass the night in a hotel and was there, in the wee hours of the morning, overcome by a profound and personal sense of the futility of life and the dreadful inevitability of death.

4. As early as the middle of the 1850s Tolstoy had expressed the belief that Christianity would provide a viable philosophy of life were it relieved of the insupportable weight of its theology and dogma. Still earlier, as he later recalled, he had dramatically thrown away the icon that the Orthodox commonly wore upon their necks in favor of a medallion engraved with the face of Jean-Jacques Rousseau. He seemed to face a choice between a saving, but irrational, faith and the meaningless despair his reason showed him. In the end he reconciled himself to the irrational.
Tolstoy’s ideas may be seen as one aspect of the turn in Russian intellectual life away from the materialism that had dominated the late 1850s and 1860s and toward a renewed emphasis on spiritual and religious values. The old materialism, however, continued to be philosophically viable, while the renewed spiritualism was sharply fractionated, particularly as between proponents of the traditional religious values and practices of the Orthodox faith and those who, like Tolstoy, rebelled against the teachings of the church. In art and literature the movement away from realism was particularly sharp. The leading trend in literature from about 1890 is called “modernism,” a catchall term that subsumes the work of the so-called decadents, the symbolists, and a variety of other groups, which, despite their diversity, shared a distaste for traditional realism. It is interesting that while Tolstoy bitterly attacked the artistic practices of the modernists in his *What Is Art? (Chto takoe iskusstvo?, 1898)*, *The Death of Ivan Ilich* is profoundly symbolic and may be seen as a harbinger of the symbolist art that followed in the 1890s and later.
The Writing and Publication of the Novel

Nearly everything that Leo Tolstoy wrote is of considerable interest, since he is one of the giants of Russian literature. The Death of Ivan Ilich, however, is regarded as one of his great masterpieces; many would say that it is the chef d’oeuvre of the second half of his literary career. Written in 1886, it was the first major fictional work published by Tolstoy after his crisis and conversion of the late 1870s. For a considerable period after 1878 Tolstoy had turned away from literature altogether in favor of his biblical and theological writings. Thus, it was with considerable interest that the reading public of the mid-1880s learned of the publication of a new novel from the pen of the author of War and Peace and Anna Karenina. The novel that they read in the pages of the twelfth (and last) volume of Tolstoy’s Collected Works (1886), subtitled Works of Recent Years, surprised many of Tolstoy’s old admirers and disappointed others.

The reasons for disappointment were largely ideological. I will discuss the initial reaction to the novel’s publication in the next section. Here it will suffice to say that it was not long before the novel came to be universally regarded as one of the greatest works of a very great writer. The Death of Ivan Ilich can be and has been variously interpreted, but it possesses certain basic qualities that must be accounted for in any cogent reading of the novel. It is a devastatingly satirical account of the life of the well-to-do professional class of late-nineteenth-century Russia. In representing the life of a member of this class, Tolstoy shows a masterful (and occasionally uncanny) ability to seize upon the apt situation or detail. The novel is a remarkable example of realism, but at the same time it contains many anticipations of the symbolist art that would shortly (during the 1890s and the first decade of the twentieth century) begin to predominate in Russian literature. Finally, the novel is exemplary of Tolstoy’s post-conversion philosophical concerns and revised understanding of the mission of art and of the artist.

These qualities, however, could hardly account, by themselves, for the continuing power of The Death of Ivan Ilich to seize and hold the imagination of its readers. The English poet and critic Matthew Arnold once said of Tolstoy (referring to the novel Anna Karenina) that “he created not art, but life itself.” ¹ Tolstoy was a master of representation and verisimilitude. His characters, and the situations in which they find themselves, seem to come alive to the point that readers often feel as though they know Tolstoy’s characters as well as or better than some actual acquaintances. In addition, the particular dimension of life that Tolstoy addresses in The Death of Ivan Ilich is one of inescapable interest to all readers. His basic subject is the inevitable confrontation of a human being with her or his own mortality, the coming to grips with the certainty that our lives will end. It is one of Tolstoy’s major contentions in the novel that people are, in general, very adept at hiding this ultimate truth from themselves, and he spares no effort in his determination to “remove the coverings” with which we attempt to mask the figure of death in our consciousness.

The importance of the novel for the general reader, then, is that it provides a keenly observed and unsparingly realistic account of a moment in life that we shall all experience; as the character Gerasim says in chapter 1 of the novel, “We will all come to it one day.” Aside, then, from the elegance of its structure, the apparent simplicity

and directness of its style, and the authenticity and acuity of its observation of a form of life that seems still rather familiar in the 1990s, the novel impresses the reader with the seriousness of its purpose and its moral earnestness, and above all with the evident applicability of the life and death of its protagonist to each reader individually.

**Tolstoy in the Mid-1880's**

_The Death of Ivan Ilich_ was the product of a time in Tolstoy's life full of hope and anxiety. The years 1885 and 1886 brought death into Tolstoy's house and serious illness to Tolstoy. In December 1885, he wrote (although he never sent the letter) to his friend and disciple, V. G. Chertkov: “I am living through what are perhaps the final hours of my life, and living badly — mournful and irritated with those around me. I am doing something that is not as God would have it; I try to find out what it is, but it eludes me. And always there is this constant anxiety, mournfulness, and worst of all, irritation and the desire for death” (85:294). If the essence of Tolstoy's conversion in the 1870s had been the elaboration of an answer to the question posed by the ineluctable and nullifying power of death, these remarks of the mid-1880s suggest that that answer, which had until then “made life possible” for Tolstoy, was losing its power to persuade. Despite this, or perhaps because of it, these years also saw the creation of many of Tolstoy's most affirmative fictions (the majority of his “Stories for the People” were written in 1885 and 1886) and of _On Life_, his most detailed statement of his views on the positive potential of human existence.

The surface of Tolstoy's story about the life and death of Ivan Ilich seems to reflect more clearly the anxious rather than the hopeful side of the author as he was in the years 1885 and 1886. A full appreciation of the novel requires the reader to bear in mind both Tolstoy's conscious conviction of having arrived at a satisfying explanation of death and its significance and his more hidden but still persisting and still powerful anxiety over it. The purpose of the remainder of this section, however, is to describe how it was that the novel came to be written, to provide background information concerning Tolstoy's conception of art and of the mission of the artist, and to offer some preliminary observations on the organization of the text.

**The Composition of the Novel**

Tolstoy worked intensively on the novel from August 1885 to March 1886. In a letter to his friend D. Urusov (22 August 1885) Tolstoy refers to “an account of the simple death of a simple man, told from his own point of view” (26:681). Tolstoy's active interest in this subject can be traced back to July or August 1881, when he first heard of the recent (2 July 1881) death of a certain Ivan Ilich Mechnikov, a prosecutor in the regional court of Tula Government (the major subsidiary regions in the administrative organization of Russia were called “governments”; these, in turn, were subdivided into “districts”). Tolstoy knew and liked Mechnikov, about whose death he learned from the deceased's brother, Ilia Ilich. Mechnikov, who was known as a kindly and benevolent man, served as the partial prototype of Ivan Ilich Golovin, the protagonist of _The Death of Ivan Ilich_. Tolstoy's sister-in-law, Tatyana Kuzminskaya, states in her memoirs that she repeated to Tolstoy what had been confided to her by the deceased's widow, that Mechnikov’s dying thoughts had been of the “uselessness of the life which he had lived.

Tolstoy took no immediate action on the impressions aroused by Mechnikov's death. He seems to have left them to develop without conscious supervision in some quiet corner of his reflecting mind; in the period between his first knowledge of the incident and August 1885, only twice is he known to have mentioned a continuing interest in the topic (April and December 1884).

Once Tolstoy had actively set to work on the novel, however, he involved himself in it intensely. He completed a finished draft of the story in January 1886 and sent it to the publisher late in that month or early in February; the
proof sheets were returned to him for correction in mid-February; Tolstoy heavily revised these and submitted what was essentially a new version of the novel in early March. Tolstoy further revised the new set of proofs, which he received in mid-March. These corrected proofs, the novel's final revision, were returned to the publisher on 25 March. The novel was first published in volume 12 (the final volume) of *The Works of Count L. N. Tolstoy* (edited by Mrs. Tolstoy) later in 1886.
The Reception of the Novel

The Initial Critical Reception of the Novel

The critical reaction that greeted the appearance of *The Death of Ivan Ilich*, strange as it may seem given the novel’s title, paid little attention to the theme of death. Contemporary critics were more concerned with matters of style and of ideology. Thus, the populist critic N. K. Mikhailovsky, while noting that the novel was a “fine story,” also declared that it was “not of the first rank in artistic beauty, in strength or clarity of thought, or finally in the fearless realism of the writing.”¹ The response of a certain Lisovsky was more positive — “the story is without parallel in Russian literature and should be acknowledged a triumph of realism and truth in poetry” — but still confined to generalities.²

The various camps in Russian literary criticism and appreciation had been arrayed in ideologically adversarial groups at least since the time of V. G. Belinsky (the founder of modern Russian literary criticism) in the 1840s. Works of literature were generally presumed to have an ideological or, at least, broadly educational function, and much of the literary comment of the time consisted of estimates of the degree to which a given author or a given work had succeeded in the fictional or poetic promotion of one or another ideological agenda. Once Tolstoi’s fame had spread to Europe, stimulated there by the high praise accorded to his work in *Le Roman Russe (The Russian Novel)* by Vicomte Melchior de Vogue,³ one finds occasional responses to the novel there also. Again, however, these tend toward evaluative generalities. The early history of the novel’s reception makes it quite clear, at least, that Tolstoi’s contemporaries were much struck by the novel; by and large, the novel was read as an unflattering commentary on the moral short-comings of the life-style of the privileged classes rather than as a reflection on the common mortality of all people.

Modern Criticism and Scholarship on the Novel

Modern criticism and scholarship of *The Death of Ivan Ilich* for the most part no longer consider themselves obliged to deal with the question of the literary value of the novel.⁴ Considering the question of value as settled, commentators have devoted themselves to the consideration of specific aspects of the novel’s themes and ideas on one hand and its organization and artistic strategies on the other.

³ This book, published in France in the mid-1880s, was a crucial factor in the dawning awareness of European intellectuals of the excellence of the Russian literary culture.
⁴ One exception that should be noted is Edward Wasiolek’s, “Tolstoy’s The Death of Ivan Ilyich and Jamesian Fictional Imperatives,” *Modern Fiction Studies* 6(1960):314-24; hereafter cited in text as Wasiolek. This essay disputes the validity of criticism directed at the overtly moralizing tone of the novel. Wasiolek finds the basis of this criticism in the assumptions and presuppositions of a Jamesian aesthetic of indirection and suggests a rejoinder along the lines of taking Tolstoy on his own, rather than another’s, aesthetic terms.
Themes and Ideas

Social Issues

An early avenue of approach to the novel was to consider it as an attack upon the empty and valueless life of its protagonist and the privileged society of which he was a part. This was a main theme within Soviet criticism, which, generally speaking, venerated Tolstoi as an exemplary practitioner of “critical realism.” This term denotes a style in literature that, while perhaps not informed by a “proper” (i.e., Marxist) understanding of the human universe, was at least capable of arriving at “correct” (i.e., negative) judgments upon pre-communist forms of social organization. It was mainly used to describe the practices of such giants of nineteenth-century Russian literature as Gogol, Turgenev, and (certain aspects of) Dostoevsky, besides Tolstoi. From such a point of view The Death of Ivan Ilich is without doubt an exemplary text. The life of the protagonist is that of an educated, relatively prosperous, and, above all, ordinary member of the privileged classes of the latter part of the nineteenth century, and the entire direction of the narrative is toward the display of the falseness, insincerity, insensitivity, and consequent spiritual inadequacy of that life. The History of Russian Literature in Three Volumes, published by the Soviet Academy of Sciences in 1964, puts it this way: “With profound artistry Tolstoi brands the petty, selfish motives, the insincerity and lies which form the basis of the ‘pleasant and decent’ life of the privileged members of the gentry and the state bureaucracy”; or again “Leo Tolstoi’s merciless satire manifests itself in all its power in The Death of Ivan Ilich. Ivan Ilich’s friends, even at his graveside, continue to lie and to pretend…. The author pitilessly tears the masks from [the faces of his characters], revealing what they really think and feel.” It certainly cannot be cogently maintained that the novel does not do these things; one may well wonder, however, whether the novel does these things in order to reveal the inadequacy of the social structure implicated in the narrative or whether that inadequacy is revealed as part of some other, larger literary enterprise.

Non-Soviet readers, too, have often drawn attention to the novel’s critique of society. The materialism of nineteenth-century bourgeois society, or its twentieth-century counterpart, has been found either responsible for or productive of Ivan Ilich’s malaise and alienation. His physiological sickness is read as an indicator of the diseased quality of his life in society and/or of that society itself. The novel has also been taken as a revelation of the manner in which society or “the social” acts as a hindrance to the discovery of the truths every person requires as an individual. In this reading the novel is the narrative of the individual’s inevitable separation from the social as the “truth” perceived by the dying protagonist becomes ever more opaque to those surrounding him.

Psychological Issues

Most commentators on the novel have declared that Tolstoi is a masterful observer of human psychology; their admiration has been particularly occasioned by such scenes as the conversation among the deceased’s colleagues or that between Ivan’s wife and Peter Ivanovich. In both of these passages from chapter 1 of the novel the true motives and feelings of the participants are revealed as Tolstoi strips away the masks of sympathy and condolence that they wear. The text provides such an abundance of similar examples that it may well be taken as a revelation of the psychological masking and hypocrisy characteristic of Ivan and his associates’ layer of society. In this

sense Tolstoi’s talent for psychological observation is understood to be employed in the furtherance of the social criticism discussed earlier.

Some scholars have understood the psychological dimension of the novel to be of primary, rather than ancillary, importance. Thus, Boris Sorokin draws our attention to Ivan’s habit of psychological “encapsulization.” By this is meant Ivan’s habit of retreating from the unpleasantnesses of life, principally, of course, from death. The protagonist’s retreats from actual reality into a controlled, internal, purely psychological (but, of course, false) reality, which he gradually establishes for himself as he ages, result, in the end, in his isolation from actuality (Sorokin, 295). William Edgerton sees the life of Ivan Ilich becoming a form of death from this isolation. This view of psychology in the novel accounts for the behavior of Ivan Ilich on general, human grounds rather than as a psychopathy occasioned by a particular social environment.

A third approach to psychology in the novel has been along medical or quasi-medical lines. There was at one time (around the turn of the century) some interest in attempting a diagnosis of the illness from which Ivan suffers and eventually dies, despite the fact that it is rather clear in the novel that the exact nature of Ivan’s physiological disease is beside the point; his spiritual well-being is the main issue. Yet the basis of this early “medical” criticism, wherein the fictional account is viewed as an actual clinical record, has persisted in certain psychological studies of the novel. James Bartell, for example, applies the theories of Otto Rank and Arthur Janov to the case of Ivan Ilich. He finds the material of the novel suitable for his purposes both on the grounds of its general fit with Rank’s and Janov’s explanation of the origins of neurosis in the fear of separation/rejection (one manifestation of which is the fear of death) and on the grounds of the presence in the text of the lengthy retrospective analysis of his own life, which Ivan undertakes and which leads to his ultimate escape from “that which was oppressing him.” Bartell understands this as a clear anticipation of the therapy suggested by Rank and Janov. Y. J. Dayananda’s work on the novel shares the same sort of concern with the material, but he focuses his attention on Ivan’s story as an anticipation (and corroboration) of modern research on the psychological stages involved in death and dying. He discovers analogues in the novel to each of the five stages isolated by Elisabeth Kubler-Ross in her On Death and Dying: (1) denial and isolation; (2) anger; (3) bargaining; (4) depression; (5) acceptance. Such interpretations as these clearly indicate that Tolstoi’s powers of psychological observation were acute to the point of creating a flawless illusion of reality in the presentation of the thoughts, feelings, and behavior of the main characters. A more recent analysis of this type is offered in Daniel Rancour-Laferriere’s “Narcissism, Masochism, and Denial in Tolstoi’s The Death of Ivan Ilich”.

George Gutsche’s analysis of the novel, “Moral Fiction: Tolstoi’s The Death of Ivan Ilich”, also has a psychological emphasis, but it proceeds from an entirely different assumption; the hero’s story is not seen as material for psychological analysis, but rather a psychological viewpoint is adopted because it seems to offer insight into the novel. Gutsche claims, very cogently, that Ivan Ilich’s story is that of a man who comes gradually, and painfully, to the awareness that his perception of the world (his moral and psychological foundations, as it were) has been in error. Tolstoi’s novel traces the arduous path followed by the protagonist in his progress toward rectification of these errors of perception. At the same time Gutsche’s analysis is also concerned to explore the moral dimensions

9. A number of studies of this type appeared; they generally concluded that some form of cancer was the proper diagnosis.
of the life and death of the protagonist, and in this way Gutsche's work also has an important place in the next section.

Philosophical Issues

It is entirely in accord with Tolstoi's own interest in philosophy, religion, and ethics or morality that much of the criticism on the novel can be included under this heading. Furthermore, there can be no strict separation between the social criticism (discussed earlier) offered by the novel and the ethical teachings it seems to offer. Tolstoi's main concern in philosophy was undoubtedly with ethics and morality: the distinction between right and wrong (good and evil) actions. Many commentators direct our attention to the novel as an account of a life wrongly lived and of the protagonist's ultimate realization of its wrongness. This is one of the main points urged by Prof. Gutsche, and there is much precedent for this point of view. Philip Rahv compares the life of Ivan Ilich to that of Joseph K. of Franz Kafka's *The Trial*. In both works it is the protagonists' certainty that their lives have been well lived that is the root of their inability to deal with the situations in which they find themselves. Sorokin (500) and Charles Glicksberg both suggest that a major cause for the wrongness of the manner of Ivan Ilich's life is his misapprehension of the nature of his life. Ivan overlooks the spiritual dimension of his life and the need for faith, and these are shown to be the only antidotes for the oppressive fear of death. Ivan's incorrect understanding of the nature of the moral situation in which he finds himself leads him further and further into a state of unreality; thus, his striving for a life of illusory material reality is at the expense of his life of genuine spiritual reality (Sorokin, 487-88).

The same theme of the unreality of the life of Ivan Ilich is taken up by Geoffrey Clive in his discussion of the “inauthentic.” Although his attention is focused on moral questions, Clive, like some of the psychologically oriented critics mentioned earlier, in effect identifies the novel as being concerned mainly with social criticism. He depicts Ivan Ilich's inauthentic life as the product of the inauthentic (by which is meant insincere) behavior that is characteristic of Ivan Ilich's social milieu. The constant practice of inauthentic behavior toward others results, at last, in a lack of truthfulness to the self and a futile attempt to conceal from oneself the significance of life's major occasions, especially death (Clive, 114 — 17). James Olney adds to this that what Clive would call “authentic” behavior is modeled in the story in the character of the servant Gerasim. Associated with Clive's ideas, but along a different axis of development from that selected by Olney, are the several studies that delineate the roots of existential thought in the novel. Ivan's situation in life is seen as featureless and deprived of meaning and he himself as subject to a steadily increasing sense of alienation. Lev Shestov (now regarded as one of the founders of existential thought) commented at length on the novel (Shestov, 116 — 27). William Barrett, who regards the novel as “a basic scripture of existentialist thought” (Barrett, 143), has indicated points of comparison between the novel and the writings of both Kierkegaard and Nietzsche (Barrett, 144). Irving Halperin has developed the connection with Kierkegaard, especially with the Danish philosopher's *Sickness unto Death*.

John Donnelly's article on *The Death of Ivan Ilich* bespeaks the concerns of the philosopher more than those of the literary scholar. His work is primarily a discussion of his own view of morality and is more an occasion for his own reflections than an attempt to illuminate the novel. Mainly at issue is what Donnelly regards as the inappropriately

(because unrealistically) absolute moral tone of the novel. In a certain sense, Donnelly’s essay is akin in spirit to those by Dayananda and Bartell, which also, in their own way, regard the novel more as a source of exemplary matter than as a text in need of interpretation. *The Death of Ivan Ilich* has often been used in this way also by linguists (e.g., the various studies of Barlas) on the grounds that it offers a conveniently sized specimen of the conversational language of educated speakers of the period. The purpose of such studies is, however, openly linguistic, and it is made quite clear that the intention is to use rather than comment upon the text of the novel.

With the exception of Prof. Gutsche’s detailed analysis not as much as one might expect has been made of Tolstoi’s religious views as a background to the understanding of *The Death of Ivan Ilich*. Glicksberg (83) explains Tolstoi’s failure to “develop to the full” the awful irony of death as a function of his belief in “redemption.” In terms of Tolstoi’s religious beliefs redemption would refer to the individual’s freedom to select and his or her actually selecting the spiritual dimension of life as superior to the physiological. Richard Gustafson’s recent book *Leo Tolstoi: Resident and Stranger* considers the novel in the context of the theological teaching of the Russian Orthodox church concerning suffering and sin. He suggests that here, as elsewhere, Tolstoi was closer to church teaching than his many militant statements to the contrary would suggest. Thus, suffering is portrayed as the way to self-understanding, almost as a divine kindness to the lost soul of Ivan Ilich. Ivan’s illness is discussed as a metaphor for his misapprehension of the nature of human life, or “sin,” to use Gustafson’s term. Gustafson’s treatment of the novel is informed by a comprehensive knowledge of the contents of Tolstoi’s religious writings and by a preference for what these writings may suggest as opposed to what they seem to say. A more straightforward link between Tolstoi’s religious writings and *The Death of Ivan Ilich* has been suggested by W. R. Hirschberg, who has drawn attention especially to the treatise *On Life* (especially chapter 9), which Tolstoi wrote immediately after *The Death of Ivan Ilich*. This connection has been explored in detail by Jahn.

**Structure and Style**

The general artistic organization of the novel, its artistic structure, has occasioned considerable critical comment. Halperin was one of the first to point out the steady narrowing of narrative focus in the text. He associates this feature with the portion of the text that recounts Ivan’s life after his fall from the ladder. The narrative focus becomes most concentrated at the very end of the novel (Halperin, 337 — 39). The disproportion of space assigned to Ivan’s life before he became ill (about one-fourth of the text) and his illness and death (about three-fourths of the text) has been noted by Olney, who explains this feature as an indication that Ivan’s death is much more significant than his life (Olney, 108-9).

In considering the artistic organization of the story, considerable interest has been taken in the question of the placement of the material contained in the first chapter of the novel. Put simply, it has been seen as somewhat problematical that, while the vast majority of the text is devoted to a chronological account of the life and death of the protagonist, the material in chapter 1 pertains to the period after Ivan’s death. In terms of the primarily chronological narrative this material seems to belong at the end of the novel rather than at the beginning. C. J. G.

20. Gutsche, in fact, devotes a major part of his chapter on *The Death of Ivan Ilich* to exploring the extent of the relevance of Tolstoy’s formal religious ideas, as well as those associated with traditional dogmas of institutionalized Christianity, for an interpretation of the novel (*Moral Apostasy in Russian Literature* [DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1986]).
Turner has suggested that the placement of the material in the first chapter may be explained by the history of the novel's creation: Tolstoi's original plan had been to tell the story through the device of Ivan's personal diary account of his experiences. The first chapter was to offer an opportunity for this diary to come into the hands of one of the characters (the one who later became Ivan's friend and colleague, Peter Ivanovich) and thence to the reader. Turner also notes that the linguistic structure of chapter 1 is similar to that of chapter 2, which in fact follows it, but would be in strident contrast to that of chapter 12, which would precede it if the material in chapter 1 were placed chronologically. 23 Gunter Schaarschmidt commented extensively on the placement of the first chapter in his analysis of the language of the novel. Professor Turner's “Ivan Ilich: Resident and Stranger” revisits this theme and presents a further analysis of word clusters and semantic groups in the novel. 24

The placement of the material in the first chapter is one of a number of questions that have to do with what we may call the “narrative strategy.” Edward Wasiolek has commented on this topic at some length. He has suggested that the placement of Ivan's death at the beginning of the text alienates the reader's sympathies from the very outset by providing a sharply critical portrait of those who survive Ivan Ilich and, by implication, of the sort of life that the decedent had lived (Wasiolek, 324).

Wasiolek, however, is mainly concerned to address a primary criticism of the novel — namely, that its narrative is arbitrary and its narrator intrusive. Wasiolek points out that the basis of such a criticism is in what he calls the “Jamesian fictional imperative.” By this is meant that the unfriendly critic has invoked criteria that may be very appropriate to a consideration of the work of Henry James (who is on record as being no admirer of Tolstoi) but very inappropriate to a consideration of a work by Tolstoi (Wasiolek, 318). Wasiolek admits that by the Jamesian standard the narrative strategy of the novel seems arbitrary or “arranged”; it is clear that Tolstoi is intent upon interpreting as well as telling the events portrayed in the novel. Authorial intrusion is part of Tolstoi's narrative stance; if the novel is approached with a prejudice against such a strategy, naturally only an unfavorable judgment of the work is possible (Wasiolek, 317). Wasiolek describes Tolstoi's technique as a “clear and unambiguous control of the meaning he intends” (Wasiolek, 319). This acknowledgment of the importance of considering the author's intentions, at least with an author like Tolstoi, is a most important concept in dealing with The Death of Ivan Ilich. Jahn's The Death of Ivan Ilich: An Interpretation is an attempt to discuss the novel largely from this point of view and from within the context of Tolstoi's own writings. While attempting to pay attention to the author's intentions in the interpretation of a work of literature has a long history and the support of substantial theoretical argument (see especially E. D. Hirsch, Validity in Interpretation (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967), it has also been noted that exclusive allegiance to this method of work may lead to an inappropriate narrowing of the interpreter's horizon. Certainly, such an approach as that taken by Daniel Rancour-Laferriere in his contribution to Tolstoy's The Death of Ivan Ilich: A Critical Companion cannot be said to be anchored in the conscious intentions of the author, but it's helpfulness to readers grappling with the significance of the novel may be no less for that.

The undisguised presence of Tolstoi the author as an interpreting and guiding force in the narrative has been confirmed by the discovery of a variety of subtexts within the novel. A subtext may take various forms, most commonly that of a pattern of allusions to some other text (either by the same or another author) or a pattern within the narrative that seems to be at odds with the pattern on the surface of the narrative. Chapter Nine of Jahn (1993) contains the most complete discussion of subtext in the second meaning suggested here. The first sort of subtext (which has also been called intertext) has occasioned frequent comment in the context of Tolstoi's many attempts to deal with the theme of death in his writings. David Matual has considered one particular subtext at length: the intertextual relationship between The Death of Ivan Ilich and Tolstoi's A Confession, written some half-

dozen years earlier. Matual has displayed numerous parallels between the situation of Tolstoi, as described in *A Confession*, and that of Ivan Ilich, as described in the novel. The effect of the discoveries of such subtexts are, of course, that readings of Ivan's physiological illness as symbolic of underlying spiritual malaise become easier to defend and seem more likely to be appropriate.

Related to the notions of subtext and intertext is the connection between *The Death of Ivan Ilich* and the works of other writers. Philip Rogers, for example, has produced a magisterial discussion of the connections between Tolstoi and the English novelist Charles Dickens, with particular reference to *The Death of Ivan Ilich*.

As we conclude this brief survey of critical comment on the novel, let us turn to the question of the use of image, symbol, metaphor, and other literary figures in the text. It was mentioned earlier that Tolstoi was very much at odds with the symbolist writers of the 1890s and early 1900s on the grounds that their art was exclusive and unconcerned with the ethical questions Tolstoi considered so important. It is a curious irony that Tolstoi's works, to some extent, prefigure, in their use of symbol and metaphor, some of the aesthetic devices of those later writers whom he would soon be so roundly denounced. To prevent any misunderstanding, however, it needs to be said that Tolstoi's symbolism is of what we might call a metonymic sort: it is based in the use of one report of experience to comment upon, reflect, foreshadow, or explain another experience. Characteristic of the symbolists, however, is a metaphorical (or even metaphysical) symbolism, wherein a report of experience on one plane of existence is taken to reflect, explain, etc., experience on a different plane.

Already in *Anna Karenina* (from the mid-1870s) Tolstoi had written a book that many have found to contain profoundly symbolic (in the metonymic sense) elements. The chapter describing the horse race in which Vronsky competes or the scene of Levin mowing hay with the peasants come immediately to mind. In *The Death of Ivan Ilich* this tendency is much intensified. Situations, details, even turns of phrase seem full of meaning and suggestiveness for the reader's understanding of the life and death of the protagonist. Various critics have explained the symbolism of the card game that Ivan is so fond of playing, of his interest in the furnishing of his apartment, of the ladder from which he falls, and of the position he adopts upon the couch in his study. Rima Salys' *Signs on the Road of Life: The Death of Ivan Ilich* has a thorough discussion of such usages in the novel. George Gutsche's is the best general summary account of the artistry of Tolstoi's use of language, especially of the patterned repetition of key words and phrases and of the play with prefixes, roots, and suffixes in the text. Jahn has advanced the notion that it is characteristic of *The Death of Ivan Ilich* that what is metaphorical on one level of the text must often be taken literally on another (as when, on the physiological plane, a friend says that Ivan Ilich is so ill that he seems to have become a corpse, while on the spiritual plane this proves to be already literally true).

By far the greatest amount of attention has been paid to the image of the “black bag” or “black hole,” which plays so prominent a role in the last four chapters of the novel. Matual has pointed out that this key image is one of the connections between *The Death of Ivan Ilich* and *A Confession*, in which the image first appeared as a “black spot” (Matual, 126). In the main, critics have regarded this image as suggestive of the uterus and as part of the symbolic depiction of Ivan’s rebirth (Halperin; Olney). However, Sorokin has elaborated a solid case for the idea that the symbolic referent of the black bag is the bowel, especially in the many references to the caecum (the “blind gut,” the appendix) in the text. In either case, the reader’s attention is drawn to the conclusion that the entire account of Ivan Ilich’s life and death is symbolically referential, that his physiological life symbolizes his spiritual life. The


27. Art, for the symbolists, involved the portrayal of *realia* (the real) in the interest of leading our attention to *realiora* (the more real, the essence of existence).

conclusion has been drawn by Edgerton that Ivan's death is a door to genuine life and that his life had been a form of death (300).
The Proportions of the Text

General Remarks on the Proportions of the Text

The text of *The Death of Ivan Ilich* runs to about 15,000 words and is divided into 12 chapters. The text is apportioned among these as follows (measured in lines of type as the text is printed in volume 26 of the standard scholarly edition of Tolstoy's works: *Polnoe sobranie sochinenij i pisem v devjanosto tomax* [Moskva: 1928-58]):

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Roughly speaking, the chapters are organized in a pattern of decreasing length, and, without putting too fine a point on it, it is possible to speak of long (250 — 300 lines), medium (140 — 150 lines), and short (70 — 95 lines) chapters. Besides the general pattern of decreasing length, then, the visual appearance of the text also suggests a division into three parts: chapters 1 through 4, which are all “long” chapters; 5 through 8, of which 5 and 7 are “medium” chapters, 6 a long “short” chapter, and 8 a short “long” chapter; and 9 through 12, which are all “short” chapters.

These data take on added significance when considered in the light of the chapters’ contents. Following the introductory material provided in chapter 1, chapters 2 through 4 give an account of the life of Ivan Ilich from his childhood, through the development of his career in government service and his marriage, to the onset of his illness: a period of more than 40 years. Chapters 5 through 8 present the development of the illness, Ivan's further attempts to deal with it, and his growing awareness of the approach of death: a period of several months. The last four chapters recount the hero's final decline and agonized death: a period of a bit more than four weeks. Thus, the decreasing size of the chapters is matched by a parallel decrease in their time frame: from years to months to weeks. The last chapter makes this gradual focusing still more apparent by shrinking the temporal framework from weeks to days, then to hours, and finally brings the flow of time to a stop altogether in the “one changeless instant” in which Ivan finds himself following his illumination.

There is a parallel decrease in the spatial dimensions of the story. Chapters 2 through 4 present the protagonist in the broad context of his official peregrinations from town to town and conclude by localizing him in the city to which his final promotion sends him and in the stylish apartment that he engages there. Chapters 5 through 8 curtail this spatial mobility, and Ivan is ultimately confined to his study. The process is completed in chapters 9 through 12 as the comparative freedom of the study is reduced to the limits of the sofa (chapter 10) on which he dies. Thus, the temporal and spatial stages of the narrative coincide with the three groups of chapters. The gradual contraction of time and space around Ivan Ilich leads logically to the story's time line reaching time-zero and its space line reaching space-zero at the moment of his death.
This brief analysis of the story’s surface text indicates the basis for a commonly made criticism of the novel. On one hand the text prepares the reader to accept time-zero and space-zero as points of termination. On the other hand, when time- and space-zero are finally reached in chapter 12, they are, apparently unexpectedly, revealed to be a new beginning, as is shown by Ivan’s sense of relief and well-being, his overcoming of time, and his escape from the confines of the “black hole” into a space that contains no dimensions at all, but only light.

The linearity and gradually increasing tempo of the text prepare the reader for a conclusion very like that which Ivan Il’ich imagines when he describes his life as “a series of increasing sufferings” that “flies faster and faster towards its end, the most terrible suffering” (163 [26:109]). The astonishing, last-minute reversal that the reader is offered instead has struck some readers as incredible or artistically unjustified. This is not so much a matter of religious convictions as of artistic consistency, and it represents one of the main questions that have moved scholars and critics to undertake specialized studies of the novel. The papers by Gutsche and Rancour-Laferriere devote close attention to this question.

In this introduction I have tried to provide a general and abbreviated account of the historical, biographical, and philosophical context in which the novel was produced and a summary of the main points of view from which scholars and critics, readers like the rest of us, have sought to understand and appreciate Tolstoy’s novel. Their main concerns have centered on the moral implications of the novel, its structure and organization (particularly the placement of the material presented in the first chapter), the psychology of the central character as he confronts his imminent demise, the strange mixture of the literal and the symbolic in the text, and the relationship between *The Death of Ivan Ilich* and Tolstoy’s other works or between the novel and the works of other writers. The various studies that form the substance of the next part of this book were chosen because of the masterful way in which they involve themselves in these central questions of the appreciation and understanding of Tolstoy’s great short novel. With this background in mind, and with a reading (or a re-reading) of the work freshly accomplished, we may now proceed to the consideration of these specialized. Each of them brings something particular to our individual and collective understanding of Tolstoy’s short novel and helps to define further its place within our intellectual landscape.
THE RUSSIAN TEXT OF "THE DEATH OF IVAN ILCHE"

Смерть Ивана Ильича

Л. Н. Толстой
1886

The text of “Смерть Ивана Ильича” presented here is that of the “Academy” edition of Tolstoy’s collected works: Polnoe sobranie sochinenii v devianosto tomakh. [Complete Collected Works in Ninety Volumes]. Moscow and Leningrad: Gosudarstvennoe Izdatel'stvo Khudozhestvennoi Literatury, 1928-1958. Called the “Jubilee Edition” because its publication commenced on the one hundredth anniversary of Tolstoy’s birth, this is the standard scholarly edition of his works. It contains printed and manuscript variants, supplemented by introductions to and commentary on the texts. In addition, it contains the most complete collection of Tolstoy’s letters, diaries, notebooks, and other personal papers. Text of and commentary on “The Death of Ivan Ilich” are in volume 26 of this edition. The original text is in the Public Domain and has No Copyright under United States law. The Jubilee Edition has a note that the contents are free to reproduce.

Full Text
В большом здании судебных учреждений во время перерыва заседания по делу Мельвинских члены и прокурор сошлись в кабинете Ивана Егоровича Шебек, и зашел разговор о знаменитом красовском деле. Федор Васильевич разгорячился, доказывая неподсудность, Иван Егорович стоял на своем, Петр же Иванович, не вступив сначала в спор, не принимал в нем участия и просматривал только что поданные "Ведомости".


– Неужели?

– Вот, читайте, – сказал он Федору Васильевичу, подавая ему свежий, пахучий еще номер.

В черном ободке было напечатано: "Прасковья Федоровна Головина с душевным прискорбием извещает родных и знакомых о кончине возлюбленного супруга своего, члена Судебной палаты, Ивана Ильича Головина, последовавшей 4-го февраля сего 1882 года. Вынос тела в пятницу, в час пополудни".

Иван Ильич был сотоварищ собравшихся господ, и все любили его. Он болел уже несколько недель; говорили, что болезнь его неизлечима. Место оставалось за ним, но было соображение о том, что в случае его смерти Алексеев может быть назначен на его место, на место же Алексеева – или Винников, или Штабель. Так что, услыхав о смерти Ивана Ильича, первая мысль каждого из господ, собравшихся в кабинете, была и о том, какое значение может иметь эта смерть на перемещения или повышения самих членов или их знакомых.

“Теперь, наверно, получу место Штабеля или Винникова, – подумал Федор Васильевич. – Мне это и давно обещано, а это повышение составляет для меня восемьсот рублей прибавки, кроме канцелярии”.

“Надо будет попросить теперь о переводе шурина из Калуги, – подумал Петр Иванович. – Жена будет очень рада. Теперь уж нельзя будет говорить, что я никогда ничего не сделал для ее родных”.

– Я так и думал, что ему не поднятьсь, – вслух сказал Петр Иванович. – Жалко.

– Да что у него, собственно, было?

– Доктора не могли определить. То есть определяли, но различно. Когда я видел его последний раз, мне казалось, что он поправится.

– А я так и не был у него с самых праздников. Все собирался.
– Что, у него было состояние?

– Кажется, что-то очень небольшое у жены. Но что-то ничтожное.

– Да, надо будет поехать. Ужасно далеко жили они.

– То есть от вас далеко. От вас всё далеко.

– Вот, не может мне простить, что я живу за рекой, – улыбаясь на Шебека, сказал Петр Иванович. И заговорили о дальности городских расстояний, и пошли в заседание.

Кроме вызванных этой смертью в каждом соображении о перемещениях и возможных изменениях по службе, могущих последовать от этой смерти, самый факт смерти близкого знакомого вызвал во всех, узнавших про нее, как всегда, чувство радости о том, что умер он, а не я.

“Каково, умер; а я вот нет”, – подумал или почувствовал каждый. Близкие же знакомые, так называемые друзья Ивана Ильича, при этом подумали невольно и о том, что теперь им надобно исполнить очень скучные обязанности приличия и поехать на панихиду и к вдове с визитом соболезнования.

Ближе всех были Федор Васильевич и Петр Иванович.

Петр Иванович был товарищем по училищу правоведения и считал себя обязанным Иваном Ильичом.

Передав за обедом жене известие о смерти Ивана Ильича и соображения о возможности перевода шурина в их округ, Петр Иванович, не ложась отдыхать, надел фрак и поехал к Ивану Ильичу.

У подъезда квартиры Ивана Ильича стояла карета и два извозчика. Внизу, в передней у вешалки приклонена была к стене глазетовая крышка гроба с кисточками и начищенным порошком галуном. Две дамы в черном снимали шубки. Одна, сестра Ивана Ильича, знакомая, другая – незнакомая дама. Товарищ Петра Ивановича, Шварц, сходил сверху и, с верхней ступени увидав входившего, остановился и подмигнул ему, как бы говоря: “Глупо распорядился Иван Ильич: то ли дело мы с вами”.

Лицо Шварца с английскими бакенбардами и вся худая фигура во фраке имела, как всегда, изящную торжественность, и эта торжественность, всегда противоречащая характеру игривости Шварца, здесь имела особенную соль. Так подумал Петр Иванович.

Петр Иванович пропустил вперед себя дам и медленно пошел за ними на лестницу. Шварц не стал сходить, а остановился наверху. Петр Иванович понял зачем: он, очевидно хотел сговориться, где повинтить нынче. Дамы прошли на лестницу к вдове, а Шварц, с серьезно сложенными, крепкими губами и игривым взглядом, движением бровей показал Петру Ивановичу направо, в комнату мертвеца.

Петр Иванович вошел, как всегда это бывает, с недоумением о том, что ему там надо будет делать. Одно он знал, что креститься в этих случаях никогда не мешает. Насчет того, что нужно ли при этом и кланяться, он не совсем был уверен и потому выбрал среднее: войдя в комнату, он стал креститься и немножко как будто кланяться. Дамы прошли на лестницу к вдове, а Шварц, с серьезно сложенными, крепкими губами и игривым взглядом, движением бровей показал Петру Ивановичу направо, в комнату мертвеца.
Ильич особенно любил его. Петр Иванович все крестился и слегка кланялся по серединному направлению между гробом, дьячком и образами на столе в углу. Потом, когда это движение крещения рукою показалось ему уже слишком продолжительно, он приостановился и стал разглядывать мертвеца.

Мертвец лежал, как всегда лежат мертвецы, особенно тяжело, по-мертвецки, утонувши окоченевшими членами в подстилке гроба, с навсегда согнувшейся головой на подушке, и выставлял, как всегда выставляют мертвецы, свой желтый восковой лоб с взлизами на ввалившихся висках и торчащий нос, как бы надавивший на верхнюю губу. Он очень переменился, еще похудел с тех пор, как Петр Иванович не видал его, но, как у всех мертвецов, лицо его было красивее, главное – значительнее, чем оно было у живого. На лице было выражение того, что то, что нужно было сделать, сделано, и сделано правильно. Кроме того, в этом выражении был еще упрек или напоминание живым. Напоминание это показалось Петру Ивановичу неуместным или, по крайней мере, до него не касающимся. Что-то ему стало неприятно, и потому Петр Иванович еще раз поспешно перекрестился и, как ему показалось, слишком поспешно, нерешительно с прилиями, повернулся и пошел к двери. Шварц ждал его в проходной комнате, расставив ноги и играя обеими руками за спиной своим цилиндром. Один взгляд на игривую, чистоплотную и элегантную фигуру Шварца освежил Петра Ивановича. Петр Иванович понял, что он, Шварц, стоит выше этого и не поддается удручающим впечатлениям. Один вид его говорил: инцидент панихиды Ивана Ильича никак не может служить достаточным поводом для признания порядка заседания нарушенным, то есть что ничто не может помешать нынче же вечером щелкнуть, распечатывая ее, колодой карт, в то время как лакей будет расставлять четыре необожженные свечи; вообще нет основания предполагать, чтобы инцидент этот мог помешать нам провести приятно и сегодняшний вечер. Он и сказал это шепотом проходившему Петру Ивановичу, предлагая соединиться на партию у Федора Васильевича. Но, видно, Петру Ивановичу была не судьба винтить нынче вечером. Прасковья Федоровна, невысокая, жирная женщина, несмотря на все старания устроить противное, все-таки расширявшая от плеч книзу, вся в черном, с покрытой кружевом головой и с такими странно поднятыми бровями, как и та дама, стоявшая против гроба, вышла из своих покоев с другими дамами и, проводив их в дверь мертвеца, сказала:

– Сейчас будет панихида; пройдите.

Шварц, неопределенно поклонившись, остановился, очевидно, не принимая и не отклоняя этого предложения. Прасковья Федоровна, узнав Петра Ивановича, вздохнула, подошла к нему вплоть, взяла его за руку и сказала:

– Я знаю, что вы были истинным другом Ивана Ильича... – и посмотрела на него, ожидая от него соответствующих этим словам действий.

Петр Иванович знал, что как там надо было креститься, так здесь надо было пожать руку, вздохнуть и сказать: “Поверьте!”. И он так и сделал. И, сделав это, почувствовал, что результат получился желаемый: что он тронут и она тронута.

– Пойдемте, пока там не началось; мне надо поговорить с вами, – сказала вдова. – Дайте мне руку.

Петр Иванович подал руку, и они направились во внутренние комнаты, мимо Шварца, который печально подмигнул Петру Ивановичу: “Вот те и винт! Уж не взыщите, другого партнера возьмем. Нешто впятером, когда отделаетесь”, – сказал его игривый взгляд.

Петр Иванович вздохнул еще глубже и печальнее, и Прасковья Федоровна благодарно пожала ему руку. Войдя в ее обитую розовым кретоном гостиную с пасмурной лампой, они сели у стола: она на диван, а Петр Иванович на расстроившийся пружинами и неправильно подававшийся под его сиденьем низенький
пуф. Прасковья Федоровна хотела предупредить его, чтобы он сел на другой стул, но нашла это предупреждение не соответствующим своему положению и раздумала. Садясь на этот пуф, Петр Иванович вспомнил, как Иван Ильич устраивал эту гостиную и советовался с ним об этом самом розовым с зелеными листьями кретоне. Садясь на диван и проходя мимо стола (вообще вся гостиная была полна вещей и мебели), вдова зацепилась черным кружевом черной мантили за резьбу стола. Петр Иванович приподнялся, чтобы отцепить, и освобожденный под ним пуф стал волноваться и подталкивать его. Вдова сама стала отцеплять свое кружево, и Петр Иванович опять сел, придавив бунтовавшийся под ним пуф. Но вдова не все отцепила, и Петр Иванович опять поднялся, и опять пуф забунтовал и даже щелкнул. Когда все это кончились, она вынула чистый батистовый платок и стала плакать. Петра же Ивановича охладил эпизод с кружевом и борьба с пуфом, и он сидел насупившись. Неловкое это положение перервал Соколов, буфетчик Ивана Ильича, с докладом о том, что место на кладбище то, которое назначила Прасковья Федоровна, будет стоить двести рублей. Она перестала плакать и, с видом жертвы взглянув на Петра Ивановича, сказала по-французски, что ей очень тяжело. Петр Иванович сделал молчаливый знак, выражавший несомненную уверенность в том, что это не может быть иначе.

– Курите, пожалуйста, – сказала она великодушным и вместе убитым голосом и занялась с Соколовым вопросом о цене места. Петр Иванович, закуривая, слышал, что она очень обстоятельно расспросила о разных ценах земли и определила ту, которую следует взять. Кроме того, окончив о месте, она распорядилась и о певчих. Соколов ушел.

– Я все сама делаю, – сказала она Петру Ивановичу, отодвигая к одной стороне альбомы, лежавшие на столе; и, заметив, что пепел угрожал столу, не мешкая подвинула Петру Ивановичу пепельницу и проговорила: – Я нахожу притворством уверять, что я не могу от горя заниматься практическими делами. Меня, напротив, если может что не утешить... а развлечь, то это – заботы о нем же. – Она опять достала платок, как бы собираясь плакать, и вдруг, как бы пересиливая себя, встряхнулась и стала говорить спокойно:

– Однако у меня дело есть к вам.

Петр Иванович поклонился, не давая расходиться пружинам пуфа, тотчас же зашевелившимся под ним.

– В последние дни он ужасно страдал.


– Ах, ужасно! Последние не минуты, а часы он не переставая кричал. Трое суток сряду он, не переводя голосу, кричал. Это было невыносимо. Я не могу понять, как я вынесла это; за тремя дверьми слышно было. Ах! что я вынесла!


– Да, – прошептала она, – до последней минуты. Он простился с нами за четверть часа до смерти и еще просил увести Володю.

Мысль о страдании человека, которого он знал так близко, сначала веселым мальчиком, школьником, потом взрослым партнером, несмотря на неприятное сознание притворства своего и этой женщины, вдруг ужаснула Петра Ивановича. Он увидал опять этот лоб, нажимавший на губу нос, и ему стало страшно за себя.

“Трое суток ужасных страданий и смерть. Ведь это сейчас, всякую минуту может наступить и для меня”,
подумал он, и ему стало на мгновение страшно. Но тотчас же, он сам не знал как, ему на помощь пришла обычная мысль, что это случилось с Иваном Ильичом, а не с ним и что с ним этого случиться не должно и не может; что, думая так, он поддается мрачному настроению, чего не следует делать, как это, очевидно было по лицу Шварца. И, сделав это рассуждение, Петр Иванович успокоился и с интересом стал расспрашивать подробности о кончине Ивана Ильича, как будто смерть была такое приключение, которое свойственно только Ивану Ильичу, но совсем не свойственно ему.

После разных разговоров о подробностях действительно, ужасных физических страданий, перенесенных Иваном Ильичом (подробности эти узнавал Петр Иванович только по тому, как мучения Ивана Ильича действовали на нервы Прасковьи Федоровны), вдова, очевидно, нашла нужным перейти к делу.

– Ах, Петр Иванович, как тяжело, как ужасно тяжело, как ужасно тяжело, – и она опять заплакала.

Петр Иванович вздохнул, и ждал, когда она высморкается. Когда она высморкалась, он сказал:

– Поверьте... – и опять она разговорилась и выказала то, что было, очевидно, ее главным делом к нему; дело это состояло в вопросах о том, как бы по случаю смерти мужа достать денег от казны. Она сделала вид, что спрашивает у Петра Ивановича совета о пенсии: но он видел, что она уже знает до мельчайших подробностей и то, чего он не знал: все то, что можно вытянуть от казны по случаю этой смерти; но что ей хотелось узнать, нельзя ли как-нибудь вытянуть еще побольше денег. Петр Иванович постарался выдумать такое средство, но, подумав несколько и из приличия побранив наше правительство за его складность, сказал, что, кажется, больше нельзя. Тогда она вздохнула и, очевидно, стала придумывать средство избавиться от своего посетителя. Он понял это, затушил папироску, встал, пожал руку и пошел в переднюю.

В столовой с часами, которым Иван Ильич так рад был, что купил в брикабраке. Петр Иванович встретил священника и еще несколько знакомых, приехавших на панихиду, и увидел знакомую ему красивую барышню, дочь Ивана Ильича. Она была вся в черном. Талия ее, очень тонкая, казалась еще тоньше. Она имела мрачный, решительный, почти гневный вид. Она поклонилась Петру Ивановичу, как будто он был в чем-то виноват. За дочерью стоял с таким же обиженным видом знакомый Петру Ивановичу богатый молодой человек, судебный следователь, ее жених, как он слышал. Он уныло поклонился им и хотел пройти в комнату мертвеца, когда из под лестницы показалась фигурка гимназистка-сына, ужасно похожего на Ивана Ильича. Это был маленький Иван Ильич, каким Петр Иванович помнил его в Правоведении. Глаза у него были и заплаканные и такие, как бывают у нечистых мальчиков в тринадцать – четырнадцать лет. Мальчик, увидав Петра Ивановича, стал сурово и стыдливо морщиться. Петр Иванович кивнул ему головой и вошел в комнату мертвеца. Началась панихида – свечи, стоны, слезы, всхлипывания. Петр Иванович стоял нахмурившись, глядя на ноги перед собой. Он не взглянул ни разу на мертвеца и до конца не поддался расслабляющим влияниям и один из первых вышел. В передней никого не было. Герасим, буфетный мужик, выскочил из комнаты покойника, перешвырял своими сильными руками все шубы, чтобы найти шубу Петра Ивановича, и подал ее.

– Что, брат Герасим? – сказал Петр Иванович, чтобы сказать что-нибудь. – Жалко?

– Божья воля. Все там были и заплаканные и такие, какие бывают у нечистых мальчиков в тринадцать – четырнадцать лет. Мальчик, увидав Петра Ивановича, стал сурово и стыдливо морщиться. Петр Иванович кивнул ему головой и вошел в комнату мертвеца. Началась панихида – свечи, стоны, ладан, слезы, всхлипывания. Петр Иванович стоял нахмурившись, глядя на ноги перед собой. Он не взглянул ни разу на мертвеца и до конца не поддался расслабляющим влияниям и один из первых вышел. В передней никого не было. Герасим, буфетный мужик, выскочил из комнаты покойника, перешвырял своими сильными руками все шубы, чтобы найти шубу Петра Ивановича, и подал ее.

– Что, брат Герасим? – сказал Петр Иванович, чтобы сказать что-нибудь. – Жалко?

– Божья воля. Все там же будем, – сказал Герасим, оскапывая свои белые, сплошные мужицкие зубы, и, как человек в разгаре усilenной работы, живо отворил дверь, кликнул кучера, подсадил Петра Ивановича и прыгнул назад к крыльцу, как будто придумывая, что бы ему еще сделать.

Петру Ивановичу особенно приятно было дохнуть чистым воздухом после запаха ладана, трупа и карболовой кислоты.

– Не поздно. Заеду еще к Федору Васильевичу. И Петр Иванович поехал. И действительно, застал их при конце первого роббера, так что ему удобно было вступить пятym.

II

Прошедшая история жизни Ивана Ильича была самая простая и обыкновенная и самая ужасная.

Иван Ильич умер сорока пяти лет, членом Судебной палаты. Он был сын чиновника, сделавшего в Петербурге по разным министерствам и департаментам ту карьеру, которая доводит людей до того положения, в котором хотя и ясно оказывается, что исполнять какую-нибудь существенную должность они не годятся, они все-таки по своей долге и прошедшей службе и своим чинам не могут быть выгнаны и потому получают выдуманные фиктивные места и нефиктивные тысячи, от шести до десяти, с которыми они и доживают до глубокой старости.

Таков был тайный советник, ненужный член разных ненужных учреждений, Илья Ефимович Головин.

У него было три сына, Иван Ильич был второй сын. Старший делал такую же карьеру, как и отец, только по другому министерству, и уж близко подходил к тому служебному возрасту, при котором получается эта инерция жалованья. Третий сын был неудачник. Он в разных местах везде напортил себе и теперь служил по железным дорогам: и его отец, и братья, и особенно их жены не только не любили встречаться с ним, но без крайней необходимости и не вспоминали о его существовании. Сестра была за бароном Грехом, таким же петербургским чиновником, как и его тестя. Иван Ильич был le phénix de la famille, как говорили. Он был не такой холодный и аккуратный, как старший, и не такой отчаянный, как меньший. Он был середина между ними – умный, живой, приятный и приличный человек. Воспитывался он вместе с молодым братом в Правоведении. Меньший не кончил и был выгнан из пятого класса, Иван же Ильич хорошо кончил курс. В Правоведении уже он был тем, чем он был впоследствии всю свою жизнь: человеком способным, весело добродушным и общительным, но строго исполняющим то, что он считал своим долгом; долгом же он своим считал все то, что считалось таковым наивысше поставленными людьми. Он не был заискивающим ни мальчиком, ни потом взрослым человеком, но у него с самых молодых лет было то, что он, как муха к свету, тянулся к наивысше поставленным в свете людям, усваивал себе их приемы, их взгляды на жизнь и с ними устанавливал дружеские отношения. Все увлечения детства и молодости прошли для него, не оставив больших следов; он отдавался и чувственности и тщеславию, и под конец, в высших классах – либеральности, но все в известных пределах, которые верно указывало ему его чувство.

Были в Правоведении совершены им поступки, которые прежде представлялись ему большими гадостями и внушили ему отвращение к самому себе, в то время, как он совершал их; впоследствии, увидав, что поступки эти были совершаемы и высоко стоящими людьми и не считались ими дурными, он не то что признал их хорошими, но совершенно забыл их и нисколько не огорчался воспоминаниями о них.

Выйдя из Правоведения десятым классом и получив от отца деньги на обмундировку, Иван Ильич заказал себе платье у Шармера, повесил на брелоки медальку с надписью: “respice finem”, простился с принцем и воспитателем, пообедал с товарищами у Донона и с новыми модными чемоданом, бельем, платьем, бритвенными и туалетными принадлежностями и пледом, заказанными и купленными в самых лучших магазинах, уехал в провинцию на место чиновника особых поручений губернатора, которое доставил ему отец.
В провинции Иван Ильич сразу устроил себе такое же легкое и приятное положение, каково было его положение в Правоведении. Он служил, делал карьеру и вместе с тем приятно и прилично веселился; изредка он ездил по поручению начальства в уезды, держал себя с достоинством и с высшими и с низшими и с точностью и неподкупной чистотой, которой не мог не гордиться, исполнял возложенные на него поручения, преимущественно по делам раскольников.

В служебных делах он был, несмотря на свою молодость и склонность к легкому веселью, чрезвычайно сдержан, официален и даже строг; но в общественных он был часто игрив и остроумен и всегда добродушен, приличен и bon enfant, как говорил про него его начальник и начальница, у которых он был домашним человеком.

Была в провинции и связь с одной из дам, навязавшейся щеголеватому правоведу; была и модистка; были и попойки с приезжими флигель-адъютантами и поездки в дальнюю улицу после ужина; было и подслуживание начальнику и даже жене начальника, но все это носило на себе такой высокий тон порядочности, что все это не могло быть называемо дурными словами: все это подходило только под рубрику французского изречения: il faut que jeumesse se passe. Все происходило с чистыми руками, в чистых рубашках, с французскими словами и, главное, в самом высшем обществе, следовательно, с одобрением высоко стоящих людей.

Так прослужил Иван Ильич пять лет, и наступила перемена по службе. Явились новые судебные учреждения; нужны были новые люди.

И Иван Ильич стал этим новым человеком.

Ивану Ильичу предложено было место судебного следователя, и Иван Ильич принял его, несмотря на то, что место это было в другой губернии и ему надо было бросить установившиеся отношения и устанавливать новые. Ивана Ильича проводили друзья, сделали группу, поднесли ему серебряную папиросочницу, и он уехал на новое место.

Судебным следователем Иван Ильич был таким же comme il faut'ным, приличным, умеющим отделять служебные обязанности от частной жизни и внушающим общее уважение, каким он был чиновником особых поручений. Сама же служба следователя представляла для Ивана Ильича гораздо более интереса и привлекательности, чем прежняя. В прежней службе приятно было свободной походкой в шармеровском вицмундире пройти мимо трепещущих и ожидающих приема просителей и должностных лиц, завидующих ему, прямо в кабинет начальника и сесть с ним за чай с папиросою; но людей, прямо зависящих от его произвола, было мало. Такие люди были только исправники и раскольники, когда его посылали с поручениями; и он любил учитво, почти по-товарищески обходить с такими, зависящими от него, людьми, любил давать чувствовать, что вот он, могущий раздавить, дружески, просто обходится с ними. Таких людей тогда было мало. Теперь же, судебным следователем, Иван Ильич чувствовал, что все, все без исключения, самые важные самодовольные люди – все у него в руках и что ему стоит только написать известные слова на бумаге с заголовком, и этого важного, самодовольного человека приведут к нему в качестве обвиняемого или свидетеля, и он будет, если он не захочет посадить его, стоять перед ним и отвечать на его вопросы. Иван Ильич никогда не злоупотреблял этой своей властью, напротив, старался смягчать выражения ее; но сознание этой власти и возможность смягчать ее составляли для него главный интерес и привлекательность его новой службы. В самой же службе, именно в следствиях, Иван Ильич очень быстро усвоил прием отстранения от себя всех обстоятельств, не касающихся службы, и облечение всякого самого сложного дела в такую форму, при которой бы дело только внешним образом отражалось на бумаге и при котором исключалось совершенно его личное воззрение и, главное, соблюдалась бы
вся требуемая формальность. Дело это было новое. И он был один из первых людей, выработавших на практике приложение уставов 1864 года.

Перейдя в новый город на место судебного следователя, Иван Ильич сделал новые знакомства, связи, по-новому поставил себя и принял несколько иной тон. Он поставил себя, в некотором достойном отдалении от губернских властей, а избрал лучший круг из судейских и богатых дворян, живших в городе, и принял тон легкого недовольства правительством, умеренной либеральности и цивилизованной гражданственности. При этом, нисколько не изменяв элегантности своего туалета, Иван Ильич в новой должности перестал пробривать подбородок и дал свободу бороде расти, где она хочет.

Жизнь Ивана Ильича и в новом городе сложилась очень приятно: фрондирующее против губернатора общество было дружное и хорошее; жалованья было больше, и немалую приятность в жизни прибавил тогда вист, в который стал играть Иван Ильич, имевший способность играть в карты весело, быстро соображая и очень тонко, так что в общем он всегда был в выигрыше.

После двух лет службы в новом городе Иван Ильич встретился с своей будущей женой. Прасковья Федоровна Михель была самая привлекательная, умная, блестящая девушка того кружка, в котором вращался Иван Ильич. В числе других забав и отдохновений от трудов следователя Иван Ильич установил игривые, легкие отношения с Прасковьей Федоровной.

Иван Ильич, будучи чиновником особых поручений, вообще танцевал; судебным же следователем он уже танцевал как исключение. Он танцевал уже в том смысле, что хоть и по новым учреждениям и в пятом классе, но если дело коснется танцев, то могу доказать, что в этом роде я могу лучше других. Так, он изредка в конце вечера танцевал с Прасковьей Федоровной и преимущественно во время этих танцев и победил Прасковью Федоровну. Она влюбилась в него. Иван Ильич не имел ясного, определенного намерения жениться, но когда девушка влюбилась в него, он задал себе этот вопрос: “В самом деле, отчего же и не жениться?” – сказал он себе.

Девица Прасковья Федоровна была хорошего дворянского рода, недурна; было маленькое состояние. Иван Ильич мог рассчитывать на более блестящую партию, но и эта была партия хорошая. У Ивана Ильича было его жалованье, у ней, он надеялся, будет столько же. Хорошее родство; она – милая, хорошенькая и вполне порядочная женщина. Сказать, что Иван Ильич женился потому, что он полюбил свою невесту и нашел в ней сочувствие своим взглядам на жизнь, было бы так же несправедливо, как и сказать то, что он женился потому, что люди его общества одобряли эту партию. Иван Ильич женился по обоим соображениям: он делал приятное для себя, приобретая такую жену, и вместе с тем делал то, что наивысше поставленные люди считали правильным.

И Иван Ильич женился.

Самый процесс женитьбы и первое время брачной жизни, с супружескими ласками, новой мебелью, новой посудой, новым бельем, до беременности жены прошло очень хорошо, так что Иван Ильич начинал уже думать, что женитьба не только не нарушит того характера жизни легкой, приятной, веселой и всегда приличной и одобряемой обществом, который Иван Ильич считал свойственным жизни вообще, но еще усугубит его. Но тут, с первых месяцев беременности жены, явилось что-то такое новое, неожиданное, неприятное, тяжелое и неприличное, чего нельзя было ожидать и от чего никак нельзя было отделаться.

Жена без всяких поводов, как казалось Ивану Ильичу, de gaité de cœur, как он говорил себе, начала нарушать приятность и приличие жизни: она без всякой причины ревновала его, требовала от него ухаживанья за собой, придиралась ко всему и делала ему неприятные и грубые сцены.
Сначала Иван Ильич надеялся освободиться от неприятности этого положения тем самым легким и приличным отношением к жизни, которое выручало его прежде, – он пробовал игнорировать расположение духа жены, продолжал жить по-прежнему легко и приятно: приглашал к себе друзей составлять партию, пробовал сам уезжать в клуб или к приятелям. Но жена один раз с такой энергией начала грубыми словами ругать его и так упорно продолжала ругать его всякий раз, когда он не исполнял ее требований, очевидно, твердо решившись не переставать до тех пор, пока он не покорится, то есть не будет сидеть дома и не будет так же, как и она, тосковать, что Иван Ильич ужаснулся. Он понял, что супружеская жизнь – по крайней мере, с его женою – не содействует всегда приятностям и приличию жизни, а, напротив, часто нарушает их, и что поэтому необходимо оградить себя от этих нарушений. И Иван Ильич стал отыскивать средства для этого. Служба было одно, что импонировало Прасковье Федоровне, и Иван Ильич посредством службы и вытекающих из нее обязанностей стал бороться с женой, выгораживая свой независимый мир.

С рождением ребенка, попытками кормления и различными неудачами при этом, с болезнями действительными и воображаемыми ребенка и материи, в которых от Ивана Ильича требовалось участие, но в которых он ничего не мог понять, потребность для Ивана Ильича выгородить себе мир вне семьи стала еще более настоятельна.

По мере того как жена становилась раздражительнее и требовательнее, и Иван Ильич все более и более переносил центр тяжести своей жизни в службу. Он стал более любить службу и стал более честолюбив, чем он был прежде.

Очень скоро, не далее как через год после женитьбы, Иван Ильич понял, что супружеская жизнь, представляя некоторые удобства в жизни, в сущности есть очень сложное и тяжелое дело, по отношению к которому, для того чтобы исполнять свой долг, то есть вести приличную, одобряемую обществом жизнь, нужно выработать – определенное отношение, как и к службе.

И такое отношение к супружеской жизни выработал себе Иван Ильич. Он требовал от семейной жизни только тех удобств домашнего обеда, хозяйки, постели, которые она могла дать ему, и, главное, того приличия внешних форм, которые определялись общественным мнением. В остальном же он искал веселой приятности и, если находил их, был очень благодарен; если же встречал отпор и ворчливость, то тотчас же уходил в свой отдельный, выгороженный им мир службы и в нем находил приятности.

Ивана Ильича ценили как хорошего служаку, и через три года сделали товарищем прокурора. Новые обязанности, важность их, возможность привлечь к суду и посадить всякого в острог публичность речей; успех, который в этом деле имел Иван Ильич, – все это еще более привлекало его к службе.

Пошли дети. Жена становилась все ворчливее и сердитее, но выработанные Иваном Ильичом отношения к домашней жизни делали его почти непроницаемым для ее ворчливости.

После семи лет службы в одном городе Ивана Ильича перевели на место прокурора в другую губернию. Они переехали, денег было мало, и жена не понравилось то место, куда они переехали. Жалованье было хоть и больше прежнего, но жизнь была дороже; кроме того, умерло двое детей, и потому семейная жизнь стала еще неприятнее для Ивана Ильича.

Прасковья Федоровна во всех случавшихся невзгодах в этом новом месте жительства упрекала мужа. Большинство предметов разговора между мужем и женой, особенно воспитание детей, наводило на вопросы, по которым были воспоминания ссор, и ссоры всюкий минуту готовы были разгораться. Оставались только те редкие периоды влюбленности, которые находили на супругов, но продолжались
недолго. Это были островки, на которые они приставали на время, но потом опять пускались в море затаенной вражды, выражавшейся в отчуждении друг от друга. Отчуждение это могло бы огорчать Ивана Ильича, если бы он считал, что это не должно так быть, но он теперь уже признавал это положение не только нормальным, но и целью всей деятельности в семье. Цель его состояла в том, чтобы все больше и больше освобождать себя от этих неприятностей и придать им характер безвредности и приличия; и он достигал этого тем, что он все меньше и меньше проводил время с семьей, а когда был вынужден это делать, то старался обеспечивать свое положение присутствием посторонних лиц. Главное же то, что у Ивана Ильича была служба. В служебном мире сосредоточился для него весь интерес жизни. И интерес этот охватил его. Сознание своей власти, возможности погубить всякого человека, которого он захочет погубить, важность, даже внешняя, при его вхождении в суд и встречах с подчиненными, успех своей перед вышними и подчиненными и, главное, мастерство свое ведения дел, которое он чувствовал, – все это радовало его и вместе с беседами с товарищами, обедами и вистом наполняло его жизнь. Так что вообще жизнь Ивана Ильича продолжала идти так, как он считал, что она должна была идти: приятно и прилично. Так прожил он еще семь лет. Старшей дочери было уже шестнадцать лет, еще один ребенок умер, и оставался мальчик-гимназист, предмет раздора. Иван Ильич хотел отдать его в Правоведение, а Прасковья Федоровна назло ему отдала в гимназию. Дочь училась дома и росла хорошо, мальчик тоже учился недурно.

III

Так шла жизнь Ивана Ильича в продолжение семнадцати лет со времени женитьбы. Он был уже старым прокурором, отказавшимся от некоторых перемещений, ожидая более желательного места, когда неожиданно случилось одно неприятное обстоятельство, когда уже нарушало его спокойствие жизни. Иван Ильич ждал места председателя в университете, но Гоппе забежал как-то вперед и получил это место. Иван Ильич раздражился, стал делать упреки и поссорился с ним и с ближайшим начальством; к нему стали холодны и в следующем назначении его опять обошли.

Это было в 1880 году. Этот год был самый тяжелый жизни Ивана Ильича. В этом году оказалось, с одной стороны, что жалованья не хватает на жизнь; с другой – что все его забыли и что то, что казалось для него по отношению к нему величайшей, жесточайшей несправедливостью, другим представлялось совсем обыкновенным делом. Даже отец не считал своей обязанностью помогать ему. Он почувствовал, что все покинули его, считая его положение с 3500 жалованья самым нормальным и даже счастливым. Он один знал, что с сознанием тех несправедливостей, которые были сделаны ему, и с вечным пилением жены, и с долгами, которые он стал делать, живя сверх средств, – он один знал, что его положение далеко не нормально.

Летом этого года для облегчения средств он взял отпуск и поехал прожить с женой лето в деревне у брата Прасковьи Федоровны.

В деревне, без службы Иван Ильич в первый раз почувствовал не только скуку, но тоску невыносимую, и решил, что так жить нельзя и необходимо принять какие-нибудь решительные меры.

Проведя бессонную ночь, которую всю Иван Ильич проходил по террасе, он решил ехать в Петербург хлопотать и, чтобы наказать их, тех, которые не умели оценить его, перейти в другое министерство.

На другой день, несмотря на все отговоры жены и шурина, он поехал в Петербург.
Он ехал за одним; выпросить место в пять тысяч жалованья. Он уже не держался никакого министерства, направления или рода деятельности. Ему нужно только было место, место с пятью тысячами, по администрации, по банкам, по железным дорогам, по учреждениям императрицы Марии, даже таможни, но непременно пять тысяч и непременно выйти из министерства, где не умели оценить его.

И вот эта поездка Ивана Ильича увенчалась удивительным, неожиданным успехом. В Курск подсел в первый класс Ф. С. Ильин, знакомый, и сообщил свежую телеграмму, полученную курским губернатором, что в министерстве произойдет на днях переворот: на место Петра Ивановича назначают Ивана Семеновича.

Предполагаемый переворот, кроме своего значения для России, имел особенное значение для Ивана Ильича тем, что он, выдигая новое лицо, Петра Петровича и, очевидно, его друга Захара Ивановича, был в высшей степени благоприятен для Ивана Ильича. Захар Иванович был товарищ и друг Ивану Ильичу.

В Москве известие подтвердились. А приехав в Петербург, Иван Ильич нашел Захара Ивановича и получил обещание верного места к своему прежнем министерстве юстиции.

Через неделю он телеграфировал жене:

“Захар место Миллера при первом докладе получаю назначение”.

Иван Ильич благодаря этой перемене лиц неожиданно получил в своем прежнем министерстве такое назначение, в котором он стал на две степени выше своих товарищей: пять тысяч жалованья и подъемных три тысячи пятьсот. Вся досада на прежних врагов своих и на все министерство была забыта, и Иван Ильич был совсем счастлив.

Иван Ильич вернулся в деревню веселый, довольный, каким он давно не был. Прасковья Федоровна тоже повеселела, и между ними заключилось перемирие. Иван Ильич рассказывал о том, как его все чествовали в Петербурге, как все те, которые были его врагами, были посрамлены и подличали теперь перед ним, как ему завидуют за его положение, в особенности о том, как все его сильно любили Петербурге.

Прасковья Федоровна выслушивала это и делала вид, что она верит этому, и не противоречила ни в чем, а делала только планы нового устройства жизни в том городе, куда они переезжали. И Иван Ильич с радостью видал, что эти планы были его планы, что они сходятся и что опять его запнувшаяся жизнь приобретает настоящий, свойственный ей, характер веселой приятности и приличия.

Иван Ильич приехал на короткое время. 10 сентября ему надо было принимать должность и, кроме того, нужно было время устроиться на новом месте, перевезти все из провинции, прикупить, призаказать, еще многое; одним словом, устроиться так, как это решено было в его уме, и почти что точно так же, как это решено было и в душе Прасковьи Федоровны.

И теперь, когда все устроилось так удачно, и когда они сходились с женою в цели и, кроме того, мало жили вместе, они так дружно сошлись, как не сходились с первых лет женатой своей жизни. Иван Ильич было думал увезти семью тотчас же, но настоящия сестры и зятя, вдруг сделавшимся особенно любезными и родственными к Ивану Ильичу и его семье, сделали то, что Иван Ильич уехал один.

Иван Ильич уехал, и веселое расположение духа, произведенное удачей и согласием с женой, одно усиливающее другое, все время не оставляло его. Нашлась квартира прелестная, то самое, о чем мечтали муж с женой. Широкие, высокие, в старом стиле приемные комнаты, удобный грандиозный кабинет, комнаты для жены и дочери, классная для сына – все как нарочно придумано для них. Иван Ильич
сам взялся за устройство, выбирал обои, подкупал мебель, особенно из старья, которому он придавал особенный комильфотный стиль, обивку, и все росло, росло и приходило к тому идеалу, который он составил себе. Когда он до половины устроился, его устройство превзошло его ожидание. Он понял тот комильфотный, изящный и не пошлый характер, который примет все, когда будет готово. Засыпая, он представлял себе залу, какую она будет. Глядя на гостиную, еще не оконченную, он уже видел камин, экран, этажерку и эти стульчики разбросанные, эти блюды и тарелки по стенам и бронзы, когда они все станут по местам. Его радовала мысль, как он поразит Пашу и Лизаньку, которые тоже имеют к этому вкус. Они никак не ожидали этого. В особенности ему удалось найти и купить дешево старые вещи, которые придавали всему особенно благородный характер. Он в письмах своих нарочно представлял все хуже, чем есть, чтобы поразить их. Все это так занимало его, что даже новая служба его, любящего это дело, занимала меньше, чем он ожидал. В заседаниях у него бывали минуты рассеянности: он задумывался о том, какие карнизы на гардины, прямые или подобранные. Он так был занят этим, что сам часто возился, переставлял даже мебель и сам перевешивал гардины. Раз он влез на лесенку, чтобы показать непонимающему обойщику, как он хочет драпировать, упал, но, как сильный и ловкий человек, удержался, только боком стукнулся об ручку рамы. Ушиб поболел, но скоро прошел – Иван Ильич чувствовал себя все это время особенно веселым и здоровым. Он писал: чувствую, что с меня соскочило лет пятнадцать. Он думал закончить в сентябре, но затянулось до половины октября. Зато было прелестно, – не только он говорил, но ему говорили все, кто видели.

В сущности же, было то самое, что бывает у всех не совсем богатых людей, но таких, которые хотят быть похожими на богатых и потому только похожи друг на друга: штофы, черное дерево, цветы, ковры и бронзы. Темное и блестящее, – все то, что все известного рода люди делают, чтобы быть похожими на всех людей известного рода. И у него было так похоже, что нельзя было даже обратить внимание; но ему все это казалось чем-то особенным. Когда он встретил своих на станции железной дороги, привез их в свою освещенную готовую квартиру и лакей в белом галстуке отпер дверь в убранную цветами переднюю, а потом они вошли в гостиную, кабинет и ахали от удовольствия, – он был очень счастлив, водил их везде, впивал в себя их похвалы и сиял от удовольствия. В этот же вечер, когда за чаем Прасковья Федоровна спросила его, между прочим, как он упал, он засмеялся и в лицах представил, как он полетел и испугал обойщика.

– Я недаром гимнаст. Другой бы ушибся, а я чуть ударился вот тут; когда тронешь – больно, но уже проходит; просто синяк.

И они начали жить в новом помещении, в котором, как всегда, когда хорошо обжились, недоставало только одной комнаты, и с новыми средствами, к которым, как всегда, только немножко – каких-нибудь пятьсот рублей – недоставало, и было очень хорошо. Особенно было хорошо первое время, когда еще не все было устроено и надо было еще устраивать: то купить, то заказать, то переставить, то наладить. Хоть и были некоторые несогласия между мужем и женой, но оба так были довольны итак много было дела, что все кончалось без больших ссор. Когда уже нечего было устраивать, стало немного скучно и чего-то недоставать, но тут уже сделались знакомства, привычки, и жизнь наполнилась.

Иван Ильич, проведши утро в суде, возвращался к обеду, и первое время расположение его духа было хорошо, хотя и страдало немного именно от помещения. (Всякое пятно на скатерти, на штофе, оборванный снурок гардины раздражали его: он столько труда положил на устройство, что ему больно было всякое разрушение.) Но вообще жизнь Ивана Ильича пошла так же, как, по его вере, должна была протекать жизнь: легко, приятно и прилично. Вставал он в девять, пил кофе, читал газету, потом надевал вицмундир и ехал в суд. Там уже был обял тот хомут, к которому он работал; он сразу попадал в него. Просили, справки в канцелярии, сама канцелярия, заседания – публичные и распорядительные. Во всем этом надо...
было уметь исключать все то сырое, жизненное, что всегда нарушает правильность течения служебных дел: надо не допускать с людьми никаких отношений, помимо служебных, и повод к отношениям должен быть только служебный и самые отношения только служебные. Например, приходит человек и желает узнать что-нибудь, Иван Ильич как человек недолжностной и не может иметь никаких отношений к такому человеку; но если есть отношение этого человека как к члену, такое, которое может быть выражено на бумаге с заголовком, - в пределах этих отношений Иван Ильич делает все, все решительно, что можно, и при этом соблюдает подобие человеческих дружелюбных отношений, то есть учтивость. Как только кончается отношение служебное, так кончается всякое другое. Этим умением отделять служебную сторону, не смешивая ее с своей настоящей жизнью, Иван Ильич владел в высшей степени и долгой практикой и талантом выработал его до такой степени, что он даже, как виртуоз, иногда позволял себе, как бы шутя, смешивать человеческое и служебное отношения. Он позволял это себе потому, что чувствовал в себе силу всегда, когда ему понадобится, опять выделить одно служебное и откинуть человеческое. Дело это шло у Ивана Ильича не только легко, приятно и прилично, но даже виртуозно. В промежутки он курил, пил чай, беседовал немножко о политике, немножко об общих делах, немножко о картах и больше всего о назначениях. И усталый, но с чувством виртуоза, отчетливо отделявшего свою партию, одну из первых скрипок в оркестре, возвращался домой. Дома дочь с матерью куда-нибудь ездили или у них был кто-нибудь; сын был в гимназии, готовил уроки с репетиторами и учился исправно тому, чему учат в гимназии. Все было хорошо. После обеда, если не было гостей, Иван Ильич читал иногда книгу, про которую много говорят, и вечером садился за дела, то есть читал бумаги, справлялся с законами, - сличал показания и подводил под законы. Ему это было ни скучно, ни весело. Скучно было, когда можно было играть в винт; но если не было винта - то это было все-таки лучше, чем сидеть одному или с женой. Удовольствия же Ивана Ильича были обеды маленькие, на которые он звал важных по светскому положению дам и мужчин, и такое времяпровождение с ними, которое было бы похоже на обыкновенное препровождение времени таких людей, так же как гостиная его была похожа на все гостиные.

