# The Brothers Karamazov

## INTRODUCTION

### BRIEF BIOGRAPHY OF FYODOR DOSTOEVSKY

Fyodor Dostoevsky was the second of six children born to Dr. Mikhail A. Dostoevsky and Marya Feodorovna. Dr. Dostoevsky was a descendant of Lithuanian nobility that hailed from the small village of Dostoevo (presently in the Belarussian district of Pinsk), while Marya Feodorovna was the daughter of a prosperous Moscow merchant. The family was poor, and Fyodor spent his early childhood living in a small apartment on the grounds of the hospital where his father worked. However, the Dostoevskys still maintained a staff of six servants. Dostoevsky always spoke of his mother with great warmth and affection but less glowingly of his father—a man who suffered from depression and a nervous affliction, two conditions that Fyodor would later inherit. When he was nine years old, Fyodor suffered from his first epileptic fit. He would suffer from epileptic seizures sporadically throughout his life and would use his condition to inspire the creation of some of his characters, including Smerdyakov in *The Brothers Karamazov*. Fyodor and his brother, Mikhail, were first educated at home. The Dostoevskys were adamant in providing their sons with thorough religious and secular instruction, particularly lessons in French, which were necessary to ensure social mobility. After Marya died of tuberculosis, Fyodor and Mikhail were sent to the Academy of Military Engineering in St. Petersburg to become military engineers, according their father's wishes. After his father's death, Fyodor Dostoevsky became a lieutenant and left the engineering academy the following year. In the same year, he completed a translation of Honoré de Balzac's *Eugénie Grandet*. After leaving the army, he started to write fiction. His first work, *Poor Folk*, a short epistolary novel, was published in 1845 to great acclaim. To assert his opposition to serfdom, Dostoyevksy joined the Petrashevsky Circle—a group of intellectuals who favored utopian socialism. When Tsar Nicholas I went after the group as part of a crackdown on political dissent, Dostoevsky and other members of the circle were sentenced to death. Dostoevsky's sentence was commuted to four years of exile in Siberia, where he lived in cramped, vermin-infested quarters. He was then forced to serve in the Siberian Regiment, where he spent five years as a private, and then as a lieutenant, in a battalion stationed at a fortress in present-day Kazakhstan. During his years in prison, he developed skepticism toward intellectuals and what he saw as their condescension toward poor, common people. After returning to St. Petersburg, Dostoevsky published his most important works, including *Notes from Underground* (1864), *Crime and Punishment* (1866), *The Idiot* (1868-1869), *The Possessed* (1872), and his last novel, *The Brothers Karamazov* (1879-1880). In 1864, Dostoevsky's first wife died. He married the stenographer Anna Grigoryevna Snitkina in 1867, with whom he had four children, though only two survived to adulthood. Shortly after completing *The Brothers Karamazov*, Dostoevsky died in bed of a hemorrhage at his home in St. Petersburg.

### HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The beginning of the 1870s were marked by the Franco-Prussian War (1870-1871), which resulted in France's defeat and diminished power in Europe. It also led to the creation of a unified Germany. Russia remained neutral in the conflict, swayed by Otto von Bismarck's support of Russian plans to remilitarize the Black Sea, a move that posed a threat to Turkey. Domestically, Russia seemed poised for progress. Alexander II, the eldest son of Nicholas I, led a series of reforms to modernize Russia, including the emancipation of the serfs in 1861. The 1860s and 1870s were also a period of scientific progress. Nihilists and monarchists alike were enthusiastic about new discoveries in physiology, chemistry, paleontology, and other scientific fields. As for progress in education and gender equality, there was a steady increase in the number of women permitted to attend lectures unofficially or to enroll semiofficially as auditors of courses between 1860 and 1863. However, the tsarist government chose to keep universities closed to women, missing out on the chance to make Russia the first European country to grant women the same opportunities as men to enroll in university full-time and obtain degrees.

### RELATED LITERARY WORKS

The nineteenth century is the period in which Russian literature reached the height of its sensibilities. Though the era is usually associated with the well-known prose of Leo Tolstoy, Ivan Goncharov, and Ivan Turgenev, and the plays of Anton Chekhov, the era began with a flowering of Romantic poetry, particularly the work of Aleksandr Pushkin. Pushkin is still regarded as Russia's greatest poet, best known for the novel in verse, *Eugene Onegin* (1833). His inventive, multi-faceted verse, which included moral and philosophical themes, strongly influenced Dostoevsky and other major Russian authors. Mikhail Lermontov was another major influence on Dostoevsky and was a leading Russian Romantic poet. His best-known work is the novel *A Hero of Our Time* (1840). After Lermontov's death in 1841, prose began to dominate Russian literature, starting with Nikolai Gogol, whose work includes short stories such as "The Nose" and "The Overcoat." The Russian intelligentsia—that is, a group of people who sought to reform Russia, often according to Utopian Socialist ideas, and

promoted their theories through literature—took Russian literature by storm in the 1960s. Nikolay Chernyshevsky's utopian novel *What Is to Be Done?* (1863) may have been the most widely read work of the century. Dostoevsky, along with Tolstoy, rejected the atheism of the intelligentsia. Their novels sought to explore the complexities of daily life and championed the values of common people. Tolstoy published his greatest novels, *War and Peace* and *Anna Karenina*, which are regarded among the best in Western literature, between 1863 and 1877. In 1862, Ivan Turgenev published the novel *Fathers and Sons*. Unlike Tolstoy and Dostoevsky, who disliked Turgenev's work, Turgenev did not seek to answer life's big questions in literature. Turgenev's compassionate stance toward both simple, rural people and intellectual nihilists made him an exile in the Russian literary community, which demanded that authors align with particular classes.

## KEY FACTS

- **Full Title:** *The Brothers Karamazov*
- **When Written:** 1870s
- **Where Written:** St. Petersburg, Russia
- **When Published:** The first installment was published on February 1, 1879.
- **Literary Period:** The Golden Age of Russian Literature; Realism
- **Genre:** Realism, nineteenth-century fiction, psychological fiction
- **Setting:** Skotoprigonyevsk, Russia; Mokroye, Russia
- **Climax:** Fyodor Karamazov is found bludgeoned to death.
- **Antagonist:** Pavel Fyodorovich Smerdyakov
- **Point of View:** Third-person omniscient

## EXTRA CREDIT

**Ecclesiastical Courts.** In *The Brothers Karamazov*, Ivan Fyodorovich writes an article on ecclesiastical courts, which was popular in Russia in the 1870s. The responsibility of the courts, which held jurisdiction among "fallen Christians" in both the clergy and among the laity, was to identify a person's sins, admonish the sinner, return them to a righteous path, and, if this failed, to excommunicate them. Ecclesiastical courts had only moral authority and could not withdraw political or civil rights. Such courts are found today among those of Jewish, Muslim, and Christian faith but they deal strictly with administrative issues, such as the maintenance of clerical property.

**St. Isaac the Syrian.** Ivan notices a thick, yellow book on the table when he enters Smerdyakov's room at Maria Kondratievna's home: *The Homilies of Our Father among the Saints, Isaac the Syrian*. St. Isaac was known for rejecting worldly possessions. In an ironically similar move, Smerdyakov gives Ivan Karamazov the three thousand rubles that he stole from Fyodor Karamazov, declaring that he has given up his dream of leaving town and, therefore, no longer has any use for the money. His action mirrors St. Isaac's refusal of money to help him build a monastery. When asked why he declined the money, St. Isaac replied that "a monk who acquires possessions is no longer a monk."

## PLOT SUMMARY

Fyodor Pavlovich Karamazov is a twice-married "old buffoon" from the town of Skotoprigonyevsk and the patriarch of the Karamazov clan, which includes his three legitimate sons—Dmitri, Ivan, and Alexei. Fyodor is also the probable father of his cook and "lackey," Smerdyakov, due to a brief liaison with the "holy fool" and unwashed itinerant, nicknamed "Stinking Lizaveta." Marriage and fatherhood didn't quell Fyodor's sensual appetites. He frequently conducted orgies in his home, spent much of his time drunk, and forgot about all three of his children, who were left in the care of his servant, Grigory Vasilievich.

The three Karamazov boys take different paths, though all are alike in their determination to distinguish themselves from their father: Dmitri becomes a military man, Ivan is a well-regarded intellectual and journalist, and Alexei enters the monastery and falls under the tutelage of the revered Zosima, the Elder. One day, the Karamazovs visit the monastery. They're accompanied by Dmitri's cousin, Pyotr Alexandrovich Miusov. Zosima is also routinely visited by women—both peasants and members of the upper-class. Madame Khokhlakov brings her paralyzed daughter, Lise, with the hope that the elder's blessings will help the girl to walk again. When the Karamazovs arrive, Alexei worries that they'll embarrass him, and his fears come true. Fyodor plays the buffoon to ingratiate himself with Zosima. This infuriates Miusov, who despises Fyodor anyway, and they quarrel.

The hostility within the family is further revealed when Fyodor exposes how Dmitri abandoned his fiancée, the upper-class Katerina Ivanovna, to take up with a "courtesan" named Grushenka, who is also Fyodor's love interest. Meanwhile, Alexei's supposed friend and Ivan's rival, Mikhail Osipovich Rakitin, believes that Ivan Fyodorovich is trying to steal Katerina away from Dmitri. Katerina is "a beautiful, proud, and imperious girl," whose pride comes from performing acts of self-sacrifice. She offers herself to Dmitri after her father attempts suicide to escape from having others discover that he embezzled government funds. She tells Dmitri that her sister, Agafya Ivanovna, told her that Dmitri would give Katerina forty-five hundred roubles if she went to him and "offered" herself. Dmitri gives her a bank note for five thousand roubles.

After her father dies, Katerina goes to Moscow, where she's

welcomed into the family of a general's widow, whose two nieces, her closest heirs, have died. The widow gives Katerina a dowry of eighty thousand roubles. Katerina takes forty-five hundred—the sum that she requested from Dmitri—and sends it along with a letter in which she demands to be his wife. Dmitri explains the matter in a six-page letter to Ivan, who is in Moscow, and asks him to meet with Katerina to explain why he can't marry her. Dmitri has already gone to Mokroye with Grushenka, using the **three thousand roubles** that Katerina entrusted to him for Agafya. Katerina knows about Dmitri's interest in Grushenka and gave him the money as a test of his character, to see if he'd be willing to steal from her to be with another woman.

During his meeting with Katerina in Moscow, Ivan falls in love. Meanwhile, Fyodor Pavlovich has promised three thousand roubles to Grushenka and seals them in an envelope tied, according to Dmitri, with a red ribbon (it is actually a pink ribbon). Fyodor sends Grushenka word of the sum, hoping that it'll tempt her back to him. Dmitri knows about the money and asks Alexei to go to their father and ask for it. He also requests that Alexei go to Katerina, with or without the three thousand that Dmitri owes her, to tell her that he is "bowing out"—meaning that he'd like to depart from her life with honor. Alexei goes to see Katerina at dusk. Unbeknownst to him, Grushenka is there, too. It seems that the very different women have become friends, due to Grushenka's promise to give up Dmitri. This turns out to be a lie, which is revealed by Grushenka's refusal to kiss Katerina's hand, and her mention of Katerina's brief act of prostitution. After telling Dmitri about the ensuing clash, Alexei returns to the monastery. He reads a letter from Lise, in which the girl confesses her love for him.

One day, Alexei visits his father, who expresses his refusal to allow Dmitri to have Grushenka. When Alexei leaves, he encounters six schoolboys throwing rocks at one whom they identify as a "scoundrel." The boy, whose name is Ilyusha, stabbed an older classmate and friend, Kolya Krasotkin, with a penknife. Alexei defends the lone boy, who then turns on him and bites his hand. Ilyusha resents Alexei for being a Karamazov. The boy witnessed Dmitri humiliate his father, Captain Snegiryov, by dragging him out of a tavern by his beard. Dmitri went after Snegiryov in response to the captain going to Grushenka, on Fyodor's behalf, to ask her to take over Dmitri's promissory notes. This way, Grushenka could sue Dmitri for his debts and have him locked up, due to his inability to pay.

Alexei then visits the Khokhlakovs, where he tells Lise that he will marry her when he leaves the monastery. Katerina is in the drawing room. She gives Alexei two hundred shining roubles to give to Snegiryov, to compensate the impoverished captain for the assault. Alexei goes to the captain's house to give him the money and, while there, he officially meets nine-year-old Ilyusha. Alexei soon gets better acquainted with Ivan when they meet at a tavern and discuss the existence of God. Ivan is an atheist who doesn't think that humanity is capable of unconditional love. To prove his point, he recites to Alexei a poem he wrote called "The Grand Inquisitor." In the story, God enters the world. He performs miracles and is then imprisoned by an inquisitor who, through interrogation, finds out the true identity of the elderly stranger. The inquisitor releases the stranger and sends him away, assuring him that the people will never accept him if the inquisitor doesn't want them to. After telling Alexei this story, Ivan says goodbye to his brother, assuming that they won't see each other again for another six or seven years. Soon thereafter, Smerdyakov warns Ivan about the possibility of Dmitri killing his father over the three thousand roubles that Fyodor promised to Grushenka. He suggests that Ivan not go to Moscow but to Chermashya because it's closer to home. Fyodor wants Ivan to go there to see if the merchant, Lyagavy, is sincerely interested in buying a woodlot for eleven thousand roubles. The errand is also an excuse to get rid of Ivan while Fyodor awaits Grushenka.

Back at the monastery, Zosima is dying. Alexei enters his cell and listens to the old man's life story, which he transcribes. Zosima talks about being born of a noble father, and having an older brother named Markel who died when Zosima, then named Zinovy, was still a child. After he insulted a romantic rival and nearly entered a duel, Zosima decided to enter the monastery. After narrating his life story, Zosima dies. His body lies in a coffin in the monastery. Alexei awaits a miracle, while some of the monks gossip about the deceased elder and question the validity of his holy reputation. When the corpse begins to stink, revealing that the elder is a mere mortal, it confirms the others' skepticism, and Alexei becomes disillusioned. He leaves and encounters Rakitin, who's both surprised and pleased by Alexei's sudden loss of faith. He invites the young monk to go with him to see Grushenka. It turns out that she's promised Rakitin twenty-five roubles to bring Alexei to her so that she can seduce him. This is her revenge against Alexei for averting her gaze in the street. When she finds out about Zosima's death, she expresses sorrow, which surprises Alexei. He realizes that Grushenka isn't as bad as he thought. He takes comfort in her sympathy, while she's relieved to realize that he doesn't think so ill of her. They agree that they have each offered the other "**an onion**." When he returns to the monastery, Alexei dreams that the elder Zosima appears to him. The dream inspires him to leave the monastery and "sojourn in the world," as Zosima once advised.

Meanwhile, Dmitri is still trying to figure out how to return the three thousand roubles that he owes Katerina. He thinks about suing his father for his land inheritance. Desperate, he offers Grushenka's "patron," Samsonov, three thousand roubles to take over his claims on the land. Samsonov advises that Dmitri go to Lyagavy in Sukhoy Possyolok and make him the offer instead. Dmitri makes the trip, but Lyagavy is too drunk to talk business. Finally, Mitya pawns his pistols to Pyotr Ilych

Perkhotin and then visits Madame Khokhlakov to borrow three thousand roubles from her. Madame Khokhlakov detests Dmitri and wants Katerina to be rid of him so that she can pursue a relationship with Ivan instead. She suggests that Dmitri can get far more than three thousand by going to work in the mines to prospect for gold. When he again requests the three thousand that he needs now, she says that he doesn't have it. Furious, he leaves. He then runs into Samsonov's servant who tells him that Grushenka was just at Fyodor's house. Dmitri rushes to Grushenka's residence at the widow Morozov's house and demands that her maid, Fenya, tell him where Grushenka is. Fenya says she doesn't know. Before going back out, Dmitri snatches a brass pestle off of the table and rushes to his father's house.

Grigory awakens, remembering that he didn't lock the garden gate. He sees that his master's window is open and someone is running in the dark, toward the fence. Grigory runs after the figure and is hit on the head. Dmitri climbs back into the garden and feels Grigory's bloody head. He has no time to look after the old man, however, and rushes off to find Grushenka. He returns to the widow Morozov's house. The head porter tells him that Grushenka left two hours ago for Mokroye, where she's meeting with the Polish officer to whom she's supposedly engaged. Dmitri meets again with Perkhotin and asks for the pistols back. Perkhotin sees the blood on Dmitri's hands and face and suspects that something is wrong. Nonetheless, Perkhotin returns the pistols, and Dmitri goes to Mokroye to see Grushenka for what he thinks will be the last time, because he plans to commit suicide. He arrives at Plastunov's inn and greets the owner, Trifon Borisovich. There, he finds Grushenka with Pytor Fomich Kalgonov and two panie, or Polish officers. Pan Mussyalovich is Grushenka's fiancé. Dmitri plays cards with them and loses money, but it's then discovered that the men have been playing with a marked deck. Dmitri offers Pan Mussyalovich three thousand roubles to disappear—he promises to give five hundred up front and the rest to be delivered in town. Pan Mussyalovich refuses and then leaves Grushenka, declaring her "wanton and shameless" for her involvement with both men. With the panie gone, Dmitri, Grushenka, and Kalgonov get drunk. Dmitri and Grushenka declare their love for each other and pledge to be together. This romantic idyll is disrupted when the police commissioner enters and arrests Dmitri for murdering his father. Around this time, Ilyusha succumbs to consumption. Kolya Krasotkin reunites with him and brings him the gift of a small cannon. Kolya also brings his dog, which he claims is Ilyusha's old dog, Zhuchka, whom Ilyusha believed had died after he played the mean trick of feeding the dog a piece of bread stuck with a pin—something he learned from Smerdyakov. Kolya also befriends Alexei—the only person Kolya respects because the monk speaks to the thirteen-year-old boy as an equal.

While Dmitri sits in jail, Alexei, Katerina, and Ivan come up with three thousand roubles to get the famous defense attorney, Fetyukovich, to represent him. Ivan, meanwhile, feels guilty for having wanted his father dead. Smerdyakov admits to Ivan that he killed Fyodor. He explains how he did it, revealing that he's not at all the idiot that people take him to be. Smerdyakov then presents Ivan with the three thousand roubles that he stole. Ivan insists that they go to the prosecutor the next day and confess; however, the next day, Ivan succumbs to "brain fever" and hallucinates a conversation with a gentleman who turns out to be the devil. Alexei later announces that Smerdyakov has hanged himself. Still, Ivan insists on confessing. During Dmitri's trial, Ivan testifies to Smerdyakov's guilt. He appears unwell, and everyone in court assumes that he's merely trying to protect Dmitri. Alexei, too, takes the stand and asserts Dmitri's innocence. The public is equally unimpressed. Katerina also testifies and talks about how she gave Dmitri the three thousand roubles. She presents the letter that Dmitri wrote in a drunken rage, declaring his plan to kill his father. This is the same letter that Ivan once declared "mathematical proof" of his brother's guilt, and the public concurs. The prosecutor, Ippolit Kirillovich, and Fetyukovich, deliver their closing statements. Kirillovich uses the Karamazov case as an allegory for Russia's decline in moral character. Fetyukovich tells a story that denies the existence of the three thousand roubles promised to Grushenka and argues that Fyodor was never a true father to Dmitri. An hour past midnight, the jury leaves to deliberate. They return after an hour and find Dmitri Fyodorovich Karamazov guilty. Before he fell ill, Ivan prepared for the possibility of Dmitri being convicted. He set aside nearly ten thousand roubles of his inheritance to plan for Dmitri's escape. He entrusts the money to Katerina, who has moved Ivan in with her so that she can look after him. Dmitri plans to go with Grushenka to the American West. They'll later return to Russia; he thinks that they would both be too homesick to remain abroad.

After leaving Dmitri's cell, Alexei goes to Ilyusha's funeral. The boy died two days after Dmitri's sentencing. Alexei is late and the pallbearers take the coffin to the church without him. Alexei notices how there's nearly no odor emanating from Ilyusha's body. It's the "miracle" he had expected from Zosima, revealing the truth in his former elder's belief in the inherent goodness of children. It also confirms Alexei's belief in the inherent goodness of humanity. Ilyusha's passing restores Alexei's faith in the afterlife and encourages Ilyusha's former schoolmates, particularly Krasotkin, to strive toward kindness and good will.

## CHARACTERS

### MAJOR CHARACTERS

**Fyodor Pavlovich Karamazov** – The patriarch of the Karamazov clan, Fyodor is the father of Dmitri, Ivan, and Alexei and the probable father of his "lackey," Smerdyakov. He starts

out poor but later becomes a "very small landowner," and it is only after his death that the extent of his wealth is made known. Regarded as an "old buffoon," Fyodor is a morally depraved and greedy man, known for having made his fortune partly by eating at other people's tables. He has been married twice—first, to Adelaida Ivanovna Miusov, then to Sofia Ivanovna. Dmitri Fyodorovich is his eldest son by Adelaida Ivanovna, while Ivan and Alexei are the children that Fyodor had with Sofia Ivanovna, and Smerdyakov was conceived as a result of an encounter that he likely had with Lizaveta Smerdyashchaya. Described as "muddleheaded," "worthless and depraved," Fyodor is a self-indulgent sensualist who likes to get drunk frequently and participates in orgies at his home—a practice that he continues while married. Three or four years after Sofia dies, he leaves town for southern Russia and lives there for several years. In middle-age, Fyodor looks bloated with "long, fleshy bags under his eternally insolent, suspicious, and leering little eyes." He has a fat and wrinkled little face and a large Adam's apple that is "fleshy and oblong like a purse" and hangs "below his sharp chin." His lips are plump, and he has "black, almost decayed teeth." His nose is thin and "noticeably hooked"—a feature Fyodor believes makes him look like "an ancient Roman patrician of the decadent period." He is both sentimental and wicked and expresses fears of being dragged off to hell on hooks. Dmitri nicknames his father "Aesop" or "Pierrot" after the sad, stock figure in French pantomime. Fyodor believes that he is in love with Grushenka and competes with Dmitri for the younger woman's affections. He is murdered at his home as a result of Smerdyakov bludgeoning him to death with a paperweight. He leaves behind one hundred and twenty thousand roubles for his sons to inherit.

**Alexei "Alyosha" Fyodorovich Karamazov** – Also frequently referred to as "Alyoshka," Alexei is the youngest and third son of Fyodor Pavlovich and Sofia Ivanovna, the younger brother of Dmitri and Ivan, and the probable half-brother of Smerdyakov. His mother dies when he is four years old. He then spends some of his childhood growing up with Yefim Petrovich Polenov. Alexei's father often tells him that he resembles his mother, who dies when Alexei is four years old. Alexei, who is twenty when the novel begins, has dark brown hair, a handsome and "slightly elongated face," and serene-looking deep gray eyes that are set widely apart. During his boyhood, he was introspective and quiet and not at all likely to hold on to anger or any offense committed against him. During his school years, he was among the best in his class in regard to his studies but never the first. Alexei doesn't know the value of money, but no one ever worries that he will suffer from poverty or homelessness because he is the type who will either be cared for or will immediately find a way to care for himself. He is a realist, though he is inclined to believe in miracles; once he has been convinced that he has witnessed something supernatural, he remains certain that such events do occur. He joins the local monastery for a year, where he resides in a cell, in an effort to relieve himself from the darkness that characterized his early life. He comes under the guidance of the elder, Zosima, whom Alexei admires greatly. After the elder's death, Alexei is disappointed when the holy man's corpse rots like any other; as a result, Alexei becomes disillusioned with the world and with the other clergy members, who speak disparagingly of the deceased monk. Alexei is then entrusted to Father Paissy for spiritual guidance. After a surprising visit to Grushenka, and a dream in which Zosima appears, Alexei has an epiphany that restores his faith. He decides to follow his former elder's advice "to sojourn in the world," so he promptly leaves the monastery and rejoins civilian life. While he was still a monk, he and Lise spoke of the possibility of marrying after he leaves the monastery. However, Lise breaks the engagement after she regains her ability to walk. Alexei later befriends Kolya Krasotkin and becomes the only person whom the cynical boy admires.

**Lieutenant Dmitri "Mitya" Fyodorovich Karamazov** – Also frequently referred to as "Mitenka," Dmitri is the eldest son of Fyodor Pavlovich and Adelaida Ivanovna, the cousin of Pyotr Alexandrovich Miusov, the eldest brother of Ivan and Alexei, and the probable half-brother of Smerdyakov. He is twenty-eight years old when the novel begins but appears much older. Due to his father's negligence, he was raised by Grigory Vasilievich after his mother's death. Dmitri never finished high school and instead attended military school. After going into debt due to being careless with money, Dmitri finds out that he will receive no inheritance from his father and might even be indebted to Fyodor for the small sums that his father lent him for four years. Dmitri is a recently retired army officer, frequently referred to as "the captain," and others notice his "long, resolute military stride." Careless with money and contemptuous of his father, Dmitri becomes so desperate that he accosts his father, in a desperate attempt to obtain the **three thousand roubles** that he needs to pay back a debt to Katerina Ivanovna, to whom he is engaged, and to run away with Grushenka, with whom he is obsessively in love. His father, Fyodor, is his rival for Grushenka's affections. Dmitri's plans are foiled when he is jailed and then put on trial, convicted, and imprisoned for his father's murder, which he did not commit. With Ivan's help, he plans to escape from prison, then move to the American West for a while with Grushenka. After some time there, he says that they will return to Russia as American citizens.

**Ivan Fyodorovich Karamazov** – Sometimes referred to as "Vanechka," Ivan is the second son of Fyodor Karamazov and Sofia Ivanovna, the younger brother of Dmitri, the elder brother of Alexei, and the probable half-brother of Smerdyakov. When the novel begins, the gloomy and withdrawn Ivan is twenty-four years old and is a well-regarded intellectual and atheist. During his schooling years, he demonstrated an "unusual and brilliant aptitude for learning."

Madame Khokhlakov favors Ivan over Dmitri Fyodorovich due to having better manners. Ivan is also in love with Katerina Ivanovna, his brother Dmitri's fiancée. Like his siblings, Ivan was neglected by his father in childhood, which results in neither man knowing the other. Ivan returns to his father as a practical stranger and becomes ashamed of his father's drunken conduct. Ivan acts as "a mediator and conciliator" between his father and elder brother. Smerdyakov characterizes Ivan as the most like his father of all of his brothers—a proud sensualist who enjoys living in "peaceful prosperity, without bowing to anyone." Smerdyakov confesses to Ivan about having killed Fyodor and claims that Ivan wanted his father dead but didn't want to take the responsibility of murdering him. After Dmitri is arrested for his father's murder, Ivan plans to raise ten thousand roubles to help with Dmitri's escape, should he be imprisoned. Ivan eventually succumbs to "brain fever," or madness, and is taken into Katerina Ivanovna's home so that she can care for him.

**Pavel Fyodorovich Smerdyakov** – The probable son of Fyodor Pavlovich Karamazov and the local "holy fool," Lizaveta Smerdyashchaya, nicknamed "Stinking Lizaveta." He is the probable half-brother of Dmitri, Ivan, and Alexei. His name, which means "son of the stinking one," refers both to his mother, who was an unwashed itinerant, and to his father, who has a dishonorable reputation. He is attentive to his appearance, in what may partly be an effort to distance himself from his mother's unsavory reputation. He suffers from epilepsy (like Dostoevsky himself) and works as Fyodor Pavlovich's cook. Despite Smerdyakov's lowly position, Fyodor is attentive to the boy, mainly due to his illness. He also trusts Smerdyakov and allows him access to a library that Fyodor has never used. After Fyodor's death and Smerdyakov's struggle with illness after a particularly bad epileptic fit, he moves in with Maria Kondratievna. Smerdyakov is misanthropic, devious, and spiteful, probably due to the rumors surrounding his birth and never having been acknowledged as Fyodor's son. He is methodical and far more intelligent and perceptive than anyone, particularly Ivan, gives him credit for being. He confesses to Ivan that he was the one who murdered Fyodor after Dmitri had already run out of his father's house. He bludgeoned Fyodor over the head with the cast-iron paperweight on Fyodor's desk. Smerdyakov later hangs himself in Maria Kondratievna's home.

**Zosima, the Elder** – Named Zinovy before he became a monk and sometimes called "Zosimov," Zosima is Alexei Fyodorovich's spiritual guide and the most revered elder at the monastery to which Alexei belongs. When Zosima is introduced into the novel, he is around sixty-five years old and has been a monk for forty years. He comes from a family of landowners and once had an orderly named Afanasy. Zosima was in the army in his early youth and served in the Caucasus as a commissioned officer. While still an officer, he encouraged equality between the upper-class and their servants. He then started his monastic effort in "a poor, little-known monastery in Kostroma" and later traveled with Father Anfim all over Russia to collect donations for their poor monastery. Zosima is a gentle cleric who is drawn to the most sinful of his followers. Many of the other monks believe that Zosima is a saint, though, there are others who resent Zosima's influence and extraordinarily holy reputation. Many people, particularly women, flock from all over Russia to receive his blessings. He is "a tall, lean, but still vigorous old man, dark-haired with much gray, and with a long, pious, and important face." When the elder dies, Alexei expects a miracle and is disappointed when Zosima's body rots like that of any other man, casting doubt on his holiness. However, Alexei has a dream about the elder which restores his crumbling faith and encourages him to follow Zosima's advice "to sojourn in the world," or to leave the monastery and re-engage with people.

**Agrafena "Grushenka" Alexandrovna Svetlov** – The twenty-two-year-old kept woman of her "patron," Kuzma Kuzmich Samsonov. She lives in the house that belongs to the dead merchant Morozov's widow. She is Rakitin's cousin, due to their mothers being sisters. Grushenka is "a red-cheeked, full-bodied Russian beauty" and "a woman of bold and determined character." She is very alluring, and the great appeal of her beauty is that it is simple and ordinary. She is rather tall and plump. She has a soft, "inaudible way of moving her body," and her voice is like "sugary confection." Her joy is like that of a child, and she wears a "childlike, openhearted expression," though she is also "proud and insolent." She is "acquisitive, tight-fisted, and cautious" when it comes to money, resulting in her developing a small fortune. Despite her reputation as a promiscuous woman, she rebuffs most of the men who take an interest in her. She is the lover of both Dmitri Fyodorovich and his father, Fyodor Pavlovich, though she later claims that she had no romantic interest in the elderly man and only laughed at him. After Dmitri's arrest, she falls ill and is sick for five weeks. By the end of the novel, it turns out that Grushenka truly loves Dmitri; she stands by him when he is sent to prison, and she agrees to his plans to move with him temporarily to the American West.

**Mikhail Osipovich "Misha" Rakitin** – Alexei Fyodorovich's supposed friend who soon exhibits his envy of Alexei's Christian faith. The two eventually discontinue their friendship after he plots with Grushenka to corrupt Alexei in exchange for her bribe of twenty-five roubles. Rakitin is a seminarian at the monastery and a socialist writer whose political ideas and cynicism influence Kolya Krasotkin. He dislikes the Karamazovs and characterizes the brothers as "sensualists, money-grubbers, and holy fools." He is offended by Ivan Fyodorovich's simultaneous avowal of atheism and his belief that the immortality of the soul is necessary for virtue. Though he is a man of "considerable abilities," his conceit compels him to

exaggerate them, and he has "a restless and covetous heart." Rakitin is egotistical, envious, and, though very sensitive to his own feelings, his "youthful inexperience" and egotism disconnect him from others' feelings. During her testimony at Dmitri Fyodorovich's trial, Grushenka reveals that she is Rakitin's cousin—out of shame, he had always begged her not to tell anyone. The revelation diminishes the public's faith in Rakitin's earlier testimony, which pleases Dmitri's defense attorney, Fetyukovich.

