**EUGENE ONEGIN**

(In this edition he is called Yevgeny Onegin).

The translation is by G[erard]. R. Ledger.

 **Chapter One**

He hastens to live and rushes to experience all things

*Prince Vyazemsky*

 I

"My uncle, a most worthy gentleman,
When he fell seriously ill,
By snuffing it made us all respect him,
Couldn't have done better if he tried.
His behaviour was a lesson to us all.
But, God above, what crushing boredom
To sit with the malingerer night and day
Not moving even one footstep away.
What demeaning hypocrisy
To amuse the half-dead codger,
To fluff up his pillows, and then,
Mournfully to bring him his medicine;
To think to oneself, and to sigh:
When the devil will the old rascal die?"

 II

So thought our young ne'er-do-well
Flying through the dust on a mail coach.
By the supreme will of Zeus
He was the inheritor of all his kin.
Good friends of Ludmilla and Ruslan!
With the hero of my romance
Allow me to make you acquainted
Without further prelude,this very instant.
Onegin, my good Sir or Madam,
Was born on the banks of the Neva,
Where perhaps you too were born,
Or made your name, my dearest reader.
There too I once enjoyed myself,
But North winds are damaging to my health.

 III

Having served his country faithfully
His father lived a life of debt.
He gave a regular ball thrice yearly
And at last bankrupted himself.
But fate took Yevgeny in hand:
First *Madame* was his governess,
Then *Monsieur* took over the task.
The child was lively, but biddable.
*Monsieur l'Abbé*, a meagre Frenchman,
To spare the boy from weariness
Taught everything lightheartedly,
And spared him stern morality,
Scolded his pranks with a hint of anger,
And in the Summer Garden let him wander.

 IV

But when the tumultuous yearnings
Of youth descended on Yevgeny,
A time of hope and tender longings,
Monsieur was sent packing hastily.
And now my Onegin found his freedom:
For, barbered in the latest fashion,
And clothed like a London dandy
He at last went into society.
He spoke French with absolute ease
And perfection, and wrote it too,
Danced the mazurka with delicacy
And made acquaintance easily;
What more do you wish? The *beau monde* said
'The fellow's a gem and quite well read'.

 V

We all have studied by bits and pieces
Something or other and this and that;
So with this learning, God be thanked,
It is not difficult to make a splash.
Onegin was, in the opinion of many,
(Critics both stern and even incisive)
A studious fellow, but somewhat cranky.
He had that very happy knack
In conversation to be carefree,
To touch on everything in passing lightly,
And with an expert's look and bearing
To keep silent when the talk grew heavy
And to make the women smile and admire
An epigram's unexpected fire.

 VI

Latin is nowadays not much in vogue:
And so, if truth grew old in telling,
He knew enough of that old tongue
To decipher the odd phrase and saying,
Or to chat of Juvenal occasionally,
Or to end his letters with the word *vale*,
And he knew by heart, (not perfectly)
Two whole verses from the Aeneid.
He had no strong desire to rummage
In the chronological dust
Of the world's historical baggage:
But spicy stories from day's gone by
From Romulus' time to our own day
He kept intact in his memory.

 VII

Having no intense passion and longing
To sacrifice his life for poetry,
Trochees and iambics, despite our efforts he
Could not distinguish in any way.
He railed at Homer and Theocritus,
Instead he studied Adam Smith
And in economics was well versed,
That is, an argument he could rehearse
About the wealth of government.
Both how it lives, on what, and why
It does not need reserves of gold
When *basic products* are its main supply.
His father could not understand the theory
And mortgaged all his land completely.

 VIII

Of all those things which my Yevgeny
Knew, I have no leisure to tell;
But for true genius, if there is any,
The thing he knew better than any science,
Which from youth onwards was for him
His toil, his torture, his delights,
Which occupied his days and nights
And all his pining idleness, -
It was the science of tender passions,
Which Ovid the poet once sang,
For which, an exile, he ended in strife
His dazzling and tumultuous life
In Moldavia, in the steppe's immensity,
Far, far from his beloved Italy.

 X

From early years he could act and dissemble,
Conceal his hopes, or show jealousy,
Instil both trust and disillusion,
Appear sad and gloomy, or pine in anguish,
Seem sometimes proud, sometimes submissive,
Or else indifferent, or all attentive!
How languid was his reticence,
And how passionate was his eloquence,
But in letters of the heart how unconcerned!
Breathing only one thing, loving only one thing,
How he could immerse himself totally!
His glance how devastating or how tender,
How modest, or how impudent, and occasionally
The obedient tear would glisten tellingly.

 XI

How skilled he was at appearing novel,
How skilled to dazzle innocence,
To frighten with despair's pretence,
To heap on flattery with a shovel,
To catch the first breath of emotion;
And the naivete of innocent years
To overcome with wit and passion;
To await the involuntary caress,
To pray and beseech a true confession,
To listen for the heart's first utterance,
To pursue love utterly, and, at last!
To agree a secret rendezvous
Then afterwards, alone in the darkness
To give lessons in love to his enchantress.

 XII

How early had he learned to thwart
The heart of an experienced flirt!
And when he wished to dish the dirt
Upon his rivals and outsmart
Them all, how poisonously he talked of them!
What traps, what gins he laid for them!
But you, the ever blissful husbands,
You remained ever his confidante:
The watchful spouse was his intimate,
Whether an old follower of Faublas,
Or a suspicious dotard, too old,
Or a pompous idiot cuckold,
Forever satisfied, forever agreeable
With self, and wife, and his dinner table.

 XIII, XIV

 . . . . .

 . . . . .

 . . . . .

 XV

As often happened, he was still in bed:
Three notelets are brought him on a tray. -
What is it? Invitations? You don't say.
Three homes invite him for an evening out.
A ball here, then a birthday celebration.
Where then will my young idler hasten?
With whom will he start. It is not important.
He will have the time to cover them all.
Meanwhile, dressed in his morning finery
And donning his fashionable *bolivar*
He takes a carriage to the boulevard
And there parades in all his glory
Until his sleepless pocket watch
Tells him it is time for his dinner and scotch.

 XVI

Already it darkens. In the sleigh he sits.
"Full speed! Full speed!" The cry is heard,
With frosty dust and rime now glistens
His beaver collar around his beard.
He speeds to *Talon*, for he is convinced
That there he will find his friend Kaverin.
He enters - a cork flies to the ceiling.
Some wine of comet vintage fizzes,
While roast beef all bloody on the table stands,
And truffles, a luxury of younger years,
The greatest glory of French *cuisine*,
And Strasbourg tart all fresh and gleaming
With Limburg cheese all runny and spiced
And golden pineapple freshly sliced.

 XVII

His thirst still needs another glass
To drown the cutlet's fiery fat,
But then his watch prompts him to note
That a new ballet is due to start.
A stern critic of the stage and law giver,
An inconstant and fickle admirer
Of all the enchanting actresses,
This respected inhabitant of the *coulisses*,
Onegin hastens to the theatre,
Where everyone, breathing freedom's air,
Prepares to clap an *entrechat*,
To hiss a Phaedre, boo a Queen,
To shout for Moina, (only for one thing,
To make his own voice heard in the din).

 XVIII

Enchanted land! There, in year's gone by
With audacious mastery of satire
Fonvizin shone, freedom's defender,
And Knyazhnin, the famous imitator.
There Ozerov shared with young Semyonov
The spontaneous gift and tribute of
The people's tears and glad applause.
There our Katyenin resurrected
The majestic genius of Corneille,
And there sarcastic Shakhovsky
Produced a swarm of comedy,
And there Didelot was crowned with glory.
And there, just there, my young years sped,
Amidst the wings' and scenery's shade.

 XIX

Ah, where are you fled? My dream, my goddesses?
Listen once more to my saddened voice.
Are you as before, or have other young misses
Replaced you, who are not a worthy choice?
Do I hear again the sound of your chorus?
Do I see a Russian Terpsichore
With lofty soul in the dance's flight?
Or does my gloomy vision find
No kindred face on the tedious stage,
And, fixing upon a foreign scene
A lorgnette full of disenchantment,
An indifferent spectator of merriment,
Silently will I yawn and sigh
Remembering all the years gone by?

 XX

The theatre is full, the boxes sparkle,
The stalls, the orchestra - all is in motion,
A slow handclap comes from the circle,
And the curtain rises in swift commotion.
All glistening, and almost ethereal,
Obedient to the magic bow,
A throng of nymphs around her now,
Istomena stands; then cautiously,
With one foot lightly on the ground
With the other she turns herself around,
Then a sudden leap, and now she's flying
A flight like down from Aeolus' mouth,
She twists her waist, and now untwists it,
While one foot spins, and the other one hits it

 XXI

All is applause... Onegin enters
And walks in the rows past people's feet,
Held at an angle, his lorgnette centres
Upon the boxes of unknown sweets;
He takes in at a glance the rows and tiers,
And sees it all: the faces, fashions,
Fill him with grisly, surly passion.
To the gentlemen on all sides he bows
Then to the stage at last directs
A glance of great indifference,
Then turns away - and then he yawns
And mutters "This lot is past its best,
The ballet I've endured too long,
And Didelot is not worth a song"

 XXI

Then Cupids come, and devils, and snakes,
To crowd on the scene and shout and leap,
And still the worn out servants sleep
On fur coats at the entrance gates.
And still the audience goes on stamping,
Or sniffing and coughing, or hissing and clapping;
And still both outdoors and inside
The lanterns glitter far and wide;
And still the frozen horses shuffle
Fretting at the harnesses' attire;
And coachmen gather around the fire
And beat their hands, at their masters grumble -
But already Onegin has been and gone,
And home he hurries for a change of gown.

 XXIII

Shall I depict in a faithful copy
The solitary dressing room
Where fashion's perfect devotee
Gets clothed, unclothed, and clothed again?
All things which, for caprice unbounded,
Fastidious London sells and trades
And sends across the Baltic waves
(For wood and pig fat fair exchanges);
All which the frenzied taste in Paris,
Conspiring with the useful trades
Invents and chooses for our distraction,
For luxury, and for idle fashion,
All this adorned the room of our sage,
The philosopher, eighteen years of age.

 XXIV

An amber pipe from Istanbul,
Faience and bronzes on the table
And, a delight most sensual,
Perfumes in bottles of quartz cut crystal;
Some hair combs, and some pins of steel,
Scissors with straight blades and with bent ones,
And thirty different sorts of brushes
For teeth and nails or what you will.
Rousseau (I mention this in passing)
Just could not grasp that haughty Grimm
Dared clean his nails in front of him,
Of him, Rousseau (the eloquent crank).
But freedom and morals' champion strong
In this case was entirely wrong.

 XXV

Perhaps an active man should engage
With the question of the beauty of his nails.
Why quarrel fruitlessly with the age?
Custom is a tyrant that prevails.
A second Chadaaev, my Yevgeny,
Fearing a hostile jealous rebuke
In the matter of dress was over finicky,
And someone we would call a dandy.
For three hours, at the very least,
In front of his mirrors he would sit,
And from his dressing room would exit,
A veritable flighty Venus,
As, when, in a man's costume arrayed
The goddess enters a masquerade.

 XXVI

All spruced to tastes of high modernity
Your curious gaze he would endear,
And, before rational, polite society
I might attempt to describe his gear;
Of course it would be rather bold,
And description was and is my *forté*;
But *leggings*, *frock coat* and *gilet*
In the Russian language '*Nyet kak nyet*';\*
And so I see, and make confession
That already my wretched composition
Could be less peppered and be less absurd
If it had far fewer foreign words.
And yet I have rummaged frequently
In the Academic Dictionary.

\*'Nyet kak nyet' - There is no trace of.

 XXVII

But that is not our topic now.
Far better it seems to hasten on
To the ball, where, in a hired carriage
Already Onegin has galloped headlong.
Before the darkened, murky houses,
Along the sleepy streets in rows
The twin lamps of the carriage throw
A cheerful and abundant light
And pour out rainbows on the snow.
The lampions scattered all around
Light up the large and splendid mansion;
Behind vast windows shadows move,
Profiles of heads flit by of sleek
Young women and fashionable freaks.

 XXVIII
And now our hero enters the hall,
Then past the porter like an arrow
He flies aloft by the marble stair
And with his hand adjusting his hair
He strides on in. The room is full.
Already the music wearily strains;
The crowd is occupied with the dancing;
The noise and crush are all around;
The cavalry guardsman's spurs are jingling;
And gentle ladies' legs are flying;
While, after their enchanting flight
Ardent and passionate glances are winging;
And totally drowned by the violins' screeching
Is the fashionable ladies' jealous whispering.

 XXIX
In days of dreams and wild desire
I was of dances a frantic fan,
The surest place for love to conspire,
Or for a letter to pass from hand to hand.
And you, respected, watchful spouses,
I offer you my truest services,
I ask you to listen and pay attention:
For you I have an admonition.
You also, mothers, be more careful,
Your daughters you must supervise:
Make your lorgnette your second eyes!
Or else… or else, oh God, not this!
I only write about this now
As I gave up sinning long ago.

 XXX
Alas, on various amusements
I squandered many of life's good hours!
But if my nerves had not been weakened
I still would worship dancing floors.
I love the madcap fling of youth,
The crush, the sparkle and the gaiety,
The girls' elaborate dress, the novelty,
And how I do adore their feet. Scarcely
Through all of Russia could you find
Three pairs of slender women's feet.
Ah! For long I never could forget
Two little feet… Now sad and chilled,
I still remember, and in my dreams
My heart is troubled by their charms.

 XXXI
But when, wherever, in what deserted strand,
You madman, could you ever forget?
Ah, little feet, where now do you stand?
What springtime flowers now bear your weight?
For pampered amidst all Eastern luxury,
Upon the Northern, gloomy snows,
You left no trace as you passed by;
You loved the sensual eloquence
Of a soft carpet's luxuriance.
How long for you I suffered misery
Forgetting praise, and thirst of fame,
And love of country, an exile's pain.
But now the dream of youth is over,
Like your soft footstep on the clover.

 XXXII
Diana's breast, the cheeks of Flora
Are so enchanting, my dearest friends!
And yet the foot of Terpsichore
Is more enchanting to my mind.
For it, foretelling to my glances
Rewarding joys beyond all price
With subtle beauty can entice
A swarm of headstrong sweet desires.
I so adore it, my friend Elvina,
Beneath the long damask of the table,
In Spring upon the meadow grass,
In winter resting on the hearth,
Or on the parquet's mirrored face,
Or on granite cliffs where the seas race.

 XXXIII
I remember the sea before a storm:
How envious was I of the waves
Rushing in sequence without form
To lie at her feet in loving embrace.
How I wished to be among those breakers
To touch with my lips those darling feet!
For never, among the flaming days
Of all my ardent, turbulent youth
Did I ever wish with such tortured longing
To kiss the lips of young Armida,
Or the roses of her flaming cheeks,
Or her breast, so full of aching yearning.
No, never have gusts of passion so torn me,
Or rent and tormented the soul within me.

 XXXIV

And now I remember another time:
Sometimes in my most cherished dreams
I hold the stirrup so happily blest…
And I feel in my hands the little foot;
Once more my imagination seethes,
Once more the touch upon my hand
Warms up the blood in my faded breast,
Once more the anguish, once more love breathes!
But a truce to puffing up the haughty
With my chattering and talkative muse,
They are not worth my passionate moan,
Nor my songs, inspired by them alone.
The words and looks of these sirens sweet
Are deceptive… as are their darling feet.

 XXXV

What of my Onegin? Half asleep
He leaves the ball and goes to his bed;
But tireless, restless St. Petersburg
Is awakened already by the pounding drum.
The merchant rises, and the peddlar,
The cabman wearily drives to his stand,
A woman from Ochta with her pitcher
Hurries, crunching the morning snow.
The pleasant sounds of morning grow.
Shutters are opened, smoke from chimneys
Rises in columns with a blueish tinge,
While the fastidious German baker
In a paper night cap, more than once
Has opened the half-door to his clients.

 XXXVII

No: for early had his feelings withered,
Society's bustle only bored him stiff,
And not for long were beautiful women
The subject of his constant adoring.
Betrayals only served to weary him,
While friends and friendship turned him rigid,
Because he could not every time
Drown hot beef-steaks and Strasbourg pie
With frequent bottles of sparkling wine,
And scatter abroad a witty lie,
Especially when his head was frigid.
And though a womaniser fierce and ardent
In the end he could no longer pine
For duels, and sabres and the bullet's whine.

 XXXVIII
The discontentment and disenchantment
Of which the cause it is time to seek
Most like what is spleen to Englishmen,
Or more simply 'the blues' in Russian,
Had gradually sunk and overwhelmed him;
At least to shoot himself, thank God,
He had no wish to make an attempt
But yet his life grew cold and unkempt.
Like Byron's *Childe Harold*, gloomy, mournful,
He often appeared in dining rooms.
But neither gossip, nor sighs, nor Boston,
Nor tender looks moved him; for all was lost on
Him, nothing could touch his feeling,
He noticed nothing that was appealing.

 XXXIX, XL, XLI.
 . . . . .
 . . . . .
 . . . . .
 . . . . .

 XLII

You fashionable freaks of high society,
He first neglected and abandoned you,
And to tell the truth, today we know
The crushing boredom of being U.
Although it is true some women may
Talk both of Bentham and of Sey,
But generally their conversation
Though innocent, is awful tripe;
Besides they are so pure, so sinless,
So haughty and so intellectual,
So full of good deeds and so effectual,
So delicately circumspect, so blameless,
So unapproachable for men
That their sight alone awakes our spleen.

 XLIII
And you, sweet beauties, darling young ones,
Whom, late at night when all's at rest
Across St. Petersburg's cobblestones
The dashing drozhkies carry with zest,
Even you Yevgeny at last abandoned.
A recluse from tempestuous delights
Onegin shut himself indoors
Then taking his pen in hand and yawning
He tried to write - but the stubborn toil
Was nauseous to him. No spawning
Words came rushing from his quill,
And he did not enter the perky guild
Of writers, of whom I cannot be critical,
For the reason that I am of their circle

 XLIV
And once more consigned to being idle,
And aching with emptiness in his soul,
He settled down - with an aim most praiseful
To acquire the thoughts of other toil.
He stacked his shelves from floor to ceiling;
He read and read - but still no meaning
Emerged. Only tedium, or madness and self-deception
He found. No conscience in this, in that no sense,
All wore the chains of pre-conception;
Old works were utterly out-dated
And new ones had looks that were antiquated,
And so, like women, he abandoned books,
And across the shelves with their dusty crew,
A mourning curtain of black he drew.

 XLV

I too the burden of social convention
Having cast off, like him, and leaving the fuss,
Made friends with him in this latter time,
I liked his manners and his face,
His unbidden tendency to dream,
And his inimitable, striking oddness,
His incisive mind, as sharp as ice.
I was embittered, he depressed.
The play of passions we both had known;
And life had sickened both of us;
In both the heat of the heart had flown;
And both had felt blind Fortune's frown
And the evil working of people's ways
At the earliest dawning of our days.

 XLVI

Whoever has thought, whoever has lived
Cannot in his soul not despise the world;
Whoever is sensitive, he must be tormented
By the phantom of days which will not return:
For such a man there is no enchantment,
For memory's biting serpent gnaws him
And repentance of the past absorbs him.
All this can add to conversation
A frequent charm and great delight.
At first Onegin's talk and wit
Embarassed me, but I grew used to it,
And to his poisonous reprobation,
And to his jokes, half mixed with bile
And to his epigrams' spiteful guile.

 XLVII
How often in the summer time
When lightly and transparently
Above the Neva the nightime sky
Is still, and the happy water's glass
Does not reflect Diana's face,
Remembering years of former romance,
Remembering many a former love,
In a sentimental, carefree trance,
The breath of night's munificence
We drank in rapture and in silence!
As when to a green wood from his prison
A sleepy convict in shackles is taken.
So in dreams we were carried far away
To life's beginning and its youthful day.

 XLVIII
With heartfelt passion, heavy with regret,
Resting his foot upon the granite,
Yevgeny stood musing inwardly
As our bard described himself recently.
All was still, only the sentry
Exchanged with another his nightime call,
And the distant sound of a carriage wheel
Was suddenly heard from Milyona street;
A single boat with its oars outspread
On the slumbering river dreamily sped,
And from far off, enrapturing us for long
Came the sound of a horn and a gallant song.
But sweeter for me, in the night's embrace,
Are Torquatus's octaves sung with grace.

 XLIX
Waves of the Adriatic seas!
Oh Brenta! No, do I see your streams?
Once more with inspiration brimming
I hear your voice with all its charms.
It is sacred to the grandchildren of Apollo;
By the proud lyre of Albion
It is known to me and is my fellow.
In a golden night of Italy
I freely bathe and take my ease
With a young and sweet Venetian miss,
Who at times is silent, at others chattering,
And on the mysterious gondola floating
My lips acquire by following hers
The language of Petrarch and of lovers.

 L

When will the hour of freedom come?
The time is due! I call exultingly:
I walk by the waves, I await the breeze,
I beckon the swift ship and its sail.
Under the storm's dark coat, fighting the waves,
Through the extended roadways of the seas,
When will my freedom's flight begin?
For 'tis time to leave this monotonous shore
Of the hostile climate I wander in,
And in the midst of southern ripples,
Under my native African sky,
To think of Russian glooms with a sigh,
Where I loved, where I suffered, and where I
Buried my heart and let it die.

 LI

Onegin with me had been ready of late
To travel and visit foreign lands;
But soon we were both by bitter fate
Split up and went our separate ways.
And at that time his father died.
Before Onegin there soon arrived
A greedy regiment of mortgagers,
Each with his claim and explanations.
Yevgeny, hating these complications
And satisfied with his lot so far
Offered them the full inheritance,
Seeing no great loss in such a stance,
Or else forseeing, though distant still,
His uncle's death and his uncle's will.

 LII

Then suddenly he received in fact
From his uncle's steward a notification
That on his death bed his uncle lay
And desired to give a farewell blessing.
Reading the sad epistle's message
Yevgeny immediately for the meeting
Set off post haste, and in the carriage
Yawned in advance, and making ready,
Prepared himself for the sake of money
To endure the sighs, deceit and boredom
(And that was where our tale began);
But, speeding up to his uncle's home
He found the body laid out on the table,
A tribute ready for its earthly burial.

 LIII
He found the household in full commotion.
For on the deceased from all sides had called
Both friends and foes showing devotion,
Or simply lovers of funerals.
They buried the body with due ceremony.
The priests and guests both ate and drank,
Then afterwards departed solemnly,
As if content with the business done.
Now our Onegin, a country dweller,
Of vine presses, waters, woods and fields
Becomes full master, but up till then
He had hated order, and was an idle waster.
But now he was glad that his former bent
Was changing to something different.

 LIV

For the first two days all seemed pleasantly new,
The isolation of the fields,
The gloomy dank of the oak wood thicket,
The gurgling sound of a quiet brooklet;
But on the third day woods, fields and hills
No longer occupied his thinking,
And even made him stifle a yawn.
Then he saw clearly, without blinking,
That in the country the same old tedium
Returned, although there were no streets,
Nor busy yards, poems, parties and cards.
While disillusion watched with a constant guard
And pursued him ever throughout his life
Like his own shadow, or a faithful wife

 LV

I was born to enjoy the retired life,
For rural silences and peace:
The lyre's voice rings out more in the stillness,
And the creative spirit is more alive.
To innocent idleness devoted
I wander the lake's deserted shore
And *far niente* is my only law.
The returning morn awakens me
To sweetest leisure and liberty:
I read much, and I drowse at will,
While fleeting fame I do not chase.
Was it not thus, in the years gone by,
That I spent in shadow, in an idle haze
The happiest portion of my days?

