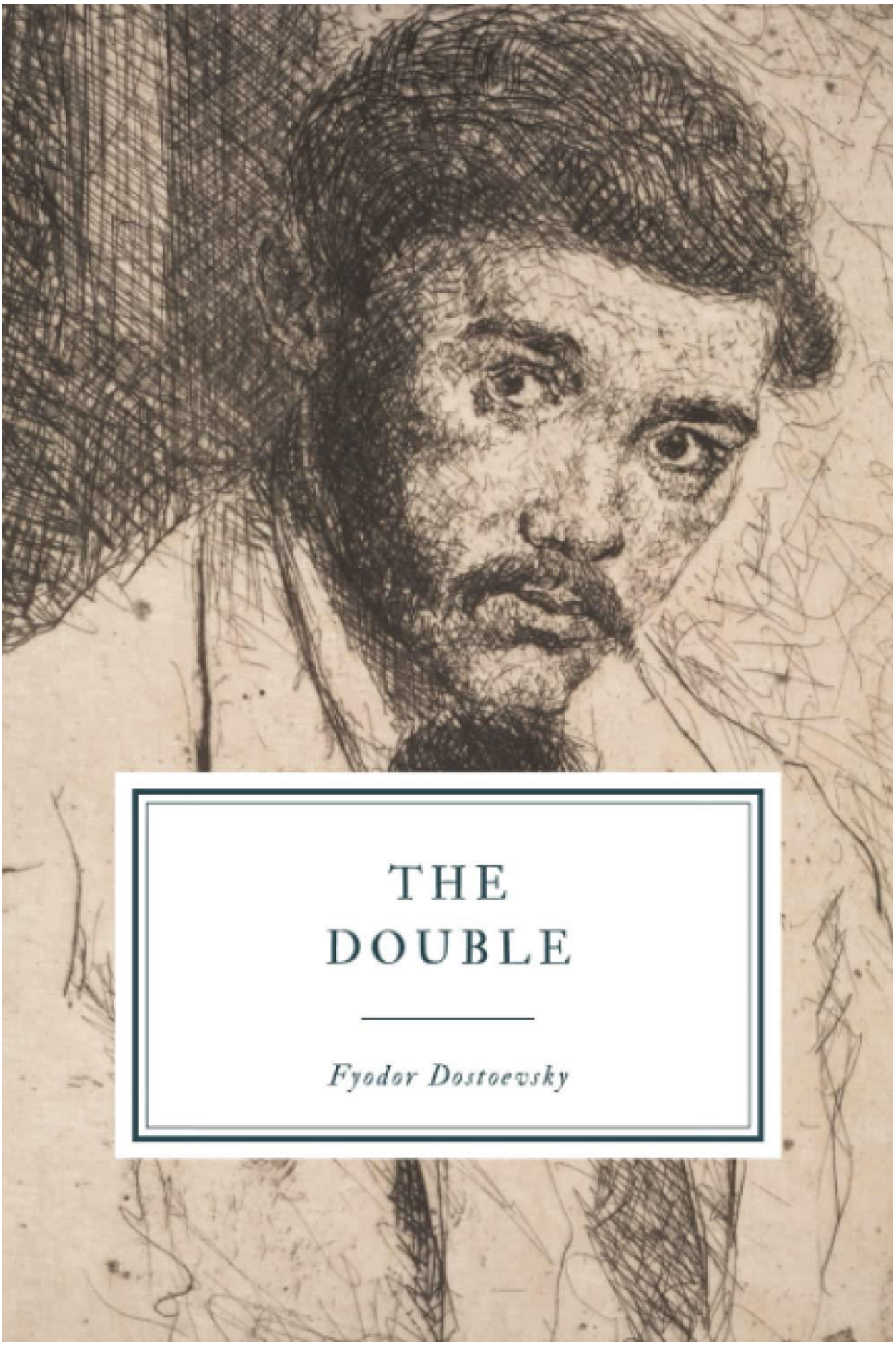

THE DOUBLE

Fyodor Dostoevsky

The Double, Fyodor Dostoevsky

Contents

The Double

Yákov Petróvich Goliádkin (Sr. and Jr.)
Pyótr (Petrúshka, Petrúsha; no patronymic or last name)
Krestyán Ivánovich Rútenspitz
Vladímir Semyónovich (no last name)
Andréi Filíppovich (no last name)
Olsúfy Ivánovich Berendéev
Klára Olsúfyevna Berendéev
Antón Antónovich Sétochkin
Néstor Ignátievich Vakhreméev
Emelyán Gerásimovich (Gerásimych; no last name)
Iván Semyónovich (no last name)
Alexéich (no first name or last name)
Karolina Ivánovna (no last name)

The Double

A Petersburg Poem

Chapter I

IT WAS NEARLY eight o'clock in the morning when the titular councillor1 Yakov Petrovich Goliadkin came to after a long sleep, yawned, stretched, and finally opened his eyes all the way. For some two minutes, however, he lay motionless on his bed, like a man who is not fully certain whether he is awake or still asleep, whether what is happening around him now is a reality or a continuation of the disordered reveries of his sleep. Soon, though, Mr. Goliadkin's senses began to receive their usual everyday impressions more clearly and distinctly.

The dirtyish green, sooty, and dusty walls of his little room, his mahogany chest of drawers, the imitation mahogany chairs, the red-painted table, the oilcloth Turkish sofa of a reddish color with little green flowers, and finally his clothes, hastily taken off the night before and thrown in a heap on the sofa, all gazed at him familiarly.

Finally, the gray autumn day, dull and dirty, peeked into his room through the dim window so crossly and with such a sour grimace that Mr. Goliadkin could in no way doubt any longer that he was not in some far-off kingdom but in the city of Petersburg, in the capital, on Shestilavochnaya Street, on the fourth floor of a quite large tenement house, in his own apartment. Having made this important discovery, Mr. Goliadkin convulsively closed his eyes, as if regretting his recent dream and wishing to bring it back for a brief moment.

But after a moment he leaped out of bed at a single bound, probably hitting finally upon the idea around which his scattered, not yet properly ordered thoughts had been turning. Having leaped out of bed, he ran at once to the small round mirror that stood on the chest of drawers.

Though the sleepy, myopic, and rather bald-pated figure reflected in the mirror was precisely of such insignificant quality as to arrest

decidedly no one's exclusive attention at first sight, its owner evidently remained perfectly pleased with all he saw in the mirror.

"What a thing it would be," Mr. Goliadkin said half-aloud, "what a thing it would be if something was amiss with me today, if, for instance, something went wrong—a stray pimple popped out somehow or some other sort of unpleasantness occurred; however, so far it's not bad; so far everything's going well."

Very glad that everything was going well, Mr. Goliadkin put the mirror back in its former place, and, despite the fact that he was barefoot and still wearing the costume in which he was accustomed to go to bed, he rushed to the window and, with great concern, began searching with his eyes for something in the courtyard on which the windows of his apartment gave. Apparently whatever he was searching for in the yard also satisfied him completely; his face lit up with a self-satisfied smile.

Then—though not without having first peeked behind the partition into the closet of his valet Petrushka and made sure that Petrushka was not in it—he tiptoed to the desk, unlocked one of the drawers, rummaged about in the hindmost corner of that drawer, finally took out a shabby green wallet from under some old yellow papers and trash, opened it warily, and peeked carefully and with delight into its remotest secret pocket.

Probably a wad of green, gray, blue, red, and multicolored bits of paper looked back quite affably and approvingly at Mr. Goliadkin: with a beaming face he placed the opened wallet on the table before him and rubbed his hands energetically as a sign of the greatest pleasure. Finally he took it out, his comforting wad of banknotes, and for the hundredth time—that is, counting only from yesterday—began to re-count them, painstakingly rubbing each leaf between his thumb and index finger.

"Seven hundred and fifty roubles in banknotes!" he finished finally in a half-whisper. "Seven hundred and fifty roubles…a significant sum! An agreeable sum," he went on in a voice trembling and slightly faint with pleasure, squeezing the wad in his hands and smiling significantly,

“quite an agreeable sum! An agreeable sum for anyone! I’d like to see the man now for whom this sum would be negligible! A man can go far on such a sum…”

“What is this, though?” thought Mr. Goliadkin. “Where is Petrushka?” Still wearing the same costume, he peeked once more behind the partition. Again Petrushka was not to be found behind the partition; there was only a samovar left on the floor there, angry, excited, and beside itself, constantly threatening to run away, and babbling to Mr. Goliadkin heatedly, quickly, in its abstruse language, lisping and swallowing its R’s—probably saying something like, “Take me, good people, I’m perfectly ripe and ready.”

“Devil take it!” thought Mr. Goliadkin. “The lazy brute may finally drive one beyond the last limits; where’s he lolling about?” In righteous indignation he went to the front hall, which consisted of a small corridor at the end of which was the door to the vestibule, opened that door a crack, and saw his servitor surrounded by a decent-sized crowd of sundry lackeyish, domestic, and accidental riffraff. Petrushka was telling some story, the others were listening.

Apparently Mr. Goliadkin liked neither the subject of the conversation nor the conversation itself. He immediately called Petrushka and went back to his room thoroughly displeased, even upset. “This brute is ready to sell a man for a groat, all the more so his master,” he thought to himself, “and he did, he surely did, I’m ready to bet he sold me for a penny. Well, so?…”
“They’ve brought the livery, sir.”

“Put it on and come here.”
Having put on the livery, Petrushka, smiling stupidly, went to his master’s room. He could not have been more oddly costumed. He was wearing extremely shabby green lackey’s livery with frazzled gold braid, apparently made for someone a whole two feet taller than Petrushka. In his hands he was holding a hat, also with braid and with green feathers, and at his hip he had a lackey’s sword in a leather scabbard.

Finally, to complete the picture, Petrushka, following his favorite habit of always going about casually, in home-style, was barefoot now as well. Mr. Goliadkin inspected Petrushka all around and apparently remained pleased. The livery had obviously been rented for some solemn occasion. It was also noticeable that during the inspection Petrushka looked at his master with some strange expectation, and followed his every movement with extraordinary curiosity, which greatly embarrassed Mr. Goliadkin.

“Well, and the carriage?”
“The carriage has come, too.”
“For the whole day?”
“For the whole day. Twenty-five, in banknotes.”2
“And they’ve brought the boots?”
“And they’ve brought the boots.”
“Blockhead! Can’t you say they’ve brought them, sir? Bring them here.”

Having expressed his satisfaction that the boots fit well, Mr. Goliadkin asked for tea, a wash and a shave. He shaved rather painstakingly and washed in the same way, hastily sipped some tea, and proceeded to his main, definitive dressing: he put on almost perfectly new trousers; then a shirt front with little bronze buttons, a waistcoat with rather bright and agreeable little flowers; tied a multicolored silk cravat around his neck, and finally pulled on a uniform jacket, also spanking new and painstakingly brushed.

While dressing, he glanced lovingly at his boots several times, lifted now one foot, now the other, admired the style, and kept whispering something under his nose, occasionally winking at his thoughts with an expressive little grimace. However, Mr. Goliadkin was extremely distracted that morning, because he let Petrushka’s little smiles and grimaces on his account as he helped him dress go almost unnoticed.

Finally, having adjusted everything properly, the fully dressed Mr. Goliadkin put his wallet in his pocket, definitively admired Petrushka, who had put on his boots and was thus in full readiness, and, noticing that everything had been done and there was nothing more to wait for,

hastily, bustlingly, with little trepidations of the heart, ran down his stairs. A light blue hackney carriage with some coat-of-arms on it rolled up thunderingly to the porch. Petrushka, exchanging winks with the coachman and various idlers, seated his master in the carriage; in an unaccustomed voice and barely holding back his foolish laughter, he shouted: “Gee-up!” and jumped onto the tailboard, and the whole thing, with noise and thunder, jingling and clattering, rolled off towards Nevsky Prospect.3

The blue carriage had no sooner driven through the gate than Mr. Goliadkin rubbed his hands convulsively and dissolved into quiet, inaudible laughter, like a man of merry character who has managed to play a nice trick and is as glad of it as glad can be. However, immediately following this fit of merriment, the laughter on Mr. Goliadkin’s face changed to a strangely preoccupied expression. Though the weather was damp and gray, he lowered both windows of the carriage and began looking concernedly to right and left at passersby, immediately assuming a decent and decorous air as soon as he noticed someone looking at him.

At the turn from Liteinaya onto Nevsky, he gave a start from a most unpleasant sensation and, wincing like some poor fellow whose corn has accidentally been stepped on, hastily and even fearfully pressed himself into the darkest corner of the carriage. The thing was that he had met two of his colleagues, two young clerks from the department where he himself worked.

The clerks, as it seemed to Mr. Goliadkin, were for their own part also extremely perplexed at meeting their colleague in this fashion; one of them even pointed his finger at Mr. Goliadkin. It even seemed to Mr. Goliadkin that the other called him loudly by name, which, naturally, was quite an improper thing to do in the street. Our hero stayed hidden and did not respond. “Little brats!” he began to reason with himself. “Well, what’s so strange?

A man in a carriage; a man needs to be in a carriage, so he takes a carriage. Simply trash! I know them—they’re simply brats who ought to

be whipped! They only play pitch-and-toss on payday and mooch about somewhere, that's what they do. I could tell them all a thing or two, only…" Mr. Goliadkin did not finish and went dead. A brisk pair of pretty Kazan horses, quite familiar to Mr. Goliadkin, hitched to a jaunty droshky, was quickly passing his carriage on the right.

The gentleman sitting in the droshky, chancing to see the face of Mr. Goliadkin, who quite imprudently stuck his head out the window of the carriage, was apparently also extremely amazed at such an unexpected encounter and, leaning out as far as he could, began peering with great curiosity and concern into the corner of the carriage, where our hero had hastened to hide.

The gentleman in the droshky was Andrei Filippovich, head of an office in the place where Mr. Goliadkin also served in the quality of assistant to his section chief. Mr. Goliadkin, seeing that Andrei Filippovich recognized him perfectly well, was looking at him all eyes, and it was simply impossible to hide from him, blushed to the roots of his hair. "Should I bow or not? Should I respond or not?

Should I acknowledge him or not? our hero thought in indescribable anguish. "Or pretend it's not me but someone else strikingly resembling me, and look as if nothing has happened? Precisely not me, not me, and that's that!" Mr. Goliadkin said, tipping his hat to Andrei Filippovich and not taking his eyes off him. "I…I'm all right," he whispered with effort, "I'm quite all right, it's not me at all, Andrei Filippovich, it's not me at all, not me, and that's that."

Soon, however, the droshky passed the carriage, and the magnetism of the directorial gaze ceased. However, he still kept blushing, smiling, muttering something to himself…"I was a fool not to respond," he thought finally, "I should simply have taken a bold footing and said frankly, but not without nobility, 'Thus and so, Andrei Filippovich, I'm also invited to dinner, and that's that!' "

Then, suddenly remembering that he had flunked it, our hero flared up like fire, frowned, and cast a terrible, defiant glance into the front

corner of the carriage, a glance intended to incinerate all his enemies to dust at a stroke. Finally, by some sudden inspiration, he pulled the cord tied to the coachman's elbow, stopped the carriage, and told the coachman to turn back to Liteinaya.

The thing was that Mr. Goliadkin felt an immediate need, probably for the sake of his own peace of mind, to say something most interesting to his doctor, Krestyan Ivanovich. And though his acquaintance with Krestyan Ivanovich was quite recent—namely, he had visited him only once the previous week, owing to a certain necessity—a doctor, as they say, is the same as a father confessor, to hide would be stupid, and to know the patient was his duty.

"Will all this be right, though?" our hero went on, stepping out of the carriage by the entrance to a five-story house on Liteinaya where he had ordered his equipage to stop, "will it all be right? Will it be decent?

Will it be appropriate? So what, though," he went on, going up the stairs, trying to catch his breath and restrain the throbbing of his heart, which was in the habit of throbbing on other people's stairs, "so what? It's my own affair, and there's nothing reprehensible in it…It would be stupid to hide. So I'll make believe that I'm all right, and that I was just passing by…He'll see that it must be so."

Reasoning thus, Mr. Goliadkin reached the second floor and stopped in front of apartment number five, on the door of which hung a beautiful brass plaque with the inscription:

KRESTYAN IVANOVICH RUTENSPITZ DOCTOR OF MEDICINE AND SURGERY

Stopping, our hero hastened to give his physiognomy a decent, casual air, not without a certain courtesy, and prepared to give the bell-pull a tug. Having prepared to give the bell-pull a tug, he immediately and rather appropriately reasoned that tomorrow would be better, and that now, for the time being, there was no great need. But, suddenly hearing someone's footsteps on the stairs, Mr. Goliadkin immediately

changed his new resolve and, just by the way, though maintaining a most resolute air, rang at Krestyan Ivanovich's door.

Chapter II

KRESTYAN IVANOVICH, doctor of medicine and surgery, quite hale, though already an elderly man, endowed with thick, graying eyebrows and side-whiskers, an expressive, flashing gaze that by itself apparently drove away all illnesses, and, finally, an important decoration, was sitting that morning in his office, in his easy chair, drinking coffee, brought to him with her own hands by his doctoress, smoking a cigar, and from time to time writing prescriptions for his patients. Having prescribed the last vial to a little old man suffering from hemorrhoids and sent the suffering old man off through the side door, Krestyan Ivanovich sat down in expectation of the next visitor. Mr. Goliadkin came in.

Apparently, Krestyan Ivanovich was not in the least expecting, nor did he wish to see, Mr. Goliadkin before him, because he suddenly became confused for a moment, and his face involuntarily acquired a sort of strange, even, one might say, displeased mien. Since Mr. Goliadkin, for his part, almost always became somehow inappropriately crestfallen and lost at those moments when he happened to abord someone for the sake of his own little affairs, so now, too, not having prepared a first phrase, which was a real stumbling block for him on such occasions, he became considerably embarrassed, murmured something—however, it seems to have been an apology—and, not knowing what to do next, took a chair and sat down.

But, recollecting that he had sat down without being invited, he at once felt his impropriety and hastened to correct his error in ignorance of society and good tone by immediately getting up from the seat he had occupied without being invited.

Then, thinking better of it and dimly noting that he had done two stupid things at once, he ventured, without the least delay, upon a third, that is, he tried to excuse himself, murmured something, smiled,

blushed, became embarrassed, fell into an expressive silence, and finally sat down definitively and did not get up anymore, but only provided himself, just in case, with that same defiant gaze, which possessed the extraordinary power of mentally incinerating and grinding to dust all of Mr. Goliadkin's enemies.

Moreover, this gaze fully expressed Mr. Goliadkin's independence, that is, it stated clearly that Mr. Goliadkin was quite all right, that he was his own man, like everybody else, and that, in any case, he kept to his own backyard. Krestyan Ivanovich coughed, grunted, apparently as a sign of his approval and agreement to all that, and fixed his inspectorial, questioning gaze on Mr. Goliadkin.

"Krestyan Ivanovich," Mr. Goliadkin began with a smile, "I have come to trouble you for a second time, and now for a second time I venture to ask your indulgence…" Mr. Goliadkin was obviously struggling for words.

"Hm…yes!" uttered Krestyan Ivanovich, letting out a stream of smoke from his mouth and placing the cigar on the desk, "but you must keep to your prescriptions; I did explain to you that your treatment should consist in a change of habits…Well, diversions; well, and you should visit friends and acquaintances, and along with that be no enemy of the bottle; likewise keep merry company."

Mr. Goliadkin, still smiling, hastened to observe that it seemed to him that he was like everybody else, that he was his own man, that his diversions were like everybody else's…that he could, of course, go to the theater, for, like everybody else, he also had means, that he worked during the day, but in the evening was at home, that he was quite all right; he even observed just then, in passing, that, as it seemed to him, he was no worse than others, that he lived at home, in his own apartment, and, finally, that he had Petrushka. Here Mr. Goliadkin faltered.

"Hm, no, that's not the right order, and it's not at all what I wanted to ask you. I'm generally interested to know whether you are a great lover

of merry company, whether you spend your time merrily…Well, I mean, do you continue now in a melancholy or a merry way of life?”

“Krestyan Ivanovich, I…”

“Hm…I’m saying,” the doctor interrupted, “that you need to reorganize your whole life radically and in some sense break your character.” (Krestyan Ivanovich strongly emphasized the word “break” and paused for a moment with a very significant air.) “Not to shun the merry life; to frequent the theater and the club, and in any case be no enemy of the bottle. Staying at home is no good…staying at home is impossible for you.”

“I, Krestyan Ivanovich, love quiet,” said Mr. Goliadkin, casting a significant glance at Krestyan Ivanovich and obviously seeking for words to express his thought more happily. “There’s only me and Petrushka in the apartment, Krestyan Ivanovich…I mean to say, my manservant, Krestyan Ivanovich. I mean to say, Krestyan Ivanovich, that I go my own way, a particular way. I’m my own particular man and, as it seems to me, I don’t depend on anybody. I also go for walks, Krestyan Ivanovich.”

“What?…Yes! Well, nowadays, going for a walk is nothing pleasurable; the climate’s quite poor.”
“Yes, sir, Krestyan Ivanovich. Though I’m a peaceable man, Krestyan Ivanovich, as I believe I’ve had the honor of explaining to you, my way goes separately, Krestyan Ivanovich. The path of life is broad…I mean…I mean to say, Krestyan Ivanovich, that…Excuse me, Krestyan Ivanovich, I’m no master of fine speaking.”

“Hm…you were saying…”
“I was saying that you must excuse me, Krestyan Ivanovich, for the fact that I, as it seems to me, am no master of fine speaking,” Mr. Goliadkin said in a half-offended tone, slightly confused and thrown off. “In this respect, Krestyan Ivanovich, I am not like others,” he added with some special smile, “and I am unable to speak at length; I never studied how to beautify my style. Instead, Krestyan Ivanovich, I act; I act instead, Krestyan Ivanovich.”

“Hm…How is it…that you act?” Krestyan Ivanovich rejoined. After which, silence ensued for a moment. The doctor gave Mr. Goliadkin a strange, mistrustful look. Mr. Goliadkin, in his turn, also gave the doctor a rather mistrustful sidelong glance.

“I, Krestyan Ivanovich,” Mr. Goliadkin began to go on in the same tone as before, slightly annoyed and perplexed by Krestyan Ivanovich’s extreme persistence, “I, Krestyan Ivanovich, love tranquillity, not worldly noise. With them there, I say, in great society, Krestyan Ivanovich, one must know how to polish the parquet with one’s boots…” (Here Mr. Goliadkin scraped the floor slightly with his foot.)

“That’s what’s called for there, sir, and quips are also called for…knowing how to put together a perfumed compliment, sir…that’s what’s called for there. And I never studied that, Krestyan Ivanovich—I never studied all those clever things; I had no time. I’m a simple, unsophisticated man, and there’s no external brilliance in me.

In that sense, Krestyan Ivanovich, I lay down my arms; I drop them, if I may put it that way.” Mr. Goliadkin said all this, to be sure, with such an air as to let it be known that our hero did not at all regret laying down his arms in this sense and never having studied clever things, but even quite the contrary. Krestyan Ivanovich, listening to him, looked down with quite an unpleasant scowl on his face, as if anticipating something beforehand. Mr. Goliadkin’s tirade was followed by a rather long and significant silence.

“It seems you’ve diverged slightly from the subject,” Krestyan Ivanovich said at last in a low voice. “I confess, I’m completely unable to understand you.”

“I’m no master of fine speaking, Krestyan Ivanovich; I’ve already had the honor of informing you, Krestyan Ivanovich, that I’m no master of fine speaking,” said Mr. Goliadkin, this time in a sharp and resolute tone.
“Hm…”

“Krestyan Ivanovich!” Mr. Goliadkin began again in a low but meaningful voice, partly of a solemn sort, and pausing at every point. “Krestyan Ivanovich! on coming in here, I began with apologies. I now repeat the former and again beg your indulgence for a time. I, Krestyan Ivanovich, have nothing to conceal from you. I am a little man, you know that yourself; but, to my good fortune, I do not regret that I am a little man. Even the contrary, Krestyan Ivanovich; and, to tell all, I am even proud that I am not a great man, but a little one.

Not an intriguer—and I am proud of that as well. I act not on the sly, but openly, without cunning, and though I could do harm in my turn, could very well, and I even know to whom and how to do it, Krestyan Ivanovich, I do not want to besmirch myself, and in that sense I wash my hands. In that sense, I say, I wash them, Krestyan Ivanovich!” Mr. Goliadkin fell expressively silent for a moment; he had spoken with meek animation.

“I walk, Krestyan Ivanovich,” our hero began to go on, “straight ahead, openly, and without twisting paths, because I despise them and leave them to others. I do not try to humiliate those who have gone one better than you and I…that is, I mean to say them and I, Krestyan Ivanovich, I didn’t mean to say you. I dislike half-utterances; petty duplicity is not in favor with me; I scorn slander and gossip.

I put on a mask only for masked balls, and do not go around in it before people every day. I will only ask you, Krestyan Ivanovich, how would you go about taking revenge on your enemy, your worst enemy—someone you consider as such?” Mr. Goliadkin concluded, casting a defiant glance at Krestyan Ivanovich.

Though Mr. Goliadkin had spoken it all with the utmost distinctness, clarity, and assurance, weighing his words and calculating their surest effect, nevertheless it was with uneasiness, with great uneasiness, with extreme uneasiness, that he now looked at Krestyan Ivanovich. Now he became all eyes, and timidly, with vexing, anxious impatience, awaited Krestyan Ivanovich’s response.

But, to the amazement and total shock of Mr. Goliadkin, Krestyan Ivanovich muttered something to himself under his nose; then he moved his chair to the desk and rather dryly, though courteously, announced to him that his time was precious, that he somehow did not quite understand, or something of the sort; that, though he was ready to be of any possible service, as far as he could, he would leave aside all the rest, which did not concern him. Here he took a pen, drew a piece of paper towards him, cut a piece from it for a doctor's form, and announced that he would at once prescribe what was proper.

"No, sir, not proper, Krestyan Ivanovich! No, sir, that is by no means proper!" said Mr. Goliadkin, getting up from his place and seizing Krestyan Ivanovich by the right hand. "That, Krestyan Ivanovich, is by no means needed here…"

But while Mr. Goliadkin was saying all this, a strange transformation was taking place in him. His gray eyes gleamed somehow strangely, his lips trembled, all the muscles, all the features of his face began to move, to twitch. He was shaking all over. Having followed his first impulse and stopped Krestyan Ivanovich's hand, Mr. Goliadkin now stood motionless, as if not trusting himself and awaiting the inspiration for further actions.

Then a rather strange scene took place.
Slightly perplexed, Krestyan Ivanovich sat momentarily as if rooted to his chair and, feeling at a loss, stared all eyes at Mr. Goliadkin, who was staring at him in the same way. Finally Krestyan Ivanovich stood up, holding on slightly to the lapel of Mr. Goliadkin's uniform jacket. For a few seconds the two men stood thus, motionless and not taking their eyes off each other. Then, however, in an extraordinarily strange way, Mr. Goliadkin's second movement resolved itself.

His lips trembled, his chin quivered, and our hero quite unexpectedly burst into tears. Sobbing, wagging his head, and beating himself on the breast with his right hand, and with his left also seizing the lapel of Krestyan Ivanovich's lounging jacket, he wanted to speak and

immediately explain something, but was unable to say a word. Krestyan Ivanovich finally recovered from his astonishment.

“Come, calm yourself, sit down!” he said finally, trying to sit Mr. Goliadkin in an armchair.
“I have enemies, Krestyan Ivanovich, I have enemies; I have wicked enemies who have sworn to destroy me…” Mr. Goliadkin replied timorously and in a whisper.

“Come, come, what’s this about enemies! There’s no need to mention enemies, absolutely no need! Sit down, sit down,” Krestyan Ivanovich went on, definitively sitting Mr. Goliadkin in the armchair.

Mr. Goliadkin finally sat down, not taking his eyes from Krestyan Ivanovich. Krestyan Ivanovich, looking extremely displeased, began to pace up and down his office. A long silence ensued.
“I’m grateful to you, Krestyan Ivanovich, quite grateful and quite sensible of all you’ve now done for me. To my dying day I will not forget your kindness, Krestyan Ivanovich,” Mr. Goliadkin said finally, getting up from his chair with an offended look.

“Come, come, I tell you, enough!” Krestyan Ivanovich responded rather sternly to Mr. Goliadkin’s outburst, sitting him down again. “Well, what is it? Tell me, what’s this unpleasantness you have there,” Krestyan Ivanovich went on, “and what enemies are you talking about? What is it with you there?”

“No, Krestyan Ivanovich, we’d better drop that now,” replied Mr. Goliadkin, lowering his eyes to the ground, “better set it all aside for a time…for another time, Krestyan Ivanovich, for a more opportune time, when everything is disclosed, and the mask falls from certain faces, and certain things are laid bare. And meanwhile, naturally, after what has occurred with us…you yourself will agree, Krestyan Ivanovich…Allow me to bid you good morning, Krestyan Ivanovich,” said Mr. Goliadkin, this time resolutely and seriously getting up from his place and seizing his hat.

“Ah, well…as you wish…hm…” (A moment of silence ensued.) “I, for my part, you know, whatever I can…and I sincerely wish you well.”
“I understand you, Krestyan Ivanovich, I understand; I understand you completely now…In any case, excuse me for having troubled you, Krestyan Ivanovich.”
“Hm…No, that’s not what I wanted to say. However, as you wish. Continue the medications as before…”

“I will continue the medications, as you say, Krestyan Ivanovich, I will, and I’ll get them from the same apothecary. Nowadays, Krestyan Ivanovich, even being an apothecary has become an important thing…”

“Oh? In what sense do you mean to say?”
“In a perfectly ordinary sense, Krestyan Ivanovich. I mean to say, that’s how the world goes nowadays…”
“Hm…”

“And that every little brat, not only from the apothecary, turns up his nose before a decent person now.”
“Hm…And how do you understand that?”

“I’m speaking, Krestyan Ivanovich, about a certain person…about our mutual acquaintance, Krestyan Ivanovich, say, for instance, about Vladimir Semyonovich…”
“Ah!…”

“Yes, Krestyan Ivanovich; and I know some people, Krestyan Ivanovich, who do not hold so much to the general opinion as not to tell the truth sometimes.”
“Ah!…How is that?”

“It’s just so, sir. That, however, is a side issue; they sometimes know how to offer a cock with a sock.”
“What? Offer what?”

“A cock with a sock, Krestyan Ivanovich; it’s a Russian saying. They sometimes know how to congratulate a person opportunely, for example—there are such people, Krestyan Ivanovich.”
“Congratulate?”

“Yes, sir, congratulate, as a close acquaintance of mine did the other day…”
“A close acquaintance of yours…ah! how’s that?” said Krestyan Ivanovich, looking attentively at Mr Goliadkin.

“Yes, sir, a close acquaintance of mine congratulated another, also quite a close acquaintance, and moreover an intimate, or, as they say, the sweetest of friends, on his promotion, on receiving the rank of assessor.4 It just came out by itself. ‘I am,’ he said, that is, ‘most feelingly glad of the chance to offer you, Vladimir Semyonovich, my congratulations, my sincere congratulations, on your promotion. And my gladness is the greater in that, nowadays, as all the world knows, there are no more little grannies telling fortunes.’ ” Here Mr. Goliadkin nodded slyly and, narrowing his eyes, looked at Krestyan Ivanovich…

“Hm…So he said that…”
“He did, Krestyan Ivanovich, he said it and immediately looked at Andrei Filippovich, the uncle of our little treasure, Vladimir Semyonovich. But what is it to me, Krestyan Ivanovich, that he was made an assessor? What is it to me? And he wants to get married, when the milk, if I may be permitted to say so, is not yet dry on his lips. And so I told him. That is, I mean, Vladimir Semyonovich! I’ve told you everything now; allow me to leave.”

“Hm…”
“Yes, Krestyan Ivanovich, allow me, I say, to leave now. And here, to kill two birds with one stone—once I’ve cut the lad down with the little grannies, I turn to Klara Olsufyevna (this was two days ago at Olsufy Ivanovich’s), and she had just finished singing a heartfelt romance—that is, I say, ‘You have been pleased to sing a most heartfelt romance, only you have not been listened to with a pure heart.’ And I clearly hint

by that, you understand, Krestyan Ivanovich, I clearly hint by that, that what was being sought was not her, but something further…"
"Ah! And what about him?"

"He bit the lemon, Krestyan Ivanovich, as the saying goes."
"Hm…"

"Yes, sir, Krestyan Ivanovich. And I also say to the old man—that is, Olsufy Ivanovich, I say, I know how much I owe you, I fully appreciate your benefactions, which you have showered upon me almost from my childhood. But open your eyes, Olsufy Ivanovich, I say. Look around. I myself am conducting the affair candidly and openly, Olsufy Ivanovich."
"Ah, so that's how!"

"Yes, Krestyan Ivanovich. That's how it…"
"And what about him?"
"What about him, Krestyan Ivanovich! He mumbles—this and that, and I know you, and his excellency's a benevolent man—and on he goes, and smooches it around…But so what? He's gone pretty dotty, as they say, from old age."

"Ah! so that's how it is now!"
"Yes, Krestyan Ivanovich. And yet we're all like that! an old codger! staring into the grave, at his last gasp, as they say, but then there's some women's gossip, and there he is listening; no doing without him…"

"Gossip, you say?"
"Yes, Krestyan Ivanovich, they've made up some gossip. And our bear and his nephew, our little treasure, have mixed their hands in it; they've banded together with the old women and cooked up the business. What do you think? How have they contrived to kill a man?…"

"To kill a man?"
"Yes, Krestyan Ivanovich, to kill a man, to kill a man morally. They've spread…I'm still talking about my close acquaintance…"
Krestyan Ivanovich nodded his head.

“They’ve spread a rumor about him…I confess to you, I’m even ashamed to say it, Krestyan Ivanovich…”
“Hm…”

“They’ve spread a rumor that he has already signed an agreement to marry, that he’s already engaged elsewhere…And to whom do you think, Krestyan Ivanovich?”
“Really?”

“To a cookshop owner, an indecent German woman, from whom he buys his dinners; instead of paying his debts he’s offering her his hand.”
“That’s what they say?”
“Would you believe it, Krestyan Ivanovich? A German woman, a mean, vile, shameless German woman, Karolina Ivanovna, if you know…”
“I confess, for my part…”

“I understand you, Krestyan Ivanovich, I do, and for my part I feel that…”
“Tell me, please, where are you living now?”
“Where am I living now, Krestyan Ivanovich?”

“Yes…I want…before, it seems, you were living…”
“I was, Krestyan Ivanovich, I was, I was living before. How could I not have been!” replied Mr. Goliadkin, accompanying his words with a little laugh and slightly confusing Krestyan Ivanovich with his reply.

“No, you haven’t taken it the right way; I wanted for my part…”
“I also wanted, Krestyan Ivanovich, for my part, I also wanted,” Mr. Goliadkin continued, laughing. “However, Krestyan Ivanovich, I’ve sat too long with you. I hope you will now permit me…to bid you good morning…”
“Hm…”

“Yes, Krestyan Ivanovich, I understand you; I fully understand you now,” said our hero, posturing slightly before Krestyan Ivanovich. “And so, permit me to bid you good morning…”

Here our hero scraped with his foot and walked out of the room, leaving Krestyan Ivanovich in extreme astonishment. Going down the doctor's stairs, he smiled and rubbed his hands joyfully. On the porch, breathing the fresh air and feeling himself free, he was even actually ready to acknowledge himself the happiest of mortals and then go straight to the department—when his carriage suddenly clattered up to the entrance; he looked and remembered everything.

Petrushka was already opening the doors. Some strange and extremely unpleasant sensation gripped the whole of Mr. Goliadkin. He seemed to blush for a moment. Something pricked him. He was just about to place his foot on the step of the carriage when he suddenly turned and looked at Krestyan Ivanovich's windows. That was it! Krestyan Ivanovich was standing at the window, stroking his side-whiskers with his right hand and looking at our hero with great curiosity.

"That doctor is stupid," thought Mr. Goliadkin, hiding himself in the carriage, "extremely stupid. Maybe he treats his patients well, but all the same…he's stupid as a log." Mr. Goliadkin settled himself, Petrushka shouted "Gee-up!"—and the carriage again went rolling down to Nevsky Prospect.

Chapter III

MR. GOLIADKIN SPENT that whole morning in an awful bustle. On reaching Nevsky Prospect, our hero ordered the carriage to stop at the Gostiniy Dvor.5 Jumping out of his carriage, he ran in under the arcade, accompanied by Petrushka, and went straight to a silver- and goldsmith's shop. One could see merely by the look of Mr. Goliadkin that he was all aflutter and had an awful heap of things to do.

Having agreed on a price of fifteen hundred in banknotes for a full dinner and tea service, and bargained his way into a whimsically shaped cigar box and a full silver shaving kit for the same price, having inquired, finally, about the price of certain other little objects, useful and agreeable in their way, Mr. Goliadkin ended by promising to stop by for his purchases without fail the next day or even send for them that same

day, took the number of the shop, listened attentively to the merchant, who was fussing about a little deposit, and promised to give him a little deposit in due time.

After which he hastily took leave of the bewildered merchant and went down the arcade pursued by a whole flock of salesclerks, constantly looking back at Petrushka, and painstakingly searching for some other shop. On the way he dashed into a moneychanger's shop and broke all his big notes into smaller ones, and though he lost in the exchange, he broke them all the same, and his wallet grew significantly fatter, which apparently afforded him great pleasure. Finally, he stopped at a store selling various ladies' fabrics.

Again negotiating purchases for a significant sum, Mr. Goliadkin, here as well, promised the merchant to stop by without fail, took the number of the shop, and, to the question about a little deposit, again repeated that there would be a little deposit in due time. Then he visited several other shops; in all of them he bargained, asked the price of various objects, sometimes argued for a long time with the merchants, left the shop and came back three times—in short, manifested an extraordinary activity.