**Katerina "Katya" Ivanovna Verkhovtsev** – An old colonel's second daughter with his second wife. She is the younger sister of Agafya Ivanovna. Katerina falls in love with Dmitri Fyodorovich soon after offering herself to him in exchange for the money she needed to protect her father from dishonor due to his misappropriation of government funds. It is Dmitri who suggests through Agafya Ivanovna that Katerina offer her body in exchange for the money, though Katerina kindly conceals this fact during Dmitri's trial, making it look as though she came up with the idea to prostitute herself for the money. She is described as "a beautiful, proud, and imperious girl," who is quite tall and makes "strong, cheerful strides." Alexei initially perceives her as arrogant, but he comes to regard her as a noble, courageous woman with a "clear, strong faith in herself." She was welcomed into the family of a general's widow and given a dowry of eighty thousand roubles. She sends Dmitri forty-five hundred roubles in the mail and, three days later, sends a letter declaring her love and offering herself to him as his fiancée. Dmitri believes that she doesn't love him, but "her own virtue." Meanwhile, Ivan Fyodorovich is passionately in love with her. When Ivan succumbs to "brain fever," Katerina moves him into her home so that she can care for him. She tells Dmitri that, if Ivan is unable, she will do the work of ensuring Dmitri's escape from prison.

**Ilyusha** – Nicknamed "Ilyushechka" and "Ilyushka," Ilyusha is the son of Nikolai Ilyich Snegiryov and Arina Petrovna, and brother to Nina and Varvara. Alexei Fyodorovich meets nine-year-old Ilyusha when six schoolboys, including Smurov, corner him, throw rocks at him, and call him a "scoundrel" for stabbing Kolya Krasotkin with a penknife. Ilyusha is a small, weak boy who wears ragged clothes due to his family's poverty. When Alexei tries to defend him against the stone throwers, Ilyusha throws rocks at Alexei and then bites the monk's hand. His stoning of Alexei is revenge for Dmitri Fyodorovich dragging his father out of the tavern by his beard. He is also getting revenge for being teased by other children, who have learned of the incident and call his father a coward. Ilyusha promises to challenge Dmitri to a duel when he grows up. Ilyusha later contracts tuberculosis. He is reunited with Kolya, with whom he had once been friends, when the older boy arrives at his bedside and brings him Zhuchka, Ilyusha's old dog. Ilyusha dies two days after Dmitri is sentenced.

**Nikolai "Kolya" Ivanov Krasotkin** – The thirteen-year-old son of Anna Fyodorovna Krasotkin and the provincial secretary Krasotkin, who died "almost fourteen years before"—that is, before Kolya was born. Kolya is a prankster who enjoys causing trouble everywhere he goes. He becomes notorious for lying down under the rails while a train rides over him. When he meets Alexei Fyodorovich, he is two weeks away from his fourteenth birthday. He is a school boy who declares himself a socialist and who probably gets some of his political ideas from Rakitin, whom he talks to often. He is rude, arrogant, and inclined to view others as less intelligent than he. He enjoys humiliating other people and drawing attention to himself. The only person whose opinion he respects is Alexei Fyodorovich, who treats Kolya like the mature equal the boy wants to believe he is. Kolya is short and regards his face as "disgusting," though the narrator explains that he is actually quite handsome with fair, freckled skin and "small but lively gray eyes." His cheekbones are broad, and his lips are small and very red. His nose, too, is small and upturned. He is friends with Smurov, though Kolya is two years ahead of him. He also befriended Ilyusha Snegiryov, who later turns on Kolya and stabs him in the leg with a penknife. Ilyusha and Kolya reunite when the former contracts tuberculosis and Kolya visits him at his bedside. He brings Zhuchka, Ilyusha's former dog. Ilyusha's death, as well as Alexei's encouragement of kindness, softens Kolya's attitude by the end of the novel.

**Lizaveta Smerdyashchaya ("Stinking Lizaveta")** – Nicknamed "Stinking Lizaveta," Lizaveta is "a holy fool" and a mute. The mother of Smerdyakov, Lizaveta (who has no surname) is described as having been very short—"a wee bit under five feet"—with a "healthy, broad, and ruddy" face that looked "completely idiotic." In the summer and winter, she went barefoot, wearing only "a hempen shift." In every instance in which others tried to clothe Stinking Lizaveta, she went somewhere, usually to the porch of the cathedral church, and removed the garments they had given her. She had extremely thick hair, as curly as sheep's wool, that was nearly black and always dirty "with earth and mud," "little leaves, splinters, and shavings stuck to it," due to sleeping on the ground. By the time she was twenty years old, her mother had been long dead and her father was a homeless and sickly failed tradesman named Ilya, who drank heavily and worked sparingly for "well-to-do middle-class families as some sort of handyman." Stinking Lizaveta's pregnancy resulted from a drunken encounter with Fyodor Pavlovich. She dies soon after giving birth to Smerdyakov.

**Pyotr Alexandrovich Miusov** – Adelaida Ivanovna's cousin. When the novel begins, he is fifty years old. He is "enlightened" and sophisticated and considers himself "a lifelong European." He is a liberal who has lived in Paris. In Russia, he owns land that is measured by its one thousand "souls," or slaves. He is described as an inauthentic type who often play-acts to his disadvantage. Dmitri Fyodorovich is left briefly in his care after

Adelaida's death. Pyotr, in turn, leaves his younger cousin with one of Adelaida's cousins in Moscow, returns to Paris, and forgets about Dmitri. Pyotr Alexandrovich detests Fyodor Pavlovich and appears embarrassed by Fyodor's behavior when they visit the elder, Zosima, at the monastery. His nephew is Pyotr Fomich Kalgonov.

**Adelaida Ivanovna** – Fyodor Pavlovich's first wife, the mother of Dmitri Fyodorovich, and the cousin of Pyotr Alexandrovich Miusov. She belonged to the wealthy and aristocratic Miusov family. Adelaida is beautiful and has a dowry that includes twenty-five thousand roubles, a small village, and a "rather fine townhouse." Thus, no one in her family could understand why she married Fyodor, whom they regarded as a "runt," other than for the sheer excitement of breaking away from her social class and its expectations. She is described as "hot-tempered," "bold, dark-skinned, impatient," and "strong"—qualities that are particularly on display when she develops contempt for her husband and beats him in anger. She abandons Fyodor for "a destitute seminarian" and leaves Dmitri with his father. She dies in St. Petersburg of either typhus or starvation.

**Sofia Ivanovna** – Nicknamed "the shrieker" by Fyodor Pavlovich, Sofia is Fyodor's second wife and the mother of Ivan and Alexei. She was very young when Fyodor married her and was previously in the charge of General Vorokhov's widow. Sofia came from another province and was the orphaned daughter of "some obscure deacon." Sofia later tried to hang herself to escape from the widow. After this failed suicide attempt, she married Fyodor at the age of sixteen. The narrator notes that Fyodor was struck by the girl's innocent beauty, which was very different from "the coarser kind of feminine beauty" possessed by his orgy partners. She gives birth to Ivan Fyodorovich in the first year of her marriage and has Alexei three years later. She dies from "something like a kind of feminine nervous disorder" when Alexei is four.

**Nastasia** – A visitor to the monastery who seeks the elder Zosima's, blessing. She is "not at all old yet but very thin and haggard, with a face not tanned but […] blackened." She has given birth to four children, all of whom have died. Her latest loss is her son, Alexei, for whom she cannot stop grieving. He was nearly three when he died. She is married to a man named Nikitushka who has started to drink to cope with their losses. Nastasia has abandoned her husband and her home. Zosima encourages her to return to her husband, saying it was a sin for her to leave him. She agrees to return home.

**Madame Prokhorovna** – The widow of a noncommissioned officer. She is "a very old little old lady" who dresses "in town fashion." She has a son, Vasenka, who "had served somewhere in the army commissariat and then gone to Siberia, to Irkutsk." After he stops writing for a year, she thinks that he may have died during his army service. During a visit to Zosima, the monk assures her that the young man is probably still living and will either come back to her or write her a letter.

**Grigory Vasilievich Kutuzov** – Fyodor Pavlovich's faithful servant who raised Dmitri Fyodorovich from the age of three. He is married to Marfa Ignatievna. He detested Fyodor's first wife, Adelaida Ivanovna, but defended the honor of his second wife, Sofia Ivanovna, by chasing Fyodor's orgy partners out of the house. The narrator describes Grigory as "a firm and unwavering man," though he is actually stubborn to the point of self-defeat; he persistently pursues his points, however illogical they may be, as though they were immutable truths. Otherwise, he is "honest and incorruptible" but regards all women as "without honor." He is also extremely loyal; after the emancipation of the serfs, he refused his wife's suggestion that they leave the Karamazovs and go to Moscow. He nearly dies after Dmitri Fyodorovich hits him over the head with the pestle that he took from Fenya's table while trying to escape from Fyodor's property.

**Yefim Petrovich Polenov** – The provincial marshal of nobility. He is described as a generous and humane man who managed Ivan Fyodorovich and Alexei Fyodorovich's inheritance of one thousand roubles each, bestowed by General Vorokhov's widow. Within his care, the small fortune grew to two thousand roubles for each boy. To avoid spending their inheritance, Polenov educated Ivan and Alexei at his own expense. However, he left his legal affairs in disarray after his death, making it difficult for Ivan and Alexei to obtain their inheritances.

**General Vorokhov's Widow** – An aristocratic old lady who is described as Sofia Ivanovna's former "benefactress, mistress, and tormentress." She has violent tendencies and later beats up both Fyodor Pavlovich and Grigory Vasilievich when she visits Fyodor's home and finds Ivan and Alexei in soiled undershirts. She takes charge of the children three months after Sofia's death and sets aside one thousand roubles for their education, a sum that is carefully managed by Yefim Petrovich Polenov. She cruelly claims that Sofia's illness was justified due to her former charge's "ingratitude."

**Pyotr Fomich Kalganov** – Also known as "Petrushka," he is the nephew of Pyotr Alexandrovich Miusov. He is twenty years old, stylish, and handsome "with a very sweet, pale face" and "beautiful, thick, light brown hair." Dreamy and thoughtful but prone to laziness and distraction, Pyotr has "intelligent" blue eyes and a child-like manner. He is quiet and awkward, but he is also prone to excitement over the smallest things, quickly becoming talkative, impulsive, and giggly. He is also described as a thoughtful but distracted person. When the narrator introduces him, he is preparing to leave town for university—Pyotr Alexandrovich wants him to go to Jena or Zurich to study. Pyotr Fomich possesses some wealth and expects to receive more. He is friendly with Alexei.

**Varsonofy** – The elder who preceded Zosima, the Elder at the monastery. He is rumored to have beaten with a stick the visiting women who hoped for miracles. The little monk who escorts Pyotr Miusov and the Karamazovs into the monastery

acknowledges that Varsonofy was a fool, but he dispels rumors that the elder ever beat anyone. After Zosima dies, his enemies use Varsonofy to discount faith in Zosima's extraordinary holiness, claiming that Varsonofy's body did not stink but emitted a pleasant scent, indicating that the former elder was holier than Zosima and more miraculous.

**Madame Katerina Osipovna Khokhlakov** – The devout mother of Lise. She is a wealthy woman and is always tastefully dressed. She is still "fairly young and quite attractive"—in fact, she is no more than thirty-three years old and has been widowed for about five years. She is "slightly pale, with lively and almost completely black eyes." She goes to Zosima, the Elder with Lise to receive his blessings, in the hope that her daughter will walk again. When she visits, Madame Khokhlakov and her daughter wait in the quarters set aside for gentlewomen. She tries to convince Dmitri Fyodorovich to go to the mines to prospect for gold; Madame Khokhlakov despises Dmitri, due to what she perceives as his poor manners, and would prefer that Katerina Ivanovna marry Ivan Fyodorovich.

**Lise** – Named Liza, she is the daughter of Madame Khokhlakov and is usually referred to by the French variation of her name, Lise. She is fourteen years old when the novel begins and has suffered from paralysis of the legs for about six months. She is wheeled around "in a long, comfortable chair." She has "a lovely little face, a bit thin from illness, but cheerful." Her eyes are large, dark, and long-lashed and flash mischievously. She is in love with Alexei Fyodorovich, who agrees to marry her after he leaves the monastery. However, Lise later takes back her promise to marry Alexei after she regains her ability to walk. By the age of sixteen, her character hardens, as she adopts a dark view of humanity and develops a sexual interest in Ivan Fyodorovich.

**Kuzma Kuzmich Samsonov** – Grushenka's patron. He is an old shopkeeper and "a profligate peasant." He is also the mayor of Skotoprigonyevsk—the town in which the Karamazovs live. As the result of an illness, he lost the use of his leg, which had already become swollen. He is a widower and "a tyrant over his two grown sons." He is a very wealthy man and a great business man, "tight-fisted above all and hard as flint." He develops admiration, however, for Grushenka and becomes close to her. He even gives her eight thousand roubles, despite his reputation for being "stingy and implacable." He dies a week after Dmitri Fyodorovich's trial. On his deathbed, he refuses to see Grushenka.

**Lyagavy** – Often called "Gorstkin," because he takes "bitter offense" at the nickname Lyagavy, which means "bird dog." The peasant trader in the blue coat buys timber land. Both Fyodor Pavlovich and Dmitri Fyodorovich seek him out in order to sell him a woodlot in Chermashnya. Fyodor has been doing business with him for a long time but regards him as "a complete scoundrel." When Fyodor asks Ivan Fyodorovich to go to Chermashnya, he warns his son that Lyagavy is a swindler and "a rogue" with a penchant for lies. Fyodor tells Ivan to watch Lyagavy's beard when he speaks and not his eyes, which are "murky water." If he looks angry and his "red, ugly, thin little beard" shakes, he's telling the truth. If he strokes his beard with his **left** hand, it means that he's going to cheat someone. When Dmitri first encounters him in Sukhoy Possyolok, Lyagavy is passed out drunk after having consumed nearly a quart of vodka.

**Agafya Ivanovna** – The older sister of Katerina Ivanovna and the old colonel's eldest daughter born to his first wife. She is described as "simple and pert." She is attractive, in the "Russian taste"—that is, "tall, buxom, full-figured, with beautiful eyes" and "a rather coarse face." Though two men proposed to her, she refused to marry and remained a virgin. She lives with her father and her aunt. She is a great dressmaker but doesn't charge for her services.

**Captain Nikolai Ilyich Snegiryov** – The old captain and father of two daughters, Varvara Nikolaevna and Nina Nikolaevna, and one son, Ilyusha. The captain is married to a "half-witted" woman named Arina Petrovna. Katerina Ivanovna sends Alexei to the captain, who lives near Dmitri, to give the old man two hundred roubles as compensation for Dmitri beating him up outside of a tavern in revenge for his participation in Fyodor Pavlovich's scheme to convince Grushenka to take over Dmitri's promissory notes. The captain refuses to challenge Dmitri to a duel, out of fear that, if he is killed, there will be no one to look after his family. The captain makes a show of rejecting Katerina Ivanovna's money by throwing it down on the street and stomping on it; however, he ends up accepting the money, and later accepts her friendship and financial assistance when Ilyusha falls ill.

**Brother Anfim** – Also referred to as "Father Anfim," he is a simple monk from the poorest peasantry. He is quite old and "all but illiterate, quiet and taciturn, rarely speaking to anyone." He is "the humblest of the humble" and has "the look of a man who has been permanently frightened by something great and awesome that was more than his mind could sustain." Zosima loves Brother Anfim and treats him with "unusual respect." The men have hardly ever said a word to each other but, forty years ago, traveled together "all over holy Russia." Brother Anfim instills Zosima with a love for children, whom he regards as similar to angels.

**Markel** – The older brother of Zosima. He was eight years older than his brother, who was called Zinovy in childhood. As a boy, Markel was "hot-tempered and irritable by nature, but kind, not given to mockery, and strangely silent," especially when he was at home. He was a good student, but didn't make friends with his classmates. He instead developed a close relationship with a great scholar and distinguished professor who was exiled to their town from Moscow for "freethinking." Similarly, Markel was an atheist who refused to obey the customs of religious traditions. He was tall and good-looking,

but "thin and sickly." He died in the third week of Easter of consumption, or tuberculosis, when Zinovy was still a boy.

**Ippolit Kirillovich** – The deputy prosecutor, usually referred to simply as "the prosecutor." He has no surname and is married to "a rather fat and childless lady. When he arrives to arrest Dmitri Fyodorovich, he is described as "the trim, 'consumptive' fop" in "well-polished boots." He participates in Dmitri's interrogation, along with Nikolai Parfenovich. He is only thirty-five, but he lacks good health due to susceptibility to "consumption," or tuberculosis. He is described as intelligent and has "a kind soul," though he is also "proud and irritable." He has a lofty opinion of himself that doesn't match his true virtues. This high personal opinion, particularly regarding his understanding of the human character, leads him to think that he's underappreciated in his profession, and that he has enemies. He's eager to take on the Karamazov case because he thinks that it could become known all over Russia, thereby helping with his reputation. He dies of "acute consumption" nine months after the Karamazov trial.

**Fetyukovich** – Dmitri Fyodorovich's famous defense attorney from St. Petersburg. Katerina Ivanovna, Alexei Fyodorovich, and Ivan Fyodorovich have each contributed to the attorney's three thousand rouble fee for Dmitri's defense. Dmitri says that Fetyukovich thinks he's guilty. Fetyukovich's legal talents are "known everywhere" and he has previously visited the provinces to defend someone in "a celebrated criminal case." After his defense, these cases become famous all over Russia and are remembered for a long time. Fetyukovich is described as "a tall, dry man, with long, thin legs, extremely long, pale, thin fingers, a clean-shaven face, modestly combed, rather short hair, and thin lips twisted now and then into something halfway between mockery and a smile." His eyes are "small and inexpressive," "unusually close together," and barely separated "by the thin bone of his thin, long-drawn nose." His appearance is best characterized as "birdlike." He appears to be around forty.

**Herzenstube** – The local doctor of German descent who treats Ilyusha for tuberculosis by "[stuffing] him full of medications," which doesn't improve the boy's condition. He is "an old man of seventy, gray-haired and bald, of medium height and sturdy build." He is "kind and philanthropic," known for treating poor patients for free. Everyone in town respects him very much, as he is conscientious and pious. He is a lifelong bachelor but views women "as exalted and ideal beings." However, he is stubborn and is the sort of man who never gives up an idea once he espouses it. Though he speaks perfect Russian, he exhibits an absentmindedness for ordinary words. Dr. Varvinsky is critical of Dr. Herzenstube's skill in medicine.

**Trifon "Borisich" Borisovich** – The innkeeper at Plastunov's inn in Mokroye. He is also called "Trifon Borisich." He is described as "a thickset and robust man of medium height, with a somewhat fleshy face." He is a snobby and greedy man who is stern and cold with peasants but servile to paying customers. He has plenty of money and land and rents some land from landowners. He has more than half of the town's peasants working on his own property, in an effort to pay off debts that they will never be able to pay back. He is a widower with four adult daughters. One of his daughters lives with him with her two daughters and works for her father as a charwoman. Another daughter is married to an official. Borisovich's two younger daughters also perform chores for him. He is known for cheating customers who are eager to spend their money and once cheated Dmitri Fyodorovich out of two or three hundred roubles when he stayed at the inn with Grushenka. When Dmitri is in prison, he hears from a guard who comes from Mokroye that Borisovich has gone mad. He tore apart his inn looking for the fifteen hundred roubles that the prosecutor said Dmitri had hidden there during his stay.

**The Panie** – Polish for "sirs" or "gentlemen," the *panie* are two Polish officers with whom Grushenka and Kalganov are keeping company at Plastunov's inn when Dmitri Fyodorovich arrives. One is short, "plumpish," and "broad-faced." He is Pan Mussyalovich, the Polish officer to whom Grushenka is supposedly engaged. He is a retired official of the twelfth grade, which is one of the lowest-ranking grades of the imperial civil service, and served in Siberia as a veterinarian. Grushenka has been in love with him for five years, though the officer ultimately dumped her and married another woman. His companion is Pan Vrublevsky, a freelance dentist who is described as "exceedingly tall." Trifon Borisovich exposes the men for cheating during a card game with a marked deck. The *panie* leave and the Polish officer breaks his engagement with Grushenka. The *panie* later run out of money and end up living in abject poverty.

**The Gentleman** – A visitor who appears to Ivan Fyodorovich during a nightmare when the latter is "on the verge of brain fever," or madness. The gentleman, who is actually Satan, is described as "a certain type of Russian gentleman" with a bit of gray in his "dark, rather long, and still thick hair." He also has a pointed beard. He wears a well-tailored but shabby jacket. In keeping with stylish gentlemen, he wears linen, a "scarflike necktie," and fitted, checkered trousers. What is striking is about this gentleman's appearance is that his clothing is a few years out of fashion in addition to being a bit soiled and threadbare. With this in mind, he looks as though he belongs in a category of "former idle landowners" that flourished during the age of serfdom and had since fallen into poverty. On the middle finger of his right hand, he wears "a massive gold ring" inlaid with "an inexpensive opal." He speaks with charm and intelligence and remains well-mannered throughout his encounter with Ivan, who is unsure if he is actually seeing Satan, some minor devil, or a manifestation of his own guilty conscience.

**The Cardinal Grand Inquisitor** – The title character in Ivan's poem, "The Grand Inquisitor," which he narrates to Alexei in the

tavern. The Inquisitor is a nearly ninety-year-old man and the head clergyman in Seville, Spain, during the sixteenth century. He is described as "tall and straight, with a gaunt face and sunken eyes." He is a surly man who usually "scowls with his thick, gray eyebrows." Despite his age, his eyes are fiery. He usually wears "magnificent cardinal's robes," but, when he encounters Christ in the town square, he is wearing an "old, coarse monastic cassock."

**The Presiding Judge** – A practical, "educated and humane man" with "the most modern ideas." He is vain but not overly concerned with career advancement, due to being wealthy and having connections. What is most important to him is to be progressive. He is passionate about the Karamazov case, in regard to its social significance, but he takes little interest in "the personal character of the case" or in the fate of the defendant, toward whom he is indifferent. The narrator views the judge's ability to regard the participants of a case in an abstract manner as the ideal attitude for a judge.

**Mikhail "Makarich" Makarovich Makarov** – The district police commissioner who arrests Dmitri Fyodorovich for killing his father, Fyodor Pavlovich. He is a retired lieutenant colonel who has been re-designated as a state councilor. He is a widower who lives with his "already long-widowed daughter" and her own two daughters. Makarov is uneducated and not a bright man, but he is competent at his job. He describes himself as having "the soul of a military man, not a civilian." When he arrives to arrest Dmitri Fyodorovich, he is described as a "tall, plump old man in a coat and service cap with a cockade."

**Maria Kondratievna** – The landlord's daughter, who has no surname and lives next door to Fyodor Pavlovich. After Fyodor's death, she moves into "a tiny, lopsided log-house." She used to get soup in Fyodor's kitchen and listen when Smerdyakov sang and played the guitar. She lives in a log-house, which is "almost a hut," with her mother and the deathly ill Smerdyakov, who moved in with them after Fyodor's death.

**Marfa Ignatievna** – Grigory Vasilievich's wife. She is a fellow servant on the Karamazov property. She has submitted to her husband's will all her life, but she pesters him "terribly" when she wants something, such as when she wants to move to Moscow and open a little shop there after the emancipation of the serfs. Her husband ignores her, and they remain with Fyodor Pavlovich.

**Pyotr Ilyich Perkhotin** – The young official to whom Dmitri Fyodorovich pawned his pistols in order to obtain the **three thousand roubles** that he believes he needs to pay off a debt to Katerina Ivanovna and then start a new life with Grushenka. Dmitri later goes to Perkhotin's home, as the latter is going to the Metropolis tavern, to return the money and recover his pistols.

**Afanasy** – Zosima's former orderly during his youth, before he entered the monastery. In a fit of anger, he once beat Afanasy but quickly begged for forgiveness. He later reunites with Afanasy by chance "in the provincial capital of K—" at a marketplace. Afanasy has since left the army, married, and had two children.

**Dardanelov** – Kolya Krasotkin's world history teacher who stands up for Kolya when he gets in trouble with the other instructors, even after the boy shows him up during class by demanding that the instructor tell everyone who founded Troy. This is a prank against Dardanelov who, along with everyone else, doesn't know the answer because Kolya is one of two known people in possession of the historian Smaragdov's *Universal History* (Fyodor Pavlovich also has a copy in his library), which reveals the names of Troy's original founders.

## MINOR CHARACTERS

**Father Mikhail** – The superior of the hermitage. He is "not yet a very old man." He is uneducated and "of humble origin," but "firm in spirit, with inviolable and simple faith." He has a stern appearance and often conceals his tender-heartedness, as though he is ashamed of it.

**Father Pavel Ilyinsky** – The priest with whom Lyagavy was living before moving on to Sukhoy Possyolok for another timber deal. Father Ilyinsky takes Dmitri Fyodorovich to meet with Lyagavy at his new location.

**Mavriky "Mavrikich" Mavrikievich Shmertsov** – The deputy commissioner who drives Dmitri Fyodorovich into town to his prison cell. He is described as "a squat, thickset man with a flabby face."

**Fedosya "Fenya" Markovna** – Grushenka's maid. When Dmitri Fyodorovich enters her home in a frenzy, looking for Grushenka, Fenya begs for her mistress's life, worried that he may kill her. It is her pestle that Dmitri seizes before leaving her cottage to go meet with Perkhotin.

**Maximov** – A landowner around sixty years of age, who is also called "Maximushka." He becomes homeless, as well as "obviously ill and weak," and ends up living with Grushenka at the widow Morozov's house.

**Father Ferapont** – A clergyman who "intensely disliked Father Zosima." He rarely leaves his little wooden cell in the apiary and does not go to church "for long stretches of time."

**Agafya** – Anna Fyodorovna Krasotkin's maid. She is overweight, pockmarked, and around forty years old. She and Kolya Krasotkin have a contentious relationship and they often exchange insults.

**Anna Fyodorovna Krasotkin** – Often referred to as "Mrs. Krasotkin," Anna is a widow who rents out rooms in her house to a doctor's wife and the woman's two children, Kostya and Nastya. She is the mother of Kolya Krasotkin.

**Kostya** – The son of the doctor's wife and the younger brother of Nastya. He is seven years old.

**Nastya** – The daughter of the doctor's wife and the older sister of Kostya. She is eight years old.

**Smurov** – One of the group of boys who threw stones at Ilyusha in Alexei Fyodorovich's presence. He is the ruddy-cheeked eleven-year-old son of a well-to-do official and a friend of Kolya Krasotkin, though his father forbids him to associate with Kolya.

**Andrei** – Dmitri Fyodorovich's coachman. He handles a troika, or trio, of horses that takes Dmitri to Mokroye in pursuit of Grushenka.

**Father Iosif** – A hieromonk and the librarian at the monastery.

**Father Paissy** – Known as "the silent and learned hieromonk," Father Paissy wants the government to be subordinate to the Orthodox Church. He becomes Alexei's new elder after Zosima dies.

**Father Superior** – A "tall, lean, but still vigorous old man." He is "dark-haired with much gray" and has "a long, pious, and important face." He invites the Karamazovs, Pyotr Alexandrovich Miusov, and Pyotr Fomich Kalganov to dine with him in his apartment at the monastery.

**Nikolai Parfenovich Nelyudov** – The prosecutor who participates, along with Ippolit Kirillovich, in the interrogation of Dmitri Fyodorovich. He came from the Imperial School of Jurisprudence in St. Petersburg two months before working on the Karamazov case. He is described as a "short young man in spectacles."

**Varvinsky** – The young district doctor from Moscow. He completed his studies at the Petersburg Medical Academy. He is critical of Dr. Herzenstube's competence as a doctor.

**Semyon Ivanovic Kachalnikov** – The justice of the peace in the town of Skotoprigonyevsk.

**Arina Petrovna** – Captain Snegiryov's wife and the mother of Ilyusha, Nina Nikolaevna, and Varvara Nikolaevna. She is a simple, "half-witted" woman but also light-hearted and easily amused.

**Nina Nikolaevna** – Also called "Ninochka," Nina is Snegiryov and Arina's daughter, and Ilyusha and Varvara's sister. She is crippled with a hunchback and is described as quiet and meek.

**Varvara Nikolaevna** – Snegiryov and Arina's daughter, and Ilyusha and Nina's sister. She is an educated young woman who eventually returns to her university in St. Petersburg.

## THEMES

In LitCharts literature guides, each theme gets its own color-coded icon. These icons make it easy to track where the themes occur most prominently throughout the work. If you don't have a color printer, you can still use the icons to track themes in black and white.

### FAITH VS. REASON

The "accursed question" that hovers in the minds of Fyodor Dostoevsky's central characters in *The Brothers Karamazov* is whether or not God exists. Furthermore, if God does exist, what is the moral meaning of this fact in a society that has increasingly less interest in religious faith? During his lifetime, Dostoevsky witnessed Russia veering toward socialism and worried that the political ideology's rejection of divine faith would lead to moral decay. He also worried that the philosophical musings of the intellectual class, for which the author had contempt, sought ways to rationalize immorality. In the novel, Dostoevsky uses Ivan to embody the intellectual class's atheism and cynical view of humanity. In contrast, his brother Alexei represents devotion to God's grace and faith in the ultimate goodness of humanity, despite the world's inexplicable depravity. Thus, the brothers' disagreement in the novel represents the contention between intellectuals and clergy members regarding Russia's moral destiny. Dostoevsky uses this debate over faith and reason to explore the precariousness of religious faith in a nation that wanted to believe in divine goodness but became too disillusioned with the world's corruption to maintain faith. As the novel unfolds, Dostoevsky argues that goodness can be found in the world if people accept it as it is, instead of pursuing grand miracles or living according to the whims of intellectual circles.

For Ivan, the Orthodox Church's existence is essential in maintaining the current social order and some semblance of civilization. He doesn't regard the institution's role as genuinely spiritual, given his insistence that there is neither a God nor an afterlife, but as correctional—helping to right the paths of those who cannot find their own way. When Ivan and Alexei's father, Fyodor Pavlovich Karamazov, suggests that "mysticism" should be abolished across Russia, forcing the devout to "reason," Ivan counters that once "the truth" shines forth, Fyodor will be the first "to be robbed and then abolished." The "truth," according to Ivan, is that God doesn't exist. Faith in salvation keeps the masses complacent with a system of inequality that unfairly benefits men like Fyodor. Once people abandon their faith, they will reject the system that oppresses them. In keeping with his view of the remedial purpose of religion, Ivan has written an article saying that, without "immortality of the soul, there is no virtue." Ivan appears to believe that others require the promise of an award—that is, going to heaven—or the fright of being sent to hell, to ensure good behavior. He, on the other hand, doesn't require faith for moral guidance. Believing himself to be a person of superior intelligence, he thinks that he can independently discern what is morally righteous without the rewards and punishments of religion.

In contrast, Alexei believes in both God and the afterlife, though his faith initially hinges on his belief in miracles. His need to believe in the presence of something extraordinary to

assure himself that he lives in a just world nearly costs him his faith and illustrates the precariousness of religious belief. When Ivan posits that it is "impossible to love one's neighbors," and that most people only do so out of a sense of duty, Alexei counters that he "knows" that "there is still much love in mankind, almost like Christ's love." Ivan considers such love a "miracle impossible on earth," due to people's inability to overlook others' unflattering qualities, such as "a bad smell" or "a foolish face." Ivan's cynical view of love is rooted in an awareness of human weakness, while Alexei's arises from his belief that people are capable of achieving divine grace. Alexei's faith in God makes him optimistic about the human capacity for love, while Ivan's pessimistic view of the world makes him skeptical.

