

AI-Generated Graded Readers

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About This Edition

This book is a simplified English adaptation created for extensive reading practice.

The text was generated using ChatGPT and prepared for intermediate English learners as part of an educational project.

Target reading level: CEFR A2-B1

This edition aims to support fluency development through accessible vocabulary, expanded narration, and improved readability while preserving the original story structure.

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Lev Nikolaevich Tolstoy, *Anna Karenina* (Simplified Edition, Adapted and Simplified by ChatGPT)

Part 1

Happy families are all alike; every unhappy family is unhappy in its own way.

Everything was in confusion in the Oblonskys' house. Three days earlier, Dolly had learned that her husband had been unfaithful to her with a French governess who had once lived under their own roof. Since that moment, the house had lost its shape, its order, and even its ordinary sounds. Dolly stayed in her room. Stiva had slept in his study. The children ran from room to room without proper care. The servants were upset, offended, or ready to leave. It seemed that every person in the house knew that something shameful had happened.

Prince Stepan Arkadyevitch Oblonsky, whom everyone called Stiva, woke up at eight o'clock on the leather sofa in his study. For a few seconds he was smiling over the pleasant remains of a foolish dream. Then he reached, by habit, toward the place where his dressing gown should have been hanging in his wife's room. His hand stopped in the air. At once he remembered where he was, and why.

"Ah," he said softly. "Yes. Of course."

He sat up and pressed his hands over his face. The whole scene came back to him. He saw Dolly again with the letter in her hand. He heard her voice asking, "What is this?" He remembered, too, the worst part of it. It was not only the affair itself. It was the stupid smile that had appeared on his face when she found him out. He had not meant to smile. It had simply happened. But that smile had ruined everything.

"That smile destroyed me," he thought. "What is to be done now?"

He was not a man who liked to lie to himself. He knew that he was guilty. Yet even now he did not truly repent in the simple, clean way that good people in books repent. He was sorry for Dolly, sorry for the children, sorry for himself, and sorry that he had not hidden his sin better. He had long believed, without ever thinking it through clearly, that a wife like Dolly would suffer, be angry, and then

endure. Instead, everything had broken open at once.

“Awful,” he whispered. “Truly awful.”

Still, life pushed forward. He got up, put on his dressing gown, and rang for his servant. Matvey entered with clothes, boots, and a telegram. He was a faithful old servant, and more than that, almost a silent friend. One glance passed between them. Each understood the other.

“There are papers from the office,” Matvey said. Then, after a pause, he added with care, “And a telegram.”

Stiva tore it open. As he read it, his face brightened for the first time that morning.

“My sister Anna is coming tomorrow,” he said.

“Thank God,” Matvey answered at once.

They both knew what that meant. Anna Arkadyevna was intelligent, warm, and calm. If anyone could speak to Dolly and soften her heart, perhaps it was Anna.

“Shall the upstairs room be made ready?” Matvey asked.

“Ask Darya Alexandrovna,” Stiva said.

A little later Matvey returned with Dolly’s answer.

“Darya Alexandrovna says she is leaving. Let him do as he likes.”

Stiva lowered his head. But even then Matvey said, in his quiet, certain way, “She will come round, sir.”

Then the old nurse came in and spoke even more plainly.

“You must ask forgiveness again,” she told him. “She is suffering. The whole house is upside down. Think of the children.”

Stiva blushed. He hated scenes, hated pain, hated ugly truth when it had to be faced directly. Yet he knew she was right.

He dressed carefully, as always. Even in misery he remained clean, handsome, graceful, and easy in his body. He drank coffee, read his paper, and tried for a little while to lose himself in ordinary things. He read politics he only half believed, financial news he barely cared about, and social notes that usually amused him. Nothing helped. Then his little daughter Tanya and his son Grisha came in. Tanya ran straight to him, laughing and trusting. Grisha stood near, less open, less sure.

“How is mamma?” he asked Tanya.

The girl looked at him and blushed. She was young, but she understood enough. Her father saw her shame and felt ashamed himself.

“She is up,” Tanya said.

He gave the children sweets and sent them away. Then he stood still for some seconds. The house was full of pain, and yet breakfast had been eaten, children dressed, servants called, carriages ordered. Life, even miserable life, did not stop.

At last he went to Dolly.

She stood in her room among scattered clothes and half-packed things. She had told herself again and again that she must leave him. Yet she had not left. The children tied her to the house. Habit tied her to him. Love, wounded and humiliated, still tied her to him most of all.

When he entered, she turned and looked at him. He said her name in a low voice.

“Dolly.”

She answered at once, hard and fast.

“What do you want?”

“Anna is coming,” he said. “She will be here today.”

“What is that to me? I cannot see her.”

“But you must, Dolly—”

“Go away! Go away! Go away!”

Her cry seemed to tear through the room. Stiva had thought himself prepared, but the sight of her suffering face struck him harder than he expected. His eyes filled with tears.

“My God, what have I done?” he said. “Dolly, forgive me.”

She looked at him with pain and disgust.

“Forgive you?”

“Think of our life together,” he said. “Can nine years mean nothing because of one moment—”

“One moment of passion?” she repeated.

That phrase hurt her like a blow. He heard it at once. It sounded cheap, ugly,

and selfish, yet he had already said it.

“Go out,” she cried. “Do not speak to me of your passion and your filth.”

Then he wept openly and begged her to think of the children.

“They are not guilty,” he said. “Punish me if you like. I deserve it. But forgive me.”

Dolly sat down. Her face shook. Her breath came heavily.

“You play with the children,” she said. “But I think of them. I know what this will mean for them. Tell me, can we live together after this? Can we? The father of my children has been the lover of their governess.”

“What could I do?” he said helplessly.

“You are hateful to me,” she answered. “Disgusting. A stranger. Yes, a complete stranger.”

That word struck both of them. She believed it and did not believe it. He feared it and still hoped against it.

Just then a child cried in the next room. Dolly listened. Her face changed at once. She turned toward the door.

Stiva saw that change and thought, “She loves the children. How can she truly hate me if she loves what is mine?” But it was a foolish hope.

“One word more,” he said, following her.

She turned with sudden fury.

“If you come near me, I will call the servants and the children. Let everyone know what kind of man you are. I am going away. Stay here with your mistress.”

She left, slamming the door behind her.

He stood alone for a little while, then went out to his office. There he became, as always, cheerful, easy, and successful. He joked with clerks, listened to reports, and carried out his duties with the same smooth skill that made everyone like him. His whole public life was pleasant and light. It was exactly this lightness that made his home disaster seem even darker.

Near the end of the sitting, a visitor appeared at the door. He was broad-shouldered, bearded, awkward in the city, and full of restless force.

“Levin!” cried Stiva warmly. “At last!”

Konstantin Levin had just come from the country. He looked shy, strong, serious, and deeply uncomfortable among the officials, polished cuffs, and easy smiles of city life. He and Stiva had been friends since youth, but they were men of very different kinds. Stiva accepted the world as it was and moved pleasantly through it. Levin wanted things to be true, whole, and clean, and because of that he was often angry.

Stiva drew him into his room. They spoke first of public work, which Levin dismissed almost with contempt. Then, after several efforts, blushing like a boy, Levin finally asked the question that had brought him to Moscow.

“What are the Shtcherbatskys doing?” he asked. “Everything as before?”

Stiva smiled at once. He knew what was hidden behind the question. Levin had not come to Moscow for business. He had come because of Kitty.

“They are all well,” Stiva said. “If you want to see them, go to the Zoological Gardens this afternoon. Kitty is sure to be there. She skates.”

Levin’s whole face changed. He tried to remain calm, but hope had already entered him.

“Very well,” he said. “I will go.”

And so, in one house, a marriage was breaking under the weight of betrayal and pain. In another part of Moscow, another man was moving toward love with fear, honesty, and expectation. Anna had not yet arrived, but her coming was already drawing these lives toward one another.

Part 2

Levin left the government building with a feeling that was half joy and half fear. The cold Moscow air struck his face as he stepped outside. Sleighs slid past in the streets. Bells rang lightly from the horses’ collars. The city was alive with winter movement, yet to Levin it seemed that everything around him existed only as a background to one thought.

“Kitty,” he said softly to himself.

He had known her since she was a child. When he had last seen her, she had

been almost a girl. Now she was eighteen. In his imagination she had grown into something bright and pure, something that gave meaning to his own life. Yet he also feared what he would find.

“What if she does not care for me?” he thought.

He knew he was not a charming man in society. He was awkward in drawing rooms. His clothes were never quite right. He did not understand the polite language of fashionable people. But he believed in honesty. If he loved someone, he could not hide it.

“I will say everything,” he told himself. “I cannot live otherwise.”

He walked slowly through the streets until it was time to go to the skating ground in the Zoological Gardens. When he arrived, he heard laughter and music. Sleights stood near the entrance. Elegant ladies and officers were stepping out and walking toward the ice.

Levin entered the garden.

The skating pond lay open and shining in the winter light. Young people moved across the ice with easy grace. Some skated quickly in circles. Others moved more slowly in pairs. From time to time someone laughed as a skater nearly fell.

Levin stood still and searched the ice.

Then he saw her.

Kitty was skating near the center of the pond. Her cheeks were red from the cold. Her eyes were bright. She moved lightly and confidently, as if the ice belonged to her.

For a moment Levin could not move.

“She is even better than I remembered,” he thought.

Just then Kitty noticed him standing at the edge of the pond. She stopped, turned, and skated toward him. Her whole face filled with friendly pleasure.

“How glad I am that you have come!” she said.

Her voice was warm and simple, without the smallest trace of pride. At that moment Levin felt as if his whole life had suddenly opened.

“Have you been here long?” she asked.

“No,” he said. “I arrived only today.”

“Will you skate?”

“I do not know how very well.”

“You skate very well,” she said quickly. “I remember.”

Levin laughed a little awkwardly and allowed himself to be led onto the ice.

At first he moved stiffly. But soon the old skill returned. He began to glide more easily. Kitty skated beside him, sometimes holding his arm lightly for balance.

Several people watched them with interest. One of them was Count Vronsky.

Vronsky stood near the edge of the pond, speaking with Kitty’s mother. He was a handsome young officer, confident and calm. Everything about him seemed smooth and certain. His uniform fit him perfectly. His movements were graceful without effort.