From the Gostiniy Dvor, our hero went to a well-known furniture store, where he arranged a deal on furniture for six rooms, admired a fashionable and very whimsical lady's toilet table in the latest taste and, having assured the merchant that he would send for it all without fail, left the store, as was his custom, with the promise of a little deposit, then went elsewhere and bargained for other things. In short, there was apparently no end to his bustling. Finally, it seems, Mr. Goliadkin himself began to grow quite bored with it all.

He even, and God knows by what chance, began, out of the blue, to suffer pangs of conscience. Not for anything would he now have agreed to meet, for example, Andrei Filippovich, or even Krestyan Ivanovich. Finally, the town clock struck three in the afternoon. When Mr. Goliadkin definitively settled in his carriage, of all the purchases he had made that morning, there actually turned out to be only one pair of

gloves and a flask of scent for a rouble and a half in banknotes. Since it was still early for Mr. Goliadkin, he ordered his coachman to stop at a famous restaurant on Nevsky Prospect, of which he had previously only heard, got out of the carriage, and ran to have a bite to eat, to rest, and while away some time.

Having nibbled as a man nibbles when he is looking forward to a sumptuous dinner party, that is, taken a little something to appease his tapeworm, as they say, and drunk a little glass of vodka, Mr. Goliadkin settled into an armchair and, modestly glancing around, peacefully affixed himself to a skinny government newspaper. After reading a couple of lines, he got up, looked in the mirror, straightened and smoothed himself out; then he went over to the window to see if his carriage was there…then sat down again and took the newspaper. It was noticeable that our hero was in extreme agitation. Having glanced at his watch and seen that it was only a quarter past four, and that consequently there was still quite a while to wait, and at the same time considering it improper just to sit like that, Mr. Goliadkin ordered hot chocolate, for which, however, he felt no great desire at the present moment. Having drunk the hot chocolate and noticed that the time had advanced a little, he went to pay. Suddenly someone tapped him on the shoulder.

He turned and saw his two colleagues before him, the same ones he had met that morning on Liteinaya—still quite young fellows in both age and rank. Our hero was neither here nor there with them, neither friends nor outright enemies. Naturally, decency was observed on both sides; but there was no further closeness, and there could not be. Meeting them at the present moment was extremely unpleasant for Mr. Goliadkin. He winced slightly and was momentarily confused.

“Yakov Petrovich, Yakov Petrovich!” the two registrars6 chirped, “you here? On what…”

“Ah! It’s you, gentlemen!” Mr. Goliadkin interrupted hastily, slightly embarrassed and scandalized by the clerks’ astonishment and at the same time by the intimacy of their manners, but anyhow acting the

casual and fine fellow willy-nilly. “So you’ve deserted, gentlemen, heh, heh, heh!…” Here, so as not to demean himself and yet to condescend to the chancellery youth, with whom he always kept himself within due limits, he tried to pat one young man on the shoulder; but on this occasion Mr. Goliadkin’s popularism did not succeed, and instead of a decently intimate gesture, something quite different came out.

“Well, so our bear is sitting there?…”
“Who’s that, Yakov Petrovich?”

“Well, the bear there, as if you didn’t know who is called the bear?…” Mr. Goliadkin laughed and turned to the cashier to take his change.
“I’m speaking of Andrei Filippovich, gentlemen,” he went on, having finished with the cashier and this time turning to the clerks with a quite serious air. The two registrars exchanged meaningful winks.

“He’s still sitting there, and he asked about you, Yakov Petrovich,” one of them replied.
“Sitting, ah! In that case let him sit, gentlemen. And he asked about me, eh?”

“He did, Yakov Petrovich. But what is it with you, all scented, all pomaded, such a dandy?…”
“Yes, gentlemen, so it is! Enough, now…” Mr. Goliadkin responded, looking to one side and with a strained smile. Seeing Mr. Goliadkin’s smile, the clerks burst out laughing. Mr. Goliadkin pursed his lips slightly.

“I’ll tell you, gentlemen, in a friendly way,” our hero said after some silence, as if (“So be it, then!”) deciding to reveal something to the clerks, “you all know me, gentlemen, but so far you know me from only one side. No one is to blame in this case, and, I confess, it’s partly my own fault.”
Mr. Goliadkin compressed his lips and looked meaningfully at the clerks. The clerks again exchanged winks.

“Till now, gentlemen, you have not known me. To explain myself here and now would not be entirely appropriate. I’ll tell you only a thing or two in passing and by the way. There are people, gentlemen, who dislike roundabout paths and mask themselves only for masked balls. There are people who do not see the direct destiny of man in the dexterous skill of polishing the parquet with their boots. There are also people, gentlemen, who will not say they are happy and have a full life, when, for instance, their trousers fit well.

Finally, there are people who do not like to leap and fidget in vain, to flirt and fawn, and, above all, to poke their noses where they are not asked…I, gentlemen, have told you nearly all; permit me now to withdraw…”
Mr. Goliadkin stopped. Since the gentlemen registrars were now fully satisfied, they both suddenly rocked with extremely impolite laughter. Mr. Goliadkin flared up.

“Laugh, gentlemen, laugh meanwhile! You’ll live and you’ll see,” he said with a feeling of injured dignity, taking his hat and retreating towards the door.

“But I’ll say more, gentlemen,” he added, addressing the gentlemen registrars one last time, “I’ll say more—the two of you are here face-to-face with me. These, gentlemen, are my rules: if I don’t succeed, I keep trying; if I do succeed, I keep quiet; and in any case I don’t undermine anyone. I’m not an intriguer, and I’m proud of it.

I wouldn’t make a good diplomat. They also say, gentlemen, that the bird flies to the fowler. That’s true, and I’m ready to agree: but who is the fowler here, and who is the bird? That’s still a question, gentlemen!”

Mr. Goliadkin fell eloquently silent and with a most significant mien, that is, raising his eyebrows and compressing his lips to the utmost, bowed and went out, leaving the gentlemen clerks in extreme astonishment.

“Where to, sir?” Petrushka asked quite sternly, probably sick by then of dragging about in the cold. “Where to, sir?” he asked Mr. Goliadkin, meeting his terrible, all-annihilating gaze, with which our hero had already provided himself twice that day, and to which he now resorted for a third time, going down the steps.
“To the Izmailovsky Bridge.”

“To the Izmailovsky Bridge! Gee-up!”

“Their dinner won’t begin before five or even at five,” thought Mr. Goliadkin, “isn’t it too early now? However, I can come early; it’s a family dinner after all. I can just come sans façon,*1 as they say among respectable people. Why can’t I come sans façon? Our bear also said it would all be sans façon, and therefore I, too…” So thought Mr. Goliadkin; but meanwhile his agitation increased more and more.

It was noticeable that he was preparing himself for something quite troublesome, to say the least; he whispered to himself, gesticulated with his right hand, kept glancing out the carriage windows, so that, looking now at Mr. Goliadkin, no one would really have said that he was preparing to dine well, simply, and in his own family circle—sans façon, as they say among respectable people. Finally, just at the Izmailovsky Bridge, Mr. Goliadkin pointed to a house; the carriage drove noisily through the gate and stopped by the entrance to the right wing.

Noticing a female figure in a second-floor window, Mr. Goliadkin blew her a kiss. However, he did not know what he was doing himself, because at that moment he was decidedly neither dead nor alive. He got out of the carriage pale, bewildered; he went up to the porch, took off his hat, straightened his clothes mechanically, and, though feeling a slight trembling in his knees, started up the stairs.

“Olsufy Ivanovich?” he asked the man who opened the door for him.
“At home, sir, that is, no, sir, he is not at home!”

“How’s that? What are you saying, my dear? I—I have come to dinner, brother. Don’t you know me?”
“How could I not, sir! I was told not to receive you, sir.”

“You…you, brother…you must be mistaken. It’s me. I’ve been invited, brother; I’ve come to dinner,” said Mr. Goliadkin, throwing off his overcoat and showing an obvious intention of going in.

“Sorry, sir, but you can’t, sir. I’ve been ordered not to receive you, sir, I’ve been told to refuse you. That’s what!”
Mr. Goliadkin turned pale. Just then the inside door opened and Gerasimych, Olsufy Ivanovich’s old valet, came out.
“See here, Emelyan Gerasimovich, he wants to come in, and I…”

“And you’re a fool, Alexeich. Go in and send the scoundrel Semyonych here. You can’t, sir,” he said politely yet resolutely, turning to Mr. Goliadkin. “Quite impossible, sir. They ask to be excused, but they cannot receive you, sir.”

“That’s what they told you, that they cannot receive me?” Mr. Goliadkin asked hesitantly. “Pardon me, Gerasimych. Why is it quite impossible?”
“Quite impossible, sir. I’ve announced you, sir; they said they ask to be excused. Meaning they cannot receive you, sir.”
“But why? how come? how…”

“Sorry, sorry!…”
“Though how can it be so? It’s not possible! Announce me…How can it be so? I’ve come to dinner…”
“Sorry, sorry!…”

“Ah, well, anyhow, that’s a different matter—they ask to be excused. Pardon me, though, Gerasimych, but how can it be so, Gerasimych?”

“Sorry, sorry!” Gerasimych protested, moving Mr. Goliadkin aside quite resolutely with his arm and giving wide way to two gentlemen who at that moment were entering the front hall.

The entering gentlemen were Andrei Filippovich and his nephew, Vladimir Semyonovich. They both looked at Mr. Goliadkin in perplexity. Andrei Filippovich was about to say something, but Mr. Goliadkin had already made up his mind; he was already leaving Olsufy Ivanovich's front hall, lowering his eyes, blushing, smiling, with a totally lost physiognomy.

"I'll come later, Gerasimych; I'll explain; I hope all this will not be slow to clarify itself in due time," he said in the doorway and partly on the stairs.
"Yakov Petrovich, Yakov Petrovich!…" came the voice of Andrei Filippovich, who followed after Mr. Goliadkin.
Mr. Goliadkin was already on the first-floor landing. He turned quickly to Andrei Filippovich.

"What can I do for you, Andrei Filippovich?" he said in a rather resolute tone.
"What is the matter with you, Yakov Petrovich? How on earth…?"
"Never mind, Andrei Filippovich. I'm here on my own. It is my private life, Andrei Filippovich."
"What is this, sir?"

"I say, Andrei Filippovich, that it is my private life and, as far as I can see, it is impossible to find anything reprehensible here with regard to my official relations."
"What! With regard to your official…What, my dear sir, is the matter with you?"
"Nothing, Andrei Filippovich, absolutely nothing; a pert young lady, nothing more…"

"What?…What?!" Andrei Filippovich was at a loss from amazement. Mr. Goliadkin, who thus far, talking with Andrei Filippovich from downstairs, had been looking at him as if he was about to jump right into his eyes—seeing that the head of the department was slightly bewildered, almost unwittingly took a step forward. Andrei Filippovich drew back. Mr. Goliadkin climbed one step, then another.

Andrei Filippovich looked around uneasily. Mr. Goliadkin suddenly went quickly up the stairs. Still more quickly Andrei Filippovich jumped back into the room and slammed the door behind him. Mr. Goliadkin was left alone.

It went dark in his eyes. He was totally thrown off and now stood in some sort of muddled reflection, as though recalling some circumstance, also extremely muddled, that had happened quite recently. “Ah, ah!” he whispered, grinning from the strain.

Meanwhile from the stairs below came the sound of voices and footsteps, probably of new guests invited by Olsufy Ivanovich. Mr. Goliadkin partly recovered himself, hastily turned up his raccoon collar, covered himself with it as much as he could, and, hobbling, mincing, hurrying, and stumbling, began to go down the stairs.

He felt some sort of faintness and numbness inside him. His confusion was so strong that, on going out to the porch, he did not wait for the carriage but went straight to it himself across the muddy courtyard. Reaching his carriage and preparing to put himself into it, Mr. Goliadkin mentally displayed a wish to fall through the earth or even hide in a mouse hole together with his carriage.

It seemed to him that whatever there was in Olsufy Ivanovich’s house was now looking directly at him from all the windows. He knew he would surely die right there on the spot if he turned around.

“What are you laughing at, blockhead?” he said in a rapid patter to Petrushka, who readied himself to help him into the carriage.
“What have I got to laugh at? It’s nothing to me. Where to now?”

“Home now, get going…”
“Home!” shouted Petrushka, climbing onto the tailboard.

“What a crow’s gullet!”7 thought Mr. Goliadkin. Meanwhile the carriage had already driven far beyond the Izmailovsky Bridge.

Suddenly our hero pulled the string with all his might and shouted to his coachman to turn back immediately. The coachman turned the horses, and two minutes later they drove into Olsufy Ivanovich's courtyard again. "No need, fool, no need! Go back!" cried Mr. Goliadkin, and it was as if the coachman expected this order: without protesting or stopping by the porch, he drove around the whole courtyard and out to the street once more.

Mr. Goliadkin did not go home but, having passed the Semyonovsky Bridge, gave orders to turn down a lane and stop by a tavern of rather modest appearance. Getting out of the carriage, our hero paid the driver and in this way finally rid himself of his equipage, ordered Petrushka to go home and wait for his return, while he himself went into the tavern, took a separate room, and ordered dinner. He felt quite poorly, and his head was in total disarray and chaos. For a long time he paced the room in agitation; finally he sat down on a chair, his forehead propped in his hands, and began trying with all his might to consider and resolve certain things relating to his present situation…

Chapter IV

THE DAY, THE BIRTHDAY festivity of Klara Olsufyevna, the only-begotten daughter of State Councillor Berendeev, 8 once Mr. Goliadkin's benefactor—the day, marked by a splendid, magnificent dinner party, a dinner party such as had not been seen for a long time within the walls of officials' apartments by the Izmailovsky Bridge and roundabouts—a dinner more like some sort of Balshazzar's feast than a dinner—which had something Babylonian in it with regard to splendor, luxury, and decorum, with Clicquot champagne, with oysters and fruit from Eliseevs' and Miliutin's shops, with various fatted calves and the official table of ranks9—this festive day, marked by such a festive dinner, concluded with a splendid ball, a small, intimate, family ball, but splendid all the same with regard to taste, good breeding, and decorum.

Of course, I agree completely, such balls do take place, but rarely. Such balls, more like family rejoicings than balls, can be given only in such

houses as, for example, the house of State Councillor Berendeev. I say more: I even doubt that all state councillors can give such balls.

Oh, if I were a poet!—to be sure, at least such a poet as Homer or Pushkin;10 you can't butt into it with less talent—I would unfailingly portray for you with bright colors and sweeping brushstrokes, O readers! all of that highly festive day. Nay, I would begin my poem with the dinner, I would especially emphasize that amazing and at the same time solemn moment when the first toasting cup was raised in honor of the queen of the feast. I would portray for you, first, these guests immersed in reverent silence and expectation, more like Demosthenean eloquence11 than silence.

I would then portray for you Andrei Filippovich, even having a certain right to primacy as the eldest of the guests, adorned with gray hairs and with orders befitting those gray hairs, rising from his place and raising above his head the toasting cup of sparkling wine—wine brought purposely from a far kingdom to be drunk at such moments, a wine more like the nectar of the gods than wine. I would portray for you the guests and the happy parents of the queen of the feast, who also raised their glasses after Andrei Filippovich and turned on him their eyes filled with expectation.

I would portray for you how this oft-mentioned Andrei Filippovich, having first let drop a tear into his glass, uttered a felicitation and a wish, pronounced the toast, and drank to the health…But, I confess, I fully confess, I could never portray all the solemnity of that moment when the queen of the feast herself, Klara Olsufyevna, reddening like a rose in spring with the flush of bliss and modesty, from the fullness of her feelings fell into the arms of her tender mother, how the tender mother waxed tearful, and how the father himself thereupon wept, the venerable old man and state councillor Olsufy Ivanovich, who had lost the use of his legs from longtime service, and whom destiny had rewarded for his zeal with a bit of capital, a house, country estates, and a beautiful daughter—wept like a child, and said through his tears that his excellency was a beneficent man.

And I could never, yes, precisely never, portray for you the general enthusiasm of hearts that inevitably followed this moment—an enthusiasm clearly manifested even in the behavior of one youthful registrar (at that moment more like a state councillor than a registrar), who also waxed tearful as he listened to Andrei Filippovich.

In his turn, Andrei Filippovich was at this solemn moment quite unlike a collegiate councillor12 and the head of an office in a certain department—no, he seemed to be something else…I do not know precisely what, but not a collegiate councillor.

He was loftier! Finally…oh, why do I not possess the secret of a lofty, powerful style, a solemn style, so as to portray all these beautiful and instructive moments of human life, arranged as if on purpose to prove how virtue sometimes triumphs over ill intention, freethinking, vice, and envy! I shall say nothing, but silently—which will be better than any eloquence—point out to you that fortunate youth, who was approaching his twenty-sixth spring, Vladimir Semyonovich, Andrei Filippovich's nephew, who in his turn got up from his place, in his turn is pronouncing a toast, and towards whom are directed the tearful eyes of the parents of the queen of the feast, the proud eyes of Andrei Filippovich, the modest eyes of the queen of the feast herself, the admiring eyes of the guests, and even the decently envious eyes of some of the brilliant youth's young colleagues.

I will say nothing, though I cannot help observing that everything in this youth—who was more like an old man than a youth, speaking in a sense advantageous to him—everything, from his blossoming cheeks to the rank of assessor he bore, everything in this solemn moment was all but proclaiming: see to what a high degree good behavior can bring a man! I will not describe how, finally, Anton Antonovich Setochkin,13 a section chief in a certain department, a colleague of Andrei Filippovich's and once of Olsufy Ivanovich's, and at the same time an old friend of the house and Klara Olsufyevna's godfather, a little old man with snow-white hair, offering a toast in his turn, crowed like a rooster and recited merry verses; how, with such a decent forgetting of decency, if it is possible to put it so, he made the whole company laugh

to tears, and how Klara Olsufyevna herself, on her parents' orders, gave him a kiss for being so merry and amiable.

I will only say that the guests, who after such a dinner must, naturally, have felt themselves as family and brothers to each other, finally got up from the table; then how the oldsters and solid men, after spending a short time in friendly conversation and even certain, to be sure quite decent and polite, confidences, decorously proceeded to the other room and, not to lose precious time, having divided themselves into parties, with a sense of their own dignity sat down at tables covered with green baize; how the ladies, seating themselves in the drawing room, all suddenly became extraordinarily amiable and began talking about various matters; how, finally, the highly esteemed host himself, who had lost the use of his legs from true and faithful service and had been rewarded for it with all the abovementioned things, began to walk about on crutches among his guests, supported by Vladimir Semyonovich and Klara Olsufyevna, and how, also suddenly becoming extraordinarily obliging, he decided to improvise a modest little ball, despite the expense; how, to that end, an efficient youth (the one who at dinner had been more like a state councillor than a youth) was dispatched for musicians; how the musicians then arrived, a whole eleven of them in number; and how, finally, at exactly half-past eight, the inviting strains of a French quadrille and various other dances rang out…Needless to say, my pen is too weak, sluggish, and dull for a proper portrayal of the ball improvised by the extraordinarily obliging gray-haired host.

And how, may I ask, can I, the humble narrator of the adventures of Mr. Goliadkin—highly curious adventures in their way, however—how can I portray this extraordinary and decorous mixture of beauty, brilliance, decency, gaiety, amiable solidity and solid amiability, friskiness, joy, all the games and laughter of all these official ladies, more like fairies than ladies—speaking in a sense advantageous to them—with their lily-and-rose shoulders and faces, their airy waists, and their friskily playful, homeopathic (speaking in high style) little feet? How, finally, shall I portray their brilliant official partners, merry and respectable, youthful and sedate, joyful and decently nebulous, those smoking a pipe during

the intervals between dances in a remote little green room and those not smoking in the intervals—partners who, from first to last, were all bearers of a decent rank and name—partners deeply imbued with a sense of elegance and of their own dignity; partners who for the most part spoke French with the ladies, and if they spoke Russian, expressed themselves in the highest tone, in compliments and profound phrases—partners who perhaps only in the smoking room allowed themselves a few amiable departures from language of the highest tone, a few phrases of a friendly and polite brevity, such as, for example: “Thus and so, Petka, you cut some nice capers during the polka” or “Thus and so, Vasya, you really nailed down your little lady the way you wanted!” For all this, as I have already had the honor of explaining to you above, O readers! my pen is inadequate, and therefore I keep silent. Better let us turn to Mr. Goliadkin, the real, the only hero of our quite truthful story.

The thing is that he now finds himself in a quite strange, to say the least, position. He, ladies and gentlemen, is also here, that is, not at the ball, but almost at the ball; never mind him, ladies and gentlemen; he is his own man, but at this moment he is standing on a path that is not entirely straight; he is now standing—it is even strange to say it—he is now standing in the hallway to the back stairs of Olsufy Ivanovich’s apartment. But never mind that he is standing there; he is all right.

He is standing, ladies and gentlemen, in a little corner, huddled in a place not so much warm as dark, hidden partly by an enormous wardrobe and some old screens, among all sorts of litter, trash, and junk, hiding for a time and meanwhile only observing the general course of events in the capacity of an external onlooker. He, ladies and gentlemen, is only observing now; he may also go in, ladies and gentlemen…why not go in? He has only to take a step, and he will go in, and go in rather adroitly. Only just now—while standing, incidentally, for the third hour in the cold, between the wardrobe and the screens, amidst all sorts of trash, litter, and junk—he quoted, in his own justification, a phrase from the French minister Villèle,14 of blessed memory, that “everything will come in its turn, if you have the gumption to wait.”

This phrase Mr. Goliadkin had read once in a completely unrelated book, but now he called it up quite opportunely in his memory. First, the phrase suited his present situation very well, and second, what will not occur to a man who has been waiting for the happy outcome of his circumstances for almost a whole three hours in a hallway, in the dark and cold? Having quite opportunely quoted the phrase of the former French minister Villèle, as has been said, Mr. Goliadkin at once, no one knows why, also recalled the former Turkish vizier Marzimiris, as well as the beautiful Margravine Louise, whose story he had also read once in a book.15 Then it came to his memory that the Jesuits even made it a rule to consider all means appropriate, so long as the end is achieved. Having encouraged himself somewhat with this historical point, Mr. Goliadkin said to himself, well, so what about the Jesuits?

The Jesuits, all to a man, were the greatest fools, that he himself would go them one better, that if only the pantry (that is, the room whose door gave directly onto the hallway and the back stairs, where Mr. Goliadkin now was) stayed empty at least for a moment, then, in spite of all Jesuits, he would up and go straight from the pantry to the morning room, then to the room where they were now playing cards, and then straight into the ballroom where they were now dancing the polka.

And he would go in, he would go in without fail, he would go in despite all, he would slip in, just that, and no one would notice; and once there, he would know what to do. That is the position, ladies and gentlemen, in which we now find the hero of our perfectly truthful story, though, incidentally, it is hard to explain precisely what was happening to him at that moment. The thing was that he had managed to get as far as the hallway and the stairs for the simple reason that, say, why should he not get there, anybody could get there; but he did not dare to penetrate further, did not dare to do it openly…not because he lacked daring, but just so, because he did not want to, because he would have preferred to do it on the quiet. Here he is, ladies and gentlemen, waiting now for this quiet, and he has been waiting exactly two and a half hours for it.

Why should he not wait? Villèle himself waited. “What has Villèle got to do with it?” thought Mr. Goliadkin. “Why Villèle? What if I now sort of…up and penetrate?…Eh, you bit player!” said Mr. Goliadkin, pinching his frozen cheek with his frozen hand. “What a little fool, what a Goliadka—that’s what your name is!…”16 However, this endearment towards his own person at the present moment was just by the way, in passing, with no visible purpose. He now made as if to set out and move forward; the moment had come; the pantry was empty, and there was no one in it; Mr. Goliadkin saw all this through a little window; two steps brought him to the door, and he was already opening it. “To go or not? Well, to go or not?

I’ll go…why shouldn’t I go? The brave man makes his way everywhere!” Having encouraged himself in this way, our hero suddenly and quite unexpectedly retreated behind the screens. “No,” he thought, “what if somebody comes in? There, somebody has; why was I gaping when nobody was there?

I should have upped and penetrated!…No, there’s no penetrating, when a man has such a character! What a mean tendency! I got frightened like a chicken. Getting frightened is what we do, so there! Mucking things up is what we always do: don’t even ask us about it. So I stand here like a block of wood, and that’s that! At home I’d be having a nice cup of tea now…How pleasant it would be to have a nice cup. If I get home late, Petrushka may grumble. Why don’t I go home? Devil take it all! I’m going, and that’s that!”

Having thus resolved his situation, Mr. Goliadkin quickly moved forward, as if someone had touched a spring inside him; in two steps he was in the pantry, he threw off his overcoat, removed his hat, hastily shoved it all into a corner, straightened and smoothed himself out; then…then he moved to the morning room, from there he flitted to yet another room, slipping almost unnoticed among the passionately engrossed gamblers; then…then…here Mr. Goliadkin forgot everything that was going on around him and directly, like a bolt from the blue, appeared in the ballroom.

As luck would have it, there was no dancing at that moment. The ladies were strolling about the ballroom in picturesque groups. The men clustered in little circles or darted about the room engaging the ladies. Mr. Goliadkin did not notice any of it.

He saw only Klara Olsufyevna; beside her Andrei Filippovich, then Vladimir Semyonovich, and another two or three officers, and another two or three young men, also quite interesting, giving or having already realized, as could be judged at first glance, certain hopes…He saw some others.

Or no, he no longer saw anyone, no longer looked at anyone…but, moved by the same spring that had caused him to pop uninvited into someone else's ball, he stepped forward, then further forward, and further forward; ran into some councillor in passing, trod on his foot; incidentally stepped on one venerable old lady's dress and tore it slightly, shoved a man with a tray, shoved somebody else, and, not noticing any of it, or rather, noticing it, but just so, in passing, without looking at anyone, making his way further and further forward, he suddenly ended up in front of Klara Olsufyevna herself.

Doubtless, without batting an eye, he would have sunk through the earth at that moment with the greatest pleasure; but what's done cannot be undone…cannot possibly be undone. What was he to do? "If I don't succeed, I keep quiet; if I do succeed, I keep trying." Mr. Goliadkin, to be sure, "was not an intriguer and was no master at polishing the parquet with his boots…" It just happened that way.

Besides, the Jesuits somehow got mixed up in it all…However, Mr. Goliadkin could not be bothered with them! Everything that walked, noised, talked, laughed, suddenly, as if by some sign, became hushed and gradually crowded around Mr. Goliadkin. Mr. Goliadkin, however, seemed to hear nothing, to see nothing, he could not look…not for anything would he look; he lowered his eyes to the ground and just stood like that, having given himself in passing, however, his word of honor to shoot himself somehow that same night. Having given himself

this word of honor, Mr. Goliadkin said to himself mentally: “Here goes!” and, to his own greatest amazement, quite unexpectedly began suddenly to speak.

Mr. Goliadkin began with congratulations and appropriate wishes. The congratulations went well; but our hero faltered at the wishes. He had the feeling that if he faltered, everything would go to the devil at once. And so it happened—he faltered and got stuck…got stuck and blushed; blushed and became flustered; became flustered and raised his eyes; raised his eyes and looked around; looked around and—and went dead…Everything stood, everything was silent, everything waited; a little further away there was whispering, a little closer—laughter. Mr. Goliadkin cast a humble, lost glance at Andrei Filippovich.

Andrei Filippovich responded to Mr. Goliadkin with such a look that, if our hero had not already been fully, completely destroyed, he would certainly have been destroyed a second time—if only that were possible. The silence continued.

“This has more to do with my domestic circumstances and my private life, Andrei Filippovich,” the half-dead Mr. Goliadkin said in a barely audible voice, “this is not an official event, Andrei Filippovich…”

“Shame on you, sir, shame on you!” Andrei Filippovich spoke in a half-whisper, with a look of inexpressible indignation—spoke, took Klara Olsufyevna by the arm, and turned away from Mr. Goliadkin.

“I have nothing to be ashamed of, Andrei Filippovich,” replied Mr. Goliadkin in the same half-whisper, looking around with his unhappy glance, at a loss, and trying on account of it to find some middle ground in the perplexed crowd, and his own social position.

“Well, never mind, well, never mind, ladies and gentlemen! Well, what is it? Well, it could happen to anyone,” whispered Mr. Goliadkin, moving slightly from his place and trying to get out of the crowd surrounding him. They made way for him. Our hero somehow passed between the two rows of curious and perplexed observers. He was

driven by fate. Mr. Goliadkin felt it himself, that it was fate he was driven by.

Of course, he would have paid dearly for the possibility of now being, without any breach of etiquette, at his former station in the hallway, by the back stairs; but since that was decidedly impossible, he began trying to slip away somewhere into a corner and stand there just like that—modestly, decently, separately, disturbing nobody, drawing no exceptional attention to himself, but at the same time gaining the good graces of the guests and the host. However, Mr. Goliadkin felt as if something was undermining him, as if he was tottering, falling.

Finally he made his way to a little corner and stood in it like a stranger, a rather indifferent observer, leaning with his hands on the backs of two chairs, thus taking them into his full possession, and trying his best to glance cheerfully at Olsufy Ivanovich's guests who were grouped near him. Closest to him stood some officer, a tall and handsome fellow, before whom Mr. Goliadkin felt himself a regular little bug.

"These two chairs, Lieutenant, are reserved: one for Klara Olsufyevna and the other for Princess Chevchekhanov, who is dancing here; I am now holding them for them, Lieutenant," Mr. Goliadkin said breathlessly, turning an imploring gaze on the lieutenant. The lieutenant, silently and with a devastating smile, turned away. Having misfired in one place, our hero attempted to try his luck somewhere else and turned directly to an important councillor with a significant decoration on his neck.

But the councillor measured him with such a cold gaze that Mr. Goliadkin felt clearly that he had suddenly been showered with a whole bucket of cold water. Mr. Goliadkin quieted down. He decided that it was better to keep silent, not to speak, to show that he was just so, that he was also like everyone else, and that his position, as it seemed to him, was also proper at the very least. To that end, he fixed his gaze on the cuffs of his uniform coat, then raised his eyes and rested them on a gentleman of highly respectable appearance. "This gentleman is wearing a wig," thought Mr. Goliadkin, "and if he takes the wig off,

there will be a bare head, as bare as the palm of my hand." Having made such an important discovery, Mr. Goliadkin remembered, too, about the Arab emirs who, if they took from their head the green turban they wear as a token of their relation to the prophet Mohammed, would leave nothing but a bare, hairless head.

Then, probably by a particular collision of ideas about the Turks in his head, Mr. Goliadkin went on to Turkish slippers, and here incidentally recalled that Andrei Filippovich wore shoes that were more like slippers than shoes. It was noticeable that Mr. Goliadkin now felt partly at home in his situation. "Now, if that chandelier," flitted through Mr. Goliadkin's head, "if that chandelier tore loose and fell on this company, I would rush at once to save Klara Olsufyevna. Having saved her, I would tell her: 'Don't worry, miss; it's nothing, and I am your savior.' Then…" Here Mr. Goliadkin turned his gaze to the side, looking for Klara Olsufyevna, and saw Gerasimych, Olsufy Ivanovich's old valet.

Gerasimych, with a most solicitous and officially solemn air, was making his way straight towards him. Mr. Goliadkin shuddered and winced from some unaccountable and at the same time most disagreeable feeling. He looked around mechanically; it occurred to him to slip away from trouble somehow, underhandedly, sideways, quietly, just to up and—efface himself, that is, to make as though he could not care less, as though it had nothing to do with him. However, before our hero managed to resolve on anything, Gerasimych was standing before him.

"You see, Gerasimych," said our hero, addressing Gerasimych with a little smile, "you ought to give orders. You see that candle there in the candelabra, Gerasimych—it's about to fall; so, you know, order it to be straightened; really, it's about to fall, Gerasimych…"

"The candle, sir? No, sir, the candle's standing straight, sir; but there's somebody asking for you out there, sir."
"Who is asking for me, Gerasimych?"

“I really don’t know exactly who, sir. A man from thereabouts, sir. ‘Is Yakov Petrovich Goliadkin here?’ he says. ‘Then call him out,’ he says, ‘on very necessary and urgent business…’—that’s what, sir.”

“No, Gerasimych, you’re mistaken; you’re mistaken about that, Gerasimych.”
“Doubtful, sir…”
“No, Gerasimych, it’s not doubtful; there’s nothing doubtful about it, Gerasimych. Nobody’s asking for me, Gerasimych, there’s nobody to ask for me, and I’m quite at home here, that is, where I belong, Gerasimych.”

Mr. Goliadkin caught his breath and looked around. So it was! Everything that was in the room, everything, was straining its eyes and ears at him in some sort of solemn expectation.

The men crowded nearer and listened. Further away the ladies exchanged alarmed whispers. The host himself appeared at a by no means great distance from Mr. Goliadkin, and though by the looks of him it was impossible to observe that he, in his turn, was also taking a direct and immediate interest in Mr. Goliadkin’s circumstances, because it was all done on a delicate footing, nevertheless it all gave the hero of our story the clear feeling that the decisive moment had come for him. Mr. Goliadkin saw clearly that the time had come for a bold stroke, the time for the disgracing of his enemies. Mr. Goliadkin was agitated. Mr. Goliadkin felt a sort of inspiration, and in a trembling, solemn voice began again, addressing the waiting Gerasimych:
“No, my friend, nobody’s calling me. You’re mistaken. I’ll say more: you were also mistaken earlier today when you assured me…made so bold as to assure me, I say” (Mr. Goliadkin raised his voice), “that Olsufy Ivanovich, my benefactor from time immemorial, who in a certain sense has taken the place of a father for me, would close his door to me at a moment of familial and festive joy for his parental heart.” (Mr. Goliadkin looked around self-contentedly, but with deep feeling. Tears welled up in his eyes.) “I repeat, my friend,” our hero concluded, “you were mistaken, you were cruelly, unforgivably mistaken…”

It was a solemn moment. Mr. Goliadkin felt that the effect was most certain. Mr. Goliadkin stood modestly looking down and waiting for Olsufy Ivanovich's embrace. Agitation and perplexity could be noticed among the guests; even the un-flinching and awesome Gerasimych faltered at the word "Doubtful, sir"…when suddenly out of the blue the merciless orchestra struck up a polka. All was lost, all was blown to the winds. Mr. Goliadkin shuddered, Gerasimych drew back, everything that was in the room billowed up like the sea, and Vladimir Semyonovich was already flying in the lead couple with Klara Olsufyevna, and the handsome lieutenant with Princess Chevchekhanov.

Onlookers crowded around with curiosity and delight to watch them dancing the polka—a new, interesting, fashionable dance that had turned everyone's head. Mr. Goliadkin was forgotten for a while.

But suddenly everything roused, stirred, bustled; the music stopped…a strange incident had occurred. Wearied by the dancing, Klara Olsufyevna, barely able to breathe from exhaustion, her cheeks aflame and her breast heaving deeply, finally fell strengthless into an armchair.

All hearts strained towards the lovely enchantress, everyone hastened to be the first to greet her and thank her for the pleasure she had given—suddenly Mr. Goliadkin appeared before her. Mr. Goliadkin was pale, extremely upset; he also seemed somehow strengthless, he could barely move. He smiled for some reason, he reached out his hand imploringly.

In her amazement, Klara Olsufyevna had no time to draw her hand back and mechanically stood up at Mr. Goliadkin's invitation. Mr. Goliadkin swayed forward, first one time, then another, then raised his foot, then somehow shuffled, then somehow stamped, then stumbled…he also wanted to dance with Klara Olsufyevna. Klara Olsufyevna cried out; everyone rushed to free her hand from the hand of Mr. Goliadkin, and all at once our hero was shoved nearly ten paces away by the crowd. Around him a little circle also grouped itself.

Shrieking and crying came from two old women whom Mr. Goliadkin had nearly knocked down in his retreat. The commotion was terrible; everything questioned, everything cried out, everything argued. The orchestra fell silent.

Our hero turned around within his little circle and mechanically, partly smiling, muttered something to himself, that, say, “why not,” and, say, “the polka, as it seemed to him at least, was a new and highly interesting dance, made to humor the ladies…but if it came to that, then he was perhaps ready to agree.” But it seemed no one was asking for Mr. Goliadkin’s agreement.

Our hero felt someone’s hand suddenly fall on his arm, another hand rested lightly on his back, and with a special solicitousness he was directed somewhere to the side. Finally he noticed that he was heading straight for the door. Mr. Goliadkin wanted to say something, to do something…But no, he no longer wanted anything.

He merely laughed it off mechanically. Finally he felt that an overcoat was being put on him, that a hat was being pulled over his eyes; he finally felt himself in the hallway, in the dark and cold, and finally on the stairs. Finally, he stumbled, it seemed to him that he was falling into an abyss; he was about to cry out—and suddenly found himself in the yard.

Fresh air breathed on him, he paused for a minute; at that same moment the sounds reached him of the orchestra striking up anew. Mr. Goliadkin suddenly remembered everything; it seemed that all his sagging strength came back to him. He tore from the spot where he had been standing till then as if rooted, and rushed headlong away, anywhere, into the air, into freedom, wherever his legs would carry him…

Chapter V

IN ALL THE PETERSBURG towers that displayed and struck the hour, it struck midnight exactly as Mr. Goliadkin, beside himself, ran out to the

embankment of the Fontanka just next to the Izmailovsky Bridge, fleeing from his enemies, from persecutions, from the shower of flicks hanging over him, from the cries of alarmed old women, from ladies' ah's and oh's, and from the destructive gazes of Andrei Filippovich. Mr. Goliadkin was destroyed—fully destroyed, in the full sense of the word, and if at the present moment he retained the ability to run, it was solely by some sort of miracle, a miracle in which he himself, finally, refused to believe.

It was a terrible November night—wet, foggy, rainy, snowy, fraught with fluxes, colds, agues, anginas, fevers of all possible sorts and kinds, in short, with all the gifts of a Petersburg November. The wind howled in the deserted streets, heaving the black water of the Fontanka higher than the mooring rings and perkily brushing up against the skinny streetlamps of the embankment, which in their turn seconded its howling with a thin, shrill creaking, which made up an endless, squeaking, rattling concert, quite familiar to every inhabitant of Petersburg.