However, Alexei's total faith in human goodness leaves him easily disappointed when others fail to demonstrate the love that he believes is innate. He's appalled by the monks who gossip about how quickly a stink emanates from the body of the elder monk, Zosima, equating it with an "odor of corruption." For them, the smell uncovers the unholiness of a monk who "taught that life is great joy and not tearful humility." Witnessing such pettiness and unkindness from those who are supposed to epitomize God's goodness nearly results in the collapse of Alexei's faith, which is only restored when he witnesses goodness in Grushenka, the woman desired by both his father and his eldest brother, Dmitri, and who supposedly epitomizes depravity. Alexei thus realizes that goodness needn't be revealed through miracles, but that it often surfaces in the most ordinary of circumstances and can be manifested by anyone.

The novel ultimately asserts that faith is not to be found in a monastery or based on grand, sweeping miracles; instead, faith is found in "[sojourning] with the world," embracing the flawed reality that Ivan found so unbearable and believing unceasingly in the capacity for human grace. Alexei's faith is restored when he witnesses goodness in Grushenka, a woman known for her sexual wantonness and greed. She expresses sympathy for him after hearing about the death of Zosima, who served as Alexei's moral guide. Through this encounter, Alexei ultimately realizes that goodness often surfaces in the most ordinary of circumstances and can be manifested by anyone, even those who are judged most harshly by society.

In contrast, Dostoevsky exposes the flaw in Ivan's delusion of superiority when the character succumbs to "brain fever," hallucinates an encounter with Satan, and then eventually goes mad. Ivan's belief in the power of reason isn't enough to withstand the fact of human frailty, which includes the likelihood of sometimes being wrong. The "mathematical proof" that fostered his initial belief in his brother Dmitri's guilt for murdering their father comes undone as a result of learning the identity of Fyodor's true murderer, the "lackey" Smerdyakov. Ivan also realizes that Smerdyakov isn't as unintelligent as Ivan believed, revealing the flaw in Ivan's arrogant intellectualism. Dostoevsky uses Ivan's delusion of superiority, as well as his eventual descent into madness, to suggest that faith in reason alone does not ensure moral rectitude. For Ivan, it leads to a loss of reason altogether, once he recognizes his father's true murderer, as well as his own corruption, due to his own murderous feelings toward his father. Alexei, too, has an epiphany in regard to faith. It is not to be found in a monastery but in "[sojourning] with the world"—that is, in embracing the flawed reality that Ivan found so unbearable and believing always in the capacity for human grace.

## INNOCENCE AND GUILT

When Dmitri is arrested for his father Fyodor Pavlovich's murder, there appears to be little doubt, even in the reader's mind, that Dmitri is the likeliest culprit. Dmitri's resentment of his father's neglect during his childhood, Fyodor's withholding of Dmitri's land inheritance, and their rivalry for Grushenka's affections all seem to confirm Dmitri's motives for and guilt in committing parricide (the killing of one's parent). When Ivan Fyodorovich learns that it is actually the conniving Smerdyakov who killed Fyodor, and that he committed the act knowing that Ivan wished for his incorrigible father's murder, it complicates the reader's understanding of innocence and guilt. Meanwhile, the public's eager condemnation of Dmitri poses the question of whether the truth matters as much as the semblance of guilt. Ultimately, Dostoevsky's exploration of innocence and guilt in *The Brothers Karamazov* exposes the baseness of human character, which seems to value finding fault more than seeking justice.

For most people, Dmitri's moral transgressions make him an ideal murder suspect, setting up the idea that placing blame based on the appearance of guilt is of more interest to the public than ensuring genuine justice plays out. Dmitri's brother, Ivan Fyodorovich, seems to share this view and makes Dmitri the scapegoat for his own murderous feelings toward their father. Dmitri's angry letter, in which he exposes his rage toward Fyodor, becomes a convenient excuse to cast for blame at the expense of justice. Dmitri swears to Grushenka that he didn't kill his father, despite wanting him dead and writing a letter to his fiancée, Katerina Ivanovna, saying as much—a document that Ivan calls "a mathematical proof" that Dmitri killed their father. The public overlooks Dmitri's drunken anger when writing the letter in favor of pegging him as a vindictive and self-indulgent son. This explanation initially satisfies Ivan and discounts Smerdyakov's assertion that he committed the murder to satisfy Ivan's secret wish for his father's death. Dmitri's letter takes on "a mathematical significance" that sets Ivan "completely at ease," in the belief that he's blameless. The letter serves as physical evidence of Dmitri's guilt, while Smerdyakov's story is based on suspicion. The letter, therefore, satisfies Ivan's preference for proof in explaining events, while

it also exonerates him of any possible responsibility for his father's murder.

Even after Ivan learns the truth about how Smerdyakov carefully planned and committed the murder and tries to present it during his court testimony, the facts of Ivan's mental illness and the absence of a confession "in [Smerdyakov's] dying note," only further the public's wish to find Dmitri guilty—reflecting the human impulse to place blame rather than pursue genuine justice. To them, Ivan merely seems to be protecting his older brother. It's assumed that his fraternal bias, as well as his mental fragility, make him a poor witness to his older brother's true character. More precisely, Ivan is a poor witness due to his own sinful rage toward his father. Knowing this, Ivan develops more sympathy toward Dmitri at the end of the novel. He sees how his eagerness for his brother's condemnation was unfair and self-serving.

Smerdyakov's plan rests on the notion that people are more interested in blame than justice. He claims that Ivan wanted someone to kill their father so that he, along with his brothers, would get the nearly forty thousand roubles—if not more—that they each would have inherited as long as their father didn't marry Grushenka. Smerdyakov also claims that Ivan would've been fine with Dmitri committing the murder and getting caught; that way, he and Alexei Fyodorovich only would've needed to split the money two ways. Smerdyakov suggests that, like Dmitri, Ivan viewed his father's wealth as the key to his happiness and comfort, while the man himself was an impediment that Ivan wished to be rid of. Smerdyakov's accusation of greed leaves "a certain unhealing scratch" on Ivan's heart. By offering to plan for Dmitri's escape from prison after his sentencing, and using a portion of his inheritance to arrange for it, Ivan seems to be atoning for his role in facilitating his brother's imprisonment. The "scratch" is a metaphor for Ivan's unreasonable impulse to condemn his brother—an instinct that brings him shame, both due to his lack of loyalty toward Dmitri and because this sentiment is so contrary to his intellectual principles.

Dmitri's arrest and trial for murder do not result in justice for Fyodor's murder, which doesn't seem to be of great interest to the public anyway. What seems to matter most is that the person who appears to be guilty gets punished. By exploring the lust to condemn a man who turns out to be innocent, Dostoevsky shows how prejudice can spoil the pursuit for justice. By exposing Ivan's own wish for his father's death, the author complicates our understanding of culpability, leading one to wonder if the impulses that can inspire murder—greed and anger—are just as problematic as the act itself.

## JEALOUSY AND ENVY

In *The Brothers Karamazov*, jealousy serves as a major motivating factor for some of the main characters' actions. Only Alexei, who has rejected sensuality in favor of communion with God, eludes this fatal weakness. Jealously partly explains Dmitri's hatred of his father, Fyodor Pavlovich, who is his rival for Grushenka's affections. Jealousy also causes Katerina Ivanovna's resentment of Grushenka, due to Dmitri's willingness to betray her in favor of the notorious woman. Throughout the novel, Dostoevsky characterizes jealousy as a petty emotion that causes characters to behave rashly, both out of fear of losing a beloved's affection to someone deemed less worthy, and out of envy for a romantic rival's perceived advantages.

Dmitri assumes, quite rightly, that money is the source of Grushenka's supposed interest in Fyodor, just as it is the cause of Dmitri's contention with his father. Fyodor knows the advantage of his wealth and the power that it gives him over both Dmitri and Grushenka. Therefore, Fyodor uses this leverage to make the case that Dmitri, a younger and more attractive man, is an unworthy suitor. Envy of Dmitri's youth, and jealousy over Grushenka's preference for him, cause Fyodor to forget all paternal duties in his effort to humiliate his son, thereby revealing the corrosive effects of envy and jealousy on familial bonds. For instance, during a meeting with the elder monk, Zosima, Fyodor uses the occasion to humiliate his son, Dmitri, for his carelessness with money. Fyodor claims that he has it "on paper" that Dmitri owes him "several thousand." Worse, Dmitri has won the love of "one of the noblest girls" (Katerina) but continues "visiting one of the local seductresses" (Grushenka). Fyodor speaks to the monk as though he's seeking a witness to his son's faults. If he can win the holy man over, then he wins an important ally against Dmitri, who comes off as a self-indulgent fornicator.

Dmitri counters that his father is jealous of his relationship with Grushenka and became so desperate to get him out of the way that he threatened to have Dmitri jailed for his outstanding debts to his father. Using the impoverished Captain Snegiryov as his emissary, Fyodor sends the old captain to Grushenka, offering that she take over Dmitri's promissory notes, which are in Fyodor's possession. She could then sue for the money owed and have Dmitri jailed for his inability to pay. Here, Fyodor's scheming works well on three counts—it preys on Grushenka's notorious greed, it ensures that Dmitri can no longer bother Fyodor about his supposed land inheritance, and it gets Fyodor's romantic rival permanently out of his way. In these instances, Fyodor's jealousy causes him to encourage others to be the worst versions of themselves. His drive to humiliate his son facilitates Grushenka's greed and pushes the captain to dishonor his position in exchange for much-needed income.

Meanwhile, Katerina, who is Dmitri's fiancée and Grushenka's rival for his affections, is jealous of Dmitri's willingness to do anything, even steal from her, to be with Grushenka. At the same time, Grushenka envies Katerina's social class and position of respectability. Their rivalry, however, is less about

Dmitri than about each woman using her relationship with him to discredit the other. Katerina's attempt to charm Grushenka into breaking up with Dmitri by telling him that she loves another man backfires when Grushenka refuses to kiss Katerina's hand after the noblewoman deigned to kiss Grushenka's. This refusal of mutual respect, in addition to Grushenka's reminder that Katerina also once offered her body to a man in exchange for money, undermines Katerina's social power and equalizes the women. Despite Katerina's wealth and nobility, Grushenka makes the point of demonstrating that they are no different in their occasional reliance on men for money. Grushenka's petty action exposes her envy for Katerina's social prestige. Furthermore, Grushenka's willingness to exploit Katerina's jealousy over her relationship with Dmitri has less to do with asserting her affections for Dmitri than in trying to expose Katerina's noble social airs as false. Katerina, however, refuses to acknowledge any parity with Grushenka, whom she refers to as "that creature." She gives Dmitri three thousand roubles, supposedly for him to send to her sister, as a moral test. She wants to see if he would be so depraved as to steal her money and go off with Grushenka, which he does. Even after Katerina realizes that it isn't Dmitri that she loves, but Ivan, her pride is offended by the realization that Dmitri was willing to betray her trust so easily and for a woman of such ill-repute. She is, therefore, not jealous of Dmitri's greater affection for Grushenka but of the other woman's power to get him to disregard his obligations to Katerina.

None of these petty, jealous rivalries results in a winner. Fyodor Pavlovich's competition with his son results in his murder and the jailing of Dmitri for that murder. Dmitri wins Grushenka, but it remains uncertain if he will escape from prison, as planned, and fulfill his dream of starting anew with her in the American West. Katerina succeeds in using a damning letter against Dmitri in court, which seems to confess his guilt, but she is now tasked with ensuring his escape to release him from punishment for a crime that he didn't commit. Dostoevsky spins a cautionary tale in which he offers these characters as various warnings of what can happen when base jealousy overrides one's better senses.

## MORALITY AND MODERNIZATION

During Dmitri Fyodorovich Karamazov's trial for the murder of his father, Fyodor Pavlovich Karamazov, the prosecutor, Ippolit Kirillovich, uses the Karamazov clan's intrigues as a cautionary tale against "modernizing Russia," which he compares to a troika "galloping by at breakneck speed." Russia is a nation that is rapidly progressing, but toward what? The country's abdication of moral sense is, according to the prosecutor, making it "impossible for it to arrive at anything sensible." Dostoevsky uses Kirillovich's speech to the jury to argue that Russia's urge to modernize, or to adopt more Western values, is making it vulnerable to ideas that compromise its moral character and weaken its defenses against corruption.

For Kirillovich, Russian society's corruption is exemplified by the fact that the horrific case of patricide (the killing of one's father) isn't even the worst story of criminality and depravity that has been reported to the public. The prosecutor contends that the Russian people read about "horrors of unbridled will and moral degradation" daily and are indifferent to them. This he takes to be a sign of "some general malaise that has taken root," due to living in a nation in which, as Ivan Fyodorovich would say, "everything is permitted." For instance, Kirillovich tells the story of "a brilliant young officer of high society, just setting out on his life and career" who stabs a petty official and the official's "serving-woman" for money, then puts pillows under the two corpses' heads. Kirillovich juxtaposes the officer's expression of warmth—putting pillows under their heads—with the coldness of murdering them to ensure his own advancement. Furthermore, this coldness has no bounds—he kills the petty official, who is of a higher social class, as easily as he kills the "serving-woman," who is a mere peasant. Though modern Russia has become more egalitarian, the new wave of progressive ideas have not, it seemed, reaffirmed the sanctity of human life.

Kirillovich ironically offers the story of another "young hero" who, "all hung with medals for valor [...] kills the mother of his chief and benefactor." The soldier behaves, according to the prosecutor, "like a robber on the highway." Again, there is the juxtaposition between an honorable appearance, fostered by centuries of patriotism, and a dishonorable character, which has presumably resulted from prioritizing individual needs over institutional values. While the young men in Ippolit Kirillovich's concluding remarks are regarded as pillars of Russian society that have fallen to depravity, he uses Smerdyakov to personify the simple Russian soul that is easily corrupted by ideas that he doesn't understand.

The prosecutor characterizes Smerdyakov as having been "oppressed" by epilepsy, or "the falling sickness"—too weak and helpless to have been capable of premeditating murder, which Dmitri Fyodorovich himself admitted by describing Smerdyakov as cowardly, or "a chicken with falling sickness." These views reinforce superstitions about people with epilepsy, while it also reinforces an image of Smerdyakov as a helpless member of the peasant class, abused and exploited by wealthier, more cosmopolitan types—in this case, epitomized by the Karamazovs. This juxtaposition of Smerdyakov's "oppression" with the Karamazovs' power paints a simplistic yet effective portrait of how those leading the country toward modernity are doing so at the expense of the peasant class. When the jury finds Dmitri guilty of murder, it's concluded that the "peasants stood up for themselves." It's also assumed that Smerdyakov was too mentally weak to handle the ideas to which his probable half-brother, Ivan, exposed him. Kirillovich

portrays Smerdyakov as "a feebleminded man with the rudiments of some education" who was "confused" and "frightened by certain modern-day teachings on duty and obligation," as well as by "the various strange philosophical conversations" that he had with Ivan. These teachings, along with his supposed fear of Dmitri, caused a "highly honest young man by nature" to succumb to guilt for the discord in the Karamazov family. Thus, Smerdyakov becomes symbolic of how modern ideas can create such confusion and chaos within the populace that otherwise simple and gentle people could be spurred to commit immoral acts. The language that Kirillovich uses to describe Smerdyakov's supposed feelings convey the sense that the "lackey" was a victim of Ivan's instigation.

Kirillovich uses Dmitri and Smerdyakov's case histories not only to prove the former's guilt but also to make a point about the perilous influence of modern, post-Enlightenment ideas in Russian society. The prosecutor believes that ideas which emphasize liberty over responsibility and privilege individual will over institutional obedience have created a society that is morally numb—in this case, no longer shocked by patricide. Kirillovich's moralizing remarks, which appropriately come from a representative of the state, read like a plea to save Russia from modern intellectuals, like Ivan, whose tolerance permits everything, even the prospect of a nation that will believe in nothing.

## SUFFERING

Despite the wealth in which most of the main characters in *The Brothers Karamazov* live, they are too obsessed by feelings of jealousy, anger, and greed to enjoy their privileges. On the other hand, the characters who would evoke the most sympathy—Alexei Fyodorovich, his mother Sofia Ivanovna, "Stinking Lizaveta," and Lise—seem to embrace suffering as a way of life. In the world that Dostoevsky has created for his characters, suffering is inevitable, either as a result of the choices people make, or due to the circumstances in which they were born. However, by using the suffering of Dmitri Fyodorovich and Alexei, the author demonstrates how suffering can also be transcendent.

During most of the novel, Dmitri suffers over money. He quarrels with his father, Fyodor Pavlovich, over it, and he attempts foolish business deals to acquire the **three thousand roubles** that he believes will free him from any obligation to his fiancée, Katerina Ivanovna, so that he can begin anew with Grushenka. Dmitri's obsession with money is rooted in a belief that, once he acquires it, he will be happy, though he is oblivious to the ways in which his obsession with money actually makes him deeply unhappy.

Dmitri goes to Kuzma Kuzmich Samsonov, Grushenka's patron, and offers him the possibility of taking over claims on the land that his mother, Adelaida Ivanovna, supposedly left to him, in exchange for three thousand roubles. The narrator interjects in this scene and points out what a "stupid" decision this is; if the land does, in fact, belong to Dmitri (his indebtedness to his father may have caused him to unknowingly forfeit any claims), it would be worth far more than the small sum that he demands. His willingness to sell it for so little reveals how his single-minded obsession with this sum—the supposed key to his freedom from the social obligations that restrict him, in favor a life with a woman who has been shunned from polite society—reveals how much he wishes to escape from the life into which he was born, in favor of creating one to his own standards.

In the end, Dmitri's obsessive pursuit of the three thousand roubles lands him in prison, as a jury believes that money, and resentment toward his father for not giving it to him, compelled Dmitri to kill Fyodor. Though Dmitri is sentenced for a crime that he didn't commit and succumbs to nervous fever, his inability to acquire the money is, ironically, what helps him to repair his relationship with Katerina and to secure Grushenka's love. Katerina appears to Dmitri "in the doorway" of his room in the town hospital's section for convicts. They "[prattle] to each other," talking frantically and, perhaps "not even [truthfully]" of their love for each other. The talk is an outpouring of sympathy from both sides, an acknowledgement of how each has made the other suffer.

Alexei's suffering, in contrast, is an effort to attain a closer relationship to God. His suffering involves enduring others' problems, which often includes relaying their messages and running their errands. Otherwise, Alexei sequesters himself in the monastery, withdrawn from the world. In the end, he realizes that his enforced martyrdom doesn't validate his existence but distances him from its fuller purpose. Alexei joins the monastery to relieve himself from darkness. In this regard, he perpetuates his mother's commitment to the Orthodox Church, due to her inability to find comfort and love in the home of General Vorokhov's widow—Sofia's "benefactress, mistress, and tormentress." Fyodor tells his son how much he looks like his mother—"the shrieker," whose nickname comes from the sounds that she would make in her religious ecstasies. Alexei's commitment to the Church seems to be both an internalization of his father's association of his youngest son with his mother, whose commitment to suffering seems nobler than his father's licentiousness, and a morbid fixation with his memory of a frenzied but beautiful woman. Alexei's memory of his mother, however, is connected to his suffering. During his boyhood, his schoolmates teased him for his "frantic modesty and chastity," leading him to become so embarrassed that he would cover his ears and slip down to the floor. Alexei's attitude toward women sharply contrasts with his father's expressed desire for them and willingness to sexually exploit them. Furthermore, for Alexei, the body isn't a source of pleasure but of suffering. He disassociates himself from women both to attain communion with God and, perhaps, because he cannot

disconnect them from his lingering memory of his suffering mother.

Alexei's decision to "sojourn in the world" helps him to relinquish his ideations, which, initially, hindered his ability to engage fully with humanity and with the world as it is. Meanwhile, Dmitri's transcendence comes from realizing that he never really needed money to get Grushenka to love him, and that an honest confession of his feelings and intentions meant far more to Katerina than the money he took from her. Both men find that their respective obsessions—money and religion—did not yield the rewards they expected. However, their deep suffering as a result of these obsessions helps them realize that their values were misplaced.

## FAMILY

*The Brothers Karamazov* is rife with stories of dysfunction in families. Orphans, absent or negligent fathers, and financial ruin are commonplace. Dostoevsky strongly suggests that the family is the source of moral guidance, and that without said guidance, people are likely to become detriments to society. Thus, Fyodor Pavlovich's failure to be a good parent is partly to blame for the downfall of his eldest son, Dmitri Fyodorovich, and for the mental breakdown of his middle son, Ivan Fyodorovich. Dostoevsky uses the theme of family to illustrate the need for human belonging; he reveals that when family fails to foster belonging, people are likely seek community elsewhere, with mixed success, or become morally corrupt.

All three of the Karamazov boys learned early in their lives that they could not depend on their father, setting the stage for the entire family's corruption. All three children, as well as Fyodor's probable son, Smerdyakov, were raised by Fyodor's servant, Grigory, and his wife, Marfa Ignatievna. However, Grigory, too, proved inept at raising all four boys. Dostoevsky makes Fyodor Pavlovich emblematic of a problem that the novel establishes with paternity. Fathers are often absent, incompetent, or corrupt, setting their children up for moral abdication.

After Fyodor's first wife, Adelaida Ivanovna, dies, Fyodor forgets about their son, Dmitri, who goes to live in the servant's cottage with Grigory. The narrator presents this forgetting, which recurs with Fyodor's next two sons, Ivan and Alexei Fyodorovich, as a simple act of negligence. Fyodor has no malice toward his sons and doesn't neglect them out of animosity toward his wives—he simply has no interest in being a father. This results in his boys wearing nothing but dirty undershirts as small children. They grow into men who know little about their father and, as a result of their poor familial connection, they also know little about each other. With this backstory, the author strongly suggests that the family's corruption is rooted in Fyodor's indifference and self-indulgence—a pattern of behavior that Dmitri repeats.

Ironically, Fyodor takes more interest in the upbringing of his "lackey," Smerdyakov, than he does in that of his own sons, but even this uncharacteristic care for another person doesn't redeem Fyodor. Smerdyakov's vulnerability, due to his epilepsy, prompts a sympathy in Fyodor that he doesn't express toward anyone else. When he sees the boy loitering around his bookcase, he gives Smerdyakov the key to the bookcase. When Smerdyakov demonstrates a discernible palate, Fyodor sends him to Moscow to train as a cook. Fyodor's interest in Smerdyakov's cultural development could be an attempt to atone for his past negligence. It could also be the result of genuine admiration for Smerdyakov, whose tastes in "clothes, pomade, [and] perfume" resemble his father's sensuality, while his honesty suggests a higher character. Thus, when it's discovered that Smerdyakov is Fyodor's murderer, this truth seems to be a greater betrayal, given Fyodor's attempts to establish a closeness with Smerdyakov that he never fostered with his legitimate sons.

When fathers aren't negligent in the novel, they are altogether absent. For instance, the thirteen-year-old prankster Kolya Krasotkin has no father. Unlike the Karamazovs, who seek surrogate families within communities—the military, intellectual circles, and the monastery—Kolya is eager to establish his independence and his manhood. However, his lack of paternity results in the mixed feeling of having both contempt for older male figures and a desire for their guidance. Kolya's contempt is most visible at school. He antagonizes his instructors, even his world history teacher, Dardanelov, who stands up for Kolya when he gets in trouble with his other teachers. Kolya's attempt to embarrass Dardanelov with the question of who discovered Troy is not only an attempt to undermine Dardanelov's authority on the subject but is also a dismissal of his instructor's wish to befriend and protect him—in other words, it is a rejection of paternal authority.

On the other hand, Kolya eagerly seeks Alexei's friendship and respect and talks often to Rakitin, from whom he gets his socialist ideas. Kolya likes Alexei because the monk speaks to the boy as though he were an equal. Kolya's friendship with Alexei strongly suggests a desire to connect with an older man but without anyone trying to establish authority or dominance over him. It seems that Kolya has a desire to repair this missing familial connection but insists on having it without relinquishing his rebellious independence. Kolya's connection to Alexei is successful, for the monk's humane values influence him in becoming kinder and letting go of some of his previously defensive behavior. In contrast, Fyodor's connection to Smerdyakov is evidently unsuccessful, for the "lackey" ends up being the most morally corrupt of all of Fyodor's sons and the most resentful of Fyodor's indifference. In the end, the novel strongly suggests that the corrosion of family values results in disobedience or downright depravity. However, the novel concludes with the optimistic prospect that people can be

redeemed through friendship, faith in God, and faith in their own inherent goodness.

## SYMBOLS

Symbols appear in **teal text** throughout the Summary and Analysis sections of this LitChart.

### THE LEFT SIDE

Several times throughout *The Brothers Karamazov*, Dostoevsky mentions left-handedness or the left side: schoolboys pick on Ilyusha for his left-handedness, Lyagavy strokes his beard with his left hand before preparing to cheat someone in business, and Grigory Vasilievich imagines that the door leading to the garden, which is on the left side of Fyodor Pavlovich's house, was opened by Dmitri Fyodorovich, thereby providing further testimony that Fyodor's eldest son murdered him in a fit of rage. Historically, the left side is a symbol of evil. The superstition that left-handedness connotes wickedness comes from the Bible. In Matthew 25:41, Christ sits on the throne of his glory and separates the righteous, who are on his right hand, from those who shunned him in life, who are on his left hand. He tells the latter to depart from him and sends them to hell, while the righteous go to paradise.

In *The Brothers Karamazov*, however, Dostoevsky undermines this left-side superstition and uses it to symbolize the human impulse to condemn others on arbitrary grounds. For instance, the author reveals how Kolya Krasotkin manipulated Ilyusha during their friendship, thereby providing a context for his stabbing Kolya with a penknife. Smerdyakov later tells Ivan Fyodorovich that the door to the garden was never open, and that Grigory is too stubborn to rethink his testimony against Dmitri. Finally, it's ironic that Fyodor Pavlovich characterizes Lyagavy as a "scoundrel" and a cheat, given his own history of miserliness and crude behavior. Dostoevsky ultimately suggests that the tendency to explain away evil with something as arbitrary as left-handedness gives those who don't share the trait an excuse to condemn others without examining their own behavior.

### THE ONION

The onion is a symbol of redemption that helps both Grushenka and Alexei Fyodorovich to recognize the complexity of human character, which is neither strictly good nor entirely evil. Grushenka tells Alexei the parable of the onion, in which a wicked woman ruins her chance of being saved from hell by failing to remember an instance in which she unselfishly gave a beggar woman an onion. The woman's guardian angel makes a wager with God: if the angel can take "that same onion" and pull the woman out of the lake of fire, she can go to heaven; but, if it breaks, she will remain in hell. The angel holds the onion out to the woman and beckons her to pull. She takes hold of it and nearly pulls herself out. However, when other sinners hold on to her, hoping to be pulled up with her, she kicks them away and tries to keep the onion for herself. With this, the onion breaks, and she falls back into the lake of fire.

Grushenka tells the tale of the onion to exemplify her own wickedness, though it ends up becoming an indication of her decency. She confesses that she promised Mikhail Osipovich Rakitin twenty-five roubles in exchange for bringing Alexei Fyodorovich to her residence, where she hoped to seduce and corrupt the young monk, in revenge for what she perceived as his self-righteous judgment of her. Alexei, in turn, allowed Rakitin to take him to Grushenka's to be corrupted, due to his recent disillusionment over failing to witness a miracle after Zosima, the Elder's death. After Grushenka learns about the elder's death, she has a change of heart, prompted by her empathy for Alexei's loss. In turn, Alexei is pleasantly surprised by her empathy and feels that the woman whom he had once considered "a wicked soul" is now "a loving soul" and "a true sister." Grushenka's empathy was "the onion" that Alexei needed in order to nourish his weak faith in the world and to restore the strength of his belief in goodness. Similarly, Alexei's faith in Grushenka's good nature is "the onion" that she needed in order to rescue her from her belief that she could never overcome her wickedness. With these simple acts of empathy, Alexei and Grushenka save each other from the hell of hopelessness and illustrate the complexity of human nature.

### THE ENVELOPE AND THE THREE THOUSAND ROUBLES

The envelope initially occurs to the reader as a symbol of greed, but it crystallizes into a symbol of pursuit of truth. The three thousand roubles that it contained is the supposed motive for Fyodor Pavlovich Karamazov's murder. However, no one has ever seen the inscribed and pink-beribboned envelope that he promised to Grushenka, and Ivan Fyodorovich has only heard about it. It's an elusive and vaguely understood object that remains fundamental to understanding what led to Fyodor's murder. Fyodor's son, Dmitri Fyodorovich Karamazov, coveted the three thousand roubles. It was well-known that Dmitri was always broke, that he felt cheated out of his inheritance by his father. He also needed exactly three thousand to pay back money that he had stolen from his fiancée Katerina Ivanovna, so that he could break off their engagement with honor and run away with Grushenka. Three thousand rubles is the key, it seems, in facilitating Dmitri's escape from his hometown and his unhappy family life, and in allowing him to create the life that he wants. For Katerina, giving Dmitri the money was a test to reveal his true character—would he be so dishonorable as to take money from her to go be with his

mistress? According to Alexei Fyodorovich, the money was a point of obsession for Dmitri, a reminder of how their father had "cheated" him, and evidence, it seems, of a lack of paternal love.

However, it was Smerdyakov, not Dmitri, who took the money out of the envelope. Instead of running away with it, as planned, the former "lackey" and illegitimate son gives it to Ivan. By committing suicide, Smerdyakov ensures that he'll never be discovered as Fyodor's true murderer. He'll never send "evidence from the other world [...] in an envelope." Without Smerdyakov to testify, Ivan's crazed courtroom confession has no credibility and is further undermined by the contents of other envelopes—the three thousand roubles that Katerina entrusted to Dmitri, and Dmitri's letter to Katerina, which declares his desire to kill his father. Ivan characterized the letter as "mathematical proof" of his brother's guilt, and it stands as such because the truth about what occurred is not visible to the public and is too far-fetched to be believed. Dmitri, therefore, goes to prison for his father's murder, condemned by a public that believes he murdered his father out of greed and lust for a woman of ill-repute. The three thousand roubles that Alexei, Katerina, and Ivan paid for his defense are not enough, in this instance, to free him. The truth about Fyodor's murder remains as hidden and mysterious as the envelope holding the three thousand roubles.

## QUOTES

Note: all page numbers for the quotes below refer to the Farrar, Straus and Giroux edition of *The Brothers Karamazov* published in 1990.

### Part 1: Book 3, Chapter 3 Quotes

"'To insects—sensuality!' I am that very insect, brother, and those words are precisely about me. And all of us Karamazovs are like that, and in you, angel, the same insect lives and stirs up storms in your blood. Storms, because sensuality is a storm, more than a storm! [...] Too many riddles oppress man on earth. Solve them if you can without getting your feet wet."

**Related Characters:** Lieutenant Dmitri "Mitya" Fyodorovich Karamazov (speaker), Katerina "Katya" Ivanovna Verkhovtsev, Agrafena "Grushenka" Alexandrovna Svetlov, Alexei "Alyosha" Fyodorovich Karamazov

**Related Themes:**

**Page Number:** 108

**Explanation and Analysis**

Dmitri is speaking to his youngest brother, Alexei. They sit at a table in a gazebo in a garden near their father's home. Dmitri sips cognac and proceeds to tell Alexei about his "wild life," which includes his sexual promiscuity, his willingness to exploit Katerina's desperation for his own pleasure, and his passion for Grushenka.

Sporadically throughout the book, someone mentions the Karamazovs' sensuality as the single trait that binds the family. This quality is a point of criticism, levied by others or against themselves. Later in the novel, the brothers' father, Fyodor Pavlovich, compares Dmitri to a "cockroach" that he's determined to crush. The comparison to insects illustrates Dmitri's belief that the Karamazovs are fundamentally base and focused only on their own individual survival, like insects. It seems that the loftier, more human traits, such as generosity and genuine interest in others' lives, are absent within them. Dmitri insists that Alexei also has this "insect" quality, despite wanting to be good. In this context, Dmitri's reference to his younger brother as an "angel" seems sarcastic. It also juxtaposes a sublime and unreal image with real and earthly ones—insects and storms. The point is that Alexei cannot escape nature, including the passions that exist within everyone, and particularly within the Karamazovs. Dmitri's mention of "riddles" refers to aspects of life that are beyond human understanding, despite Alexei's wish to shut himself off in a monastery to attempt to solve them. Dmitri sympathizes with Alexei but implies that he may be overwhelmed.