 LVI

Flowers, love, the country, idleness
And meadows on meadows! I adore you all.
As ever I am glad to notice
The difference between Onegin's and my own soul,
So that the haughty, sarcastic reader
Or some other gossip and inventer
Of over elaborate calumny,
Comparing Onegin's and my own features,
May not repeat ignominiously
That here I have daubed my own portrait,
Like Byron, of lofty pride the poet,
As if it were impossible for us to write
A poem on another, or a different tone,
But only about ourselves alone.

 LVII

All poets - I note here, for it is pertinent -
Are friends of imaginary loves.
It was my custom and my bent
To dream of such subjects brought from above.
My soul preserved their mystery.
The muse afterwards enlivened them all.
And so, in rapture free I sang,
The mountain maid, my heart's ideal,
Or the captive of Salgira's banks.
But now from you, my friends I hear
A frequent question in my ear:
"For whom does your lyre now sigh and moan?
To which of the girls in the jealous throng
Have you dedicated its latest song?

 LVIII

Whose glance, disturbing your inspiration
Has rewarded with its sweet caress
Your thought-heavy song and incantation?
Whom has your verse created goddess?
My friends, no one! Really and truly
The pangs of love, wild and unruly
I suffered without hope or joy.
Happy is he who can create from such trouble
A burning rhyme, for thus he would double
The sacred flame of his poems madness,
And following then in Petrarch's footsteps
His heart's suffering he could allay,
And fill the cup of fame as well;
But I, in loving, was stupid and dull.

 LIX

So love sped by and the muse appeared,
And my mind, fettered in darkness, awakened.
Now released, I strive to blend again
The magic of sounds with thought and emotion.
I write, and my heart is not in pain;
The pen distractedly does not wander
To sketch some female legs or faces
Beside some half forgotten lines;
The flame does not flare up from the ashes,
And, though I am sad, yet my eyes are dry,
And soon, the trace of the storm flown by
In my deepest soul will be totally quenched.
Then definitely I shall start to compose
An epic poem of twenty five cantos.

 LX

I have already thought of an underlying plan,
And what the hero's name will be;
Meanwhile of this present novel in verse
The first chapter I've finished and set to rest.
I have looked at the lot of it through and through
And in it there are many contradictions,
But to put them right is not my aim,
For censorship must have work to do,
And to the journalists for their devouring
The fruits of my labour I will consign.
Go then, little book, to the banks of the Neva,
My new born babe, my own creation,
And earn there for me renown's main gift:
Intemperate criticism and short shrift!

 **Chapter Two**

O rus!
*Horace*
O country!

 I

The estate in which our bored Yevgeny
Now lived, was in fact a fine retreat:
There a lover of the simpler pleasures
Would thank the heavens for his fate.
His mansion house was solitary,
Sheltered by hills in windy weather,
And stood by a river. Stretching away
Far off the meadows were bright and gay
With flowers, and the cornfields golden.
And here was a hamlet, there another,
And cattle wandered the meadows at random,
While shade was cast both deep and wide
By a huge garden all overgrown,
For the pensive Dryads a secret home.

 II

The stately mansion was built and planned
As all good mansions should really be:
Sturdily set in the peaceful land
In the refined taste of an age gone by.
All of the rooms were wide and lofty,
Silk wall paper embellished the drawing room,
And portraits of tsars hung on the walls,
The stoves were bright with ceramic tiles.
All this is nowadays somewhat passé,
Indeed, for what reason, I cannot say,
But of course for my friend, our story's hero
There was no need for these things at all,
Because he would yawn with equal distraction
At an ancient pile or a modern mansion.

 III
He settled in the sitting room
Where the old-timer in his country ways
For forty years had gazed from the window
Or balled at the housekeeper, or swatted flies.
A simple room, with oaken floors,
Two cupboards, a table and a stuffed settee,
And not a single spot of ink.
Onegin opened the cupboard doors;
He found in one a book of expenses,
In another a shelf of home brewed brandy,
And apple water in an earthenware jar,
And from eighteen o eight a calendar.
The old man having such a busy life
Found that looking in books brought too much strife.

 IV

Alone amid his wealth and holdings
In order to occupy the time
Yevgeny thought out a new scheme
To establish change in the order of things.
A prophet in the wilderness,
The burden of serf-labour he abolished
And changed it for quit-rent, no less;
The serf blessed his fortune and his fate.
On the other hand, in another corner,
Seeing in this matter a tragedy,
His over-calculating neighbour
Sulked. Another sneered craftily.
In unison they all agreed
He was a dangerous crank of a nasty breed.

 V

At first they all came visiting,
But since in the courtyard at the rear
At the very moment was brought to the door
His thoroughbred stallion saddled and waiting,
As soon as, along the open highway,
The sound of the home made carriage was heard -
Being much offended by this whim
They all cut short acquaintance with him.
"He's an ignoramus, and a lunatic,
A freemason, and he drinks alone,
Red wine by the tumblerful, and what is more
He will not kiss women's hands in greeting,
He says 'Yes' or 'No', but never politely"
Such was their opinion, and it was not held lightly.

 VI

To his estate at this same time
A new landowner had just arrived,
And just as much cause for stern rebuke
Among his neighbours he provoked.
Vladimir Lensky was his name,
In his soul he hailed from Göttingen,
Had good looks, was in the flower of youth,
A poet, believed in Kant and truth.
From the heart of misty Germany
He brought the fruits of all his study:
Dreams that were linked to freedom's road,
An ardent spirit that was somewhat odd,
And speech that was inspired and soaring,
And black curls down to his shoulder falling.

 VII

Through the world's indifferent wickedness
His ample spirit still had not withered,
His heart was warmed, his soul impressed
By a friendly greeting, or a girl's caress.
In his heart he was a simple innocent
Whom hope had pampered and endeared
And the world's new shine and merriment
Still entranced and flattered his young mind.
He often amused with sweetest dreams
The doubts that lay buried in his soul;
The aim of life for him, it seems,
Was a riddle, of alluring meaning.
He racked his brain about these puzzles,
And suspected hidden miracles.

 VIII

He believed that somewhere a kindred soul
Must join with his and make it whole,
That, pining for him gloomily
It waited for him eternally;
He believed also that many friends
To defend his honour would accept chains,
And that their hands, true and unshaken
Would shatter the vessel of calumny;
And that there are, chosen by fate
Most holy friends of the human race;
That their immortal family
In time to come with radiant fire
Will all illuminate and bless
And fill the world with their caress.

 IX
Compassion and high indignation,
And a pure love for what is good,
And for fame the sweet torture of ambition
Quite early on burned in his blood.
With his lyre he wandered the world over
Under skies of Goethe and of Schiller.
And with their poetic flame
His soul was fired and imbued.
The art of the most lofty muses,
Being fortunate, he never put to shame:
He proudly kept alive in song
Feelings that always were exalted,
Outbursts of pure intensity,
And the charm of solemn simplicity

 X

He sang of love, in love he would swoon,
And his song was of the most pellucid,
Like the thoughts of a young lass, simple hearted,
Like the dreams of a child, or like the moon
In the great untroubled deserted skies,
The goddess of mystery and tender sighs;
Or he sang of parting and of sorrow,
Of something strange, or the misty distance,
Of roses full of high romance;
He sang of all the distant strands
Where long, in the bosom of peacefulness
His living tears fell noiselessly ;
He sang of life's flower, dry and sere,
For he had almost completed his eighteenth year.

 XI

In the wilderness, where alone Yevgeny
The young man's talents could appreciate
The feasts and parties of the local gentry
Did not appeal to his personality.
He used to flee their noisy chatter,
Their conversation without matter,
About the hay harvest or the wine,
Or the dog kennels, or their family,
Which naturally did not shine
Or sparkle with poetic fire,
Or wit, or sharpness which he could admire,
And lacked the skill of high society;
But the conversation of their spouses
Was less intelligent than a louse is.

 XII

Rich, handsome, and presentable
Our Lensky was thought of as a fiancé,
For such is indeed the country way.
All set their daughters up as suitable
To marry the half-Russian gentleman.
When he appeared, the conversation
Turned suddenly but indirectly
To the boring life of a bachelor;
They invite him to the samovar,
Where the tea is poured by sweet Dunyasha
To whom they whisper, "Dunya. Now!"
And then they bring in the guitar,
And then she squeaks (oh heavens above!)
*Come to my golden room, my love!…*

 XIII

But Lensky, having no desire
To bear the yoke of marriage yet
Sincerely wished that with Onegin
He could become more intimate.
They met. Water and stone,
Poetry and prose, ice and flame
Were not more different than they.
At first their mutual variance
Caused them to feel indifference.
And then they warmed, and then
They went out riding every day.
And soon inseparable they became.
So people (and I am first to confess)
Become friends out of mere idleness.

 XIV

Friendship like this is quite unknown to us.
We prejudge others with bigotry,
And write them down as ciphers merely,
Deeming ourselves alone as worthy.
We see ourselves in Napoleon's dress
And the millions of two-legged creatures
Are so much cannon fodder for us.
Feeling is wild and laughable to us.
Yevgeny was more tolerant than most,
Though naturally the human race,
He knew, and despised it cordially.
But (no rule can be exceptionless)
Some men he liked and set apart,
Respecting emotion with an alien heart.

 XV

He listened to Lensky with a smile.
The poet's impassioned conversation
And mind, still capable of change,
His face, always full of inspiration -
All to Onegin were new and strange;
The chilling and sarcastic word
Upon his lips he held meanwhile,
And thought - what madness to prevent
A momentary happiness,
Without my help its hour is numbered.
Let him but live this passing season
And believe in the world's unique perfection.
We can forgive a young man's eagerness,
And youthful ardour, and youthful keeness.

 XVI

Between them ever rose disputations,
Which sparked off deeper trains of thought:
The life and history of past nations
The fruits of science, evil and good,
Ancient custom and prejudice,
The fateful secrets of the grave,
Fortune and life, all in their turn
Were subjected to analysis.
The poet burning with hot opinions
Would recite, plunged in a reverie
Fragments of Russian poetry
While indulgently Yevgeny listened.
Although to him they made no sense
He heard out the youth with diligence.

 XVII
But most of all the realms of passion
My two young hermits wandered in.
Having escaped from their intemperate reign
Onegin could, with quiet dispassion
Speak of them, though not without a sigh.
Happy the one who has known their agitation
And at last has left them far behind,
But happier is he with an untouched mind,
Who has cooled off love with separation,
Or love's revenge with a spiteful word,
Who yawns with wife, friends and relations
Untroubled by jealous perturbations,
And whose grandfathers' solid capital
He has not entrusted to the gambler's table.

 XVIII

When we take refuge under the banner
Of quiet and sombre rationality,
When passions' flames have grown much dimmer
And their unbridled liberty
Is now ridiculous, and their outbursts,
And even their belated thirsts, -
Then, with some struggle, now being sober
We love to hear sometimes the tale
From another's tongue of passion's gale,
And sometimes it can stir our soul.
Just as an ancient veteran
Will gladly bend his ear to listen
To the story of a young moustachio,
Being cooped in his hut from long ago.

 XIX

Besides the enthusiasm of youth
Could never hide a single thing,
Love, hatred, pain or gladness,
It will blurt out quite readily.
Counting himself a veteran
In love affairs, Onegin listened
With solemn face. The poet confessed,
And all his trusting heart and soul
Threw open wide in simple earnest.
Yevgeny easily discovered
The story of his youthful ardour,
A sickly, sentimental stew,
Which for you or me is nothing new.

 XX
Ah yes, he loved, such as in our time
No one can love, for alone,
The poet's heart, in a fine frenzy rolling,
Is fated still to love and groan.
Always and everywhere the constant dream,
And one habitual wish and longing,
And one habitual melancholy.
And neither distance which can cool,
Nor the long years of separation,
Nor hours to the Muses given,
Nor beauties from a foreign nation,
Nor study, nor noisy gatherings,
Nothing could alter his constant soul,
With pure fire burning beyond control.

 XXI

Scarce in his teens, by Olga hooked,
Having never tasted the heart's deep pains,
He tenderly observed and looked
On all her childish whims and pastimes.
In an oak grove's protecting shade
He shared her games, toys and amusements,
And the children had their plighted faith
Declared for them by both their parents.
Far from the world's ignoble strife
And full of charming innocence,
A joy to her parents, she led her life
Like a secret flower full of scent,
Which unseen in the long grasses lies,
Unknown to bees and butterflies.

 XXII

To the anxious poet she gave full promise
Of youth's first dream and wild delight,
And thoughts of her gave life and spirit
To the first notes of his sylvan pipe.
Farewell then, all those golden pastimes!
He sought the reclusive, shadowy grove,
And solitary nooks, and silence,
And night, and stars, and the silver moon,
The moon, the oil lamp of the sky,
To which we dedicated, you and I,
Our wanderings through the evening gloom,
Our tears, delight of secret longings…
Though now we only see in it
A lamp by which the street is lit.

 XXIII

Yet always modest, always truthful,
Always as cheerful as the morn,
Like a poet's life, simple, youthful,
Like love's first kiss without its thorn,
Her eyes like the heavens, blue, serene,
Her smile, her flaxen hair all gleaming,
Her movements, voice, her slender waist,
All was in Olga… but any novel
Which you might pick would probably
Contain her portrait. Charming, absolutely so;
I formerly adored it too,
But now it bores me utterly.
Permit me then, my dearest reader,
To describe to you her elder sister.

 XXIV

Her sister bore the name Tatyana.
We are the first to break the rule
With such a name in such a novel,
And willingly grace the page with it.
Why not? It has a pleasant sound,
Although inseparable from it, I know,
Are memories of long ago,
And servants quarters! We must admit
Good taste has little force with us,
And for the names we often choose,
(I will not mention here the Muse);
Enlightenment has scarcely touched us,
And from its presence we have learned
False airs only - the rest is spurned.

 XXV

And so Tatyana is her name.
She was no beauty, like her sister,
And had no roses on her cheeks
Which would attract admiring looks.
A wild thing, mournful and retiring,
Like a doe seen in a forest clearing.
In the midst of all her kith and kin
She seemed like something alien.
She could not manage a caress
With ma or pa, or a soft touch.
Herself a child, in the crowd of infants,
She had no wish to play or dance,
And often on the window sill
All day she sat, silent and still.

 XXVI
Her bosom friend, the thoughtful mind,
From early days, even from her cradle,
In the slow-flowing stream of rural calm
Enriched her dreams and made her beautiful.
Her tender fingers never knew
A needle, and leaning on the frame
She did not, with a silken pattern
Give life to dull embroidery.
A symbol of the will to rule,
The child with its tame, obedient doll
Prepares itself, albeit in play,
For the laws of tact and social nicety,
And solemnly repeats to it
Lessons from mother learnt by heart.

 XXVII

But even in these early years,
Tatyana never played with dolls
News of the town, or news of fashions
She never prattled in their ears.
And childish pranks and entertainment
Were strange to her. But fearful stories
In winter, in the gloom of night
Endeared her heart and made it bright.
And when her nanny had collected
For Olga on the spacious meadow
All her friends and little playmates,
Tatyana would not play at tig.
Their laughter was so loud and tedious
And their noisy games were merely frivolous.

 XXVIII

She loved, from her own balcony,
To anticipate the rising sun,
Whenever, from the pale horizon,
The chorus of the stars goes down,
And the edge of the earth softly lightens,
And a light wind blows, the morning's herald,
And gradually the day arises.
Or in winter, when the nightime shades
Hold sway for long o'er the one half world,
And longer in lazy quietness
In the sight of the mist-encumbered moon
The idle dawn rests in slothfulness,
At her usual time awakened from rest,
By candlelight she would rise and dress.

 XXIX

From early years novels captured her passion,
And they were now her delight in chief.
She loved the 'suspension of disbelief'
In Rousseau or in Richardson.
Her father was a decent chap,
Though somewhat fixed in a former age,
But he saw no harm in the novel's page;
And since he never read a scrap
Of anything, he thought them simple nonsense,
And never bothered himself whatever
That a secret book was his daughter's fellow,
Slumbering all night under her pillow.
His wife could only behave inanely,
For Richardson she adored insanely.

 XXX

She madly worshipped Richardson
Not that she read him, that is absurd,
Or that the hero Grandison
To Lovelace simply she preferred;
But long ago Princess Alina,
The cousin from her Moscow years
Had often to them both referred.
At that time her former husband was
Betrothed to her, but she rebelled;
She sighed and drooped for another one,
Who in her very heart and soul
Pleased her much more, much more excelled.
This Grandison was an awful dandy,
A gambler, and a sergeant in the army.

 XXXI
Like him she dressed up to the nines
Both fashionably and nattily,
But, never asking her advice
They read to her the marriage lines.
In order to dispel her grief
Her thoughtful husband quickly took her
To his estate, where she was plunged
In God knows what society.
She pined and wept at first, of course,
Nearly insisted on divorce,
Then took up household management,
Grew habituated and became content.
Habit is given us by heaven's bequest:
It is almost as good as happiness.

 XXXII
Habit, then, sweetened her agony,
For nothing else would have overcome it;
And then came a great discovery
Which reconciled her absolutely.
For, in the midst of work and leisure,
She found the secret (which gave her pleasure)
How to rule her husband autocratically,
And all else then ran sweet and smoothly.
She went about her daily tasks,
Salted the mushrooms for the winter,
Kept her accounts, shaved those recruited,
On Saturdays went to the bathhouse,
Beat a servant girl when in a fit,
And never asked what her husband thought of it.

 XXXIII

In the past she used to write in blood
In the album of some tender friend;
She called Praskovya Pauline,
And musically her speech she blended,
And wore a corset that was very tight.
Her Russian Ns were not quite right,
But pronounced like French ones, nasally.
But soon the whole lot was thrown out:
The corset, album, Princess Aline,
The book of sentimental rhymes,
She forgot them, and began instead
To use old fashioned Russian names,
And wore at last, first having sworn at it,
A quilted housecoat, and a bonnet.

 XXXIV

Her husband loved her devotedly,
And in her whims did not intrude,
He trusted her in all implicitly,
And often in a dressing gown ate his food.
Peacefully their life moved onwards;
In the evening sometimes a family
From the neighbourhood would make a visit,
They did not stand on ceremony,
But groused and exchanged the latest gossip,
And laughed at whatever took their fancy.
The time went past, then casually,
They call on Olga to prepare the tea,
Then it's supper time, then time for bed,
And the guests set off for their own homestead.

 XXXV

They had retained in their quiet existence
The habits of a gracious past;
On Shrove Tuesday they always feasted
On Russian pancakes in abundance;
And twice a year they always fasted;
They loved to sing the country rounds,
Or choruses, or songs of marriage.
At Holy Trinity, when the people
Yawn as they hear the special mass,
Emotionally they would let drop
Three tears upon the forget-me-not;
And like native air they loved their kvass.
And at the table, when dinner was served,
Due rank and custom was ever observed.

 XXXVI

And so they both grew old together.
Then opened for them at the last
The grave's dim portal, the husband first,
And he went off to meet his maker.
He died shortly before his dinner,
And was wept by all the friends and neighbours,
By his children and his faithful wife,
More pure of heart than you usually find.
He was a good man, of a simple kind,
And there, where his honoured dust now lies,
An epitaph on his headstone states:
*Dimitry Larin, a humble sinner,
Slave of the Lord, and a brigadier,
In peaceful sleep under this stone lies here.*

 XXXVII

Having returned to his household gods and home,
Vladimir Lensky paid his respects
To his neighbour's quiet memorial stone
And offered a sigh in lieu of debt;
For long his heart was filled with grief.
Alas, poor Yorick! - He said gloomily.-
He use to hold me in his arms,
And often in my childhood games
I played with the medals on his chest
He hoped that Olga and I would marry,
And often said "Will I see the day?".
And so, full of the sincerest sadness,
Vladimir sat him down and penned
A madrigal for the grave's dark end.

 XXXVIII

And there too, with a sad inscription,
To his father and mother, with tears and moan,
He honoured the patriarchal dust…
Alas! In the furrows of life's field
The swift harvest of each generation
By the secret will of providence
Springs up, and ripens, and brings its yield,
And others follow hard upon its heel…
And so our heedless tribe of today
Will grow up, will fret with fuss and bother,
Then crowd into the grave of its ancestor.
And our time too will come, will come,
As our grandchildren too, on a suitable day
Will crowd us out, though we are not ready.

 XXXIX

Therefore enjoy the fleeting hour
Of this most brittle life, good friends!
I understand its worthlessness,
And count myself little in its power;
To life's illusions I have closed my eyes,
And yet some distant hopes arise
And trouble my heart from time to time.
Without all noticeable trace
It would be hard to leave this place.
I live, I write, and not for praise,
But only because, I wish, it seems,
To add to my sorry fate some fame,
And that, like a true friend, with constancy,
One verse at least should remember me.

 XL

For then it might touch someone's heart;
And, preserved by fate for eternity,
Perhaps to Lethe will not depart
That stanza, that verse composed by me;
Perhaps also, (oh flattering hope!)
Some future dunce or nincompoop
Will point at me in a well-known portrait
And pronounce: There indeed is a poet!
Receive also my gratitude and thanks
You disciple of the peaceful muses
You, in whose memory reposes
My fleeting, transitory verse,
Whose kindly hand pats me on the shoulder,
And adjusts the laurels as I grow older.

 **Chapter Three**

She was a girl, she was in love.

*Malfilâtre*

I

"Where now then? Ah, these poetic characters!"
"Goodbye, Yevgeny, it's time. I must.."
"I do not keep you. But tell me, please,
Where do you spend your evenings now?"
" At the Larins." "Ah, there, but how strange.
Good heavens! Is it not torture fit to bust
To slaughter every evening there?"
"Not at all." "I cannot understand you.
Ah yes, I see it, what it must be
In the first place (admit it, is it true?)
A simple Russian family,
With over zealous hospitality,
Preserves and chutneys and endless prattle
About rain, about crops, and about their cattle."

 II

"I still see nothing wrong in that ."
"But tedious, that's what is wrong, my friend."
"I hate your modern, fashionable set.
Give me the home life and home circle,
Where I may…" "Ah! How pastoral!
Enough, enough. For God's sake Lensky.
Well? So you're going? What a pity.
But listen: is it impossible
For me to see this gentle Phyllida,
The object of your thoughts and pen,
Your tears, your rhymes, *et cetera*?
Introduce me." "You're joking." "Not at all."
"Gladly." "When?" "Why, now, if you have leisure.
They'll always smile and welcome us with pleasure."

 III

"Let's go then." -
 They set off rapidly,
And soon at the Larin's are ensconced.
The attentiveness at times was wearying
Of the old fashioned hospitality.
Of well known treats a plethora:
Preserves on dishes are brought in,
On a polished table then is placed
A jug with cranberry water in
. . . . . .
. . . . . .