Rain and snow fell at once. Streams of rainwater, broken up by the wind, sprayed almost horizontally, as if from a fire hose, and pricked and lashed at the wretched Mr. Goliadkin's face like thousands of pins and needles.

Amid the night's silence, broken only by the distant rumble of carriages, the howling of the wind, and the creaking of the streetlamps, the splashing and burbling water pouring down from all the roofs, porches, gutters, and eaves onto the granite pavement of the sidewalks had a dismal sound. There was not a soul either near or far, nor did it seem there could be at such an hour and in such weather. Thus only Mr. Goliadkin, alone with his despair, trotted just then along the sidewalk of the Fontanka with his usual small and quick step, hurrying to reach as soon as possible his Shestilavochnaya Street, his fourth floor, his own apartment.

Though the snow, the rain, and all that does not even have a name when blizzard and blackness break loose under the November sky of

Petersburg, at one blow suddenly attacked Mr. Goliadkin, destroyed by his misfortunes even without that, granting him not the slightest mercy or respite, chilling him to the bone, gluing his eyes shut, blowing from all sides, knocking him off his path and out of his last wits, though it all poured at once onto Mr. Goliadkin, as if purposely cooperating and agreeing with all his enemies to make a fine day and evening and night of it for him—despite all that, Mr. Goliadkin remained almost insensible to this ultimate proof of fate's persecution: so strongly had he been shaken and shocked by all that had happened to him a few minutes earlier at State Councillor Berendeev's! If some stranger, some disinterested observer, had merely glanced from the side now at Mr. Goliadkin's dreary course, even he would have been pervaded at once by all the terrible horror of his misfortunes and would surely have said that Mr. Goliadkin looked as if he wanted to hide somewhere from himself, as if he wanted to escape somewhere from himself.

Yes, it really was so! We will say more: Mr. Goliadkin now wanted not only to escape from himself, but to annihilate himself completely, to be no more, to turn to dust. In the present moments he paid heed to nothing around him, understood nothing that was going on around him, and looked as if indeed neither the unpleasantness of the foul night, nor the long way, the rain, the snow, the wind, nor all this harsh weather existed for him.

A galosh that came off the boot on Mr. Goliadkin's right foot simply stayed there in the mud and snow on the Fontanka sidewalk, and Mr. Goliadkin neither thought of going back for it nor noticed its loss.

He was so bewildered that several times, suddenly, in spite of everything around him, totally pervaded by the idea of his recent terrible fall, he would stop motionless, like a post, in the middle of the sidewalk at those moments he died, vanished; then suddenly he would tear himself furiously from the spot and run, run without looking back, as if escaping from someone's pursuit, from some still more terrible calamity…Indeed, his situation was terrible!…Finally, at the end of his strength, Mr. Goliadkin stopped, leaned on the rail of the embankment in the position of a man who suddenly, quite unexpectedly, has a nose

bleed, and began gazing intently at the muddy black water of the Fontanka. It is not known precisely how much time he spent in this occupation.

It is known only that at that moment Mr. Goliadkin reached such despair, was so broken, so tormented, so exhausted and sagging in what remained of his spirit, which was weak to begin with, that he forgot everything—the Izmailovsky Bridge, and Shestilavochnaya Street, and his present…But what of it, in fact? It was all the same to him the thing was done, finished, the decision was signed and sealed; what was it to him?…Suddenly…suddenly he shuddered all over and involuntarily jumped aside a couple of steps.

In inexplicable alarm, he began to look around; but there was no one there, nothing special had happened—and yet…and yet it seemed to him that just then, that minute, someone had been standing there next to him, also leaning his elbows on the rail of the embankment, and—wondrous thing!—had even said something to him, said something rapidly, abruptly, not quite clearly, but about something quite close to him, of concern to him. “Did I imagine it, or what?” said Mr. Goliadkin, looking around once more.

“But what am I doing standing here?…Eh, eh!” he concluded, shaking his head, and meanwhile, with an uneasy, anguished feeling, even with fear, he began peering into the dim, moist distance, straining his vision with all his might, and trying with all his might to penetrate with his nearsighted gaze into the wet milieu spread before him.

However, there was nothing new, nothing special struck Mr. Goliadkin’s eye. It seemed that everything was in order, as it ought to be—that is, the snow poured down still heavier, bigger, and thicker; nothing could be seen beyond a distance of twenty paces; the streetlamps creaked ever more piercingly, and the wind seemed to drone its melancholy song still more plaintively and pitifully, like an importunate beggar pleading for a copper to feed himself. “Eh, eh! what’s the matter with me?” Mr. Goliadkin repeated, starting on his way again, and still looking around a little.

And yet some new sensation echoed in Mr. Goliadkin's whole being: not really anguish, not really fear…a feverish trembling ran through his veins. It was an unbearably unpleasant moment! "Well, never mind," he said to encourage himself, "never mind; maybe it's nothing at all, and no stain on anyone's honor. Maybe it had to be so," he went on, not understanding what he was saying himself, "maybe it will all work out for the better in time, and there won't be any claims to make, and everything will be justified." Speaking thus, and relieving himself with words, Mr. Goliadkin shook himself slightly, shaking off the snowflakes that covered in a thick crust his hat, his collar, his overcoat, his tie, his boots, and everything—but he was still unable to push away, to shake off the strange feeling, the strange, dark anguish.

Somewhere in the distance a cannon shot rang out. "What weather," thought our hero. "Listen, mightn't there be a flood?17 The water must have risen very high." Mr. Goliadkin had only just said or thought this, when he saw before him a passerby coming in the opposite direction, like him, probably, also out late by some chance.

It seemed to be a trifling, chance matter; but, no one knows why, Mr. Goliadkin became confused, and even frightened, slightly at a loss. Not that he feared he was a bad man, but just so, maybe…"And who knows about this late-night walker," flashed in Mr. Goliadkin's head, "maybe he's one, too, maybe he's the chief thing here, and not out walking for nothing, but with a purpose, crossing my path and brushing against me." Maybe, however, Mr. Goliadkin did not think precisely that, but only felt momentarily something similar and highly disagreeable.

However, there was no time for thinking and feeling; the passerby was two steps away. Mr. Goliadkin hastened at once, as was his wont, to assume a completely special air, an air which showed clearly that he, Goliadkin, was his own man, that he was all right, that the way was wide enough for everybody, and that he, Goliadkin, was not offending anybody. Suddenly he stopped as if rooted, as if struck by lightning, and then quickly turned to look at the man who had just walked past him—

turned as if something had pulled him from behind, as if the wind had whirled his weathervane.

The passerby was quickly vanishing into the snowy blizzard. He, too, was walking hastily, he, too, like Mr. Goliadkin, was dressed and wrapped from head to foot and, just like him, pattered and minced down the sidewalk of the Fontanka with scurrying little steps, trotting slightly. “What…what is this?” whispered Mr. Goliadkin, smiling mistrustfully—though he shuddered all over.

A chill ran down his spine. Meanwhile the passerby had vanished completely, even his footsteps were no longer heard, and Mr. Goliadkin still stood and looked after him. Finally, though, he began to recover his senses. “But what is this,” he thought with vexation, “have I really gone out of my mind, or what?”—turned and went on his way, hurrying, and quickening his pace more and more, and trying rather not to think about anything at all. He even finally closed his eyes for that purpose. Suddenly, through the howling of the wind and the noise of the storm, there again came to his ears the noise of someone’s footsteps quite close by. He gave a start and opened his eyes.

Before him again, some twenty paces away, was the black shape of a little man quickly approaching him. This man was hurrying, flurrying, scurrying; the distance was quickly diminishing. Mr. Goliadkin could even thoroughly examine his new late-night comrade—examined him and cried out in astonishment and terror; his legs gave way under him. This was that same walker he knew, the one whom he had let pass by some ten minutes earlier and who now had suddenly, quite unexpectedly, appeared before him again.

But this was not the only wonder that struck Mr. Goliadkin—and Mr. Goliadkin was so struck that he stopped, cried out, was about to say something—and started after the stranger, even shouted something to him, probably wishing to stop him the sooner.

The stranger actually stopped some ten paces from Mr. Goliadkin, and so that the light of a nearby streetlamp fell full on his whole figure—

stopped, turned to Mr. Goliadkin, and, with an impatiently preoccupied air, waited for what he would say. “Excuse me, perhaps I’m mistaken,” our hero said in a trembling voice. The stranger said nothing, turned in vexation, and quickly went on his way, as if hurrying to make up the two seconds lost on Mr. Goliadkin.

As for Mr. Goliadkin, he trembled in every muscle, his knees gave way, grew weak, and he sank with a moan onto a hitching post. However, there actually was a cause for such bewilderment. The thing was that this stranger now seemed somehow familiar to him. That would still be nothing. But he recognized, he now almost fully recognized this man.

He had seen him often, this man, even used to see him quite recently; but where was it? was it not just yesterday? However, once again this was not the main thing, that Mr. Goliadkin had seen him often; and there was almost nothing special about this man—no one’s special attention would have been drawn to this man at first sight.

He was just a man like everybody else, a decent one, to be sure, like all decent people, and maybe had some merits, even rather significant ones—in short, he was his own man. Mr. Goliadkin did not even nurse any hatred, or hostility, or even the slightest animosity for this man, even the contrary, it would seem—yet (and the greatest force lay in this circumstance), yet he would not have wanted to meet him for all the treasures in the world and especially to meet him as he had now, for instance.

We will say more: Mr. Goliadkin knew this man perfectly well; he even knew what he was called, knew what the man’s last name was; yet not for anything, and again not for all the treasures in the world, would he have wanted to name him, to agree to recognize, say, that he was called such-and-such, that such-and-such was his patronymic, and such-and-such his last name.

Whether Mr. Goliadkin’s quandary lasted a long or a short time, whether he sat for precisely a long time on the hitching post, I cannot say, but only that finally, having recovered a little, he suddenly broke

into a run without looking back, for all the strength that was in him; his breath kept failing; he stumbled twice, nearly fell—on this occasion Mr. Goliadkin's other boot became orphaned, also abandoned by its galosh. Finally, Mr. Goliadkin slowed his pace a little, so as to catch his breath, hurriedly looked around, and saw that he had already run, without noticing it, the whole of his way along the Fontanka, crossed the Anichkov Bridge, gone partway down Nevsky, and was now standing at the corner of Liteinaya. Mr. Goliadkin turned onto Liteinaya.

His position at that moment was like the position of a man standing over a frightful precipice, when the earth breaks away under him, is rocking, shifting, sways for a last time, and falls, drawing him into the abyss, and meanwhile the unfortunate man has neither the strength nor the firmness of spirit to jump back, to take his eyes from the yawning chasm; the abyss draws him, and he finally leaps into it himself, himself hastening the moment of his own perdition.

Mr. Goliadkin knew, felt, and was completely certain that some further bad thing was bound to befall him on the way, that some further trouble would break over him, that, for instance, he would meet his stranger again; but—strange thing—he even wished for that meeting, considered it inevitable, and asked only for it all to be over, for his situation to be resolved at least somehow, only soon.

And meanwhile he went on running, running, as if moved by some outside force, for he felt some sort of weakening and numbness in his whole being; he was unable to think about anything, though his ideas kept catching at everything like thorns. Some forsaken little dog, all wet and shivering, tagged after Mr. Goliadkin and also ran along sideways next to him, hurriedly, tail and ears drooping, from time to time glancing at him timidly and intelligently. Some remote, long-forgotten idea—the remembrance of circumstances that had occurred long ago—now came to his head, knocked like a little hammer in his head, vexed him, would not leave him alone. "Eh, this nasty little dog!" whispered Mr. Goliadkin, not understanding himself.

Finally, he saw his stranger at the corner of Italianskaya Street. Only now the stranger was going not in the opposite but in the same direction as himself, and was also running, a few steps ahead. Finally, they reached Shestilavochnaya. Mr. Goliadkin was breathless. The stranger stopped right in front of the house where Mr. Goliadkin lived. The bell rang and at almost the same time the iron bolt rasped. The gate opened, the stranger stooped, flashed, and vanished.

At almost the same instant, Mr. Goliadkin arrived and shot arrowlike through the gate. Not heeding the caretaker's grumbling, breathless, he ran into the courtyard and at once saw his interesting companion, whom he had lost for a moment. The stranger flashed at the entrance to the stairway that led to Mr. Goliadkin's apartment.

Mr. Goliadkin rushed after him. The stairway was dark, damp, and dirty. At each turning, a mass of all sorts of household rubbish was heaped up, so that a stranger, an unaccustomed man, coming to that stairway at a dark time, would be forced to travel it for half an hour, risking a broken leg, and cursing both the stairway and his acquaintances who lived in so uncomfortable a place.

But Mr. Goliadkin's companion was like an acquaintance, a familiar; he ran up lightly, without difficulty, and with a perfect knowledge of the locale. Mr. Goliadkin almost caught up with him completely; the skirt of the stranger's overcoat even struck him on the nose once or twice. His heart was sinking.

The mysterious man stopped right in front of the door to Mr. Goliadkin's apartment, knocked, and (which, however, would have surprised Mr. Goliadkin at another time) Petrushka, as if he had been waiting and had not gone to bed, opened the door at once and walked after the entering man with a candle in his hand. Beside himself, the hero of our narrative also ran into his lodgings; not taking off his overcoat and hat, he went down the little corridor and, as if thunderstruck, stopped on the threshold of his room.

All of Mr. Goliadkin's forebodings had come perfectly true. All that he had feared and anticipated had now become reality. His breath broke off, his head spun. The stranger sat before him, also in his overcoat and hat, on his own bed, smiling slightly, narrowing his eyes a little, nodding to him amicably.

Mr. Goliadkin wanted to cry out but could not—to protest in some way, but had no strength. His hair stood on end, and he slumped down where he was, insensible from horror. With good reason, however. Mr. Goliadkin had perfectly well recognized his night companion. His night companion was none other than himself—Mr. Goliadkin himself, another Mr. Goliadkin, but perfectly the same as himself—in short, what is known as his double in all respects.

Chapter VI

THE NEXT MORNING, at exactly eight o'clock, Mr. Goliadkin came to in his bed. Straight away all the extraordinary things of yesterday and all that incredible, wild night, with its almost impossible adventures, at once, suddenly, in all their terrifying fullness, appeared to his imagination and memory.

Such fierce, infernal malice from his enemies, and especially the last proof of that malice, froze Mr. Goliadkin's heart. But at the same time it was all so strange, incomprehensible, wild, it seemed so impossible, that it was actually hard to give credence to the whole thing; even Mr. Goliadkin himself would have been prepared to recognize it all as unfeasible raving, a momentarily disturbed imagination, a darkening of the mind, if, luckily for him, he had not known from bitter life's experience how far malice can sometimes drive a man, how far an enemy's fierceness can sometimes go in avenging his honor and ambition.

Besides, Mr. Goliadkin's racked limbs, his dazed head, his aching back, and a malignant cold witnessed to and insisted on all the probability of last night's promenade, and partly to all the rest that had occurred during that promenade. And, finally, Mr. Goliadkin had already long

known that they were preparing something there, that they had someone else there.

But—what then? Having thought well, Mr. Goliadkin decided to say nothing, to submit, and not to protest about this matter for the time being. “Maybe they just think to frighten me a little, and when they see that I don’t mind, don’t protest, and am perfectly humble, that I endure with humility, they’ll give it up, give it up themselves, even be the first to give it up.”

Such were the thoughts in Mr. Goliadkin’s head when, stretching in his bed and spreading his racked limbs, he waited this time for Petrushka’s usual appearance in his room. He waited for a quarter of an hour; he heard the lazybones Petrushka pottering with the samovar behind the partition, and yet he simply could not bring himself to call him.

We will say more: Mr. Goliadkin was now even slightly afraid of a face-to-face meeting with Petrushka. “God knows,” he thought, “God knows how that knave looks at this whole thing now. He says nothing, but he keeps his own counsel.” Finally the door creaked, and Petrushka appeared with a tray in his hands.

Mr. Goliadkin timidly gave him a sidelong glance, waiting impatiently for what would happen, waiting to see if he would finally say something concerning a certain circumstance. But Petrushka said nothing; on the contrary, he was somehow more silent, stern, and cross than usual, looking askance at everything from under his eyebrows; generally it was evident that he was extremely displeased with something; he did not look at his master even once, which, be it said in passing, slightly piqued Mr. Goliadkin; he put everything he had brought with him on the table, turned, and silently went behind his partition.

“He knows, he knows, he knows everything, the lout!” Mr. Goliadkin muttered, sitting down to his tea. However, our hero asked his man precisely nothing, though Petrushka later came into his room several times for various needs. Mr. Goliadkin was in a most alarmed state of mind. He also felt eerie about going to the department. He had a strong

presentiment that precisely there something was not right. “Suppose you go there,” he thought, “and run into something or other? Wouldn’t it be better to be patient now?

Wouldn’t it be better to wait now? Let them be as they like there; but today I’d rather wait here, gather my strength, recover, reflect better about the whole thing, and then seize the moment, drop on them out of the blue, and act as if nothing happened.” Pondering in this way, Mr. Goliadkin smoked pipe after pipe; time flew; it was already nearly half-past nine. “So it’s already half-past nine,” thought Mr. Goliadkin, “it’s even late to show up. Besides, I’m sick, of course I’m sick, certainly I’m sick; who’ll say I’m not? What do I care!

So they send to verify it, so let the errand boy come; what indeed do I care? I’ve got a backache, a cough, a cold; and, finally, I can’t go, I simply can’t go in such weather; I may fall ill, and then even die for all I know; there’s such peculiar mortality nowadays…” With such reasonings, Mr. Goliadkin finally set his conscience fully at ease and justified himself beforehand in view of the dressing-down he expected from Andrei Filippovich for being remiss at work.

Generally, in all such circumstances, our hero was extremely fond of justifying himself in his own eyes by various irrefutable reasons and thus setting his conscience fully at ease. And so, having now set his conscience fully at ease, he took his pipe, filled it, and, having just begun to draw on it properly, jumped up quickly from the sofa, threw the pipe aside, briskly washed, shaved, smoothed his hair, pulled on his uniform and all the rest, seized some papers, and flew off to the department.

Mr. Goliadkin entered his section timidly, in trembling expectation of something quite unpleasant—an unconscious expectation, obscure, but at the same time disagreeable; he sat down timidly in his usual place beside the chief clerk, Anton Antonovich Setochkin.

Not looking at anything, not distracted by anything, he tried to grasp the contents of the papers that lay before him. He resolved and

promised himself to keep as far away as possible from anything provoking, from anything that might seriously compromise him—that is, from immodest questions, from somebody or other's jokes and improper allusions regarding all the circumstances of the previous evening; he even resolved to refrain from the usual civilities with his colleagues, such as inquiries about health and so on.

But it was also obvious that to remain that way would not do, was not possible. Anxiety and ignorance about something that closely concerned him always tormented him more than the thing itself.

And that was why, despite his promise to himself not to enter into anything, whatever might happen, and to keep away from everything, whatever it might be, Mr. Goliadkin occasionally raised his head on the sly, ever so quietly, and stealthily glanced sidelong to right, to left, peeking into the physiognomies of his colleagues and trying to conclude from them whether there was anything new and particular that concerned him and was being concealed from him for some unseemly purposes.

He assumed that there was an inevitable connection between all his circumstances yesterday and everything that surrounded him now. Finally, in his anguish, he began to wish only that it be resolved quickly, even God knows how, even in some disaster—who cared! It was here that fate caught Mr. Goliadkin: he had barely managed to wish it, when his doubts were suddenly resolved, albeit in a most strange and unexpected fashion.

The door to the other room suddenly creaked quietly and timidly, as if to introduce the entering person as quite insignificant, and someone's figure—quite familiar, however, to Mr. Goliadkin—appeared bashfully before that same desk at which our hero was installed. Our hero did not raise his head—no, he glimpsed this figure only in passing, with the slightest glance, but he already knew everything, understood everything to the smallest detail.

He burned with shame and buried his victorious head in the papers, with exactly the same purpose as an ostrich pursued by a hunter buries its head in the hot sand. The newcomer bowed to Andrei Filippovich, and after that a formally benign voice was heard, the sort with which superiors in all official places speak to new subordinates.

“Sit down here,” said Andrei Filippovich, pointing the novice to Anton Antonovich’s desk, “here, opposite Mr. Goliadkin, and we’ll find something for you to do at once.” Andrei Filippovich concluded by making the newcomer a quick, properly admonishing gesture, and then immediately immersed himself in the essence of various papers, a whole pile of which lay before him.

Mr. Goliadkin finally raised his eyes, and if he did not faint, it was solely because he had anticipated the whole thing in advance, because he had been forewarned of it all in advance, having divined the newcomer in his soul. Mr. Goliadkin’s first move was to look around quickly, to see whether there was any whispering, whether any office joke was being cooked up, whether anyone’s face was distorted with surprise, whether, finally, anyone fell under the desk from fright.

But, to Mr. Goliadkin’s greatest surprise, no one showed anything of the sort. The behavior of Mr. Goliadkin’s gentleman comrades and colleagues astounded him. It seemed beyond common sense. Mr. Goliadkin was even frightened by such extraordinary silence. The essence of the thing spoke for itself: it was strange, outrageous, wild. There was cause for a stir. All this, to be sure, only flashed through Mr. Goliadkin’s head. He himself was roasting on a slow fire.

There was cause for that, however. The one now sitting opposite Mr. Goliadkin was Mr. Goliadkin’s horror, he was Mr. Goliadkin’s shame, he was Mr. Goliadkin’s nightmare from yesterday, in short, he was Mr. Goliadkin himself—not the Mr. Goliadkin who was now sitting in a chair with a gaping mouth and a pen frozen in his hand; not the one who served as assistant to his chief clerk; not the one who likes to efface himself and bury himself in the crowd; not the one, finally, whose gait clearly says: “Don’t touch me, and I won’t touch you,” or “Don’t touch

me, since I don't touch you"—no, it was a different Mr. Goliadkin, completely different, but at the same time completely identical to the first—of the same height, of the same mold, dressed the same way, with the same bald spot—in short, nothing, decidedly nothing, had been overlooked for a complete likeness, so that if they had been taken and placed next to each other, no one, decidedly no one, would have undertaken to determine precisely which was the real Goliadkin and which was the counterfeit, which was the old and which the new, which was the original and which the copy.

Our hero, if the comparison is possible, was now in the position of a man at whom some mischiefmaker was poking fun, aiming a burning-glass at him on the sly, as a joke. "What is this, a dream or not," he thought, "a reality or a continuation of yesterday? How can it be? By what right is it all being done? Who has allowed such a clerk, who gave the right for it? Am I asleep, am I dreaming?"

Mr. Goliadkin tried to pinch himself, he even tried to get himself to pinch someone else…No, it was not a dream, and that was that. Mr. Goliadkin felt that sweat was pouring down him in streams, that something unprecedented, something unheard-of, was happening to him, which therefore, to complete the misfortune, was also indecent, for Mr. Goliadkin understood and felt all the disadvantage of being the first example of such a lampoonish thing. He even began, finally, to doubt his own existence, and though he had been prepared for anything beforehand, and had wished himself that his doubts would be resolved at least in some way, the very essence of the circumstance, of course, suited the unexpectedness.

Anguish oppressed and tormented him. At times he was completely bereft of sense and memory. Recovering after such moments, he noticed that he was mechanically and unconsciously moving his pen over the paper.

Not trusting himself, he began to check all he had written—and understood nothing. Finally, the other Mr. Goliadkin, who till then had been sitting decorously and peaceably, got up and disappeared through

the door of another section on some errand. Mr. Goliadkin looked around—all right, everything was quiet; only the scratching of pens was heard, the rustle of turning pages, and talking in the corners furthest from Andrei Filippovich's seat. Mr. Goliadkin glanced at Anton Antonovich, and since, in all probability, our hero's physiognomy fully corresponded to his present and was in harmony with the whole sense of the matter, and consequently was highly remarkable in a certain respect, the kindly Anton Antonovich, laying aside his pen, inquired with extraordinary solicitousness after Mr. Goliadkin's health.

"I thank God, Anton Antonovich," Mr. Goliadkin said, faltering, "I'm perfectly well, Anton Antonovich; I'm all right now, Anton Antonovich," he added hesitantly, still not quite trusting the oft-mentioned Anton Antonovich.

"Ah! And I fancied you were unwell; however, no wonder if you were! These days, especially, there are all sorts of infections. You know…"

"Yes, Anton Antonovich, I know, such infections exist…I didn't mean that, Anton Antonovich," Mr. Goliadkin went on, peering intently at Anton Antonovich. "You see, Anton Antonovich, I don't even know how to make you, that is, I mean to say, from which side to approach this matter."

"What, sir? I…you know…I confess to you, I don't understand you very well; you…you know, you should explain more thoroughly in what respect you are in difficulties here," said Anton Antonovich, who was in some small difficulty himself, seeing that tears had even welled up in Mr. Goliadkin's eyes.

"I really…here, Anton Antonovich…a clerk here, Anton Antonovich."
"Well, sir! I still don't understand."
"I mean to say, Anton Antonovich, that there is a newly hired clerk here."
"Yes, sir, there is—your namesake."

"What?" cried Mr. Goliadkin.

“I’m saying he’s your namesake; also Goliadkin. Mightn’t he be your brother?”
“No, sir, Anton Antonovich, I…”

“Hm! you don’t say. And it seemed to me that he must be a close relative of yours. You know, there’s this certain sort of familial resemblance.”

Mr. Goliadkin was stupefied with amazement, and for a time he was robbed of speech. To treat such an outrageous, unheard-of thing so lightly, a thing indeed rare of its kind, a thing that would astonish even the most disinterested observer, to speak of a family resemblance when here it was like looking in a mirror!

“You know, this is what I advise you, Yakov Petrovich,” Anton Antonovich went on. “You should go to the doctor and ask his advice. You know, you somehow look quite unwell. Your eyes especially…you know, there’s some special expression in them.”

“No, Anton Antonovich, of course I feel…that is, I want to ask you, how about this clerk?”
“Well, sir?”

“That is, haven’t you noticed something particular about him, Anton Antonovich…something all too conspicuous?”
“That is?”

“That is, I mean to say, Anton Antonovich, a striking resemblance to someone, for example, that is, to me, for example. You spoke just now, Anton Antonovich, of family resemblance, you made a passing remark…You know, sometimes there are twins like that, that is, exactly like two drops of water, so there’s no telling them apart. Well, that’s what I mean, sir.”

“Yes, sir,” said Anton Antonovich, having pondered a little and as if struck by this circumstance for the first time, “yes, that’s right, sir! The resemblance is indeed striking, and you’re not mistaken in judging that

the one could actually be taken for the other," he went on, opening his eyes wider and wider. "And you know, Yakov Petrovich, it's even a wondrous resemblance, fantastic, as they sometimes say, that is, he's exactly like you…Have you noticed, Yakov Petrovich?

I even wanted to ask you for an explanation myself; yes, I confess, I didn't pay proper attention to it at first. A wonder, a real wonder! And you know, Yakov Petrovich, you're not from local folk, I'd say?"

"No, sir."
"Neither is he. Maybe he's from the same place as you. If I may venture to ask, where did your mother live for the most part?"
"You said…you said, Anton Antonovich, that he's not from local folk?"

"Right, sir, he's not from these parts. And, indeed, how wondrous that is," continued the loquacious Anton Antonovich, for whom a chat about something was a real feast, "it is actually capable of arousing curiosity; one passes it by so often, brushes against it, shoves it, without noticing it. However, don't be embarrassed. It happens. This, you know—here's what I'll tell you, that the same thing happened to my aunt on my mother's side; she also saw herself double before she died…"

"No, sir, I—excuse me for interrupting you, Anton Antonovich—I, Anton Antonovich, would like to know how this clerk, that is, on what grounds is he here?"

"In place of the deceased Semyon Ivanovich, in his vacant place; a vacancy opened up, so they replaced him. Now, really, the thing is that this dear deceased Semyon Ivanovich, they say, left three children—each one smaller than the next. The widow fell at his excellency's feet. They say, however, that she's got something hidden away; there's a bit of money there, but she's hidden it away…"

"No, Anton Antonovich, sir, I'm still talking about this circumstance."

"That is? Well, yes! but why does it interest you so? I tell you, don't be embarrassed. It's all a bit temporary. What, then? it's not your concern;

the Lord God Himself arranged it this way, such was His will, and it's sinful to murmur against it. His wisdom can be seen in it. And you, Yakov Petrovich, as far as I understand, are not at all to blame. There are all sorts of wonders in the world! Mother Nature is generous; and you won't be asked to answer for it, you will not answer for it. Take, for example, incidentally speaking, you've heard, I hope, how those, what do you call them, yes, Siamese twins, are joined at the back, so they live, and eat, and sleep together; they say they bring in a lot of money."
"Excuse me, Anton Antonovich…"

"I understand you, I understand! Yes! well, and so?—never mind! I speak from my utmost understanding, there's nothing to be embarrassed about. What of it? He's a clerk like any other, and seems to be an efficient man. He says he's Goliadkin; not from these parts, he says, a titular councillor. Had a personal talk with his excellency."
"Well, and how was it, sir?"

"All right, sir. They say he gave sufficient explanations, presented reasons; he said thus and so, Your Excellency, I have no fortune, but I wish to serve, and especially under your flattering leadership…well, and everything one ought to say, you know, he put it aptly. Must be a clever man. Well, naturally, he came with a recommendation; no doing without that…"
"Well, but who from, sir?…that is, I mean to say, precisely who mixed his hand in this shameful business?"

"Yes, sir. A good recommendation, they say; his excellency, they say, had a laugh with Andrei Filippovich."
"A laugh with Andrei Filippovich?"
"Yes, sir. He just smiled and said it was good, and that for his part he was not against it, as long as he served loyally…"
"Well, go on, sir. You've revived me a bit, Anton Antonovich; I beg you, go on, sir."

"Excuse me, I again said something that you…Well, yes, sir; well, and never mind, sir; it's an uncomplicated matter; I tell you, don't be embarrassed, and there's nothing dubious to be found in it…"

“No, sir. I, that is, want to ask you, Anton Antonovich, whether his excellency added nothing more…concerning me, for example?”

“How’s that, sir? Right, sir! Well, no, nothing; you can be perfectly at ease. You know, of course, to be sure, it’s a very striking circumstance and at first…yet I, for example, almost didn’t notice at first. I really don’t know why I didn’t notice until you reminded me. However, you can be perfectly at ease. He said nothing at all, nothing in particular,” added the kindly Anton Antonovich, getting up from his chair.

“So, then, sir, I, Anton Antonovich…”
“Ah, you must forgive me, sir. I’ve been babbling about trifles, and here’s an important, urgent matter. I must make inquiries.”
“Anton Antonovich!” the politely summoning voice of Andrei Filippovich rang out, “his excellency is asking for you.”

“At once, at once, Andrei Filippovich, I’ll come at once, sir.” And Anton Antonovich, taking a small pile of papers in his hands, flew first to Andrei Filippovich and then to his excellency’s office.
“What’s this?” Mr. Goliadkin thought to himself. “So this is the sort of game we’ve got here! This is the sort of wind we’ve got blowing now…Not bad; it means things have taken a most agreeable turn,” our hero said to himself, rubbing his hands and not feeling the chair under him from joy.

“So our affair is quite an ordinary affair. So it ends in trifles, resolves itself into nothing. In fact, nobody thinks anything, and they don’t peep, the robbers, they sit and keep busy; nice, very nice! I love a good man, love and am always ready to respect…However, if you think about it, this Anton Antonovich…I’m afraid to trust him: he’s much too gray-haired and pretty shaky with old age.

However, the nicest and greatest thing is that his excellency said nothing and let it pass: that’s good! I approve! Only what’s Andrei Filippovich doing mixing into it with his laughter? What is it to him? The old stitch! He’s always in my way, always trying to run across a man’s

path like a black cat, always thwarting and spiting him; spiting and thwarting him…”

Mr. Goliadkin looked around again, and again hope revived him. However, he still felt embarrassed by some remote thought, some bad thought. It even occurred to him to somehow sidle up to the clerks, to run ahead harelike, even (somehow as they were leaving after work or approaching them as if on business) in the midst of conversation, and to hint that, say, gentlemen, thus and so, there’s this striking resemblance, a strange circumstance, a lampoonish comedy—that is, to make fun of it all and in this way to sound the depths of the danger.

Because still waters do run deep, our hero concluded mentally. However, Mr. Goliadkin only thought it; but he caught himself in time. He realized that it would be going too far. “That’s your nature!” he said to himself, slapping himself lightly on the forehead. “You immediately start playing, rejoicing!

A truthful soul! No, Yakov Petrovich, you and I had better wait and be patient!” Nevertheless, and as we have already mentioned, Mr. Goliadkin was reborn in full hope, as if resurrected from the dead. “Never mind,” he thought, “it’s as if five hundred pounds had fallen off my chest!

There’s a circumstance for you! And the coffer had no trick to it. Krylov’s right, Krylov’s right18…he’s a dab, a stitch, that Krylov, and a great fable writer! And as for that one, let him work, let him work all he likes, as long as he doesn’t interfere with anybody or touch anybody; let him work—I agree and I approbate!”

But meanwhile the hours passed, flew by, and before he noticed it struck four o’clock. The office closed; Andrei Filippovich took his hat, and, as usual, everyone followed his example. Mr. Goliadkin lingered a little, as long as necessary, and purposely went out after everyone else, last, when everyone had already wandered off their different ways.

Going outside, he felt as if he was in paradise, so that he even had a desire to stroll along Nevsky, though it meant a detour. “That’s fate for you!” said our hero. “An unexpected turnabout of the whole affair. And the weather has cleared, and there’s frost, and sleighriding. And frost suits the Russian man, the Russian man gets along nicely with frost! I love the Russian man. And there’s snow, a first dust of snow, as a hunter would say. Oh, to be tracking a hare in the first dust of snow! Ahh! Well, never mind!”

Thus Mr. Goliadkin expressed his delight, and yet something kept tickling in his head—anguish or not, but at times his heart was so wrenched that Mr. Goliadkin did not know how to comfort himself. “However, let’s wait till daytime and then rejoice. What is all this, however?

Well, let’s reason and see. Well, go on and reason, my young friend, go on and reason. Well, he’s a man the same as you, first of all, exactly the same. Well, what of it? If that’s what he is, why should I weep? What is it to me? I stand apart, I whistle to myself, that’s all. So it goes, that’s all! Let him work!

Well, it’s a wonder and a strange thing, they say, these Siamese twins…Well, who needs them, these Siamese? Suppose they are twins, but great people have also looked strange sometimes. It’s even known from history that the famous Suvorov crowed like a rooster19…Well, for him it was all politics; and great generals…yes, however, what about generals? I’m my own man, that’s all, I don’t care about anybody, and in my innocence I despise the enemy. I’m not an intriguer, and I’m proud of it. I’m pure, straightforward, neat, agreeable, unresentful…”

Suddenly Mr. Goliadkin fell silent, stopped short, and trembled like a leaf, and even closed his eyes for a moment. Hoping, however, that the object of his fear was simply an illusion, he finally opened his eyes and glanced timidly to the right. No, it was not an illusion!…Beside him trotted his morning acquaintance, smiling, peeking into his eyes, and apparently waiting for a chance to start a conversation. The

conversation, however, would not get started. The two men went some fifty steps like that.

All Mr. Goliadkin's effort went into wrapping himself more tightly, burying himself in his overcoat, and pulling the hat down over his eyes as far as possible. To complete the injury, even his friend's overcoat and hat were exactly as if they had just been taken from Mr. Goliadkin's shoulders.

"My dear sir," our hero finally said, trying to speak almost in a whisper and not looking at his friend, "it seems we're going different ways…I'm even sure of it," he said after some silence. "Finally, I'm sure you've understood me perfectly," he added rather sternly in conclusion.

"I should like," Mr. Goliadkin's friend said finally, "I should like…you will probably magnanimously forgive me…I don't know whom to turn to here…my circumstances—I hope you will forgive my boldness—it even seemed to me that, moved to compassion, you concerned yourself with me this morning. For my part, I felt drawn to you from the first glance, I…" Here Mr. Goliadkin mentally wished his new colleague would fall through the earth. "If I dared hope that you, Yakov Petrovich, would be so indulgent as to listen…"

"We—here we—we…we'd better go to my place," replied Mr. Goliadkin. "We'll cross to the other side of Nevsky now, it will be more convenient for us there, and then take the side street…we'd better take the side street."

"Very well, sir. Why not take the side street, sir," Mr. Goliadkin's humble companion said timidly,
as if hinting by the tone of his reply that it was not for him to choose and that, in his position, he was ready to be satisfied with a side street. As for Mr. Goliadkin, he did not understand at all what was happening to him. He did not believe himself. He still could not recover from his amazement.

Chapter VII

HE RECOVERED A LITTLE on the stairs, by the entrance to his apartment. “Ah, what a mutton-head I am!” he mentally denounced himself. “Where am I bringing him? Putting my own head into the noose. What will Petrushka think, seeing us together? What will this blackguard venture to think now? and he’s suspicious…” But it was too late for regrets; Mr. Goliadkin knocked, the door opened, and Petrushka began taking the overcoats from his master and the guest.

Mr. Goliadkin looked in passing, just cast a fleeting glance at Petrushka, trying to penetrate his physiognomy and guess his thoughts. But, to his greatest surprise, he saw that it did not occur to his servant to be surprised and even, on the contrary, that it was as if he had been expecting something like that.

Of course, now, too, he looked wolfish, squinted sideways, as if he was getting ready to eat somebody.

“They all seem bewitched today,” thought our hero, “some demon must have been running around! There certainly must be something special with all these folk today. Devil take it, what a torment!” Thinking and pondering in this way, Mr. Goliadkin led the guest to his room and humbly begged him to sit down.

The guest was evidently extremely disconcerted, very timid, followed obediently all the movements of his host, caught his glances, and from them, it seemed, tried to guess his thoughts.