### Part 2: Book 5, Chapter 3 Quotes

"You see, my dear, there was in the eighteenth century an old sinner who stated that if God did not exist, he would have to be invented [...] And man has, indeed, invented God. And the strange thing, the wonder is that such a notion—the notion of the necessity of God—could creep into the head of such a wild and wicked animal as man [...] As for me, I long ago decided not to think about whether man created God or God created man [...] I have a Euclidean mind, an earthly mind, and therefore it is not for us to resolve things that are not of this world [...] All such questions are unsuitable to a mind created with a concept of only three dimensions. And so, I accept God [...] It's not God that I do not accept, you understand, it is this world of God's [...] that I do not accept and cannot agree to accept."

**Related Characters:** Ivan Fyodorovich Karamazov (speaker), Alexei "Alyosha" Fyodorovich Karamazov

**Related Themes:**

**Page Number:** 234-235

**Explanation and Analysis**

Ivan has invited Alexei to the tavern, where Ivan is having dinner, so that they can get better acquainted. Ivan wants to befriend Alexei, despite their opposing views about faith and humanity.

By calling Alexei, "my dear," it seems that Ivan is trying to ingratiate himself to his brother. His words could also be those of condescension, given his generally smug attitude. When talking about matters of faith, Ivan usually contextualizes them within stories that he invents. It's unclear if the story that he relates is true, but it works to confirm his view on God's existence, which is that God doesn't exist but is necessary to help maintain a sound social order. Ivan reveals his cynical view of humanity by describing "man" as "a wild and wicked animal"—not unlike Dmitri Fyodorovich's description of the Karamazovs' "insect sensuality." Like his elder brother, Ivan doesn't want to concern himself with "things that are not of this world," just as Dmitri doesn't wish to spend all of his time on "riddles." Ivan encapsulates his view within Euclidean geometry, which has clearly defined and proven rules. His "Euclidean mind" also parallels with his later assertion that Dmitri's angry letter is "mathematical proof" of his guilt in murdering their father. This passage prepares the reader to understand Ivan as someone who's only concerned with the aspects of life that are easily discernible. He avoids mystery. Ironically, Alexei is the same—a "realist" with absolute faith in the world as he sees it.

## Part 2: Book 5, Chapter 4 Quotes

❝ "In my opinion, Christ's love for people is in its kind a miracle impossible on earth. True, he was God. But we are not gods. Let's say that I, for example, am capable of profound suffering, but another man will never be able to know the degree of my suffering, because he is another and not me, and besides, a man is rarely willing to acknowledge someone else as a sufferer [...] And why won't he acknowledge it, do you think? Because I, for example, have a bad smell, or a foolish face, or once stepped on his foot [...] Beggars, especially noble beggars, should never show themselves in the street; they should ask for alms through the newspapers. It's still possible to love one's neighbor abstractly, and even occasionally from a distance, but hardly ever up close."

**Related Characters:** Ivan Fyodorovich Karamazov (speaker), Alexei "Alyosha" Fyodorovich Karamazov

**Related Themes:**

**Related Symbols:**

**Page Number:** 237

**Explanation and Analysis**

Ivan and Alexei are in the tavern, where the former is dining. Ivan is sharing his views on religious faith and the condition of humanity with his younger brother. Ivan's point in this passage is that Christian love is the ultimate form of love, but that human beings do not possess the capacity to truly empathize with others. This inhibits our ability to love purely. Ivan argues that trivial human flaws, such as poor hygiene or ugliness, make us less likely to empathize with those who may need our empathy the most. In Ivan's view, it is easier to contemplate love for one's fellow beings than it is to express it. Later in the novel, Alexei will demonstrate a contrast to his brother's view when he develops empathy for Grushenka, after she expresses empathy for his grief over the death of the elder Zosima. Grushenka's warmth restores Alexei's brief loss of faith in humanity, which had threatened to make him as cynical as his brother Ivan appears here.

❝ "You know, with us it's beating, the birch and the lash, that's our national way [...] I know for certain that there are floggers who get more excited with every stroke, to the point of sensuality, literal sensuality [...] I've collected a great, great deal about Russian children, Alyosha. A little girl, five years old is hated by her mother and father, 'most honorable and official people, educated, and well-bred.' You see, once again I positively maintain that this peculiar quality exists in much of mankind—this love of torturing children, but only children [....] These educated parents subjected the poor five-year-old girl to every possible torture. They beat her, flogged her, kicked her, not knowing why themselves, until her whole body was nothing but bruises [...] they locked her all night in the outhouse, because she wouldn't ask to get up and go in the middle of the night [...] for that they smeared her face with her excrement and made her eat the excrement [...]"

**Related Characters:** Ivan Fyodorovich Karamazov (speaker), Alexei "Alyosha" Fyodorovich Karamazov

**Related Themes:**

**Page Number:** 239, 241-242

**Explanation and Analysis**

Ivan is giving his younger brother Alexei more examples to

support his point that humanity is incapable of expressing the selfless love of Christ, and that a benevolent God would not allow such horrifying things to happen. He characterizes Russian cruelty by its fixation on "the birch and the lash"—remnants of its system of serfdom—which are conventional modes of punishment. Ivan strongly suggests that the Russian people have a penchant for cruelty that has permeated every class of society, even those who supposedly ought to know better, and that can impact society's most innocent members. His portrait of the five-year-old girl who is subjected to every imaginable form of abuse and degradation turns her into an emblem of suffering. What is ironic is that the girl's "educated" and "well-bred" parents don't know why they are tormenting the girl but appear to do so only out of the sensual pleasure that they gain from inflicting pain. Ivan's story not only undermines Alexei's belief that humankind is capable of expressing Christ's love, it also undermines the notion that modernization, including the end of serfdom and increased education, can improve moral character.

## Part 2: Book 5, Chapter 5 Quotes

❝ "My action is set in Spain, in Seville, in the most horrible time of the Inquisition, when fires blazed every day to the glory of God, and 'In the splendid auto-da-fé / Evil heretics were burnt.' Oh, of course, this was not that coming in which he will appear, according to his promise, at the end of time, in all his heavenly glory, and which will be sudden 'as the lightening that shineth out of the east unto the west.' No, he desired to visit his children if only for a moment, and precisely where the fires of the heretics had begun to crackle. In his infinite mercy, he walked once again among men, in the same human image in which he had walked for three years among men fifteen centuries earlier."

**Related Characters:** Ivan Fyodorovich Karamazov (speaker), Alexei "Alyosha" Fyodorovich Karamazov, The Cardinal Grand Inquisitor

**Related Themes:**   

**Page Number:** 248

### Explanation and Analysis

Ivan is narrating a poem that he has written, "The Grand Inquisitor." In the poem, Christ reappears in the form that he that he took when he first walked the earth. His arrival is mundane and uneventful and occurs during one of the most infamous moments of human suffering—a time in which devout Christian people were most in need of Christ's love and forgiveness. Ivan narrates his poem to Alexei to prove his point that Christ's love for people is impossible on earth. He sets his poem during the Spanish Inquisition to show how humans are more likely to kill in Christ's name than to express love in tribute to Christian faith. The Inquisition is a metaphor for Ivan's belief that cruelty is the natural expression among people and that a greater inclination toward hatred than love would blind them to the presence of God's son if he appeared on Earth again.

❝ "In the deep darkness, the iron door of the prison suddenly opens, and the Grand Inquisitor himself slowly enters carrying a lamp. He is alone, the door is immediately locked behind him. He stands in the entrance and for a long time, for a minute or two, gazes into his face. At last he quietly approaches [...] 'Is it you? You?' [...] 'Why, then, have you come to interfere with us? [...] I do not know who you are, and I do not want to know whether it is you, or only his likeness; but tomorrow I shall condemn you and burn you at the stake as the most evil of heretics, and the very people who today kissed your feet, tomorrow, at a nod from me, will rush to heap the coals up around your stake [...]'"

**Related Characters:** Ivan Fyodorovich Karamazov (speaker), Alexei "Alyosha" Fyodorovich Karamazov, The Cardinal Grand Inquisitor

**Related Themes:**    

**Page Number:** 250

### Explanation and Analysis

At this point in Ivan's poem, "The Grand Inquisitor," the Cardinal Grand Inquisitor confronts Christ, who has come to Earth as a man. Since appearing in Seville, Christ has entranced the entire town with his warmth and generosity of spirit. Christ's infinite goodness and comfort are threats to the cardinal's power, however, which is determined by his ability to control the populace through fear and prejudice, so the cardinal has Christ arrested. Whereas Christ reorients the community to the best aspects of their nature, the cardinal reinforces the worst.

In this scene, the darkness is representative of the ignorance that has shrouded the people of Seville, as well as of the evil that the cardinal manifests through his exploitation of their superstitions and fears. By threatening Christ with turning the populace against him and burning him at the stake, the cardinal asserts his dominance among

mortals while also blaspheming against the authority that he's supposed to worship. The irony in the cardinal's reaction toward Christ reveals Ivan's belief that clergymen are less concerned with holiness than they are in using the Orthodox Church to foster and secure their own power and to control knowledge.

> "Freedom, free reason, and science will lead them into such a maze, and confront them with such miracles and insoluble mysteries, that some of them, unruly and ferocious, will exterminate themselves; others, unruly but feeble, will exterminate each other; and the remaining third, feeble and wretched, will crawl to our feet and cry out to us: 'Yes, you were right, you alone possess his mystery, and we are coming back to you—save us from ourselves' [....] But the flock will gather again, and again submit, and this time once and for all."

**Related Characters:** Ivan Fyodorovich Karamazov (speaker), Alexei "Alyosha" Fyodorovich Karamazov, The Cardinal Grand Inquisitor

**Related Themes:**

**Page Number:** 258

**Explanation and Analysis**

The cardinal tells Christ, who has returned to Earth as a mortal, why Christians throughout the West will ultimately submit to the Church and abandon its pursuits of knowledge and truth. His references to "freedom, free reason, and science" allude to the burgeoning Scientific Revolution, which started in the mid-sixteenth century when the Inquisition was powerful and threatened to stifle scientific progress. The cardinal argues that reason will only confuse people ("lead them into such a maze") by showing them things that may be too wondrous for most to understand ("such miracles and insoluble mysteries"). The cardinal is a cynic who seems to think that people are generally too stupid and weak to handle the responsibility that comes with knowledge. The results of their confusion will either be violence—a kind of tantrum that he thinks is inevitable in response to confusion—or submission to the Church. His belief that people will acknowledge that the Church "alone [possesses] his mystery" contrasts with the "maze" in which the cardinal thinks people will end up without the Church showing them the path that it determines to be righteous. The cardinal doesn't want God's son to interact with the people of Seville because he insists that the Church should serve as the intermediary between God and the populace. The desires of the cardinal and the Church to "possess" God's mystery and to maintain the Christians as a "flock" shows that the Church's agenda for power contrasts with Christ's expression of benevolence.

> Oh, we will allow them to sin, too; they are weak and powerless, and they will love us like children for allowing them to sin. We will tell them that every sin will be redeemed if it is committed with our permission; and that we allow them to sin because we love them, and as for the punishment for these sins, very well, we take it upon ourselves [....] And they will have no secrets from us. We will allow them or forbid them to live with their wives and mistresses, to have or not to have children—all depending on their obedience—and they will submit to us gladly and joyfully. The most tormenting secrets of their conscience—all, they will bring to us, and we will decide all things, and they will joyfully believe our decision [...] Peacefully they will die, peacefully they will expire in your name, and beyond the grave they will find only death."

**Related Characters:** Ivan Fyodorovich Karamazov (speaker), Alexei "Alyosha" Fyodorovich Karamazov, The Cardinal Grand Inquisitor

**Related Themes:**

**Page Number:** 259

**Explanation and Analysis**

Ivan is continuing to narrate his poem, "The Grand Inquisitor," to Alexei. The cardinal is telling God, who has returned to Earth disguised as a mortal, how the Catholic Church will maintain its power over the people by preying on the worst instincts in human nature. Believing people to be "weak and powerless," the cardinal imagines that his followers will be grateful for the opportunity to sin within the Church's parameters. They willbe even more grateful to have the Church as a moral guide, believing that obedience will help them to reach heaven after death. However, at the end of this speech, the cardinal acknowledges that he doesn't believe in an afterlife, which also suggests that he doesn't believe in many of the tenets of faith espoused in the Bible. His open expressions of cynicism and disbelief are forms of blasphemy, boldly proclaimed in the face of God himself, in the form of Christ.

The cardinal's certainty about the Church's power and the weakness of humanity is emphasized by his active use of the future tense—"we will" and "they will." The uses of the pronouns "we" and "they" reinforce the distinctions

between the Church and its flock. They also reinforce the anonymity of those who participate in this arrangement between the dominant religious order and the people. The cardinal's speech also undermines the Biblical commandment not to commit adultery, given his admission that the Church could allow for men to have mistresses, as long as such an allowance would be convenient to its power. The cardinal, therefore, reveals his complicity with sin and indulgence in exchange for influence.

## Part 2: Book 6, Chapter 3 Quotes

❝ The people are festering with drink and cannot leave off. And what cruelty toward their families, their wives, and even their children, all from drunkenness! [...] But God will save Russia, for though the simple man is depraved, and can no longer refrain from rank sin, still he knows that his rank sin is cursed by God and that he does badly in sinning. So our people still believe tirelessly in truth, acknowledge God, weep tenderly. Not so their betters. These, following science, want to make a just order for themselves by reason alone, but without Christ now, not as before, and they have already proclaimed that there is no crime, there is no sin. And in their own terms, that is correct: for if you have no God, what crime is there to speak of?

**Related Characters:** Zosima, the Elder (speaker), Alexei "Alyosha" Fyodorovich Karamazov

**Related Themes:**    

**Page Number:** 315

### Explanation and Analysis

The elder Zosima is narrating both his biography and his philosophy to Alexei who is recording the dying monk's words for a manuscript. In this part of the speech, Zosima is contemplating the monastic way and the purpose of the monk in an increasingly advanced and skeptical society. Zosima describes a people who appear to be trapped in depravity. They have retreated into drunkenness as a palliative, though this only encourages more cruelty. Zosima's speech about the perils of alcoholism in Russian society is prophetic, for it is a problem that the nation struggles with even in contemporary times. What Zosima thinks will redeem "the simple man" from this behavior is awareness of "his rank sin." He suggests that humanity has an innate awareness of God that cannot be dislodged by science and reason. Zosima contrasts "the simple man" with his "betters" who claim to have no sense of sin and, therefore, can have no sense of understanding crime. In Zosima's view, the understanding of right and wrong is rooted in one's beliefs in God and sin. He doesn't think it possible to generate a moral foundation out of scientific knowledge. Therefore, the simple man's "betters"—and Zosima is probably using this expression ironically—lack both morality and humility before God. This idea of a fundamental connection between religion and morality is reflected in Ivan's declaration—later adopted by Smerdyakov—that if God does not exist, "everything is permitted."

❝ In Europe, the people are rising up against the rich with force, and popular leaders everywhere are leading them to bloodshed and teaching them that their wrath is righteous [....] Yet the Lord will save Russia, as he has saved her many times before. Salvation will come from the people, from their faith and their humility [....] I have been struck by the true and gracious dignity in our great people [...] I can testify to it myself, I have seen it and marveled at it, seen it even in spite of the rank sins and beggarly appearance of our people. They are not servile, and that after two centuries of serfdom. They are free in appearance and manner, yet without any offense. And not vengeful, not envious. "You are noble, you are rich, you are intelligent and talented, very well, God bless you. I honor you, but I know that I, too, am a man [....]"

**Related Characters:** Zosima, the Elder (speaker), Alexei "Alyosha" Fyodorovich Karamazov

**Related Themes:**    

**Page Number:** 315-316

### Explanation and Analysis

The elder Zosima is narrating both his life story and his personal philosophy to Alexei, who is recording the dying monk's words for a manuscript. After describing how science convinces people that there is no sin, Zosima speaks of how class warfare is another facet of modernity. In this instance, he contrasts the humble people of Russia with the wrathful revolutionaries in Europe who are "rising up against the rich." The image of Europeans "rising" suggests that they are seeking dominance against the "betters" whom Zosima described previously. He contrasts this image with Russians who supposedly have a "beggarly appearance" and have no envy. Zosima idealizes Russians as an almost saintly people who have overcome any bitterness toward their "betters" over past serfdom and are even happy that the aristocracy has its riches while they maintain a "beggarly appearance" (which is naïve, of course,

considering the Russian Revolution not long after this). Zosima seems to be likening their poverty to the ascetic way of life adopted by monks. He argues that their poverty has given them freedom, along with greater honor than those who claim (or seek) riches and superior knowledge of the world.

## Part 4: Book 11, Chapter 8 Quotes

"He ran there, went up to the window [...] 'Grushenka,' he called, 'Grushenka, are you here?' He called her, but he didn't want to lean out the window, he didn't want to move away from me [...] because he was very afraid of me [....] 'But there she is,' I said (I went up to the window and leaned all the way out), 'there she is in the bushes, smiling to you, see?' He suddenly believed it, he just started shaking, because he really was very much in love with her, sir, and he leaned all the way out the window. Then I grabbed that same cast-iron paperweight, the one on his desk [...] and I swung and hit him from behind on the top of the head with the corner of it."

**Related Characters:** Pavel Fyodorovich Smerdyakov (speaker), Ivan Fyodorovich Karamazov, Fyodor Pavlovich Karamazov

**Related Themes:**

**Related Symbols:**

**Page Number:** 629

### Explanation and Analysis

Smerdyakov is telling Ivan how he killed their father, Fyodor, using his desperation over seeing Grushenka to distract him so that Smerdyakov could hit the old man from behind. This confession certifies Smerdyakov's guilt in the murder, though Ivan had been previously convinced that his older brother Dmitri murdered their father over both the three thousand roubles that he was desperate to obtain and his anger over his father's jealous attempts to keep Dmitri away from Grushenka.

Smerdyakov's recollection of Fyodor's fear in response to him suggests that Fyodor had a preternatural sense that Smerdyakov would betray him and kill him. This is rather ironic for, among all of his sons, Fyodor has been closest to Smerdyakov and most involved in nurturing his well-being by exposing him to literature and sending him to Moscow for culinary school. Smerdyakov's act of striking Fyodor from behind while distracting him with the fantasy of Grushenka in the bushes reveals him as particularly dishonest and willing to prey on Fyodor's weaknesses. While narrating this story to Ivan, he refers to him as "sir," still acknowledging the differences in their ranks, despite their being brothers and with no regard to the power that Smerdyakov has over the family due to his possession of the truth. Just as Smerdyakov is the only one who has actually seen the envelope of three thousand roubles that Fyodor was saving for Grushenka, he is the only person with the power to save Dmitri from a murder sentence.

## Part 4: Book 11, Chapter 9 Quotes

"I am perhaps the only man in all of nature who loves the truth and sincerely desires good. I was there when the Word died on the cross and was ascending into heaven, carrying on his bosom the soul of the thief who was crucified to the right of him, I heard the joyful shrieks of the cherubim singing and shouting 'Hosannah,' and the thundering shout of rapture from the seraphim, which made heaven and all creation shake. And, I swear by all that's holy, I wanted to join the chorus and shout 'Hosannah' with everyone else. It was right on my lips, it was already bursting from my breast...you know, I'm very sensitive and artistically susceptible. But common sense—oh, it's the most unfortunate quality of my nature—kept me within due bounds even then, and I missed the moment!"

**Related Characters:** The Gentleman (speaker), Ivan Fyodorovich Karamazov

**Related Themes:**

**Page Number:** 647

### Explanation and Analysis

Here, the Gentleman, who is actually Satan, appears to Ivan and speaks to him. The Gentleman flatters Ivan by mirroring his ideas and maintaining good manners, as Ivan would in a conversation. This mirroring makes Ivan, who is suffering from brain fever, hyperaware of his relationship with sin and evil, concepts that he would have previously spurned because they have, in his view, little to do with the real world. In keeping with Ivan's view of himself as a man with "a Euclidean mind," the Gentleman describes himself as a "man" in "nature" (as opposed to a supernatural being). Ironically, he identifies himself as someone who loves "truth," thereby contrasting with the Devil's supposed affinity for artifice, and someone who "sincerely desires good," which is meant to distract Ivan from his association with evil. However, he also describes himself as someone uniquely concerned with these values ("perhaps the only

man"), which appeals to Ivan's sense of distinction.

The Gentleman offers that he, too, once thought of becoming a man of faith, envying the raptures of the beings around him and appreciating their passion. Similarly, Ivan is a man who wants to believe in God, who wants to have the depth of feeling that his brother Alexei has, but cannot bring himself to adopt faith in things unseen. Like Ivan, the Devil's shortcoming is "common sense," which keeps him in "due bounds," just as Ivan's supposed adherence to a world defined by Euclidean geometry prevents him from understanding the depths of love that Alexei felt for Zosima, or even from understanding the passionate love that overtook Dmitri.

"Someone takes all the honor of the good for himself and only leaves me the nasty tricks. But I don't covet the honor of living as a moocher, I'm not ambitious. Why, of all beings in the world, am I alone condemned to be cursed by all decent people, and even to be kicked with boots [....] There's a secret here, I know, but they won't reveal this secret to me for anything, because then, having learned what it's all about, I might just roar 'Hosannah,' and the necessary minus would immediately disappear and sensibleness would set in all over the world [....] No, until the secret is revealed, two truths exist for me: one is theirs, from there, and so far completely unknown to me; the other is mine. And who knows which is preferable..."

**Related Characters:** The Gentleman (speaker), Ivan Fyodorovich Karamazov

**Related Themes:**

**Page Number:** 647-648

### Explanation and Analysis

The Gentleman, who is Satan, is commiserating with Ivan over his condition. As with the previous quote, he doesn't identify as the supernatural being that he is but instead places himself among "all beings in the world." Moreover, like Ivan, he characterizes his condition as an aspect of suffering beyond his control. He is "condemned" and "cursed." He is "alone" and even "kicked with boots." The latter image summons the pain of persecution and the sense of being under the heel of humanity, as opposed to the other way around. The Gentleman complains about "someone" taking all of the honor, presumably referring to God or Christ, and characterizes the evil with which he is left to perform as "nasty tricks." The Devil sees himself as the negative ("the necessary minus") that must exist in order to reinforce the positive associated with God and Christ. He senses that there is a "secret" that God will not reveal to him and he covets this knowledge. The Gentleman argues that, until the secret is revealed, he can only exist according to his own perceptions, or his own version of the truth. Similarly, Ivan deals with the world as he sees it because he cannot know God's mysteries.

## Part 4: Book 12, Chapter 5 Quotes

"'The thing is that I am precisely in my right mind...my vile mind, the same as you, and all these m-mugs!' he suddenly turned to the public. 'A murdered father, and they pretend to be frightened,' he growled with fierce contempt. 'They pull faces to each other. Liars! Everyone wants his father dead. Viper devours viper...If there were no parricide, they'd all get angry and go home in a foul temper...Circuses! 'Bread and circuses!' [...] Calm yourselves, I'm not mad, I'm simply a murderer! [...] I have no witnesses. That dog Smerdyakov won't send you evidence from the other world...in an envelope. You keep asking for envelopes, as if one wasn't enough. I have no witnesses...except one, perhaps [....] He's got a tail, Your Honor, you'd find him inadmissible! *Le diable n'existe point!*"

**Related Characters:** Ivan Fyodorovich Karamazov (speaker), Katerina "Katya" Ivanovna Verkhovtsev, Lieutenant Dmitri "Mitya" Fyodorovich Karamazov, Alexei "Alyosha" Fyodorovich Karamazov, The Presiding Judge , Fetyukovich, Pavel Fyodorovich Smerdyakov

**Related Themes:**

**Related Symbols:**

**Page Number:** 686-687

### Explanation and Analysis

Ivan has taken the stand at his brother Dmitri's trial for murdering their father, Fyodor. Having been unable to get Smerdyakov to go and confess with him before his suicide, Ivan now feels compelled to admit to his guilt for his perceived role in his father's murder. He rambles because he is both riddled with guilt and delirious from "brain fever," as a result of having been exposed during a snow storm. Despite his illness, Ivan is determined show that his speech is reasoned ("in my right mind") and that, despite his reputation as a well-mannered man, he's not a good person ("my vile mind"). Ivan doesn't merely condemn himself but all of society, particularly those observing the trial in the courtroom, for their delight in hearing gruesome stories. This harks back to his earlier conversation with Alexei in the

tavern, in which he told a series of stories that highlighted how people delight in committing cruel acts, particularly toward children. At the time, Ivan overlooked his possible delight in telling such stories, but he may now be aware of his own contemptible voyeurism.

His reference to the envelope, which only Ivan (and Smerdyakov) saw after his father's death, is the envelope that contained the three thousand roubles. In the novel, the envelope is a symbol of a truth that cannot be completely known. Ivan offers that one envelope should be enough, but no envelope actually turns up. Ivan's madness is not just a symptom of his illness but also the result of his sense of order coming undone. The things that he believed to be true are not, and the mysteries he avoided have revealed themselves (most notably the devil, or his witness who has "a tail").

## Part 4: Book 12, Chapter 6 Quotes

"Gentlemen of the jury," the prosecutor began, "the present case has resounded throughout Russia. But what, one might think, is so surprising, what is so especially horrifying about it? For us, for us especially? We're so used to all that! And here is the real horror, that such dark affairs have almost ceased to horrify us! It is this, and not the isolated crime of one individual or another, that should horrify us: that we are so used to it. Where lie the reasons for our indifference, our lukewarm attitude towards such affairs, such signs of the times, which prophesy for us an unenviable future? In our cynicism, in an early exhaustion of mind and imagination in our society, so young and yet so prematurely decrepit? In our moral principles, shattered to their foundations, or, finally, in the fact that we, perhaps, are not even possessed of such moral principles at all?"

**Related Characters:** Ippolit Kirillovich (speaker), Fyodor Pavlovich Karamazov, Lieutenant Dmitri "Mitya" Fyodorovich Karamazov

**Related Themes:**

**Page Number:** 693

### Explanation and Analysis

The prosecutor Ippolit Kirillovich begins to deliver his statement in Dmitri's trial. His approach to the jury is largely rhetorical. He prods them with questions regarding the moral consequences of the case on the Russian public, as well as imagined responses that expose people's cynicism toward murder and parricide (meaning the murder of a parent). Instead of focusing his argument against Dmitri as a source of evil and guilt, the prosecutor demands that the observers in the courtroom consider the possibility of their own guilt. Everyone, Ippolit Kirillovich seems to say, has been complicit in creating the moral conditions that would compel Dmitri Karamazov to murder his father and nearly to murder, Grigory, the servant who raised him in his early childhood.

Ippolit Kirillovich argues that the public's "indifference" and "lukewarm attitude" suggest that Russia is morally doomed. He refers to the nation as "young," meaning that its shift into modernity has created the potential for something new. On the other hand, the people's cynicism (fostered, undoubtedly, as a result of centuries of poverty and serfdom) make it "prematurely decrepit." His skepticism toward Russia's moral character contrasts with the elder Zosima's previous assessment of the Russian people, particularly the poor, as exceptionally noble. However, by condemning the public's moral lassitude, the prosecutor is trying to convince them to convict Dmitri so that they can prove themselves capable of the moral goodness that Zosima was so sure they possessed.

"For now we are either horrified or pretend that we are horrified, while, on the contrary, relishing the spectacle, like lovers of strong, eccentric sensations that stir our cynical and lazy idleness, or, finally, like little children waving the frightening ghosts away, and hiding our heads under the pillow until the frightening vision is gone, so as to forget it immediately afterwards in games and merriment. But should not we, too, some day begin to live soberly and thoughtfully; should not we, too, take a look at ourselves as a society; should not we, too, understand at least something of our social duty, or at least begin to understand? A great writer of the previous epoch, in the finale of the greatest of his works, personifying all of Russia as a bold Russian troika galloping towards an unknown goal, exclaims: 'Ah, troika, bird-troika, who invented you!—and in proud rapture adds that all nations respectfully stand aside for this troika galloping by at breakneck speed."

**Related Characters:** Ippolit Kirillovich (speaker), Fyodor Pavlovich Karamazov, Lieutenant Dmitri "Mitya" Fyodorovich Karamazov

**Related Themes:**

**Page Number:** 695

### Explanation and Analysis

Ippolit Kirillovich continues with his remarks. Like Ivan, he reiterates the belief that the observers in the courtroom

enjoy listening to the macabre story and watching some of the witnesses, including Katerina Ivanovna and Ivan, embarrass themselves. They delight in watching noble, privileged people, normally so composed in their self-presentation, expose themselves to be just as flawed as anyone else. The prosecutor's reference to the public as "lovers of strong, eccentric sensations" refers back to Dmitri's idea about "insect sensuality," which he believed was particular to the Karamazovs. This part of the speech also references Ivan's belief that there's something sensual about committing or observing violence. The prosecutor's identification of the public with "little children" who prefer "games and merriment" over confronting things that frighten them, is comparable to the speech that Ivan gives to the Cardinal Grand Inquisitor, who also believed that his "flock" would remain obedient as long as it could be careless and indulge in enough sinful pleasures.

The prosecutor's supposed purpose is to steer the jury and the public toward maturity and sober-mindedness (as a means of convicting Dmitri, of course). He repeatedly uses the modal phrase "should not we" to prompt them into acting according to duty. He includes himself with the pronoun "we" to suggest that he's working in concert with the jury to seek justice and save the nation's soul. His characterization of Russia as a troika is a trope that's been used in nineteenth-century landscape painting and musical folklore. The troika is a vehicle, but it's also a metaphor for progress and freedom. The prosecutor suggests that the nation cannot progress and be free without self-examination and accountability.

## Part 4: Book 12, Chapter 12 Quotes

❝ "I visited Smerdyakov [....] His health was weak [...] but his character, his heart—oh, no, he was not at all such a weak man as the prosecution has made him out to be. I especially did not find any timidity in him [....] As for guilelessness, there was nothing of the sort [...] I found a terrible mistrustfulness in him, behind a mask of naivety, and a mind capable of contemplating quite a lot."

**Related Characters:** Fetyukovich (speaker), Lieutenant Dmitri "Mitya" Fyodorovich Karamazov, Fyodor Pavlovich Karamazov, Pavel Fyodorovich Smerdyakov

**Related Themes:**

**Page Number:** 738

**Explanation and Analysis**

Dmitri's defense attorney, Fetyukovich, is making the argument in his remarks that Smerdyakov murdered Fyodor. He's trying to expose Dmitri's arrest and his possible conviction as a potential "judicial error," for the jury would be sentencing a man who is not guilty and would be doing so as a result of erroneous information. Fetyukovich tries to convince the jury that his word is more valid than that of the prosecutor, because he had an actual encounter with Smerdyakov. The defense attorney's purpose is to show that people are not always what they seem. The image of Smerdyakov as "a weak man" is an attempt to paint him as innocent, someone physically and mentally incapable of committing murder. This tendency to underestimate him—a habit of everyone in the Karamazov family, except for Fyodor, who recognized the lackey's gifts—is a fatal error. Fetyukovich claims that Smerdyakov, in fact, wore his presumed weakness and ignorance as "a mask." However, nothing in Smerdyakov's speech throughout the novel revealed him as a stupid man. On the contrary, Dostoevsky presents him as clever and particularly astute on religious matters. Thus, the image of Smerdyakov as a fool and a weakling was concocted by the Karamazovs, particularly Dmitri and Ivan, to reinforce their own senses of superiority.