He looked toward Kitty and Levin skating together.

“Who is that gentleman?” he asked politely.

“That is Konstantin Levin,” the princess answered. “An old friend of the family.”

Vronsky nodded. He watched the pair for a moment longer.

Meanwhile Levin was speaking eagerly.

“I like Moscow less every year,” he said. “Everything here seems artificial. In the country life is simpler.”

Kitty listened with interest. She enjoyed his seriousness, even when she did not completely agree with him.

“But people must live together,” she said. “Cities bring people together.”

“Yes,” Levin answered. “But often they also hide the truth.”

Kitty smiled.

“You are always looking for truth.”

“Yes,” he said quietly.

They skated another circle together. Levin felt that he must speak soon or lose courage entirely.

“I will come to see you this evening,” he said.

Kitty looked at him for a moment, then nodded.

“Yes. Please come.”

When they left the ice, Kitty went to speak with her mother. Levin bowed and

stepped aside.

Soon after that he left the garden. His heart beat strongly. He walked through the snowy streets with long, quick steps.

“This evening,” he thought. “Everything will be decided this evening.”

But in the Shtcherbatsky house things were not so simple.

The princess had noticed something that Levin had not. She had seen the way Vronsky watched Kitty. She had seen Kitty’s excitement when he entered the room. The princess liked Vronsky. He was rich, charming, and well connected. Levin, in comparison, seemed rough and uncertain.

“Levin is a good man,” she told herself. “But Kitty deserves something more brilliant.”

That evening the drawing room filled with visitors.

Levin arrived early. He sat quietly, speaking little, watching Kitty whenever he could. Every movement she made seemed important to him.

Vronsky arrived later.

At once the room grew livelier. Several young officers greeted him warmly. The princess welcomed him with special kindness. Kitty’s face brightened.

Levin noticed everything.

“Of course,” he thought bitterly. “Why should she choose me?”

Still he remained.

When at last the moment came and Kitty stood alone near the window, Levin approached her. His heart pounded so loudly that he could hardly hear his own voice.

“I wished to speak with you,” he said.

Kitty looked at him. She understood immediately what was coming. A deep color rose in her face.

“Yes?” she said softly.

Levin struggled for words. For a few seconds he could not speak at all.

Then suddenly everything came out.

“I came to Moscow for this,” he said. “I came to ask you to be my wife.”

The words were simple. But for Levin they seemed enormous. Once they were

spoken, he felt that nothing in his life could ever be the same again.

Kitty did not answer at once.

For one moment she felt pure joy. She saw Levin's honesty, his devotion, his strong and faithful nature. She knew that his love was real.

But almost at once another image rose in her mind.

She saw Vronsky.

She believed he loved her. She believed that he would soon ask her to marry him.

And because of that belief, she could not answer Levin as he hoped.

She lowered her eyes and spoke quickly.

"That cannot be," she said. "Forgive me."

The room seemed to grow silent around them.

Levin stood still.

He did not look at her again.

"Of course," he said quietly. "That is as it should be."

Then he turned and walked away.

Only a minute earlier Kitty had felt close to him, connected to him. Now he seemed distant, almost a stranger.

She watched him go with a troubled heart.

Across the room Vronsky was speaking easily with another guest, unaware that a life had just changed forever.

Part 3

When Levin left the Shtcherbatsky house that evening, the winter air struck him like a cold wave. He walked quickly through the dark streets without seeing the houses around him. The lamps shone on the snow. Sleighs passed. Voices rose and faded. But Levin heard almost nothing.

"It is finished," he thought.

Only a few hours earlier he had believed that his whole future stood before him. Now that future had disappeared as suddenly as a door closing.

“Of course she refused,” he told himself. “Why would she accept me?”

Yet he knew that this was not the true reason for his pain. Kitty had not refused him with cruelty. Her voice had been gentle, almost sad. That kindness hurt him more than anger would have.

“She does not love me,” he said to himself again.

Levin returned to his hotel. The room seemed small and unpleasant. He walked up and down for a long time.

“I must leave Moscow tomorrow,” he decided.

Life in the city suddenly seemed empty and foolish to him. Only the country, with its fields and work and simple people, felt real.

Meanwhile, in the Shtcherbatsky house, Kitty sat quietly after Levin’s departure. Her mother noticed that she had grown pale.

“You are tired,” the princess said. “You should rest.”

Kitty nodded, but she did not move.

In her heart two feelings struggled against each other. She admired Levin’s honesty and strength. Yet she believed that Count Vronsky loved her. His attention had been clear for weeks. Everyone seemed to expect that he would soon ask for her hand.

“He will speak soon,” she told herself.

When Vronsky approached her later that evening, she felt a deep happiness. He spoke to her lightly about skating, about friends, about small events of society. Yet every word seemed to carry some hidden promise.

Kitty watched his face with quiet excitement.

But Vronsky himself did not feel what Kitty imagined.

He liked her. He admired her beauty and freshness. She pleased him. Yet he had not thought seriously about marriage. For him life was easy and bright. One event followed another, and he accepted them as they came.

After leaving the Shtcherbatsky house, he drove to the railway station.

His mother, the Countess Vronskaya, was arriving from Petersburg that night.

The station was full of noise and movement. Porters hurried across the platform carrying luggage. Steam rose from the engines. Lamps glowed in the cold air.

Vronsky waited near the train.

When it finally arrived, passengers began to step down. Among them was a tall woman dressed in black. Her movements were calm and graceful. Her dark eyes shone with quiet intelligence.

This was Anna Arkadyevna Karenina.

She had traveled from Petersburg to Moscow to help her brother Stiva and his wife Dolly. Though she was tired from the journey, her face remained full of life and warmth.

Vronsky saw her at the same moment that she noticed him.

He stepped forward quickly.

“Allow me to introduce myself,” he said. “I am Count Vronsky. My mother is on the train.”

Anna smiled kindly.

“Of course,” she said. “I know your name.”

At that moment Stiva Oblonsky hurried toward them.

“Anna!” he cried happily.

She turned and embraced him warmly.

“How glad I am to see you,” she said.

“And I you,” Stiva answered. “You cannot imagine how much we need you.”

Anna looked at him with gentle understanding.

“Tell me everything,” she said.

While they spoke, Vronsky watched Anna carefully.

There was nothing extraordinary about her beauty in the ordinary sense. She was not very tall. Her features were simple. Yet something in her expression drew attention immediately. Her eyes shone with intelligence and warmth. Her smile seemed both joyful and thoughtful.

Vronsky felt an unexpected interest.

“Who is she?” he thought.

Just then a sudden disturbance spread along the platform. A railway worker had slipped under the train while it was moving. People rushed toward the place. Voices rose in alarm.

Vronsky and Stiva went to see what had happened.

When they returned, their faces were serious.

“A man has been killed,” Stiva said quietly.

Anna shuddered.

“How terrible,” she said.

For a moment she stood silent. Then she turned toward Vronsky.

“This seems like a bad sign,” she said softly.

Vronsky smiled lightly.

“I hope not,” he answered.

But the strange accident remained in Anna’s thoughts.

Soon afterward they left the station.

As the sleigh carried them through the snowy streets of Moscow, Anna asked her brother about his home.

Stiva sighed.

“Everything is broken,” he said. “Dolly will not forgive me.”

Anna listened carefully. She did not judge him immediately. Instead she tried to understand.

“You must be patient,” she said at last. “Dolly is suffering. I will speak with her.”

Her voice was calm and confident.

In that moment Stiva felt hope for the first time in several days.

“If anyone can save my marriage,” he thought, “it is Anna.”

Yet at the same time another story was beginning.

Count Vronsky rode home through the cold night thinking about the woman he had just met.

He remembered her eyes.

“There is something remarkable about her,” he said to himself.

He did not yet know how deeply his life would soon become tied to hers.

Nor did Anna know that the meeting on the snowy railway platform had already changed the direction of her fate.

Part 4

The next morning Anna went to her brother's house.

The Oblonsky home was still full of confusion. Servants walked quietly through the halls, speaking in low voices. The children moved about without their usual cheerful noise. Everyone in the house knew that something was wrong.

Anna removed her traveling cloak and asked softly, "Where is Dolly?"

"In her room," Stiva answered uneasily. "She will not see me."

Anna looked at him with serious kindness.

"Wait here," she said. "Let me go to her first."

Dolly had spent the whole night without sleep. Her eyes were red. Letters, clothes, and children's things lay scattered around the room. She had tried again and again to imagine leaving the house, yet every thought ended with the same difficulty.

"What will happen to the children?" she asked herself.

When the door opened and Anna entered, Dolly stood up suddenly. For a moment she tried to control her tears, but the sight of Anna broke the last of her strength.

"Anna!" she cried.

They embraced.

For several minutes Dolly could not speak. She wept quietly while Anna held her and stroked her hair.

At last Dolly began to tell the story. She showed Anna the letter that had revealed Stiva's betrayal. Her voice trembled with humiliation.

"She lived in this house," Dolly said. "She taught my children. And he—"

Her voice stopped.

Anna listened without interrupting. Her face showed deep sympathy, but she did not rush to judge.

When Dolly finished, Anna spoke gently.

"You have suffered terribly," she said. "No one could deny that."

Dolly looked at her with desperate eyes.

“Then you understand why I cannot forgive him?”

Anna hesitated.

“I understand your pain,” she answered. “But think also of your life together. Think of the children.”

Dolly turned away bitterly.

“He does not think of them.”

“Perhaps he does not think clearly,” Anna said. “But I believe he loves them. And he loves you too, in his way.”

Dolly shook her head.

“Love?” she repeated.

Anna took her hand.

“Forgiveness is not easy,” she said. “But sometimes it is the only path that allows life to continue.”

They spoke for a long time.

Dolly argued that everything had been destroyed. Anna answered that not everything was lost. She reminded Dolly of the years they had lived together, the children they had raised, the ordinary happiness that had filled their home.

Gradually Dolly’s anger began to soften.

She was not ready to forgive completely. But she began to see that leaving might not bring peace either.

When Anna left the room later that morning, Stiva looked at her anxiously.

“Well?” he asked.

Anna smiled faintly.

“She will speak with you.”

Stiva seized her hands with gratitude.

