

~~Large Bay~~ ~~throughout to Barin~~, ~~was it~~ ~~st~~ ~~as above~~.
~~Change~~ ~~Princess~~ ~~Barin~~ ~~God's Journey~~
~~Change~~ ~~Barin~~ ~~off to Pavel Petrovitch~~ ~~by Marie Lavroff~~

The house was very big, and very old,
and very lonely. In some parts of Europe, it
would have been called a castle, for it stood
four square with walls two yards thick, and there
was a strong tower at one corner. But, here,
a hundred miles from Kazan, it was just the House
of the Baron. [Little Dascha was never very
frightened. The loneliness of the land came
natural to her. Nobody knew who she was, but people
said that there must be Tartar blood in her
because her face was very Mongolian, even as a baby,
and her hair was fox color. Probably it would get
darker when she got older. [No, she was never
frightened, brave little six-year old, not even
Paul Petrovitch Goluchinoff
of the Baron in his worst fits of melancholy rage,
for she had an all-powerful protectress in the pale
woman who ruled the house, Maria Samokaya. For the
Baron was a bit of an adventurer. There were periods

in his past that would not bear investigation. And, his wife was the daughter of a general, a Prince of the Empire, a man who stood very well indeed with the Czar.

The Barón beat everybody else, not only in the house, but for twenty miles around. One does not resist a man whose father-in-law is a general. And, besides, God had afflicted him. He was never quite like the other people. He was more human and sane when he was drunk than at other times, thought the peasants.

But, drunk or sober, he never lifted his hand against the thin, pale, fragile woman whom he had married. And he never opposed her.

She had never had any children, and little Dascha had been adopted to fill the empty place. On that one occasion, indeed, the Barón had registered

one last, ineffectual protest. He wanted to know why, if she must have a child in the house, she could not take a boy.

However, there was a good deal of boy in the queer little Tartar girl. She was a wild, scape-grace child, always in mischief. But when ~~she~~ ^{thwarted or} ~~was~~ annoyed, she would retire into herself almost like some Chinese monk might do, sitting motionless in a corner, forgetful of everything but the trouble of the moment.

Maria Ivanovna

~~The Baroness~~ herself thought there was something unnatural in such fits and tried to break the child of the habit, but ^{for will} ~~will~~, little Dascha was the stronger of the pair.

It was a long time, indeed, before her foster-mother could find out what was the meaning of her sulkiness. But, once, in an outburst of frankness, the girl said:

"Somebody does harm to me. I say nothing.

I tell God. You wait. You will see that good does not come of that."

"Well, baby," said the Baroness, "why does it take you so long to tell God?"

"Oh," said Bascha, "God lives a long way off. I am sometimes very tired before I get to him. But I never give up."

It was a very strange and solitary family that lived in the big house, in the lonely land. The *Baroness* saw no friends at all, except that now and then some of her relations would come from Moscow or *Petrograd* ~~St. Petersburg~~ to visit her.

Their estate was an enormous one. It was thirty miles to the next house of any landed proprietor.

Paul Petrovitch
~~The Baron~~ had no friends at all of his own rank. Strange stories were told of how he had left the army, and stories even more sinister as to how he

had managed to marry into so exalted a family as he had.

He was a short, strong^{ly} built man, with a
^{et}bully head nearly bald, a long pair of fierce moustaches,
and a clean shaved chin. His nose was short and
blunt; his eyes, small, beady and malevolent. All his
notion of human society was drinking bouts in the Piv-
naya with the peasants of the village. His mistress
was the lowest and dirtiest of all the serfs.

He had managed after long and careful
maneuvers to get her into the house as an occasional
helper in the scullery.

^{poor lady}
The ~~Barenova~~ knew nothing of this, and
would not have cared. She had resigned herself to
her life of utter loneliness. Like so many Russians
of the most strictly religious type, she felt acutely
the need of self-torture. She accepted her long
imprisonment, for one could hardly speak of it as
anything else, as the just punishment for real or

imaginary errors of her earlier life.