❝ "I gathered some information: he hated his origin, was ashamed of it, and gnashed his teeth when he recalled that he was 'descended from Stinking Lizaveta.' He was irreverent towards the servant Grigory and his wife, who had been his childhood benefactors. He cursed Russia and laughed at her. He dreamed of going to France and remaking himself as a Frenchman. He used to talk about it often and said that he only lacked the means to do so. It seems to me that he loved no one but himself, and his respect for himself was peculiarly high [....] Considering himself (and there are facts to support it) the illegitimate son of Fyodor Pavlovich, he might very well detest his position as compared with that of his master's legitimate children: everything goes to them [...] to them all the rights, to them the inheritance, while he is just a cook."

**Related Characters:** Fetyukovich (speaker), Fyodor Pavlovich Karamazov, Marfa Ignatievna, Grigory Vasilievich Kutuzov, Lizaveta Smerdyashchaya ("Stinking Lizaveta"), Pavel Fyodorovich Smerdyakov

**Related Themes:**

**Page Number:** 738

**Explanation and Analysis**

Fetyukovich is continuing his closing remarks. Having already worked to dissuade the jury of viewing Smerdyakov as a weakling, he is now providing the motive for the lackey's murder of Fyodor. Fetyukovich's remarks are an attempt to sway attention away from Dmitri as an object of evil. They are also designed to undercut Ippolit Kirillovich's remarks about the morality of the people hinging on their capability to accurately determine the outcome of this case. Fetyukovich paints Smerdyakov as the problem and as the proper object of contempt. In Fetyukovich's narrative, Smerdyakov is ungrateful ("irreverent toward the servant Grigory and his wife, who had been his childhood benefactors") and disloyal to his country, cursing Russia and dreaming of remaking himself in France. The latter argument also reinforces the understanding of Smerdyakov as inauthentic, or a man who wore masks. The defense attorney paints Smerdyakov as a uniquely selfish man, incapable of love and resentful of his inability to command the respect that he felt he deserved, due to his illegitimacy. Smerdyakov's motive was envy of his siblings for being able to reap the rewards of wealth and status denied to him, and resentment toward Fyodor for never acknowledging Smerdyakov as his son. In his narrative about the Karamazovs' denial of Smerdyakov and the disenfranchisement of the lackey, Fetyukovich unintentionally makes him seem more sympathetic. Smerdyakov, in this tale, becomes the epitome of the suffering servant class—a man who was abused and insulted from birth and denied every opportunity to realize his true potential.

## Epilogue, Chapter 2 Quotes

❝ "This is what I've thought up and decided: if I do run away [...] and even to America, I still take heart from the thought that I will not be running to any joy or happiness, but truly to another penal servitude, maybe no better than this one! [...] This America, devil take it, I hate it already! So Grusha will be with me, but look at her: is she an American woman? She's Russian, every little bone of her is Russian, she'll pine for her native land, and I'll see all the time that she's pining away for my sake [...] And I, will I be able to stand the local rabble [...] I hate this America even now! And maybe every last one of them is some sort of boundless machinist or whatever—but, devil take them, they're not my people, not of my soul! I love Russia, Alexei, I love the Russian God, though I myself am a scoundrel!"

**Related Characters:** Lieutenant Dmitri "Mitya" Fyodorovich Karamazov (speaker), Agrafena "Grushenka" Alexandrovna Svetlov, Alexei "Alyosha" Fyodorovich Karamazov

**Related Themes:**

**Page Number:** 764

### Explanation and Analysis

Dmitri is talking to Alexei from his bed in the town hospital's section for convicts. He is there because he's come down with "nervous fever." His condition, like Ivan's "brain fever," is less physical than mental, a symptom of coming to terms with the suffering inflicted as a result of his upbringing, his endless quarreling with his father, and his trial for Fyodor's murder.

Before succumbing to brain fever, Ivan put aside ten thousand roubles to arrange for Dmitri's escape, in the case that he was found guilty. Dmitri's first statement is ambiguous. He starts with the certainty of having "thought up and decided" something. He then uses the conditional "if" to talk about his decision to run away. This reflects his feeling of not wanting to leave Skotoprigonyevsk, despite his previous contempt for his hometown and prior plans to run away with Grushenka. He talks about how much he will "hate" America, though he's never been. Dmitri's feeling of hatred comes from his resentment about leaving Russia in favor of a society that he's afraid he and Grushenka will not understand. He characterizes America by "local rabble" and imagines that every American is a "boundless machinist." The description conjures images of cacophony and endless industrial activity, which wouldn't appeal to Dmitri, due to his laziness. Despite his loyalty to his country, he feels that he should leave because it is unjust for him to remain in prison for a crime that he didn't commit.

❝ "Love is gone, Mitya!" Katya began again, "but what is gone is painfully dear to me. Know that, for all eternity. But now, for one minute, let it be as it might have been," she prattled with a twisted smile, again looking joyfully into his eyes. "You now love another, I love another, but still I shall love you eternally, and you me, did you know that? Love me, do you hear, love me all your life!" she exclaimed with some sort of almost threatening tremor in her voice.

**Related Characters:** Katerina "Katya" Ivanovna Verkhovtsev (speaker), Ivan Fyodorovich Karamazov, Agrafena "Grushenka" Alexandrovna Svetlov, Lieutenant Dmitri "Mitya" Fyodorovich Karamazov

**Related Themes:**

**Page Number:** 766

**Explanation and Analysis**

Katerina Ivanovna is visiting Dmitri at his bed in the town hospital's section for convicts. Initially, there was uncertainty over whether or not she would come, but she appears in the doorway. This speech represents a détente between Katerina and Dmitri. On the witness stand, she used a letter that he had written to her to help prove that he murdered his father, Fyodor. She admits that she did this, not because she truly believed in his guilt, but out of jealousy for his preference for Grushenka. The speech is also a meditation on love. By exclaiming that "love is gone," Katerina is saying that she no longer wants to be with Dmitri and her passionate desire for him is gone, though she will cherish its memory. Despite Alexei and Dmitri's previous skepticism about the sincerity of Katerina's feelings, it appears that she loved Dmitri and retains tenderness for him. Her "twisted smile" seems to be an attempt to summon joy through her pain. However, it is also possible that her vanity and pride cannot bear the thought of Dmitri forgetting her in favor of Grushenka. Her command that he love her all her life, delivered in an "almost threatening tremor," could be an expression of fear that she will no longer matter to him. She wants to indulge in a fantasy of what might have been, and ensure that she remains relevant in Dmitri's mind.

❝ Thus they prattled to each other, and their talk was frantic, almost senseless, and perhaps also not even truthful, but at that moment everything was truth, and they both utterly believed what they were saying. "Katya," Mitya suddenly exclaimed, "do you believe I killed him? I know you don't believe it now, but then…when you were testifying…Did you, did you really believe it!" "I did not believe it then either! I never believed it! I hated you, and suddenly persuaded myself, for that moment…While I was testifying…I persuaded myself and believed it…and as soon as I finished testifying, I stopped believing it again. You must know all that. I forgot that I came here to punish myself!" she said with some suddenly quite new expression, quite like her prattling of love just a moment before.

**Related Characters:** Katerina "Katya" Ivanovna Verkhovtsev, Lieutenant Dmitri "Mitya" Fyodorovich Karamazov (speaker), Agrafena "Grushenka" Alexandrovna Svetlov, Fyodor Pavlovich Karamazov

**Related Themes:**

**Page Number:** 766

**Explanation and Analysis**

Katerina remains in Dmitri's room in the convicts' section of the town hospital. They are making up and trying to right their past wrongs to each other. Though Katerina starts out "prattling" about endless love, they are now both talking endlessly, as though they are afraid to let silence rest between them. Their constant talk makes it difficult to know what they mean and what they are saying out of propriety. Dmitri asks Katerina if she really believes that he killed his father, despite her previously testifying against Dmitri. She admits that she testified against him out of sudden hatred, fostered by her jealousy of his relationship with Grushenka.

Katerina describes her process of condemning Dmitri as persuasion, meaning that she worked to forget her love for him and focused instead on her jealousy, revealing how that emotion can cause people to try to ruin those whom they claim to love. However, in her speech, she accounts less for the suffering that she has caused Dmitri as a result of her own vanity and jealousy and focuses, instead, on her own suffering. She makes it clear that she has come to visit him, despite not initially wanting to, "to punish [herself]." In this regard, it seems that Dmitri's previous assessment of her as a woman who enjoys suffering to feel noble seems accurate.

## Epilogue, Chapter 3 Quotes

❝ "He was a nice boy, a kind and brave boy, he felt honor and his father's bitter offense made him rise up. And so, first of all, let us remember him, gentlemen, all our lives. And even though we may be involved with the most important affairs, achieve distinction or fall into some great misfortune—all the same, let us never forget how good we once felt here, all together, united by such good and kind feelings […] You must know that there is nothing higher, or stronger, or sounder, or more useful afterwards in life, than some good memory, especially a memory from childhood, from the parental home [….] If a man stores up many such memories to take into life, then he is saved for his whole life."

**Related Characters:** Alexei "Alyosha" Fyodorovich Karamazov (speaker), Lieutenant Dmitri "Mitya" Fyodorovich Karamazov, Captain Nikolai Ilyich Snegiryov, Nikolai "Kolya" Ivanov Krasotkin, Ilyusha

**Related Themes:**

**Page Number:** 774

**Explanation and Analysis**

Alexei is speaking to the boys who are attending Ilyusha's

funeral, including Ilyusha's former friend and later rival, Kolya Krasotkin. Ilyusha died of tuberculosis (consumption) two days after Dmitri was sentenced for murdering his father, Fyodor. Alexei's talk of Ilyusha's bravery and his need to honor "his father's bitter offense" refer to the humiliation that Ilyusha's father, Captain Snegiryov, suffered when Dmitri assaulted him outside of a tavern, pulling him by his "whiskbroom" beard—a physical feature that symbolized the captain's feebleness and loss of virility. By rising up, Ilyusha attempted to assert the manhood that his father had lost. His loyalty as a son contrasts with the frequent betrayals within the Karamazov clan.

Alexei's idealization of Ilyusha, and his reminder to the boys to remember how good and kind-spirited they feel in this moment, results from his belief in the elder Zosima's assertion that humanity's ultimate goodness is to be found in children, who represent the purity of the human spirit. Thus, Alexei orients them all to keep in mind their good memories from childhood and "the parental home," which will keep them morally strong throughout life. This advice suggests that the main reason why Alexei's brothers, Dmitri and Ivan, succumbed to madness and despondency is because they have no good memories from childhood. On the other hand, Alexei has retained his memory of his mother, Sofia Ivanovna, and adopted her devotion to her faith. In speaking of how such memories can save one "for his whole life," he may be talking about (and perhaps trying to convince) himself.

# SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS

The color-coded icons under each analysis entry make it easy to track where the themes occur most prominently throughout the work. Each icon corresponds to one of the themes explained in the Themes section of this LitChart.

## PART 1: BOOK 1, CHAPTER 1: FYODOR PAVLOVICH KARAMAZOV

Alexei Fyodorovich Karamazov is the third son of the local landowner, Fyodor Pavlovich Karamazov—a "muddleheaded" man who starts out as a small landowner and then acquires a small fortune as a result of "having dinner at other men's tables." Fyodor was married twice and has three sons—Dmitri, Ivan, and Alexei. Dmitri, also called Mitya, was born to Fyodor's first wife—the beautiful, wealthy, and aristocratic Adelaida Ivanovna Miusov. It's unclear what Adelaida wanted with Fyodor beyond the "piquancy from elopement." As for Fyodor, he wished to "squeeze into a good family and get a dowry." There seemed to be little love between them. Though Fyodor is a sensualist during much of his life, Adelaida was the one woman who "made no particular impression on him."

*In the first pages, Dostoevsky establishes Alexei as his protagonist. He also establishes how the Karamazov family came into its wealth—through Fyodor's dishonest means of sponging off of others and marrying Adelaida because she had money and not because he loved her. Thus, the reader understands that the concept of family was corrupted by Fyodor long before his children were born. Adelaida only married Fyodor because she wanted to anger and frustrate her family by marrying someone from a lower class.*

Immediately after their marriage, Adelaida realizes that she feels contempt for Fyodor, who "filched" twenty-five thousand roubles in cash from her and tries to have the little village and the town house that came with her dowry transferred to his name. Adelaida's family intervenes to put a stop to this. If this weren't enough, there are frequent fights between the couple in which Adelaida does most of the beating. She is "a hot-tempered lady," and "endowed with remarkable physical strength." She finally leaves the house and runs away with "a destitute seminarian, leaving the three-year-old Dmitri in his father's hands."

*Adelaida realized that Fyodor was greedy and had no genuine love for her or interest in her. Fortunately, the feeling was mutual, allowing Adelaida to leave the marriage without feeling hurt. However, the frequent violence between the couple as well as her eventual abandonment of Dmitri must have left a mark on him. By leaving him "in his father's hands," she allowed for Fyodor to make the boy into whatever he wanted, risking that he'd learn his father's habits. A seminarian—the person Adelaida left Fyodor for—is someone in training for the priesthood or ministry.*

Soon after Adelaida's departure, Fyodor sets up "a regular harem" in his home and drinks constantly. During his intermissions, he drives all over the province, tearfully complaining to all who will listen, saying that Adelaida abandoned him. He seems even to enjoy playing the role of "the offended husband." Eventually, he learns that Adelaida is living in Petersburg with her seminarian. When Fyodor is preparing to go there, however, he receives news of Adelaida's death. In one version of the story, the narrator says, she dies of typhus. In another, she dies of starvation. Fyodor is drunk when he learns of his wife's death and supposedly he runs down the street, lifts his hands to the sky, and shouts with joy. Others say he sobs like a child. It's possible that both versions are true.

*Fyodor played up the image of the suffering husband to evoke pity from the community while simultaneously showing indifference to his wife's alienation by taking up with other women regularly. Here, Dostoevsky shows that Fyodor is a man who enjoys playing roles to get what he wants from people, whether it's money, invitations to free meals, or social acceptance. Like many of Dostoevsky's characters, Fyodor is a complicated man, and it's unclear if he is truly capable of love or is only a creature of self-interest.*

## PART 1: BOOK 1, CHAPTER 2: THE FIRST SON SENT PACKING

Fyodor abandons three-year-old Dmitri, leaving him in the care of his servant, Grigory. This isn't out of malice but simply because Fyodor forgets about the boy. So, Dmitri lives with Grigory in the servants' cottage for nearly a year.

*Fyodor was never interested in being a father and left the task of raising his son to his servant simply because he could. Fyodor is indifferent to children probably because he can't gain anything from them, and is too concerned with his own affairs.*

Around this time, Adelaida's cousin Pyotr Alexandrovich Miusov returns from Paris. He has a splendid estate, valued "at about a thousand souls," which lies just beyond the Karamazovs' town and borders on the "famous monastery." After learning of Dmitri's existence, he expresses interest in taking responsibility for the child's upbringing and tells Fyodor so. Years later, Pyotr would recall that Fyodor looked at him as though he had no idea there was a child in the house. It's possible that Fyodor was play-acting, something he was fond of doing, even to his own disadvantage.

*The "thousand souls" refer to the number of serfs on the Miusov property. It's possible, based on what was previously narrated, that Fyodor genuinely had no idea that Miusov had found his son, Dmitri, on the property. Fyodor has no interest in children and, therefore, doesn't think about them. In a way, it would also have worked to his advantage to play-act ignorance because he would show that he's incapable of raising Dmitri, leading Miusov to take the boy away.*

Dmitri is the only one of Fyodor's three sons who grows up thinking that he'll come into some property. He never finishes high school and later ends up in military school. Later, he goes to the Caucasus, gets promoted, fights a duel, leads a wild life, and spends a lot of money. He gets to know his father only when he reaches the age of inheritance and tries to settle the question of his property with Fyodor. Dmitri dislikes his father and stayed for only a short time, but he manages to obtain a sum from him and makes a deal concerning future payments from the estate. Fyodor notices, however, that Dmitri has "a false and inflated idea of his property."

*Dostoevsky here establishes Dmitri as different from his brothers due to his sense of entitlement. His background will mirror that of the elder Zosima who, before his death, narrates his early life. Zosima is a parallel figure for Dmitri, highlighting that, under different circumstances, Dmitri may have become a radically different person. However, Dmitri ends up how he is partly as a result of Fyodor's neglect and his penchant to lie to his son about money.*

Fyodor senses that Dmitri is frivolous and impatient. He exploits this to his advantage, giving him small sums until, after four years, Dmitri learns that he has received his entire inheritance in cash from Fyodor and might even be indebted to his father. As a result, Dmitri has no right to demand any more money. He is stunned and "suspected a lie or a trick." This circumstance leads to the catastrophe which forms the subject of the first part of the novel.

*Like the shrewd businessman that he is, Fyodor exploited Dmitri's weaknesses to his own advantage. He gave his son his inheritance and, once that was squandered, provided what Dmitri didn't know were loans, reaping a financial advantage for himself. Fyodor's exploitation of his son reveals an absence of paternal love and a willingness to exploit anyone and everyone.*

## PART 1: BOOK 1, CHAPTER 3: SECOND MARRIAGE, SECOND CHILDREN

Fyodor marries for a second time to Sofia Ivanovna. The marriage lasts for about eight years. Sofia is sixteen and from another province. She is an orphan, "the daughter of some obscure deacon," and grew up in the home of General Vorokhov's widow. Sofia is a meek, gentle girl who once tried to hang herself. Fyodor offers her his hand in marriage and, again, suggests elopement. Fyodor doesn't get a dowry this time, but he is tempted "by the innocent girl's remarkable beauty." Still, he remains a philanderer and has orgies at the house, in front of his wife. Grigory, who hated his former mistress, Adelaida, takes Sofia's side. On one occasion, he breaks up an orgy and drives the "loose women" away from the house.

*Sofia is the antithesis of the formidable Adelaida. She suffered her whole life from being unloved, and her long-suffering image will later influence both of her sons in different ways. Alexei will regard it as a form of nobility, akin to Christ's suffering, and this, coupled with her religious devotion, influences him to join the monastery. Ivan's memories of his mother probably influence his ideas about the predominance of suffering on Earth, making God's world an unacceptable place.*

Sofia later comes down with a nervous disorder that causes her to have "terrible hysterical fits." Nevertheless, she bears Ivan in the first year of her marriage to Fyodor, and Alexei three years later. Alexei is four when Sofia dies, but he remembers his mother throughout his life. After her death, Fyodor forgets about the boys and they, too, end up in Grigory's cottage, just as their older brother had. One day General Vorokhov's widow finds them in the cottage. When she sees Fyodor, who is tipsy, she slaps him and then goes for the boys, who are unwashed and wearing dirty shirts. For that, she slaps Grigory. She then carries the boys outside, wraps them in plaid, puts them in a carriage, and takes them to her town.

*These days, we would probably say that Sofia suffered from a mental disorder, though her hysteria is later connected to her religious fervor. Fyodor repeats his earlier indifference to his children, proving that his neglect of Dmitri wasn't personal—that is, borne neither out of resentment for his first-born nor his mother. The widow slaps both Fyodor and Grigory because she finds them guilty of neglecting innocent children, though Grigory has probably done his best to raise the boys with what little Fyodor provided.*

General Vorokhov's widow dies shortly after that. In her will, the widow sets aside a thousand roubles each for Ivan and Alexei. The money is to be for their education. The widow's principal heir, Yefim Petrovich Polenov, takes an interest in the boys and particularly comes to love Alexei, who grows up in Polenov's family for a while. Polenov educates the boys at his own expense and protects their inheritances so that they grow with interest.

*It's never made clear why the widow made Sofia miserable while demonstrating care for the boys. The widow, like Polenov, became a surrogate parent to the boys, providing them with the guidance that Dmitri never received.*

At an early age, Ivan shows an "unusual and brilliant aptitude for learning." He leaves Yefim Petrovich's family at thirteen and enters a Moscow secondary school. Yefim Petrovich, unfortunately, leaves his affairs in disarray upon his death, which results in Ivan and Alexei being unable to obtain their inheritances right away. To make up for this loss, Ivan finds work giving lessons and then writes small "Eyewitness" articles about street incidents for local newspapers. In his later years at university, he publishes "talented reviews of books" and becomes known in literary circles. One article deals with ecclesiastical courts, a subject that is being raised everywhere at the time. Ivan, surprisingly, sides with the "churchmen."

*Unlike Dmitri, Ivan demonstrated an intellectual talent, which didn't make him dependent on inheritances to survive. He also developed a work ethic, which Dmitri never bothered to do. These facts of his life established within him a moral rectitude that couldn't be learned at home. Ivan's position on ecclesiastical courts comes from his belief that faith and obedience to the Orthodox Church are necessary to help maintain a strong social order, and have little to do with whether or not God actually exists.*

One day, Ivan appeared at Fyodor's house and lives with him for a couple of months. The pair "[get] along famously." Ivan even has influence over Fyodor, who listens to him occasionally. Only later do we learn, the narrator says, that Ivan went to Fyodor partly at the request of Dmitri. He acted as "a mediator and conciliator" between his father and elder brother.

*Fyodor likes Ivan because Fyodor likes to imagine himself as a learned man. Given that Ivan is his son, it strongly suggests that he could have bestowed him with his intellectual gifts. Ivan initially plays the mediating role that's later taken up by Alexei.*

## PART 1: BOOK 1, CHAPTER 4: THE THIRD SON, ALYOSHA

At twenty years old (Ivan is twenty-four and Dmitri is almost twenty-eight), Alexei, or Alyosha, is not a fanatic or even a mystic, but simply a lover of mankind. He throws himself "into the monastery path" as a result of his becoming attached to the famous elder Zosima. His earliest memories of his mother are of a "frenzied, but beautiful" woman. However, he seldom shares this memory with anyone.

*Alexei's faith is actually rooted in earthly concerns, which is why Zosima later encourages him to "sojourn in the world," where his gift of selflessness will be put to better use. For Alexei, suffering is initially inseparable from faith, due to his early images of his mother—his first model for religious devotion.*

During his childhood, Alexei wasn't very talkative due to "some inner preoccupation." He accepts everything "without the least condemnation." When Fyodor's antics are too much to bear, he simply retires quietly from his presence, never expressing contempt. Initially, Fyodor is suspicious of Alexei, but then comes "to love him sincerely and deeply."

*Fyodor's suspicion of Alexei comes from his mistrust of and inability to read those who, unlike him, are not overtly expressive. He initially suspects that Alexei is judging him, but when he realizes that the boy merely accepts his father as he is, this generates love within Fyodor—one of the few examples of Fyodor truly loving anyone other than himself.*

Everyone loves Alexei. When he lives in Yefim Petrovich's house, he attaches himself to the family so well that they consider him their own child. He succeeds in awakening special love for himself at school, too. Though he is seldom playful or merry, he never shows off and never holds on to an offense. His schoolmates tease him, though not out of malice, for his "frantic modesty and chastity." Alexei can't stand to hear certain words or conversations about women. Seeing that he puts his fingers in his ears when his classmates speak of such things, they crowd around him, pull his hands from his ears, and shout foul things at him until he slips to the floor, lies down, and covers his head. He never says a word but silently bears the offense. In his studies, he is among the best but never first.

*Alexei's warmth of spirit and aversion to judgment make people feel comfortable and welcome in his presence. This, like Ivan's intellectual talents, saves him from becoming an angry or covetous person—consequences of his poor upbringing. His modesty in regard to sex and women will remain with him throughout his life. Instead of running away from his classmates or asking them to leave him alone, he bears the offense as though he must suffer their vulgarity with a Christlike kind of meekness and submissiveness. His approach to his studies reflects his wish not to stand out, neither as a success nor a failure.*

After Yefim Petrovich dies, Alexei spends two more years at the local secondary school. He then ends up in the house of two women he'd never seen before, distant relations of Yefim Petrovich. Alexei, however, never worries about who's supporting him. He has no awareness of the value of money and is the sort who, if he were to come into a fortune, would give it all away. Pyotr Alexandrovich jokes that Alexei will never need to worry about poverty, for he's the only man in the world who could be left completely alone in a large unknown city and would manage to find someone to care for him.

*Alexei's attitude toward money contrasts with that of Dmitri and his father. Alexei's lack of concern about money, however, is partly fostered by the fact that he's never really lived in poverty. This doesn't make him a hypocrite; however, it does make him someone who doesn't really know what it's like to be desperately poor. He has always existed in higher-class social circles and would likely find someone among them to care for him.*

Alexei doesn't complete his studies at school. He has one more year to go before he decides that had to see his father. He is also looking for his mother's grave. Fyodor, however, is unable to show Alexei his mother's grave because he never visited it after she was buried. He also forgot where it was. Several years after Sofia Ivanovna died, Fyodor ends up in Odessa. At this time, he develops the skill of "knocking money together" and "knocking it out of other people." He arrives back in his hometown three years before Alexei's arrival.

*Alexei's disinterest in school probably comes partly from his disinterest in making a career. His desire to find his mother's grave may come from a wish to reconnect with a part of himself, or his childhood, from which he had distanced himself. Meanwhile, Fyodor has reestablished his old habit of cheating people out of money to fatten his own pockets. His behavior contrasts with Alexei's sincere search for meaning.*

Soon after finding his mother's grave, Alexei announces that he wanted to enter the monastery and says that the monks are ready to accept him as a novice. Alexei asks for Fyodor's consent, and he agrees. Fyodor says that Alexei can pray for sinners like him. Fyodor figures that, when he dies, devils will drag him into hell with their hooks—then again, he isn't not sure where they'll get the hooks from, what they'll be made of, and how he'll be suspended from them. In any case, Fyodor is sure that his son—the only person in the world who hasn't condemned him—will return after he is "cured." Fyodor will be waiting.

*Even when Alexei announces his decision, Fyodor uses the occasion to talk about himself. Fyodor is a depraved man but also one who worries about the fate of his soul. His suffering, which he masks with drunkenness and role-play, comes from being too selfish to be good while also sensing that he will one day pay a price for his selfishness. His story about being dragged to hell on hooks is an attempt at comic levity that also probably masks his genuine concern for his fate.*

## PART 1: BOOK 1, CHAPTER 5: ELDERS

Alexei enters the monastery a healthy, "red-cheeked," and "clear-eyed" young man. He's even a realist, though he believes in miracles. Realists, when they come to admit to the existence of miracles, will admit them as facts of nature that were previously unknown to them. Alexei enters the monastery because he is seeking truth and wishes to participate in it. If he didn't believe in God, he would have joined the atheists and socialists, for socialism is the desire "to bring heaven down to earth."

*The description of Alexei as "clear-eyed" suggests that he has no delusions about the world and didn't enter the monastery to escape from reality. On the contrary, he entered it to bring himself closer to reality. His faith is rooted in a desire to understand mysteries, whereas Ivan will later express a wish not to bother with what he cannot see.*

Alexei may have preserved some early childhood memories from the local monastery, "where his mother may have taken him to the Sunday liturgy." There, he would have met his elder, Zosima, who's now "dying from weakness and disease." It's unclear whom they are going to replace him with.

*Alexei's desire to enter the monastery is likely connected to his wish to identify more strongly with his mother's memory. His early memories of his mother are more positive than his experience of neglect at the hands of his father.*

The replacement of the elder Zosima is an important issue because the local monastery offers nothing but its elders. An elder is someone who takes another's soul and will "into his soul and into his will." By choosing an elder, one renounces one's will and gives it to the elder under total obedience and with self-renunciation. The purpose of doing this is to achieve "self-conquest" to avoid the fate of never understanding who one is. Only the elder who imposes obedience on a disciple can release him from obedience. Elders have "a boundless and inconceivable" power that first led to their persecution. Soon thereafter, they "found great respect among the people." Commoners, as well as the highest nobility, flock to them to confess their doubts, sins, and sufferings. They ask for advice and admonition.

*In the culture of the Orthodox Church, elders can also be nuns ("eldresses"). Elders can sometimes also be married priests or bishops. What makes a member of the clergy an elder is their spiritual purity, which, believers say, gives them the power of clairvoyance. This extraordinary power is largely bestowed to the institution by the people, however. An elder cannot assume responsibility for another's soul without the consent of the believer. Giving another mortal such responsibility reveals the extent of the community's faith in the institution and its immense respect for those willing to suffer.*

Alexei lives in a cell, and Zosima loves the young man very much and allows him to stay near him. There are some among the monks who hate and envy Zosima, but they are a silent few. Still, they consist of some of the most important members of the monastery. One of them is one of the most aged monk, Father Ferapont, "famous for his great silence and remarkable fasting." The majority, however, love Zosima ardently. Some are even so fanatically attached to him that they revere him as a saint.

*Zosima probably loves Alexei for his innocence and the ease of his devotion. The envy toward Zosima among the other monks shows that even those who have dedicated themselves to holiness are prone to petty human foibles, as Dostoevsky frequently shows. Reactions to Zosima are extreme, it seems. People either loathe him or are deeply devoted to him.*

While Dmitri and Fyodor are arguing over the inheritance and property accounts, Alexei suggests that they all get together in Zosima's cell, figuring that the elder's presence might be "influential and conciliatory." This gives Alexei the chance to get to know his brothers. He becomes friends intimately and quickly with Dmitri, but Alexei and Ivan are still not close. Alexei even wonders if Ivan, "the learned atheist," might not feel some contempt for him. Pyotr Alexandrovich also agrees to participate in the visit. He figures that it'll help him settle his lawsuit with the monastery over the boundaries of their land, wood-cutting rights, and fishing in the river.

*The visit to Zosima's cell turns into a family affair, bringing together those who are stuck in a circle of discord, fostered largely by material interests. However, Fyodor and Pyotr show up not out of interest in the institution or any particular respect for the elder, but only to address their selfish desires. Alexei knows that Fyodor and Dmitri don't really share in his faith, but he believes that they can still reap the benefits of Zosima's boundless goodness. He worries, though, that Ivan will find it all ridiculous.*

Alexei worries that Dmitri will be the only one who will take the council with Zosima seriously, and that the rest will come "with frivolous purposes" and might even offend the elder. Ivan and Pyotr Alexandrovich, he figures, are only agreeing out of curiosity. Fyodor, he thinks, is only coming to engage in "some buffoonery and theatrics." He fears any insult to Zosima, especially Pyotr's "refined, polite jibes" and Ivan's "haughty innuendos."

*Alexei is embarrassed by his family, knowing that they're neither devout nor truly interested in the monastery. It's possible that he thinks Dmitri will be the only one to be respectful because Dmitri already belongs to an institution that requires devotion—the military. He also lacks Fyodor's farcical pretentiousness and Pyotr and Ivan's haughtiness.*

## PART 1: BOOK 2, CHAPTER 1: THEY ARRIVE AT THE MONASTERY

On a warm and clear day at the end of August, Pyotr Alexandrovich arrives in a carriage drawn by "a pair of expensive horses." He comes with his young relative, Pyotr Fomich Kalganov, who is friendly with Alexei. In "a very ancient" but "roomy" carriage, Fyodor Pavlovich arrives with Ivan Fyodorovich. Dmitri Fyodorovich is late. An elderly gentleman with "sweet little eyes" comes up to them, tipping his hat "and speaking in a honeyed lisp." He's the Tula landowner, Maximov. He directs them to where the elder Zosima lives—"shut up in the hermitage…about four hundred paces from the monastery…through the woods…" They follow Maximov, though Pyotr Alexandrovich tells him that they have come to see Zosima to address "a private matter" and, therefore, cannot invite Maximov to go in with them. Maximov says that he's been already and that Zosima is "*un chevalier parfait*"—a perfect gentleman.