“You are an angel,” he said.

Anna laughed lightly.

“No,” she answered. “Only your sister.”

That evening the Shtcherbatsky family gave a ball.

Kitty had been looking forward to this evening for many weeks. She believed that something important would happen there.

“He will speak tonight,” she thought again and again.

The ballroom glittered with light. Music filled the air. Ladies in bright dresses moved through the hall like flowers. Officers stood together in groups, laughing and talking.

Kitty danced again and again.

The evening seemed like a beautiful dream full of music, color, and movement. She was happy simply to be there.

Anna arrived later.

When Kitty saw her enter the ballroom, she admired her immediately. Anna wore a simple black dress that made her face appear even brighter. There was nothing extravagant about her appearance, yet people turned to look at her as she passed.

Kitty greeted her warmly.

“I am so glad you came,” she said.

Anna smiled with friendly affection.

“I promised your brother I would not miss it.”

Soon the dancing began again.

Kitty danced several times with Vronsky. Each time she felt more certain that he cared for her. His attention was gentle and respectful.

Yet something else was happening in the room.

During one dance Vronsky asked Anna to be his partner.

Kitty watched them.

At first she felt only curiosity. But as the dance continued, a strange feeling began to grow in her heart.

Anna moved with quiet grace. Her eyes shone with excitement. Her whole face seemed alive with pleasure.

“Whom is she looking at?” Kitty wondered.

She studied Anna more carefully.

It seemed that Anna was intoxicated by admiration. Yet this admiration did not come from everyone equally. It came from one person.

Kitty followed Anna’s gaze.

She looked toward Vronsky.

At that moment Vronsky spoke to Anna. His head bent slightly toward her. His expression showed complete devotion.

Kitty suddenly understood.

“It is him,” she thought with horror.

Again and again during the dance she saw the same thing. Whenever Vronsky spoke to Anna, a bright light appeared in Anna’s eyes. Whenever Anna answered him, his face grew serious and respectful, almost humble.

It was the expression of a man who had discovered something powerful and unexpected.

Kitty felt the music fading around her.

The dreamlike beauty of the evening disappeared.

She finished the dance, but she hardly knew how her feet moved.

Across the room Anna and Vronsky continued speaking quietly.

Neither of them yet realized how clearly their feelings were visible.

But Kitty saw everything.

And in that moment she understood that the happiness she had imagined was already lost.

Part 5

The ball ended late that night, but for Kitty the evening had already lost its brightness long before the final dance. The music still played, the lights still shone, and people continued to laugh and move across the floor. Yet for her everything felt distant and unreal.

She stood quietly near the wall and watched the dancers.

Again and again she saw Anna and Vronsky speaking together. Sometimes they danced. Sometimes they stood close, almost without words. The expressions on their faces were enough.

Kitty felt a tight pressure in her chest.

“I must be mistaken,” she told herself.

But each time she looked again, the same truth appeared before her eyes.

At last the final quadrille began.

Kitty had already promised this dance to a dull young officer whom she could not refuse without causing embarrassment. She stood opposite another couple as the figures of the dance began.

Then suddenly she realized who stood across from her.

It was Anna and Vronsky.

Until that moment Kitty had been separated from Anna during most of the evening. Now she saw her clearly again.

What she saw shocked her.

On Anna's face Kitty recognized an expression she knew very well—the expression of a woman who feels the excitement of success and admiration. But there was something more.

Anna seemed intoxicated.

Kitty felt that Anna had drunk a sweet wine made of praise and attention. She seemed to glow with it.

“But from whom?” Kitty wondered.

She watched carefully.

“Is it from everyone?” she asked herself. “Or from one person?”

The answer appeared slowly, painfully.

Every time Vronsky spoke, Anna's eyes brightened. A joyful smile touched her lips. She seemed to try to hide that joy, but she could not.

And what of Vronsky?

Kitty looked at him.

She felt a sudden shock of understanding.

On his face she saw the same expression that shone in Anna's. His head bent slightly whenever he spoke to her, as if he were ready to kneel at her feet. His eyes held a mixture of devotion and fear.

It seemed as if his gaze said silently, “Forgive me if I offend you. I only wish to save myself.”

Kitty had never seen such an expression on his face before.

In that moment the truth became impossible to deny.

Vronsky loved Anna.

The dance continued around them, but Kitty felt as if the ground beneath her feet had disappeared. She completed the movements of the quadrille almost without knowing what she was doing.

When the dance ended, she left the ballroom quickly.

Outside the air was cold and quiet.

Her mother soon joined her in the carriage.

“You are pale,” the princess said.

Kitty answered only, “I am tired.”

But in her heart she knew that something deeper had been wounded.

Meanwhile Anna returned home with her brother.

Stiva was cheerful again. Dolly had spoken with him. Though she had not forgiven him completely, she had agreed to remain in the house. Peace, at least for the moment, had returned.

“You have saved us,” Stiva said warmly.

Anna smiled.

“I only helped you speak honestly,” she replied.

Yet even while she spoke these words, Anna felt something new moving quietly within her mind.

She remembered the evening again.

She remembered Vronsky’s eyes.

When she closed her own eyes for a moment, she saw the ballroom once more. The music, the lights, the movement—and the expression on Vronsky’s face when he spoke to her.

“No,” she said softly to herself. “That must not happen.”

She was a married woman. She loved her son deeply. Her husband, Alexey Alexandrovitch Karenin, was an important man in Petersburg society. Her life was already complete.

Yet the memory returned again and again.

“Why did I feel such happiness while dancing?” she asked herself.

She could not answer.

The next day she prepared to return to Petersburg.

Vronsky also came to the station.

He told himself that he was only accompanying his mother, who was leaving on the same train. But he knew that this was not the true reason.

Anna stood beside the carriage door speaking with Stiva when she noticed him.

She greeted him calmly.

“You are traveling too?” she asked.

“Yes,” he said. “To Petersburg.”

The answer surprised her.

“Are you returning home?”

“No,” he said quietly. “I am traveling because you are traveling.”

Anna looked at him sharply.

For a moment neither spoke.

Then she said firmly, “You should not say such things.”

But the expression in her eyes contradicted her words.

The train whistle sounded.

Passengers began to enter their compartments.

Anna stepped into the carriage.

As the train slowly began to move, Vronsky stood on the platform watching her.

In that moment both of them understood that their lives had begun to move in a new direction—one that neither of them yet fully understood, and one that neither could easily escape.

Part 6

When Levin left Moscow the next morning, the sky was gray and heavy with snow. The train carried him away from the city toward the wide open fields of the countryside. As the distance between himself and Moscow grew, the painful memory of Kitty’s refusal became clearer rather than weaker.

“It is finished,” he repeated again and again.

Yet Levin was not a man who could remain long in self-pity. His nature always pushed him toward action. When he arrived at his estate in the country, work immediately demanded his attention.

The farm was large and complicated. Fields stretched far across the land. Workers moved slowly through the snow. Horses pulled sledges full of wood and grain. The life of the estate continued without concern for the troubles of one man's heart.

Levin walked through the barns and fields with the farm manager. They spoke about crops, tools, and the coming spring work.

"We must prepare the fields earlier this year," Levin said.

"Yes, sir," the manager answered. "But the peasants prefer the old methods."

Levin frowned.

This was a problem that troubled him constantly. He believed that farming in Russia could improve greatly. New methods, better tools, and careful planning could produce more food and better lives for the peasants.

Yet the peasants themselves often resisted these changes.

"They do not trust us," Levin thought.

One day he went to speak directly with several peasants who were repairing a fence.

"Why do you not follow the new system?" he asked them.

The men listened respectfully but answered simply.

"The old way works," one of them said. "Our fathers did it this way."

Levin argued patiently, explaining how the new methods could improve their work. The peasants nodded politely but remained uncertain.

As Levin walked away he felt the same frustration that often filled him after such conversations.

"They do not understand me," he thought.

Yet he also knew that the problem might not lie only with the peasants.

"Perhaps I do not understand them," he admitted.

These thoughts filled his days.

Sometimes he worked in the fields beside the peasants themselves. He cut grass,

lifted wood, and walked long distances through the land he loved. Physical work calmed his mind.

Still, the memory of Kitty returned unexpectedly.

A quiet evening, a familiar path through the trees, or the sound of music from a distant house could suddenly remind him of Moscow.

“Why did I believe she could love me?” he asked himself.

At such moments he felt ashamed of his hope.

Meanwhile life in Petersburg continued for Anna.

When she returned home, her husband Karenin greeted her politely. His manner was always calm and correct. Nothing in his expression showed strong feeling.

“I hope your journey was comfortable,” he said.

“Very comfortable,” Anna answered.

Their conversation moved easily through ordinary topics. They spoke about mutual acquaintances, about politics, and about the health of their son, Seryozha.

Karenin loved his son in a quiet, distant way. His duties in government occupied most of his time. Order and reputation were extremely important to him.

Anna watched him carefully.

She respected his intelligence and his discipline. Yet sometimes she felt that a wall existed between them.

“He lives entirely in his work,” she thought.

Later that evening she sat alone with Seryozha.

The boy climbed into her arms and wrapped his small hands around her neck.

“Mama,” he said happily.

Anna held him tightly.

“My dear boy,” she whispered.

At that moment she felt peaceful again. Whatever confusion had entered her mind during the journey seemed to disappear when she was with her child.

Yet another thought soon returned.

She remembered the station.

She remembered Vronsky’s words: *I am traveling because you are traveling.*

Anna stood and walked slowly across the room.

“This must end,” she said quietly.

She believed that once she returned to her ordinary life, the strange feeling would fade.

But a few days later she attended a small gathering in Petersburg society.

As she entered the room, she heard someone behind her.

“Anna Arkadyevna.”

She turned.

Vronsky stood there.

For a moment neither of them spoke.

Then Anna said calmly, “You are in Petersburg after all.”

“Yes,” he answered.

His voice was quiet but steady.

Anna felt her heart beat faster.

She tried to speak lightly.

“Your mother must be pleased.”

“My mother is pleased with many things,” he said. “But I am pleased only with one.”

Anna lowered her eyes.

“You must not speak this way,” she said.

Vronsky stepped closer.

“You know what I feel,” he said. “And you know that I cannot pretend otherwise.”