The Baron might have tolerated any other kind of woman. The cold rigidity of his wife was an abhorrence to him. Indeed, ^{Maria Vaslovna} ~~the Baroness~~ had no softer feelings in her life at all. Her religion was as arid as the Steppes. Her only weak spot was little Dascha, whom she cherished with a love that was really more religious than it was human. Indeed, she had reason to release her grip on life, for she was slowly, very slowly, dying of consumption.

It is impossible to imagine a greater contrast than that between the two women ~~in the Baron's~~

~~and~~
Nadiah, the maid, was a stout, muscular wench, violent, drunken and degraded, but enormously vital. A fanciful man might have thought of her as a demon sprung from the very soil itself. She was fierce and surly. She had probably not five hundred words in her whole vocabulary, and her ideas were

gross almost to bestiality. She was entirely destitute of any moral sense. But, beyond this mask lay a brain, which, under other conditions, might have fitted a statesman. You would have got no hint of it, save in the smouldering fire of her wolfish eyes. And even in them, you would probably have read nothing but a savage and predatory instinct.

You would have supposed that her ambitions were bounded by the satisfaction of the moment. But, in reality, she had, perhaps hardly formulated in consciousness, a lust of power which knew neither bounds nor scruples.

In any other country, a woman with such ideas would have hastened to grasp at the obvious purifications which lead to power. She would have tried to wash, to dress herself attractively, to acquire some education.

In the country of Catherine the Great, such methods are not necessary. You will remember how John the Pannonian, the blacksmith, destroyed the Infant Protus and grasped the sceptre in his great gnarled fist without any more ado about it.

So, all that Nadia could see of the whole planet was the big, square house, and she wanted that for her own.

All she could see of humanity was the master of the house, whom she had in her grasp, and the mistress of the house, who prevented her from making use of her victory.

Between the thought of murder and the dead, however, lay an abyss. There was the certainty of vengeance, and there was the dread of the supernatural. But here came to her aid the inexorable patience of the Russian peasant. She had a quality which would have saved Napoleon if

he had possessed it. She knew how to wait. She did not even take any steps to gain a firmer grasp, to establish her~~self~~ footing in the household more securely. The Barón was her slave. Of what use would it be to do anything whatever when she had that vantage?

As it so often turns out in life, if one is honestly resigned to wait, one does not have to wait so long after all: ~~before~~

Before she had been in the house a year, the Barón~~ess~~ found her sickness leap suddenly forward. A week's tussle with the Grim Old Man, and she was gone.

It was on the day of the funeral itself that a long heralded storm broke out in the house. The Barón~~ess~~ had wished to be buried with ~~the~~ her jewelled cross, crude emeralds and amethysts bubling from rough hammered gold. When the time came to close the coffin the ~~cross~~ ^{cross} was no where to be found.

Everyone in the house was rather drunk, and
a great ^h ^a hallooabaloo was aroused. A person of any
intelligence would have known who had taken it. The
village pope was a notorious thief, and it was not
the first time that the spiritual advantages of his
presence had had to be paid for by ^{material} ~~moral~~ disadvantages.

But the room where the dead ^{woman} ~~one~~ lay was
filled with beings half ² crazy with emotion, and
nothing was to be heard but accusations and recri-
minations mingled with passionate protestations
and appeals to the Deity to bear witness to what
was going on, which some might consider a highly
impolitic proceeding if it had been likely to have
any results whatever.

There was one person who had not the
normal activity of the brain, that superficial
quality of swift re-action without reflection,
whose evidence is talk. This was a brain that

apprehended situations in some deep stratum of the soul, and the result of whose ^tsuble, secret operations is to make decisions which really decide things.

When the hubbub chanced for a moment to be lulled, Nadia~~l~~, who had been watching the scene silently out of the ~~dark~~ corners of her ^{sombre}eyes, came ^{maste of the house}heavily across the floor towards the ~~Baron~~. Her very motion might have suggested some inexorable engine of destruction.

Petrivitch She made most humble reverence to ~~the~~ *Paul*
~~Baron~~ and said, "I saw Dascha with it."