 IV

By the shortest road on their homeward way
They hasten home at utmost speed.
And we may now eavesdrop indeed
On what these heroes have to say.
"Well then, Onegin. I see you're yawning."
"It's habit, Lensky." - "But it seems you're bored
Much more than usual." - "No. It's nothing to me.
Although in the fields it's dark, I see.
Quickly, Andryushka! Get a move on! Shift!
What stupid countryside this is, and ghastly!
But you know that Larin woman is okay,
Simple, but decent, in an old fashioned way.
But that cranberry water I rather fear
Will cost my stomach something dear.

 V

But tell me, which one was Tatyana?"
"The one who, with a face of sorrow,
And silently, just like Svetlana,
Came in and sat beside the window."
"Can it be that you really love the younger ?"
"Why not?" - "Well, it's the elder I would choose,
Being a poet, like you, and in your shoes.
That Olga has rather lifeless features,
Just like the madonna of Van Dyck,
A beautiful and round-faced creature,
Like this round moon, banal and pointless
Lying on the pointless, flat horizon."
Vladimir thought his friend was wrong,
But for the rest of the journey he held his tongue.

 VI
Meanwhile the appearance of Onegin
At the Larins, had of course produced
On all a suitable impression,
And all the neighbours were transfixed.
One surmise followed on another,
All stealthily began to mutter,
To joke, to make an errant guess,
To betroth Tatyana a new lover;
Some even stated positively
That the marriage was agreed, no less
But only put off temporarily
As modern rings were in short supply.
As for Lensky's marriage, (surely you know)
They all had agreed on it long ago.

 VII

Tatyana listened with vexation
To all this gossip, but secretly,
With inexpressible elation,
She thought on it unguardedly;
In her heart the thought had taken root;
Time passed, and she became inflamed.
Just so a seed falling on the ground
By the fire of spring sends forth its shoot.
For a long time her imagination,
Burning with emptiness and longing,
Thirsted for fatal nourishment
For a long time all her heartfelt yearning
Had constricted her young breast with pain
Her soul was waiting - waiting in vain

 VIII

For the unknown he… He came, her eyes
Were opened. It is him! she exclaimed.
Alas! Now all her nights and days,
Her solitary, feverish dreams
Were filled with him. And ceaselessly
With magic all things speak entrancingly
Of him. Then with what vexation
She listens to a voice of sympathy,
Or a servant's look with irritation
She bears though it is kind. In desolation
The visiting guests she fails to hear,
And curses their leisure and free time,
Their unexpected tedious visit
And the prolonged unending time they sit.

 IX

And now with what enhanced attention
She reads a novel and finds it sweet,
With what enchanted living passion
She imbibes the seductive, wild deceit!
Imbued with the writer's power of vision
Each novel's inspired characters
The lover of Julia, Volmar,
Malek-Adel, and de Linar,
And Werther, tortured by self-derision,
And the incomparable Grandison,
(Who unfortunately sends us to sleep),
All of them became but as one,
And the silly dreamer saw them all
Merged in Onegin, body and soul.

 X

Seeing herself as the heroine
Of all her favourite authors' works,
Clarissa, Julia, Delphine,
Tatyana in the woodland's depths
Alone with the dangerous volume roams.
She searches it through to find the tale
Of her secret passion, and her dreams,
The fruits of her overflowing heart;
She sighs, and as her own she captures
Another's griefs, another's raptures,
Then half lost, from memory she whispers
For the gentle hero a letter of passion.
But alas our hero, though somebody's son,
Was certainly never a Grandison.

 XI

Having elevated his style with solemn fuss,
In the past, the hot-brained author of fiction
Always presented his hero to us
As an icon of absolute perfection.
His darling character he endowed
(One ever unjustly persecuted)
With a sensitive soul and intelligence,
And a most attractive charming face.
With purest passion burnt his desire,
And always with rapture flamed his heart,
And he readied himself for sacrifice fire;
But when you reached the final part
Evil was punished and always put down,
While good was rewarded with a worthy crown.

 XII

But now our minds are doused in fogs,
Morality induces the dumps,
Vice is quite pleasant even in books,
And there of course at last it triumphs.
The tales of the Britannic muse
Disturb the slumber of the young girl,
And now her hero and her idol
Becomes the Vampire, prone to brood,
Or Melmot, the gloomy wanderer,
Or the eternal Jew, or the Corsair,
Or the mysterious Jean Sbogar.
Lord Byron with a successful ruse
Has clothed in dark romanticism
The fallen idol of egoism.

 XIII

But friends, why should I ramble on?
Perhaps it is the will of heaven
My days of poetry are gone,
And a new demon inhabits me.
So, spurning the threats of the god Apollo,
I will descend to humble prose,
An old type novel I will compose
To occupy my sunset cheer.
No villain's hidden agony
Will I depict, with fear and menacing,
But simply I will tell the tale
Of the traditions of a Russian family,
The dreams of love bewitched with gold,
And the customs of our antique world.

 XIV

I will recount the simple speech
Of a father or an aged uncle,
The youngsters' carefully planned meetings
By an old lime tree, or by a stream;
The pains of miserable jealousy,
Parting, the tears of making up,
Again they quarrel, but in the end
I'll lead them happily to the altar.
I remember words uttered in sweet bliss
The utterance of passionate longing
Which, in days remote from this,
Beside my gorgeous lover's feet
Came tripping to me on the tongue:
But that was in days when I was young.

 XV

Tatyana, poor Tatyana, dearest!
My tears for you cannot now abate;
Into the hands of a fashionable monster
You have given yourself, trusted your fate.
You will perish, my dearest, but before that,
Blinded by dazzling, searing hope,
You will call upon each dark delight,
You will know life's agony, and its bliss,
You will drink the sweet poison of desire,
While dreams pursue you everywhere,
Imagining that in each place you see
Arbours where lovers meet happily;
And everywhere there stands before you
Your fateful tempter who is not true.

 XVI

The pain of love engulfs her utterly,
To the garden she goes, where she may pine…
Her eyes are downcast suddenly
And moving forward becomes a pain.
Her breast is heaving, while her cheeks
Are covered with an instant flame,
The breath is frozen on her lips,
A roar in her ears, her eyes near blinded…
Then night comes on, the moon patrols
On sentry duty the vault of heaven,
And a nightingale in the woodland gloom
Intones its rich, resounding tune.
Tatyana in darkness lies awake,
And quietly with her nanny starts to speak.

 XVII

"I can't sleep, nanny. It's so stifling!
Open the window, sit by me and rest." -
"What is it Tanya? What troubles you, dearest?" -
"I'm bored. Let's talk about times past." -
"About what, Tanya? There was a time
When I remembered reams and reams
Of old time legends and old fables
Of evil spirits and lovely maidens;
But now Tanya, so much is faded
All that I knew is forgotten, dark.
Yes, the bad times have done their work!
My memory is gone…" - "Nanny, tell me
About those years so long ago:
Were you in love? I want to know."-

 XVIII

"Ah, Tanya! How could you! So long ago
We never heard the word of love.
My mother-in-law, good lord above
Would have driven me quite to damnation." -
"But how then, nanny, were you wed?" -
"God wished it so. And my good Vanya
Was younger than me, dearest Tanya,
And I had reached only thirteen years.
For two weeks the matchmaker came here
To my parents, and in the end
My father blessed me, gave his consent
Bitterly I wept and cried in fear,
And weeping, they loosed my girlish hair,
And led me to the church with songs and cheer.

 XIX

And so I was brought to a strange family…
But my dear, you are not listening to me…" -
"Ah, nanny, nanny, my heart is breaking,
I'm sick, my dearest nanny, dearest,
I want to cry, I want to sob!…" -
"My little one, you are not well;
Oh save us! Aid us, Lord above!
What do you want? Just say the word.
Let me just sprinkle holy water.
You're all in fever." - "I am not ill;
I'm… you know, nanny… I am in love." -
"My little one! Oh Lord, please save us!"
Then over the girl, while muttering a prayer
Her decrepit hand made a cross in the air.

 XX

"I am in love", - whispered Tatyana again,
With grief in her voice, to the ancient woman.
"My sweetest dear, you are unwell." -
"Oh leave me nanny. I'm in love, in love."
Meanwhile the sad moon from above
Shone down and languidly illuminated
Tatyana's wan and pallid beauty,
And, hanging down, her tired, limp hair,
And her tear drops, and sitting on the chair
In front of our young heroine,
A kerchief bound around her head,
In a long warm jacket, the old beldame.
And all in the stillness was in a swoon
Under the inspiration of the moon.

 XXI

Tatyana, gazing at the moon,
Was carried in thought far, far away…
Then suddenly an idea inside was sown…
"Go now, nanny, leave me alone;
But bring me some paper and a pen,
And move this table, I'll soon lie down;
Goodnight." And now, locked in seclusion,
Everything is silent. The moon gives light.
Leaning on her elbow Tatyana writes,
And Yevgeny is ever on her mind,
And in a simple, natural letter
There breathes a love of girlish innocence.
The letter is finished, folded, sealed.
For whom Tatyana? All will be revealed.

 XXII
I have known beauties unapproachable,
Icy and pure as winter's self,
Inviolable and untouchable,
Inaccessible to our mental vision;
I marvelled at their modish arrogance,
And all their inbred worthiness,
And gave them a wide berth, I must confess
Reading, with horror, (did I dream it so?)
The motto of Hades on their brow:
*Abandon hope all ye who enter.*
To inspire love for them is disaster,
But to frighten away the greatest joy.
Perhaps you too, on Neva's shores
Have seen such charming dinosaurs.

 XXIII

Surrounded by obedient devotees
Yet other freaks I have also seen,
Indifferent in their egotism
To sighs of passion, praise and flatteries.
Yet what, with astonishment did I find?
They all, with the fiercest of intent,
Frightening off love's timid sallies,
Were able to bring it back again;
At least, the pretence of sympathy,
At least, it seemed to me, their voices
At times rang out more tenderly,
And with foolish, gullible blindness
The young lover, once more into the fray,
Runs after the sweet bundle of vanity.

 XXIV

Why should we count Tatyana more guilty?
Is it that, in her gentle simplicity,
She does not know the wiles of deceit
And believes in her dream implicitly?
Or that she loves without design and art,
Obedient to the promptings of her heart,
And that she is so trusting, honest,
And that from heaven she has been blest
With an unruly, wild imagination,
With quickness, and a lively mind,
And a heart that's passionate, yet kind?
Surely you can forgive her this,
Her irresponsible and ardent bliss?

 XXV

A flirt would say cold-bloodedly:
Tatyana loves too seriously,
And gives herself without restraint
To love, like a child, so simplistically.
She does not say: Let's put him off -
That way love's value we'll increase,
And wind him more firmly in the mesh;
Firstly we'll arouse his vanity,
With hope, then with perplexity
And doubt we'll rack his heart, until
With the fire of jealousy well revive his will;
Otherwise, bored with easy delights,
The cunning captive from his chains will be gone,
Being perpetually ready to cut and run.

 XXVI

Already I foresee a difficulty:
Anxious to preserve my country's reputation,
I must of course, without hesitation,
Translate Tatyana's letter fully.
Alas, she knew Russian rather badly,
And did not read our Mirror and Sun,
And expressed herself somewhat awkwardly
In the language of her mother tongue.
And so, she wrote in French, of course…
What can you do?! I repeat again:
Till now the love affairs of women
Have not been well expressed in Russian;
Till now our language, haughty and proud,
For letter writing has been too loud.

 XXVII

I know: they now wish to compel women
To read in Russian. But horror indeed!
Could I ever really come to imagine them
With '*The Loyalist Telegraph*' in their hands?
I call on you, my fellow poets,
Is it not true: those darling creatures,
For whom for all your sins (and worse)
You secretly wrote romantic verse,
To whom your heart was consecrated,
Did they not all, when using Russian,
Which they mastered feebly and with difficulty,
Produce such charming infelicity,
That on their lips a foreign tongue
Became converted into their very own.

 XXVIII

God grant I never meet at the ball,
Or, when departing, on the entrance steps,
With a female scholar in a yellow shawl,
Or with an academician in a bonnet!
Like rosy lips without a smile
Without its ration of mistakes
The Russian language does not beguile
Or charm me. Perhaps, alas, alas,
Beauties of the coming generation,
Heeding the journals' dissertations,
To grammar will accustom us at last
And poetry will be their occupation.
But for me… I sing no song of praise:
I will be true to old fashioned ways

 XXIX

Inaccurate and careless chattering,
Or incorrect pronunciation,
As formerly, produce a tingling
Within my heart, a sweet sensation.
I cannot repent, I have not the strength,
For gallicisms will always me bewitch,
Like the sins of my wild youth, now distant,
Or like the verses of Bogdanovitch.
But enough. It is time to give ear and listen
To the letter of my charming beauty;
I gave my word, but really and truly,
I am virtually ready to recant.
I know gentle Parny is no longer read,
His pen and his style are all but dead.

 XXX

Singer of feasts and heartfelt sadness,
If you had still been with me now,
I would, with an audacious request,
My dearest friend, seek to trouble you:
That into verse that would amaze us
You would translate, from that young girl,
All of her foreign words and phrases.
Where are you? Come. It is your right,
I acknowledge it with deference…
But in the midst of cliffs so mournful,
His heart unaccustomed now to the heights,
Alone, under a distant, Finnish horizon
He wanders, and his soul abandons me
To my trouble and my importunity.

 XXXI

Tatyana's letter is now before me;
I keep it as a holy treasure,
I read it with a sense of mystery,
And cannot fully take its measure.
Who can have inspired her to this tenderness?
This lovely carelessness of words?
Who taught her this overwrought emotion,
The speech of the heart, almost absurd,
So attractive, yet so full of danger.
I do not understand it. Yet here I give you
An incomplete and weak translation,
From a living picture a pale imitation,
Or a work of Weber murdered by
A pupil whose fingers lack subtlety.

 *Tatyana's letter to Onegin.*

I write this to you - what more can be said?
What more can I add to that one fact?
For now I know it is in your power
To punish me contemptuously for this act.
But you, keeping for my unhappy lot
Even one drop of sympathy
Will not entirely abandon me.
At first I wished to remain silent;
Believe me, my shame, my agony,
You never ever would have heard.
As long as hope remained preserved
That rarely, even once a week,
I'd see you in our country house,
To hear your voice, to hear you speak,
To say a few words, and then, and then
To think, and think, and think again
All day, all night, until the next meeting.

But it is said you are unsociable,
And in this backwater all is tedious to you,
While we… well here we shine at nothing,
Although we're glad to welcome you.

Why did you come to visit us?
In this forgotten rural home
Your face I never would have known
Nor known this bitter suffering.
The fever of inexperience
In time (who can tell?) would have died down,
And I'd have found another lover,
Dear to my heart, to whom I'd be true,
And a loving wife, and virtuous mother.

Another!… No, no one on this earth
Is there to whom I'd give my heart!
That is ordained by highest fate…
That is heaven's will - that I am yours;
My life till now was but a pledge,
Of meeting with you, a forward image;
You were sent by heaven of that I'm sure,
To the grave itself you are my saviour…
In dreams you have appeared to me,
Though yet unseen, I held you dear,
Your glance and strangeness tortured me,
To my soul your voice was loud and clear
From long ago… It was not a dream!
You came, and I knew that very instant,
I was struck dumb, my heart flared up,
And in my thoughts said "He is the one!"
Is it not true? I heard you often:
In the silence did you not speak to me,
Both when I helped the poor, and when
With prayer I sought to ease and soften
The pain inside my anguished head?
And at this very moment, is it not you,
Oh sweetest, lovely vision who
In the night's transparency flits by
And quietly nestles by the bed's head?
And you, who with love and rapturously
Whispered a word of hope to me?

Who are you, my guardian angel?
Or a wily devil, a tempter fatal?
Disperse these doubts, this agony.
Perhaps all this is nothingness,
A foolish mind's self-aberration,
And something other is fate's decree…
So be it! Whatever my destiny,
To you I give it from this day,
Before you the tears roll down my cheek,
And your protection I beseech…
For consider: here I am alone,
No one understands what I say,
My reason tortures me every day,
And silently I am doomed to perish.
You I await: With a single glance
Revive the hope that's in my heart,
Cut short this heavy dream I cherish,
Deserving, I know, reproach and scorn.

I finish - I tremble to read it through,
With shame and terror my heart sinks low,
But your honour is my guarantee
And to that I entrust my destiny.

 XXXII

Tatyana is now sighing, now aching,
The letter in her hand is shaking;
The rosy coloured sealing strip
Dries on her tongue's red burning tip.
Her head towards her neck hangs down,
Her light and flimsy dressing gown
Slips lower on her charming shoulder…
But now from the moon's bright silver gleam
The radiance dies. Here a valley
Shines in the mist. And there a stream
Turns all to silver; the shepherd's pipe
Wakes up the village from its dream.
Morning is here, all long ago are dressed,
But for my Tatyana there can be no rest.

 XXXIII

She does not notice the rosy dawn,
And sitting with her head held low
She does not on the folded letter
With her engraved signet press it down.
Now, quietly opening the door,
Old grey-haired Fillipevna enters
Bringing the tea upon a tray.
"It's time, my child, wake up, arise;
But you, my darling, are up already!
My little early bird, my own!
Last night how much you worried me!
But, Lord be praised, you're well, I see!
Of last night's pain there is no trace,
Your colour is like a poppy's face."

 XXXIV

"Ah, nanny, nanny, do help me, please."
"Of course my darling, just tell me what."
"Don't think… truly… nanny, you must not
Suspect me… You see… Ah, do not refuse!"
"My friend, my sweet, as God is holy…"
"Well, send your grandson, secretly,
With this letter, to O… to that one…
Our neighbour… But tell him, do,
About this task he must keep mum,
And that he must not mention me…"
"To whom, my dear. Who must receive it?
For now I'm somewhat slow of wit.
All round we have so many neighbours,
How could I even count their numbers?"

 XXXV

"Nanny, you could not guess a thing!"
"My dearest friend, I'm old, you know,
Old, dear Tanya, my mind is slow;
Time was, when I knew everything,
Time was, the mistress' wishes, yes…"
"Ah, nanny, nanny, what is all this?
Why should I need what's in the past?
Can't you see, this letter, it must go
To Onegin." - "Ah, of course, of course.
Do not be angry, sweetest girl,
My mind does not grasp these things, you know…
But why are you again so pale?"
"It's nothing nanny, I'm feeling better.
Send off your grandson with the letter."

 XXXVI

The day wore on, but brought no reply ;
Another followed, but still no sign.
Pale as a shadow, dressed from early morn,
Tatyana waits: when will this all end?
Then Olga's admirer came riding by.
"Tell me now, where is your friend?"
The old dame of the house addressed him.
"He seems to have given us the miss."
Tatyana blushed and trembled in suspension.
"He said that he would visit you today,"
Said Lensky to the old dear in reply,
"But evidently the post caused some delay."
Tatyana was downcast at what she heard.
For she sensed a reproach in every word.

 XXXVII

Dusk fell, and on the table, gleaming,
Stood the hissing samovar for the evening,
The Chinese teapot stood on it warming,
And underneath the steam was swirling.
Poured out by Olga's steady hand
In a dark stream, into each cup,
The tea streamed out fragrant and bland,
And with cream a young boy topped it up.
Tatyana stood before the window,
Breathing upon the frozen pane,
So pensive she was, my pet, my sparrow,
And with her finger, light as rain,
Wrote on the glass (which was all misty)
The cherished monogram, O and E.

 XXXVIII

But all the time her heart was aching,
Her languid eyes were full of tears.
Suddenly hooves!… Her blood froze.
Nearer they came! They are galloping!
Yevgeny is here! "Ah!" Swift as a shadow
Tatyana hastens to another entrance,
From porch, to yard, to garden in one go,
She flies, she flies, and a backward glance
She dare not make. In a flash she passes,
Flowerbeds, pathways, pool and copse,
An alley to the lake, and then traverses
A lilac grove, some of which she breaks,
Over the borders to the stream she runs
And panting, gasping, to the bench she comes

 XXXIX

And falls…
… "He's here! Ah me! Yevgeny!
Oh God! What must he think of me!"
Her heart, full of the deepest agony
Preserves still a dark dream of desire.
She trembles, and she burns with fire,
And waits: Is this him? But she cannot hear.
The servant girls within the garden
Who pick the raspberries from the bushes
Are singing the customary choruses
(Master's command it is, so then
His fruit will not be slyly eaten,
Devoured by their cunning lips,
Instead, with song they'd be occupied,
A scheme by rural wit devised).

 *The girls' song.*

Come maidens, daughters beautiful,
Darlings, sweetest lassies all,
Enjoy yourselves, you lovely ones,
Make sport here, all you dearest girls,
Strike up a song, untwine your curls,
A fetching song, a cherished one,
Let's tempt a young man to our circle,
To our chorus and our song.
And when the young man is enticed,
And when we see him in the distance,
Let's surround him in a trice,
Pelt him with cherries from our hands,
With cherries and with raspberries,
And the red currants ripe and ruddy.
How dare you eavesdrop, bold young lad
Upon our songs sung from the heart,
How dare you look and take a part,
In maidens' games which make us glad.

 XL

And so they sang, but paying scant heed
To the singers' fair, resounding song
Tatyana waited with apprehension,
Hoping her heart's beating would subside,
And that her flaming cheeks would cool.
But still the tumult was in her breast,
And still the fire upon her cheeks,
Fiercer and fiercer it only burns…
Just as a butterfly twists and turns,
Beating the rainbows of its wings
Captured by some schoolboy cheat.
Or as a hare trembles among the beet
Suddenly in the distance glimpsing
A hunter within the bushes slinking.

 XLI

But finally she heaves a sigh,
And from the bench gets up to walk,
Turns round and almost immediately
Directly in front of her, in the alley,
Onegin stands, his eyes ablaze,
In the likeness of a thundery haze,
And, as though burned by the lightning's hand,
She stops and rooted to the ground she stands.
But the sequel to this rendezvous
So unexpected, good readers, not today
Have I the strength to narrate to you.
After such toilsome oratory
I must relax and have some wine:
Somehow I'll finish it in my own good time.

 **Chapter Four**

Morality is part of the nature of things.
*Necker.*

 I. (II. III. IV. V. VI. VII. )

The less we show our love to a woman,
Or please her less, and neglect our duty,
The more we trap and ruin her surely
In the flattering toils of philandery.
For, as usual, cold blooded, lechery
Obtains its fame from the science of love,
Always trumpeting to the skies above,
Enjoying itself without a heart.
But this most solemn, serious pastime,
Was fit for baboons of long ago,
Such as were praised in grandad's time:
The fame of Lovelace is withered now,
Along with the fame of scarlet shoes
And wigs which up to the ceiling rose.

 VII

Who is not bored with acting a part,
Repeating with variation the same old thing,
Striving solemnly to assert
A fact known to all from long ago,
To listen to the same tedious objections,
Do battle with rooted convictions,
Such as never were and never have been
Even in a young girl who's just thirteen!
Who is not exhausted by threats,
Cajollings, swearings, pretended passion,
Notes six pages long (all the fashion),
Deceits, back biting, slanders, tears,
The supervision of aunts and mother,
And the heavy friendship of the husband of one's lover!