Один раз у них был даже вечер, танцевали. И Ивану Ильичу было весело, и все было хорошо, только вышла большая ссора с женой из-за тортов и конфет: у Прасковьи Федоровны был свой план, а Иван Ильич настоял на том, чтобы взять все у дорогого кондитера, и взял много тортов, и ссора была за то, что торты остались, а счет кондитера был в сорок пять рублей. Ссора была большая и неприятная, так что Прасковья Федоровна сказала ему: "Дурак, кисляй". А он схватил себя за голову и в сердцах что-то упомянул о разводе. Но самый вечер был веселый. Было лучшее общество, и Иван Ильич танцевал с княгинею Труфоновой, сестрою той, которая известна учреждением общества "Унеси ты мое горе".

Радости служебные были радости самолюбия; радости общественные были радости тщеславия; но настоящие радости Ивана Ильича были радости игры в винт. Он признавался, что после всего, после каких бы то ни было событий, нерадостных в его жизни, радость, которая, как свеча, горела перед всеми другими, - это сесть с хорошими игроками и некрикунами-партнерами в винт, и непременно вчетвером (впятером уж очень больно выходить, хотя и притворяешься, что я очень люблю), и вести умную, серьезную игру (когда карты идут), потом поужинать и выпить стакан вина. А спать после винта, особенно когда в маленьком выигрыше (большой - неприятно), Иван Ильич ложился в особенно хорошем расположении духа.

Так они жили. Круг общества составлялся у них самый лучший, здали и важные люди, и молодые люди.

Во взгляде на круг своих знакомых муж, жена и дочь были совершенно согласны и, не ссоряясь, одинаково отпирали от себя и освобождались от всяких разных приятелей и родственников, замарашек, которые разлетились к ним с нежностями в гостиную с японскими блюдами по стенам. Скоро эти друзья-замарашки перестали разлетаться, и у Головиных осталось общество одно самое лучшее. Молодые люди
ухаживали за Лизанькой, и Петрищев, сын Дмитрия Ивановича Петрищева и единственный наследник его состояния, судебный следователь, стал ухаживать за Лизой, так что Иван Ильич уже поговаривал об этом с Прасковьей Федоровной: не свести ли их кататься на тройках или устроить спектакль. Так они жили. И все шло так, не изменяясь, и все было очень хорошо.

IV

Все были здоровы. Нельзя было назвать нездоровьем то, что Иван Ильич говорил иногда, что у него странный вкус во рту и что-то неловко в левой стороне живота.

Но случилось, что неловкость эта стала увеличиваться и переходить не в боль еще, но в сознание тяжести постоянной в боку и в дурное расположение духа. Дурное расположение духа это, все усиливаясь и усиливаясь, стало портить установившуюся было в семействе Головыных приятность легкой и приличной жизни. Муж с женой стали чаще и чаще ссориться, и скоро отпала легкость и приятность, и с трудом удерживалось одно приличие. Сцены опять стали чаще. Опять остались одни островки, и тех мало, на которых муж с женой могли сходиться без взрыва.

И Прасковья Федоровна теперь не без основания говорила, что у ее мужа тяжелый характер. С свойственной ей привычкой преувеличивать она говорила, что всегда и был такой ужасный характер, что надообно ее доброту, чтобы переносить это двадцать лет. Правда было то, что ссоры теперь начались от него. Начинались его придирки всегда перед самым обедом и часто, именно когда он начинал есть, за супом. То он замечал, что что-нибудь из посуды испорчено, то кушанье не такое, то сын положил локоть на стол, то прическа дочери. И во всем он обвинял Прасковью Федоровну. Прасковья Федоровна сначала возражала и говорила ему неприятности, но он раза два во время начала обеда приходил в такое бешенство, что она поняла, что это болезненное состояние, которое вызывается в нем принятием пищи, и смирila себя; уже не возражала, а только торопила обедать. Смирение свое Прасковья Федоровна поставила себе в великую заслугу. Решив, что муж ее имеет ужасный характер и сделал несчастье ее жизни, она стала жалеть себя. И чем больше она жалела себя, тем больше ненавидела мужа. Она стала желать, чтоб он умер, но не могла этого желать, потому что тогда не было бы жалованья. И это еще более раздражало ее против него. Она считала себя страшно несчастной именно тем, что даже смерть его не могла спасти ее, и она раздражалась, скрывала это, и это скрытое раздражение ее усиливало его раздражение.

После одной сцены, в которой Иван Ильич был особенно несправедлив и после которой он и при объяснении сказал, что он точно раздражителен, но что это от болезни, она сказала ему, что если он болен, то надо лечиться, и потребовала от него, чтобы он поехал к знаменитому врачу.

Он поехал. Все было, как он ожидал; все было так, как всегда делается. И ожидание, и важность напускная, докторская, ему знакомая, та самая, которую он знал в себе в суде, и постукивание, и выслушивание, и вопросы, требующие определенные вперед и, очевидно, ненужные ответы, и значительный вид, который внушал, что вы, мол, только подвергнитесь нам, а мы все устроим, — у нас известно и несомненно, как все устроить, все одним манером для всякого человека, какого хотите. Все было точно так же, как в суде. Как он в суде делал вид над подсудимыми, так точно над ним знаменитый доктор делал тоже вид.

Доктор говорил: то-то и то-то указывает, что у вас внутри то-то и то-то; но если это не подтвердится по исследованиям того-то и того-то, то у вас надо предположить то-то и то-то. Если же предположить то-то, тогда... и т. д. Для Ивана Ильича был важен только один вопрос: опасно ли его положение или нет? Но доктор игнорировал этот неуместный вопрос. С точки зрения доктора, вопрос этот был праздный.
и не подлежал обсуждению; существовало только взвешивание вероятностей – блуждающей почки, хронического катара и болезней слепой кишки. Не было вопроса о жизни Ивана Ильича, а был спор между блуждающей почкой и слепой кишкой. И спор этот на глазах Ивана Ильича доктор блестящим образом разрешил в пользу слепой кишки, сделав оговорку о том, что исследование мочи может дать новые улики и что тогда дело будет пересмотрено. Все это было точь-в-точь то же, что делал тысячу раз сам Иван Ильич над подсудимыми таким блестящим манером. Так же блестяще сделал свое резюме доктор и торжествующее, весело даже, взглядыв сверху очков на подсудимого. Из резюме доктора Иван Ильич вывел то заключение, что плохо, а что ему, доктору, да, пожалуй, и всем все равно, а ему плохо. И это заключение болезненно поразило Ивана Ильича, вызвав в нем чувство большой жалости к себе и большой злобы на этого равнодушного к такому важному вопросу доктора.

Но он ничего не сказал, а встал, положил деньги на стол и, вздохнув, сказал:

- Мы, больные, вероятно, часто делаем вам неуместные вопросы, – сказал он. – Вообще, это опасная болезнь или нет?..

Доктор строго взглянул на него одним глазом через очки, как будто говоря: подсудимый, если вы не будете оставаться в пределах ставимых вам вопросов, я буду принужден сделать распоряжение об удалении вас из зала заседания.

- Я уже сказал вам то, что считал нужным и удобным, – сказал доктор. – Дальнейшее покажет исследование.

– И доктор поклонился.

Иван Ильич вышел медленно, уныло сел в сани и поехал домой. Всю дорогу он не переставая перебирал все, что говорил доктор, стараясь все эти запутанные, неясные научные слова перевести на простой язык и прочесть в них ответ на вопрос: плохо – очень ли плохо мне, или еще ничего? И ему казалось, что смысл всего сказанного доктором был тот, что очень плохо. Все грустно показалось Ивану Ильичу на улицах. Извозчики были грустны, дома грустны, прохожие, лавки грустны. Боль же эта, глухая, ноющая, ни на секунду не перестающая, казалось, в связи с неясными речами доктора получала другое, более серьезное значение. Иван Ильич с новым тяжелым чувством теперь прислушивался к ней.

Он приехал домой и стал рассказывать жене. Жена выслушала, но в середине рассказа его вошла дочь в шляпке: она собиралась с матерью ехать. Она с усилием присела послушать эту скуку, но долго не выдержала, и мать не дослушала.

- Ну, я очень рада, – сказала жена, – так теперь ты, смотри ж, принимай аккуратно лекарство. Дай рецепт, я пошлю Герасима в аптеку. – И она пошла одеваться.

Он не переводил дыханья, пока она была в комнате, и тяжело вздохнул, когда она вышла.

- Ну что ж, – сказал он. – Может быть, и точно ничего еще.

Он стал принимать лекарства, исполнять предписания доктора, которые изменились по случаю исследования мочи. Но тут как раз так случилось, что в этом исследовании и в том, что должно было последовать за ним, вышла какая-то путаница. До самого доктора нельзя было добраться, а выходило, что делалось не то, что говорил ему доктор. Или он забыл, или соврал, или скрывал от него что-нибудь.

Но Иван Ильич все-таки точно стал исполнять предписания и в исполнении этом нашел утешение на первое время.
Главным занятием Ивана Ильича со времени посещения доктора стало точное исполнение предписаний доктора относительно гигиены и принимания лекарств и прислушиванье к своей боли, ко всем своим отправлениям организма. Главными интересами Ивана Ильича стали людские болезни и людское здоровье. Когда при нем говорили о больных, об умерших, о выздоровевших, особенно о такой болезни, которая походила на его, он, стараясь скрыть свое волнение, прислушивался, расспрашивал и делал применение к своей болезни.

Боль не уменьшалась; но Иван Ильич делал над собой усилия, чтобы заставлять себя думать, что ему лучше. И он мог обманывать себя, пока ничего не волновало его. Но как только случалась неприятность с женой, неудача в службе, дурные карты в винте, так сейчас он чувствовал всю силу своей болезни; бывало, он переносил эти неудачи, ожидая, что вот-вот исправлю плохое, поборю, дождусь успеха, большого шлема. Теперь же всякая неудача подкашивала его и ввергала в отчаяние. Он говорил себе: вот только что я стал поправляться и лекарство начинало уже действовать, и вот это проклятое несчастье или неприятность... И он злился на несчастье или на людей, делавших ему неприятности и убивающих его, и чувствовал, как эта злоба убивает его; но не мог воздержаться от нее. Казалось бы, ему должно было быть ясно, что это озлобление на обстоятельства и людей усиливает его болезнь и что поэтому ему надо не обращать внимания на неприятные случайности; но он делал совершенно обратное рассуждение: он говорил, что ему нужно спокойствие, следил за всем, чтобы не допустить этого спокойствия, и при всяком малейшем нарушении приходил в раздражение. Ухудшило его положение то, что он читал медицинские книги и советовался с докторами. Ухудшение шло так равномерно, что он мог себя обманывать, сравнивая один день с другим, – разницы было мало. Но когда он советовался с докторами, тогда ему казалось, что идет к худшему и очень быстро даже. И несмотря на это, он постоянно советовался с докторами.

В этот месяц он побывал у другой знаменитости: другая знаменитость сказала почти то же, что и первая, но иначе поставила вопросы. И совет с этой знаменитостью только угубил сомнение и страх Ивана Ильича. Приятель его приятеля – доктор очень хороший – тот еще совсем иначе определил болезнь и, несмотря на то, что обещал выздоровление, своими вопросами и предположениями еще больше спутал Ивана Ильича и усилил его сомнение. Гомеопат – еще иначе определил болезнь и дал лекарство, и Иван Ильич, тайно от всех, принимал его на неделю. Но после недели не почувствовал облегчения и потерял доверие к прежним лечениям и к этому, пришел в еще большее уныние. Раз знакомая дама рассказывала про исцеление иконами. Иван Ильич застал себя на том, что он внимательно прислушивался и поверял действительность факта. Этот случай испугал его. “Неужели я так умственно ослабел? – сказал он себе. – Пустяки! Все вздор, не надо поддаваться мнительности, а, избавя одного врача, строго держаться его лечения. Так и буду делать. Теперь конечно. Не буду думать и до лета строго буду исполнять лечение. А там видно будет. Теперь конец этим колебаниям!..” Легко было сказать это, но невозможно исполнить. Боль в боку все тормозила, все как будто усиливалась, становилась постоянной, вкус во рту становился все страннее, ему казалось, что пахло чем-то овальным у него изо рта, и аппетит и силы все слабели. Нельзя было себя обманывать: что-то страшное, новое и такое значительное, чего значительнее никогда в жизни не было с Иваном Ильичем, совершалось в нем. И он один знал про это, все же окружающие не понимали или не хотели понимать и думали, что все на свете идет по-прежнему. Это-то более всего мутило Ивана Ильича. Домашние – главное жена и дочь, которые были в самом разгаре выездов, – он, видел, ничего не понимали, досадовали на то, что он такой невезелый и требовательный, как будто он был виноват в этом. Хотя они и старались скрывать это, он видел, что он им помеха, но что жена выработала себе известное отношение к его болезни и держалась его независимо от того, что он говорил и делал. Отношение это было такое:

– Вы знаете, – говорила она знакомым, – Иван Ильич не может, как все добрые люди, строго исполнить предписанное лечение. Нынеш он примет капли и кушает, что велено, и вовремя ляжет; завтра вдруг, если я просмотрю, забудет принять, скушает осетрины (а ему не велено), да и засидится за винтом до часа.
– А вчера с Шебеком.
– Все равно я не мог спать от боли...
– Да там уже отчего бы то ни было, только так ты никогда не выздоровеешь и мучаешь нас.

Внешнее, высказываемое другим и ему самому, отношение Прасковьи Федоровны было такое к болезни мужа, что в болезни этой виноват Иван Ильич и вся болезнь эта есть новая неприятность, которую он делает жене. Иван Ильич чувствовал, что это выходило у нее невольно, но от этого ему не легче было.

В суде Иван Ильич замечал или думал, что замечает, то же странное к себе отношение: то ему казалось, что к нему приглядываются, как к человеку, имеющему скоро опростать место; то вдруг его приятели начинали дружески подшучивать над его мнительностью, как будто то, что-то ужасное и страшное, неслыханное, что завелось в нем и не переставая сосет его и неудержимо влечет куда-то, есть самый приятный предмет для шутки. Особенно Шварц своей игривостью, жизненностью и комильфотностью, напоминавшим Ивану Ильичу его самого за десять лет назад, раздражал его.

Приходили друзья составить партию, садились. Сдавали, разминались новые карты, складывались бубны к бубнам, их семь. Партнер сказал: без козырей, – и поддержал две бубны. Чего ж еще? Весело, бодро должно быть – шлем. И вдруг Иван Ильич чувствует эту сосущую боль, этот вкус во рту, и ему что-то дикое представляется в том, что он при этом может радоваться шлему.

Он глядит на Михаила Михайловича, партнера, как он бьет по столу сангвинической рукой и учтиво и снисходительно удерживается от захватывания взяток, а подвигает их к Ивану Ильичу, чтобы доставить ему удовольствие собирать их, не утруждая себя, не протягивая далеко руку. “Что ж он думает, что я так слаб, что не могу протянуть далеко руку”, – думает Иван Ильич, забывает козырей и козыряет лишний раз по своим и проигрывает шлем без трех, и что ужаснее всего – это то, что он видит, как страдает Михаил Михайлович, а ему все равно. И ужасно думать, отчего ему все равно.

Все видят, что ему тяжело, и говорят ему: “Мы можем прекратить, если вы устали. Вы отдохните”. Отдохнуть? Нет, он нисколько не устал, они доигрывают роббер. Все мрачны и молчаливы. Иван Ильич чувствует, что он напустил на них эту мрачность и не может ее рассеять. Они ужинают и разъезжаются, и Иван Ильич остается один с сознанием того, что его жизнь отравлена для него и отравляет жизнь других и что отрава эта не ослабевает, а все больше и больше проникает все существо его.

И с сознанием этим, да еще с болью физической, да еще с ужасом надо было ложиться в постель и часто не спать от боли большую часть ночи. А наутро надо было опять вставать, одеваться, ехать в суд, говорить, писать, а если и не ехать, дома быть с теми же двадцатью четырьмя часами в сутках, из которых каждый был мучением. И жить так на краю погибели надо было одному, без одного человека, который бы понял и пожалел его.

V

Так шло месяц и два. Перед Новым годом приехал в их город его шурин и остановился у них. Иван Ильич был в суде. Прасковья Федоровна ездила за покупками. Войдя к себе в кабинет, он застал там шурина, здорового сангвиника, самого раскладывающего чемодан. Он поднял голову на шаги Ивана Ильича и
поглядел на него секунду молча. Этот взгляд все открыл Ивану Ильичу. Шурин раскрыл рот, чтоб ахнуть, и удержался. Это движение подтвердило все.

– Что, переменился?
– Да... есть перемена.

И сколько Иван Ильич ни наводил после шурина на разговор о его внешнем виде, шурин отмалчивался. Приехала Прасковья Федоровна, шурин пошел к ней. Иван Ильич запер дверь на ключ и стал смотреть в зеркало – прямо, потом сбоку. Взял свой портрет с женой и сличил портрет с тем, что он видел в зеркале. Перемена была огромная. Потом он оголил руки до локтя, посмотрел, опустил рукава, сел на оттоманку и стал чернее ночи.

“Не надо, не надо”, – сказал он себе, вскочил, подошел к столу, открыл дело, стал читать его, но не мог. Он отпер дверь, пошел в залу. Дверь в гостиную была затворена. Он подошел к ней на цыпочках и стал слушать.

– Нет, ты преувеличиваешь, – говорила Прасковья Федоровна.
– Как преувеличиваю? Тебе не видно – он мертвый человек, посмотри его глаза. Нет света. Да что у него?
– Никто не знает. Николаев (это был другой доктор) сказал что-то, но я не знаю. Лещетицкий (это был знаменитый доктор) сказал напротив...

Иван Ильич отошел, пошел к себе, лег и стал думать: “Почка, блуждающая почка”. Он вспомнил все то, что ему говорили доктора, как она оторвалась и как блуждает. И он усилием воображения старался поймать эту почку и остановить, укрепить ее: так мало нужно, казалось ему. “Нет, поеду еще к Петру Ивановичу”. (Это был тот приятель, у которого был приятель доктор.) Он позвонил, велел заложить лошадь и собрался ехать.

– Куда ты, Jean? – спросила жена с особенно грустным и непривычно добрым выражением.

Это непривычное доброе озлобило его. Он мрачно посмотрел на нее.

– Мне надо к Петру Ивановичу.

Он поехал к приятелю, у которого был приятель доктор. И с ним к доктору. Он застал его и долго беседовал с ним.

Рассматривая анатомически и физиологически подробности о том, что, по мнению доктора, происходило в нем, он все понял.

Была одна штучка, маленькая штучка в слепой кишке. Все это могло поправиться. Усилить энергию одного органа, ослабить деятельность другого, произойдет всасывание, и все поправится. Он немного опоздал к обеду. Пообедал, весело поговорил, но долго не мог уйти к себе заниматься. Наконец он пошел в кабинет и тотчас же сел за работу. Он читал дела, работал, но сознание того, что у него есть отложенное важное задушевное дело, которым он займетесь по окончании, не оставляло его. Когда он кончил дела, он вспомнил, что это задушевное дело были мысли о слепой кишке. Но он не предался им, он пошел в гостиную к чаю. Были гости, говорили и играли на фортепиано, пели; был судебный следователь, желанный жених у дочери. Иван Ильич провел вечер, по замечанию Прасковы Федоровны, веселее других, но он не забывал ни на минуту, что у него есть отложенные важные мысли о слепой кишке. В
одиннадцать часов он простился и пошел к себе. Он спал один со времени своей болезни, в маленькой комнатке у кабинета. Он пошел, разделся и взял роман Золя, но не читал его, а думал. И в его воображении происходило то желанное исправление слепой кишки. Всасывалось, выбрасывалось, восстанавливалась правильная деятельность. “Да, это все так, – сказал он себе. – Только надо помогать природе”. Он вспомнил о лекарствах, приподнялся, принял его, лег на спину, прислушиваясь к тому, как благотворно действует лекарство и как оно уничтожает боль. “Только равномерно принимать и избегать вредных влияний; я уже теперь чувствую несколько лучше, гоараздо лучше”. Он стал щупать бок, – на ощупь не больно. “Да, я не чувствую, право, уже гораздо лучше”. Он потушил свечу и лег на бок... Слепая кишка исправляется, всасывается. Вдруг он почувствовал знакомую старую, глухую, ноющую боль, упорную, тихую, серьезную. Во рту та же знакомая гадость. Засосало сердце, помутнело в голове. “Боже мой, Боже мой! – проговорил он. – Опять, опять, и никогда не перестанет”. И вдруг ему дело представлено совсем с другой стороны. “Слепая кишка? Почка, – сказал он себе. – Не в слепой кишке, не в почке дело, а в жизни и... смерти. Да, жизнь была и вот уходит, уходит, и я не могу удержать ее. Да. Зачем обманывать себя? Разве не очевидно всем, кроме меня, что я умираю, и вопрос только в числе недель, дней – сейчас, может быть. То свет был, а теперь мрак. То я здесь был, а теперь туда! Куда?” Его обдало холодом, дыхание остановилось. Он слышал только удары сердца.

“Меня не будет, так что же будет? Ничего не будет. Так где же я буду, когда меня не будет? Неужели смерть? Нет, не хочу”. Он вскохнул, хотел зажечь свечку, пошарили дрожащими руками, уронил свечу с подсвечником на пол и опять повалился назад, на подушку. “Зачем? Все равно, – говорил он себе, открытыми глазами глядя в темноту. – Смерть, Да, смерть. И они никто не знают, и не хотят знать, и не жалеют. Они играют. (Он слышал дальние, из-за двери, раскат голоса и ритурали.) Им все равно, а они также умрут. Дурачины. Мне раньше, а им после; и им то же будет. А они радуются. Скоты!” Злоба душила его. И ему стало мучительно, невыносимо тяжело. Не может же быть, чтоб все всегда были обречены на этот ужасный страх. Он поднялся.

“Что-нибудь не так; надо успокоиться, надо обдумать все сначала”. И вот он начал обдумывать. “Да, начало болезни. Стукнулся боком, и все такой же я был, и нынче и завтра; немного ныло, потом больше, потом доктора, потом унылость, тоска, опять доктора; а я все шел ближе, ближе к пропасти. Сил меньше. Ближе, ближе. И вот я исчез, у меня света в глазах нет. И смерть, а я думаю о кишке. Думаю о том, чтобы починить кишку, а это смерть. Неужели смерть?” Опять на него нашел ужас, он запыхался, нагнулся, стал искать спичек, надавил локтем на тумбочку. Она мешала ему и делала больно, он разозлился на нее, надавил с досадой сильнее и повалил тумбочку. И в отчаянии задыхаясь, он повалился на спину, ожидая сейчас же смерти.

Гости уезжали в это время. Прасковья Федоровна провожала их. Она услышала падение и вошла.

– Что ты?
– Ничего. Уронил нечаянно.

Она вышла, принесла свечу. Он лежал, тяжело и быстро-быстро дыша, как человек, который пробежал версту, остановившимися глазами глядя на нее.

– Что ты, Jean?
– Ниче...го. У...ро...нил. – “Что же говорить. Она не поймет”, – думал он.

Она точно не поняла. Она подняла, зажгла ему свечу и поспешно ушла: ей надо было проводить гостью.
Когда она вернулась, он так же лежал навзничь, глядя вверх.
– Что тебе, или хуже?
– Да.
Она покачала головой, посидела. – Знаешь, Jean, я думаю, не пригласить ли Лещетицкого на дом.
Это значит знаменитого доктора пригласить и не пожалеть денег. Он ядовито улыбнулся и сказал; “Нет”. Она посидела, подошла и поцеловала его в лоб.
Он ненавидел ее всеми силами души в то время, как она целовала его, и делал усилия, чтобы не оттолкнуть ее.
– Прощай. Бог даст, заснешь.
– Да.

VI

Иван Ильич видел, что он умирает, и был в постоянном отчаянии.

В глубине души Иван Ильич знал, что он умирает, но он не только не привык к этому, но просто не понимал, никак не мог понять этого.

Тот пример силлогизма, которому он учился в логике Кизеветера

: Кай – человек, люди смертны, потому Кай смертен, казался ему во всю его жизнь правильным только по отношению к Каю, но никак не к нему. То был Кай-человек, вообще человек, и это было совершенно справедливо; но он был не Кай и не вообще человек, а он всегда был совсем, совсем особенное от всех других существа; он был Ваня с мамой, папа, с Митьей и Володей, с игрушками, кучером, с няней, потом с Катенькой, со всеми радостями, горестями, с восторгами детства, юности, молодости. Разве для Кая был тот запах кожаного полосками мячика, который так любил Ваня! Разве Кай целовал так руку матери и разве для Кая так шуршал шелк складок платья матери? Разве он бунтовал за пирожки в Правоведении? Разве Кай так был влюблен? Разве Кай так мог вести заседание?

И Кай точно смертен, и ему правильнее умирать; но мне, Ване, Ивану Ильичу, со всеми моими чувствами, мыслями, – мне это другое дело. И не может быть, чтобы мне следовало умирать. Это было бы слишком ужасно.

Так чувствовалось ему.
“Если б и мне умирать, как Кая, то я так бы и знал это, так б и говорил мне внутренний голос, но ничего подобного не было во мне; и я и все мои друзья – мы понимали, что это совсем не так, как с Каем. А теперь вот что! – говорил он себе. – Не может быть. Не может быть, а есть. Как же это? Как понять это?”

И он не мог понять и старался отогнать эту мысль, как ложную, неправильную, болезненную, и вытеснить ее другими, правильными, здоровыми мыслями. Но мысль эта, не только мысль, но как будто действительность, приходила опять и становилась перед ним.
И он призывал по очереди на место этой мысли другие мысли, в надежде найти в них опору. Он пытался возвратиться к прежним ходам мысли, которые заслоняли для него прежде мыслей о смерти. Но – странное дело – все то, что прежде заслоняло, скрывало, уничтожало сознание смерти, теперь уже не могло производить этого действия. Последнее время Иван Ильич большей частью проводил в этих попытках восстановить прежние ходы чувства, заслонявшего смерть. То он говорил себе: “Займусь службой, ведь я жил же ею”. И он шел в суд, отгоняя от себя всякие сомнения; вступал в разговоры с товарищами и садился, по старой привычке рассеянно, задумчивым взглядом окидывая толпу и обеими исхудавшими руками опираясь на ручки дубового кресла, так же, как обыкновенно, перегибаясь к товарищу, подвигая делу, перешептываясь, и потом, вдруг вскидывая глаза и прямо усаживаясь, произносил известные слова и начинал дело. Но вдруг в середине боль в боку, не обращая никакого внимания на период развития дела, начинала свое сосущее дело. Иван Ильич прислушивался, отгоняя мысль о ней, но она продолжала свое, и она приходила и становилась прямо перед ним и смотрела на него, и он столбенел, огонь тух в глазах, и он начал опять спрашивать себя: “Неужели только она правда?” И товарищи и подчиненные с удивлением и огорчением видели, что он, такой блестящий, тонкий судья, путался, делал ошибки. Он встряхивался, старался опомниться и кое-как доводил до конца заседание и возвращался домой с грустным сознанием, что не может по-старому судейское его дело скрыть от него то, что он хотел скрыть; что судейским делом он не может избавиться от нее. И что было хуже всего – это то, что она отвлекала его к себе не затем, чтобы он делал что-нибудь, а только для того, чтобы он смотрел на нее, прямо ей в глаза, смотрел на нее и, ничего не делая, невыразимо мучился.

И, спасаясь от этого состояния, Иван Ильич искал утешения, других ширм, и другие ширмы являлись и на короткое время как будто спасали его, но тотчас же разрушились, сколько просвечивали, как будто она проникала через все, и ничто не могло заслонить ее.

Бывало, в это последнее время он входил в гостиную, убранную им, – в ту гостиную, где он упал, для которой он, – как ему ядовито смешно было думать, – для устройства которой он пожертвовал жизнью, потому что он знал, что болезнь его началась с этого ушиба, – он входил и видел, что на лакированном столе был рубец, прорезанный чем-то. Он искал причину: и находил ее в бронзовом украшении альбома, отогнутом на краю. Он брал альбом, дорогой, им составленный с любовью, подосадовал на неряшливость дочери и ее друзей, – то разорвано, то карточки перевернуты. Он приводил это старательно в порядок, загибал опять украшение.

Потом ему приходила мысль весь этот etablissement *[сооружение] с альбомами переместить в другой угол, к цветам. Он звал лакея: или дочь, или жена приходили на помощь; они не соглашались, противоречили, он спорил, сердился; но все было хорошо, потому что он не помнил о ней, ее не видно было.

Но вот жена сказала, когда он сам передвигал: “Позволь, люди сделают, ты опять себе сделаешь вред”, и вдруг она мелькнула через шторы, он увидал ее. Она мелькнула, он еще надеется, что она скроется, но невольно он прислушался к боку, – там сидит все то же, все так же ноет, и он уже не может забыть, и она явственно глядит на него из-за цветов. К чему все?

“И правда, что здесь, на этой гардине, я, как на штурме, потерял жизнь. Неужели? Как ужасно и как глупо! Это не может быть! Не может быть, но есть”.

Он шел в кабинет, ложился и оставался опять один с нею, с глазу на глаз с нею, а делать с нею нечего. Только смотреть на нее и холодеть.
Как это сделалось на третьем месяце болезни Ивана Ильича, нельзя было сказать, потому что это делалось шаг за шагом, незаметно, но сделалось то, что и жена, и дочь, и сын его, и прислуга, и знакомые, и доктора, и, главное, он сам – знали, что весь интерес в нем для других состоит только в том, скоро ли, наконец, он опростает место, освободит живых от стеснения, производимого его присутствием, и сам освободится от своих страданий.

Он спал меньше и меньше; ему давали опиум и начали прыскать морфином. Но эта не облегчала его. Тупая тоска, которую он испытывал в полуусыпленном состоянии, сначала только облегчала его как что-то новое, но потом она стала так же или еще более мучительна, чем откровенная боль.

Ему готовили особенные кушанья по предписанию врачей; но кушанья эти все были для него безвкуснее и безвкуснее, отвратительнее и отвратительнее.

Для испражнений его тоже были сделаны особые приспособления, и всякий раз это было мученье. Мученье от нечистоты, неприличия и запаха, от сознания того, что в этом должен участвовать другой человек.

Но в этом самом неприятном деле и явились утешение Ивану Ильичу. Приходил всегда выносить за ним буфетный мужик Герасим.

Герасим был чистый, свежий, раздобревший на городских харчах молодой мужик. Всегда веселый, ясный. Сначала вид этого, всегда чисто, по-русски одетого человека, делавшего это противное дело, смущал Ивана Ильича.

Один раз он, встав с судна и не в силах поднять панталоны, повалился на мягкое кресло и с ужасом смотрел на свои обнаженные, с резко обозначенными мускулами, бессильные ляжки.

Вошел в толстых сапогах, распространяя вокруг себя приятный запах детя от сапог и свежести зимнего воздуха, легкой сильной поступью Герасим, в посконном чистом фартуке и чистой ситцевой рубахе, с засученными на голых, сильных, молодых руках рукавами, и, не глядя на Ивана Ильича, – очевидно, сдерживая, чтобы не оскорбить больного, радость жизни, сияющую на его лице, – подошел к судну.

– Герасим, – слабо сказал Иван Ильич.

Герасим вздрогнул, очевидно, испугавшись, не промахнулся ли он в чем, и быстрым движением повернул к больному свое свежее, доброе, простое, молодое лицо, только что начинавшее обрастать бородой.

– Что изволите?

– Тебе, я думаю, неприятно это. Ты извини меня. Я не могу.

– Помилуйте-с. – И Герасим блеснул глазами и оскалил свои молодые белые зубы. – Отчего же не потрудиться? Ваше дело большое.

И он ловкими, сильными руками сделал свое привычное дело и вышел, легко ступая. И через пять минут, так же легко ступая, вернулся.

Иван Ильич все так же сидел в кресле.
— Гerasим, — сказал он, когда тот поставил чистое, обмытое судно, — пожалуйста, помоги мне, поди сюда. — Гerasим подошел. — Подними меня. Мне тяжело одному, а Дмитрия я услал.

Гerasим подошел; сильными руками, так же, как он легко ступал, обнял, ловко, мягко поднял и поддержал, другой рукой подтянул панталоны и хотел посадить. Но Иван Ильич попросил его свести его на диван. Гerasим, без усилия и как будто не нажимая, свел его, почти неся, к дивану и посадил.

— Спасибо. Как ты ловко, хорошо... все делаешь.

Гerasим опять улыбнулся и хотел уйти. Но Ивану Ильичу так хорошо было с ним, что не хотелось отпускать.

— Вот что: подвинь мне, пожалуйста, стул этот. Нет, вот этот, под ноги. Мне легче, когда у меня ноги выше.

Гerasим принес стул, поставил не стукнув, враз опустил его ровно до полу и поднял ноги Ивана Ильича на стул; Ивану Ильичу показалось, что ему легче стало в то время, как Гerasим высоко поднимал его ноги.

— Мне лучше, когда ноги у меня выше, — сказал Иван Ильич. — Подложи мне вон ту подушку.

Гerasим сделал это. Опять поднял ноги и положил. Опять Ивану Ильичу стало лучше, пока Гerasим держал его ноги. Когда он опустил их, ему показалось хуже.

— Гerasим, — сказал он ему, — ты теперь занят?

— Никак нет-с, — сказал Гerasим, выучившийся у городских людей говорить с господами.

— Тебе что делать надо еще?

— Да мне что ж делать? Все переделал, только дров наколоть на завтра.

— Так поддержи мне так ноги повыше, можешь?

— Отчего же, можно. — Гerasим поднял ноги выше, и Ивану Ильичу показалось, что в этом положении он совсем не чувствует боли.

— А дрова-то как же?

— Не извольте беспокоиться. Мы успеем.

Иван Ильич велел Гerasиму сесть и держать ноги и поговорил с ним. И — странное дело — ему казалось, что ему лучше, пока Гerasим держал его ноги.

С тех пор Иван Ильич стал иногда звать Гerasима и заставлял его держать себе на плечах ноги и любил говорить с ним. Гerasим делал это легко, охотно, просто и с добротой, которая умиляла Ивана Ильича. Здоровье, сила, бодрость жизни во всех других людях оскорбляла Ивана Ильича; только сила и бодрость жизни Гerasима не огорчала, а успокаивала Ивана Ильича.

Главное мучение Ивана Ильича была ложь, — та, всеми почему-то признанная ложь, что он только болен, а не умирает, и что ему надо только быть спокойным и лечиться, и тогда что-то выйдет очень хорошее. Он же знал, что, что бы ни делали, ничего не выйдет, кроме еще более мучительных страданий и смерти. И его мутила эта ложь, мутило то, что не хотели признаться в том, что все знали и он знал, а хотели лгать над ним по случаю ужасного его положения и хотели и заставляли его самого принимать участие в этой лжи. Ложь, ложь эта, совершаемая над ним накануне его смерти, ложь, должевствующая низвести
этот страшный торжественный акт его смерти до уровня всех их визитов, гастрономия, осетра к обеду... была ужасно мучительна для Ивана Ильича. И – странно – он много раз, когда они над ним проделывали свои штуки, был на волоске от того, чтобы закричать им: перестаньте врать, и вы знаете и я знаю, что я умираю, так перестаньте, по крайней мере, врать. Но никогда он не имел духа сделать этого. Страшный, ужасный акт его умирания, он видел, всеми окружающими его был низведен на степень случайной неприятности, отчасти неприличия (вроде того, как обходятся с человеком, который, войдя в гостиную, распространяют от себя дурной запах), тем самым “приличием”, которому он служил всю свою жизнь; он видел, что никто не пожалеет его, потому что никто не хочет даже понимать его положения. Один только Герасим понимал это положение и жалел его. И потому Ивану Ильичу хорошо было только с Герасимом. Ему хорошо было, когда Герасим, иногда целые ночи напролет, держал его ноги и не хотел уходить спать, говоря: “Вы не извольте беспокоиться, Иван Ильич, высплюсь еще”; или когда он вдруг, переходя на “ты”, прибавлял: “Кабы ты не больной, а то отчего же не послужить?” Один Герасим не лгал, по всему видно было, что он один понимал, в чем дело, и не считал нужным скрывать этого, и просто жалел исчахшего, слабого барина. Он даже раз прямо сказал, когда Иван Ильич отсылал его:

– Все умирать будем. Отчего же не потрудиться? – сказал он, выражая этим то, что он не тяготится своим трудом именно потому, что несет его для умирающего человека и надеется, что и для него кто-нибудь в его время понесет тот же труд.

Кроме этой лжи, или вследствие ее, мучительнее всего было для Ивана Ильича то, что никто не жалел его так, как ему хотелось, чтобы его жалели: Ивану Ильичу в иные минуты, после долгих страданий, больше всего хотелось, как ему ни совестно бы было признаться в этом, – хотелось того, чтобы его, как дитя больное, пожалел бы кто-нибудь. Ему хотелось, чтоб его приласкали, поглаживали, поцеловали, как ласкают и утешают детей. Он знал, что он важный член, что у него седеющая борода и что потому это невозможно; но ему все-таки хотелось этого. И в отношениях с Герасимом было что-то близкое к этому, и потому отношения с Герасимом утешали его. Ивану Ильичу хочется плакать, хочется, чтоб его ласкали и плакали над ним, и вот приходит товарищ, член Шебек, и, вместо того чтобы плакать и ласкаться, Иван Ильич делает серьезное, строгое, глубокомысленное лицо и по инерции говорит свое мнение о значении кассационного решения и упорно настаивает на нем. Эта ложь вокруг него и в нем самом более всего отравляла последние дни жизни Ивана Ильича.

ВIII

Было утро. Потому только было утро, что Герасим ушел и пришел Петр-лакей, потушил свечи, открыл одну гардину и стал потихоньку убирать. Утро ли, вечер ли был, пятница, воскресенье ли было – все было все равно, все было одно и то же: ноющая, ни на мгновение не утихающая, мучительная боль; сознание безнадежно все уходящей, но все не ушедшей еще жизни; надвигающаяся все та же страшная ненавистная смерть, которая одна была действительность, и все та же ложь. Какие же тут дни, недели и часы дня?

– Не прикажете ли чай?

“Ему нужен порядок, чтоб по утрам господы пили чай”, – подумал он и сказал только:

– Нет.

– Не угодно ли перейти на диван?
“Ему нужно привести в порядок горницу, и я мешаю, я – нечистота, беспорядок”, – подумал он и сказал только:
– Нет, оставь меня.

Лакей повозился еще. Иван Ильич протянул руку. Петр подошел услужливо.
– Что прикажете?
– Часы.

Петр достал часы, лежавшие под рукой, и подал.
– Половина девятого. Там не встали?
– Никак нет-с. Василий Иванович (это был сын) ушли в гимназию, а Прасковья Федоровна приказали разбудить их, если вы спросите. Прикажете?
– Нет, не надо. – “Не попробовать ли чаю?” – подумал он. – Да, чаю... принеси.


Петр ушел. Иван Ильич, оставшись один, застонал не столько от боли, как она ни была ужасна, сколько от тоски. “Все то же и то же, все эти бесконечные дни и ночи. Хоть бы скорее. Что скорее? Смерть, мрак. Нет, нет. Все лучше смерти!”

Когда Петр вошел с чаем на подносе, Иван Ильич долго растерянно смотрел на него, не понимая, кто он и что он. Петр смутился от этого взгляда. И когда Петр смутился, Иван Ильич очнулся.
– Да, – сказал он, – чай... хорошо, поставь. Только помоги мне умыться и рубашку чистую.

И Иван Ильич стал умываться. Он с отдыхом умыл руки, лицо, вычистил зубы, стал причесываться и посмотрел в зеркало. Ему страшно стало: особенно страшно было то, как волосы плоско прижимались к бледному лбу.

Когда переменяли ему рубашку, он знал, что ему будет еще страшнее, если он вглядит на свое тело, и не смотрел на себя. Но вот кончилось все. Он надел халат, укрылся пледом и сел в кресло к чаю. Одну минуту он почувствовал себя освеженным, но только что он стал пить чай, опять тот же вкус, та же боль. Он насилино допил и лег, вытянув ноги. Он лег и отпустил Петра.

Все то же. То капля надежды блеснет, то взбушуется море отчаяния, и все боль, все боль, все тоска и все одно и то же. Одному ужасно тоскливо, хочется позвать кого-нибудь, но он вперед знает, что при других еще хуже. “Хоть бы опять морфин – забыться бы. Я скажу ему, доктору, чтоб он придумал что-нибудь еще. Это невозможно, невозможно так”.

Час, два проходит так. Но вот звонок в передней. Авось доктор. Точно, это доктор, свежий, бодрый, жирный, веселый, с тем выражением – что вот вы там чего-то напугались, а мы сейчас вам все устроим.
Доктор знает, что это выражение здесь не годится, но он уже раз навсегда надел его и не может снять, как человек, с утра надевший фрак и едущий с визитами. Доктор бодро, утешающе потирает руки.

– Я холоден. Мороз здоровый. Дайте обогреюсь, – говорит он с таким выражением, что как будто только надо немного подождать, пока он обогреется, а когда обогреется, то уж все исправит.

– Ну что, как?

Иван Ильич чувствует, что доктору хочется сказать: “Как делишки?”, но что и он чувствует, что так нельзя говорить, и говорит: “Как вы провели ночь?”

Иван Ильич смотрит на доктора с выражением вопроса: “Неужели никогда не станет тебе стыдно врать?”

Но доктор не хочет понимать вопрос.

И Иван Ильич говорит:

– Все так же ужасно. Боль не проходит, не сдается. Хоть бы что-нибудь!

– Да, вот вы, больные, всегда так. Ну-с, теперь, кажется, я согрелся, даже аккуратнейшая Прасковья Федоровна ничего бы не имела возразить против моей температуры. Ну-с, здравствуйте. – И доктор пожимает руку.

И, откинув всю прежнюю игрую, доктор начинает с серьезным видом исследовать больного, пульс, температуру, и начинаются постукивания, прослушивания.

Иван Ильич знает твердо и несомненно, что все это вздор и пустой обман, но когда доктор, став на коленки, вытряхивается над ним, прислоняя ухо то выше, то ниже, и делает над ним с значительнейшим лицом разные гимнастические эволюции, Иван Ильич поддается этому, как он поддавался, бывало, речам адвокатов, тогда как он уж очень хорошо знал, что они всё врут и зачем врут.

Доктор, стоя на коленках на диване, еще что-то выстукивал, когда зашумело в дверях шелковое платье Прасковьи Федоровны и послышался ее упрек Петру, что ей не доложили о приезде доктора.

Она входит, целует мужа и тотчас же начинает доказывать, что она давно уж встала и только по недоразумению ее не было тут, когда приехал доктор.

Иван Ильич смотрит на нее, разглядывает ее всю и в упрек ставит ей и белизну, и пухлость, и чистоту ее рук, шеи, глянец ее волос и блеск ее полных жизни глаз. Он всеми силами души ненавидит ее, и прикосновение ее заставляет его страдать от прилива ненависти к ней.

Ее отношение к нему и его болезни все то же. Как доктор выработал себе отношение к больным, которое он не мог уже снять, так она выработала одно отношение к нему – то, что он не делает чего-то того, что нужно, и сам виноват и она любовно укоряет его в этом, – и не могла уже снять этого отношения к нему.


Она рассказала, как он заставляет Герасима держать себе ноги.

Доктор улыбнулся презрительно-ласково: “Что ж, мол, делать, эти больные выдумывают иногда такие глупости; но можно простить.”
Когда осмотр кончился, доктор посмотрел на часы, и тогда Прасковья Федоровна объявила Ивану Ильичу, что уж как он хочет, а она нынче пригласила знаменитого доктора, и они вместе с Михаилом Даниловичем (так звали обыкновенного доктора) осмотрят и обсудят.

– Ты уж не противься, пожалуйста. Это я для себя делаю, – сказала она иронически, давая чувствовать, что она все делает для него и только этим не дает ему права отказать ей. Он молчал и морщился. Он чувствовал, что ложь эта, окружающая его, так путалась, что уж трудно было разобрать что-нибудь.

Она все над ним делала только для себя и говорила ему, что она делает для себя то, что она точно делала для себя как такую невероятную вещь, что он должен был понимать это обратно.

Действительно, в половине двенадцатого приехал знаменитый доктор. Опять пошли выслушивания и значительные разговоры при нем и в другой комнате о почке, о слепой кишке и вопросы и ответы с таким значительным видом, что опять вместо реального, вопрос о жизни и смерти, который уже теперь один стоял перед ним, выступил вопрос о почке и слепой кишке, которые что-то делали не так, как следовало, и на которые за это вот-вот нападут Михаил Данилович и знаменитость и заставят их исправиться.

Знаменитый доктор простился с серьезным, но не с безнадежным видом. И на робкий вопрос, который с поднятыми к нему блестящими страхом и надеждой глазами обратил Иван Ильич, есть ли возможность выздоровления, отвечал, что ручаться нельзя, но возможность есть. Взгляд надежды, с которым Иван Ильич проводил доктора, был так жалок, что, увидав его, Прасковья Федоровна даже заплакала, выходя из дверей кабинета, чтобы передать гонорар знаменитому доктору.

Подъем духа, произведенный обнадеживанием доктора, продолжался недолго. Опять та же комната, те же картинь, гардины, обои, склянки и то же свое болеющее, страдающее тело. И Иван Ильич начал стонать; ему сделали вспрыскивание, и он забылся.

Когда он очнулся, стало смеркаться; ему принесли обедать. Он поел с усилием бульона; и опять то же, и опять наступающая ночь.

После обеда, в семь часов, в комнату его вошла Прасковья Федоровна, одетая как на вечер, с толстыми, подтянутыми грудями и с следами пудры на лице. Она еще утром напоминала ему о поездке их в театр. Была приезжая Сарра Бернар, и у них была ложа, которую он настоял, чтоб они взяли. Теперь он забыл про это, и ее наряд оскорбил его. Но он скрыл свое оскорбление, когда вспомнил, что он сам настаивал, чтоб они достали ложу и ехали, потому что это для детей воспитательное эстетическое наслаждение.

Прасковья Федоровна вошла довольная собою, но как будто виноватая. Она присела, спросила о здоровье, как он видел, для того только, чтоб спросить, но не для того, чтобы узнать, зная, что и узнавать нечего, и начала говорить то, что ей нужно было: что она ни за что не поехала бы, но ложа взята, и едут Элен и дочь и Петрищев (судебный следователь, жених дочери), и что невозможно их пустить одних. А что ей так бы приятнее было посидеть с ним. Только бы он делал без нее по предписанию доктора.

– Да, и Федор Петрович (женех) хотел войти. Можно? И Лиза.

– Пускай войдут.

Вошла дочь разодетая, с обнаженным молодым телом, тем телом, которое так заставляло страдать его. А она его выставляла. Сильная, здоровая, очевидно, влюбленная и негодующая на болезнь, страдания и смерть, мешающие ее счастью.
Вошел и Федор Петрович во фраке, завитой à la Capoul, с длинной жилистой шеей, обложенной плотно бельм воротничком, с огромной белой грудью и обтянутыми сильными яжками в узких черных штанах, с одной натянутой белой перчаткой на руке и с клаком.

За ним вполз незаметно и гимназистик в новеньком мундирчике, бедняжка, в перчатках и с ужасной синевой под глазами, значение которой знал Иван Ильич.

Сын всегда жалок был ему. И страшен был его испуганный и соболезнующий взгляд. Кроме Герасима, Ивану Ильичу казалось, что один Вася понимал и жалел.

Все сели, опять спросили о здоровье. Произошло молчание. Лиза спросила у матери о бинокле. Произошли пререкания между матерью и дочерью, кто куда его дел. Вышло неприятно.

Федор Петрович спросил у Ивана Ильича, видел ли он Сарру Бернар. Иван Ильич не понял сначала того, что у него спрашивали, а потом сказал:

– Нет; а вы уж видели?

– Да, в “Adrienne Lecouvreur.”

Прасковья Федоровна сказала, что она особенно хороша в том-то. Дочь возразила. Начался разговор об изяществе и реальности ее игры, – тот самый разговор, который всегда бывает один и тот же.

В середине разговора Федор Петрович взглянул на Ивана Ильича и замолк. Другие взглянули и замолкли. Иван Ильич смотрел блестящими глазами пред собою, очевидно, негодуя на них. Надо было поправить это, но поправить никак нельзя было. Надо было как-нибудь прервать это молчание. Никто не решался, и всем становилось страшно, что вдруг нарушится как-нибудь приличная ложь, и ясно будет всем то, что есть. Лиза первая решилась. Она прервала молчанье. Она хотела скрыть то, что все испытывали, но проговорилась.

– Однако, если ехать, то пора, – сказала она, взглянув на свои часы, подарок отца, и чуть заметно, значительно о чем-то, им одним известном, улыбнулась молодому человеку и встала, зашумев платьем. Все встали, простились и уехали.

Когда они вышли, Ивану Ильичу показалось, что ему легче: лжи не было, – она ушла с ними, но боль осталась. Все та же боль, все тот же страх делали то, что ничто не тяжело, ничто не легче. Все хуже.

Опять пошли минута за минутой, час за часом, все то же, и все нет конца, и все страшнее неизбежный конец.

– Да, пошлите Герасима, – ответил он на вопрос Петра.

IX

Поздно ночью вернулась жена. Она вошла на цыпочках, но он услыхал ее: открыл глаза и поспешно закрыл опять. Она хотела услать Герасима и сама сидеть с ним. Он открыл глаза и сказал:

– Нет. Иди.

– Ты очень страдаешь?
— Все равно.
— Прими опиума.

Он согласился и выпил. Она ушла.

Часов до трех он был в мучительном забытьи. Ему казалось, что его с болью суют куда-то в узкий черный мешок и глубокий, и все дальше просовывают, и не могут просунуть. И это ужасное для него дело совершается с страданием. И он и боится, и хочет провалиться туда, и борется, и помогает. И вот вдруг он оборвался и упал, и очнулся. Все тот же Герасим сидит в ногах на постели, дремлет спокойно, терпеливо. А он лежит, подняв ему на плечи исхудальные ноги в чулках; свечи та же с абажуром, и та же непрекращающаяся боль.

— Уйди, Герасим, — прошептал он.
— Ничего, посигу-с.

— Нет. Уйди.

Он снял ноги, лег боком на руку, и ему стало жалко себя. Он подождал только того, чтобы Герасим вышел в соседнюю комнату, и не стал больше удерживаться и заплакал, как дитя. Он плакал о беспомощности своей, о своем ужасном одиночестве, о жестокости людей, о жестокости Бога, об отсутствии Бога. “Зачем ты все это сделал? Зачем привел меня сюда? За что, за что так ужасно мучает меня?” Он и не ждал ответа и плакал о том, что нет и не может быть ответа. Боль поднялась опять, но он не шевелился, не звал. Он говорил себе: “Ну еще, ну бей! Но за что? Что я сделал тебе, за что?”

Потом он затаил, перестал не только плакать, перестал дышать и весь стал внимание: как будто он прислушивался не к голосу, говорящему звуками, но к голосу души, к ходу мыслей, поднимавшемуся в нем.

— Чего тебе нужно? — было первое ясное, могущее быть выражено словами понятие, которое, он услышал.

И опять он весь предался вниманию такому напряженному, что даже боль не развлекала его.


— Да, жить, как я жил прежде: хорошо, приятно.

— Как ты жил прежде, хорошо и приятно? — спросил голос. И он стал перебирать в воображении лучшие минуты своей приятной жизни. Но — странное дело — все эти лучшие минуты приятной жизни казались теперь совсем не тем, чем казались они тогда. Все — кроме первых воспоминаний детства. Там, в детстве, было что-то такое действительно приятное, с чем можно было жить, если бы оно вернулось. Но того человека, который испытывал это приятное, уже не было: это было как бы воспоминание о каком-то другом.

Как только начиналось то, чего результатом был теперешний он, Иван Ильич, так все казавшиеся тогда радости теперь на глазах его таяли и превращались во что-то ничтожное и часто гадкое.

И чем дальше от детства, чем ближе к настоящему, тем ничтожнее и сомнительнее были радости. Начиналось это с Правоведения. Там было еще кое-что истинно хорошее: там было веселое, там была дружба, там были надежды. Но в высших классах уже были реже эти хорошие минуты. Потом, во время
первой службы у губернатора, опять появились хорошие минуты: это были воспоминания о любви к женщине. Потом все это смешалось, и еще меньше стало хорошего. Далее еще меньше хорошего, и что дальше, то меньше.

Женитьба... так нечаянно, и разочарование, и запах изо рта жены, и чувственность, притворство! И эта мертвая служба, эти заботы о деньгах, итак год, и два, и десять, и двадцать – и все то же. И что дальше, то мертвое. Точно равномерно я шел под гору, воображая, что иду на гору. Так и было. В общественном мнении я шел на гору, и ровно настолько из-под меня уходила жизнь... И вот готово, умирай!


Но сколько он ни думал, он не нашел ответа. И когда ему приходила, как она приходила ему часто, мысль о том, что все это происходит оттого, что он жил не так, он тотчас вспоминал всю правильность своей жизни и отгонял эту странныю мысль.

X

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Эти два настроения с самого начала болезни сменяли друг друга; но чем дальше шла болезнь, тем сомнительнее и фантастичнее становились соображения о почке и тем реальнее сознание наступающей смерти.

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В последнее время того одиночества, в котором он находился, лежа лицом к спинке дивана, того одиночества среди многолюдного города и своих многочисленных знакомых и семьи, – одиночества, полнее которого не могло быть нигде: ни на дне моря, ни в земле, – последнее время этого страшного
одиночества Иван Ильич жил только воображением в прошедшем. Одна за другой ему представлялись картины его прошедшего. Начиналось всегда с ближайшего по времени и сводилось к самому отдаленному, к детству, и на нем останавливалось. Вспоминал ли Иван Ильич о вареном черносливе, который ему предлагали есть нынче, он вспоминал о сыром сморщенном французском черносливе в детстве, об особенном вкусе его и обилии слюны, когда дело доходило до косточки, и рядом с этим воспоминанием вкуса возникал целый ряд воспоминаний того времени: няня, брат, игрушки. “Че надо об этом... слишком больно”, – говорил себе Иван Ильич и опять переносился в настоящее. Пуговица на спинке дивана и морщины сафьяна. “Сафьян дорог, непрочен; ссора была из-за него. Но сафьян другой был, и другая ссора, когда мы разорвали портфель у отца и нас наказали, а мама принесла пирожки”. И опять оставалось на детстве, и опять Ивану Ильичу было больно, и он старался отогнать и думать о другом.

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XI

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XII

С этой минуты начался тот три дня не перестававший крик, который так был ужасен, что нельзя было за двумя дверями без ужаса слышать его. В ту минуту, как он ответил жене, он понял, что он пропал, что возврата нет, что пришел конец, совсем конец, а сомнение так и не разрешено, так и остается сомнением.

– У! Уу! Уу! – кричал он на разные интонации. Он начал кричать: “Не хочу!” – и так продолжал кричать на букву “у”.

Все три дня, в продолжение которых для него не было времени, он барахтался в том черном мешке, в который палача приговоренный к смерти, зная, что он не может спастись; и с каждой минутой он чувствовал, что, несмотря на все усилия борьбы, он ближе и ближе становился к тому, что ужасало его. Он чувствовал, что мученье его и в том, что он вскользь в эту черную дыру, и еще больше в том, что он не может пролезть в нее. Пролезть же ему мешает признание того, что жизнь его была хорошая. Это-то оправдание своей жизни цепляло и не пускало его вперед и больше всего мучало его.
Вдруг какая-то сила толкнула его в грудь, в бок, еще сильнее сдавила ему дыхание, он провалился в дыру, и там, в конце дыры, засветилось что-то. С ним сделалось то, что бывало с ним в вагоне железной дороги, когда думаешь, что едешь вперед, а едешь назад, и вдруг узнаешь настоящее направление.


Это было в конце третьего дня, за час до его смерти. В это самое время гимназистик тихонько прокрался к отцу и подошел к его постели. Умирающий все кричал отчаянно и кидал руками. Рука его попала на голову гимназистика. Гимназистик схватил ее, прижал к губам и заплакал.

В это самое время Иван Ильич провалился, увидел свет, и ему открылось, что жизнь его была не то, что надо, но что это можно еще поправить. Он спросил себя: что же “то”, и затих, прислушиваясь. Тут он почувствовал, что руку его целует кто-то. Он открыл глаза и взглянул на сына. Ему стало жалко его. Жена подошла к нему. Он взглянул на нее. Она с открытым ртом и с неотертymi слезами на носу и щеке, с отчаянным выражением смотрела на него. Ему жалко стало ее.

“Да, я мучаю их, – подумал он. – Им жалко, но им лучше будет, когда я умру”. Он хотел сказать это, но не в силах был выговорить. “Впрочем, зачем же говорить, надо сделать”, – подумал он. Он указал жене взглядом на сына и сказал:


И вдруг ему стало ясно, что то, что томило его и не выходило, что вдруг все выходит сразу, и с двух сторон, с десяти сторон, со всех сторон. Жалко их, надо сделать, чтобы им не больно было. Избавить их и самому избавиться от этих страданий. “Как хорошо и как просто, – подумал он. – А боль? – спросил он себя, – Ее куда? Ну-ка, где ты, боль?”

Он стал прислушиваться.

“Да, вот она. Ну что ж, пускай боль”.

“А смерть? Где она?”

Он искал своего прежнего привычного страха смерти и не находил его. Где она? Какая смерть? Страха никакого не было, потому что и смерти не было.

Вместо смерти был свет.

– Так вот что! – вдруг вслух проговорил он. – Какая радость!

Для него все это произошло в одно мгновение, и значение этого мгновения уже не изменялось. Для присутствующих же агония его продолжалась еще два часа. В груди его клокотало что-то; изможденное тело его вздрагивало. Потом реже и реже стало клокочать и хрипеть.

– Конечно! – сказал кто-то над ним.

Он усмехал эти слова и повторил их в своей душе. “Кончена смерть, – сказал он себе. – Ее нет больше”.

Он втянул в себя воздух, остановился на половине вздоха, потянулся и умер.
AN ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF
"THE DEATH OF IVAN ILYCH"

The Death of Ivan Ilych

Leo Tolstoy
1886

The text offered here is that prepared by Louise and Aylmer Maude. It provides a contemporary translation of the text by persons who were closely acquainted with Tolstoy and who had the benefit of his advice with respect to the translation of difficult passages (Tolstoy had a passable knowledge of English). The Maudes were also the translators and editors of the 21 volume “The Works of Tolstoy” (the so-called Centenary Edition), published by Oxford University Press 1928-37. The translation is in the Public Domain and has No Copyright under United States law.

Full Text
During an interval in the Melvinski trial in the large building of the Law Courts the members and public prosecutor met in Ivan Egorovich Shebek's private room, where the conversation turned on the celebrated Krasovski case. Fedor Vasilievich warmly maintained that it was not subject to their jurisdiction, Ivan Egorovich maintained the contrary, while Peter Ivanovich, not having entered into the discussion at the start, took no part in it but looked through the *Gazette* which had just been handed in.

“Gentlemen,” he said, “Ivan Ilych has died!”

“You don't say so!”

“Here, read it yourself,” replied Peter Ivanovich, handing Fedor Vasilievich the paper still damp from the press. Surrounded by a black border were the words: “Praskovya Fedorovna Golovina, with profound sorrow, informs relatives and friends of the demise of her beloved husband Ivan Ilych Golovin, Member of the Court of Justice, which occurred on February the 4th of this year 1882. the funeral will take place on Friday at one o'clock in the afternoon.”

Ivan Ilych had been a colleague of the gentlemen present and was liked by them all. He had been ill for some weeks with an illness said to be incurable. His post had been kept open for him, but there had been conjectures that in case of his death Alexeev might receive his appointment, and that either Vinnikov or Shtabel would succeed Alexeev. So on receiving the news of Ivan Ilych's death the first thought of each of the gentlemen in that private room was of the changes and promotions it might occasion among themselves or their acquaintances.

“I shall be sure to get Shtabel's place or Vinnikov's,” thought Fedor Vasilievich. “I was promised that long ago, and the promotion means an extra eight hundred rubles a year for me besides the allowance.”

“Now I must apply for my brother-in-law's transfer from Kaluga,” thought Peter Ivanovich. “My wife will be very glad, and then she won't be able to say that I never do anything for her relations.”

“I thought he would never leave his bed again,” said Peter Ivanovich aloud. “It's very sad.”

“But what really was the matter with him?”

“The doctors couldn't say — at least they could, but each of them said something different. When last I saw him I thought he was getting better.”

“And I haven't been to see him since the holidays. I always meant to go.”
“Had he any property?”

“I think his wife had a little — but something quiet trifling.”

“We shall have to go to see her, but they live so terribly far away.”

“Far away from you, you mean. Everything’s far away from your place.”

“You see, he never can forgive my living on the other side of the river,” said Peter Ivanovich, smiling at Shebek. Then, still talking of the distances between different parts of the city, they returned to the Court.

Besides considerations as to the possible transfers and promotions likely to result from Ivan Ilych’s death, the mere fact of the death of a near acquaintance aroused, as usual, in all who heard of it the complacent feeling that, “it is he who is dead and not I.”

Each one thought or felt, “Well, he’s dead but I’m alive!” But the more intimate of Ivan Ilych’s acquaintances, his so-called friends, could not help thinking also that they would now have to fulfil the very tiresome demands of propriety by attending the funeral service and paying a visit of condolence to the widow.

Fedor Vasilievich and Peter Ivanovich had been his nearest acquaintances. Peter Ivanovich had studied law with Ivan Ilych and had considered himself to be under obligations to him.

Having told his wife at dinner-time of Ivan Ilych’s death, and of his conjecture that it might be possible to get her brother transferred to their circuit, Peter Ivanovich sacrificed his usual nap, put on his evening clothes and drove to Ivan Ilych’s house.

At the entrance stood a carriage and two cabs. Leaning against the wall in the hall downstairs near the cloakstand was a coffin-lid covered with cloth of gold, ornamented with gold cord and tassels, that had been polished up with metal powder. Two ladies in black were taking off their fur cloaks. Peter Ivanovich recognized one of them as Ivan Ilych’s sister, but the other was a stranger to him. His colleague Schwartz was just coming downstairs, but on seeing Peter Ivanovich enter he stopped and winked at him, as if to say: “Ivan Ilych has made a mess of things — not like you and me.”

Schwartz’s face with his Piccadilly whiskers, and his slim figure in evening dress, had as usual an air of elegant solemnity which contrasted with the playfulness of his character and had a special piquancy here, or so it seemed to Peter Ivanovich.

Peter Ivanovich allowed the ladies to precede him and slowly followed them upstairs. Schwartz did not come down but remained where he was, and Peter Ivanovich understood that he wanted to arrange where they should play bridge that evening. The ladies went upstairs to the widow’s room, and Schwartz with seriously compressed lips but a playful look in his eyes, indicated by a twist of his eyebrows the room to the right where the body lay.

Peter Ivanovich, like everyone else on such occasions, entered feeling uncertain what he would have to do. All he knew was that at such times it is always safe to cross oneself. But he was not quite sure whether one should make obsequiences while doing so. He therefore adopted a middle course. On entering the room he began crossing himself and made a slight movement resembling a bow. At the same time, as far as the motion of his head and arm allowed, he surveyed the room. Two young men — apparently nephews, one of whom was a high-school pupil — were leaving the room, crossing themselves as they did so. An old woman was standing motionless, and a lady with strangely arched eyebrows was saying something to her in a whisper. A vigorous, resolute Church Reader, in a frock-coat, was reading something in a loud voice with an expression that precluded any contradiction.
The butler’s assistant, Gerasim, stepping lightly in front of Peter Ivanovich, was strewing something on the floor. Noticing this, Peter Ivanovich was immediately aware of a faint odour of a decomposing body.

The last time he had called on Ivan Ilych, Peter Ivanovich had seen Gerasim in the study. Ivan Ilych had been particularly fond of him and he was performing the duty of a sick nurse.

Peter Ivanovich continued to make the sign of the cross slightly inclining his head in an intermediate direction between the coffin, the Reader, and the icons on the table in a corner of the room. Afterwards, when it seemed to him that this movement of his arm in crossing himself had gone on too long, he stopped and began to look at the corpse.

The dead man lay, as dead men always lie, in a specially heavy way, his rigid limbs sunk in the soft cushions of the coffin, with the head forever bowed on the pillow. His yellow waxen brow with bald patches over his sunken temples was thrust up in the way peculiar to the dead, the protruding nose seeming to press on the upper lip. He was much changed and grown even thinner since Peter Ivanovich had last seen him, but, as is always the case with the dead, his face was handsomer and above all more dignified than when he was alive. The expression on the face said that what was necessary had been accomplished, and accomplished rightly. Besides this there was in that expression a reproach and a warning to the living. This warning seemed to Peter Ivanovich out of place, or at least not applicable to him. He felt a certain discomfort and so he hurriedly crossed himself once more and turned and went out of the door — too hurriedly and too regardless of propriety, as he himself was aware.

Schwartz was waiting for him in the adjoining room with legs spread wide apart and both hands toying with his top-hat behind his back. The mere sight of that playful, well-groomed, and elegant figure refreshed Peter Ivanovich. He felt that Schwartz was above all these happenings and would not surrender to any depressing influences. His very look said that this incident of a church service for Ivan Ilych could not be a sufficient reason for infringing the order of the session — in other words, that it would certainly not prevent his unwrapping a new pack of cards and shuffling them that evening while a footman placed fresh candles on the table: in fact, that there was no reason for supposing that this incident would hinder their spending the evening agreeably. Indeed he said this in a whisper as Peter Ivanovich passed him, proposing that they should meet for a game at Fedor Vasilievich’s. But apparently Peter Ivanovich was not destined to play bridge that evening. Praskovya Fedorovna (a short, fat woman who despite all efforts to the contrary had continued to broaden steadily from her shoulders downwards and who had the same extraordinarily arched eyebrows as the lady who had been standing by the coffin), dressed all in black, her head covered with lace, came out of her own room with some other ladies, conducted them to the room where the dead body lay, and said: “The service will begin immediately. Please go in.”

Schwartz, making an indefinite bow, stood still, evidently neither accepting nor declining this invitation. Praskovya Fedorovna recognizing Peter Ivanovich, sighed, went close up to him, took his hand, and said: “I know you were a true friend to Ivan Ilych...” and looked at him awaiting some suitable response. And Peter Ivanovich knew that, just as it had been the right thing to cross himself in that room, so what he had to do here was to press her hand, sigh, and say, “Believe me...” So he did all this and as he did it felt that the desired result had been achieved: that both he and she were touched.

“Come with me. I want to speak to you before it begins,” said the widow. “Give me your arm.”

Peter Ivanovich gave her his arm and they went to the inner rooms, passing Schwartz who winked at Peter Ivanovich compassionately.

“That does for our bridge! Don’t object if we find another player. Perhaps you can cut in when you do escape,” said his playful look.
Peter Ivanovich sighed still more deeply and despondently, and Praskovya Fedorovna pressed his arm gratefully. When they reached the drawing-room, upholstered in pink cretonne and lighted by a dim lamp, they sat down at the table — she on a sofa and Peter Ivanovich on a low pouffe, the springs of which yielded spasmodically under his weight. Praskovya Fedorovna had been on the point of warning him to take another seat, but felt that such a warning was out of keeping with her present condition and so changed her mind. As he sat down on the pouffe Peter Ivanovich recalled how Ivan Ilych had arranged this room and had consulted him regarding this pink cretonne with green leaves. The whole room was full of furniture and knick-knacks, and on her way to the sofa the lace of the widow's black shawl caught on the edge of the table. Peter Ivanovich rose to detach it, and the springs of the pouffe, relieved of his weight, rose also and gave him a push. The widow began detaching her shawl herself, and Peter Ivanovich again sat down, suppressing the rebellious springs of the pouffe under him. But the widow had not quite freed herself and Peter Ivanovich got up again, and again the pouffe rebelled and even creaked. When this was all over she took out a clean cambric handkerchief and began to weep. The episode with the shawl and the struggle with the pouffe had cooled Peter Ivanovich's emotions and he sat there with a sullen look on his face. This awkward situation was interrupted by Sokolov, Ivan Ilych's butler, who came to report that the plot in the cemetery that Praskovya Fedorovna had chosen would cost two hundred rubles. She stopped weeping and, looking at Peter Ivanovich with the air of a victim, remarked in French that it was very hard for her. Peter Ivanovich made a silent gesture signifying his full conviction that it must indeed be so.

“Please smoke,” she said in a magnanimous yet crushed voice, and turned to discuss with Sokolov the price of the plot for the grave.

Peter Ivanovich while lighting his cigarette heard her inquiring very circumstantially into the prices of different plots in the cemetery and finally decide which she would take. when that was done she gave instructions about engaging the choir. Sokolov then left the room.

“I look after everything myself,” she told Peter Ivanovich, shifting the albums that lay on the table; and noticing that the table was endangered by his cigarette-ash, she immediately passed him an ash-tray, saying as she did so: “I consider it an affectation to say that my grief prevents my attending to practical affairs. On the contrary, if anything can — I won't say console me, but — distract me, it is seeing to everything concerning him.” She again took out her handkerchief as if preparing to cry, but suddenly, as if mastering her feeling, she shook herself and began to speak calmly. “But there is something I want to talk to you about.”

Peter Ivanovich bowed, keeping control of the springs of the pouffe, which immediately began quivering under him.

“He suffered terribly the last few days.”

“Did he?” said Peter Ivanovich.

“Oh, terribly! He screamed unceasingly, not for minutes but for hours. for the last three days he screamed incessantly. It was unendurable. I cannot understand how I bore it; you could hear him three rooms off. Oh, what I have suffered!”

“Is it possible that he was conscious all that time?” asked Peter Ivanovich.

“Yes,” she whispered. “To the last moment. He took leave of us a quarter of an hour before he died, and asked us to take Volodya away.”

The thought of the suffering of this man he had known so intimately, first as a merry little boy, then as a schoolmate, and later as a grown-up colleague, suddenly struck Peter Ivanovich with horror, despite an unpleasant
consciousness of his own and this woman's dissimulation. He again saw that brow, and that nose pressing down on the lip, and felt afraid for himself.

"Three days of frightful suffering and the death! Why, that might suddenly, at any time, happen to me," he thought, and for a moment felt terrified. But — he did not himself know how — the customary reflection at once occurred to him that this had happened to Ivan Ilych and not to him, and that it should not and could not happen to him, and that to think that it could would be yielding to depression which he ought not to do, as Schwartz's expression plainly showed. After which reflection Peter Ivanovich felt reassured, and began to ask with interest about the details of Ivan Ilych's death, as though death was an accident natural to Ivan Ilych but certainly not to himself.

After many details of the really dreadful physical sufferings Ivan Ilych had endured (which details he learnt only from the effect those sufferings had produced on Praskovya Fedorovna's nerves) the widow apparently found it necessary to get to business.

"Oh, Peter Ivanovich, how hard it is! How terribly, terribly hard!" and she again began to weep.

Peter Ivanovich sighed and waited for her to finish blowing her nose. When she had don so he said, "Believe me..." and she again began talking and brought out what was evidently her chief concern with him — namely, to question him as to how she could obtain a grant of money from the government on the occasion of her husband's death. She made it appear that she was asking Peter Ivanovich's advice about her pension, but he soon saw that she already knew about that to the minutest detail, more even than he did himself. She knew how much could be got out of the government in consequence of her husband's death, but wanted to find out whether she could not possibly extract something more. Peter Ivanovich tried to think of some means of doing so, but after reflecting for a while and, out of propriety, condemning the government for its niggardliness, he said he thought that nothing more could be got. Then she sighed and evidently began to devise means of getting rid of her visitor. Noticing this, he put out his cigarette, rose, pressed her hand, and went out into the anteroom.

In the dining-room where the clock stood that Ivan Ilych had liked so much and had bought at an antique shop, Peter Ivanovich met a priest and a few acquaintances who had come to attend the service, and he recognized Ivan Ilych's daughter, a handsome young woman. She was in black and her slim figure appeared slimmer than ever. She had a gloomy, determined, almost angry expression, and bowed to Peter Ivanovich as though he were in some way to blame. Behind her, with the same offended look, stood a wealthy young man, and examining magistrate, whom Peter Ivanovich also knew and who was her fiance, as he had heard. He bowed mournfully to them and was about to pass into the death-chamber, when from under the stairs appeared the figure of Ivan Ilych's schoolboy son, who was extremely like his father. He seemed a little Ivan Ilych, such as Peter Ivanovich remembered when they studied law together. His tear-stained eyes had in them the look that is seen in the eyes of boys of thirteen or fourteen who are not pure-minded. When he saw Peter Ivanovich he scowled morosely and shamefacedly. Peter Ivanovich nodded to him and entered the death-chamber. The service began: candles, groans, incense, tears, and sobs. Peter Ivanovich stood looking gloomily down at his feet. He did not look once at the dead man, did not yield to any depressing influence, and was one of the first to leave the room. There was no one in the anteroom, but Gerasim darted out of the dead man's room, rummaged with his strong hands among the fur coats to find Peter Ivanovich's and helped him on with it.

"Well, friend Gerasim," said Peter Ivanovich, so as to say something. "It's a sad affair, isn't it?"

"It's God will. We shall all come to it some day," said Gerasim, displaying his teeth — the even white teeth of a healthy peasant — and, like a man in the thick of urgent work, he briskly opened the front door, called the coachman, helped Peter Ivanovich into the sledge, and sprang back to the porch as if in readiness for what he had to do next.
Peter Ivanovich found the fresh air particularly pleasant after the smell of incense, the dead body, and carbolic acid.

“Where to sir?” asked the coachman.

“It's not too late even now....I'll call round on Fedor Vasilievich.”

He accordingly drove there and found them just finishing the first rubber, so that it was quite convenient for him to cut in.

II

Ivan Ilych's life had been most simple and most ordinary and therefore most terrible.

He had been a member of the Court of Justice, and died at the age of forty-five. His father had been an official who after serving in various ministries and departments in Petersburg had made the sort of career which brings men to positions from which by reason of their long service they cannot be dismissed, though they are obviously unfit to hold any responsible position, and for whom therefore posts are specially created, which though fictitious carry salaries of from six to ten thousand rubles that are not fictitious, and in receipt of which they live on to a great age.

Such was the Privy Councillor and superfluous member of various superfluous institutions, Ilya Epimovich Golovin.

He had three sons, of whom Ivan Ilych was the second. The eldest son was following in his father's footsteps only in another department, and was already approaching that stage in the service at which a similar sinecure would be reached. The third son was a failure. He had ruined his prospects in a number of positions and was now serving in the railway department. His father and brothers, and still more their wives, not merely disliked meeting him, but avoided remembering his existence unless compelled to do so. His sister had married Baron Greff, a Petersburg official of her father's type. Ivan Ilych was le phénix de la famille as people said. He was neither as cold and formal as his elder brother nor as wild as the younger, but was a happy mean between them — an intelligent polished, lively and agreeable man. He had studied with his younger brother at the School of Law, but the latter had failed to complete the course and was expelled when he was in the fifth class. Ivan Ilych finished the course well. Even when he was at the School of Law he was just what he remained for the rest of his life: a capable, cheerful, good-natured, and sociable man, though strict in the fulfillment of what he considered to be his duty: and he considered his duty to be what was so considered by those in authority. Neither as a boy nor as a man was he a toady, but from early youth was by nature attracted to people of high station as a fly is drawn to the light, assimilating their ways and views of life and establishing friendly relations with them. All the enthusiasms of childhood and youth passed without leaving much trace on him; he succumbed to sensuality, to vanity, and finally, in the upper classes, to liberalism, but always within limits which his instinct unfailingly indicated to him as correct.

At school he had done things which had formerly seemed to him very horrid and made him feel disgusted with himself when he did them; but when later on he saw that such actions were done by people of good position and that they did not regard them as wrong, he was able not exactly to regard them as right, but to forget about them entirely or not be at all troubled at remembering them.

Having graduated from the School of Law and qualified for the tenth rank of the civil service, and having received money from his father for his equipment, Ivan Ilych ordered himself clothes at Scharmer's, the fashionable tailor, hung a medallion inscribed respișe finem on his watch-chain, took leave of his professor and the prince who
was patron of the school, had a farewell dinner with his comrades at Donon's first-class restaurant, and with his new and fashionable portmanteau, linen, clothes, shaving and other toilet appliances, and a travelling rug, all purchased at the best shops, he set off for one of the provinces where through his father's influence, he had been attached to the governor as an official for special service.

In the province Ivan Ilych soon arranged as easy and agreeable a position for himself as he had had at the School of Law. He performed his official task, made his career, and at the same time amused himself pleasantly and decorously. Occasionally he paid official visits to country districts where he behaved with dignity both to his superiors and inferiors, and performed the duties entrusted to him, which related chiefly to the sectarians, with an exactness and incorruptible honesty of which he could not but feel proud.

In official matters, despite his youth and taste for frivolous gaiety, he was exceedingly reserved, punctilious, and even severe; but in society he was often amusing and witty, and always good-natured, correct in his manner, and bon enfant, as the governor and his wife — with whom he was like one of the family — used to say of him.

In the province he had an affair with a lady who made advances to the elegant young lawyer, and there was also a milliner; and there were carousals with aides-de-camp who visited the district, and after-supper visits to a certain outlying street of doubtful reputation; and there was too some obsequiousness to his chief and even to his chief's wife, but all this was done with such a tone of good breeding that no hard names could be applied to it. It all came under the heading of the French saying: *Il faut que jeunesse se passe*. It was all done with clean hands, in clean linen, with French phrases, and above all among people of the best society and consequently with the approval of people of rank.

So Ivan Ilych served for five years and then came a change in his official life. The new and reformed judicial institutions were introduced, and new men were needed. Ivan Ilych became such a new man. He was offered the post of examining magistrate, and he accepted it though the post was in another province and obliged him to give up the connexions he had formed and to make new ones. His friends met to give him a send-off; they had a group photograph taken and presented him with a silver cigarette-case, and he set off to his new post.