The words were quite enough. It let everybody out.

The pope immediately said, "So that was the glittering thing I noticed in her hand a little while ago."

And soon other witnesses came forward, including one, who had actually seen the child take it from the breast of the dead woman.

The next thing was to find Dascha. The child was playing in a little coppice which fringed the sluggish stream that wound around the great tower of the house.

She denied all knowledge of the cross, and when she heard the nature of the accusation, shut her little mouth firmly and sat down where she was.

The Baron grew very angry. His wife was dead. There was no one to restrain him. His sullen hatred for the child, pent up for years, broke loose. He shook her and slapped her, punctuating his actions with curses.

The child took no more notice of him than if she had been carved of wood. The moment he stopped, there she was once more sitting like an

idol, and nothing but the quick beating of her little heart testified to ^{her} the emotion.

At last the pope, possibly stricken by some touch of remorse, began to protest.

Paul Petrowitch

~~The Baron~~ turned on him with a savage oath, took him immediately by the shoulders, spun him around, and dismissed him with a vigorous kick.

But the others also took Dascha's part.

She was so sweet, so playful, so natural, so witty in her childish way, that everybody loved her, that is, when he or she happened to think of it.

But the Baron, ^{off} beating them all like a huntsman driving the hounds from ~~the~~ a dead fox, and having picked her up by the nape of her neck, flung her across his shoulder and crying out, "Foundling ~~that~~ she is, now let somebody else find her" ^{strode} ~~spring~~ to the stable, leaped on his favorite horse and rode away ^{across} ~~unto~~ the Steppes with her.

It was a day before he returned, and

no one ever knew what he had done with Dascha, except Nadia, to whom he confessed that he had given a sum of money to some merchants, who were travelling towards Nizhni Novgorod, to take her with them.

II.

Pavel Petrovitch ~~Kolost~~
~~Baron Goluchinoff~~ was not long in discovering that he had exchanged King Log for King Stork. Nadia closed upon him as if it were a mountain that fell upon a man and buried him.

In a week, she was the absolute mistress of the household; but, having achieved her ambitions, *she* did not enlarge her horizon. She had got all she wanted, or ever could want, for the simple reason that she knew of nothing else; and she proceeded to enjoy it to the utmost.

She turned the house into a pigsty.

The servants had no duties any more, save to get drunk.

Orgies of the most outrageous character were the rule of the house. She would ^{invite} ~~ask~~ ~~the~~ wandering bands of Gypsies to camp in the great hall. The furniture was broken up for fire wood, and the glassware used for missiles.

She was supremely happy. There was not a cloud on the horizon. She was not one of those women who ruin a man, for she did not know what diamonds were. The Barón's income was more than sufficient for all the debauchery and drink that heart could wish.

He, too, was happy in his hoggish way. He became absolutely slovenly in his dress, and only changed his linen by a whim. He let his beard grow long.

The household readily settled down into the new routine. Month after month passed by with scarce an incident beyond the putting out of somebody's eye, or something of the sort, always in a

perfectly friendly manner, so that the trifle was forgotten and forgiven as soon as the blood stopped flowing.

There was no doctor in the village. The diseases of the people were attended to at intervals by travelling quacks, who competed with the old, wise women who prepared medicines ~~from~~ of simples. But if a doctor had chanced to pay a visit to the old big house, he might have warned ^{its master} ~~the Baron~~ that his course of life was not conducive to longevity.

There is a peculiar action of alcohol which is true with regard to certain temperaments and constitutions. A man becomes as it were preserved in his spirit. He never seems to be ill. It is almost as if time passed him by. But, now and again, an accident may break down this mummification of the devotee of Bacchus.

One winter's night, twelve years after the death of his wife, ^{Paul Petrovitch} ~~the Baron~~ made a wager with a

travelling salesman. It was a race across the river which bounded the edge of the village. It was filled with broken ice, heaped up in hummocks at the curve, and with black pools of water glimmering darkly between them.