Something humiliated, downtrodden, and intimidated showed in all his gestures, so that, if the comparison be permitted, he rather resembled at the moment a man who, having no clothes of his own, had put on someone else’s: the sleeves pull up, the waist is almost at the neck, he straightens his scanty waistcoat every minute, or shuffles sideways and gives way, first tries to hide somewhere, then peeks into everyone’s eyes and tries to hear whether they may be saying something about his circumstances, or laughing at him, or are ashamed of him—and the man blushes, and is at a loss, and his vanity suffers…Mr. Goliadkin

placed his hat on the windowsill; a careless movement knocked it to the floor.

The guest straight away rushed to pick it up, brushed off all the dust, carefully put it back in its former place, and put his own on the floor by the chair on the edge of which he humbly placed himself.

This small circumstance partly opened Mr. Goliadkin's eyes; he realized that he was greatly needed, and therefore no longer troubled himself with how to begin with his guest, leaving it all, as was only fitting, to the man himself.

The guest, for his part, also began nothing, being either timid or slightly ashamed, or else waiting, out of politeness, for the host to begin—no one knows, it was difficult to figure it out. At that moment Petrushka came in, stopped in the doorway, and fixed his eyes in a direction completely opposite to that in which the guest and his master were located.

"Shall I bring two portions of dinner?" he asked casually and in a husky voice.

"I, I don't know…you—yes, bring two portions, brother."

Petrushka left. Mr. Goliadkin looked at his guest. The guest blushed to his ears. Mr. Goliadkin was a kind man and therefore, in the kindness of his heart, at once put together a theory:
"A poor man," he thought, "and he's only been one day on the job; he has probably suffered in his time; maybe these decent clothes are his only belongings, and he has nothing to eat on. Look how downtrodden he is! Well, never mind; it's partly even better…"

"Excuse me for…" Mr. Goliadkin began, "however, will you allow me to know your name?"

"Ya…Ya…Yakov Petrovich," his guest almost whispered, as if guilty and ashamed, as if asking forgiveness for also being called Yakov Petrovich.

“Yakov Petrovich!” our hero repeated, unable to conceal his embarrassment.

“Yes, sir, exactly right…Your namesake, sir,” Mr. Goliadkin’s humble guest replied, venturing to smile and say something of a jocular sort. But he sank back at once, assuming the gravest air, slightly embarrassed, however, noticing that his host was beyond joking just then.

“You…allow me to ask, by what chance do I have the honor…”

“Knowing your magnanimity and your virtues,” his guest interrupted promptly, but in a timid voice, rising slightly from his chair, “I have ventured to turn to you and ask for your…acquaintance and patronage…” his guest concluded, obviously finding his expressions with difficulty and trying to choose words that were not too obsequious and humiliating, so as not to compromise himself in respect to his pride, nor too bold, smacking of indecent equality. In general, it could be said that Mr. Goliadkin’s guest behaved like a noble beggar in a patched tailcoat and with a noble passport in his pocket, not yet properly practiced in holding out his hand.

“You embarrass me,” replied Mr. Goliadkin, looking around at himself, his walls, his guest. “Is there anything I can…that is, I mean to say, precisely in what respect can I be of service to you?”

“I, Yakov Petrovich, felt drawn to you from the first glance and, be so magnanimous as to forgive me, I venture to place my hopes in you—my hopes, Yakov Petrovich. I…I am a forlorn man here, Yakov Petrovich, a poor man, I’ve suffered greatly, Yakov Petrovich, and I’m still new here. Having learned that you, with all the ordinary, innate qualities of your beautiful soul, are also my namesake…”

Mr. Goliadkin winced.
“…my namesake, and originating from the same parts as me, I decided to turn to you and explain to you my difficult situation.”

“Very well, sir, very well; really, I don’t know what to tell you,” Mr. Goliadkin replied in an embarrassed voice. “After dinner we’ll have a talk…”

The guest bowed; dinner was brought. Petrushka set the table, and guest and host together began to satiate themselves. Dinner did not take long; both men were hurrying—the host, because he was not quite himself and, besides, was embarrassed about the bad dinner—embarrassed partly because he wanted to feed his guest well, and partly because he wanted to show that he did not live like a beggar.

The guest, for his part, was extremely embarrassed and extremely abashed. Having taken the bread once and eaten his slice, he was now afraid to reach for a second slice; he was ashamed to take the better pieces, and insisted every moment that he was not at all hungry, that the dinner was excellent, and that he, for his part, was completely satisfied, and would be sensible of it to his dying day. When the eating was over, Mr. Goliadkin lit his pipe, offered another, kept for friends, to his guest, the two sat down facing each other, and the guest began recounting his adventures.

Mr. Goliadkin Jr.’s account went on for three or four hours. The story of his adventures was, however, made up of the most empty, the most puny, if one may say that, of circumstances. It was a matter of working somewhere in a provincial government office, of some prosecutors and chairmen, of some bureaucratic intrigues, of the depraved soul of one of the chief clerks, of an inspector, of a sudden change of superiors, of Mr. Goliadkin-the-second suffering quite blamelessly; of his elderly aunt, Pelageya Semyonovna; of how, owing to various intrigues of his enemies, he lost his post and came on foot to Petersburg; of how he languished and suffered grief here in Petersburg, how he sought work fruitlessly for a long time, spent all his money, ate up all his food, lived almost in the street, ate stale bread, washing it down with his tears, slept on a bare floor, and, finally how one good man undertook to solicit for him and magnanimously set him up in a new job. Mr. Goliadkin’s guest wept as he told it all, and wiped his tears with a blue checked handkerchief that greatly resembled oilcloth.

He concluded by opening himself completely to Mr. Goliadkin and confessing that, for the time being, he not only did not have enough to live on and set himself up decently, but could not even outfit himself properly, and that he had borrowed a uniform from someone for a short time.

Mr. Goliadkin was moved to tenderness, was genuinely touched. However, and even despite the fact that his guest's story was of the emptiest sort, every word of this story lay on his heart like heavenly manna.

The thing was that Mr. Goliadkin was forgetting his last doubts, he unbound his heart for freedom and joy, and finally bestowed on himself the title of fool. It was all so natural!

And what cause was there to lament, to raise such an alarm? Well, there is, there actually is this one ticklish circumstance—but there's no harm in that: it can't besmirch a man, stain his ambition, and ruin his career, if it's not the man's fault, if nature itself has mixed into it.

Besides, the guest asked for protection, the guest wept, the guest blamed fate, he seemed so artless, without malice or cunning, pathetic, insignificant, and, it seemed, was now ashamed himself, though perhaps in another connection, of the strange likeness of his own and his host's face. He behaved himself with the utmost propriety: all he was looking to do was to please his host, and he looked the way a man looks who is tormented by remorse and feels himself guilty before another man.

If the talk, for instance, got on to some doubtful point, the guest at once agreed with Mr. Goliadkin's opinion. If, somehow by mistake, he expressed an opinion that went counter to Mr. Goliadkin's and then noticed that he had gone astray, he at once corrected his speech, explained himself, and made it known immediately that he understood it all just as his host did, his thoughts were the same as his, and he looked at it all with exactly the same eyes as he.

In short, the guest made every possible effort to “seek after” Mr. Goliadkin, so that Mr. Goliadkin decided finally that his guest must be a highly obliging man in all respects. Meanwhile, tea was served; it was past eight o’clock. Mr. Goliadkin felt himself in excellent spirits, became cheerful, playful, let himself go a little, and finally launched into a most lively and entertaining conversation with his guest. Mr. Goliadkin, when in a jolly mood, occasionally enjoyed telling some interesting story.

So it was now: he told his guest a great deal about the capital, its amusements and beauties, the theater, the clubs, Briullov’s painting;20 about two Englishmen who came on purpose from England to Petersburg in order to look at the fence of the Summer Garden, and then left at once; about the office, about Olsufy Ivanovich and Andrei Filippovich; about the fact that Russia was hourly moving towards perfection, and that here

The art of letters flourisheth today;21

about a little anecdote he had read recently in the Northern Bee,22 and that in India there was a boa snake of extraordinary strength; finally, about Baron Brambeus,23 and so on, and so forth. In short, Mr. Goliadkin was fully content, first, because he was perfectly at ease; second, because he not only was not afraid of his enemies, but was now even ready to challenge them all to a most decisive battle; third, because he, in his own person, was offering patronage and, finally, was doing a good deed.

In his soul, however, he acknowledged that he was not yet entirely happy at that moment, that there was one little worm still sitting in him—a very little one, however—and gnawing at his heart even now. He was greatly tormented by the recollection of the previous evening at Olsufy Ivanovich’s. He would have given much now if one thing or another of what had happened yesterday had not happened.

“However, it’s all nothing!” our hero finally concluded, and he firmly resolved in his heart to behave well in the future and not fall into such

blunders. Since Mr. Goliadkin had now let himself go completely and had suddenly become almost perfectly happy, he even decided to enjoy life.

Petrushka brought rum and they put together a punch. Guest and host each drained a glass, then another. The guest turned out to be still more obliging and, for his part, showed more than one proof of his straightforwardness and happy character, was greatly concerned with Mr. Goliadkin's good pleasure, seemed to find joy only in his joy, and looked upon him as his sole and true benefactor.

Having taken a pen and a sheet of paper, he asked Mr. Goliadkin not to look at what he was going to write, and then, when he had finished, himself showed his host all he had written. It turned out to be a quatrain, rather sentimentally written—in a beautiful style and handwriting, however, and evidently composed by the obliging guest himself. The verses were the following:

Though me thou mayest well forget,
I shall ne'er forget thee.
Anything can happen in this life,
But, thou, do not forget me!

With tears in his eyes, Mr. Goliadkin embraced his guest and, finally waxing totally sentimental, initiated his guest into some of his secrets and mysteries, laying great stress in his speech on Andrei Filippovich and Klara Olsufyevna.

"Well, so you and I will become close, Yakov Petrovich," our hero said to his guest, "you and I, Yakov Petrovich, will live like fish in water, like two brothers; we, my friend, will be clever, we'll be clever together; for our part, we'll conduct an intrigue to spite them…to spite them we'll conduct an intrigue. And don't trust a one of them.

I know you, Yakov Petrovich, and understand your character; you'll just up and tell all, you truthful soul! Keep away from all of them, brother." The guest agreed completely, thanked Mr. Goliadkin, and finally also

waxed tearful. “You know, Yasha,” Mr. Goliadkin went on in a trembling, weakened voice, “you settle with me for a time, or even for good. We’ll become close. What is it to you, brother—eh?

And don’t be embarrassed and don’t grumble that there’s such a strange circumstance between us now: grumbling’s a sin, brother; it’s nature! Mother Nature’s generous, that’s what, brother Yasha! It’s from love for you, from brotherly love for you, that I speak.

And you and I are going to be clever, Yasha, for our part we’ll undermine them and put their noses out of joint.” The punch finally went as far as three and four glasses each, and then Mr. Goliadkin began to experience two sensations: one, that he was extraordinarily happy, the other—that he was no longer able to stand on his feet. The guest, naturally, was invited to spend the night. A bed was somehow put together out of two rows of chairs.

Mr. Goliadkin Jr. announced that under a friendly roof even the floor was soft to sleep on, that he for his part would sleep wherever need be, with humility and gratitude; that he was now in paradise, and that, finally, he had suffered many misfortunes and woes in his life, had seen everything, had endured everything, and—who knows the future?—might endure still more. Mr. Goliadkin Sr. protested against that and began to demonstrate that one should place all hope in God.

The guest fully agreed and said that, to be sure, there was no one like God. Here Mr. Goliadkin Sr. observed that the Turks were right in certain respects to invoke the name of God even in their sleep.

Then, not agreeing, however, with some scholars in some of the aspersions they cast at the Turkish prophet Mohammed, and recognizing him as a great politician in his way, Mr. Goliadkin went on to a very interesting description of an Algerian barbershop, which he had read about in the miscellaneous section of some book.

Guest and host laughed much at the simple-heartedness of the Turks; however, they could not help granting due astonishment to the

fanaticism aroused in them by opium…The guestfinally began to undress, and Mr. Goliadkin stepped behind the partition, partly out of the kindness of his heart, so as not to embarrass the man, who had already suffered without that, in case he might not have decent underclothes, and partly to assure himself as far as possible about Petrushka, to test him, cheer him up if he could, and show kindness to the man, so that everyone would be happy and no spilled salt would be left on the table. It should be noted that Petrushka still troubled Mr. Goliadkin a little.

“You go to bed now, Pyotr,” Mr. Goliadkin said meekly, entering his servant’s compartment, “you go to bed now, and wake me tomorrow at eight o’clock. Understand, Petrusha?”
Mr. Goliadkin spoke extraordinarily softly and gently. But Petrushka was silent. He was pottering about near his bed at the time and did not even turn to his master, which he should have done, however, if only out of respect for him.

“Did you hear me, Pyotr?” Mr. Goliadkin continued. “You go to bed now, Petrusha, and wake me tomorrow at eight o’clock; understand?”
“So I know already, so drop it!” Petrushka muttered under his nose.

“Well, there, Petrusha; I’m just saying it so you’ll feel calm and happy. We’re all happy now, so you, too, should be calm and happy. And now I wish you good night. Sleep, Petrusha, sleep; we all must work…You know, brother, don’t go thinking anything…”

Mr. Goliadkin was about to begin, but stopped. “Won’t it be too much?” he thought. “Haven’t I overshot the mark? It’s always that way; I fill to overflowing.” Our hero left Petrushka’s very displeased with himself. Besides, he was slightly hurt by Petrushka’s rudeness and unyieldingness.

“I make advances to the rogue, the master does the rogue that honor, and he doesn’t feel it,” thought Mr. Goliadkin. “However, that’s the mean tendency of all his kind!” Swaying a bit, he returned to his room and, seeing that his guest was already lying down, sat on his bed for a

moment. “But confess, Yasha,” he began in a whisper and wagging his head, “you scoundrel, aren’t you guilty before me?

You know, my namesake, you sort of…” he went on, making advances rather familiarly to his guest. Finally, taking leave of him amicably, Mr. Goliadkin went to bed. The guest meanwhile began to snore. Mr. Goliadkin, in his turn, began to stretch out in bed, and meanwhile, chuckling, whispered to himself: “And you’re drunk tonight, Yakov Petrovich, my dear heart, what a scoundrel you are, eh, what a Goliadka—that’s what your name is!! Well, why are you so glad?

You’ll be weeping tomorrow, you’re such a sniveler: what am I to do with you?!” Here a rather strange sensation echoed through Mr. Goliadkin’s whole being, something like doubt or regret. “I really let myself go,” he thought, “there’s a buzzing in my head now, and I’m drunk; and you couldn’t help yourself, you’re such a big fool! poured out three buckets of drivel and still wanted to be clever, you scoundrel.

Of course, forgiving and forgetting an offense is the foremost virtue, but all the same things are bad, that’s what!” Here Mr. Goliadkin got up, took a candle, and went on tiptoe to look at his sleeping guest. For a long time he stood over him deep in thought. “An unpleasant picture! a lampoon, the sheerest lampoon, that’s the end of it!”

Finally, Mr. Goliadkin lay down. In his head there was a buzzing, a crackling, a ringing. He began to sink into oblivion…tried to think about something, to remember something highly interesting, to resolve something highly important, some ticklish matter—but could not. Sleep flew down upon his victorious head, and he dropped off as people usually do who, without being accustomed to it, suddenly avail themselves of five glasses of punch at some friendly soirée.

Chapter VIII

AS USUAL, MR. GOLIADKIN woke up the next day at eight o’clock; on waking up, he at once recalled all that had happened yesterday evening, recalled it and winced. “Eh, I got playful yesterday like some

kind of fool!" he thought, getting out of bed and looking at his guest's bed. But what was his surprise when not only the guest but even the bed on which the guest had slept was not in the room! "What is this?" Mr. Goliadkin all but cried out.

"What can this possibly be? What does this new circumstance mean?" While Mr. Goliadkin, in perplexity, stared open-mouthed at the now empty place, the door creaked, and Petrushka came in with the tea tray. "But where, where?" our hero uttered in a barely audible voice, pointing his finger at the place reserved yesterday for the guest. Petrushka at first made no reply, did not even look at his master, but shifted his eyes to the right corner, so that Mr. Goliadkin was also forced to look into the right corner. However, after some silence, Petrushka replied in a husky and rude voice that "the master wasn't home."

"You fool, I'm your master, Petrushka," Mr. Goliadkin said in a faltering voice and stared all eyes at his servant.

Petrushka did not respond, but gave Mr. Goliadkin such a look that Mr. Goliadkin blushed to the ears—a look of some sort of insulting reproach, similar to outright abuse. Mr. Goliadkin dropped his arms, as they say. Finally, Petrushka announced that the other had left about an hour and a half ago and had not wanted to wait.

Of course, the answer was probable and plausible; it was evident that Petrushka was not lying, that his insulting look and the word other he had used were merely the consequence of the abominable circumstance known to all, but even so he understood, though vaguely, that something was wrong here and that fate was preparing some further treat for him, a not entirely pleasant one.

"Very well, we'll see," he thought to himself, "we'll see, we'll crack all this in due time…Ah, Lord God!" he moaned in conclusion, in a totally different voice, "why did I invite him, to what end did I do all that? I'm truly putting my own head into their thievish noose, I'm tying the noose myself. Oh, head, head! you can't help yourself, you spill everything like

some little brat, some office clerk, like some rankless trash, a rag, some rotten old shred, gossip that you are, old woman that you are!…Saints alive!

And the rogue wrote a little ditty and declared his love for me! How can I, sort of…How can I show the rogue decently to the door, if he comes back? To be sure, there are many different turns and ways. Thus and so, I'll say, given my limited resources…Or frighten him somehow, say, that taking this and that into consideration, I'm forced to inform you…say, we'll have to go halves for room and board, and pay the money in advance. Hm! no, devil take it, no!

That would besmirch me. It's not entirely delicate! Maybe I could do it this way: try to get Petrushka into it, so that Petrushka irks him somehow, treats him somehow negligently, is rude to him, and get rid of him that way? Sic them on each other…No, devil take it, no! It's dangerous, and again, if you look at it from that point of view—well, yes, quite wrong! Completely wrong! Well, but what if he doesn't come? Will that also be bad? I spilled out a lot to him yesterday!…Ah, bad, bad! Ah, things are in such a bad way with us!

Oh, my head, my cursed head! nothing gets sawed into you as it should, no sense gets nailed into you! And what if he comes and refuses? The Lord grant he does come! I'd be extremely glad if he came; I'd give a lot if he came…" So reasoned Mr. Goliadkin, gulping down his tea and constantly looking at the wall clock. "It's now a quarter to nine; time to go.

But what's going to happen; what's going to happen here? I wish I knew precisely what in particular is hidden here—the goal, the direction, the various hitches. It would be good to find out precisely what all these folk are aiming at and what their first step will be…" Mr. Goliadkin could no longer bear it, abandoned his half-smoked pipe, got dressed, and set off to work, wishing to catch the danger, if possible, and verify everything by his personal presence.

And there was a danger: he knew himself that there was a danger. “But we’ll…crack it open,” Mr. Goliadkin was saying, taking off his overcoat and galoshes in the front hall, “now we’re going to penetrate all these matters.” Having decided to act in such fashion, our hero put himself to rights, assuming a decent and official air, and was just about to penetrate into the next room, when suddenly, just in the doorway, he ran into yesterday’s acquaintance, friend, and comrade. Mr. Goliadkin Jr. seemed not to notice Mr. Goliadkin Sr., though they met almost nose-to-nose. Mr. Goliadkin Jr. seemed to be busy, hurrying somewhere, out of breath; he looked so official, so businesslike, that it seemed anyone could have read directly in his face: “Sent on a special mission…”

“Ah, it’s you, Yakov Petrovich!” our hero said, seizing yesterday’s guest by the arm.
“Later, later, excuse me, you can tell me later,” cried Mr. Goliadkin Jr., rushing ahead.
“Though, if you please, it seems you wanted, Yakov Petrovich, sort of…”

“What, sir? Explain quickly, sir.” Here Mr. Goliadkin’s guest from yesterday stopped as if with effort and reluctantly, and placed his ear directly to Mr. Goliadkin’s nose.
“I’ll tell you, Yakov Petrovich, that I am astonished at this reception…a reception which, obviously, I could in no way have expected.”

“There is a certain form for everything, sir. Report to his excellency’s secretary and then address yourself, as is proper, to the office manager. Do you have a petition?…”
“I hardly know you, Yakov Petrovich! You simply amaze me, Yakov Petrovich! Surely you don’t recognize me, or else you’re joking, owing to your innately merry character.”

“Ah, it’s you!” said Mr. Goliadkin Jr., as if he had just made out Mr. Goliadkin Sr. “So it’s you? Well, what, did you have a good night’s sleep?” Here Mr. Goliadkin Jr., smiling slightly—smiling officially and formally, not at all as he ought to have done (because in any case he owed Mr. Goliadkin Sr. a debt of gratitude), and so, smiling officially

and formally, he added that he for his part was extremely glad that Mr. Goliadkin had had a good sleep; then he inclined slightly, minced slightly in place, glanced to the right, to the left, then dropped his eyes to the floor, aimed himself at the side door, and, rapidly whispering that he was on a special mission, darted into the next room. There was not a trace of him left.

“Well, that’s something!…” our hero whispered, dumbstruck for a moment. “That’s really something! There’s a circumstance for you!…” Here Mr. Goliadkin felt that for some reason he was covered with gooseflesh. “However,” he went on to himself, making his way to his section, “however, I’ve long been talking about this circumstance; I’ve long had a presentiment that he was on a special mission—just yesterday I said the man was certainly being employed on some special mission…”

“Did you finish yesterday’s document, Yakov Petrovich?” asked Anton Antonovich Setochkin as Mr. Goliadkin sat down next to him. “Do you have it here?”
“It’s here,” Mr. Goliadkin whispered with a somewhat lost look, gazing at his chief.

“A good thing, sir. I say it because Andrei Filippovich has already asked for it twice. His excellency is likely to request it at any moment…”
“No, sir, it’s finished…”
“Well, very good, sir.”

“I believe, Anton Antonovich, that I have always fulfilled my duties properly, and I am zealous in the matters entrusted to me by my superiors, sir, and apply myself to them diligently.”
“Yes, sir. Well, sir, but what do you mean to say by that?”

“Nothing, Anton Antonovich. I only wanted to explain, Anton Antonovich, that I…that is, I wanted to convey, that sometimes disloyalty and jealousy do not spare any person, seeking their repulsive daily food, sir…”

“Excuse me, I don’t quite understand you. That is, to which person are you alluding now?”
“That is, I only meant to say, Anton Antonovich, that I follow a straight path, and I scorn to take a roundabout path, that I am not an intriguer and, if I may be permitted to say so, I can be justly proud of it…”

“Yes, sir. That is all so, sir, and to the utmost of my understanding I render full justice to your reasoning; but also allow me, Yakov Petrovich, to observe to you that personal references are not entirely permissible in good society; that behind my back, for instance, I’m prepared to put up with it—because who isn’t denounced behind his back!—but to my face, as you will, but I, for instance, my good sir, will not allow insolent things to be said. I, my good sir, have grown gray in government service and will not allow insolent things to be said to me in my old age…”

“No, sir, I, Anton Antonovich, sir, you—you see, Anton Antonovich—it seems, Anton Antonovich, that you did not quite catch my meaning, sir. But, mercy me, Anton Antonovich, for my part I can only take it as as an honor, sir…”

“And we also ask to be excused, sir. We were taught in the old way, sir. And your way, the new way, it’s too late for us to learn. Up to now, it seems, my understanding has sufficed me in serving the fatherland. As you know yourself, my good sir, I have been decorated for twenty-five years of irreproachable service…”

“I am sensible, Anton Antonovich, for my part, I am perfectly sensible of all that, sir. But I’m not talking about that, sir, I’m talking about masks, Anton Antonovich…”
“About masks, sir?”

“That is, again you…I fear that here, too, you will apprehend the meaning from the other side, that is, the meaning of my speech, as you said yourself, Anton Antonovich. I am only developing a theme, that is, I am introducing the idea that people who wear masks are no longer a

rarity, sir, and that it is now hard to recognize the man behind the mask, sir…"
"Well, sir, you know, it's not really so hard, sir. Sometimes it's even quite easy, sir, sometimes there's no need to look far, sir."

"No, sir, you know, Anton Antonovich, I'm talking, sir, I'm talking about myself, that I, for example, put on a mask only when there's a need for it, that is, uniquely for carnivals or merry gatherings, speaking in a direct sense, but I don't mask myself before people every day, speaking in another more hidden sense, sir. That is what I meant to say, Anton Antonovich."
"Well, all right, for the time being let's leave all that; besides, I have no time, sir," said Anton Antonovich, getting up from his place and gathering some papers for a report to his excellency. "Your affair, I suppose, will not be slow to clarify itself in due time. You will see for yourself whom you are to fault and whom to blame, but for now I humbly beg you to spare me any further personal explanations and discussions harmful to the service…"

"No, sir, Anton Antonovich," Mr. Goliadkin, grown slightly pale, began to say in the wake of the retreating Anton Antonovich, "I, Anton Antonovich, sort of, didn't even think it, sir. What's going on?" our hero went on to himself, left alone. "What winds are blowing here, and what's the meaning of this new hitch?" Just as our disconcerted and half-crushed hero was preparing to resolve this new question, there came a noise from the next room, and some businesslike movement manifested itself, the door opened, and Andrei Filippovich, who just previously had absented himself on business to his excellency's office, appeared in the doorway, breathless, and called Mr. Goliadkin. Knowing what it was about, and not wishing to keep Andrei Filippovich waiting, Mr. Goliadkin jumped up from his seat and, as was proper, immediately began bustling away for all he was worth, preparing and giving a final primping to the requested notebook, and preparing himself to set off, in the wake of the notebook and Andrei Filippovich, for his excellency's office. Suddenly, and almost from under the arm of Andrei Filippovich, who just then was standing right in the doorway, Mr. Goliadkin Jr. darted into the room, bustling, breathless, worn out

from work, with an important and decidedly official look, and went rolling straight up to Mr. Goliadkin Sr., who least of all expected an assault like that…

“The papers, Yakov Petrovich, the papers…His excellency kindly asks whether you have them ready,” Mr. Goliadkin Sr.’s friend chirped in a rapid half-whisper. “Andrei Filippovich is waiting for you…”

“I know that without you,” Mr. Goliadkin said, also in a rapid half-whisper.
“No, Yakov Petrovich, I don’t mean that; not that at all, Yakov Petrovich; I sympathize, Yakov Petrovich, and am moved to heartfelt concern.”
“From which I humbly beg you to deliver me. Allow me, allow me, sir…”

“You will, of course, wrap them in a cover, Yakov Petrovich, and slip in a bookmark at page three—allow me, Yakov Petrovich…”
“No, allow me, finally…”

“And there’s a little ink blot here, Yakov Petrovich, have you noticed the ink blot?…”
At this point Andrei Filippovich called Mr. Goliadkin a second time.

“Just a moment, Andrei Filippovich; I’ll just fix it a little, there…My dear sir, do you understand the Russian language?”
“It would be best to remove it with a knife, Yakov Petrovich, you’d better rely on me; you’d better not touch it yourself, Yakov Petrovich, but rely on me—I’ll just use a penknife on it…”
Andrei Filippovich called Mr. Goliadkin for the third time.

“For pity’s sake, where’s the blot? There doesn’t seem to be any blot here.”
“A huge little blot, and here it is! Allow me, I saw it here; allow me…only allow me, Yakov Petrovich, I’ll use a penknife here, I’m concerned, Yakov Petrovich, and with my penknife, in all sincerity…like so, and there’s an end to it…”

Here, and quite unexpectedly, Mr. Goliadkin Jr., suddenly, for no reason at all, overcoming Mr. Goliadkin Sr. in the momentary struggle that had arisen between them, and in any case totally against his will, took possession of the paper requested by his superiors, and, instead of scraping it with a penknife in all sincerity, as he had perfidiously assured Mr. Goliadkin Sr., quickly rolled it up, put it under his arm, in two bounds reached Andrei Filippovich, who had not noticed any of his antics, and flew with him to the director's office. Mr. Goliadkin Sr. remained as if rooted to the spot, holding the penknife in his hand and as if preparing to scrape something with it…

Our hero had not yet quite understood his new circumstance. He had not yet come to his senses. He felt the blow, but thought it was just by chance. In terrible, indescribable anguish, he finally tore from his place and rushed straight to the director's office, praying to heaven on the way, however, that it would all somehow work out for the best and be just by chance, nothing serious…In the last room before the director's office, he ran head-on into his namesake and Andrei Filippovich.

The two were already on their way back: Mr. Goliadkin stepped aside. Andrei Filippovich was smiling and talking cheerfully. Mr. Goliadkin Sr.'s namesake was also smiling, fawning, mincing at a respectable distance from Andrei Filippovich, and whispering something into his ear with a delighted look, to which Andrei Filippovich nodded in a most benevolent fashion.

All at once our hero understood the whole state of affairs. The thing was that his work (as he learned afterwards) had almost exceeded his excellency's expectations and had actually arrived duly on time.

His excellency was extremely pleased. It was even reported that his excellency had said thank you to Mr. Goliadkin Jr., a firm thank you; he had said he would remember it when the occasion arose and would never forget…Naturally, the first thing for Mr. Goliadkin to do was protest, protest with all his might, to the utmost possibility. Almost forgetting himself and pale as death, he rushed to Andrei Filippovich. But Andrei Filippovich, hearing that Mr. Goliadkin's business was a

private matter, refused to listen, observing resolutely that he did not have a free moment even for his own needs.

The dryness of his tone and the sharpness of the refusal struck Mr. Goliadkin. “I’d better get at it somehow from another side…I’d better go to Anton Antonovich.” To Mr. Goliadkin’s misfortune, Anton Antonovich, too, turned out to be unavailable: he was also busy with something somewhere. “It was not without purpose that he asked to be spared any explanations and discussions!” our hero thought. “That’s what he was aiming at—the old stitch! In that case I’ll simply be so bold as to entreat his excellency.”

Still pale and feeling his whole head in a complete muddle, greatly perplexed about what precisely he must venture upon, Mr. Goliadkin sat down on a chair. “It would be much better if all this was just by chance,” he kept thinking to himself. “Actually, such a shady business is even quite improbable. First of all, it’s nonsense; and second, it could never happen. I’ve probably imagined it somehow, or something else took place, and not what actually happened; or I must have gone myself…and somehow took myself for someone else…in short, it’s a completely impossible thing.”

No sooner had Mr. Goliadkin decided that it was a completely impossible thing than Mr. Goliadkin Jr. suddenly flew into the room with papers in both hands and under his arm. Having said some necessary word or two in passing to Andrei Filippovich, exchanged remarks with this one and that, exchanged courtesies with this one and that, exchanged familiarities with this one and that, Mr. Goliadkin Jr., evidently having no spare time to waste uselessly, seemed about to leave the room, but, luckily for Mr. Goliadkin Sr., he stopped right in the doorway and began to talk in passing with two or three young clerks who happened to be there.

Mr. Goliadkin Sr. rushed straight for him. As soon as Mr. Goliadkin Jr. spotted Mr. Goliadkin Sr.’s maneuver, he at once began looking around with great uneasiness to see if he could quickly slip away somewhere. But our hero was already holding yesterday’s guest by the sleeve. The

clerks who surrounded the two titular councillors stepped back and waited with curiosity for what would happen. The old titular councillor was well aware that good opinion was not on his side now, he was well aware that there was an intrigue against him: the more necessary it was for him now to stand up for himself. The moment was decisive.

“Well, sir?” said Mr. Goliadkin Jr., looking rather insolently at Mr. Goliadkin Sr.
Mr. Goliadkin Sr. was barely breathing.
“I do not know, my dear sir,” he began, “in what way I can explain to you the strangeness of your behavior with me.”

“Well, sir. Go on, sir.” Here Mr. Goliadkin Jr. looked around and winked at the surrounding clerks, as if giving them to know that the comedy would begin precisely now.
“The insolence and shamelessness of your conduct with me, my dear sir, in the present case expose you still more…than all my words. Hope for nothing from your game: it is rather poor…”
“Well, Yakov Petrovich, tell me now, did you have a good night’s sleep?” replied Goliadkin Jr., looking Mr. Goliadkin Sr. straight in the eye.

“You forget yourself, my dear sir,” said the titular councillor, totally at a loss and barely feeling the floor under his feet, “I hope you will change your tone…”

“Sweetheart!!” said Mr. Goliadkin Jr., contriving a rather indecent grimace for Mr. Goliadkin Sr. and suddenly, quite unexpectedly, in the guise of a caress, seized his rather plump right cheek with two fingers. Our hero flared up like fire…As soon as Mr. Goliadkin Sr.’s friend noticed that his adversary, trembling all over, numb with fury, red as a lobster, and, finally, driven to the ultimate limits, might even venture a formal attack, he immediately, and in the most shameless way, forestalled him in his turn.

Having patted him a couple of times more on the cheek, having tickled him a couple of times more, having toyed with him in this way for

another few seconds, to the great amusement of the surrounding young men, while he stood motionless and mad with rage, Mr. Goliadkin Jr., with revolting shamelessness, finally flicked Mr. Goliadkin Sr. on his taut little paunch and, with a most venomous and far-insinuating smile, said to him: “You’re a prankster, brother Yakov Petrovich, a prankster! You and I are going to be clever, Yakov Petrovich, very clever!”

Then, and before our hero had time to recover in the slightest from this last attack, Mr. Goliadkin Jr. suddenly (first delivering a little smile to the surrounding spectators) assumed a most occupied, most busy, most official air, lowered his eyes to the ground, shriveled, shrank, and, saying quickly, “On a special mission,” kicked up his short leg, and darted into the next room. Our hero could not believe his eyes and was still unable to recover himself…

Finally he did recover. Realizing instantly that he was lost, annihilated in a certain sense, that he had besmirched himself and begrimed his reputation, that he had been laughed at and spat upon in the presence of strangers, that he had been treacherously insulted by the man whom he had regarded still yesterday as the first and most reliable of his friends, that he had finally flunked it for all he was worth—Mr.

Goliadkin rushed in pursuit of his enemy. In the present moment he no longer wanted to think about the witnesses of his abuse. “They’re all in collusion with each other,” he said to himself, “supporting each other and setting each other against me.” However, having gone ten steps, our hero saw clearly that all pursuit was vain and useless, and therefore turned back.

“You won’t get away,” he thought, “you’ll get trumped in due time, the sheep’s tears will be revisited on the wolf.” With fierce coolness and the most energetic resolve, Mr. Goliadkin reached his chair and sat down on it.

“You won’t get away!” he said again. Now the matter had gone beyond any passive defense: it smacked of decision, of offense, and anyone

who had seen Mr. Goliadkin at the moment when, flushed and barely controlling his agitation, he stabbed his pen into the inkstand and fiercely sent it scrawling over the paper, could have told beforehand that the matter would not just pass by, and would not end in some old-wife-ish way. He laid up a certain decision in the depths of his soul, and in the depths of his heart he vowed to fulfill it.

In truth, he did not yet know very well how he would act, that is, better to say, he did not know at all; but never mind, it made no difference! "And one doesn't get ahead in our age by imposture and shamelessness, my dear sir. Imposture and shamelessness, my dear sir, do not lead to any good, but end in the noose.

Grishka Otrepyev24 alone got ahead by imposture, my good sir, having deceived the blind people, and that not for long." In spite of this last circumstance, Mr. Goliadkin resolved to wait until the mask fell from certain faces and something or other was laid bare. To that end it was necessary, first, that the office hours end as soon as possible, and until then our hero decided not to undertake anything. Later, when the office hours ended, he would take a certain measure.

And then, having taken this measure, he would know how to act, how to lay out the whole future plan of his action, to smash the horn of pride and crush the serpent gnawing the dust in contemptible impotence.25 Mr. Goliadkin could not allow himself to be dirtied like an old rag for wiping muddy boots.

He could not agree to that, especially in the present case. If it had not been for the last disgrace, our hero might have decided to restrain his wrath, he might have decided to keep quiet, to submit and not protest too stubbornly; thus, he might have argued, stood his ground a little, proved that he was within his rights, then yielded a little, then he might have yielded a little more, then agreed completely, then, and especially once the other side had solemnly recognized that he was within his rights, then he might even have made peace, even waxed a little tenderhearted, and—who can tell?—a new friendship might even have been born, a firm, warm friendship, broader still than yesterday's

friendship, so that this friendship might finally have outshone the unpleasantness of the rather unseemly resemblance of the two persons, so that both titular councillors would have been extremely happy and would have lived on, finally, to be a hundred years old, and so on.

Let's finally say it all: Mr. Goliadkin was even beginning to regret a little that he had stood up for himself and for his rights and had at once gotten into trouble for it. "If he were to give in," thought Mr. Goliadkin, "to say he was joking—I'd forgive him, I'd forgive him even more, if only he'd acknowledge it aloud. But I will not allow anyone to dirty me like an old rag.

I haven't allowed better people to dirty me like an old rag, much less will I permit this depraved man to try it. I'm not an old rag, I, good sir, am not an old rag!" In short, our hero made up his mind. "It's your own fault, my good sir!" He made up his mind to protest and to protest with all his might to the utmost possibility. Such a man he was! He would in no way agree to permit himself to be insulted, much less would he allow himself to be dirtied like an old rag, and, finally, allow it to this totally depraved man. We won't argue, however, we won't argue.

Maybe if someone had wanted, if someone, for example, had so absolutely wanted to turn Mr. Goliadkin into an old rag, he could have done so, could have done so without resistance and with impunity (Mr. Goliadkin sometimes felt it himself), and the result would have been an old rag, and not Goliadkin—just a mean, dirty old rag, but this would not be a simple rag, this would be a rag with ambition, this would be a rag with animation and feelings—unrequited ambition and unrequited feelings, hidden deep within the dirty folds of this rag, but feelings all the same…

The hours dragged on incredibly long; finally it struck four. A little later everyone got up and, following the superior, headed each for his own home. Mr. Goliadkin mingled with the crowd; his eye was vigilant and never lost sight of the one he needed.