 IX

Such were the thoughts of my Yevgeny.
For, from the days of his first youth
He was the victim of wildest fancy,
Unbridled passions for him were truth.
Spoiled by life's usual encounters,
For a time some girl would enchant his heart,
But then another would be disenchanting,
How wearisome the slow pain of desire,
But how wearisome too the successful fire;
He heard in the tumult and in silence too
The unending protests in his soul,
And stifled a yawn with an idle laugh:
And so he slaughtered eight years at least
Life's best flowers squandering at a barren feast.

 X

From lovely beauties he already felt distant,
But dragged after them for routine's sake.
A refusal - he was consoled in an instant,
A betrayal - he was glad his thirst to slake.
He sought them all with no sign of rapture,
And, without regret, evaded capture,
Scarcely remembering their love or hate.
In the same way an indifferent guest
Arrives for an evening game of whist,
Sits down, and plays till the game is done,
Then from the courtyard he hurries home,
And easily in his chair he snoozes,
Yet in the morning he knows not whose is
The house he will visit in the evening gloom.

 XI

But, having received Tatyana's letter
Onegin was touched to his heart's core:
The language of innocent, girlish dreams
Stirred up a swarm of thoughts within him,
And he remembered Tatyana's charms,
Her pale colour and look of melancholy,
And in delightful, harmless folly
He plunged head first and filled his soul.
Perhaps, the ageing flames of passion
Took hold of him, after a fashion;
Even so he had no wish to mislead
The trusting heart of an innocent girl.
So we to the garden must wing our flight
Where Tatyana is already within sight.

 XII

For two minutes they both were silent,
Then Onegin walked up to her and said
«You wrote to me, do not deny it.
Your letter I have. In it I read
The confession of a heart all trusting,
And innocent love's sincere outpouring;
Your openness is to me most dear.
It brought to life, to agitation,
My feelings, long since mute and sere.
Yet I do not wish to make compliments;
Your sincerity I will repay
With just such an artless declaration ;
Receive my confession, frank and true:
I place myself in judgement before you.

 XIII

If ever my life by the domestic round
I wish to limit, or circumscribe,
If ever to be a husband, father,
My happy fortune should command;
Or if ever the picture of family
Should hold me for but one moment's space,
- Then, truly, except for you alone
I would seek no other for a wife.
I will speak without embellishment:
If ever I found my heart's ideal
Then surely on you my choice would fall
As companion of all my mournful days,
A token of all that's beautiful,
And would have been happy… were it possible.

 XIV

But I was not born for happiness;
It is foreign to this tortured mind;
Your perfections are so much nothingness
To me, I am of the unworthy kind.
Believe me (my conscience is here guarantor),
As spouses we would suffer agony,
For, however much I adored you first,
Custom would cool me instantly.
Then you would weep, but all your tears
Would leave unmoved my stony heart
And only serve to enrage it more.
Judge then, what roses, what a part
Hymen prepares for us to play,
Perhaps, for day after tedious day .

 XV

For what in the world is worse than this:
A family, where the poor, neglected wife,
Complaining of her husband's turpitude,
Spends days and nights in solitude;
While the pestiferous man, knowing her worth,
(And cursing the hour of his birth),
Is ever gloomy, silent, sour,
Thunderous, angry, and jealously chill.
Such am I. Did you seek me, really, truly,
You with your pure and ardent mind,
When, with such artless simplicity,
Your letter disclosed to me your will?
Can it be that a lot so full of hate
Is appointed to you by the stern hand of fate?

 XVI

There is no return of dreams or years;
I cannot replace my soul with another,
I love you with the love of a brother,
And, possibly, even more tenderly.
So hear me, without rage or tears:
For a young girl there are always changes;
As one set of dreams replaces the last,
Like a tree which all its leaves exchanges
And re-clothes itself with each new spring.
For such is the fate that the heavens bring.
You will love again, but yet, but yet…
Learn self control, and do not forget,
Not all will understand you as I, or read you,
Inexperience to calamity can often lead you.

 XVII

So preached Yevgeny to the girl.
She, through her tears, saw nothing at all,
Scarce breathing, without protestation,
Tatyana listened to the explanation.
He gave his arm to her. Then sadly,
(Or, as it is said, *mechanically*),
Tatyana silently leaned upon it,
Her dejected head cast down and heavy.
They returned to the house by the orchard path,
Appearing together at the garden door,
And no one thought it cause for censure.
For country freedom has its conventions
And pleasant rules for all to follow,
As haughty Moscow has also.

 XVIII

You would agree, my reader, surely,
That our friend Yevgeny has behaved
With sad Tatyana sympathetically:
Not for the first time did he here reveal
His soul's innate nobility,
Although the world's inveterate spite
Would castigate him mercilessly:
His friends, not to mention his enemies,
(They are perhaps the self same thing),
Showed him respect off-handedly.
Everyone has enemies, it's true,
But from our friends, dear God, I shudder!
These friends, these friends, ah me! Ah me!
I do not invoke them dispassionately.

 XIX

What is this? Well, well. I merely scatter
Empty, dark, gloomy imaginings;
*In parenthesis* I choose to utter
That there is no base, contemptible slander
Invented by a liar in a garret
And nurtured by the worldly throng,
Nor stupid gossip of any sort,
Nor epigram from a market trader,
Which a friend with a smile would not repeat
In a circle of respectable people,
Without any evil plan or intent,
One hundred times, with some adornment.
But of course he stands by you through thick and thin:
He loves you so… like your next of kin!

 XX

Yes, yes, my noble reader, listen:
Are all your kinsfolk healthy and well?
Allow me then: perhaps, with pleasure,
You'll hear me recite in fullest measure
What exactly is meant by having 'relations'.
Well, relations are the sort of folks
Whom we feel obliged always to pamper,
To love, and to respect them heartily,
And, by the customs of the world,
To visit them at Christmas-tide,
Or at the very least send them a card,
So that, for all the rest of the year
They need not think of us any more…
And so, god grant them years by the score!

 XXI

But the love of a tender, beautiful Miss
Is more certain than that of kin, or friend:
For even amidst life's bustling fuss
Your sway will never come to an end.
Of course it is so. But fashion's whirlwind,
Nature's capricious wilfulness
And changing opinions in society's stream:
The gentle sex is lighter than feathers.
Besides, the opinions of her man,
By the wife who's virtuous and good,
Will be respected in all weathers.
Except that the most faithful woman
Is prone to a sudden infatuation:
Thus love is always the sport of Satan.

 XXII

Whom then should one love? Whom should one trust?
Whom alone in the world may we trust not to trick?
Who measures all speeches and all actions
Conveniently by our own yardstick?
Who does not with slanders round enmesh us?
Who carefully nurtures our frailty?
For whom are our vices mere amusement?
Who never is bored by our company?
You energetic chaser of mirages,
Waste not your labour all in vain,
But love yourself, yourself alone,
Most worthy reader of these pages.
A more fitting object than which, I'm sure,
Or more gently amiable, you could never discover

 XXIII

What was the sequel to their meeting?
Alas, it is not difficult to guess.
The frantic pain of violent love
Did not cease to agitate and oppress
With quenchless longing her young breast.
Indeed, far worse, with cheerless desire
Wretched Tatyana is on fire,
And sleep deserts her bed completely.
Health, life's colour and its sweetness,
Her smile and girlish serene calm
Quite disappeared, as empty sound,
And fair Tatyana's youth then faded;
Just as the storm clouds often slay
The scarcely breathing new born day.

 XXIV

Alas, Tatyana withers, alters,
Grows pale, grows silent, perishes!
Nothing at all seems to distract her,
Or fill her soul with living wishes.
Shaking their heads most solemnly,
The neighbours whisper to each other:
'Tis time, 'tis time for wedding bells!…
But enough, enough. For I must swiftly
Brighten and enliven this gloomy scene
With a picture of a love that's happy.
Although, dear reader, I confess,
Pity has taken control of me.
Forgive me, for I am quite crazy
With dear Tatyana, and her looks amaze me.

 XXV

But from hour to hour and most devotedly,
Entranced with his Olga's youth and beauty,
Vladimir to the sweet captivity
Gave up his spirit absolutely.
He was always with her. And in her room
They sit together in the darkness;
Then to the garden, hand in hand
They stroll out in the early morn.
And what else then? In finest rapture
Embarrassed and with tender modesty
He only dares most hesitantly,
Encouraged by a smile from her
To fondle a curl that has gone astray,
Or with the hem of her dress to kiss and play

 XXVI

Then sometimes he would read to Olga
A novel that was morally supreme,
In which the author knows more of nature
Than ever was known by Chateaubriand.
In the course of which, two or three pages,
(Trifling nonsense, fairy tales,
But unsuitable for younger girls)
He would pass over with a blush.
Then far away from all, retreating,
Around the chess board they would sit
Their elbows on the table leaning,
And deeply then their brows would knit,
And Lensky would falsely take a rook,
An air of abstraction in his look.

 XXVII

If he returned home, - even at home,
Olga would occupy his mind.
The ephemeral pages of an album
He painted diligently for her sake.
Here it would be a rural landscape,
A temple of Venus, or a grave's cross,
Or a dove seated upon a lyre
Lightly painted with pen and brush;
Or on a page of old remembrances,
Beneath others' lines and signatures,
He would indite some tender verses,
The silent memorial of his dreams,
From a fleeting thought a lasting rhyme,
Unchanging through the swift years of time.

 XXVIII

Of course, quite often you will have seen
The album of a provincial Miss,
In which all friends set daub and scribble
At the beginning, the end, and in the middle.
In defiance of good writing, there you'll find
Unmetrical verses, by old tradition
As a sign of true friendship written,
With lines too short or else too long.
On the first page you'll discover this:
*Qu'ecrirez-vous sur ces tablettes?* (1)
And the signature: *t. a. v. Annette;* (2)
On the last page the following you'll find:
*Whose love for you is more than mine is,
Let them write on a page that's after this.*

(1) What will you write in this album?

(2) t.a.v. = tout a vous, all my love.

 XXIX

And here, without a doubt, you'll find
Two hearts, some flowers and a torch;
And here a vow you'll surely read
Of eternal love to the grave's dark porch.
Some army poet will here have written
A careless verse full of irony.
In such an album, my reader friends,
I confess that I also write willingly,
In my heart of hearts being quite convinced
That every line of my zealous nonsense
Will be scanned with a well-meaning eye
And that thereafter, with no evil smile,
It will not be solemnly debated
Whether wittily or not it was created.

 XXX

But you, the odd and suspect volumes
From hidden regions underground,
Albums magnificently bound,
The torment of many a rhyming dandy,
You, all adorned so sumptuously
By the brush of the magician Tolstoy,
Or Baratinsky's noble pen,
May heaven's lightning blast you utterly!
The fashionable damsel, when
She hands to me her own *in-quarto*,
Sees not the spite and rage which shakes me,
And that a biting epigram
In my soul's depths seethes with gall.
For she requires a madrigal!

 XXXI

No madrigals does Lensky write
In the album of young Olga now;
His pen breathes love and love again,
And does not sparkle with cold delight.
Whatever he hears, whatever notices
About his Olga, he then indites:
And full of living, truthful passion,
Full many an elegy he can fashion.
Thus you, inspired Yazikov, also,
In the outpourings of your burning heart
Sing god knows who and god knows what,
And the line of noble elegies
Will tell, at some far distant date
The entire story of your fate.

 XXXII

But quieter! Listen. The critic stern
Commands that we must all abandon
The wretched crown of elegy,
And to the band of poet brothers
He shouts: «Do stop this awful squawking,
This perpetual, unchanging mawkishness,
Moaning of what is past and gone,
Enough of it! Sing something else!» -
«You are right, indeed, in showing to us
The trumpet, dagger, and actor's mask,
And the treasures of dead genius
From wherever we may you bid recreate:
Is it not so, friend?» - «Not at all. Not so! Not so!
Write only odes for me, gentlemen, do,

 XXXIII

As they were written in the glorious times,
For odes were established long ago…»
«So, only majestic odes will do!
Enough, my friend, does it really matter?
Remember what the satirist said!
Is the sneering poet of 'Strange styles'
Really more bearable, as you declare,
Than today's more solemn versifiers?» -
«But those elegaics are so trifling:
Their aim is pitifully sparse
Whereas the ode soars to the skies,
A noble thing…» Here, possibly,
I could challenge you, but I will not set
Two ages to quarrel with each other yet.

 XXXIV

A disciple of fame and freedom's road,
In the turmoil of his raging heart,
Vladimir would even have written an ode,
But Olga would have ignored his art.
It could be that many a tearful poet
Has read to his lovely maiden's brow
His latest ballads. They say that, than this,
No greater delight in the world exists.
And indeed, the modest lover is happy
Who reads the works of imagination
To the subject of his songs and passion,
A beauty who swoons most languidly.
Happy is he… though, she well might be
More swayed by other frivolity.

 XXXV

But my own meditations' harvest
And amusements set to harmony
I read only to my ancient nanny,
The friend and companion of my youth.
Or, after a long tedious dinner
A neighbour arriving accidentally
I seize and hold by his jacket collar,
In a corner stifling him with tragedy.
Or else (joking aside I say this)
Worn out by anguish and by rhyme,
And wandering beside my favourite lakes,
I startle a flock of ducks or drakes:
For, hearing my sweet-sounding minstrelsy
They rise from the shore and hastily flee.

 XXXVI. XXXVII

But what of Onegin? Good point, my friend!
I ask for your forbearance now,
For his routine and his daily round
I will describe methodically.
Onegin lived like an anchorite:
At seven a.m. he rose in summer,
Then started off, being lightly clad
To the river that ran beneath the hill,
Then Gulnare's singer he would emulate,
And swam a miniature Hellespont.
Then coffee he drank (he had time to kill),
Reading a rather low brow paper,
Then he dressed… et cetera, et cetera…

 XXXVIII. XXXIX

Strolling, reading, dreaming, sleeping,
The shade of woods and babble of streams,
From a fair skinned dark-eyed peasant lass
Occasionally a fresh and vibrant kiss;
A spirited horse, to the bit attentive,
A dinner sufficiently whimsical,
Some wine that sparkled in the bottle,
And solitude, and quietness:
His life was as in a monastery,
And to its charms, insensibly,
He yielded, and the fine summer days
He did not count up through idleness,
His friends and life in the city forgetting
Nor the boredom of idle amusements regretting.

 XL

But the summer in these northern parts
Of southern winters is a caricature,
It flashes and is gone: this is known for sure,
Though we do not admit it in our hearts.
The sky already breathed autumn's breath,
Already the sun shone infrequently,
The day became shorter noticeably,
The mysteries of the woodland shade
With melancholy leaf-rustle were laid bare,
On the fields the mist lay everywhere.
Of geese a cackling caravan
Stretched far to the south: and then came near
That boring time that we all remember,
Already at the gateway stood - November!

 XLI

The dawn arises in a chilly gloom;
The noise of men in the stubble field working
Is gone. Then with his hungry she-wolf
The wolf comes out on the highway lurking.
A highway horse, catching the scent,
Snorts - then the wary traveller
Gallops up the hillside in frantic haste.
The herdsman in the morning light
Leads not the cows from the cosy barn;
At noontime into the sheltered pen
His silent horn calls not the herd.
Inside the hut a peasant girl, singing
Spins wool, and a constant friend of winter
Crackles beside her, the wooden splinter.

 XLII

Already the frosts and frozen noses
Bite hard, and the fields are silvery…
(The reader now expects the rhyme 'roses')
Well, here it is then, seize it avidly!)
Finer than modish parquet flooring
The river gleams, all clothed in ice.
A crowd of boys, their spirits soaring,
Noisily cut it with their skates.
On its red webbed feet a heavy goose
Thinking to sail on the water's breast
Steps carefully upon the ice,
And slithers, and falls. Then comes to rest,
Glittering and twisting, winter's first snow,
Falling like stars on the shores below.

 XLIII

In the depths how does one pass this season?
By taking a stroll? But the country then
Inevitably bores the pants off us
With its nakedness so monotonous.
By galloping full tilt on the open plain?
But the horse, alas, with its blunted shoe,
Grips on the ice most unsteadily,
And any moment it will surely throw you .
So should you sit in your empty study
Reading Walter Scott or perhaps Voltaire?
No good? - Then do your accounts and stare,
Be moody, or drink, and the evening so gloomy
Will pass somehow, tomorrow and tomorrow,
And splendidly you will live through winter's sorrow.

 XLIV

Onegin as a true Childe Harolde
Gave in to serious idleness:
In the morning he sits in bath ice cold,
And afterwards in pensiveness
Alone, in serious thought engrossed,
He arms himself with a billiard cue,
And then with two balls or three at most
He plays at billiards with the first morning dew.
Evening descends on the countryside,
Billiards is forgotten, the cue set aside,
Beside the hearth the table is laid,
Yevgeny waits: and here is Lensky
Driving a troika of roan horses,
Bring in the dinner with four courses!

 XLV

Moet et Chandon, or Cliquot
That heavenly beverage of Champagne
In a chilled bottle for the poet
Is brought and set upon the table.
It sparkles as true Hippocrene,
And by its froth and foam and bubble
(Like this and that, or seeing double)
I was held captive: to obtain it,
Often I gave my final copper.
Do you remember friends? For with it,
From its enchanting stream of fun
Were born full many a string of puns
So many jokes, and verses in reams
And strife, and sleep and happy dreams.

 XLVI

But with its noisy, frothy ways
To my stomach now it is a traitor,
And *Bordeaux*, reasonable and staid
Is my preferred drink nowadays.
I cannot take a glass of bubbly,
Champagne to me is like a mistress,
Sparkling, heedless and vivacious,
Headstrong, but full of emptiness …
But you, Bordeaux, are like a friend
Through grief and through calamity
A steady comrade, to the end
Ready to serve us faithfully
And share our hours of quiet leisure.
Long live Bordeaux, our friend, our treasure!

 XLVII

The fire died down; thinly through ash
The glowing coal was sparsely seen;
In a scarcely noticeable stream
The heat twirls round, and the warm hearth
Is barely alive. Smoke from their pipes
In the chimney rises. A bright glass
On the table bubbles with champagne.
And the evening darkness now descends …
(I love the chat together of friends,
And the glass of wine so amiable
Around that time which the French call
'Between a dog and wolf' (how droll),
Yet why I love it I cannot tell.)
Now our friends are chatting under its spell.

 XLVIII

«Well, how are the neighbours? How's Tatyana?
And your lively Olga, how is she?» -
«Give me another glass, a finger…
Enough, old chap… All the family
Are well, and send their greetings to you.
But Olga, her shoulders especially
Her neck, her bosom, all that beauty,
And what a spirit! … Some time soon
To them we'll go. You can favour them;
Or else, my friend, yourself be judge,
Twice you paid a visit, afterwards
They did not even glimpse your nose.
But look… I'm a blockhead and a freak!
You're invited there this coming week.» -

 XLIX

«Me?» - «Yes, For Tatyana's name day,
This Saturday. Mama and Olga
Said to invite you, there's no reason why
To their invitation you should say nay.» -
«But what a heap of plebs there'll be,
And rabble, and riff-raff for company…» -
«Of course not, none like that, I'm sure!
Who'll be there? Well, their family.
Let's go. Please do me the favour, !
What do you say?» - «Alright.» - «What a brick you are!»
And with these words he drained his glass,
A thank offering to his kindly neighbour,
Then once more he beguiled his mind
With Olga's charms: for love is blind!

 L

How happy he was. In two weeks time
The appointed wedding day was set.
The secrets of the marriage bed ,
And love's most sweet and glorious crown
With its delights awaited him.
For Hymen's troubles and alarms,
A long succession of cold yawns,
Did not arise even in his dreams.
While we, the foes of Hymen's charms
See only in domesticity
Row upon row of tedious scenes,
A novel after *Lafontaine*…
But simple Lensky, so happily sated,
Was for such a life alone created.

 LI

He was loved… or at the very least,
He believed so, and was therefore happy.
A thousand times blest is he who believes,
Who calming the cold fears of his mind
Rests in a state of bliss serenely,
Like a drunken traveller at an inn,
Or (less harshly) like a butterfly
Drinking the liquor of a springtime flower;
But piteous is he, who foresees all,
Whose head never loses self control,
For whom all words, all motivations
Are hateful in their transformations,
Whose heart experience has made chill,
Yet forbids him to lose himself at will.

 **Chapter Five**

May you not have such dreadful dreams,

My dearest Svetlana.

*Zhukovsky.*

 I

That year the autumn weather lingered
Over the field and around the yards,
Winter held back, Nature awaited,
In January only snow fell at last
On the third, at night. And waking early
Tatyana saw through the window clearly
The yard all covered with morning whiteness,
The flower beds, roofs, and all the fences;
On the window glass the leaves of frost,
The trees in their winter silveriness,
And cheerful magpies in the snow.
The hills all covered with the soft glow
Of winter's carpet glistening bright,
Around all was shining, all was white.

 II

Winter ! The peasant breathes a sigh,
Renews his sledge, and makes his way.
His horse, snorting in the fresh snow
With a finicky trot gets along somehow.
And now the dashing kibitka flies,
In the powdery snow cutting feathery furrows.
The coachman sits huddled upon his box,
In a sheepskin coat and a scarlet sash.
A yard boy runs out, and on his sledge
His favourite 'Dasher' is the driver,
While he himself is the willing puller;
The rascal struggles with frozen hands;
What fun it is, but so painful too,
While his mother scolds him above at the window.

 III

But perhaps recollection of winter's scenes
Does not arouse you, gentle reader:
It is all base, lowly, and vulgar Nature,
But not much here of refinement breathes.
Warmed by the inspiration of the Muse,
Another poet, in luxuriant gloss,
Has painted for us the first fallen snow,
And all the shades of winter's sloth.
I am sure that he more than ever enchants you,
Depicting in his flamboyant verse
The charm of a secret rendezvous,
On a sledge; yet to fight I am somewhat averse,
With him, or with that other minstrel
Of the Finnish maiden, as bright as tinsel.

 IV

Tatyana, (to her heart's core a Russian,
Herself not knowing the reason why),
With all their cold and frigid beauty,
Loved Russian winters with great passion:
The sun-lit hoar-frost on frozen days,
Sledge rides, and from the sunset's glow
The rosy radiance on the snow;
The foggy nights of Epiphany,
Evenings which, by ancient rule,
They celebrated in the old time ways:
The servants from the house and yard
All told the fortunes of their mistresses,
Each year they gave them the blissful word:
An army husband and a trip abroad.

 V.

Tatyana implicitly believed the tales
Of the simple country folk of old;
Dreams, fortune by cards, the cold
Predictions which the moon reveals.
All omens used to make her shudder,
All objects spoke mysteriously,
Pronouncing one thing or another,
Forebodings crowded her anxiously.
The curious cat, on the stove shelf sitting,
Purrs and washes its paws with its tongue:
A sure sign to her that guests would come;
Then suddenly, seeing up above,
The face of the two-horned waxing moon,
On the left hand side, almost in a swoon,

 VI.

She shook and grew pale as any waif.
And, whenever a falling star
Through the sky's darkness cut a path,
And then dispersed, --- then in utter fear
Tatyana hastened, in confusion,
(And while the star was still on fire)
To whisper to it her heart's desire.
Whenever it happened, in her delusion,
That she met a black monk, or in the fields,
A racing hare would suddenly
Strike across her way, and run obliquely,
Then in very fear not knowing what remedy
To take, and full of sad expectation
She sensed bad fortune in anticipation.