The whole crowd, clutching bottles of vodka, staggered out of the great house down to the stream. The race began. But before he had got half way, ~~Boris Golushineff~~ ^{Kleist} ~~slipped down the steep-~~
Paul Petrovitch
ness of the hummock and found himself in the river.

Men from the village, drawn by the drunken shouts of the crowd, had gathered to watch the race, and while the others laughed and cheered, they brought ropes and pulled out the man near drowning.

It was a long while before he came back to life. The chill came near to be his bane. But luckily for his life there was a woman in the town *village* who had been a nurse in the Crimean War and understood such conditions. She installed herself in the big

sick man

house and watched the ~~Baron~~ day and night, while Nadia, perpetually drunk, only came in from time to time to curse ~~the Baron~~ ^{him} for being sick. It was her way of expressing her love. What she wanted, what she really cared for, was a man to join her in her amusements. And while she had no scruples about *Paul Petrovitch* fidelity, ~~the Baron~~ was the lord of the district, and it was her pride that she had him under her thumb.

Not long

There were times in ~~the Baron's~~ illness when the nurse almost despaired, and Nadia, ~~she~~ understood, in her dark soul that his death would be the end of her empire. She said to herself that she ought to have married him long before, ^{and that} ~~but~~ she must do it now. But the vodka with which she had saturated herself for so many years stepped between idea and execution.

Paul Petrovitch

It was ~~the Baron~~ who broached the subject. His sickness had washed all gross desires from him.

He began to live again in the memories of early boyhood. His religious training knocked at the door of his dull conscience. He began to think, in a quite conventional, bourgeois way, of making reparation to the woman whom he had wronged.

A severe sickness is very trying to one's sense of humour.

He spoke of the matter to his nurse, and she, *thought it her clear duty to* ~~the~~ good old soul, confirmed him in his idea. The upshot was that one day when he seemed sinking, she sent for the pope, and, dragging Nadia from her carousals with some Gypsies who were passing through, had them safely married.

That the sick man
It is possible ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~man~~ was really affected in his subconsciousness by the superstitious idea of reparation, for from the moment of his marriage he began rapidly to mend. Ten days later he was up and about.

But he was a man essentially changed.

His eye caught the dirt and disorder of the house,
which had never once been cleaned in twelve years.

He began to remember how different it had been while
/vanovna
Maria ~~Sanskaya~~ lived. An ineffable weariness and
disgust swept through him. And, yet, such is the
force of habit, no sooner had he found Nadia lying
drunk in the kitchen, than he called for drink.

But drink is a very curious thing. It
requires two parties to the transaction. *Paul Petritch*
The ~~Baron~~
Paul Petritch
who was drinking now was not the ~~Baron~~ who had drunk
before.

Previously, his nature had been merely
gross, and vodka had accentuated that quality in
him. Now, he was purified of bestiality by that
close call from death, and the obedient alcohol
now accentuated that quality just as it had done
the former.

all right
He got drunk, ~~already~~, but instead of his
losing himself in a phantasia whose theme was animal

satisfaction, it gave him ~~the~~ clarity of vision, like that of a drowning man who can comprehend in an instant the whole vista of life.

He became melancholy, for that was part of his original nature, but it was not the fierce and irritable melancholia which had characterized that type of mood during his first wife's life time. It was a pure, a mystic melancholia, and the chorus was, "What a rotten thing life is. And, anyhow, what a mess you've made of it."

And when that thought took clear shape in his mind, his eyes fell upon his wife. In twelve years, she had grown old and fat. She was incredibly dirty. Her hair ^{was} matted with mud. Her clothes were filthy beyond words, torn and stained. It did not seem as if she put them on. One might have said that they had grown on her, like moss upon a rotten oak stump.

And, then again, came the fierce counter-

attack of habit. She was the woman who gratified every vile and perverted habit that he had ever had. To use his own language, she was the woman whom he loved.

As if in answer to this thought, she came out of her drunken stupor. There were several other people in the kitchen, but they never stirred. It was certain that they would not stir for many an hour yet.