Finally our hero saw his friend run up to the office caretakers, who were handing out overcoats, and, as was his mean wont, fidget around them while waiting for his. The moment was decisive. Somehow Mr. Goliadkin squeezed through the crowd and, not wishing to lag behind, also began fussing about his overcoat. But the overcoat went first to Mr. Goliadkin's acquaintance and friend, because here, too, he managed in his own way to sidle up, fawn, whisper, and toady.

Having thrown on his overcoat, Mr. Goliadkin Jr. gave Mr. Goliadkin Sr. an ironic glance, thus acting openly and insolently to spite him, then looked around with his usual impudence, did some final mincing—probably in order to leave a favorable impression—around the clerks, said a word to one, whispered something to another, smooched deferentially with a third, addressed a smile to a fourth, shook hands with a fifth, and darted cheerfully down the stairs. Mr. Goliadkin Sr. started after him and, to his indescribable satisfaction, caught up with him on the last step and seized him by the collar of his overcoat. Mr. Goliadkin Jr. seemed slightly startled and looked around with a lost air.

"How am I to understand you?" he whispered finally, in a weak voice, to Mr. Goliadkin.
"My dear sir, if only you are a noble person, I hope you will remember our friendly relations of yesterday," said our hero.
"Ah, yes. So, then? Did you have a good night's sleep, sir?"

Rage momentarily deprived Mr. Goliadkin Sr. of speech.
"I did, sir…But allow me to tell you, my dear sir, that your game is extremely convoluted…"

"Who says so? It's my enemies who say so," the man who called himself Mr. Goliadkin answered sharply and, while saying it, unexpectedly freed himself from the weak grip of the real Mr. Goliadkin. Having freed himself, he rushed away from the steps, looked around, saw a cabby, ran up to him, got into the droshky, and in an instant vanished from Mr. Goliadkin's sight.

Desperate, abandoned by everyone, the titular councillor looked around, but there was no other cab. He tried to run, but his legs gave way under him. With an overturned physiognomy, with a gaping mouth, annihilated, shrunken, he leaned strength-lessly against a lamppost, and remained that way for several minutes in the middle of the sidewalk. It seemed that all was lost for Mr. Goliadkin…

Chapter IX

EVERYTHING, EVIDENTLY, and even nature itself, was up in arms against Mr. Goliadkin; but he was still on his feet and not vanquished; this he felt, that he was not vanquished. He was ready to fight. He rubbed his hands with such feeling and such energy, when he recovered from his initial amazement, that from Mr. Goliadkin's look alone it could have been concluded that he would not yield. However, the danger was right under his nose, it was obvious; Mr. Goliadkin felt that, too; but how was he to handle this danger?

That was the question. For a moment the thought even flashed in Mr. Goliadkin's head: "What, say, if I just drop it all, what if I simply give it up? Well, what then? Well, nothing. I'll be on my own, as if it's not me," thought Mr. Goliadkin, "I'll let it all pass; it's not me, that's all; and he'll also be on his own, perhaps he'll give it up, too; he'll fuss, the rogue, he'll fuss, fidget a bit, and then give it up.

There we have it! I'll succeed by humility. And where's the danger? well, what sort of danger? I wish somebody would point out to me the danger here. A paltry affair! an ordinary affair!…" Here Mr. Goliadkin stopped short. The words died on his tongue; he even swore at himself for this thought; even caught himself at once in baseness, in cowardice for this thought; though his affair still did not budge from the spot. He felt that resolving upon something at the present moment was an urgent necessity for him; he even felt that he would give a lot to whoever told him what precisely he must resolve upon.

Well, but how was he to guess it? However, there was no time for guessing. In any case, so as not to lose time, he hired a cab and flew

home. “So? how do you feel now?” he asked himself. “How do you feel now, if you please, Yakov Petrovich? What are you going to do? What are you going to do now, scoundrel that you are, rogue that you are! You’ve driven yourself to the utmost, and now you weep, and now you whimper!”

So Mr. Goliadkin taunted himself, bobbing up and down in his cabby’s jolty vehicle. To taunt himself and thus aggravate his wounds at the present moment was some sort of deep pleasure for Mr. Goliadkin, even almost a sensual one. “Well, if some magician were to come now,” he thought, “or it happened somehow in an official way, and they said, ‘Give us a finger from your right hand, Goliadkin, and we’re quits; there’ll be no other Goliadkin, and you’ll be happy, only there’ll be no finger’—I’d give up the finger, I’d certainly give it up, give it up without wincing. Devil take it all!” the desperate titular councillor finally cried out.

“Well, what’s it all for? Well, as if all this had to be; unfailingly this, precisely this, as if it could not possibly have been something else! And everything was fine at first, everyone was pleased and happy; but no, this had to happen! However, words won’t do anything. I must act.”

And so, having almost resolved on something, Mr. Goliadkin, entering his apartment, seized his pipe without a moment’s delay and, sucking at it with all his might, scattering puffs of smoke right and left, began rushing up and down the room in great agitation. Meanwhile Petrushka began to set the table.

Finally, Mr. Goliadkin became fully resolved, suddenly abandoned his pipe, threw on his overcoat, said he would not be dining at home, and rushed out of the apartment. On the stairs, Petrushka, out of breath, caught up with him, holding his forgotten hat in his hands.

Mr. Goliadkin took the hat, wanted in passing to justify himself a little in Petrushka’s eyes, so that Petrushka would not think anything special—say, that there’s this circumstance, that I forgot my hat, and so on—but since Petrushka refused even to look and went away at once,

Mr. Goliadkin, without further explanations, put on his hat, rushed down the stairs and, muttering that all might still turn out for the best and that the affair would be settled somehow, though, incidentally, he felt a chill even all the way to his heels, went outside, hired a cab, and flew off to Andrei Filippovich's. "However, wouldn't it be better tomorrow?" thought Mr. Goliadkin, taking hold of the bell-pull at the door of Andrei Filippovich's apartment. "And what am I going to say that's so special? There's nothing special here.

It's such a puny affair, yes, finally, it is in fact a puny, a paltry, that is, almost a paltry affair…there it is, there's the whole thing, this circumstance…" Suddenly Mr. Goliadkin pulled the bell; the bell rang, someone's steps were heard inside…Here Mr. Goliadkin even cursed himself, partly for his hastiness and boldness. The recent unpleasantnesses, which Mr. Goliadkin had nearly forgotten about on account of his affairs, and the confrontation with Andrei Filippovich, emerged at once in his memory.

But it was too late to flee: the door opened. Fortunately for Mr. Goliadkin, the answer he received was that Andrei Filippovich had not come home from work and was not dining at home. "I know where he's dining; he's dining near the Izmailovsky Bridge," our hero thought and felt terribly glad.

To the servant's question, "How shall I announce you?" he said, "Very well, my friend," then "Later, my friend," and ran down the stairs even with a certain briskness. Going outside, he decided to dismiss the carriage and paid the cabby. And when the cabby asked for a little extra, saying, "I waited a long time, sir, and didn't spare my trotter for Your Honor," he added five kopecks extra and even quite willingly; then he himself went on foot.

"The affair, in truth, is such," thought Mr. Goliadkin, "that it cannot possibly be left like this; though, if you reason that way, if you reason sensibly, why should I really fuss over it? Well, no, however, I'll keep talking about it, why should I fuss? why should I wear myself out,

thrash about, suffer, kill myself? First of all, the deed is done, there's no going back…no going back!

Let's reason this way: a man appears, a man appears with a satisfactory recommendation, say, a capable clerk, of good behavior, only he's poor and has suffered various unpleasant-nesses—all those bad scrapes—well, but poverty's no vice; which means, I'm outside it. Well, in fact, what is this nonsense? Well, it so happens, it's so arranged, nature itself has so arranged it that a man resembles another man like two drops of water, that he's a perfect copy of another man: should he not be taken into the department because of that?!

If fate, if fate alone, if blind fortune alone is to blame here—should he be dirtied like an old rag, should he not be allowed to work…where will there be any justice after that? He's a poor man, lost, intimidated; there's heartache here, there's compassion here telling us to show him kindness!

Yes, indeed, they'd be fine superiors if they reasoned the way I do, dunderhead that I am! What a noddle I've got! Enough stupidity for ten sometimes! No, no! they did well, and should be thanked for sheltering the poor wretch…Well, so, suppose, for example, that we're twins, that we were born like that, twin brothers, and that's all—that's the way it is! Well, what of it?

Well, it's nothing! It's possible to get all the clerks accustomed to it…and some stranger, coming into our offices, would surely find nothing indecent or insulting in this circumstance.

There's even something touching here; that here, say, there's such a thought: that, say, God's design created two perfect likenesses, and our beneficent superiors, seeing God's design, gave shelter to both twins. Of course," Mr. Goliadkin went on, catching his breath and lowering his voice slightly, "of course…of course, it would be better if none of these touching things existed, and there were also no twins…Devil take it all!

Who needed it? And what was this need that was so special and would suffer no postponement?! Lord God! A nice kettle of fish the devil's cooked up! See, though, what a character he has, what a playful, nasty temper—what a scoundrel he is, what a fidget, a smoocher, a lickspittle, what a Goliadkin! For all I know, he may behave badly and besmirch my name, the blackguard. And now I have to look at him and take care of him! What a punishment! However, what then? well, who cares! Well, he's a scoundrel—well, let him be a scoundrel, but the other will be honest.

Well, so he'll be a scoundrel, but I'll be honest—and they'll say, that Goliadkin's a scoundrel, don't look at him, and don't confuse him with the other one; but this one's honest, virtuous, meek, unresentful, highly reliable at work, and deserves to be promoted—so there! Well, all right…but what if sort of…But what if they sort of…mix us up! You can expect anything from him! Ah, Lord God!…And he'll supplant a man, supplant him, the scoundrel—he'll supplant a man like an old rag and never consider that a man is not an old rag. Ah, Lord God! What a misfortune!…"

Reasoning and lamenting in this way, Mr. Goliadkin ran on without noticing the way and almost without knowing where. He came to himself on Nevsky Prospect and only because he happened to run into some passerby so adroitly and heartily that the sparks flew. Mr. Goliadkin mumbled an apology without raising his head, and only when the passerby, having growled something none too flattering, had gone on for a considerable distance, did he raise his nose and look to see where he was and how.

Looking around and noticing that he was precisely by the restaurant where he had whiled away the time in preparation for the dinner party at Olsufy Ivanovich's, our hero suddenly felt a pinching and tweaking in the stomach, remembered that he had had no dinner, nor was there any prospect of a dinner party, and therefore, not to lose precious time, he ran up the steps to the restaurant, to snatch something quickly and hurry on if possible without lingering.

And though the restaurant was a bit expensive, that small circumstance did not deter Mr. Goliadkin this time; nor was there any question now of being deterred by such trifles. In the brightly lit room, near the counter, on which lay a miscellaneous heap of all that decent people use for snacks, stood a rather dense crowd of guests. The counterman barely had time to pour, serve, take and give back money.

Mr. Goliadkin waited his turn and, having waited, modestly reached out for a little fish pie. Having gone into a corner, turned his back on those present and eaten it with appetite, he returned to the counterman, put the plate down, and, knowing the price, took out a silver ten-kopeck piece and placed the coin on the counter, trying to catch the counterman's eye so as to point out to him that, say, "there's this coin lying here; one little fish pie" and so on.

"That'll be one rouble and ten kopecks," the counterman said through his teeth.
Mr. Goliadkin was properly astounded.
"Are you speaking to me?…I…it seems I took one little pie."
"You took eleven," the counterman objected with assurance.
"You…as it seems to me…you seem to be mistaken…Truly, it seems I took one little pie."
"I was counting; you took eleven. When you take, you have to pay; we don't give anything for free."

Mr. Goliadkin was dumbstruck. "What is this, is some kind of witchcraft being worked on me?" he thought. Meanwhile the counterman was waiting for Mr. Goliadkin's decision; Mr. Goliadkin was surrounded; Mr. Goliadkin had already gone to his pocket to take out a silver rouble, to pay immediately, to be out of harm's way. "Well, if it's eleven, it's eleven," he thought, turning red as a lobster, "well, what of it if eleven little pies got eaten?

Well, a man's hungry, so he eats eleven little pies; well, let him eat and enjoy it; well, there's nothing to wonder at and nothing to laugh at…" Suddenly something as if pricked Mr. Goliadkin; he raised his eyes and—at once understood the riddle, understood all the witchcraft; at

once all the difficulties were resolved…In the doorway to the next room, almost directly behind the counterman's back and facing Mr. Goliadkin, in the doorway which, incidentally, till then our hero had taken for a mirror, stood a little fellow—stood he, stood Mr. Goliadkin himself—not the old Mr. Goliadkin, not the hero of our story, but the other Mr. Goliadkin, the new Mr. Goliadkin. The other Mr. Goliadkin was evidently in excellent spirits.

He smiled at Mr. Goliadkin-the-first, nodded his head to him, winked his eye, minced slightly with his feet, and looked as if he was all set to efface himself, slip into the next room, and then, perhaps, out the back door, and that would be it…all pursuit would be in vain. In his hand was the last piece of the tenth little pie, which he, right in front of Mr. Goliadkin's eyes, sent into his mouth, smacking with pleasure.

"Supplanted me, the scoundrel!" thought Mr. Goliadkin, flaring up like fire with shame. "He's not ashamed in public! Can't they see him? Nobody seems to notice…" Mr. Goliadkin flung down the silver rouble as if it burned his fingers, and, not noticing the significantly impudent smile of the counterman, a smile of triumph and calm strength, tore himself from the crowd, and rushed away without looking back.

"Thanks at least that he didn't compromise a man utterly!" thought Mr. Goliadkin Sr. "Thanks to the brigand, to him and to fate, that it still got settled so well. Only the counterman was rude. But then he was within his rights! He was owed a rouble and ten kopecks, so he was within his rights. Meaning, we don't give to anyone without money! Though he could have been more polite, the lout!…"

Mr. Goliadkin was saying all this as he went down the stairs to the porch. However, on the last step he stopped as if rooted to the spot and suddenly turned so red from a fit of wounded pride that tears even welled up in his eyes. Having stood for half a minute like a post, he suddenly stamped his foot resolutely, leaped from the porch to the street in a single bound, and, without looking back, breathless, feeling no fatigue, set out for his home on Shestilavochnaya Street.

At home, not even taking off his street clothes, contrary to his habit of dressing informally at home, not even taking his pipe first, he immediately sat on the sofa, moved the inkstand towards him, picked up the pen, took out a sheet of writing paper, and began to scribble, in a hand trembling from inner agitation, the following missive:

My dear Yakov Petrovich!
I would never have taken up the pen, if my circumstances and you yourself, my dear sir, had not forced me to do so. Believe me, necessity alone has forced me to enter upon such a discussion with you, and therefore I beg you first of all not to consider this measure of mine, my dear sir, as deliberately intended to insult you, but as a necessary consequence of the circumstances which now bind us.

“Seems good, decent, polite, though not without force and firmness?…Nothing offensive to him here, it seems. Besides, I’m within my rights,” thought Mr. Goliadkin, rereading what he had written.

Your unexpected and strange appearance, my dear sir, on a stormy night, after my enemies, whose names I omit out of disdain for them, had acted rudely and indecently with me, has been the germ of all the misunderstandings existing between us at the present time. Your stubborn desire, my dear sir, to have your own way and forcibly enter the circle of my existence and all the relations of my practical life even goes beyond the limits demanded by mere politeness and simple sociality.

I think there is no point in mentioning here, my dear sir, your theft of my papers and of my own honorable name in order to win favor with our superiors—favor you did not merit. There is no point in mentioning here your deliberate and offensive avoidance of the explanations necessary on such an occasion.

Finally, to say all, I do not mention here your last strange, one might say incomprehensible, act in the coffeehouse. Far be it from me to lament the, for me, useless loss of a silver rouble; yet I cannot but express all

my indignation at the recollection of your obvious infringement, my dear sir, to the detriment of my honor, and, moreover, in the presence of several persons who, though not of my acquaintance, are yet of quite good tone…

“Am I not going too far?” thought Mr. Goliadkin. “Won’t it be too much; isn’t it too offensive—this allusion to good tone, for instance?…Well, never mind! I must show firmness of character with him. However, to soften it, maybe I’ll just flatter him and butter him up a little at the end. We’ll see to that.”

But I would not weary you, my dear sir, with my letter, if I were not firmly convinced that the nobility of your heart’s feelings and your open, straightforward character would point you to the means for setting all omissions to rights and restoring everything as it was before.

In the fullest hopes, I venture to rest assured that you for your part will not take offense at my letter, and with that will not refuse to explain yourself specifically on this occasion in writing, through the mediation of my man.

In expectation, I have the honor of remaining, my dear sir,
Your most humble servant,
Ya. Goliadkin.

“Well, that’s all fine. The deed is done; it’s even gone as far as writing. But who is to blame? He himself is to blame: he himself has driven a man to the necessity of requesting written documents. And I’m within my rights…”

Having reread the letter for a last time, Mr. Goliadkin folded it, sealed it, and summoned Petrushka. Petrushka appeared, as was his custom, with sleepy eyes and extremely angry at something.

“Here, brother, take this letter…understand?”

Petrushka was silent.

“Take it and bring it to the department; there you’ll find the man on duty, Provincial Secretary Vakhrameev. Vakhrameev is on duty today. Do you understand that?”
“I understand.”

“ ‘I understand’! You can’t say: ‘I understand, sir.’ You’ll ask for the clerk Vakhrameev and tell him, say, thus and so, say, my master sends his respects and humbly asks you to consult our department address book, say, for where Titular Councillor Goliadkin lives.”

Petrushka said nothing and, as it seemed to Mr. Goliadkin, smiled.
“Well, so then, Pyotr, you’ll ask for the address and find out where the newly hired clerk Goliadkin lives?”
“Yes.”

“You’ll ask the address, and take the letter to that address. Understand?”
“I understand.”

“If there…where you take this letter—the gentleman to whom you give the letter, this Goliadkin…Why are you laughing, blockhead?”
“Why should I laugh? What’s it to me? It’s nothing, sir. The likes of us oughtn’t to go laughing…”

“Well, so then…if that gentleman asks, say, how’s your master, how is it with him; what, say, is he sort of…well, if he starts asking questions—you keep mum and answer, say, my master’s all right, but he asks, say, for an answer in your own hand. Understand?”

“I understand, sir.”
“Well, then, say, my master, say, tell him, he’s all right, say, and in good health, and is, say, about to go visiting; but he asks you, say, for an answer in writing. Understand?”
“I understand.”

“Well, off you go.”
“So I’ve also got to work on this blockhead! He laughs to himself, and that’s the end. What’s he laughing at? I’ve lived my way into trouble, lived my way into trouble like this! However, maybe it will all turn out for the best…That crook will most likely drag about for a couple of hours, or else disappear somewhere. Can’t send him anywhere. Ah, such trouble!…ah, such trouble’s come over me!…”

Thus, fully aware of his trouble, our hero decided on a passive two-hour role of waiting for Petrushka. For about an hour he paced the room, smoked, then abandoned his pipe and sat down with some book, then lay on the sofa, then picked up his pipe again, then again began to rush about the room. He tried to reason, but was decidedly unable to reason about anything.

Finally, the agony of his passive condition reached the ultimate degree, and Mr. Goliadkin decided to take a certain measure. “Petrushka won’t come for another hour,” he thought. “I can give the key to the caretaker, and meanwhile sort of…investigate the affair, investigate it for my own part.” Losing no time and hastening to investigate the affair, Mr. Goliadkin took his hat, left the room, locked the apartment, stopped at the caretaker’s, handed him the keys along with ten kopecks—Mr. Goliadkin had somehow become extraordinarily generous—and set off for where he had to go. Mr. Goliadkin set off on foot, first, for the Izmailovsky Bridge.

He spent half an hour walking. On reaching the goal of his journey, he went straight into the courtyard of the familiar house and looked at the windows of State Councillor Berendeev’s apartment. Except for the three windows hung with red curtains, all the rest were dark.

“Olsufy Ivanovich must have no guests today,” thought Mr. Goliadkin, “they must all be at home by themselves now.” Having stood in the courtyard for some time, our hero was about to decide on something. But the decision was not destined to take place, evidently.

Mr. Goliadkin finished thinking, waved his hand, and went back out to the street. “No, this is not where I needed to come. What am I going to do here?…But now I’d better sort of…and investigate the affair in person.” Having taken such a decision, Mr. Goliadkin set off for his department.

The way was not short, moreover it was terribly dirty, and wet snow was pouring down in the thickest flakes. But at the present time, it seems, there were no difficulties for our hero. He did get soaked, true, and also not a little dirty, “but that was just while he was about it, and meanwhile the goal was attained.”

And indeed Mr. Goliadkin was already nearing his goal. The dark mass of the enormous official building showed black in the distance before him. “Wait!” he thought, “where am I going and what will I do there? Suppose I learn where he lives; and meanwhile Petrushka is probably already back and has brought me the answer.

I’m only wasting my precious time for nothing, I’ve only wasted my time this way. Well, never mind; it can all still be put right. Although, and in fact, shouldn’t I go and see Vakhrameev? Well, but no! I can later…Ehh, there was no need at all to go out!

But no, that’s my character! Such an urge, whether it’s needed or not, to be always trying to run ahead somehow…Hm…what time is it? Must be nine already. Petrushka may come and not find me at home. It was sheer stupidity for me to go out…Ah, really, what a chore!”

Having thus sincerely acknowledged that he had committed a sheer folly, our hero ran back home to Shestilavochnaya. He arrived there weary, worn out. He learned from the caretaker that Petrushka had never dreamed of coming.

“Well, so! I anticipated that,” our hero thought, “and yet it’s already nine o’clock. What a scoundrel! Eternally drinking somewhere! Lord God! what a day has fallen to my miserable lot!” Reflecting and lamenting like this, Mr. Goliadkin unlocked his apartment, fetched a

light, got undressed, smoked a pipe, and, exhausted, weary, broken, hungry, lay down on the sofa to wait for Petrushka. The candle burned dimly, light flickered over the walls…Mr. Goliadkin stared and stared, thought and thought, and finally fell asleep like the dead.

He woke up late. The candle had burned down almost entirely, smoked, and was ready at any moment to go out altogether. Mr. Goliadkin jumped up, roused himself, and remembered everything, decidedly everything. From behind the partition came Petrushka's dense snoring.

Mr. Goliadkin rushed to the window—not a light anywhere. He opened the vent pane—stillness; the city slept like the dead. Meaning it was around two or three o'clock; and so it was: the clock behind the partition strained and struck two. Mr. Goliadkin rushed behind the partition.

Somehow, though after long efforts, he shook Petrushka awake and managed to sit him up in bed. During that time the candle went out completely. About ten minutes passed before Mr. Goliadkin managed to find another candle and light it.

During that time Petrushka managed to fall asleep again. "You rogue, you blackguard!" said Mr. Goliadkin, shaking him awake again. "Get up, wake up, will you?" After half an hour of efforts, Mr. Goliadkin managed, however, to rouse his servant completely and drag him from behind the partition. Only then did our hero see that Petrushka was, as they say, dead drunk and barely able to keep on his feet.

"You lout!" cried Mr. Goliadkin. "You brigand! You've cut off my head! Lord, where did he unload that letter? Ah, God in heaven, what if it…And why did I write it? As if I had to write it! Fool that I am, galloping away with my vanity! There's where I got with my vanity! That's vanity for you, you scoundrel, that's vanity for you!…Hey, you, what did you do with that letter, you brigand! Who did you give it to?"

"I never gave anybody any letter; and I never had any letter…that's what!"

Mr. Goliadkin wrung his hands in despair.
“Listen, Pyotr…you listen, you listen to me…”

“I’m listening…”
“Where did you go? Answer…”
“Where did I go…I went to good people! what else!”

“Ah, Lord God! Where did you go first? Did you go to the department?…Listen, Pyotr, maybe you’re drunk?”
“Me drunk? May I die on this spot, not a ti-ti-tittle—so there…”
“No, no, it’s nothing that you’re drunk…I just asked; it’s good that you’re drunk; it’s nothing to me, Petrusha, it’s nothing tome…Maybe you’ve only just forgotten, but do remember it all. Well, now, try to recall, did you go to see the clerk Vakhrameev—did you or didn’t you?”

“I didn’t, and there never was any such clerk. Right now you could…”
“No, no, Pyotr! No, Petrusha, it’s nothing to me. You see, it’s nothing to me…Well, what of it! Well, it’s cold outside, damp, well, so a man has a little drink, well, what of it…I’m not angry. I myself had a drink today, brother…Confess, recollect, brother: did you go to the clerk Vakhrameev?”

“Well, if it’s come to that now, then really and truly—I did go, right now you could…”
“Well, that’s good, Petrusha, it’s good you went. You see, I’m not angry…Well, well,” our hero went on, cajoling his servant still more, patting him on the shoulder and smiling at him, “well, you had a drop, you blackguard…a ten-kopeck drop, eh? you slyboots! Well, never mind; well, you see, I’m not angry…I’m not angry, brother, I’m not angry…”

“No, as you like, but I’m not a slyboots, sir…I just stopped to see some good people, but I’m no slyboots, and I’ve never been a slyboots…”

“Right, you’re not, you’re not, Petrusha! Listen, Pyotr: it’s nothing to me, it’s not to abuse you that I call you a slyboots. I say it kindly to you, in a noble sense. It’s sometimes flattering, Petrusha, to tell a man he’s a

stitch, a cunning fellow, that there's no flies on him, and he won't let anybody hoodwink him. Some people like it…Well, well, never mind! Well, now tell me, Petrusha, without hiding anything, openly, as to a friend…well, so you went to the clerk Vakhrameev, and he gave you an address?"

"And he gave me an address, he also gave me an address. A good clerk! And your master, he says, is a good man, very good, he says; tell him, he says—I send greetings, he says, to your master, thank him and tell him, he says, that I love him—see, he says, how I respect your master! because, he says, your master, Petrusha, is a good man, he says, and you, he says, are also a good man, Petrusha—so there…"

"Ah, Lord God! And the address, the address, you Judas?" Mr. Goliadkin uttered the last words almost in a whisper.
"And the address…and he gave me the address."

"He did? Well, where does he live, this Goliadkin, the clerk Goliadkin, the titular councillor?"
"And your Goliadkin, he says, you'll find on Shestilavochnaya Street. You just go, he says, to Shestilavochnaya, to the right, upstairs, on the fourth floor. There, he says, you'll find your Goliadkin…"

"You swindler!" shouted our hero, finally losing patience. "You brigand! But that's me; you're talking about me. But there's another Goliadkin; I'm talking about the other one, you swindler!"

"Well, as you like! What's it to me! Do whatever you like—so there!…"
"But the letter, the letter…"

"What letter? There was never any letter, I never saw any letter."
"But what did you do with it, you rascal?!"

"I delivered it, I delivered the letter. Greetings, he says, and thanks; a good master, he says, yours is. Greetings, he says, to your master…"
"But who said it? Did Goliadkin say it?"

Petrushka paused for a moment and grinned from ear to ear, looking straight into his master's eyes.
"Listen, brigand that you are!" Mr. Goliadkin began, breathless, at a loss from rage. "What have you done to me! Tell me, what have you done to me! You've cut me down, you villain! You've taken my head from my shoulders, you Judas!"

"Well, now, as you like! What's it to me!" Petrushka said in a resolute tone, retiring behind the partition.
"Come here, come here, you brigand!…"

"And I just won't go to you now, I won't go at all. What's it to me! I'll go to good people…Good people live honestly, good people live without falseness, and they never come in twos…"
Mr. Goliadkin's hands and feet turned ice cold, and his breath was taken away…
"Yes, sir," Petrushka went on, "they never come in twos, they don't offend God and honest people…"

"You lout, you're drunk! Sleep now, you brigand! But you're going to get it tomorrow," Mr. Goliadkin said in a barely audible voice. As for Petrushka, he muttered something more; then he could be heard putting his full weight on the bed, so that the bed creaked, producing a long yawn, stretching out, and finally snoring the sleep of the innocent, as they say.

Mr. Goliadkin was neither dead nor alive. Petrushka's behavior, his hints, which were quite strange, though remote, at which, therefore, there was no point in being angry, the less so as it was all spoken by a drunk man, and, finally, the whole malignant turn that affairs were taking—all this shook Mr. Goliadkin to his foundations. "And I just had to go reprimanding him in the middle of the night," our hero said, his whole body trembling with some sort of morbid sensation.

"And I just couldn't help dealing with a drunk man! What sense can you expect from a drunk man? His every word is drivel. What was it, however, that he was hinting at, the brigand! Oh, Lord God! And why

did I write all those letters, manslayer that I am! suicide that I am! Just couldn't keep quiet! Had to go driveling! What else! You're perishing, you're like an old rag, and yet, no, there's still vanity, say, my honor's suffering, say, you must save your honor! Suicide that I am!"

So spoke Mr. Goliadkin, sitting on his sofa and not daring to stir from fear. Suddenly his eye rested on a certain object that aroused his attention to the highest degree. Fearing that the object which aroused his attention was an illusion, a trick of the imagination, he reached out his hand, with hope, with timidity, with indescribable curiosity…No, it was not a trick! not an illusion!

A letter, precisely a letter, certainly a letter, and addressed to him…Mr. Goliadkin took the letter from the table. His heart was pounding terribly. "That swindler must have brought it," he thought, "and put it here, and then forgotten it; it must have happened that way; that's precisely how it must have happened…"

The letter was from the clerk Vakhrameev, a young colleague and erstwhile friend of Mr. Goliadkin's. "However, I anticipated it all beforehand," thought our hero, "and everything that will now be in the letter I've anticipated as well…" The letter went as follows:

Dear sir, Yakov Petrovich,

Your man is drunk, and no sense can be expected from him; for that reason I prefer to reply in writing. I hasten to inform you that I agree to perform with all accuracy and precision the mission you have entrusted to me, which consists in conveying through my hands a letter to an individual known to you. This individual, who is well known to you and who has now replaced a friend for me, and whose name I hereby pass over in silence (because I do not want vainly to blacken the reputation of a totally innocent man), now lodges with us in Karolina Ivanovna's apartment, in that same room which formerly, while you were still with us, was occupied by an infantry officer visiting from Tambov. However,

you can find this individual everywhere among honest and open-hearted people—something that cannot be said of others.

I intend to terminate my contacts with you as of this date; it is impossible for us to remain in a friendly tone and the former harmonious air of comradeship, and therefore I ask you, my dear sir, immediately upon receipt of this frank letter of mine, to send me the two roubles owing to me for the razors of foreign workmanship that I sold you, if you will kindly remember, seven months ago on credit, still in the time of your living with us at Karolina Ivanovna's, whom I respect with all my soul. I am acting in this manner because you, by the accounts of intelligent people, have lost your pride and reputation and become dangerous to the morality of innocent and uninfected people, for certain individuals do not live by the truth and, above all, their words are falseness and their well-intentioned air suspicious.

It is possible always and everywhere to find people capable of interceding for the offense of Karolina Ivanovna—who has always been of good behavior and, secondly, is an honest woman and moreover a virgin, though no longer young, yet of a good foreign family—of which certain individuals have asked me to make mention in this letter of mine, in passing and speaking for my own person. In any case, you will learn everything in due time, if you have not learned it yet, despite the fact that you have disgraced yourself, by the accounts of intelligent people, in all corners of the capital and, consequently, may already have received from many places, my dear sir, appropriate information about yourself. In conclusion of my letter, I inform you, my dear sir, that the individual known to you, whose name I do not mention here for well-known noble reasons, is highly respected by well-minded people; moreover, he is of a cheerful and agreeable character, succeeds as much in service as among all sober-minded people, is true to his word and to friendship, and does not insult in their absence those with whom he is ostensibly on friendly terms.

In all events I remain
Your humble servant,
N. Vakhrameev.

P.S. You should get rid of your man: he is a drunkard and, in all probability, causes you much trouble, and take Evstafy, who used to work for us and is now without a post. Your present servant is not only a drunkard, but moreover a thief, for last week he sold Karolina Ivanovna a pound of lump sugar at a low price, which, in my opinion, he could not have done unless he had stolen it from you on the sly, in small portions, at various times. I write this to you wishing you well, despite the fact that certain individuals know only how to insult and deceive all people, mostly those who are honest and possessed of a good character; moreover, they denounce them in their absence and present them in a reverse sense, solely out of envy and because they cannot be called such themselves.

V.

Having read Vakhrameev's letter, our hero remained for a long time in a motionless position on his sofa. Some sort of new light was breaking through all this vague and mysterious fog that had surrounded him for two days. Our hero was partly beginning to understand…He tried to get up from the sofa and pace the room once or twice to refresh himself and somehow collect his broken thoughts, to turn them towards a certain subject, and then, having pulled himself together a little, to give mature consideration to his position. But he was just going to get up when at once, in weakness and impotence, he fell back into his former place. "Of course, I anticipated it all beforehand; though what is it he writes and what is the direct meaning of these words?

Suppose I know the meaning; but where does it lead? He should say directly: here, say, thus and so, what's required is this and that, and I'd do it. Such an unpleasant turn this affair is taking! Ah, if only we could get quickly to tomorrow and get quickly to this affair! Now I know what to do. Say, thus and so, I'll tell them, I agree with your reasoning, I won't sell my honor, but sort of…perhaps; how, though, did that one, that well-known individual, that unfavorable person, get mixed up in

this? And precisely why did he get mixed up in it? Ah, if only tomorrow would come quickly! They'll disgrace me meanwhile, they're intriguing, they're working against me! Above all—I mustn't lose time, but now, for instance, I should at least write a letter and only let on that, say, this and that, this and that, and I agree to this and that. And tomorrow at first light send it off and go very early…and work against them from the other side and forestall the dear hearts…They'll disgrace me, that's just it!"

Mr. Goliadkin drew paper towards him, took the pen, and wrote the following missive in reply to Provincial Secretary Vakhrameev:

Dear sir, Nestor Ignatievich!

With an astonishment that grieves my heart I have read your letter so insulting to me, for I see clearly that, under the name of certain disreputable individuals and other falsely well-intentioned persons, you imply me. With genuine sorrow I see how quickly, successfully, and how far calumny has sent its roots, to the detriment of my well-being, my honor, and my good name. It is the more grievous and insulting that even honest people with a truly noble cast of mind and, above all, endowed with a direct and open character, abandon the interests of noble people and, with the best qualities of their hearts, cling to a pernicious louse—which, unfortunately, in our difficult and immoral time, have multiplied greatly and extremely ill-intentionedly. In conclusion I will say that I consider it my sacred duty to repay the debt you mentioned, two silver roubles, in its entirety.

With regard, my dear sir, to your hints concerning a certain individual of the female sex, concerning the intentions, calculations, and various designs of this individual, I will tell you, my dear sir, that I have understood all these hints vaguely and unclearly.

Allow me, my dear sir, to keep my noble cast of mind and my honest name untainted. In any case, I am ready to condescend to personal explanations, preferring the verity of the personal to the written, and,

above all, I am ready to enter into various peaceable—and mutual, to be sure—agreements. To that end I ask you, my dear sir, to convey to this individual my readiness for personal agreement and, moreover, to ask her to appoint the time and place of the meeting.

It was bitter for me to read, my dear sir, hints that I had supposedly insulted you, betrayed our original friendship, and had spoken of you in bad terms. I ascribe it all to the misunderstanding, vile slander, envy, and ill-will of those whom I may rightly call my bitterest enemies.

But they probably do not know that innocence is strong in its very innocence, that the shamelessness, impudence, and exasperating familiarity of certain individuals will sooner or later earn them the universal brand of contempt, and that those individuals will perish from nothing other than their own indecency and depravity of heart. In conclusion I ask you, my dear sir, to convey to those individuals that their strange claim and ignoble, fantastic desire to supplant with their own being the confines occupied by others in this world, and to occupy their place, are deserving of amazement, contempt, regret, and, moreover, the madhouse; that, moreover, such attitudes are strictly forbidden by law, which, in my opinion, is completely just, for everyone should be satisfied with his own place. There are limits to everything, and if this is a joke, it is an indecent joke; I will say more: it is completely immoral, for, I venture to assure you, my dear sir, that my ideas, enlarged upon above, regarding one's own place, are purely moral.

In any case, I have the honor to remain
Your humble servant,
Ya. Goliadkin.

Chapter X

GENERALLY IT MAY be said that the happenings of the previous day had shaken Mr. Goliadkin to his foundations. Our hero rested very poorly, that is, did not fall completely asleep even for five minutes: as if some joker had put cut-up bristles in his bed. He spent the whole night in

some sort of half-sleeping, half-waking state, tossing and turning from side to side, sighing, groaning, falling asleep for a moment, waking up again a moment later, and all this was accompanied by some strange anguish, vague recollections, grotesque visions—in short, every available unpleasantness…Now, in some strange, mysterious half-light, the figure of Andrei Filippovich appeared before him—a dry figure, an angry figure, with a dry, hard gaze and a stiffly courteous reproach…And Mr. Goliadkin was just about to go up to Andrei Filippovich in order to justify himself before him in some way, by this or by that, and prove to him that he was not at all as his enemies described him, that he was this and he was that, and, on top of his ordinary, innate qualities, even possessed such and such; but just then the person known for his indecent tendency appeared and by some most outrageous means destroyed at one blow all Mr. Goliadkin's preliminaries, thoroughly blackened his reputation, right there, almost in front of Mr. Goliadkin's eyes, trampled his pride in the mud, and then immediately took over his place at work and in society.