Anna forced herself to look at him.

“Then you must pretend,” she answered. “That is the only honorable choice.”

Vronsky did not move.

“I cannot,” he said simply.

Their conversation lasted only a few minutes, yet when Anna returned home that night she understood that something dangerous had begun.

She sat beside her sleeping son and watched his quiet face.

“I must protect this life,” she told herself.

But somewhere in her heart she knew that the struggle had only just begun.

Part 7

Life in Petersburg continued outwardly as it always had.

Anna visited friends, received guests, and attended small social gatherings. Her husband worked long hours in his government office and returned home each evening with the same calm and careful manner. Nothing in their household appeared unusual to the outside world.

Yet Anna herself felt that everything had changed.

Wherever she went, she was aware of Vronsky.

Sometimes he appeared at the same gatherings. Sometimes she heard his name spoken in conversation. Sometimes she simply remembered his voice.

Each time she felt the same mixture of fear and excitement.

One afternoon she attended a reception at the house of Princess Betsy Tverskaya. Betsy was a fashionable woman who enjoyed gathering interesting people around her. Her drawing room was always filled with conversation and light laughter.

When Anna entered, Betsy greeted her warmly.

“You have been hiding yourself,” Betsy said. “We hardly see you anymore.”

Anna smiled politely.

“I have been busy at home.”

Betsy laughed softly.

“No one should hide at home in winter. It is the season for society.”

As they spoke, Anna suddenly felt someone’s presence behind her.

She turned.

Vronsky stood there.

He bowed.

“Anna Arkadyevna.”

She answered calmly, though her heart beat quickly.

“Count Vronsky.”

Betsy watched them both with quiet interest. She was quick to notice small

things. The tone of a voice, the movement of a glance—these details told her stories about people.

“You two have already met in Moscow,” she said lightly.

“Yes,” Anna answered.

The conversation moved to other topics, but the awareness between Anna and Vronsky did not disappear.

Later that evening, when most guests had left, Anna found herself standing near a window. The room had grown quieter.

Vronsky approached her.

For a moment neither spoke.

Then he said, in a low voice, “Why do you try to avoid me?”

Anna did not look at him.

“Because I must.”

“But why?” he asked.

She turned toward him suddenly.

“Because what you say is wrong.”

Vronsky’s expression remained serious.

“I say only the truth.”

Anna felt a sudden movement of emotion that she struggled to control.

“The truth?” she repeated. “You speak as if life were simple. It is not simple.”

Vronsky answered quietly, “For me it is simple. My life now has only one meaning.”

Anna knew what he meant before he said it.

“You,” he continued.

The word seemed to fill the silent room.

Anna looked at him with troubled eyes.

“You must not say such things,” she whispered.

“But it is true.”

She turned away.

“Even if it were true, it would still be wrong.”

Vronsky stepped closer.

“You ask me to live a lie,” he said.

Anna felt that his words struck directly at her heart. She knew that he understood her feelings more clearly than she wished.

Yet she also knew the danger of those feelings.

“Return to Moscow,” she said firmly. “Ask Kitty for forgiveness.”

Vronsky shook his head slowly.

“You do not wish that,” he answered.

Anna felt that he had seen through her.

He continued quietly.

“You know that you are my life. I cannot promise you peace. I do not even know if peace is possible. Perhaps there will be only suffering. Perhaps there will be happiness. But I cannot live without you.”

Anna tried to speak, but the words would not come.

She wanted to tell him to leave. She wanted to end the conversation. Yet when she looked at him, she felt only the strange happiness that had begun on the night of the ball.

She said nothing.

But her eyes answered.

Vronsky saw the answer immediately.

A sudden joy rose in his heart.

“She loves me,” he thought.

Anna left the house soon afterward.

As her carriage moved through the dark streets of Petersburg, she pressed her hands together.

“What have I done?” she whispered.

Yet deep inside she knew that something had already happened that could not be undone.

Meanwhile Karenin continued his life with careful order.

He had noticed that his wife seemed distracted in recent weeks. But he explained it to himself in simple terms.

“She is tired,” he thought. “Society life is exhausting.”

His own life was ruled by duty.

Each morning he rose at the same hour. Each day he worked with careful attention to every document and report. His colleagues respected him for his intelligence and discipline.

One evening, however, he noticed something that disturbed him.

Anna was speaking about Count Vronsky during dinner.

Her voice was calm, but there was an unusual warmth in her tone.

Karenin listened silently.

When she finished speaking, he said only, "Yes. I know the young man."

Anna felt suddenly uncomfortable.

For the first time she realized that her feelings were not hidden as carefully as she believed.

That night she lay awake for a long time.

"Everything must remain as it is," she told herself.

But the memory of Vronsky's voice continued to echo in her mind.

And slowly, quietly, the distance between truth and deception began to grow inside her life.

Part 8

After the evening at Princess Betsy's house, Anna tried for several days to avoid Vronsky completely.

She refused invitations where she knew he might appear. She remained at home more often with her son. She told herself again and again that the strange excitement she felt would disappear if she simply refused to see him.

Yet the effort itself only made the feeling stronger.

When she walked through the rooms of her house, she sometimes stopped suddenly, remembering a word he had spoken. When she read or tried to write letters, her thoughts returned to him again.

"This must end," she repeated to herself.

But the struggle only made her aware of how deeply the new feeling had entered

her life.

One afternoon she received a message.

Vronsky wished to see her.

Anna stood with the letter in her hand for several minutes.

“No,” she said quietly. “I will not see him.”

Yet later that evening she found herself at Princess Betsy’s house again, knowing perfectly well that Vronsky would be there.

When she entered the room, she saw him immediately.

He came toward her without hesitation.

Neither of them spoke at first.

Then Vronsky said quietly, “You tried to avoid me.”

Anna answered, “Yes.”

“And yet you are here.”

She looked at him steadily.

“Yes.”

The calmness of her voice surprised even herself.

Vronsky lowered his voice.

“Do you still ask me to return to Moscow?”

Anna shook her head slowly.

“No,” she said.

For a moment they stood in silence.

Vronsky spoke again.

“Then what do you wish?”

Anna tried to answer honestly, but the truth frightened her.

“I wish for peace,” she said.

Vronsky smiled faintly.

“I have never known peace,” he said. “And I cannot give it to you.”

Anna’s voice became softer.

“Then why do you continue?”

Vronsky answered without hesitation.

“Because my life now has only one purpose.”

She already knew the answer.

“You.”

Anna felt a sudden wave of emotion. She tried to speak calmly.

“This cannot lead to happiness,” she said.

Vronsky looked at her seriously.

“Perhaps not. But it is the only truth I know.”

Anna turned away, but he continued speaking.

“If I must suffer, I will suffer. If I must lose everything, I will lose it. But I cannot pretend that I do not love you.”

His voice remained steady, but Anna could feel the strength behind the words.

She realized that he would not stop.

And she realized something else.

She herself did not want him to stop.

For several days after that conversation they met again and again.

At first they spoke cautiously, trying to hide the depth of their feelings. But little by little the distance between them disappeared.

One evening Anna arrived at Betsy’s house and found Vronsky waiting in a small room nearby.

The moment she entered, he understood that everything had changed.

She stood before him silently.

Then suddenly she spoke in a broken voice.

“Oh God... forgive me!”

She seized his hands and pressed them against her chest.

At that moment Anna felt as if her entire life had collapsed. She saw herself as a sinful woman, someone who had destroyed the peace of her own family.

Yet she could speak to no one except the man before her.

“Forgive me,” she whispered again.

Vronsky felt a strange and terrible emotion.

It was not pure happiness.

Instead he felt something like the feeling of a man who has killed another person and now stands looking at the body.

The thing that had been destroyed was not a human life but something else—the first pure stage of their love.

He lifted her hands and kissed them.

Again and again he kissed her face and shoulders.

Anna remained still.

Then she slowly raised one of his hands and kissed it herself.

“Everything is finished,” she said quietly.

Her voice trembled.

“I have nothing left except you. Remember that.”

Vronsky fell to his knees beside her.

He tried to see her face, but she turned away.

At last she stood up and gently pushed him back.

Her face was still beautiful, but now it held a deep sadness.

“Everything is finished,” she repeated.

From that moment their lives became bound together in a way that could not be undone.

At first they believed that their love would bring them happiness.

Yet even in that first moment something dark had already entered their future.

Anna felt it herself, though she did not yet fully understand it.

Part 9

After that night Anna’s life divided into two separate worlds.

In one world everything continued as before. She lived in the same house with her husband. She cared for her son. She visited friends and attended gatherings in society. From the outside nothing had changed.

But in the other world nothing remained the same.

In that hidden world there was only one person—Vronsky.

At first their meetings were careful and secret. They spoke in quiet rooms or exchanged only brief words during visits. Each meeting seemed dangerous, yet neither of them tried to end it.

Anna often told herself that she must stop.

“This cannot continue,” she thought.

But when she saw Vronsky again, all her careful decisions disappeared.

One evening she returned home late from a social visit. Karenin was sitting in the drawing room reading papers from his office. He looked up when she entered.

“You are late,” he said calmly.

“Yes,” Anna answered.

She removed her cloak slowly. Her hands trembled slightly, though she tried to appear calm.

Karenin watched her for a moment.

“You seem tired,” he said.

“Perhaps I am,” she replied.

He continued reading for a few minutes. Then he folded the papers neatly and placed them on the table.

“I have something to say to you,” he said.

Anna felt a sudden fear.

“Yes?”

Karenin spoke in his usual careful tone.

“Certain rumors have reached my ears. They concern your relations with Count Vronsky.”

Anna stood still.

For a moment she felt the strong desire to deny everything. It would have been easy. Karenin himself seemed ready to accept a simple explanation.

But Anna was not capable of such lies.

She said nothing.

Karenin continued.

“I do not wish to question your feelings,” he said. “But I must ask that you behave with greater caution. Society observes such things closely.”

His words were calm and reasonable. Yet the meaning behind them felt cold and distant.

Anna looked at him with sudden anger.

“What do you wish from me?” she asked.

Karenin answered quietly.

“Only that you respect the dignity of our family.”

Anna felt that his words avoided the real truth.

“You care only about appearances,” she said.

Karenin frowned slightly.