Nadia came to her husband, staggering over the flags of the kitchen. She caught him fiercely in her fat arms, and smothered him with drunken kisses. The tumult in his soul increased almost to the point of ecstasy. All the sensual side of his nature, developed through years of indulgence, roused an almost incoherent passion in him. The perceptive faculties in him, rendered exquisitely acute by the emaciation of his sickness and rooted deep in the soil of his earliest training, cried bitterly, "That thing is your wife!"

He thrilled with horror and disgust. Then, rose the other wave, insurgent and insistent; and, alternating, these two violences drove him to the edge of insanity.

A moment came when he could no longer distinguish between them, and it was at that moment *his wife reeled; and dragged him* that ~~they fell~~ together to the ground.

As chance would have it, there was a rusty carving knife lying upon the floor within reach of his hand, and even as he swooned beneath her kisses, he reached out for it and drove it slowly ~~and deliberately~~ into her throat.

Kleist
~~Baron Goluchineff~~ did not know what he had *Paul Petrovitch* done for a little while. When he came to himself, the other people in the room were still asleep. He, on the other hand, was more awake than he had ever been in his whole life. His brain had never been very active, but at this moment it was supernaturally acute. He understood perfectly well that he had done

murder. He understood perfectly well that he was free from any possibility of suspicion. Furious brawls had been too common in that house. More than once a man or a woman had been wounded right unto death. No one would suspect a convalescing invalid of the crime. He had no motive that any one could ^{imagine} ~~get~~. Any one of the dozen people in that kitchen might have done it. When they woke up, it would be their business to look after it.

All he had to do was to take a stroll in the village, chat pleasantly with the people whom he might find there. He was sure he could do it. He did not feel the slightest tremor, either of remorse or fear.

The lovely sun of spring shone beyond the walls of the old big house. He went quietly upstairs, put on his coat and hat, and went out of the house humming a tune.

III.

Kleist

When ~~Baron Goluchinoff~~ came to the village,

Paul Petrovitch

he found a warm welcome from everybody whom he met.

The mind of the Russian is admirably simple and well-ordered. He never mistakes accidents for essentials.

A Czar might be a very terrible person. He might be stamped with every crime. He might be guilty of every oppression. But he is the Little Father, Temporal and Spiritual Head of the Empire, which is the civilized world. And as a father he is to be loved and revered, as the representative of God on earth.

the Condowner

Similarly, ~~the Baron~~ might have been rather

oppressor

a wicked ~~Baron~~, and the serfs might be ready to burn down the roof over his head and roast him in the embers, but he never ceases to be the Dear Baron,

Vice Regent of the Czar, one ray of that Czar's sunshine. The peasants must love him with the love not only of a child for a father, but that of a

mother for a child. "He has been near to death and God has preserved him to us and this is the happiest day in our lives".

It is hard for those who do not know Russia to understand such psychology.

The result of it was that, with the fine weather and the love of his villagers, *Pavel Petrovitch* ~~the Baron~~ suddenly found himself in a world of simple, child-like happiness. He experienced the relief of one whose sins have been washed away, and wished such a state to endure forever.

It was only when he became hungry that he thought of returning to his house. But the thought of that house was another spiritual awakening. It was not a real house at all to him. It was a nightmare from which he had awakened. But, again, his physical being aroused in him the impulse to return to that house, and this was a thing which he understood that he could never do.

He vizualized the twenty years he had spent there with absolute lucidity. He could never go there again.

But then the situation was quite simple. He would go to his friend, Stepan Pavlowitch, the merchant, and draw on him for funds. He would go to spend the spring in the Crimea. It was perfectly natural that one recovering from pneumonia should take just that step.

People in Russia do not scrutinize closely the behaviour of individuals. Every one is allowed to do things in his own way.

There was no reason why he should start from his house with a large number of trunks and the flourish of trumpets.

So he went to his friend's house and took Ten Thousand Rubles. He engaged a carriage and set out on his travels, a free man.

The fresh air and the swift motion exhilarated him more than ever. He felt that by his act he had cut himself off completely from his past. He knew perfectly well that he stood in no danger whatever.