Now Mr. Goliadkin's head itched from some flick, recently acquired and accepted in all humility, and received either in everyday life or somehow out of duty, against which flick it was difficult to protest…And meanwhile, as Mr. Goliadkin began to rack his brain over precisely why it was so difficult to protest at least against such a flick—meanwhile this thought of the flick imperceptibly recast itself into some other form—into the form of some certain small or rather significant meanness, seen, heard of, or even recently performed by himself—and often performed not even on mean grounds, not even from some mean urge, but just so—sometimes, for instance, by chance—out of delicacy; or another time owing to his total defenselessness, well, and, finally, because…because, in short, this Mr. Goliadkin knew very well why! Here Mr. Goliadkin blushed in his sleep and, suppressing his blushes, muttered to himself that here, say, for instance, one could show firmness of character, considerable firmness of character could be shown on this occasion…but then concluded that, "say, what of this firmness of character!…say, why mention it now!…"

But what enraged and annoyed Mr. Goliadkin most of all was that here, and unfailingly at this moment, summoned or not summoned, the person known for the grotesqueness and lampoonishness of his tendency appeared and also, despite the fact that the matter seemed to be well known—also muttered with an indecent little smile, that, "say, what has firmness of character got to do with it! what firmness of character, say, are you and I going to show, Yakov Petrovich!…" Now Mr. Goliadkin fancied that he was in excellent company, known for the wit and noble tone of all the persons who constituted it; that Mr. Goliadkin in his turn distinguished himself in respect of amiability and wittiness; that everyone loved him—even some of his enemies, who were right there, loved him—which Mr. Goliadkin found very agreeable; that everyone acknowledged his superiority; and that, finally, Mr. Goliadkin himself overheard with pleasure how his host, just then, leading one of the guests aside, praised Mr. Goliadkin…and suddenly, out of the blue, the person known for his ill intentions and beastly impulses appeared again, in the guise of Mr. Goliadkin Jr., and straightaway, at once, in an instant, by his appearance alone, Goliadkin Jr. destroyed all the triumph and glory of Mr. Goliadkin Sr., eclipsed Goliadkin Sr., trampled Goliadkin Sr. in the mud, and, finally, proved clearly that Goliadkin Sr., the real one at that, was not the real one at all but a counterfeit, and that he was the real one, that, finally, Goliadkin Sr. was not at all what he appeared to be, but was this and that, and consequently should not and had no right to belong to the society of well-intentioned and high-toned people.

And all this was done so quickly that, before Mr. Goliadkin Sr. managed to open his mouth, everyone had already given themselves body and soul to the grotesque and counterfeit Mr. Goliadkin, and with the profoundest contempt had rejected him, the real and blameless Mr. Goliadkin. Not a person remained whose opinion the grotesque Mr. Goliadkin had not in one instant remade in his own way. Not a person remained, even the most insignificant of the whole company, whom the useless and false Mr. Goliadkin had not sucked up to in his own way, in the sweetest manner, whom he had not sidled up to in his own way, before whom he had not burned, as was his wont, the most sweet

and pleasing incense, so that the censed person only sniffed and sneezed to the point of tears as a sign of the highest satisfaction.

And, chiefly, all this had been done in an instant: the speed of the suspect and useless Mr. Goliadkin's course was astonishing! He barely manages, for instance, to smooch with one, to earn his good favor—and in the twinkling of an eye he's already with somebody else. He smooches with the second on the quiet, wins a little smile of benevolence, kicks up his short, round, though rather crudely made little leg, and here he is with a third, already paying court to a third, also smooching with him in a friendly way: you haven't managed to open your mouth, haven't managed to feel astonished, and he's already with a fourth, and is on the same terms with the fourth—terrible: witchcraft, that's all! And everybody is glad of him, and everybody loves him, and everybody extols him, and everybody announces in a chorus that his amiability and satirical turn of mind are far better than the amiability and satirical turn of mind of the real Mr. Goliadkin, and they use that to shame the real and blameless Mr. Goliadkin, and they reject the truth-loving Mr. Goliadkin, and they drive out the well-intentioned Mr. Goliadkin, and they shower flicks on the real Mr. Goliadkin, known for loving his neighbor!…In anguish, in terror, in rage, the much-suffering Mr. Goliadkin ran outside and tried to hire a cab to fly straight to his excellency, and if not to him, then at least to Andrei Filippovich, but—oh, horror!—the cabbies would in no way agree to take Mr. Goliadkin: "Say, master, it's impossible to take two that are completely alike; say, Your Honor, a good man strives to live honorably, and not just anyhow, and he never comes double."

In a frenzy of shame, the perfectly honorable Mr. Goliadkin glanced around and indeed convinced himself with his own eyes that the cabbies, and Petrushka in collusion with them, were within their rights; for the depraved Mr. Goliadkin was indeed there beside him, at no great a distance from him, and, in line with his habitual mean morals, here, too, in this critical case, was certainly preparing to do something highly indecent and revealing not the slightest trace of the particular noble character that one usually receives through upbringing—a

nobility which the disgusting Mr. Goliadk-in-the-second liked to glory in on every convenient occasion.

Forgetting himself, in shame and despair, the lost and perfectly righteous Mr. Goliadkin rushed off wherever his legs would carry him, as fate willed, whatever turn it might take; but with every step, with every blow of his feet on the granite pavement, there sprang up as if from under the ground—each an exact and perfect likeness and of a revolting depravity of heart—another Mr. Goliadkin. And all these perfect likenesses, as soon as they appeared, began running after each other, and stretched out in a long line like a string of geese, went hobbling after Mr. Goliadkin Sr., so that there was no escaping these perfect likenesses, so that Mr. Goliadkin, worthy of all compassion, was left breathless with horror—so that, finally, a frightful multitude of perfect likenesses was born—so that the whole capital was flooded, finally, with perfect likenesses, and a policeman, seeing such a violation of decency, was forced to take all these perfect likenesses by the scruff of the neck and put them in the sentry box that happened to be there beside him…Stiff and frozen with horror, our hero would wake up and, stiff and frozen with horror, feel that he was hardly going to have a merrier time of it when awake. It was painful, tormenting…Such anguish rose in him as though someone was gnawing the heart in his breast…

Finally, Mr. Goliadkin could endure no longer. “This will not be!” he shouted, resolutely sitting up in bed, and after this exclamation, he awakened completely.

Day had evidently begun long ago. The room was somehow unusually bright; the sun’s rays strained thickly through the frost-covered windowpanes and abundantly flooded the room, which surprised Mr. Goliadkin not a little; for the sun in its due progress peeked in on him only at noontime; previously such exceptions to the course of the heavenly luminary, at least as far as Mr. Goliadkin himself could recall, had almost never occurred. Our hero had just managed to marvel at it, when the wall clock behind the partition began to buzz and thus became completely ready to strike. “Ah, there!” thought Mr. Goliadkin,

and in anguished expectation he got ready to listen…But, to Mr. Goliadkin's complete and utter shock, his clock strained and struck only once. "What's this story?" our hero cried, jumping out of bed altogether. Not believing his ears, he rushed behind the partition just as he was. The clock indeed showed one.

Mr. Goliadkin glanced at Petrushka's bed; but there was not even a whiff of Petrushka in the room: his bed had evidently long been made and left; there were no boots anywhere—an unquestionable sign that Petrushka was indeed not at home. Mr. Goliadkin rushed to the door: the door was locked. "But where is Petrushka?" he went on in a whisper, in terrible agitation, and feeling a considerable trembling in all his limbs…Suddenly a thought raced through his head…Mr. Goliadkin rushed to his desk, looked it over, searched around—that was it: yesterday's letter to Vakhrameev was not there…Petrushka was also not there at all behind the partition; the wall clock showed one, and in yesterday's letter from Vakhrameev some new points had been introduced which, though vague at first glance, were now quite explainable. Finally, Petrushka, too—obviously, Petrushka had been bribed! Yes, yes, it was so!

"So it was there that the chief knot was tied!" cried Mr. Goliadkin, striking himself on the forehead and opening his eyes wider and wider. "So it's in that niggardly German woman's nest that the chief unclean powers are hidden now! So that means she was only making a strategic diversion when she directed me to the Izmailovsky Bridge—distracting my attention, confusing me (the worthless witch!), and in that way undermining me!!! Yes, it's so! If you look at it from that side, it's all precisely so!

And the appearance of the scoundrel is now fully explained: it all goes together. They've been keeping him for a long time, preparing him and saving him for a rainy day. That's how it is now, that's how it all turns out! That's the whole solution! Ah, well, never mind! I still have time!…" Here Mr. Goliadkin recalled with terror that it was already past one in the afternoon. "What if they've now managed to…" A groan burst from his breast…"But no, nonsense, they haven't managed—we'll

see…” He dressed haphazardly, seized some paper, a pen, and scribbled the following missive:

My dear Yakov Petrovich!

Either you or me, but two of us is impossible! And therefore I announce to you that your strange, ridiculous, and at the same time impossible wish—to appear my twin and pass yourself off as such—will serve nothing except your total dishonor and defeat. And therefore I beg you, for your own benefit, to step aside and give way to people of true nobility and well-intentioned purposes. In the contrary case, I am prepared to venture even upon the most extreme measures. I lay down my pen and wait…However, I remain ready to be at your service and—to pistols.
Ya. Goliadkin.

Our hero rubbed his hands energetically when he had finished the note. Then, having pulled on his overcoat and put on his hat, he unlocked the door with a spare key and set off for the department. He reached the department, but did not venture to go in; indeed, it was much too late; Mr. Goliadkin’s watch showed half-past two. Suddenly a certain, apparently quite unimportant, circumstance resolved some of Mr. Goliadkin’s doubts: a breathless and red-faced little figure appeared from around the corner of the office building and stealthily, with a ratlike gait, darted onto the porch and then at once into the front hall.

This was the scrivener Ostafyev, a man quite well known to Mr. Goliadkin, a somewhat necessary man and ready to do anything for ten kopecks. Knowing Ostafyev’s soft spot and realizing that, after absenting himself on a most urgent necessity, he was now probably still more avid for his ten-kopeck pieces, our hero decided not to be sparing and at once darted onto the porch and then also into the front hall after Ostafyev, called to him, and with a mysterious look invited him to one side, into a nook behind an enormous iron stove. Having led him there, our hero began asking questions.

“Well, so, my friend, how’s things there, sort of…you understand me?”
“Yes, Your Honor, I wish Your Honor good day.”

“Very well, my friend, very well; and I’ll reward you, my dear friend. Well, so you see, how are things, my friend?”
“What are you asking, if you please, sir?” Here Ostafyev slightly covered his accidentally opened mouth with his hand.

“You see, my friend, I sort of…but don’t go thinking anything…Well, so, is Andrei Filippovich here?…”
“He is, sir.”

“And the clerks are here?”
“The clerks also, as they should be, sir.”
“And his excellency also?”

“And his excellency also, sir.” Here once more the scrivener held his hand over his again opened mouth and looked at Mr. Goliadkin somehow curiously and strangely. At least it seemed so to our hero.
“And there’s nothing special, my friend?”
“No, sir, nothing at all, sir.”

“So, my dear friend, there isn’t anything about me, anything just…eh? just so, my friend, you understand?”

“No, sir, I’ve heard nothing so far.” Here the scrivener again held his hand to his mouth and again glanced at Mr. Goliadkin somehow strangely. The thing was that our hero was now trying to penetrate Ostafyev’s physiognomy, to read whether there was not something hidden in it.

And indeed there seemed to be something hidden; the thing was that Ostafyev was becoming somehow ruder and dryer, and no longer entered into Mr. Goliadkin’s interests with the same concern as at the beginning of the conversation. “He’s partly within his rights,” thought Mr. Goliadkin. “What am I to him? He may already have gotten

something from the other side, and that's why he absented himself with such urgency. But now I'll sort of…" Mr. Goliadkin understood that the time for ten-kopeck pieces had come.

"Here you are, my dear friend…"
"I cordially thank Your Honor."
"I'll give you more."
"As you say, Your Honor."

"I'll give you more now, at once, and when the matter's ended, I'll give you as much again. Understand?"
The scrivener said nothing, stood at attention, and looked fixedly at Mr. Goliadkin.
"Well, tell me now: have you heard anything about me?…"

"It seems that, so far…sort of…nothing so far, sir." Ostafyev also replied measuredly, like Mr. Goliadkin, preserving a slightly mysterious look, twitching his eyebrows slightly, looking at the ground, trying to fall into the right tone and, in short, trying with all his might to earn what had been promised, because what had been given he considered his own and definitively acquired.

"And nothing's known?"
"Not so far, sir."
"But listen…sort of…maybe it will be known?"
"Later on, of course, maybe it will be known, sir."

"That's bad!" thought our hero.
"Listen, here's more for you, my dear."
"I heartily thank Your Honor."
"Was Vakhrameev here yesterday?…"
"He was, sir."

"And wasn't there somebody else?…Try to recall, brother!"
The scrivener rummaged in his memory for a moment and recalled nothing suitable.
"No, sir, there was nobody else, sir."

“Hm!” Silence ensued.

“Listen, brother, here’s more for you; tell me everything, all the innermost secrets.”
“Yes, sir.” Ostafyev was now standing there smooth as silk: that was just what Mr. Goliadkin wanted.
“Tell me, brother, what sort of footing is he on now?”

“All right, sir, quite good, sir,” replied the scrivener, staring all eyes at Mr. Goliadkin.
“Good in what sense?”

“In that sense, sir.” Here Ostafyev twitched his eyebrows significantly. However, he was decidedly at a loss and did not know what more to say. “That’s bad!” thought Mr. Goliadkin.
“Haven’t they got something further going with this Vakhrameev?”

“It’s all as before, sir.”
“Think a little.”
“They have, so it’s said, sir.”

“Well, what is it?”
Ostafyev held his hand over his mouth.
“Is there a letter for me from there?”

“Today the caretaker Mikheev went to Vakhrameev’s lodgings, to that German woman of theirs, sir, so I’ll go and ask if you like.”
“Be so kind, brother, for heaven’s sake!…I’m just…Don’t go thinking anything, brother, I’m just…And ask questions, brother, find out if anything’s being prepared there on my account. How does he act? That’s what I need to know; you find that out, and then I’ll thank you well, my dear friend…”

“Yes, sir, Your Honor, and today Ivan Semyonovich sat in your place, sir.”
“Ivan Semyonovich? Ah! yes! Really?”
“Andrei Filippovich told him to sit there, sir…”

“Really? By what chance? Find that out, brother, for heaven’s sake, find that out; find everything out—and I’ll thank you well, my dear; that’s what I need to know…And don’t go thinking anything, brother…”
“Yes, sir, yes, sir, I’ll come down here at once, sir. But, Your Honor, won’t you be going in today?”

“No, my friend; it’s just so, just so, I’ve just come to have a look, my dear friend, and then I’ll thank you well, my dear.”
“Yes, sir.” The scrivener quickly and zealously ran up the stairs, and Mr. Goliadkin was left alone.

“That’s bad,” he thought. “Eh, it’s bad, bad! Eh, our little affair…it’s in such a bad way now! What can it all mean? What precisely can certain of this drunkard’s hints mean, for instance, and whose trick is it?

Ah! now I know whose trick it is! Here’s the trick. They must have found out, and so they sat him there…However, what is it—they sat him there? It was Andrei Filippovich who sat him there, this Ivan Semyonovich; why, however, did he sit him there and with precisely what aim did he sit him? Probably they found out…It’s Vakhrameev’s work, that is, not Vakhrameev, he’s stupid as a pine log, this Vakhrameev; it’s all of them working for him, and they set the rogue on for the same purpose; and she complained, the one-eyed German!

I’ve always suspected that this whole intrigue had something behind it, and that all this old-womanish gossip surely had something to it; I said as much to Krestyan Ivanovich, that, say, they’d sworn to cut a man down, speaking in a moral sense, so they seized on Karolina Ivanovna.

No, masters are at work here, you can see! Here, my good sir, there’s a master’s hand at work, not Vakhrameev. It has already been said that Vakhrameev is stupid, but this…now I know who is working for them all here: it’s the rogue, the impostor! That’s the one thing he clings to, which partly explains his success in high society. And indeed, I wish I knew what footing he’s on now…what is he to them?

Only why did they bring in Ivan Semyonovich? Why the devil did they need Ivan Semyonovich? As if they couldn't have come up with somebody else? However, no matter who they sat there, it would all be the same; I only know that I've long suspected this Ivan Semyonovich, I've long noticed that he's such a nasty old codger, such a vile one—they say he lends money on interest and takes interest like a Jew. It's all that bear's doing. The bear got mixed up in this whole circumstance. It started that way.

It started by the Izmailovsky Bridge; that's how it started…" Here Mr. Goliadkin winced as if he had bitten into a lemon, probably recalling something highly unpleasant. "Well, never mind, though!" he thought.

"And I only go on about my own thing. Why doesn't Ostafyev come? He must have gotten stuck or been stopped somehow. It's partly good that I intrigue this way and undermine them from my side. Ostafyev only has to be given ten kopecks, and he sort of…and he's on my side. Only here's the thing: is he really on my side?

Maybe they also, on their side…and in complicity with him, on their side, are conducting an intrigue. He has the look of a brigand, the crook, a sheer brigand! In secret, the rogue! 'No, there's nothing,' he says, 'and, say, I heartily thank Your Honor.' You brigand!"

Noise was heard…Mr. Goliadkin shrank and jumped behind the stove. Someone came down the stairs and went outside. "Who could be leaving like that now?" our hero thought to himself. A moment later someone's footsteps were heard again…Here Mr. Goliadkin could not help himself and stuck the smallest tip of his nose out from behind his breast-work—stuck it out and pulled it back at once, as though someone had pricked his nose with a needle.

This time you know who was going by—that is, the rogue, the intriguer and debaucher—walking as usual with his mean, rapid little step, mincing and prancing on his feet as if he was about to kick somebody. "The scoundrel!" our hero said to himself. However, Mr. Goliadkin could not fail to notice that under the scoundrel's arm was an

enormous green portfolio belonging to his excellency. “He’s on a special mission again,” thought Mr. Goliadkin, turning red and shrinking still more from vexation.

No sooner did Mr. Goliadkin Jr. flash past Mr. Goliadkin Sr., without noticing him at all, than for a third time someone’s footsteps were heard, and this time Mr. Goliadkin guessed that the steps were the scrivener’s. Indeed, the slicked-down little figure of a scrivener peeked behind the stove; the little figure, however, was not Ostafyev but another scrivener named Scriverenko. This amazed Mr. Goliadkin. “Why is he mixing others into the secret?” thought our hero. “What barbarians! Nothing’s sacred to them!”

“Well, so, my friend?” he said, addressing Scriverenko. “Who are you coming from, my friend?…”
“It’s this, sir, on your little affair, sir. So far there’s no news from anyone, sir. But if there is, we’ll let you know, sir.”

“And Ostafyev?…”
“He really couldn’t come, Your Honor. His excellency has already made the rounds of the department twice, and I’ve got no time now.”
“Thank you, my dear, thank you…Only tell me…”

“By God, I’ve got no time, sir…We’re asked for every moment, sir…But you please go on standing here, sir, so that if there’s anything concerning your little affair, sir, we’ll let you know, sir…”

“No, my friend, you tell me…”
“Excuse me, sir; I’ve got no time, sir,” Scriverenko said, trying to tear free of Mr. Goliadkin, who had seized his coat skirt, “really, it’s impossible, sir. You kindly go on standing here, and we’ll let you know.”

“One moment, one moment, my friend! one moment, my dear friend! Here’s what now: here’s a letter, my friend; and I’ll thank you well, my dear.”
“Yes, sir.”

“Try to hand it to Mr. Goliadkin, my dear.”
“To Goliadkin?”

“Yes, my friend, to Mr. Goliadkin.”
“Very well, sir; once I’ve finished up, I’ll take it, sir. And you stand here meanwhile. Nobody’ll see you here…”

“No, my friend, don’t go thinking I…I’m not standing here so that people won’t see me. I’ll no longer be here, my friend…I’ll bein the lane. There’sa coffeehouse; I’ll be waiting there, and if anything happens, you inform me about it all, understand?”
“Very well, sir. Only let me go; I understand…”

“And I’ll thank you well, my dear!” Mr. Goliadkin called after the finally freed Scriverenko…“The rogue seems to have grown ruder towards the end,” thought our hero, stealthily coming out from behind the stove. “There’s another hitch here. That’s clear…First it was both this and that…However, he really was in a hurry; maybe there was a lot to do there. And his excellency made the rounds of the office twice…What might be the reason for that?…Oof! well, it’s nothing! maybe it’s nothing, however, but now we’re going to see…”

Here Mr. Goliadkin opened the door and was about to step out, when suddenly, at that same instant, his excellency’s carriage rumbled up to the porch. Before Mr. Goliadkin managed to recover, the door of the carriage opened from inside and the gentleman sitting in it jumped out onto the porch. The newcomer was none other than the same Mr. Goliadkin Jr., who had absented himself ten minutes earlier.

Mr. Goliadkin Sr. remembered that the director’s apartment was two steps away. “He’s on a special mission,” our hero thought to himself. Meanwhile Mr. Goliadkin Jr., taking a fat green portfolio and some other papers from the carriage, and, finally, giving some order to the coachman, opened the door, almost shoving Mr. Goliadkin Sr. with it, and, deliberately ignoring him, and therefore acting this way in order to spite him, started at a trot up the department stairs.

“Bad!” thought Mr. Goliadkin. “Eh, our little affair is doing poorly! Look at him, Lord God!” Our hero stood motionless for half a minute; finally, he made up his mind. Not thinking long, though feeling a strong fluttering in his heart and a trembling in all his limbs, he ran after his friend up the stairs. “Ah! let come what may; what is it to me? I have nothing to do with it,” he thought, taking off his hat, overcoat, and galoshes in the hall.

When Mr. Goliadkin entered his department, it was already fully dark.26 Neither Andrei Filippovich nor Anton Antonovich was in the room. They were both in the director’s office with their reports; the director, as rumor had it, was hastening in his turn to go to his superior.

Owing to this circumstance, and also because there was darkness mixed into it and the business day was almost over, some of the clerks, mostly young men, were occupied at the moment our hero entered with some sort of idleness, clustering together, talking, discussing, laughing, and some of the youngest, that is, of the most rankless rank, on the sly and under cover of the general noise, had even begun a game of pitch-and-toss in the corner by the window.

Being a polite man and sensing at the present time some particular need to acquire and to find, Mr. Goliadkin approached some of those with whom he was on better terms, to wish them a good afternoon, and so on.

But his colleagues responded to Mr. Goliadkin’s greetings somehow strangely. He was unpleasantly struck by a sort of general coldness, dryness, even, one might say, a sort of sternness in the reception. No one shook hands with him. Some simply said “Hello” and walked off; others just nodded, some simply turned away, showing that they had not noticed anything, and, finally, certain—and this was the most offensive thing for Mr. Goliadkin—certain of the lowest ranking young men, boys who, as Mr. Goliadkin correctly observed about them, knew only how to play pitch-and-toss on occasion and to mooch about somewhere—gradually surrounded Mr. Goliadkin, forming a cluster

around him and almost blocking his way out. They all gazed at him with some insulting curiosity.

It was a bad sign. Mr. Goliadkin felt that and for his part sensibly prepared not to notice anything. Suddenly one completely unexpected circumstance quite, as they say, finished off and annihilated Mr. Goliadkin.

In the bunch of young colleagues surrounding him, suddenly and, as if on purpose, at the most anguished moment for him, Mr. Goliadkin Jr. appeared, cheerful as always, with a little smile as always, also fidgety as always—in short, a prankster, a leaper, a smoocher, a tittler, light of tongue and foot, as always, as before, just as yesterday, for instance, at a very unpleasant moment for Mr. Goliadkin Sr. Grinning, fidgeting, mincing, with a little smile that as much as said “Good evening” to them all, he wormed his way into the bunch of clerks, shook hands with one, patted another on the shoulder, embraced a third slightly, explained to a fourth precisely on what occasion his excellency had employed him, where he had gone, what he had done, and what he had brought with him; gave the fifth, probably his best friend, a smacking kiss right on the lips—in short, it all happened exactly as in Mr. Goliadkin Sr.’s dream.

Having had his fill of leaping about, having finished with each of them in his own way, having wound them all into his favor, whether he needed it or not, having smooched with them all to his heart’s content, Mr. Goliadkin Jr. suddenly, and probably by mistake, having so far failed to notice his old friend, offered his hand to Mr. Goliadkin Sr. Probably also by mistake, though, incidentally, he had managed to notice the ignoble Mr. Goliadkin Jr. perfectly well, our hero at once eagerly seized the so unexpectedly proffered hand and shook it in a most firm, friendly way, with some strange, quite unexpected inner impulse, with a sort of tearful feeling.

Whether our hero had been deceived by his indecent enemy’s first move, or had merely found nothing better to do, or had sensed and

realized deep in his soul the whole extent of his defenselessness, it is hard to say.

The fact was that Mr. Goliadkin Sr., of sound mind, by his own will, and before witnesses, solemnly shook hands with the one he called his mortal enemy. But what was the amazement, the fury, and the rage, what was the horror and shame of Mr. Goliadkin Sr., when his adversary, his mortal enemy, the ignoble Mr. Goliadkin Jr., noticing the mistake of the innocent and persecuted man whom he had perfidiously deceived, without any shame, without feeling, without compassion and conscience, suddenly, with insufferable impudence and rudeness, tore his hand from Mr. Goliadkin Sr.'s hand; what's more, he shook his hand as if he had dirtied it in something quite unsavory; what's more, he spat to the side, accompanying it all with a most insulting gesture; what's more, he took out his handkerchief and right there, in the most outrageous fashion, wiped all the fingers that had rested for a moment in Mr. Goliadkin Sr.'s hand.

Acting in this way, Mr. Goliadkin Jr. deliberately looked around, as was his mean custom, making sure that everyone had seen his conduct, looked everyone in the eye, and obviously tried to instill in everyone all that was most unfavorable regarding Mr. Goliadkin. It seemed that the conduct of the disgusting Mr. Goliadkin Jr. aroused general indignation in the surrounding clerks; even the flighty young men showed their displeasure.

Grumbling and talk arose around. The general stir could not have missed the ears of Mr. Goliadkin Sr.; but suddenly the timely arrival of a joke that boiled up, among other things, on the lips of Mr. Goliadkin Jr., dashed and destroyed our hero's last hopes and again tilted the balance in favor of his mortal and useless enemy.

"This is our Russian Faublas,27 gentlemen; allow me to introduce to you the young Faublas," squeaked Mr. Goliadkin Jr., mincing and twining with an impudence all his own among the clerks and pointing to the petrified, and at the same time furious, real Mr. Goliadkin. "Give us a kiss, sweetie!" he went on with insufferable familiarity, moving closer

to the man he had treacherously insulted. The little joke of the useless Mr. Goliadkin Jr. seemed to have found an echo in the right place, the more so as it contained a perfidious allusion to a circumstance that was already public and known to all.

Our hero felt the hand of his enemies heavily on his shoulders. However, he was already resolved. With a burning gaze, a pale face, a fixed smile, he extricated himself somehow from the crowd and, with irregular, hurrying steps, made his way straight to his excellency's office. In the next to last room, he met with Andrei Filippovich, who had just come from his excellency's, and though there were quite a number of persons in the room at that moment who were total strangers to Mr. Goliadkin, our hero did not want to pay any attention to that circumstance. Directly, resolutely, and boldly, almost astonished at himself and inwardly praising himself for his boldness, without wasting any time he accosted Andrei Filippovich, who was quite amazed at such an unexpected assault.

"Ah!…what…what do you want?" asked the head of the office, not listening to Mr. Goliadkin, who had faltered over something.
"Andrei Filippovich, I…may I, Andrei Filippovich, have a talk with his excellency now, at once, and eye-to-eye?" our hero uttered eloquently and distinctly, directing a most resolute glance at Andrei Filippovich.

"What, sir? Of course not, sir." Andrei Filippovich looked Mr. Goliadkin up and down.
"I say all this, Andrei Filippovich, because I'm surprised that no one here will expose an impostor and scoundrel."
"Wha-a-at, sir?"
"A scoundrel, Andrei Filippovich."
"To whom are you pleased to refer in this manner?"

"To a certain person, Andrei Filippovich. I am alluding, Andrei Filippovich, to a certain person; I am within my rights…I think, Andrei Filippovich, that the authorities should encourage such initiative," added Mr. Goliadkin, obviously forgetting himself. "Andrei Filippovich…you probably can see for yourself…Andrei Filippovich, that

this noble initiative betokens all possible good intentions in me—to take a superior as a father, Andrei Filippovich, say, I take a beneficent superior as a father and blindly entrust my fate to him. Thus and so, say…that's what…" Here Mr. Goliadkin's voice trembled, his face reddened, and two tears welled up on both of his eyelashes.

Andrei Filippovich was so surprised, listening to Mr. Goliadkin, that he somehow inadvertently drew back a couple of steps. Then he looked around uneasily…It is hard to say how the matter would have ended…But suddenly the door of his excellency's office opened, and he himself emerged, in the company of several clerks. Everyone in the room was drawn after him. His excellency called to Andrei Filippovich and walked beside him, broaching a conversation about some business. When they all started moving and headed out of the room, Mr. Goliadkin came to his senses. Subdued, he took shelter under the wing of Anton Antonovich Setochkin, who in turn hobbled after them all and, as it seemed to Mr. Goliadkin, with a most stern and preoccupied air. "I've said too much again, I've mucked it up again," he thought to himself. "Ah, well, never mind."

"I hope that at least you, Anton Antonovich, will agree to listen to me and enter into my circumstances," he said softly and in a voice still trembling with agitation. "Rejected by all, I turn to you. I'm still puzzled by the meaning of Andrei Filippovich's words, Anton Antonovich. Explain them to me, if you can…"

"Everything will be explained in good time, sir," Anton Antonovich replied sternly and measuredly and, as it seemed to Mr. Goliadkin, with an air which showed clearly that Anton Antonovich had no wish to continue the conversation. "You will learn everything shortly, sir. Today you will be formally notified of everything."

"What do you mean by 'formally,' Anton Antonovich? Why precisely 'formally,' sir?" our hero asked timidly.
"It is not for us to reason, Yakov Petrovich, about what our superiors decide."

“Why our superiors, Anton Antonovich,” Mr. Goliadkin asked still more timidly, “why our superiors? I see no reason why there’s any need to trouble our superiors here, Anton Antonovich…May be you mean to say something about yesterday, Anton Antonovich?”

“No, sir, not about yesterday, sir; there’s something else here that’s not up to snuff with you.”
“What’s not up to snuff, Anton Antonovich? It seems to me, Anton Antonovich, that there’s nothing that’s not up to snuff with me.”

“And this being clever with somebody?” Anton Antonovich sharply cut off the totally dumbfounded Mr. Goliadkin. Mr. Goliadkin gave a start and turned white as a sheet.

“Of course, Anton Antonovich,” he said in a barely audible voice, “if we heed the voice of calumny and listen to our enemies, without accepting justification from the other side, then, of course…of course, Anton Antonovich, then we can suffer, Anton Antonovich, suffer innocently and for nothing.”

“Come, come, sir; and your indecent act to the detriment of the reputation of a noble young lady of a virtuous, respectable, and well-known family that had been your benefactor?”
“What action is that, Anton Antonovich?”

“Come, come, sir. And with regard to another young lady who, though poor, is of honorable foreign extraction, are you also ignorant of your laudable act, sir?”
“Excuse me, Anton Antonovich…be so good, Anton Antonovich, as to hear me out…”

“And your perfidious act and calumny of another person—accusing the other person of that in which your own little sin lay? eh? what is the name for that?”
“I didn’t drive him out, Anton Antonovich,” our hero said with trepidation, “and I didn’t teach Petrushka—that is, my man—any such thing, sir…He ate my bread, Anton Antonovich; he availed himself of my

hospitality," our hero added expressively and with deep feeling, so that his chin trembled slightly and tears were about to well up again.

"You, Yakov Petrovich, are only saying that he ate your bread," Anton Antonovich replied, grinning, and slyness could be heard in his voice, so that something clawed at Mr. Goliadkin's heart.

"Allow me to humbly ask you, Anton Antonovich: has his excellency been informed of this whole affair?"
"What else, sir! However, let me go now, sir. I have no time for you now…Today you'll learn of everything you ought to know, sir."
"For God's sake, allow me one more little minute, Anton Antonovich…"

"You can tell me later, sir…"
"No, Anton Antonovich; I, you see, sir, just listen, Anton Antonovich…I am not a freethinker, Anton Antonovich, I shun freethinking; I am perfectly ready for my part, and I even slipped in this idea…"

"All right, sir, all right. I've already heard, sir…"

"No, sir, this you haven't heard, Anton Antonovich. It's something else, Anton Antonovich, it's good, it's truly good, and pleasant to hear…I slipped in this idea, as I explained above, Anton Antonovich, that what we have here is God's design creating two perfect likenesses, and our beneficent superiors, seeing God's design, gave shelter to both twins, sir.

It's good, Anton Antonovich. You can see that it's very good, Anton Antonovich, and that I'm far from any freethinking. I accept our beneficent superiors as a father. Thus and so, beneficent superiors, say, and you sort of…the young man needs a job…Support me, Anton Antonovich, intercede for me, Anton Antonovich…I don't…Anton Antonovich, for God's sake, one more little word…Anton Antonovich…"

But Anton Antonovich was already far away from Mr. Goliadkin…Our hero did not know where he was standing, what he was hearing, what he was doing, what was being done to him, and what else would be

done to him, so confused and shaken he was by all he had heard and all that had happened to him.

With an imploring gaze, he sought Anton Antonovich in the crowd of clerks, in order to justify himself further in his eyes and tell him something extremely well intentioned and highly noble and agreeable concerning himself…However, anew light gradually began to break through Mr. Goliadkin's confusion, a new, terrible light, which illuminated for him suddenly, all at once, a whole perspective of as yet completely unknown and even not in the least suspected circumstances…At that moment someone nudged our completely bewildered hero in the side. He turned. Before him stood Scriverenko.

"A letter, Your Honor."
"Ah!…you already went, my dear?"
"No, this one was brought here in the morning, at ten o'clock, sir. Sergei Mikheev, the caretaker, brought it from the lodgings of Provincial Secretary Vakhrameev."
"All right, my friend, all right, I'll thank you well, my dear."

Having said that, Mr. Goliadkin hid the letter away in the side pocket of his uniform and buttoned all the buttons, then looked around and noticed, to his surprise, that he was already in the front hall of the department, in a little bunch of clerks crowding towards the exit, because the workday was over. Mr. Goliadkin not only did not notice this last circumstance, but did not even notice or remember how it was that he suddenly had his overcoat and galoshes on and his hat in his hand.

All the clerks stood motionless and in deferential expectation. The thing was that his excellency had stopped at the bottom of the stairs to wait for his carriage, which was delayed for some reason, and was engaged in a highly interesting conversation with two councillors and Andrei Filippovich.

A little distance away from the two councillors and Andrei Filippovich stood Anton Antonovich Setochkin and some of the other clerks, full of smiles, seeing that his excellency was pleased to joke and laugh.

The clerks crowding at the top of the stairs also smiled and waited for his excellency to laugh again. The only one who did not smile was Fedoseich, the fat-bellied porter, who kept himself at attention by the door handle, waiting impatiently for a portion of his daily satisfaction, which consisted in opening one half of the door widely all at once, with a sweep of the arm, and then, bending his back into a curve, deferentially allowing his excellency to pass by.

But apparently the one who was gladdest and felt the most satisfaction of all was Mr. Goliadkin's unworthy and ignoble enemy. At that moment he even forgot all the clerks, he even stopped mincing and twining among them, as was his mean custom, he even forgot to make use of the opportunity to fawn on someone at that moment.

He turned all ears and eyes, shrank somehow strangely, probably so as to listen more conveniently, not taking his eyes off his excellency, and his arms, his legs, his head only twitched occasionally with some barely noticeable spasms, which exposed all the hidden, inner stirrings of his soul.

"See how worked up he is!" our hero thought. "He has the look of a favorite, the swindler! I wish I knew precisely how he gets ahead in high-toned society! No intelligence, no character, no education, no feeling; he's a lucky rogue! Lord God! how quickly a man can go ahead, if you think of it, and get in with everybody!

And, I swear, the man will go on, he'll go far, the rogue, he'll make it—he's a lucky rogue! I wish I knew precisely what it is he whispers to them all! What secrets has he got with all these people, and what mysteries do they talk about?

Lord God! Why couldn't I sort of…and also with them a little…say, thus and so, to ask him…say, thus and so, but I won't do it anymore; say, I'm

to blame, and a young man in our time needs to work, Your Excellency; and the obscure circumstance doesn't trouble me in the least—so there!

Nor will I protest in any way, and I'll endure it all with patience and humility—so there! Is that how I'm to act?…No, however, you can't get at this rogue with any words; you can't hammer any reason into his wayward head…However, let's give it a try. I might happen to fall on a good moment, so why not give it a try…"

In his uneasiness, in anguish and confusion, feeling that it was impossible to remain like this, that the decisive moment was coming, that it was necessary to discuss it with at least someone, our hero gradually began edging towards the place where his unworthy and mysterious friend stood; but just then his excellency's long-awaited carriage rumbled up to the entrance. Fedoseich tore at the door and, bending double, allowed his excellency to pass by him.

All the waiting clerks surged at once to the exit and momentarily pushed Mr. Goliadkin Sr. away from Mr. Goliadkin Jr. "You won't escape!" our hero was saying as he broke through the crowd, not taking his eyes off the one he wanted. Finally the crowd parted. Our hero felt himself free and rushed in pursuit of his adversary.

Chapter XI

THE BREATH LABORED in Mr. Goliadkin's chest; he flew as on wings after his quickly retreating adversary. He felt in himself the presence of a terrible energy. However, despite the presence of a terrible energy, Mr. Goliadkin could boldly trust that at the present moment even a simple mosquito, had it been able to live at such a season in Petersburg, could quite easily have knocked him down with its wing.

He also felt that he was completely limp and feeble, that he was borne up by some completely peculiar and extraneous power, that he was not walking by himself, that, on the contrary, his legs were giving way under him and refused to serve.

However, all that might work out for the better. “For better or worse,” thought Mr. Goliadkin, almost suffocating from running so fast, “but there’s not the slightest doubt that the affair is lost; that I’m totally lost is known, determined, decided, and signed.”