“Appearances are important in public life.”

The conversation ended without any clear conclusion.

Yet after that evening Anna felt the distance between herself and her husband more strongly than ever.

Some weeks later she met Vronsky again in a quiet room at Betsy’s house.

They spoke together for a long time.

Suddenly Anna said in a calm, slow voice, “I must tell you something.”

Vronsky looked at her with concern.

“What is it?”

She hesitated for a moment.

Then she said quietly, “I am going to have a child.”

For a few seconds Vronsky did not answer.

Anna watched his face carefully. She expected him to understand the meaning of this news in the same way she did.

But she was mistaken.

The first emotion that appeared on his face was not joy. It was something darker—a sudden feeling of horror at the complicated situation that now surrounded them.

Yet almost immediately another thought replaced it.

“The moment has come,” he said firmly.

Anna looked at him.

“What moment?”

“The moment when we must end this false life.”

He walked across the room quickly.

“We must stop hiding,” he continued. “We must tell everything.”

Anna watched him with quiet sadness.

“Tell everything?” she repeated.

“Yes,” Vronsky said. “You must leave your husband. We must live together openly.”

Anna shook her head slowly.

“You do not understand.”

“What is there to understand?”

“I am my husband’s wife,” she said softly.

Vronsky answered immediately.

“Then you must separate from him.”

Anna gave a small, bitter smile.

“And how do you imagine that will happen?”

Vronsky remained silent.

Anna continued.

“You think that I can simply walk away from my life. But nothing is so simple.”

She moved toward the window.

“I have a son,” she said quietly. “Do you think they will allow me to take him with me?”

Vronsky felt the weight of her words.

“Then we must fight for him.”

Anna shook her head again.

“You still do not understand.”

For the first time Vronsky realized how difficult their future might become.

Yet his love for Anna only grew stronger.

“Whatever happens,” he said firmly, “I will remain with you.”

Anna looked at him.

For a moment she felt comfort in his confidence.

But deep inside she sensed that the path ahead would bring far more suffering than either of them yet imagined.

Part 10

The tension in Anna's life continued to grow.

After telling Vronsky about the child, she felt that the hidden world she lived in could not remain hidden much longer. Every day brought new moments of anxiety. She watched her husband more carefully. She feared that he would discover everything, yet at the same time she felt a strange desire to end the false silence between them.

Karenin, however, continued his life in the same calm and orderly way.

He rose early, worked in his office, attended meetings, and returned home at the same hour every evening. His behavior toward Anna remained polite and controlled. Yet behind this calmness he had begun to observe her more closely.

One evening they rode together in a carriage after visiting friends.

The night was cold. The streets of Petersburg were quiet, and the sound of the horses' hooves echoed through the dark.

Anna sat in silence beside her husband.

Suddenly she felt that she could no longer bear the hidden truth.

"I must speak," she thought.

She turned toward Karenin.

"I must tell you something."

He looked at her calmly.

"Yes?"

Anna felt her heart beating strongly.

"I love another man," she said.

The words came out clearly and without hesitation.

Karenin did not move.

For several seconds he continued looking straight ahead, as if he had not heard.

Then he asked quietly, "What did you say?"

Anna forced herself to continue.

"I love him," she repeated. "I am his mistress. I hate you. I fear you. Do what you wish with me."

Having spoken these words, she suddenly covered her face with her hands and

began to cry.

Karenin remained perfectly still.

His expression changed slowly until his face appeared almost like that of a statue. His eyes stared forward, and his lips tightened.

The carriage continued moving through the silent streets.

At last Karenin spoke.

His voice trembled slightly, though his words were controlled.

“Very well,” he said. “But I demand that the outward appearance of our life remain unchanged.”

Anna lowered her hands and looked at him with surprise.

“What do you mean?”

“Until I decide how to protect my honor,” he answered, “you must continue to behave as my wife in public.”

Anna felt that his words were colder than anger.

“So that people will not talk?” she asked.

“Yes,” he said simply.

She turned away from him.

The carriage soon arrived at their house. Karenin stepped out first and offered his hand to help her down, exactly as he had done countless times before.

Nothing in his behavior revealed the terrible conversation that had just taken place.

In the following days Karenin considered his situation carefully.

He did not think about love or happiness. Instead he thought about reputation, family dignity, and social order.

Divorce in Russia was extremely difficult. The church required strict proof of adultery before granting permission. Even when divorce was granted, the guilty person could not easily marry again.

Karenin understood that the situation placed him in a painful position.

If he exposed Anna’s affair publicly, it would create a scandal that would damage his own reputation as well as hers. Yet if he ignored it completely, society might believe that he lacked dignity.

For the moment he chose patience.

“Time will reveal the proper solution,” he told himself.

Meanwhile Anna felt that the walls of her life were closing around her.

She could no longer pretend that nothing had happened. Yet her husband’s cold restraint created a strange prison in which everything remained outwardly normal.

She continued to see Vronsky.

One evening they met again at Betsy’s house.

Anna told him about her conversation with Karenin.

Vronsky listened with growing anger.

“He wishes to preserve appearances,” he said. “He cares only about his reputation.”

Anna looked at him sadly.

“Perhaps that is the only thing he understands.”

Vronsky took her hand.

“Then we must free ourselves from him.”

Anna shook her head.

“It is not so simple.”

“Nothing matters except our life together,” he said.

Anna smiled faintly.

“You speak as if the world were empty except for us.”

“For me it is.”

His confidence moved her deeply, yet it also frightened her.

She knew that their love had already crossed a line from which there was no easy return.

Soon afterward Anna’s life changed again.

Her health began to weaken. She felt tired and restless. The approaching birth of the child filled her with both hope and fear.

During this difficult time Karenin remained distant but correct. He arranged doctors and nurses, ensuring that everything necessary for her care was provided.

Yet his kindness felt mechanical.

Anna realized that the real battle between them had not yet begun.

And somewhere beyond that battle waited a future that neither of them could yet clearly see.

Part 11

While Anna's life in Petersburg became more complicated and painful, Levin continued his life in the country.

Winter slowly ended. Snow melted from the fields, and the dark soil began to appear again. Workers prepared the land for spring planting. Horses moved slowly across the wet earth, pulling heavy tools.

Levin spent most of his days outside.

Physical work helped quiet his troubled thoughts. When he walked behind the plow or spoke with the peasants about the crops, he felt closer to the real rhythm of life.

Yet his mind still returned sometimes to Moscow.

"Kitty refused me," he reminded himself.

At first this memory had felt unbearable. But with time the sharp pain began to fade into something quieter.

"Perhaps it was better this way," he thought.

One day Levin decided to visit Dolly Oblonskaya, who was staying with her children at a country estate not far from his own.

When he arrived, the house felt lively and warm. Children's voices filled the rooms. Toys lay scattered on the floor. The smell of food came from the kitchen.

Dolly greeted him with sincere pleasure.

"How good it is to see you," she said.

Levin bowed awkwardly.

"I was passing nearby and thought I should visit."

Dolly knew perfectly well that this was not the whole truth. She guessed that Levin might wish to hear news about Kitty.

They sat together in the drawing room while the children ran in and out of the door.

One little girl entered carrying a toy shovel.

“Mama,” she said in Russian, “where is my shovel?”

Dolly answered automatically in French.

“Your mother asked you in French,” she said. “You must answer in French.”

The girl hesitated.

She tried to remember the French word for “shovel,” but she could not. After several seconds Dolly quietly supplied the word for her, and the girl repeated the sentence.

Levin watched this scene with discomfort.

“Why must children speak French?” he thought. “Why should a Russian mother speak to her own child in a foreign language?”

He believed that such habits created a false and artificial life.

“They lose their natural honesty,” he thought.

Yet he did not say these thoughts aloud.

Dolly, however, had already asked herself the same questions many times. She knew that the fashionable world expected children to speak French. If she wished them to succeed in society later, she believed she had no choice.

During their conversation Dolly spoke kindly about Kitty.

“She has not been well,” Dolly said. “The winter was difficult for her.”

Levin felt a quiet sadness.

“I am sorry to hear that.”

Dolly looked at him thoughtfully.

“She admired you very much,” she added.

Levin shook his head.

“That is finished.”

Dolly did not argue. Instead she changed the subject and asked about Levin’s work on his estate.

He began to speak eagerly about farming.

“Russia could become much more productive,” he said. “If we study the land carefully and work together with the peasants, everything could improve.”

Dolly listened patiently, though she did not fully understand all his ideas.

Later that afternoon Levin walked outside with the children.

The fresh air and the laughter of the young voices filled him with unexpected happiness.

“Perhaps life can still be good,” he thought.

Meanwhile far away in Petersburg Anna’s life was moving toward a darker moment.

The child she carried was about to be born.

The doctors and nurses moved quickly through the house. Karenin waited anxiously in another room. Though his feelings toward Anna had grown cold and distant, he could not remain indifferent during this dangerous moment.

The hours passed slowly.

Finally the doctor came out with serious news.

“The situation is difficult,” he said.

Karenin felt a sudden fear.

He entered Anna’s room quietly.

She lay on the bed pale and weak. Her eyes opened slowly when she saw him.

For the first time since their terrible conversation in the carriage, she spoke to him with complete honesty.

“Forgive me,” she whispered.

Karenin felt something break inside him.

In that moment all thoughts of pride and reputation disappeared. He saw only a suffering human being before him.

“Everything is forgiven,” he said gently.

Anna turned her head slightly.

Vronsky stood in the room nearby.

Karenin looked at him calmly.

“You must not be ashamed before me,” he said. “I forgive you also.”

These words shocked Vronsky deeply.

He had expected anger, hatred, or humiliation. Instead he saw a man who showed unexpected compassion.

Later that night, overwhelmed by shame and confusion, Vronsky attempted to

end his own life.

He shot himself with a pistol.

But the wound was not fatal.

The bullet passed through his chest without killing him.

When he regained consciousness later, he understood that his life had been spared.

Meanwhile Anna slowly recovered from the birth.

A little girl had been born.

The child was weak but alive.

The strange events of those days changed the relationships between all three of them. Karenin's sudden generosity made Anna feel even more ashamed of her past actions.

Yet the complicated emotions between them did not disappear.

Instead they only grew more difficult to understand.