*The differences in the carriages reveal the differences between the two sides of the family. Pyotr Alexandrovich is a man who likes to display his wealth ("expensive horses"). Fyodor drives an older carriage, despite having the money to buy a newer one, because he's miserly and is comfortable with what he knows. Pyotr's comment about going to express "a private matter" makes it clear that he isn't interested in learning from the elder but in settling the matter of rights over the land that he shares with the monastery. Maximov's comment about Zosima's gentlemanliness may also be a sly remark about Pyotr's pretentiousness in contrast to Zosima's genuine good manners.*

A little monk, "very pale and haggard," arrives and greets them with "an extremely courteous and deep bow." He tells the visitors that the Father Superior has invited the family to dine with him at one o'clock, after their visit to the hermitage. He also invites Maximov. Fyodor happily agrees, as does Pyotr Alexandrovich, though the latter is not pleased to share company with Fyodor and hopes that Dmitri doesn't show up at all.

*The monk's appearance is a sign of his ill-health, but also his ascetic lifestyle of fasting and other forms of self-denial. This willingness to forget the self in order to be closer to goodness contrasts with Pyotr's unwillingness to forget about his own interests for a moment, as well as his lingering resentment toward the Karamazovs.*

Pyotr Alexandrovich warns Fyodor to behave himself during the visit to the Father Superior. When they arrive at the hermitage, Fyodor starts "crossing himself energetically before the saints painted above and on the sides of the gates." He notes how not "one woman ever goes through [the] gates." Then, he remembers that Zosima does receive ladies. The little monk says that female peasants lie near the porch, waiting for him. For "higher ladies," there are "two small rooms" that were "built on the porch." Madame Khokhlakov is waiting there now with her paralyzed daughter, Lise. Zosima has promised to see them, but he's been very weak lately.

*Pyotr's warning comes from not wanting to be associated with Fyodor's comic antics. However, Fyodor starts this immediately when he begins "crossing himself energetically." This is an act of mockery that he thinks makes him look earnestly devout, yet he also on some level knows that he is playing the clown. Fyodor is interested in the monk's denial of sex while he simultaneously commands worship from women all over the country and from every social class. Despite his suffering, Zosima remains committed to his duties.*

The house where Zosima has his cell is "wooden, one-storied, with a front porch" and "surrounded with flowers." Fyodor asks if the house looked like this during the time of Varsonofy, the previous elder, who supposedly disliked "such niceties." Fyodor also says that Varsonofy "used to jump up and beat even ladies with a stick." The little monk denies this as an absurd rumor. He then asks the visitors to wait while he announces them to Zosima. Pyotr Alexandrovich warns Fyodor once again to behave himself, otherwise Pyotr will make him pay. Fyodor wonders why Pyotr, a progressive Parisian, cares so much about the opinion of these clergymen. Fyodor tells Pyotr, sarcastically, that his cousin surprises him. Privately, Fyodor knows that he will inevitably "start arguing," lose his temper, and then will "demean himself and his ideas."

*There is a contrast between the stern asceticism represented by the little house and the beauty of the flowers that surround it. However, this image reveals Zosima as someone who only takes what he needs from the world to survive but doesn't ignore the world's beauty. His religious faith doesn't hinge on self-righteous denial of everything, like that of Father Ferapont, but on modest appreciation. Pyotr only cares about the clergymen to the extent that he doesn't want Fyodor to spoil his chance at recouping his land rights. His vanity also makes him concerned that the elders will liken him to Fyodor.*

## PART 1: BOOK 2, CHAPTER 2: THE OLD BUFFOON

The visitors enter the room at the same time as the elder Zosima. Father Iosif and Father Paissy are already in the cell awaiting the elder. When Zosima emerges with a novice and Alexei, the monks bow deeply at each other, touching the ground with their fingers. Pyotr Alexandrovich and Fyodor also bow deeply. Pyotr, however, dislikes the elder, whose withered face and small eyes displease him. He surmises that the monk is "a malicious and pettily arrogant little soul." It shames him to think this.

*Pyotr's irritation with the elder may come from becoming hyper-aware of how much the elder's humility and lack of interest in material comforts contrast with his own vanity and covetousness. He seems to be projecting his fears about himself onto the elder out of envy for the holy man's qualities, which he will never possess.*

When the clock chimes, Fyodor mentions that Dmitri still hasn't arrived and notes that he, on the other hand, always makes a point to be punctual. He also tells Zosima that he (Fyodor) is "a natural-born buffoon," painfully embarrassed when a joke isn't going over well. He says that, as a youth, he made his living by "sponging" off of the gentry.

*Fyodor is showing off for the elder. However, he's also in an oddly confessional mood and expresses sharp self-awareness in this moment. He knows that he likes to act the fool and he also admits that he acquired his wealth as a result of using people. This blatant honesty makes him occasionally endearing in spite of his many other repulsive qualities.*

Fyodor throws himself down onto his knees and asks Zosima what he should do to "inherit eternal life." The elder tells him to stop getting drunk, to resist sensuality and the adoration of money, and to close his taverns. Above all else, he says, Fyodor mustn't lie because it encourages disrespect of himself and others. Zosima then tells him to get off of his knees, for "these posturings are false, too." Zosima then rises to leave the room for a few minutes to attend to people who were waiting for him before the Karamazov party arrived.

*Fyodor's question to Zosima may have been genuine. He is concerned with the fate of his soul, knowing what an immoral man he is. Zosima's advice is delivered in a practical and direct manner, contrasting with Fyodor's posturing, which he seems to perform at the benefit of the elder and out of a desire to adjust his manner to the institution.*

## PART 1: BOOK 2, CHAPTER 3: WOMEN OF FAITH

There are about twenty women near the wooden porch "built onto the outside wall." The widowed Madame Khokhlakov and her paralyzed fourteen-year-old daughter, Lise, are also on the porch. Zosima the elder appears on the porch and stands on the top step. The crowd presses toward the steps that connect "the low porch with the field." A "shrieker" is "pulled up to him by both hands." She begins to shriek, hiccup, and shake all over "as if in convulsions." Zosima covers her head with his stole and reads her a prayer, which calms her.

*The "shrieker" near the porch is reminiscent of Fyodor's tendency to call Ivan and Alexei's mother "the shrieker" due to her similarly hysterical reactions in response to holy rapture. In the novel, women express more religious devotion than men, except for those in the monastery, who have less control over their lives and rely more on the Church to deliver them from their circumstances.*

Many of the women who move toward Zosima are crying "tears of tenderness and rapture." Others try to kiss the hem of his clothes. The elder points to a woman named Nastasia who comes from two hundred miles away. She's in mourning for her three-year-old son, the last of her children to die. Her husband, Nikitushka, has taken to drinking, and she has abandoned him and her home. Zosima encourages her to think that her child "stands before the throne of the Lord, rejoicing and being glad, and praying to God" on her behalf. He tells her to weep and then to rejoice. The woman, however, can't stop thinking about how she'll never see or hear her son, whose name was Alexei, ever again.

*The women react to Zosima as though he is a saint or a Christ-like savior. Their faith in him is partly borne out of religious instruction, as well as desperation to appeal to someone who can relieve their suffering. Nastasia is obsessed with the death of her youngest child. Zosima comforts her by distracting her from the earthly reality of his decomposing body and reimagining him in a heaven in which he enjoys a happiness and nobility that he couldn't realize in life.*

Zosima tells Nastasia that he'll remember her in his prayers. He then tells her to go back to her husband, because it is a sin for her to abandon him. She agrees to return home and tells the elder that he's "touched [her] heart." Zosima then shifts his attention to "a very little old lady" who is "the widow of a noncommissioned officer." This is Madame Prokhorovna. She worries that her son, Vasenka, is dead because he has stopped writing to her. Zosima assures her that the boy is alive and that she should go and "be at peace."

*Zosima reminds Nastasia that her grief doesn't exempt her from her responsibility to her husband, who may need her more now so that he doesn't dissipate himself in alcohol. Their marriage unites them in their suffering. Prokhorovna has a different obsession—that of being overprotective of her son, who may have stopped writing to be relieved of her excessive concern.*

Zosima then focuses on a "still young, peasant woman" who looks "consumptive." She's a widow whose husband used to beat her. She nearly confesses to having killed her husband while he was on his sickbed. Zosima tells her not to let repentance "slacken" in her. She will then be forgiven. He blesses her three times, takes an icon from around his neck, and puts it around hers. After taking a donation of sixty kopecks from a woman who wants to provide for "some woman who's poorer" than she is, Zosima blesses all of the women and bows "deeply" to them.

*What Zosima seems to mean about not letting repentance "slacken" in the widow is that she must not forget that she has committed the sin of murder. The icon that he gives her is similar to the one that he later gives to Madame Khokhlakov, which she thinks imbues her with special powers of foresight. Zosima's icons seem to give the women who visit him a feeling of empowerment that they otherwise lack.*

## PART 1: BOOK 2, CHAPTER 4: A LADY OF LITTLE FAITH

Zosima goes up to Madame Khokhlakov, who quietly sheds tears and wipes them away with her handkerchief. She tells him that the elder's prayers have "healed" Liza (Lise) because her legs have grown stronger. Her color has also improved. Madame Khokhlakov tells her daughter to thank the monk. Lise, who is there as well, stands up as much as she can. Looking at the elder, she begins laughing and says that she's laughing at Alexei. Madame Khokhlakov asks how Alexei is doing and extends her "exquisitely gloved hand." She then hands him a note from Katerina Ivanovna, who has asked that Alexei visit her very soon. Katerina has come to a decision about Dmitri. Alexei agrees to go to Katerina.

*Madame Khokhlakov is a very devout woman who believes that Zosima has the supernatural ability to heal, though Lise's healing process may more likely be due to medical attention or improved nutrition. Lise serves as an example of extreme suffering. Later, after she gains the ability to walk, she changes into a person who enjoys inflicting emotional pain on others and physical pain on herself. Because her mother has fetishized and obsessed over her suffering, Lise can't live without it.*

Madame Khokhlakov notes how healthy and cheerful Zosima looks. She then says that she's suffering from a lack of faith in the afterlife. She worries that, after she dies, there will be nothing. Zosima encourages her to love her neighbors "more actively and tirelessly." She'll then be "convinced of the existence of God and the immortality of [her] soul." Madame Khokhlakov wonders if she's capable of that. She wonders if she can stand ingratitude—no return of love for her love.

*Concern about the afterlife and the fate of one's soul is common to numerous characters, including Fyodor and Ivan. Zosima encourages Madame Khokhlakov to love actively in life, encouraging the constant work of goodness rather than any secret formula for salvation. However, she doesn't know if she can do this without a reward.*

Zosima encourages Madame Khokhlakov to do what she can, and says that she's already done a lot by speaking so sincerely about herself. However, if she's only spoken in such a manner for praise, then she'll get nowhere in her effort to practice active love. Madame Khokhlakov admits that she was waiting for the elder to praise her. Because she admitted this, though, Zosima is convinced that the widow is sincere. Even if she doesn't achieve happiness, he reminds her that she's still on a good path and can stay on it as long as she avoids all lies. The elder then rises to excuse himself.

*Zosima instructs Madame Khokhlakov to understand that the purity of her faith relies on authenticity. It's normal for a devout person to doubt religious teachings and to have moments in which they are unsure about the depth of their faith. Zosima says that it's important to acknowledge these feelings, as opposed to pretending that one's faith is pure or stronger than that of others.*

Madame Khokhlakov reminds him to bless Lise. Zosima teases Lise about laughing at Alexei and asks her why she does it. She says that it's because Alexei acts as though he doesn't know her, though he carried her in his arms when she was little. Now, he averts his gaze, though she looks back at him defiantly when in his presence. She then bursts into uncontrollable laughter. The elder listens to her "with a smile" and gives her a tender blessing. Lise kisses Zosima's hand and implores him not to be angry with her because she's "a fool" and "worthless." She thinks that maybe Alexei is right not to want to see such a silly girl. The elder assures her that he'll send Alexei to visit her.

*Alexei avoids Lise's gaze because, at fourteen, she is becoming a young woman. Alexei is in the habit of avoiding women because he's embarrassed by them. The sight of young women seems to remind him of his sexuality, which he's eager to deny, both to maintain a pure religious faith and also to distance himself from his father's reputation for sensuality. Lise's laughter is coy. She seems to sense Alexei's shyness and appreciates it because she has affection for him, too.*

## PART 1: BOOK 2, CHAPTER 5: SO BE IT! SO BE IT!

Zosima has been absent from his cell for about twenty-five minutes. Dmitri still hasn't arrived. When the monk reenters, he finds that his guests are engaged in lively conversation, led mainly by Ivan and the two hieromonks (monks who are also priests), Father Iosif and Father Paissy. Fyodor asks Pyotr Alexandrovich why he's consented to remain in what Pyotr calls "unseemly company." He suspects that Pyotr is only staying so that he can display his intelligence. Fyodor picks at Pyotr until the elder's return. As Zosima sits, Alexei notices how tired and pale the old monk looks. Father Iosif tells Zosima that they've been talking about Ivan's article about ecclesiastical courts and "the scope of their rights." Zosima has heard about the article.

*Fyodor enjoys poking fun at Pyotr Alexandrovich's pretensions. Part of this may come from Fyodor's enjoyment of baiting another member of Adelaida Ivanovna's family who disapproved of his marriage to her due to his relative lack of refinement. The subject of ecclesiastical courts was popular in Russia at the time and addresses a more general debate over the separation of church and state and what the scope of religious power ought to be.*

Father Iosif says that Ivan "completely rejects the separation of Church and state," which the hieromonk finds "curious." Ivan explains that a compromise "between the state and the Church on such questions as courts" is "impossible." Ivan thinks, therefore, that the Church should contain the whole state. Father Paissy agrees, but Pyotr Alexandrovich doesn't. Father Paissy goes on to say that "the Church ought to be transforming itself into the state…so as to disappear eventually, making way for science, the spirit of the age, and civilization." Yet, according to the Russian view, the state "should end by being accounted worthy of becoming only the Church alone, and nothing else but that."

*In saying that the Church should become the whole state, both Ivan and Father Paissy seem to want the state to mimic the Church's attention to traditional rituals and a firm code of conduct. However, Father Paissy makes it clear that he doesn't want the state to adopt the Church's more backward-looking tendencies. On the contrary, the Church as the state should embrace progress. In this regard, Father Paissy seems to think that the Church should work more in the service of the people and civilization than for its own self-interest.*

Ivan says that, if the Church takes over completely, it would "excommunicate the criminal and the disobedient and cut off their heads." The excommunicated man would then have to not only go away from men but also from Christ. Zosima says that the Church is the only entity that can exact "real punishment" on the criminal. Hard labor and floggings don't reform anyone. Also, after a criminal is cut off, another one takes his place. It is, therefore, only "Christ's law" that forces one to acknowledge one's own conscience. The criminal is capable of acknowledging guilt only before the Church, not the state. However, the Church now has "no active jurisdiction," only the power of moral condemnation.

*Ivan and Zosima have very different concepts of the kind of punishment that the Church could exact. Ivan imagines the kind of brutal punishments that would more likely be performed by the state (the cutting off of heads conjures up the guillotine). Zosima's idea of "real punishment" has nothing to do with physical pain but rather the pain of social alienation and being condemned in God's eyes, which means that one's soul will never be at peace.*

Zosima contemplates what would happen to the criminal if the Church turned on him, too. Excommunicated, the criminal would be "in despair." Society, in league with the Church, would also turn on the criminal. So, "if the whole of society turned into the Church alone," it's likely, the monk thinks, that crimes would starkly diminish. The Church could even bring those it excommunicated back into its fold.

*The "despair" that Zosima describes would come from ostracism. Zosima believes that people fear being cast out of society more than they fear any physical judgment. The Church's power over the devout would ensure this. However, Zosima holds that the Church could also be forgiving to those who atone.*

Pyotr Alexandrovich is outraged, prompting Father Paissy to remind him, sternly, that it's not the Church that turns into the state but the state that "rises up to the Church and becomes the Church over all the earth." The notion of the Church turning into the state is the dream of those in Rome. However, the state rising to the Church is "the great destiny of Orthodoxy on earth." Father Paissy thinks that the "star will show forth from the East."

*Pyotr Alexandrovich is outraged because he is a secularist who wishes to separate religious institutions from social and political ones. He may also find it hypocritical of religious institutions, like the monastery, to possess vast tracts of land, like that which he shares with them, without being taxed.*

In response, Pyotr Alexandrovich relates a story that a man told him in Paris, after the December revolution. They were talking about socialist revolutionaries who were being prosecuted. The man said that the people weren't afraid of "socialists, anarchists, atheists, and revolutionaries" but of socialist Christians who are "terrible people" and "more dangerous" than socialist atheists. Father Paissy asks if Pyotr sees them as socialists. Before he replies, the door opens and Dmitri enters.

*The idea that socialist Christians are more "dangerous" or "terrible" likely comes from their tendency to support their ideology with righteous Biblical talk. Whereas atheists would base their arguments in material conditions that could be refuted or complicated, the Christians would use the incontrovertible "proof" of the Bible as their justification.*

## PART 1: BOOK 2, CHAPTER 6: WHY IS SUCH A MAN ALIVE!

Dmitri is twenty-eight but looks much older, despite being in good physical shape. He stops on the threshold and looks around. He then goes directly to Zosima. He makes a low bow and asks for his blessing. The elder stands a little in his chair and then blesses him. Dmitri kisses the elder's hand and then apologizes for being so late. Dmitri says that his father's servant Smerdyakov told him the appointment would be at one. Dmitri then turns to his father and bows to him as well. Fyodor responds in kind. Dmitri then leans forward to listen to the conversation that he interrupted.

*Dmitri's aged appearance probably comes from the difficult and self-indulgent life he has led, particularly with his excessive drinking. It isn't clear if Dmitri's excuse for his lateness is true or not. He and Ivan normally treat the lackey as their scapegoat, but Smerdyakov is also both more intelligent and more spiteful than anyone realizes, so it's possible that he did purposefully mislead Dmitri to embarrass him. Dmitri, as Alexei expects, behaves well, despite his lateness. His experience as a military man makes him attentive to protocol.*

Fyodor says that Dmitri owes him several thousand roubles. He tells Zosima how Dmitri got "one of the noblest girls to fall in love with him" (Katerina Ivanovna) but that he still "keeps visiting one of the local seductresses (Grushenka)." Fyodor claims that his eldest son has thrown away lots of money "on this seductress" and, for that reason, is always borrowing money from Fyodor. Fyodor also talks about how Dmitri seized "a retired captain" (Snegiryov) by the beard, dragged him out in the street in front of the tavern, and beat him up because the captain acted as Fyodor's agent "in a little business of [his]."

*Fyodor wants to sully Dmitri's reputation in front of a man whom he believes will support him in his criticisms toward his eldest son. He wants to portray Dmitri as a fornicator, a wrathful person, and a gluttonous person—a terrible sinner. What Fyodor neglects to remember, due to his jealousy of Dmitri and lack of love, is that Dmitri is his son. So, if he's turned out as badly as Fyodor says, it's partly his fault.*

Dmitri acknowledges that he behaved badly with Captain Snegiryov, but it was because the captain went to Grushenka and encouraged her to take over Dmitri's promissory notes, which are in Fyodor's possession, and sue him to have him imprisoned—that is, as a deterrent for Dmitri bothering his father about his property inheritance. Dmitri says that Fyodor only wants to have him locked up because he's jealous of his son. Dmitri says that he came to forgive his father but, because Fyodor has insulted both him and Grushenka, Dmitri is resolved to "give away his whole game in public," despite Fyodor being his father.

*Dmitri gives away his father's "game," exposing it as a ruse to malign Dmitri's character and to make himself look a wronged man. Dmitri explains that Fyodor is a conniving and vindictive man, driven by jealousy over Dmitri—his romantic rival. Both of them expose the perversion that can develop in families. In this case, it develops as a result of both greed and lust. Promissory notes are written promises to pay a certain amount of money.*

Fyodor says that, if Dmitri weren't his son, he'd challenge him to a duel. Dmitri looks at his father and frowns. He says that he believed that he would return to his birthplace with his fiancée to find a father whom he would cherish in his old age. Instead, he's found "a depraved sensualist and a despicable comedian." Fyodor then screams that he challenges Dmitri to a duel, "spraying saliva with each word." Fyodor goes on to declare that Grushenka is "perhaps holier" than everyone present, because "she has 'loved much.'"

*The scene is tragi-comic, as is Fyodor's entire character. It is unfortunate that father and son are at war with each other over money and a woman, but Fyodor's challenge of a duel to a military man also seems absurd, both because of Dmitri's relative youth and training. Also, his claim about Grushenka is amusing because he uses a Bible verse (Jesus describing a prostitute as blessed because she has "loved much") to totally reverse his own previous criticisms of her.*

## PART 1: BOOK 2, CHAPTER 7: A SEMINARIST-CAREERIST

After his visit with the Karamazovs, Alexei takes the elder Zosima to a little bedroom to rest. Zosima encourages him to go to the Father Superior's so that he can serve at the table. The monk also says that, when he dies, Alexei should leave the monastery for good. He encourages Alexei to travel and to marry. Alexei leaves the hermitage to get to the monastery for dinner with the Superior. He feels anguished. He hurries through the woods that separate the hermitage from the monastery and there notices Rakitin. Rakitin asserts that the elder smells a crime that stinks in Alexei's family. Rakitin gets Alexei to admit that, while watching his brother and his father, he "thought about a crime."

*Zosima encourages Alexei to leave the monastery because he thinks that he can lead a better life and be of greater service if he shares his generosity of spirit with the rest of the world. It's unclear if Alexei's anguish is about Zosima's advice or his humiliation over his family's behavior in the elder's cell. It could be the result of both. Rakitin's comment foreshadows Dmitri's later crime, but Rakitin also seems to be encouraging Alexei to commit the "crime"—an attempt to rob Alexei of the air of holiness that Rakitin envies.*

Rakitin thinks that, eventually, the Karamazovs will bring each other to ruin. He says that Dmitri is a sensualist like his father and that, in the Karamazov clan, "sensuality is carried to the point of fever." Alexei believes that Dmitri "despises" Grushenka, while Rakitin says that Alexei can't understand why Dmitri loves Grushenka, as he can't understand yet how a man falls in love with a woman's body. He tells Alexei that Dmitri may despise Grushenka, but he remains unable to tear himself away from her.

*The "sensuality" to which Rakitin refers is about sex but also greed, jealousy, and emotional fervor. Rakitin is right in his assessment that Alexei can't understand sexual desire. He assumes that his brother "despises" Grushenka because he imagines desire as a source of shame, leading one to resent the person who incites that desire.*

Rakitin surmises that Alexei, a virgin, is both a sensualist like his father and a "holy fool" like his mother. He talks about how Dmitri has "lost his mind over Grushenka," though Rakitin insists that Grushenka is merely deciding on who, between father and son, is the more profitable. He thinks that Dmitri will drop Katerina, his fiancée, for Grushenka. Meanwhile, Ivan hopes to acquire Katerina as a result, and will, at the same time, get "her dowry of sixty thousand roubles." Rakitin then condemns Ivan's article as "ridiculous and absurd." He says that Ivan is merely a "show-off."

*Rakitin portrays the Karamazovs as all sensualists in different ways—Alexei has been carried "to the point of fever" by religious fervor, not desire for sex or money. He also identifies more with his brother's passion than he does with Grushenka's opportunism. Rakitin's assessment of Ivan is partly due to jealousy over Ivan's success as a writer. His suspicion that Ivan is greedy is echoed later by Smerdyakov, who accuses him of coveting a bigger portion of his inheritance.*

Alexei finds it hard to believe that Rakitin would have been at Katerina's while Ivan was talking about him. Rakitin confirms that he wasn't, but that Dmitri was, and he heard it from Dmitri because he was sitting in Grushenka's bedroom and eavesdropping. Alexei then remembers that Grushenka is Rakitin's relative, which the latter denies. Rakitin is offended by the association. He insists that he has his reasons for visiting her, which are no one's business. Rakitin then shifts his attention—Dmitri and Ivan are leaving quickly from the Father Superior's.

*Rakitin wouldn't have been at Katerina's because he is of a lower social class and, therefore, wouldn't be invited to her home. His being shut out of these higher social circles while the Karamazovs are allowed entry due to their money makes Rakitin resentful, because he regards the Karamazovs as people of poor character. He denies his relation to Grushenka because of her bad reputation.*

## PART 1: BOOK 2, CHAPTER 8: SCANDAL

As Pyotr Alexandrovich and Ivan enter the Father Superior's rooms, Pyotr begins to feel ashamed of his anger toward Fyodor. He decides to "seduce them with amiability" to distinguish himself from Fyodor. He also decides to relinquish his forestry and fishing rights to the monastery and to stop his court action.

*Though Pyotr isn't religious, he is a man who values his reputation and wants to be liked. By suing the monastery, he thinks that he's revealing himself to be just as greedy and petty as Fyodor has shown himself to be—and separating himself from Fyodor is very important for Pyotr.*

The Father Superior's apartment consists of two rooms, so there's no dining room. Still, it's "more spacious and comfortable" than Zosima's rooms. It's also "bright and clean." On the table, there are "sparkling dishes, three kinds of baked bread, two bottles of wine, two bottles of monastery mead, and a big glass jug of monastery kvass." The dinner consists of five courses: sturgeon soup accompanied with "little fish pies," boiled fish, salmon cakes, ice cream with fruit compote, and custard.

*All of the monks live in modest accommodations to express devotion to their faith. However, for meals they enjoy the best forms of nourishment. Arguably, this is in keeping with their faith—the notion of a body as a temple—but it could also be perceived as wastefulness, and squandering money that could go to the poor. The elder Zosima is also well-known for his love of sweets and not denying himself some sensual pleasures.*

Rakitin, deemed too "insignificant," isn't invited to dinner, but Father Iosif and Father Paissy are. They are waiting in the Father Superior's dining room when Pyotr Alexandrovich, Pyotr Kalganov, and Ivan enter. The Father Superior steps forward into the middle of the room to greet his guests. He bows silently and they come up to him to receive his blessing. Pyotr Alexandrovich even tries to kiss his hand, but the Father Superior takes it away before he can do so. Pyotr Alexandrovich then apologizes for arriving without Fyodor who, he says, "felt obliged" to skip dinner, due to quarreling with Dmitri in Father Zosima's cell. Pyotr Alexandrovich says that Fyodor asks for the Father Superior's forgiveness and promises "to make up for it all later."

*Rakitin's exclusion from this dinner is the kind of social ostracism that fuels his resentment against the Karamazovs, which will become more clearly expressed later, particularly toward Alexei. Pyotr's act of kissing the Superior's hand is inappropriate because he doesn't share the same exalted status as Zosima. The faux pas exposes Pyotr's lack of experience in the Church as well as his clumsy attempts to ingratiate himself to distinguish himself from Fyodor.*

Meanwhile, while getting into "his rattling carriage" at the inn, Fyodor has a change of heart. He decides to finish what he started at the monastery and "spit all over them without any shame." He orders his coachman to wait and then returns to the monastery, going straight to the Father Superior's. He doesn't know what he's going to do, and he doesn't feel in control of himself. He arrives, stops on the threshold, looks at all of the diners, and starts laughing. Pyotr Alexandrovich, who was in "a most benign mood, immediately [turns] ferocious." Fyodor asks the Father Superior if he may join the table, and the Superior welcomes him.

*Fyodor is spiteful, and he resents how eager his relatives were to make him look like a fool. He overlooks his own role in making himself look like a fool by trying so hard to condemn Dmitri. Pyotr is angry to see Fyodor reappear because he knows that Fyodor will bait him throughout dinner, making him look as petty and competitive as his despised relative. Fyodor's sense of having no control contrasts with Pyotr's wish to seem controlled at all times.*

Pyotr Alexandrovich turns to Pyotr Kalganov and says that they're leaving. Fyodor prompts him to stay so that he can finish what he wants to say. He expresses his concern for Alexei, believing the false gossip about the elders abusing the sacrament of confession. He goes on to accuse the monks of being false and useless to society for shutting themselves up in a monastery. He goes to the table and looks at the quality bottles of port and Médoc wine, saying that it is the Russian peasant whose hard work allows for such provisions. Pyotr Alexandrovich rushes out of the room and Pyotr Kalganov follows him.

*Fyodor, ironically, seems jealous of the control that the monks have over his son. Though he never took any interest in Alexei's upbringing, he may also have difficulty understanding how Alexei is the only son who doesn't demand anything of him. Fyodor then goes on to accuse the Church of hypocrisy for taking money from the poor to indulge in pleasures.*

Fyodor pounds a fist on the dining table "in a fit of sham emotion." He talks about what a big role the "little monastery" has played in his life. He talks about how it turned his wife, "the shrieker," against him and how the institution gave him a bad name around the district. In truth, the monastery never meant much in Fyodor's life and never gave him a bad name. However, Fyodor is "so carried away by his own sham tears that for a moment he almost believed himself."

*Fyodor blames the monastery for his being a bad husband who tormented Sofia Ivanovna with his infidelities and indifference. He cries "sham tears" because he wants the men in the room to feel sorry for him, and he also just wants to make himself the center of attention. A key aspect of Fyodor's sensualism is his theatrical narcissism.*

Fyodor says that he's going to use his "parental authority" to take Alexei away from the monastery. He then invites Ivan and Maximov to leave with him and have dinner at his place instead. Ivan agrees to leave, but, outside, he pushes Maximov away from Fyodor's carriage and then orders the coachman to drive. Fyodor offers that they'll have cognac when they arrive at his house, but Ivan doesn't speak to him again until they get home.

*Ivan agrees to leave because he has no particular interest in dining with the Father Superior. It's unclear why he pushes Maximov away, unless this is an expression of his snobbery, because Maximov is poor. Ivan's silence during the trip is a subtle condemnation of Fyodor's humiliating behavior.*

## PART 1: BOOK 3, CHAPTER 1: IN THE SERVANTS' QUARTERS

Fyodor's house is far from the center of town but not on the outskirts. It's a nice one-storied home, painted gray and with "a red iron roof," but "rather decrepit." There are rats, too, but Fyodor isn't angry about them. The servants' cottage—a "spacious and solid" edifice—is in the yard, and Fyodor has decided to have his kitchen there, though there's a working kitchen in the main house. Fyodor's house is for a large family but, at the moment, only he and Ivan are living there. Three servants live in the cottage: the elderly Grigory, his wife Marfa, and Smerdyakov, who is a young man.

*The location of Fyodor's home reveals something about his class. He is not as noble as Madame Khokhlakov or Katerina Ivanovna, whose centralized homes parallel their central social positions, but he has enough money to live within the town limits. The "decrepit" state of the house also reflects with how Fyodor chooses to spend his money—on alcohol and women, as opposed to upkeep.*

Grigory made the decision to stay with Fyodor after the liberation of the serfs due to his "unquestionable influence over his master." Grigory has also come to his master's rescue in instances in which Fyodor was "beaten badly." Outwardly, Grigory is cold, pompous, and a man of few words. His wife, Marfa, is more intelligent than her husband but submits to him and has done so without complaint since "the very beginning of their married life." They speak very little to each other and only about the most necessary things. He beat her only once, and "slightly," after she performed the "Russian dance" in the master's yard in the special manner that she had learned when she worked for the wealthy Miusovs. She had been taught by a dancing master invited from Moscow. After Grigory pulled her hair for this display, she gave up dancing completely.

*Grigory is a servant but also, in a way, a member of Fyodor's family. He has served as a surrogate father to all of Fyodor's children, particularly Smerdyakov. Grigory's outward manner contrasts with Fyodor's fervor and sensuality. Grigory's attitude toward his wife comes out of envy for both her greater intelligence (he may resent her more for suppressing it for his benefit) and her more refined manners. By pulling her hair, he tried to remind her that she was in his possession and that her prior occupation in grander houses shouldn't give her airs. His insistence on staying with Fyodor after emancipation reveals complacency with his station.*


Grigory and Marfa had only one baby, and it died. Grigory loves children and doesn't conceal this sentiment. He fussed over all three of the Karamazov boys when he looked after them. His own son was born with six fingers, which "mortified" Grigory. On the day of his baptism, Grigory declared that the boy wouldn't be baptized at all because Grigory thought he was "a dragon"—the result of a "confusion of natures." This prompted laughter and the baby was baptized that day. Still, this didn't change Grigory's opinion about his newborn son.