As examining magistrate Ivan Ilych was just as comme il faut and decorous a man, inspiring general respect and capable of separating his official duties from his private life, as he had been when acting as an official on special service. His duties now as examining magistrate were far more interesting and attractive than before. In his former position it had been pleasant to wear an undress uniform made by Scharmer, and to pass through the crowd of petitioners and officials who were timorously awaiting an audience with the governor, and who envied him as with free and easy gait he went straight into his chief's private room to have a cup of tea and a cigarette with him. But not many people had then been directly dependent on him — only police officials and the sectarians when he went on special missions — and he liked to treat them politely, almost as comrades, as if he were letting them feel that he who had the power to crush them was treating them in this simple, friendly way. There were then but few such people. But now, as an examining magistrate, Ivan Ilych felt that everyone without exception, even the most important and self-satisfied, was in his power, and that he need only write a few words on a sheet of paper with a certain heading, and this or that important, self-satisfied person would be brought before him in the role of an accused person or a witness, and if he did not choose to allow him to sit down, would have to stand before him and answer his questions. Ivan Ilych never abused his power; he tried on the contrary to soften its expression, but the consciousness of it and the possibility of softening its effect, supplied the chief interest and attraction of his office. In his work itself, especially in his examinations, he very soon acquired a method of eliminating all considerations irrelevant to the legal aspect of the case, and reducing even the most complicated case to a form in which it would be presented on paper only in its externals, completely excluding his personal opinion of the
matter, while above all observing every prescribed formality. The work was new and Ivan Ilych was one of the first men to apply the new Code of 1864.

On taking up the post of examining magistrate in a new town, he made new acquaintances and connexions, placed himself on a new footing and assumed a somewhat different tone. He took up an attitude of rather dignified aloofness towards the provincial authorities, but picked out the best circle of legal gentlemen and wealthy gentry living in the town and assumed a tone of slight dissatisfaction with the government, of moderate liberalism, and of enlightened citizenship. At the same time, without at all altering the elegance of his toilet, he ceased shaving his chin and allowed his beard to grow as it pleased.

Ivan Ilych settled down very pleasantly in this new town. The society there, which inclined towards opposition to the governor was friendly, his salary was larger, and he began to play whist, which he found added not a little to the pleasure of life, for he had a capacity for cards, played good-humouredly, and calculated rapidly and astutely, so that he usually won.

After living there for two years he met his future wife, Praskovya Fedorovna Mikhel, who was the most attractive, clever, and brilliant girl of the set in which he moved, and among other amusements and relaxations from his labours as examining magistrate, Ivan Ilych established light and playful relations with her.

While he had been an official on special service he had been accustomed to dance, but now as an examining magistrate it was exceptional for him to do so. If he danced now, he did it as if to show that though he served under the reformed order of things, and had reached the fifth official rank, yet when it came to dancing he could do it better than most people. So at the end of an evening he sometimes danced with Praskovya Fedorovna, and it was chiefly during these dances that he captivated her. She fell in love with him. Ivan Ilych had at first no definite intention of marrying, but when the girl fell in love with him he said to himself: “Really, why shouldn't I marry?”

Praskovya Fedorovna came of a good family, was not bad looking, and had some little property. Ivan Ilych might have aspired to a more brilliant match, but even this was good. He had his salary, and she, he hoped, would have an equal income. She was well connected, and was a sweet, pretty, and thoroughly correct young woman. To say that Ivan Ilych married because he fell in love with Praskovya Fedorovna and found that she sympathized with his views of life would be as incorrect as to say that he married because his social circle approved of the match. He was swayed by both these considerations: the marriage gave him personal satisfaction, and at the same time it was considered the right thing by the most highly placed of his associates.

So Ivan Ilych got married.

The preparations for marriage and the beginning of married life, with its conjugal caresses, the new furniture, new crockery, and new linen, were very pleasant until his wife became pregnant — so that Ivan Ilych had begun to think that marriage would not impair the easy, agreeable, gay and always decorous character of his life, approved of by society and regarded by himself as natural, but would even improve it. But from the first months of his wife's pregnancy, something new, unpleasant, depressing, and unseemly, and from which there was no way of escape, unexpectedly showed itself.

His wife, without any reason — de gaieté de coeur as Ivan Ilych expressed it to himself — began to disturb the pleasure and propriety of their life. She began to be jealous without any cause, expected him to devote his whole attention to her, found fault with everything, and made coarse and ill-mannered scenes.

At first Ivan Ilych hoped to escape from the unpleasantness of this state of affairs by the same easy and decorous relation to life that had served him heretofore: he tried to ignore his wife's disagreeable moods, continued to live in his usual easy and pleasant way, invited friends to his house for a game of cards, and also tried going out to his
club or spending his evenings with friends. But one day his wife began upbraiding him so vigorously, using such coarse words, and continued to abuse him every time he did not fulfil her demands, so resolutely and with such evident determination not to give way till he submitted — that is, till he stayed at home and was bored just as she was — that he became alarmed. He now realized that matrimony — at any rate with Praskovya Fedorovna — was not always conducive to the pleasures and amenities of life, but on the contrary often infringed both comfort and propriety, and that he must therefore entrench himself against such infringement. And Ivan Ilych began to seek for means of doing so. His official duties were the one thing that imposed upon Praskovya Fedorovna, and by means of his official work and the duties attached to it he began struggling with his wife to secure his own independence.

With the birth of their child, the attempts to feed it and the various failures in doing so, and with the real and imaginary illnesses of mother and child, in which Ivan Ilych's sympathy was demanded but about which he understood nothing, the need of securing for himself an existence outside his family life became still more imperative.

As his wife grew more irritable and exacting and Ivan Ilych transferred the center of gravity of his life more and more to his official work, so did he grow to like his work better and became more ambitious than before.

Very soon, within a year of his wedding, Ivan Ilych had realized that marriage, though it may add some comforts to life, is in fact a very intricate and difficult affair towards which in order to perform one's duty, that is, to lead a decorous life approved of by society, one must adopt a definite attitude just as towards one's official duties.

And Ivan Ilych evolved such an attitude towards married life. He only required of it those conveniences — dinner at home, housewife, and bed — which it could give him, and above all that propriety of external forms required by public opinion. For the rest he looked for lighthearted pleasure and propriety, and was very thankful when he found them, but if he met with antagonism and querulousness he at once retired into his separate fenced-off world of official duties, where he found satisfaction.

Ivan Ilych was esteemed a good official, and after three years was made Assistant Public Prosecutor. His new duties, their importance, the possibility of indicting and imprisoning anyone he chose, the publicity his speeches received, and the success he had in all these things, made his work still more attractive.

More children came. His wife became more and more querulous and ill-tempered, but the attitude Ivan Ilych had adopted towards his home life rendered him almost impervious to her grumbling.

After seven years' service in that town he was transferred to another province as Public Prosecutor. They moved, but were short of money and his wife did not like the place they moved to. Though the salary was higher the cost of living was greater, besides which two of their children died and family life became still more unpleasant for him.

Praskovya Fedorovna blamed her husband for every inconvenience they encountered in their new home. Most of the conversations between husband and wife, especially as to the children's education, led to topics which recalled former disputes, and these disputes were apt to flare up again at any moment. There remained only those rare periods of amorousness which still came to them at times but did not last long. These were islets at which they anchored for a while and then again set out upon that ocean of veiled hostility which showed itself in their aloofness from one another. This aloofness might have grieved Ivan Ilych had he considered that it ought not to exist, but he now regarded the position as normal, and even made it the goal at which he aimed in family life. His aim was to free himself more and more from those unpleasantnesses and to give them a semblance of harmlessness and propriety. He attained this by spending less and less time with his family, and when obliged to be at home he tried to safeguard his position by the presence of outsiders. The chief thing however was that he had his official duties. The whole interest of his life now centered in the official world and that interest absorbed
him. The consciousness of his power, being able to ruin anybody he wished to ruin, the importance, even the external dignity of his entry into court, or meetings with his subordinates, his success with superiors and inferiors, and above all his masterly handling of cases, of which he was conscious — all this gave him pleasure and filled his life, together with chats with his colleagues, dinners, and bridge. So that on the whole Ivan Ilych's life continued to flow as he considered it should do — pleasantly and properly.

So things continued for another seven years. His eldest daughter was already sixteen, another child had died, and only one son was left, a schoolboy and a subject of dissension. Ivan Ilych wanted to put him in the School of Law, but to spite him Praskovya Fedorovna entered him at the High School. The daughter had been educated at home and had turned out well: the boy did not learn badly either.

III

So Ivan Ilych lived for seventeen years after his marriage. He was already a Public Prosecutor of long standing, and had declined several proposed transfers while awaiting a more desirable post, when an unanticipated and unpleasant occurrence quite upset the peaceful course of his life. He was expecting to be offered the post of presiding judge in a University town, but Hoppe somehow came to the front and obtained the appointment instead. Ivan Ilych became irritable, reproached Hoppe, and quarrelled both with him and with his immediate superiors — who became colder to him and again passed him over when other appointments were made.

This was in 1880, the hardest year of Ivan Ilych's life. It was then that it became evident on the one hand that his salary was insufficient for them to live on, and on the other that he had been forgotten, and not only this, but that what was for him the greatest and most cruel injustice appeared to others a quite ordinary occurrence. Even his father did not consider it his duty to help him. Ivan Ilych felt himself abandoned by everyone, and that they regarded his position with a salary of 3,500 rubles as quite normal and even fortunate. He alone knew that with the consciousness of the injustices done him, with his wife's incessant nagging, and with the debts he had contracted by living beyond his means, his position was far from normal.

In order to save money that summer he obtained leave of absence and went with his wife to live in the country at her brother's place.

In the country, without his work, he experienced ennui for the first time in his life, and not only ennui but intolerable depression, and he decided that it was impossible to go on living like that, and that it was necessary to take energetic measures.

Having passed a sleepless night pacing up and down the veranda, he decided to go to Petersburg and bestir himself, in order to punish those who had failed to appreciate him and to get transferred to another ministry.

Next day, despite many protests from his wife and her brother, he started for Petersburg with the sole object of obtaining a post with a salary of five thousand rubles a year. He was no longer bent on any particular department, or tendency, or kind of activity. All he now wanted was an appointment to another post with a salary of five thousand rubles, either in the administration, in the banks, with the railways, in one of the Empress Marya's Institutions, or even in the customs — but it had to carry with it a salary of five thousand rubles and be in a ministry other than that in which they had failed to appreciate him.

And this quest of Ivan Ilych's was crowned with remarkable and unexpected success. At Kursk an acquaintance of his, F. I. Ilyin, got into the first-class carriage, sat down beside Ivan Ilych, and told him of a telegram just received
by the governor of Kursk announcing that a change was about to take place in the ministry: Peter Ivanovich was to be superseded by Ivan Semyonovich.

The proposed change, apart from its significance for Russia, had a special significance for Ivan Ilych, because by bringing forward a new man, Peter Petrovich, and consequently his friend Zakhar Ivanovich, it was highly favourable for Ivan Ilych, since Zakhar Ivanovich was a friend and colleague of his.

In Moscow this news was confirmed, and on reaching Petersburg Ivan Ilych found Zakhar Ivanovich and received a definite promise of an appointment in his former Department of Justice.

A week later he telegraphed to his wife: “Zakhar in Miller's place. I shall receive appointment on presentation of report.”

Thanks to this change of personnel, Ivan Ilych had unexpectedly obtained an appointment in his former ministry which placed him two states above his former colleagues besides giving him five thousand rubles salary and three thousand five hundred rubles for expenses connected with his removal. All his ill humour towards his former enemies and the whole department vanished, and Ivan Ilych was completely happy.

He returned to the country more cheerful and contented than he had been for a long time. Praskovya Fedorovna also cheered up and a truce was arranged between them. Ivan Ilych told of how he had been feted by everybody in Petersburg, how all those who had been his enemies were put to shame and now fawned on him, how envious they were of his appointment, and how much everybody in Petersburg had liked him.

Praskovya Fedorovna listened to all this and appeared to believe it. She did not contradict anything, but only made plans for their life in the town to which they were going. Ivan Ilych saw with delight that these plans were his plans, that he and his wife agreed, and that, after a stumble, his life was regaining its due and natural character of pleasant lightheartedness and decorum.

Ivan Ilych had come back for a short time only, for he had to take up his new duties on the 10th of September. Moreover, he needed time to settle into the new place, to move all his belongings from the province, and to buy and order many additional things: in a word, to make such arrangements as he had resolved on, which were almost exactly what Praskovya Fedorovna too had decided on.

Now that everything had happened so fortunately, and that he and his wife were at one in their aims and moreover saw so little of one another, they got on together better than they had done since the first years of marriage. Ivan Ilych had thought of taking his family away with him at once, but the insistence of his wife's brother and her sister-in-law, who had suddenly become particularly amiable and friendly to him and his family, induced him to depart alone.

So he departed, and the cheerful state of mind induced by his success and by the harmony between his wife and himself, the one intensifying the other, did not leave him. He found a delightful house, just the thing both he and his wife had dreamt of. Spacious, lofty reception rooms in the old style, a convenient and dignified study, rooms for his wife and daughter, a study for his son — it might have been specially built for them. Ivan Ilych himself superintended the arrangements, chose the wallpapers, supplemented the furniture (preferably with antiques which he considered particularly *comme il faut*), and supervised the upholstering. Everything progressed and progressed and approached the ideal he had set himself: even when things were only half completed they exceeded his expectations. He saw what a refined and elegant character, free from vulgarity, it would all have when it was ready. On falling asleep he pictured to himself how the reception room would look. Looking at the yet unfinished drawing room he could see the fireplace, the screen, the what-not cabinet, the little chairs dotted here and there, the dishes and plates on the walls, and the bronzes, as they would be when everything was in
place. He was pleased by the thought of how his wife and daughter, who shared his taste in this matter, would be impressed by it. They were certainly not expecting as much. He had been particularly successful in finding, and buying cheaply, antiques which gave a particularly aristocratic character to the whole place. But in his letters he intentionally understated everything in order to be able to surprise them. All this so absorbed him that his new duties — though he liked his official work — interested him less than he had expected. Sometimes he even had moments of absent-mindedness during the court sessions and would consider whether he should have straight or curved cornices for his curtains. He was so interested in it all that he often did things himself, rearranging the furniture, or rehanging the curtains. Once when mounting a step-ladder to show the upholsterer, who did not understand, how he wanted the hangings draped, he made a false step and slipped, but being a strong and agile man he clung on and only knocked his side against the knob of the window frame. The bruised place was painful but the pain soon passed, and he felt particularly bright and well just then. He wrote: “I feel fifteen years younger.” He thought he would have everything ready by September, but it dragged on till mid-October. But the result was charming not only in his eyes but to everyone who saw it.

In reality it was just what is usually seen in the houses of people of moderate means who want to appear rich, and therefore succeed only in resembling others like themselves: there are damasks, dark wood, plants, rugs, and dull and polished bronzes — all the things people of a certain class have in order to resemble other people of that class. His house was so like the others that it would never have been noticed, but to him it all seemed to be quite exceptional. He was very happy when he met his family at the station and brought them to the newly furnished house all lit up, where a footman in a white tie opened the door into the hall decorated with plants, and when they went on into the drawing-room and the study uttering exclamations of delight. He conducted them everywhere, drank in their praises eagerly, and beamed with pleasure. At tea that evening, when Praskovya Fedorovna among others things asked him about his fall, he laughed, and showed them how he had gone flying and had frightened the upholsterer.

“It’s a good thing I’m a bit of an athlete. Another man might have been killed, but I merely knocked myself, just here; it hurts when it’s touched, but it’s passing off already — it’s only a bruise.”

So they began living in their new home — in which, as always happens, when they got thoroughly settled in they found they were just one room short — and with the increased income, which as always was just a little (some five hundred rubles) too little, but it was all very nice.

Things went particularly well at first, before everything was finally arranged and while something had still to be done: this thing bought, that thing ordered, another thing moved, and something else adjusted. Though there were some disputes between husband and wife, they were both so well satisfied and had so much to do that it all passed off without any serious quarrels. When nothing was left to arrange it became rather dull and something seemed to be lacking, but they were then making acquaintances, forming habits, and life was growing fuller.

Ivan Ilych spent his mornings at the law court and came home to dinner, and at first he was generally in a good humour, though he occasionally became irritable just on account of his house. (Every spot on the tablecloth or the upholstery, and every broken window-blind string, irritated him. He had devoted so much trouble to arranging it all that every disturbance of it distressed him.) But on the whole his life ran its course as he believed life should do: easily, pleasantly, and decorously.

He got up at nine, drank his coffee, read the paper, and then put on his undress uniform and went to the law courts. There the harness in which he worked had already been stretched to fit him and he donned it without a hitch: petitioners, inquiries at the chancery, the chancery itself, and the sittings public and administrative. In all this the thing was to exclude everything fresh and vital, which always disturbs the regular course of official business, and to admit only official relations with people, and then only on official grounds. A man would come, for instance,
wanting some information. Ivan Ilych, as one in whose sphere the matter did not lie, would have nothing to do with him: but if the man had some business with him in his official capacity, something that could be expressed on officially stamped paper, he would do everything, positively everything he could within the limits of such relations, and in doing so would maintain the semblance of friendly human relations, that is, would observe the courtesies of life. As soon as the official relations ended, so did everything else. Ivan Ilych possessed this capacity to separate his real life from the official side of affairs and not mix the two, in the highest degree, and by long practice and natural aptitude had brought it to such a pitch that sometimes, in the manner of a virtuoso, he would even allow himself to let the human and official relations mingle. He let himself do this just because he felt that he could at any time he chose resume the strictly official attitude again and drop the human relation. and he did it all easily, pleasantly, correctly, and even artistically. In the intervals between the sessions he smoked, drank tea, chatted a little about politics, a little about general topics, a little about cards, but most of all about official appointments. Tired, but with the feelings of a virtuoso — one of the first violins who has played his part in an orchestra with precision — he would return home to find that his wife and daughter had been out paying calls, or had a visitor, and that his son had been to school, had done his homework with his tutor, and was surely learning what is taught at High Schools. Everything was as it should be. After dinner, if they had no visitors, Ivan Ilych sometimes read a book that was being much discussed at the time, and in the evening settled down to work, that is, read official papers, compared the depositions of witnesses, and noted paragraphs of the Code applying to them. This was neither dull nor amusing. It was dull when he might have been playing bridge, but if no bridge was available it was at any rate better than doing nothing or sitting with his wife. Ivan Ilych's chief pleasure was giving little dinners to which he invited men and women of good social position, and just as his drawing-room resembled all other drawing-rooms so did his enjoyable little parties resemble all other such parties.

Once they even gave a dance. Ivan Ilych enjoyed it and everything went off well, except that it led to a violent quarrel with his wife about the cakes and sweets. Praskovya Fedorovna had made her own plans, but Ivan Ilych insisted on getting everything from an expensive confectioner and ordered too many cakes, and the quarrel occurred because some of those cakes were left over and the confectioner’s bill came to forty-five rubles. It was a great and disagreeable quarrel. Praskovya Fedorovna called him “a fool and an imbecile,” and he clutched at his head and made angry allusions to divorce.

But the dance itself had been enjoyable. The best people were there, and Ivan Ilych had danced with Princess Trufonova, a sister of the distinguished founder of the Society “Bear My Burden”.

The pleasures connected with his work were pleasures of ambition; his social pleasures were those of vanity; but Ivan Ilych’s greatest pleasure was playing bridge. He acknowledged that whatever disagreeable incident happened in his life, the pleasure that beamed like a ray of light above everything else was to sit down to bridge with good players, not noisy partners, and of course to four-handed bridge (with five players it was annoying to have to stand out, though one pretended not to mind), to play a clever and serious game (when the cards allowed it) and then to have supper and drink a glass of wine. after a game of bridge, especially if he had won a little (to win a large sum was unpleasant), Ivan Ilych went to bed in a specially good humour.

So they lived. They formed a circle of acquaintances among the best people and were visited by people of importance and by young folk. In their views as to their acquaintances, husband, wife and daughter were entirely agreed, and tacitly and unanimously kept at arm’s length and shook off the various shabby friends and relations who, with much show of affection, gushed into the drawing-room with its Japanese plates on the walls. Soon these shabby friends ceased to obtrude themselves and only the best people remained in the Golovins’ set.

Young men made up to Lisa, and Petrishchev, an examining magistrate and Dmitri Ivanovich Petrishchev's son and
sole heir, began to be so attentive to her that Ivan Ilych had already spoken to Praskovya Fedorovna about it, and considered whether they should not arrange a party for them, or get up some private theatricals.

So they lived, and all went well, without change, and life flowed pleasantly.

IV

They were all in good health. It could not be called ill health if Ivan Ilych sometimes said that he had a queer taste in his mouth and felt some discomfort in his left side.

But this discomfort increased and, though not exactly painful, grew into a sense of pressure in his side accompanied by ill humour. And his irritability became worse and worse and began to mar the agreeable, easy, and correct life that had established itself in the Golovin family. Quarrels between husband and wife became more and more frequent, and soon the ease and amenity disappeared and even the decorum was barely maintained. Scenes again became frequent, and very few of those islets remained on which husband and wife could meet without an explosion. Praskovya Fedorovna now had good reason to say that her husband's temper was trying. With characteristic exaggeration she said he had always had a dreadful temper, and that it had needed all her good nature to put up with it for twenty years. It was true that now the quarrels were started by him. His bursts of temper always came just before dinner, often just as he began to eat his soup. Sometimes he noticed that a plate or dish was chipped, or the food was not right, or his son put his elbow on the table, or his daughter's hair was not done as he liked it, and for all this he blamed Praskovya Fedorovna. At first she retorted and said disagreeable things to him, but once or twice he fell into such a rage at the beginning of dinner that she realized it was due to some physical derangement brought on by taking food, and so she restrained herself and did not answer, but only hurried to get the dinner over. She regarded this self-restraint as highly praiseworthy. Having come to the conclusion that her husband had a dreadful temper and made her life miserable, she began to feel sorry for herself, and the more she pitied herself the more she hated her husband. She began to wish he would die; yet she did not want him to die because then his salary would cease. And this irritated her against him still more. She considered herself dreadfully unhappy just because not even his death could save her, and though she concealed her exasperation, that hidden exasperation of hers increased his irritation also.

After one scene in which Ivan Ilych had been particularly unfair and after which he had said in explanation that he certainly was irritable but that it was due to his not being well, she said that if he was ill it should be attended to, and insisted on his going to see a celebrated doctor.

He went. Everything took place as he had expected and as it always does. There was the usual waiting and the important air assumed by the doctor, with which he was so familiar (resembling that which he himself assumed in court), and the sounding and listening, and the questions which called for answers that were foregone conclusions and were evidently unnecessary, and the look of importance which implied that "if only you put yourself in our hands we will arrange everything — we know indubitably how it has to be done, always in the same way for everybody alike." It was all just as it was in the law courts. The doctor put on just the same air towards him as he himself put on towards an accused person.

The doctor said that so-and-so indicated that there was so- and-so inside the patient, but if the investigation of so-and-so did not confirm this, then he must assume that and that. If he assumed that and that, then...and so on. To Ivan Ilych only one question was important: was his case serious or not? But the doctor ignored that inappropriate question. From his point of view it was not the one under consideration, the real question was to decide between a floating kidney, chronic catarrh, or appendicitis. It was not a question of the life of Ivan Ilych, but rather a dispute between the floating kidney and the appendix which the doctor solved brilliantly, as it seemed
to Ivan Ilych, in favour of the appendix, with the reservation that should an examination of the urine give fresh indications the matter would be reconsidered. All this was just what Ivan Ilych had himself brilliantly accomplished a thousand times in dealing with men on trial. The doctor summed up just as brilliantly, looking over his spectacles triumphantly and even gaily at the accused. From the doctor's summing up Ivan Ilych concluded that things were bad, but that for the doctor, and perhaps for everybody else, it was a matter of indifference, though for him it was bad. And this conclusion struck him painfully, arousing in him a great feeling of pity for himself and of bitterness towards the doctor's indifference to a matter of such importance.

He said nothing of this, but rose, placed the doctor's fee on the table, and remarked with a sigh: “We sick people probably often put inappropriate questions. But tell me, in general, is this complaint dangerous, or not?...”

The doctor looked at him sternly over his spectacles with one eye, as if to say: “Prisoner, if you will not keep to the questions put to you, I shall be obliged to have you removed from the court.”

“I have already told you what I consider necessary and proper. The analysis may show something more.” And the doctor bowed.

Ivan Ilych went out slowly, seated himself disconsolately in his sledge, and drove home. All the way home he was going over what the doctor had said, trying to translate those complicated, obscure, scientific phrases into plain language and find in them an answer to the question: “Is my condition bad? Is it very bad? Or is there as yet nothing much wrong?” And it seemed to him that the meaning of what the doctor had said was that it was very bad. Everything in the streets seemed depressing. The cabmen, the houses, the passers-by, and the shops, were dismal. His ache, this dull gnawing ache that never ceased for a moment, seemed to have acquired a new and more serious significance from the doctor's dubious remarks. Ivan Ilych now watched it with a new and oppressive feeling.

He reached home and began to tell his wife about it. She listened, but in the middle of his account his daughter came in with her hat on, ready to go out with her mother. She sat down reluctantly to listen to this tedious story, but could not stand it long, and her mother too did not hear him to the end.

“Well, I am very glad,” she said. “Mind now to take your medicine regularly. Give me the prescription and I'll send Gerasim to the chemist's.” And she went to get ready to go out.

While she was in the room Ivan Ilych had hardly taken time to breathe, but he sighed deeply when she left it.

“Well,” he thought, “perhaps it isn't so bad after all.”

He began taking his medicine and following the doctor's directions, which had been altered after the examination of the urine. But then it happened that there was a contradiction between the indications drawn from the examination of the urine and the symptoms that showed themselves. It turned out that what was happening differed from what the doctor had told him, and that he had either forgotten or blundered, or hidden something from him. He could not, however, be blamed for that, and Ivan Ilych still obeyed his orders implicitly and at first derived some comfort from doing so.

From the time of his visit to the doctor, Ivan Ilych's chief occupation was the exact fulfillment of the doctor's instructions regarding hygiene and the taking of medicine, and the observation of his pain and his excretions. His chief interest came to be people's ailments and people's health. When sickness, deaths, or recoveries were mentioned in his presence, especially when the illness resembled his own, he listened with agitation which he tried to hide, asked questions, and applied what he heard to his own case.
The pain did not grow less, but Ivan Ilych made efforts to force himself to think that he was better. And he could do
this so long as nothing agitated him. But as soon as he had any unpleasantness with his wife, any lack of success
in his official work, or held bad cards at bridge, he was at once acutely sensible of his disease. He had formerly
borne such mischances, hoping soon to adjust what was wrong, to master it and attain success, or make a grand
slam. But now every mischance upset him and plunged him into despair. He would say to himself: “there now, just
as I was beginning to get better and the medicine had begun to take effect, comes this accursed misfortune, or
unpleasantness…” And he was furious with the mishap, or with the people who were causing the unpleasantness
and killing him, for he felt that this fury was killing him but he could not restrain it. One would have thought
that it should have been clear to him that this exasperation with circumstances and people aggravated his illness,
and that he ought therefore to ignore unpleasant occurrences. But he drew the very opposite conclusion: he said
that he needed peace, and he watched for everything that might disturb it and became irritable at the slightest
infringement of it. His condition was rendered worse by the fact that he read medical books and consulted
doctors. The progress of his disease was so gradual that he could deceive himself when comparing one day with
another — the difference was so slight. But when he consulted the doctors it seemed to him that he was getting
worse, and even very rapidly. Yet despite this he was continually consulting them.

That month he went to see another celebrity, who told him almost the same as the first had done but put his
questions rather differently, and the interview with this celebrity only increased Ivan Ilych's doubts and fears. A
friend of a friend of his, a very good doctor, diagnosed his illness again quite differently from the others, and
though he predicted recovery, his questions and suppositions bewildered Ivan Ilych still more and increased his
doubts. A homeopathist diagnosed the disease in yet another way, and prescribed medicine which Ivan Ilych
took secretly for a week. But after a week, not feeling any improvement and having lost confidence both in the
former doctor's treatment and in this one's, he became still more despondent. One day a lady acquaintance
mentioned a cure effected by a wonder-working icon. Ivan Ilych caught himself listening attentively and beginning
to believe that it had occurred. This incident alarmed him. “Has my mind really weakened to such an extent?” he
asked himself. “Nonsense! It's all rubbish. I mustn't give way to nervous fears but having chosen a doctor must
keep strictly to his treatment. That is what I will do. Now it's all settled. I won't think about it, but will follow the
treatment seriously till summer, and then we shall see. From now there must be no more of this wavering!” This
was easy to say but impossible to carry out. The pain in his side oppressed him and seemed to grow worse and
more incessant, while the taste in his mouth grew stranger and stranger. It seemed to him that his breath had
a disgusting smell, and he was conscious of a loss of appetite and strength. There was no deceiving himself:
something terrible, new, and more important than anything before in his life, was taking place within him of which
he alone was aware. Those about him did not understand or would not understand it, but thought everything
in the world was going on as usual. That tormented Ivan Ilych more than anything. He saw that his household,
especially his wife and daughter who were in a perfect whirl of visiting, did not understand anything of it and were
annoyed that he was so depressed and so exacting, as if he were to blame for it. Though they tried to disguise it
he saw that he was an obstacle in their path, and that his wife had adopted a definite line in regard to his illness
and kept to it regardless of anything he said or did. Her attitude was this: “You know,” she would say to her friends,
“Ivan Ilych can't do as other people do, and keep to the treatment prescribed for him. One day he'll take his drops
and keep strictly to his diet and go to bed in good time, but the next day unless I watch him he'll suddenly forget
his medicine, eat sturgeon — which is forbidden — and sit up playing cards till one o'clock in the morning.”

“Oh, come, when was that?” Ivan Ilych would ask in vexation. “Only once at Peter Ivanovich's.”

“And yesterday with Shebek.”

“Well, even if I hadn't stayed up, this pain would have kept me awake.”
“Be that as it may you’ll never get well like that, but will always make us wretched.”

Praskovya Fedorovna’s attitude to Ivan Ilych’s illness, as she expressed it both to others and to him, was that it was his own fault and was another of the annoyances he caused her. Ivan Ilych felt that this opinion escaped her involuntarily — but that did not make it easier for him.

At the law courts too, Ivan Ilych noticed, or thought he noticed, a strange attitude towards himself. It sometimes seemed to him that people were watching him inquisitively as a man whose place might soon be vacant. Then again, his friends would suddenly begin to chaff him in a friendly way about his low spirits, as if the awful, horrible, and unheard-of thing that was going on within him, incessantly gnawing at him and irresistibly drawing him away, was a very agreeable subject for jests. Schwartz in particular irritated him by his jocularity, vivacity, and savoir-faire, which reminded him of what he himself had been ten years ago.

Friends came to make up a set and they sat down to cards. They dealt, bending the new cards to soften them, and he sorted the diamonds in his hand and found he had seven. His partner said “No trumps” and supported him with two diamonds. What more could be wished for? It ought to be jolly and lively. They would make a grand slam. But suddenly Ivan Ilych was conscious of that gnawing pain, that taste in his mouth, and it seemed ridiculous that in such circumstances he should be pleased to make a grand slam.

He looked at his partner Mikhail Mikhaylovich, who rapped the table with his strong hand and instead of snatching up the tricks pushed the cards courteously and indulgently towards Ivan Ilych that he might have the pleasure of gathering them up without the trouble of stretching out his hand for them. “Does he think I am too weak to stretch out my arm?” thought Ivan Ilych, and forgetting what he was doing he over-trumped his partner, missing the grand slam by three tricks. And what was most awful of all was that he saw how upset Mikhail Mikhaylovich was about it but did not himself care. And it was dreadful to realize why he did not care.

They all saw that he was suffering, and said: “We can stop if you are tired. Take a rest.” Lie down? No, he was not at all tired, and he finished the rubber. All were gloomy and silent. Ivan Ilych felt that he had diffused this gloom over them and could not dispel it. They had supper and went away, and Ivan Ilych was left alone with the consciousness that his life was poisoned and was poisoning the lives of others, and that this poison did not weaken but penetrated more and more deeply into his whole being.

With this consciousness, and with physical pain besides the terror, he must go to bed, often to lie awake the greater part of the night. Next morning he had to get up again, dress, go to the law courts, speak, and write; or if he did not go out, spend at home those twenty-four hours a day each of which was a torture. And he had to live thus all alone on the brink of an abyss, with no one who understood or pitied him.

V

So one month passed and then another. Just before the New Year his brother-in-law came to town and stayed at their house. Ivan Ilych was at the law courts and Praskovya Fedorovna had gone shopping. When Ivan Ilych came home and entered his study he found his brother-in-law there — a healthy, florid man — unpacking his portmanteau himself. He raised his head on hearing Ivan Ilych’s footsteps and looked up at him for a moment without a word. That stare told Ivan Ilych everything. His brother-in-law opened his mouth to utter an exclamation of surprise but checked himself, and that action confirmed it all.

“I have changed, eh?”
“Yes, there is a change.”

And after that, try as he would to get his brother-in-law to return to the subject of his looks, the latter would say nothing about it. Praskovya Fedorovna came home and her brother went out to her. Ivan Ilych locked the door and began to examine himself in the glass, first full face, then in profile. He took up a portrait of himself taken with his wife, and compared it with what he saw in the glass. The change in him was immense. Then he bared his arms to the elbow, looked at them, drew the sleeves down again, sat down on an ottoman, and grew blacker than night.

“No, no, this won't do!” he said to himself, and jumped up, went to the table, took up some law papers and began to read them, but could not continue. He unlocked the door and went into the reception-room. The door leading to the drawing-room was shut. He approached it on tiptoe and listened.

“No, you are exaggerating!” Praskovya Fedorovna was saying.

“Exaggerating! Don't you see it? Why, he's a dead man! Look at his eyes — there's no life in them. But what is it that is wrong with him?”

“No one knows. Nikolaevich [that was another doctor] said something, but I don't know what. And Leshchetitsky [this was the celebrated specialist] said quite the contrary...”

Ivan Ilych walked away, went to his own room, lay down, and began musing; “The kidney, a floating kidney.” He recalled all the doctors had told him of how it detached itself and swayed about. And by an effort of imagination he tried to catch that kidney and arrest it and support it. So little was needed for this, it seemed to him. “No, I'll go to see Peter Ivanovich again.” [That was the friend whose friend was a doctor.] He rang, ordered the carriage, and got ready to go.

“Where are you going, Jean?” asked his wife with a specially sad and exceptionally kind look.

This exceptionally kind look irritated him. He looked morosely at her.

“I must go to see Peter Ivanovich.”

He went to see Peter Ivanovich, and together they went to see his friend, the doctor. He was in, and Ivan Ilych had a long talk with him.

Reviewing the anatomical and physiological details of what in the doctor's opinion was going on inside him, he understood it all.

There was something, a small thing, in the vermiform appendix. It might all come right. Only stimulate the energy of one organ and check the activity of another, then absorption would take place and everything would come right. He got home rather late for dinner, ate his dinner, and conversed cheerfully, but could not for a long time bring himself to go back to work in his room. At last, however, he went to his study and did what was necessary, but the consciousness that he had put something aside — an important, intimate matter which he would revert to when his work was done — never left him. When he had finished his work he remembered that this intimate matter was the thought of his vermiform appendix. But he did not give himself up to it, and went to the drawing-room for tea. There were callers there, including the examining magistrate who was a desirable match for his daughter, and they were conversing, playing the piano, and singing. Ivan Ilych, as Praskovya Fedorovna remarked, spent that evening more cheerfully than usual, but he never for a moment forgot that he had postponed the important matter of the appendix. At eleven o'clock he said goodnight and went to his bedroom. Since his illness he had slept alone in a small room next to his study. He undressed and took up a novel by Zola, but instead of reading it he fell
into thought, and in his imagination that desired improvement in the vermiform appendix occurred. There was
the absorption and evacuation and the re-establishment of normal activity. “Yes, that’s it!” he said to himself. “One
need only assist nature, that’s all.” He remembered his medicine, rose, took it, and lay down on his back watching
for the beneficent action of the medicine and for it to lessen the pain. “I need only take it regularly and avoid all
injurious influences. I am already feeling better, much better.” He began touching his side: it was not painful to
the touch. “There, I really don’t feel it. It’s much better already.” He put out the light and turned on his side … “The
appendix is getting better, absorption is occurring.” Suddenly he felt the old, familiar, dull, gnawing pain, stubborn
and serious. There was the same familiar loathsome taste in his mouth. His heart sank and he felt dazed. “My
God! My God!” he muttered. “Again, again! And it will never cease.” And suddenly the matter presented itself in a
quite different aspect. “Vermiform appendix! Kidney!” he said to himself. “It’s not a question of appendix or kidney,
but of life and…death. Yes, life was there and now it is going, going and I cannot stop it. Yes. Why deceive myself?
Isn’t it obvious to everyone but me that I’m dying, and that it’s only a question of weeks, days…it may happen this
moment. There was light and now there is darkness. I was here and now I’m going there! Where?” A chill came
over him, his breathing ceased, and he felt only the throbbing of his heart.

“When I am not, what will there be? There will be nothing. Then where shall I be when I am no more? Can this be
dying? No, I don’t want to!” He jumped up and tried to light the candle, felt for it with trembling hands, dropped
candle and candlestick on the floor, and fell back on his pillow.

“What’s the use? It makes no difference,” he said to himself, staring with wide-open eyes into the darkness. “Death.
Yes, death. And none of them knows or wishes to know it, and they have no pity for me. Now they are playing.” (He
heard through the door the distant sound of a song and its accompaniment.) “It’s all the same to them, but they
will die too! Fools! I first, and they later, but it will be the same for them. And now they are merry…the beasts!”

Anger choked him and he was agonizingly, unbearably miserable. “It is impossible that all men have been doomed
to suffer this awful horror!” He raised himself.

“Something must be wrong. I must calm myself — must think it all over from the beginning.” And he again began
thinking. “Yes, the beginning of my illness: I knocked my side, but I was still quite well that day and the next. It hurt
a little, then rather more. I saw the doctors, then followed despondency and anguish, more doctors, and I drew
nearer to the abyss. My strength grew less and I kept coming nearer and nearer, and now I have wasted away and
there is no light in my eyes. I think of the appendix — but this is death! I think of mending the appendix, and all
the while here is death! Can it really be death?” Again terror seized him and he gasped for breath. He leant down
and began feeling for the matches, pressing with his elbow on the stand beside the bed. It was in his way and hurt
him, he grew furious with it, pressed on it still harder, and upset it. Breathless and in despair he fell on his back,
effecting death to come immediately.

Meanwhile the visitors were leaving. Praskovya Fedorovna was seeing them off. She heard something fall and
came in.

“What has happened?”

“Nothing, I knocked it over accidentally.”

She went out and returned with a candle. He lay there panting heavily, like a man who has run a thousand yards,
and stared upwards at her with a fixed look.

“What is it, Jean?”

“No...o...thing. I upset it.” (“Why speak of it? She won’t understand,” he thought.)
And in truth she did not understand. She picked up the stand, lit his candle, and hurried away to see another visitor off. When she came back he still lay on his back, looking upwards.

“What is it? Do you feel worse?”

“Yes.”

She shook her head and sat down.

“Do you know, Jean, I think we must ask Leshchetitsky to come and see you here.”

This meant calling in the famous specialist, regardless of expense. He smiled malignantly and said “No.” She remained a little longer and then went up to him and kissed his forehead.

While she was kissing him he hated her from the bottom of his soul and with difficulty refrained from pushing her away.

“Good night. Please God you'll sleep.”

“Yes.”

VI

Ivan Ilych saw that he was dying, and he was in continual despair.

In the depth of his heart he knew he was dying, but not only was he not accustomed to the thought, he simply did not and could not grasp it.

The syllogism he had learnt from Kiesewetter’s Logic: “Caius is a man, men are mortal, therefore Caius is mortal,” had always seemed to him correct as applied to Caius, but certainly not as applied to himself. That Caius — man in the abstract — was mortal, was perfectly correct, but he was not Caius, not an abstract man, but a creature quite, quite separate from all others. He had been little Vanya, with a mamma and a papa, with Mitya and Volodya, with the toys, a coachman and a nurse, afterwards with Katenka and with all the joys, griefs, and delights of childhood, boyhood, and youth. What did Caius know of the smell of that striped leather ball Vanya had been so fond of? Had Caius kissed his mother's hand like that, and did the silk of her dress rustle so for Caius? Had he rioted like that at school when the pastry was bad? Had Caius been in love like that? Could Caius preside at a session as he did? “Caius really was mortal, and it was right for him to die; but for me, little Vanya, Ivan Ilych, with all my thoughts and emotions, it's altogether a different matter. It cannot be that I ought to die. That would be too terrible.”

Such was his feeling.

“If I had to die like Caius I would have known it was so. An inner voice would have told me so, but there was nothing of the sort in me and I and all my friends felt that our case was quite different from that of Caius. And now here it is!” he said to himself. “It can’t be. It's impossible! But here it is. How is this? How is one to understand it?”

He could not understand it, and tried to drive this false, incorrect, morbid thought away and to replace it by other proper and healthy thoughts. But that thought, and not the thought only but the reality itself, seemed to come and confront him.

And to replace that thought he called up a succession of others, hoping to find in them some support. He tried to
get back into the former current of thoughts that had once screened the thought of death from him. But strange to say, all that had formerly shut off, hidden, and destroyed his consciousness of death, no longer had that effect. Ivan Ilych now spent most of his time in attempting to re-establish that old current. He would say to himself: “I will take up my duties again — after all I used to live by them.” And banishing all doubts he would go to the law courts, enter into conversation with his colleagues, and sit carelessly as was his wont, scanning the crowd with a thoughtful look and leaning both his emaciated arms on the arms of his oak chair; bending over as usual to a colleague and drawing his papers nearer he would interchange whispers with him, and then suddenly raising his eyes and sitting erect would pronounce certain words and open the proceedings. But suddenly in the midst of those proceedings the pain in his side, regardless of the stage the proceedings had reached, would begin its own gnawing work. Ivan Ilych would turn his attention to it and try to drive the thought of it away, but without success. It would come and stand before him and look at him, and he would be petrified and the light would die out of his eyes, and he would again begin asking himself whether It alone was true. And his colleagues and subordinates would see with surprise and distress that he, the brilliant and subtle judge, was becoming confused and making mistakes. He would shake himself, try to pull himself together, manage somehow to bring the sitting to a close, and return home with the sorrowful consciousness that his judicial labours could not as formerly hide from him what he wanted them to hide, and could not deliver him from It. And what was worst of all was that It drew his attention to itself not in order to make him take some action but only that he should look at It, look it straight in the face: look at it and without doing anything, suffer inexpressibly.

And to save himself from this condition Ivan Ilych looked for consolations — new screens — and new screens were found and for a while seemed to save him, but then they immediately fell to pieces or rather became transparent, as if It penetrated them and nothing could veil It.

In these latter days he would go into the drawing-room he had arranged — that drawing-room where he had fallen and for the sake of which (how bitterly ridiculous it seemed) he had sacrificed his life — for he knew that his illness originated with that knock. He would enter and see that something had scratched the polished table. He would look for the cause of this and find that it was the bronze ornamentation of an album, that had got bent. He would take up the expensive album which he had lovingly arranged, and feel vexed with his daughter and her friends for their untidiness — for the album was torn here and there and some of the photographs turned upside down. He would put it carefully in order and bend the ornamentation back into position. Then it would occur to him to place all those things in another corner of the room, near the plants. He would call the footman, but his daughter or wife would come to help him. They would not agree, and his wife would contradict him, and he would dispute and grow angry. But that was all right, for then he did not think about It. It was invisible.

But then, when he was moving something himself, his wife would say: “Let the servants do it. You will hurt yourself again.” And suddenly It would flash through the screen and he would see it. It was just a flash, and he hoped it would disappear, but he would involuntarily pay attention to his side. “It sits there as before, gnawing just the same!” And he could no longer forget It, but could distinctly see it looking at him from behind the flowers. “What is it all for?”

“It really is so! I lost my life over that curtain as I might have done when storming a fort. Is that possible? How terrible and how stupid. It can't be true! It can't, but it is.”

He would go to his study, lie down, and again be alone with It: face to face with It. And nothing could be done with It except to look at it and shudder.
How it happened it is impossible to say because it came about step by step, unnoticed, but in the third month of Ivan Ilych's illness, his wife, his daughter, his son, his acquaintances, the doctors, the servants, and above all he himself, were aware that the whole interest he had for other people was whether he would soon vacate his place, and at last release the living from the discomfort caused by his presence and be himself released from his sufferings.

He slept less and less. He was given opium and hypodermic injections of morphine, but this did not relieve him. The dull depression he experienced in a somnolent condition at first gave him a little relief, but only as something new, afterwards it became as distressing as the pain itself or even more so.

Special foods were prepared for him by the doctors' orders, but all those foods became increasingly distasteful and disgusting to him.

For his excretions also special arrangements had to be made, and this was a torment to him every time — a torment from the uncleanliness, the unseemliness, and the smell, and from knowing that another person had to take part in it.

But just through this most unpleasant matter, Ivan Ilych obtained comfort. Gerasim, the butler's young assistant, always came in to carry the things out. Gerasim was a clean, fresh peasant lad, grown stout on town food and always cheerful and bright. At first the sight of him, in his clean Russian peasant costume, engaged on that disgusting task embarrassed Ivan Ilych.

Once when he got up from the commode too weak to draw up his trousers, he dropped into a soft armchair and looked with horror at his bare, enfeebled thighs with the muscles so sharply marked on them.

Gerasim with a firm light tread, his heavy boots emitting a pleasant smell of tar and fresh winter air, came in wearing a clean Hessian apron, the sleeves of his print shirt tucked up over his strong bare young arms; and refraining from looking at his sick master out of consideration for his feelings, and restraining the joy of life that beamed from his face, he went up to the commode.

"Gerasim!" said Ivan Ilych in a weak voice.

"Gerasim started, evidently afraid he might have committed some blunder, and with a rapid movement turned his fresh, kind, simple young face which just showed the first downy signs of a beard.

"Yes, sir?"

"That must be very unpleasant for you. You must forgive me. I am helpless."

"Oh, why, sir," and Gerasim's eyes beamed and he showed his glistening white teeth, "what's a little trouble? It's a case of illness with you, sir."

And his deft strong hands did their accustomed task, and he went out of the room stepping lightly. Five minutes later he as lightly returned.

Ivan Ilych was still sitting in the same position in the armchair.
“Gerasim,” he said when the latter had replaced the freshly-washed utensil. “Please come here and help me.”

Gerasim went up to him. “Lift me up. It is hard for me to get up, and I have sent Dmitri away.”

Gerasim went up to him, grasped his master with his strong arms deftly but gently, in the same way that he stepped — lifted him, supported him with one hand, and with the other drew up his trousers and would have set him down again, but Ivan Ilych asked to be led to the sofa. Gerasim, without an effort and without apparent pressure, led him, almost lifting him, to the sofa and placed him on it.

“Thank you. How easily and well you do it all!”

Gerasim smiled again and turned to leave the room. But Ivan Ilych felt his presence such a comfort that he did not want to let him go.

“One thing more, please move up that chair. No, the other one — under my feet. It is easier for me when my feet are raised.”

Gerasim brought the chair, set it down gently in place, and raised Ivan Ilych’s legs on it. It seemed to Ivan Ilych that he felt better while Gerasim was holding up his legs.

“It’s better when my legs are higher,” he said. “Place that cushion under them.”

Gerasim did so. He again lifted the legs and placed them, and again Ivan Ilych felt better while Gerasim held his legs. When he set them down Ivan Ilych fancied he felt worse.

“Gerasim,” he said. “Are you busy now?”

“Not at all, sir,” said Gerasim, who had learnt from the townsfolk how to speak to gentlefolk.

“What have you still to do?”

“What have I to do? I’ve done everything except chopping the logs for tomorrow.”

“Then hold my legs up a bit higher, can you?”

(Of course I can. Why not?” and Gerasim raised his master’s legs higher and Ivan Ilych thought that in that position he did not feel any pain at all.

“And how about the logs?”

“Don’t trouble about that, sir. There’s plenty of time.”

Ivan Ilych told Gerasim to sit down and hold his legs, and began to talk to him. And strange to say it seemed to him that he felt better while Gerasim held his legs up.

After that Ivan Ilych would sometimes call Gerasim and get him to hold his legs on his shoulders, and he liked talking to him. Gerasim did it all easily, willingly, simply, and with a good nature that touched Ivan Ilych. Health, strength, and vitality in other people were offensive to him, but Gerasim’s strength and vitality did not mortify but soothed him.

What tormented Ivan Ilych most was the deception, the lie, which for some reason they all accepted, that he was not dying but was simply ill, and he only need keep quiet and undergo a treatment and then something very good would result. He however knew that do what they would nothing would come of it, only still more agonizing
suffering and death. This deception tortured him — their not wishing to admit what they all knew and what he knew, but wanting to lie to him concerning his terrible condition, and wishing and forcing him to participate in that lie. Those lies — lies enacted over him on the eve of his death and destined to degrade this awful, solemn act to the level of their visitings, their curtains, their sturgeon for dinner — were a terrible agony for Ivan Ilych. And strangely enough, many times when they were going through their antics over him he had been within a hairbreadth of calling out to them: “Stop lying! You know and I know that I am dying. Then at least stop lying about it!” But he had never had the spirit to do it. The awful, terrible act of his dying was, he could see, reduced by those about him to the level of a casual, unpleasant, and almost indecorous incident (as if someone entered a drawing room diffusing an unpleasant odour) and this was done by that very decorum which he had served all his life long. He saw that no one felt for him, because no one even wished to grasp his position. Only Gerasim recognized it and pitied him. And so Ivan Ilych felt at ease only with him. He felt comforted when Gerasim supported his legs (sometimes all night long) and refused to go to bed, saying: “Don’t you worry, Ivan Ilych. I’ll get sleep enough later on,” or when he suddenly became familiar and exclaimed: “If you weren’t sick it would be another matter, but as it is, why should I grudge a little trouble?” Gerasim alone did not lie; everything showed that he alone understood the facts of the case and did not consider it necessary to disguise them, but simply felt sorry for his emaciated and enfeebled master. Once when Ivan Ilych was sending him away he even said straight out: “We shall all of us die, so why should I grudge a little trouble?” — expressing the fact that he did not think his work burdensome, because he was doing it for a dying man and hoped someone would do the same for him when his time came.

Apart from this lying, or because of it, what most tormented Ivan Ilych was that no one pitied him as he wished to be pitied. At certain moments after prolonged suffering he wished most of all (though he would have been ashamed to confess it) for someone to pity him as a sick child is pitied. He longed to be petted and comforted. He knew he was an important functionary, that he had a beard turning grey, and that therefore what he longed for was impossible, but still he longed for it. And in Gerasim’s attitude towards him there was something akin to what he wished for, and so that attitude comforted him. Ivan Ilych wanted to weep, wanted to be petted and cried over, and then his colleague Shebek would come, and instead of weeping and being petted, Ivan Ilych would assume a serious, severe, and profound air, and by force of habit would express his opinion on a decision of the Court of Cassation and would stubbornly insist on that view. This falsity around him and within him did more than anything else to poison his last days.

VIII

It was morning. He knew it was morning because Gerasim had gone, and Peter the footman had come and put out the candles, drawn back one of the curtains, and begun quietly to tidy up. Whether it was morning or evening, Friday or Sunday, made no difference, it was all just the same: the gnawing, unmitigated, agonizing pain, never ceasing for an instant, the consciousness of life inexorably waning but not yet extinguished, the approach of that ever dreaded and hateful Death which was the only reality, and always the same falsity. What were days, weeks, hours, in such a case?

“Will you have some tea, sir?”

“He wants things to be regular, and wishes the gentlefolk to drink tea in the morning,” thought Ivan Ilych, and only said “No.”

“Wouldn’t you like to move onto the sofa, sir?”

“He wants to tidy up the room, and I’m in the way. I am uncleanness and disorder,” he thought, and said only:
“No, leave me alone.”

The man went on bustling about. Ivan Ilych stretched out his hand. Peter came up, ready to help.

“What is it, sir?”

“My watch.”

Peter took the watch which was close at hand and gave it to his master.

“Half-past eight. Are they up?”

“No sir, except Vladimir Ivanovich” (the son) “who has gone to school. Praskovya Fedorovna ordered me to wake her if you asked for her. Shall I do so?”

“No, there's no need to.” “Perhaps I'd better have some tea,” he thought, and added aloud: “Yes, bring me some tea.”

Peter went to the door, but Ivan Ilych dreaded being left alone. “How can I keep him here? Oh yes, my medicine.” –Peter, give me my medicine.– “Why not? Perhaps it may still do some good.” He took a spoonful and swallowed it.

“No, it won't help. It's all tomfoolery, all deception,” he decided as soon as he became aware of the familiar, sickly, hopeless taste. “No, I can't believe in it any longer. But the pain, why this pain? If it would only cease just for a moment!” And he moaned. Peter turned towards him. “It's all right. Go and fetch me some tea.”

Peter went out. Left alone Ivan Ilych groaned not so much with pain, terrible though that was, as from mental anguish. Always and for ever the same, always these endless days and nights. If only it would come quicker! If only what would come quicker? Death, darkness?...No, no! anything rather than death!

When Peter returned with the tea on a tray, Ivan Ilych stared at him for a time in perplexity, not realizing who and what he was. Peter was disconcerted by that look and his embarrassment brought Ivan Ilych to himself.

“Oh, tea! All right, put it down. Only help me to wash and put on a clean shirt.”

And Ivan Ilych began to wash. With pauses for rest, he washed his hands and then his face, cleaned his teeth, brushed his hair, looked in the glass. He was terrified by what he saw, especially by the limp way in which his hair clung to his pallid forehead.

While his shirt was being changed he knew that he would be still more frightened at the sight of his body, so he avoided looking at it. Finally he was ready. He drew on a dressing-gown, wrapped himself in a plaid, and sat down in the armchair to take his tea. For a moment he felt refreshed, but as soon as he began to drink the tea he was again aware of the same taste, and the pain also returned. He finished it with an effort, and then lay down stretching out his legs, and dismissed Peter.

Always the same. Now a spark of hope flashes up, then a sea of despair rages, and always pain; always pain, always despair, and always the same. When alone he had a dreadful and distressing desire to call someone, but he knew beforehand that with others present it would be still worse. “Another dose of morphine—to lose consciousness. I will tell him, the doctor, that he must think of something else. It's impossible, impossible, to go on like this.”

An hour and another pass like that. But now there is a ring at the door bell. Perhaps it's the doctor? It is. He comes in fresh, hearty, plump, and cheerful, with that look on his face that seems to say: “There now, you're in a panic about something, but we'll arrange it all for you directly!” The doctor knows this expression is out of place here,
but he has put it on once for all and can't take it off — like a man who has put on a frock-coat in the morning to pay a round of calls.

The doctor rubs his hands vigorously and reassuringly.

“Brr! How cold it is! There's such a sharp frost; just let me warm myself!” he says, as if it were only a matter of waiting till he was warm, and then he would put everything right.

“Well now, how are you?”

Ivan Ilych feels that the doctor would like to say: “Well, how are our affairs?” but that even he feels that this would not do, and says instead: “What sort of a night have you had?”

Ivan Ilych looks at him as much as to say: “Are you really never ashamed of lying?” But the doctor does not wish to understand this question, and Ivan Ilych says: “Just as terrible as ever. The pain never leaves me and never subsides. If only something …”

“Yes, you sick people are always like that.... There, now I think I am warm enough. Even Praskovya Fedorovna, who is so particular, could find no fault with my temperature. Well, now I can say good-morning,” and the doctor presses his patient's hand.

Then dropping his former playfulness, he begins with a most serious face to examine the patient, feeling his pulse and taking his temperature, and then begins the sounding and auscultation.

Ivan Ilych knows quite well and definitely that all this is nonsense and pure deception, but when the doctor, getting down on his knee, leans over him, putting his ear first higher then lower, and performs various gymnastic movements over him with a significant expression on his face, Ivan Ilych submits to it all as he used to submit to the speeches of the lawyers, though he knew very well that they were all lying and why they were lying.

The doctor, kneeling on the sofa, is still sounding him when Praskovya Fedorovna's silk dress rustles at the door and she is heard scolding Peter for not having let her know of the doctor's arrival.

She comes in, kisses her husband, and at once proceeds to prove that she has been up a long time already, and only owing to a misunderstanding failed to be there when the doctor arrived.

Ivan Ilych looks at her, scans her all over, sets against her the whiteness and plumpness and cleanliness of her hands and neck, the gloss of her hair, and the sparkle of her vivacious eyes. He hates her with his whole soul. And the thrill of hatred he feels for her makes him suffer from her touch.

Her attitude towards him and his disease is still the same. Just as the doctor had adopted a certain relation to his patient which he could not abandon, so had she formed one towards him — that he was not doing something he ought to do and was himself to blame, and that she reproached him lovingly for this — and she could not now change that attitude.

“You see he doesn't listen to me and doesn't take his medicine at the proper time. And above all he lies in a position that is no doubt bad for him — with his legs up.”

She described how he made Gerasim hold his legs up.

The doctor smiled with a contemptuous affability that said: “What's to be done? These sick people do have foolish fancies of that kind, but we must forgive them.”
When the examination was over the doctor looked at his watch, and then Praskovya Fedorovna announced to Ivan Ilych that it was of course as he pleased, but she had sent today for a celebrated specialist who would examine him and have a consultation with Michael Danilovich (their regular doctor).

“Please don’t raise any objections. I am doing this for my own sake,” she said ironically, letting it be felt that she was doing it all for his sake and only said this to leave him no right to refuse. He remained silent, knitting his brows. He felt that he was surrounded and involved in such a mesh of falsity that it was hard to unravel anything.

Everything she did for him was entirely for her own sake, and she told him she was doing for herself what she actually was doing for herself, as if that was so incredible that he must understand the opposite.

At half-past eleven the celebrated specialist arrived. Again the sounding began and the significant conversations in his presence and in another room, about the kidney and the appendix, and the questions and answers, with such an air of importance that again, instead of the real question of life and death which now alone confronted him, the question arose of the kidney and appendix which were not behaving as they ought to and would now be attacked by Michael Danilovich and the specialist and forced to amend their ways.

The celebrated specialist took leave of him with a serious though not hopeless look, and in reply to the timid question Ivan Ilych, with eyes glistening with fear and hope, put to him as to whether there was a chance of recovery, said that he could not vouch for it but there was a possibility. The look of hope with which Ivan Ilych watched the doctor out was so pathetic that Praskovya Fedorovna, seeing it, even wept as she left the room to hand the doctor his fee.

The gleam of hope kindled by the doctor's encouragement did not last long. The same room, the same pictures, curtains, wall-paper, medicine bottles, were all there, and the same aching suffering body, and Ivan Ilych began to moan. They gave him a subcutaneous injection and he sank into oblivion.

It was twilight when he came to. They brought him his dinner and he swallowed some beef tea with difficulty, and then everything was the same again and night was coming on.

After dinner, at seven o'clock, Praskovya Fedorovna came into the room in evening dress, her full bosom pushed up by her corset, and with traces of powder on her face. She had reminded him in the morning that they were going to the theatre. Sarah Bernhardt was visiting the town and they had a box, which he had insisted on their taking. Now he had forgotten about it and her toilet offended him, but he concealed his vexation when he remembered that he had himself insisted on their securing a box and going because it would be an instructive and aesthetic pleasure for the children.

Praskovya Fedorovna came in, self-satisfied but yet with a rather guilty air. She sat down and asked how he was, but, as he saw, only for the sake of asking and not in order to learn about it, knowing that there was nothing to learn — and then went on to what she really wanted to say: that she would not on any account have gone but that the box had been taken and Helen and their daughter were going, as well as Petrishchev (the examining magistrate, their daughter's fiance) and that it was out of the question to let them go alone; but that she would have much preferred to sit with him for a while; and he must be sure to follow the doctor's orders while she was away.

“Oh, and Fedor Petrovich” (the fiance) “would like to come in. May he? And Lisa?”

“All right.”

Their daughter came in in full evening dress, her fresh young flesh exposed (making a show of that very flesh
which in his own case caused so much suffering), strong, healthy, evidently in love, and impatient with illness, suffering, and death, because they interfered with her happiness.

Fedor Petrovich came in too, in evening dress, his hair curled à la Capoul, a tight stiff collar round his long sinewy neck, an enormous white shirt-front and narrow black trousers tightly stretched over his strong thighs. He had one white glove tightly drawn on, and was holding his opera hat in his hand.

Following him the schoolboy crept in unnoticed, in a new uniform, poor little fellow, and wearing gloves. Terribly dark shadows showed under his eyes, the meaning of which Ivan Ilych knew well.

His son had always seemed pathetic to him, and now it was dreadful to see the boy's frightened look of pity. It seemed to Ivan Ilych that Vasya was the only one besides Gerasim who understood and pitied him.

They all sat down and again asked how he was. A silence followed. Lisa asked her mother about the opera glasses, and there was an altercation between mother and daughter as to who had taken them and where they had been put. This occasioned some unpleasantness.

Fedor Petrovich inquired of Ivan Ilych whether he had ever seen Sarah Bernhardt. Ivan Ilych did not at first catch the question, but then replied: “No, have you seen her before?”

“Yes, in Adrienne Lecouvreur.”

Praskovya Fedorovna mentioned some roles in which Sarah Bernhardt was particularly good. Her daughter disagreed. Conversation sprang up as to the elegance and realism of her acting — the sort of conversation that is always repeated and is always the same.

In the midst of the conversation Fedor Petrovich glanced at Ivan Ilych and became silent. The others also looked at him and grew silent. Ivan Ilych was staring with glittering eyes straight before him, evidently indignant with them. This had to be rectified, but it was impossible to do so. The silence had to be broken, but for a time no one dared to break it and they all became afraid that the conventional deception would suddenly become obvious and the truth become plain to all. Lisa was the first to pluck up courage and break that silence, but by trying to hide what everybody was feeling, she betrayed it.

“Well, if we are going it's time to start,” she said, looking at her watch, a present from her father, and with a faint and significant smile at Fedor Petrovich relating to something known only to them. She got up with a rustle of her dress.

They all rose, said good-night, and went away.

When they had gone it seemed to Ivan Ilych that he felt better; the falsity had gone with them. But the pain remained — that same pain and that same fear that made everything monotonously alike, nothing harder and nothing easier. Everything was worse.

Again minute followed minute and hour followed hour. Everything remained the same and there was no cessation. And the inevitable end of it all became more and more terrible.

“Yes, send Gerasim here,” he replied to a question Peter asked.
IX

His wife returned late at night. She came in on tiptoe, but he heard her, opened his eyes, and made haste to close them again. She wished to send Gerasim away and to sit with him herself, but he opened his eyes and said: “No, go away.”

“Are you in great pain?”

“Always the same.”

“Take some opium.”

He agreed and took some. She went away.

Till about three in the morning he was in a state of stupefied misery. It seemed to him that he and his pain were being thrust into a narrow, deep black sack, but though they were pushed further and further in they could not be pushed to the bottom. And this, terrible enough in itself, was accompanied by suffering. He was frightened yet wanted to fall through the sack, he struggled but yet co-operated. And suddenly he broke through, fell, and regained consciousness. Gerasim was sitting at the foot of the bed dozing quietly and patiently, while he himself lay with his emaciated stockinged legs resting on Gerasim’s shoulders; the same shaded candle was there and the same unceasing pain.

“Go away, Gerasim,” he whispered.

“It’s all right, sir. I’ll stay a while.”

“No. Go away.”

He removed his legs from Gerasim’s shoulders, turned sideways onto his arm, and felt sorry for himself. He only waited till Gerasim had gone into the next room and then restrained himself no longer but wept like a child. He wept on account of his helplessness, his terrible loneliness, the cruelty of man, the cruelty of God, and the absence of God.

“Why hast Thou done all this? Why hast Thou brought me here? Why, why dost Thou torment me so terribly?”

He did not expect an answer and yet wept because there was no answer and could be none. The pain again grew more acute, but he did not stir and did not call. He said to himself: “Go on! Strike me! But what is it for? What have I done to Thee? What is it for?”

Then he grew quiet and not only ceased weeping but even held his breath and became all attention. It was as though he were listening not to an audible voice but to the voice of his soul, to the current of thoughts arising within him.

“What is it you want?” was the first clear conception capable of expression in words, that he heard.

“What do you want? What do you want?” he repeated to himself.

“What do I want? To live and not to suffer,” he answered.

And again he listened with such concentrated attention that even his pain did not distract him.
“To live? How?” asked his inner voice.

“Why, to live as I used to — well and pleasantly.”

“As you lived before, well and pleasantly?” the voice repeated.

And in imagination he began to recall the best moments of his pleasant life. But strange to say none of those best moments of his pleasant life now seemed at all what they had then seemed — none of them except the first recollections of childhood. There, in childhood, there had been something really pleasant with which it would be possible to live if it could return. But the child who had experienced that happiness existed no longer, it was like a reminiscence of somebody else.

As soon as the period began which had produced the present Ivan Ilych, all that had then seemed joys now melted before his sight and turned into something trivial and often nasty.

And the further he departed from childhood and the nearer he came to the present the more worthless and doubtful were the joys. This began with the School of Law. A little that was really good was still found there — there was light-heartedness, friendship, and hope. But in the upper classes there had already been fewer of such good moments. Then during the first years of his official career, when he was in the service of the governor, some pleasant moments again occurred: they were the memories of love for a woman. Then all became confused and there was still less of what was good; later on again there was still less that was good, and the further he went the less there was. His marriage, a mere accident, then the disenchantment that followed it, his wife's bad breath and the sensuality and hypocrisy: then that deadly official life and those preoccupations about money, a year of it, and two, and ten, and twenty, and always the same thing. And the longer it lasted the more deadly it became. “It is as if I had been going downhill while I imagined I was going up. And that is really what it was. I was going up in public opinion, but to the same extent life was ebbing away from me. And now it is all done and there is only death. “Then what does it mean? Why? It can't be that life is so senseless and horrible. But if it really has been so horrible and senseless, why must I die and die in agony? There is something wrong!

“Maybe I did not live as I ought to have done,” it suddenly occurred to him. “But how could that be, when I did everything properly?” he replied, and immediately dismissed from his mind this, the sole solution of all the riddles of life and death, as something quite impossible.

“And what do you want now? To live? Live how? Live as you lived in the law courts when the usher proclaimed ‘The judge is coming!’ The judge is coming, the judge!” he repeated to himself. “Here he is, the judge. But I am not guilty!” he exclaimed angrily. “What is it for?” And he ceased crying, but turning his face to the wall continued to ponder on the same question: Why, and for what purpose, is there all this horror? But however much he pondered he found no answer. And whenever the thought occurred to him, as it often did, that it all resulted from his not having lived as he ought to have done, he at once recalled the correctness of his whole life and dismissed so strange an idea.

X

Another fortnight passed. Ivan Ilych now no longer left his sofa. He would not lie in bed but lay on the sofa, facing the wall nearly all the time. He suffered ever the same unceasing agonies and in his loneliness pondered always on the same insoluble question: “What is this? Can it be that it is Death?” And the inner voice answered: “Yes, it is Death.”
“Why these sufferings?” And the voice answered, “For no reason — they just are so.” Beyond and besides this there was nothing.

From the very beginning of his illness, ever since he had first been to see the doctor, Ivan Ilych’s life had been divided between two contrary and alternating moods: now it was despair and the expectation of this uncomprehended and terrible death, and now hope and an intently interested observation of the functioning of his organs. Now before his eyes there was only a kidney or an intestine that temporarily evaded its duty, and now only that incomprehensible and dreadful death from which it was impossible to escape.

These two states of mind had alternated from the very beginning of his illness, but the further it progressed the more doubtful and fantastic became the conception of the kidney, and the more real the sense of impending death.

He had but to call to mind what he had been three months before and what he was now, to call to mind with what regularity he had been going downhill, for every possibility of hope to be shattered.

Latterly during the loneliness in which he found himself as he lay facing the back of the sofa, a loneliness in the midst of a populous town and surrounded by numerous acquaintances and relations but that yet could not have been more complete anywhere — either at the bottom of the sea or under the earth — during that terrible loneliness Ivan Ilych had lived only in memories of the past. Pictures of his past rose before him one after another. They always began with what was nearest in time and then went back to what was most remote — to his childhood — and rested there. If he thought of the stewed prunes that had been offered him that day, his mind went back to the raw shrivelled French plums of his childhood, their peculiar flavour and the flow of saliva when he sucked their stones, and along with the memory of that taste came a whole series of memories of those days: his nurse, his brother, and their toys. “No, I mustn't thing of that….It is too painful,” Ivan Ilych said to himself, and brought himself back to the present — to the button on the back of the sofa and the creases in its morocco. “Morocco is expensive, but it does not wear well: there had been a quarrel about it. It was a different kind of quarrel and a different kind of morocco that time when we tore father's portfolio and were punished, and mamma brought us some tarts....” And again his thoughts dwelt on his childhood, and again it was painful and he tried to banish them and fix his mind on something else.

Then again together with that chain of memories another series passed through his mind — of how his illness had progressed and grown worse. There also the further back he looked the more life there had been. There had been more of what was good in life and more of life itself. The two merged together. “Just as the pain went on getting worse and worse, so my life grew worse and worse,” he thought. “There is one bright spot there at the back, at the beginning of life, and afterwards all becomes blacker and blacker and proceeds more and more rapidly — in inverse ration to the square of the distance from death,” thought Ivan Ilych. And the example of a stone falling downwards with increasing velocity entered his mind. Life, a series of increasing sufferings, flies further and further towards its end — the most terrible suffering. “I am flying....” He shuddered, shifted himself, and tried to resist, but was already aware that resistance was impossible, and again with eyes weary of gazing but unable to cease seeing what was before them, he stared at the back of the sofa and waited — awaiting that dreadful fall and shock and destruction.

“Resistance is impossible!” he said to himself. “If I could only understand what it is all for! But that too is impossible. An explanation would be possible if it could be said that I have not lived as I ought to. But it is impossible to say that,” and he remembered all the legality, correctitude, and propriety of his life. “That at any rate can certainly not be admitted,” he thought, and his lips smiled ironically as if someone could see that smile and be taken in by it. “There is no explanation! Agony, death....What for?”
Another two weeks went by in this way and during that fortnight an even occurred that Ivan Ilych and his wife had desired. Petrishchev formally proposed. It happened in the evening. The next day Praskovya Fedorovna came into her husband’s room considering how best to inform him of it, but that very night there had been a fresh change for the worse in his condition. She found him still lying on the sofa but in a different position. He lay on his back, groaning and staring fixedly straight in front of him.

She began to remind him of his medicines, but he turned his eyes towards her with such a look that she did not finish what she was saying; so great an animosity, to her in particular, did that look express.

“For Christ’s sake let me die in peace!” he said.

She would have gone away, but just then their daughter came in and went up to say good morning. He looked at her as he had done at his wife, and in reply to her inquiry about his health said dryly that he would soon free them all of himself. They were both silent and after sitting with him for a while went away.

“Is it our fault?” Lisa said to her mother. “It’s as if we were to blame! I am sorry for papa, but why should we be tortured?”

The doctor came at his usual time. Ivan Ilych answered “Yes” and “No,” never taking his angry eyes from him, and at last said: “You know you can do nothing for me, so leave me alone.”

“We can ease your sufferings.”

“You can’t even do that. Let me be.”

The doctor went into the drawing room and told Praskovya Fedorovna that the case was very serious and that the only resource left was opium to allay her husband’s sufferings, which must be terrible.

It was true, as the doctor said, that Ivan Ilych’s physical sufferings were terrible, but worse than the physical sufferings were his mental sufferings which were his chief torture.

His mental sufferings were due to the fact that that night, as he looked at Gerasim’s sleepy, good-natured face with its prominent cheek-bones, the question suddenly occurred to him: “What if my whole life has been wrong?”

It occurred to him that what had appeared perfectly impossible before, namely that he had not spent his life as he should have done, might after all be true. It occurred to him that his scarcely perceptible attempts to struggle against what was considered good by the most highly placed people, those scarcely noticeable impulses which he had immediately suppressed, might have been the real thing, and all the rest false. And his professional duties and the whole arrangement of his life and of his family, and all his social and official interests, might all have been false. He tried to defend all those things to himself and suddenly felt the weakness of what he was defending. There was nothing to defend.

“But if that is so,” he said to himself, “and I am leaving this life with the consciousness that I have lost all that was given me and it is impossible to rectify it — what then?”

He lay on his back and began to pass his life in review in quite a new way. In the morning when he saw first his footman, then his wife, then his daughter, and then the doctor, their every word and movement confirmed to him the awful truth that had been revealed to him during the night. In them he saw himself — all that for which he had
lived — and saw clearly that it was not real at all, but a terrible and huge deception which had hidden both life and
death. This consciousness intensified his physical suffering tenfold. He groaned and tossed about, and pulled at
his clothing which choked and stifled him. And he hated them on that account.

He was given a large dose of opium and became unconscious, but at noon his sufferings began again. He drove
everybody away and tossed from side to side.

His wife came to him and said:

“Jean, my dear, do this for me. It can't do any harm and often helps. Healthy people often do it.”

He opened his eyes wide.

“What? Take communion? Why? It's unnecessary! However...”

She began to cry.

“Yes, do, my dear. I'll send for our priest. He is such a nice man.”

“All right. Very well,” he muttered.

When the priest came and heard his confession, Ivan Ilych was softened and seemed to feel a relief from his
doubts and consequently from his sufferings, and for a moment there came a ray of hope. He again began to think
of the vermiform appendix and the possibility of correcting it. He received the sacrament with tears in his eyes.

When they laid him down again afterwards he felt a moment's ease, and the hope that he might live awoke in
him again. He began to think of the operation that had been suggested to him. “To live! I want to live!” he said to
himself.

His wife came in to congratulate him after his communion, and when uttering the usual conventional words she
added:

“You feel better, don't you?”

Without looking at her he said “Yes.”

Her dress, her figure, the expression of her face, the tone of her voice, all revealed the same thing. “This is wrong,
it is not as it should be. All you have lived for and still live for is falsehood and deception, hiding life and death
from you.” And as soon as he admitted that thought, his hatred and his agonizing physical suffering again sprang
up, and with that suffering a consciousness of the unavoidable, approaching end. And to this was added a new
sensation of grinding shooting pain and a feeling of suffocation.

The expression of his face when he uttered that “Yes” was dreadful. Having uttered it, he looked her straight in the
eyes, turned on his face with a rapidity extraordinary in his weak state and shouted:

“Go away! Go away and leave me alone!”

XII

From that moment the screaming began that continued for three days, and was so terrible that one could not
hear it through two closed doors without horror. At the moment he answered his wife realized that he was lost,
that there was no return, that the end had come, the very end, and his doubts were still unsolved and remained doubts.

“Oh! Oh! Oh!” he cried in various intonations. He had begun by screaming “I won’t!” and continued screaming on the letter “O”.

For three whole days, during which time did not exist for him, he struggled in that black sack into which he was being thrust by an invisible, resistless force. He struggled as a man condemned to death struggles in the hands of the executioner, knowing that he cannot save himself. And every moment he felt that despite all his efforts he was drawing nearer and nearer to what terrified him. He felt that his agony was due to his being thrust into that black hole and still more to his not being able to get right into it. He was hindered from getting into it by his conviction that his life had been a good one. That very justification of his life held him fast and prevented his moving forward, and it caused him the most torment of all.

Suddenly some force struck him in the chest and side, making it still harder to breathe, and he fell through the hole and there at the bottom was a light. What had happened to him was like the sensation one sometimes experiences in a railway carriage when one thinks one is going backwards while one is really going forwards and suddenly becomes aware of the real direction.

“Yes, it was not the right thing,” he said to himself, “but that's no matter. It can be done. But what is the right thing? he asked himself, and suddenly grew quiet.

This occurred at the end of the third day, two hours before his death. Just then his schoolboy son had crept softly in and gone up to the bedside. The dying man was still screaming desperately and waving his arms. His hand fell on the boy's head, and the boy caught it, pressed it to his lips, and began to cry.

At that very moment Ivan Ilych fell through and caught sight of the light, and it was revealed to him that though his life had not been what it should have been, this could still be rectified. He asked himself, “What is the right thing?” and grew still, listening. Then he felt that someone was kissing his hand. He opened his eyes, looked at his son, and felt sorry for him. His wife camp up to him and he glanced at her. She was gazing at him open-mouthed, with undried tears on her nose and cheek and a despairing look on her face. He felt sorry for her too.

“Yes, I am making them wretched,” he thought. “They are sorry, but it will be better for them when I die.” He wished to say this but had not the strength to utter it. “Besides, why speak? I must act,” he thought. with a look at his wife he indicated his son and said: “Take him away...sorry for him...sorry for you too....” He tried to add, “Forgive me,” but said “Forego” and waved his hand, knowing that He whose understanding mattered would understand.

And suddenly it grew clear to him that what had been oppressing him and would not leave him was all dropping away at once from two sides, from ten sides, and from all sides. He was sorry for them, he must act so as not to hurt them: release them and free himself from these sufferings. “How good and how simple!” he thought. “And the pain?” he asked himself. “What has become of it? Where are you, pain?”

He turned his attention to it.

“Yes, here it is. Well, what of it? Let the pain be.”

“And death...where is it?”

He sought his former accustomed fear of death and did not find it. “Where is it? What death?” There was no fear because there was no death.
In place of death there was light.

“So that’s what it is!” he suddenly exclaimed aloud. “What joy!”

To him all this happened in a single instant, and the meaning of that instant did not change. For those present his agony continued for another two hours. Something rattled in his throat, his emaciated body twitched, then the gasping and rattle became less and less frequent.

“It is finished!” said someone near him.

He heard these words and repeated them in his soul.

“Death is finished,” he said to himself. “It is no more!”

He drew in a breath, stopped in the midst of a sigh, stretched out, and died.
THE RUSSIAN AND ENGLISH TEXTS OF "THE DEATH OF IVAN ILYICH" PRESENTED SIDE BY SIDE

Л. Н. Толстой, Смерть Ивана Ильича

Leo Tolstoy, The Death of Ivan Ilych (translated by L. and A. Maude)

This section contains the original Russian text of Смерть Ивана Ильича presented side by side with the English translation of The Death of Ivan Ilych made by Aylmer and Louise Maude. The two texts are presented here in parallel columns aligned by paragraphs. In those cases where there was a disjunction between the paragraphing of the original text and that of the Maudes' translation, the translation has been tacitly adjusted to agree with the paragraphing of the original text.

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Chapter 1

Lev Tolstoy THE DEATH OF IVAN IL'ICH

During an interval in the Melvinski trial in the large building of the Law Courts the members and public prosecutor met in Ivan Egorovich Shebek's private room, where the conversation turned on the celebrated Krasovski case. Fedor Vasilievich warmly maintained that it was not subject to their jurisdiction, Ivan Egorovich maintained the contrary, while Peter Ivanovich, not having entered into the discussion at the start, took no part in it but looked through the Gazette which had just been handed in.