Part 12

The weeks after the birth were strange and quiet.

Anna slowly recovered her strength. The little girl grew stronger each day. The nurses moved quietly through the house, and the rooms were filled with the soft sounds of a new child's life.

Yet the emotional life of the house had changed in ways that no one fully understood.

Karenin had forgiven Anna.

At least, he believed that he had.

During the terrible hours when Anna seemed close to death, he had felt a sudden clarity. All his anger and pride had disappeared. He had seen how small human judgment seemed beside suffering and death.

"Forgiveness is the only true path," he had told himself.

But once Anna's life was no longer in danger, everyday reality returned.

Society began to speak again.

Rumors spread quietly through Petersburg drawing rooms. People spoke politely in public, but their words carried hidden meanings.

Karenin heard these rumors.

He tried to ignore them. He told himself that he must remain faithful to the generous decision he had made during Anna's illness.

Yet it was not easy.

Meanwhile Anna lived in a strange emotional state.

She remembered clearly the moment when Karenin had forgiven her. That memory filled her with deep shame. She felt that his kindness placed her under a heavy moral burden.

At the same time her feelings for Vronsky had not disappeared.

She loved her son Seryozha deeply. She felt affection for the new baby girl. Yet her heart remained tied to Vronsky.

When she thought about him, she felt both joy and pain.

For a time she believed that she must leave him forever.

"I cannot continue this life," she thought.

But the decision did not last.

Vronsky had survived his wound. After several weeks he began to recover his strength. When Anna heard the news, her emotions returned with full force.

She wished to see him.

At first she resisted the desire. But finally she asked for news of him through mutual friends.

Soon afterward they met again.

The meeting was quiet and serious.

Vronsky looked thinner than before. The wound had weakened him, but his expression remained determined.

"You should not have done such a thing," Anna said softly.

Vronsky answered calmly.

"I believed that I had destroyed your life."

Anna shook her head.

"No one destroyed my life except myself."

For several minutes they spoke in low voices.

Both of them knew that their feelings had not changed.

Finally Vronsky said firmly, "We must leave Russia."

Anna looked at him with surprise.

"Leave?"

"Yes. We will travel abroad. We will live where no one knows us."

Anna hesitated.

She thought about her son Seryozha.

"And my child?" she asked.

Vronsky understood the meaning of the question.

"Your husband will not give him to you," he said quietly.

Anna closed her eyes.

She already knew that this was true.

Karenin had shown unexpected kindness during her illness, but he would never willingly allow his son to leave him.

The thought filled Anna with deep sorrow.

"I love two people," she said slowly. "My son and you."

Vronsky took her hand.

"Then we must accept the price of our love."

Anna remained silent for a long time.

At last she said, "Yes."

Soon afterward she left Petersburg with Vronsky.

They traveled through Europe together, moving from city to city.

At first this new life seemed exciting. They visited beautiful places, met new people, and enjoyed the freedom of being far from Russian society.

Yet even during these early months a quiet uneasiness began to grow between them.

Their love had once felt like a powerful discovery.

Now it had become the center of their entire existence.

And when two people depend completely on one another, every small misunderstanding can become painful.

Meanwhile life in the Russian countryside moved in a very different direction. Levin continued his work on the estate.

One day he received unexpected news.

Kitty had returned from a journey abroad where she had gone to recover her health.

The news stirred emotions in Levin that he had tried to forget.

“Will I see her again?” he wondered.

The thought filled him with both hope and fear.

Though he tried to remain calm, something deep inside him began to awaken once more.

Part 13

Levin heard the news of Kitty’s return from a friend who had recently come from Moscow.

“She is much better now,” the man said. “The journey seems to have helped her.”

Levin tried to answer calmly.

“I am glad to hear it.”

Yet the words stirred something deep within him.

After the conversation ended, he walked alone across the fields near his house. The land stretched wide beneath the open sky. The early summer grass moved gently in the wind.

“Why does this still matter to me?” he asked himself.

He had believed that his love for Kitty was finished. He had tried to build a new life without thinking of her. Yet the news of her return awakened feelings he had never truly lost.

At the same time Kitty herself had changed during the months away from Moscow.

When she had refused Levin, she had believed that Count Vronsky loved her and would soon ask for her hand. When she discovered that Vronsky had fallen in

love with Anna instead, the disappointment struck her deeply.

She became ill.

The doctors advised travel. Her family took her abroad to recover her strength.

During the journey Kitty had time to reflect quietly on her past actions.

“I did not understand him,” she thought many times.

She remembered Levin’s honesty, his serious nature, and the sincerity of his love.

Slowly she began to see him differently.

By the time she returned to Russia, she was no longer the same young girl who had once dreamed only of brilliant social success.

One evening not long after her return, Levin visited Moscow again for business.

He did not plan to visit the Shtcherbatsky house. Yet while walking through the city he suddenly found himself standing near the familiar street.

He hesitated for several minutes.

“Perhaps I should go,” he thought.

Finally he approached the house.

The servant recognized him immediately and welcomed him inside.

When Kitty entered the drawing room and saw him standing there, she stopped suddenly.

For a moment neither of them spoke.

Levin noticed at once that she looked different. Her beauty remained, but her expression had grown calmer and more thoughtful.

Kitty felt her heart beating quickly.

She remembered the moment when she had refused him.

“I hurt him,” she thought.

Yet Levin’s manner toward her was polite and respectful.

“I am very glad to see you again,” he said.

“And I you,” she answered.

They sat together with Kitty’s parents and spoke about ordinary things—travel, health, and life in the countryside.

But beneath the polite conversation both of them felt that something important

had changed between them.

Later that evening they found themselves seated near one another at the dinner table.

Kitty tried to speak naturally.

“I heard that you killed a bear,” she said with a small smile.

She struggled with a mushroom on her fork as she spoke, her white lace sleeve trembling slightly with the effort.

“But are there really bears near your estate?” she added, turning her face toward him.

The question itself was simple.

Yet for Levin every word she spoke seemed filled with deeper meaning. In the sound of her voice, in the movement of her lips and eyes, he felt something that he could hardly describe.

It seemed to him that her words contained apology, trust, tenderness, hope—and even love.

Levin felt almost unable to breathe.

He realized that Kitty was listening carefully to everything he said. She seemed interested not only in his words but in him himself.

For the first time since their earlier meeting, he felt that happiness might still be possible.

Yet he remained cautious.

“Do not hope too much,” he told himself.

Kitty also felt the strange happiness of the moment.

When she looked at Levin, she saw not the awkward man she had once misunderstood but someone strong, honest, and deeply kind.

She felt a quiet wish to repair the pain she had caused him.

The evening passed quickly.

Neither of them spoke openly about their feelings.

Yet both of them sensed that the distance between them was slowly disappearing.

As Levin left the house that night, he walked through the quiet streets with a

new feeling in his heart.

The future, which had once seemed completely closed, now appeared uncertain—but no longer hopeless.

Part 14

After the evening at the Shtcherbatsky house, Levin could not sleep.

He walked back and forth through his hotel room in Moscow, thinking about every word Kitty had spoken, every movement of her hands, every expression in her eyes.

“She was kind to me,” he thought.

Yet he did not trust his own hopes.

“Perhaps she only wished to be polite,” he told himself.

Still, the feeling in his heart would not disappear.

The next day he visited the family again.

This time the atmosphere between them was even calmer and more natural. Kitty spoke with him easily, asking questions about the countryside and his work on the farm.

Her parents watched them both with quiet interest.

The princess, Kitty’s mother, had once preferred Vronsky as a husband for her daughter. But recent events had changed her view. Now she saw Levin’s honesty and stability more clearly.

After dinner that evening, the family gathered around a small table where Kitty had been writing with chalk on a green cloth surface. It was a common game among friends and family to write small messages this way.

Kitty had been drawing letters and words while speaking with her sister.

Levin watched the marks on the table suddenly with intense attention.

An idea came to him.

His heart began beating rapidly.

Without speaking aloud, he took the chalk and wrote several letters on the table.

They were only the first letters of each word in a sentence.

W. Y. M. M. C. B. I. N. M. O. R. I. C. B.

Kitty looked at the letters.

At first she did not understand.

Then suddenly her face grew pale, and her eyes widened.

She understood.

The letters meant:

“When you made me miserable, could it be I never meant otherwise, really I could be?”

It was Levin’s question.

When you refused me before, did you truly mean it—or could you love me now?

Kitty picked up the chalk with trembling fingers.

She wrote her own letters beneath his.

T. M. I. N. C. B.

Levin read them quickly.

“That moment is not complete bliss.”

She erased the letters and wrote again.

“I. D. N. K. T. T. H.”

Levin understood again.

“I did not know then what happiness was.”

His heart filled with overwhelming joy.

Kitty looked at him softly.

Then she wrote one final answer.

“Y.”

Just one letter.

Yes.

Levin could hardly believe what he saw.

The room around them seemed to disappear. He saw only Kitty’s face and the single letter she had written.

Her cheeks were red with emotion, but her eyes shone with quiet happiness.

Levin felt that his entire life had suddenly changed.

He stood up quickly.

Kitty's parents had noticed that something important had happened, though they did not know exactly what.

Levin approached them.

"May I speak with you?" he asked.

The prince and princess exchanged a glance.

"Of course," the prince said.

Levin spoke simply and honestly.

"I love your daughter," he said. "I have loved her for a long time. I ask for your permission to marry her."

The prince smiled warmly.

"We are very happy to hear this," he said.

The princess's eyes filled with tears.

"We have always respected you," she added.

Soon afterward Levin spoke with Kitty alone.

For several minutes they could not say anything.

Finally Kitty whispered, "Forgive me."

Levin shook his head immediately.

"There is nothing to forgive."

She looked at him with gentle seriousness.

"I did not understand my own heart before."

Levin took her hand carefully.

"Now we understand each other."

Kitty smiled.

"Yes."

Their engagement was announced soon afterward.

For Levin the world suddenly seemed brighter and clearer. Every small detail of life felt full of meaning.

Meanwhile far away in Europe Anna and Vronsky were living a very different life.

They traveled through Italy and France, visiting beautiful cities and famous works of art. At first this life of freedom seemed exciting.

Yet slowly Anna began to feel a strange emptiness.

She had left her son behind in Russia.