The evening had fallen when he came to the market town of the district and put up at the hotel. He dined well, with no passion for drink. A small bottle of light champagne was all that he touched. And when his head sank on the pillow, he slept instantly, dreamlessly, like a tired child.

In the morning, he woke early. He could not think where he was. He could not remember any of the events which had led up to his being in this strange place.

One may suppose that there are few people to whom this experience has not happened at one time or another. And it is always a little embarrassing to people of weak mentality, perhaps even a little terrifying.

Pavel Petrovitch

To ~~the Baron~~, enfeebled by his long sickness, and no doubt sub-consciously affected by the remembrance of what he had passed through, the situation was one of horror.

It presented itself to him in a shape which he had never previously envisaged. He said to himself, "Now I know who I am, and where I am, and how I am here. I am a murderer running away."

That, you see, had been the true reason for his flight, though that aspect ^{had} never previously presented itself to his consciousness. He was a murderer, running away, though he had not known it till that moment.

But the idea, once presented to him in such form, took complete possession of him. He immediately began to think of the things which would naturally occur to any one in such a situation. He did not think of the truth, that there was no chance whatever of any one suspecting him. He simply thought, "How shall I escape notice?"

Thus

So, first of all, it occurred to him that he must change his appearance. So he dressed quietly and quickly, went down-stairs and ordered his breakfast. He walked down the street until he came to a barber shop.

The proprietor had not yet arrived at that early hour in the morning. The only person in the shop was an assistant, a boy, ~~of~~ some eighteen years old, with a mass of chestnut hair, a bright, quick smile, and eyes, large, lustrous and intense.

Paul Petrovitch

~~Caluchineff~~ took a swift fancy to him.

He exchanged greetings far more cordial than his wont, and asked for a clean shave. It would be easy to make some laughing excuse for the change in his appearance at the hotel. A convalescent going to some fashionable resort in the Crimea does not need a big, black beard. He began to try his excuses on the young barber, who acquiesced in a flow of pleasant conversation.

"This is the time to go to the Crimea," said

the boy, "the spring wind blows cold over from Tartary.

You see, Gospodin, how my hand trembles, although the sun is up and shining brightly."

"Yes, this is spring weather. I have waited a long while through a dreary winter."

"Your hair is a little thin on the top, sir, can't I sell you this elixir, which is made by the cleverest chemist from Paris, itself?

"No, sir, you need not be afraid, if my hand trembles. I have been shaving people for several years, and I have never had an accident."

"No, my boy, I would trust you with anything," ~~laughed~~ *laughed the man in the chair* ~~Golobinski~~, "I have half a mind to ask you to be my valet. What do you say to leaving this dull, little town and sunning yourself among the fine ladies on the Plage?"

"The offer is tempting," said the boy, "but I am on a journey, and I am very near its end. It has taken me a long while to get to this town which is

not far from the place that I have always wanted to go to.

"Strange, as it may seem to you, I think there is a God who speeds travellers even when they least expect it."

Paul Petrovitch.

"I hope He will speed me," replied ~~the Baron~~.

"I have no doubt of that," cried the young barber.

"It seems almost a pity for you to lose that beautiful beard. I admired your appearance so much when you came into the shop. You look quite different now. Of course, I do not mean to say that I do not admire you as you are. Though, perhaps, a man never looks his best with a lot of lather on his face."

Paul Petrovitch.

~~The Baron~~ laughed cheerfully.

"Talking of accidents," said the boy, "it seems so extraordinary to me that suicides have no more sense. They try to cut through the thick muscles of the neck or pierce through the bony structure of the

larynx, and as a surgical fact, it requires the greatest determination as well as considerable muscular strength to reach any vital artery in this direction. But, on the other hand, the jugular vein lies very near the surface, and I sometimes think that beards were intended as a sort of protection to this part from some cutting or piercing instrument."

The boy's words, innocent as they were, filled *Pavel Petrovitch* ~~the Baron~~ with a clammy terror. Was it not in that vein that he had stabbed his wife?

The boy noticed ^{the} a change in his eyes.