 VII.
For Tatyana found a secret charm
Even in the very heart of terror,
Thus nature makes us prone and warm
To superstition and to error.
When Christmas came, joy overflowed!
For heedless youth has fortunes told
As if it never could be old;
For it the distant prospects glowed
Bright as the day, incomparable;
While age in corners through its specs
Sees fortunes too, though the grave gapes,
And life where is it? Irretrievable.
But what does it matter? To them also,
Hope whispers its childish false farrago.

 VIII.
Tatyana with eager, searching looks
Watches the sealing wax's shape,
Which, with strange patterns in the water,
Foretells the wonders of the future;
Then, from the liquid in the saucer,
Each ring is pulled out in its turn,
And hers comes out while the song goes round,
A song of the countryside long ago:
*«Your husband rich as rich shall be,
He digs the ground with a silver spade,
To whom we sing, every good shall be,
And glory too!»* A song of grief and woe,
Is the chorus of this fanfarade;
Better the cat for the heart of a maid.

 IX.
The night is frosty; the sky all clear;
The stars in a wondrous caravan
Move round so quietly, at peace...
Tatyana into the garden's space
Comes out to watch, to guess, to fear.
She trains her mirror onto the moon,
But in the dark glass is only seen
The swimming melancholy of its face.
Alas! The snow crunches - A passer by!
She hastens towards him on tiptoe,
And her voice rings out across the snow,
More tender than a reed-pipe's tune:
*"What is your name?"*,but he is gone,
But not without answering "Agafon".

 X.
Tatyana, on the advice of nurse,
Seeking at night her fortune true,
Gave orders that within the bath house,
The table should be laid for two.
But suddenly she took a fright...
I too, when thinking of Svetlana,
Become quite weak --- well, so be it,
We'll not keep vigil with Tatyana.
Instead we see her silken sash
She has removed, disrobed she lies,
Asleep in bed. A spirit hovers, or creeps;
But underneath her feathery pillow
Her maiden mirror hidden lies.
Now all is quiet. Tatyana sleeps.

 XI.
And then she dreams a wondrous dream.
It seems that, as she walks along
A snowy valley, hidden long,
Wrapped in the sadness of the mist;
In front of her, in the drifted snow,
Swirling its dark wave, something hissed:
A boiling, shadowy stream below,
A torrent, not tamed and locked by frost.
Two stakes held tight by icy glue
Made up a rickety-rackety bridge
Over the current's roaring race.
Before the seething, tumbling chasm
She stands, her heart in violent spasm,
And waits, perplexity in her face.

 XII.
And as before a sad farewell,
Tatyana resents the stream that divides;
Nor sees a soul whose hand might help,
By reaching across from the other side.
Then suddenly a snow-drift heaves,
And something, some one, seems to appear:
A huge, untamed, and shaggy bear!
Tatyana screams - and aloud he roars,
Then stretches his paw with sharpened claws
To give her aid; she grits her teeth,
And with shaking hand leaning upon it,
And fearful steps, with the brook beneath,
She crosses the bridge -safety at last!
But the bear follows after - she is aghast!

 XIII.
Not daring to stop or look behind her
Tatyana quickens her urgent pace;
But from that servant with the shaggy face,
She cannot escape in any way.
Groaning, the hideous bear stumbles on;
A wood appears ― the motionless pines,
Stand in a gloomy dark array,
The branches all are heavily laden
With piled up snow, and through the crowns
Of aspens, birch and naked limes
The watery starlight filters down.
There is no path; the bushes, ravines,
The storm has covered up completely,
All is drowned in the snow which has fallen deeply.

 XIV.
She makes for the wood; the bear pursues;
The powdery snow reaches to her knees;
A long thin branch her neck ensnares,
And grasps it suddenly, then from her ears
The golden earrings are torn violently.
In the crumbly snow her dripping shoe
Sticks and from her tender foot is torn;
And then her handkerchief falls down,
And she cannot retrieve it, for she dreads,
The shaggy beast who after her treads.
Even to lift the hem of her dress
With a trembling hand is too onerous;
Onward she runs, he still follows fleetly,
And now her strength has failed completely.

 XV.
She falls in the snow ― the bear is swift
To seize her and to carry her offaway the gift;
Supine, benumbed, submissive, yielding,
She does not move, she is not breathing.
He hurries her along the woodland path;
Then suddenly a hovel appears
In the midst of trees, around all is bare,
The sides are barricaded with the snow,
But the window sends abroad a glow,
And from the hut come shouts and noise.
"Here", says the bear, "live all the boys:
Just warm yourself by the fire awhile!"
Then straight he goes through the open door
And sets her down upon the floor.

 XVI.
Tatyana wakes, she looks around:
The bear has gone; she is in a hall;
Behind a door the cheers resound
The glasses clink as at a funeral;
Not seeing here any sense at all
She carefully peers through an open chink,
And sees what? ― heavens! At the table
Some monsters at a feast are sitting:
One has horns and a dog-like face,
Another with head like a cockerel,
Here a witch with a goatish beard is spitting;
A skeleton here all prim and proper,
Then a dwarf with a tail, but look at that:
Something half a crane and half a cat!

 XVII.
Then stranger still, almost incredible,
A lobster is seated upon a spider,
A goose-neck has a skull as rider,
Wearing a red night-cap; another marvel,
A windmill dances and does the splits,
Waving its sails which creak and crack;
Laughter, songs, whistles, bangs and barking,
The gallop of horses, and people talking !
But what can be Tatyana's thoughts
When she spies the man among the guests
Who to her is both her terror and her dream, ―
The hero of this novel's theme.
At the table sits Onegin, regally,
And at the door he glances stealthily.

 XVIII.
He gives a sign ―all is rush and pother;
He drinks ― they drink and shout and rave;
He starts to laugh ― they laugh and guffaw;
He frowns ― then all is silent as the grave;
There he is master, that is obvious,
And Tanya is now more at her ease,
And gradually becomes more curious,
And pushes the door upon its hinge...
But suddenly a gusty draught
Flutters the light of the candle flames,
Among the spirits confusion reigns;
Onegin with his glittering eyes
From the table with a clatter swiftly rose;
All rise with him: to the door he goes.

 XIX.
So, full of fear and as fast as can be
Tatyana struggles to escape;
Impossible; intemperately
Her legs move fast without result;
All is lost; Yevgeny shoves open the door,
And to the eyes of all the host
Of hellish spirits the girl appears ―
A fierce wild laugh! Then all the eyes,
The hooves, the crooked snouts, the fangs,
The tufted tails, the tusks, the beards,
Moustaches, and the bloody tongues,
The bony fingers and the horns,
All point at her at the same time
And shout with one voice "She's mine, she's mine !"

 XX.
"She's mine !" Yevgeny shouted fiercely,
And the host of demons vanished from sight.
In the gloom, together in the frosty night
Remained the girl with him alone.
Onegin calmly carries Tatyana
Across the room, into the corner,
And lays her on a shaky bed,
And then he tenderly places his head
Upon her shoulder. But suddenly,
Olga appears followed by Lensky;
It brightens, Onegin waves his hand,
And both his eyes are wandering wildly,
The uninvited guests he scolds;
Tatyana lies still and deathly cold.

 XXI.
Louder and louder the quarrel grows,
Yevgeny seizes a long, sharp knife:
In a flash falls Lensky, deprived of life;
The shades darken, a terrible scream,
Rings out ... the hut shivers ...
Tatyana in terror wakes from her dream,
Looks round, the room in brightness quivers,
And through the window's frosted glass
Flutter the rays of the crimson morn;
The door opens; Olga appears,
More rosy than the Northern dawn,
More airy than the swallow which soars.
"Well, ― says she ― now tell me true,
Did dreams reveal your true love to you?"

 XXII.
But she, her sister not yet noting,
Looks at a book and lies in bed,
She is engrossed, she answers nothing.
Although the book gave up no riches
Of poet's sweetest inspirations,
Nor sages' truths, nor illustrations.
But never tome of Scott, Racine,
Nor Byron, Seneca, nor Virgil,
Nor even 'The Ladies Fashion Journal'
So occupied a maiden's passion.
It was, my friends, Zadeka, Martin,
The chiefest Chaldean interpreter,
Of dreams and fortunes the sagest minister.

 XXIII.
This deepest of the world's creation
A wandering merchant of the steppes
Brought once to them in their isolation,
And sold it finally to Tatyana
Along with a dog-eared, torn 'Malvina'.
He let it go for three pounds fifty,
As part of the bargain he also took,
A heap of cheap and worn out books,
A grammar, two old histories,
And Belisarius, volume three.
Martin Zadeka thereafter became
Tatyana's darling ... in all her miseries
This was her joy and chief delight,
Inseparable from her throughout the night.

 XXIV.
This nightmare greatly worried her.
Not knowing how to interpret it,
Tatyana from its dreadful plot
Seeks to unravel the dream's secret.
So, in the subject index she peers,
And runs through the alphabetic list:
Bear, birch tree, bridge, copse, blizzard,
Hedgehog, forest, storm and wizard,
And all the rest. Her trepidations
Martin Zadeka does not allay.
The evil dream seems to foresay
Adventures and sad expectations.
And for several days thereafter she
Was deeply troubled by the mystery.

 XXV.
But now the rosy fingered dawn
Rising above the morning valleys
Emerges and leads forth the new sun,
The joyful harbinger of the name day.
The Larin's homestead from early on
Was full and thronged; whole families
Of neighbours visited in carriage loads,
In broughams, kibitkas and toboggans.
In the hall a crush, shoving, and crowds;
In the main room the meeting of new faces,
Yapping of lap dogs, young girls kissing,
Noise, bustle, fuss, commotion, crushing,
Bows, and the formalities of greeting,
Shouting of nannies, and children bleating.

 XXVI.
With his beloved, (somewhat portly),
Arrived the beer-gut Pustyakov;
Gvozdin, a squire, most excellent,
Owner of serfs without a cent;
The Skotinins, a greyish couple,
With numerous children of all ages,
From two to thirty, more or less;
The local dandy Petushkov,
My cousin, hearty Buyanov,
In the latest fashion, and with a peaked cap,
(But he is known to you of course),
And the retired councillor Felyanov,
Inveterate gossiper, crook of old,
Glutton, bribe-taker, and prankster bold.

 XXVII.
With Panfil Kharlikov's family
Arrived also Monsieur Triquet,
A wit, from Tambov recently,
With spectacles and a reddish wig.
In his pocket, (always a true Frenchman),
He brings a song for Tanya's ears,
One known to children across the years,
"Wake up, wake up, my sleeping beauty."
In an old album's ancient pages
This song was printed long ago;
Triquet, a resourceful so and so
Rescued it from the dust of ages,
But boldly changed its 'beautiful Nina'
Into 'the beautiful Tatyana'.

 XXVIII.
But from a nearby army station,
The idol of all riper maidens
And joy of each and every matron,
The CO of the nearby squadron,
Enters ... What news! And what elation!
The music will be miltary!
The colonel himself has sent the band.
What joy: for it will be a ball! Hurray!
The girls are twitchy with excitement:
But dinner is served, and hand in hand,
The couples enter the dining hall.
And by Tatyana the women crowd and stand,
The menfolk opposite; grace is repeated,
The crowd is humming, all are seated.

 XXIX.
Then ceases all the idle prattle
While mouths are chewing. On all sides
The plates and dishes clash and rattle
And toasts are drunk from clinking glasses.
But gradually the noise increases
As guests add to the general din,
Nobody listens, but all shout loudly,
And laugh and quarrel and shriek boldly.
But suddenly the doorway opens,
Lensky it is, with him Onegin,
"At last! Oh Lord!" the good Lady shouts.
The guests squeeze up and move about
The dishes; two chairs quickly are found,
They call the two friends, they sit them down.

 XXX.
They seat them opposite Tatyana,
And she, more pale than the moon at dawn,
More furtive than a hunted fawn,
Does not lift up her darkened eyes:
She flames inside with passion's fires,
Stifling it is, and overwhelming;
The two friends with their formal greeting
She does not hear; the tears are welling
Ready to fall; alas, poor soul,
She is nearly fainting, her heart is full;
But will and reason conquer all
And hold the fort. Two words she says,
Forced through her teeth with determination,
And sits at the table in consternation.

 XXXI.
Female's neurotic tragedies,
Tears, fainting fits, and all that jazz,
Yevgeny had long ago despised,
He'd had enough of it in the past.
A cranky guest at this huge feast,
His anger brewed. But noticing
The shaking fit of the languid girl
Lowering his eyes in irritation,
He sulked and stoked his indignation,
He swore to be revenged on Lensky,
And to enrage him fittingly.
But now, already triumphing,
He started to picture within his breast
Caricatures of all the guests.

 XXXII.
Of course, Yevgeny was not alone
In seeing Tanya's strange confusion;
But a rich pie, glory of country dishes,
Was the cynosure of all eyes and wishes
(Alas, it had been over-salted).
And now, in a bottle tarred and smoky,
Between the roast-beef and blancmange,
They bring the heady, cheap champagne,
And then some glasses, short, thin-waisted,
Like you, dear Zizi, sweetheart mine,
My own dear perfect chrysolite,
Star of my verses, innocent, bright,
Alluring vial of love unthinking,
For, drunk with you, I never ceased drinking.

 XXXIII.
Freeing itself from the moistened cork
The bottles pop; the champagne flows,
And hisses; then with a stately look,
The verses burning him from head to toes,
Triquet stands up; the gathering hushes,
And all is silent in expectation.
Tatyana half dies; and then Triquet,
With paper in hand turns to her and gushes:
He starts, but the tune is half awry.
Shouts, claps now greet him, while she
Before him makes a constrained curtsy.
The modest poet, though great of mind,
Is the first to pledge her eternal health,
He gives her the song, and wishes her wealth.

 XXXIV.
Good wishes, health, congratulations
Pour in; Tatyana thanks each one.
But when Yevgeny's turn is come,
The pallid languor of her face,
Or her confusion, her distress,
Awoke in him some sympathy:
He bowed to her respectfully;
But the glance that from his eyes escaped
Was strangely tender. Whether because
His heart expressed sincerity,
Or, jokingly, he played a role,
Unwittingly, or with good will,
His looks of comfort almost spoke:
Her heart, revivified, awoke.

 XXXV.
The chairs are moved with a scraping sound,
In the drawing room the crowd arrives,
As noisy bees from cosy hives
Fly to the meadow in a round.
Full satisfied with all that feasting,
One neighbour pants before another,
The women at the hearth are sitting;
The girls all whisper in a corner;
The green card tables they unfold,
Resilient players are summoned forth,
Boston, and Ombre is for the old,
Or whist, which still is fashionable:
These games, a monotonous family,
All greedy boredom's progeny !

 XXXVI.
The heroes of whist had already played
Eight rubbers; eight times they mix,
By changing places at the table;
Tea is brought in. I love to fix
The hours by dinner, tea and supper,
For in the country time is made
By such events without much fuss:
The stomach is our pocket watch;
I note also in parenthesis,
That often the matter of my verse
Of feasts and drinking is made up,
And different dishes I can rehearse,
Like you, the poet divine, great Homer,
The ancient idol of three millenia !

 XXXVII, XXXVIII, XXXIX.
Tea is brought in, the girls all decorously
Have scarcely picked their saucers up,
When from the doorway suddenly
Bassoons and flutes are striking up.
Delighted with the sound of music
And leaving the tea cup and the rum,
Petushkov (the district's main Adonis)
Goes up to Olga for the waltz.
Lensky asks Tanya; and Kharlikova,
A maiden somewhat past her best,
Our poet from Tambov leads solemnly.
Buyanov hastens with Pustyakova.
The crowd spills out into the wide hall,
And all is sparkling for the ball.

 XXXVII, XXXVIII, XXXIX.
Tea is brought in, the girls all decorously
Have scarcely picked their saucers up,
When from the doorway suddenly
Bassoons and flutes are striking up.
Delighted with the sound of music
And leaving the tea cup and the rum,
Petushkov (the district's main Adonis)
Goes up to Olga for the waltz.
Lensky asks Tanya; and Kharlikova,
A maiden somewhat past her best,
Our poet from Tambov leads solemnly.
Buyanov hastens with Pustyakova.
The crowd spills out into the wide hall,
And all is sparkling for the ball.

 XL.
At the beginning of this lofty story
(See Chapter One, which will do for all),
In the style of the mighty Albany,
I had hoped to describe a Petersburgh ball.
But by empty dreams often entranced
I wandered off down memory's lanes,
Thinking of feet, and charming dames.
But I follow after your slender trace
No more, dear feet! I will not be distracted!
Since my youth has changed its shining face
It is time for me to become more sane,
To reform in theory and in practice,
And, for this Chapter's final curtain,
To free it from all cheap diversion.

 XLI.
Monotonous, mad, and totally mindless,
As is the life of whirlwind youth,
The boisterous waltz whirls round so fast,
As couple after couple flashes past.
The minute of revenge approaches,
And Onegin, smiling secretly,
Goes up to Olga. Dancing rapidly,
He steers her swiftly among the guests,
Then seats her down upon a chair,
Starts talking oddly of this and that,
Fills up a minute or two with chat,
Then again he waltzes her through the air.
All are astonished, but mostly Lensky,
Who cannot believe what his eyes can see.

 XLII.
The Mazurka plays. But in past ages,
Whenever its heady tone rang out,
Everything in the ballroom shook
The floors creaked under the pounding feet,
The windows shivered in the window frames.
But now not so : for like sheepish dames,
We slide over the lacquered, bright parquet.
But in country towns and villages
The old fashioned mazurka still preserves
Its maiden innocence and beauty:
Knocking of heels, moustaches, leaps,
All is the same; it is not changed
By that frenzied tyrant, feverish fashion,
The curse of every modern Russian.

 XLIII, XLIV.
Buyanov, my cousin, full of spirit,
To our hero, leading them by the hand
Brings Tanya and Olga; swiftly, deftly,
Onegin with Olga becomes a hit;
He dances, guiding her carelessly, neatly,
And, leaning close, whispers in her ear
Sweet nothings, and then intimately
He presses her hand ― the poor dear,
Flared up with the flattery, her face
Grew satisfied and flushed. But Lensky
Saw everything: he was enraged,
In the indignation of jealousy
The poet waits till the mazurka's done,
Then asks his sweetheart for the cotillon.

 XLV.
But she cannot do it. Cannot? Can it be so?
But Olga has already given her word
To Onegin. Good God! Absurd, absurd!
What does he hear? Could she.. ? Ah, no...!
For one who's scarcely out of nappies
To be a flirt, a flighty changeling !
She clearly knows the cunning devices
Of love, betrayal, and all those vices !
Poor Lensky cannot endure the blow;
Cursing the the tricks that women know
He leaves and calls straightway for his horse,
Then gallops off. A pair of pistols, nothing worse,
Two bullets will settle everything,
Let the future see what Fate will bring.
 **Chapter Six**

For there, where the days are short and overcast,
Lives a race of people for whom death is no pain.
*Petrarch*

 I.
Seeing that Lensky had already gone,
Onegin, again oppressed with gloom,
Alongside Olga became as stone,
But pleased with the damage he had done.
While she beside him dancing idly,
Yawned and glanced around for Lensky,
Tired by the endless cotillon,
Which exhausted her like a heavy dream.
At last it's ended. They hasten to supper.
Beds then are found; and for the guests
Spaces are made from hall to cellar,
Even the maids rooms. For all need rest,
And grateful slumber. Onegin alone
Sets off to ride and sleep at home.

 II.
All is at peace: in the drawing room,
Snores loudly the weighty Pustyakov,
Beside his heavy better half.
Gvozdin, Buyanov, Petushkov,
And Felyanov, uncomfortably,
Lie out on chairs in the dining room,
And on the floor, Monsieur Triquet,
In an old night cap and a sweater.
The girls are all in with Tatyana,
And Olga, enjoying slumber's boon;
Sad and alone, by the window's gloom,
Lit up by the rays of chaste Diana,
My poor Tatyana stays awake;
She looks out on the fields which darkly speak.

 III.
By Onegin's unexpected showing,
The fleeting tenderness of his eyes,
His dealing with Olga in such strange wise,
Tatyana was strangely mesmerised,
And struck to the core; in no way can she
Understand his mind; her jealous yearning
Disturbs her composure utterly;
As if a cold and icy hand
Pressed on her heart, as if a chasm
Seethed darkly beneath her trembling feet.
"I am lost", she whispers to her soul,
"But perdition through him is desirable.
I do not complain. Why should I grieve?
For happiness I know he cannot give."

 IV.
But onward, onward, my history !
A new personality is calling us.
A few miles out of Krasnagory
Lensky's estate, there flourished before,
And to this day still enjoys good health
In his philosophic wilderness,
Zaretsky, once a good time fellow,
Chief of the tribe of card players,
Tavern sage, noble philanderer,
But now a staid, good tempered neighbour,
Father of many, and a bachelor.
A friend in need, a peaceful landowner,
And even quite an honourable creature:
Such power has the age to improve on nature!

 V.
As happens, the flattering voice of the times
Praised the lewd boldness it saw in him.
It is true, from a pistol at twenty paces
He could hit a playing card in bang on.
And we may mention that once in battle
Carried away by a rapturous calling,
He distinguished himself by boldly falling
From his Kalmyk stallion, right in the dirt,
Being blindly drunk, and lost his shirt
To a Frenchman, who took him captive,
A proud prize, a Regulus, honour's devotee;
Prepared once again to suffer calumny,
Provided that at Vera's, in the morning, late,
He could drink three bottles on the slate.

 VI.
He was always prone to take the Michael,
Or lead a fool circuitously,
Or trounce a clever one wondrously,
Sometimes in stealth, or even openly.
But sometimes these jokes of his backfired
Or did not succeed without a shove,
And sometimes he himself got mired
In the muck, like any simple dove.
But he could cleverly start a quarrel,
Reply both archly and sincerely,
At times be silent most urbanely,
At others skilfully promote a squabble,
Or set two friends to hate each other,
And lead them to the duel as a brother;

 VII.
Or force them both to dextra data,
In order to get a a meal for free,
And then defame them privately,
With a jolly joke and lying banter.
But times are changed! And all these wheezes,
(Like love's young dream, another joke)
Are blown away by age's breezes.
As I was saying, Zaretsky's yoke,
Retired from the storms of life at last,
Was now to sit among his cherries,
And, like a sage, relive his past,
Like Horace sow cabbages and peas,
Breed ducks and geese and cast his net,
And teach young scamps the alphabet.

 VIII.
He was no idiot, and Yevgeny,
Not greatly admiring his style of life,
Loved still the sharpness of his wit,
His common sense and raison d'être.
In the past, Yevgeny met with him
Occasionally and agreeably,
And so was not surprised to see him
This morning when he called unexpectedly.
When, after the first greeting he
Curtailed the short formalities
And to Onegin, with a slight grin,
Handed across the poet's letter.
Onegin took it to the window sill
And read it, silently and chill.

 IX.
It was the usual noble summons,
The briefest challenge, or 'cartel':
Politely and with cold precision
Lensky had challenged him to a duel.
Onegin with a swift decision
Turned to the duel's ambassador,
And without more ado announced
That as of old he was *'prepared'*.
Zaretsky rose without delay,
He did not wish to prolong his stay,
Having much work to do at home.
And left forthwith. But then Yevgeny
Left to commune with his soul alone
Was far from pleased with what he'd done.