*Grigory's superstition about his own son's polydactyly comes from ignorance and superstition, which would have been common at the time regarding this condition. His comparison of the boy to a "dragon" expresses how he regards the characteristic as something fantastic and unbelievable. Though others see the defect as harmless, Grigory's conviction harms his ability to bond with his son.*


Two weeks after his baptism, Grigory and Marfa's son died of thrush. For many years afterward, Grigory never mentioned his child, and Marfa doesn't mention the boy in Grigory's presence. When she does talk to someone about the baby, she speaks in a whisper, even when her husband isn't present. Marfa observes how, since their son's death, her husband has started reading the Lives of the Saints, "mostly silently and by himself."

*Thrush in babies is common and, usually, shows up as diaper rash. Grigory probably doesn't talk about his son after his death because the memory of such a loss is painful. His superstition about the polydactyly and his choice of reading material also suggests that he thinks the boy's birth and death may have had religious significance.*

On the day that they buried their son, Marfa awoke during the night and listened to what sounded like a woman groaning. She woke Grigory. He got up and went out into the warm May night. He opened the door to the bathhouse and found the local "holy fool," known as "Stinking Lizaveta." She had gotten into the house, where she gave birth to an infant. She didn't say anything, simply because she was unable to speak.

*The appearance of Stinking Lizaveta on the day of their son's death seems like a sign that Grigory and Marfa should take charge of Smerdyakov. Lizaveta is a symbol of suffering in the novel due to her poverty and itinerant lifestyle as well as her possible madness.*

## PART 1: BOOK 3, CHAPTER 2: STINKING LIZAVETA

Stinking Lizaveta was a very small girl, only twenty years old, with a "healthy, broad, ruddy" and "completely idiotic" face. In every season, she goes barefoot and wears "only a hempen shift." Her extremely thick, black, curly hair is always "dirty with earth and mud" and has leaves and wood shavings in it because she sleeps on the ground. Her mother had been long dead and her father, "a failed tradesman named Ilya," was an alcoholic who sponged off of "well-to-do middle-class families as some sort of handyman." When Lizaveta returned home, Ilya beat her brutally, but she seldom went back home because she was an itinerant who went around begging.

*Lizaveta's "healthy" face contrasts with the constant walking that her itinerancy would require and her meager diet. Despite supposedly being mentally challenged, it seems that Lizaveta left her home to escape abuse. Knowing this, as well as admiring her indifference toward all material concerns, the public looks after her.*

People made efforts to clothe Lizaveta and, after her father died, she became even dearer to the public. No one teased or insulted her, not even local schoolboys. When someone gave her a kopeck, she would donate it to a church or prison. When someone gave her a fresh roll or bun from the marketplace, she would give it to a child or even to a wealthy lady, who would accept it. Lizaveta "lived only on black bread and water." When she visited expensive shops, the shopkeepers never worried about her, knowing she wouldn't take anything. One could put down thousands of roubles in front of her and forget about them, and she wouldn't take a kopeck.

*Despite her own poverty, Lizaveta was dedicated to assuaging others' suffering. Her gift of coins to wealthy ladies is ironic. It seems as though she did this because she knew that the women valued money more than she did. This fact is echoed by her tendency not to be tempted when large amounts of money are placed near her. This also reflects Jesus's parable of a poor woman giving away her last two pennies, showing how Lizaveta is seen as a kind of "holy fool" for her generosity and removal from worldly concerns.*

One "bright and warm September night, under a full moon," a bunch of drunken men found Lizaveta lying near a wattle fence, in "nettles and burdock." One of them looked down at her and wondered if it could be possible to regard such a creature as a woman. The group agreed that it was impossible. Fyodor Pavlovich was alone among them in declaring that it was possible to see her womanly virtues and that there was even a "piquancy" about her. Around this time, he found out that his wife, Adelaida Ivanovna, was dead. His companions laughed at his opinion and then went on their way.

*The men's comment about Lizaveta's supposed absence of womanly virtues comes from her lack of adherence to hygiene, but more so her indifference to feminine rituals that would make her traditionally attractive. For Fyodor, the "piquancy" perhaps comes from the seedy aspect of going to bed with someone who is completely outside of the margins of society, in addition to the odd sensual pleasure of touching and smelling an unwashed person.*

Long after this episode, Fyodor swore that he rejoined his companions. No one knows for certain whether or not he did. What was known was that, five or six months later, the whole town was wondering who had impregnated Lizaveta. The rumor spread that Fyodor was the culprit. Grigory stood up for his master against the rumors and even managed to convince many people that Lizaveta herself was to blame, for she had probably slept with an escaped convict named Karp. Nonetheless, this gossip didn't deter people's sympathy for Lizaveta. The town continued to look after her. The wealthy widow of the merchant Kondratiev even brought Lizaveta to her house to care for her until the birth. However, on the very last day of her pregnancy, Lizaveta left the widow's house and turned up in Fyodor Pavlovich's garden.

*Fyodor's claim is more than likely a lie that he told to spare whatever was left of his reputation. Grigory's need to stand up for his master comes both out of an inexplicable loyalty to Fyodor as well as the possible wish not to be associated with a man who would do something so depraved. In Grigory's mind, Lizaveta has to become the guilty one; though, Fyodor's willingness to take advantage of her vulnerability—particularly her handicap—is equivalent to rape. Lizaveta's choice to show up in Fyodor's garden to give birth is further proof of their association.*

After giving birth, Lizaveta died "towards morning." Grigory took the infant into the servant's cottage. He saw the newborn as a gift from his dead child. He and Marfa baptized the baby and named him Pavel Fyodorovich, which Fyodor found amusing. Grigory then invented the surname Smerdyakov, after the boy's mother, Lizaveta Smerdyashchaya. The child became Fyodor's second servant and was employed as a cook.

*Keen on seeing signs, Grigory reads the new baby as one—particularly given his arrival so close to the death of his own son. By giving the boy this patronymic (Fyodorovich, after Fyodor), Grigory is privately acknowledging the paternity that he wouldn't acknowledge publicly.*

The narrator believes that he ought to say more about Smerdyakov but is "ashamed" to distract the reader with details about "such ordinary lackeys." He assumes that, in regard to Smerdyakov, "things will somehow work themselves out in the further course of the story."

*The narrator's statement is ironic because Smerdyakov is neither "ordinary," as the reader will see, nor merely a lackey.*

## PART 1: BOOK 3, CHAPTER 3: THE CONFESSION OF AN ARDENT HEART. IN VERSE.

The note that Madame Khokhlakov gave Alexei, saying that he should visit Katerina Ivanovna at once, "awakened some tormenting feeling in his heart." Alexei is afraid of Katerina and has been since he first met her. He has only seen her once or twice, maybe three times, and they exchanged few words.

*Though Katerina is Dmitri's fiancée, Alexei doesn't know her very well and seems to have been trying to avoid her. The torment may come from wondering that she has something bad to tell him—or he is afraid of being attracted to her.*

To save time, Alexei passes very close to his father's house and passes the neighbor's garden, where his brother Dmitri happens to be. Dmitri invites Alexei to sit down at the table in the gazebo. Dmitri says that he wanted to send Alexei—"an angel"—to both Katerina Ivanovna and to Fyodor on his behalf. He remembers that Katerina sent for Alexei and wrote him a letter, which Alexei shows to his elder brother. Dmitri quickly reads it. He then recites poems to Alexei, commiserating over his depraved condition. He views himself as an "insect" due to his sensuality and says that all of the Karamazovs are like this.

*There is a contrast between Dmitri's lofty image of Alexei as "an angel" and Dmitri's sense of being a lowly "insect." He says that all of the Karamazovs are like this, which would necessarily include Alexei. Either Dmitri is mocking his brother's holiness or admires him genuinely for his wish to be something nobler than what his birth would allow—or both. Dmitri, however, seems to think that he can do nothing to change his nature.*

## PART 1: BOOK 3, CHAPTER 4: THE CONFESSION OF AN ARDENT HEART. IN ANECDOTES.

Dmitri recounts his "wild life" to Alexei, particularly his sexual promiscuity. He was "a lieutenant in a line battalion," and he lived in a little town that received him well. While there, Dmitri threw money around like a rich man. His colonel was a twice-widowed old man who disliked him. The colonel's first wife left him a daughter, and he lived with her and his sister-in-law. The colonel's daughter is named Agafya Ivanovna. Dmitri became close to her, "quite sinlessly, as a friend."

*Dmitri, like his father, is quite open about his self-indulgent behavior. Also like Fyodor, he has a "wild" reputation but often finds himself popular and well-received in others' homes. This suggests that, while people will condemn those whom they perceive as immoral, they may find amusement in their lifestyle.*

The talk all over town was that the colonel had a second daughter, too, who was coming to visit from the capital. She was "a beauty of beauties" who "had just finished one of the institutes for well-born young ladies." Her name was Katerina Ivanovna. She was the daughter of the colonel's second wife, who was long dead and born into "the great, noble family of some general." The town livened up around Katerina, inviting her to balls and picnics. Dmitri went up to her once at a party, but she barely looked at him. He vowed to get revenge on her for this. Though he admits that he was a "terrible boor then," he regarded himself as "a fine fellow" and resented that she couldn't see it.

*Dmitri couldn't stand a woman thinking herself too good for him or simply even not being interested. Katerina's pride is a point of offense for all of the Karamazov brothers—even Ivan, who loves her but cannot bring himself to admit it, due to her power to make him feel relatively helpless. Dmitri's interest in Katerina seems to have less to do with an attraction to her than in proving to himself that he can conquer and humble her.*

Dmitri then got word that the colonel had stolen forty-five hundred roubles of government money. He confronted Agafya Ivanovna about it, but promised that he wouldn't say anything if she would "secretly send" Dmitri her "institute girl" (Katerina). Agafya was outraged by the suggestion and called Dmitri a "scoundrel." Agafya later told Katerina about Dmitri's suggestion.

*The colonel's theft provides Dmitri with an opportunity to place Katerina in a position of needing him. Dmitri uses the colonel's hypocrisy to take Katerina down a notch—that is, if her father is a thief, then this gives her less right, in his view, to seem so haughty. He uses her suffering to his advantage.*

While Dmitri was preparing to go out, Katerina Ivanovna appeared at his door. She told him how Agafya Ivanovna told her that he'd give her forty-five hundred roubles if she offered herself to him. Dmitri thought about how much he desired her but that, the next day, he would offer to marry her in exchange for her sexual favor. Then, he remembered how Katerina would ignore him if he appeared at her house. He got angry thinking about how he would be rejected, so he played a "mean, piggish, merchant's trick" and told her that four thousand is "too much money" to spend "on such trifles."

*Dmitri decides that he will marry Katerina if she goes to bed with him because he knows the importance of reputation for a woman of her station. However, it still doesn't seem as though Dmitri loves Katerina as much as he loves an idea about who she is. His fears about being rejected by her also diminish his ability to be empathetic. He refers to her offer of sex (really, her virginity) as a "trifle" to humiliate and diminish her.*

Dmitri turned away from Katerina Ivanovna, leaned his forehead on the frozen glass pane of his window, and opened his drawer. He took out "a five percent bank note for five thousand roubles, with no name filled in." He folded it and handed it to her. He then stepped back and bowed deeply to her. She was startled but returned the bow, "with her forehead to the ground, not like an institute girl but like a Russian woman!" She then jumped up and ran away. Dmitri finishes the story. He says that Ivan already knows it and, now, Alexei does, too.

*Dmitri turns away from Katerina, as though he feels shame for the way in which he has spoken to her. His bow is less of an acknowledgment of her high social station than it is a gesture of sympathy for her suffering. However, Katerina surprises him by returning the gesture. When Dmitri says that she doesn't bow "like an institute girl," he means that she demonstrates true humility and lack of pretension.*

## PART 1: BOOK 3, CHAPTER 5: THE CONFESSION OF AN ARDENT HEART. "HEELS UP"

Alexei asks if Dmitri is still Katerina Ivanovna's fiancé. Dmitri says that he became her fiancé three months after the events that he just recounted. The day after her visit, Katerina's maid came and handed him an envelope containing the change from the five-thousand-rouble bank note. He went on a spree with the money, leading him to be reprimanded by the new major. The old colonel returned the missing government funds, then lay sick in bed for three weeks before getting "a softening of the brain" and dying in five days.

*Katerina honorably returns the money that she didn't need. Dmitri spends what she returns on alcohol, specialty foods, and women—his usual indulgences during his "sprees." There is a contrast between Dmitri's wanton indulgence and the suffering that pervades the Verkhovtsev family. The old colonel dies shortly after he restores his good name, perishing of an illness that seems to be dementia.*

Ten days later, Katerina Ivanovna, Agafya Ivanovna, and her aunt left for Moscow. There, Katerina was welcomed by an old widow who lost both of her nieces—her closest heirs—to smallpox in the same week. The woman took Katerina in as though she were her own daughter and gave her a dowry of eighty thousand roubles to spend however she'd like. So, Dmitri suddenly received forty-five hundred roubles in the mail. He was struck dumb, then received another letter three days later. In it, Katerina declared her love for Dmitri and asked him to marry her. She promised to be his "furniture" and a "rug" for him to walk on, only to save him from himself.

*Katerina's newly found wealth places her back in a position of privilege. Though she pays Dmitri back, she also uses her leverage to express her wish to marry. The attraction between Dmitri and Katerina seems to have little to do with who they actually are and everything to do with their unrealistic ideas about each other. Dmitri assumes that Katerina is haughty and untouchable, and Katerina assumes that Dmitri is hopelessly damned and needs her. She is attracted to the notion of suffering in her effort to reform a reprobate husband.*

Dmitri responded and said that he was only a poor boor, while Katerina Ivanovna was now rich. Dmitri then wrote to Ivan in Moscow and explained everything in a six-page letter. He then sent Ivan to Katerina, and Ivan fell in love with her, and Katerina "reveres" Ivan. Alexei thinks that Katerina still loves Dmitri, but Dmitri thinks that she only loves her own virtue. Dmitri wants Katerina to marry Ivan while he, the "unworthy" man, will disappear down "his dirty back lane"—that is, back to Grushenka.

*Dmitri doesn't want to marry Katerina because he doesn't actually love her, and he uses her new wealth as an excuse not to marry her. He sends Ivan to speak on his behalf, but it's also possible that he sends Ivan because he thinks that his younger brother would be a more suitable companion for Katerina. Ivan is more gentlemanly and less of an overt sensualist.*

Dmitri says that, once he started seeing Grushenka, he stopped being a fiancé and an honest man. However, he found out about her getting the promissory note from Captain Snegiryov, so he set out to give her a beating. Dmitri knows about how money-hungry Grushenka is, and about the old merchant, Samsonov, who'll leave her a nice sum when he dies. He tells Alexei how **three thousand roubles** turned up, which he spent in Mokroye.

*Dmitri thinks that he's unworthy to marry Katerina. It speaks to his nobility that he backs out of his engagement, knowing that he isn't committed, instead of keeping both women. However, he learns that Grushenka is willing to betray him for money. He seems to prefer Grushenka because she acts as depravedly as he does.*

Grushenka agreed to marry Dmitri. Alexei asks if Dmitri really wants to marry her, and Dmitri says he will "at once." Dmitri regards himself as a "thief" and a "pilferer" for taking **three thousand roubles** that Katerina Ivanovna entrusted him to send to her sister Agafya Ivanovna, who was in Moscow. He pretended to go to the provincial capital, from where he would've needed to send the money. Instead, he went to Mokroye with Grushenka. He wants Alexei to tell Katerina that he's a "base sensualist" who spent her money. Alexei suggests that he can give her the money. He already has two thousand and Ivan will give another thousand, but Dmitri isn't so sure that he can acquire the full sum. He implores Alexei to go to Katerina today, "with the money or without it," and "make that bow to her."

*The centerpiece of Dmitri's suffering, which compels his frenzied behavior later in the novel, is the three thousand roubles that he owes Katerina. For him, not returning the money would suggest that he has no honor, and that he is, indeed, guilty of abusing Katerina's weakness. Given that his father would have no problem with exploiting someone's vulnerability—he did so with both his children and his second wife—it seems that Dmitri may have absorbed this standard during his time in the military. Even without the money, he insists, too, on saying a proper goodbye to his fiancée.*

Dmitri then says that Alexei should go to their father and ask him for the money, but Alexei is sure that the old man won't give it. Dmitri insists that Fyodor owes him something for making a hundred thousand out of his mother's twenty-eight thousand dowry. He says that if Fyodor gives him **three thousand roubles**, he'll never have to hear from his eldest son again. Alexei insists that their father will not give him the sum and Dmitri admits that he knows the same. Fyodor surely won't give him the money that he'll need to marry Grushenka, since Fyodor has "lost his mind over her." Five days before, Fyodor "withdrew three thousand roubles in hundred-rouble notes and packed them into a big **envelope**, sealed with five seals and tied crisscross with a red ribbon." The money is for Grushenka. Dmitri says that no one, other than Smerdyakov, "whose honesty [Fyodor] trusts like himself," knows that he has the money.

*Dmitri suggests that Alexei request the money because he knows that Fyodor likes Alexei. He would also probably be pleased to receive a request from the one son who seems not to need anything from him. The five seals on the envelope could be an indirect reference to the seven seals in the Bible's Book of Revelation, which predict the Second Coming of Christ. The seals contain information only known by God. The fifth seal contains the souls that were "slain for the word of God," or martyrs. Fyodor's trust in Smerdyakov will prove to be extremely misplaced.*

Fyodor has sent word to Grushenka to come to him. Dmitri is currently staying in "a closet" that a former fellow soldier, Foma, rents out in a brothel. Smerdyakov knows that Dmitri is staying in the brothel and will tell him if Grushenka goes to Fyodor for the money. It was also Smerdyakov who told Dmitri about the **three thousand roubles**. Dmitri says that even Ivan doesn't know about the money, and Fyodor is sending Ivan to Chermashnya to see about someone who might want to buy their woodlot. It's really just an excuse for Fyodor to have Ivan out of the way during Grushenka's possible visit. Currently, Fyodor is drinking with Ivan, which makes this a good time for Alexei to go ask him for the money.

*The fact that Dmitri is living in a room so small that it could be considered a "closet" is a point of embarrassment as well as symbolic of his sense of feeling confined by his poverty. Smerdyakov's knowledge of the money is the first sign that he could be a suspect in the upcoming murder. Unlike Dmitri, Fyodor would have likely told Smerdyakov where the money was. Fyodor wants Ivan out of the way during Grushenka's visit so that he can be alone with her. It's a good time to ask for the money because Fyodor is likely drunk.*

Alexei asks what they'll do if Grushenka shows up today. Dmitri says that he'll see her, burst in, and stop it. He says that he would kill Fyodor, which shocks Alexei. Dmitri then becomes unsure about the prospect of killing his father, but he can't help but think about how much he hates his father's face. Alexei, deep in thought, then leaves to visit his father.

*This admission makes Dmitri seem an obvious suspect. Moreover, there is the matter of his personal loathing for Fyodor. The hatred of his father's face is an odd feeling, given that he likely resembles him. This suggests a degree of self-hatred as well, or hatred of the parts of himself that he also sees in Fyodor.*

## PART 1: BOOK 3, CHAPTER 6: SMERDYAKOV

When Alexei enters his father's house, Fyodor is excited to see him. He invites his youngest son to sit down for coffee. He refrains from offering Alexei cognac because he knows that he's fasting, but then changes his mind and offers it anyway; Alexei refuses. Fyodor has the liqueur served for himself and Ivan. He then asks if Alexei has had dinner and Alexei says that he has, though he's only had a piece of bread and a glass of kvass in the Father Superior's kitchen. He requests hot coffee, however.

*Alexei's self-denial contrasts with Fyodor and Ivan's personal indulgences. Kvass is a Slavic drink made from black bread. Kvass is a typical Russian drink, whereas cognac is a French liqueur, afforded only by those of the upper class. Alexei's subsistence on a piece of bread is suggestive of the body of Christ in the traditional Eucharist.*

Fyodor notes that Smerdyakov, whom he calls "Balaam's ass," has started to talk and is quite a talker. Smerdyakov is only twenty-four and usually taciturn. Grigory insists that he grew up "without any gratitude" and "was fond of hanging cats and then burying them with ceremony." Grigory once caught him in the midst of conducting a ceremony and beat him. Grigory then declared that Smerdyakov wasn't a human being but something "begotten of bathhouse slime." Smerdyakov never forgave these words.

*Balaam is a figure from the Old Testament, or Torah, who was a non-Israelite but also a prophet. He is famous for having a donkey that once spoke to him after he beat it unjustly. Fyodor thus sees Smerdyakov as less-than-human, and finds his new intellectual ideas amusing rather than valuable. Grigory's account of Smerdyakov's youthful violence against cats also suggests psychopathic tendencies in him.*

Grigory taught Smerdyakov how to read and write using the Scriptures. During the second or third lesson, Smerdyakov asked where the light shone from on the first day if the Lord didn't create the sun, moon, and stars until the fourth day. Grigory was stunned at the boy, who "looked derisively at his teacher." Grigory could only respond by delivering a blow on Smerdyakov's cheek. A week later, Smerdyakov "had the falling sickness" (epilepsy). This caused Fyodor to change his opinion of the boy, whom he formerly regarded with relative indifference. Suddenly, he was worried about Smerdyakov. He called in a doctor to treat him, but a cure was impossible. Smerdyakov suffered an attack about once a month. Some attacks were slight, others "extremely severe." As a result, Fyodor strictly forbade Grigory any corporal punishment of his charge.

*Smerdyakov has a sharp, critical mind, which intimidates Grigory, who isn't very bright. In this regard, Smerdyakov resembles Ivan, though he also exhibits his father's skepticism toward religious institutions. It's possible, given that we later learn that Smerdyakov can fake falling fits, that he was long aware of his illness and began to "sham fits" to gain favor with Fyodor and get from under Grigory's thumb. Nonetheless, Fyodor's expression of sympathy toward Smerdyakov's condition is unusual, given his indifference toward his other children. He seems to commiserate with Smerdyakov's suffering. Dostoevsky also famously suffered from epilepsy, so his account of Smerdyakov's "falling sickness" is deeply personal.*

Fyodor also forbade further instruction. Then, one day, when Smerdyakov was about fifteen, Fyodor notices the teenager "loitering by the bookcase and reading the titles through the glass." There are many books in the house, though no one has ever seen Fyodor reading anything. He gives Smerdyakov the key to the bookcase. Smerdyakov dislikes the first book he reads, so Fyodor gives him Smaragdov's *Universal History* instead. Smerdyakov gets through about ten pages and finds it boring, so Fyodor locks the bookcase up again.

*Fyodor forbade Grigory's religious instruction but was open to Smerdyakov learning more about the secular world. Fyodor's library fosters the pretense that he is a learned, cerebral man when he's both too lazy and too uncurious for that to be actually true. His ownership of Smaragdov's history discounts Kolya Krasotkin's later belief that he's the only one in possession of the book.*

Grigory and Marfa notice that, at dinner, Smerdyakov has become particularly discerning and studies his food before eating it. This prompts Fyodor to send Smerdyakov to Moscow to train as a cook. Smerdyakov spends a few years there and comes back greatly changed. He looks much older, but he's just as withdrawn as before. Moscow's cultural scene interested him very little, but he did learn to dress well. He also turned out to be an excellent cook. Fyodor provides him with a salary, which Smerdyakov spends almost entirely "on clothes, pomade, perfume, and so on."

*Smerdyakov's behavior seems to be a refutation of his low birth and illegitimacy. His attention to taste makes him similar to Fyodor and Dmitri, who both enjoy rich delicacies and good drink. His love of fine clothes is also similar to his father's appreciation for quality garments. Smerdyakov is not a Karamazov in name, but he does seem to be a Karamazov in his sensualist nature.*

Smerdyakov seems to hate women as much as men. He also seems to be having more epileptic attacks, which Fyodor finds curious. He says that he wishes Smerdyakov would get married, and that he could find him someone.

*Smerdyakov is a misanthrope. Given that it's later revealed that Smerdyakov can fake seizures, it's possible that he feigns more attacks to avoid people or to get what he wants out of them.*

Fyodor is convinced of Smerdyakov's honesty. Once, when he dropped three hundred-rouble bank notes in the mud of his yard, he found the notes lying on his table the next day. Smerdyakov picked them up the evening before. As a reward, Fyodor gave him ten roubles. Smerdyakov isn't a conspirer or a thinker. Instead, he's a contemplative type who gets lost in the impressions that he's "greedily storing up."

*This honesty seems to be an inherent trait, because Stinking Lizaveta had the same quality but died in childbirth, making it so that Smerdyakov couldn't have learned this indifference toward materialism from his mother. Everyone underestimates Smerdyakov's potential to do harm because he's so seemingly helpless.*

## PART 1: BOOK 3, CHAPTER 7: DISPUTATION

Smerdyakov tells Grigory and Fyodor about a Russian soldier who was captured by Asians and forced "on pain of agonizing and immediate death to renounce Christianity and convert to Islam." The soldier wouldn't renounce his faith and, as a result, was flayed alive. Fyodor says that the soldier should be a saint and that his flayed skin should be "dispatched to some monastery." People, he thinks, would pay lots of money to see it.

*The story aligns with traditional Western fears over the threat of Islam. The soldier appears in the story as a martyr to his faith and suffers losing his skin. Fyodor is less interested in the moral of this tale than he is in the material value of religious devotion. This falls in line with his financial opportunism.*

Smerdyakov says that, if he were taken captive, he would renounce his faith by his "own reason." Once he renounces his faith, he says, he'll be excommunicated, so he wouldn't be lying to his tormenters if he says that he's not a Christian. Furthermore, he was never baptized, so he's not a Christian anyway. Grigory is dumbfounded by Smerdyakov's speech, while Fyodor bursts "into shrill laughter."

*Smerdyakov shocks Grigory by saying that he would renounce Christ if it would spare him from suffering. This contrasts with the conventional view of the time, which lauds those who are willing to suffer for their faith. Smerdyakov also uses his ignoble birth in his favor; for, his lack of baptism isn't his fault.*

Smerdyakov insists that renouncing his faith would be "a little sin" and "a rather ordinary one." Though Grigory curses him for belittling the sin, Smerdyakov explains what he means. In the Scriptures, it says that "if you have faith even as little as the smallest seed," one could command mountains to go down into the sea—though, he makes an exception for the Karamazov property, saying that the mountain would have to go into the "stinking stream" beyond their garden because they're far from the sea. However, the person of faith can see that the mountain won't move, despite their commands. This means that, even those who claim to be devout, such as Grigory, don't really "believe in a proper manner."

*Smerdyakov regards renouncing his faith as a minor sin in probable comparison to murder or theft—two sins that he later commits. This monologue reveals that Smerdyakov is aware of right and wrong and understands the magnitude of some deeds versus others. He uses Scripture to suggest that those who claim total devotion, such as Grigory, must be making superficial claims. If they aren't, they must admit that their belief in this portion of the Bible is merely superstition.*

Smerdyakov argues that no one in their time, "except maybe one person on the whole earth, two at most," have such devotion, and those people can't even be found. So, then, if everyone else seems to be an unbeliever, Smerdyakov wonders if it's possible that "the population of the whole earth…except those two desert hermits, will be cursed by the Lord?" So, Smerdyakov has hope that, though he once doubted his faith, he'd be forgiven "if [he] shed tears of repentance."

*Smerdyakov suggests that total faith and devotion to Christ would require one to separate themselves from the world, which is why Smerdyakov characterizes such people as "desert hermits." This story about the desert hermits seems partly based on the legend of Anthony the Great. He was one of the earliest monks and established monasticism. He also lived in a mountain in the Sahara.*

Fyodor shrieks for Smerdyakov to stop speaking so that he can ask him if he really believes that there are two hermits, "somewhere in the Egyptian desert," who can move mountains. He and Ivan conclude that Smerdyakov's superstition is typical among Russians. Alexei says that Smerdyakov's faith isn't Russian at all, but Fyodor is more focused on the detail about the two desert dwellers, which he believes is typically Russian, and Alexei agrees with that part.

*The trope about two desert dwellers was used in literature and painting during the period of Russian Futurism, which began before the First World War. The persistence of this fable suggests that it's a very well-known Christian allegory in Russia, which is why Fyodor describes it as "typically Russian."*

Fyodor asserts that people are unbelievers "out of carelessness" and because God has given people little time to repent. This makes it more absurd to renounce one's faith when there's nothing else to think about but the fate of one's soul. That is "precisely the time" to show religious devotion.

*What Fyodor means is that people don't spend much time thinking about the fate of their souls and aren't be encouraged to do so until they're near death or in instances of immense suffering.*

Smerdyakov agrees that faith may be "tantamount" and that, if one believes, it would be truly sinful to convert to Islam instead of "[enduring] torments." However, he says, one would never suffer torments if one's faith could truly move mountains and crush tormenters. However, if the person of faith tries to move mountains and nothing happens, should they not doubt "in such a terrible hour of great moral fear?" The devout would also think that they wouldn't reach the Kingdom of Heaven because, if the mountain doesn't move at one's word, then "they must not trust much in [one's] faith there." So, why then, should one "be flayed to no purpose?" On top of this, one can lose one's mind to fear, making it impossible to reason. One can only trust in the mercy of God and trust that one will be forgiven.

*Smerdyakov logically dismisses the possibility that religious devotion gives one the power to escape from death or torments. Furthermore, even if one maintains faith, it cannot help but be shaken in a moment of distress, when no divine intervention would save the condemned from their predicament. Though the devout person would believe, they would also wonder if God has not, in fact, abandoned them. In Smerdyakov's view, this feeling of abandonment should be sufficient justification for one choosing renunciation over prolonged pain or threat of death.*

## PART 1: BOOK 3, CHAPTER 8: OVER THE COGNAC

After the dispute ends, Fyodor sends the servants out. He goes on to say that, "generally speaking," Russian peasants like Smerdyakov "should be whipped." He concludes that peasants are "cheats" and unworthy of pity. Fyodor says that he "[stands] with the men of intelligence," but that Russia is "all swinishness" due to the prevalence of vice. He talks next about meeting an old man in Mokroye—a sadist—who likes to whip young girls.

*This is exemplary of Fyodor's hypocrisy. Instead of taking responsibility for his vices and how they lead to social detriment, he places the onus onto servants. The anecdote about the old man, whom he compares to the Marquis de Sade, is exemplary of how the upper class abuses the vulnerable for their pleasure.*

Fyodor tells Alexei how he'd like to "put an end to that little monastery of [his]." He argues that there should be an end to mysticism and "all the fools" should be forced to reason. Ivan says that, if the truth is revealed to believers, Fyodor "will be the first to be robbed and then…abolished." At this, Fyodor decides that it's probably best for Alexei's little monastery to stand so that the "intelligent people" (Fyodor is referring to himself and Ivan) can "keep warm and sip cognac." He surmises that God must have set things up this way on purpose.

*Fyodor diminishes the importance of Alexei's monastery because he dislikes the power that it has both over his son and, formerly, over his second wife. Ivan then reminds Fyodor that the Church is necessary to keep the masses in line so that they won't rebel against the upper classes (like Fyodor himself). Ivan views the Church cynically, as a necessity for maintaining his own privilege.*

Fyodor then asks Ivan if there is a God. Ivan says that there isn't. He then poses the question to Alexei, who says that there is a God. Fyodor then asks if there is immortality. Ivan says there isn't, while Alexei says there is. Fyodor concludes that Ivan is more likely to be right and that people have expended "energy of all kinds" on a dream. Fyodor then asks Ivan if there's a devil, and he says that there isn't one.