Despite all that, it was as if our hero had risen from the dead, as if he had endured battle, as if he had snatched away the victory, when he managed to seize the overcoat of his adversary, who had already hoisted one leg into the droshky he had just hired. “My dear sir! my dear sir!” he shouted finally at the ignoble Mr. Goliadkin Jr., caught at last. “My dear sir, I hope that you…”

“No, please don’t hope for anything,” Mr. Goliadkin’s unfeeling adversary replied evasively, one foot standing on one step of the droshky and with the other straining with all his might to get to the other side of the vehicle, waving it vainly in the air, trying to keep his balance and at the same time trying with all his might to detach his overcoat from Mr. Goliadkin Sr., who for his part attached himself to it with all the means granted him by nature.

“Yakov Petrovich! just ten minutes…”
“Excuse me, I have no time, sir.”

“You yourself must agree, Yakov Petrovich…please, Yakov Petrovich…for God’s sake, Yakov Petrovich…thus and so—to have a talk…on a bold footing…One little second, Yakov Petrovich!…”
“My dear heart, I have no time,” Mr. Goliadkin’s falsely noble adversary replied with discourteous familiarity, but in the guise of heartfelt kindness, “some other time, believe me, from fullness of soul and purity of heart; but now—really, it’s impossible.”

“Scoundrel!” thought our hero.

“Yakov Petrovich!” he cried in anguish. “I have never been your enemy. Wicked people have described me unfairly…For my part, I’m ready…Yakov Petrovich, if you wish, you and I, Yakov Petrovich, shall

we go in now?…And there, from purity of heart, as you just said correctly, and in a direct, noble tongue…into this coffeehouse: then everything will explain itself—that's what, Yakov Petrovich! Then certainly everything will explain itself…"

"Into the coffeehouse? Very well, sir. I have nothing against it, let's go to the coffeehouse, only on one condition, my joy, on the single condition—that there everything will explain itself. Say, thus and so, my sweet," said Mr. Goliadkin Jr., stepping down from the droshky and shamelessly patting our hero on the shoulder, "my good chum; for you, Yakov Petrovich, I'm ready to go down a little lane (as you, Yakov Petrovich, were pleased to observe correctly once upon a time). What a slyboots, really, he does whatever he wants with a man!" Mr. Goliadkin's false friend went on, fidgeting and twining around him with a slight smile.

Off the main streets, the coffeehouse which the two Mr. Goliadkins entered was at that moment totally empty. A rather fat German woman appeared at the counter as soon as she heard the ringing of the little bell. Mr. Goliadkin and his unworthy adversary passed into the second room, where a puffy-faced boy with cropped hair was fussing with a heap of chips by the stove, trying to revive the dying fire. At the demand of Mr. Goliadkin Jr., hot chocolate was served.

"She's a tasty morsel, that one," said Mr. Goliadkin Jr., winking slyly at Mr. Goliadkin Sr.
Our hero blushed and said nothing.

"Ah, yes, I forgot, forgive me. I know your taste. We, sir, relish thin German women; you and I, you truthful soul, say, we relish thin German women, though, incidentally, not lacking in certain pleasant qualities; we rent their apartments, we seduce their virtue; for bier-zuppe, for milch-zuppe, we dedicate our hearts to them and sign various papers—that's what we do, you Faublas, you traitor, you!"

Mr. Goliadkin Jr. said all this, making thereby a completely useless though villainously cunning allusion to a certain person of the female

sex, twining around Mr. Goliadkin, smiling at him in simulated courtesy, making a false display, thereby, of his affability and joy at their meeting.

But noticing that Mr. Goliadkin Sr. was by no means so stupid and deprived of education and good-toned manners as to believe him at once, the ignoble man decided to change his tactics and conduct the affair on an open footing.

Straightaway, having uttered his abomination, the false Mr. Goliadkin concluded by patting the reliable Mr. Goliadkin on the shoulder with outrageous shamelessness and familiarity, and, not content with that, began flirting with him in a manner completely improper to good-toned society—namely, he was about to repeat the former abomination, that is, despite the resistance and the slight outcries of the indignant Mr. Goliadkin Sr., to pinch his cheek. Seeing such depravity, our hero seethed but said nothing…only for a time, however.

“That’s how my enemies talk,” he finally answered in a trembling voice, sensibly restraining himself. At the same time our hero turned to look anxiously at the door. The thing was that Mr. Goliadkin Jr. was apparently in an excellent state of mind and ready to start all kinds of tricks not admissible in a public place and, generally speaking, not permitted by the laws of society, and chiefly of high-toned society.

“Ah, well, in that case, as you wish,” Mr. Goliadkin Jr. retorted gravely to the thought of Mr. Goliadkin Sr., placing his empty cup, which he had drunk with indecent greediness, on the table. “Well, sir, anyhow there’s no point in prolonging…Well, sir, how are you getting along now, Yakov Petrovich?”

“I can say only one thing to you, Yakov Petrovich,” our hero replied coolly and with dignity, “I have never been your enemy.”
“Hm…well, and Petrushka? How now! It’s Petrushka, I believe?—why, yes! So, how is he? Well? Same as before?”

“He’s also the same as before, Yakov Petrovich,” replied the slightly astonished Mr. Goliadkin Sr. “I don’t know, Yakov Petrovich…for my

part…for the noble, for the sincere part, Yakov Petrovich, you must agree, Yakov Petrovich…"

"Yes, sir. But you yourself know, Yakov Petrovich," Mr. Goliadkin Jr. replied in a soft and insinuating voice, thus falsely making himself out to be a sad, dignified man, filled with repentance and regret, "you yourself know, our times are hard…I defer to you, Yakov Petrovich; you're an intelligent man and will judge fairly," Mr. Goliadkin Jr. put in, basely flattering Mr. Goliadkin Sr. "Life's not a game—you know that yourself, Yakov Petrovich," Mr. Goliadkin Jr. concluded meaningfully, thus pretending to be an intelligent and learned man who could reason about lofty subjects.

"For my part, Yakov Petrovich," our hero replied with animation, "for my part, scornful of roundabout paths and speaking boldly and sincerely, speaking a direct, noble language, and putting the whole affair on a noble level, I will tell you, I can openly and nobly assert, Yakov Petrovich, that I am completely clear and that, as you yourself know, a mutual error—anything can happen—the world's judgment, the opinion of the servile crowd…I'm speaking sincerely, Yakov Petrovich, anything can happen.

I will also say, Yakov Petrovich, if one judges in this way, if one looks at the affair from a noble and lofty point of view, I will say boldly, without false shame, Yakov Petrovich, it would even be pleasant for me to reveal that I was mistaken, it would even be pleasant for me to admit it. You yourself know, you're an intelligent man, and moreover a noble one. Without shame, without false shame, I am ready to admit it…" our hero concluded with dignity and nobility.

"Fate, destiny, Yakov Petrovich!…But let's leave all that," Mr. Goliadkin Jr. said with a sigh. "Better let's use the brief moments of our encounter in more useful and pleasant conversation, as befits two colleagues…Really, I somehow haven't managed to exchange two words with you all this time…I'm not to blame for it, Yakov Petrovich…"

“Neither am I,” our hero warmly interrupted, “neither am I! My heart tells me, Yakov Petrovich, that I am not to blame for all this. Let’s blame destiny for it, Yakov Petrovich,” Mr. Goliadkin Sr. added in a completely conciliatory tone. His voice gradually began to weaken and tremble.

“Well, so? How’s your health generally?” the wayward one asked in a sweet voice.
“I have a slight cough,” our hero replied still more sweetly.

“Take care of yourself. There are these infections going around, it’s easy to catch a quinsy, and, I confess to you, I’m beginning to wrap myself in flannel.”
“Indeed, Yakov Petrovich, it is easy to catch a quinsy, sir…Yakov Petrovich!” our hero said after a meek pause. “Yakov Petrovich! I see that I was mistaken…I have a fond memory of those happy minutes we managed to pass under my poor but, I dare say, hospitable roof…”

“However, that is not what you wrote in your letter,” the perfectly fair (perfectly fair, however, solely in this respect) Mr. Goliadkin Jr. said partly in reproach.

“Yakov Petrovich! I was mistaken…I now see clearly that I was also mistaken in that unfortunate letter of mine. Yakov Petrovich, I am ashamed to look at you, Yakov Petrovich, you won’t believe me…Give me that letter so that I can tear it up before your eyes, Yakov Petrovich, or if that is absolutely impossible, I implore you to read it the other way round—quite the other way round, that is, with a deliberately friendly intention, giving the contrary sense to all the words of my letter. I was mistaken. Forgive me, Yakov Petrovich, I was totally…I was grievously mistaken, Yakov Petrovich.”

“You were saying?” Mr. Goliadkin Sr.’s perfidious friend asked rather absentmindedly and indifferently.
“I was saying that I was totally mistaken, Yakov Petrovich, and that, for my part, without any false shame, I…”

“Ah, well, good! It’s very good that you were mistaken,” Mr. Goliadkin Jr. replied rudely.
“I even had the idea, Yakov Petrovich,” our candid hero added in a noble fashion, totally oblivious of the terrible perfidy of his false friend, “I even had the idea that, say, here two perfect likenesses have been created…”

“Ah, so that’s your idea!…”
Here Mr. Goliadkin Jr., known for his uselessness, got up and seized his hat. Still failing to notice the deceit, Mr. Goliadkin Sr. also got up, smiling simple-heartedly and nobly to his pseudo-friend, trying, in his innocence, to be gentle, to encourage him, and thus to strike up a new friendship with him…

“Good-bye, Your Excellency!” Mr. Goliadkin Jr. suddenly cried out. Our hero shuddered, noticing something even bacchic in his enemy’s face and, solely to be rid of him, thrust two fingers of his hand into the hand the immoral man held out to him; but here…here the shamelessness of Mr. Goliadkin Jr. went beyond all degree. Having seized the two fingers of Mr. Goliadkin Sr.’s hand and pressed them first, the unworthy man straightaway, before Mr. Goliadkin’s eyes, ventured to repeat his shameless morning joke. The measure of human patience was exhausted…

He was already putting the handkerchief with which he had wiped his fingers into his pocket when Mr. Goliadkin Sr. came to his senses and rushed after him into the next room, where, as was his nasty habit, his implacable enemy had at once hastened to slip away. Cool as a cucumber, he was standing at the counter eating little pies and, like a virtuous man, quite calmly paying court to the German pastry cook. “Impossible in front of ladies,” thought our hero, and he also went up to the counter, beside himself with agitation.

“Not a bad-looking wench, in fact! What do you think?” Mr. Goliadkin Jr. began his indecent escapades anew, probably counting on Mr. Goliadkin’s endless patience. The fat German woman, for her part,

looked at both her customers with senseless, tinny eyes, obviously not understanding Russian and smiling affably.

Our hero flared up like fire at the words of the shameless Mr. Goliadkin Jr. and, losing all control, finally hurled himself at him with the obvious intention of tearing him to pieces and thus having done with him definitively, but Mr. Goliadkin Jr., as was his mean custom, was already far away: he had taken to his heels, he was already on the porch.

It goes without saying, of course, that after the first momentary stupefaction, which naturally came over Mr. Goliadkin Sr., he recovered and rushed headlong after his offender, who was already getting into a waiting cab, whose driver was obviously in full complicity with him. But at that same moment the fat German woman, seeing the flight of the two customers, shrieked and rang the bell with all her might.

Our hero turned back almost on the wing, threw her money for himself and the shameless, unpaying man, not asking for change, and, despite this delay, still managed—though, again, only on the wing—to catch up with his adversary. Clinging to the droshky's mudguard with all the means granted him by nature, our hero went racing down the street for a time, trying to scramble into the carriage, which Mr. Goliadkin Jr. defended with all his might.

Meanwhile the cabby, with whip and reins and foot and words, urged on his broken-down nag, who quite unexpectedly went into a gallop, taking the bit in her teeth and kicking up her hind legs, as was her nasty habit, at every third stride. Finally our hero somehow managed to hoist himself into the droshky, face to his adversary, back leaning against the cabby, his knees to the shameless fellow's knees, and with his right hand clutching as best he could the rather shabby fur collar of his depraved and most bitter enemy's overcoat…

The enemies raced on and for a time were silent. Our hero could barely catch his breath; the road was very bad, and he was jolted at every step, in danger of breaking his neck. On top of that, his bitter adversary

still would not admit defeat and tried to push his enemy off into the mud.

To complete all the unpleasantnesses, the weather was most terrible. Snow poured down in big flakes and tried all it could, for its part, to get under the flung-open overcoat of the real Mr. Goliadkin. It was murky all around and impossible to see. It was hard to tell where and down what streets they were racing…It seemed to Mr. Goliadkin that something familiar was happening to him.

At one point he tried to recall whether he had had any presentiment the day before…in a dream, for instance…Finally, his anguish grew to the ultimate degree of its agony. Leaning his full weight against his merciless adversary, he was about to cry out.

But the cry died on his lips…There was a moment when Mr. Goliadkin forgot everything and decided that all this was quite negligible and that it had been done just like that, somehow, in an inexplicable fashion, and to protest on this occasion would be a superfluous and completely wasted business…But suddenly, and almost at the moment when our hero was coming to this conclusion, some careless jolt changed the whole sense of the affair.

Mr. Goliadkin tumbled off the droshky like a sack of flour and rolled away somewhere, admitting quite correctly in the moment of his fall that he had really and highly inappropriately lost his temper.

Jumping to his feet, finally, he saw that they had arrived somewhere; the droshky was standing in the middle of someone's yard, and our hero noticed at first glance that it was the yard of the house where Olsufy Ivanovich lived. At that same moment he noticed that his companion was already making his way to the porch and probably to Olsufy Ivanovich's. In his indescribable anguish, he was about to rush in pursuit of his adversary, but, fortunately for him, he had sense enough to think better of it in time.

Not forgetting to pay the cabby, Mr. Goliadkin rushed out to the street and ran as fast as he could wherever his legs would carry him. Snow poured down in big flakes as before; as before it was murky, damp, and dark. Our hero did not walk but flew, knocking down everyone in his way—peasants, their women, children, and bouncing off of women, peasants, and children in his turn.

Around him and behind him he heard frightened talk, shrieks, cries…But it seemed that Mr. Goliadkin was oblivious and did not want to pay any attention to anything…He came to his senses, however, by the Semyonovsky Bridge, and then only because he happened somehow clumsily to brush against and knock down two peasant women with the wares they were carrying, and to fall down himself along with them. “Never mind that,” thought Mr. Goliadkin, “all this may very well still work out for the best”—and he straightaway went to his pocket, wishing to get off by paying a silver rouble for the spilled gingerbreads, apples, peas, and various other things.

Suddenly a new light dawned on Mr. Goliadkin; in his pocket he felt the letter that the scrivener had handed to him in the morning. Remembering among other things that there was a tavern he knew not far away, he ran to the tavern, sat down without wasting a moment at a little table lit by a tallow candle, and, not paying attention to anything, not listening to the waiter who came to take his order, he broke the seal and began to read what follows below, struck by it to the uttermost.

Noble man, who suffers for me and is forever dear to my heart!

I am suffering, I am perishing—save me! The slanderer, the intriguer, the man known for his useless tendency, entangled me in his net, and I was lost! I fell! But he is repulsive to me, while you…! They separated us, they intercepted my letters to you—and it was all done by the immoral one, making use of his one good quality—his resemblance to you. In any case, a man may be bad-looking, but attractive by his intelligence, strong feeling, and pleasant manners…I am perishing! They

are giving me away by force, and the one who is intriguing most of all is my parent, my benefactor, the state councillor Olsufy Ivanovich, probably wishing to occupy my place and my relations in high-toned society…But I am resolved and I protest with all the means granted me by nature. Wait for me with your carriage tonight, at exactly nine o'clock, by the windows of Olsufy Ivanovich's apartment. There will be a ball again, and the handsome lieutenant will be there. I will come out, and we will fly away. Besides, there are other places of service, where one can still be of use to the fatherland. In any case, remember, my friend, that innocence is already strong in its innocence. Farewell. Wait with the carriage at the entrance. I will throw myself under the protection of your embrace at exactly two a.m.
Yours till death,

Klara Olsufyevna.

Having read the letter, our hero remained as if dumbfounded for several minutes. In terrible anguish, in terrible agitation, pale as a sheet, the letter in his hands, he paced several times about the room; to complete his disastrous position, our hero failed to notice that he was at the present moment the object of the exclusive attention of all those in the room.

Probably the disorder of his clothes, his unrestrained agitation, his pacing, or, rather, running about, gesticulating with both hands, maybe a few mysterious words uttered to the wind and in oblivion—probably all that recommended Mr. Goliadkin quite poorly to the opinion of all the customers; even the waiter himself began to glance at him suspiciously.

Coming to his senses, our hero noticed that he was standing in the middle of the room and staring in an almost indecent, impolite fashion at a little old man of quite venerable appearance, who, after having dinner and praying to God before an icon, sat down again and, for his part, fixed his gaze on Mr. Goliadkin. Our hero looked around vaguely and noticed that everyone, decidedly everyone, was looking at him

with a most sinister and suspicious air. Suddenly a retired officer with a red collar loudly asked for The Police Gazette.

Mr. Goliadkin gave a start and blushed: somehow by chance he looked down and saw that his clothes were so indecent that they would have been impossible even in his own home, to say nothing of a public place.

His boots, his trousers, and his entire left side were covered with mud; the trouser strap on his right foot had been torn off, and his tailcoat was even ripped in many places. In inexhaustible anguish, our hero went over to the table at which he had been reading and saw a waiter approaching him with an odd and brazenly insistent expression on his face.

Totally bewildered and deflated, our hero began to examine the table at which he was standing. There were dishes on the table left after someone's dinner, a dirty napkin lay there, and a just-used knife, fork, and spoon. "Who was having dinner?" thought our hero. "Could it have been me? Anything's possible! I had dinner and didn't notice it: what am I to do?" Raising his eyes, Mr. Goliadkin again saw the waiter standing beside him, about to say something to him.

"How much do I owe, brother?" our hero asked in a trembling voice.

Loud laughter arose around Mr. Goliadkin; the waiter himself grinned. Mr. Goliadkin realized that in this, too, he had flunked and done something awfully stupid. Having realized it all, he became so embarrassed that he had to go to his pocket for a handkerchief, probably so as to do something and not stand there like that; but to his own and everyone else's indescribable amazement, instead of a handkerchief, he took out a vial with some medication prescribed by Krestyan Ivanovich four days earlier.

"Medications from the same apothecary," raced through Mr. Goliadkin's head…Suddenly he gave a start and almost cried out in terror. New light was shed…A dark, disgustingly reddish liquid shone

with a sinister gleam before Mr. Goliadkin's eyes. The vial fell from his hand and broke at once.

Our hero cried out and sprang two steps back from the spilled liquid…he trembled all over, and sweat broke out on his temples and forehead. "That means my life's in danger!" Meanwhile there was movement, commotion in the room; everyone surrounded Mr. Goliadkin, everyone talked to Mr. Goliadkin, some even seized Mr. Goliadkin. But our hero was mute and motionless, saw nothing, heard nothing, felt nothing…Finally, as if tearing himself away, he rushed out of the tavern, shoved aside each and all of those who tried to hold him back, fell almost unconscious into the first droshky that happened along, and flew home.

In the front hall of his apartment he met Mikheev, the department caretaker, with an official envelope in his hand. "I know, my friend, I know everything," our exhausted hero answered in a weak, melancholy voice, "it's official…" The envelope indeed contained an order for Mr. Goliadkin, signed by Andrei Filippovich, to hand over the cases in his charge to Ivan Semyonovich. Having taken the envelope and given the caretaker a ten-kopeck piece, Mr. Goliadkin went into his apartment and saw Petrushka preparing and gathering into a heap all his trash and rubbish, all his things, obviously intending to leave Mr. Goliadkin and go over from him to Karolina Ivanovna, who had lured him away to replace her Evstafy.

Chapter XII

PETRUSHKA CAME SAUNTERING IN, bearing himself with some strange casualness and with a sort of knavishly solemn expression on his face. It was evident that he had thought up something, felt himself fully within his rights, and looked like a total stranger, that is, anyone else's servant, only in no way the former servant of Mr. Goliadkin.

"Well, so you see, my dear," our hero began breathlessly, "what time is it now, my dear?"

Petrushka silently went behind the partition, then returned and announced in a rather independent tone that it would soon be half-past seven.

“Well, all right, my dear, all right. Well, you see, my dear…allow me to tell you, my dear, that it seems everything is now over between us.”
Petrushka was silent.

“Well, now, since everything is over between us, tell me candidly now, tell me like a friend, where have you been, brother?”
“Where have I been? Among good people, sir.”

“I know, my friend, I know. I have always been satisfied with you, my dear, and I’ll give you a reference…Well, how are you doing with them now?”
“How am I doing, sir? You know yourself, if you please, sir. Everybody knows a good man won’t teach you anything bad.”

“I know, my dear, I know. Good people are rare nowadays, my friend; value them, my friend. Well, how are they doing?”
“Everybody knows how, sir…Only I can’t serve you any more now, sir; you know that yourself, if you please, sir.”

“I know, my dear, I know; I know your zeal and assiduousness; I’ve seen all that, my friend, I’ve noticed. I respect you, my friend. I respect a good and honest man, even if he’s a servant.”

“Why, sir, everybody knows! The likes of us, you know yourself, if you please, sir, go where it’s better. So there, sir. What’s it to me! Everybody knows, sir, there’s no doing without a good man, sir.”

“Well, all right, brother, all right; I feel that…Well, here’s your money and here’s your reference. Now let’s kiss, brother, let’s say good-bye…Well, now, my dear, I’ll ask one service of you, a last service,” Mr. Goliadkin said in a solemn tone. “You see, my dear, anything can happen. Woe also hides in gilded mansions, my friend, and there’s no

getting away from it. You know, my friend, I believe I've always been nice to you…"

Petrushka was silent.
"I believe I've always been nice to you, my dear…Well, how much linen have we got now, my dear?"

"It's all there, sir. Six cotton shirts, sir; three pairs of socks; four shirt fronts; a flannel vest; two undershirts, sir. You know it all, sir. There's nothing of yours, sir, that I…I look after my master's goods, sir. You and I, sir, sort of…it's a known thing, sir…but anything wrong on my part—never, sir; you know that yourself, sir."

"Right, my friend, right. I don't mean that, my friend, not that; you see, there's this, my friend…"
"Everybody knows, sir; that we know already, sir. Take me, when I was still in General Stolbniakov's service, he dismissed me, sir, having gone to Saratov himself…to his family estate there…"

"No, my friend, I don't mean that; I never…don't go thinking anything, my dear friend…"
"Everybody knows, sir. With the likes of us, you know yourself, if you please, sir, you can slander a man in no time, sir. But they've always been satisfied with me, sir. There've been ministers, generals, senators, counts, sir. I've been with them all, sir, with Prince Svinchatkin, with Colonel Pereborkin, also had a go with General Nedobarov, in my native parts, sir. Everybody knows, sir…"

"Yes, my friend, yes; very well, my friend, very well. So now I, too, my friend, am leaving…There's a different path laid down for each of us, my dear, and no one knows what road a man may wind up on. Well, my friend, give me my clothes now; and also put in my uniform…a second pair of trousers, sheets, blankets, pillows…"

"Will you have me tie it all up in a bundle, sir?"
"Yes, my friend, yes; perhaps in a bundle…Who knows what may happen with us? Well, now, my dear, go out and find a carriage…"

“A carriage, sir?…”

“Yes, my friend, a carriage, a roomy one and for some length of time. And don’t go thinking anything, my friend…”
“And do you mean to go a long way, sir?”

“I don’t know, my friend, I don’t know that either. I suppose you should also put in the feather bed. What do you think, my friend? I’m relying on you, my dear…”
“Might you be pleased to leave at once, sir?”

“Yes, my friend, yes! There’s this circumstance…so it is, my dear, so it is…”
“Everybody knows, sir; it was the same with a lieutenant in our regiment—ran off, sir…with a landowner’s…”
“Ran off?…What, my dear? You…”

“Yes, ran off, sir, and they got married on another estate. It was all prepared beforehand, sir. They were pursued; only here the late prince stepped in, sir—well, and the matter was settled, sir…”
“Married, hm…but how is it, my dear, how did you come to know it?”

“Why, what do you mean, sir, everybody knows! The earth’s full of rumors, sir. Yes, sir, we know everything…of course, nobody’s without sin. Only I’ll tell you now, sir, allow me in a simple, boorish way to tell you, since we’re talking about it, sir, I’ll tell you—you’ve got a rival there, sir, a strong rival…”

“I know, my friend, I know; you know it yourself, my dear…Well, so I’m relying on you. What are we to do, my friend? How would you advise me?”

“So then, sir, if you’re now proceeding, shall we say, in such a manner, sir, you’ll need to buy a thing or two, sir—well, say, sheets, pillows, another feather bed, a double one, sir, a good blanket, sir—from the neighbor here, sir, downstairs: she’s a tradeswoman; she has a good fox-fur woman’s coat; you could have a look at it and buy it, you could

go now and have a look, sir. You'll need it now, sir; a good satin coat, sir, lined with fox fur…"

"Well, all right, my friend, all right; I agree, my friend, I'm relying on you, relying on you fully; perhaps the coat as well, my dear…Only quickly, quickly! for God's sake, quickly! I'll buy the coat as well, only quickly, please! It will soon be eight o'clock, hurry, for God's sake, my friend! as fast as you can, my friend!…"

Petrushka abandoned the as yet untied bundle of linen, pillows, blanket, sheets, and various trash he was gathering together and tying up, and rushed headlong from the room. Mr. Goliadkin meanwhile snatched out the letter once again—but was unable to read it. Clutching his victorious head in both hands, he leaned against the wall in amazement.

He was unable to think of anything, he was also unable to do anything; he did not know what was happening to him. Finally, seeing that time was passing and no Petrushka or fur coat appeared, Mr. Goliadkin decided to go himself. Opening the door to the front hall, he heard noise, talk, argument, and discussion downstairs…Several neighbor women were babbling, shouting, argling and bargling about something—and Mr. Goliadkin knew precisely what about.

Petrushka's voice was heard, then someone's footsteps. "My God! They'll invite the whole world here!" moaned Mr. Goliadkin, wringing his hands in despair and rushing back to his room. Running into his room, he fell almost oblivious onto the sofa, his face buried in a cushion. After lying like that for a moment, he jumped up and, not waiting for Petrushka, put on his galoshes, his hat, his overcoat, seized his wallet, and ran headlong down the stairs.

"Nothing's needed, nothing, my dear! I'll do it myself, all myself. There's no need for you right now, and meanwhile maybe the affair will get settled for the best," Mr. Goliadkin murmured to Petrushka, meeting him on the stairs; then he ran out to the yard and away from the house; his heart was sinking; he was still undecided…What should

he do, how should he behave, how should he act in this present and critical case…

“This is it! How to act, oh, Lord God? And all this just had to happen!” he finally cried in despair, hobbling down the street wherever his legs carried him, “it all just had to happen! If it weren’t for this, precisely for this, everything would have been settled; all at once, at one stroke, one deft, energetic, firm stroke, it would have been settled. I’d let them cut my finger off that it would have been settled. And I even know in precisely what way it would have been settled.

Here’s how it would be: I’d say such and such—thus and so, but for me, my good sir, with your permission, it’s neither here nor there; say, things aren’t done this way; say, my good sir, my very dear sir, things aren’t done this way, and imposture doesn’t get anywhere with us; an impostor, my good sir, is a man who is—useless and of no use to the fatherland. Do you understand that? I say, do you understand that, my very dear sir?!

That’s how it would be, sort of…But no, however, what am I…that’s not it, not it at all…What am I babbling, like an utter fool! me, suicide that I am! I say, suicide that you are, it’s not that at all…Though that is how, you depraved man, that is how things are done nowadays!…Well, where shall I take myself now? Well, what, for instance, am I to do with myself now? What am I good for now? What, for instance, are you good for now, you Goliadkin, you worthless fellow! Well, what now? I have to hire a carriage; go, she says, and fetch a carriage here; our little feet, she says, will get wet if there’s no carriage…There, who’d have thought it?

Oh, you young lady! oh, lady mine! oh, you well-behaved miss! oh, our much-praised one! You’ve distinguished yourself, ma’am, I declare, you’ve distinguished yourself!…And it all comes from immoral upbringing; and I, as I look closely now and get to the bottom of it all, I see that it comes from nothing else than immorality. Instead of a bit of birching from a young age…every once in a while…they give her candy, they stuff her with all sorts of sweets, and the old fellow slobbers over

her: says you're my this, and you're my that, you good girl, says I'll give you away to a count!…And now she's up and shown us her cards; says here's what our game is! Instead of keeping her at home at a young age, they put her in a boarding school, with a French madame, an émigrée Falbala28 of some sort; and she learns all kinds of good things from the émigrée Falbala—and so it all turns out this way.

She says, go on, rejoice! Says, be there with a carriage at such and such hour in front of the windows and sing a sentimental romance in Spanish style; I'm waiting for you, and I know you love me, and we'll run off together and live in a cabin. But it's impossible, finally; if it's come to that, lady mine, it's impossible, it's against the law to carry off an honest and innocent girl from her parents' home without her parents' permission!

And, finally, what for, and why, and where's the need? Well, let her marry the one she ought to, the one she's destined for, and the matter can end there. But I'm in government service; I could lose my job because of it; I, lady mine, could wind up in court because of it! that's what, in case you didn't know! This is the German woman's work. It's from her, the witch, that all this comes, she set the whole forest on fire. Because they're slandering a man, because they've invented some old wives' tale about him, some cock-and-bull story, on Andrei Filippovich's advice, that's where it comes from. Otherwise why is Petrushka mixed up in it?

what is it to him? what's the need for that rogue here? No, I can't do it, my lady, I simply can't do it, can't do it for anything…You, my lady, must excuse me somehow this time. It all comes from you, my lady, it doesn't come from the German woman, not from the witch at all, but purely from you, because the witch is a good woman, because the witch is not to blame for anything, it's you, lady mine, who are to blame—that's how it is! You, my lady, are leading me into futility…A man's perishing here, a man's vanishing from his own sight here, and can't control himself—what sort of wedding can there be! And how will it all end? and how will it be settled now? I'd pay dearly to know all that!…"

Thus our hero reasoned in his despair. Suddenly coming to his senses, he noticed that he was standing somewhere on Liteinaya. The weather was terrible: there was a thaw, heavy snow fell, rain came—exactly as in that unforgettable time, at the dreadful midnight hour, when all of Mr. Goliadkin's misfortunes had begun. "What sort of journey can there be!" thought Mr. Goliadkin, looking at the weather, "this is universal death…Oh, Lord God! where, for instance, am I to find a carriage?

There seems to be something black there at the corner. Let's look, examine…Oh, Lord God!" our hero went on, directing his feeble and shaky steps towards where he saw something resembling a carriage. "No, here's what I'll do: I'll go, fall at his feet, if I can, I'll humbly beg. I'll say, thus and so; into your hands I put my fate, into the hands of my superiors; say, Your Excellency, be a benefactor, defend a man; thus and so, say, there's this and that, an illegal act; do not destroy me, I take you as a father, do not abandon me…save my pride, my honor, my name…save me from a villain, a depraved man…He's a different man, Your Excellency, and I'm also a different man; he's separate, and I'm also my own man; I'm really my own man, Your Excellency, really my own man; so there. I'll say, I can't resemble him; change it, if you please, order it changed—and do away with the godless, unwarranted substitute…no example to others, Your Excellency. I take you as my father; our superiors are, of course, beneficent and solicitous and ought to encourage such actions…There's even something chivalrous in it. I'll say, I take you, my beneficent superior, as a father, and entrust my fate to you, and will not object, I entrust myself to you and withdraw from the affair…so there!"

"Well, so, my dear, are you a cabby?"
"I am…"
"A carriage, brother, for the evening…"
"And would you be going far, if you please, sir?"
"For the evening, for the evening; wherever it may be, my dear, wherever it may be."
"Might you be going out of town, if you please, sir?"

“Yes, my friend, maybe out of town, too. I still don’t know for certain myself, my friend, I can’t tell you for certain, my dear. You see, my dear, it may all get settled for the best. Everybody knows, my friend…”

“Yes, of course, sir, everybody knows; God grant everybody that.”
“Yes, my friend, yes; thank you, my dear; well, how much will you charge, my dear?…”
“Might you be pleased to go now, sir?”

“Yes, now, that is, no, you must wait in a certain place…wait a little, it won’t be long, my dear…”
“If you hire me for the whole time, sir, it can’t be less than six roubles, considering the weather, sir…”
“All right, my friend, all right; and I’ll thank you well, my dear. Well, so you’ll take me now, my dear.”
“Get in; excuse me, I’ll straighten it out a little here; get in now, if you please. Where would you like to go?”
“To the Izmailovsky Bridge, my friend.”

The driver clambered up on the box and urged his pair of skinny nags, whom he had trouble tearing away from the hay trough, in the direction of the Izmailovsky Bridge. But Mr. Goliadkin suddenly tugged the bell-pull, stopped the carriage, and asked in a pleading voice to turn back and not go to the Izmailovsky Bridge, but to another street. The driver turned into the other street, and in ten minutes Mr. Goliadkin’s newly obtained vehicle stopped in front of the house in which his excellency was quartered. Mr. Goliadkin got out of the carriage, insistently asked his driver to wait, and with a sinking heart ran up to the first floor, tugged the bell-pull, the door opened, and our hero found himself in his excellency’s front hall.
“Is his excellency at home, if you please?” asked Mr. Goliadkin, addressing in this way the man who had opened the door for him.

“What is your business, sir?” asked the footman, looking Mr. Goliadkin up and down.
“I, my friend, am sort of…Goliadkin, a clerk, Titular Councillor Goliadkin. Say, thus and so, to explain…”

“Wait; it’s impossible, sir…”

“I can’t wait, my friend: my business is important, it will brook no delay…”
“But where are you coming from? Have you brought any papers?…”

“No, my friend, I’m on my own…Announce me, my friend, say, thus and so, to explain. And I’ll thank you well, my dear…”
“Impossible, sir. I have no orders to receive anyone; they’re having guests, sir. Please come in the morning at ten o’clock, sir…”

“Announce me, my dear; I can’t, it’s impossible for me to wait…You’ll answer for it, my dear…”
“Go and announce him; what, are you sorry for your boots or something?” said the other footman, who was sprawled on a bench and so far had not said a word.
“Wear out my boots! He gave no orders to receive anyone, you know? Their turn’s in the morning.”

“Announce him. Your tongue won’t fall off.”
“So I’ll announce him: my tongue won’t fall off. But he gave no orders, I told you, he gave no orders. Come in, then.”

Mr. Goliadkin went into the first room; there was a clock on the table. He looked: it was half-past eight. His heart ached in his breast. He was about to retreat; but at that moment the lanky footman, standing on the threshold of the next room, loudly pronounced Mr. Goliadkin’s name. “What a gullet!” our hero thought in indescribable anguish…“Well, he might have said: sort of…say, thus and so, came most obediently and humbly to explain—sort of…be so good as to receive…But now the whole affair is ruined, and it’s all gone to the winds; however…ah, well—never mind…” There was no point in reasoning, however. The footman came back, said, “This way please,” and led Mr. Goliadkin into the study.

When our hero went in, he felt as if he had been blinded, for he could see decidedly nothing. Two or three figures, however, flashed before

his eyes. “These must be the guests,” flashed through Mr. Goliadkin’s head. Finally, our hero began to make out clearly the star on his excellency’s black tailcoat, then, still as gradually, he passed on to the black tailcoat, and finally acquired the ability of full contemplation…

“What is it, sir?” the familiar voice spoke over Mr. Goliadkin.
“Titular Councillor Goliadkin, Your Excellency.”

“Well?”
“I’ve come to explain…”
“How?…What?…”

“Just that. Say, thus and so, I’ve come to explain, Your Excellency, sir…”
“But you…but who on earth are you?”
“M-m-mr. Goliadkin, Your Excellency, a titular councillor.”
“Well, what is it you want?”

“Say, thus and so, I take his excellency as a father; I withdraw from the affair, and protect me from my enemy—so there!”
“What is this?…”
“Everybody knows…”
“Knows what?”

Mr. Goliadkin was silent; his chin began to twitch slightly…
“Well?”

“I thought it was chivalrous, Your Excellency…That here, say, it was chivalrous, and I take my superior as a father…say, thus and so, protect me, I en…entreat you in te…tears, and that such sti…stirrings sho…should be en…en…encouraged…”

His excellency turned away. For a few moments our hero was unable to look at anything with his eyes. His chest was tight. His breath failed him. He did not know where he was standing…He felt somehow sad and ashamed. God knows what happened then…Having recovered, our hero noticed that his excellency was talking with his guests and seemed

to be discussing something sharply and forcefully. One of the guests Mr. Goliadkin recognized at once.

It was Andrei Filippovich. The other he did not; however, the face also seemed familiar—a tall, thickset figure, of a certain age, endowed with extremely bushy eyebrows and side-whiskers and a sharp, expressive gaze. There was a decoration hung on the stranger's neck and a cigar in his mouth. The stranger was smoking and, without taking the cigar out of his mouth, nodded his head significantly, glancing now and then at Mr. Goliadkin. Mr. Goliadkin felt somehow awkward. He looked away and at once saw yet another extremely strange guest.

In a doorway which till then our hero had been taking for a mirror, as had happened to him once before—he appeared—we all know who, an extremely close acquaintance and friend of Mr. Goliadkin's. Mr. Goliadkin Jr. had in fact been in another little room up to then, hurriedly writing something; now he must have been needed—and he appeared, with papers under his arm, went over to his excellency, and quite deftly, expecting exclusive attention to his person, managed to worm his way into the conversation and concilium, taking his position slightly behind Andrei Filippovich and partly masked by the stranger smoking the cigar.