 X.
And rightly so. In stern perspective,
Setting himself in a secret court,
There was much that he could not forgive:
Firstly, he was in the wrong, he thought,
For tender love so shy and timid
He mocked yesterday so carelessly.
And secondly supposing that
The poet was an utter berk;
At eighteen years that was acceptable.
And he who loved the youth, Yevgeny,
Should show himself as he ought to be,
Not bounce with prejudice like a ball,
Nor be a boor, nor a cavalier,
But an older man with a sense of honour

 XI.
He could have spoken openly
Instead of bristling like a beast;
That would have captured instantly
The young man's heart. "But now, at least,
It is too late; the time is past ...
Besides, ― he thought ― this wretched business
Has dragged in an old duellist,
Spiteful, a stirrer, and malicious;
Of course contempt should rightly sneer
At the telling of his loaded stories.
But whispers, and the snort of fools..."
And then there was the world to fear,
The springs of honour, opinion's face.
For that is what guides the human race !

 XII.
Seething with hatred, impatiently,
At home the poet waits for an answer;
And now his pompous, bustling neigbour
Brings the response back solemnly.
Now for revenge all is set fair !
For up till then, he feared the waster
Would make a joke and wriggle away,
Inventing a trick, so freeing his breast,
From the bullet which must wing its flight.
But they must meet beside the mill,
In the early hours, at the first light,
To cock their pistols, aiming at will,
At thighs or temples, and the opponent kill.

 XIII.
Determined he would scourge his Cressida,
Lensky, in passion, did not wish
Before the duel to visit Olga.
He watched the sun, glanced at his watch,
And finally gave up discretion,
And finds himself at his neighbours porch.
He thought to throw her in confusion
Arriving unexpectedly;
Surprise, surprise! Just as formerly,
As the poor poet climbed the stair,
His little Olga leapt from the chair,
Like the proverbial, heedless Cupid,
Lively, unthinking, full of bliss,
In a word, just as she always is.

 XIV.
"Yesterday, why did you leave so early?"
Olga greets him with her first inquiry.
All Lensky's thoughts were blown off course,
And he drooped his nose like a jaded horse.
His anger vanished, and his jealousy,
Faced with her open tender glance,
Faced with her bright simplicity,
Faced with her soul's clear radiance !
He gazed at her with sweet emotion,
And sees at once: he still is loved;
Then tortured by remorse, devotion,
Prepared to beg forgiveness from her,
He trembles, words refuse to come,
And happy he is, though stricken dumb...

 XV, XVI, XVII.
Then once more thoughtful, somewhat gloomy,
Before his sweet and tender Olga,
Vladimir does not have the strength
To remind her of yester evening's pranks.
"I'll be her saviour", he reflects,
"I'll not endure it, that a wastrel,
With sighs and groans and praise and fire
Should tear her heart with sweet desire,
Or that the poisonous loathly worms
Should devour the growing lily's clothes,
Or that the flower of two soft morns
Should fade, its buttons not disclosed".
But friends, this means, (be not misled),
"I'll shoot the bastard through the head!"

 XVIII.
If only he had known what agony
Burned in the heart of dear Tatyana !
Or had Tatyana known, or guessed,
Had she been able to divine
That on the morrow Onegin, Lensky
Would fight upon the grave's dark rim ―
Ah, then, perhaps her pure devotion
Would join the friends in peace again.
But this wild love of hers no one,
Had yet discovered or stumbled on.
Like a deaf pillar was Onegin,
And Tanya secretly pined alone.
Only the nanny might have known,
But she was as inquisitive as a stone.

 XIX.
Lensky was distracted all that evening,
Now silent, now happy once again;
But those who are the Muses' darlings
Are always so: with furrowed brain
He sat at times at the clavichord,
But only played a scale or two.
Then fixing his gaze on Olga's face
He whispered "I'm happy. It's true. It's true".
But it's late. Time calls. He must be going.
His heart was swollen and big with pain,
And as he said his sad farewell,
It seemed as if it must be breaking.
She looks at him with earnest endeavour.
"What is it?" "Nothing." Then he's gone for ever.

 XX.
Arriving home, his pair of pistols
He carefully checked, then set aside,
Back in their case, and then, undressed,
He looked at Schiller in the candle's light.
But a single thought had his mind oppressed:
His gloomy heart refuses slumber,
Instead, with beauty quite aglow,
Olga appears before his sight.
Vladimir closes the opened book,
And takes up his pen. His verses flow,
Abundant with love's sweet nothingness,
And ringing in his ears. He reads them out,
Clear and loud, with a lyric zest,
Like Delvig when drunk and at a feast.

 XXI.
Chance has preserved intact these lines;
I have them before me; here they are:
"Ah have you flown, so fast, so far
Those golden days of my Spring time?
What does the coming day bring to me?
Vainly my eyes seek to ambush it,
But in deepest gloom lies its mystery.
Why struggle - just is the law of fate.
Then if I fall, struck by doom's arrow,
Or if its flight sends it winging past,
All will be well: of sleep or sorrow,
The appointed hour will come at last.
For blessed is the day of ceaseless longing,
And blessed is darkness to the tomb belonging.

 XXII.
The morning star will illume the sky,
And the clear day will play its part;
But I ― perhaps inert will lie
In the grave's mouth, by its secret heart;
And a youthful poet's memory
Will be swallowed up by remorseless Lethe;
The world will forget me; but you, o you,
Will you come, my beautiful, lovely girl,
To weep over my untimely urn,
To think and weep: his love was true,
For he alone, in life's fierce whirl
Gave the sad dawn of it all to you !
Heart of my heart, my eternal friend,
I am your spouse to the very end !... "

 XXIII.
Thus wrote he, *darkly* and with l*anguidness*,
(Romanticism is what it is called,
Although a hint of the romantic spirit
I cannot see; but what is that to us?)
But in the end, before the dawn,
Laying down at last his weary head,
On that modern word *ideally*,
He dozed and slumbered fitfully.
But scarcely had the drowsy bliss
Of sleep seized him with forgetfulness,
When his neigbour bustles into the room
And with an exclamation wakens him:
"Time to get up, for seven is near,
And Onegin is waiting for us, I fear".

 XXIV.
But he was wrong, for still Onegin
Was wrapped in the slumber of the just,
The shades of night were thinning fast,
And the cockerel hailed the star of morning.
Yevgeny snoozes in slumber deep,
The sun has risen in the sky,
A brief snow flurry passes by,
Whirling and glistening, but asleep
Still Yevgeny has not left his bed,
And sleep still flutters o'er his head.
But at last he is awakened, stirring,
And moves aside the curtains' folds;
Looks out ― and sees that it is dawn,
'Tis long since time that he should be gone.

 XXV.
Quickly he rings. The servant runs,
(Guillot the Frenchman) to help him dress,
Sets out slippers and dressing gown,
And hands him underpants and vest.
Onegin hastens to dress himself,
And orders Guillot to prepare
To go with him and to bring also
The box of military hardware.
The swift smart sledge is standing by.
He sits, and to the mill they fly.
Arriving at speed, his servant Guillot
He orders to bring Lepage's barrels
And follow after, the horses tying,
Where two oaks beside the field are lying.

 XXVI.
Leaning upon the dam was Lensky,
Who long has waited with resolution;
Meanwhile, the country sleuth Zaretsky,
Surveyed the mill and dam's construction.
Onegin arrives with apologies.
"But where on earth ― mutters Zaretsky
Astonished, ― your second, where is he?"
In matters of duelling an apologist,
He loved to observe the rules with zest,
And to lay a man out in the snow,
He would permit, but not anyhow.
It must be by art's stern principles,
And anciently established rules,
(Which we would praise, were we not fools).

 XXVII.
"My second", says Yevgeny, quite at ease,
"Why here he is, my friend, Guillot.
I do not foresee a problem here
Or barrier to my proposition.
Although a man not known to you,
He's a good chap, and honourable too".
Zaretsky frowned and bit his lip.
And then Onegin said to Lensky:
"Well, shall we start? - "We'll start. Why not?"
Vladimir answers. And both set off
Behind the mill. Meanwhile far off
Noble Zaretsky and the *good chap*
Commenced a parley, solemn, discreet.
The enemies wait, their eyes do not meet.

 XXVIII.
Enemies! Is it so long since
That thirst for blood drew them far apart?
Is it so long since the hours of leisure,
The meals, the thoughts, the games, the pleasure,
They shared in friendship. Now in hostility
Like enemies locked in a feud eternally
As in a terrible, unclear dream,
Here in the silence, brutally,
In cold blood they seek to slay each other.
Should they not laugh and smile together
Before their hands are stained with blood,
Should they not part exchanging love?
But the world's savage indoctrination
Fears the false shame of reconciliation.

 XXIX.
Now already the pistols glint,
The hammer grates against the ramrod,
In the etched barrel the bullets lodge,
And for the first time the gun is cocked.
Now powder in a greyish stream
Is set on the plate. The toothed flint
Now firmly screwed in and locked
Is raised again. By a nearby tree
Stands Guillot, confused uncannily.
The enemies discard their cloaks.
Zaretsky measures paces thirty two
With precise haughtiness and much ado.
Then leads to the extreme mark each friend,
And each took his pistol, for to make an end.

 XXX.
"Now approach!" Then grimly, acidly,
As yet not aiming, the enemies
With steady stride, determinedly
Quietly the first four paces made,
Four fatal steps of mortality.
His pistol then Yevgeny slowly
Brought up, while softly, steadily,
Advancing, the first of the two;
Still five more paces each one took,
And Lensky squinting with his left eye,
Took aim also ― but suddenly
Onegin's gun rang out... the hour,
The appointed hour has struck. His gun
The poet drops silently, a setting sun.

 XXXI.
He puts his hand upon his breast,
Quietly, and falls. A darkening mist
Betrays cold death, not just a wound,
Slowly he falls, as from a hill's slant side
Shining and sparkling in the sun,
Tumbles a snowy block of ice.
Struck by a chill, silent and numb,
Onegin runs up to the youth's side,
Looks at him, calls... All is in vain.
He is no more. The youthful singer
Has found a harsh, untimely doom.
The storm is blown out, the glorious bloom
Has faded in the morning's rays,
Extinguished is the altar's blaze !..

 XXXII.
Motionless he lies, both strange and eerie
Is the languid torpor of his face.
His chest was opened with a gaping gully,
Steaming, the blood flowed out apace.
Yet but one instant formerly
Within this heart the poet's frenzy
Had beaten, hope, love, enmity,
Full life had blossomed, blood had seethed;
And now, as a deserted mansion,
All is shut off, silent, and still;
All there is quiet that once had breathed.
Closed are the shutters, windows barred,
And whitened. No master's face
Appears. But where? God knows. There is no trace.

 XXXIII.
Pleasant it is with a sharp remark
To enrage an occasional enemy,
Pleasant to see him stubbornly,
Bending his horned physiognomy
To look unwillingly in the glass,
And shudder to see his stupid face.
More pleasant still, if he, my friends
Calls out in folly as he bends:
Its me ! But pleasantest of all
In silence to arrange his goodly burial,
And quietly to aim at his pale head
Across the measured duel's space;
But to send him off to Hades' hall
Will not be pleasant for you at all.

 XXXIV.
And what if, by your pistol's shot,
Wounded, a young friend lies, and sinking,
For some unthinking look or hot
Retort, or other thing most trifling,
Which offended you as you sat drinking,
Or else, if in his spiteful rage,
He proudly challenged you to a duel,
Say then, in your secret soul,
What feeling overwhelms you then
When on the ground before you stretched,
Death on his forehead, lies the poor wretch,
His body in rigor mortis stiffening;
When to your heartfelt, desperate call,
His deaf, dumb mouth replies not at all.

 XXXV.
Gripped by the pangs of deep remorse,
His hand still clutching his pistol tightly,
Yevgeny looks down on dead Lensky.
"Well", says Zaretsky, "he's dead of course."
Dead ! ... With this stark, terrible pronouncement
Quite stricken, Onegin, shuddering,
Turns round and calls aid from the servant.
Zaretsky carefully puts in his sleigh
The stone cold corpse from where it lay,
And carries the dreadful burden home.
Smelling a corpse, the horses snorting
Kick up their feet, covering with foam
The steel bright harness and the bits,
Flying as fast as an arrow flits.

 XXXVI.
My friends, perhaps for the poet you weep:
Cut off in the flower of happy hopes,
Not yet having brought them all from sleep,
Scarce having left his childish clothes,
He fades. Where now is the burning passion,
Where is the noble vast ambition,
In thought and feeling, the young emotion,
Lofty and tender, seeking an ocean
To roam in? Where are love's storms?
The thirst for knowledge and for toil?
The fear of vice and of shame's despoil?
And you, alluring, clear ideals,
You, phantom of a life unearthly,
You, dreams of sanctified poesy!

 XXXVII.
Perhaps for the world's improvement or
For fame at least he was created.
His now for ever silent lyre
Resounding song could have inspired
For age on age. The poet's fame
Perhaps upon Parnassus' steps
Would mount on high. Alas, alas,
Perhaps his suffering, gibbering ghost
Carried away with it the lost
And holy secret, and for us
Gone for ever is the life-giving voice,
And beyond the grave's dark terminus
No hymn can reach, or people's praises,
Or the eternal thanksgiving of all ages.

 XXXVIII, XXXIX.
Perhaps there is another scenario:
The usual fate lay in store for him.
The years of youth would have been so so,
The flame of the soul would grow cold and dim.
And much within him would change of late,
Parting from poetry, he'd have settled down,
Married, cuckolded, on a country estate,
Happily he'd wear his dressing gown.
And then he'd have known life as it is,
He'd expect the gout at the age of forty,
He'd eat, drink, get bored, get fat, grow ill,
And in the end death's bitter pill
He'd swallow, the children around his bed,
With doctors and women in tears at his head.

 XL.
But what must be must be, dear reader.
Alas, the young and tender lover,
The poet, meditative dreamer,
Was slain by the hand of his young friend.
There is a spot, as you leave the village
Where lived the lofty inspired poet,
Where two pines intertwine their roots;
Beneath them meandering rivulets
Moisten a nearby valley's brakes.
And there the shepherd loves to rest,
And reapers come their thirst to slake,
Their clinking jugs in the waters dipping.
There by the stream in the thick glades
A simple memorial stands in the shades.

 XLI.
Beneath it (whenever springtime rains
Begin to water the wheaten shoots)
The shepherd, weaving his raffia boots
Sings fishermen's songs of the Volga's plains,
And the young lass from the busy city,
Spending the summer in the country,
When alone upon her horse she races,
Covering the fields' wide open spaces
Pulls up her horse and stops it there,
Leaning upon the leather reins,
And throws the veil back from her hair
In order to read with flitting glance
The grave's inscription ― it grows dim,
A tender teardrop makes her eyes swim.

 XLII.
Then slowly back to the open country
She paces, plunged in reverie;
For long her soul unconsciously
Broods on the fate of the mortal Lensky;
She thinks " What then became of Olga?
Was it for long her heart was torn,
Or did the time of tears forlorn
Pass quickly by? And where's her sister?
And where lives that outcast wanderer,
Modish hater of modish beauties,
Where now is that gloomy, freakish man,
The young poet's untimely slaughterer?
An account of all that passed I'll try
To give in detail, but by and by.

 XLIII.
Not now, my friends. Of course my hero
I love as heartily as before,
Hereafter for him my verse will flow,
But on him right now I set no store.
Age turns me to severer prose,
Age drives away that joker, rhyme,
And I ― I confess it with a sigh,
I follow on after, dragged by the nose.
No longer with a drooping quill
I pine to stain the flying leaves,
For other dreams, more surly still,
And other cares, and other sorrows
In the world's noise, and in peacefulness,
Upon my inner conscience press.

 XXIV.
I have heard the call of other longing,
New sadness comes to claim my soul;
All former dreams bring no awakening,
And previous sorrows I now lament.
Illusions, dreams ! where is your truth?
And you, its constant rhyming pal, where's youth?
Truly, indeed, and in the end,
Its crown, can it be faded, withered?
And can it be, in fact, indeed,
(Not only in elegaic verse),
That my springtime day is gone for ever,
(Which often I in jest rehearsed) ?
Of that is there really no repeating?
And is the thirtieth year at my window peeping?

 XLV.
And so, midday has come. My heart
Confess the truth, you see it clear.
Then so be it: shake hands and part,
My frivolous youth, so swift, so dear !
I thank you for all those sweet delights,
The sadness, torments of the soul,
The noise, the storms, the feasts, the fights,
For all those gifts in your control.
My grateful thanks. For with you beside me,
In the midst of riot, and in quiet too,
I took my pleasures ... copiously.
No more ! No more ! with a rinsed soul
I start now where new rivers flow,
And the past ― I give it leave to go.

 XLVI.
Let me look back. Farewell ye shades
Where flowed the river of quietness,
Full of sweet passion, idleness,
And dreams of the soul in meditation.
And you, o youthful inspiration,
Awake again my imagination,
Stir up the dull heart's sleepiness,
Visit this bower full oft in flight,
Let not the poet's soul grow chill,
Or calloused, hard, or killed with blight,
Or worse grow ossified and still,
Amongst the deadly rapturous whirl
Of society's slurry pit, where you with me,
My dearest friends, bathe frequently.
 **Chapter Seven**

Moscow, Russia's beloved daughter,
Where might we ever find your equal?
*Dmitriev*
How could one not love our own dear Moscow?
*Baratinsky*
Look down on Moscow ! That's what it means to be a man of the world !
But where is it better? ― Wherever we are not.
*Griboyedov*

 I.
Chased by the rays of springtime sun
The snow already from surrounding hills
In turbid streams begins to run
To meet the liquid flooded fields.
Awakening nature with a smile
Greets the first dawning of the spring;
The skies sparkle with a blue wing;
Transparently the woods beguile
With green, a downy coat assuming.
The bee sets out for the gift of gold
To distant fields from his waxen cell.
The valleys in dappled brightness are drying;
The herd is restive, and a nightingale
In the silence of night sings its pensive tale.

 II.
How sad to me is your appearance ,
Oh Spring ! The time of glorious love !
What languid agony and disturbance
Within my soul, within my blood !
With what a heavy dark emotion
I take delight in the wafting breath
Of the spring's breeze blowing in my face,
In the quiet of the countryside's soft peace !
Or are such delights a foreign notion
To me, and all that is glad, that lives,
All that rejoices, all that shines,
Brings only boredom, anguish, pain
To one whose soul died long ago,
And all is dark in the springtime's glow.

 III.
Or perhaps it is, no longer joying
In the return of autumn's fallen leaves,
We remember the bitter loss that grieves,
Hearing again the woodlands rustling;
Perhaps, with nature, reawakening,
Our turbulent souls bring back to mind
The years long gone, the faded past
For which there can be no rebirth.
Perhaps the thought might visit us
In the midst of our poetic fancies
Of another spring, an older season,
Which brings into an aching bosom
A dream of a distant other place,
A wonderful night, and the moon's face...

 IV.
The time invites: you seasoned idlers,
Sages of Epicurean rule,
You, fortunate philosophers,
You, fledglings of the Levshin school,
You, Priams of the countryside,
And all you sentimental ladies,
The spring calls to the fields, the lanes,
The time of warmth, of work, of blossoms,
The time of strolls, of inspiration,
And tempting nights beneath the moon.
To the fields, my friends! Make haste, make haste!
In carriages all laden heavily,
Drawn by post horses, or your own livery,
March in procession through the town joyously.

 V.
And you, benevolent, fastidious reader,
In your imported new barouche,
Leave the city, which is uncouth,
Which you enjoyed throughout the winter,
Join me and my impatient Muse
And listen to the forest's hum
Above the nameless rivulet's noise,
Where Yevgeny in his rural home,
That idle hermit, strange and gloomy
Had spent the winter recently,
A neighbour to my lovely Tanya,
The young and always gentle dreamer,
But where he is no longer found,
Although sad memories of him abound.

 VI.
Near hills, which lie in half a circle,
We'll make our way to where a stream
Around a meadow runs and gurgles,
To a river, through a wood of limes.
There the nightingale, the Spring's lover,
Sings all night long; the wild thyme blows,
And sounds of waters sweetly hover ―
There is the poet's memorial stone,
In the shade of two old crooked pines,
And to the traveller the inscription shows:
"Valdimir Lensky the poet lies here,
Who early found the grave's release
At such and such age, in such and such year,
Rest, youthful poet, rest in peace".

 VII.
On a sloping pine branch, downward bending
Often an early morning breeze
Over the peaceful gravestone wending
Rocked to and fro a silent wreath.
And often, when the sky was darkened,
Arm in arm two friends came here,
And in the moonlight sat and hearkened,
Embraced each other, and shed a tear.
But now... forgotten lies the stone;
The pathway there is overgrown,
And the branch of its old wreath is bare.
Alone in its shade, wrinkled with care,
The same old shepherd sings, and sits
Plaiting his shoes with wooden strips.

 VIII, IX, X.
My poor Lensky. Not long did Olga
Grieving for you, weep for your fate.
Alas! Young girls keep faith no longer,
Their sorrow has an uncertain date.
Another came and took her fancy,
Another who swamped her very soul
With love's sweet lore and flattery.
A Cossack who bewitched her utterly;
A Cossack she loves with love unending.
And now beneath the altar standing,
With modest grace under the wedding crown,
She stands and blushes, her eyes cast down,
Her head is bowed, her heartbeat skips,
And a light smile flutters upon her lips.

 XI.
Alas poor Lensky ! In the grave's remoteness
In the bourn of silent eternity,
Was the mournful singer cast down, no less,
By the fateful news of this treachery?
Or else, over Lethe soundly sleeping,
Does the poet in blissful forgetfulness
Sleep on, undisturbed by anything?
Is the world for him both closed and dumb?...
So be it ! Impartial oblivion
Awaits us all where the grave extends
Its shade. Enemies, lovers, friends
Are suddenly silent. But the estate
Awakes a throng of troublesome boors,
The indecent quarrels of inheritors.

 XII.
And soon the ringing voice of Olga
In the Larin's home is heard no more.
The Cossack a slave to his army life
Must take to the regiment his new found wife.
Her face half swimming in bitter tears,
The old mother, with her daughter parting
It seems was scarcely less than breathing.
But Tanya could not bring herself to cry;
Only a pallor wan and deathly
Covered her face with melancholy.
When all went out on the porch for blessing,
With all the kissing, fussing, pressing
Around the carriage of the young pair,
Tatyana went with them and said a prayer.

 XIII.
And long thereafter, as if through a mist,
She stood and watched as the carriage sped...
And now alone, on misery fed,
Alas Tatyana had lost her friend
Of many years, her young pet dove,
Her bosom pal, her sharer, her love,
Now carried afar by relentless fate,
Torn from her and for ever separate.
She wanders like a shade quite aimlessly,
Looks in the garden which is sere and empty,
Nowhere is anything to make her glad,
She finds that relief can not be had;
With tears oppressed she is sinking under,
And her heart is almost torn asunder.