“Gentlemen,” he said, “Ivan Ilych has died!”

1. The Ivan Il'ich mentioned in the title is Ivan Ilyich Golovin, the novel's protagonist. Tolstoy modeled this character in part on a certain Ivan Il'ich Mechnikov, an acquaintance of his who served as prosecutor in the district court of Tula, the nearest sizable town to Tolstoy's country estate at Yasnaya Polyana. According to N. F. Golubov's commentary on The Death of Ivan Il'ich in volume 26 of Complete Collected Works of Lev Tolstoi in 90 Volumes the circumstances attending Mechnikov's illness and untimely death in 1881 closely resembled those described by Tolstoy in the story. Shortly after Mechnikov's demise in July, 1881, Tolstoy made his first recorded mention of the idea which he eventually developed into The Death of Ivan Il'ich. The novel was completed and published in 1886.

2. The Melvinsky case was a celebrated court case of the 1880s, as was the Krasovsky case, mentioned a couple of lines later. Evidently Tolstoi is at pains to connect his narrative to the authentic realities of life in the period described.

3. In the 1880s both civil and criminal cases were often heard by a panel of three judges before whom matters were argued by opposing counsel. The "members" of the court were these judges. Ivan Il'ich, whose death is about to come to the attention of these gentlemen, was such a judge.

4. The motifs of judge, judgement, and jurisdiction (the right or responsibility of rendering judgement) emerge immediately, frequently, and forcefully in the story. It seems clear that the theme of judgement will be important; it may be that we as readers will ourselves be implicated in the responsibility of rendering judgement on the life and death of Ivan Il'ich.

5. Petr Ivanovich takes no part in the discussion concerning jurisdiction (the judicial responsibility of hearing evidence and rendering judgement) here. He continues steadfast throughout chapter one (after which he more or less disappears from the novel) in his refusal to "get involved." He is concerned only to perform the superficial rituals required by the death of his colleague and then to leave the entire unpleasant situation behind him in order to spend the remainder of his evening playing cards. His indifference to the discussion of the question of jurisdiction in the first paragraph is a model of his general attitude toward the death of his colleague and mentor.

6. Vedomosti (The Gazette) was the name shared by prominent daily newspapers in both St. Petersburg and Moscow. Most commentators believe that Tolstoi had Moscow in mind as the setting of the novel.
Ivan Il’ich had been a colleague of the gentlemen present and was liked by them all. He had been ill for some weeks with an illness said to be incurable. His post had been kept open for him, but there had been conjectures that in case of his death Alexeev might receive his appointment, and that either Vinnikov or Shtabel would succeed Alexeev. So on receiving the news of Ivan Il’ich’s death the first thought of each of the gentlemen in that private room was of the changes and promotions it might occasion among themselves or their acquaintances.

“I shall be sure to get Shtabel’s place or Vinnikov’s,” thought Fedor Vasilievich. “I was promised that long ago, and the promotion means an extra eight hundred rubles a year for me besides the allowance.”

Надо будет попросить теперь о переводе шурина из Калуги, подумал Петр Иванович. – Жена будет очень рада. Теперь уже нельзя будет говорить, что я никогда ничего не сделал для ее родных.

– Я так и думал, что ему не поднятьсь, вслух сказал Петр Иванович. – Жалко.

Now I must apply for my brother-in-law’s transfer from Kaluga,” thought Peter Ivanovich. “My wife will be very glad, and then she won’t be able to say that I never do anything for her relations.”

“I thought he would never leave his bed again,” said Peter Ivanovich aloud. “It’s very sad.”

7. This is the first of many examples of images of enclosure and containment in the text of the novel. These images become a veritable leitmotiv of isolation and estrangement over the course of the story. This is also the first appearance of Ivan Il’ich himself. In a way, one might say that the main question of which the reader of the story must judge is: “How did Ivan Il’ich come to be enclosed in such a tiny frame?” Click here to see a typical example of such a funeral announcement as is described here. Note how prominent the “black border” of the announcement is.

8. Note the familiar conventionality of the content of the announcement. It will emerge that this tidy summary of Ivan Il’ich as a “beloved spouse” (rather than a husband) whose “kindred and acquaintances” (rather than his relatives and friends) are “informed” (rather than told) of the “demise” (not death) of this “member of the Palace of Justice” (his function in life), in the midst of her “profound grief” (not so very apparent at the scene of the funeral which will shortly follow). Thus is Ivan Il’ich’s life and death neatly encapsulated in a “single document, executed in perfect observance of all required formalities” (a description provided in chapter two of Ivan Il’ich’s own particular skill as a judicial official).

9. Ivan Il’ich is a good man who is liked by all of his co-workers. This motif is taken up again at the beginning of Chapter Two; his story is that of an ordinary man. Neither villain nor hero, Ivan Il’ich is just such a pleasant and likable fellow as we would all prefer to have around us.

10. The irony, of course, is that what Ivan Il’ich suffered most from will be, in fact, incurable by medical means. His spiritual malaise will eventually be much more painful to him than his physical illness. The novel concludes, however, on the hopeful note that this spiritual illness can, after all, be alleviated.

11. The Russian text says, literally, that “his place remained behind him.” The conversation of his friends will soon make it clear that, pleasant fellow though he was, his vacant place in the official world is much more important than the person who has died. There is also the clear suggestion that a person’s place or position is of considerably more importance than the person himself.

12. Kaluga: a provincial city. Just as Ivan Il’ich’s final promotion had brought him, at last, from the provinces to the capital, so here Peter Ivanovich can imagine no happier and more desirable fate for his brother-in-law.

13. The Russian text says, literally, “he wouldn’t raise himself up,” a somewhat peculiar way to indicate that a sick person won’t recover. It may, however, serve to suggest the notion of the raising of the dead by a miracle of the spirit. So, for example, in scripture Jesus “raised” Lazarus from the dead. That Ivan Il’ich in the end did succeed in “raising himself” seems to be suggested in the last chapter of the novel.
The thought "it's he who is dead and not I" is symptomatic of the belief in the separability of people from one another. We have already learned that the characters mentioned so far live far away from one another, and this passage is another example of the same idea: that other people, unpleasant occurrences, distressing situations can be kept at a distance, that each individual has a separate spiritual condition of the protagonist. These two stories are related in that the second is, so to say, told through the first. Phrases which superficially refer to the first narrative are often also very important for the second.

14. Here we note the use of the word определить ('to define,' 'to determine') to characterize what the doctors were trying to do. The word is derived from the root предел ('limit,' 'boundary') and so plays into the motif of limitation which is marked throughout the story. Etymologically, the doctors are trying to "put a limit to" or "close in" Ivan's illness, but they are not able to do so.

15. The first example of the novel's satirical attitude toward physicians. Doctors and other professionals (Ivan Il'ich's colleagues, Ivan himself) are all shown in the novel as concerned exclusively with forms or phenomena rather than with the individuals who appear before them. Of Ivan Il'ich it will be said that his great talent as an official is his ability to reduce even the most complex individual case into a properly executed one-page form.

16. Here is another example of a revealing choice of words. The Russian for "would get better" is, literally, "would right himself, would correct himself." As in the remark about "raising himself" this colloquial and metaphorical expression seems to contain a hidden, literal meaning. In the end, Ivan Il'ich does seem to "right himself" before he dies. Given the eventual outcome of the novel, these examples suggest that Tolstoy is telling two stories here: one of them is about the physical illness and death of Ivan Il'ich; the other concerns the spiritual condition of the protagonist. These two stories are related in that the second is, so to say, told through the first. Phrases which superficially refer to the first narrative are often also very important for the second.

17. "Trifling" translates the Russian word "ничтожное" (etymologically, "nothing at all"), suggesting that Ivan Il'ich, despite his hard work, had not managed to accumulate anything of significance. Thus, his life has come to nothing (Russian, ничто).

18. The separation among people, including the emotional distance separating them, is a prominent motif in the development of the novel. In a sense, the story of Ivan Il'ich's life is a history of his increasing and self-imposed isolation from those close to him.

19. The very serious topic of the death of a valued colleague is replaced by apparent trivialities. The colleagues of Ivan Il'ich and, Tolstoy seems to imply, "all the rest of us, too," are unwilling to deal with the fact of death. They deny it, avoid it, eventually flee from it. Note that this process is reflected in detail in the behavior of Peter Ivanovich as he goes to pay a call of condolence on Ivan Il'ich's widow. He is derived from the root предел ('limit,' 'boundary') and so plays into the motif of limitation which is marked throughout the story.

20. The thought "it's he who is dead and not I" is symptomatic of the belief in the separability of people from one another. We have already learned that the characters mentioned so far live far away from one another, and this passage is another example of the same idea: that other people, unpleasant occurrences, distressing situations can be kept at a distance, that each individual has a separate fate which can be controlled simply by avoidance of all perceived threats. We will see Ivan Il'ich again and again putting this distance between himself and various forms of unpleasantness. It will turn out, however, that this distancing carries with it the necessary consequence of closing the individual off from contact with others. Thus it is that two primary sets of images in the novel--pertaining to distance and enclosure--are causally related to one another.
“Каково, умер; а я вот нет”, – подумал или почувствовал каждый. Близкие же знакомые, так называемые друзья[21] Ивана Ильича, при этом подумали невольно и о том, что теперь им надобно исполнить очень скучные обязанности приличия и поехать на панихиду[22] и к вдове с визитом соболезнования.[23]

Ближе всех были Федор Васильевич и Петр Иванович.

Петр Иванович был товарищем по училищу правоведения и считал себя обязанным Иваном Ильичом.

Передав за обедом жне известие о смерти Ивана Ильича и сообщения о возможности перевода шурина в их округ, Петр Иванович, не ложась отдыхать, надел фрак и поехал к Ивану Ильичу.

У подъезда квартиры Ивана Ильича стояла карета и два извозчика. Внизу, в передней у вешалки припоспелена была к стене глазетовая крышка гроба с кисточками и начищенным порошком галуном. Две дамы в черном снимали шубки. Одна, сестра Ивана Ильича, знакомая, другая – незнакомая дама. Товарищ Петра Ивановича, Шварц, сходил сверху и, с верхней ступени увидав входившего, остановился и подмигнул ему, как бы говоря: “Тупо распорядился Иван Ильич: то ли дело мы с вами”. [24]

Федор Васильевич и Пепер Иванович был его наименее знакомым.

Петр Иванович had studied law with Ivan Ilych and had considered himself to be under obligations to him.

Having told his wife at dinner-time of Ivan Ilych’s death, and of his conjecture that it might be possible to get her brother transferred to their circuit, Peter Ivanovich sacrificed his usual nap, put on his evening clothes and drove to Ivan Ilych’s house.

At the entrance stood a carriage and two cabs. Leaning against the wall in the hall downstairs near the cloakstand was a coffin-lid covered with cloth of gold, ornamented with gold cord and tassels, that had been polished up with metal powder. Two ladies in black were taking off their fur cloaks. Peter Ivanovich recognized one of them as Ivan Ilych’s sister, but the other was a stranger to him. His colleague Schwartz was just coming downstairs, but on seeing Peter Ivanovich enter he stopped and winked at him, as if to say: “Ivan Ilych has made a mess of things — not like you and me.” [26]

21. “So-called,” of course because they seem to lack any concern at all for Ivan Il’ich as an individual person. Their interest in him is, one might say, functional; he is a co-worker, a husband, a father, a deceased acquaintance whose funeral must be attended.

22. The Russian words for ‘propriety’ (приличие), ‘appropriate, fitting’ (прилично), and ‘pleasant’ (приятно) play a very important role in the novel’s description of the life of Ivan Il’ich. They function as a sort of verbal leitmotiv of his life and the life of those around him. They suggest a life which is ruled by adherence to a known set of standards. One gets an image of the individual comfortably surrounded by well-marked boundaries of behavior within which the individual may be confident of a pleasant and well-regulated existence. In this way, the ideal life of propriety may be seen as an instance of the images of enclosure and distance. We already know that the end of such a life is the enclosure of the coffin and the distance which the living seek to put between themselves and the deceased.

23. One of the central artistic techniques of The Death of Ivan Il’ich is the concealment of one conception, image, or verbal motif inside another. The word “sympathy” in this passage is an example of this. It is derived from a Greek root (path-) which may designate either “feeling” or “disease.” Thus, in English, we have both “sympathy” and “pathology.” The Russian word for “sympathy” is “соболезнование,” which also derives from the Greek, but in a different manner than its English counterpart. The English word simply imports the original Greek word “symbathes” (as redered in the Latin alphabet). The Russian word is a “calque”: that is, the word is made by following the structure of the original but translating the Greek roots into their Russian equivalents. Thus, the Greek “sun-” (‘with’) becomes the Russian со- (‘with’) while the Greek “path-” (‘feeling’ or ‘illness’) becomes the Russian болезнь (‘Illness’), producing “соболезнование.” Russians use this word exclusively for the function of expressing sympathy, condolence, or fellow feeling with someone, but its form may suggest that the sympathizer is suffering from the same disease. In other words, it produces an effect like that we can see in English when someone says “I feel your pain.” We know that the function of the phrase is to provide comfort, but its form suggests that the pain is real and physical. We might call this technique the realization of metaphor. A phrase or behavior which is commonly used metaphorically is seen to have also the significance of literal reality. It is as though the metaphorical function of the phrase is taken for the reality of life when it is a self-defeating attempt to conceal the reality of life. “I feel your pain” is what I say to comfort you in your suffering, but I don’t really feel your pain. But it may also suggest that I do, in fact, suffer the same pain that you do, but I’m not yet aware of it or ready to admit to it in my own case. This technique recurs again and again in the text, eventually creating a structure in which that is on the surface is, in fact, superficial and inadequately real, and that which lies below that carefully constructed surface is the truth about reality. This is as much as to say that The Death of Ivan Il’ich is a deeply symbolic work, fulfilling the classical definition of symbolism: a realibus ad realiora—the use of “real” things to show the way to “more real” things.

24. Peter Ivanovich’s arrival at the home of Ivan Ilych is marked by rather obvious reminders of the fact that Ivan Ilych has died: the coffin lid leaning against the wall in the foyer, the black clothing worn by two ladies who have just arrived. Also present is a character with a prominent role in Chapter One, Schwartz, whose name (in German) signifies ‘black’. Thus, from one point of view, Schwartz, who gives the impression of being impervious to death, is just one more memento mori among the several that are presented here. On the other hand, as in the next sentence, Schwartz is clearly presented as being somehow above and impervious to the death of Ivan Ilych: he
Лицо Шварца с английскими бакенбардами и вся худая фигура во фраке имела, как всегда, изящную торжественность, и эта торжественность, всегда противоречащая характеру играйости Шварца, здесь имела особенную соль. Так подумал Петр Иванович.

Петр Иванович пропустил вперед себя дам и медленно пошел за ними на лестницу. Шварц не стал сходить, а остановился наверху. Петр Иванович понял зачем: он, очевидно хотел сговориться, где повинтить нынче. Дамы прошли на лестницу к вдове, а Шварц, с серьезно сложенными, крепкими губами и игривым взглядом, движением бровей показал Петру Ивановичу направо, в комнату мертвеца.

Пётр Иванович вошел, как всегда это бывает, с недоумением о том, что ему там надо будет делать. Одно он знал, что креститься в этих случаях никогда не мешает. Насчет того, что нужно ли при этом и кланяться, он не совсем был уверен и потому выбрал среднее: войдя в комнату, он стал креститься и неможжко как будто кланяться. Насколько ему позволяли движения рук и головы, он вместе с тем оглядывал комнату. Два молодые человека, один гимназист, кажется, племянники, крестясь, выходили из комнаты. Старушка стояла неподвижно. И дама с странно поднятыми бровями что-то ей говорила шепотом. Дьячок в сюртуке, бодрый, решительный, читал что-то громко с выражением, исключающим всякое противоречие; буфетный мужик Герасим, пройдя перед Петром Ивановичем легкими шагами, что-то посыпал по полу.

Герасим, пройдя перед Петром Ивановичем, смотрел на него как бы в глаза, сжав губы и усмехнувшись. Вдруг он тонко зевнул. После громкого зевка его губы слегка раскрылись, и он произнес что-то с горделивым оттенком.

В последнее свое посещение Иван Ильича Петр Иванович видел этого мужика в кабинете; он исполнял должность сиделки, и Иван Ильич особенно любил его. Петр Иванович все крестился и слегка кланялся по серединному направлению между гробом, дьячком и образами на столе в углу. Потом, когда это движение крещения рукою показалось ему уже слишком продолжительно, он приостановился и стал разглядывать мертвеца.

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CHAPTER 1
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Peter Ivanovich, like everyone else on such occasions, entered feeling uncertain what he would have to do. All he knew was that at such times it is always safe to cross oneself. But he was not quite sure whether one should make obseisances while doing so. He therefore adopted a middle course. On entering the room he began crossing himself and made a slight movement resembling a bow. At the same time, as far as the motion of his head and arm allowed, he surveyed the room. Two young men — apparently nephews, one of whom was a high-school pupil — were leaving the room, crossing themselves as they did so. An old woman was standing motionless, and a lady with strangely arched eyebrows was saying something to her in a whisper. A vigorous, resolute Church Reader, in a frock- coat, was reading something in a loud voice with an expression that precluded any contradiction. The butler’s assistant, Gerasim, stepping lightly in front of Peter Ivanovich, was strewing something on the floor.

Noticing this, Peter Ivanovich was immediately aware of a faint odour of a decomposing body. The last time he had called on Ivan Ilyich, Peter Ivanovich had seen Gerasim in the study. Ivan Ilych had been particularly fond of him and he was performing the duty of a sick nurse. Peter Ivanovich continued to make the sign of the cross slightly inclining his head in an intermediate direction between the coffin, the Reader, and the icons on the table in a corner of the room. Afterwards, when it seemed to him that this movement of his arm in crossing himself had gone on too long, he stopped and began to look at the corpse.

winks, he seems to say that Ivan Il’ich died because of his own foolishness, that Schwartz and Peter Ivanovich will not die, he has a playful character. At the same time, his clothing, like his name is all black and his manner is superficially solemn. In short, Schwartz is a puzzle. In what follows he will be directly and significantly compared with the dead Ivan Il’ich.

25. Actually, Peter Ivanovich is interested in playing a card game of French origin called “vignt,” which much resembles the modern game of bridge. Card playing will be a major motif in the novel. It functions throughout as a symbol of a life of propriety. We will find that as Ivan Il’ich grows older he values card-playing as an activity ever more. There is often an opposition, as here, between playing cards as an attractive, pleasant activity on one side and the harsh realities of life, the funeral, an illness, on the other.

26. The first mention of this character, who will play an increasingly important role in the story later on. Gerasim often expresses ideas and sentiments which the other characters in the story would find unpalatable. At the end of Chapter One, for example, Gerasim reminds Peter Ivanovich that “we will all come to it one day” when asked about his feelings concerning the death of Ivan Il’ich. In Russian, Gerasim is identified as a “buftetnyj muzhik,” thereby linking him closely to the Russian peasant (Russ. ‘muzhik’), even though he is working in an urban, domestic situation.
Мертвец лежал, как всегда лежат мертвецы, особенно тяжело, по-мертвцам, утонувшие окоченевшими членами в подстилке гроба, с навсегда согнувшегося головой на подушке, и выставлял, как всегда выставляют мертвецы, свой желтый восковой лоб с вспухшими на валившихся висках и торчащей нос, как бы надавивший на верхнюю губу. Он очень переменился, еще позже с тех пор, как Петр Иванович не видел его, но, как у всех мертвецов, лицо его было красивее, главное — значительнее, чем оно было у живого. На лице было выражение того, что, что нужно было сделать, сделано, и сделано правильно. Кроме того, в этом выражении был еще упрек или напоминание живым.

Напоминание это показалось Петру Ивановичу неуместным, или, по крайней мере, кого не наказывающимся. Что-то ему стало неприятно, и потому Петр Иванович еще раз поспешно перекрестился и, как ему показалось, слишком поспешно, несообразно с приличиями,[27] повернулся и пошел к двери. Шварц ждал его в проходной комнате, расставив широко ноги и игра обеими руками за спиной своим цилиндром. Один взгляд на игру, истолковую неприятности и аккуратную фигуру Шварца освежил Петра Ивановича.[28] Петр Иванович понял, что он, Шварц, стоит выше этого и не поддается удручающим впечатлениям. Один вид его говорил: инцидент панихиды Ивана Ильича никак не может служить достаточным поводом для признания порядка заседания нарушенным, то есть что ничто не может помешать нынешнему вечеру скандалить, распечатывать ее, подойдя, карт, в то время как лакей будет расставлять четыре необожженные свечи; в общем нет основания предполагать, чтобы инцидент этот мог помешать нам провести приятно и сегодняшний вечер. Он и сказал это шепотом проходившему Петру Ивановичу, предлага ему соединиться на партию у Федор Вasilievicha. Но, видно, Петру Ивановичу была не судьба вить нынешнем вечером. Прасковья Федоровна, невысокая, жирная женщина, несмотря на все старания устроить противное, все-таки расширяющейся от плеч книзу, вся в черном, с покрытой кружевом головой и с такими же странным подтянутым бровями, как и та дама, стояящая против гроба, вышла из своих покоеv с другими дамами и, проводив их в дверь мертвеца, сказала:

– Сейчас будет панихида; пройдите.

Шварц, неопределенно поклонившись, остановился, очевидно, не приняв и не отклоняя этого предложения. Прасковья Федоровна, узнав Петра Ивановича, вздохнула, подошла к нему вплотную, взяла его за руку и сказала:

– Я знаю, что вы были истинным другом Ивана Ильича… — и посмотрела на него, ожидая от него соответствующие этим словам действия.

“ shooter” (Russian “игра”) and words built from this root: he “plays” with his hat; his figure is “playful”; his attitude suggests that there is no reason why the funeral service should keep them from “playing” cards; later his “playful” look suggests that Peter Ivanovich can still join them for bridge after he extracts himself from Praskovya Fyodorovna and the funeral service. Note also that the playful Schwartz is closely associated with the card game that will also turn out to be Ivan Illich’s favorite pastime. The association of the game of cards and a certain style of life is emphasized throughout the text.

27. Here we see a distinct contrast between the solemnity and certainty manifested by the face of the dead Ivan Illich and the hesitation shown by Peter Ivanovich and the playfulness displayed by Schwartz. As if to point this contrast, the retreating Peter Ivanovich is, upon leaving the room where lies Ivan Illich, immediately presented with the restorative sight of Schwartz.

28. Note that the refreshing effect that Schwartz has upon Peter Ivanovich is emphatically associated with “play” (Russian “игра”) and words built from this root: he “plays” with his hat; his figure is “playful”; his attitude suggests that there is no reason why the funeral service should keep them from “playing” cards; later his “playful” look suggests that Peter Ivanovich can still join them for bridge after he extracts himself from Praskovya Fyodorovna and the funeral service. Note also that the playful Schwartz is closely associated with the card game that will also turn out to be Ivan Illich’s favorite pastime. The association of the game of cards and a certain style of life is emphasized throughout the text.
The hankie being clean, the widow has evidently not previously had occasion to weep into it. As though every situation has its rules, much like the rules of a game, which must be observed at all costs. Appearance are much more important to these characters than the actual realities of the situations in which they find themselves. It is exactly how he wanted the curtains to be hung. Much in the manner of the games which they play, the objects with which these characters surround themselves seem to have an unusual significance in their lives. Another interesting motif is the uncommonly important role played by material objects in the scene. The “faulty springs of the pouffe (an upholstered stool or ottoman)” are mentioned several times as artificiality of the relationships among these characters. Yet another feature is the unusual significance of image and characters. It is clear from Peter Ivanovich’s uncertainty about what was the proper way to approach the coffin in an earlier scene. Clearly, image and characters surround themselves seem to have an unusual significance in their lives.

CHAPTER

And Peter Ivanovich knew that, just as it had been the right thing to cross himself in that room, so what he had to do here was to press her hand, sigh, and say, “Believe me...” So he did all this and as he did it felt that the desired result had been achieved: that both he and she were touched.

“Come with me. I want to speak to you before it begins,” said the widow. “Give me your arm.”

Peter Ivanovich gave her his arm and they went to the inner rooms, passing Schwartz who winked at Peter Ivanovich compassionately. “That does for our bridge! Don’t’s object if we find another player. Perhaps you can cut in when you do escape,” said his playful look.

29. In the extended scene between Peter Ivanovich and Praskovya Fedorovna (Ivan Ilyich’s widow) we see many further indications of the artificiality of the relationships among these characters. Another interesting motif is the uncommonly important role played by material objects in the scene. The “faulty springs of the pouffe (an upholstered stool or ottoman)” are mentioned several times as disturbing the ritual of the visit of condolence. Later on, there will be further awkwardness when Praskovya Fedorovna catches her shawl on the elaborately carved table edge. A direct connection is made between Ivan Ilyich and the objects in this room. Later on we discover that the illness which killed him seemed to have stemmed from a fall which he had while attempting to show the draper just exactly how he wanted the curtains to be hung. Much in the manner of the games which they play, the objects with which these characters surround themselves seem to have an unusual significance in their lives.

30. Cf. Peter Ivanovich’s uncertainty about what was the proper way to approach the coffin in an earlier scene. Clearly, image and appearance are much more important to these characters than the actual realities of the situations in which they find themselves. It is as though every situation has its rules, much like the rules of a game, which must be observed at all costs.

31. The hankie being clean, the widow has evidently not previously had occasion to weep into it.
— Я все сама делаю, — сказала она Петру Ивановичу, отодвигая к одной стороне альбомы, лежавшие на столе; и, заметив, что пепел угрожал столу, не мешкая подвинула Петру Ивановичу пепельницу[33] и проговорила: — Я нахожу притворством уверять, что я не могу от горя заниматься практическими делами. Меня, напротив, если может что не утешить... а развлечь, то это — заботы о нем же. — Она опять достала платок, как бы собираясь плакать, и вдруг, как бы пересиливая себя, встряхнулась и начала говорить спокойно.[34]

— Однако у меня дело есть к вам.

Петр Иванович поклонился, не давая расходиться пружинам пуфа, тотчас же зашевелившимся под ним.

— В последние дни он ужасно страдал.

— Очень страдал? — спросил Петр Иванович.

— Ах, ужасно! Последние не минуты, а часы он не переставая кричал. Трое суток сряду он, не переводя голосу, кричал. Это было невыносимо. Я не могу понять, как я вынесла это; за тремя дверьми слышно было. Ах! что я вынесла![35]

— И неужели он был в памяти? — спросил Петр Иванович.

— Да, — прошептала она, — до последней минуты. Он простился с Нами за четверть часа до смерти и еще просил увести Володю.

Мысль о страдании человека, которого он знал так близко, сначала веселым мальчиком, школьником, потом взрослым партнером, несмотря на неприятное сознание притворства своего и этой женщины, вдруг ужаснула Петра Ивановича. Он увидел опять этот лоб, нажимавший на губу нос, и ему стало страшно за себя.

“I look after everything myself,” she told Peter Ivanovich, shifting the albums that lay on the table; and noticing that the table was endangered by his cigarette-ash, she immediately passed him an ash-tray, saying as she did so: “I consider it an affectation to say that my grief prevents my attending to practical affairs. On the contrary, if anything can — I won’t say console me, but — distract me, it is seeing to everything concerning him.” She again took out her handkerchief as if preparing to cry, but suddenly, as if mastering her feeling, she shook herself and began to speak calmly.[34]

“But there is something I want to talk to you about.”

Peter Ivanovich bowed, keeping control of the springs of the pouffe, which immediately began quivering under him.

“He suffered terribly the last few days.”

“Did he?” said Peter Ivanovich.

“Oh, terribly! He screamed unceasingly, not for minutes but for hours. for the last three days he screamed incessantly. It was unendurable. I cannot understand how I bore it; you could hear him three rooms off. Oh, what I have suffered!”[35]

“Yes,” she whispered. “To the last moment. He took leave of us a quarter of an hour before he died, and asked us to take Volodya away.”

The thought of the suffering of this man he had known so intimately, first as a merry little boy, then as a schoolmate, and later as a grown-up colleague, suddenly struck Peter Ivanovich with horror, despite an unpleasant consciousness of his own and this woman’s dissimulation. He again saw that brow, and that nose pressing down on the lip, and felt afraid for himself.

32. The widow’s evident clear-headedness in this discussion belies her claim that she is devastated by the death of her spouse. Note also that she “defined” (определить, lit. “put a limit to”) “that which it was best (следует, lit. “it behooves (her),” “it is necessary”) to take.” Not only, then, is her grief insincere, but her approach to her responsibilities is associated with the setting of limits on the permissible, a notion that has been hinted at already and will become increasingly prominent as the story progresses. Finally, the grammar of the Russian leaves us in some doubt as to whether her main concern is the lot or the price of the lot.

33. She is also not so distracted by grief that when noticing that the table was endangered by his cigarette-ash, she immediately passed him an ash-tray.

34. Tolstoy’s repetition here of the conjunction “as if” (Russ. как бы) plainly casts suspicion on the sincerity of the widow’s grief. When she remarked above that she “thought it a pretense to give the impression that she was unable to see to practical matters because of her grief” she may have been telling more truth than she meant to; this passage suggests that it is her grief that is the pretense.

35. The widow’s description of her dead husband’s final hours is given from her own point of view; her concern is with how much she suffered, what was the effect on her, of her spouse’s passing away. That his cries could be heard “through three doors” is a common way of saying that something was really loud; taken literally, however, it suggests that she had closed three doors upon her husband and his suffering in order to get away from him and it. The metaphor of the closed door, of shutting oneself off from unpleasantness is one we have seen already in Peter Ivanovich’s hasty departure from the room in which the dead man was lying, and we will see it again and again in the life of Ivan Il’ich himself.
“Трое суток ужасных страданий и смерть. Ведь это сейчас, всякую минуту может наступить и для меня”, — подумал он, и ему стало на мгновение страшно. Но тотчас же, он сам не знал как, ему на помощь пришла обычная мысль, что это случилось с Иваном Ильичом, а не с ним и что с ним этого случиться не должно и не может; что, думая так, он поддается мрачному настроению, чего не следует делать, как это, очевидно было по лицу Шварца. И, сделав это рассуждение, Петр Иванович успокоился[36] и с интересом стал расспрашивать подробности о кончине Ивана Ильича, как будто смерть была такое приключение, которое свойственно только Ивану Ильичу, но совсем не свойственно ему.

После разных разговоров о подробностях действительно, ужасных физических страданий, перенесенных Иваном Ильичом (подробности эти узнавал Петр Иванович только по тому, как мучения Ивана Ильича действовали на нервы Прасковьи Федоровны), вдова, очевидно, нашла нужным перейти к делу.

— Ах, Петр Иванович, как тяжело, как ужасно тяжело, как ужасно тяжело, — и она опять заплакала.

Петр Иванович вздыхал, и ждал, когда она высморкается.[37] Когда она высморкалась, он сказал:

— Поверьте… — и опять она разговорилась и высказала то, что было, очевидно, ее главным делом к нему; дело это состояло в вопросах о том, как бы по случаю смерти мужа достать денег от казны. Она сделала вид, что спрашивает у Петра Ивановича совета о пенсии: но он видел, что она уже знает до мельчайших подробностей и то, чего он не знал: все то, что можно вытянуть от казны по случаю этой смерти,[38] но что ей хотелось узнать, нельзя ли как-нибудь вытянуть еще побольше денег. Петр Иванович постарался выдумать такое средство, но, подумав несколько и из приличия побраня в нашем правительстве за его скаредность, сказал, что, кажется, больше нельзя. Тогда она вздохнула и, очевидно, стала придумывать средство избавиться от своего посетителя. Он понял это, затушил папироску, встал, пожал руку и пошел в переднюю.

After many details of the really dreadful physical sufferings Ivan Ilych had endured (which details he learnt only from the effect those sufferings had produced on Praskovya Fedorovna's nerves) the widow apparently found it necessary to get to business.

“Oh, Peter Ivanovich, how hard it is! How terribly, terribly hard!” and she again began to weep.

Peter Ivanovich sighed and waited for her to finish blowing her nose.[37] When she had done so he said:

“Believe me…” and she again began talking and brought out what was evidently her chief concern with him — namely, to question him as to how she could obtain a grant of money from the government on the occasion of her husband's death.[38] She made it appear that she was asking Peter Ivanovich's advice about her pension, but he soon saw that she already knew about that to the minutest detail, more even than he did himself. She knew how much could be got out of the government in consequence of her husband's death, but wanted to find out whether she could not possibly extract something more. Peter Ivanovich tried to think of some means of doing so, but after reflecting for a while and, out of propriety, condemning the government for its niggardliness, he said he thought that nothing more could be got. Then she sighed and evidently began to devise means of getting rid of her visitor. Noticing this, he put out his cigarette, rose, pressed her hand, and went out into the anteroom.

36. The word рассуждение contains the same root as the word for "judge," "court," or "legal process" and is a subtle reminder of the occupation of both Ivan Il'ich and Peter Ivanovich. To apply it to the manner in which Peter Ivanovich comforts himself in his sudden fright at the specter of death is to suggest that he has acted not truly as a judge—the arbiter of wisdom and truth—but rather so as to abandon his calling in order to "calm himself".

37. Tolstoy's depiction of the widow's insincere grief and shallow behavior has been merciless without being explicit; he concludes his portrait by putting her on display as she blows her nose and then remarks that she has finished blowing her nose.

38. This last clause represents a rather strange combination of the circuitous (“in accordance with the incidence of the death of her husband”) and the rather coarsely direct (“get money from the government”); it confirms the image which has been created of Praskovya Fyodorovna.
В столовой с часами, которым Иван Ильич так рад был, что купил в брикабаре,[1] на распродаже старинных вещей, Пётр Иванович встретил священника и, еще несколько знакомых, приехавших на панихиду, и увидел знакомую ему красивую барышню, дочь Ивана Ильича. Она была в черном. Талия ее, очень тонкая, казалась еще тоньше. Она имела мрачный, решительный, почти гневный вид. Она похолодела Пётру Ивановичу, как будто он был в чем-то виноват. За дочерью стоял с таким же обжженным видом знакомый Пётру Ивановичу богатый молодой человек, судебный следователь, ее жених, как он сказывал. Он улыбнулся, поклонился им и хотел пройти в комнату мертвеца, когда из под лестницы показалась фигурка гимназистика-сына, ужасно похожего на Ивана Ильича.[39] Это был маленький Иван Ильич, таким Петру Иванович помнил его в Правоведении. Глаза у него были и заплаканые и такие, какие бывают у нечистых мальчиков в тринадцать - четырнадцать лет. Мальчик, увидав Петра Ивановича, стал сурово и стыдливо морщиться. Пётр Иванович кивнул ему головой и вошел в комнату мертвеца. Началась панихида - свечи, стоны, ладан, слезы, всхлипывания. Пётр Иванович стоял нахмурившись, глядя на ноги перед собой. Он не взглянул ни разу на мертвеца и до конца не поддался расслабляющим влияниям и один из первых вышел. В передней никого не было. Герасим, буфетный мужик, выскочил из комнаты покойника,[40] перешвырял своими сильными руками все шубы, чтобы найти шубу Петра Ивановича, и подал ее.

– Что, брат Герасим? – сказал Пётр Иванович, чтобы сказать что-нибудь. – Жалко?

– Божья воля. Все там же будем, – сказал Герасим, оскалив свои белые, сплошные мужицкие зубы, и, как человек в разгаре усиленной работы, живо отворил дверь, кликнул кучера, подсадил Петра Ивановича и прыгнул назад к крыльцу, как будто придумывая, что бы ему еще сделать.

Пётру Ивановичу особенно приятно было дохнуть чистым воздухом после запаха ладана, трупа и карболовой кислоты.


– Не поздно. Заведу еще к Федору Васильевичу. И Петр Иванович поехал. И действительно, застал их при конце первого робера, так что ему удобно было вступить пятым.[41] In the dining-room where the clock stood that Ivan Ilych had liked so much and had bought at an antique shop, Peter Ivanovich met a priest and a few acquaintances who had come to attend the service, and he recognized Ivan Ilych’s daughter, a handsome young woman. She was in black and her slim figure appeared slimmer than ever. She had a gloomy, determined, almost angry expression, and bowed to Peter Ivanovich as though he were in some way to blame. Behind her, with the same offended look, stood a wealthy young man, and examining magistrate, whom Peter Ivanovich also knew and who was her fiance, as he had heard. He bowed mournfully to them and was about to pass into the death-chamber, when from under the stairs appeared the figure of Ivan Ilych’s schoolboy son, who was extremely like his father.[39] He seemed a little Ivan Ilych, such as Peter Ivanovich remembered when they studied law together. His tear-stained eyes had in them the look that is seen in the eyes of boys of thirteen or fourteen who are not pure-minded. When he saw Peter Ivanovich he scowled morosely and shamefacedly. Peter Ivanovich nodded to him and entered the death-chamber. The service began: candles, groans, incense, tears, and sobs. Peter Ivanovich stood looking gloomily down at his feet. He did not look once at the dead man, did not yield to any depressing influence, and was one of the first to leave the room. There was no one in the anteroom, but Gerasim darted out of the dead man’s room.[40] He rummaged with his strong hands among the fur coats to find Peter Ivanovich’s and helped him on with it.

“Well, friend Gerasim,” said Peter Ivanovich, so as to say something. “It’s a sad affair, isn’t it?”

“It’s God will. We shall all come to it some day,” said Gerasim, displaying his teeth — the even white teeth of a healthy peasant — and, like a man in the thick of urgent work, he briskly opened the front door, called the coachman, helped Peter Ivanovich into the sledge, and sprang back to the porch as if in readiness for what he had to do next.

Peter Ivanovich found the fresh air particularly pleasant after the smell of incense, the dead body, and carbolic acid.

“Where to sir?” asked the coachman.

“It’s not too late even now....I’ll call round on Fedor Vasilievich.” He accordingly drove there and found them just finishing the first rubber, so that it was quite convenient for him to cut in.[41] 39. It’s worth noting the ambiguity of the son’s being "terribly" similar to his father. A characteristic feature of the style of this story is the use of colloquial or foreign expressions not in their everyday sense but rather in a literal sense—perhaps it really is terrible, dreadful that the son is so like the father.
40. Note that with respect to the other characters the dead Ivan Il’ich is referred to as the мертвец ("the dead man," "the corpse"), but in connection with Gerasim Ivan Il’ich is here referred to as the покойник ("the late," "the departed," lit. "the one who is resting in peace"). In this way the difference (which will prove great) between Gerasim and the others is subtly signalled.
41. Thus, Peter Ivanovich has resolved the conflicted state of his feelings by not looking at “the dead man once, (not yielding) to any depressing influence, and (being) one of the first to leave the room.” In this way, Peter Ivanovich, a judge, seems to refuse to accept jurisdiction over the situation which has arisen following the death of Ivan Il’ich. He would rather make a hasty departure from the situation, observing the minimum required by propriety. His flight leaves us as readers, who have accompanied Peter Ivanovich so far, on our own in the midst of the story. Ivan Il’ich’s dead face had held a message also for us, and it has become our task to continue on interpreting that message, even without the company of Peter Ivanovich.
Chapter 2

Прошедшая история жизни Ивана Ильича была самая простая и обыкновенная и самая ужасная.  

Ivan Ilych's life had been most simple and most ordinary and therefore most terrible.

Иван Ильич умер сорока пяти лет, членом Судебной палаты. Он был сын чиновника, сделавшего в Петербурге по разным министерствам и департаментам ту карьеру, которая доводит людей до того положения, в котором хотя и ясно оказывается, что исполнять какую-нибудь существенную должность они не годятся, они все-таки по своей долгой и прошедшей службе и своим чинам не могут быть выгнаны и потому получают выдуманные фиктивные места и нефиктивные тысячи, от шести до десяти, с которыми они и доживают до глубокой старости.

He had been a member of the Court of Justice, and died at the age of forty-five. His father had been an official who after serving in various ministries and departments in Petersburg had made the sort of career which brings men to positions from which by reason of their long service they cannot be dismissed, though they are obviously unfit to hold any responsible position, and for whom therefore posts are specially created, which though fictitious carry salaries of from six to ten thousand rubles that are not fictitious, and in receipt of which they live on to a great age.

1. Thus begins the second chapter of the novel, with one of the most famous lines in Russian literature. A literal translation of the Russian would be "The past history of the life of Ivan Illich was most simple and ordinary, and most terrible" ("terrible" in the sense of inspiring terror, absolute fear). In the paragraphs that follow the text is at pains to show that Ivan Ilich was an average, ordinary sort of person. He is middle-aged at his death (in his mid-forties), the middle son of three, an average family man with a medium-sized family and an entirely normal career.
Таков был тайный советник, ненужный член разных ненужных учреждений, Илья Ефимович Головин.

У него было три сына, Иван Ильич был второй сын. Старший делал такую же карьеру, как и отец, только по другому министерству, и уж близко подходил к тому служебному возрасту, при котором получается эта инерция жалованья. Третий сын был неудачник. Он в разных местах вздох напортил себе и теперь служил по железным дорогам: и его отец, и братья, и особенно их жены не только не любили встречаться с ним, но без крайней необходимости и не вспоминали о его существовании. Сестра была за бароном Грефом, таким же петербургским чиновником, как и его тесть. Иван Ильич был le phenix de la famille, как говорил.

Он был не такой холодный и аккуратный, как старший, и не такой отчаянный, как меньший. Он был середина между ними – умный, живой, приятный и приличный человек.

Воспитывался он вместе с меньшим братом в Правоведении. Меньший не кончил и был выгнан из пятого класса, Иван же Ильич хорошо кончил курс. В Правоведении уже он был тем, чем он был впоследствии всю свою жизнь: человеком способным, весело добродушным и общительным, но строго исполняющим то, что он считал своим долгом; долгом же он считал все то, что считался таковым наивысшее поставленными людьми. Он не был заискивающим ни мальчиком, ни потом взрослым человеком, но у него с самых молодых лет было то, что он, как муха к свету, тянулся к наивысшее поставленным людям, усваивал себе их приемы, их взгляды на жизнь и с ними устанавливая дружеские отношения. Все увлечения детства и молодости прошли для него, не оставив больших следов; он отдавался и чувственности и тщеславию, и – под конец, в высших классах – либеральности, но все в известных пределах, которые верно указывало ему его чувство.

He had three sons, of whom Ivan Ilyich was the second. The eldest son was following in his father's footsteps only in another department, and was already approaching that stage in the service at which a similar sinecure would be reached. The third son was a failure. He had ruined his prospects in a number of positions and was now serving in the railway department. His father and brothers, and still more their wives, not merely disliked meeting him, but avoided remembering his existence unless compelled to do so. His sister had married Baron Greff, a Petersburg official of her father's type. Ivan Ilych was le phenix de la famille as people said. He was neither as cold and formal as his elder brother nor as wild as the younger, but was a happy mean between them — an intelligent polished, lively and agreeable man. He had studied with his younger brother at the School of Law, but the latter had failed to complete the course and was expelled when he was in the fifth class. Ivan Ilych finished the course well. Even when he was at the School of Law he was just what he remained for the rest of his life: a capable, cheerful, good-natured, and sociable man, though strict in the fulfillment of what he considered to be his duty; and he considered his duty to be what was so considered by those in authority. Neither as a boy nor as a man was he to a toady, but from early youth was by nature attracted to people of high station as a fly is drawn to the light, assimilating their ways and views of life and establishing friendly relations with them. All the enthusiasms of childhood and youth passed without leaving much trace on him; he succumbed to sensuality, to vanity, and finally, in the upper classes, to liberalism, but always within limits which his instinct unfailingly indicated to him as correct.

2. Here is the first of several foreign-language expressions which occur in the text of the novel, many of which contain particular significance. This one (lit. “the phoenix of the family”) normally means “the member of the family most likely to succeed,” but it contains a reference to the phoenix, a mythological bird which was periodically reborn from the ashes of its own destruction. It is interesting to note that some lines below the reference to the phoenix we read: “from early youth he was by nature attracted to people of high station as a fly is drawn to the light, assimilating their ways and views of life and establishing friendly relations with them.” In the original, this sentence contains a pun on the Russian word ‘svet’ (‘light,’ ‘world of high society’). We might translate as follows: “he was, like a fly to the light (‘svet’), drawn to the people most highly placed in society (‘svet’).” In Tolstoi’s day, of course, the “light” to which flies were drawn was the light of a burning flame in which the insect is immolated. It is suggested that this flame is society itself, which will burn up Ivan Ilich, but that, like the phoenix, Ivan Ilich will somehow transcend this fiery end.

3. The list of adjectives describing Ivan Ilich is particularly appropriate to the description of him as an average or composite sort of person. He is intelligent (“umnyj” – lit. “having a mind”) and lively (“zhivoj” – lit. “alive”), but also pleasant and proper (the characteristics of his older brother and his father). There is a suggestion here that pleasantness and propriety are somehow antithetical to intelligence and aliveness.

4. See note 2 for an explanation of the pun on the word “svet” which this sentence contains.
By the time he had left the School of Law, having graduated at the tenth rank of the civil service, and having received money from his father for his equipment, Ivan Ilych ordered himself clothes at Scharmer’s, the fashionable tailor, hung a medallion inscribed *respice finem* on his watch-chain, took leave of his professor and the prince who was patron of the school, had a farewell dinner with his comrades at Donon’s first-class restaurant, and with his new and fashionable portmanteau, linen, clothes, shaving and other toilet appliances, and a travelling rug, all purchased at the best shops, he set off for one of the provinces where through his father’s influence, he had been attached to the governor as an official for special service.

In the province Ivan Ilych soon arranged as easy and agreeable a position for himself as he had had at the School of Law. He performed his official task, made his career, and at the same time amused himself pleasantly and decorously. Occasionally he paid official visits to country districts where he behaved with dignity both to his superiors and inferiors, and performed the duties entrusted to him, which related chiefly to the sectarians, with an exactness and incorruptible honesty of which he could not but feel proud.

In official matters, despite his youth and taste for frivolous gaiety, he was exceedingly reserved, punctilious, and even severe; but in society he was often amusing and witty, and always good-natured, correct in his manner, and bon enfant, as the governor and his wife — with whom he was like one of the family — used to say of him.

In the province he had an affair with a lady who made advances to the elegant young lawyer, and there was also a milliner; and there were carousals with aides-de-camp who visited the district, and after-supper visits to a certain outlying street of doubtful reputation; and there was too some obsequiousness to his chief and even to his chief’s wife, but all this was done with such a tone of good breeding that no hard names could be applied to it. It all came under the heading of the French saying: *Il faut que jeunesse se passe.* It was all done with clean hands, in clean linen, with French phrases, and above all among people of the best society and consequently with the approval of people of rank.

So Ivan Ilych served for five years and then came a change in his official life. The new and reformed judicial institutions were introduced, and new men were needed.

5. That is, his starting grade in the Civil Service would be at the tenth rank or higher.
6. Scharmer’s was an expensive tailor.
7. Here is another example of the ironic use of cliche formulas. It will turn out that the one thing that Ivan Ilych absolutely refuses to foresee is his own end, his death.
8. Donon’s was a fashionable restaurant.
9. Religious sectarians represented special legal problems in the Russian empire because the Russian Orthodox Church was the officially established national church. Thus, religious differences could often lead to legal disputes or prosecutions.
10. French for “a good fellow, a nice guy” (literally, ‘a good child’). Beneath the surface of this foreign-language cliche is the suggestion that “good-heartedness” (lit., goodness of soul) is characteristic of a child but not, perhaps, of an adult. We should pay attention to the way in which Ivan Ilych’s behavior changes as he grows older. Just as earlier we learned that his sense of shame as a child was gradually overcome so too the positive qualities of good-heartedness and gaiety will gradually be weakened in favor of more grown up attitudes and pastimes.
Ivan Ilych became such a new man.\textsuperscript{12}

He was offered the post of examining magistrate, and he accepted it\textsuperscript{13} though the post was in another province and obliged him to give up the connexions he had formed and to make new ones. His friends met to give him a send-off; they had a group photograph taken and presented him with a silver cigarette-case, and he set off to his new post.

As examining magistrate Ivan Ilych was just as comme il faut and decorous a man,\textsuperscript{14} inspiring general respect and capable of separating his official duties from his private life, as he had been when acting as an official on special service. His duties now as examining magistrate were far more interesting and attractive than before. In his former position it had been pleasant to wear an undress uniform made by Scharmer, and to pass through the crowd of petitioners and officials who were timorously awaiting an audience with the governor, and who envied him as with free and easy gait he went straight into his chief's private room to have a cup of tea and a cigarette with him. But not many people had then been directly dependent on him — only police officials and the sectarians when he went on special missions — and he liked to treat them politely, almost as comrades, as if he were letting them feel that he who had the power to crush them was treating them in this simple, friendly way. There were then but few such people. But now, as an examining magistrate, Ivan Ilych felt that everyone without exception, even the most important and self-satisfied, was in his power, and that he need only write a few words on a sheet of paper with a certain heading, and this or that important, self-satisfied person would be brought before him in the role of an accused person or a witness, and if he did not choose to allow him to sit down, would have to stand before him and answer his questions. Ivan Ilych never abused his power; he tried on the contrary to soften its expression, but the consciousness of it and the possibility of softening its effect, as supplied the chief interest and attraction of his office. In his work itself, especially in his examinations, he very soon acquired a method of eliminating all considerations irrelevant to the legal aspect of the case, and reducing even the most complicated case to a form in which it would be presented on paper only in its essentials, completely excluding his personal opinion of the matter, while above all observing every prescribed formality.\textsuperscript{15}

The work was new and Ivan Ilych was one of the first men to apply the new Code of 1864.

\footnotesize
11. French for “a good fellow, a nice guy” (literally, ‘a good child’). Beneath the surface of this foreign-language cliche is the suggestion that “good-heartedness” (lit., goodness of soul) is characteristic of a child but not, perhaps, of an adult. We should pay attention to the way in which Ivan Ilych’s behavior changes as he grows older. Just as earlier we learned that his sense of shame as a child was gradually overcome so too the positive qualities of good-heartedness and gaiety will gradually be weakened in favor of more grown up attitudes and pastimes. Notice, too, the emphasis on the growing distinction he makes between his official and social behavior; as time goes on that distinction is gradually eroded as the official behavior gradually becomes regnant.

12. The 1860s saw the institution of major governmental reforms in Russia. The most celebrated of these was the freeing of the serfs from their legal bondage in 1861. Among the most far-reaching (and the most needed) of the reforms was that which attempted to remodel the Russian judiciary system, long marked by incompetence and venality. Ivan Ilych’s ability to conform himself to the proprieties and expectations of this new system is the secret to his continuing career success. He now begins a steady rise in the service of several years duration.

13. An "examining magistrate" was a junior official of the court charged with conducting a preliminary enquiry into the circumstances and character of a crime and of the person(s) charged with the commission of the crime.

14. Comme il faut is French for “as one ought to be”; the phrase is a favorite descriptor of vapid and insincere characters throughout his career. One thinks, for example, of such characters in War and Peace as Hippolyte Kuragin, completely comme il faut and almost devoid of intelligence, or Alphonse Karlovich Berg, whose most earnest desire is to be the twin of those highly-placed persons who seem to him to represent comme il faut, a feat he tries to accomplish not simply by furnishing his house in the same style as those he admires but by purchasing furnishings which have actually stood in those houses.
Playing cards and courting a wife are represented as no more than two varieties of the same activity—and both are equally "pleasant." He established with her, so also does his astute "playing" of cards leave him usually on the "winning" side after a rubber of whist.

van Ilich dances as skillfully as he plays cards; as he "won over" Praskovya Fyodorovna with his dancing and by the "playful" relations to reduce both to triviality by suggesting that involve little more than the artificial conventions of a game of cards.

Like Peter Ivanovich and Schwartz in Chapter One, Ivan Ilich becomes a devotee of card-playing. The skills required to play whist (which progresses will treat him very much as he treats those who come before him in court.

It is interesting to note that Ivan Il'ich's secret of success in his official career resembles very much the attitude which his 'friends' bring to the 'required formality' of attending his funeral. Peter Ivanovich, indeed, does a remarkable job of estranging himself from the unpleasant sensations aroused by his feelings of personal connection with his deceased mentor and of the personal relevance which Ivan Il'ich's countenance and expression seemed to hold for him. Later on, the doctors whom Ivan Il'ich consults as his illness to the 'required formality' of attending his funeral. Peter Ivanovich, indeed, does a remarkable job of estranging himself from the unpleasant sensations aroused by his feelings of personal connection with his deceased mentor and of the personal relevance which Ivan Il'ich's countenance and expression seemed to hold for him. Later on, the doctors whom Ivan Il'ich consults as his illness

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16. Like Peter Ivanovich and Schwartz in Chapter One, Ivan Il'ich becomes a devotee of card-playing. The skills required to play whist (which will be referred to later as "vint," a variation of the game sometimes called "Russian whist" in English) are similar to those which bring him success in his career: his good humor and playful manner, his ability to calculate quickly and astutely, his knowledge of the rules of the game and the proper forms of play. The thrust here is to connect his "life" (Russ. zhizn') with his "official life" (Russ. sluzhba) and to reduce both to triviality by suggesting that involve little more than the artificial conventions of a game of cards.

17. van Ilich dances as skilfully as he plays cards; as he 'won over' Praskovyia Fyodorovna with his dancing and by the "playful" relations he established with her, so also does his astute "playing" of cards leave him usually on the "winning" side after a rubber of whist. Playing cards and courting a wife are represented as no more than two varieties of the same activity—and both are equally "pleasant."
The preparations for marriage and the beginning of married life, with its conjugal caresses, the new furniture, new crockery, and new linen, were very pleasant until his wife became pregnant — so that Ivan Ilych had begun to think that marriage would not impair the easy, agreeable, gay and always decorous character of his life, approved of by society and regarded by himself as natural, but would even improve it. But from the first months of his wife’s pregnancy, something new, unpleasant, depressing, and unseemly, and from which there was no way of escape, unexpectedly showed itself.

18. The Russian word “porjadochnaja” suggests a variety of meanings. Clearly the surface significance is that Praskovya Fedorovna exemplifies “good order” (Russ. porjadok) in the choice of a wife. The word may also suggest that she is selected from a whole row (rjad) of similarly acceptable women. The word “porjadochnyj” may also be applied to physical objects to indicate that the object is well ordered. The word may also suggest that she is selected from a whole row (rjad) of similarly acceptable women. The word “porjadochnyj” may also be applied to physical objects to indicate that the object is well ordered.

19. The word “soobrazhenija” (Engl. “considerations”) forms a verbal link to the earlier comment about Ivan Ilych’s ability to “quickly and astutely consider” the best way to play a hand of whist.

20. Ivan Ilych’s relationship with his wife, entered into more because it was suitable and appropriate match than because he loved her, is portrayed as satisfactory and even pleasant as long as it involves only such material considerations as sexual relations, furniture, dishes, and tablecloths. It is disrupted, however, and becomes unpleasant when Praskovya Fedorovna becomes pregnant, that is, when a new life enters into the situation. Thus, marriage, too, as Ivan Ilych wishes it to be, is suggested to be a form of death in which there is no place for life. By now it has already become clear that the story of the life of Ivan Ilych is really the story of his steady approach toward death. In the midst of his successful “life,” real life is already a devastating threat. Later in this same passage the pregnancy is said to introduce something “new, unexpected, unpleasant, depressing (Russ. ‘tjazheloе’ = ‘heavy, serious’), and unseemly” came into his life, “from which there was no way of escape.” All of these adjectives apply equally to the illness from which Ivan Ilych will soon begin to suffer. This is especially true of the adjective ‘tjazheloе,’ which is part of a familiar and standard expression when applied to disease (Russ. ‘tjazhelaja bolezn’). In the same way that Praskovya Fedorovna’s pregnancy seems to be an intimation of Ivan Ilych’s illness, so also her behavior while pregnant pre-figures that of her husband after he has become ill. Thus, the displays of unseemliness and unpleasantness, the unreasonable, the vulgar scenes which will mark Ivan Ilych’s behavior later on are all pre-figured here in the behavior of his pregnant wife. One must conclude, it seems, that just as there is a relationship between Ivan Ilych’s official and personal life and the symbols of death, so too is there a relationship between the illness which leads to the end of that “life” and the genuine new life stirring within Praskovya Fedorovna’s womb.

21. A French phrase used to mean “out of sheer wantonness” or, more vulgarly, “for the hell of it.” Literally, the phrase means “from gaiety of heart” and, consequently, seems to suggest the possibility that Praskovya Fedorovna’s pregnancy and its attendant symptoms, since they represent new life, should rather be a cause of happiness than of irritation. Here is still another example of a meaning
CHAPTER 2

At first Ivan Ilych hoped to escape from the unpleasantness of this state of affairs by the same easy and decorous relation to life that had served him heretofore: he tried to ignore his wife's disagreeable moods, continued to live in his usual easy and pleasant way, invited friends to his house for a game of cards, and also tried going out to his club or spending his evenings with friends. But one day his wife began upbraiding him so vigorously, using such coarse words, and continued to abuse him every time he did not fulfill her demands, so resolutely and with such evident determination not to give way till he submitted — that is, till he stayed at home and was bored just as she was — that he became alarmed. He now realized that marriage — at any rate with Praskovya Fedorovna — was not always conducive to the pleasures and amenities of life, but on the contrary often infringed both comfort and propriety, and that he must therefore entrench himself against such infringement. And Ivan Ilych began to seek for means of doing so. His official duties were the one thing that imposed upon Praskovya Fedorovna, and by means of his official work and the duties attached to it he began struggling with his wife to secure his own independence.22

Having discovered that the pleasantness and propriety of his life has been badly injured by the behavior of his pregnant wife Ivan Ilych first tries to ignore her outbursts and demands, but when this fails he withdraws into his work in order to protect his "independence." Thus, he turns away from his family life to the still more artificial world of his life at work. Maude's translation here does not capture the organizing metaphor of this passage. Where Maude says "entrench himself" the Russian has "barricade himself" (Russ. 'ogradir’ sebja’), and where Maude translates "secure his own independence" Tolstoi's text has "fence off his own independent world" (Russ. 'vygorazhivaja svoj nezavisimyj mir'). Thus, the Russian text suggests the motif of voluntary separation by walls or barriers, a process of securing for himself an existence outside his family life became still more imperative.

Very soon, within a year of his wedding, Ivan Ilych had realized that marriage,23 though it may add some comforts to life, is in fact a very intricate and difficult affair towards which in order to perform one's duty, that is, to lead a decorous life approved of by society, one must adopt a definite attitude just as towards one's official duties.24

22. Having discovered that the pleasantness and propriety of his life has been badly injured by the behavior of his pregnant wife Ivan Ilych first tries to ignore her outbursts and demands, but when this fails he withdraws into his work in order to protect his "independence." Thus, he turns away from his family life to the still more artificial world of his life at work. Maude's translation here does not capture the organizing metaphor of this passage. Where Maude says "entrench himself" the Russian has "barricade himself" (Russ. 'ogradir’ sebja’), and where Maude translates "secure his own independence" Tolstoi's text has "fence off his own independent world" (Russ. 'vygorazhivaja svoj nezavisimyj mir'). Thus, the Russian text suggests the motif of voluntary separation by walls or barriers, a process of self-enclosure, which is similar to the image created by the heavy black border of the funeral announcement and the framing edge of Ivan Ilych's coffin in chapter one. Some lines below the Maude translation does finally make the connection with "if he met with antagonism and querulousness he retired at once into his separate fenced-off (Russ. 'otdel'nyj vygorozhennyj im') world of official duties (italics mine)." Even here, though, Maude's translation refers to "his fenced-off world" while the Russian has "the world fenced-off by him" which makes Ivan Ilych responsible for the deliberate act of closing himself off from that which irritates him. Thus it is that in his desire to escape from the unpleasantness and fullness of his personal life he more and more embraces the relative emptiness and artificiality of his official life. In thinking to protect himself by isolating the unpleasantness, he always accomplishes this result by isolating himself, by building a metaphorical fence around himself.

23. The narrator's preference for the adjective supruzheskaya ("spousal," from "suprug/supruga," spouse) suggests that Ivan Ilych sees his relationship with Praskovya Fedorovna as one in which each of them is playing, and is bound to play, a certain role, that of spouse, rather than as a relationship between two authentic individuals. One might say that Ivan Ilych's strategy for defense against the importunities of his wife is to escape the role of spouse by taking refuge in the role of government official. The inherently inauthentic nature of this "play-acting" at life is most strongly suggested in Chapter Eight where the family discusses their imminent outing to the theater to see the celebrated actress Sarah Bernhardt perform.

Сначала Иван Ильич надеялся освободиться от неприятности этого положения тем самым легким и приличным отношением к жизни, которое выручило его прежде, — он пробовал игнорировать расположение духа жены, продолжал жить по-прежнему легко и приятно: приглашал к себе друзей составлять партию, пробовал сам уезжать в клуб или к приятелям. Но жена один раз с такой энергией начала грубыми словами ругать его и так упорно продолжала ругать его всякий раз, когда он не исполнял ее требований, очевидно, твердо решившись не переставать до тех пор, пока он не покорится, то есть не будет сидеть дома и не будет так же, как и она, тосковать, что Иван Ильич ужаснулся. Он понял, что супружеская жизнь — по крайней мере, с его женою — не содействует всегда приятностям и приличию жизни, а, напротив, часто нарушает их, и что поэтому необходимо оградить себя от этих нарушений. И Иван Ильич стал отыскивать средства для этого. Служба было одно, что импонировало Прасковье Федоровне, и Иван Ильич посредством служки и вытекающих из нее обязанностей стал бороться с женой, выгораживая свой независимый мир.23

With the birth of their child, the attempts to feed it and the various failures in doing so, and with the real and imaginary illnesses of mother and child, in which Ivan Ilych's sympathy was demanded but about which he understood nothing, the need of securing for himself an existence outside his family life became still more imperative.

As his wife grew more irritable and exacting and Ivan Ilych transferred the center of gravity of his life more and more to his official work, so did he grow to like his work better and became more ambitious than before.

Очень скоро, не далее как через год после женитьбы, Иван Ильич понял, что супружеская жизнь, представляя некоторые удобства в жизни, в сущности есть очень сложное и тяжелое дело, по отношению которого, для того чтобы исполнять свой долг, то есть вести приличную, одобряемую обществом жизнь, нужно выработать — определенное отношение, как и к службе.24

22. Having discovered that the pleasantness and propriety of his life has been badly injured by the behavior of his pregnant wife Ivan Ilych first tries to ignore her outbursts and demands, but when this fails he withdraws into his work in order to protect his "independence." Thus, he turns away from his family life to the still more artificial world of his life at work. Maude's translation here does not capture the organizing metaphor of this passage. Where Maude says "entrench himself" the Russian has "barricade himself" (Russ. ‘ogradir’ sebja’), and where Maude translates “secure his own independence” Tolstoi's text has “fence off his own independent world” (Russ. ‘vygorazhivaja svoj nezavisimyj mir’). Thus, the Russian text suggests the motif of voluntary separation by walls or barriers, a process of self-enclosure, which is similar to the image created by the heavy black border of the funeral announcement and the framing edge of Ivan Ilych’s coffin in chapter one. Some lines below the Maude translation does finally make the connection with “if he met with antagonism and querulousness he retired at once into his separate fenced-off (Russ. ‘otdel’nyj vygorozhennyj im’) world of official duties (italics mine).” Even here, though, Maude’s translation refers to “his fenced-off world” while the Russian has “the world fenced-off by him” which makes Ivan Ilych responsible for the deliberate act of closing himself off from that which irritates him. Thus it is that in his desire to escape from the unpleasantness and fullness of his personal life he more and more embraces the relative emptiness and artificiality of his official life. In thinking to protect himself by isolating the unpleasantness, he always accomplishes this result by isolating himself, by building a metaphorical fence around himself.

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И такое отношение к супружеской жизни выработал себе Иван Ильич. Он требовал от семейной жизни только тех удобств домашнего обеда, хозяйки, постели, которые она могла дать ему, и, главное, того приличия внешних форм, которые определялись общественным мнением. В остальном же он искал веселой приятности и, если находил их, был очень благодарен; если же встречал отпор и ворчливость, то тотчас же уходил в свой отдельный, выгороженный им мир службы и в нем находит приятности.

Ивана Ильича ценили как хорошего служаку, и через три года сделали товарищем прокурора. Новые обязанности, важность их, возможность привлечь к суду и посадить всякого в острог публичность речей; успех, который в этом деле имел Иван Ильич, — все это еще более привлекало его к службе.

Посши дети. Жена становилась все ворчливее и сердитее, но выработанные Иваном Ильичом отношения к домашней жизни делали его почти непроницаемым для ее ворчливости.

После семи лет службы в одном городе Ивана Ильича перевели на место прокурора в другую губернию. Они переехали, денег было мало, и жене не понравилось то место, куда они переехали. Жалованье было хоть и больше прежнего, но жизнь была дороже; кроме того, умерло двое детей, и потому семейная жизнь стала еще неприятнее для Ивана Ильича.

And Ivan Ilych evolved such an attitude towards married life. He only required of it those conveniences — dinner at home, housewife, and bed — which it could give him, and above all that propriety of external forms required by public opinion. For the rest he looked for lighthearted pleasure and propriety, and was very thankful when he found them, but if he met with antagonism and querulousness he at once retired into his separate fenced-off world of official duties, where he found satisfaction.

Ivan Ilych was esteemed a good official, and after three years was made Assistant Public Prosecutor. His new duties, their importance, the possibility of indicting and imprisoning anyone he chose, the publicity his speeches received, and the success he had in all these things, made his work still more attractive.

More children came. His wife became more and more querulous and ill-tempered, but the attitude Ivan Ilych had adopted towards his home life rendered him almost impervious to her grumbling.

After seven years’ service in that town he was transferred to another province as Public Prosecutor. They moved, but were short of money and his wife did not like the place they moved to. Though the salary was higher the cost of living was greater besides which two of their children died and family life became still more unpleasant for him.

24. The word “opredelennyj” (as here in “opredelennoe otnoshenie,” Eng., “a definite (or "defined") relationship) occurs frequently in the story. It is suggestive that it derives from the word “predel,” Eng., “limit,” “boundary” and thereby resonates with the various images of borders, edges, barriers, enclosures, curtains, screens and so on in which the story abounds. To say that there is need for a defined relationship suggests that every aspect of life has its known and desirable limits, its rules describing the types of behavior which are and are not permitted within that aspect. Extending this principle logically we come soon to the conclusion that life itself is just such a limited affair, and Ivan Ilich’s hope to protect his “independent world” is illusory.

25. Note the use of the same verb “privlekat’/privlech’” (“to draw, attract”) to express the idea of Ivan Ilich’s gratification of being able to “draw” anyone into court (or into prison) and his gratification with all aspects of his new duties being able to “draw” Ivan Ilich himself into his work at the office even more than before. Thus again the idea of Ivan Ilich’s life becoming ever more a voluntarily accepted decision to lock himself away from the world.

26. The image of being surrounded by solid walls is picked up yet again in the use of the word “nepronicaemyj” (impenetrable).

27. Here is a prime example of the ambiguity so often reflected in the style of the narrative: is it simply that the cost of living is more expensive because of moving to a larger town, or is it that because of his promotion Ivan Ilich’s real life has become more dear because it is slipping away ever farther into the false life of his increased official duties.

28. Just as the birth of a child created unpleasantness in Ivan Ilich’s life, so also does their death. Clearly, if these ineluctable evidences of real life—birth and death—are both unpleasant, it must be that Ivan Ilich’s “family life” is somehow false, not real life at all; his family life is rather a phenomenon in which the elements of real life have no appropriate place.
Прасковья Федоровна во всех случавшихся невзгодах в этом новом месте жительства упрекала мужа. Большинство предметов разговора между мужем и женой, особенно воспитание детей, наводило на вопросы, по которым были воспоминания ссор, и ссоры всюкую минуту готовы были разгораться. Оставались только те редкие периоды влюбленности, которые находили на супругов, но продолжались недолго. Это были островки, на которые они призывали на время, но потом опять пускались в море затаенной вражды, выражавшейся в отчуждениях друг от друга. Отчуждение это могло бы огорчать Ивана Ильича, если бы он считал, что это не должно так быть, но он теперь уже признавал это положение не только нормальным, но и целью всей деятельности в семье. Цель его состояла в том, чтобы все больше и больше освобождать себя от этих неприятностей и придать им характер безвредности и приличия; и он достигал этого тем, что он все меньше и меньше проводил время с семьёй, а когда был вынужден это делать, то старался обеспечивать свое положение присутствием посторонних лиц. Главное же то, что у Ивана Ильича была служба. В служебном мире сосредоточился для него весь интерес жизни. И интерес этот поглощал его — Сознание своей власти, возможности погубить всякого человека, которого он захочет погубить, важность, даже внешняя, при его входе в суд и встречах с подчиненными, успех своего перед высшими и подчиненными и, главное, мастерство свое ведения дел, которое он чувствовал, — все это радовало его и вместе с беседами с товарищами, обедами и вистом наполняло его жизнь. Так что вообще жизнь Ивана Ильича продолжала идти как он считал, что она должна быть: приятно и прилично.

Так прожил он еще семь лет. Старшей дочери было уже шестнадцать лет, еще один ребенок умер, и оставался мальчик-гимназист, предмет раздора. Иван Ильич хотел отдать его в Правоведение, а Прасковья Федоровна назло ему отдала в гимназию. Дочь училась дома и росла хорошо, мальчик тоже учился недурно.

29. Making the point yet again, Tolstoy’s Russian uses the phrase “postoronnie lica” (lit. ‘persons ranged along the sides, rather than in the center’) to suggest once more the image of Ivan Ilyich surrounded by a protective screen. Ivan Ilyich thinks always to fence the offending behavior out, never realizing that he is also, necessarily, fencing himself in.

30. The completeness of his isolation in his official life is mainly missed by Maude’s translation “The whole interest of his life now centered in the official world and that interest absorbed him” but is vividly suggested by Tolstoy’s use of the idiomatic expression “And that interest swallowed him” which Tolstoy offers as a separate, brief, and powerful sentence.
Так шла жизнь Ивана Ильича в продолжение семнадцати лет со времени женитьбы. Он был уже старым прокурором, отказавшимся от некоторых перемещений, ожидая более желательного места, когда неожиданно случилось одно неприятное обстоятельство, совсем было нарушившее его спокойствие жизни.

Это было в 1880 году. Этот год был самый тяжелый жизни Ивана Ильича. В этом году оказалось, с одной стороны, что жалованья не хватает на жизнь; с другой — что все его забыли и что то, что казалось для него по отношению к нему величайшей, жесточайшей несправедливостью, другим представлялось совсем обыкновенным делом. Даже отец не считал своей обязанностью помогать ему. Он почувствовал, что все покинули его, считая его положение с 3500 жалованья самым нормальным и даже счастливым. Он один знал, что с сознанием тех несправедливостей, которые были сделаны ему, с вечным пилением жены, и с долгами, которые он стал делать, живя сверх средств, — он один знал, что его положение далеко не нормально.

Летом этого года для облегчения средств он взял отпуск и поехал прожить с женой лето в деревне у брата Прасковьи Федоровны.

This was in 1880, the hardest year of Ivan Ilych's life. It was then that it became evident on the one hand that his salary was insufficient for them to live on, and on the other that he had been forgotten, and not only this, but that what was for him the greatest and most cruel injustice appeared to others a quite ordinary occurrence. Even his father did not consider it his duty to help him. Ivan Ilych felt himself abandoned by everyone, and that they regarded his position with a salary of 3,500 rubles as quite normal and even fortunate. He alone knew that with the consciousness of the injustices done him, with his wife's incessant nagging, and with the debts he had contracted by living beyond his means, his position was far from normal.

So Ivan Ilych lived for seventeen years after his marriage. He was already a Public Prosecutor of long standing, and had declined several proposed transfers while awaiting a more desirable post, when an unanticipated and unpleasant occurrence quite upset the peaceful course of his life. He was expecting to be offered the post of presiding judge in a University town, but Hoppe somehow came to the front and obtained the appointment instead. Ivan Ilych became irritable, reproached Hoppe, and quarrelled both with him and with his immediate superiors — who became colder to him and again passed him over when other appointments were made.

In order to save money that summer he obtained leave of absence and went with his wife to live in the country at her brother's place.

1. The unpleasant circumstance mentioned here is Ivan Ilich's being passed over for an expected promotion. Since the event is "unpleasant" it has no place in Ivan Ilich's "pleasant" life and strikes him, a few lines later, as being most unjust. This unpleasant occurrence may be seen as one of several warnings which Ivan Ilich receives in the story that his "pleasant" and "seemly" and "well-ordered" life is at odds with the real life which surrounds it. In short, Ivan Ilich's skillfully arranged pleasant life may be just as artificial as his clever one-page summaries of the complex matters that come before him in court. Real life has intervened once before, in Praskovya Fyodorovna's changed behavior when pregnant, and now even his official life (into which he had fled to escape Praskovya Fyodorovna's bad behavior) is disrupted by this failure to provide him with the promotion that he believes he has earned. As before, so now, Ivan Ilich will react to this unpleasantness by attempting to isolate himself from it, by leaving it behind and quitting his post in the Ministry of Justice. On this occasion, however, he will be saved by a lucky change in the higher administration of his department. That these disruptions (later referred to as "stumbles") in the pleasant flow of his life may be seen as warnings seems rather clear from a passage some paragraphs later in which Ivan Ilich thinks that "it was impossible to go on living this way." The Russian text has the phrase "tak zhit' nel'zja" which may be understood to mean either that living so is "not possible" or "not permitted." The final indication that Ivan Ilich's life works neither as he imagines it nor as he would prefer it to work is the onset of his illness, which arises from a "stumble" from a step-stool. In the end it is his sickness which finally convinces him that his life, as he had arranged it and lived it, was false and artificial; as Tolstoy writes, his life was not "the real thing."
В деревне, без службы Иван Ильич в первый раз почувствовал не только скуку, но тоску невыносимую, и решил, что так жить нельзя и необходимо принять какие-нибудь решительные меры.

Проведя бессонную ночь, которую всю Иван Ильич проходил по террасе, он решил ехать в Петербург хлопотать и, чтобы наказать их, тех, которые не умели оценить его, перейти в другое министерство.

На другой день, несмотря на все отговоры жены и шурина, он поехал в Петербург.

Он ехал за одним: выпросить место в пять тысяч жалованья. Он уже не держался никакого министерства, направления или рода деятельности. Ему нужно только было место, место с пятью тысячами, по администрации, по банкам, по железным дорогам, по учреждениям императрицы Марии, даже таможни, но непременно пять тысяч и непременно выйти из министерства, где не умели оценить его.

И вот эта поездка Ивана Ильича увенчалась удивительным, неожиданным успехом. В Курске подсел в первый класс Ф. С. Ильин, знакомый, и сообщил свежую телеграмму, полученную курским губернатором, что в министерстве произойдет на днях переворот: на место Петра Ивановича назначают Ивана Семеновича.

Он уже не держался никакого министерства, направления или рода деятельности. Ему нужно только было место, место с пятью тысячами, по администрации, по банкам, по железным дорогам, по учреждениям императрицы Марии, даже таможни, но непременно пять тысяч и непременно выйти из министерства, где не умели оценить его.

Предполагаемый переворот, кроме своего значения для России, имел особенное значение для Ивана Ильича тем, что он, выдигая новое лицо, Петра Петровича и, очевидно, его друга Захара Ивановича, был в высшей степени благоприятен для Ивана Ильича. Захар Иванович был товарищ и друг Ивану Ильичу.

В Москве известие подтвердилось. А приехав в Петербург, Иван Ильич нашел Захара Ивановича и получил обещание верного места к своем прежнем министерстве юстиции.

Через неделю он телеграфировал жене: "Захар место Миллера при первом докладе получаю назначение".

Иван Ильич благодаря этой перемене лиц неожиданно получил в своем прежнем министерстве такое назначение, в котором он стал на две степени выше своих товарищей: пять тысяч жалованья и подъемных три тысячи пятьсот. Вся досада на прежних врагов своих и на все министерство была забыта, и Иван Ильич был совсем счастлив.

Иван Ильич вернулся в деревню веселый, довольный, каким он давно не был. Прасковья Федоровна тоже повеселела, и между ними заключились перемирие. Иван Ильич рассказывал о том, как его все чествовали в Петербурге, как все те, которые были его врагами, были посрамлены и подчинили теперь перед ним, как ему завидуют за его положение, в особенности о том, как все его сильно любили Петербурге.
Прасковья Федоровна выслушивала это и делала вид, что она верит этому, и не противоречила ни в чем, а делала только планы нового устройства жизни в том городе, куда они переезжали. Иван Ильич с радостью видел, что эти планы были его планы, что они сходятся и что опять его запутывающая жизнь приобретает настоящий, свойственный ей, характер веселой приятности и приличия.

Иван Ильич приехал на короткое время. 10 сентября ему надо было принимать должность и, кроме того, нужно было время устроиться на новом месте, перевезти все из провинции, прикупить, призаказать, еще многое; одним словом, устроиться так, как это решено было в его уме, и почти что точно так же, как это решено было и в душе Прасковьи Федоровны.

И теперь, когда все устроилось так удачно, и когда они сходились с женой в целях и, кроме того, мало жили вместе, они так дружно сошлись, как не сходились с первых лет женатой своей жизни. Иван Ильич уезжать увезти семью тотчас же, но настоящия сестры и зятя, вдруг сделавшимися особенно любезными и родственными к Ивану Ильичу и его семье, сделали то, что Иван Ильич уехал один.

2. We may wonder if there is any significance to the fact that the text specifies that all of this was decided in the mind of Ivan Ilich and in the soul of Praskovya Fedorovna. Perhaps there is a suggestion that Ivan Ilich and his wife are unable to distinguish between the products of the mind and of the soul.

3. The emphatic repetition in this paragraph of the forms of the verb сходиться/совместиться (“to come together, to converge”) seems to foreground the idea that Ivan Ilich’s unexpected promotion, portrayed as a recovery from an unexpected and inappropriate stumble, also restores a welcome sense of unity and togetherness in Ivan Ilich and Praskovya Fedorovna which has been absent since the very first years of their married life. Not only is the happiness and propriety of their life restored, but also the emotional bond and sense of mutuality between them. And yet this apparent sense of the full repair of Ivan Ilich’s life is undercut in at least two ways: the feeling of mutuality and togetherness owes at least some of its strength to the fact that “they lived together very little,” and, in the end, Ivan Ilich’s intention to move the whole family at once meets resistance and he leaves for the new city alone. The suggestion would appear to be that Ivan Ilich’s life has not been substantively changed or mended. He has gotten a higher salary and a promotion in prestige, but the hoped for return of togetherness and emotional convergence proves to be an illusion which can be maintained only so long as the family is not actually together.