The memory of him followed her everywhere.

Even when she sat beside Vronsky in a bright café or walked through a beautiful garden, a quiet sadness remained in her heart.

“I have lost him,” she thought.

Vronsky tried to make her happy.

He arranged new journeys, new houses, new pleasures.

But nothing could completely fill the place that Seryozha had once held in Anna’s life.

And slowly the bright dream that had begun with their love started to reveal its darker side.

Part 15

Levin and Kitty were married in Moscow during the early spring.

The ceremony took place in a quiet church filled with family and close friends. The candles burned softly before the icons, and the priest’s voice echoed gently through the high space.

Levin stood beside Kitty with deep emotion.

Until the last moment he could hardly believe that this happiness was truly real. Even as the priest spoke the sacred words of the marriage service, Levin felt that something might suddenly happen to destroy the moment.

“This cannot be true,” he thought.

Yet when Kitty looked at him with calm and loving eyes, his doubts slowly disappeared.

After the ceremony the newly married couple left Moscow and traveled to Levin’s estate in the countryside.

Kitty had never lived on a large country estate before. Everything there seemed new and unfamiliar to her. The wide fields, the barns, the peasants who worked the land—all these things formed a world very different from the elegant drawing

rooms of Moscow.

At first Kitty felt uncertain.

“Will I be able to live here?” she wondered.

Levin noticed her hesitation.

“You will grow to love this life,” he said gently.

Kitty smiled.

“I already love it because it is your life.”

Their first weeks together were not always easy.

Marriage brought small difficulties that neither of them had imagined before. Levin sometimes became impatient about household details. Kitty sometimes felt confused about how to manage the servants and the farm.

Yet each problem also brought them closer together.

One evening Levin returned home after spending many hours in the fields. His clothes were covered with dust, and he looked tired.

Kitty greeted him warmly.

“You have worked too hard again,” she said.

Levin laughed.

“The land does not wait for anyone.”

They sat together near the window while the evening light faded across the fields.

Levin spoke about his plans for improving the farm.

“If we organize the work differently,” he said, “the peasants can produce much more. Everyone would benefit.”

Kitty listened carefully.

She did not fully understand all his ideas about agriculture, but she understood his passion for honest work and simple life.

“You believe that people can live better if they work together,” she said.

Levin nodded.

“Yes.”

Kitty placed her hand gently over his.

“Then I will help you.”

Levin felt a quiet joy at her words.

Their marriage gradually found its natural rhythm.

Kitty learned how to manage the house. She became friendly with the peasants' wives and children. Soon everyone on the estate respected her kindness and sincerity.

Levin continued his work on the farm, but now he felt that his life had a deeper purpose.

He was no longer alone.

Meanwhile Anna and Vronsky continued their life abroad.

At first their travels through Italy brought moments of happiness. They lived for some time in a beautiful house near a small Italian town. The warm sunlight, the quiet streets, and the colorful gardens created a peaceful atmosphere.

Vronsky began to study painting.

Art seemed to offer him a new purpose in life. He spent long hours working in a small studio, copying famous paintings and practicing his own style.

Anna watched him with affection.

"You have real talent," she said one day.

Vronsky smiled.

"Perhaps. But I think I only enjoy the work."

Yet despite these pleasant moments, Anna often felt restless.

She missed Russia.

More than anything, she missed her son.

Sometimes she tried to speak about him.

"I dream of Seryozha often," she told Vronsky one evening.

Vronsky looked uncomfortable.

"You must not torture yourself with memories," he said.

Anna turned away.

"How can a mother forget her child?"

Vronsky did not answer.

Their silence revealed a growing distance between them.

Anna's love for Vronsky remained strong, but her thoughts often returned to

the life she had abandoned.

In quiet moments she began to feel that she existed between two worlds.

She could not return to the past.

Yet the future before her seemed uncertain and fragile.

Part 16

Summer passed peacefully on Levin's estate.

The fields were full of life. Workers moved through the tall grass with long scythes, cutting the hay in wide shining lines. The air smelled of warm earth and fresh plants. Everywhere there was movement and sound.

Levin worked beside the peasants during the harvest.

He enjoyed the physical effort. When he swung the scythe through the grass and felt the steady rhythm of the work, his thoughts became clear and calm.

"This is real life," he thought.

Kitty often watched him from a distance.

At first she had worried that life in the countryside might feel lonely or dull. But she soon discovered that it contained a quiet beauty and purpose.

She spoke kindly with the peasants' wives, visited sick children, and helped organize the household.

One evening Levin returned home tired but satisfied after a long day in the fields.

Kitty greeted him at the door.

"You look happy," she said.

Levin laughed.

"I am happy."

They walked together through the garden while the sun slowly disappeared behind the trees.

Kitty stopped suddenly.

"I must tell you something."

Levin looked at her with curiosity.

Kitty smiled shyly.

“We are going to have a child.”

For a moment Levin did not understand her words.

Then suddenly the meaning became clear.

He felt a powerful emotion that filled his entire body.

“A child?” he repeated.

Kitty nodded.

Levin took her hands and looked at her with deep tenderness.

“This changes everything,” he said softly.

From that moment his sense of responsibility toward life grew even stronger.

He began thinking not only about the present but about the future of his family.

Meanwhile far away in Europe Anna’s life continued to grow more difficult.

At first she and Vronsky had enjoyed the freedom of living abroad. But slowly that freedom began to feel empty.

They had no clear purpose.

Vronsky’s interest in painting gradually weakened. Though he had talent, he realized that he would never become a truly great artist.

Anna noticed the change.

“You no longer enjoy your work,” she said.

Vronsky answered quietly, “Perhaps it was only a temporary dream.”

Their days became slower and more uncertain.

Anna’s thoughts returned constantly to Russia.

She missed her son more deeply with each passing month.

Finally she could no longer endure the separation.

One evening she spoke to Vronsky with unusual determination.

“I must see Seryozha.”

Vronsky looked troubled.

“Your husband will not allow it.”

Anna’s voice became stronger.

“Then I will go without permission.”

Vronsky hesitated.

He understood the risk.

“If you return to Petersburg, society will judge you harshly,” he said.

Anna smiled bitterly.

“Society has already judged me.”

After several days of discussion they decided to return to Russia.

Anna planned to visit her son secretly on his birthday.

When she arrived in Petersburg, the city seemed both familiar and painful.

Early in the morning she went to Karenin’s house.

The servants were surprised to see her, but she moved quickly through the familiar rooms.

At last she reached Seryozha’s bedroom.

The boy was still asleep.

Anna knelt beside the bed and looked at his face.

For a moment she simply watched him breathe.

Then she gently touched his hair.

Seryozha opened his eyes slowly.

At first he could not understand what he was seeing.

Then suddenly he cried out with joy.

“Mama!”

Anna embraced him tightly.

Tears filled her eyes.

“My dear boy,” she whispered.

For several minutes they remained together, holding each other.

But the moment could not last.

Soon the servants began to whisper nervously in the hallway. Karenin’s presence in the house made the situation dangerous.

Anna realized that she must leave quickly.

She kissed her son again and again.

“Remember that I love you,” she said.

Seryozha began to cry as she left the room.

When Anna stepped outside into the cold morning air, she felt both happiness

and deep sorrow.

She had seen her child again.

Yet the meeting had only reminded her of the painful distance that now separated them.

And that distance could never fully disappear.

Part 17

After Anna's secret visit to her son, she returned to the house where Vronsky was waiting.

The moment she entered, he saw the change in her face.

Her eyes were bright with tears, yet there was also a strange calmness in her expression.

"You saw him?" Vronsky asked.

Anna nodded.

"Yes."

She removed her cloak slowly and sat down.

For several minutes she could not speak.

At last she said quietly, "He has grown so much."

Vronsky listened without interrupting.

Anna continued.

"At first he did not understand who I was. Then suddenly he recognized me. He cried out and ran to me."

Her voice trembled.

"He believed that I had returned forever."

Vronsky felt a heavy sadness.

"And Karenin?" he asked.

Anna shook her head.

"He did not see me."

She paused.

"But the servants were frightened. I had to leave quickly."

The memory of the moment when she left Seryozha returned to her with painful clarity.

“He was crying when I went away,” she said softly.

The room became silent.

Vronsky understood that nothing he could say would truly comfort her.

After that day Anna felt even more separated from the world around her.

Petersburg society treated her coldly.

Some people refused to receive her at all. Others spoke politely but with hidden judgment. Even those who once admired her beauty now looked at her with quiet criticism.

Only Princess Betsy continued to welcome her openly.

Yet even Betsy’s drawing room no longer brought Anna the pleasure it once had.

Instead she felt that every conversation contained invisible accusations.

Meanwhile Vronsky also felt the pressure of society.

His military career had once promised great success. But now his reputation had become uncertain.

Some officers respected his devotion to Anna, but others quietly believed that he had sacrificed his future for a scandal.

One evening Vronsky returned home from a meeting with friends.

Anna was waiting for him.

“You were late,” she said.

Her voice carried a slight tension.

Vronsky noticed it immediately.

“I was speaking with several officers,” he explained.

Anna watched him carefully.

“You enjoy their company,” she said.

“They are my friends.”

Anna looked away.

“You have many things in your life,” she said slowly. “Friends, work, the army.”

Vronsky felt uncomfortable.

“And you,” he answered.

Anna’s expression darkened slightly.

“Only me?”

Vronsky hesitated.

He sensed the meaning behind her question.

Anna continued.

“Sometimes I feel that I have nothing except you.”

Her voice became quieter.

“And if you were to grow tired of me...”

Vronsky interrupted quickly.

“That will never happen.”

Anna smiled faintly.

“You believe that now.”

But the doubt in her heart did not disappear.

From that moment small disagreements began to appear between them more often.

They still loved each other deeply, yet their love had become mixed with fear and insecurity.

Anna feared losing Vronsky.

Vronsky feared that he could not give Anna the happiness she needed.

At the same time life continued peacefully in the countryside for Levin and Kitty.

Kitty’s pregnancy filled their home with quiet expectation.

Levin felt both joy and anxiety.

“Will I be a good father?” he asked himself.

Sometimes he walked alone through the fields thinking about the meaning of life.

The coming birth of his child made him reflect on deeper questions.

“Why do we live?” he wondered.