Evidently Mr. Goliadkin Jr. took great interest in the conversation, to which he now listened in a noble manner, nodding his head, mincing his feet, smiling, glancing every moment at his excellency, his eyes as if pleading that he be allowed to put in his own half-word. "The scoundrel!" thought Mr. Goliadkin, and he involuntarily took a step forward. Just then his excellency turned and rather hesitantly approached Mr. Goliadkin himself.

"Well, all right, all right; go with God. I'll look into your affair, and order that you be accompanied…" Here the general glanced at the stranger with the bushy side-whiskers. He nodded in agreement.

Mr. Goliadkin felt and understood clearly that he was being taken for something else, and not at all as he ought to have been. "One way or

another, an explanation is called for," he thought, "thus and so, say, Your Excellency." Here, in his perplexity, he lowered his eyes to the ground and, to his extreme amazement, saw considerable white spots on his excellency's boots.

"Can they have split open?" thought Mr. Goliadkin. Soon, however, Mr. Goliadkin discovered that his excellency's boots were not split open at all, but only had bright reflections—a phenomenon explained completely by the fact that the boots were of patent leather and shone brightly.

"That's called a highlight," thought our hero. "The term is used especially in artists' studios; elsewhere this reflection is called a bright gleam." Here Mr. Goliadkin raised his eyes and saw that it was time to speak, otherwise the affair might take a bad turn…Our hero stepped forward.

"I say, thus and so, Your Excellency," he said, "but imposture doesn't get anywhere in our age."
The general did not reply, but tugged strongly on the bell-pull. Our hero took another step forward.

"He's a mean and depraved man, Your Excellency," said our hero, forgetting himself, sinking with fear, and, for all that, pointing boldly and resolutely at his unworthy twin, who at that moment was mincing around his excellency, "thus and so, say, but I'm alluding to a certain person."

Mr. Goliadkin's words were followed by a general stir. Andrei Filippovich and the unknown figure nodded their heads; his excellency was impatiently tugging at the bell-pull with all his might, summoning people. Here Mr. Goliadkin Jr. stepped forward in his turn.

"Your Excellency," he said, "I humbly ask your permission to speak." There was something extremely resolute in Mr. Goliadkin Jr.'s voice; everything about him showed that he felt himself completely within his rights.

“Permit me to ask you,” he began, in his zeal forestalling his excellency’s reply and this time addressing Mr. Goliadkin, “permit me to ask you, in whose presence are you making such comments? before whom are you standing? whose study are you in?…” Mr. Goliadkin Jr. was all in extraordinary agitation, all red and flushed with indignation and wrath; tears even showed in his eyes.

“Mr. and Mrs. Bassavriukov!”29 a footman bellowed at the top of his lungs, appearing in the doorway of the study. “A good noble family, of Little Russian extraction,” thought Mr. Goliadkin, and just then he felt someone lay a hand on his back in a highly friendly manner; then another hand was laid on his back; Mr. Goliadkin’s mean twin was bustling ahead of them, showing the way, and our hero saw clearly that he was being steered towards the big doors of the study. “Just as at Olsufy Ivanovich’s,” he thought, and found himself in the front hall. Looking around, he saw his excellency’s two footmen and one twin.

“Overcoat, overcoat, overcoat, my friend’s overcoat! my best friend’s overcoat!” the depraved man chirped, tearing the overcoat from one of the men’s hands and flinging it, in mean and unpleasant mockery, right over Mr. Goliadkin’s head. Struggling out from under his overcoat, Mr. Goliadkin Sr. clearly heard the laughter of the two footmen. But, not listening or paying attention to anything extraneous, he was already leaving the front hall and found himself on the lighted stairway. Mr. Goliadkin Jr. followed him out.

“Good-bye, Your Excellency!” he called after Mr. Goliadkin Sr.
“Scoundrel!” said our hero, beside himself.
“Well, yes, a scoundrel…”
“Depraved man!”

“Well, yes, a depraved man…” Thus the unworthy adversary responded to the worthy Mr. Goliadkin and, with a meanness all his own, looked from the top of the stairs, directly and without batting an eye, into the eyes of Mr. Goliadkin, as if asking him to go on. Our hero spat in indignation and ran out to the porch; he was so crushed that he simply

did not remember by whom and how he was put into the carriage. Coming to his senses, he saw that he was being driven along the Fontanka.

“So we’re going to the Izmailovsky Bridge?” thought Mr. Goliadkin…Here Mr. Goliadkin wanted to think of something else as well, but it was impossible; it was something so terrible that there was no way to explain it…“Well, never mind!” our hero concluded and drove to the Izmailovsky Bridge.

Chapter XIII

…IT SEEMED THAT the weather wanted to change for the better. Indeed, the wet snow that had been pouring down till then in great heaps gradually began to thin out, thin out, and finally ceased almost entirely. The sky became visible, and little stars sparkled on it here and there.

Only it was wet, dirty, damp, and suffocating, especially for Mr. Goliadkin, who even without that could barely catch his breath. From his wet and heavy overcoat some unpleasantly warm dampness penetrated all his limbs, and its weight bent his legs, which were badly weakened without that.

Some feverish trembling went through his whole body with sharp and biting prickles; weariness made him break into a cold, sickly sweat, so that Mr. Goliadkin forgot to make use of this good opportunity to repeat, with his characteristic firmness and resolution, his favorite phrase, that perhaps all of this might somehow, certainly and unfailingly, work out and be settled for the best.

“However, so far it’s all not so bad,” our sturdy and undaunted hero added, wiping from his face the drops of cold water that ran in all directions from the brim of his round hat, which was so sodden that it no longer repelled any water.

Adding that it was all nothing, our hero tried to seat himself on a rather thick block of wood that lay near the pile of firewood in Olsufy Ivanovich's courtyard. Of course, there was no point in thinking about Spanish serenades and silk ladders; but he did have to think about a cosy nook, maybe not very warm, but at least comfortable and concealed.

He was strongly tempted, be it said in passing, by that same nook on the landing of Olsufy Ivanovich's apartment where previously, almost at the beginning of this truthful story, our hero had stood through his two hours between the wardrobe and the old screens, among all sorts of useless household trash, litter, and junk. The thing was that now, too, Mr. Goliadkin had already been standing and waiting for a whole two hours in Olsufy Ivanovich's courtyard.

But with regard to that former cosy and comfortable nook there now existed certain inconveniences which had not existed previously. The first inconvenience was that this place had probably been spotted and certain preventive measures taken about it since the time of the incident at Olsufy Ivanovich's last ball; and second, he had to wait for the prearranged signal from Klara Olsufyevna, because there certainly must have existed some such prearranged signal. It was always done that way, and "we're not the first and we won't be the last."

Just then Mr. Goliadkin incidentally had a fleeting recollection of some novel he had read long ago, in which the heroine gave a prearranged signal to Alfred in exactly the same circumstances by tying a pink ribbon to the window.

But a pink ribbon now, at night, and in the St. Petersburg climate, known for its dampness and unreliability, could not enter the picture and, in short, was quite impossible. "No, it won't come to silk ladders," thought our hero. "I'd better stand here, just so, cosily and quietly…I'd better stand here, for instance," and he chose a place in the courtyard, across from the windows, by the pile of stacked firewood.

Of course, there were many other people walking about the courtyard, postilions, coachmen; besides, there was the rattling of wheels and the snorting of horses, and so on; but even so, the place was convenient; whether they noticed him or not, for the time being there was this advantage, that the thing was going on in the shadows, and nobody could see Mr. Goliadkin, while he himself could see decidedly everything.

The windows were brightly lit; there was some solemn gathering at Olsufy Ivanovich's. However, there was no music to be heard yet. "So it's not a ball, and they've just gathered on some other occasion," our hero thought with a partly sinking heart.

"Was it today, though?" raced through his head. "Did I get the date wrong? It's possible, anything's possible…That's just it, that anything's possible…It's possible that the letter was written yesterday and didn't reach me, and it didn't reach me because that rogue Petrushka got mixed up in it! Or it was written tomorrow, meaning that I…that it was all to be done tomorrow, that is, the waiting with the carriage…" Here our hero turned definitively cold and went to his pocket for the letter, so as to check. But, to his surprise, the letter was not in his pocket. "How's that?" whispered the half-dead Mr. Goliadkin. "Where did I leave it?

So I've lost it? Just what I needed!" he finally moaned in conclusion. "And what if it now falls into unfriendly hands? (And maybe it already has!) Lord! what will come of it! It will be something that…Ah, my detestable fate!" Here Mr. Goliadkin trembled like a leaf at the thought that maybe his indecent twin, as he threw the overcoat over his head, had precisely the aim of stealing the letter, which he had somehow gotten wind of from Mr. Goliadkin's enemies. "What's more, he intercepted it," thought our hero, "and the evidence…but who cares about the evidence!…" After the first fit and stupefaction of terror, the blood rushed to Mr. Goliadkin's head.

With a moan and a gnashing of teeth, he clutched his hot head, sank onto his chunk of wood, and began thinking about something…But the

thoughts somehow did not connect in his head. Some faces flashed in his memory, now vaguely, now sharply, some long-forgotten events, the melodies of some stupid songs kept coming into his head…Anguish, there was an unnatural anguish! “My God! My God!” our hero thought, somewhat recovered, stifling a muffled sobbing in his breast, “grant me firmness of spirit in the inexhaustible depths of my calamities!

That I’ve perished, vanished completely—of that there’s no doubt, and it’s all in the order of things, for it couldn’t be any other way…First, I’ve lost my job, I’ve certainly lost it, there’s no way I could not have lost it…Well, let’s suppose that will get settled somehow. The bit of money I have, let’s suppose, will be enough to start with; I’ll rent some other apartment, a bit of furniture’s also needed…Petrushka won’t be with me.

I can do without the rogue…rent a room; well, that’s good! I can come and go when I please, and Petrushka won’t grumble about my coming late—so there; that’s what’s good about renting a room…Well, suppose it’s all good; only why am I talking about something that’s not it, not it at all?” Here the thought of his present situation again lit up in Mr. Goliadkin’s memory. He looked around. “Oh, Lord God! Lord God! what am I talking about now?” he thought, totally at a loss and clutching his hot head…

“Might you be leaving soon, if you please, sir?” a voice spoke over Mr. Goliadkin. Mr. Goliadkin gave a start; but before him stood his cabby, also soaked and chilled to the bone, who, in his impatience and having nothing to do, had decided to visit Mr. Goliadkin behind the woodpile. “I, my friend, am all right…soon, my friend, very soon, just wait a little…”

The cabby left, muttering under his nose. “What’s he muttering about?” Mr. Goliadkin thought through his tears. “I hired him for the evening, I’m sort of…within my rights now…so there! I hired him for the evening, and that’s the end of the matter. Even if he just stands there, it’s all the same.

It's as I will. I'm free to go, and free not to go. And that I'm now standing behind the woodpile—that, too, is quite all right…and don't you dare say anything; I say, the gentleman wants to stand behind the woodpile, so he stands behind the woodpile…and it's no taint to anybody's honor—so there! So there, lady mine, if you'd like to know. Thus and so, I say, but in our age, lady mine, nobody lives in a hut. So there! In our industrial age, lady mine, you can't get anywhere without good behavior, of which you yourself serve as a pernicious example…You say one must serve as a chief clerk and live in a hut on the seashore.

First of all, lady mine, there are no chief clerks on the seashore, and second, you and I can't possibly get to be a chief clerk. For, to take an example, suppose I apply, I show up—thus and so, as a chief clerk, say, sort of…and protect me from my enemy…and they'll tell you, my lady, say, sort of…there are lots of chief clerks, and here you're not at some émigrée Falbala's, where you learned good behavior, of which you yourself serve as a pernicious example. Good behavior, my lady, means sitting at home, respecting your father, and not thinking of any little suitors before it's time.

Little suitors, my lady, will be found in due time! So there! Of course, one must indisputably have certain talents, to wit: playing the piano on occasion, speaking French, some history, geography, catechism, and arithmetic—so there!—but not more. Also cooking; cooking should unfailingly be part of every well-behaved young girl's knowledge! But what do we have here? First of all, my beauty, my dearest madam, you won't get away with it, you'll be pursued, and then trumped into a convent.

And then what, lady mine? Then what would you have me do? Would you have me follow some stupid novels, lady mine, and go to a neighboring hill, and dissolve in tears gazing at the cold walls of your confinement, and finally die, following the custom of certain bad German poets and novelists, is that it, my lady?

Then, first of all, allow me to tell you in a friendly way that that is not how things are done, and, second, I'd have you and your parents soundly thrashed for giving you French books to read; for French books don't teach anything good. There's poison in them…noxious poison, lady mine!

Or do you think, if I may be permitted to ask, do you think that, say, thus and so, we'll run away with impunity, and sort of…there'll be a cabin on the seashore for you and we'll start cooing and discussing various feelings; and spend our whole life like that, in prosperity and happiness; and then there'll be a youngling, so that we'll sort of…say, thus and so, our parent and state councillor, Olsufy Ivanovich, here, say, a youngling has come along, so on this good occasion why don't you lift your curse and bless the couple? No, my lady, again that's not how things are done, and the first thing is that there'll be no cooing, kindly don't expect it. Nowadays, lady mine, a husband is the master, and a good and well-behaved wife must oblige him in everything.

And gentilities, my lady, are not in favor nowadays, in our industrial age; say, the time of Jean-Jacques Rousseau30 is past. Nowadays a husband comes home from work hungry—isn't there a bite to eat, darling, he says, a glass of vodka, some pickled herring? So you, my lady, have to have vodka and herring ready at once.

The husband relishes his snack and doesn't even glance at you, but says: off to the kitchen, my little kitten, and see to dinner—and he kisses you maybe once a week and even that indifferently…There's how we do it, lady mine! and even that, say, indifferently!…That's how it will be, if we start reasoning like this, if it's already gone so far that you begin looking at things this way…And what has it to do with me? Why, my lady, have you mixed me up in your caprices? 'A beneficent man, say, suffering for my sake, and in all ways dear to my heart, and so on.'

First of all, lady mine, I'm not right for you, you know that yourself, I'm no expert at paying compliments, I don't like uttering all those perfumed trifles for ladies, I'm not in favor of philanderers, and, I confess, my looks are not very winning.

You won't find any false boasting or shame in us, and we are confessing to you now in all sincerity. Say, so there, what we have is a direct and open character and common sense; we don't get involved in intrigues. I am not an intriguer, and I'm proud of it—so there!…I go among good people without a mask, and to tell you all…"
Suddenly Mr. Goliadkin gave a start. The red and thoroughly sodden beard of his driver again peeked behind the woodpile…

"Right away, my friend; at once, you know, my friend; I'll come at once, my friend," Mr. Goliadkin answered in a trembling and weary voice.
The driver scratched the top of his head, then stroked his beard, then stepped another step forward…stopped, and looked mistrustfully at Mr. Goliadkin.
"Right away, my friend; you see, I.. my friend… I'll sit here a little longer, my friend, you see, only a second longer…you see, my friend…"

"Might you not be going anywhere at all?" the driver said finally, accosting Mr. Goliadkin resolutely and definitively…
"No, my friend, I'll come right away. You see, my friend, I'm waiting…"
"Yes, sir…"

"You see, my friend…what village are you from, my dear?"
"We're house serfs…"
"And are they good masters?…"
"Sure enough…"

"So, my friend; stay here, my friend. You see, my friend, have you been in Petersburg long?"
"I've been driving for a year now…"
"And it suits you well, my friend?"
"Sure enough…"

"Yes, my friend, yes. Thank providence, my friend. You, my friend, should be looking for a good man. Good men have become rare, my dear; a good man will wash you, feed you, and give you a drink, that's what he'll do, my dear…And sometimes you see that tears even pour

through gold, my friend…you behold a lamentable example of that; so there, my dear…"
The cabby looked as if he felt sorry for Mr. Goliadkin.

"If you please, I'll wait, sir. Might you be waiting long, sir?"
"No, my friend, no; you know, I sort of…I'm not going to keep waiting, my dear. What do you think, my friend? I'll rely on you. I'm not going to keep waiting here…"
"Might you not be going anywhere at all?"

"No, my friend; no, but I'll thank you well, my dear…so there. What do I owe you, my dear?"
"The same as what we agreed on, sir, if you please. I waited a long time, sir; you wouldn't offend a man, sir."

"Well, here you are, my dear, here you are." Mr. Goliadkin gave the cabby a whole six silver roubles and, resolving seriously not to lose any more time, that is, to get away safe and sound, the more so as the affair was definitively resolved and the cabby had been dismissed, and therefore there was nothing more to wait for, he left the yard, went through the gates, turned left, and without looking back, breathless and rejoicing, broke into a run.

"Maybe it will still work out for the best," he thought, "and this way I've avoided trouble." Indeed, Mr. Goliadkin somehow suddenly felt an extraordinary lightness of heart. "Ah, if only it would work out for the best!" thought our hero, though hardly believing in his own words.

"So I'll sort of…" he thought. "No, I'd better do it like this, and the other way…Or maybe I'd better do it this way?…" Thus doubting and seeking for the key and the solution to his doubts, our hero ran as far as the Semyonovsky Bridge, and having reached the Semyonovsky Bridge, he decided sensibly and definitively to go back.

"That will be better," he thought. "I'd better look at it the other way, that is, like this. Here's what I'll do—I'll be an onlooker from outside, and that's the end of it; say, I'm an onlooker, an outsider, and only that;

and whatever happens there—it's not my fault. So there! That's how it's going to be now!"

Having decided to go back, our hero actually went back, the more readily in that, according to his happy thought, he had now established himself as a complete outsider. "And it's better this way: you're not answerable for anything, and you'll see what follows…so there!" That is, the calculation was most sure, and that was the end of it.

Calming himself, he again got into the peaceful shadow of his comforting and protective woodpile and began looking attentively at the windows. This time he did not have to watch and wait for long. Suddenly, in all the windows at once, a strange commotion manifested itself, figures flashed, curtains opened, whole groups of people crowded to Olsufy Ivanovich's windows, all of them searching and looking for something in the courtyard.

From the safety of his woodpile, our hero in his turn also began watching the general commotion with curiosity and craning his neck to right and left concernedly, at least as far as the short shadow of the woodpile that covered him would permit. Suddenly he was dumbstruck, gave a start, and almost sat down where he was from terror. He fancied—in short, he fully figured out—that they were not searching for something or somebody, they were quite simply searching for him, Mr. Goliadkin.

Everybody is looking his way, everybody is pointing his way. It was impossible to flee: they would see him…The dumbstruck Mr. Goliadkin pressed himself as close as he could to the woodpile, and only then did he notice that the treacherous shadow had betrayed him, that it did not cover all of him. Our hero would now have agreed with the greatest pleasure to crawl into some mouse hole between the logs and sit there peaceably, if only it were possible.

But it was decidedly impossible. In his agony he finally began to stare resolutely and directly at all the windows at once; that was better…And suddenly he burned with the uttermost shame. He was completely

noticed, they all noticed him at once, they all waved their hands at him, they all nodded their heads at him, they all called to him; now several vent panes clicked and opened; several voices at once shouted something to him…"I'm surprised these girls aren't thrashed starting from childhood," our hero murmured to himself, quite at a loss. Suddenly he (we know who) ran down the porch in nothing but his uniform, hatless, out of breath, bustling, mincing and hopping, perfidiously proclaiming his terrible joy at finally seeing Mr. Goliadkin.

"Yakov Petrovich," the man known for his uselessness chirped. "Yakov Petrovich, you here? You'll catch cold. It's cold here, Yakov Petrovich. Please come inside!"
"Yakov Petrovich! No, sir, I'm all right, Yakov Petrovich," our hero murmured in a humble voice.

"No, sir, impossible, Yakov Petrovich: they beg, they humbly beg, they're waiting for us. 'Make us happy,' they say, 'bring Yakov Petrovich here.' That's what, sir."
"No, Yakov Petrovich; you see, I'd do better…It would be better if I went home, Yakov Petrovich…" our hero said, roasting on a slow fire and freezing from shame and terror, all at the same time.

"No, no, no, no!" the repulsive man chirped. "No, no, no, not for anything! Come on!" he said resolutely and dragged Mr. Goliadkin Sr. towards the porch. Mr. Goliadkin Sr. did not want to go at all; but since everyone was watching, and it would have been stupid to resist and protest, our hero went—however, it is impossible to say he went, because he himself decidedly did not know what was happening to him. But never mind, he did it anyway!

Before our hero had time to straighten himself and come to his senses, he was in the reception room. He was pale, disheveled, in shreds; with dull eyes he looked around at the whole crowd—terrible! That room, all the rooms—all, all of them were filled to overflowing. There were multitudes of people, a whole orangery of ladies; all this clustered around Mr. Goliadkin, all this strained towards Mr. Goliadkin, all this bore Mr. Goliadkin on its shoulders, he noticed quite clearly that he

was being urged in a certain direction. “It’s not towards the door,” raced through Mr. Goliadkin’s head.

Indeed, he was not being urged towards the door, but straight to Olsufy Ivanovich’s easy chair. On one side of the chair stood Klara Olsufyevna, pale, languid, sad, though magnificently attired. Especially striking to Mr. Goliadkin’s eyes were the little white flowers in her black hair, which made an excellent effect. Vladimir Semyonovich kept himself on the other side of the chair, in a black tailcoat, with his new decoration in the buttonhole.

Mr. Goliadkin was being taken under the arms and, as was said above, straight to Olsufy Ivanovich—on one side Mr. Goliadkin Jr., who assumed an extremely well-behaved and well-intentioned air, which caused our hero no end of joy, while on the other side he was escorted by Andrei Filippovich with a most solemn look on his face. “What can this be?” thought Mr. Goliadkin.

But when he saw that he was being led to Olsufy Ivanovich, it was as if lightning suddenly flashed. The thought of the intercepted letter flew into his head…In inexhaustible agony, our hero stood before Olsufy Ivanovich’s chair. “What am I to do now?” he thought to himself. “Of course, it must all be on a bold footing, that is, with frankness, but not without nobility; say, thus and so, and so on.” But what our hero evidently feared did not happen. Olsufy Ivanovich seemed to receive Mr. Goliadkin very well and, though he did not offer him his hand, at least shook his gray-haired and respect-inspiring head as he looked at him—shook it with some sort of solemnly mournful but at the same time benevolent air.

So at least it seemed to Mr. Goliadkin. It even seemed to him that a tear glistened in Olsufy Ivanovich’s dim eyes; he looked up and saw that a little tear also seemed to be glistening on the eyelashes of Klara Olsufyevna, who was standing right there, and that there also seemed to be something similar in Vladimir Semyonovich’s eyes—that, finally, the calm and imperturbable dignity of Andrei Filippovich was tantamount to the general tearful sympathy—that, finally, the young

man who once greatly resembled an important councillor was now weeping bitterly, taking advantage of the present moment…Or maybe all this only seemed so to Mr. Goliadkin because he himself had turned quite tearful and clearly felt the hot tears running down his cold cheeks…Ina voice filled with sobbing, reconciled with people and fate, and feeling great love at the present moment not only for Olsufy Ivanovich, not only for all the guests taken together, but even for his pernicious twin, who now, evidently, was not pernicious at all and not even Mr. Goliadkin's twin, but a total outsider and an extremely amiable man in himself, our hero made as if to address Olsufy Ivanovich with a touching outpouring of his soul; but from the fullness of all that had accumulated in him, he was unable to explain anything at all, but only pointed silently with a highly eloquent gesture to his heart…Finally, Andrei Filippovich, probably wishing to spare the gray-haired old man's feelings, led Mr. Goliadkin a little aside and left him, seemingly, however, in a completely independent position.

Smiling, murmuring something under his nose, slightly perplexed, but in any case almost completely reconciled with people and fate, our hero began to make his way somewhere through the dense mass of guests.

They all gave way to him, they all looked at him with a sort of strange curiosity and a sort of inexplicable, mysterious sympathy. Our hero went into the next room—the same attention everywhere; he dimly heard how the whole crowd pressed after him, noticing his every step, discussing something highly engaging among themselves, wagging their heads, talking, argling, bargling, and whispering. Mr. Goliadkin would have liked very much to know what they were all argling and bargling and whispering about. Turning around, our hero noticed Mr. Goliadkin Jr. nearby.

Feeling a need to take his arm and draw him aside, Mr. Goliadkin insistently begged the other Yakov Petrovich to assist him in all his future undertakings and not to abandon him on critical occasions. Mr. Goliadkin Jr. nodded gravely and firmly pressed Mr. Goliadkin Sr.'s hand. The heart in our hero's breast throbbed from an excess of feelings.

However, he was suffocating, he felt hemmed in, hemmed in; all those eyes turned on him were somehow oppressing and crushing him…Mr. Goliadkin caught a fleeting glimpse of the councillor who wore a wig.

The councillor looked at him with a stern, searching gaze not at all softened by the general sympathy…Our hero decided to go straight to him, smile at him, and immediately have a talk with him; but the thing somehow did not work out. For a moment, Mr. Goliadkin almost became oblivious, lost both memory and feeling…Recovering, he noticed that he was turning about in a wide circle of surrounding guests.

Suddenly someone called Mr. Goliadkin from the next room; the call passed at once through the whole crowd. Everything became agitated, noisy, everybody rushed to the doors of the first room; our hero was almost carried out, and the hard-hearted councillor in the wig turned up right beside Mr. Goliadkin. Finally, he took him by the arm and sat him down next to himself and across from Olsufy Ivanovich's seat, though at a rather significant distance from him.

Everyone who had been in the rooms sat down in several rows around Mr. Goliadkin and Olsufy Ivanovich. Everything became hushed and subdued, everyone preserved a solemn silence, everyone kept glancing at Olsufy Ivanovich, obviously expecting something not entirely ordinary. Mr. Goliadkin noticed that the other Mr. Goliadkin and Andrei Filippovich had placed themselves next to Olsufy Ivanovich's chair and also directly across from the councillor.

The silence continued; they really were expecting something. "Just as in some family, when somebody's about to go on a long journey; all that remains now is to stand up and pray," thought our hero. Suddenly an extraordinary commotion arose and interrupted all of Mr. Goliadkin's reflections. Something long expected occurred. "He's coming, he's coming!" passed through the crowd. "Who's coming?" passed through Mr. Goliadkin's head, and he shuddered from some strange sensation.

“It’s time,” said the councillor, looking attentively at Andrei Filippovich. Andrei Filippovich, for his part, looked at Olsufy Ivanovich.

Olsufy Ivanovich nodded his head gravely and solemnly. “Let us stand,” said the councillor, getting Mr. Goliadkin to his feet. Everybody stood up. Then the councillor took Mr. Goliadkin Sr. by the arm, and Andrei Filippovich took Mr. Goliadkin Jr., and they both solemnly brought together the two completely identical men, in the midst of the crowd that surrounded them and was turned towards them in expectation. Our hero looked around in perplexity, but was immediately stopped and directed towards Mr. Goliadkin Jr., who held out his hand to him. “They want us to make peace,” thought our hero, and, deeply moved, he held out his hand to Mr. Goliadkin Jr.; then, then he held out his face to him.

The other Mr. Goliadkin did the same…Here it seemed to Mr. Goliadkin Sr. that his perfidious friend was smiling, that he winked fleetingly and slyly to the crowd around them, that there was something sinister in the face of the indecent Mr. Goliadkin Jr., that he even made a grimace at the moment of his Judas’s kiss…Mr. Goliadkin’s head rang, his eyes went dark; it seemed to him that a multitude, an endless string of completely identical Goliadkins was bursting noisily through all the doors of the room; but it was too late…A ringing, treacherous kiss resounded, and…

Here a quite unexpected circumstance occurred…The door of the reception room opened noisily, and on the threshold appeared a man the very sight of whom turned Mr. Goliadkin to ice. His feet became rooted to the ground. A cry died in his constricted breast. However, Mr. Goliadkin had known it all beforehand and had long anticipated something like it. The stranger gravely and solemnly approached Mr. Goliadkin…Mr. Goliadkin knew this figure very well.

He had seen it, had seen it very often, had seen it that same day…The stranger was a tall, solidly built man, in a black tailcoat, with an important cross on his neck, and endowed with bushy, very black side-whiskers; all he lacked to complete the resemblance was a cigar in his

mouth…Yet the stranger's gaze, as has already been said, froze Mr. Goliadkin with terror. With a grave and solemn mien, the fearsome man came up to the lamentable hero of our story…Our hero offered him his hand; the stranger took his hand and pulled him with him…Our hero looked around with a lost, mortified face…

"This, this is Krestyan Ivanovich Rutenspitz, doctor of medicine and surgery, your old acquaintance, Yakov Petrovich!" someone's disgusting voice chirped right in Mr. Goliadkin's ear. He turned: it was Mr. Goliadkin's twin, repulsive in the mean qualities of his soul.

An indecent, sinister joy shone in his face; with delight he rubbed his hands, with delight he turned his head around, with delight he minced among all and sundry; he seemed ready to begin dancing straightaway from delight; finally, he leaped forward, snatched a candle from one of the servants, and went ahead, lighting the way for Mr. Goliadkin and Krestyan Ivanovich. Mr. Goliadkin clearly heard how all that was in the reception room rushed after him, how they all pressed and jostled each other, and all together loudly began repeating behind Mr. Goliadkin: "Never mind; don't be afraid, Yakov Petrovich, it's just your old friend and acquaintance, Krestyan Ivanovich Rutenspitz…" Finally they went out to the brightly lit main stairway; on the stairway there was also a mass of people; the doors to the porch were noisily flung open, and Mr. Goliadkin found himself on the porch along with Krestyan Ivanovich.

At the entrance stood a carriage harnessed with four horses, which were snorting with impatience. The gleeful Mr. Goliadkin Jr. ran down the steps in three bounds and opened the carriage door himself. With an admonitory gesture, Krestyan Ivanovich invited Mr. Goliadkin to get in.

However, there was no need for an admonitory gesture; there were enough people to help him in…Sinking with terror, Mr. Goliadkin turned to look back: the entire brightly lit stairway was strung with people; curious eyes looked at him from everywhere; Olsufy Ivanovich himself presided from his easy chair on the upper landing, and watched what was happening with attention and strong concern. Everyone was

waiting. A murmur of impatience passed through the crowd when Mr. Goliadkin looked back.

“I hope there’s nothing here…nothing reprehensible…or that might be cause for severity…and the attention of everyone regarding my official relations?” our hero said, at a loss. Talk and noise arose around him; everyone wagged their heads in the negative. Tears gushed from Mr. Goliadkin’s eyes.
“In that case, I’m ready…I fully entrust…and hand over my fate to Krestyan Ivanovich…”

Mr. Goliadkin had only just said that he fully handed over his fate to Krestyan Ivanovich, when a terrible, deafening, joyful shout burst from everyone around him, and its sinister echo passed through the whole expectant crowd. Here Krestyan Ivanovich on the one side and Andrei Filippovich on the other took Mr. Goliadkin under the arms and began putting him into the carriage; his double, as was his mean custom, helped from behind.

The unfortunate Mr. Goliadkin Sr. cast a last glance at everyone and everything and, trembling like a kitten that has been doused with cold water—if the comparison be permitted—got into the carriage. Krestyan Ivanovich at once got in behind him. The carriage door slammed, the whip cracked over the horses, the horses tore the vehicle from its place…everything rushed after Mr. Goliadkin.

The piercing, furious shouts of all his enemies came rolling after him in the guise of a farewell. For a certain time faces still flashed around the carriage that was bearing Mr. Goliadkin away; but they gradually dropped behind, dropped behind, and finally disappeared completely. Mr. Goliadkin’s indecent twin held out longer than anyone else.

His hands in the pockets of his green uniform trousers, he ran along with a pleased look, skipping now on one side of the carriage, now on the other; sometimes, taking hold of the window frame and hanging on, he would thrust his head through the window and blow Mr.

Goliadkin little farewell kisses; but he, too, began to tire, appeared more and more rarely, and finally disappeared completely.

The heart in Mr. Goliadkin's breast ached dully; a hot stream of blood rushed to his head; he gasped for air, he wanted to unbutton himself, to bare his chest, to pour snow and cold water on it.

He fell, finally, into oblivion…When he came to, he saw that the horses were bearing him along some unfamiliar road. To right and left a forest blackened; it felt desolate and deserted. Suddenly he went dead: two fiery eyes gazed at him from the darkness, and those two eyes shone with sinister, infernal glee. This was not Krestyan Ivanovich! Who was it? Or was it him? Him! It was Krestyan Ivanovich, only not the former, but another Krestyan Ivanovich! This was a terrible Krestyan Ivanovich!…

"Krestyan Ivanovich, I…I seem to be all right, Krestyan Ivanovich," our hero began timidly and with trepidation, wishing to appease the terrible Krestyan Ivanovich at least somewhat with submissiveness and humility.

"You vill haf a gofernment apartment, mit firewood, mit licht, und mit serfices, vich you don't deserf," Krestyan Ivanovich's reply came sternly and terribly, like a verdict.
Our hero cried out and clutched his head. Alas! he had long foreseen it!

The End

Notes

The Double

1. Russian civil service ranks are referred to throughout The Double. The following is the table of fourteen ranks established by the emperor Peter the Great in 1722:

Chancellor
Actual Privy Councillor
Privy Councillor
Actual State Councillor
State Councillor
Collegiate Councillor
Court Councillor
Collegiate Assessor
Titular Councillor
Collegiate Secretary
Secretary of Naval Constructions
Government Secretary
Provincial Secretary
Collegiate Registrar

The rank of titular councillor was immortalized in Russian literature in the person of Akaky Akakievich Bashmachkin, hero of "The Overcoat," by Nikolai Gogol (1809–52). Dostoevsky's hero is his direct descendant.
2. Silver roubles and paper roubles (banknotes) circulated simultaneously in Russia at that time, the silver rouble being worth more than the paper.
3. Nevsky Prospect is the central thoroughfare of Petersburg; its mysterious qualities are celebrated in a story of the same name by Gogol.
4. See note 1 above.
5. The Gostiniy Dvor was, and still is, a large shopping arcade on Nevsky Prospect.
6. See note 1 above.
7. A reference to the fable "The Crow and the Fox" by I. A. Krylov (1768–1844): "The crow cawed with all her crow's gullet—/The cheese fell…" Krylov, one of the most beloved Russian poets, is a master of the poetic fable in the manner of La Fontaine.
8. See note 1 above.

9. Balshazzar's feast, described in Chapter 5 of the Old Testament book of Daniel, became the prototype of any sumptuous feast. The house of Clicquot (Veuve Clicquot Ponsardin) in Reims, founded in 1772, produces one of the finest champagnes. Eliseevs' and Miliutin's were actual shops on Nevsky Prospect (Eliseevs' is still flourishing). The "fatted calf " is found in Luke 15:23, the parable of the prodigal son: "And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry." For the table of ranks, see note 1 above.
10. Alexander Pushkin (1799–1837) is the greatest of Russian poets.
11. Demosthenes (384–322 b.c.) was an Athenian political leader, whose powerful oratory awakened the Greek national spirit in the conflict with Macedonia.
12. See note 1 above.
13. Anton Antonovich Setochkin will reappear in Dostoevsky's Notes from Underground (1864), where he is the anonymous hero's superior in the civil service.
14. Joseph, comte de Villèle (1773–1854), French statesman, was leader of the ultra-royalists under the Restoration (1814–30) and president of the Council of Ministers from 1821 to 1828. The laws passed under his leadership made him extremely unpopular.
15. The Story of the English Milord George and Frederike Louise, Margravine of Brandenburg, with the Appended Story of the Former Turkish Vizier Marzimiris, by Matvei Komarov, was first published in 1782; its ninth edition came out in 1839.
16. Goliadka is an endearing diminutive of goliada (probably cognate with goliy, "naked"), meaning a poor man, a beggar.
17. After the disastrous flood of 1824, the citizens of Petersburg were warned of the danger of flooding by the firing of a cannon from the Peter and Paul fortress.
18. See note 7 above. The line "And the coffer had no trick to it" is from the fable "The Coffer."
19. Field Marshal Alexander V. Suvorov (1729–1800), supreme commander of Russian forces under Catherine the Great, fought successfully against the Turks, put down the Polish uprising in 1794, and fought against the French revolutionary army in Italy until his defeat by Marshal Masséna in 1799. He was known for several eccentricities, one of which was crowing like a rooster.

20. Karl Pavlovich Briullov (1799–1852), leader of the Russian Romantic school of painters, finished his most famous painting, The Last Day of Pompeii, in Italy in 1833; in 1834 it was brought to Russia and exhibited at the Academy of Fine Arts in Petersburg, where it met with great public admiration and critical acclaim.
21. A line from the eighteenth-century Russian poet A. P. Sumarokov (1717–77) in the prologue "New Laurels," written for a ballet performed on the occasion of Catherine the Great's birthday in 1759.
22. The Northern Bee was a reactionary newspaper edited by Faddey Bulgarin (1789–1859) and Nikolai Grech (1787–1867). Bulgarin was also a bad novelist and a police spy who specialized in denouncing literary figures, Pushkin among them.
23. The pen name of O. I. Senkovsky (1800–58), critic and writer, publisher of the collection "Library for Reading."
24. Grigory ("Grishka") Otrepyev, known as "the False Dmitri," was a defrocked monk who claimed the Russian throne by pretending to be the lawful heir, the prince Dmitri, who had been murdered in childhood. He reigned for less than a year.
25. The words about the serpent are a distorted quotation from the opening monologue of the little tragedy Mozart and Salieri, by Alexander Pushkin: "Who will say the proud Salieri was ever…/A crushed serpent, still alive, / Impotently biting the sand and dust…"
26. In Petersburg, owing to its northern latitude, the sun sets in mid-afternoon during the winter.
27. The Adventures of Faublas, a novel by the French writer and Girondist Louvet de Couvrai (1760–97), was translated into Russian in 1792–6.
28. A reference to Pushkin's comic poem Count Nulin, in which the heroine is said to have been "brought up / Not in the customs of our forefathers, / But in a noble girls' boarding school / By some émigrée Falbala."
29. The name Basavriuk (Dostoevsky added the second "s") belongs to the satanic villain in Gogol's first published story, "St. John's Eve."
30. Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–78), one of the most influential writers of the French Enlightenment, favored natural settings and emotions.