4. Pasha is the diminutive form of Praskovya (Ivan Il’ich’s wife) and Lizanka of Elizaveta (their daughter).

5. Just as metaphors in the text often possess literal significance, so actual occurrences (here, falling off a ladder) often suggest metaphorical associations (the ladder of success, moving up the ladder, rising another rung on the ladder) and may suggest a hidden cause for the actual event. In this case the cause of Ivan Il’ich’s fall is merely his concern with the proper hanging of the curtains, but the step-ladder indicates a connection to his life in the service and suggests that it is not merely the curtains which precipitate his fall, his injury, and eventually his illness and death, but his entire all-consuming life in the service itself. It is also important to note that what he is attempting to do on the step-ladder is to arrange the curtains properly, and this connects directly with the other various metaphors of screening and enclosure which play so prominent a role in the artistic rhetoric of the novel.

В сущности же, было то самое, что бывает у всех не совсем богатых людей, но таких, которые хотят быть похожими на богатых и потому только похожи друг на друга: штофы, черное дерево, цветы, ковры и бронзы. Темное и блестящее, – все то, что все известного рода люди делают, чтобы быть похожими на всех людей известного рода. И у него было так похоже, что нельзя было даже обратить внимание; но ему все это казалось чем-то особынным. Когда он встретил своих на станции железной дороги, привез их в свою освещенную готовую квартиру в белом галстуке отпер дверь в убранную цветами переднюю, а потом они вошли в гостиную, кабинет и ахали от удовольствия, – он был очень счастлив, водил их везде, впивал в себя их похвалы и сиял от удовольствия. В этот же вечер, когда за чаем Прасковья Федоровна спросила его, между прочим, как он упал, он засмеялся и в лицах представил, как он полетел и испугал обойщика.

– Я негодяй гимнаст. Другой бы убился, а я чуть ударился вот тут; когда тронешь – больно, но уже проходит; просто синяк.

In reality it was just what is usually seen in the houses of people of moderate means who want to appear rich, and therefore succeed only in resembling others like themselves: there are damasks, dark wood, plants, rugs, and dull and polished bronzes – all the things people of a certain class have in order to resemble other people of that class. His house was so like the others that it would never have been noticed, but to him it all seemed to be quite exceptional. He was very happy when he met his family at the station and brought them to the newly furnished house all lit up, where a footman in a white tie opened the door into the hall decorated with plants, and when they went on into the drawing-room and the study uttering exclamations of delight. He conducted them everywhere, drank in their praises eagerly, and beamed with pleasure. At tea that evening, when Praskovya Fedorovna among others things asked him about his fall, he laughed, and showed them how he had gone flying and had frightened the upholsterer.

“It’s a good thing I’m a bit of an athlete. Another man might have been killed, but I merely knocked myself, just here; it hurts when it’s touched, but it’s passing off already — it’s only a bruise.”

7. The Russian here says, literally, “I am not an athlete for nothing. Another would have killed himself [Russ. ‘ubilsja’].” This is a powerful indicator, once the principle of seeing the literal in the metaphorical in this story is understood, that Ivan Ilich himself is responsible for the condition in which he will find himself. In lavishing all his attention on the pleasant and proper arrangement of his new apartment, in behaving as though his new apartment were the center and essence of his life, he has actually been killing himself. In this way, apparently casual expressions (remember here the phrase, at the end of Chapter Two, that his life in the service “swallowed” him) point the way to a method of reading the text in which the apparent and the actual are at odds with one another. We begin to see metaphors as exact descriptions; we begin to understand that what seems to be a most pleasant life is actually a kind of death; we understand that apparent disasters (his wife’s behavior change in pregnancy; being passed over for promotion) are actually timely warnings of possible rescue (the advent of new life; a chance to come out of the official shell which the service has created for him). At a certain point the logic becomes quite inescapable: his illness is not the cause of his death, but the mechanism which returns him to life.
И они начали жить в новом помещении, в котором, как всегда, когда хорошо обжились, недоставало только одной комнаты, и с новыми средствами, к которым, как всегда, только немножко — каких-нибудь пятьсот рублей — недоставало, и было очень хорошо. Особенно было хорошо первое время, когда еще не все было устроено и надо было еще устраивать: то купить, то заказать, то переставить, то наладить. Хоть и были некоторые несогласия между мужем и женой, но оба так были довольны итак много было дела, что все кончалось без больших ссор. Когда уже нечего было устраивать, стало немного скучно и чего-то недоставать, но тут уже сделались знакомства, привычки, и жизнь наполнилась.

So they began living in their new home — in which, as always happens, when they got thoroughly settled in they found they were just one room short — and with the increased income, which as always was just a little (some five hundred rubles) too little, but it was all very nice. Things went particularly well at first, before everything was finally arranged and while something had still to be done: this thing bought, that thing ordered, another thing moved, and something else adjusted. Though there were some disputes between husband and wife, they were both so well satisfied and had so much to do that it all passed off without any serious quarrels. When nothing was left to arrange it became rather dull and something seemed to be lacking, but they were then making acquaintances, forming habits, and life was growing fuller.
Ivan Ilych, spending his mornings at the law court and coming home to diner, and at first he was generally in a good humour, though he occasionally became irritable just on account of his house. (Every spot on the tablecloth or the upholstery, and every broken window-blind string, irritated him. He had devoted so much trouble to arranging it all that every disturbance of it distressed him.) But on the whole his life ran its course as he believed life should do; easily, pleasantly, and decorously. He got up at nine, drank his coffee, read the paper, and then put on his undress uniform and went to the law courts. There the harness in which he had worked had already been stretched to fit him and he donned it without a hitch: petitioners, inquiries at the chancery, the chancery itself, and the sittings public and administrative. In all this the thing was to exclude everything fresh and vital, which always disturbed the regularities. There he kept the semblance of friendly human relations, that is, would observe the courtesies of life. As soon as the official relations ended, so did everything else. Ivan Ilych possessed this capacity to separate his real life from the official side of affairs and not mix the two, in the highest degree, and by long practice and natural aptitude had brought it to such a pitch that sometimes, in the manner of a virtuoso, he would even allow himself to let the human and official relations mingle. He let himself do this just because he felt that he could at any time he chose resume the strictly official attitude again and drop the human relation, and he did it all easily, pleasantly, correctly, and even artistically. In the intervals between the sessions he smoked, drank tea, chatted a little about politics, a little about general topics, a little about cards, but most of all about official appointments.

8. One thinks here of the similarity between the blemishes on the furnishings, which concern Ivan Ilych so much, and the blemish on himself, the bruise on his side, which he tries to disregard.

9. The use of the word "votre" here is suggestive; its basic meaning of "belief" fits the surface sense of the statement, but its other associations--"faith," "religion"--might indicate that Ivan Ilych's deep concern with the material objects surrounding him is to him a kind of basic faith or creed.

10. Even at moments when Ivan Ilych's life has in fact become the pleasant and easy thing he wants it to be we are reminded that this life is not his real life. We understand the text to be referring to the distinction between Ivan Ilych's life at home and his life at the office, but since we know that his home life is not less artificial than his office life we are struck by this oblique reminder that there is, beyond both of these artificial, surrogate lives, a real life which would seem to be uniformly ignored wherever he is.

11. Vint is a card-game, similar to both bridge and whist, and it is sometimes referred to as Russian whist. Vint means a screw in Russian, and the name is given to the game because the four players, each in turn, propose, bid and overbid each other until one, having bid
Once they even gave a dance. Ivan Ilyich enjoyed it and everything went off well, except that it led to a violent quarrel with his wife about the cakes and sweets. Praskovya Fedorovna had made her own plans, but Ivan Ilych insisted on getting everything from an expensive confectioner and ordered too many cakes, and the quarrel occurred because some of those cakes were left over and the confectioner’s bill came to forty-five rubles. It was a great and disagreeable quarrel. Praskovya Fedorovna called him “a fool and an imbecile,” and he clutched at his head and made angry allusions to divorce. But the dance itself had been enjoyable. The best people were there, and Ivan Ilych had danced with Princess Trufonova, a sister of the distinguished founder of the Society “Bear My Burden”.12

The pleasures connected with his work were pleasures of ambition; his social pleasures were those of vanity; but Ivan Ilych’s greatest pleasure was playing bridge.13 He acknowledged that whatever disagreeable incident happened in his life, the pleasure that beamed like a ray of light above everything else was to sit down to bridge with good players, not noisy partners, and of course to four-handed bridge (with five players it was annoying to have to stand out, though one pretended not to mind), to play a clever and serious game (when the cards allowed it) and then to have supper and drink a glass of wine. After a game of bridge, especially if he had won a little (to win a large sum was unpleasant), Ivan Ilych went to bed in a specially good humour.14

higher than the others care to follow, makes the trump, and his vis-a-vis plays as his partner. (Source: Wikipedia)
12. The name of a charitable society, fictional, but characteristic of the time.
13. It would be hard to miss the importance of the image of playing cards to the novel, so insistent is Tolstoy’s repetition of it. Ivan Ilych’s love affair with the game of vint provides a virtual index of the history of his life. We first hear of it as a new and more dignified social activity gradually displacing dancing and other more youthful pursuits by the increasingly successful official following his early promotions. Later it becomes a favorite activity, and here it is said to be the real joy of his life. In following chapters the increasing physical distress of his illness causes him to be every more seriously “off his game,” culminating (in Chapter Four) in his spoiling an entire evening of cards with his resentment at his own egregious misplaying of a hand. By Chapter Six card playing has disappeared altogether along with virtually all of Ivan Ilych’s other social activities. Thus, vint is not only the “real joy” of his life but a symbol of that life itself, and it is instructive to consider the elements of the image of the game. It is played by partners who sit opposite and never touch one another (unlike dancing, the activity it replaced in Ivan Ilych’s earlier life); it is played according to strict rules of speaking (the bidding must consist only of pre-determined phrases, many of which are referred to as “conventions”) and play (taking turns, correctness of play, close attention to the game to prevent embarrassing blunders). In short, vint is a vivid example of rule-bound, conventional, controlled, and highly decorous activity. As such, it mirrors very closely Ivan Ilych’s ideal for his own life, an ideal which he tries to realize in the furnishing and arrangement of the apartment in which he lives. We have seen how it was that effort that led to his fall and the injury which precipitated the onset of his illness. The game, the furnishings, the life of the office, the company he keeps are Ivan Ilych’s life—and from them emerges illness and death. Again, that which seems to be one thing is in fact its opposite; Ivan Ilych’s life is actually his death.
Так они жили. Круг общества составлялся у них самый лучший, ездили и важные люди, и молодые люди.

Во взгляде на круг своих знакомых муж, жена и дочь были совершенно согласны и, не сговариваясь, одинаково оттирали от себя и освобождались от всяких разных приятелей и родственников, замарашек, которые разлетались к ним с нежностями в гостиную с японскими блюдами по стенам. Скоро эти друзья-замарашки перестали разлетаться, и у Головых осталось общество одно самое лучшее. Молодые люди ухаживали за Лизанькой, и Петрищев, сын Дмитрия Ивановича Петрищева и единственный наследник его состояния, судебный следователь, стал ухаживать за Лизой, так что Иван Ильич уже поговаривал об этом с Прасковьей Федоровной: не свести ли их кататься на тройках или устроить спектакль. Так они жили. И все шло так, не изменяясь, и все было очень хорошо.  

So they lived. they formed a circle of acquaintances among the best people and were visited by people of importance and by young folk.

In their views as to their acquaintances, husband, wife and daughter were entirely agreed, and tacitly and unanimously kept at arm's length and shook off the various shabby friends and relations who, with much show of affection, gushed into the drawing-room with its Japanese plates on the walls. Soon these shabby friends ceased to obtrude themselves and only the best people remained in the Golovins' set. Young men made up to Lisa, and Petrishchev, an examining magistrate and Dmitri Ivanovich Petrishchev's son and sole heir, began to be so attentive to her that Ivan Ilych had already spoken to Praskovya Fedorovna about it, and considered whether they should not arrange a party for them, or get up some private theatricals. So they lived, and all went well, without change, and life flowed pleasantly.

15. This is the starting point of what is perhaps the most direct verbal reminder that things are not what they appear to be. It begins here at the end of chapter three and recurs throughout the final four chapters of the novel. Maude renders the last paragraph of chapter three as "So (Russ. "tak") they lived. And everything went along so (Russ. "tak")." Ivan Ilich's life is identified as "just so." In the last four chapters of the novel the thought that, strange as it seems, his life had been lived "wrongly" (as Maude translates it) occurs several times to Ivan Ilich. An exact translation of these passages would be that "he lived not so (Russ. "ne tak");" with the result that his life, which had been thought to be "just so" turns out to have been its binary opposite ("not just so") instead, that in fact his "life" was really a form or intimation of death.
They were all in good health. It could not be called ill health if Ivan Ilyich sometimes said that he had a queer taste in his mouth and felt some discomfort in his left side.

But this discomfort increased and, though not exactly painful, grew into a sense of pressure in his side accompanied by ill humour. And his irritability became worse and worse and began to mar the agreeable, easy, and correct life that had established itself in the Golovin family. Quarrels between husband and wife became more and more frequent, and soon the ease and amenity disappeared and even the decorum was barely maintained. Scenes again became frequent, and very few of those islets remained on which husband and wife could meet without an explosion.

Chapter 4

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2. The first few paragraphs of chapter four present Ivan Ilich as experiencing symptoms very similar to those exhibited by Praskovya Fyodorovna when she was pregnant: the well-known “morning sickness” in pregnancy is reflected in Ivan Ilich’s difficulties with taking food and the strange taste in his mouth; the increasing sense of pressure and weight in the abdomen is also common to both experiences. Most striking of all is the common behavior patterns of the two, the sudden outbursts, the demands, and the vulgar scenes. As though to point up these similarities the text reports that Praskovya Fyodorovna asserts, with her usual exaggeration, that Ivan Ilich had always had a “terrible character,” and that it had needed all her good nature to put up with it for twenty years (i.e., since the time of her first pregnancy). The text continues by noting that “what was true was that now their quarrels were started by him” (thereby suggesting a comparison with those quarrels of twenty years before which were started by her!). In this way the onset of Ivan

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The doctor said that so-and-so indicated that there was so-and-so inside the patient, but if the investigation of so-and-so did not confirm this, then he must assume that and that. If he assumed that and that, then... and so on. To Ivan Ilych only one question was important: was his case serious or not? But the doctor ignored that inappropriate question. From his point of view it was not the one under consideration, the real question was to decide between a floating kidney, chronic catarrh, or appendicitis. It was not a question of the life of Ivan Ilych, but rather a dispute between the floating kidney and the appendix which the doctor solved brilliantly, as it seemed to Ivan Ilych, in favour of the appendix, with the reservation that should an examination of the urine give fresh indications the matter would be reconsidered. All this was just what Ivan Ilych had himself brilliantly accomplished a thousand times in dealing with men on trial. The doctor summed up just as brilliantly, looking over his spectacles triumphantly and even gaily at the accused. From the doctor's summing up Ivan Ilych concluded that things were bad, but that for the doctor, and perhaps for everybody else, it was a matter of indifference, though for him it was bad. And this conclusion struck him painfully, arousing in him a great feeling of pity for himself and of bitterness towards the doctor's indifference to a matter of such importance.

Illich's illness, which culminates in his death, is linked to the onset of pregnancy, which culminates in the birth of new life.

This is the first of several phrases and incidents in the novel that can be understood as allusions to the story of the death by crucifixion of Jesus as reported in the New Testament. This set of motifs in the story is discussed by various scholars, including the present author ("A Note on the Miracle Motifs in the Later Works of Lev Tolstoi." In The Supernatural in Slavic and Baltic Literatures: Essays in Honor of Victor Terras, 191-99. Columbus, Ohio: Slavica Publishers, 1988). The presence of these allusions in the text is challenging, because the miracle of the Resurrection—that people are saved by the death and resurrection of Jesus—was explicitly denied by Tolstoy in his study of the Gospels (e.g., in The Gospel in Brief, A Harmonization and Translation of the Four Gospels, and What I Believe). I will indicate these allusions as such as the text progresses.

Note the explicit comparison which the text offers between the cold and impersonal treatment Ivan Ilych receives from the doctors and that which he himself accorded to those whom he encountered in his own official capacity. A strict reading of the Russian text says that which he himself accorded to those whom he encountered in his own official capacity. A strict reading of the Russian text says that which he himself accorded to those whom he encountered in his own official capacity. A strict reading of the Russian text says that which he himself accorded to those whom he encountered in his own official capacity. A strict reading of the Russian text says that which he himself accorded to those whom he encountered in his own official capacity. A strict reading of the Russian text says that which he himself accorded to those whom he encountered in his own official capacity. A strict reading of the Russian text says that which he himself accorded to those whom he encountered in his own official capacity. A strict reading of the Russian text says that which he himself accorded to those whom he encountered in his own official capacity. A strict reading of the Russian text says that which he himself accorded to those whom he encountered in his own official capacity. A strict reading of the Russian text says that which he himself accorded to those whom he encountered in his own official capacity. A strict reading of the Russian text says that which he himself accorded to those whom he encountered in his own official capacity. A strict reading of the Russian text says that which he himself accorded to those whom he encountered in his own official capacity. A strict reading of the Russian text says that which he himself accorded to those whom he encountered in his own official capacity. A strict reading of the Russian text says that which he himself accorded to those whom he encountered in his own official capacity. A strict reading of the Russian text says that which he himself accorded to those whom he encountered in his own official capacity. A strict reading of the Russian text says that which he himself accorded to those whom he encountered in his own official capacity. A strict reading of the Russian text says that which he himself accorded to those whom he encountered in his own official capacity. A strict reading of the Russian text says that which he himself accorded to those whom he encountered in his own official capacity. A strict reading of the Russian text says that which he himself accorded to those whom he encountered in his own official capacity. A strict reading of the Russian text says that which he himself accorded to those whom he encountered in his own official capacity. A strict reading of the Russian text says that which he himself accorded to those whom he encountered in his own official capacity. A strict reading of the Russian text says that which he himself accorded to those whom he encountered in his own official capacity. A strict reading of the Russian text says that which he himself accorded to those whom he encountered in his own official capacity. A strict reading of the Russian text says that which he himself accorded to those whom he encountered in his own official capacity. A strict reading of the Russian text says that which he himself accorded to those whom he encountered in his own official capacity. A strict reading of the Russian text says that which he himself accorded to those whom he encountered in his own official capacity. A strict reading of the Russian text says that which he himself accorded to those whom he encountered in his own official capacity.
Он приехал домой и стал рассказывать жене. Жена выслушала, но в сердце ей не пришло вовремя что-то сказать. Она сама с умом успела заметить, что доктора она не выдержала и даже не дослушала.

– Ну, я очень рад, сказала жена, – так теперь ты, смотри ж, принимай аккуратно лекарство. Дай рецепт, я пошлю Герасима в аптеку. – И она пошла одеваться.

Он не переведал дыханья, пока она была в комнате, и тяжело вздохнул, когда она вышла.

– Ну что ж, сказал он. – Может быть, и точно ничего еще.

Он стал принимать лекарства, исполнять предписания доктора, которые изменились по случаю исследования мочи. Но тут как раз так случилось, что в этом исследовании и в том, что должно было последовать за ним, вышла какая-то путаница. До самого доктора нельзя было добраться, а выходило, что делалось не то, что говорил ему доктор. Или он забыл, или Соврал, и он рассказал ей то, что о нем говорил ему.

Иван Ильич вышел медленно, уныло сел в сани и поехал домой. Всю дорогу он не переставая перебирал все, что говорил доктор, стараясь все эти запутанные, неясные научные слова перевести на простой язык и прочесть в них ответ на вопрос: плохо ли ему, или еще ничего? И ему казалось, что смысл всего сказанного доктором был тот, что очень плохо. Все грустно показалось Ивану Ильичу на улицах. Извозчики были грустны, дома грустны, прохожие, лавки грустны. Боль же эта, глухая, ноющая боль, ни на секунду не переставая, казалось, в связь с новыми речами доктора получала другое, более серьезное значение. Иван Ильич с новым тяжелым чувством теперь прислушивался к ней.

– Ну что ж, – сказал он. – Может быть, и точно ничего еще.

Он приехал домой, а встал положил деньги на стол и, вздохнув, сказал:

– Мы, больные, вероятно, часто делаем вам неуместные вопросы, – сказал он. – Вообще, это опасная болезнь или нет?..
Here is one of the first signs that Ivan Ilich is at some level aware of the idea that he may be not just sick, but dying. His unanswered superficiality and the other a true life where suffering and illness are real and personal, but so also, potentially, are joy and well-being. The text is suggesting that there are two forms of life— one false and the other true. The card game stands for that false life of pleasant functioning as symbols of the call away from the false life of the card game and, by implication, toward the true life. In this sense, Ivan Ilich's underlying belief that vint is a perfect analogue of life is made virtually explicit here. This passage emphasizes yet again the point that the card game, the symbol of Ivan Ilich's life as he has lived it so pleasantly until now, is ridiculously incommensurate with Ivan Ilich's underlying belief that vint is a perfect analogue of life. But Ivan Ilich seems quite unable to understand this! The pain did not grow less, but Ivan Ilych made efforts to force himself to think that he was better. And he could do this so long as nothing agitated him. But as soon as he had any unpleasantness with his wife, any lack of success in his official work, or held bad cards at bridge, he was at once acutely sensible of his disease. He had formerly borne such mischances, hoping soon to adjust what was wrong, to master it and attain success, or make a grand slam. But now every mischance upset him and plunged him into despair. He would say to himself: “there now, just as I was beginning to get better and the medicine had begun to take effect, comes this accursed misfortune, or unpleasantness...” And he was furious with the mishap, or with the people who were causing the unpleasantness and killing him, for he felt that this fury was killing him but he could not restrain it. One would have thought that it should have been clear to him that this exasperation with circumstances and people aggrothing agitated him. But he ought therefore to ignore unpleasant occurrences. But he drew the very opposite conclusion: he said that he needed peace, and he watched for everything that might disturb it and became irritable at the slightest infringement of it. His condition was rendered worse by the fact that he read medical books and consulted doctors. The progress of his disease was so gradual that he could deceive himself when comparing one day with another — the difference was so slight. But when he consulted the doctors it seemed to him that he was getting worse, and even very rapidly. Yet despite this he was continually consulting them.

On that occasion following the approved procedure had availed him not at all; his recovery of his appropriate (in his view) position in the service came about almost miraculously, through an entirely unexpected and, from Ivan Il'ch's point of view, extremely fortunate change in the leadership of the ministry. So here in dealing with his illness the prescribed, approved measures will fail to produce recovery; before the end, Ivan Ilich will consider going to a religious shrine to seek a miraculous cure. Even this second major failure of the artificial system of life to which Ivan Ilich is dedicated, however, fails to lead him at once to the obvious conclusion— that his pleasant, seemly, official life is not a real life and offers no help for or protection from the vicissitudes of that real life. At this point Ivan Ilich can still derive some comfort from the thought that he is doing what he is supposed to do and still hoping that this seemly action will produce the desired results.

8. Thus, it is suggested that all of his efforts to recover by taking approved steps within the limits of the life which he has developed for himself are just so much self-deception, and the implication of this would naturally be that his life as a whole is just as much a self-deception as his attempts to follow doctor's orders.

9. From this passage one might well infer a connection between Ivan Ilich's illness and the episodes of Praskovya Fyodorovna's first pregnancy and his being passed over for promotion at work. All three have in common that they reveal that Ivan Ilich's understanding and expectations of life are entirely faulty and not congruent with life as it actually is. Life is actually not analogous to a game of cards, but Ivan Ilich seems quite unable to understand this!

10. Ivan Ilich's underlying belief that vint is a perfect analogue of life is made virtually explicit here. This passage emphasizes yet again the point that the card game, the symbol of Ivan Ilich's life as he has lived it so pleasantly until now, is ridiculously incommensurate with life as it actually is. The further implication is that the pain and the putrid taste in his mouth, the symptoms of his disease, are functioning as symbols of the call away from the false life of the card game and, by implication, toward the true life. In this sense, Ivan Ilich's illness brings him into life as much as it leads him out of it. This apparent confusion can only be resolved by supposing that the text is suggesting that there are two forms of life—one false and the other true. The card game stands for that false life of pleasant superficiality and the other a true life where suffering and illness are real and personal, but so also, potentially, are joy and well-being. Here is one of the first signs that Ivan Ilich is at some level aware of the idea that he may be not just sick, but dying. His unanswered question for the doctor, "Is my condition dangerous," hinted at this, but here he feels that something is killing him, and that "something" is the imperfection of his life as he understands it and also his own unrestrained anger at those imperfections. In this way the text introduces the first subtle suggestion that what is killing him is the life he leads.
В этот месяц он побывал у другой знаменитости; другая знаменитость сказала почти то же, что и первая, но иначе поставила вопросы. И совет с этой знаменитостью только усугубил сомнение и страх Ивана Ильича. Привиль его приятели — доктор очень хороший — тот еще совсем иначе определил болезнь и, несмотря на то, что обещал выздоровление, своими вопросами и предположениями еще больше спутал Ивана Ильича и усилил его сомнение. Гомеопат — еще иначе определил болезнь и дал лекарство, и Иван Ильич, тайно от всех, принимал его с недоверием. Но только недели не почувствовал облегчения и потерял доверие и к прежним лечением и к этому, пришел в еще большее уныние. Раз знакомая дама рассказывала про исцеление иконами. Иван Ильич застал себя на том, что он внимательно прислушивался и поведал действительность факта. Этот случай испугал его. "Неужели я так умственно ослабел?" — сказал он себе. — Пустяки! Все вздор, не надо поддаваться мнительности, а, избрав одного врача, строго держаться его лечения. Так и буду делать. Теперь кончено. Не буду думать и до лета строго буду исполнять лечение. А там видно будет. Теперь конец этим колебаниям." Легко было сказать это, но невозможно исполнить. Боль в боку все томила, все как будто усиливалась, становилась постоянной, вус во рту становился все сильнее, ему казалось, что пахло чем-то отвратительным у него изо рта, и аппетит и сила все ослабевали. Нельзя было себя обманывать: что-то страшное, новое и такое значительное, чего значительнее никогда в жизни не было с Иваном Ильичем, совершалось в нем. И он один знал про это, все же окружающие не понимали или не хотели понимать и думали, что все на свете идет по-прежнему. Это-то более всего мучило Ивана Ильича. Домашние — главное тяже и дочь, которые были в самом разгаре выездов, — он, видел, ничего не понимали, и досадовали на то, что он такой невеселый и требовательный, как будто он был виноват в этом. Хотя они и старались скрывать это, он видел, что они им помеха, но что жена выработала себе известное отношение к его болезни и держалась его независимо от того, что он говорил и делал. Отношение это было такое:

That month he went to see another celebrity, who told him almost the same as the first had done but put his questions rather differently, and the interview with this celebrity only increased Ivan Ilych's doubts and fears. A friend of a friend of his, a very good doctor, diagnosed his illness again quite differently from the others, and though he predicted recovery, his questions and suppositions bewidered Ivan Ilych still more and increased his doubts. A homeopathist diagnosed the disease in yet another way, and prescribed medicine which Ivan Ilych took secretly for a week. But after a week, not feeling any improvement and having lost confidence both in the former doctor's treatment and in this one's, he became still more despondent. One day a lady acquaintance mentioned a cure effected by a wonder-working icon. Ivan Ilych caught himself listening attentively and beginning to believe that it had occurred. This incident alarmed him. "Has my mind really weakened to such an extent?" he asked himself. "Nonsense! It's all rubbish. I mustn't give way to nervous fears but having chosen a doctor must keep strictly to his treatment. That is what I will do. Now it's all settled. I won't think about it, but will follow the treatment seriously till summer, and then we shall see. From now there must be no more of this wavering!" This was easy to say but impossible to carry out. The pain in his side oppressed him and seemed to grow worse and more incessant, while the taste in his mouth grew stranger and more disgusting, and he was conscious of a loss of appetite and strength. There was no deceiving himself: something terrible, new, and more important than anything before in his life, was taking place within him of which he alone was aware. Those about him did not understand or would not understand it, but thought everything in the world was going on as usual. That tormented Ivan Ilych more than anything. He saw that his household, especially his wife and daughter who were in a perfect whirl of visiting, did not understand anything of it and were annoyed that he was so depressed and so exacting, as if he were to blame for it. Though they tried to disguise it he saw that he was an obstacle in their path, and that his wife had adopted a definite line in regard to his illness and kept to it regardless of anything he said or did. Her attitude was this:

12. Ivan Ilych means to say that his shilly-shallying over which of the various treatments to follow has come to an end and that he is resolved to stick faithfully to one treatment in order to treat his illness. In other words, he has decided that he is only ill and that the treatment, if followed strictly, will make him well. And yet this thought, "Now it is finished," is phrased so as to foreshadow exactly the words that Ivan Ilych, at the moment of his death in Chapter Twelve, will hear spoken above him: "It is finished." The phrasing suggests that perhaps Ivan Ilych is at this point not just sick, but in fact already as good as dead. We remember his feeling that the little upsets of his life at home and work were "killing" him. This suggestion that Ivan Ilych is already as good as dead, even though he is still alive, will be offered again and again in the next couple of chapters and may well lead to the conclusion that Ivan Ilych's "life" is in fact really a form of death.

13. Ivan Ilych means, of course that he will spend no more time considering which of the various treatments to follow. But the reader is becoming more and more familiar with the by now familiar device of suggestive contrast between the superficial, conventional, contextualized meaning of a statement and its more pointed underlying significance. Here that underlying meaning is "I will stop thinking"; that is, Ivan Ilych resolves to deal with his troubles by abandoning the only mechanism which has any chance of alerting him to the fact that his real illness is that his life, as he has lived it, is no more genuine and substantial than a game of cards. Fortunately for him, Ivan Ilych proves unable to stop thinking. The final four chapters of the novel, in fact, are mainly an extended record of his thoughts, and it is that persistent thinking which finally leads to the resolution of "that which had been besetting him from all sides."

14. It has been noted that references to the passion of Jesus are to be found in this text. This paragraph has two of them: the Russian words "sovershalos'" and "koncheno" are the equivalents to the words of Jesus from the cross which English-language Bibles translate as "It is finished" (John 19:30). "Sovershalos'" is the word used in the text established for use in the Russian Orthodox Church in Tolstoy's time; "koncheno" is the word used by Tolstoy in his own translation (in the early 1880s) of the Gospels in "Soedinenie i perevod chetyrex evangeli" ("Harmonization and Translation of the Four Gospels").
“You know,” she would say to her friends, “Ivan Ilych can’t do as other people do, and keep to the treatment prescribed for him. One day he’ll take his drops and keep strictly to his diet and go to bed in good time, but the next day unless I watch him he’ll suddenly forget his medicine, eat sturgeon — which is forbidden — and sit up playing cards till one o’clock in the morning.”

“Oh, come, when was that?” Ivan Ilych would ask in vexation. “Only once at Peter Ivanovich’s.”

“And yesterday with Shebek.”

“Well, even if I hadn’t stayed up, this pain would have kept me awake.”

“Be that as it may you’ll never get well like that, but will always make us wretched.”

Praskovya Fedorovna’s attitude to Ivan Ilych’s illness, as she expressed it both to others and to him, was that it was his own fault and was another of the annoyances he caused her. Ivan Ilych felt that this opinion escaped her involuntarily — but that did not make it easier for him.

At the law courts too, Ivan Ilych noticed, or thought he noticed, a strange attitude towards himself. It sometimes seemed to him that people were watching him inquisitively as a man whose place might soon be vacant. Then again, his friends would suddenly begin to chaff him in a friendly way about his low spirits, as if the awful, horrible, and unheard-of thing that was going on within him, incessantly gnawing at him and irresistibly drawing him away, was a very agreeable subject for jests.

Schwartz in particular irritated him by his jocularity, vivacity, and savoir-faire, which reminded him of what he himself had been ten years ago.

Friends came to make up a set and they sat down to cards. They dealt, bending the new cards to soften them, and he sorted the diamonds in his hand and found he had seven. His partner said “No trumps” and supported him with two diamonds. What more could be wished for? It ought to be jolly and lively. They would make a grand slam. But suddenly Ivan Ilych was conscious of that gnawing pain, that taste in his mouth, and it seemed ridiculous in such circumstances he should be pleased to make a grand slam.

He looked at his partner Mikhail Mikhaylovich, who rapped the table with his strong hand and instead of snatching up the tricks pushed the cards courteously and indulgently towards Ivan Ilych that he might have the pleasure of gathering them up without the trouble of stretching out his hand for them. “Does he think I am too weak to stretch out my arm?” thought Ivan Ilych, and forgetting what he was doing he over-trumped his partner, missing the grand slam by three tricks. And what was most awful of all was that he saw how upset Mikhail Mikhaylovich was about it but did not himself care. And it was dreadful to realize why he did not care.

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15. It is noteworthy that it is Schwartz—the person who is most vibrantly alive—is most irritating to Ivan Ilych. A bit later we will find that another character—the servant Gerasim—possesses this same “aliveness,” as shown by his perfect teeth, his unfailing energy, and his springy step, and yet Gerasim has quite the opposite effect on Ivan Ilych. He is comforted by Gerasim, and only by Gerasim, rather than irritated by him. We wonder: what is the difference between Schwartz’s “aliveness” and Gerasim’s. Perhaps it is that Schwartz’s life is “playful” (lit., like a game) and comme il faut (conventional, artificial) and therefore unreal, an illusion, just as Ivan Ilych’s life had always been “ten years ago,” before he got sick. The logic of this is oblique and deeply buried, but its effect is to suggest that Ivan Ilych’s life as he has known it is not really life at all, and it is sickness that is showing this to him.
Все видят, что ему тяжело, и говорят ему: “Мы можем прекратить, если вы устали. Вы отдохните”. Отдохнуть? Нет, он нисколько не устал, они доигрывают роббер. Все мрачны и молчаливы. Иван Ильич чувствует, что он напустил на них эту мрачность и не может ее рассеять. Они ужинают и разъезжаются, и Иван Ильич остается один с сознанием того, что его жизнь отравлена для него и отравляет жизнь других и что отрава эта не ослабевает, а все больше и больше проникает все существо его.

И с сознанием этим, да еще с болью физической, да еще с ужасом надо было ложиться в постель и часто не спать от боли большую часть ночи. А наутро надо было опять вставать, одеваться, ехать в суд, говорить, писать, а если и не ехать, дома быть с теми же двадцатью четырьмя часами в сутках, из которых каждый был мучением. И жить так на краю погибели надо было одному, без одного человека, который бы понял и пожалел его.

They all saw that he was suffering, and said: “We can stop if you are tired. Take a rest.” Lie down? No, he was not at all tired, and he finished the rubber. All were gloomy and silent. Ivan Ilych felt that he had diffused this gloom over them and could not dispel it. They had supper and went away, and Ivan Ilych was left alone with the consciousness that his life was poisoned and was poisoning the lives of others, and that this poison did not weaken but penetrated more and more deeply into his whole being.

With this consciousness, and with physical pain besides the terror, he must go to bed, often to lie awake the greater part of the night. Next morning he had to get up again, dress, go to the law courts, speak, and write; or if he did not go out, spend at home those twenty-four hours a day each of which was a torture. And he had to live thus all alone on the brink of an abyss, with no one who understood or pitied him.
Так шло месяц и два. Перед Новым годом приехал в их город его шурин и остановился у них. Иван Ильич был в суде. Прасковья Федоровна ездила за покупками. Войдя к себе в кабинет, он застал там шурина, здорового сангвиника, самого раскладывающего чемодан. Он поднял голову на шаги Ивана Ильича и поглядел на него секунду молча. Этот взгляд все открыл Ивану Ильичу. Шурин раскрыл рот, чтоб ахнуть, и удержался. Это движение подтвердило все.

– Что, переменился?
– Да... есть перемена.

И сколько Иван Ильич ни наводил после шурина на разговор о его внешнем виде, шурин отмалчивался. Приехала Прасковья Федоровна, шурин пошел к ней. Иван Ильич запер дверь на ключ и стал смотреться в зеркало – прямо, потом сбоку. Взял свой портрет с женой и сличил портрет с тем, что он видел в зеркале. Перемена была огромная. Потом он оголил руки до локтя, посмотрел, опустил рукава, сел на оттоманку и стал чернее ночи.

“Не надо, не надо”, – сказал он себе, вскочил, подошел к столу, открыл дело, стал читать его, но не мог. Он отпер дверь, пошел в залу. Дверь в гостицу была затворена. Он подошел к ней на цыпочках и стал слушать.

– Нет, ты преувеличиваешь, – говорила Прасковья Федоровна.

– Как преувеличиваю? Тебе не видно – он мертвый человек, посмотри его глаза. Нет света. Да что у него?

– Никто не знает. Николаев (это был другой доктор) сказал что-то, но я не знаю. Лещетицкий (это был знаменитый доктор) сказал напротив... 

1. The first four chapters of the novel have brought Ivan Ilich to a point where his illness has developed so far as to be out of control. So serious is the situation that Ivan Ilich seems already near death. His visiting brother-in-law here states that Ivan Ilich is already a dead man. This emphasis upon the extent to which Ivan’s condition has already deteriorated continues throughout chapter five and at the end of chapter six he even imagines that he sees “death” looking at him from behind some flowers in the sitting room. The reader may well wonder why such emphasis is placed on Ivan’s death, or his nearness to death, or the apparition of death at this point in the novel. After all, there are still six more chapters (half of the novel, if we are counting chapters) before he will in fact die. Let us note, at least, that Ivan is, in a sense, pronounced virtually dead already in chapters five and six, and that it is therefore possible that the final six chapters will be concerned to do more than provide further repetition of this motif. At the least it is clear that Ivan Ilich might as well be dead at this point, that his life is really just a kind of death.
Иван Ильич отошел, пошел к себе, лег и стал думать: “Почка, блуждающая почка”. Он вспомнил все то, что ему говорили доктора, как она оторвалась и как блуждает. И он усилием воображения старался поймать эту почку и остановить, укрепить ее: так мало нужно, казалось ему. “Нет, поеду еще к Петру Ивановичу”. (Это был тот приятель, у которого был приятель доктор.) Он позвонил, велел заложить лошадь и собрался ехать.

“Where are you going, Jean?” asked his wife with a specially sad and exceptionally kind look.

Рассматривая анатомически и физиологически подробности о том, что, по мнению доктора, происходило в нем, он все понял.

2. According to Wikipedia "Nephroptosis (also called floating kidney or renal ptosis) is an abnormal condition in which the kidney drops down into the pelvis when the patient stands up." The Russian for "floating kidney" (“bluzhdajushchaja pochka”) derives from the word “bluzhat’” (“to roam, wander”) and is etymologically related to the root “blud-” found in such words as “bludnitsa” (“loose woman, whore”) and “bludnoj syn” (the Biblical “prodigal son”). Thus, there is a subtle implication of sin, improper behavior (a roaming beyond the permitted boundaries) in this possible diagnosis of “whatever is the matter with” Ivan Ilich. And yet we have been told that Ivan Ilich’s life has been a model of staying within the bounds of decency and appropriateness. Two possibilities suggest themselves: the “floating kidney” has really nothing to do with what ails Ivan Ilich and is simply a mockery of the doctors’ incompetence, or Ivan Ilich has mistaken the life he has been leading for real life (perhaps it has only been as real as a game of cards) and that he has mistakenly wandered away from real life into an inauthentic and counterfeit existence. In this case the pretentious incompetence of the doctors’ is caused by their looking in the wrong place for the illness besetting Ivan Ilich; what is really besetting him is spiritual rather than material in origin. As always, the narrative is so constructed that both of these outlooks are correct with the spiritual narrative of view encased within the material one.

3. Note how Tolstoy colors Ivan Ilich’s behavior. Here he "looked at her darkly"; earlier in the chapter his expression “became blacker than night.” Thus, his actions in life take on the funereal color of death. This is in the same vein as the emphasis on the black clothing worn by all the living people in Chapter One of the novel and Ivan’s particular resentment of Schwartz (“black” in German) whose liveliness and playfulness (= life is a game) remind him of himself in younger and healthier days.

4. Since this diagnosis, too, will come to nothing the phrasing here suggests that neither the anatomical nor the physiological facts have any relevance to the question of what is wrong with Ivan Ilich.
There was something, a small thing, in the vermiform appendix. It might all come right. Only stimulate the energy of one organ and check the activity of another, then absorption would take place and everything would come right. He got home rather late for dinner, ate his dinner, and conversed cheerfully, but could not for a long time bring himself to go back to work in his room. At last, however, he went to his study and did what was necessary, but the consciousness that he had put something aside—an important, intimate matter which he would revert to when his work was done—never left him. When he had finished his work he remembered that this intimate matter was the thought of his vermiform appendix. But he did not give himself up to it, and went to the drawing-room for tea. There were callers there, including the examining magistrate who was a desirable match for his daughter, and they were conversing, playing the piano, and singing. Ivan Ilych, as Praskovya Fedorovna remarked, spent that evening more cheerfully than usual, but he never for a moment forgot that he had postponed the important matter of the appendix. At eleven o'clock he said goodnight and went to his bedroom. Since his illness he had slept alone in a small room next to his study. He undressed and took up a novel by Zola, but instead of reading it he fell into thought, and in his imagination that desired improvement in the vermiform appendix occurred. There was the absorption and evacuation and the re-establishment of normal activity. "Yes, that's it!" he said to himself. "One need only assist nature, that's all." He remembered his medicine, rose, took it, and lay down on his back watching for the beneficent action of the medicine and for it to lessen the pain. "I need only take it regularly and avoid all injurious influences. I am already feeling better, much better." He began touching his side: it was not painful to the touch. "There, I really don't feel it. It's much better already." He put out the light and turned on his side... "The appendix is getting better, absorption is occurring." Suddenly he felt the old, familiar, dull, gnawing pain, stubborn and serious. There was the same familiar loathsome taste in his mouth. His heart sank and he felt dazed. "My God! My God!" he muttered. Again, again! And it will never cease. And suddenly the matter presented itself in a quite different aspect. "Vermiform appendix! Kidney!" he said to himself. "It's not a question of appendix or kidney, but of life and... death. Yes, life was there and now it is going, going and I cannot stop it. Yes, Why deceive myself? Isn't it obvious to everyone but me that I'm dying, and that it's only a question of working days... it may happen this moment. And it's light and now there is darkness. I was here and now I'm going there! Where? A chill came over him, his breathing ceased, and he felt only the throbbing of his heart.

5. As the diagnosis of the floating kidney suggested the idea of "going astray" so, too, does the suspicion of trouble in the "blind gut" (i.e., the appendix) suggest the idea of the complete inability to see what is wrong, of blindness to the actual cause of Ivan Ilych's trouble.

6. Tolstoy uses the word "zadushevnyj" ("intimate, sincere") to describe the need to think inwardly about the "anatomical and physiological" details of the operation of the blind gut. The word "zadushevnyj," however, is derived from the root word "dusha" ("soul") and thus clearly suggests Ivan Ilych's complete confusion of his spiritual life with his physiological life; put another way, Ivan Ilych is unaware of his "soul," his spiritual life, and is spiritually dead. Even if only obliquely and etymologically, however, it would seem that, at last, and apparently for the first time in a long time, the conception of an inner, spiritual life has at last occurred to him. In Chapter Six he will remind himself that he "lived by his official duties," that he thought that his official life was his life. It is perhaps not strange then that he thinks that his inner life involves no more than the condition of his colon. Almost at once, though, his pain drives him to the thought that it is "not a question of my appendix or my kidney, but of life... and death" and soon thereafter: "I think of mending my appendix, and all the while here comes death!" Thus, the ground is prepared of the first mention, in Chapter Six, of an "inner voice," the voice of that life within, a life quite distinct from the life which Ivan Ilych has made for himself.


8. Ivan Ilych's pain is here described by the use of seven modifiers. The first four are unsurprising: "familiar" (all too familiar), "old" (by now the pain is clearly "getting old"), "dull," "aching" (from the verb meaning "to whine, complain"). All of these might well be used by Ivan Ilych to characterize pain that is continual and tiresome if not excruciating, just the sort of pain to elicit a self-pitying whine. The last three modifiers, "insistent," "quiet," "serious," however, do not evoke the same spirit of complaint. They seem rather to suggest that there is some point to the pain, as though it were quietly, seriously, persistently trying to attract Ivan Ilych's attention. The

"Что-нибудь не так; надо успокоиться, надо обдумать все сначала". И вот он начал обдумывать. Стукнулся боком, и все такой же я был, и нынче и завтра; немного ныло, потом больше, потом доктора, потом унылость, тоска, боль, и боль даже больше, и боль в глазах, и боль в сердце, и боль в груди. Он понял, что все это мучительно. И вам, думал он, и вам, и вам..."Что же говорить. Она не поймет", — думал он.

Она вышла, принесла свечу. Она лежала, тяжело и тоскливо, глядя вверх. И так, как будто он был далеко и неприступно. Она вышла, принесла свечу. Он лежал, тяжело и болезненно, глядя вверх. Он понял, что все это мучительно. И вам, думал он, и вам..."Что же говорить. Она не поймет", — думал он.

"What has happened?"

"Nothing. I knocked it over accidentally."

She went out and returned with a candle. She lay there panting heavily, like a man who has run a thousand yards, and stared upwards at her with a fixed look.

"What is it, Jean?"

"No...o...thing. I upset it." (Why speak of it? She won't understand," he thought.)

And in truth she did not understand. She picked up the stand, lit his candle, and hurried away to see another visitor off.

When she came back he still lay on his back, looking upwards.

"What is it? Do you feel worse?"

"Yes."

She shook her head and sat down. "Do you know, Jean, I think we must ask Leshchetitsky to come and see you here."

This meant calling in the famous specialist, regardless of expense. He smiled malignantly and said "No." She remained a little longer and then went up to him and kissed his forehead.

Meanwhile the visitors were leaving. Praskovya Fedorovna was seeing them off. She heard something fall and came in.

"What has happened?"

"Nothing, I knocked it over accidentally."

She went out and returned with a candle. She lay there panting heavily, like a man who has run a thousand yards, and stared upwards at her with a fixed look.

"What is it, Jean?"

"No...o...thing. I upset it." (Why speak of it? She won't understand," he thought.)
Он ненавидел ее всеми силами души в то время, как она целовала его, и делал усилия, чтобы не оттолкнуть ее.

– Прощай. Бож даст, заснешь.

– Да.

While she was kissing him he hated her from the bottom of his soul and with difficulty refrained from pushing her away.

“Good night. Please God you’ll sleep.”

“Yes.”

9. The phrase “with all the strength of his soul” is, of course, a common enough expression, but like many other such cliches in the text this one also bears a suggestive significance. In this case it suggests that, after all, Ivan Ilich does still have a soul and that soul hates the insincere affection of Praskovya Fyodorovna and the idea of calling in the doctor yet again, perhaps because it senses that medical care is irrelevant to the real, spiritual problem that is besetting Ivan Ilich.

10. The use of the word “proshchaj” here is unusual and suggestive. It is most commonly used when bidding farewell before a long absence or at the bedside of a person on the very verge of death.
Иван Ильич видел, что он умирает, и был в постоянном отчаянии. В глубине души Иван Ильич знал, что он умирает, но он не только не привык к этому, но просто не понимал, никак не мог понять этого.

Тот пример силлогизма, которому он учился в логике Кизеветера: Кай – человек, люди смертны, потому Кай смертен, казалось ему во всю его жизнь правильным только по отношению к Каю, но никак не к нему. То был Кай-человек, вообще человек, и это было совершенно справедливо, но он был не Кай и не вообще человек, а он всегда был совсем, совсем особенное от всех других существо; он был Ваня с мама, папа, с Митей и Володей, с игрушками, кучером, с няней, потом с Катенькой, со всеми радостями, горестями, восторгами детства, юности, молодости. Разве для Кая был тот запах кожаного полосками мячика, который так любил Ваня! Разве Кай целовал так руку матери и разве для Кая так шуршал шелк складок платья матери? Разве он бунтовал за пирожки в Правоведении? Разве Кай так был влюблен? Разве Кай так мог вести заседание?

Ivan Ilych saw that he was dying, and he was in continual despair. In the depth of his heart he knew he was dying, but not only was he not accustomed to the thought, he simply did not and could not grasp it.

The syllogism he had learnt from Kiesewetter’s Logic: “Caius is a man, men are mortal, therefore Caius is mortal,” had always seemed to him correct as applied to Caius, but certainly not as applied to himself. That Caius — man in the abstract — was mortal, was perfectly correct, but he was not Caius, not an abstract man, but a creature quite, quite separate from all others. He had been little Vanya, with a mamma and a papa, with Mitya and Volodya, with the toys, a coachman and a nurse, afterwards with Katenka and with all the joys, griefs, and delights of childhood, boyhood, and youth. What did Caius know of the smell of that striped leather ball Vanya had been so fond of? Had Caius kissed his mother’s hand like that, and did the silk of her dress rustle so for Caius? Had he rioted like that at school when the pastry was bad? Had Caius been in love like that? Could Caius preside at a session as he did?

1. Once again the telling use of the word “soul,” linking the beginning of Chapter Six to the end of Chapter Five. It would seem that Ivan Ilich’s soul is gradually coming to life just as his body is ineluctably sliding toward death. This may suggest that there is some basic incompatibility between the body and the soul such that the well-being of the body may hide the distress, or even the existence, of the soul and, conversely, that the distress of the body may allow the soul to appear.

2. J. G. Kiesewetter (1766-1819) wrote a textbook on logic which, translated into Russian, was used in Russian schools.

3. I have here suggested “right” as the equivalent of “spravedlivо” in contrast with “correct” as the equivalent of “прavil’no” in the preceding sentence in order to try to catch the fine distinction between the two Russian words. “Pravil’no” is usually applied in the context of matters of fact, for example, a statement is true or false; “spravedlivо” derives directly from “pravda,” which, while it shares the same basic root with “pravil’no” has the particular senses of “justness, rightness, fairness” as well as the sense of “truth.” For example, in Russian to behave “pravil’no” would be to behave “correctly” (in accord with established conventions, the hallmark of Ivan Ilich’s life as he has lived it) while to behave in a manner that is “spravedlivо” would be to do the “right” thing (in accord with some more primary principle of moral conduct, perhaps beyond the scope of the conventions defining everyday life). It is thus suggested that the “correct” life may not, if fact, be the “right” life to lead. It may be “wrong” to think of Ivan Ilich’s strict conformity with convention as being life at all.

4. Vanya is a nickname for Ivan, Mitya and Volodya (nicknames for Dmitry and Vladimir) are most likely Ivan Ilich’s two brothers; Katenka (nickname for Ekaterina) may be a sister not previously mentioned in the text.

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“Caius really was mortal, and it was right for him to die; but for me, little Vanya, Ivan Ilych, with all my thoughts and emotions, it’s altogether a different matter. It cannot be that I ought to die. That would be too terrible.”

Such was his feeling.

“If I had to die like Caius I would have known it was so. An inner voice would have told me so, but there was nothing of the sort in me and I and all my friends felt that our case was quite different from that of Caius. And now here it is!” he said to himself. “It can’t be. It’s impossible! But here it is. How is this? How is one to understand it?”

5. Here the notion of an “inner voice” and, by extension, an inner life, is mentioned in the text for the first time. If we follow the practice of paying close and exact attention to what is said we see that Ivan Ilich here seems to admit not only that there was no inner voice in him, but also no inner life. In fact, this inner voice will enter the text in Chapter Nine and will reappear in each chapter thereafter. At the very end, in Chapter Twelve, Ivan Ilich will himself seem to become that inner voice and inner life, and to view the agonized, dying remains of his body as though from a distance. However, at this point in the text, Chapter Six, the emphatic point seems to be that there is no such inner voice/inner life within Ivan Ilich, even though he is aware that he should have one. We might say that he and we have discovered that he has lost his inner life at the end of Chapter Six and that he regains it again at the end of Chapter Twelve. From this point of view, the novel seems to fall naturally into two main parts, in the first of which he gradually loses his inner, personal life in favor of his external, official life and in the second of which, through suffering and meditation occasioned by his illness, he gradually comes to acknowledge that loss and finally to regain his inner life. Simultaneously, however, the novel has been relating the same series of events from a strictly external viewpoint in which the inner life refers to no more than the kidneys and the intestines. This external story is related in three stages: Ivan Ilich’s former life, up to the onset of his illness (chapters two-four); the development of his illness (chapters five-eight); and his final agony and death (chapters nine-twelve). We might call the first stage “health,” the second “illness,” and the third “death.” The first stage involves a period of years, the second a period of months, the last a period of days and hours. (More detail on this idea is given in the section in the “Introduction” called “The Proportions of the Text.”) It seems then that just as Ivan Ilich has two distinct lives—an inner one and an outer one—the story of those lives can be seen as being organized in two different ways at the same time: the external life story according to a three-part division of the material (health, illness, death) and the inner life story according to a two-part division. The two-part division shows us an Ivan Ilich who is already inwardly dead at the mid-point of the story, and one who has regained his inner life at the end.
He could not understand it, and tried to drive this false, incorrect, morbid thought away and to replace it by other proper and healthy thoughts. But that thought, and not the thought only but the reality itself, seemed to come and confront him.

And to replace that thought he called up a succession of others, hoping to find in them some support. He tried to get back into the former current of thoughts that had once screened the thought of death from him. But strange to say, all that had formerly shut off, hidden, and destroyed his consciousness of death, no longer had that effect. Ivan Ilyich now spent most of his time in attempting to re-establish that old current. He would say to himself: I will take up my duties again — after all I used to live by them. And banishing all doubts he would go to the law courts, enter into conversation with his colleagues, and sit carelessly as was his wont, scanning the crowd with a thoughtful look and leaning both his emaciated arms on the arms of his oak chair; bending over as usual to a colleague and drawing his papers nearer he would interchange whispers with him, and then suddenly raising his eyes and sitting erect would pronounce certain words and open the proceedings. But suddenly in the midst of those proceedings the pain in his side, regardless of the stage the proceedings had reached, would begin its own gnawing work. Ivan Ilyich would turn his attention to it and try to drive the thought of it away, but without success. It would come and stand before him and look at him, and he would be petrified and the light would die out of his eyes, and he would again begin asking himself whether it alone was true. And his colleagues and subordinates would see with surprise and distress that he, the brilliant and subtle judge, was becoming confused and making mistakes. He would shake himself, try to pull himself together, manage somehow to bring the sitting to a close, and return home with the sorrowful consciousness that his judicial labours could not as formerly hide from him what he wanted them to hide, and could not deliver him from it. And what was worst of all was that it drew his attention on itself not in order to make him take some action but only that he should look at it, look it straight in the face: look at it and without doing anything, suffer inexpressibly.

6. With remarkable consistency the text notes that Ivan Ilyich believes that the thought of death is false and incorrect (“nepravil’naja”—not in conformity with convention; see note 3, above) and that it is “diseased.” But it may none the less be true, and it may be his disease that is revealing this to him.

7. The word “zaslon” in Russian is a military term designating a military force of some kind used to cover, protect, or shield the action of another force.

8. The word “soznanie” (“consciousness”) is of marked importance everywhere in Tolstoy’s works. It is usually associated with the authentic human center of his characters and is very often contrasted to the mechanical processes of mind (“um”) and reason (“razum”). In various religious and philosophical writings produced about the same time as Death of Ivan Ilyich Tolstoy devised the term “razumnoe soznanie” (“rational consciousness”) to serve as one of the central pillars of his later thought, suggesting that “reason” (the adjective) was an aspect of, but subsidiary to, “consciousness” (the noun). In general, in Tolstoy anything that interferes with the operation of consciousness is suspect to some degree. One might well say that the tension between reason and consciousness is the mainspring of Tolstoy’s art.

9. Here the idea that Ivan Ilyich considers his life at the office, his outer life, to be his real life is made explicit. The resolve to get back to this life is implied to be just another screen to protect him from the consciousness (i.e., his inner life, his authentic life) of death. The phrase “ja zhil eju” reminds one of the title of short story (one of the first of Tolstoy’s “Stories for the People”)

10. Here is a brilliant example of Tolstoy’s use of language in the novel. The preceding sentence has twice used the word “delo”: first to mean “the facts of the case before the court as set down on paper” (in the phrase “podvigaja delo”) and, second, to mean “the judicial proceedings related to that case” (in the phrase “nachinal delo”). There “delo” is established as meaning the object and activity at the center of Ivan Ilyich’s life at court (“delo” is the nominal equivalent of the verb “delat’”—“to do, make”); therefore “delo” would be, basically, anything that is done. In the following sentence “delo” appears again, but is now identified as the action of Ivan Ilyich’s “sucking” pain. The pain of his illness is sucking away his life, but his life, as he has understood it, is also “delo.” This leads to the verbal paradox that the pain that Ivan Ilyich experiences is the very same thing as the life that he has led, that it is his “life” which is sucking away his “life.” The word “sosushchij” (present active participle from “sosat’,” “to suck”) often has the transferential meaning of “gnaw” or “nag.” As so often in the novel, underneath the conventional meaning of a word or phrase lies hidden its literal sense: the false
And to save himself from this condition Ivan Ilych looked for consolations — new screens — and new screens were found and for a while seemed to save him, but then they immediately fell to pieces or rather became transparent, as if *it* penetrated them and nothing could veil it.  

In these latter days he would go into the drawing-room he had arranged — that drawing-room where he had fallen and for the sake of which (how bitterly ridiculous it seemed) he had sacrificed his life — for he knew that his illness originated with that knock. He would enter and see that something had scratched the polished table. He would look for the cause of this and find that it was the bronze ornamentation of an album, that had got bent. He would take up the expensive album which he had lovingly arranged, and feel vexed with his daughter and her friends for their untidiness — for the album was torn here and there and some of the photographs turned upside down. He would put it carefully in order and bend the ornamentation back into position.

It would then occur to him to place all those things in another corner of the room, near the plants. He would call the footman, but his daughter or wife would come to help him. They would not agree, and his wife would contradict him, and he would dispute and grow angry. But that was all right, for then he did not think about it. It was invisible.

But then, when he was moving something himself, his wife would say: "Let the servants do it. You will hurt yourself again." And suddenly it would flash through the screen and he would see it. It was just a flash, and he hoped it would disappear, but he would involuntarily pay attention to his side. "It sits there as before, gnawing just the same!" And he could no longer forget it, but could distinctly see it looking at him from behind the flowers. "What is it all for?"

"It really is so! I lost my life over that curtain as I might have done when storming a fort. Is that possible? How terrible and how stupid. It can't be true! It can't, but it is." He would go to his study, lie down, and again be alone with it: face to face with it. And nothing could be done with it except to look at it and shudder.

official life of Ivan Ilych is sucking every vestige of his true life out of him.

11. The italics mark this "it" as something different from the pain which was the referent of the "it" in the preceding clause; this it refers to a different feminine, singular noun: "smert," ("death").

12. Chapter Six continues the motif of imminent death introduced in Chapter Five. The chapter has been devoted to Ivan's ineluctable recognition of his death and to his unavailing efforts to hide this recognition from himself by erecting various screens (again the motif of self-enclosure) to protect himself from this recognition. As he will say a few lines below: "I lost my life over that curtain. . . . It can't be true, but it is."

13. Interestingly, it is just at the moment that Praskovya Fyodorovna tells Ivan Ilych that he will harm himself if he fusses with the albums that his awareness of death returns, as though she were unwittingly explaining to him that his fussy attachment to material ornaments and the artificial tidiness of his "pleasant and decorous" life is what is most harmful to him and, in fact, bringing him face to face with death.

14. The last sentence of Chapter Six, translated literally, says: "Only to look at it [death] and grow cold." Maude's translation offers "except to look at it and shudder." While this is a good translation, it fails to capture the rhetorical force of the original. In the Russian the interior cause of the action ("growing cold") is used to represent the exterior action itself ("shuddering"). In this way the text manages to express simultaneously the ideas (1) that there are two sorts of "life" involved in what is happening to Ivan Ilych, an inner one and an outer one, and (2) that Ivan Ilych is, from a certain point of view, dead already and growing cold, in the manner of a corpse.
Chapter 7

How it happened it is impossible to say because it came about step by step, unnoticed, but in the third month of Ivan Ilych’s illness, his wife, his daughter, his son, his acquaintances, the doctors, the servants, and above all he himself, were aware that the whole interest he had for other people was whether he would soon vacate his place, and at last release the living from the discomfort caused by his presence and be himself released from his sufferings.

He slept less and less. He was given opium and hypodermic injections of morphine, but this did not relieve him. The dull depression he experienced in a somnolent condition at first gave him a little relief, but only as something new, afterwards it became as distressing as the pain itself or even more so.

Special foods were prepared for him by the doctors’ orders, but all those foods became increasingly distasteful and disgusting to him.

For his excretions also special arrangements had to be made, and this was a torment to him every time — a torment from the uncleanness, the unseemliness, and the smell, and from knowing that another person had to take part in it.

But just through this most unpleasant matter, Ivan Ilych obtained comfort. Gerasim, the butler’s young assistant, always came in to carry the things out.

1. Thus, Chapter Seven begins by re-emphasizing the conclusion which, as noted above, emerges from Chapter Six: that Ivan Ilich is already as good as dead, that he is essentially dead and is only awaiting formal removal from the scene.

2. No sooner does the text make it clear that Ivan Ilich is virtually dead already, and so beyond help or comfort, than it presents the first of several consolations and remissions of his agony. The servant Gerasim, a young, healthy, and energetic figure, is assigned to assist Ivan Ilich by cleaning up after evacuation. Surprisingly enough, the health and vitality of this young man do not anger Ivan Ilich (as does the health and vitality of his daughter and her fiance), but brings him comfort instead. In particular, Ivan Ilich places a high value on Gerasim’s truthfulness and ability to acknowledge that his master is not simply ill, but is actually dying. Gerasim’s relationship to Ivan Ilich is simple and direct. He acknowledges the terminal nature of Ivan Ilich’s illness without pretense and is willing to spend long periods of time patiently helping his master to feel better. Gerasim had first appeared in Chapter One. There he had made Peter Ivanovich feel uncomfortable by reminding him that we will all die one day. Finally, the fact that a genuine comfort emerges from “this most unpleasant matter” prepares the way for the idea that something good for Ivan Ilich may also come from the most unpleasant matter of all—his terminal illness.
Герасим был чистый, свежий, раздобревший на городских харчах молодой мужик. Всегда веселый, ясный. Сначала вид этого, всегда чисто, по-русски одетого человека, делавшего это противное дело, смущал Ивана Ильича.

Один раз он, встав с судна и не в силах поднять панталоны, повалился на мягкое кресло и с ужасом смотрел на свои обнаженные, с резко обозначенными мускулами, бессильные ягодицы.

Вошел в толстых сапогах, распространяя вокруг себя приятный запах дегтя от сапог и свежести зимнего воздуха, легкой сильной поступью Герасим, в посконном чистом фартуке и чистой ситцевой рубахе, с засученными на голых, сильных, молодых руках рукавами, и, не глядя на Ивана Ильича, — очевидно, сдерживая, чтобы не оскорбить больного, радость жизни, сияющую на его лице, — подошел к судну.

— Герасим, — слабо сказал Иван Ильич.

Герасим вздрогнул, очевидно, испугавшись, не промахнулся ли он в чем, и быстрым движением повернул к больному свое свежее, доброе, простое, молодое лицо, только что начинавшее обрастать бородой.

— Что изволите?

— Тебе, я думаю, неприятно это. Ты извини меня. Я не могу.

— Помилуйте-с.3 И Герасим блеснул глазами и оскалил свои молодые белые зубы. — Отчего же не потрудиться? Ваше дело больное.

И он ловкими, сильными руками сделал свое привычное дело и вышел, легко ступая. И через пять минут, так же легко ступая, вернулся.

Иван Ильич все так же сидел в кресле.

— Герасим, — сказал он, когда тот поставил чистое, обмытое судно, — пожалуйста, помоги мне, поди сюда. — Герасим подошел. — Подними меня. Мне тяжело одному, а Дмитрия я усылал.

Герасим подошел; сильными руками, так же, как он легко ступал, обнял, ловко поднял и поддержал, другой рукой подтянул панталоны и хотел посадить. Но Иван Ильич попросил его снести его на диван. Герасим, без усилия и как будто не нажимая, свел его, почти неся, к дивану и посадил.

— Спасибо. Как ты ловко, хорошо... все делаешь.

Герасим опять улыбнулся и хотел уйти. Но Ивану Ильичу так хорошо было с ним, что не хотелось отпускать.

Герасим was a clean, fresh peasant lad, grown stout on town food and always cheerful and bright. At first the sight of him, in his clean Russian peasant costume, engaged on that disgusting task embarrassed Ivan Ilych.

Once when he got up from the commode too weak to draw up his trousers, he dropped into a soft armchair and looked with horror at his bare, enfeebled thighs with the muscles so sharply marked on them.

Gerasim with a firm light tread, his heavy boots emitting a pleasant smell of tar and fresh winter air, came in wearing a clean Hessian apron, the sleeves of his print shirt tucked up over his strong bare young arms; and refraining from looking at his sick master out of consideration for his feelings, and restraining the joy of life that beamed from his face, he went up to the commode.

— “Gerasim!” said Ivan Ilych in a weak voice.

“Gerasim started, evidently afraid he might have committed some blunder, and with a rapid movement turned his fresh, kind, simple young face which just showed the first downy signs of a beard.

“Yes, sir?”

“That must be very unpleasant for you. You must forgive me. I am helpless.”

“Oh, why, sir,” and Gerasim’s eyes beamed and he showed his glistening white teeth, “what’s a little trouble? It’s a case of illness with you, sir.”

And his deft strong hands did their accustomed task, and he went out of the room stepping lightly. Five minutes later he as lightly returned.

Ivan Ilych was still sitting in the same position in the armchair.

“Gerasim,” he said when the latter had replaced the freshly-washed utensil. “Please come here and help me.” Gerasim went up to him. “Lift me up. It is hard for me to get up, and I have sent Dmitri away.”

Gerasim went up to him, grasped his master with his strong arms deftly but gently, in the same way that he stepped — lifted him, supported him with one hand, and with the other drew up his trousers and would have set him down again, but Ivan Ilych asked to be led to the sofa. Gerasim, without an effort and without apparent pressure, led him, almost lifting him, to the sofa and placed him on it.

“Thank you. How easily and well you do it all!”

Gerasim smiled again and turned to leave the room. But Ivan Ilych felt his presence such a comfort that he did not want to let him go.

3. The "-s" is short for “sudar’” ("sir") or “sudarinja” (ma'am).
– Вот что: подвинь мне, пожалуйста, стул этот. Нет, вот этот, под ноги. Мне легче, когда у меня ноги выше.

Герасим принес стул, поставил не стукнув, враз опустил его ровно до полу и поднял ноги Ивана Ильича на стул; Ивану Ильичу показалось, что ему легче стало в то время, как Герасим высоко поднимал его ноги.

– Мне лучше, когда ноги у меня выше. – сказал Иван Ильич. – Подложи мне вон ту подушку.

Герасим сделал это. Опять поднял ноги и положил. Опять Ивану Ильичу стало лучше, пока Герасим держал его ноги. Когда он опустил их, ему показалось хуже.

– Герасим, – сказал он ему, – ты теперь занят?

– Никак нет-с, – сказал Герасим, выучивший у городских людей говорить с господами.

– Тебе что делать надо еще?

– Да мне что ж делать? Все переделал, только дров наколоть на завтра.

– Так подержи мне так ноги повыше, можешь?

– Отчего же, можно. – Герасим поднял ноги выше, и Ивану Ильичу показалось, что в этом положении он совсем не чувствует боли.

– А дрова-то как же?

– Не извольте беспокоиться. Мы успеем.

Иван Ильич велел Герасиму сесть и держать ноги и поговорил с ним. И – странное дело – ему казалось, что ему лучше, пока Герасим держал его ноги.

“One thing more, please move up that chair. No, the other one — under my feet. It is easier for me when my feet are raised.”

Gerasim brought the chair, set it down gently in place, and raised Ivan Ilych's legs on it. It seemed to Ivan Ilych that he felt better while Gerasim was holding up his legs.

“It's better when my legs are higher,” he said. “Place that cushion under them.”

Герасим сделал это. Опять поднял ноги и положил. Опять Ивану Ильичу стало лучше, пока Герасим держал его ноги. Когда он опустил их, ему показалось хуже.

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“Not at all, sir,” said Gerasim, who had learnt from the townsfolk how to speak to gentlefolk.

“What have you still to do?”

“What have I to do? I've done everything except chopping the logs for tomorrow.”

“And how about the logs?”

“I'll take care of the logs. I'll go and cut them.”

Ivan Ilych told Gerasim to sit down and hold his legs, and began to talk to him. And strange to say it seemed to him that he felt better while Gerasim held his legs up.

“Of course I can. Why not?” and Gerasim raised his master's legs higher and Ivan Ilych thought that in that position he did not feel any pain at all.

4 Gerasim's value to Ivan Ilich is based upon two primary factors: Gerasim's truthfulness (and the salutary contrast between his truthfulness and candor, on one side, and the lying (Russ. 'lozh') and convention of his wife, doctors, and acquaintances on the other) and his willingness to spend long periods in intimate contact with Ivan Ilich. This intimacy is emphatically physical; it involves helping Ivan Ilich with his processes of bodily elimination and also sitting with him in such a manner that Ivan Ilich can place his heels on Gerasim's shoulders. The relationship with Gerasim is the first example of physical touching which is explicitly represented in Ivan Ilich's life story. In the main Ivan Ilich has striven to cut himself off from other people. It has also been noted that the position in which Ivan Ilich feels better is not dissimilar to the position in which women are placed in the process of giving birth. Thus, chapter seven's antidote to the funereal gloom of chapter six goes so far as to raise the motif of birth to counter the motif of death, thereby introducing the possibility of rebirth into Ivan Ilich's story.
After that Ivan Ilych would sometimes call Gerasim and get him to hold his legs on his shoulders, and he liked talking to him. Gerasim did it all easily, willingly, simply, and with a good nature that touched Ivan Ilych. Health, strength, and vitality in other people were offensive to him, but Gerasim's strength and vitality did not mortify but soothed him.

What tormented Ivan Ilych most was the deception, the lie, which for some reason they all accepted, that he was not dying but was simply ill, and he only need keep quiet and undergo a treatment and then something very good would result. He however knew that do what they would nothing would come of it, only still more agonizing suffering and death. This deception tortured him — their not wishing to admit what they all knew and what he knew, but wanting to lie to him concerning his terrible condition, and wishing and forcing him to participate in that lie. Those lies — lies enacted over him on the eve of his death and destined to degrade this awful, solemn act to the level of their visitings, their curtains, their sturgeon for dinner — were a terrible agony for Ivan Ilych. And strangely enough, many times when they were going through their antics over him he had been within a hairbreadth of calling out to them: "Stop lying! You know and I know that I am dying. Then at least stop lying about it!" But he had never had the spirit to do it. The awful, terrible act of his dying was, he could see, reduced by those about him to the level of a casual, unpleasant, and almost indecorous incident (as if someone entered a drawing room diffusing an unpleasant odour) and this was done by that very decorum which he had served all his life long. He saw that no one felt for him, because no one even wished to grasp his position. Only Gerasim recognized it and pitied him. And so Ivan Ilych felt at ease only with him. He felt comforted when Gerasim supported his legs (sometimes all night long) and refused to go to bed, saying: "Don't you worry, Ivan Ilych. I'll get sleep enough later on," or when he suddenly became familiar and exclaimed: "If you weren't sick it would be another matter, but as it is, why should I grudge a little trouble?" Gerasim alone did not lie; everything showed that he alone understood the facts of the case and did not consider it necessary to disguise them, but simply felt sorry for his emaciated and enfeebled master. When once Ivan Ilych was sending him away he even said straight out:

"We shall all of us die, so why should I grudge a little trouble?" — expressing the fact that he did not think his work burdensome, because he was doing it for a dying man and hoped someone would do the same for him when his time came.

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5. The verb "lechit'sja" means "to be cured, healed; to follow a prescribed medical regimen"; etymologically, as a reflexive verb, it means "to cure oneself." Thus, it provides yet one more example of the novel's device of using the underlying, literal meaning of words or phrases to suggest the reverse significance attached to the underlying level of the text. It is indeed the case, as Ivan Ilich eventually discovers, that recovery from that illness of the spirit which is his most basic problem is possible only through his own efforts. He can, in fact (the novel suggests), heal himself through recognition of the wrongness of the idea that the life he has led is his true and authentic life. If he does heal himself in this way, something very good will indeed emerge.

6. The rather unconventional use of the prepositional phrase "nad + instrumental case" (lit., "above, over" something or someone) as the complement to the verbs "lgat’" ("to (tell a) lie") and "peredelyvat’" ("to do, perform") conveys the idea that people maintain the fiction that Ivan Ilich is merely ill rather than dying when they are in his presence. To express this, however, as the text does here (lit., to lie, to do their tricks "above him") suggests that he is in a sense already dead, stretched out below them, as though he already were insensible of their presence. This, in turn, suggests that their lying and pretense is undertaken not so much to spare the feelings of Ivan Ilich, but to comfort themselves.

7. The conventional meaning of the phrase "ne imel duxa" ("lacked the energy, the strength") is supplemented by its basic meaning: Ivan Ilich's true and authentic life in the spirit had virtually disappeared after so many years of neglect and indifference as he pursued success in the false and artificial life of his home and office.

8. From this point on the text makes it increasingly explicit that the spiritual pain of enduring the falseness and deception—the lies—with
Apart from this lying, or because of it, what most tormented Ivan Ilych was that no one pitied him as he wished to be pitied. At certain moments after prolonged suffering he wished most of all (though he would have been ashamed to confess it) for someone to pity him as a sick child is pitied. He longed to be petted and comforted. he knew he was an important functionary, that he had a beard turning grey, and that therefore what he long for was impossible, but still he longed for it. And in Gerasim’s attitude towards him there was something akin to what he wished for, and so that attitude comforted him. Ivan Ilych wanted to weep, wanted to be petted and cried over, and then his colleague Shebek would come, and instead of weeping and being petted, Ivan Ilych would assume a serious, severe, and profound air, and by force of habit would express his opinion on a decision of the Court of Cassation and would stubbornly insist on that view. This falsity around him and within him did more than anything else to poison his last days.

which he is surrounded and in which he participates is greater than the physical pain of his illness. One gets the sense that it is this moral pain which abates when he is in the company of Gerasim. As the next chapter will make clear, however, the pain returns in full force (both physically and morally) in Gerasim’s absence. Only Gerasim is able to tell Ivan Ilich directly that he is dying. Only Gerasim seems capable of coming close to Ivan Ilich, where “close” implies honesty, physical touch, and even the (highly inappropriate!) linguistic closeness of Gerasim’s using the second-person singular, familiar, form of address in speaking to his master. The lie (Russ. “lozh”) from this point on begins more and more to replace the physical illness from which Ivan Ilich suffers; the lie, so to say, now becomes his illness.

9. The Court of Cassation is the highest appellate court in some legal systems.
Было утро. Потому только было утро, что Герасим ушел и пришел Петр-лакей, потушил свечи, открыл одну гардину и стал потихоньку убирать. Утро ли, вечер ли был, пятница, воскресенье ли было – все было все равно, все было одно и то же: ноющая, ня на мгновение не утихающая, мучительная боль; сознание безнадежно все уходящей, но все не ушедшей еще жизни; надвигающая все та же страшная ненавистная смерть, которая одна была действительность, и все та же ложь. Какие же тут дни, недели и часы дня?

– Не прикажете ли чаю?

“Ему нужен порядок, чтоб по утрам господа пили чай”, – подумал он и сказал только:

– Не.

– Не угодно ли перейти на диван?

“Ему нужно привести в порядок горницу, и я мешаю, я – нечистота, беспорядок”, – подумал он и сказал только:

– Нет, оставь меня.

Лакей повозился еще. Иван Ильич протянул руку. Петр подошел услужливо.

– Что прикажете?

– Часы.

Петр достал часы, лежавшие под рукой, и подал.

– Половина девятого. Там не встали?

“Ему нужно привести в порядок горницу, и я мешаю, я – нечистота, беспорядок”, – подумал он и сказал только:

– Нет, оставь меня.

Петр достал часы, лежавшие под рукой, и подал.

– Половина девятого. Там не встали?

– Никак нет, Василий Иванович (это был сын) ушли в гимназию, а Прасковья Федоровна приказали разбудить их, если вы спросите. Прикажете?

It was morning. He knew it was morning because Gerasim had gone, and Peter the footman had come and put out the candles, drawn back one of the curtains, and begun quietly to tidy up. Whether it was morning or evening, Friday or Sunday, made no difference, it was all just the same: the gnawing, unmitigated, agonizing pain, never ceasing for an instant, the consciousness of life inexorably waning but not yet extinguished, the approach of that ever dreaded and hateful Death which was the only reality, and always the same falsity. What were days, weeks, hours, in such a case?

“Will you have some tea, sir?”

“He wants things to be regular, and wishes the gentlefolk to drink tea in the morning,” thought ivan Ilych, and only said:

“No.”

“Wouldn’t you like to move onto the sofa, sir?”

“He wants to tidy up the room, and I’m in the way. I am uncleanliness and disorder,” he thought, and said only:

“No, leave me alone.”

The man went on bustling about. Ivan Ilych stretched out his hand. Peter came up, ready to help.

“What is it, sir?”

“My watch.”

Peter took the watch which was close at hand and gave it to his master.

“Half-past eight. Are they up?”

“No sir, except Vladimir Ivanovich” (the son) “who has gone to school.” Praskovya Fedorovna ordered me to wake her if you asked for her. Shall I do so?”