 XIV.
And in her cruel isolation
Her passion burns with a stronger flame,
For of, distant, far, remote Onegin
Her heart speaks louder and does not wane.
She knows that she will never see him;
She knows by rights that she should hate him
For the savage murder of her brother;
The poet is dead ... but who is riven
By memory of him? And to another
His dear sweetheart has been given.
The poet's fame has dispersed to nothing
Like smoke in the blue sky vanishing.
Perhaps two hearts for him still grieve
At most... Well. We must give them leave.

 XV.
Evening falls. The sky is dark. The rivers
Flow quietly. The beetle with his hum
Drones past. The day's dancers all depart.
On the far bank, with smoky flare
Burns the fisherman's fire. Alone,
Through clear fields lit by the moon's beams
In its silver light, and plunged in dreams,
Tatyana walks, endlessly, endlessly.
And then before her, suddenly,
From a hillside looking down she sees
A house, an estate hidden in the trees,
And a garden with a sparkling stream.
She gazes, ― her heart pounds and pounds,
Stronger it races and faster it bounds.

 XVI.
Doubts then beset Tatyana's mind:
"Should I turn back, should I press on? ...
He is not here. I am not known.
Why not look over the house, the mansion?"
And so she takes the downward path,
Scarce breathing; then looking round
With perplexity her eyes are filled...
Into the empty court she goes.
The dogs run barking frenziedly.
Her cries of terror soon are heard
By the gang of children whose home is the yard,
Who soon surround her. With a fight
The urchins drive the dogs away,
And take the young lass into safety.

 XVII.
"Might then one see the house of the master?"
Tatyana asks. So in a trice,
The children run for the housekeeper
To bring the key and give advice.
Anisya quickly comes to her call
And opens the door. In the hall
Tatyana enters the empty house,
Where recently our hero lived.
She looks around: a forgotten cue
Lies on the cloth in the billiard room,
And on the crumpled old divan
A riding crop. Tanya goes on;
The old woman says: "This is the chair,
By the hearth the master sat alone there.

 XVIII.
And here with him in winter time
The late Lensky, our neighbour, used to dine.
Come this way please, and follow me.
Here is the master's room, his study;
Yes here he rested, his coffee sipped,
Listened to his steward speaking,
And in the morning in books he dipped...
The previous master, here also
Sitting, on Sundays, frequently,
Wearing his glasses, under the window,
Would play with me a game of whist.
May God rest his soul in peace,
And peaceful slumber his bones embrace,
In the grave, through blessed mother earth's grace!"

 XIX.
Tatyana's eyes with emotion fill,
She looks at everything around,
All seems to her a priceless jewel,
All makes her tired soul skip and bound
With a half-torturing delight:
The table with its shaded lamp,
The pile of books, in the window's light
A bed with Persian carpet covered,
The view outside to the sullen moon,
The pale shimmer of the twilight,
Lord Byron's portrait on the wall,
And an iron statue on the side table,
Napoleon, hatted, with darkling brows,
His arms folded in the well known pose.

 XX.
Tanya in the modish monastery cell
Stands spellbound. But it is late.
A cold wind has already risen.
The glades are darkening. The trees sleep
Pillowed upon the misty river.
The moon is hidden behind the hill.
And for our young and frail wanderer
'Tis time, long since, to head for home.
Tatyana, hiding her agitation,
But still unable to suppress a sigh,
Sets out on the return journey.
But first she asks the beldame's grace,
That to the empty fort she might intrude
To read the books in solitude.

 XXI.

At the gate with the housekeeper Tatyana
Says her goodbyes. On the next morning
She sets out when the day is dawning
To revisit the abandoned villa.
Deep in a silent reverie
She stands alone within his study
Forgetting all the world around her
And weeps in a sadness which surrounds her.
Then to the books her mind she turns.
At first she was indifferent,
But then the selection and what it meant
To her seemed strange. Her heart now burns,
The books she devours hungrily, keenly,
A new world opens, a hidden mystery.

 XXII.
Although we know that from long ago
Reading had sickened our Yevgeny,
Yet from the general condemnation
He had saved a few books of the many,
The Giaour's singer, and Don Juan,
With them perhaps a novel or two,
Which clearly showed the world's reflection
And the contemporary man
Depicted with an accurate pen,
With all his amorality,
His selfish soul, arid and dry,
Given to limitless meditation,
With a mind embittered, poisoned, hard,
Seething with labours that themselves marred.

 XXIII.
On many pages there still remained
The imprint of a sharpened nail;
The attentive maiden's eyes were strained,
Fixed ever more keenly on the trail.
With trembling then Tatyana noticed
With what ideas, remarks or word,
Onegin had been moved or stirred
Or silently he had consented.
Upon the margins she often noted
The witness of his pencil marks.
His soul was as it were being quoted,
Involuntarily characterised,
Now with a word, now with a stark
Underline, or with a question mark.

 XXIV.
And so with gradual understanding
Tatyana finally began
To take the measure of the man,
Thank God, for whom her heart was burning,
Condemned to suffer by Fate's decree:
Was he a sad and dangerous freak,
A creature of hell, perhaps heavenly,
An angel, or a haughty demon,
An imitation. Indeed what was he?
A worthless phantom, or even less,
A Moscow man in Harolde's dress,
Of foreign whims an illustration,
Of modish words a lexicon,
A parody, and what's more, a con?

 XXV.
Had she then solved the mystery?
Had the word of truth been found at last?
The clock ticks on; the hour is past;
She has forgotten her family duty.
Two neighbours were already seated,
About her already the talk is heated.
"What can one do? She's not a child."
Complained her old mother tetchily.
"Olga was younger, but more mild.
It's time to settle her, really, truly,
But what on earth is to be done?
She turns them all down, everyone:
I wont, I refuse. She's always gloomy,
Roaming the woodlands, sad and lonely."

 XXVI.

"Is she in love?" ― "Yes, but with who then?
Buyanov asked her: he got the boot.
Ivan Petushkov ― what a hoot!
We entertained that Hussar Pychtin,
My God he was infatuated,
He flattered, smiled, ingratiated,
I thought: this must be it at last!
You must be joking! Back to square one."
"Well dear, you have to look elsewhere;
In Moscow, it's like a bridegrooms' fair!
Hundreds of them, they are everywhere!"
"But heavens! The cost! It can't be done."―
"Enough for a winter season's fun,
If not I'll see you through with a loan."

 XXVII.
The old dear always greatly valued
Advice that was sensible and sound;
She agreed ― and immediately ensued
Plans for a Moscow winter's round.
Tatyana hears this unwelcome news:
To set before critical society
The clearest damning evidence
Of provincial, crass naiveté,
Of fashions that were out of date,
Of speech that was already passé;
From Moscow's beaus and Moscow's queens
To invite a haughty look and laugh!...
O horror! Better, and truer to one self
To stay for ever on the shelf.

 XXVIII.
Arising with the first morning light
She hurries into the open fields,
And there, her eyes with tears made bright,
She speaks to everything she sees:
"Farewell, you dear and peaceful valleys,
And you too, familiar, lovely hills,
And you, these woods, and glades, and leas!
Farewell dear sky so beautiful,
Farewell dear nature, of joy so filled!
Shall I exchange this quiet soft life
For a noisy world of shimmering strife?
Farewell then freedom, a long farewell!
Where then am I going? Why must I flee?
And what does my fate have in store for me?

 XXIX.
Then all her walks became much longer
And now this tree, or now that hill
Stopped her almost against her will,
For their sheer beauty charmed Tatyana.
And as with age old friends one meets
She hastens on to groves and meadows,
To chat with them and greet their charms.
But the summer fades and swiftly fleets,
And golden autumn on the fields descends.
Nature is trembling, its colours blend,
Like a richly ornate sacrifice...
The north heaps up the lofty clouds,
It blows, it howls ― then in a trice
Enchantress winter brings snow and ice.

 XXX.
Winter: it spreads, and snowy scarves
It hangs on the branches of the oaks;
It lies like carpets in smooth waves
Amidst the fields, on the hills' slopes.
Of the motionless still stream the banks
Are levelled and covered with fluffy down;
The frost twinkles, and we all give thanks,
And welcome mother winter's pranks.
But Tanya's heart is not moved at all.
To greet the winter she cannot go,
Nor breathe the flaky and frosty air,
Nor from the bath house take down the first snow
To wash her face, her breast, her shoulder,
For winter's arrival has unnerved her.

 XXXI.
The day of departure is long postponed,
But the crucial time is now at hand.
The carriage which had been long forgotten
Is new upholstered, strengthened, cleaned.
The three kibitkas in a procession
Are loaded with household possessions,
The saucepans, chairs and suitcases,
Preserves in jars, and mattresses,
The feather beds, roosters in cages,
Pots, basins, jugs, the kitchen sink,
And everything useful that you might think.
Then in the surrounding huts the servants
Say their farewells, they weep and shout,
And eighteen old nags are then led out.

 XXXII.
Some are harnessed to the master's wagon,
The cooks a meal or two prepare;
They heap the carts up and then drag on
Still more, women and coachmen swear.
A bearded outrider takes his seat
On a worn out nag, shaggy and ill.
The servants run out to the gate to greet
Their lords and masters with a last farewell.
Then all are seated, the worthy carriage
Moves clumsily out but it clears the gate.
"Goodbye, you scenes of my peaceful rest!
Goodbye, my lonely, sheltering nest!
Shall I see you again?" And then appears
The stream of Tanya's abundant tears.

 XXXIII.
When, thanks to noble enlightenment,
We advance the limits of the human race,
In time, (by the exact proportionment
Of the latest philosophical calculus,
Five hundred years), the roads, no doubt
Will be improved immeasurably.
And Russia will be one large highway
Joined and criss-crossed. Plus, a stout
Cast iron bridge thrown across each river
Will stride in a wide arc on its way.
Mountains will move. Then we'll deliver
Bold new tunnels under the waterways,
And the Christian world will, by and by,
Provide transport cafés in each lay-by.

 XXXIV.
But at the moment our roads are bad,
Bridges are neglected and they rot;
At the Inns the fleas and the bed bugs
Do not allow you to sleep one jot.
You cannot eat. In a paltry hut
A pompous high flown meaningless list
Is put up for show, to tempt your gut,
And vainly tickles your appetite.
Meanwhile the village Cyclops hammers,
Repairing before his drowsy flame,
With a Russian tool (with a Russian name),
A carriage from Europe, while he stammers
Blessings to the local ruts and grooves,
His native land's ditches, which he loves.

 XXXV.
Yet in the winter time the cold
Makes travel easy and a pleasure.
Like empty verse in the modern mould
The roads are smooth and hard in winter.
So lively are our Automedons,
Our troikas indefatigable,
The traveller's comfort, the milestones,
Flash past like fence posts, one by one.
Alas, the Larins moved but slowly
For fearing the traditional expense
Of post-horse relays, they used the lowly
Home-bred nags. And so the family
Enjoyed the coach ride's boredom fully:
They took seven days to make the journey.

 XXVI.
But now they are close. Before them spreads
The white-stoned Moscow, and like fire,
Its golden crosses to the skies aspire,
And churches raise their shimmering heads.
Ah friends! How pleased I was, elated,
When that wide view quite suddenly
Of gardens, palaces, cathedrals, plated
Cupolas appeared in front of me.
How often in the sad estrangement
Of my nomadic, fateful exile,
Moscow, I thought of you and smiled!
Moscow... how much within that sound there lies
To make a Russian's heart awake,
How many echoes does it give and take.

 XXXVII.
Here, surrounded by its oaken wood,
Stands Petrovsky Palace gloomily,
Proudly thinking of recent glory.
For here Napoleon vainly stood,
Waiting and drunk with his good fortune,
Awaiting Moscow's full submission,
With the keys of the old Kremlin's gates.
But no, dear Moscow did not comply,
To meet the tyrant with head bowed low.
No welcoming gift, no celebration,
Only the fire's conflagration
Did she prepare for the impatient hero.
And from this spot, in despondency,
He looked on the proud flames' mockery.

 XXXVIII.
Farewell you witness of a fallen glory,
Petrovsky Palace. Let us move on.
The gatepost's pillars are near already
All whitened, and the carriage then
Bumps along Tversky boulevard.
Booths flash past, and women, and men,
Young urchins, shops and open yards,
Street lamps, neat gardens, monasteries,
Bokharians, sledges, kitchen plots,
Merchants, peasants and rotten shanties,
Towers, avenues, and Cossack guards,
Chemists and fashionable shops,
Balconies and lions on gateposts perched,
And flocks of jackdaws on every church.

 XXXIX, XL.
In this exhausting itinerary
An hour or two is eaten quite.
Then by St Chariton in an alley
The carriage stops before a gate.
To an old and ailing aunt they come,
A consumptive for the last four years;
But now they've reached her Moscow home.
The door to them is opened wide
By a Kalmuk in a ragged smock,
Grey-haired, and busy darning his sock.
A shriek greets them from the inside:
The princess is stretched out on a divan.
The old folks weep, exclaim, embrace,
And words pour out at a lightning pace.

 XLI.
"Princess, mon ange!" ― "Pachette!" ― "Alina!" ―
"Who'd have thought it?" ― "So long ago!"
"Is it so long?" ― "Darling! Cousine!" ―
"Sit down - this is a surprise, you know!
Truly, like a scene from a book..." ―
"This is Tatyana, you remember her." ―
"Ah, Tanya dear. Now let me look...
I seem to be dreaming, I even wonder...
Cousin, do you remember Grandison?"
What Grandison? .. Ah that one! Yes!
I remember. But where? I dare not guess."
He lives nearby, near St. Simeon.
He came to visit at Christmas tide,
And recently got his son a bride.

 XLII.
And then he... but we'll have more later,
There will be time. Tomorrow, Tanya
We'll take to see mater and pater,
And the rest. Such a pity I can't go.
I can't drag these poor legs about.
But you, poor dears, are quite worn out,
Let's go together and have a rest.
Ooh, I'm done for... if I could breathe..
Excitement is too much for me,
My dear, not to mention misery,
I'm good for nothing, it's all wrong...
To be old is such a wretchedness"...
At last, completely tired, flaked out,
She cried and had a long coughing bout.

 XLIII.
The sick aunt's care and cheerful face
Are welcome to Tatyana's gloom;
But she cannot adjust to the change of place
Being used to her familiar room.
A new bed hung with silken drapes
Was not conducive to quiet sleep,
And the dawn ringing from the old bell towers,
The harbinger of morning toil,
Awoke her oft in the early hours.
Tanya rises and at the window sill
She sits as the darkness thins and wanes,
But she cannot make out the usual scenes.
An unknown yard meets her curious eye,
With stables, a fence, and the cook's pantry.

 XLIV.
And now with the extended family
Tatyana is dined out every day,
To meet with grandpa and with granny,
Although she was still melancholy.
The relatives from far and near
All greet her enthusiastically,
With exclamations and hospitality:
"How Tanya's grown! It's but a year
It seems that I came to the christening!
And then in my arms I dandled her!
I boxed your ears, you naughty scamp!
I fed her honey cakes on my knee!"
Then in a chorus the old dears intone:
"Who would have thought how the years have flown!"

 XLV.
But none of them have changed a whit;
All is preserved in the same old school,
Princess Helen, the aunt and wit
Still wears a bonnet edged with tulle;
Lukerya Lvovna favours white,
Lyubov Petrovna lies for spite,
Ivan Petrovich is still as thick,
Semeon Petrovich still as tight,
And Pelageya Nikolaevna
Still has the same friend, a Monsieur,
The same lap dog, and the same old spouse,
A club member, a respected mouse,
Still just as mild and deaf as a door,
Who eats and drinks for two or more.

 XLVI.

Their daughters all embrace Tatyana.
The living Graces of Moscow
Gaze at her in silent mawkish wonder
And sum her up from head to toe.
She seems at first a little strange,
A touch provincial and stand-offish,
And somewhat thin and somewhat pale,
But in the end, most reasonable;
And so, obeying nature's dictates,
They make a friend and take her home,
Kiss, and squeeze her hand tenderly,
In the latest fashion puff up her curls,
And then entrust to her light-heartedly
Their inmost secrets, the hopes of girls,

 XLVII.
Their own conquests, and others' too,
Their hopes, their tricks, their reveries.
Their innocent conversations flow
Mingled with much embellished stories.
Then, for this prattle, in exchange
The secrets of her heart and soul
They tenderly require from her.
But, just as in a dream, Tatyana
Without partaking hears all their gossip
And nothing understands in it,
And the secrets of her inmost heart,
The cherished store of joy and smart,
She keeps them silently as a stone
And does not share them with anyone.

 XLVIII.
Tatyana wants to participate
In the conversation and the chat;
But all in the drawing room await
Talk that is vulgar, stale and flat.
All is so pale and indifferent,
That even the slander is drear and spent;
In dry and fruitless interchange
Questions, news, rumours seem to range
But stir not a thought through the whole day,
Not even by chance or accident.
The languid mind is never wakened,
Or emotions roused by a joke half meant.
And even amusing idiocy
You will never meet in 'Society'.

 XLIX.
Youths from the chancellor's registry
Survey Tatyana from lofty heights,
Between themselves comparing notes,
And make their judgements saltily.
One who was something of a pedant
Finds in her a hint of the ideal,
And, leaning in a doorway, haltingly,
Prepares for her an elegy.
Once, when seeing his maiden aunt,
A bored Vyazemcky sat beside her
And for a while he entertained her.
And near him standing, one old man
Noted her, and put straight his wig,
And asked if she was *infra dig*.

 L.
But there, where fierce Melpomene
Is heard to howl and play a part
Waving her mantle tawdrily,
Before the dull crowd showing her art;
Where Talia in quiet contemplation
Hears not the ripple of applause;
Where only fair Terpsichore
Awakes the youth's admired devotion,
(Which was the case in times long gone,
Years which to you and me belong),
Nobody bothered with Tatyana,
Not even ladies with lorgnettes,
Nor experts with their opera glasses
Turned to her from the stalls and boxes.

 LI.

They take her to the high class parties.
There all is heat, throng, agitation,
The music's beat, illumination,
The flashing shapes and whirlwind dancers,
The flimsy dresses of the beauties,
And rows and rows of cavaliers,
And of hopeful brides a wide half moon.
All strikes the sense with suddenness.
Here hardened dandies strut and plume,
Showing off waistcoats, or in a hustle
Dangle an inattentive monocle.
And here on leave are some Hussars
Hasting to show themselves, to strut, to jingle,
To shine, to captivate, but to remain single.

 LII.
The night sky holds full many a star,
In Moscow many a beauty shines,
But brighter than all these lanterns are
The moon's rays in the transparent azure.
But she, for whom, above all other,
I would not distress with my eager lyre,
Like the majestic moon serenely
She shines amongst the wives and daughters.
And with a detachment heavenly
She touches the earth with her light foot!
What languor fills her lovely breast!
How wonderful her lofty glance!
Enough! Enough! Cease now to rave.
You have paid the tribute that love craves.

 LIII.
Noise, laughter, greetings, bows, commotion,
The gallop, waltz, mazurka... A great din!
Between two aunts, and showing no emotion,
Beside a pillar, taking nothing in,
Tatyana sits and looks, and nothing sees,
Hating society's frivolous concerns,
It stifles her... and now her sad heart burns
To hasten to her rural life, the trees,
The village and the pelting hamlet,
Her solitary country nook which smiles,
Where bright streams run, and many a rivulet,
To pick her flowers, or read her book a while,
Or in the lime tree alley her thoughts to gather
There, in the shade, where he had appeared to her.

 LIV.
And so it is her deep thoughts wander:
Far from society and from the ball,
But someone has fixed his eyes upon her,
A stately and important general.
The aunts then nudge each other and wink,
And they prod Tanya with an elbow,
While each one whispers what each one thinks,
"Look there, on the left, just down below."
"On the left? But where? I cannot see it."
"Well, whatever it is, just look, just look...
In that group, do you see, in front of it,
Two, in uniforms, there, quick, quick!
Now he's walked off. Now sideways to you!"
"What? That huge general, fat, in blue?"

 LV.
But here I must congratulate
My dear Tatyana for her luck,
Then turn aside and then make straight
The path, lest I forget the hero's fate...
So here some words are quite in order:
*I sing a youth who used to wander
And all his various oddities.
Oh Muse, give blessing if you please
To this my epic enterprise,
And with your staff point out the way,
Lest wandering blindly I might stray.*
Enough. The load falls from my shoulder!
To classicism, though late, some honour I'll show,
As you will have gathered from this intro.
 **Chapter Eight**

Fare thee well, and if for ever,
Still for ever, fare thee well.
*Byron*

 I.
In those days, when at the Lyceum
I peacefully opened forth into bloom,
I took Apuleius to my bosom,
But for Cicero there was little room.
And in days spent far in secret valleys
In spring, where swans have a dying call,
Near waters where the quiet lights fall,
The Muse began to visit me.
And suddenly my student's cell
Lit up: the Muse alighted
And opened a world that youth delighted
In, and sang of childish joys,
And the fame of Russia cherished of old,
And the trembling passions that hearts enfold.

 II.
And the world encountered her with a smile,
For the first success gave us our wings,
When old Derzhavin these trivial things
Of mine blessed, though on the grave's abyss.
... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ...
... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ...

 III.
But, using my own rule as measure,
With passion only as my law,
Sharing the crowd's wild taste and pleasure,
My sprightly Muse, locked in my heart's core,
I took to noisy feasts and brawls,
Challenging the watch in the midnight streets.
And there in the hubbub of the halls
She brought along her glorious gifts,
And like a Bacchant danced and revelled,
Sang to the guests for a cup of wine,
While men who were young in that golden time
Tumultuously cheered for her and yelled.
In her with my friends I would ever take pride,
This heedless Muse who was by my side.

 IV.
But from that company I dropped away
And ran far off... She followed me.
How often did my Muse in play
Delight my dumb and barren journey
With the wonder of some secret story.
How often by Caucasian gorges
She was Lenora in the moonlight pale,
Galloping with me on a swift horse.
How often, on the banks of Tauris
She led me in the night's thick gloom
To hear the thundering breakers boom,
The unceasing whispering of mermaids,
The eternal chorus of the waves
To Him that makes and Him that saves.

 V.
And so, forgetting St. Petersburg,
The gorgeous feasts, the lights, the speeches,
Amidst Moldavia's gloomy reaches
My Muse visited the nomad yurts,
The peaceful tribes in their wandering tents,
And among them grew savage and unkempt,
Exchanging the language of the gods
For those strange, meagre, broken sounds,
For the songs of the steppe she so admired.
Then once more everything changed around,
And there in my garden on the grass
She appeared once more, a provincial lass,
And on her face a thoughtful look,
Her hand often carrying a French book.

 VI.
And now I am the first to reward
The Muse with an evening reception;
Her rural unadorned perfection
With jealous timidity I guard.
Through the bulging crowds of aristocrats,
The military show-offs, diplomats,
And haughty women she glides straight past,
And seated quietly at last
Admires the noisy crush and bustle,
The chatter, and the silk's sharp rustle,
The slow presentation of the guests
Before the young and dazzling hostess;
And the men packed squarely around the dames
As if they were only picture frames.

 VII.
She loves the pomp and circumstance,
The chat of the aristocratic mighty,
The frigid politeness of the haughty
And the mix of age with precedence.
But who is this in the distinguished crowd
Who stands aloof and silently?
To all he seems but an oddity.
The faces flash by him in a dance
Like a row of boring apparitions.
Is it spleen or crucified egotism
Upon his face? And why is he here?
What sort of man. Is it really Yevgeny?
Truly? Really?... Indeed it is him.
Has he been here long, or did he come on a whim?