“What gives life its true value?”

Though he loved Kitty and looked forward to the future, these questions

continued to trouble his mind.

Yet he sensed that the answers might slowly reveal themselves through the simple realities of family life, work, and faith.

And while Levin searched quietly for meaning in the peaceful countryside, Anna's life in Petersburg moved toward increasing darkness.

Part 18

As the months passed, the differences between Anna and Vronsky slowly became sharper.

At first their disagreements were small.

A word spoken with impatience. A look misunderstood. A short silence that lasted longer than it should.

Yet for Anna each small moment carried deep meaning.

She had sacrificed everything for this love—her home, her place in society, and most painfully her son. Because of that sacrifice she felt that Vronsky must belong to her completely.

But no human being can belong completely to another.

One afternoon Vronsky prepared to leave the house to attend a meeting with several officers.

Anna watched him quietly while he put on his coat.

“Must you go today?” she asked.

“Yes,” he answered. “It is an important meeting.”

Anna hesitated.

“Could you not stay with me instead?”

Vronsky turned toward her with concern.

“You know that I must maintain some connection with my old life.”

Anna looked down.

“Your old life still has a place for you,” she said softly. “Mine does not.”

Vronsky approached her.

“You are not alone,” he said.

Anna forced a smile.

“No. I have you.”

Yet inside she felt a growing fear.

“What if even that disappears?” she wondered.

After Vronsky left, Anna remained alone in the house for several hours.

Her thoughts moved in dark circles.

She remembered Seryozha.

She remembered the day she had left her son crying in the bedroom.

“I gave up everything,” she whispered to herself.

When Vronsky returned that evening, he found her restless and anxious.

“Where were you so long?” she asked.

“The meeting lasted longer than expected.”

Anna studied his face carefully.

“You seem cheerful.”

Vronsky answered calmly, “It was pleasant to see old friends again.”

Anna’s voice grew sharper.

“Perhaps you miss that life.”

Vronsky frowned slightly.

“What do you mean?”

Anna turned away.

“Nothing.”

Yet the tension between them remained.

These small moments began to appear more frequently.

Vronsky felt increasingly tired of constant explanations. Anna felt increasingly afraid of losing him.

At the same time a very different life continued to develop in the countryside.

Kitty’s pregnancy progressed peacefully.

As the expected day approached, Levin became more anxious.

He had read books about childbirth, spoken with doctors, and asked many questions. Yet the mystery of the coming event still frightened him.

One evening he said to Kitty quietly, “I wish I could suffer in your place.”

Kitty smiled gently.

“You already suffer enough worrying about me.”

Levin shook his head.

“This is something I cannot understand.”

Kitty took his hand.

“We will face it together.”

When the time finally arrived, Levin felt almost helpless.

The doctors and midwives moved quickly through the house. Kitty endured long hours of pain.

Levin waited in another room, walking back and forth across the floor.

“Why must life begin with such suffering?” he thought.

At last the door opened.

The doctor stepped out with a tired but satisfied expression.

“You have a son,” he said.

Levin stood silent for several seconds.

“A son?”

The words felt almost unreal.

Soon he entered the room where Kitty lay exhausted but smiling.

In her arms she held the small child.

Levin looked at the baby with amazement.

For a long time he could not speak.

Then he whispered, “How wonderful.”

The moment filled him with a new understanding of life.

Until then he had searched constantly for answers to the great questions of existence.

But now he felt that the meaning of life might be found not in abstract thoughts but in simple human love.

Meanwhile Anna’s life was moving in the opposite direction.

Her fears continued to grow.

She began to imagine dangers that did not truly exist. She watched Vronsky’s every movement and searched for signs that his love might be weakening.

The more she feared losing him, the more her behavior pushed him away.
Neither of them yet realized how dangerous this growing tension would become.

Part 19

The tension in Anna's life slowly turned into something darker.

She could no longer find peace in anything around her. The rooms of the house felt empty. The streets of the city seemed cold and unfriendly. Even the presence of Vronsky, which had once filled her with happiness, now often brought anxiety.

One evening Vronsky returned home later than usual.

Anna had been waiting for him for several hours.

When he finally entered the room, she stood up quickly.

"Where have you been?" she asked.

Vronsky removed his gloves calmly.

"I told you earlier," he said. "I had business with the regiment."

Anna looked at him carefully.

"You were with them the whole evening?"

Vronsky noticed the suspicion in her voice.

"Yes."

Anna turned away.

"I thought perhaps you had gone somewhere else."

Vronsky frowned slightly.

"What do you mean?"

Anna did not answer directly.

Instead she walked slowly across the room.

"You are free," she said quietly. "You can go wherever you wish."

Vronsky felt irritation rising inside him.

"Anna," he said, "why do you speak like this?"

She faced him suddenly.

"Because I feel that you are tired of me."

Vronsky looked at her with surprise.

“That is not true.”

Anna’s voice trembled.

“You say that now. But I see how your life continues outside this house. You still have friends, duties, interests. I have nothing except you.”

Vronsky approached her.

“You know that I have given up everything for our life together.”

Anna shook her head.

“No,” she said. “You have given up some things. But not everything.”

Vronsky became silent.

He understood that nothing he said would calm her fears.

After a moment he said quietly, “You are imagining problems that do not exist.”

Anna smiled bitterly.

“Perhaps.”

But her heart remained full of doubt.

That night she slept very little.

Dark thoughts moved through her mind again and again.

“He will grow tired of me,” she told herself.

“Then what will remain of my life?”

The next day Vronsky told her that he needed to travel for a short time on military business.

Anna felt immediate panic.

“You must go?” she asked.

“Yes,” he answered. “Only for a few days.”

Anna tried to appear calm.

“Very well.”

But as soon as he left the house, the fear returned stronger than before.

She walked through the rooms restlessly.

Every object seemed to remind her of the fragile life she had built.

She sat down and tried to read, but the words made no sense.

Finally she decided to write a letter to Vronsky.

You say that you love me, she wrote. But I feel that I am losing you. If you truly

care for me, come back quickly. I cannot live in this uncertainty.

After writing the letter she felt no relief.

Instead her mind continued to fill with darker thoughts.

She began to imagine that Vronsky might already regret the choices he had made.

“He sacrificed his career for me,” she thought. “Perhaps he now understands that it was a mistake.”

The idea tortured her.

By evening her anxiety had grown almost unbearable.

She left the house and entered a carriage.

“To the station,” she told the driver.

The carriage moved quickly through the streets.

Anna looked out at the darkening sky.

Her thoughts felt confused and chaotic.

“Everything has become impossible,” she whispered.

She remembered the moment when she had first met Vronsky. She remembered the ball in Moscow, the music, the excitement of that evening.

At that time she had believed that love would bring happiness.

Now she felt only exhaustion and despair.

When the carriage arrived at the station, Anna stepped out slowly.

Trains arrived and departed. People hurried across the platform. The loud sounds of engines and voices filled the air.

Anna walked forward almost without thinking.

Suddenly a terrible idea appeared in her mind.

“There is only one way to end all this suffering.”

For a moment she stood still.

The thought frightened her.

Yet it also seemed to offer a strange sense of calm.

A train approached the platform with a deep roaring sound.

Anna watched the moving wheels.

In that instant she felt that her entire life had become a narrow, dark path with

no escape.

“Everything will end,” she thought.

And before anyone could stop her, she stepped forward toward the moving train.

Part 20

The noise of the train filled the station.

People on the platform shouted in alarm. Some ran forward, but it was already too late.

In a single terrible moment Anna’s life ended beneath the wheels.

The train continued moving slowly along the track before finally stopping.

A deep silence fell over the platform.

Those who had seen the event stood frozen in shock. Others whispered in frightened voices, trying to understand what had happened.

Among the people who soon heard the news was Vronsky.

When the message reached him, he could hardly believe it.

“No,” he said quietly. “It cannot be true.”

But the terrible truth could not be denied.

Anna was dead.

Vronsky felt as if the world around him had suddenly lost all meaning. The passionate love that had once filled his life now seemed like a distant dream that had ended in tragedy.

For several days he moved through life almost without awareness.

Friends spoke to him, but their words seemed far away. The rooms of the house felt empty and silent.

At last he made a decision.

Russia was preparing for war in a distant land. Volunteers were gathering to join the army.

Vronsky announced that he would go with them.

His friends tried to speak with him.

“You should not rush into danger,” one officer said.

Vronsky answered calmly.

“My life no longer belongs to me.”

Soon afterward he left for the front.

Meanwhile Karenin received the news of Anna’s death quietly.

His face showed little emotion.

Yet inside he felt a deep sadness.

Despite everything that had happened between them, Anna had once been his wife. She had been the mother of his son.

Now she was gone forever.

Karenin made a decision of his own.

He took responsibility for the little girl Anna had left behind. Though the child was not truly his, he chose to raise her as part of his household.

In this quiet act of duty he found a small measure of peace.

Life in the Russian countryside continued in a very different spirit.

Levin and Kitty’s home had become full of new life.

Their young son grew stronger each day. Kitty cared for him with deep tenderness, and Levin often watched them together with wonder.

Yet Levin’s thoughts about the meaning of life had not disappeared.

One evening he walked alone across the fields near his house.

The sky above him was wide and filled with stars. The air was calm and silent.

Levin thought about the many questions that had troubled him for so long.

“Why do we live?” he asked himself again.

“What gives life its true purpose?”

For a long time he had searched for answers in books, in philosophy, and in complicated ideas.

But now, as he looked up at the quiet sky, he felt something different.

He realized that the meaning of life did not lie in abstract thoughts.

Instead it existed in the simple goodness of everyday actions—in love for family, in honest work, and in kindness toward others.

Levin understood that he could not explain this truth with perfect logic.

Yet he felt it deeply within his heart.

When he returned to the house, Kitty greeted him at the door.

“You were thinking again,” she said with a smile.

Levin laughed softly.

“Yes. But perhaps thinking is not always necessary.”

Kitty looked at him curiously.

“Then what is necessary?”

Levin looked at his wife and child.

“Living,” he said.

From that moment Levin understood that his life would continue to contain difficulties, doubts, and questions.

But he also knew that each day offered the opportunity to live with love and sincerity.

And that quiet understanding brought him a lasting peace.