1. The use of a plural verb form (“ushli”) with a singular subject (“Vasily Ivanovich”) is a mark of deference shown by a social inferior when speaking of a social superior. The use of this form of speech by Peter is normal in the conventional interactions between master and servant, and is in marked contrast with the explicitly noted use of the familiar form of address by Gerasim several paragraphs earlier.
Ivan Ilyich believes that if he could just lull his consciousness to sleep it would stop hurting him, stop insisting on the truth that it is dying or that the pain of the falseness and lying all around him is much worse than his physical suffering. It is as though Ivan Ilyich’s desire to “lose consciousness” is an oblique admission that the distressed condition of his consciousness is a much worse problem than his deteriorating physical condition. Thus, the text “consciousness” in Tolstoy’s worldview has been mentioned before. Ivan Ilyich’s desire to “lose consciousness” is an oblique admission that the condition of his consciousness is a much worse problem than his deteriorating physical condition. Thus, the text “consciousness” in Tolstoy’s worldview has been mentioned before.

The word “zabyt’sja” (lit., “to forget oneself”) may be defined in Russian as “terjat’ soznanie” (“to lose consciousness”). The centrality of “consciousness” in Tolstoy’s worldview has been mentioned before. Ivan Ilyich’s desire to “lose consciousness” is an oblique admission that the distressed condition of his consciousness is a much worse problem than his deteriorating physical condition. Thus, the text keeps insisting that the pain of the falseness and lying all around him is much worse than his physical suffering. It is as though Ivan Ilyich believes that if he could just lull his consciousness to sleep it would stop hurting him, stop insisting on the truth that it is dying or as good as dead, and permit the return of the comforting illusion that it is merely that his body, his physical self is ill. Consciousness is thereby identified with an inner, spiritual self which is making itself ever more insistently present as Ivan Ilyich’s bodily strength and confidence wanes.

2. The word “zabyt’sja” (lit., “to forget oneself”) may be defined in Russian as “terjat’ soznanie” (“to lose consciousness”). The centrality of “consciousness” in Tolstoy’s worldview has been mentioned before. Ivan Ilyich’s desire to “lose consciousness” is an oblique admission that the distressed condition of his consciousness is a much worse problem than his deteriorating physical condition. Thus, the text keeps insisting that the pain of the falseness and lying all around him is much worse than his physical suffering. It is as though Ivan Ilyich believes that if he could just lull his consciousness to sleep it would stop hurting him, stop insisting on the truth that it is dying or as good as dead, and permit the return of the comforting illusion that it is merely that his body, his physical self is ill. Consciousness is thereby identified with an inner, spiritual self which is making itself ever more insistently present as Ivan Ilyich’s bodily strength and confidence wanes.
Час, два проходит так. Но вот звонок в передней. Авозь доктор. Точно, это доктор, свежий, бодрый, жирным, веселый, с тем выражением – что вот вы там чего-то напугались, а мы сейчас вам все устроим. Доктор знает, что это выражение здесь не годится, но он уже раз навсегда надел его и не может снять, как человек, с утра надевший фрак и едущий с визитами. Доктор бодро, утешающе потирает руки.

– Я холоден. [3]

Мороз здоровый. Дайте обогреюсь, – говорит он с таким выражением, что как будто только надо немного подождать, пока он обогреется, а когда обогреется, то уже все исправит.

– Ну что, как?

Иван Ильич чувствует, что доктору хочется сказать: “Как делишки?,” но что и он чувствует, что так нельзя говорить, и говорит: “Как вы провели ночь?”

Иван Ильич смотрит на доктора с выражением вопроса: “Неужели никогда не станет тебе стыдно врать?”

Но доктор не хочет понимать вопрос.

Иван Ильич говорит:

– Все так же ужасно. Боль не проходит, не сдается. Хоть бы что-нибудь!

– Да, вот вы, больные, всегда так. Ну-с, теперь, кажется, я согрелся, даже аккуратнейшая Прасковья Федоровна ничего бы не имела возразить против моей температуры. Ну-с, здравствуйте. – И доктор пожимает руку.

И, откинув всю прежнюю игровость, доктор начинает с серьезным видом исследовать больного, пульс, температуру, и начинаются постукивания, прослушивания.

Иван Ильич знает твердо и несомненно, что все это вздор и пустой обман, но когда доктор, став на колени, вытягивается над ним, прислоняя ухо то выше, то ниже, и делает над ним с значительнейшим лицом разные гимнастические эволюции, Иван Ильич поддается этому, как он поддавался, бывало, речам адвокатов, тогда как он уж очень хорошо знал, что они всё врут и зачем врут.

После этого доктор, обернувшись к стоящему на дверях Ивану Ильичу, в который раз улыбается и говорит:

– An hour and another pass like that. But now there is a ring at the door bell. Perhaps it’s the doctor? It is. He comes in fresh, hearty, plump, and cheerful, with that look on his face that seems to say: “There now, you’re in a panic about something, but we’ll arrange it all for you directly!” The doctor knows this expression is out of place here, but he has put it on once for all and can’t take it off — like a man who has put on a frock-coat in the morning to pay a round of calls.

“Brr! How cold it is! There’s such a sharp frost; just let me warm myself!” he says, as if it were only a matter of waiting till he was warm, and then he would put everything right.

– Well now, how are you?

Ivan Ilych feels that the doctor would like to say: “Well, how are our affairs?” [4] but that even he feels that this would not do, and says instead: “What sort of a night have you had?”

Ivan Ilych looks at him as much as to say: “Are you really never ashamed of lying?”

But the doctor does not wish to understand this question.

And Ivan Ilych says:

“Just as terrible as ever. The pain never leaves me and never subsides. If only something ..., “

“Yes, you sick people are always like that..., There now, I think I am warm enough. Even Praskovya Fedorovna, who is so particular, could find no fault with my temperature. Well, now I can say good-morning,” and the doctor presses his patient’s hand.

Then dropping his former playfulness, he begins with a most serious face to examine the patient, feeling his pulse and taking his temperature, and then begins the sounding and auscultation.

Ivan Ilych knows quite well and definitely that all this is nonsense and pure deception, but when the doctor, getting down on his knee, leans over him, putting his ear first higher then lower, and performs various gymnastic movements over him with a significant expression on his face, Ivan Ilych submits to it all as he used to submit to the speeches of the lawyers, though he knew very well that they were all lying and why they were lying.

3. The usual way to say that one feels cold in Russian is to use the impersonal expression: “mne xolodno” (lit., “to me (it) is cold”). The doctor, however, uses the personal expression “ja xoloden” (lit., “I am cold”) and thereby comes perilously close to the expression “ja xolodnyj” (“I am a cold (i.e., unfeeling) person”). This is another of the many examples of the significant hidden beneath the trivial and of the unwitting declaration of the truth. We remember the brother-in-law’s comment in Chapter Six: “Why, he’s a dead man.”

4. That is, to use a very informal and playful version of the standard question: “kak dela” (“how are things going”). Given the prominent role of card games as a metaphor for the empty and artificial life of Ivan Ilich, one might well imagine the doctor inquiring “How’s tricks?”
Доктор, стоя на коленках на диване, еще что-то выступал, когда зашумело в дверях шелковое платье Прасковьи Федоровны и послышался ее упрек Петру, что ей не доложили о приезде доктора.

Она входит, целует мужа и тотчас же начинает доказывать, что она давно уже встала и только по недоразумению ее не было тут, когда приехал доктор.

Иван Ильич смотрит на нее, разглядывает ее всю и в упрек ставит ей белизну, и пухлость, и чистоту ее рук, шеи, глянец ее волос и блеск ее полных жизни глаз. Он всеми силами душ ненавидит ее, и прикосновение ее заставляет его страдать от прилива ненависти к ней.

Ее отношение к нему и его болезни все то же. Как доктор выработал себе отношение к больным, которое он не мог уже снять, так она выработала одно отношение к нему — то, что он не делает чего-то того, что нужно, и сам виноват, и она любовно укоряет его в этом, — и не могла уже снять этого отношения к нему.

The doctor, kneeling on the sofa, is still sounding him when Praskovya Fedorovna's silk dress rustles at the door and she is heard scolding Peter for not having let her know of the doctor's arrival.

She comes in, kisses her husband, and at once proceeds to prove that she has been up a long time already, and only owing to a misunderstanding failed to be there when the doctor arrived.

Ivan Ilych looks at her, scans her all over, sets against her the whiteness and plumpness and cleanness of her hands and neck, the gloss of her hair, and the sparkle of her vivacious eyes. He hates her with his whole soul. And the thrill of hatred he feels for her makes him suffer from her touch.

Her attitude towards him and his disease is still the same. Just as the doctor had adopted a certain relation to his patient which he could not abandon, so had she formed one towards him — that he was not doing something he ought to do and was himself to blame, and that she reproached him lovingly for this — and she could not now change that attitude.

5. The cliche "vsemi silami duushi" ("with all the strength of (his) soul") also, of course, suggests that Ivan Ilich does after all, at least, have a soul which is capable of strong sensations, and therefore that he may not be completely lost spiritually.

6. This very important passage conveys several messages simultaneously. The most obvious concerns the attitude which both the doctor and Praskovya Fyodorovna have adopted toward Ivan Ilich and his illness. The Russian word which Maude translates as "adopted" is 'vyrabotal' ('worked out', 'constructed by effort'), suggesting the artificiality of their relation to him (despite their pleas of sincerity). The doctor's inability to "abandon" this attitude and Praskovya Fyodorovna's inability to "change" it are both reflections of the same Russian word 'snjat' ('to take down', 'to take off, as clothing or covers'). Thus, the attitude which they have adopted toward him is a covering or screen which they have put up between him and themselves. Once again, the familiar image of screens, curtains, fences, walls, enclosures, which we have seen so often in the attitudes of Ivan Ilich himself. A second point emerging from this passage is that Praskovya Fyodorovna's superficial attitude toward him is one of loving concern while at the same time it is clear that her actual attitude is one of hostile impatience for his death, that is, that her real attitude is the opposite of her professed attitude. A couple of paragraphs farther down she makes the facetiously intended but none the less curious statement that everything she does for him is done "for my own sake." The text adds this explanation: "He felt that he was surrounded and enmeshed in such a web of falsity that it was hard to unravel anything. Everything she did for him was entirely for her own sake; she told him she was doing for herself what she actually was doing for herself, as if that was so incredible he must understand the opposite." From this it emerges that the truth can be known by understanding everything we observe as its opposite. Thus, when Praskovya Fyodorovna says facetiously that she is doing what she is doing only for herself, we should understand that she actually means this seriously. Conversely, her "loving reproaches" are really manifestations of hatred. Finally, since it is in fact true that Praskovya Fyodorovna really is concerned only with herself—that is, she is telling the truth here—perhaps it is possible that the other claim she makes here is also true, namely her suggestion that Ivan Ilich "was not doing something he ought to do and was himself to blame" for his condition. She, of course, believes herself to be speaking of her husband's physiological distress, just as, in the case of her other comment she believes herself to be speaking facetiously. With respect to her husband's spiritual distress, however, it may be that she is unwittingly speaking the exact truth. What is required is to understand both what she says and what we as readers seem to see in reverse, the other way around, backwards (Russ. 'obratno') in order to see the situation rightly. Therefore, it is certain that her complaint that lying with his legs up on Gerasim's shoulders is "bad for him" (since she means it seriously) is bound to be wrong. In fact, contact of this sort with Gerasim must be good for Ivan Ilich. Following this line of thought we soon come to the conclusion that all the while we were being presented with what seemed to be an account of Ivan Ilich's life, we were actually seeing the story of his death, and now, when we seem to be observing the increasingly rapid process of his death, we are actually seeing the beginnings of renewed life. The major idea to be grasped from this passage is that Ivan Ilich himself by not "doing what he ought" has brought his spiritual illness and death upon himself.
— Да ведь вот он, не слушается! Не принимает вовремя. А главное — ложится в такое положение, которое, наверное, вредно ему — ноги кверху.

Она рассказала, как он заставляет Герасима держать себе ноги.

Доктор улыбнулся презрительно-ласково: “Что ж, мол, делать, эти больные выдумывают иногда такие глупости; но можно простить”.

Когда осмотр кончился, доктор посмотрел на часы, и тогда Прасковья Федоровна объявила Ивану Ильичу, что уж как он хочет, а она нынче пригласила знаменитого доктора, и они вместе с Михаилом Даниловичем (так звали обыкновенного доктора) осмотрят и обсудят.

— Ты уж не противься, пожалуйста. Это я для себя делаю, — сказала она иронически, давая чувствовать, что она все делает для него и только этим не дает ему права отказать ей. Он молчал и морщился. Он чувствовал, что ложь эта, окружающая его, так путалась, что уж трудно было разобрать что-нибудь.

Она все над ним делала только для себя и говорила ему, что она делает для себя то, что она точно делала для себя как такую невероятную вещь, что он должен был понимать это обратно.

Действительно, в половине двенадцатого приехал знаменитый доктор. Опять пошли выслушивания и значительные разговоры при нем и в другой комнате о почке, о слепой кишке и вопросы и ответы с таким значительным видом, что опять вместо реального, вопроса о жизни и смерти, который уже теперь один стоял перед ним, выступил вопрос о почке и слепой кишке, которые что-то делали не так, как следовало, и на которые за это вот-вот нападут Михаил Данилович и знаменитость и заставят их исправиться.

“You see he doesn’t listen to me and doesn’t take his medicine at the proper time. And above all he lies in a position that is no doubt bad for him — with his legs up.”

She described how he made Gerasim hold his legs up.

The doctor smiled with a contemptuous affability that said: “What's to be done? These sick people do have foolish fancies of that kind, but we must forgive them.”

When the examination was over the doctor looked at his watch, and then Praskovya Fedorovna announced to Ivan Ilych that it was of course as he pleased, but she had sent today for a celebrated specialist who would examine him and have a consultation with Michael Danilovich (their regular doctor).

“Please don't raise any objections. I am doing this for my own sake,” she said ironically, letting it be felt that she was doing it all for his sake and only said this to leave him no right to refuse. He remained silent, knitting his brows. He felt that he was surrounded and involved in such a mesh of falsity that it was hard to unravel anything.

Everything she did for him was entirely for her own sake, and she told him she was doing for herself what she actually was doing for herself, as if that was so incredible that he must understand the opposite.

At half-past eleven the celebrated specialist arrived. Again the sounding began and the significant conversations in his presence and in another room, about the kidney and the appendix, and the questions and answers, with such an air of importance that again, instead of the real question of life and death which now alone confronted him, the question arose of the kidney and appendix which were not behaving as they ought to and would now be attacked by Michael Danilovich and the specialist and forced to amend their ways.

7. The use of the word “obsudjat” (“will discuss to a conclusion”) suggests most clearly that not only is the behavior of the doctors like the behavior of the judges Ivan Ilich knows from his life at court (as noted earlier) but actually is virtually the same thing as their behavior. The word “obsudit’” is derived from the same root from which come “sud” (“a court, legal process”), “sud’ja” (“a judge”), “sudit’” (“to judge, render judgement”). This conclusion is confirmed by the playfully condemnatory tone of the doctor in blaming the patient for his foolish actions and his generously being willing to forgive him.

8. In Chapter Twelve Ivan Ilich’s attempt to understand what his life has been is compared to the “sensation one sometimes experiences in a railway carriage when one thinks one is going backwards while one is really going forwards and suddenly becomes aware of the real direction.” This confirms the idea presented in note 1, above, that this pattern of reversal is a characteristic feature of the structure of the novel.
Знаменитый доктор простился с серьезным, но не с безнадежным видом. И на робкий вопрос, который с поднятыми к нему блестящими страхом и надеждой глазами обратил Иван Ильич, есть ли возможность выздоровления, отвечал, что ручаться нельзя, но возможность есть. Взгляд надежды, с которым Иван Ильич проводил доктора, был так ярок, что, увидя его, Прасковья Федоровна даже заплакала, выходя из дверей кабинета, чтобы передать город знаменитому доктору.

Подъем духа, произведенный обнадеживанием доктора, продолжался недолго. Опять та же комната, те же картины, гардины, обои, склянки и то же свое болезненное, страдающее тело. И Иван Ильич начал стонать; ему сделали впрыскивание, и он забылся.

Когда он очнулся, стало смеркаться; ему принесли обедать. Он поел с усилием бульона; и опять то же, и опять наступающая ночь.

Прасковья Федоровна вошла довольная собою, но как будто виновата. Она присела, спросила о здоровье, как он видел, зная, что и узнавать нечего, и начала говорить то, что ей нужно было: что она ни за что не поехала бы, но ложа взята, предпочитала больше с ним. Только бы он делал без нее по предписанию доктора.

– Да, и Федор Петрович (женях) хотел войти. Можно? И Лиза.

– Пускай войдут.

Вошла дочь разодетая, с обнаженным молодым телом, тем телом, которое так заставляло страдать его. А она его выставляла. Сильная, здоровая, очаровательная, неграющая на болезнь, страдания и смерть, мешающая ее счастью.

Вошел и Федор Петрович во фраке, завитой à la Capoul, с длинной, пышной, блестящей на голове. Он пришел из театра, где играл в спектакле, и у него была ложа, которую он настоял, чтобы они взяли. Теперь он забыл про это, и ее наряд оскорбил его. Но он скрыл свое оскорбление, когда вспомнил, что он сам настаивал, чтобы они дали ему только ее. Поэтому что это было для детей воспитательное эстетическое наслаждение.

После обеда, в семь часов, в комнату его вошла Прасковья Федоровна, дочь как на вечер, с толстыми, подтянутыми грудями и с длинной, обложенной плотно белым воротником, длинной, золотистой шеей, обложенной плотно белым воротником, длинной, золотистой шеей, обложенной плотно белым воротником, длинной, золотистой шеей, обложенной плотно белым воротником, длинной, золотистой шеей, обложенной плотно белым воротником. Она пришла из театра, где играл в спектакле, и у нее была ложа, которую он настоял, чтобы они взяли. Теперь он забыл про это, и ее наряд оскорбил его. Но он скрыл свое оскорбление, когда вспомнил, что он сам настаивал, чтобы они дали ему только ее. Поэтому что это было для детей воспитательное эстетическое наслаждение.

After dinner, at seven o’clock, Praskovya Fedorovna came into the room in evening dress, her full bosom pushed up by her corset, and with traces of powder on her face. She had reminded him in the morning that they were going to the theatre. Sarah Bernhardt was visiting the town and they had a box, which he had insisted on their taking. Now he had forgotten about it and her toilet offended him, but he concealed his vexation when he remembered that he had himself insisted on their securing a box and going because it would be an instructive and aesthetic pleasure for the children.

Praskovya Fedorovna came in, self-satisfied but yet with a rather guilty air. She sat down and asked how he was, but, as he saw, only for the sake of asking and not in order to learn about it, knowing that there was nothing to learn — and then went on to what she really wanted to say: that she would not on any account have gone but that the box had been taken and Helen and their daughter were going, as well as Petrishchev (the examining magistrate, their daughter’s fiance) and that it was out of the question to let them go alone; but that she would have much preferred to sit with him for a while; and he must be sure to follow the doctor’s orders while she was away.

“‘Oh, and Fedor Petrovich’ (the fiance) ‘would like to come in. May he? And Lisa?’”

“All right.”

Their daughter came in in full evening dress, her fresh young flesh exposed (making a show of that very flesh which in his own case caused so much suffering), strong, healthy, evidently in love, and impatient with illness, suffering, and death, because they interfered with her happiness.

Fedor Petrovich came in too, in evening dress, his hair curled à la Capoul, a tight stiff curl round his long sinewy neck, an enormous white shirt-front and narrow black trousers tightly stretched over his strong thighs. He had one white glove tightly drawn on, and was holding his opera hat in his hand.

10. Joseph Capoul (1839-1924) a French opera singer known for a hairstyle which featured curls falling over the forehead.
11. The descriptions of the clothing of Praskova Fedorovna and Fedor Petrovich make emphatic use of words suggesting the constriction of their dress: Praskovya Fedorovna with her “tolstymi podtjanutymi grud’jami” (“heavy, tightly cinched, breasts”); Fedor Petrovich with his “sheej, oblozhennoj plotno belym vorotnichkom” (“neck tightly encased by a white collar”), his “ogromnoj beloj grud’ju” (“enormous white breast”), his “obtjanutymi sil’nymi ljazhkami v uzkix chernyx shtanax” (“strong thighs fitted tightly in narrow black trousers”), and his “natjanutoj beloj perchatkoj na ruke” (“white glove drawn tautly onto his hand”). The suggestion would seem to be that even in the matter of clothing these people find it necessary to enclose themselves, hem themselves in, providing a visible
Following him the schoolboy crept in unnoticed, in a new uniform, poor little fellow, and wearing gloves. Terribly dark shadows showed under his eyes, the meaning of which Ivan Ilych knew well.

His son had always seemed pathetic to him, and now it was dreadful to see the boy’s frightened look of pity. It seemed to Ivan Ilych that Vasya was the only one besides Gerasim who understood and pitied him.

They all sat down and again asked how he was. A silence followed. Lisa asked her mother about the opera glasses, and there was an altercation between mother and daughter as to who had taken them and where they had been put. This occasioned some unpleasantness.

Fedor Petrovich inquired of Ivan Ilych whether he had ever seen Sarah Bernhardt. Ivan Ilych did not at first catch the question, but then replied:

“No, have you seen her before?”

“Yes, in Adrienne Lecouvreur.”

Praskovya Fedorovna mentioned some roles in which Sarah Bernhardt was particularly good. Her daughter disagreed.

Conversation sprang up as to the elegance and realism of her acting — the sort of conversation that is always repeated and is always the same.12

In the midst of the conversation Fedor Petrovich glanced at Ivan Ilych and became silent. The others also looked at him and grew silent. Ivan Ilych was staring with glinting eyes straight before him, evidently indignant with them. This had to be rectified, but it was impossible to do so. The silence had to be broken, but for a time no one dared to break it and they all became afraid that the conventional deception would suddenly become obvious and the truth become plain to all. Lisa was the first to pluck up courage and break that silence, but by trying to hide what everybody was feeling, she betrayed it.

“Well, if we are going it’s time to start,” she said, looking at her watch, a present from her father, and with a faint and significant smile at Fedor Petrovich relating to something known only to them. She got up with a rustle of her dress. They all rose, said good-night, and went away. They all rose, said good-night, and went away.

refrain to the immediate cause of Ivan Ilych’s despair, just prior to these descriptions: “the same old room, the same old curtains, the same little bottles.”

12 A famous French actress (1844-1923) who toured Russia in 1881-82. One of her most famous roles was that of Adrienne Lecouvreur in the play of that name by Scribe and Legouve. The heroine of the play is herself an actress, so we are presented here with the family’s desire to hasten away from the bedside of its dying father and husband in order to be present at a play (an exercise in pretending and voluntary self-deception) in which the lead actress is most admired for her portrayal of the life of another actress. The distance between the family’s proposed activity and the reality of life is astonishingly great. The detailed emphasis on their manner of dress, their costumes, as it were, is entirely in the same spirit. Of course, the family’s ability to carry on with its plan of an evening at the theater is made possible in the first place only by pretending that Ivan Ilych is only ill rather than dying. Ivan Ilych resents most of all that he is required to join the family in this pretense. Only Ivan Ilych’s son is exempt from the hatred which Ivan Ilych feels toward his family for their constant lying about his condition and their insistence that he, too, join them in this lie. The son, Vasya, is mentioned here in the same sentence with Gerasim, the only other character who deals truthfully with Ivan Ilych, and who touches him in a meaningful way. In Chapter Twelve, Ivan Ilych’s moment of grace coincides with his hand being grasped by his son. In the context of this passage, we might say that Gerasim and Vasya are concerned with life itself while the rest of the family and household prefers to deal with the imitation of life, both on the stage and in their own lives.
Again minute followed minute and hour followed hour. Everything remained the same and there was no cessation. And the inevitable end of it all became more and more terrible.¹³

“Yes, send Gerasim here,” he replied to a question Peter asked.

¹³ There would seem to be a paradox here in that “there is no end” and the “end is inescapable” are asserted in contiguous clauses. This foreshadows Ivan Ilich’s attitude toward the image of the “black sack” which will make its first appearance in the Chapter Nine. He feels that “he and his pain” are being pushed into a constricting black sack and that he “was frightened yet wanted to fall through the sack, he struggled but yet co-operated.” This ambivalence is associated with Ivan Ilich’s gradual realization that his life, as he has lived it, is not a real life at all, but only the semblance of a life, a playing at life. If life is not life, then is it death? And what then is the end of that life that is not life? The reversal, the looking at things backward which is so often seen in the text has its ultimate significance in the idea that Ivan Ilich’s life is actually death and only the end of that false life offers the possibility of true life. “Life” is death and “death” is life.
His wife returned late at night. She came in on tiptoe, but he heard her, opened his eyes, and made haste to close them again. She wished to send Gerasim away and to sit with him herself, but he opened his eyes and said:

“No, go away.”

“Are you in great pain?”

“Always the same.”

“Take some opium.”

He agreed and took some. She went away.

Till about three in the morning he was in a state of stupefied misery. It seemed to him that he and his pain were being thrust into a narrow, deep black sack, but though they were pushed further and further in they could not be pushed to the bottom. And this, terrible enough in itself, was accompanied by suffering. He was frightened yet wanted to fall through the sack, he struggled but yet co-operated. And suddenly he broke through, fell, and regained consciousness. Gerasim was sitting at the foot of the bed dozing quietly and patiently, while he himself lay with his emaciated stockinged legs resting on Gerasim's shoulders; the same shaded candle was there and the same unceasing pain.

“Go away, Gerasim,” he whispered.

“It's all right, sir. I'll stay a while.”

“No. Go away.”

1. This is the first mention of the image of a narrow, black sack or bag or hole into which Ivan Ilich feels himself being pushed. The image has played an important role in interpretations of the novel which emphasize that Ivan Ilich, led by his sufferings, becomes spiritually reborn as his physical life ebbs away. The black bag, by its shape and its color and the fact that when, in chapter twelve, Ivan Ilich feels that he has broken through the end of the bag into the light, has been seen as an effective symbol of the birth canal. Likewise, the trauma of birth seems well matched with the trauma of Ivan Ilich's suffering and death. This interpretation, of course, fits very well with the concept that the novel privileges the method of “understanding in reverse.” It seems quite natural in this context that the image of death should be tautologous with an image of life and also that Ivan Ilich's attitude toward this image should be ambiguous: “he struggled, yet co-operated.”
He removed his legs from Gerasim's shoulders, turned sideways onto his arm, and felt sorry for himself. He only waited till Gerasim had gone into the next room and then restrained himself no longer but wept like a child. He wept on account of his helplessness, his terrible loneliness, the cruelty of man, the cruelty of God, and the absence of God. "Why hast Thou done all this? Why hast Thou brought me here? Why, why dost Thou torment me so terribly?" He did not expect an answer and yet wept because there was no answer and could be none. The pain again grew more acute, but he did not stir and did not call. He said to himself: "Go on! Strike me! But what is it for? What have I done to Thee? What is it for?"  

Then he grew quiet and not only ceased weeping but even held his breath and became all attention. It was as though he were listening not to an audible voice but to the voice of his soul, to the current of thoughts arising within him.  

"What is it you want?" was the first clear conception capable of expression in words, that he heard. "What do you want? What do you want?" he repeated to himself. "What do I want? To live and not to suffer," he answered.  

And again he listened with such concentrated attention that even his pain did not distract him.  

"To live? Ho!" asked his inner voice.  

"Why, to live as I used to — well and pleasantly."

As soon as the period began which had produced the present Ivan Ilych, all that had then seemed joys now melted before his sight and turned into something trivial and often nasty.

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2. Here is another allusion to the narrative of Christ's Passion as contained in the Gospels, specifically to Jesus' outcry "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" (Matt. 27:46 inter alia).

3. Here, as in the preceding sentence, Ivan Ilych uses the form of the pronoun "you" which is employed when speaking to very close friends and family members, and also, not incidentally, when speaking to God in prayer. "What did I to you?" might well be rendered (as the Maude translation does) "What have I done to Thee?"

4. Here is the first explicit indication that Ivan Ilych does indeed have a soul, that he is more than the physiological being which is suffering so dreadfully from the effects of disease. We remember that in Chapter Five his "inner life" was still completely a question of the physical organs located within his body. Here the inner life and voice represents a qualitatively different kind of life. Ivan Ilych's attention has finally been redirected from his physical life and sufferings to his spiritual life and sufferings. We note that since chapter seven it has seemed to him that his spiritual suffering has in fact been greater than his physical pain. At the end of Chapter Nine the thought occurs to him that "Maybe I didn't live as I ought to have done," that is, that he is where he is by his own actions and responsibility. This thought, and the conclusion arising from it, is repeated yet again in each of the three remaining chapters.
And the further he departed from childhood and the nearer he came to the present the more worthless and doubtful were the joys. This began with the School of Law. A little that was really good was still found there — there was light-heartedness, friendship, and hope. But in the upper classes there had already been fewer of such good moments. Then during the first years of his official career, when he was in the service of the governor, some pleasant moments again occurred: they were the memories of love for a woman. Then all became confused and there was still less of what was good; later on again there was still less that was good, and the further he went the less there was.

His marriage, a mere accident, then the disenchantment that followed it, his wife’s bad breath and the sensuality and hypocrisy: then that deadly official life and those preoccupations about money, a year of it, and two, and ten, and twenty, and always the same thing. And the longer it lasted the more deadly it became. “It is as if I had been going downhill while I imagined I was going up. And that is really what it was. I was going up in public opinion, but to the same extent life was ebbing away from me. And now it is all done and there is only death.

“Then what does it mean? Why? It can’t be that life is so senseless and horrible. But if it really has been so horrible and senseless, why must I die and die in agony? There is something wrong!

“Maybe I did not live as I ought to have done,” it suddenly occurred to him. “But how could that be, when I did everything properly?” he replied, and immediately dismissed from his mind this, the sole solution of all the riddles of life and death, as something quite impossible.

“Then what do you want now? To live? Live how? Live as you lived in the law courts when the usher proclaimed ‘The judge is coming!’ The judge is coming, the judge!” he repeated to himself. “Here he is, the judge.” But I am not guilty!” he exclaimed angrily. “What is it for?” And he ceased crying, but turning his face to the wall continued to ponder on the same question: Why, and for what purpose, is there all this horror?

But however much he pondered he found no answer. And whenever the thought occurred to him, as it often did, that it all resulted from his not having lived as he ought to have done, he at once recalled the correctness of his whole life and dismissed so strange an idea.
Chapter 10

Another fortnight passed. I Ivan Ilych now no longer left his sofa. He would not lie in bed but lay on the sofa, facing the wall nearly all the time. He suffered ever the same unceasing agonies and in his loneliness pondered always on the same insoluble question: “What is this? Can it be that it is Death?” And the inner voice answered: “Yes, it is Death.” “Why these sufferings?” And the voice answered, “For no reason — they just are so.” Beyond and besides this there was nothing.

From the very beginning of his illness, ever since he had first been to see the doctor, Ivan Ilych's life had been divided between two contrary and alternating moods: now it was despair and the expectation of this uncomprehended and terrible death, and now hope and an intently interested observation of the functioning of his organs. Now before his eyes there was only a kidney or an intestine that temporarily evaded its duty, and now only that incomprehensible and dreadful death from which it was impossible to escape.

These two states of mind had alternated from the very beginning of his illness, but the further it progressed the more doubtful and fantastic became the conception of the kidney, and the more real the sense of impending death.

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1. Chapters Two, Three, and Four cover a period of many years in the life of Ivan Ilich, up to the onset of his illness. In Chapter Seven it was noted that his illness was in its third month. Here we learn that two more weeks have gone by. In Chapter Eleven weeks are mentioned again, and Chapter Twelve begins by mentioning days and concludes with the note that the agony of the patient lasted another two hours. Clearly, the steadily diminishing units of time which are mentioned in the text are matched with the steadily decreasing size of the chapters in which they are mentioned. (See the section “Proportions of the Text” in the "Introduction.") This brings a steadily accelerating rhythm to the final chapters. The text draws our attention to this in the final paragraph of Chapter Ten: “And the example of a stone falling downwards with increasing velocity entered his mind.” The Russian text might more exactly be translated as: “And the image of a stone flying downward with increasing speed lodged in his soul” (literally, ‘fell into his spirit’ (Russ. ‘zapal v duxu’)).

2. In Tolstoy’s study in his house at Yasnaya polyana (his country estate) the largest item of furniture was a broad couch in black leather which was positioned against the wall just behind the desk and chair at which Tolstoy usually sat while writing. It was at this desk that he wrote “The Death of Ivan Ilich.” The black couch had been in the family a long time. It was on this couch, in fact, that, according to family tradition, Tolstoy himself and each of his siblings had been born in the 1820’s. This couch seems very similar to the one described in Ivan Ilich’s study, on which he lies in his final weeks and days with his face turned to the wall. There is an interesting and perhaps significant juxtaposition between the couch in the story as the site of Ivan Ilich’s death and the couch in Tolstoy’s study as the site of his own and his sibling’s birth. Here is a picture of Tolstoy in his study with the couch at his back.
He had but to call to mind what he had been three months before and what he was now, to call to mind with what regularity he had been going downhill, for every possibility of hope to be shattered.

Latterly during the loneliness in which he found himself as he lay facing the back of the sofa, a loneliness in the midst of a populous town and surrounded by numerous acquaintances and relations but that yet could not have been more complete anywhere — either at the bottom of the sea or under the earth — during that terrible loneliness Ivan Ilych had lived only in memories of the past. Pictures of his past rose before him one after another. They always began with what was nearest in time and then went back to what was most remote — to his childhood and rested there. If he thought of the stewed prunes that had been offered him that day, his mind went back to the raw shrivelled French plums of his childhood, their peculiar flavour and the flow of saliva when he sucked their stones, and along with the memory of that taste came a whole series of memories of those days: his nurse, his brother, and their toys. "No, I mustn't thing of that... It is too painful," Ivan Ilych said to himself, and brought himself back to the present — to the button on the back of the sofa and the creases in its morocco. "Morocco is expensive, but it does not wear well: there had been a quarrel about it. It was a different kind of quarrel and a different kind of morocco that time when we tore father's portfolio and were punished, and mamma brought us some tarts...." And again his thoughts dwelt on his childhood, and again it was painful and he tried to banish them and fix his mind on something else.

3. We note that both of the images supplied here ("at the bottom of the sea" and "in the earth") suggest places of burial, providing confirmation that Ivan Ilych is, for practical purposes, already long since dead and even buried. Thus, the struggles which he continues to face are suggested once more to be spiritual rather than physical in kind, and to be associated with the rebirth of the spirit. From this also stems the importance which Ivan Ilych attaches to his memories of childhood and his desire to be a child again and to be faced with the back of a sofa, a loneliness in the midst of a populous town and surrounded by numerous acquaintances and relations but that yet could not have been more complete anywhere — either at the bottom of the sea or under the earth — during that terrible loneliness Ivan Ilych had lived only in memories of the past. Pictures of his past rose before him one after another. They always began with what was nearest in time and then went back to what was most remote — to his childhood and rested there. If he thought of the stewed prunes that had been offered him that day, his mind went back to the raw shrivelled French plums of his childhood, their peculiar flavour and the flow of saliva when he sucked their stones, and along with the memory of that taste came a whole series of memories of those days: his nurse, his brother, and their toys. "No, I mustn't thing of that... It is too painful," Ivan Ilych said to himself, and brought himself back to the present — to the button on the back of the sofa and the creases in its morocco. "Morocco is expensive, but it does not wear well: there had been a quarrel about it. It was a different kind of quarrel and a different kind of morocco that time when we tore father's portfolio and were punished, and mamma brought us some tarts...." And again his thoughts dwelt on his childhood, and again it was painful and he tried to banish them and fix his mind on something else.

4. The similarity between Ivan Ilych's reflections ("course of thoughts") pertaining to his illness and physical decline and his deliberate remembering of his life as a whole makes it virtually explicit that his illness is a metaphor of his life. "The one and the other flowed together. As the torments became ever worse and worse, so also did my life as a whole become ever worse."
Так прошло две недели. В эти недели случилось желанное для Ивана Ильича и его жены событие: Петрищев сделал формальное предложение. Это случилось вечером. На другой день Прасковья Федоровна вошла к мужу, обдумывая, как объявить ему о предложении Федора Петровича, но в эту самую ночь с Иваном Ильичом свершилась новая переменна к худшему. Прасковья Федоровна застала его на том же диване, но в новом положении. Он лежал навзничь, стонал и смотрел перед собой остановившимся взглядом.

Она стала говорить о лекарствах. Он перевел свой взгляд на нее. Она не договорила того, что начала: такая злоба, именно к ней, выражалась в этом взгляде. – Ради Христа, дай мне умереть спокойно, – сказал он.

Она хотела уходить, но в это время вошла дочь и подошла поздороваться. Он так же посмотрел на дочь, как и на жену и на ее вопросы о здоровье сухо сказал ей, что он скоро освободит их всех от себя. Обе замолчали, посидели и вышли.

– В чем же мы виноваты? – сказала Лиза матери. – Точно мы это сделали!

В обычное время приехал доктор. Иван Ильич отвечал ему: “да, нет”, не спуская с, него озлобленного взгляда, и под конец сказал:

– Ведь вы знаете, что ничего не поможет, так оставьте.
– Облегчить страдания можем, – сказал доктор.
– И того не можете; остайте.

– Is it our fault?” Lisa said to her mother. “It’s as if we were to blame! I am sorry for papa, but why should we be tortured?”

1. The tone of Liza’s remarks here is the conventional one adopted by people who feel wounded by misdirected anger or blame: “Well, how is it OUR fault? He acts as though WE did this to him!” As so often, however, under the conventional and obvious meaning of the text is hidden the possibility of a more genuine, direct, and specific significance: “How ARE we to blame? It’s we OURSELVES who have done this!” This makes the passage resonate, if subtly and obliquely, with Ivan Ilich’s own reflections about whether he may have lived his life wrongly and his attitude of offended disbelief that such an incredible possibility might even be suggested.

2. Again a reprise of the question that has so troubled Ivan Ilich, and the suggestion that the answer may be the same: that we have lived wrongly.
Доктор вышел в гостиную и сообщил Прасковье Федоровне, что очень плохо и что одно средство – опиум, чтобы облегчить страдания, которые должны быть ужасны.

Доктор оговорил, что страдания его физические ужасны, и это была правда; но ужаснее его физических страданий были его нравственные страдания, и в этом было главное его мучение.

Нравственные страдания его состояли в том, что в эту ночь, глядя на сонное, добродушное скуластое лицо Герасима, ему вдруг пришло в голову: а что, как и в самом деле вся моя жизнь, сознательная жизнь, была “не то”.

Ему пришло в голову, что то, что ему представлялось прежде совершенной невозможностью, то, что он прожил свою жизнь не так, как должно было, что это могло быть правда.

“А если это так, – сказал он себе, – и я ухожу из жизни с сознанием того, что погубил все, что мне дано было, и поправить нельзя, тогда что ж?” Он лег навзничь и стал совсем по-новому перебирать всю свою жизнь. Когда он увидел утром лакея, потом жену, потом дочь, потом доктора, – каждое их движение, каждое их слово подтверждало для него ужасную истину, открывшуюся ему ночью. Он в них видел себя, все то, чем он жил, и ясно видел, что все это было не то, все это был ужасный огромный обман, закрывающий и жизнь и смерть. Это сознание увеличилось, удвоилось его физические страдания. Он стонал и метался и обдергивал на себе одежду. Ему казалось, что она душила и давила его. И за это он ненавидел их.

It occurred to him that what had appeared perfectly impossible before, namely that he had not spent his life as he should have done, might after all be true. It occurred to him that his scarcely perceptible attempts to struggle against what was considered good by the most highly placed people, those scarcely noticeable impulses which he had immediately suppressed, might have been the real thing, and all the rest false. And his professional duties and the whole arrangement of his life and of his family, and all his social and official interests, might all have been false. He tried to defend all those things to himself and suddenly felt the weakness of what he was defending.

“But if that is so,” he said to himself, “and I am leaving this life with the consciousness that I have lost all that was given me and it is impossible to rectify it — what then?” He lay on his back and began to pass his life in review in quite a new way. In the morning when he saw first his footman, then his wife, then his daughter, and then the doctor, their every word and movement confirmed to him the awful truth that had been revealed to him during the night. In them he saw himself — all that for which he had lived — and saw clearly that it was not real at all, but a terrible and huge deception which had hidden both life and death. This consciousness intensified his physical suffering tenfold. He groaned and tossed about, and pulled at his clothing which choked and stifled him. And he hated them on that account.

The doctor went into the drawing room and told Praskovya Fedorovna that the case was very serious and that the only resource left was opium to allay her husband’s sufferings, which must be terrible.

It was true, as the doctor said, that Ivan Ilych’s physical sufferings were terrible, but worse than the physical sufferings were his mental sufferings which were his chief torture.

His mental sufferings were due to the fact that that night, as he looked at Gerasim’s sleepy, good-natured face with its prominent cheek-bones, the question suddenly occurred to him: “What if my whole life has been wrong?”

It occurred to him that what had appeared perfectly impossible before, namely that he had not spent his life as he should have done, might after all be true. It occurred to him that his scarcely perceptible attempts to struggle against what was considered good by the most highly placed people, those scarcely noticeable impulses which he had immediately suppressed, might have been the real thing, and all the rest false. And his professional duties and the whole arrangement of his life and of his family, and all his social and official interests, might all have been false. He tried to defend all those things to himself and suddenly felt the weakness of what he was defending. There was nothing to defend.
Ему дали большую дозу опиума, он забылся; но в обед началось опять то же. Он гнал всех от себя и метался с места на место.

Жена пришла к нему и сказала:

– Jean, голубчик, сделай это для меня (для меня?). Это не может повредить, но часто помогает. Что же, это ничего. И здоровые часто...

Он открыл широко глаза.

– Что? Причаститься? Зачем? Не надо! А впрочем...

Она заплакала.

– Да, мой друг? Я позову нашего, он такой милый.

– Прекрасно, очень хорошо, – проговорил он.

Когда пришел священник и исповедовал его, он смягчился, почувствовал как будто облегчение от своих сомнений и вследствие этого от страданий, и на него нашла минута надежды. Он опять стал думать о слепой кишке и возможности исправления ее. Он причастился со слезами на глазах.

Когда его уложили после причастия, ему стало на минуту легко, и опять явилась надежда на жизнь. Он стал думать об операции, которую предлагали ему. “Жить, жить хочу”, – говорил он себе. Жена пришла поздравить; она сказала обычные слова и прибавила:

– Не правда ли, тебе лучше?

Он, не глядя на нее, проговорил: да.

Ее одежда, ее сложение, выражение ее лица, звук ее голоса – все сказали ему одно: “Не то. Все то, чем ты жил и живешь, – есть ложь, обман, скрывающий от тебя жизнь и смерть”. И как только он подумал это, поднялась его ненависть и вместе с ненавистью физические мучительные страдания и с сознанием неизбежной, близкой погибели. Что-то сделалось новое: стало винтить, и стрелять, и сдавливать дыхание.

Выражение лица его, когда он проговорил “да”, было ужасно. Проговорив это “да”, глядя ей прямо в лицо, он необычайно для своей слабости быстро повернулся ничком и закричал:

– Уйдите, уйдите, оставьте меня!

He was given a large dose of opium and became unconscious, but at noon his sufferings began again. He drove everybody away and tossed from side to side.

His wife came to him and said:

“Jean, my dear, do this for me. It can’t do any harm and often helps. Healthy people often do it.”

He opened his eyes wide.


She began to cry.

“Yes, do, my dear. I’ll send for our priest. He is such a nice man.”

“All right. Very well,” he muttered.

When the priest came and heard his confession, Ivan Ilyich was softened and seemed to feel a relief from his doubts and consequently from his sufferings, and for a moment there came a ray of hope. He again began to think of the vermiform appendix and the possibility of correcting it. He received the sacrament with tears in his eyes.

When they laid him down again afterwards he felt a moment’s ease, and the hope that he might live awoke in him again. He began to think of the operation that had been suggested to him. “To live! I want to live!” he said to himself. His wife came in to congratulate him after his communion, and when uttering the usual conventional words6 she added:

“You feel better, don’t you?”

Without looking at her he said “Yes.”

Her dress, her figure, the expression of her face, the tone of her voice, all revealed the same thing. “This is wrong, it is not as it should be. All you have lived for and still live for is falsehood and deception, hiding life and death from you.” And as soon as he admitted that thought, his hatred and his agonizing physical suffering again sprang up, and with that suffering a consciousness of the unavoidable, approaching end. And to this was added a new sensation of grinding shooting pain and a feeling of suffocation.7

The expression of his face when he uttered that “Yes” was dreadful. Having uttered it, he looked her straight in the eyes, turned on his face with a rapidity extraordinary in his weak state and shouted:

“Go away! Go away and leave me alone!”

6. The usual words are “Pozdravlju s prichastiem!” (“I congratulate (you) on communing (i.e., on having received the sacrament).”

7. One of the sensations of this new dimension of Ivan Ilich’s pain is described as “screwing into him,” expressed by the verb “vintit’” (from the word “vint” [Eng., “screw”]). The reader cannot fail to notice the bitter irony in the fact that this same verb means “to play vint,” the card game of which Ivan Ilich has been so fond. His life as he has lived it is the ultimate source of his pain and is, in fact, not life at all, but a form of death.
Chapter 12

From that moment the screaming began that continued for three days, and was so terrible that one could not hear it through two closed doors without horror. 1 At the moment he answered his wife realized that he was lost, 2 that there was no return, that the end had come, the very end, and his doubts were still unsolved and remained doubts.

“Оh! Оh! Оh!” he cried in various intonations. He had begun by screaming “I won’t!” and continued screaming on the letter “O”.

Suddenly some force struck him in the chest and side, making it still harder to breathe, and he fell through the hole and there at the bottom was a light. What had happened to him was like the sensation one sometimes experiences in a railway carriage when one thinks one is going backwards while one is really going forwards and suddenly becomes aware of the real direction. 4

1. A reminder of Praskovya Fyodorovna’s description (in Chapter One) of how terrible the last days of Ivan Ilich had been for her because she could hear him screaming through multiple closed doors. This is also a metaphorical reminder that in the end unpleasantness cannot be avoided simply by “slamming the door on it.”

2. The associated noun “propast’” means “abyss.”

3. This is the final appearance of the image of the black sack. We recall Ivan Ilich’s ambiguous relation to this sensation: his competing desires to resist and co-operate. Here the desire to “get into it” has supervened and it is only his persistent desire to see his life as good that prevents him from doing so. We know with certainty from the material in the three preceding chapters that his life has not been good, has been characterized in fact as not having been “life” at all.

4. At this moment Ivan Ilich finally realizes that his life has not been life at all in the true sense of the word, and we as readers receive our final clue that the significance of Ivan Ilich’s story can only be grasped by seeing it as the reverse of what it might appear to be: not only the story of how he died, but more importantly the story of how he returned to life. The black sack can now seem to represent not the end of life but its return, and the similarity of Ivan Ilich’s experience in the black sack to the presumed experience of a baby descending the birth canal and about to be born becomes apparent, especially in the remark that “it became light” at the end of the black hole (the Russian word “dyra” (“hole”) can also be used to mean a tunnel). There has been a great deal of comment in the scholarship on the novel on the significance of the black sack and its function in the text. For sources see the bibliography, especially Sorokin and Jahn (1993).
“Yes, it was not the right thing,” he said to himself, “but that’s no matter. It can be done. But what is the right thing? he asked himself, and suddenly grew quiet.

This occurred at the end of the third day, two hours before his death. Just then his schoolboy son had crept softly in and gone up to the bedside. The dying man was still screaming desperately and waving his arms. His hand fell on the boy’s head, and the boy caught it, pressed it to his lips, and began to cry.

At that very moment Ivan Ilych fell through and caught sight of the light, and it was revealed to him that though his life had not been what it should have been, this could still be rectified. He asked himself, “What is the right thing?” and grew still, listening. Then he felt that someone was kissing his hand. He opened his eyes, looked at his son, and felt sorry for him. His wife came up to him and he glanced at her. She was gazing at him open-mouthed, with undried tears on her nose and cheek and a despairing look on her face. He felt sorry for her too.

“Take him away...sorry for him...sorry for you too...”6 He tried to add, “Forgive me,” but said “Forego” and waved his hand, knowing that He whose understanding mattered would understand.6

And suddenly it grew clear to him that what had been oppressing him and would not leave him was all dropping away at once from two sides, from ten sides, and from all sides.7 He was sorry for them, he must act so as not to hurt them: release them and free himself from these sufferings. “How good and how simple!” he thought. “And the pain?” he asked himself. “What has become of it? Where are you, pain?”

He turned his attention to it.

5. Another allusion to the Passion narrative, the passage in which Jesus, near death, entrusts his mother with the care of the apostle John with the words “Mother, behold thy son; son, thy mother” (John, 19:26-27).

6. The confusion reflected here can be seen as a moment of coalescence between the spiritual concerns of the novel and the physiological description of Ivan Ilych’s illness and death. At the final moment the forgiveness requested for a life that was wrong becomes mixed with the passage out of that life, figured metaphorically in the desire to “fall right through” the black sack. In this way, the novel may be seen to remain true both to its account of Ivan Ilych’s physical death and its story of his spiritual rebirth.

7. While the entire course of the story of the life of Ivan Ilych has prepared us for this moment at which the space available to him would become mixed with the passage out of that life, figured metaphorically in the desire to “fall right through” the black sack. In this way, the novel may be seen to remain true both to its account of Ivan Ilych’s physical death and its story of his spiritual rebirth.
“Да, вот она. Ну что ж, пускай боль”.

“Yes, here it is. Well, what of it? Let the pain be.”

“А смерть? Где она?”

“And death... where is it?”

Он искал своего прежнего привычного страха смерти и не находил его. Где она? Какая смерть? Страха никакого не было, потому что и смерти не было.

He sought his former accustomed fear of death and did not find it. “Where is it? What death?” There was no fear because there was no death.

Вместо смерти был свет.

In place of death there was light.

– Так вот что! – вдруг вслух проговорил он. – Какая радость!

“So that’s what it is!” he suddenly exclaimed aloud. “What joy!”

Для него все это произошло в одно мгновение, и значение этого мгновения уже не изменялось. Для присутствующих же агония его продолжалась еще два часа. В груди его клокотало что-то; изможденное тело его вздрагивало. Потом реже и реже стало клокотание и хрипенье.

To him all this happened in a single instant, and the meaning of that instant did not change. For those present his agony continued for another two hours. Something rattled in his throat, his emaciated body twitched, then the gasping and rattle became less and less frequent.

– Кончено! – сказал кто-то над ним. 8

“It is finished!” said someone near him. 8

Он услыхал эти слова и повторил их в своей душе. “Кончена смерть, – сказал он себе. – Ее нет больше”.

He heard these words and repeated them in his soul. “Death is finished,” he said to himself. “It is no more!”

Он втянул в себя воздух, остановился на половине вздоха, потянулся и умер.

He drew in a breath, stopped in the midst of a sigh, stretched out, and died.

Конец

The End

8. This is the last of several allusions to the Passion story related in the Gospels. Tolstoy here uses the very same expression which he had employed, in his own translation of the Gospels, in emending the received Russian (Slavonic) translation of John, 19:30. It is, besides, a final affirmation of the principle of reading in reverse which we have been pursuing through these annotations; the final note that the novel sounds would seem to be not that the life of Ivan Ilich is finished, but that it has begun again or been reclaimed.
A FULLY GLOSSED RUSSIAN TEXT OF "THE DEATH OF IVAN ILYICH" WITH EXPLANATORY AND INTERPRETIVE ANNOTATIONS

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Note about PDF version

“The Death of Ivan Ilich”: An Electronic Study Edition of the Russian Text works best as an online book. The chapters in the “Fully Glossed Russian Text of ‘The Death of Ivan Ilich’ with Explanatory and Interpretive Annotations” section contains functionality that allows the user to click words and phrases to receive English translations. These chapters are included in the PDF and EPUB version of the book because they also include stress marks and annotations that may be helpful to the reader.

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https://open.lib.umn.edu/ivanilich/
Chapter 1

СМЕРТЬ ИВАНА ИЛЬИЧА

Самым большим зданием судебных учреждений во время перерыва заседания по делу Мельвинских члены и прокурор сошлись в кабинете Ивана Егоровича Шебек, и зашел разговор о знаменитом красовском деле. Федор Васильевич разгорячился, доказывая неподсудность, Иван Егорович стоял на своем, Пётр же Иванович, не вступив сначала в спор, не принимал в нём участия и просматривал только что поданные "Ведомости".

– Господâ!–сказа́л он, – Ива́н Ильйч-то у́мер.
– Неуже́ли?
– Вот, чита́йте, – сказа́л он Фёдору Васи́льевичу, подава́я ему́ све́жий, паху́чий ещё но́мер.

В чёрном ободке было напечатано: «Прасковья Фёдоровна Головина с душе́вным приско́рбием извеща́ет

1. The Ivan Il‘ich mentioned in the title is Ivan Il‘ich Golovin, the novel’s protagonist. Tolstoy modeled this character in part on a certain Ivan Il‘ich Mechnikov, an acquaintance of his who served as prosecutor in the district court of Tula, the nearest sizable town to Tolstoy’s country estate at Yasnaya Polyana. According to N. F. Golubov’s commentary on The Death of Ivan Il‘ich in volume 26 of Complete Collected Works of Lev Tolstoi in 90 Volumes the circumstances attending Mechnikov’s illness and untimely death in 1881 closely resembled those described by Tolstoy in the story. Shortly after Mechnikov’s demise in July, 1881, Tolstoy made his first recorded mention of the idea which he eventually developed into The Death of Ivan Il‘ich. The novel was completed and published in 1886.

2. The Melvinsky case was a celebrated court case of the 1880s, as was the Krasovsky case, mentioned a couple of lines later. Evidently Tolstoi is at pains to connect his narrative to the authentic realities of life in the period described.

3. In the 1880s both civil and criminal cases were often heard by a panel of three judges before whom matters were argued by opposing counsel. The "members" of the court were these judges. Ivan Il‘ich, whose death is about to come to the attention of these gentlemen, was such a judge.

4. The motifs of judge, judgement, and jurisdiction (the right or responsibility of rendering judgement) emerge immediately, frequently, and forcefully in the story. It seems clear that the theme of judgement will be important; it may be that we as readers will ourselves be implicated in the responsibility of rendering judgement on the life and death of Ivan Il‘ich.

5. Petr Ivanovich takes no part in the discussion concerning jurisdiction (the judicial responsibility of hearing evidence and rendering judgement) here. He continues steadfast throughout chapter one (after which he more or less disappears from the novel) in his refusal to "get involved." He is concerned only to perform the superficial rituals required by the death of his colleague and then to leave the entire unpleasant situation behind him in order to spend the remainder of his evening playing cards. His indifference to the discussion of the question of jurisdiction in the first paragraph is a model of his general attitude toward the death of his colleague and mentor.

6. Vedomosti (The Gazette) was the name shared by prominent daily newspapers in both St. Petersburg and Moscow. Most commentators believe that Tolstoi had Moscow in mind as the setting of the novel.

7. This is the first of many examples of images of enclosure and containment in the text of the novel. These images become a veritable leitmotiv of isolation and estrangement over the course of the story. This is also the first appearance of Ivan Ilich himself. In a way, one might say that the main question of which the reader of the story must judge is: “How did Ivan Ilich come to be enclosed in such a tiny frame?” Click here to see a typical example of such a funeral announcement as is described here. Note how prominent the “black border” of the announcement is.
Ivan Il'ich was a pleasant and likable fellow through and through. Neither villain nor hero, Ivan Il'ich is just such a pleasant and likable fellow as we would all prefer to have around us. The irony, of course, is that what Ivan Il'ich suffered most from was, in fact, incurable by medical means. His spiritual malaise becomes much more painful to him than his physical disease. The novel concludes, however, on the hopeful note that this spiritual illness can be alleviated.

8. Note the familiar conventionality of the content of the announcement. It will emerge that this tidy summary of Ivan Il'ich as a “beloved spouse” (rather than a husband) whose “kindred and acquaintances” (rather than his relatives and friends) are “informed” (rather than told) of the “demise” (not death) of this “member of the Palace of Justice” (his function in life), in the midst of her “profound grief” (not so very apparent at the scene of the funeral which will shortly follow). Thus is Ivan Il'ich's life and death neatly encapsulated in a “single document, executed in perfect observance of all required formalities” (a description provided in chapter two of Ivan Il'ich’s own particular skill as a judicial official).

9. Ivan Il'ich is a good man who is liked by all of his co-workers. This motif is taken up again at the beginning of Chapter Two; his story is that of an ordinary man. Neither villain nor hero, Ivan Il'ich is just such a pleasant and likable fellow as we would all prefer to have around us.

10. The irony, of course, is that what Ivan Il'ich suffered most from was, in fact, incurable by medical means. His spiritual malaise becomes much more painful to him than his physical disease. The novel concludes, however, on the hopeful note that this spiritual illness can be alleviated.

11. The Russian text says, literally, that "his place remained behind him." The conversation of his friends will soon make it clear that, pleasant fellow though he was, his vacant place in the official world is much more important than the person who has died. There is also the clear suggestion that a person’s place or position is of considerably more importance than the person himself.

12. Kaluga: a provincial city. Just as Ivan Il'ich's final promotion brings him, at last, from the provinces to the capital, so here Peter Ivanovich can imagine no happier and more desirable fate for his brother-in-law.

13. The Russian text says, literally, “he wouldn’t raise himself up,” a somewhat peculiar way to indicate that a sick person won’t recover. It may, however, serve to suggest the notion of the raising of the dead by a miracle of the spirit. So, for example, in scripture Jesus "raised" Lazarus from the dead. That Ivan Il'ich in the end did succeed in "raising himself" seems to be suggested in the last chapter of the novel.

14. Here we note the use of the word определить ('to define,' 'to specify') to characterize what the doctors were trying to do. The word is derived from the root предел ('limit,' 'boundary') and so plays into the motif of limitation which is marked throughout the story. Etymologically, the doctors are trying to "put a limit to" or "close in" Ivan's illness, but they are not able to do so.

15. The first example of the novel's satirical attitude toward physicians. Doctors and other professionals (Ivan Il'ich's colleagues, Ivan himself) are all shown in the novel as concerned exclusively with forms or phenomena rather than with the individuals who appear before them. Of Ivan Il'ich it will be said that his great talent as an official is his ability to reduce even the most complex individual case into a properly executed one-page form.

16. Here is another example of a revealing choice of words. The Russian for "would get better" is, literally, "would right himself, would correct himself." As in the remark about "raising himself" this colloquial and metaphorical expression seems to contain a hidden, literal meaning. In the end, Ivan Il'ich does seem to "right himself" before he dies. Given the eventual outcome of the novel, these examples
– A я так и не был у негó с сáмых прáздников. Всё соби́рался.

– Что, у негó бы́ло состоя́ние?

– Кáжется, чтó-то оче́нь небóльшóе у женё́. Но чтó-то ничтóжное.

– Да, нáдо бу́дет поёхать. Ужáсно далеко жи́ли они́.

– То есть от вас далеко. От вас всё дальше.18 – Вот, не мóжет мне простить, что я живу́ за рекой, – улыба́ясь на Шéбека, сказа́л Пётр Ива́нович. И заговори́ли о дáльности городских расстоя́ний, и пошли́ в засе́дание.19

Кри́ме вы́званных этóй сме́ртью в кáждом соображéниях о перемещéниях и возможных изменéниях по служёбе, могу́щих послéдовать от этóй сме́рти, сáмый факт сме́рти близкóго знакáмого вызвал во всех, узна́вших про неё, как всèдá, чв́вество рáдости о том, что умёр он, а не я.20

"Каковó, юмер; а я вот нет", – подумáл или почу́вствовал кáждый. Блйзкие же знакáмые, так назывáемые друзья́ Ива́на Ильичá, 21 при этóм поду́мали невóльно и о том, что тепéрь им надо́бно исполнить очéнь скучные обязанности прили́чия22 и поёхать на панихи́ду и к вдовé с визи́том соболезнова́ния.23

suggest that Tolstoy is telling two stories here: one of them is about the physical illness and death of Ivan Il’ich; the other concerns the spiritual condition of the protagonist. These two stories are related in that the second is, so to say, told through the first. Phrases which superficially refer to the first narrative are often also very important for the second.

17. “Trifling” translates the Russian word “ничтожное” (etymologically, “nothing at all”), suggesting that Ivan Il’ich, despite his hard work, had not managed to accumulate anything of significance. Thus, his life has come to nothing (Russian, ничто).

18. The separation among people, including the emotional distance separating them, is a prominent motif in the development of the novel. In a sense, the story of Ivan Il’ich’s life is a history of his increasing and self-imposed isolation from those close to him.

19. The very serious topic of the death of a valued colleague is replaced by trivialities. The colleagues of Ivan Il’ich, like all of us, are unwilling to deal with the fact of death. They deny it, avoid it, eventually flee from it. Note that this process is reflected in detail in the behavior of Peter Ivanovich as he goes to pay a call of condolence on Ivan Il’ich’s widow. He wishes that he could avoid it, he seeks to minimize his connection with the body of his dead friend, and he leaves the proceedings with unseemly haste so as to be able to join a game of cards in progress.

20. The thought “it’s he who is dead and not I!” is symptomatic of the belief in the separability of people from one another. We have already learned that the characters mentioned so far live far away from one another, and this passage is another example of the same idea—that other people, unpleasant occurrences, distressing situations can be kept at a distance, that each individual has a separate fate which can be controlled simply by avoidance of all perceived threats. We will see Ivan Il’ich again and again putting this distance between himself and various forms of unpleasantness. It will turn out, however, that this distancing carries with it the necessary consequence of closing the individual off from contact with others. Thus it is that two primary sets of images in the novel—pertaining to distance and enclosure—are causally related to one another.

21. “So-called,” of course because they seem to lack any concern at all for Ivan Il’ich as an individual person. Their interest in him is, one might say, functional; he is a co-worker, a husband, a father, a deceased acquaintance whose funeral must be attended.

22. The Russian words for ‘propriety’ (приличье), ‘appropriate, fitting’ (прилично), and ‘pleasant’ (приятно) play a very important role in the novel’s description of the life of Ivan Il’ich. They function as a sort of verbal leitmotiv of his life and the life of those around him. They suggest a life which is ruled by adherence to a known set of standards. One gets an image of the individual comfortably surrounded by well-marked boundaries of behavior within which the individual may be confident of a pleasant and well-regulated existence. In this way, the ideal life of propriety may be seen as an instance of the images of enclosure and distance. We already know that the end of such a life is the enclosure of the coffin and the distance which the living seek to put between themselves and the deceased.

23. One of the central artistic techniques of The Death of Ivan Il’ich is the concealment of one conception, image, or verbal motif inside another. The word “sympathy” in this passage is an example of this. It is derived from a Greek root (path-) which may designates either “feeling” or “disease.” Thus, in English, we have both “sympathy” and “pathology.” The Russian word for “sympathy” is “соболезнование,” which also derives from the Greek, but in a different manner than its English counterpart. The English word simply imports the original Greek word “sumpathēs” (as redered in the Latin alphabet). The Russian word is a “calque”: that is, the word is made by following the structure of the original but translating the Greek roots into their Russian equivalents. Thus, the Greek “sun-” (‘with’) becomes the Russian со- (‘with’) while the Greek “path-” (‘feeling’ or illness’) becomes the Russian болезнь (‘Illness’), producing ‘соболезнование.’ Russians use this word exclusively for the function of expressing sympathy, condolence, or fellow feeling with someone, but its form may suggest that the sympathizer is suffering from the same disease. In other words, it produces an effect like
The first mention of this character, who will play an increasingly important role in the story later on. Gerasim often expresses ideas of memento mori, an attractive, pleasant activity on one side and the harsh realities of life, the funeral, an illness, on the other.

Ivan Ilich grows older he values card-playing as an activity ever more. There is often an opposition, as here, between playing cards as a form of bridge. Card playing will be a major motif in the novel. It functions throughout as a symbol of a life of propriety. We will find that as Ivan Ilich grows older he values card-playing as an activity ever more. There is often an opposition, as here, between playing cards as an attractive, pleasant activity on one side and the harsh realities of life, the funeral, an illness, on the other.

Peter Ivanovich is interested in playing a card game of French origin called "vignt," which much resembles the modern game of bridge. Card playing will be a major motif in the novel. It functions throughout as a symbol of a life of propriety. We will find that as Ivan Ilich grows older he values card-playing as an activity ever more. There is often an opposition, as here, between playing cards as an attractive, pleasant activity on one side and the harsh realities of life, the funeral, an illness, on the other.
Пётр Иванович тотчас же почувствовал лёгкий запах разлагающегося трупа. В последнее своё посещение Ивана Ильича Пётр Иванович видел этого мужика в кабинете; он исполнял должность сиделки, и Иван Ильич особенно любил его. Пётр Иванович вскоре крестился и слегка кланялся по серединному направлению между гробом, дьячком и образами на столе в углу. Потом, когда это движение крещения рукой показалось ему уже слишком продолжительным, он приостановился и стал разглядывать мертвеца.

Мертвец лежал, как всегда лежат мертвецы, особенно тяжело, по-мертвому, углившимися членами в подстилке гроба, с навсегда согнувшимися головой на подушке, и выставлял, как всегда выставляют мертвецы, свой жёлтый восковой лоб с ввалившимися височками и торчащий нос, как бы надавивший на верхнюю губу. Он очень переменился, ещё похудел с тех пор, как Пётр Иванович не видел его, но, как у всех мертвецов, лицо его было красивее, главное — значительнее, чем оно было у живого. На лице было выражение того, что то, что нужно было сделать, сделано, и сделано правильно.

Кроме того, в этом выражении был ещё упрек или напоминание живым. Напоминание это показалось Петру Ивановичу неуместным или, по крайней мере, не касающимся. Что-то ему стало неприятно, и поэтому Пётр Иванович еще раз поспешно перекрестился и, как ему показалось, слишком поспешно и несообразно с приличиями, повернулся и пошёл к двери. Шварц ждал его в проходной комнате, расставив широко ноги и играя обеими руками за спиной своим цилиндром. Один взгляд на игрующую, чистоплотную и элегантную фигуру Шварца освежил Петра Ивановича. Петя Иванович понял, что он, Шварц, стоит выше этого и не поддаётся удручающим впечатлениям. Однажды говорил: инцидент панихида Ивана Ильича никак не может служить достаточным поводом для признания порядка заседания нарушённым, то есть что ничто не может помешать нынче же вечером щелкнуть, распечатывая её, колодой карт, в то время как лакей будет расставлять четыре необожжённые свечи; вообще нет основания предполагать, чтобы инцидент этот мог помешать нам провести приятно и сегодняшний вечер. Он и сказал это шепотом проходившему Петру Ивановичу, предлагая соединиться на партию у Фёдора Васильевича. Но, видно, Петру Ивановичу было не судьба в этот вечер расстаться с шахматами, ведь жена, невысокая, жирная женщина, несмотря на все старания устроить противное, всё-таки расширявшаяся от плеч кишну, в чём-то, покрытой кружевом головой и с такими же странными поднятыми бровями, как и та дама, стоявшая против гроба, вышла из своих покоеv с другими дамами и, проводив их в дверь мертеvца, сказала:

– Сейчас бьет панихида; пройдите.

Шварц, неопределенно поклонившись, остановился, очевидно, не принимая и не отклоняя этого предложения. Прасковья Фёдоровна, узнав Петрa Ивановича, вздохнула, подошла к нему вплоть, взяла он его руку и сказала:

– А как вы сегодня провели свой вечер? Что вы, Петя Иванович, вздохнула, подошла к нему вплоть, взяла его руку и сказала:

and sentiments which the other characters in the story would find unpalatable. At the end of Chapter One, for example, Gerasim reminds Peter Ivanovich that "we will all come to it one day" when asked about his feelings concerning the death of Ivan Il'ich. In Russian, Gerasim is identified as a "bufetnyj muzhik," thereby linking him closely to the Russian peasant (Russ. 'muzhik'), even though he is working in an urban, domestic situation.

27. Here we see a distinct contrast between the solemnity and certainty manifested by the face of the dead Ivan Il'ich and the hesitation shown by Peter Ivanovich and the playfulness displayed by Schwartz. As if to point this contrast, the retreating Peter Ivanovich is, upon leaving the room wherein lies Ivan Il'ich, immediately presented with the restorative sight of Schwartz.

28. Note that the refreshing effect that Schwartz has upon Peter Ivanovich is emphatically associated with "play" (Russian "igrpa") and words built from this root: he "plays" with his hat; his figure is "playful"; his attitude suggests that there is no reason why the funeral service should keep them from "playing" cards; later his "playful" look suggests that Peter Ivanovich can still join them for bridge after he extricates himself from Praskovya Fyodorovna and the funeral sevice. Note also that the playful Schwartz is closely associated with the card game that will also turn out to be Ivan Illich's favorite pastime. The association of the game of cards and a certain style of life is emphasized throughout the text.
– Я знаю, что вы были истиным другом Ивана Ильича... – и посмотрела на него, ожидая от него соответствующие этим словам действия.

Пётр Иванович знал, что как там надо было креститься, так здесь надо было пожать руку, вздохнуть и сказать —Поверьте! Уж не взыщите, другого партнёра возьмём. Нёшто впятером, когда отделяетесь,
– Пойдёмте, пока там не началось; мне надо поговорить с вами, – сказала вдова. – Дайте мне руку.

Петр Иванович подал рук, и они направились во внутренние комнаты, мимо Шварца, который печально подмигнул Петру Ивановичу: "Вот те и винт! Уж не взыщите, другого партнёра возьмём. Не што впятером, когда отделаетесь", – сказал его игриный взгляд.

Пётр Иванович вздохнул ещё глубже и печальнее, и Прасковья Фёдоровна благодаря пожала ему руку. Войдя в её обитую розовым кретоном гостиную с пасмурной лампой, они сели у стола: она на диване, а Пётр Иванович на расстроившийся пружинами и неправильно подававшийся под его сиденьем низенький пуф. 29 Прасковья Фёдоровна хотела предупредить его, чтобы он сел на другой стул, но нашла это предупреждение не соответствующим своему положению и раздумала. 30 Садясь на этот пуф, Пётр Иванович вспомнил, как Иван Ильич устраивал эту гостиную и совещался с ним об этом самом розовом с зелёными листьями кретоне. Садясь на диван и проходя мимо стола (в общешь вся гостинная была полна вещиц и мёбели), вдова зацепилась чёрным кружею чёрной мантией за резьбу стола. Пётр Иванович приподнялся, чтобы отцепить, и освобождённый под ним пуф стал волноваться и подталкивать его. Вдова сама отцепляла своё кружево, и Пётр Иванович опять сел, придавив бунтовавшийся под ним пуф.

– Курийте, пожалуйста, – сказала она великодушным и вместе убитым голосом и занялась с Соколовым вопросом о цене места. Пётр Иванович, закуривая, слышал, что она очень обстоятельно расспрашивает, что всё это кончилось, она вынула чистый батистовый платок и стала плакать. 31 Петра же Ивановича охладил этот эпизод с кружевом и борьбой с пуфом, и он сидел насупрившись. Неловкое это положение перервал Соколов, буфетчик Ивана Ильича, с докладом о том, что место на кладбище, то, которое назначила Прасковья Фёдоровна, будет стоить двести рублей. Она перестала плакать и, с видом жертвы взглянув на Петра Ивановича, сказала по-французски, что ей очень тяжело. Пётр Иванович сделал молчальный знак, выражавший несомнённую уверенность в том, что это не может быть иначе.

30. Cf. Peter Ivanovich’s uncertainty about what was the proper way to approach the coffin in an earlier scene. Clearly, image and appearance are much more important to these characters than the actual realities of the situations in which they find themselves. It is as though every situation has its rules, much like the rules of a game, which much be observed at all costs.

31. The Hankie being clean, the widow has evidently not previously had occasion to weep into it.

29. In the extended scene between Peter Ivanovich и Praskovya Fyodorovna (Ivan Ilich’s widow) we see many further indications of the artificiality of the relationships among these characters. Another interesting motif is the uncommonly important role played by material objects in the scene. The “faulty springs of the pouffe (an upholstered stool or ottoman)” are mentioned several times as disturbing the ritual of the visit of condolence. Later on, there will be further awkwardness when Praskovya Fyodorovna catches her shawl on the elaborately carved table edge. A direct connection is made between Ivan Ilich and the objects in this room. Later on we discover that the illness which killed him seemed to have stemmed from a fall which he had while attempting to show the draper just exactly how he wanted the curtains to be hung. Much in the manner of the games which they play, the objects with which these characters surround themselves seem to have an unusual significance in their lives.
о разных ценах земли и определила ту, которую следует взять. Кроме того, окончив о месте, она распорядилась о пёвчих. Соколов ушёл.

– Я всё сама делаю, – сказала она Петру Ивановичу, отодвигая к одной стороне альбомы, лежавшие на столе; и, заметив, что пепел угрожал столу, не мешкая подвинула Петру Ивановичу пепельницу и проговорила: – Я нахожу притворством уверять, что я не могу от горя заниматься практическими делами. меня, напротив, если может не утешить... а развлекать, то это - забо́ты о нём же. – она опять достала платок, как бы собираясь плакать, и вдруг, как бы пересиливая себя, встряхнулась и стала говорить спокойно.

– Однако у меня дело есть к вам.

Пётр Иванович поклонился, не давая расходиться пружинам пуфа, тотчас же зашевелившимся под ним.

– В последние дни он ужасно страдал.


– Ах, ужасно! Последние не минуты, а часы он не переставал кричать. Трое суток сряду он, не переводя голосу, кричал. Это было невыносимо. Я не могу понять, как я вынесла это; за тремя дверьми слышно было. Ах! что я вынесла!


– Да, – прошептала она, – до последней минуты. Он простился с нами за четверть часа до смерти и ещё просил увести Володю.

Мысль о страдании человечка, которого он знал так близко, сначала весёлым мальчиком, школьником, потом взрослым партнером, несмотря на неприятное сознание притворства своего и этой женщины, вдруг ужаснула Петра Ивановича. Он увидел опять этот лоб, нажимавший на губу нос, и ему стало страшно за себя.

"Трое суток ужасных страданий и смерть. Ведь это сейчас, всякую минуту может наступить и для меня",– подумал он, и ему стало на мгновение страшно. Но тотчас же, он сам не знал как, ему на помощь пришла обьчайная мысль, что это случилось с Иваном Ильичом, и не с ним и что с ним этого случиться не должно и не может; что, думаю так, он поддаётся мрачному настроению, чего не следует делать, как это

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32. The widow's evident clear-headedness in this discussion belies her claim that she is devastated by the death of her spouse. Note also that she "defined" (определила, lit. "put a limit to") "that which it was best (следует, lit. "it behooves (her)", "it is necessary") to take." Not only, then, is her grief insincere, but her approach to her responsibilities is associated with the setting of limits on the permissible, a notion that has been hinted at already and will become increasingly prominent as the story progresses. Finally, the grammar of the Russian leaves us in some doubt as to whether her main concern is the lot or the price of the lot.

33. She is also not so distracted by grief that when noticing that the table was endangered by his cigarette-ash, she immediately passed him an ash-tray.

34. Tolstoy's repetition here of the conjunction "as if" (Russ. как бы) plainly casts suspicion on the sincerity of the widow's grief. When she remarked above that she "thought it a pretense to give the impression that she was unable to see to practical matters because of her grief" she may have been telling more truth than she meant to; this passage suggests that it is her grief that is the pretense.

35. The widow's description of her dead husband's final hours is given from her own point of view; her concern is with how much she suffered, what was the effect on her, of her spouse's passing away. That his cries could be heard "through three doors" is a common way of saying that something was really loud; taken literally, however, it suggests that she had closed three doors upon her husband and his suffering in order to defend herself from him and it. The metaphor of the closed door, of shutting oneself off from unpleasantness is one we have seen already in Peter Ivanovich's hasty departure from the room in which the dead man was lying, and we will see it again and again in the life of Ivan Ilich himself.
очевидно было по лицу Шварца. И, сдёлав это рассуждение, Пётр Иванович успокоился и с интересом стал расспрашивать подробности о кончине Ивана Ильича, как будто смерть была такое приключение, которое свидетельство только Ивану Ильичу, но совсем не свидетельственно ему.

После разных разговоров о подробностях действительно ужасных физических страданий, перенёсённых Иваном Ильичом (подробности эти узнавал Пётр Иванович только по тому, как мучения Ивана Ильича действовали на нёры Прасковьи Фёдоровны), вдова, очевидно, нашла нужным перейти к делу.

– Ах, Пётр Иванович, как тяжело, как ужасно тяжело, и она опять заплакала.

Пётр Иванович вздохнул, и ждал, когда она высморкается. Когда она высморкалась, он сказал:

– Поверьте... – и опять она разговорилась и высказала то, что было, очевидно, её главным делом к нему; дёло это состояло в вопросах о том, как бы по случаю смерти мужа достать денег от казны. Она сделала вид, что спрашивает у Петра Ивановича совета о пенсии: но он видел, что она уже знает до мельчайших подробностей и то, чего он не знал: всё то, что можно вытянуть от казны по случаю этой смерти; но что ей хотелось узнать, нельзя ли как-нибудь вытянуть ещё побольше денег. Пётр Иванович постарался выдумать такое средство, но, подумав несколько и из приличия побранив наше правительство за его скверность, сказал, что, кажется, больше нельзя. Тогда она вздохнула и, очевидно, стала придумывать средство избавиться от своего посетителя. Он понял это, затушил папироску, встал, пожал руку и пошёл в переднюю.

В столовой с часами, которым Иван Ильич так рад был, что купил в брикабраке, Пётр Иванович встретил священника и ещё несколько знакомых, приехавших на панихиду, и увидал знакомую ему красивую барышню, дочь Ивана Ильича. Она была вся в чёрном. Талия её, очень тонкая, казалась ещё тоньше. Она имела мрачный, решительный, почти гневный вид. Она поклонилась Петру Ивановичу, как будто он был в чём-то виноват. За дочерью стоял с таким же обиженным видом знакомый Петру Ивановичу богатый молодой человек, судейский следователь, её жених, как он слышал. Он уныло поклонился им и хотел пройти в комната мертвеца, когда из-под лестницы появилась фигура гимназиста-сына, ужасно похожего на Ивана Ильича. Это был маленький Иван Ильич, каким Пётр Иванович помнил его в Правоведении. Глаза у него были и заплаканные и такие, какие бывают у нечистых мальчиков в тринадцать - четырнадцать лет. Мальчик, увидав Петра Ивановича, стал сурою и стыдливо морщиться. Пётр Иванович кивнул ему головой и вошёл в комната мертвеца. Началась панихида – свечи, стоны, ладан, слёзы, всхлипыванья. Пётр Иванович стоял нахмурившись, глядя на ноги Перди собак. Он не взглянул ни разу на мертвеца и до конца не поддёржал расслабляющим влияниям и один из пёрых вышел. В

36. The word рассуждение contains the same root as the word for "judge," "court," or "legal process" and is a subtle reminder of the occupation of both Ivan Ilich and Peter Ivanovich. To apply it to the manner in which Peter Ivanovich comforts himself in his sudden fright at the specter of death is to suggest that he has acted not truly as a judge--the arbiter of wisdom and truth--but rather so as to abandon his calling in order to "calm himself"

37. Tolstoy's depiction of the widow's insincere grief and shallow behavior has been merciless without being explicit; he concludes his portrait by putting her on display as she blows her nose and then remarks that she has finished blowing her nose.