 VIII.
Is this the same man, or has he since softened?
Or does he act the same old freak?
Tell me, does he come here often?
And what character does he play this week?
What is his stage persona? Melmoth?
A cosmopolitan, a patriot,
Childe Harolde, a quaker, or a bigot?
Or does he show off a mask he has brought?
Or perhaps he is just a jolly good sport,
Like you and I, like the world, in short?
My advice is this, if he will take it,
To put aside all that worn out kit.
He has fooled the world more than we can tell..
―So you know him then? ― Yes, no. Not well.

 IX.
―Why then berate him so unfairly?
Why do you savage him alone?
Is it because so unmercifully
On all we needs must cast the first stone;
Or that the barbs from a fiery soul
Offend the self-love of nonentities,
Or cause laughter, mockeries;
Or that wide intelligence constricts us so;
Or that for action we take chatter,
Seeing more of import and more matter;
Or that crassness is evil, frivolous too,
And important folk love important crap;
And that mediocrity, our older
Brother, sits square upon our shoulder.

 X.
Blessed is he who in youth stays young,
Who only ripens when he's ready,
Who takes the chilling of the years
In his stride, gradual and steady,
Who does not yield to awkward fancies,
And from the rabble is not estranged,
A braggart or dandy in his twenties,
At thirty profitably married;
Who at fifty already mortgage free
And shedding needless debts and friends
Obtains fame, rank, and salary
All in due course in peace and plenty;
Of whom the age says frequently:
X is a pillar of the community.

 XI.
It's sad to think that all for nothing
Our youth was given us, a rip off;
That often we bamboozled it
But youth itself gave us the slip off:
That all our best and dearest wishes,
The dreams we cherished intimately
Have rotted one by one too swiftly,
Like leaves in the autumnal gales.
To see before one a long row
Of formal dinners is unbearable,
To look on life as on a ritual,
And after the respectful rabble
To follow, athough its thoughts, its passions,
One does not share, not even its fashions.

 XII.
Having become the gossips target,
How unendurable (kindly agree)
Amongst the folks who are most reasonable
To be known for a pretended oddity,
Or as a melancholy freak,
Or a satanic monstrosity,
Or even as my own strange Demon.
Onegin, for now to him I turn,
His friend in a duel having sent to Styx
And living aimlessly and idly
Till the grand old age of twenty six,
Bored with his empty inactivity,
Careerless, wifeless, free and useless,
Had nothing to occupy his emptiness.

 XIII.
Unrest then seized him with vexation,
A ceaseless desire for change of place,
(A very tortuous sensation,
Though for some others a cross they take).
He left his village and his estate,
The woods' and cornfields' solitude,
Where every day the bloody shade
Of Lensky would visibly intrude.
And then he wandered aimlessly
Being guided by one emotion only;
Till travel also became a bore,
Like everything else, a task, a chore.
So he returned and, following Chatsky's call,
He dropped all else and went to a ball.

 XIV.
And now the crowd is shifting, lurching,
A whisper runs throughout the hall...
A woman to the hostess is approaching,
Behind her a stately general.
She moved without any fuss at all,
Not coldly, nor full of useless talk,
Without a haughty glance or look
Without pretensions to success,
Or the least suspicion of haughtiness,
Or imitative coquetries...
All in her was simple and serene.
She seemed the perfect living queen
Of *comme il faut*... ( Shishkov forgive me:
I cannot translate French vocabulary.)

 XV.
The women moved closer as she entered;
Old men were keen to smile at her;
The young men made their bows more fervent,
Seeking to catch a glance from her.
The young girls walked past more quietly,
Passing her in the hall, and still more stately,
Raising his shoulders and his chin jutting,
The general came after proudly strutting.
No one could say she was a beauty,
But in all her person, head to toe,
There was no trace of that which we,
By the dictat of fashion high and low,
But by London's lofty circles, especially,
Is termed 'vulgarianism'. (Pardon me...

 XVI.
I love this word inordinately,
Although I cannot quite translate it;
But for a while all may employ it,
Though it is not yet honoured equitably,
But it would suit well an epigram...)
But I turn now to our theme, the woman,
Graceful, resourceful, simple, pure,
Seated at the table, (of course, Tatyana)
Beside the dazzling Nina Voronskaya,
That Cleopatra of the Neva,
And you'll agree with me, I'm sure,
That Nina with her marble beauty
However blinding it might be
Cannot eclipse her serenity.

 XVII.
"Surely it cannot..." muses Yevgeny,
"Not her, no! It is... No, her, no less...
But how? From some village wilderness..."
He lifts his monocle fretfully
Turning it constantly in her direction,
On her, whose features he remembered
But vaguely, dimly, and half-forgotten.
"Do tell me, prince, for you must know,
Who is that in the red dress and beret
Speaking with that Spanish VIP?"
The Prince looks condescendingly:
"I see you have been gone some time;
But wait, and I will introduce you to her."
"But who is she?" "She is my wife, no other!"

 XVIII.
"So you are married! I was not aware!
For very long?" "Two years or more."
"To whom?" "A Larin." "Not Tatyana?"
"Why, do you know her?" "I am their neighbour."
"Well then, come with me." And the Prince
Takes him to his wife and introduces
His relative and friend of long ago.
The Princess looks at him dispassionately.
Whatever might have troubled her soul
However deeply she was smitten,
Astonished, struck, gob-smacked or bitten,
She shows no lack of self-control:
The same composure and appearance,
The same quiet bow and graceful distance.

 XIX.
Really, I swear it! Not to mention shuddering,
Or turning pale, or reddening,
She did not even move an eyelid,
Nor even let her lips compress.
Although he looked most tenderly
Yet of Tatyana's former self
No trace Onegin saw or distress.
He wanted to start a conversation
But could not. She questioned him
When had he arrived, and where from,
Or had he come from his estate?
And then she set her tired eyes on
Her husband; soon after she was gone.
Onegin stood rigid, like a stone.

 XX.
So could it be that same Tatyana
To whom he'd given, in isolation
And at the start of our romance,
In the depths of rural desolation,
With the fiery zeal of education
A sermon of a moral stance?
That same girl, of whom he keeps
A letter, in which her heart speaks,
Where all is open, all is fervent?
That girl... can this be but a dream?
That girl, the one whom in the past
He had cast aside as a simple lass,
Was it her with whom he had just been,
She so unblushing, so serene?

 XXI.
He leaves the crowded gathering
And pensively he makes for home:
His slumbers are not trouble free,
For glad and gloomy dreams disturb him.
He wakes: An invitation is brought in,
Prince N. requests him at the soirée
That very night. "My God, she'll be there!...
I'll go, I'll go!" And rapidly
He scrawls the usual formality.
What is the matter? A dreadful nightmare?
What stirs and shuffles in the depths
Of his chilly, idle, frozen soul?
Vexation? Vanity? Or once again
Love, which is youth's perpetual pain?

 XXII.
Once more Onegin counts the clock,
And scarcely waits for the day to end.
But ten strikes. He goes out on the dot,
Flies to the house, the steps ascends,
And, trembling, enters the drawing room.
He finds Tatyana there alone,
And there for several minutes space
They sit. Words do not come
To Onegin's lip. But gloomily
And awkwardly at times, he scarce
Replies to her. Within his head
One thought is churning constantly,
And stubbornly he stares; but she
Sits unperturbed, tranquil and free.

 XXIII.
The husband arrives and interrupts
This most unpleasant tête-à-tête,
Then with Onegin he conducts
A conversation on their old time set.
They laugh. The guests arrive and greet,
And with the salt of worldly malice
The talk begins to liven up;
Before the mistress the light chit-chat
Sparkles without any affectation,
And sometimes something reasonably
Is said, free of all vulgar indiscretion,
Without deep truths, or pedantry,
Things which should give no one a fit
By too much liveliness or wit.

 XXIV.
For here were indeed the capital's flowers,
Models of fashion, high society,
The faces one meets every few hours,
And fools both dull and necessary.
With women who were past their best,
In bonnets and roses, with crooked faces;
Here too were several younger lasses,
With looks unsmiling, not at ease;
And an ambassador with airs
Talking incessantly of state affairs;
Plus an old dodder, with powdered hair,
Joking with old-fashioned exactitude:
Remotely delicate and somewhat abstruse,
Which nowadays is mildly ridiculous.

 XXV.
Here also a fastidious devotee
Of epigrams, who hated everything:
The over-sweetened hostess's tea,
The blandness of women, men's banality,
The useless chat about some half-baked novel,
The medal to two sisters given,
The war, the Times', the Mirror's drivel,
The snow, the universe, the wife,
... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ...
... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ...

 XXVI.
And here was Prolasov, deserving
The reputation of a worthless bum,
Caricatured in many an album
By you, St. Priest, your pencil blunting.
In the doorway stands a ballroom prince,
Just like a picture from the press,
Red-faced, a cherub and a dunce,
Tight-laced, tongue-tied, and motionless;
And a migratory traveller,
An individual over-starched and galling,
Who amongst the guests has caused a snigger,
A ponce by his anxious gait and bearing;
And the interchange of silent looks
Marked him as a no-no in their books.

 XXVII.
But my Onegin the whole evening
Was occupied solely with Tatyana,
Yet not that girl so shy, retiring,
So much in love, so poor and simple,
But with a princess above the rest,
The unapproachable goddess
Of the luxurious and regal Neva.
O men! Why are you all the same,
Like Eve who tempted you to shame?
For what you have, you like it not,
And the serpent always calls you hence
To the tree that is beyond the fence.
The forbidden fruit let him give you to try,
Else paradise will never satisfy.

 XXVIII.
How changed Tatyana was, how confident!
Her rôle she played with much precision!
How surely did she implement
The exacting tasks of her position!
And who could see the tender girl
In this aloof, majestic creature,
The law-giver of the dancing hall?
Yet he had once set her heart a-quiver!
Of him, in the gloom of nights at home,
Before Morpheus descended on her,
She'd dream her virgin dreams alone,
Lifting her tired eyes to the moon,
Hoping with him at last (being besotted)
To complete the course that fate allotted.

 XXIX.
To love all ages are subservient;
But the hearts of impressionable young girls
Receive its blessings and its gales
Like springtime rain upon the fields:
For storms of passion freshen them,
Give them new life and make them ripen,
And life's grand forces bring to them
Luxuriant flowers and sweetest fruit.
But in later age, barren and sere,
When life has reached its turning point,
The effect of passion is more severe:
Thus the tempests of the dying autumn
Turn the wide meadow into flood,
And all around denude the wood.

 XXX.
There is no doubt. Alas! Yevgeny
Adores Tatyana as a foolish child;
In the torture of love's misery
He spends his days and useless nights.
His mind being deaf to reprehension
Straight to her porch and to her door
He goes each day without exception,
And like a faithful shadow follows her;
How happy he is if he assists in
Throwing her mantle on her shoulder,
Or with burning hand, being slightly bolder,
Touches her hand, and then rushes in
To clear a path through ranks of liveries,
Or a fallen handkerchief retrieves.

 XXXI.
But she ignores him utterly,
Whatever he does, he might be a ghost.
At home she receives him easily,
Among guests she gives him two words at most,
At times a distant bow she proffers,
At others she regards him not a whit;
She has no trace of flirtatiousness,
(Society does not approve of it).
Onegin starts to pale; he suffers;
She does not see, she does not care;
He pines, he withers, he flags, he falters,
He begins to fade consumptively.
All recommend him to the doctors
And they in chorus prescribe the waters.

 XXXII.
But he does not leave; he prefers to go
To his forbears by making a swift appointment;
But Tatyana ignores this acting too
(For the sex is strangely petulant);
But he is stubborn and will not back off,
He hopes, and fires up his indignation;
Being ill he is foolish and rashly rough,
And with a feverish hand he pens
To the princess, a passionate declaration.
Although in general he saw no sense
In writing epistles, and why should he?
But his heartfelt anguish evidently
Had now grown quite beyond description.
Here is the letter, an exact transcription.

 *Letter of Onegin to Tatyana*

I foresee all: how the revelation
Of my sad secret will cause offence.
For what a bitter condemnation
Is revealed within your haughty glance!
What do I wish for? And with what aim
Do I open up my soul to you?
And to your spiteful mocking laughter
Perhaps giving cause I'll rue hereafter.

In the past having met you quite by chance,
Seeing in you that spark of tenderness
I did not dare to entrust myself
To it, and shrugged off the sweet romance;
Besides, my repellent liberty
I did not wish then to abandon.
And yet another thing came to part us...
A most stupid sacrifice, poor Lensky ...
From all things that to my heart were dear,
I then had wrenched my heart away;
A stranger to all, bound to no one,
I thought to myself: freedom and rest
Are better than all that happiness.
My God! My God! How was I mistaken!
And how has the heart within me been stricken!

No, no! Each minute to have a glimpse
Of you, to follow you everywhere,
To catch with my adoring eyes,
The smile of your mouth, your looks, your hair;
Only to listen to you, and to understand
In my very soul your complete perfection,
Before you to suffer my crucifixion,
To grow pale, and perish... Ah, that is bliss!

But that is denied me: only for you,
I drag myself hopefully everywhere;
The day is precious, and the hour too,
But I waste in boredom's cruel vanity
The days which by fate are allotted me.
They are such a weary misery!
I know that my days are numbered already,
But in order to give them some small scope
I must in the morning be assured
Of seeing you each day, and of having your word...

I fear that this my humble prayer
By your fierce eye may be construed
As but a cunning trick to lure
You, and I hear your angry sneer.
But if you knew, how terrible
Is the torture of love's rabidness,
To burn ― and yet with reason's curb
To staunch the blood-letting in the soul;
To wish to fall and embrace your knees,
And sobbing, head upon your feet,
To pour forth prayers, confessions, pleas,
All, all, that words can yet control,
Although meanwhile with pretended coldness
To fortify ones looks and speech,
To hold a reasonable conversation,
And look on you with suppressed elation!...

Yet so be it: no longer have I
The strength to fight against this foe;
The die is cast, I am at your mercy,
I submit to my fate, be it yes or no.

 XXXIII.
There is no reply. He composes another.
To a second and yet to a third letter
Still no reply. He goes to a soirée,
She is there. As the room he enters freely
She walks towards him, and so fiercely!
She ignores his presence, no word is spoken,
Alas! How is she now fortified
With the deepest winter's cold and pride!
She scarce holds back the indignation
Behind her lips' enforced compression!
Onegin devours her with his looks:
Where, where is compassion, where confusion?
Where a trace of tears? .. No stain, no sign!
In her face only the remnants of anger shine.

 XXXIV.
And perhaps there was a secret fear
That her husband or the world would guess
Her foolish folly or her past tenderness...
All that Onegin knew of her.
There was no hope. He leaves the gathering
Cursing his hopeless lunacy,
And plunging more deeply into madness
He renounces the world and its society.
Then locking himself in his silent study
He remembers the time, not so long since,
When cruel depression and bitterness
Had pursued him through the world's noisiness,
Had caught him and dragged him by the collar,
And shut him away in the darkest corner.

 XXXV.
He started to read without much thought.
He got through Gibbon and Rousseau,
Manzoni, Herder and Chamfort,
De Staël and Bichat and Tissot,
The sceptic Bayle he read also,
And all the works of Fontenelle,
And of Russians many whom we know,
Not one rejecting - all were well.
He read the periodicals and journals
Which tell us how we ought to think,
But now they tell me my work stinks,
Although in the past some madrigals
Of criticism would come my way:
*E sempre bene*, as they say.

 XXXVI.
What then? It was the usual tale.
His eyes were reading but his mind
Strayed far; dreams, wishes, melancholy,
Crowded into his wandering brain.
Between the rows of printed lines
He read with spiritual eyes
Alien meanings. And in them he
Was plunged in complete reverie.
Secret traditions, half-lost memories
Of passionate gloomy histories,
And totally disconnected dreams,
Threats, explanations, premonitions,
Or from a long tale some lively nonsense,
Or a young maiden's letter's innocence.

 XXXVII.
So gradually in a drowsy lack
Of thought and feeling he declines,
While fancy in his slumbering mind
Deals out the colourful tarot pack.
At first he sees, in the melting snow
As if resting there for the night,
A youth unmoving, a sorry sight,
And a voice he hears: "He's dead you know."
Then next some ancient enemies,
Slanderers and malicious cowards appear,
And a swarm of young and faithless beauties,
And a circle of comrades seems to leer;
Then, at the window of a rural home
*She* sits, always she, and she alone!

 XXXVIII.
He was so accustomed to lose his way
In this that his mind nearly went astray,
Or he almost took up the poet's staff.
And truly, that would have been a laugh!
But indeed, by some hypnotic folly,
The structure of a Russian verse
He nearly at that time had grasped,
(This foolish, wooly headed scholar).
As a poet he even looked the part
When alone, and seated in a corner,
In front of him the chimney flamed,
While he crooned softly: *Benedetta*
Or *Idol mio*, and dropped his slipper
Or book in the fire, and ate his supper.

 XXXIX.
The days sped past ― and with the warmth
Went winter, spring began to rally.
He did not become a poet or corpse,
And neither did he go doolally.
The spring revives him. At long last
His close pent rooms where he had passed
The long winter like a mouse or marmot,
With its cosy fire and double windows,
One bright clear morning he leaves, and goes
Along the Neva in a fast sledge.
The sun reflects on the criss-crossed ice
In sparkling blues; the dirty sludge
Is melting in the trampled street.
But where are hastening his horses' feet

 XL.
Horses? Reader, you have guessed it
Already, and it is as you conjecture.
He hastens to her, to his Tatyana,
This incorrigible freak and romancer.
He enters like one already dead,
There is not a soul in the entrance hall.
To the next room. Further. But ahead all
Is empty. He opens a door. What's this?
He stands on the edge of a precipice.
The princess is before him and alone,
Sitting, in simple clothes, and pale,
Some letter she is reading, silently,
And the tears fall from her eyes in streams;
While her cheek upon her hand she leans.

 XLI.
Who would not see her silent suffering
In that brief instant and not understand?
Who would not know in the princess's glance
The former Tanya, her simplicity.
In a spasm of remorseful pity
Yevgeny fell down at her feet;
She shuddered, but she does not greet
Him; her gaze fixes on him silently,
Without surprise and without anger...
His frail and wasted countenance,
Beseeching look and dumb insistence
Is clear to her. That simple Tanya,
With the dreams and ideals of former years,
Arises within her and annuls her fears.

 XLII.
She does not seek to make him stand,
And not withdrawing from him her eyes
From his greedy lips she does not prize
Her senseless and unconscious hand.
What at this moment are her dreams? ...
A long and silent interval
Then passes. Then quietly she speaks:
"Enough; stand up. To you I shall
Declare my thoughts quite openly.
Onegin, you remember, surely,
That hour, when in our garden alley,
Fate brought us close, and unprotestingly
I heard the sermon that you thought to preach.
But now it is my turn to teach.

 XLIII.
Onegin, I was then much younger,
And better it seems, though not so sound,
And then I loved you; you well might ponder
Within your heart what reply I found.
What answer? Only fierce rejection.
Is it not so? For to you nothing new
Was there in a love that was simple and true.
And now? My God! My blood congeals
When I think of that cold look of yours,
That heartless lecturing... But at least
I do not fault you. In that hour so fateful
You acted with genuine nobility,
You were fair in the crisis which conquered me,
And with all my soul I am ever grateful.

 XLIV.
For then ― is it not true ― in that rural waste
Far from the world's ignoble fuss,
I did not appeal to you... why now do you thus
Pursue me with this unseemly haste?
Why now should I be your occupation?
Is it not that now, in society
I must appear, that I have a station,
That I am rich and amongst nobility,
That my husband in the wars was wounded,
And therefore the court still honours us?
And because you know that my fall from grace
Would be seen by all and notorious,
And to you it would bring a general renown,
And pleasant success would your efforts crown?

 XLV.
I weep now.... But if your former Tanya
You have still not forgotten even now,
Then know this: the bitterness of your anger
The stern talk, the coldness of your brow,
If it should be but within my power
I would prefer it to this mean passion,
To these tears, these letters that you fashion.
For to my young dreams in that distant hour
You then at least showed some sympathy,
And some respect for my girlish years...
But now! Why here? What foolishness
Brought you here to my feet? What sordidness?
How, with the heart and the mind that you have
Do you display the soul of the meanest slave?

 XLVI.

But for me, Onegin, this luxuriance,
This tinsel glare of a harsh existence,
My status in glittering society's whirl,
My modern home and evening parties,
What are they? I would renounce them all,
And all these rags of showy pretence,
This noisy sparkle, this rich incense,
For a shelf of books or a ragged garden,
For our old house, poor and humble too,
And all those places, where long ago,
Onegin, I first set my eyes on you,
And for that graveyard, quiet, retired,
Where a cross under the shade of trees and skies,
Marks where my poor old nurse now lies.

 XLVII.
Yet happiness seemed so possible,
So near at hand!... But now the book
Of fate is shut. Inadmissible
Perhaps was the course I took:
My mother with her tears of entreaty
Prayed me to marry; for poor Tanya
All lots were equal and indifferent...
I married. Onegin, leave me,
You must, I ask you, and I know
Within you there are nobler feelings,
Your pride, and your honourable dealings.
I love you ( why should I deceive you?)
But I am given to another now,
And I will eternally keep my vow.

 XLVIII.
She left. Yevgeny stood stock still
As if by lightning he had been struck.
And what a storm of feelings fill
His heart, his passions run amok!
But suddenly the sound of spurs:
Tatyana's husband then appears,
And my hero now, at last, dear reader,
In this sad plight (could it be worse?)
We now abandon to his fate,
For aye... till an everlasting date.
Enough we have wandered this lonely path,
Through the vasty world. We congratulate
Each other on arrival. Hooray, hooray!
'And about time too' I hear you say.

 XLIX.
Whoever you are, my dearest reader,
Friend, enemy, *n'importe qui*,
Let me part with you equitably.
Farewell. Whatever you have sought from me
Here in this book of carefree verses:
The recollection of burly times,
Or rest from toil, or but to slake
Your thirst for life, or comedy,
Or some grammatical mistake,
God grant that within these open rhymes
For your amusement, or your dreams
Your heart, or journalistic schemes,
I hope you will find a grain or two.
With that we part. And farewell to you!

 L.
Farewell you also, my stranger friend,
And you my true ideal, and pure,
And you, my lively, constant care,
My trivial work. From you I learnt
All that a poet's heart might want,
Retreat far-flung from the worlding's storms,
Sweet conversation of one's friends.
Now many, many days have flown,
Since the time when young Tatyana first,
In a misty dream with her Yevgeny
Both dimly appeared in front of me,
And the outspread distance of a story
Through the magic of a crystal ball
I scarcely could discern at all.

 LI.
But those to whom in a friendly meeting
The first verses of the poem I read...
Some like the rose are fast retreating,
As Khayam long ago has said.
Without them Onegin is now pictured.
But she, the original from whom
Tatyana's features were first formed...
Ah, how our wretched fate constricts us!
Happy is he who from life's play
Steps back and drains not to the lees
The wine glass full of cheap rosé,
Who the end of the novel never sees
But puts it aside quite carelessly,
As I from Onegin part nonchalantly.

**The End**