"I hope that you will let me sell you some of ^{special} our cream to use after shaving," he said, as though purposely ignoring the sweat which had broken out on the forehead of his customer.

Pavel Petrovitch
"Thank you," said ~~the Baron~~, "perhaps, it will be as well for me to take a pot with me." But he spoke through his clenched teeth in cold desperation.

his customer's

The boy wiped ~~the Baron's~~ forehead with a napkin.

"I fear you have been ill, sir," he said,
"and are not quite recovered."

Pavel Petrusvitch

"Why, yes," said ~~the Baron~~, "I told you I had
been ill when first I came into the shop."

"Ah," said the boy, "I do not think you know
what illness is. I have a sickness of the soul."

x

"Shall I go over twice, sir?"

"Yes, ~~that is all right~~" "I want to be shaved
close."

"I will shave very close," said the boy,
"but I will be careful not to cut you."

He had

Is it possible that ~~he~~ did not notice the

his customer

fearful state of agitation in which ~~Golushineff~~ now was?

It appeared like a coma. His eyes were turned up so

that the whites showed horribly. Perhaps he did not

know very clearly the nature of his fear. Perhaps, he

had not the power to analyze the complex of emotion which

was agonizing him. But, the boy noticed, no doubt, he noticed well, and he sought to console ~~the Baron~~ ^{Goluchin's} by endeavoring to awake his sympathy.

"However sick you may have been, sir, I can assure you that, young as I am, it is nothing to what I myself have suffered.

"When I was a child, I was accused wrongfully of a theft. I was thrown out of the house where I had been brought up and handed over like a parcel to some men who were travelling in the country on their affairs."

^{Goluchin's}
The ~~Baron's~~ head swam. Extraordinary, that this boy's story should recall his own behaviour towards little Dascha, long years ago. It seemed as if every word was playing with the skill of a Chinese torturer ^{upon his nerves.}
~~up in his nose.~~

"Yes, sir, this is my story," continued the young barber.

"A little to the right, if you please, sir.

"I have never forgotten the injury that was

"done to me. I took a solemn oath that I would avenge it.

"Still a little more to the right, if you please, sir.

"I am going to surprise you, sir, perhaps. But, after all, the thing is common in Russia. I am really a girl. But, that I might pursue more easily the plan of my vengeance, I have worn boy's clothes, lived a boy's life, learned a boy's trade. And, little by little, I worked my way until I am now within a day's journey of the place where I mean to take my vengeance.

"I beg your pardon, sir. The head a trifle farther back, if you please.

"I should have said, I had meant to take my vengeance there. But, as I said before, to one who travels earnestly, it sometimes happens that God comes to meet him on the way. This world is full of strange events. Is it not, sir?

"I think you would find your hair better if you

"Had it regularly singed. It is allowing the hair to grow too long and uneven that makes it possible for the germs to live, which cause baldness. Singing sterilizes perfectly the ends of the hair."

Pavel Petrovitch gasped an affirmative. He did not know anything any more, but fear struck to the roots of his soul in a cold delirium of anguish.

"Yes, sir," the girl went on, "even if God does not come half way to meet one, he certainly always comes a little way. I thought myself a day's journey from the author of my misery, and curiously enough he is in this chair, Pavel Petrovitch Goluchinoff!

"A little bay rum, sir?"

The murderer did not answer. The girl's hand, light as it was, weighed on his head as if it had been the monument of his sins, and the razor was still at his throat.

"No bay rum, sir? A little powder, perhaps? We have exactly the powder you require, Marin. Could I

"not sell you a stick of alum, in case at any time you should cut yourself in shaving, and find it necessary to stop the bleeding? One cannot really be too careful with that jugular vein. Hardly a touch from the point or the heel of this razor, and it would be all over. No surgeon could do anything if you should happen to meet with such an accident, Pavel Petrovitch Goluchinoff."

Little Dascha folded her razor, and hastened to powder her customer's chin.

"There, that is better. That certainly looks fine. Twenty kopecks, if you please, and pray do not forget to remember the barber."

But he did not hear those words: God had come to meet little Dascha on her journey.