38. This last clause represents a rather strange combination of the circuitous ("in accordance with the incidence of the death of her husband") and the rather coarsely direct ("get money from the government"); it confirms the image which has been created of Praskova Fyodorovna.

39. It's worth noting the ambiguity of the son's being "terribly" similar to his father. A characteristic feature of the style of this story is the use of colloquial or foreign expressions not only in their everyday sense but also in a literal sense--perhaps it really is terrible, dreadful that the son is so like the father.
передней никого не было. Герасим, буфетный мужик, выскочил из комнаты покойника, перешвырял своими сильными руками все шубы, чтобы найти шубу Петра Ивановича, и подал её.

– Что, брат Герасим? – сказал Пётр Иванович, чтобы сказать что-нибудь. – Жаль?

– Божья воля. Все там же будем, – сказал Герасим, оскаливая свои белые, сплошные мужицкие зубы, и, как человек в разгаре усиленной работы, живо отворил дверь, кликнул кучера, подсадил Петра Ивановича и прыгнул назад к крыльцу, как будто придумывая, что бы ему ещё сделать.

Петру Ивановичу особенно приятно было донуть чистым воздухом после запаха ладана, трупа и карболовой кислоты.


– Не поздно. Заеду ещё к Фёдору Васильевичу. И Пётр Иванович поехал. И действительно, застала их при конце первого роббера, так что ему удобно было вступить пятым.
Chapter 2

Прошедшая история жизни Ивана Ильича была самая простая и обыкновённая и самая ужасная.  

Иван Ильич умер сорока пяти лет, членом Судебной палаты. Он был сын чиновника, сделавшего в Петербурге по различным министерствам и департаментам ту карьеру, которая доводит людей до того положения, в котором хотя и ясно оказывается, что исполнять какую-нибудь существенную должность они не годятся, они всё-таки во своей дольгой и прошедшей службе и своим чинам не могут быть выгнаны и потому получают выдуманные фиктивные места и нефиктивные тысячи, от шести до десяти, с которыми они и доживают до глубокой старости.

Таков был тайный советник, ненужный член разных ненужных учреждений, Илья Ефимович Головин.

У него было три сына, Иван Ильич был вторым сыном. Старший делал такую же карьеру, как и отец, только по другому министерству, и уже близко подходил к тому служебному возрасту, при котором получается эта инерция жалованья. Третий сын был неудачник. Он в разных местах вздёг напорист был и теперь служил по железным дорогам: и его отец, и братья, и особенно их жены не только не любили встречаться с ним, но без крайней необходимости и не вспоминали о его существовании. Сестра была за бароном Грефом, таким же петербургским чиновником, как и его тестя. Иван Ильич был le phénix de la famille, как говорили. Он был не такой холодный и аккуратный, как старший, и не такой отчаянный, как меньший. Он был середина между ними — умный, живой, приятный и приличный человек. Воспитывался он вместе с меньшим братом в Правоведении.

Меньший не кончил и был выгнан из пяточ класса, Иван же Ильич хорошо кончил курс. В Правоведении уж он был тем, чем он был впоследствии всю свою жизнь: человеком способным, весело добродушным.

1. Thus begins the second chapter of the novel, with one of the most famous lines in Russian literature. A literal translation of the Russian would be "The past history of the life of Ivan Il'ich was most simple and ordinary, and most terrible" ("terrible" in the sense of inspiring terror, absolute fear). In the paragraphs that follow, the text is at pains to show that Ivan Illich was an average, ordinary sort of person. He is middle-aged at his death (in his mid-forties), the middle son of three, an average family man with a medium-sized family and an entirely normal career.

2. Here is the first of several foreign-language expressions which occur in the text of the novel, many of which contain particular significance. This one (lit. "the phoenix of the family") normally means "the member of the family most likely to succeed," but it contains a reference to the phoenix, a mythological bird which was periodically reborn from the ashes of its own destruction. It is interesting to note that some lines below the reference to the phoenix we read: "from early youth he was by nature attracted to people of high station as a fly is drawn to the light, assimilating their ways and views of life and establishing friendly relations with them." In the original, this sentence contains a pun on the Russian word 'svet' ('light,' 'world of high society'). We might translate as follows: "he was, like a fly to the light ('svet'), drawn to the people most highly placed in society ('svet')." In Tolstoi's day, of course, the "light" to which flies were drawn was the light of a burning flame in which the insect is immolated. It is suggested that this flame is society itself, which will burn up Ivan Il'ich, but that, like the phoenix, Ivan Il'ich will somehow transcend this fiery end.

3. The list of adjectives describing Ivan Illich is particularly appropriate to the description of him as an average or composite sort of person. He is intelligent ("umnyj" -- lit. "having a mind") and lively ("zhivoj" -- lit. "alive"), but also pleasant and proper (the characteristics of his older brother and his father). There is a suggestion here that pleasantness and propriety are somehow antithetical to intelligence and aliveness.
и общительным, но строго исполняющим то, что он считал своим долгом; долгом же он своим считал всё то, что считалось таковым наивысшими поставленными людьми. Он не был заискивающим ни мальчиком, ни потом взрослым человечком, но у него с самых молодых лет было то, что он, как мука к свету, тянулся к наивысше поставленным в свете людям, усваивал себе их приёмы, их взгляды на жизнь и с ними устанавливал дружеские отношения. Все увлечения детства и молодости прошли для него, не оставив больших следов; он отдавался и чувственности и тщеславию, и, под конец, в высших классах - либеральности, но всё в известных пределах, которые вёрно укачивало ему его чувство.

Были в Правоведении совершенны им поступки, которые прежде представлялись ему большими гадостями и внушили ему отвращение к самому себе, в то время, как он совершал их; но впоследствии, увидав, что поступки эти были совершаемы и высоко стоящими людьми и не считались дурными, он не то что признал их хорошими, но совершенно забыл их и нисколько не огорчался воспоминаниями о них.

В провинции Иван Ильич сразу устроил себе такое же лёгкое и приятное положение, каково было его положение в Правоведении. Он служил, делал карьеру и вместе с тем приятно и прилично веселился; изредка он ездил по поручению начальства в уезды, держал себя с достоинством и с высшими и с низшими и с точностью и неподкупной честностью, которой не мог не гордиться, исполнял возложенные на него поручения, преимущественно по делам раскольников.

В служебных делах он был, несмотря на свою молодость и склонность к лёгкому веселью, чрезвычайно сдержанный, официальный и даже строг; но в общественных он был часто игрив и остроумен и всегда добродушен, приличен и bon enfant, как говорил про него его начальник, у кого он был домашним человеком.

Была в провинции и связь с одной из дам, навязавшей щеголю правоведу; была и модистка; были и пирожки с приёжками флигель-адъютантами и поездки в дальнюю улицу после ужина; было и подслушивание начальника и даже жену начальника, но всё это носило на себе таковой высокий тон порядочности, что всё это не могло быть называться дурными словами: всё это подходило только под рубрику французского изречения il faut que jeunesse se passe. Всё происходило с чистыми руками,
в чистых рубашках, с французскими словами и, главное, в самом высшем обществе, слёдовано, с одобрением высоко стоящих людей.

Так прослужил Иван Ильич пять лет, и наступила переменна по службе. Явились новые судебные учреждения; нужны были новые люди.

И Иван Ильич стал этим новым человеком.  
Ивану Ильичу предложено было место судебного следователя, и Иван Ильич принял его, 13 несмотря на то, что место это было в другой губернии и ему надо было бросить установившиеся отношения и устанавливать новые. Ивана Ильича проводили друзья, сделали группу, поднесли ему серебряную папиросочницу, и он уехал на новое место.

Судебным следователем Иван Ильич был таким же comme il faut'ным, приличным 14 умевшим отделять служебные обязанности от частной жьизни и внушающим общее уважение, каким он был чиновником особых поручений. Сама же служба следователя представляла для Ивана Ильича гораздо более интереса и привлекательности, чем прежняя. В прежней службе приятно было свободной походкой в ша́рмеровском вицмунди́ре пройти мимо трепещущих и ожидающих приёма просителей и должностных лиц, зави́дующих ему, прямо в каби́не́ начальника и сесть с ним за чай с папиро́сою; но людей, прямё зави́сящих от его произво́ла, было мало. Такие люди были только испра́вники и раско́льники, когда его посыла́ли с поруче́ниями; и он люби́л учи́ть, почти по-това́рищески обходи́ться с такими, зави́сящими от него, людьми, люби́л давать чувствовать, что вот он, могу́щий раздави́ть, дру́жески, про́сто обхо́дится с ними. Таких людей тогда было мало. Теперь же, судебным слёдователем, Иван Ильич чувствовал, что все, все без исключения, самые важные самодовольные люди – все у него в руках и что ему стоя́т только написа́ть известные слова на бумаге с заголовком, и этогó важного, самодовольного челове́ка приведу́т к нему в качестве обвиня́емого или свиде́теля, и он будет, если он не захочет посади́ть его, стоя́ть перед ним и отвечать на его вопро́сы. Иван Ильич никогда не злоупотребля́л этой сво́ей вла́стью, напротив, стара́лся смъягча́ть выра́жения её; но созна́ние этой вла́сти и возмо́жность смъягча́ть её составля́ли для него главный интерес и привлекательность его новой слу́жбы. В са́мой же службе, именно в слёдствиях, Иван Ильич очень быстро усвоил приём отстранения от себя всех обстоятельств, не ка́сающихся слу́жбы, и облечения вского са́мого сложного дела в такую форму, при котором бы де́ло только внешне́м образом отра́жалось на бумаге и при кото́ром исключалось совершенно его личное воззре́ние и, главное, соблюда́лась бы и, by implication, at some point stop happening and be lost. Later on in the novel Ivan Ilich will devote a lot of effort to an attempt to recapture that lost youth.

12. The 1860s saw the institution of major governmental reforms in Russia. The most celebrated of these was the freeing of the serfs from their legal bondage in 1861. Among the most far-reaching (and the most needed) of the reforms was that which attempted to remodel the Russian judicial system, long marked by incompetence and venality. Ivan I'llich's ability to conform himself to the proprieties and expectations of this new system is the secret to his continuing career success. He now begins a steady rise in the service of several years duration.

13. An "examining magistrate" was a junior official of the court charged with conducting a preliminary enquiry into the circumstances and character of a crime and of the person(s) charged with the commission of the crime.

14. Comme il faut Is French for "as one ought to be"; the phrase is a favorite descriptor of vapid and insincere characters throughout his career. One thinks, for example, of such characters in War and Peace as Hippolyte Kuragin, completely comme il faut and almost devoid of intelligence, or Alphonse Karlovich Berg, whose most earnest desire is to be the twin of those highly-placed persons who seem to him to represent comme il faut, a feat he tries to accomplish not simply by furnishing his house in the same style as those he admires but by purchasing furnishings which have actually stood in those houses.
вся требуемая формальность. 15 Дело это было новое. И он был один из первых людей, выработавших на практике приложение указов 1864 года.

Перейдя в новый город на место судебного следователя, Иван Ильич сделал новые знакомства, связь, поновому поставил себя и принял несолько иной тон. Он поставил себя в некотором достойном отдалении от губернских властей, а избрал лучший круг из судейских и богатых дворян, живших в городе, и принял тон лёгкого недовольства правительством, умеренной либеральности и цивилизованной гражданственности. При этом, нисколько не изменяя законностью своего тулета, Иван Ильич в новой должности перестал пребывать подбородок и дал свободу бороду расти, где она хочет.

Жизнь Ивана Ильича и в новом городе сложилась очень приятно: фронтрующеее против губернатора общество было дружное и хорошее; жалованье было больше, и немалую приятность в жизни прибавил тогда вист, в который стал играть Иван Ильич, имевший способность играть в карты весело, быстро сознавая и очень тонко, так что в общем он всегда был в выигрыше. 16

После двух лет службы в новом городе Иван Ильич встретился с своей будущей женой. Прасковья Федоровна Михель была симпатичная, умная, блестящая девушка того круга, в котором вращался Иван Ильич. В числе других забав и отдыховений от трудов следователя Иван Ильич установил игриевы, легкие отношения с Прасковьей Федоровной.

Иван Ильич, будучи чиновником особых поручений, вообще танцевал; судебным же следователем он уже танцевал как исключением. Он танцевал уже в том смысле, что хоть и по новым учреждениям и в пятом классе, но если дело коснется танцев, то могу доказать, что в этом роде я могу лучше других. Так он изрёк в конце вечера танцевал с Прасковьей Федоровной и преимущественно во время этих танцев и победил Прасковью Фёдоровну. 17 Она влюбилась в него. Иван Ильич не имел ясного, определённого намерения жениться, но когда девушка влюбилась в него, он здал себе этот вопрос: "В самом деле, отчего же и не жениться?" – сказал он себе.

Девица Праскова Фёдоровна была хорошего дворянского рода, неурна; было маленькое состояние. Иван Ильич мог рассчитывать на более блестящую партию, но и эта была партия хорошая. У Ивана Ильича было его жалованье, у ней, он надеялся, будет столько же. Хорошее родство; она – милая, хорошенькая и вполне порядочная женщина. 18 Сказать, что Иван Ильич женился потому, что он полюбил свою невесту и нашёл в ней сочувствие своим взглядам на жизнь, было бы так же несправедливо, как и сказать то,

15. It is interesting to note that Ivan Illich's secret of success in his official career resembles very much the attitude which his 'friends' bring to the 'required formality' of attending his funeral. Peter Ivanovich, indeed, does a remarkable job of estranging himself from the unpleasant sensations aroused by his feelings of personal connection with his deceased mentor and of the personal relevance which Ivan Illich's countenance and expression seemed to hold for him. Later on, the doctors whom Ivan Ilich consults as his illness progresses will treat him very much as he treats those who come before him in court.

16. Like Peter Ivanovich and Schwartz in Chapter One, Ivan Ilich becomes a devotee of card-playing. The skills required to play whist (which will be referred to later as "vint," a variation of the game sometimes called "Russian whist" in English) are similar to those which bring him success in his career: his good humor and playful manner, his ability to calculate quickly and astutely, his knowledge of the rules of the game and the proper forms of play. The thrust here is to connect his "life" (Russ. zhizn') with his "official life" (Russ. sluzhba) and to reduce both to triviality by suggesting that they involve little more than the artificial conventions of a game of cards.

17. Ivan Ilich dances as skillfully as he plays cards; as he "won over" Praskovya Fyodorovna with his dancing and by the "playful" relations he established with her, so also does his astute "playing" of cards leave him usually on the "winning" side after a rubber of whist. Playing cards and courting a wife are represented as no more than two varieties of the same activity--and both are equally "pleasant."

18. The Russian word "porjadchnaja" suggests a variety of meanings. Clearly the surface significance is that Praskovya Fyodorovna exemplifies "good order" (Russ. porjadok) in the choice of a wife. The word may also suggest that she is selected from a whole row (rjad) of similarly acceptable women. The word "porjadchnyj" may also be applied to physical objects to indicate that the object is well suited to its purpose. Praskovya Fyodorovna will make a "serviceable" wife. In short, the implication is really that there is nothing special or individual about her as far as Ivan Ilich is concerned.
that he married, that he was to lose all sense of propriety and pleasantness in his life. Ivan Ilyich married precisely because he was not in love. This is emphasised by the setting in which he marries — the elegant, refined, social milieu which was his world.

Самый процесс женитьбы и первое время брачной жизни, с супружескими ласками, новой мебелью, новой посудой, новым бельем, до братии, до герцога жен пошло очень хорошо, так что Иван Ильич начинал уже думать, что женитьба не только не нарушит того характера жизни легкой, приятной, веселой и всегда приличной и одобряемой обществом, который Иван Ильич считал свойственным жизни вообще, но еще усугубит его. Но тут, с первых месяцев беременности жены, явилось что-то такое новое, неожиданное, неприятное, тяжелое и неприличное, чего никогда не было видеть и от чего никак нельзя было отделаться.

Жена без всяких поводов, как казалось Ивану Ильичу, de goïte de coeur,21 как он говорил себе, начала нарушать приятность и приличье жизни: она без всякой причины ревновала его, тревожила от него ухаживавшую за собой, придиралась ко всему и делила ему неприятные и грубые сцены.

Сначала Иван Ильич надеялся освободиться от неприятности этого положения тем самым лёгким и приличным отношением к жизни, которое выручило его прежде, — он пробовал игнорировать расположение духа жены, продолжал жить по-прежнему легко и приятно: приглашал к себе друзей составлять партию, пробовал сам уезжать в клуб или к приезжим. Но жена один раз с такой энергией начала грубыми словами ругать его и так упорно продолжала ругать его всякий раз, когда он не исполнял её требований, очевидно, твердо решила не переставать до тех пор, пока он не покорится, то есть не будет сидеть дома и не будет так же, как и она, тосковать, что Иван Ильич ужаснулся. Он понял, что супружеская жизнь — по крайней мере, с его женою — не содействует всегда приятностям и приличию жизни, а, напротив, часто нарушает их, и что поэтому необходимо оградить себя от этих нарушений.

Иван Ильич стал отыскивать средства для этого. Судьба было одно, что импонировало Прасковье Фёдоровне, и Иван Ильич посредством службы и вытекающих из неё обязанностей стал бороться с женой, возвращая свой независимый мир.

19. The word "soobrazhenija" (Engl. "considerations") forms a verbal link to the earlier comment about Ivan Ilich's ability to "quickly and astutely consider" the best way to play a hand of whist.

20. Ivan Ilich's relationship with his wife, entered into more because it was a suitable and appropriate match than because he loved her, is portrayed as satisfying and even pleasant as long as it involves only such material considerations as sexual relations, furniture, dishes, and tablecloths. It is disrupted, however, and becomes unpleasant when Praskovya Fyodorovna becomes pregnant, that is, when a new life enters into the situation. Thus, marriage, too, as Ivan Ilich wishes it to be, is suggested to be a social form in which there is no place for life. By now it has already become clear that the story of the life of Ivan Ilich is really the story of his steady approach toward death. In the midst of his successful "life," real life is already a devastating threat. Later in this same passage the pregnancy is said to introduce something "new, unexpected, unpleasant, depressing (Russ. 'tjazheloe' = 'heavy, serious'), and unseemly" into his life, "from which there was no way of escape." All of these adjectives apply equally well to the illness from which Ivan Ilich will soon begin to suffer. This is especially true of the adjective 'tjazheloe,' which is part of a familiar and standard expression when applied to disease (Russ. 'tjazhelaja bolezn'). In the same way that Praskovya Fyodorovna's pregnancy seems to be an intimation of Ivan Ilich's illness, so also her behavior while pregnant pre-figures that of her husband after he has become ill. Thus, the displays of unseemliness and unpleasantness, the unreasonable, the vulgar scenes which will mark Ivan Ilich's behavior later on are all pre-figured here in the behavior of his pregnant wife. One must conclude, it seems, that just as there is a relationship between Ivan Ilich's official and personal life and the symbols of death, so too is there a relationship between the illness which leads to the end of that "life" and the discomorts associated with the genuine new life stirring within Praskovya Fyodorovna's womb.

21. A French phrase used to mean "out of sheer wantonness" or, more vulgarly, "for the hell of it." Literally, the phrase means "from gaiety of heart" and, consequently, seems to suggest the possibility that Praskovya Fyodorovna's pregnancy and its attendant symptoms, since they represent new life, should rather be a cause of happiness than of irritation. Here is still another example of a meaning beneath the meaning of these conventional phrases, suggesting (rather specifically, since she is pregnant) that there is another life beneath the superficial life of these conventional people.

22. Having discovered that the pleasantness and propriety of his life has been badly injured by the behavior of his pregnant wife Ivan Ilich...
first tries to ignore her outbursts and demands, but when this fails he withdraws into his work in order to protect his "independence." Thus, he turns away from his family life to the still more artificial world of his life at work. Maude's translation here does not capture the organizing metaphor of this passage. Where Maude says "entrench himself" the Russian has "barricade himself" (Russ. 'ogradiť' sebja'), and where Maude translates "secure his own independence" Tolstoi's text has "fence off his own independent world" (Russ. 'vygorazhivaja svoj nezavisimyj mir'). Thus, the Russian text suggests the motif of voluntary separation by walls or barriers, a process of self-enclosure, which is similar to the image created by the heavy black border of the funeral announcement and the framing edge of Ivan Ilich's coffin in chapter one. Some lines below the Maude translation does finally make the connection with "if he met with antagonism and querulousness he retired at once into his separate fenced-off (Russ. 'otdel'nyj vygorozhennyj im') world of official duties (italics mine)." Even here, though, Maude's translation refers to "his fenced-off world" while the Russian has "the world fenced-off by him" which makes Ivan Ilich responsible for the deliberate act of closing himself off from which irritates him. Thus it is that in his desire to escape from the unpleasantness of his personal life he more and more embraces the relative emptiness and artificiality of his official life. In thinking to protect himself by escaping the unpleasantness, he always accomplishes this result by isolating himself, by building a metaphorical fence around himself.

23. The narrator's preference for the adjective supruzheskaja ("spousal," from "suprug/supruga," spouse) suggests that Ivan Ilich sees his relationship with Praskovya Fyodorovna as one in which each of them is playing, and is bound to play, a certain role, that of spouse, rather than as a relationship between two authentic individuals. One might say that Ivan Ilich's strategy for defense against the importunities of his wife is to escape the role of spouse by taking refuge in the role of government official. The inherently inauthentic nature of this "play-acting" at life is most strongly suggested in Chapter Eight where the family discusses their imminent outing to the theater to see the celebrated actress Sarah Bernhardt perform.

24. The word "opredelennyj" (as here in "opredelennoe otnoshenie," Eng., "a definite (or "defined") relationship) occurs frequently in the story. It is suggestive that it derives from the word "predel," Eng., "limit," "boundary" and thereby resonates with the various images of borders, edges, barriers, enclosures, curtains, screens and so on in which the story abounds. To say that there is need for a defined relationship suggests that every aspect of life has its known and desirable limits, its rules describing the types of behavior which are and are not permitted within that aspect. Extending this principle logically we come soon to the conclusion that life itself is just such a limited affair, and Ivan Ilich's hope to protect his "independent world" is illusory.

25. Note the use of the same verb "privlekat'/privlech'" ("to draw, attract") to express the idea of Ivan Ilich's gratification of being able to "draw" anyone into court (or into prison) and his gratification with all aspects of his new duties being able to "draw" Ivan Ilich himself into his work at the office even more than before. Thus again the idea of Ivan Ilich's life becoming ever more a voluntarily accepted decision to lock himself away from the world.
Пошли дети. Жена становилась все ворчливее и сердитее, но выработанные Иваном Ильичом отношения к домашней жизни делали его почти непроницаемым для её ворчливости.26

После семи лет службы в одном городе Ивана Ильича перевели на место прокурора в другую губернию. Они переехали, денег было мало, и жене не понравилось то место, куда они переехали. Жалованье было хоть и больше прежнего, но жизнь была дороже;27 кроме того, умерло двое детей, и потому семейная жизнь стала еще неприятнее для Ивана Ильича.28

Прастовья Фёдоровна во всех случившихся невзгодах в этом новом месте жительства упрекала мужа. Большинство предметов разговора между мужем и женой, особенно воспитание детей, наводило на вопросы, по которым были воспоминания ссор, и ссоры всякую минуту готовы были разгораться. Оставались только те редкие периоды влюбленности, которые находили на супругов, но продолжались недолго. Это были островки, на которые они приставали на время, но потом опять пускались в море затаённой вражды, выражавшейся в отчуждении друг от друга. Отчуждение это могло бы огорчать Ивана Ильича, если бы он считал, что это не должно так быть, но он теперь уже признавал это положение не только нормальным, но и целью всей деятельности в семье. Цель его состояла в том, чтобы всё больше и больше освобождать себя от этих неприятностей и придать им характер безвредности и приличия; и он достигал этого тем, что он всё меньше и меньше проводил времени с семьёю, а когда был вынужден это делать, то старался обеспечивать своё положение присутствием посторонних лиц.29 Главное же то, что у Ивана Ильича была служба. В служебном мире сосредоточился для него весь интерес жизни. И интерес этот поглощал его.30 Сознание своей власти, возможности погубить всякого человека, которого он захочет погубить, важность, досадная внешность, при его вхождении в суд и встречах с подчиненными, успех свой перед высшими и подчиненными и, главное, мастерство своё ведения дел, которое он чувствовал, – всё это радовало его и вместе с беседами с товарищами, обедами и вистом наполняло его жизнь. Так что вообще жизнь Ивана Ильича продолжала идти так, как он считал, что она должна быть идти: приятна и прилично.

Так прожил он ещё семь лет. Старшему дочери было уже шестнадцать лет, ещё один ребёнок умер, и оставался мальчик-гимназист, предмет раздора. Иван Ильич хотел отдать его в Правоведение, а Прастовь Фёдоровна назло ему отдала в гимназию. Дочь училась дома и росла хорошо, мальчик тоже учился недурно.

26. The image of being surrounded by solid walls is picked up yet again in the use of the word “nepronicaemyj” (‘impenetrable’).
27. Here is a prime example of the ambiguity so often reflected in the style of the narrative: is it simply that the cost of living is more expensive because of moving to a larger town, or is it that because of his promotion Ivan Ilich’s real life has become more dear because it is slipping away ever farther into the false life of his increased official duties.
28. Just as the birth of a child created unpleasantness in Ivan Ilich’s life, so also does their death. Clearly, if these ineluctable evidences of real life—birth and death—are both unpleasant, it must be that Ivan Ilich’s “family life” is somehow false, not real life at all; his family life is rather a phenomenon in which the elements of real life have no appropriate place.
29. Making the point yet again, Tolstoy’s Russian uses the phrase “postoronne lica” (lit. ‘persons ranged along the sides, rather than in the center’) to suggest once more the image of Ivan Ilich surrounded by a protective screen. Ivan Ilich thinks always to fence the offending behavior out, never realizing that he is also, necessarily, fencing himself in.
30. The completeness of his isolation in his official life is mainly missed by Maude’s translation “The whole interest of his life now centered in the official world and that interest absorbed him” [italics mine] but is vividly suggested by Tolstoy’s use of the idiomatic expression “And that interest swallowed him,” [italics mine] which Tolstoy offers as a separate, brief, and powerful sentence.
Так шла жизнь Ивана Ильича в продолжение семнадцати лет со времени женитьбы. Он был уже старым прокурором, отказавшимся от некоторых перемещений, ожидая более желательного места, когда неожиданно случилось одно неприятное обстоятельство, совсем было нарушившее его спокойствие жизни. Иван Ильич ждал места председателя в университете, но Гоппе забежал кем-то вперед и получил это место. Иван Ильич раздражился, стал делать упреки и поссорился с ним и с ближайшим начальством; к нему стали холодны и в следующем назначении его опять обошли.

Это было в 1880 году. Этот год был съёмный тяжёлым в жизни Ивана Ильича. В этом году оказалось, с одной стороны, что жалованья не хватает на жизнь; с другой - что все его забыли и что то, что казалось для него по отношению к нему величайшей, жесточайшей несправедливостью, другим представлялось совсем обыкновенным делом. Даже отец не считал своей обязанностью помогать ему. Он почувствовал, что все покинули его, счита его положение с 3500 жалованья съёмным нормальным и даже счастливым. Он один знал, что с сознанием тех несправедливостей, которые были сделаны ему, и с ве́чным пилением жены, и с долгами, которые он стал делать, живя сверх средств, – он один знал, что его положение далеко не нормально.

Летом этого года для облегчения средств он взял отпуск и поехал прожить с женой лето в деревне у брата Прасковьи Фёдоровны.

В деревне, без службы Иван Ильич в первый раз почувствовал не только скуку, но тоску невыносимую, и решил, что так жить нельзя и необходимо принять какие-нибудь решительные меры.

Проведя бессонную ночь, которую всю Иван Ильич проходил по террасе, он решил ехать в Петербург хлопотать и, чтобы наказать их, тех, которые не умели оценить его, перейти в другое министерство.

На другой день, несмотря на все отговоры жены и шурина, он поехал в Петербург.

1. The unpleasant circumstance mentioned here is Ivan Ilich’s being passed over for an expected promotion. Since the event is “unpleasant” it has no place in Ivan Ilich’s “pleasant” life and strikes him, a few lines later, as being most unjust. This unpleasant occurrence may be seen as one of several warnings which Ivan Ilich receives in the story that his “pleasant” and “seemly” and “well-ordered” life is at odds with the real life which surrounds it. In short, Ivan Ilich’s skillfully arranged pleasant life may be just as artificial as his clever one-page summaries of the complex matters that come before him in court. Real life has intervened once before, in Praskovya Fyodorovna’s changed behavior when pregnant, and now even his official life (into which he had fled to escape Praskovya Fyodorovna’s bad behavior) is disrupted by this failure to provide him with the promotion that he believes he has earned. As before, so now, Ivan Ilich will react to this unpleasantness by attempting to isolate himself from it, by leaving it behind and quitting his post in the Ministry of Justice. On this occasion, however, he will be saved by a lucky change in the higher administration of his department. That these disruptions (later referred to as “stumbles”) in the pleasant flow of his life may be seen as warnings seems rather clear from a passage some paragraphs later in which Ivan Ilich thinks that “it was impossible to go on living this way.” The Russian text has the phrase “так жить нельзя” which may be understood to mean either that living so is “not possible” or “not permitted.” The final indication that Ivan Ilich’s life works neither as he imagines it nor as he would prefer it to work is the onset of his illness, which arises from a “stumble” from a step-stool. In the end it is his sickness which finally convinces him that his life, as he had arranged it and lived it, was false and artificial; as Tolstoy writes, his life was not “the real thing.”
Он ехал за одним; выпросить место в пять тысяч жалованья. Он уже не держался никакого министерства, направления или рода деятельности. Ему нужно только было место, место с пятью тысячами, по администрации, по банкам, по желёным дорогам, по учреждениям императрицы Марии, даже таможни, но непременно пять тысяч и непременно выйти из министерства, где не умеют оценить его.

И вот эта поездка Ивана Ильича увенчалась удивительным, неожиданным успехом. В Курск подсёл в первый класс Ф. С. Ильин, знакомый, и сообщил свежую телеграмму, полученную курским губернатором, что в министерстве произойдет на днях переворот: на место Петра Ивановича назначают Ивана Семёновича.

Предполагаемый переворот, кроме своего значения для России, имел особенное значение для Ивана Ильича. тем, что он, выдвигая новое лицо, Петра Петровича и, очевидно, его друга Захара Ивановича, был в высшей степени благоприятен для Ивана Ильича. Захар Иванович был това́рищ и друг Ивану Ильичу.

В Москве известие подтвердилось. А приехал в Петербург, Иван Ильич нашёл Захара Ивановича и получил обещание вёрного места в своём прежнем министерстве юстиции.

Через недёло он телеграфировал жене:

“Захар место Миллера при первом докладе получай назначение”.

Иван Ильич благодаря этой перемене лиц неожиданно получил в своем прежнем министерстве такое назначение, в котором он стал на две степени выше своих товарищей: пять тысяч жалованья и подъёмных три тысячи пятьсот. Вся досада на прежних врагов своих и на всё министерство была забыта, и Иван Ильич был совсем счастлив.

Иван Ильич вернулся в деревню весёлый, довольный, каким он давно не был. Прасковья Фёдоровна тоже повеселела, и между ними заключилось перемирие. Иван Ильич рассказывал о том, как его все чествовали в Петербурге, как все те, которые были его врагами, были посрамлены и подчили теперь перед ним, как ему завидуют за его положение, в особенности о том, как все его сильно любили в Петербурге. Прасковья Фёдоровна выслушивала это и делала вид, что она верит этому, и не противоречила ни в чем, а только делала планы нового устройства жизни в том городе, куда они переезжали. И Иван Ильич с радостью видел, что эти планы были его плани, что они сходятся и что оль его запнувшаяся жизнь приобретает настоящий, свойственный ей, характер веселой приятности и прилипия.

Иван Ильич приехал на короткое время. 10-го сентября ему надо было принимать должность и, кроме того, нужно было время устроиться на новом месте, перевезти всё из провинции, прикупить, приказать, ещё многое; одним словом, устроиться так, как это решено было в его уме, и почти что точно так же, как это решено было и в душу Прасковьи Фёдоровны.

И теперь, когда всё устроилось так удачно, и когда они сходились с женой в цели и, кроме того, мало жили вместе, они так дружно сошлись, как не сходились с первых лет женатой своей жизни. Иван Ильич думал увезти семью тотчас же, но настойчивые сестры и зять, вдруг сделавшияся особенно любезными и родственными к Ивану Ильичу и его семье, сделали то, что Иван Ильич уехал один.

2. We may wonder if there is any significance to the fact that the text specifies that all of this was decided in the mind of Ivan llich and in the soul of Praskovya Fyodorovna. Perhaps there is a suggestion that Ivan llich and his wife are unable to distinguish between the products of the mind and of the soul.

3. The emphatic repetition in this paragraph of the forms of the verb skidt’sja/sojtis’ (“to come together, to converge”) seems to foreground the idea that Ivan llich’s unexpected promotion, portrayed as a recovery from an unexpected and inappropriate stumble, also restores a welcome sense of unity and togetherness in Ivan llich and Praskovya Fyodorovna which has been absent since the very
first years of their married life. Not only is the happiness and propriety of their life restored, but also the emotional bond and sense of mutuality between them. And yet this apparent sense of the full repair of Ivan Ilich's life is undercut in at least two ways: the feeling of mutuality and togetherness owes at least some of its strength to the fact that “they lived together very little,” and, in the end, Ivan Ilich's life has not been substantively changed or mended. He has gotten a higher salary and a promotion in prestige, and this connects directly with the other various metaphors of screening and enclosure which play so prominent a role in the artistic rhetoric of the novel. It is also important to note that the family is not actually together. But the hoped for return of togetherness and emotional convergence proves to be an illusion which can be maintained only so long as one can sustain the feeling of mutuality and togetherness.

4. Pasha is the diminutive form of Praskova (Ivan Ilich's wife) and Lizanka of Elizaveta (their daughter).

5. Just as metaphors in the text often possess literal significance, so actual occurrences (here, falling off a ladder) often suggest metaphorical associations (the ladder of success, moving up the ladder, rising another rung on the ladder) and may suggest a hidden cause for the actual event. In this case the cause of Ivan Ilich's fall is merely his concern with the proper hanging of the curtains, but the step-ladder indicates a connection to his life in the service and suggests that it is not merely the curtains which precipitate his fall, his injury, and eventually his illness and death, but his entire all-consuming life in the service itself. It is also important to note that what he is attempting to do on the step-ladder is to arrange the curtains properly, and this connects directly with the other various metaphors of screening and enclosure which play so prominent a role in the artistic rhetoric of the novel.

6. An example of the dark humor of the narrative. In fact, Ivan Ilich's fall from the step-ladder and the illness which followed would seem to have taken at least 15 years off of his expected span of life. James Rice discusses humor in the novel at length in “Comic Devices in 'The Death of Ivan Il'ich,'” Slavic and East European Journal, vol. 47, no. 1 (Spring 2003), 77-95.
sposa its real life. We understand the text to be referring to the distinction between Ivan Ilich’s life at home and his life at the office, but

- Ivan Ilich, prowédsy útro in sudë, vovravštális to obédu, and pérvoe vremë расположение его духа было хорошо, хотя и страдало немного именно от помещения. (Всéкое пятно на скáтерти, на штофе, оборванный снурок гардины раздражало его: он столько трудно положил на устройство, что ему бóльно было всëкое разрушение.)

8. One thinks here of the similarity between the blemishes on the furnishings, which concern Ivan Ilich so much, and the blemish on himself, the bruise on his side, which he tries to disregard.

9. The use of the word “smëshivat’” here is suggestive; its basic meaning of “belief” fits the surface sense of the statement, but its other associations—“faith,” “religion”—might indicate that Ivan Ilich’s deep concern with the material objects surrounding him is to him a kind of basic faith or creed.

10. Even at moments when Ivan Ilich’s life has in fact become the pleasant and easy thing he wants it to be we are reminded that this life is not his real life. We understand the text to be referring to the distinction between Ivan Ilich’s life at home and his life at the office, but
силу всегда, когда ему понадобится, опять выделить одно служебное и откинуть человеческое. Дело в том, что у Ивана Ильича не только легко, приятно и прилично, но даже виртуозно. В промежутки он курил, пил чай, беседовал не только об политике, немножко об общих делах, немножко о картах и больше всего о назначениях. И усталый, но с чувством виртуоза, отчётливо отделявшего свое погружение, одну из пёрых скрипок в оркестре, возвращался домой. Дома дочь с матерью куда-нибудь ездили или у них был кото- ный-нибудь; сын был в гимназии, готовил уроки с репетиторами и учился исправно тому, чему учат в гимназии. Всё было хорошо. После обеда, если не было гостей, Иван Ильич читал иногда книгу, про которую много говорят, и вечером садился за дело, то есть читал бумаги, справлялся с законами, - сличал показания и подводил под законы. Ему это было ни скучно, ни весело. Скучно было, когда можно было играть в винт.11 но если не было вinta - то это было всетаки лучше, чем сидеть одному или с женой. Удовольствия же Ивана Ильича были обеды маленькие, на которые он звал важных по светскому положению дам и мужчин, и такое времяпровождение с ними, которое было бы похоже на обыкновенное препровождение времени таких людей, так же как гостинная его была похожа на все гостинные.

Один раз у них был даже вечер, танцевали. И Ивану Ильичу было весело, и всё было хорошо, только вышла большая ссора с женой из-за тортов и конфет: у Прасковьи Фёдоровны был свой план, а Иван Ильич настоял на том, чтобы взять всё у дорогого кондитера, и взял много тортов, и ссора была за то, что торты остались, а счет кондитера был в сорок пять рублей. Ссора была большая и неприятная, так что Прасковья Фёдоровна сказала ему, "Дурак, кисляк". А он схватил себя за голову и в сердцах что-то упомянул о разводе. Но санный вечер был весёлый. Было лучшее общество, и Иван Ильич танцевал с княгинею Труфоновой, сестрою той, которая известна учреждением общества "Унеси ты моё горе".12

Радости служебные были радости самолюбия; радости общественные были радости тщеславия; но настоящие радости Ивана Ильича были радости игры в винт.13 Он признавался, что после всего, после каких бы то ни было событий, нерадостных в его жизни, радость, которая, как свеча, горела перед всеми другими, — это сесть с хорошими игроками и некрикунами-партнёрами в винт, и непременно вчетвером (впятером уж очень бьло выходить, хотя и притворяешься, что я очень люблю), и вести умную, серьёзную игру (когда карты идут), потом поужинать и выпить стакан вина. А спать после винта, особенно

since we know that his home life is not less artificial than his office life we are struck by this oblique reminder that there is, beyond both of these artificial, surrogate lives, a real life which would seem to be uniformly ignored wherever he is.

11. Vint is a card-game, similar to both bridge and whist, and it is sometimes referred to as Russian whist. Vint means a “screw” in Russian, and the name is given to the game because the four players, each in turn, round and round, propose, bid and overbid each other until one, having bid higher than the others care to follow, makes the trump, and his vis-a-vis plays as his partner. (Source: Wikipedia)

12. The name of a charitable society, fictional, but characteristic of the time.

13. It would be hard to miss the importance of the image of playing cards to the novel, so insistent is Tolstoy’s repetition of it. Ivan Ilich’s love affair with the game of vint provides a virtual index of the history of his life. We first hear of it as a new and more dignified social activity gradually displacing dancing and other more youthful pursuits for the increasingly successful official following his early promotions. Later it becomes a favorite activity, and here it is said to be the real joy of his life. In following chapters the increasing physical distress of his illness causes him to be ever more seriously “off his game,” culminating (in Chapter Four) in his spoiling an entire evening of cards with his resentment at his own egregious misplaying of a hand. By Chapter Six card playing has disappeared altogether along with virtually all of Ivan Ilich’s other social activities. Thus, vint is not only the “real joy” of his life but a symbol of that life itself, and it is instructive to consider the elements of the image of the game. It is played by partners who sit opposite and never touch one another (unlike dancing, the activity it replaced in Ivan Ilich’s earlier life); it is played according to strict rules of speaking (the bidding must consist only of pre-determined phrases, many of which are referred to as “conventions”) and play (taking turns, correctness of play, close attention to the game to prevent embarrassing blunders). In short, vint is a vivid example of rule-bound, conventional, controlled, and highly decorous activity. As such, it mirrors very closely Ivan Ilich’s ideal for his own life, an ideal which he tries to realize in the furnishing and arrangement of the apartment in which he lives. We have seen how it was that effort that led to his fall and the injury which precipitated the onset of his illness. The game, the furnishings, the life of the office, the company he keeps are Ivan Ilich’s life—and from them emerges illness and death. Again, that which seems to be one thing is in fact its opposite; Ivan Ilich’s life is actually his death.
когда́ в ма́леньком вы́игрыше (большо́й - неприя́тно), Ива́н Ильи́ч ложи́лся в осо́бенно хоро́шем расположе́нии ду́ха. 14

Так они́ жи́ли. Круг общества составля́лся у них са́мый лу́чший, е́здили и ва́жные лю́ди, и молоды́е лю́ди.

Во взгля́де на круг сво́их знако́мых муж, жена́ и дочь бы́ли совершен но согла́сны и, не сгова́риваясь, одинак ово оттира́ли от себё и освобожда́лись от всъких ра́зных приятелей и ро́дственников, зама́рашек, кото́рые разлета́лись к ним с нёжностями в гости́ную с япо́нскими блю́дами по стенам. Ско́ро э́ти друзья́-зама́рашки переста́ли разлета́ться, и у Голови́ных оста́лось общество одно́ са́мое лучшее. Молоды́е лю́ди уха́живали за Лизанькой, и Петри́щев, сын Дмитри́я Ива́новича Петри́щева и еди́нственный насле́дник его́ состояния, суде́бный сле́дователь, стал уха́живать за Лизой, так что Ива́н Ильи́ч уже́ погово́ряв об э́том с Праско́вьей Фёдоровной: не свести́ ли их кататься на тро́йках и́ли устро́ить спекта́кль. Так они́ жи́ли. И всё шло так, не изменя́ясь, и всё было́ очень хорошо́. 15

14. The sentence as a whole means: "After vint, and especially after a narrow victory (a large margin of victory is unpleasant), Ivan Ilich would lie down to sleep in a particularly good mood." But the manner in which the sentence is arranged conveys an alternate, and more somber, impression. By dividing the phrase "lozhilsja spat'" ("(he) lay down to sleep") into two parts and reversing the order of the words Tolstoy produces a significant association with the final phrase of the preceding sentence, thus: "to drink a glass of wine. And to sleep after vint . . ." There is a play on words here as well: in Russian "wine" is "vino," matching closely enough with "vint" as to suggest that "vint" is interchangeable with "vino," a drug, a soporific, and that the result of each of them is unconsciousness, oblivion, sleep. Tolstoy elaborates his attitude toward alcohol as a means of hiding from imbibers the awfulness of their empty lives in an essay written not long after "Death of Ivan Ilich" called "Why Do People Stupefy Themselves?"

15. This is the starting point of what is perhaps the most direct verbal reminder that things are not what they appear to be. It begins here at the end of chapter three and recurs throughout the final four chapters of the novel. Maude renders the last paragraph of chapter three as "So (Russ. "tak") they lived. And everything went along so (Russ. "tak")." Ivan Ilich's life is identified as "just so." In the last four chapters of the novel the thought that, strange as it seems, his life had been lived "wrongly" (as Maude translates it) occurs several times to Ivan Ilich. An exact translation of these passages would be that "he lived not so (Russ. "ne tak");" with the result that his life, which had been thought to be "just so" turns out to have been its binary opposite ("not just so") instead, that in fact his "life" was really a form or intimation of death.
Все были здоровы. Нельзя было назвать нездоровьем то, что Иван Ильич говорил иногда, что у него странный вкус во рту и что-то неловко в левой стороне живота.

Но случилось, что неловкость эта стала увеличиваться и переходить не в боль ещё, но в сознание тяжести постоянной в боку и в дурное расположение духа. Дурное расположение духа это, всё усиливаясь и усиливаясь, стало портить установившуюся было в семействе Головыных приятность лёгкой и приличной жизни. Муж с женой стали чаще и чаще ссориться, и скоро отпала лёгкость и приятность, и с трудом удерживалось одно приличие. Сцены опять стали чаще. Опять остались одни островки, и тех мало, на которых муж с женой могли ходить без взрыва.

И Прасковья Фёдоровна теперь не без основания говорила, что у её мужа тяжёлый характер. С свойственной ей привычкой преувеличивать она говорила, что всегда, и был такой ужасный характер, что надо было сделать, чтобы переносить это двадцать лет. Пряма была то, что ссоры теперь начинались от нёго. Начинались ужасные аханья всегда перед съездом обедом и часто, именно когда он начинал есть, за супом. То он замечал, что что-нибудь из посуды испорчено, то кушанье не такое, то сын положил локоть на стол, то причёска дочери. И во всем он обвинял Прасковью Фёдоровну. Прасковья Фёдоровна сначала возражала и говорила ему неприятности, но он раза два во время начала обеда приходил в такое бешенство, что она поняла, что это болезненное состояние, которое вызывается в нём принятием пищи, и смиряла себя. Уже не возражала, а только торопила обедать. Смирение свое Прасковья Фёдоровна поставила себе в величайшую заслугу. Решив, что муж ее имеет ужасный характер и сделал несчастье её жизни, она стала жалеть себя. И чем больше она жалела себя, тем больше ненавидела мужа. Она стала желать, чтоб он умер, но не могла этого желать, потому что тогда не было бы жалованья. И это ещё более раздражало её против него. Она считала себя страшно несчастной именно тем, что даже смерть...

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1. Tolstoy uses the Russian equivalent of “mood” (“raspolozhenie duxa,” lit., “disposition of spirit”) to indicate that a physical symptom may be a sign of spiritual distress. In this way it is suggested that Ivan llich's physical illness is actually a symbol of his spiritual distress, the "consciousness" of which is only now, once his ideal of life has finally been reached, beginning to make itself known to him.

2. The first few paragraphs of chapter four present Ivan llich as experiencing symptoms very similar to those exhibited by Praskovya Fyodorovna when she was pregnant: the well-known "morning sickness" in pregnancy is reflected in Ivan llich's difficulties with taking food and the strange taste in his mouth; the increasing sense of pressure and weight in the abdomen is also common to both experiences. Most striking of all is the common behavior patterns of the two, the sudden outbursts, the demands, and the vulgar scenes. As though to point up these similarities the text reports that Praskovya Fyodorovna asserts, with her usual exaggeration, that Ivan llich had always had a "terrible character," and that it had needed all her good nature to put up with it for twenty years (i.e., since the time of her first pregnancy). The text continues by noting that "what was true was that now their quarrels were started by him" (thereby suggesting a comparison with those quarrels of twenty years before which were started by her). In this way the onset of Ivan llich's illness, which culminates in his death, is linked to the onset of pregnancy, which culminates in the birth of new life.
It reminds us of the indications in Chapter One that it would be the reader’s role to judge of the life of Ivan Ilich. Now been realized. Note that Ivan Ilich has now changed from a patient to a man on trial as the comparison between the doctor’s office and the court has the simultaneous co-existence of these two patterns of organization.

In one sense, then, the novel has two levels of concern. On one level we are offered the story of Ivan Ilich’s progress from health to illness to death; on another level we are dealing with a concern concerned about the life of their patient, but only about the identification of his illness. The distinction between health and illness now asserts itself at the expense of the distinction between life and death. In one sense, then, the novel has two levels of concern.

The Russian text has it that “it was not a question about the life of Ivan Ilich.” The suggestion seems to be that the doctors are not the conclusion that Ivan Ilich’s life has been just as much a sham and just as disconnected from the real life and real concerns of the accused person.” The text is so emphatic and unambiguous on this point that the reader must conclude that it is important to come to another line later we read: “It was all just as it was in the law courts. The doctor put on just the same air towards him as he himself put on towards an

He moved from health to illness to death; on another level we are dealing with a concern concerned about the life of their patient, but only about the identification of his illness. The distinction between health and illness now asserts itself at the expense of the distinction between life and death. In one sense, then, the novel has two levels of concern. On one level we are offered the story of Ivan Ilich’s progress from health to illness to death; on another level we are dealing with a concern about the proper distinction between life and death. The first, and more superficial, level invites a three-part structuring of the narrative, the other a two-part structuring. It is one of the compositional distinctions of The Death of Ivan Ilich that Tolstoy has enabled the simultaneous co-existence of these two patterns of organization.

Note that Ivan Ilich has now changed from a patient to a man on trial as the comparison between the doctor’s office and the court has now been realized. The Russian word “podsudimyj” (“defendant; an accused”) etymologically means “subject to judgement”; this reminds us of the indications in Chapter One that it would be the reader’s role to judge of the life of Ivan Ilich.

3. This is the first of several phrases and incidents in the novel that can be understood as allusions to the story of the death by crucifixion of Jesus as reported in the New Testament. This set of motifs in the story is discussed by various scholars, including the present author (“A Note on the Miracle Motifs in the Later Works of Lev Tolstoi.” In The Supernatural in Slavic and Baltic Literatures: Essays in Honor of Victor Terras, 191-99. Columbus, Ohio: Slavica Publishers, 1988). The presence of these allusions in the text is challenging, because the miracle of the Resurrection—people are saved by the death and resurrection of Jesus—was explicitly denied by Tolstoy in his study of the Gospels (e.g., in The Gospel in Brief, A Harmonization and Translation of the Four Gospels, and What I Believe). I will indicate these allusions as such as the text progresses.

4. Note the explicit comparison which the text offers between the cold and impersonal treatment Ivan Ilich receives from the doctors and allusions as such as the text progresses.
Но он ничего не сказал, а встал, положил деньги на стол и, вздохнув, сказал:
– Мы, больные, вероятно, часто делаем вам неуместные вопросы, – сказал он. – Вообще, это опасная болезнь или нет?..

Доктор строго взглянул на него одним глазом через очки, как будто говоря: подсудимый, если вы не будете оставаться в пределах ставимых вам вопросов, я буду принужден сделать распоряжение об удалении вас из зала заседания.
– Я уже сказал вам то, что считаю нуцким и удобным, – сказал доктор. – Дальнейшее покажет исследование.
– И доктор поклонился.

Иван Ильич вышел медленно, уныло сел в сани и поехал домой. Всю дорогу он не переставая перебирал всё, что говорил доктор, стараясь все эти запутанные, нейные научные слова перевести на простой язык и прочесть в них ответ на вопрос: плохо ли плохо мне, или ещё ничего? И ему казалось, что смысл всего сказанного доктором был тот, что очень плохо. Всё грустно показалось Ивану Ильичу на улицах. Извозчики были грустны, дома грустны, прохожие, лавки грустны. Боль же эта, глухая, ноющая боль, ни на секунду не переставая, казалось, в связи с нейными речами доктора получала другое, более серьёзное значение. Иван Ильич с новым тяжёлым чувством теперь прислушивался к ней.

Он приехал домой и стал рассказывать жене. Жена выслушала, но в середине рассказа ей волна дочь в шляпе: Она собирается с матерью ехать. Она с усилием присела послушать эту скуку, но долго не выдержала, и мать не дослушала.
– Ну, я очень рада, – сказала жена, – так теперь ты, смотри же, принимай аккуратно лекарство. Дай рецепт, я пошлю Герасима в аптеку.
– И она пошла одеваться.

Он не переводил дыхания, пока она была в комнате, и тяжело вздохнул, когда она вышла.
– Ну что ж, – сказал он. – Может быть, и точно ничего ещё...

Он стал принимать лекарства, исполнять предписания доктора, которые изменились по случаю исследования мочи. Но тут как раз так случилось, что в этом исследовании и в том, что должно было последовать за ним, вышла какая-то путаница. До самого доктора нельзя было добраться, а выходило, что делалось не то, что говорил ему доктор. Или он забыл, или соврал, или скрывал от него что-нибудь.

Но Иван Ильич всётаки точно стал исполнять предписания и в исполнении этом нашёл утешение на первое время.

7. The extensive description of Ivan Ilich's relationship with his doctor makes it clear that the doctor is quite unequal both to the treatment of his patient's illness and to the meeting of his emotional needs. The text here states that Ivan Ilich “still” obeyed the doctor's instructions, reminding us of the confusion and apparent incompetence of the doctor and his office described in the preceding paragraph. Even so, Ivan Ilich attempts to continue to follow doctor's orders, apparently hoping that by going through the “proper channels” the desired result of full recovery might be assured. Thus, his first attempts to come to grips with his illness resemble the efforts that he made within the system to seek redress when he was, unfairly as he thought, passed over for promotion. On that occasion following the approved procedure had availed him not at all; his recovery of his appropriate (in his view) position in the service came about almost miraculously, through an entirely unexpected and, from Ivan Ilich's point of view, extremely fortunate change in the leadership of the ministry. So here in dealing with his illness the prescribed, approved measures will fail to produce recovery; before the end, Ivan Ilich will consider going to a religious shrine to seek a miraculous cure. Even this second major failure of the artificial system of life to which Ivan Ilich is dedicated, however, fails to lead him at once to the obvious conclusion--that his pleasant, seemly, official life is not a real life and offers no help for or protection from the vicissitudes of that real life. At this point Ivan Ilich can still derive some comfort from the thought that he is doing what he is supposed to do and still hoping that this seemly action within the system will produce the desired results.
Главным занятием Ивана Ильича со времени посещения доктора стало точное исполнение предписанных доктора относительно гигиены и принимания лекарств и прислушиваться к своей боли, ко всем своим отправлениям организма. Главными интересами Ивана Ильича стали людские болезни и людское здоровье. Когда при нём говорили о больных, об умерших, о выздоровевших, особенно о такой болезни, которая походила на его, он, стараясь скрыть своё волнение, прислушивался, расспрашивал и делал применение к своей болезни.

Боль не уменьшалась; но Иван Ильич делал над собой усилия, чтобы заставлять себя думать, что ему лучше. И он мог обманывать себя, пока ничего не волновало его. 8 Но как только случалась неприятность с женой, неудача в службе, дурные карты в винт, так сейчас он чувствовал всю силу своей болезни; 9 бывало, он переносил эти неудачи, ожидая, что вот-вот исправлю плохое, поборю, дождусь успеха, большого шлема, 10 теперь же всякая неудача подкашивала его и ввергал в отчаяние. Он говорил себе: вот толькo что я стал поправляться и лекарство начинало уже действовать, и вот это проклятое несчастье или неприятность... И он злился на несчастье или на людей, дёлавших ему неприятность и убивающих его, и чувствовал, как эта злоба убивает его; но не мог воздержаться от неё. 11 Казалось бы, ему должно бы было быть ясно, что это озлобление его на обстоятельства и людей усилит его болезнь и что поэтому ему надо не обращать внимания на неприятные случайности; но он делал совершенно обратное рассуждение: он говорил, что ему нужно спокойствие, следили за всем, что нарушало это спокойствие, и при всяком малейшем нарушении приходил в раздражение. Ухудшало его положение то, что он читал медицинские книги и совётовался с докторами. Ухудшение шло так равномерно, что он мог себя обманывать, сравнивая один день с другим, - разницы было мало. Но когда он совётовался с докторами, тогда ему казалось, что идёт к худшему и очень быстро даже. И несмотря на это, он постоянно совётовался с докторами.

В этот месяц он побывал у другого знаменитого; другая знаменитость сказала почти то же, что и пérвая, но иначе поставила вопросы. И совèт с этой знаменитостью только усугубил сомнение и страх Ивана Ильича. Приятель его приятеля - доктор очень хороший - тот ещё совсем иначе определил болезнь и, несмотря на то, что обещал выздоровление, своими вопросами и предположениями ещё больше спутал Ивана Ильича и усилил его сомнение. Гомеопат - ещё иначе определил болезнь и дал лекарство, и Иван Ильич, тайно от всех, принимал его с недёлю. Но после недёли не почувствовал облегчения и потерял довёрие и к прèжним лечению и к этому, пришёл в ещё более уныние. Раз знакома дама рассказывала про исцеление иконами. Иван Ильич застал себя на том, что он внимательно прислушивался и поверял действительность факта. Этот случай испугал его. "Неужели я так умственно ослабел?" - сказал он себе.

8. Thus, it is suggested that all of his efforts to recover by taking approved steps within the limits of the life which he has developed for himself are just so much self-deception, and the implication of this would naturally be that his life as a whole is just as much a self-deception as his attempts to follow doctor’s orders.

9. From this passage one might well infer a connection between Ivan Ilich's illness and the episodes of Praskovya Fyodorovna's first pregnancy and his being passed over for promotion at work. All three have in common that they reveal that Ivan Ilich's understanding and expectations of life are entirely faulty and not congruent with life as it actually is. Life is actually not analogous to a game of cards, but Ivan Ilich seems quite unable to understand this!

10. Ivan Ilich’s underlying belief that vint is a perfect analogue of life is made virtually explicit here. This passage emphasizes yet again the point that the card game, the symbol of Ivan Ilich's life as he has lived it so pleasantly until now, is ridiculously incommensurate with life as it actually is. The further implication is that the pain and the putrid taste in his mouth, the symptoms of his disease, are functioning as symbols of the call away from the false life of the card game and, by implication, toward the true life. In this sense, Ivan Ilich's illness brings him into life as much as it leads him out of it. This apparent confusion can only be resolved by supposing that the text is suggesting that there are two forms of life—one false and the other true. The card game stands for that false life of pleasant superficiality and the other a true life where suffering and illness are real and personal, but so also, potentially, are joy and well-being.

11. Here is one of the first signs that Ivan Ilich is at some level aware of the idea that he may be not just sick, but dying. His unanswered question for the doctor, "Is my condition dangerous," hinted at this, but here he feels that something is killing him, and that "something" is the imperfection of his life as he understands it and also his own unrestrainable anger at those imperfections. In this way the text introduces the first subtle suggestion that what is killing him is the life he leads.
-- Pustiyakh! Vse vzdor, ne nadno poddavatysya mniotelnosti, a, izbrav onogo vrah, strogo dержаться ego lecheniya. Tak i buda delaty. Teperь koncheno. 12 Ne buda dumать i do leta strogo budu ispolnyat lechenie. A tam vidno budet. Teperь konce tim koliebaniyam!.. Legko bilo sказать esto, no nevozmogno ispolnit. Boy v bokuy vse tomila, vse kak byudo usilivalsya, stanyovalas pozostoyannoy, vosk vo rtu stanyalas vse strannee, emu kazalo, cto palcho chemo otvetitelnymy u nego izo rta, i appetit i sily vse slabely. 13 Nelya bylo sobya obmanivat': cto-to strashnoe, novoe i takoe znachitel'noe, cto znachitel'nee nikogo v zhizni bylo c Ivano Ilychom, sovremalos v nem. 14 I on odin znal pro esto, vse же okruzhaющие ne ponimali ili ne хотели ponimat' i dumali, cto vsya na svete ideet po-pryelyemuyu. Esto-to bol'še vseho m'chuilo Ivana Ilycha. Domashnie - glavnoe jena i docha, kotorye byli v samom razgare vyjezdov, - on videl,ничего не понимали, досадовали на то, что он такой невесёлый и требовательный, как будто он был виноват в этом. Vtory oni i staralisya skryvat' esto, on videl, chto on im pomexha, no cto jena vyworkala sobo izvestnoe otnoeshenie k ego boldeni i dержалась ego nezavisimo ot togo, chto on говорил i delal. Otnoeshenie esto bylo takoe:

-- Vse знаете, - говорила ona znakomyim, - Ivann Ilyich ne moget, kak vse dobrei ludi, strogo ispolnyat predpisannoe lechenie. Nyanche on primet kampil i kushat', chto veleno, i vobremia lyjet; Zaavtra vdrug, else ya prosmyotr', zabude prinjat', kushat' ostretiny (a emu ne veleno), da i zasidit'sya za vintom do chasa.

-- Nu, kogda же? - ska'jet Ivan Ilyich c do'sadoy. -- Odin raz u Petra Ivanovicha.

-- A vcher' s Sh'ebekom.

-- Vs'e равno я не мог spat' oт bol'i...

-- Da tam u'che otchego by to ni bylo, tol'ko tak ty nikogda ne vy'zdrorovevayesh i m'uchayesh nas.

Vne'zhнее, vy'ska'zivаемое drugim i emu samomu, ot'noeshenie Praskovy F'edorovny bylo takoe k boldeni m'uda, chto v boldeni etoi vinnovat' Ivan Ilyich i vse boldeni eta est' novaya nepriyatnost, kotoruyu on delayet jenе. Ivan Ilyich chu'vstvoval, chto esto vyxodilo u ne' nevol'no, no ot etogo emu ne le'che bylo.

V sud'e Ivan Ilyich zamech'al ili d'uma, chto zamchayet', to же strannoe k sobo ot'noeshenie—to emu kazalo, cto k nemu prigl'adyvayut'sya, kak k cheloveku, ime'yuemu skoro opростat' mesto; to vdrug ego' priyati

12. Ivan Ilich means to say that his shilly-shallying over which of the various treatments to follow has come to an end and that he is resolved to stick faithfully to one treatment in order to treat his illness. In other words, he has decided that he is only ill and that the treatment, if followed strictly, will make him well. And yet this thought, "Now it is finished," is phrased so as to foreshadow exactly the words that Ivan Ilich, at the moment of his death in Chapter Twelve, will hear spoken above him: "It is finished." The phrasing suggests that perhaps Ivan Ilich is at this point not just sick, but in fact already as good as dead. We remember his feeling that the little upsets of his life at home and work were "killing" him. This suggestion that Ivan Ilich is already as good as dead, even though he is still alive, will be offered again and again in the next couple of chapters and may well lead to the conclusion that Ivan Ilich's "life" is in fact really a form of death.

13. Ivan Ilich means, of course that he will spend no more time considering which of the various treatments to follow. But the reader is becoming more and more familiar with the device of suggestive contrast between the superficial, conventional, contextualized meaning of a statement and its more pointed underlying significance. Here that underlying meaning is "I will stop thinking"; that is, Ivan Ilich resolves to deal with his troubles by abandoning the only mechanism which has any chance of alerting him to the fact that his real illness is that his life, as he has lived it, is no more genuine and substantial than a game of cards. Fortunately for him, Ivan Ilich proves unable to stop thinking. The final four chapters of the novel, in fact, are mainly an extended record of his thoughts, and it is that persistent thinking which finally leads to the resolution of "that which had been besetting him from all sides."

14. It has been noted that references to the passion of Jesus are to be found in this text. This paragraph has two of them: the Russian words "sovershalos'" and "koncheno" are the equivalents to the words of Jesus from the cross which English-language Bibles translate as "It is finished" (John 19:30). "Sovershalos'" is the word established for this use in the Russian Orthodox Church in Tolstoy's time; "koncheno" is the word used by Tolstoy in his own translation (in the early 1880s) of the Gospels in "Soedinenie i perevod chetyrex evangeliy" ("Harmonization and Translation of the Four Gospels")
начинали дружески подшучивать над его мниельностью, как будто то, что-то ужасное и страшное, неслыханное, что завелося в нём и не переставало сосет его и неудержимо влечёт куда-то, есть санный приятный предмёт для шутки. Особенно Шварц своей игривостью, жизненностью и комильфотностью, напоминавшими Ивану Ильичу его самого за десять лет назад, раздражал его. 

Приходили друзья составить партию, садились. Сдавали, разминавшие ночные карты, складывались бубны к бубнам, их семь. Партнер сказал--без козырей, и поддержал две бубны. Чего ж ещё? Весело, бодро должно быть - шлем. И вдруг Иван Ильич чувствует эту сосущую боль, этот вкус во рту, и ему что-то дикое представляется в том, что он при этом может радоваться шлему.

Он глядит на Михаила Михайловича, партнера, как он бьёт по столу сангвинической рукой и учтиво и снисходительно удерживается от захватывания взяток, а подвигает их к Ивану Ильичу, чтобы доставить ему удовольствие собирать их, не утруждая себя, не протягивая далеко руку. "Что ж он думает, что я так слаб, что не могу протянуть далеко руку", - думает Иван Ильич, забывает козыреи и козыряет лишний раз по своим и проигрывает шлем без трёх, и что ужаснее всего - это то, что он видит, как страдает Михаил Михайлович, а ему всё равно.

И ужасно думать, отчего ему всё равно. Все видают, что ему тяжело, и говорят ему: "Мы можем прекратить, если вы устали. Вы отдыхите". Отдохнёт? Нет, он нисколько не устал, они дойгрывают роббер. Все мрачны и молчаливы. Иван Ильич чувствует, что он напустил на них эту мрачность и не может ее рассеять. Они угождают и разъезжаются, и Иван Ильич остаётся один с сознанием того, что его жизнь отравлена для него и отравляет жизнь других и что отрава эта не ослабевает, а всё больше и больше проникает всё существо его.

И с сознанием этим, да ещё с болью физической, да ещё с ужасом пошло ложиться в постель и часто не спать от боли большую часть ночи. А наутро надо было опять вставать, оевеваться, идти в суд, говорить, писать, а если и не ехать, дома быть с тёми же двадцатью четырьмя часами в сутках, из которых каждый был мучением. И жить так на краю погибели надо было одному, без одного человечка, который бы понял и пожалел его.

15. It is noteworthy that it is Schwartz—the person who is most vibrantly alive—is most irritating to Ivan Ilich. A bit later we will find that another character—the servant Gerasim—possesses this same “aliveness,” as shown by his perfect teeth, his unfailing energy, and his springy step, and yet Gerasim has quite the opposite effect on Ivan Ilich. He is comforted by Gerasim, and only by Gerasim, rather than irritated by him. We wonder: what is the difference between Schwartz’s “aliveness” and Gerasim’s. Perhaps it is that Schwartz’s life is “playful” (lit., like a game) and comme il faut (conventional, artificial) and therefore unreal, an illusion, just as Ivan Ilich’s life had always been “ten years ago,” before he got sick. The logic of this is oblique and deeply buried, but its effect is to suggest that Ivan Ilich’s life as he has known it is not really life at all, and it is sickness that is showing this to him.
Так шло месяц и два. Перед Новым годом приехал в их город его шурина и остановился у них. Иван Ильич был в суде. Прасковья Фёдоровна ездила за покупками. Войдя к себе в кабинет, он застал там шурина, здорового сангиначека, самогого раскладывающего чемодан. Он поднял голову на шаги Ивана Ильича и поглядел на него секунду молча. Этот взгляд всё открыл Ивану Ильичу. Шурина раскрыл рот, чтоб ахнуть, и удержался. Это движение подтвердило всё.

– Что, переменился?
– Да... есть перемена.

И сколько Иван Ильич ни наводил после шурина на разговор о его внешнем виде, шурина отмалчивался. Приехала Прасковья Фёдоровна, шурина пошёл к ней. Иван Ильич залер дверь на ключ и стал смотреться в зеркало – прям, потом сбоку. Взял свой портрет с женой и сличил портрет с тем, что он видел в зеркале. Перемена была огромная. Потом он оголил руки до локтя, посмотрел, опустил рукава, сел на оттоманку и стал чернее ночи.

"Не надо, не надо", – сказал он себе, вскочил, подошёл к столу, открыл дело, стал читать его, но не мог. Он отпер дверь, пошёл в залу. Дверь в гостиную была затворена. Он подошёл к ней на цыпочках и стал слушать.

– Нет, ты преувеличиваешь, – говорила Прасковья Фёдоровна.

– Как преувеличиваю? Тебе не видно – он мертвый человек, посмотри его глаза. Нет света. Да что у него? 1
– Никто не знает. Николаев (это был другой доктор) сказал что-то, но я не знаю. Лещетинский (это был знаменитый доктор) сказал напротив...

Иван Ильич отошёл, пошёл к себе, лёг и стал думать: "Почка, блуждающая поочка". 2 Он вспомнил всё то, что

1. The first four chapters of the novel have brought Ivan Ilich to a point where his illness has developed so far as to be out of control. So serious is the situation that Ivan Ilich seems already near death. His visiting brother-in-law here states that Ivan Ilich is already a dead man. This emphasis upon the extent to which Ivan's condition has already deteriorated continues throughout chapter five and at the end of chapter six he even imagines that he sees "death" looking at him from behind some flowers in the sitting room. The reader may well wonder why such emphasis is placed on Ivan's death, or his nearness to death, or the apparition of death at this point in the novel. After all, there are still six more chapters (half of the novel, if we are counting chapters) before he will in fact die. Let us note, at least, that Ivan is, in a sense, pronounced virtually dead already in chapters five and six, and that it is therefore possible that the final six chapters will be concerned to do more than provide further repetition of this motif. At the least it is clear that Ivan Ilich might as well be dead at this point, that his life is really just a kind of death.

2. According to Wikipedia "Nephroptosis (also called floating kidney or renal ptosis) is an abnormal condition in which the kidney drops down into the pelvis when the patient stands up." The Russian for "floating kidney" ("bluzhdajushchaja pochka") derives from the word "bluzhat'" ("to roam, wander") and is etymologically related to the root "blud-" found in such words as "bludnitsa" ("loose woman, whore") and "bludnoj syn" (the Biblical "prodigal son"). Thus, there is a subtle implication of error or sin or improper behavior
inner voice," the voice of that life within, a life quite distinct from the life which Ivan Ilich has made for himself. mending my appendix, and all the while here comes death!" Thus, the ground is prepared of the first mention, in Chapter Six, of an
him to the thought that it is "not a question of my appendix or my kidney, but of life . . . and death" and soon thereafter: "I think of
Chapter Six he will remind himself that he "lived by his official duties," that he thought that his official life was his life. It is perhaps not
Ilich is unaware of his "soul," his spiritual life, and is spiritually dead. Even if only obliquely and etymologically, however, it would seem
physiological" details of the operation of the blind gut. The word "zadushevnyj," however, is derived from the root word "dusha"
Толстой uses the word "zadushevnyj" ("intimate, sincere") to describe the need to think inwardly about the "anatomical and
the appendix) suggest the idea of the complete inability to see what is wrong, of blindness to the actual cause of Ivan Ilich’s trouble.
As the diagnosis of the floating kidney suggested the idea of "going astray" so, too, does the suspicion of trouble in the "blind gut" (i.e.,
any relevance to the question of what is wrong with Ivan Ilich.
3. Note how Tolstoy colors Ivan Ilich’s behavior. Here he "looked at her darkly"; earlier in the chapter his expression "became blacker
than night." Thus, his actions in life take on the funereal color of death.
4. Since this diagnosis, too, will come to nothing the phrasing here suggests that neither the anatomical nor the physiological facts have
not only to the question of what is wrong with Ivan Ilich.
5. As the diagnosis of the floating kidney suggested the idea of "going astray" so, too, does the suspicion of trouble in the "blind gut" (i.e.,
the appendix) suggest the idea of the complete inability to see what is wrong, of blindness to the actual cause of Ivan Ilich's trouble.
6. Tolstoy uses the word "zadushevnyj" ("intimate, sincere") to describe the need to think inwardly about the "anatomical and
physiological" details of the operation of the blind gut. The word "zadushevnyj," however, is derived from the root word "dusha"
("soul") and thus clearly suggests Ivan Ilich’s complete confusion of his spiritual life with his physiological life; put another way, Ivan
Ilich is unaware of his "soul," his spiritual life, and is spiritually dead. Even if only obliquely and etymologically, however, it would seem
that, at last, and apparently for the first time in a long time, the conception of an inner, spiritual life has at last occurred to him. In
Chapter Six he will remind himself that he "lived by his official duties," that he thought that his official life was his life. It is perhaps not
strange then that he thinks that his inner life involves no more than the condition of his colon. Almost at once, though, his pain drives
him to the thought that it is "not a question of my appendix or my kidney, but of life . . . and death" and soon thereafter: "I think of
mending my appendix, and all the while here comes death!" Thus, the ground is prepared of the first mention, in Chapter Six, of an
"inner voice," the voice of that life within, a life quite distinct from the life which Ivan Ilich has made for himself.
Пошёл, раздёлся и взял роман Золя, но не читал его, а думал. И в его воображении происходило то желанное исправление слепой кишki. Всасывалось, выбрасывалось, восстанавливалась правильная деятельность. "Да, это всё так, - сказал он себе. - Только надо помогать природе". Он вспомнил о лекарстве, поднялся, принял его, лег на спину, прислушиваясь к тому, как благотворно действует лекарство и как оно уничтожает боль. "Только равномерно принимать и избегать вредных влияний; я уже теперь чувствую несколько лучше, гораздо лучше". Он стал щупать бок, - в ощупь не больно. "Да, я не чувствую, право, уже гораздо лучше". Он потушил свечу и лег на бок...

Слепая кишка исправляется, всасывается. Вдруг он почувствовал знакомую старую, глухую, ноющую боль, упорную, тихую, серьезную. Во рту та же знакомая гадость. Засосало сердце, помутилось в голове. "Боже мой, Боже мой! - проговорил он. - Опять, опять, и никогда не перестанет". И вдруг ему дело представилось совсем другой стороны. "Слепая кишока? Почка, - сказал он себе. - Не в слепой кишке, не в почке дело, а в жизни и... смерти. Да, жизнь была и вот уходит, уходит, и я не могу удержать её. Да. Зачем обманывать себя? Разве не очевидно всем, кроме меня, что я умираю, и вопрос только в числе недель, дней - сейчас, может быть. То свет был, а теперь мрак. То я здесь был, а теперь туда! Куда?" Его обдало холодом, дыхание остановилось. Он слышал только удары сердца.

"Меня не будет, так что же будет? Ничего не будет. Так где же я буду, когда меня не будет? Неужели смерть? Нет, не хочу". Он вскочил, хотел зажечь свечку, пошарил дрожащими руками, уронил свечу с подсвечником на пол и опять поднялся на ноги, на подушку." "Зачем? Всё равно, - говорил он себе, открытыми глазами глядя в темноту. - Смерть. Да, смерть. И они никто не знают, и не хотят знать, и не жалеют. Они играют. (Он слышал дальние, из-за двери, раскат голоса и ритуаре.) Им всё равно, а они так же умрут. Дурачье. Мне ранше, а им посме; и им то же будет. Неужели смерть?" Он вскочил, хотел зажечь свечку, пошарил дрожащими руками, уронил свечу с подсвечником на пол и опять повалился на спину, на подушку.

"Что-нибудь не так; надо успокоиться, надо обдумать всё сначала". И вот он начал обдумывать. "Да, начал болезни. Стукнулся боком, и всё такой же я был, и нынче и завтра; немного ныло, потом больше, потом доктора, потом унылость, тоска, опять доктора; я всё шёл ближе, ближе к пропасти. Сил меньше. Ближе, ближе. И вот я искал, у меня свёта в глазах нет. И смерть, а я думаю о кишке. Думаю о том, чтобы починить кишку, а это смерть. Неужели смерть?!" Опять на него нашёл ужас, он запыхался, нагнулся, стал искать спичек, надавил локтем на тумбочку. Она мешала ему и делала больно, он разозлился на неё, надавил с досадой сильнее и повалил тумбочку. И в отчаянии задыхаясь, он повалился на спину, ожидал сейчас же смерти.

Гости уезжали в это время. Прасковья Фёдоровна провожала их. Она услышала падение и вошла.

"Что ты?" - Чего? Уронил нечаянно. Она вышла, принесла свечи. Он лежал, тяжело и быстро-быстро дышал, как человек, который пробежал версту, оставившисьислами глаямилия на неё.

7. Emile Zola (1840-92), a French writer, author of many popular novels
8. Ivan Ilich's pain is here described by the use of seven modifiers. The first four are unsurprising: “familiar” (all too familiar), "old" (by now the pain is clearly "getting old"), “dull,” “aching” (from the verb meaning "to whine, complain"). All of these might well be used by Ivan Ilich to characterize pain that is continual and tiresome if not excruciating, just the sort of pain to elicit a self-pitying whine. The last three modifiers, "insistent," "quiet," "serious," however, do not evoke the same spirit of complaint. They seem rather to suggest that there is some point to the pain, as though it were quietly, seriously, persistently trying to attract Ivan Ilich's attention. The connotation would seem to be that while pain is pain, there is also another dimension beyond, or perhaps within, the pain.
– Что ты, Jean?
– Ниче...го. У...ро...нёл. – "Что же говорить. Она не поймёт", - думал он.

Она точно не поняла. Она подняла, зажгла ему свечу и поспешно ушла: ей надо было проводить гостем.

Когда она вернулась, он так же лежал навзничь, глядя вверх.
– Что тебе, или хуже?
– Да.

Она покачала головой, посидела. – Знаешь, Jean, я думаю, не пригласить ли Лещетицкого на дом.

Это значит знаменитого доктора пригласить и не пожалеть денег. Он ядовито улыбнулся и сказал: "Нет". Она посидела, подошла и поцеловала его в лоб.

Он ненавидел её всеми силами души в то время, как она целовала его, и делал усилия, чтобы не оттолкнуть её.
– Прощай.10 Бог даст, заснешь.
– Да.
Ива́н Ильи́ч ви́дел, что он умира́ет, и был в постоя́нном отча́янии.

В глубине́ души́ Ива́н Ильи́ч знал, что он умира́ет, но он не то́лько не привы́к к э́тому, но прі́сто не понима́л, никãй не мог поня́ть э́того.

Тот приме́р силлоги́зма, кото́рому он учи́лся в ло́гике Кизеве́тера: 2 Кай - челове́к, лю́ди сме́ртны, потому́ Кай сме́ртен, каза́лся ему́ во всю его́ жизнь пра́вильным только по отноше́нию к Ка́ю, но никãй не к нему́. То был Кай-челове́к, вообшãе челове́к, и э́то было соверше́нн̄о справедли́во; 3 но он был не Кай и не вообшãе челове́к, а он всегдã был совсãм, совсãм особенное от всãх другãх существо́в; он был Ваня с мамã, папã, с Митей и Воло́дей, с игру́шками, ку́чером, с нãней потом с Ка́тенькой, со всãми радо́стями, го́рестями, восто́ргами дãства, юно́сти, моло́дости. 4 Рãзве для Ка́я был тот зãпах кóжаного поло́сками мя́чика, кото́рый так люби́л Ваня! Рãзве Ка́й целовáл так ру́ку матãры и рãзве для Ка́я так шурша́л шёлк скла́док платãта матãры? Рãзве он бунто́вал за пи́рожки в Правовéдении? Рãзве Ка́й так был влюблён? Рãзве Ка́й так мог вести́ зasadáние?

И Кай то́чно сме́ртен, и ему́ пра́вильно умира́ть, но мне, Вãне, Ива́ну Ильи́чû, со всãми мо́йми чувствами, мы́слями, - мне э́то другое́ дёло. И не може́т быть, чтобы́ мне слёдова́ло умира́ть. Это быво́ бý слéйком ужáсно.

Так чûствовалось ему́.

“Если б и мне умира́ть, как Ка́ю, то я так бы и знал э́то, так бы и говори́л мне внûтренний го́лос,” но ниче́го

1. Once again the telling use of the word “soul,” linking the beginning of Chapter Six to the end of Chapter Five. It would seem that Ivan Ilich's soul is gradually coming to life just as his body is ineluctably sliding toward death. This may suggest that there is some basic incompatibility between the body and the soul such that the well-being of the body may hide the distress, or even the existence, of the soul and, conversely, that the distress of the body may allow the soul to appear.

2. J. G. Kiesewetter (1766-1819) wrote a textbook on logic which, translated into Russian, was used in Russian schools.

3. I have here suggested “right” as the equivalent of “spravedlivо” in contrast with “correct” as the equivalent of “pravil’no” in the preceding sentence in order to try to catch the fine distinction between the two Russian words. “Pravil’no” is usually applied in the context of matters of fact, for example, a statement is true or false; “spravedlivо” derives directly from “pravda,” which, while it shares the same basic root with “pravil’no” has the particular senses of “justness, rightness, fairness” as well as the sense of “truth.” For example, in Russian to behave “pravil’no” would be to behave “correctly” (in accord with established conventions, the hallmark of Ivan Ilich’s life as he has lived it) while to behave in a manner that is “spravedlivо” would be to do the “right” thing (in accord with some more primary principle of moral conduct, perhaps beyond the scope of the conventions defining everyday life). It is thus suggested that the “correct” life may not, if fact, be the “right” life to lead. It may be “wrong” to think of Ivan Ilich’s strict conformity with convention as being life at all.

4. Vanya is a nickname for Ivan, Mitya and Volodya (nicknames for Dmitry and Vladimir) are most likely Ivan Ilich’s two brothers; Katenka (nickname for Ekaterina) may be a sister not previously mentioned in the text.

5. Here the notion of an “inner voice” and, by extension, an inner life, is mentioned in the text for the first time. If we follow the practice of paying close and exact attention to what is said we see that Ivan Ilich here seems to admit not only that there was no inner voice in him, but also no inner life. In fact, this inner voice will actually enter the text in Chapter Nine and will reappear in each chapter.
One might well say that the tension between reason and consciousness is the mainspring of Tolstoy’s art. In general, in Tolstoy anything that interferes with the operation of consciousness is suspect to some degree. One might well say that he and we have discovered that he has lost his inner life at the end of Chapter Six and that he regains it again at the end of Chapter Twelve. From this point of view, the novel seems to fall naturally into two main parts, in the first of which he gradually loses consciousness; in the second, he gradually comes to acknowledge that loss and finally to regain his inner life. Simultaneously, however, the novel has been relating the same series of events from a strictly external viewpoint in which the inner life refers to no more than the kidneys and the intestines. This external story is related in three stages: Ivan Ilitch’s former life, up to the onset of his illness (chapters two-four); the development of his illness (chapters five-eight); and his final agony and death (chapters nine-twelve). We might call the first stage “health,” the second “illness,” and the third “death.” The first stage involves a period of years, the second a period of months, the last a period of days and hours. (More detail on this idea is given in the section in the “Introduction” called “The Proportions of the Text.”) It seems then that just as Ivan Ilitch has two distinct lives—his external life and his inner life—the story of those lives can be seen as being organized in two different ways at the same time: the external life story according to a three-part division of the material (health, illness, death) and the inner life story according to a two-part division. The two-part division shows us an Ivan Ilitch who is already inwardly dead at the mid-point of the story, and one who has regained his inner life at the end.

With remarkable consistency the text notes that Ivan Ilitch believes that the thought of death is false and incorrect (“nepravil’naja”—not in conformity with convention; see note 3, above) and that it is “diseased.” But it may none the less be true, and it may be his disease that is revealing this to him.

7. The word “zaslon” in Russian is a military term designating a military force of some kind used to cover, protect, or shield the action of another force.

8. The word “soznanie” (“consciousness”) is of marked importance everywhere in Tolstoy’s works. It is usually associated with the authentic human center of his characters and is very often contrasted to the mechanical processes of mind (“um”) and reason (“razum”). In various religious and philosophical writings produced about the same time as Death of Ivan Ilich Tolstoy devised the term “razumnoe soznanie” (“rational consciousness”) to serve as one of the central pillars of his later thought, suggesting that “reason” (the adjective) was an aspect of, but subsidiary to, “consciousness” (the noun). In general, in Tolstoy anything that interferes with the operation of consciousness is suspect to some degree. One might well say that the tension between reason and consciousness is the mainspring of Tolstoy’s art.

9. Here the idea that Ivan Ilitch considers his life at the office, his outer life, to be his real life is made explicit. The resolve to get back to this life is implied to be just another screen to protect him from the consciousness (i.e., his inner life, his authentic life) of death. The phrase “ja zhil eju” reminds one of the title, “Чем люди живы,” (“What Do Men Live By”), the first of Tolstoy’s “Stories for the People.”

10. Here is a brilliant example of Tolstoy’s use of language in the novel. The preceding sentence has twice used the word “delo”: first to mean “the facts of the case before the court as set down on paper” (in the phrase “podviga delo”) and, second, to mean “the judicial proceedings related to that case” (in the phrase “nachinal delo”). There “delo” is established as meaning the object and activity at the center of Ivan Ilich’s life in court (“delo” is the nominal equivalent of the verb “delat’”—“to do, make”; therefore “delo” would be,
своё, и она приходила 11 и становилась пря́мо пе́ред ним и смотре́ла на него, и он столбене́л, ого́нь тух в глаза́х, и он начина́л опять спра́шивать себе́: "Неуже́ли только она́ пра́вда?" И това́рищи и подчинённые с удивле́нием и огорче́нием ви́дели, что он, тако́й блестя́щий, тонкий судья́, пу́тался, де́лал оши́бки. Он встря́хивался, стара́лся опо́мниться и кое-ка́к доводи́л до конца́ заседа́ние и возвраща́лся домо́й с гру́стным созна́нием, что не може́т по-стárому судейское его́ дела́ скрыть от неё. И что было хуже всего – это то, что она́ отвлека́ла его́ к себе́ не зате́м, что́бы он де́лал что́-нибудь, а только́ для тóго, что́бы он смотре́л на неё, пря́мо ей в глаза́, смотре́л на неё и, ничто́ не деля, невырази́мо мучи́лся.

И, спаса́ясь от его́ состоя́ния, Ива́н Ильи́ч иска́л утечение, други́х ширм, и други́е ши́рмы явля́лись и на короткое вре́мя как бу́дто спаса́ли его́, но то́тчас же опять́ не сто́лько разруша́лись, сколько просве́чивали, как бу́дто она́ проника́ла че́рез всё, и ничто́ не могло́ заслони́ть её. 12

Быва́ло, в э́то последнее вре́мя он войдёт в гости́ную, у́бранную им, – в ту гости́ную, где он упа́л, для кото́рой он, - как ему́ ядови́то смешно́ бы́ло ду́мать, - для устро́йства кото́рой он поже́ртвовал жи́знью, потому́ что он знал, что боле́знь его́ нача́лась с этогó уши́ба, – он входи́л и ви́дели, что на лакиро́ванном столе́ был рубе́ц, проре́занный чём-то. Он иска́л причи́ну, и находи́л её в бро́нзовом украше́нии альбо́ма, ото́гнутом на краю́. Он брал альбо́м, дорого́й, им соста́вленный с любо́вью, и доса́довал на неря́шливость до́чки и её друзе́й, – то разо́рвано, то ка́рточки перевёрнуты. Он приводи́л э́то стара́тельно в поря́док, загиба́л опя́ть украше́ние. Пото́м ему́ приходи́ла мысль весь э́тот etablissement с альбо́мами перемести́ть в друго́й у́гол, к цвета́м. Он звал лаке́я–и́ли дочь, и́ли жена́ приходи́ли на по́мощь; они́ не соглаша́лись, противоречи́ли, он спо́рил, серди́лся; но всё бы́ло хорошо́, потому́ что он не по́мнил о ней, её не ви́дно бы́ло.

Но вот жена́ сказа́ла, когда́ он сам передвига́л: "Позво́ль, лю́ди сде́лают, ты опя́ть себе́ сде́лаешь вред", и вдруг она́ мелькну́ла че́рез ши́рмы, он увида́л её. 13 Она́ мелькну́ла, он ещё наде́ется, что она́ скро́ется, но нево́льно он прислу́шался к бо́ку, – там сиди́т всё то же, всё так же но́ет, и он уже́ не может забы́ть, и она́ явственно гляди́т на него́ из-за цвето́в. К чему́ всё?

"И пра́вда, что здесь, на э́той гарди́не, я, как на шту́рме, потеря́л жизнь. Неуже́ли? Как ужа́сно и как глúпо! Э́то не може́т быть! Не може́т быть, но есть".

basically, anything that is done. In the following sentence "delo" appears again, but is now identified as the action of Ivan Ilich's "sucking" pain. The pain of his illness is sucking away his life, but his life, as he has understood it, is also "delo." This leads to the verbal paradox that the pain that Ivan Ilich experiences is the very same thing as the life that he has led, that it is his "life" which is sucking away his "life." The word "sosushchij" (present active participle from "sosat,' "to suck") often has the transferential meaning of "gnaw" or "nag." As so often in the novel, underneath the conventional meaning of a word or phrase lies hidden its literal sense: the false official life of Ivan Ilich is sucking every vestige of his true life out of him.

11. The italics mark this "it" as something different from the pain which was the referent of the "it" in the preceding clause; this it refers to a different feminine, singular noun: "smert;' ("death").

12. Chapter Six continues the motif of imminent death introduced in Chapter Five. The chapter has been devoted to Ivan's ineluctable recognition of his death and to his unavailing efforts to hide this recognition from himself by erecting various screens (again the motif of self-enclosure) to protect himself from this recognition. As he will say a few lines below: "I lost my life over that curtain. . . . It can't be true, but it is."

13. Interestingly, it is just at the moment that Praskovya Fyodorovna tells Ivan Ilich that he will harm himself if he fusses with the albums that his awareness of death returns, as though she were unwittingly explaining to him that his fussy attachment to material ornaments and the artificial tidiness of his "pleasant and decorous" life is what is most harmful to him and, in fact, bringing him face to face with death.
Он шёл в кабинет, ложился и оставался опять один с нею, с глазу на глаз с нею, а делать с нею ничего. Только смотреть на неё и холодеть.

14. The last sentence of Chapter Six, translated literally, says: "Only to look at it [death] and grow cold." Maude’s translation offers "except to look at it and shudder." While this is a correct translation, it fails to capture the rhetorical force of the original. In the Russian we see a further example of the use of words in both their metaphorical sense (on the surface) and their literal sense (hidden beneath the surface). The literal meaning of the word (‘growing cold’) is used to suggest the exterior action (‘shuddering’). In this way the text manages to express simultaneously the ideas (1) that there are two sorts of “life” involved in what is happening to Ivan Ilich, an inner one and an outer one, and (2) that Ivan Ilich is only shuddering from a chill on the surface but, from the inner point of view, is dead already and growing cold, in the manner of a corpse.
Как это сделалось на третьем месяце болезни Ивана Ильича, нельзя было сказать, потому что это делалось шаг за шагом, незаметно, но делалось то, что и женá, и дочь, и сын его, и прислуга, и знакомые, и доктора, и, главное, он сам - знали, что весь интерес к ним для других состоит только в том, скоро ли, наконец, он опрокинет место, освободит живых от стеснения, производимого его присутствием, и сам освободится от своих страданий. ¹

Он спал меньше и меньше; ему давали опиум и начали прыскать морфийом. Но это не облегчало его. Тупая тоска, которую он испытывал в полуусыпленном состоянии, сначала только облегчала его как что-то новое, но потом она стала так же или еще более мучительна, чем откровенная боль.

Ему готовили особенные кушанья по предписанию врачей; но кушанья эти все были для него безвкуснее и безвкуснее, отвратительнее и отвратительнее.

Для испражнений его тоже были сделаны особые приспособления, и всякий раз это было мученье. Мученье от нечистоты, неприличия и зáпаха, от сознания того, что в этом должен участвовать другой человек.

Но в этом самому неприятному дèле и явилось утешение Ивану Ильичу.² Приходил всегда выносить за ним буфетный мужик Герасим.

Герасим был чистый, свежий, раздобревший на городских харчах молодой мужик. Всегда веселый, ясный. Сначала вид этого, всегда чисто, по-русски одетого человека, делающего это противное дело, смущал Ивана Ильича. Одн раз он, встав с судна и не в силах поднять панталоны, повалился на мягкое кресло и с ужасом смотрел на свои обнаженные, с резко обозначенными мускулами, бессильные ляжи.

Вошёл в толстых сапогах, распространив вокруг себя приятный зáпах дёгтя и свежести зимнего воздуха, лёгкой сильной поступью Герасим, в посюном чистом фартуке и чистой сицевой рубахе, с

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1. Thus, Chapter Seven begins by re-emphasizing the conclusion which, as noted above, emerges from Chapter Six: that Ivan Ilich is already as good as dead, that he is essentially dead and is only awaiting formal removal from the scene.

2. No sooner does the text make it clear that Ivan Ilich is virtually dead already, and so beyond help or comfort, than it presents the first of several consolations and remissions of his agony. The servant Gerasim, a young, healthy, and energetic figure, is assigned to assist Ivan Ilich by cleaning up after evacuation. Surprisingly enough, the health and vitality of this young man do not anger Ivan Ilich (unlike the health and vitality of his daughter and her fiancé), but brings him comfort instead. In particular, Ivan Ilich places a high value on Gerasim’s truthfulness and ability to acknowledge that his master is not simply ill, but is actually dying. Gerasim’s relationship to Ivan Ilich is simple and direct. He acknowledges the terminal nature of Ivan Ilich’s illness without pretense and is willing to spend long periods of time patiently helping his master to feel better. Gerasim had first appeared in Chapter One. There he had made Peter Ivanovich feel uncomfortable by reminding him that we will all die one day. Finally, the fact that a genuine comfort emerges from “this most unpleasant matter” prepares the way for the idea that something good for Ivan Ilich may also come from the most unpleasant matter of all—his terminal illness.
засу́ченными на го́лых, си́льных, молодых рукáх рукавáми, и, не гля́дя на Ива́на Ильичá, – очевидно, сдёрживая, чтобы не оскорбить больно́го, ра́дость жи́зни, сия́ющую на его́ лице́, – подошёл к судну.

– Гера́сим, - слáбо сказа́л Ива́н Ильи́ч.

Гера́сим вздрóгнул, очевидно, испуга́вшись, не промахну́лся ли он в чём, и бы́стрым движе́нием повернул к больно́му своё свéжее, доброе, простое, молодое лицо́, тóлько что начи́навшее обра́стать бородой.

– Что изво́лите?

– Тебé, я дýмаю, неприя́тно это́. Ты извини́ менé. Я не могу́.

– Помилуйте-с. 3 – И Гера́сим блесну́л глаза́ми и оска́лил свой молодые бéлье зубы́. – Отчего же не потруди́ться? Вáше дeло больно́е.

И он лóвкими, си́льными рукáми сдeлал своё привéчное дéло и вы́шел, легко ступáя. И чéрез пять минút, так же легко ступáя, верну́лся.

Ива́н Ильи́ч всё так же сидéл в крёсле.

– Гера́сим, - сказа́л он, когда́ тот поста́вил чё́стое, обмы́тное судно, – пожалуйста, помоги мне, поди́ сюда́. – Гера́сим подошёл. – Подними меня. Мне тяже́ло одному, а Дмитрия я услáл.

Гера́сим подошёл; си́льными рукáми, так же, как он легко ступáл, обнýял, лóвко, мя́гко поднял и подержа́л, другóй рукóй подтяну́л панта́лоны и хотéл посади́ть. Но Ива́н Ильи́ч попроси́л егó свести́ его на дивáн. Гера́сим, без усíлия и как бýдто не нажима́я, свёл егó, почти несý, к дивáну и посади́л.

– Спаси́бо. Как ты лóвко, хорошо́... всё делaeшь.

Гера́сим опья́ть улыбну́лся и хотéл уйти. Но Ива́ну Ильичу так хоро́шо бы́ло с ним, что не хотéлось отпускáть.

– Вот что: подви́нь мне, пожалуйста, сту́л этот. Нет, вот это́, под ноги. Мне лéгче, когда у меня ноги вы́ше. Гера́сим принёс сту́л, поста́вил на сте́кнув, враз опустил его́ рóвно до полу и поднёс ноги Ива́ну Ильичу на сту́л; Ива́н Ильичу показа́лось, что ему́ лéгче ста́ло в то врёмя, как Гера́сим высóко поднимал его́ ноги.

– Мне лéчше, когда́ ноги у меня́ вы́ше, – сказа́л Ива́н Ильи́ч. – Подложи́ мне вон ту подúшку.

Гера́сим сдёлал это. Опьять поднёс ноги и положи́л. Опьять Ива́ну Ильичу стáло лéчше, покá Гера́сим держа́л его́ ноги. Когда́ он опустил их, ему́ показа́лось ху́же.

– Гера́сим, - сказа́л он емú, - ты тепeрь зáнят?

– Никáк нет-с, - сказа́л Гера́сим, выучи́вшийся у городских люде́й говори́ть с господáми.

– Тебé что дéлать на́до ещё?

– Да мне что ж déла́ть? Всё передéдал, тóлько дров наколо́ть на завт́ра.

– Так поддержи́ мне так ноги повóше, можно́шь?

3. The "-s" is short for "sudar" ("sir") or "sudarinja" (ma'am).
– Отчего же, можнол. Герасим поднял ноги выше, и Ивану Ильичу показалось, что в этом положении он совсем не чувствует боли.

– А дровата-то как же?
– Не изволите беспокоиться. Мы успеем.

Иван Ильич велел Герасиму сесть и держать ноги и поговорил с ним. И - странное дело - ему казалось, что ему лучше, пока Герасим держал его ноги.

С тех пор Иван Ильич стал иногда звать Герасима и заставлял его держать себе на плечах ноги и любил говорить с ним. Герасим делал это легко, охотно, просто и с добротой, которая умилила Ивана Ильича. Здоровье, сила, бодрость жизни во всех других людях оскорбляла Ивана Ильича; только сила и бодрость жизни Герасима не огорчала, а успокаивала Ивана Ильича.

Главное мучение Ивана Ильича была ложь, - та, всёми причём-то признанная ложь, что он только болен, а не умирает, и что ему надо только быть спокойным и лечиться, и тогда что-то выйдет очень хорошее.

Он же знал, что, чтобы ни делали, ничего не выйдет, кроме ещё более мучительных страданий и смерти. И его мучила эта ложь, мучило то, что не хотели признаться в том, что все знали и он знал, а хотели лгать над ним по случаю ужасного его положения и хотели и заставляли его самого принимать участие в этой лжи. Ложь, ложь эта, совершаемая над ним накануне его смерти, ложь, должностнуюнюю низвести этот страшный торжественный акт его смерти до уровня всех их визитов, гардин, осетрины к обеду... была ужасно мучительна для Ивана Ильича. И - странно - он много раз, когда он над ним проделывали свой штуки, был на волоке от того, чтобы закричать им: перестаньте врать, и вы знаете и я знаю, что я умираю, так перестаньте, по крайней мере, врать. Но никогда он не имел духа сделать этого. Страшный, ужасный акт его умирания, он видел, всёми окружающими его был низведен на степень случайной неприятности, отчасти неприличия (вроде того, как обходятся с человеком, который, войдя в гостиную, распространяет от себя дурной запах), тем са́мым "приличием", кото́рому он служил всю сво́ю жизнё, он видел, что никто не

4. Gerasim's value to Ivan Llich is based upon two primary factors: Gerasim's truthfulness (and the salutary contrast between his truthfulness and candor, on one side, and the lying (Russ. 'lozh') and convention of his wife, doctors, and acquaintances on the other) and his willingness to spend long periods in intimate contact with Ivan Llich. This intimacy is emphatically physical; it involves helping Ivan Llich with his processes of bodily elimination and also sitting with him in such a manner that Ivan Llich can place his heels on Gerasim's shoulders. The relationship with Gerasim is the first example of physical touching which is explicitly represented (as opposed to being merely reported) in Ivan Llich's life story. In the main Ivan Llich has striven to cut himself off from other people. It has also been noted that the position in which Ivan Llich feels better, is not dissimilar to the position in which women are placed in the process of giving birth. Thus, chapter seven's antidote to the funereal gloom of chapter six goes so far as to suggest the motif of birth to counter the motif of death, thereby introducing the possibility of rebirth into Ivan Llich's story.

5. The verb "lechit'sja" means "to be cured, healed; to follow a prescribed medical regimen"; etymologically, as a reflexive verb, it means "to cure oneself." Thus, it provides yet one more example of the novel's device of using the underlying, literal meaning of words or phrases to suggest the reverse significance attached to the surface level of the text. It is indeed the case, as Ivan Llich eventually discovers, that recovery from that illness of the spirit which is his most basic problem is possible only through his own efforts. He can, in fact (the novel suggests), heal himself through recognition of the wrongness of the idea that the life he has led is his true and authentic life. If he does heal himself in this way, something very good will indeed emerge.

6. The rather unconventional use of the prepositional phrase "nad + instrumental case" (lit., "above, over" something or someone) as the complement to the verbs "lgat'" ("to tell a lie") and "peredelyvayat'" ("to do, perform") conveys the idea that people maintain the fiction that Ivan Llich is merely ill rather than dying when they are in his presence. To express this, however, as the text does here (lit., to lie, to do their tricks "above him") suggests that he is in a sense already dead, stretched out below them, as though he already were insensible of their presence. This, in turn, suggests that their lying and pretense is undertaken not so much to spare the feelings of Ivan Llich, but to comfort themselves.

7. The conventional meaning of the phrase "ne imel dukha" ("lacked the energy, the strength") is supplemented by the basic meaning of "dukh," "spirit": Ivan Llich's true and authentic life in the spirit had virtually disappeared after so many years of neglect and indifference as he pursued success in the false and artificial life of his home and office.
пожалеет его, потому что никто не хочет даже понимать его положения. Однін толькó Гера́сим понимал э́то положение и жалёл его. И потому Ивáну Ильичу хорошо было только с Гера́симом. Емú хорошо было, когда Гера́сим, инодгá цёлые но́чи напролёт, держал его но́ги и не хотёл уходить спать, говоря: "Вы не извóльте беспоко́йться, Ива́н Ильич, вы́сплюсь ещё"; и́ли когда он вдруг, переходя на "ты", прибавлял: "Кабы ты не больной, а то отчего же не послужи́ть?" Однін Гера́сим не лгал, по всему ви́дно было, что он однін понимал, в чём де́ло, и не считал нужным скрывать э́того, и прosto жалёл исчáхшего, слáбого ба́рина. Он даже раз пря́мо сказáл, когда Ива́н Ильи́ч отсыла́л егó:

– Все умира́ть бу́дем. Отчего же не потруди́ться? – сказа́л он, выража́я э́тим то, что он не тяготи́тся сво́им трудо́м и́менно потому, что несёт егó для умира́ющего челове́ка и наде́ется, что и для нёгó ктó-нибудь в егó вре́мя понесёт тот же труд.8

Крòме э́той лжи, и́ли вслéдствие её, мучительнее всего бы́ло для Ива́на Ильича то, что никто не жалёл его так, как емú хотéлось, чтóбы егó жалёли: Ивáну Ильичу в и́нёе мину́ты, пóсле дóлгих страда́ний, бо́льше всéго хотéлось, как емú ни сóвсемто бы́ло признáться в э́том, – хотéлось того́, чтóб егó, как дитя больное, пожалéл бы ктó-нибудь. Емú хотéлось, чтóб егó приласка́ли, поце́лова́ли, поплака́ли бы над ним, как ласка́ют и утеша́ют детей. Он знал, что он вáжный член, что у нёгó се́дёющая борода и что потому́ э́то невозмóжно; но емú всé-та́ки хотéлось э́того. И в отноше́ниях с Гера́симом было чтó-то близкое к э́тому, и пóсле отношения́ с Гера́симом утеши́л егó. Ивáну Ильичу хо́чется пла́кать, хо́чется, чтóб егó ласка́ли и плáкали над ним, и вот прихо́дит това́рищ, член Шéбек, и, вмёсто того чтóб плáкать и ласка́ться, Ива́н Ильи́ч дёлает серё́зное, стрóгое, глубокомысленное лицо́ и по инéрции говори́т своё мнéние о значе́нии кассационного реше́ния9 и упорно наста́ивает на нём. Э́та ложь вкróсут нёгó и в нём самóм бо́льше всéго отправля́ла послéдние дни жи́зни Ива́на Ильича.

8. From this point on the text makes it increasingly explicit that the spiritual pain of enduring the falseness and deception--the lies--with which he is surrounded and in which he participates is greater than the physical pain of his illness. One gets the sense that it is this moral pain which abates when he is in the company of Gerasim. As the next chapter will make clear, however, the pain returns in full force (both physically and morally) in Gerasim's absence. Only Gerasim is able to tell Ivan Ilich directly that he is dying. Only Gerasim seems capable of coming close to Ivan Ilich, where "close" implies honesty, physical touch, and even the (highly inappropriate!) linguistic closeness of Gerasim's using the second-person singular, familiar, form of address in speaking to his master. The lie (Russ. "lozh'") from this point on begins more and more to replace the physical illness from which Ivan Ilich suffers; the lie, so to say, now becomes his illness.

9. The Court of Cassation is the highest appellate court in some legal systems.
Было утро. Потому только было утро, что Герасим ушёл и пришёл Пётр-лакей, потушил свечи, открыл одну гардину и стал потихоньку убирать. Утро ли, вечер ли был, пятница, воскресенье ли было - всё было всё равно, всё было одно и то же: ноющая, ни на мгновение не утихающая, мучительная боль; сознание безнадёжно всё уходящей, но всё не ушедшей ещё жизни; надвигающаяся всё та же страшная ненавистная смерть, которая одна была действительность, и всё та же ложь. Какие же тут дни, недели и часы дня?

– Не прикажете ли чаю?

"Ему нужен порядок, чтоб по утрам господы пили чай", – подумал он и сказал только:

– Нет.

– Не угодно ли перейти на диван?

"Ему нужно привести в порядок горницу, и я мешаю, я - нечистота, беспорядок", – подумал он и сказал только:

– Нет, оста́вь меня.

Лакей повозился ещё. Иван Ильич протянул руку. Пётр подошёл услужливо.

– Что прикажете?

– Часы.

Пётр достал часы, лежавшие под рукой, и подал.

– Полови́на девя́того. Там не вста́ли?

– Ника́к нет-с. Васи́лий Ива́нович (это был сын) ушёл в гимна́зию а Праско́вья Фёдоровна приказа́ли разбуди́ть их, е́сли вы спро́сите. Прика́жете?

– Нет, не надо. – "Не попробовать ли чаю?" – подумал он. – Да, чаю... принеси́.

Пётр пошёл к выходу. Ивану Ильичу страшно стало оставаться одному. "Чем бы задержать его? Да, лека́рство". – Пётр, подай мне лека́рство. – "Отчего же, может быть, ещё поможете и лека́рство". Он взял ло́жку, выпил. "Нет, не поможет. Всё это вздор, обман, - решил он, как тольковопочувствовал знакомый

1. The use of a plural verb form ("ushli") with a singular subject ("Vasily Ivanovich") is a mark of deference shown by a social inferior when speaking of a social superior. The use of this form of speech by Peter is normal in the conventional interactions between master and servant, and is in marked contrast with the explicitly noted use of the familiar form of address by Gerasim several paragraphs earlier.
Приговорный и безнадежный вкус. — Нет, уж не могу верить. Но боль-то, боль-то зачем, хоть на минуту затихла бы". И он застонал. Пётр вернулся. - Нет, иди. Принеси чай.

Пётр ушёл. Иван Ильич, оставшись один, застонал не столько от боли, как она ни была ужасна, сколько от тоски. "Всё то же и то же, все эти бесконечные дни и ночи. Хоть бы скорее. Что скорее? Смерть, мрак. Нет, нет. Всё лучше смерти!"

Когда Пётр вошёл с чаем на подносе, Иван Ильич долго растерянно смотрел на него, не понимая, кто он и что он. Пётр смутился от этого взгляда. И когда Пётр смутился, Иван Ильич очнулся.

— Да, — сказал он, — чай... хорошо, постарайтесь помочь мне умыться и рубашку чистую.

Иван Ильич стал умываться. Он с отдохновением умыл руки, лицо, вычистил зубы, стал причёсываться и посмотрел в зеркало. Ему страшно стало: особенно стало то, как волосы плоско прижимались к бледному лбу.

Когда переменяли ему рубашку, он знал, что ему будет ещё страшнее, если он вглядется в своё тело, и не смотрел на себя. Но вот кончилось всё. Он надел халат, укрылся пледом и сел в кресло к чаю. Он насилием дотянул и лег, вытянув ноги. Он лег и отпустил Петра.

Все то же. Чем больше Иван Ильич умывался, тем больнее становилось всё. Он невольно думал о том, что это выражение здесь не годится, но он впереди знает, что это выражение, что это выражение здесь не годится, но он уже раз навсегда надел его и не может снять, как человек, с утра надевший фрак и едущий с визитами.

Доктор, однако, был живой, бодрый, юный, весёлый, с таким выражением, что он был напуган, а мы сейчас вам всё устроим. Доктор знает, что это выражение здесь не годится, но он уже раз навсегда надел его и не может снять, как человек, с утра надевший фрак и юный, с утра надевший фрак и юный, с утра надевший фрак и юный, с утра надевший фрак.

— Я холоден. Мороз здоровый. Даите обогрейтесь, — говорит он с таким выражением, что как будто только нало немножко подождать, пока он обогрётся, а когда обогрётся, то уже исправит.

— Ну что, как?

2. The word “zabyt’sja” (lit., “to forget oneself”) may be defined in Russian as “terjat’ soznanie” (“to lose consciousness”). The centrality of “consciousness” in Tolstoy’s world-view has been mentioned before. Ivan Ilich’s desire to "lose consciousness" is an oblique admission that the distressed condition of his consciousness is a much worse problem than his deteriorating physical condition. Thus, the text keeps insisting that the pain of the falseness and lying all around him is much worse than his physical suffering. It is as though Ivan Ilich believes that if he could just fully lose his consciousness to sleep it would stop hurting him, stop insisting on the truth that it is dying or as good as dead, and permit the return of the comforting illusion that it is merely that his body, his physical self is ill. Consciousness is thereby identified with an inner, spiritual self which is making itself ever more insistently present as Ivan Ilich’s bodily strength and confidence wanes.

3. The usual way to say that one feels cold in Russian is to use the impersonal expression: “mne xolodno” (lit., “to me (it) is cold”) The doctor, however, uses the personal expression “ja xoloden” (lit., “I am cold”) and thereby comes perilously close to the expression “ja xolodnyj” ("I am a cold (i.e., unfeeling) person"). This is another of the many examples of the significant hidden beneath the trivial and of the unwitting declaration of the truth. We remember the brother-in-law’s comment in Chapter Six: “Why, he’s a dead man.”
Иван Ильич чувствует, что доктору хочется сказать, "Как делишки?" но что он чувствует, что так нельзя говорить, и говорит, "Как вы провели ночь?"

Иван Ильич смотрит на доктора с выражением вопроса: "Неужели никогда не станет тебе стыдно врать?"

Но доктор не хочет понимать вопрос.

И Иван Ильич говорит:

– Всё так же ужасно. Боль не проходит, не сдаётся. Хоть бы что-нибудь!

– Да, вот вы, больные, всегда так. Ну-с, теперь, кажется, я согрелся, да и аккуратнейшая Прасковья Фёдоровна ничего бы не имела возразить против моей температуры. Ну-с, здоровьтесь. – И доктор пожимает руку.

И, откинув всю прежнюю игривость, доктор начинает с серьёзным видом исследовать больного, пульс, температуру, и начинаются постукивания, прослушивания.

Иван Ильич знает твёрдо и несомненно, что всё это вздор и пустой обман, но когда доктор, став на коленки, вытягивается над ним, прислоняя ухо то выше, то ниже, и делает над ним с значительнейшим лицом разные гимнастические эволюции, Иван Ильич поддаётся этому, как он поддавался, бывало, речам адвокатов, тогда как он уже очень хорошо знал, что они всё врут и зачем врут.

Доктор, стоя на коленках на диване, ещё что-то выстукивал, когда зашумело в дверях шёлковое платье Прасковьи Фёдоровны и послышался её упрек Петру, что ей не доложили о приезде доктора.

Она входит, целует мужа и тотчас же начинает доказывать, что она давно уж вставала и только по недоразумению её не было тут, когда приехал доктор.

Иван Ильич смотрит на неё, разглядывает её всю и в упрёк ставит ей и белизну, и пушистость, и чистоту её рук, шеи, глянец её волос и блеск её полных жизненных глаз. Он всёыми силами душев ненавидит её и прикосновение её заставляет его страдать от прилива ненависти к ней.

Её отношение к нему и его болезни всё то же. Как доктор выработал себе отношение к больным, которое он не мог уже снять, так она выработала одно отношение к нему – то, что он не делает чего-то того, что нужно, и сам виноват, и она любовно укоряет его в этом, – и не могла уже снять этого отношения к нему.

4. That is, to use a very informal and playful version of the standard question: "kak dela" ("how are things going"). Given the prominent role of card games as a metaphor for the empty and artificial life of Ivan Ilich, one might well imagine the doctor inquiring "How's tricks?"

5. The cliche "vsemi silami dushi" ("with all the strength of (his) soul") also, of course, suggests that Ivan Ilich does after all, at least, have a soul which is capable of strong sensations, and therefore that he may not be completely lost spiritually.

6. This very important passage conveys several messages simultaneously. The most obvious concerns the attitude which both the doctor and Praskovya Fyodorovna have adopted toward Ivan Ilich and his illness. The Russian word which Maude translates as "adopted" is 'vyrabotal' ('worked out', 'constructed by effort'), suggesting the artificiality of their relation to him (despite their pleas of sincerity). The doctor's inability to "abandon" this attitude and Praskovya Fyodorovna's inability to "change" it are both reflections of the same Russian word 'snjat' ('to take down', 'to take off, as clothing or covers'). Thus, the attitude which they have adopted toward him is a covering or screen (metaphorically, perhaps, a protective garment) which they have put between him and themselves. Once again, the familiar image of screens, curtains, fences, walls, enclosures, which we have seen so often in the attitudes of Ivan Ilich himself. A second point emerging from this passage is that Praskovya Fyodorovna's superficial attitude toward him is one of loving concern while at the same time it is clear that her actual attitude is one of hostile impatience for his death, that is, that her real attitude is the opposite of her professed attitude. A couple of paragraphs farther down she makes the facetiously intended but none the less curious statement that everything she does for him is done "for my own sake." The text adds this explanation: "He felt that he was surrounded and enmeshed in such a web of falsity that it was hard to unravel anything. Everything she did for him was entirely for her own sake;
– Да ведь вот он, не слушается! Не принимает вовремя. А главное - ложится в такое положение, которое, наверное, вредно ему - ноги вверху.

Она рассказала, как он заставляет Герасима держать себе ноги. Доктор улыбнулся презрительно-ласково: "Что ж, мол, делать, эти больные выдумывают иногда такие глупости; но можно простить".

Когда осмотр кончился, доктор посмотрел на часы, и тогда Прасковья Фёдоровна объявила Ивану Ильичу, что уж как он хочет, а она нынче пригласила знаменитого доктора, и они вместе с Михаилом Даниловичем (так звали обыкновенного доктора) осмотрят и обсудят.

– Ты уж не противься, пожалуйста. Это я для себя делаю, - сказала она иронически, давая чувствовать, что она всё делает для него и только этим не даёт ему права отказаться ей. Он молчал и морщился. Он чувствовал, что ложь эта, окружающая его, так путала его, что уж трудно было разобрать что-нибудь. Она всё над ним делала только для себя и говорила ему, что она делает для себя то, что она точно делала для себя как такую невероятную вещь, что он должен был понимать это обратно.  

Действительно, в половине двенадцатого приехал знаменитый доктор. Опять пошли выслушивания и значительные разговоры при нём и в другой комнате о почке, о слепой кишке и вопросы и ответы с таким значительным видом, что опять вместо реального вопроса о жизни и смерти, который уже теперь один стоял перед ним, выступил вопрос о почке и слепой кишке, которые что-то делали не так, как слёдовало, и на которые вот-вот нападут Михаил Данилович и знаменитость и заставят их исправиться.

Знаменитый доктор простились с серьёзным, но не с безнадёжным видом. И на робкий вопрос, который с поднятыми к нему блестящими страхом и надеждой глазами обратился Иван Ильич, есть ли возможность выздоровления, отвечал, что ручаюсь нельзя, но возможность есть. Взгляд надежды, с которым Иван...
Ильич проводил доктора, был так жалок, что, увидев его, Прасковья Фёдоровна даже заплакала, выходя из дверей кабинета, чтобы передать гонорар знаменитому доктору.

Подъём духа, произведённый обнадёживанием доктора, продолжался недолго. Опять та же комната, те же картины, гардины, обои, склянки и то же своё болеющее, страдающее тело. И Иван Ильич начал стонать; ему сделили вспрыскивание, и он забылся.

Когда он очнулся, стало смеркаться; ему принесли обед. Он поёл с усилением бульона и опять то же, и опять наступающая ночь.

После обеда, в семь часов, в комнату его вошла Прасковья Фёдоровна, одетая как на вечер, с толстыми, подтянутыми грудями и с следами пудры на лице. Она ещё утром напоминала ему о поездке их в театр. Была приезжая Сара Бернар, и у них была ложа, которую он настаивал, чтоб они взяли. Также он забыл про это, и её наряд оскорбил его. Но он скрыл своё оскорбление, когда вспомнил, что он сам настаивал, чтоб они достали ложу и ехали, потому что это для детей воспитательное эстетическое наслаждение.

Прасковья Фёдоровна довольная собой, но как будто виновата. Она присела, спросила о здоровье, как он видел, для того то, чтоб спросить, но не для того, чтобы узнать, знаю, что и узнавать нечего, и начала говорить то, что ей нужно было: что она ни за что не поехала бы, но ложа взята, и едут Элён и дочь и Петрищев (судебный следователь, жених дочери), и что невозможно их пусть одних. А что ей так бы приятнее было посидеть с ним. Только бы он делал без неё по предписанию доктора.

– Да, и Фёдор Петрович (жених) хотел войти. Можно? И Лиза.
– Пускай войдут.

Вошла дочь разодетая, с обнажённым молодым телом, тем телом, которое так заставляло страдать его. Она его выставляла. Сильная, здоровая, очевидно влюбленная и негодующая на болезнь, страдания и смерть, мешающие её счастью.

Вошёл и Фёдор Петрович во фраке, завитый à la Capoul, с длинной жилистой шеёй, обложенной плотно бёлым воротничком, с огромной белой грудью и обтянутыми сильными ляжками в узких чёрных штанах, с одной натянутой белой перчаткой на руке и с клаком.

За ним вполз незаметно и гимназистик в новеньком мундирчике, бедняжка, в перчатках и с ужасной синевой под глазами, знамён которой знал Иван Ильич.

Сын всегда жалок был ему. И страшен был его испуганный и соболезнующий взгляд. Кроме Герасима, Ивану Ильичу казалось, что один Вася понимал и жалел.

Все сёли, опять спросили о здоровье. Произошло молчание. Лиза спросила у матери о бинокле. Произошёл прерыванием между матерью и дочерью, кто куда его дел. Вышло неприятно.

10. Joseph Capoul (1839-1924) a French opera singer known for a hairstyle which featured curls falling over the forehead.
11. The descriptions of the clothing of Praskovya Fyodorovna and Fyodor Petrovich make emphatic use of words suggesting the constriction of their dress: Praskovya Fyodorovna with her "tolstymi podtjanutymi grud'jami" ("plump, tightly cinched, breasts"); Fyodor Petrovich with his "sheej, oblozhennoj plotno belym vorotnichkom" ("neck tightly encased by a white collar"), his "ogromnoj beloj grud'ju" ("enormous white breast"), his "obtjanutoj beloj perchatkoj na ruke" ("white glove drawn tautly onto his hand"). The suggestion would seem to be that even in the matter of clothing these people find it necessary to enclose themselves, hem themselves in, providing a visible refrain to the immediate cause of Ivan Ilich's despair, just prior to these descriptions: "the same old room, the same old curtains, the same little bottles."
Фёдор Петрович спросил у Ивана Ильича, видел ли он Сарру Бернар. Иван Ильич не понял сначала того, что у него спрашивали, а потом сказал:

– Нет, а вы уж видели?

– Да, в "Adrienne Lecouvreur".

Прасковья Фёдоровна сказала, что она особенно хороша в том-то. Дочь возразила. Начался разговор об изяществе и реальности её игры, – тот санный разговор, который всегда бывает один и тот же.

В середине разговора Фёдор Петрович взглянул на Ивана Ильича и замолк. Другие взглянули и замолкли. Иван Ильич смотрел блестящими глазами пред собою, очевидно, негодуя на них. Надо было поправить это, но поправить никак нельзя было. Надо было как-нибудь прервать это молчание. Никто не решился, и всем становилось страшно, что вдруг нарушится как-нибудь приличная ложь, и ясно будет всем то, что есть. Лиза первой решилась. Она прервала молчание. Она хотела скрыть то, что все испытывали, но проговорилась.

– Однако, если ехать, то пора, – сказала она, взглянув на свой часы, подарок отца, и чуть заметно, значительно о чём-то, им двум известном, улыбнулась молодому человеку и встала, зашумев платьем. Все встали, простились и уехали.

Когда они вышли, Ивану Ильичу показалось, что ему легче, лжи не было, – она ушла с ними, но боль осталась. Всё так же боль, всё тот же страх делали то, что ничто не тяжело, ничто не лёгче. Всё хуже.

– Да, пошлите Герасима, – ответил он на вопрос Петра.

12. One of Sarah Bernhardt’s most famous roles was that of Adrienne Lecouvreur in the play of that name by Scribe and Legouve. The heroine of the play is herself an actress, so we are presented here with the family’s desire to hasten away from the bedside of its dying father and husband in order to be present at a play (an exercise in pretending and voluntary self-deception) in which the lead actress is most admired for her portrayal of the life of another actress. The distance between the family’s proposed activity and the reality of life is astonishingly great. The detailed emphasis on their manner of dress, their costumes, as it were, is entirely in the same spirit. Of course, the family’s ability to carry on with its plan of an evening at the theater is made possible in the first place only by pretending that Ivan Ilich is only ill rather than dying. Ivan Ilich resents most of all that he is required to join the family in this pretense. Only Ivan Ilich’s son is exempt from the hatred which Ivan Ilich feels toward his family for their constant lying about his condition and their insistence that he, too, join them in this lie. The son, Vasya, is mentioned here in the same sentence with Gerasim, the only other character who deals truthfully with Ivan Ilich, and who touches him in a meaningful way. In Chapter Twelve, Ivan Ilich’s moment of grace coincides with his hand being grasped by his son. In the context of this passage, we might say that Gerasim and Vasya are concerned with life itself while the rest of the family and household prefers to deal with the imitation of life, both on the stage and in their own lives.

13. There would seem to be a paradox here in that “there is no end” and the “end is inescapable” are asserted in contiguous clauses. This foreshadows Ivan Ilich’s attitude toward the image of the “black sack” which will make its first appearance in Chapter Nine. He feels that “he and his pain” are being pushed into a constricting black sack and that he “was frightened yet wanted to fall through the sack, he struggled but yet co-operated.” This ambivalence is associated with Ivan Ilich’s gradual realization that his life, as he has lived it, is not a real life at all, but only the semblance of a life, a playing at life. If life is not life, then is it death? And what then is the end of that life that is not life? The reversal, the looking at things backward which is so often seen in the text has its ultimate significance in the idea that Ivan Ilich’s life is actually death and only the end of that false life offers the possibility of true life. "Life" is death and "death" is life.
Поздно ночью вернулась жена. Она вошла на цыпочках, но он услыхал её: открыл глаза и поспешно закрыл опять. Она хотела усласть Герасима и сама сидеть с ним. Он открыл глаза и сказала:

– Нет. Иди.
– Ты очень страдаешь?
– Всё равно.
– Прими опиума.

Она согласилась и выпил. Она ушла.

Часов до трёх он был в мучительном забытьи. Ему казалось, что его с болью суют куда-то в узкий чёрный мешок и глубокий, и всё дальше просовывают, и не могут просунуть. 1 И это ужасное для него дело совершается с страданием. И он и бьётся, и хочет провалиться туда, и борется, и помогает. И вот вдруг он оборвался и упал, и очнулся. Всё тот же Герасим сидит в ногах на постели, дремлет спокойно, терпеливо. А он лежит, подняв ему на плечи исхудалые ноги в чулках; свеча та же с абажуром, и та же непрекращающаяся боль.

– Уйди, Герасим, - прошептал он.
– Ничего, посижь-с.
– Нет. Уйди.

Он снял ноги, лёг боком на руку, и ему стало жаль себя. Он подождал только того, чтоб Герасим вышел в соседнюю комнату, и не стал больше удерживаться и заплакал, как дитя. Он плакал о беспомощности своей, о своём ужасном одиночестве, о жестокости людей, о жестокости Бога, об отсутствии Бога. "Зачем ты всё это сделал? Зачем привёл меня сюда? За что, за что так ужасно муучаешь меня?.." 2 Он и не ждал ответа

1. This is the first mention of the image of a narrow, black sack or bag or hole into which Ivan Ilich feels himself being pushed. The image has played an important role in interpretations of the novel which emphasize that Ivan Ilich, led by his sufferings, becomes spiritually reborn as his physical life ebbs away. The black bag, by its shape and its color and the fact that when, in chapter twelve, Ivan Ilich feels that he has broken through the end of the bag into the light, has been seen as an effective symbol of the birth canal. Likewise, the trauma of birth seems well matched with the trauma of Ivan Ilich's suffering and death. This interpretation, of course, fits very well with the concept that the novel privileges the method of "understanding in reverse." It seems quite natural in this context that the image of death should be tautologous with an image of life and also that Ivan Ilich's attitude toward this image should be ambiguous: "he struggled, yet co-operated."

2. Here is another allusion to the narrative of Christ's Passion as contained in the Gospels, specifically to Jesus' outcry "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" (Matt. 27:46 inter alia).
и плакал о том, что нет и не может быть ответа. Боль поднялась опять, но он не шевелился, не звал. Он говорил себе, "Ну ещё, ну бей! Но за что? Что я сделал тебе, за что?" 3

Потом он затих, перестал не только плакать, перестал дышать и весь стал внимание: как будто он прислушивался не к голосу, говорящему звуками, но к голосу души, к ходу мыслей, поднимавшемуся в нём.

- Чего тебе нужно? - было пярвенное ясное, могущее быть выражено словами понятие, которое, он услышал.

И опять он весь предался вниманию такому напряжённому, что даже боль не развлекала его.

- Да, жить, как я жил прежде-хорошо, приятно.
- Как ты жил прежде, хорошо и приятно? - спросил голос. И он стал перебирать в воображении лучшие минуты своей приятной жизни. Но - страшное дело - все эти лучшие минуты приятной жизни казались теперь совсем не тем, чем казались он я тогда. Все - кроме первых воспоминаний детства. Там, в детстве, было что-то такое действительно приятное, с чем можно было жить, если бы он вернулся. Но того человека, который испытывал это приятное, уже не было: это было как бы воспоминание о каком-то другом.

Как только начальство, что результатом был теперешний он, Иван Ильич, так все казавшиеся тогда радости теперь на глазах его таяли и превращались во что-то ничтожное и часто гадкое.

И чем дальше от детства, чем ближе к настоящему, тем ничтожнее и сомнительнее были радости. Начинало это с Правоведения. Там было ещё кое-что истинно хорошее: там было веселье, там была дружба, там были надежды. Но в высших классах уже были реже эти хорошие минуты. Потом, во время первой службы у губернатора, опять появились хорошие минуты: это были воспоминания о любви к женщине. Потом всё это смещалось, и ещё меньше стало хорошего. Далее ещё меньше хорошего, и что дальше, то меньше.

Жениться... так нечаянно, и разочарование, и заботы из-за рта жены, и чувственность, притворство! И это мёртвая служба, эти заботы о деньгах, и всё, и дядья, и двадцать - и всё то же. И что дальше, то мертвеч. Точно равномерно я шёл под гору, воображая, что иду на гору. Так и было. В общественном мнении я шёл на гору, и ровно настолько из-под меня уходила жизнь... И вот готово, умирай!


"Может быть, я жил не так, как должно?" - приходилось ему вдруг в голову. "Но как же не так, когда я делал..."

3. Here, as in the preceding sentence, Ivan Ilich uses the form of the pronoun "you" which is employed when speaking to very close friends and family members, and also, not incidentally, when speaking to God in prayer. "What did I to you" might well be rendered (as the Maude translation does) "What have I done to Thee"?
4. Here is the first explicit indication that Ivan Ilich does indeed have a soul, that he is more than the physiological being which is suffering so dreadfully from the effects of disease. We remember that in Chapter Five his "inner life" was still completely a question of the physical organs located within his body. Here the inner life and voice represent a qualitatively different kind of life. Ivan Ilich's attention has finally been redirected from his physical life and sufferings to his spiritual life and sufferings. We note that since chapter seven it has seemed to him that his spiritual suffering has in fact been greater than his physical pain. At the end of Chapter Nine the thought occurs to him that "Maybe I didn't live as I ought to have done," that is, that he is where he is by his own actions and responsibility. This thought, and the conclusion arising from it, is repeated yet again in each of the three remaining chapters.
всё как сле́дует?" - говори́л он себé и тóтчас же отгоня́л от себé éто единственное разрешение всей зага́дки жи́зни и сме́рти, как чтó-то совершённо невозмóжное.

"Чегó ж ты хóчешь тепе́рь? Жить? Как жить? Жить, как ты живёшь в судé, когда́ судёбный приста́в провозглаша́ет "Суд идёт!..:" Суд идёт, идёт суд, повтори́л он себé. Вот он, суд! Да я же не виновáт! вски́ннул он с злóбой. – За что?" И он переста́л плáкать и, поверну́вшись лицо́м к стенé, стал думать всё об одно́м и том же: зачáм, за что весь э́тот у́жас?

Но скóлько он ни ду́мал, он не нашёл отвéта. И когда́ емú приходи́ла, как она́ приходи́ла емú чáсто, мысль о том, что всё э́то происхо́дит оттого, что он жил не так, он тóтчас вспоми́нал всю пра́вильность своéй жи́зни и отгоня́л э́ту стра́нную мысль.

5. "Sleduet" is a form of the verb "sledovat’" ("to follow"). It is used here in its conventional sense as an impersonal synonym of the personal construction of necessity, "dolzhen + infinitive, in the meaning "as I was supposed to," "as I should have." But the expression also suggests its literal sense of "following." Ivan Ilich is confident that his life could not have been "ne tak" (lit., "not so" but often suggesting "wrong, improper") because he has always behaved as he has in emulation of, following in the footsteps of, his betters and peers in society.

6. The word "sud" can mean "court" in the sense of the judge(s) charged with superintending a trial and it can also mean the trial itself or the result of the trial, the judgement that is rendered by the court. This latter meaning is exemplified in the Russian religious phrase "Strashnyj sud," what in English is called "the Last Judgement" or "Judgement Day."
Прошло еще две недели. 1 Иван Ильич уже не вставал с дивана. Он не хотел лежать в постели и лежал на диване. 2 И, лежа почти всё время лицом к стене, он одиноко страдал всё те же неразрешающиеся страдания и одиноко думал всё ту же неразрешающуюся думу. Что это? Неужели правда, что смерть? И внутренний голос отвечал, "да, правда". "Зачем эти муки"? И голос отвечал, "а так, ни зачем". Дальше и кроме этого ничего не было.

С самого начала болезни, с того времени, как Иван Ильич в первый раз поехал к доктору, его жизнь разделилась на два противоположных настроений, сменявшие одно другое: то было отчаяние и ожидание непонятной и ужасной смерти, то была надежда и исполненное интереса наблюдение за деятельностью своего тела. То перед глазами была одна почка или кишечник, которая на время отклонилась от исполнения своих обязанностей, то была одна непонятная ужасная смерть, от которой ничем нельзя избавиться.

Эти два настроения с самого начала болезни сменяли друг друга; но чем дальше шла болезнь, тем сомнительнее и фантастичнее становились соображения о почке и тем реальнее сознание наступающей смерти.

Стоило ему вспомнить о том, чем он был три месяца тому назад, и то, что он теперь; вспомнить, как равномерно он шел под гору, – чтобы разрушилась всякая возможность надежды.

В последнее время того одинчество, в котором он находился, лежа лицом к спинке дивана, того одинчество среди многолюдного города и своих многочисленных знакомых и семьи, – одночество, полнее которого не могло быть нигде: ни на дне моря, ни в земле, 3 – последнее время этого страшного

1. Chapters Two, Three, and Four cover a period of many years in the life of Ivan Ilich, up to the onset of his illness. In Chapter Seven it was noted that his illness was in its third month. Here we learn that two more weeks have gone by. In Chapter Eleven weeks are mentioned again, and Chapter Twelve begins by mentioning days and concludes with the note that the agony of the patient lasted another two hours. Clearly, the steadily diminishing units of time which are mentioned in the text are matched with the steadily decreasing size of the chapters in which they are mentioned. (See the section “Proportions of the Text” in the “Introduction.”) This brings a steadily accelerating rhythm to the final chapters. The text draws our attention to this in the final paragraph of Chapter Ten: “And the example of a stone falling downwards with increasing velocity entered his mind.” The Russian text might more exactly be translated as: “And the image of a stone flying downward with increasing speed lodged in his soul” (literally, ‘fell into his spirit’ (Russ. ‘zapal v duxu’)).

2. In Tolstoy’s study in his house at Yasnaya polyana (his country estate) the largest item of furniture was a broad couch in black leather which was positioned against the wall just behind the desk and chair at which Tolstoy usually sat while writing. It was at this desk that he wrote “The Death of Ivan Ilich.” The black couch had been in the family a long time. It was on this couch, in fact, that, according to family tradition, Tolstoy himself and each of his siblings had been born in the 1820’s. This couch seems very similar to the one described in Ivan Ilich’s study, on which he lies in his family a long time. It was on this couch, in fact, that, according to family tradition, Tolstoy himself and each of his siblings had been born in the 1820’s. This couch seems very similar to the one described in Ivan Ilich’s study, on which he lies in his final weeks and days with his face turned to the wall. There is an interesting and perhaps significant juxtaposition between the couch in the story as the site of Ivan Ilich’s death and the couch in Tolstoy’s study as the site of his own and his siblings’ births. Here is a picture of Tolstoy in his study with the couch at his back.

3. We note that both of the images supplied here (“at the bottom of the sea” and “in the earth”) suggest places of burial, providing confirmation that Ivan Ilich is, for practical purposes, already long since dead and even buried. Thus, the struggles which he continues to face are suggested once more to be spiritual rather than physical in kind, and to be associated with the rebirth of the spirit. From
одиночества Иван Ильич жил только воображением в прошедшем. Одна за другой ему представлялись картины его прошлого. Начиналось всегда с ближайшего по времени и сводилось к самому отдалённому, к детству, и на нём останавливалось. Вспоминал ли Иван Ильич о варёном черносливе, который ему предлагали есть ныне, он вспоминал о сыром сморщенном французском черносливе в детстве, об особенном вкусе его и об июля слюны, когда дело доходило до косточек, и рядом с этим воспоминанием вкуса возникла целый ряд воспоминаний того времени: няня, брат, игрушки. "Не надо об этом... слышком больно", — говорил себе Иван Ильич и опять переносился в настоящее. Пуговица на спинке дивана и морщины сафьяна. "Сафьян дорог, непрочен; ссора была из-за него. Но сафьян другой был, и другая ссора, когда мы разорвали портфель у отца и нас наказали, а мама принесла пирожки". И опять останавливалось на детстве, и опять Ивану Ильичу было больно, и он старался отогнать и думать о другом.

И опять тут же, вместе с этим ходом воспоминаний, у него в душу шёл другой ход воспоминаний — о том, как усилывалась и росла его болезнь. То же, что дальше незад, то больше было жизни. Больше было и добра в жити, и больше было и самой жизни. И то и другое сливалось вместе. "Как мученья всё идут хуже и хуже, так и вся жизнь шла всё хуже и хуже", — думал он. Одна точка светлая там, назад, в начале жизни, а потом всё чернее и чернее и всё быстрее и быстрее. "Обратно пропорционально квадратам расстояний от смерти", — подумал Иван Ильич. И этот образ камня, летящего вниз с увеличивающейся быстротой, запал ему в душу. Жизнь, ряд увеличивающихся страданий, летит быстрее и быстрее к концу, страшнейшему страданию. "Я лечу..." Он вздрагивал, шевелился, хотел противиться; но уже он знал, что противиться нельзя, и опять усталыми от смотрения, но не могущими не смотреть на то, что было перед ним, глазами глядел на спинку дивана и ждал, — ждал этого страшного падения, толчка и разрушения. "Противиться нельзя, — говорил он себе. — Но хоть бы понять, зачем это? И того нельзя. Объяснить бы можно было, если бы казалось, что я жил не так, как надо. Но этого-то уже невозможно признать", — говорил он сам себе, вспоминая всю законность, правильность и приличие своей жизни. "Этого-то допустить уже невозможно, — говорил он себе, усмехаясь губами, как будто кто-нибудь мог видеть эту его улыбку и быть обманутым ею. — Нет объяснения! Мучение, смерть... Зачем?"

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**this also stems the importance which Ivan Ilich attaches to his memories of childhood and his desire to be a child again and to be treated as a child (Chapter Nine). His preference is to move, in thought, spiritually, back from the life he has led toward the moment of his birth.**

4. The similarity between Ivan Ilich’s reflections ("course of thoughts") pertaining to his illness and physical decline and his deliberate remembering of his life as a whole makes it virtually explicit that his illness is a metaphor of his life. "The one and the other flowed together. As the torments became ever worse and worse, so also did my life as a whole become ever worse."
Так прошло две недели. В эти недели случилось желанное для Ивана Ильича и его жены событие: Петрищев сделал формальное предложение. Это случилось вечером. На другой день Прасковья Фёдоровна вошла к мужу, обдумывая, как объявить ему о предложении Фёдора Петровича, но в эту самую ночь с Иваном Ильичом свершилась новая перемена к худшему. Прасковья Фёдоровна застала его на том же диване, но в новом положении. Он лежал навзничь, стонал и смотрел перед собою остановившимся взглядом.

Она стала говорить о лекарствах. Он перевёл свой взгляд на неё. Она не договорила того, что началла: такая злоба, именно к ней, выражаилась в этом взгляде. — Ради Христа, дай мне умереть спокойно, — сказал он.

Она хотела уходить, но в это время вошла дочь и подошла поздороваться. Он так же посмотрел на дочь, как и на жену, и на её вопросы о здоровье сухо сказал ей, что он скоро освободит их всех от себя. Обе замолчали, посидели и вышли.

— В чём же мы виноваты? — сказала Лиزة матери. — Точно мы это сделали! 1 Мне жалко папа, но за что же нас мучать? 2

В обычное время приехал доктор. Иван Ильич отвечал ему, "да, нет", не спуская с него озлобленного взгляда, и под конец сказал:

— Ведь вы знаете, что ничего не поможете, так остайте.

— Облегчить страдания можем, — сказал доктор.

— И того не можете; остайте.

Доктор вышел в гостиную и сообщил Прасковье Фёдоровне, что очень плохо и что одно средство — опиум, чтобы облегчить страдания, которые должны быть ужасны.

Доктор говорил, что страдания его физические ужасны, и это была правда; но ужаснее его физических страданий были его нравственные страдания, и в этом было главное его мучение.

Нравственные страдания его состояли в том, что в эту ночь, глядя на сонное, добродушное скуластое лицо

1. The tone of Liza's remarks here is the conventional one adopted by people who feel wounded by misdirected anger or blame: "Well, how is it OUR fault? He acts as though WE did this to him!" As so often, however, under the conventional and obvious meaning of the text is hidden the possibility of a more genuine, direct, and specific significance: "How ARE we to blame? It's we OURSELVES who have done this!" This makes the passage resonate, if subtly and obliquely, with Ivan Ilich's own reflections about whether he may have lived his life wrongly and his attitude of offended disbelief that such an incredible possibility might even be suggested.

2. Again a reprise of the question that has so troubled Ivan Ilich, and the suggestion that the answer may be the same: that we have lived wrongly.
Герасима, ему вдруг пришло в голову, "а что, как и в самом деле вся моя жизнь, сознательная жизнь, была не то."

Ему пришло в голову, что то, что ему представлялось прежде совершенной невозможностью, то, что он прожил свою жизнь не так, как должно было, что это могло быть правда. Ему пришло в голову, что те его чуть заметные поползновения борьбы против того, что наивысшее поставленными людьми считалось хорошим, поползновения чуть заметные, которые он тотчас же отгонял от себя, — что они-то и могли быть настоящие, а остальное всё могло быть не то. И его служба, и его устройства жизни, и его семья, и эти интересы общества и слабы - всё это могло быть не то. Он попытался защитить пред собой всё это. 3 И вдруг почувствовал всю слабость того, что он защищает. И защищать нёчего было.

"А если это так, — сказал он себе, — и я ухожу из жизни с сознанием того, что погубил всё, что мне дано было, и поправить нельзя, тогда что?" 4 Он лёг на навзничь и стал совсем по-новому перебирать всю свою жизнь. Когда он увидел утром лакея, потом жену, потом дочь, потом доктора, — каждое их движение, каждое их слово подтверждало для него ужасную истины, открывшуюся ему ночью. Он в них видел себя, всё то, чем он жил, и ясно видел, что всё это было не то, всё это был ужасный огромный обман, закрывающий и жизнь и смерть. 5 Это сознание увеличилось, удостеряло его физические страдания. Он стал и метался и обдергивал на себе одежду. Ему казалось, что она душит и давит его. И за это он ненавидел их.

Ему дали большую дозу опиума, он забылся; но в обед началось опять то же. Он гнал всех от себя и метался с места на место.

Жена пришла к нему и сказала:

— Женя, голубчик, сделай это для меня (для меня?). Это не может повредить, но часто помогает. Что же, это ничего. И здоровые часто...

Она заплакала.

— Да, мой друг? Я позову нашего, он такой милый.

— Прекрасно, очень хорошо, — проговорил он.

Когда пришёл священник и исповедовал его, он смягчился, почувствовал как будто облегчение от своих сомнений, и вследствие этого от страданий, и на него нашла минута надежды. Он опять стал думать о слепой кишке и возможности исправления её. Он причастился со слезами на глазах.

Когда его уложили после причастия, ему стало на минуту легко, и опять явилась надежда на жизнь. Он

3. The grammar of this sentence is that which would be used to say that a lawyer is defending an accused client before the court; Ivan Ilich is portrayed as being both lawyer and judge in the most important case he has ever heard: his own life is on trial. He himself is now in the position that we as readers have been in ever since our judicial guide, Peter Ivanovich, abandoned us to go play bridge after the funeral service at the end of Chapter One.

4. The Russian makes quite clear Ivan Ilich's personal responsibility for the fact that his life was "wrong" (Russ. "ne to"). Maude's translation: "I've lost all that was given to me" is more accurately rendered as "I ruined (Russ. "pogubil") everything that was given to me."

5. Which is as much as to say that the "life" he has led is "not that at all" and so is indistinguishable from death.
стал думать об операции, которую предлагали ему. "Жить, жить хочу", - говорил он себе. Жена пришла поздравить; она сказала обычные слова и прибавила:

– Не правда ли, тебе лучше?

Он, не глядя на неё, проговорил, "да".

Её одежда, её сложение, выражение её лица, звук её голоса - всё сказали ему одно: "Не то. Всё то, чем ты жил и живёшь, - есть ложь, обман, скрывающий от тебя жизнь и смерть". И как только он подумал это, поднялась его ненависть и вместе с ненавистью физические мутильные страдания и с страданиями сознание неизбежной, близкой погибели. Что-то сделалось новое: стало винтить, и стрелять, и сдавливать дыхание.

Выражение лица его, когда он проговорил "да", было ужасно. Проговорив это "да", глядя ей прямо в лицо, он необычайно для своей слабости быстро повернулся ничком и закричал:

– Уйдите, уйдите, остайте меня!

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6. The usual words are "Pozdravlju s prichastiem!" ("(I) congratulate (you) on communing (i.e., on having received the sacrament).
7. One of the sensations of this new dimension of Ivan Ilich's pain is described as "screwing into him," expressed by the verb "vintit" (from the word "vint" [Eng., "screw"]). The reader cannot fail to notice the bitter irony in the fact that this same verb means "to play vint," the card game of which Ivan Ilich has been so fond. His life as he has lived it is the ultimate source of his pain and is, in fact, not life at all, but a form of death.
С этой минуты начался тот три дня не перестававший крик, который так был ужасен, что нельзя было за двумя дверями без ужаса слышать его. В ту минуту, как он ответил жене, он понял, что он пропал, что возврата нет, что пришёл конец, совсем конец, а сомнение так и не разрешено, так и остаётся сомнением.

– У! Уу! У! – кричал он на разные интонации. Он начал кричать, "Не хочу!" – и так продолжал кричать на букву "у".

Все три дня, в продолжение которых для него не было времени, он барахтался в том чёрном мешке, в который просовывала его невидимая непреодолимая сила. Он бился, как бьётся в руках палача приговорённый к смерти, зная, что он не может спастись; и с каждой минутой он чувствовал, что, несмотря на все усилия борьбы, он ближе и ближе становился к тому, что ужасало его. Он чувствовал, что муки его и в том, что он всовывается в эту чёрную дыру, и ещё больше в том, что он не может пролезть в неё. Пролезть же ему мешает признание того, что жизнь его была хорошая. Это-то оправдание своей жизни цепляло и не пускало его вперёд и больше всего мушило его.

Вдруг какая-то сила толкнула его в грудь, в бок, ещё сильнее сдавила ему дыхание, он провалился в дыру, и там, в конце дыры, засветилось что-то. С ним сделалось то, что бывало с ним в вагоне железной дороги, когда думаешь, что едешь вперёд, а едешь назад, и вдруг узнаешь настоящее направление.

– Да, всё было не то, – сказал он себе, – но это ничего. Можно, можно сделать "то". Что ж "то"? – спросил он себя и вдруг затих.

Это было в конце трёхьего дня, за час до его смерти. В это самое время гимназистик тихонько прокрачился к отцу и подошёл к его постели. Умирающий вск кричал отчаянно и кидал руками. Рука его попала на голову гимназистика. Гимназистик схватил её, прижал к губам и заплакал.

1. A reminder of Praskovya Fyodorovna's description (in Chapter One) of how terrible the last days of Ivan Ilich had been for her because she could hear him screaming through multiple closed doors. This is also a metaphorical reminder that in the end unpleasantness cannot be avoided simply by "slamming the door on it."
2. The associated noun "propast'" means "abyss."
3. This is the final appearance of the image of the black sack. We recall Ivan Ilich's ambiguous relation to this sensation: his competing desires to resist and co-operate. Here the desire to "get into it" has supervened and it is only his persistent desire to see his life as good that prevents him from doing so. We know with certainty from the material in the three preceding chapters that his life has not been good, has been characterized in fact as not having been "life" at all.
4. At this moment Ivan Ilich finally realizes that his life has not been life at all in the true sense of the word, and we as readers receive our final cue that the significance of Ivan Ilich's story can only be grasped by seeing it as the reverse of what it might appear to be: not only the story of how he died, but more importantly the story of how he returned to life. The black sack can now seem to represent not the end of life but its return, and the similarity of Ivan Ilich's experience in the black sack to the presumed experience of a baby descending the birth canal and about to be born becomes apparent, especially in the remark that "it became light" at the end of the black hole (the Russian word "dyra" ("hole") can also be used to mean a tunnel). There has been a great deal of comment in the scholarship on the novel on the significance of the black sack and its function in the text. For sources see the bibliography, especially Sorokin (1971) and Jahn (1993).
В это самое время Иван Ильич провалился, увидел свет, и ему открылось, что жизнь его была не то, что надо, но что это можно еще поправить. Он спросил себя, что же "то", и затих, прислушиваясь. Тут он почувствовал, что руку его целует кто-то. Он открыл глаза и взглянул на сына. Ему стало жалко его. Жена подошла к нему. Он взглянул на неё. Она с открытым ртом и с неотертymi слезами на носу и щеке, с отчаинным выражением смотрела на него. Ему жалко стало её.

"Да, я мучаю их, - подумал он. - Им жалко, но им лучше будет, когда я умру". Он хотел сказать это, но не в силах был выговорить. "Впрочем, зачем же говорить, надо сделать", - подумал он. Он указал жене взглядом на сына и сказал:

- Уведи... жалко... и тебя...  

И вдруг ему стало ясно, что то, что томило его и не выходило, что вдруг всё выходит сразу, и с двух сторон, с десяти сторон, со всех сторон. Жалко их, надо сделать, чтобы им не больно было. Избавить их и самому избавиться от этих страданий. "Как хорошо и как просто, - подумал он. - А боль? - спросил он себя, - Её куда? Ну-ка, где ты, боль?"

Он стал прислушиваться.

"Да, вот она. Ну что ж, пу скай боль".

"А смерть? Где она?"

Он искал своего прежнего привычного страха смерти и не находил его. Где она? Какая смерть? Страха никакого не было, потом что и смерти не было.

Вместо смерти был свет.

- Так вот что! - вдруг вслух проговорил он. - Какая радость!

Для него всё это произошло в одно мгновение, и значение этого мгновения уже не изменилось. Для присутствующих же агония его продолжалась ещё два часа. В груди его кокотало что-то; измождённое тело его вздрагивало. Потом рёже и рёже стало кокотанье и хрипенье.

5. Another allusion to the Passion narrative, the passage in which Jesus, near death, entrusts his mother with the care of the apostle John with the words "Mother, behold thy son; son, thy mother" (John, 19:26-27).

6. The confusion reflected here can be seen as a moment of coalescence between the spiritual concerns of the novel and the physiological description of Ivan Ilich's illness and death. At the final moment the forgiveness requested for a life that was wrong becomes mixed with the passage out of that life, figured metaphorically in the desire to "fall right through" the black sack. In this way, the novel may be seen to remain true both to its account of Ivan Ilich's physical death and its story of his spiritual rebirth.

7. While the entire course of the story of the life of Ivan Ilich has prepared us for this moment at which the space available to him would shrink down to no space at all (his movement from the breadth of the provinces, to localization in a single city, to confinement at home rather than going to work, to a preference to remain always in his study, to his final positioning on the sofa, and then at last to a particular position on the sofa--facing into the back of it). As this moment is reached, however, these confinements are transcended and Ivan Ilich is precipitated into a region which has no limits whatever: "In place of death there was light." A similar phenomenon occurs with respect to the dimension of time. The steadily shortening temporal framework (from years, to months, to weeks, to days, to hours) has been leading Ivan Ilich to the moment when his time is up, when no time at all remains. Instead, time, too, is transcended and we learn that: "all this happened in a single instant, and the meaning of that instant did not change." This changeless instant is described in the Russian as one that "no longer continued to change" (Russ. "uzhe ne izmenjalos"). It is also clear, however, that the ordinary course of time, despite the transcendence asserted in these passages, also continues. Although Ivan Ilich has escaped, somehow, the ruin of his body, that body does still continue its course toward death without interruption: "For those present, his agony continued for another two hours."
– Кончено! - сказал кто-то над ним.
Он услыхал эти слова и повторил их в своей душе. "Кончена смерть, - сказал он себе. – Её нет больше".
Он втянул в себя воздух, остановился на половине вздоха, потянулся и умер.

8. This is the last of several allusions to the Passion story related in the Gospels. Tolstoy here uses the very same expression which he had employed, in his own translation of the Gospels, in emending the received Russian (Slavonic) translation of John, 19:30. It is, besides, a final affirmation of the principle of reading in reverse which we have been pursuing through these annotations; the final note that the novel sounds would seem to be not that the life of Ivan Ilich is finished, but that it has begun again or been reclaimed.
BIBLIOGRAPHY OF STUDIES PERTAINING TO "THE DEATH OF IVAN ILYICH"

Selected Bibliography of Primary Sources
Selected Bibliography of Secondary Sources
Note about PDF version

“The Death of Ivan Ilich”: An Electronic Study Edition of the Russian Text works best as an online book. The bibliographies in this section contain links that provide access to the articles, books, and book chapters listed. For complete functionality, please visit the online version.

https://open.lib.umn.edu/ivanilich
**Selected Bibliography of Primary Sources**

*Polnoe sobranie sochinenii v devyanosto tomakh*. 90 vols [Complete Collected Works in Ninety Volumes]. Moscow and Leningrad: Gosudarstvennoe Izdatel'stvo Khudozhestvennoi Literatury, 1928-1958. Called the “Jubilee Edition” because its publication commenced on the one hundredth anniversary of Tolstoi’s birth, this is the standard scholarly edition of Tolstoi’s works. It contains printed and manuscript variants, supplemented by introductions to and commentary on the texts. In addition, it contains the most complete collection of Tolstoi’s letters, diaries, notebooks, and other personal papers. Online access to the entire 90 vols. is available via [tolstoy.ru](http://tolstoy.ru). Text of and commentary on *The Death of Ivan Il’ich* (Russian title, *Smert’ Ivana Il’icha*) is in volume 26 of this edition: text, pp. 61-113; variant readings, pp. 505-28; commentary (by L. P. Grossman), pp. 679-91. The original Jubilee Edition has a note that the contents are free to reproduce.

*The Death of Ivan Il’yich*. In *Tolstoy’s Short Fiction*, edited and with revised translations by Michael R. Katz, 123-67. New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1991. Of the many translations of *The Death of Ivan Il’yich* currently available, this edition, originally translated by Louise and Aylmer Maude, provides the best text for study. It provides a translation of the text by persons who were closely acquainted with Tolstoi and who had the benefit of his advice with respect to the translation of difficult passages. Their work has been further improved by the revisions of the editor. The Norton edition also contains a helpful supplement of scholarly materials, including extracts from Tolstoi’s personal papers and letters, a selection of scholarly articles on Tolstoi’s short fiction, a chronology of his life and works, and a selected bibliography. The Maude translation as originally published can be found on Wikisource.


*Lev Nikolaeovich Tolstoi: Materialy k biografii s 1886 po 1892 g. (Lev Nikolaeovich Tolstoi: Materials towards a biography 1886-1892)*, L. D. Gromova-Opul’skaia. Moskva: Izd-vo Akademii nauk SSSR, 1979. A compendious documentary record of Tolstoy’s literary and other activities between 1886 and 1892, the period in which *The Death of Ivan Ilich* was finished and first published.

*Lev Nikolaeovich Tolstoi: Materialy k biografii s 1881 po 1885 g. (Lev Nikolaeovich Tolstoi: Materials towards a biography 1881-1885)*, N. N. Gusev, Moskva: Izd-vo Akademii nauk SSSR, 1970. A compendious documentary record of Tolstoy’s literary and other activities between 1881 and 1885, the period in which *The Death of Ivan Ilich* was begun and largely written.


*Lev Tolstoi. Повести и рассказы: книга для чтения с комментариями на английском языке (Tales and Stories: A
Book for Reading with Commentaries in English), E. G. Babaev (ed.). Moskva: Russkiĭ iazyk, 1978. A study version of the texts of several of Tolstoy’s stories, fully stressed and with commentary.
**Selected Bibliography of Secondary Sources**

It is often said that *The Death of Ivan Ilich* is the masterpiece of the later Tolstoy, but Vladimir Nabokov goes even farther in declaring it the writer’s most artistic, most perfect, and most sophisticated achievement. The secondary bibliography on Tolstoy and his various writings is very large in general, and that on this story is no exception. The majority of the scholarship, of course, has been produced by persons interested in the novel mainly as an outstanding example of 19th-century European literature. But ample attention has also been paid to it from other points of view.

For the purposes of the present bibliography, which is extensive, but far from exhaustive, it has seemed sensible to divide the fairly large number of items into more manageable groups. I have categorized the entries under three main rubrics. The first I have labelled as General Studies. The unifying characteristic of this group is its focus on the novel in and of itself—its literary artistry, its thematic significance, its place within Tolstoy’s oeuvre and world literature. The second rubric I have styled Comparative. The numerous papers collected here are devoted to the study of the relationship between *The Death of Ivan Ilich* and one or more other works or writers. The final rubric, Miscellany, is the most varied. The studies catalogued here have in common that they use the novel as an illustration in the presentation of subject matter not necessarily related to its literary value. Here you will find the novel discussed in a variety of contexts: medical, psychological, religious, philosophical, ethical, pedagogical (how to teach the novel or how to use the novel to teach), legal, even the life of the businessman or woman or the care of the dying. The first rubric contains a fairly complete bibliography of relevant works. The second provides a fair sample of the available works. The third provides a limited sample sufficient to show the variety of the studies that have appeared.

- [General Studies section of the bibliography](#)
- [Comparative Studies section of the bibliography](#)
- [Miscellany section of the bibliography](#)

Many of the links in these bibliographies point to citations in Google Scholar. If you are a member of an academic institution such as a college or university, we encourage you to link your library to your Google Scholar account. This will enable you to access many of the articles through your library.
Selected Bibliography - General Studies Secondary Sources


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