*Fyodor seems to be intentionally pointing out the contrasts between his sons, perhaps even to instigate a conflict between the brothers for his amusement. Ivan's response about the devil is a bit of foreshadowing, because later in the novel, he encounters the very creature in which he doesn't believe.*

Fyodor says that hanging would be too good for the man who invented God. Ivan insists that there wouldn't be civilization without God. Fyodor apologizes to Alexei for being rude to the elder Zosima earlier, chalking his behavior up to excitement. He commends Zosima's wit but proceeds to lie about how the elder doesn't really believe in God and is actually "a sensualist." Ivan announces that he'll leave because "the drink is acting up" in his father. Fyodor then asks Ivan to go to Chermashnya "for a day or two" so that Fyodor can show him "a young wench there." He insists that there's "something extremely interesting in every woman, something that's not to be found in any other."

*Fyodor establishes his atheism by saying that someone "invented God." Ivan is also an atheist but, unlike his father, believes that the invention of God has a purpose. It seems, too, that Ivan might actually believe in God, but may choose atheism out of discontent with the world that God has created. Fyodor's effort to tempt Ivan with a woman mirrors his alleged assessment of Lizaveta while watching her sleep with his drunken friends.*

Soon thereafter, a "clamor" comes from the front hall along with some "furious shouting." The door opens and Dmitri rushes into the room. Fyodor goes to Ivan "in terror," clutching at him for safety. He's afraid that Dmitri has come to kill him.

*The father-son romantic rivalry is incongruous and somewhat incestuous, because both relations are sharing a love object.*

## PART 1: BOOK 3, CHAPTER 9: THE SENSUALISTS

Grigory and Smerdyakov run back into the room, after having struggled with Dmitri in the front hall to keep him from entering the house. Grigory closes both doors leading to the inner rooms and guards them, leading Dmitri to think that Grushenka is hidden away in the rooms. Dmitri hits Grigory "with all his strength." Grigory collapses, allowing Dmitri to go through the door. Fyodor accuses Dmitri of trying to steal money from his bedroom. Breaking away from Ivan, who's holding him back, Fyodor rushes at his eldest son, but Dmitri seizes the old man "by the two surviving wisps of hair on his temples," smashes him against the floor, and kicks him "two or three times with his heel." Alexei, the only one Dmitri trusts, assures him that Grushenka hasn't appeared. Dmitri then reminds Alexei to go to Katerina Ivanovna to remind her that Dmitri bows to her and "bows out."

*Frequently in the novel, both Dmitri and Fyodor express their obsession with Grushenka by believing that she is always present, or hidden away by the other one, when she's actually nowhere around. Her presence is palpable, even when she is absent, due to Dmitri and Fyodor's fixation on her and how that fixation impacts their behavior and their relationship. The image of Dmitri seizing the old man by his "wisps of hair" will later be echoed when he drags Captain Snegiryov out of the tavern by his "whiskbroom" (beard).*

Ivan and Grigory help Fyodor into an armchair. His face is bloody, but Dmitri gives him "a hateful glance" as he runs out of the room. Fyodor begins to think that Grushenka is present, while Ivan shouts at him that she's not. Alexei advises Grigory to put a compress on his head and to go lie down, because Dmitri gave him "a terribly painful blow." He assures Grigory that he and Ivan will look after Fyodor. Grigory is in shock that Dmitri "dared" to hit him, given that he "used to wash him in a tub." Ivan reminds Grigory that Dmitri hit Fyodor, too, and that, if he hadn't pulled Dmitri away, he might have killed Fyodor, who wouldn't be able to withstand much.

*Dmitri and Fyodor's contention over Grushenka leads both to forget or disregard the fact that they are father and son. Familial roles are further confused by Grigory's sense that Dmitri has shown great disloyalty by daring to hit him—the man who looked after Dmitri in his infancy after Fyodor neglected him. The tender image of Grigory washing Dmitri in a tub is contrasted with the brutality of Dmitri knocking Grigory to the floor.*

Alexei rejects this idea, while Ivan views such a scenario as "viper eating another viper," and concludes that "it would serve them both right." Ivan goes for a walk in the yard because he feels a headache coming on. Alexei goes to Fyodor's room and sits with him for about an hour. Fyodor opens his eyes, gazes silently at Alexei, then asks where Ivan is. After Alexei tells him, Fyodor asks for the mirror on his chest. Fyodor looks at his badly swollen nose and the "large purple bruise on his forehead above the left eyebrow." Fyodor tells Alexei that he's the only one of his sons that he isn't afraid of. He asks Alexei again to assure him that Grushenka wasn't in the house, and Alexei says that she wasn't. He assures his father that Dmitri won't marry her.

*The image of a "viper eating another viper" is cannibalistic. Ivan suggests that Dmitri and Fyodor's equal urges to destroy each other are mutually self-destructive. This image may also refer indirectly to the ancient Egyptian symbol of the Ouroboros—the snake eating its own tail. This is a symbol of infinity or continuity, but it also represents the eternal cycle of destruction and regeneration. This image applies to the enmity between father and son, as Fyodor and Dmitri risk destroying each other, even as one also created the other.*

Fyodor then asks Alexei to go to Grushenka and find out if she wants to be with him or with Dmitri. Alexei agrees to run this errand. Then, Fyodor decides that maybe Alexei shouldn't go to her, because she won't tell him the truth anyway. He describes Grushenka as "a cheat." He then asks where Dmitri asked Alexei to go. To Katerina Ivanovna, Alexei says. Before he leaves, Fyodor asks him to return the next morning but not to mention this to Ivan.

*Fyodor wants to give Grushenka an ultimatum. This may be more for his own peace of mind—he's afraid of Dmitri—than out of any need to force a decision out of her. Fyodor seems to know that Grushenka is duplicitous and will continue to play both men's jealousies against them.*

Alexei passes through the yard and sees Ivan sitting on a bench by the gate, "writing something in his notebook with a pencil." Ivan asks Alexei if they can meet the following morning. Alexei says that he'll be with the Khokhlakovs, and he may have to return to Katerina Ivanovna's if he fails to find her now. Ivan knows about Dmitri's request that Alexei tell Katerina that he's "bowing out." Ivan concludes that Grushenka is "a beast," that Fyodor must be kept at home, and that Dmitri can't be allowed into the house.

*Ivan's feelings for Katerina, and his own embarrassment in regard to his brother's behavior toward her, probably impact his feelings toward Grushenka—a woman he has never met but only heard about. In a truly sexist fashion, he seems to regard her as a temptress sowing discord in his family, instead of holding his father and brother responsible for their own actions.*

Alexei asks Ivan if he thinks that any man can decide if other people are worthy to live or not. Ivan says that worth has nothing to do with it, but that people make such decisions for other, "more natural" reasons. He adds that anyone has the right to wish for another's death. He asks Alexei if he thinks that, like Dmitri, he'd be capable of killing Fyodor, whom he calls "Aesop." Alexei is shocked by the question. Ivan is flattered by his response, and insists that he'll always protect their father. As for his personal feelings, he says, he'll keep those to himself. He asks that Alexei not look upon him as a villain. They shake hands, and Alexei feels that his brother "stepped a step towards him…with some purpose in mind."

*Ivan's question to Alexei concerns whether it is ever proper to commit murder. In his dismissal of "worth," Ivan is saying that one's assessment of someone's character, wealth, or social preeminence plays little role in their decision to kill. Instead, people commit the crime for more "natural" reasons, such as envy, jealousy, or greed. Aesop was an ancient Greek storyteller, famous for his fables. Ivan perhaps refers to his father by this nickname because Aesop instructed his audience in morals, while Fyodor has none, or perhaps because Aesop was traditionally described as extremely ugly.*

## PART 1: BOOK 3, CHAPTER 10: THE TWO TOGETHER

As Alexei leaves Fyodor's house, he wonders how things will end between his father, his brother, and "this terrible woman." He hurries to Katerina Ivanovna's. It's seven o'clock when he arrives. Katerina comes with "quick, hurrying steps" and smiles delightedly as she extends her hands to Alexei, who is struck by her beauty and imperiousness. He once told Dmitri that he would be happy with Katerina but "not quietly happy." Dmitri admits that the problem with women like Katerina is that they stay the same, refusing to "humble themselves before fate."

*Alexei shares everyone else's view of Grushenka. Here, he reveals his own hypocrisy. As a man who believes in "Christ-like" love, he forgets that Christ also managed to love a woman of ill-repute—Mary Magdalene. Katerina, however, fares no better in Alexei's eyes because she seems too proud and strong-willed—supposed flaws in women. No woman in the novel is viewed entirely positively.*

Soon after giving this opinion, Alexei felt ashamed for speaking so authoritatively about Katerina Ivanovna. Now, he notices that she seems excited. She tells Alexei that she's been waiting for him. She asks him what Dmitri sent him to tell her. Alexei repeats that Dmitri says that he bows to her and "that he will never come again."

*Alexei isn't usually judgmental, but he speaks authoritatively about Katerina because her pride and self-assurance offend him. He's too young to be aware of this or to understand his insecurity around women.*

Katerina Ivanovna interprets that Dmitri's emphasis on the word "bow" means that his decision to leave her isn't a reasoned one but an impulsive one. She assumes that he's in despair and that she can still save him. She asks Alexei if Dmitri said anything about **three thousand roubles**. Alexei says that Dmitri mentioned it, and that this sum may be what's "killing him most of all." Katerina says that last week she learned how much Dmitri needs money. She wishes that he would understand how much she wants to help him. As she speaks, tears flow from her eyes.

*Katerina is reading too much into Dmitri's words because she doesn't want to accept that he's breaking up with her. She's devoted to Dmitri. Though it's never clear that she loves him (really, they hardly know each other), she seems enamored with his suffering and how his suffering can both give her purpose and make her look noble and worthy in others' eyes.*

Alexei tells Katerina Ivanovna about the scene that just took place between Dmitri and Fyodor. Alexei is sure that Dmitri has gone to "that woman" (Grushenka). Katerina nervously says that Dmitri won't marry Grushenka, and that their relationship is only one of passion. She describes Grushenka as "an angel," which surprises Alexei. Just then, she calls out to Agrafena Alexandrovna—Grushenka's proper name. Grushenka arrives, "laughing and joyful." Alexei is struck by her beauty and, particularly, by the "childlike, openhearted expression" on her face.

*Ivan and Alexei seldom refer to Grushenka by either her proper name or nickname, but rather indirectly, as though distancing themselves from her by refusing to acknowledge her existence. Grushenka is a foil for Katerina, both because of her reputation and social station as well as their contrasting manners. While Katerina is portrayed as aloof and intimidating, Grushenka is warm and girlish.*

Katerina Ivanovna tells Alexei about an officer, now a widower, whom Grushenka has always loved. Katerina says that he will return and Grushenka, who's supposedly been unhappy for five years, will be happy again. When Grushenka was tormented over her soldier, it was Samsonov, the merchant, who saved her. Katerina then kisses Grushenka's plump hand three times. Grushenka seems to be embarrassed by this flattery, and says that Katerina may not fully understand Grushenka who may, in fact, have "a wicked heart." She remarks that she charmed Dmitri "only to laugh at him."

*Katerina is hoping that, now that the officer is free, Grushenka can distract herself with him and leave Dmitri alone. It's unclear how Samsonov "saved" Grushenka, though the reader knows that he became her patron and that she had to convince him to liberate her. This suggests that Grushenka was either Samsonov's "kept woman" who was given an allowance, or that she was an industrious prostitute and he was her pimp.*

Katerina Ivanovna says that Grushenka can now save Dmitri, and Grushenka gave her word that she would do so. Grushenka says that she never gave her word. Katerina turns "a bit pale" over this reversal, while Grushenka goes on to explain how "fickle" she is. She liked Dmitri once for nearly a whole hour, she says, and she could like him again. She takes Katerina's hand, "as if in reverence," and offers to kiss it. She says that maybe she'll want to be Katerina's "slave," doing all she can to please her. She compliments Katerina's "impossible beauty." Grushenka slowly raises Katerina's hand to her lips, then hesitates before deciding not to kiss it. She says that Katerina can go forward remembering that she kissed Grushenka's hand while Grushenka refused to kiss hers.

*The reader never knows if Grushenka actually gave her word to Katerina or if the latter presumed so, because the narrator doesn't make us privy to this part of the conversation. However, with Grushenka, it wouldn't matter anyway, because she's "fickle." Grushenka seems to enjoy playing into others' prejudices about her, as well as prejudices about women, and using them to her advantage. She always retains the right to choose. When she manipulates others, it's through her ability to use their weaknesses against them.*

Katerina Ivanovna is stunned by Grushenka's disrespect, calls her a "slut," and orders her out of the house. Grushenka reminds Katerina that she, too, once went to a gentleman "at dusk to get money," thereby reminding her of her offer to Dmitri. Katerina cries out and nearly leaps at Grushenka, but Alexei holds her back. Katerina's aunts rush in, along with the maid. Grushenka prepares to leave and asks Alexei to come with her. Katerina is mortified by Dmitri having told Grushenka their secret and calls him "a scoundrel." She then asks Alexei to return the next day. As he leaves, the maid gives Alexei a letter from Madame Khokhlakov.

*Katerina shifts from thinking Grushenka an "angel"—that is, when Grushenka agrees to do what Katerina wants—to now perceiving her as a "slut" for her willingness to change her mind. Grushenka demonstrates to Katerina that she owes her nothing. When Katerina tries to remind Grushenka of her poor reputation, Grushenka reminds her that she, too, was once desperate enough to offer her body for money.*

## PART 1: BOOK 3, CHAPTER 11: ONE MORE RUINED REPUTATION

Alexei hurries along the road back to the monastery. As he reaches the crossroads, someone jumps up and shouts at him, pretending to be a robber. It's Dmitri. He asks him what happened at Katerina Ivanovna's. Alexei tells him that Grushenka was also at the house, and tells him everything that happened from the moment he entered. Dmitri's face, which looked "angry and ferocious" as Alexei narrated the story, suddenly "[dissolves] in laughter." He expresses admiration for Grushenka, whom he refers to as "that queen of insolence."

*It's seems that Dmitri is angry because Katerina dared to meet with Grushenka without his knowledge, which would explain why he starts with this emotion. His anger "dissolves" into amusement when he hears the trick that Grushenka has played. Dmitri seems to delight in Grushenka's irreverence and refers to her as a "queen" because this quality distinguishes her from other women, who try to be good.*

Dmitri admits that he is, indeed, "a scoundrel." He says that he told Grushenka the story about Katerina Ivanonva in Mokroye. He was weeping on his knees and praying before Katerina's image. Grushenka wept, too. He tells Alexei to tell Katerina that he accepts her opinion of him. Dmitri then bids his brother farewell forever, and says that he plans to go to Grushenka. He walks quickly toward town, "as though tearing himself away." Alexei walks toward the monastery, wondering what his older brother means, and why they won't see each other anymore. He decides to seek out Dmitri again the next day to find out what he was talking about.

*Like Grushenka, who embraces her "fickle" nature, meaning that she will choose to be with whomever she pleases, Dmitri embraces his reputation as a scoundrel—an insult which is hurled at all of the Karamazovs, except for Alexei. This self-awareness coincides with his and his father's preference for sensuality and pleasure over honor. Alexei doesn't realize that when Dmitri says farewell, that this strongly suggests that he's already decided to commit suicide.*

Alexei decides that, despite his promises to see his father, Katerina Ivanovna, the Khokhlakovs, and Ivan, he won't leave the monastery the next day but will stay with Zosima until the very end. He goes to the sleeping elder's small bedroom, kneels, and bows before the old man. While praying, he feels the little envelope in his pocket from Katerina's maid. It contains a note from Lise. In it, she confesses to loving Alexei and having loved him since childhood.

*Alexei's first commitment is to his elder, who has taken on the role of both spiritual guide and father. Part of Alexei's attraction to the monastery is that Zosima has offered him the only paternal guidance he has ever had. The note from Lise reminds him of the world of human sensuality and communion that he has eschewed in favor of asceticism.*

## PART 2: BOOK 4, CHAPTER 1: FATHER FERAPONT

Alexei is awakened by the sound of the elder Zosima moving from his bed to his armchair before dawn. As the day continues, monks arrive from the monastery. Zosima speaks to them of many things, as though he wishes to share everything with them all for the last time. He tells them to love all of God's people, and that the monks are not holier merely because they've shut themselves off from the world. He tells them not to hate those who reject them, including atheists. Zosima gasps for breath as he speaks, but seems to be "in ecstasy."

*Zosima is eager to share all of the knowledge that he has left to disseminate, knowing that his death is imminent. What is unique about Zosima, compared to his rival Father Ferapont, and the others who condemn him, is his egalitarian view of humanity as well as his belief that it is the job of monks to foster equality among people. He's not interested in superiority or isolation, which is why he receives so many visitors.*

Alexei leaves the cell after a fellow monk tells him that Rakitin is looking for him. He has come from town with a letter from Madame Khokhlakov. She tells him that Zosima's prophecy about Prokhorovna's son, Vasenka, has come true—he is "undoubtedly alive" and, as Zosima predicted, sent his mother a letter from Siberia, in which he says that he will return to Russia with an official and, upon his arrival, hopes to embrace his mother again. Madame Khokhlakov begs Alexei to tell the Father Superior and the other monks this news. Alexei shares the information with Father Paissy, who is unmoved. Within an hour, the report of the "miracle" spreads around the monastery, mostly impressing the little monk from the small Obdorsk monastery in the north.

*What probably amounts to no more than a lucky guess is regarded as a prophecy by the followers of the elder Zosima. Father Paissy exists here partly to reflect what would be the reader's reaction to this news. It seems that people believe that Zosima has performed a miracle because they want to believe it. This exalted image of the elder contrasts with how he presents himself—with humility and full appreciation of his humanity, including ignoble aspects of his past.*

The little monk from Obdorsk finds that the seventy-five-year-old Father Ferapont is "an extremely dangerous adversary of the elder Zosima." Rumor has it, "among the most ignorant people," that Father Ferapont is in communication with "the heavenly spirits" and speaks only to them, which is why he doesn't care to be bothered with visitors. He also claims to see devils.

*Father Ferapont is a foil for Zosima. His isolation and misanthropy contrast with Zosima's boundless empathy and frequent contact with others. This isolation, however, gives Father Ferapont an aura of mystique. His strict fasting probably causes him to hallucinate devils.*

The little monk is surprised by these tales. He then asks Father Ferapont if it's true that he's "in constant communication with the Holy Spirit." Father Ferapont says that the Spirit flies down like a bird, "in the form of a dove." He also distinguishes between the Holy Spirit and the Holispirit. The latter comes as some other type of bird—"a swallow, a goldfinch, a tomtit." Also, the Holispirit speaks, and today announced that a fool would visit Father Ferapont and ask him "improper questions."

*Father Ferapont is making fun of the visiting monk, but he's generally cantankerous and doesn't like to speak or meet with people. In this instance, he creates an amusing pun—the "Holispirit," which doesn't, in fact, exist, but which Father Ferapont makes up to symbolize those who annoy him, including the little monk.*

Father Ferapont points to an elm tree. He says, at night, its branches become Christ's arms, which may grab him and carry him away. The little monk from Obdorsk goes back to his cell. Father Ferapont's words are no odder than those uttered by other "holy fools." The visiting monk arrived having been "strongly biased against the institution of elders." Now, with news of the "miracle" involving the widow Prokhorovna, he's not so sure.

*Father Ferapont paints an image of Christ that seems quite dark. The monk doesn't take him seriously, but he does wonder if Zosima may have special powers, given the rumor of his prophecy. It wasn't much of a prophecy, but the gossip about it has turned it into a bigger story than it actually is.*

Feeling tired, Zosima returns to bed and summons Alexei to his side. He tells Alexei that he must go to visit those whom he promised to see and assures him that he won't die without saying his last word in Alexei's presence. Alexei obeys. Before he leaves, Father Paissy tells him how the learned people of the world have examined everything and learned nothing. Those who renounce Christianity are "in their essence of the same image of the same Christ." They will never succeed in creating "another, higher image of man" and their attempts have only resulted in "monstrosities." Father Paissy tells Alexei this because he wants him to remember that the world's temptations are strong. Alexei is young and his strength isn't enough to endure the temptations. He then sends Alexei on his way. Alexei concludes that he has found a loving friend in Father Paissy.

*Zosima reminds Alexei of his responsibility to his family, which Zosima encourages him to place above his allegiance to the monastery. On the other hand, Father Paissy worries about Alexei's vulnerability. He reflects on it in relation to his brothers' traits. When warning him about those who renounce Christianity and rebel against God, he may as well be talking about Ivan. His warning to Alexei about temptations and being strong enough to endure them may also be referring to Dmitri, and what can happen when one succumbs to weaknesses such as lust and jealousy.*

## PART 2: BOOK 4, CHAPTER 2: AT HIS FATHER'S

Alexei first visits his father's house. He wonders why Fyodor didn't want Ivan to know about this visit. Marfa Ignatievna opens the gate for Alexei (Grigory is ill and in bed in the cottage) and tells him that Ivan left two hours ago. Fyodor is currently having his coffee. Alexei enters to find his father sitting alone at his table, "in his slippers and an old coat." Smerdyakov, too, went out to buy groceries for dinner, so the old man is "quite alone in the house." He looks "tired and weak," and his forehead is bruised and bandaged. He asks Alexei why he's come, then remembers that he asked him to do so. Fyodor then gets up, for perhaps the fortieth time that morning, to look at his swollen nose. He asks about Zosima. Alexei mentions that the monk may die within the day, but Fyodor doesn't hear him and even quickly forgets the question.

*Fyodor's concern with his swollen nose is a point of conceit. Earlier in the novel, it is mentioned that he takes great pride in his hooked nose, which he sees as "Roman." Dmitri's attack, which results in an injury to Fyodor's nose, seems to be also an attack on his pride. He's so concerned with it that he forgets that he asked for Alexei's company and takes no real interest in the answer to his own question about Zosima. He is also preoccupied with fear that Dmitri will return. It isn't clear why Fyodor didn't want Ivan to know about the visit; unless he simply wanted to be alone with Alexei, whose presence is comforting.*

Fyodor says that Ivan left because he's trying to win over Katerina Ivanovna, and that's also the reason why he's living in the house. He thinks that Ivan is only keeping an eye on him to ensure that Fyodor doesn't marry Grushenka. That way, he can push for Dmitri to marry Grushenka and Ivan can then get the rich Katerina all to himself. Fyodor concludes that Ivan is a scoundrel.

*Fyodor assumes that everyone around him, except for Alexei, is as selfish and depraved as he is. He also imagines that everyone is plotting against his wish to marry Grushenka. Today, Fyodor would be regarded as a narcissist who only thinks of how others' actions will affect him.*

Alexei tells his father that he seems "irritable" and advises Fyodor to go lie down. Fyodor says that he thought about filing charges against Dmitri, but Ivan talked him out of it. Fyodor says that the real reason why he chose not to have Dmitri arrested is because he knows that Grushenka would go to him at once if he were locked up. However, if she hears that Dmitri beat up "a weak old man," she'll visit Fyodor instead.

*Fyodor's obsession with Grushenka takes the form of making decisions based on her preferences and predictions about her possible actions. He knows that Grushenka is warm, despite her tendency for duplicity, and will often align herself with the person who seems to be suffering the most.*

Fyodor then says that Ivan won't go to Chermashnya, which he thinks is further proof that Ivan wishes to spy on him and see how much money Fyodor will give Grushenka when she arrives. He decides that he won't leave Ivan any money at all and won't bother to leave a will. As for Dmitri, Fyodor tells Alexei that he'll crush his eldest brother "like a cockroach." Fyodor then asks Alexei if he thinks that Dmitri would disappear and give up Grushenka if Fyodor agreed to give him one or two thousand roubles.

*Fyodor's comparison of Dmitri to a cockroach harkens back to Dmitri's description of the Karamazovs' "insect sensuality." They are all united, as Fyodor admits, in doing what makes them feel good, with little to no regard for others. Fyodor wants to pay Dmitri to disappear, which is possible, though the sum he's suggesting falls short of the three thousand roubles that Dmitri wants and obsesses over.*

Alexei murmurs that he'll ask Dmitri on Fyodor's behalf, but suggests that the plan would be more successful if Fyodor offered **three thousand roubles**. Fyodor quickly changes his mind and says that he'll not give Dmitri any money at all because he needs all of his money for himself. He then asks Alexei if Katerina Ivanovna will marry Dmitri or not. Alexei reports that Katerina won't leave Dmitri. Fyodor says that ladies like Katerina love "rakes and scoundrels" like Dmitri and that "these pale young ladies" are really "trash." Alexei then leaves. He kisses his father on the shoulder, which surprises Fyodor. He asks Alexei to return tomorrow for some fish soup. Fyodor gulps another half-glass of cognac before locking up the cupboard and going to bed.

*Alexei spends much of the novel fostering communication between his father and brothers as part of the many errands he runs because he takes on others' burdens. Similarly, Fyodor is right to think that much of what drives Katerina's affection for Dmitri is his disobedience and her insistence that she can fix him. Fyodor contrasts Katerina's delicate image with what he perceives to be her tendency to wallow in ill-repute. This show of affection surprises Fyodor, who has never been affectionate with any of his sons.*

## PART 2: BOOK 4, CHAPTER 3: HE GETS INVOLVED WITH SCHOOLBOYS

As soon as Alexei crosses the town square, he sees "a small gang of schoolboys" at the foot of the tiny bridge. The six boys range in age from nine to twelve. They're going home and "talking animatedly about something." Alexei, who likes children, feels like going over and talking to them. When he comes closer, he sees that each boy has a stone or two in his hand. Another boy, a pale and sickly one, is standing near the fence across the ditch.

*Alexei's fondness for children is influenced by Zosima, who teaches that children are of a purer spirit (like Jesus himself taught). However, the sight of stones in the boys' hands dispels this notion of children's perfect innocence. They seem now like predators hunting weak prey.*

The boys throw stones at the boy across the ditch, who throws one back at them. One of them, Smurov, retaliates. The cornered boy throws a stone directly at Alexei and hits him in the shoulder. The boys notice that he hit Alexei on purpose, alerting them to the fact that Alexei is a Karamazov. When six more stones shoot out of the group, Alexei steps forward to shield the lone boy from the flying stones. The boys explain that they're attacking the boy because he's "a scoundrel" who "stabbed Kolya Krasotkin in class with a penknife." Krasotkin didn't want to tell on the boy, but they've all agreed that he needs to be beaten up.

*The children know that the boy, Ilyusha, is angry at the Karamazovs because of Dmitri's abusive treatment of his father. Alexei shields the boy because it's unfair for six to gang up on one and because he has a tendency to identify with those who are underdogs. The boys, however, have a code of honor that isn't dissimilar from that of adult men, who would also be likely to retaliate. Their code is also aligned with the Biblical Old Testament's "eye for an eye" standard.*

Another exchange of fire begins, this one "very savage." The boy across the ditch is hit in the chest, prompting him to cry and run toward the street. The remaining boys call him a "coward" and a "whiskbroom." The boys notice that the boy has stopped and is looking at Alexei from the hill. Alexei decides to find out from the boy why the others were attacking him. Coming closer, Alexei sees that the boy is pale and malnourished. He stares back at Alexei with large, dark, and angry eyes.

*The "savage" nature of the rock fight contrasts with the presumed innocence of the boys, as well as the relative helplessness of their prey. The other children call the boy "whiskbroom" to mock his father, who was beaten up by Dmitri and dragged by his beard. The boy's suffering seems inseparable from that of his family.*

Alexei asks the boy if they know each other. The boy cries out to be left alone. Alexei agrees, but then the boy follows him and teases him. The boy then hits him in the back with a stone. When Alexei turns to face the boy and chastise him for attacking people from behind, the boy throws another stone into Alexei's face. Alexei shields himself and it hits his elbow. The boy is certain that Alexei will retaliate. When he doesn't, the boy seizes Alexei's **left** hand and bites down on his middle finger. When Alexei pulls the finger away, he sees that it's been bitten down to the bone. Alexei demands to know what he's done to the boy, who doesn't answer but bursts into "loud sobs." He then runs away. Alexei decides that he'll look for the boy again later, when he has time.

*The boy cries out as though Alexei is victimizing him. The boy wants to engage with Alexei to get revenge for his father, but he also wants to assert the feeling that his family has been wronged. The boy's willingness to hit Alexei in the back is revenge for Dmitri beating up on someone much weaker than himself. When the boy hits Alexei in the face and bites his finger, it's a demonstration of the courage that he thinks the Karamazovs take for granted. Because Alexei serves as his brothers' ambassador so often, it makes sense for him to be a stand-in for Dmitri.*

## PART 2: BOOK 4, CHAPTER 4: AT THE KHOKHLAKOVS'

Alexei reaches Madame Khokhlakov's stone house—one of the best and most beautiful homes in town. Madame Khokhlakov also has an estate in another district and her own house in Moscow. She inherited her house in town "from her fathers and grandfathers." She runs out to the front hall to greet Alexei. She asks him if he received her letter about the miracle. He confirms that he did, and then says that the elder Zosima will die today. Madame Khokhlakov says she knows. She adds that Katerina Ivanovna is in the house with Ivan.

*Madame Khokhlakov is a woman who lives in privilege because of her lineage. It's interesting that she inherits her property—this indicates that she either received it as part of a dowry and kept it after her husband disappeared (it's assumed that he died), or that she benefited from the expansion of inheritance rights for women in 1731.*

Madame Khokhlakov then asks Alexei if he knows why Lise is in hysterics. Lise's strained voice emerges from one of the side rooms and says that it's her mother and not her who's in hysterics. Madame Khokhlakov says that she had Herzenstube come in to check on Lise. As usual, he could make nothing of her reactions. She says that as soon as Lise knew Alexei was coming, "she screamed and had a fit."

*Given Lise's seemingly calm reaction to Alexei's presence, it seems that her mother has either misjudged or overreacted to what was probably an expression of excitement over seeing Alexei. Madame Khokhlakov is overprotective of her daughter.*

Alexei asks Madame Khokhlakov for a rag with which to wrap his finger. Madame Khokhlakov shrieks at the ugly wound. Lise also sees Alexei's finger and swings open the door to her room. Frightened, she demands that they quickly wash the wound. Madame Khokhlakov offers to send for Herzenstube. Alexei assures them that he's fine. Lise sends her mother away to get some antiseptic for the wound. She then asks Alexei how it happened, and he describes the episode with the schoolboys.

*The ugly wound on Alexei's middle finger will later be replicated by Lise when she smashes her finger in a door. Like Alexei, her identity is inseparable from her sense that she deserves to suffer. In this instance, she swings open her door to offer loving tenderness to Alexei. When they next meet, she will close it and commit an act of viciousness against herself.*

Lise then asks Alexei to give her the letter that she sent him yesterday, which she believes he has in his pocket. He assures her that he doesn't have it. She asks him if he laughed at her words and he assures her that he didn't. In fact, he says that, after the elder Zosima dies, he must leave the monastery and finish his studies. When "the legal time comes," he says, he will marry Lise. She points out that she's in a wheelchair, but Alexei assures her that he'll wheel her around, though he thinks that she'll overcome her paralysis by then.

*Lise is afraid that Alexei will think her words were nothing more than the infatuated ramblings of a little girl. By referring to "the legal time," Alexei means that he can't marry fourteen-year-old Lise until she's sixteen, which became the legal age of marriage for girls after 1830.*

Alexei announces that he must go to see Katerina Ivanovna. It upsets Lise that he's leaving her, though he offers to return to her rooms before going back to the monastery. Madame Khokhlakov leaves with Alexei and tells him, "in a quick whisper," about the comedy that's ensuing between Ivan and Katerina. Katerina clearly loves Ivan but is persuading herself that she loves Dmitri.

*The "comedy" is that both Katerina and Ivan are too proud to tell each other the truth. Katerina is persuading herself that she loves Dmitri because she made a commitment to him, and her relationship with him gives her purpose.*

## PART 2: BOOK 4, CHAPTER 5: STRAIN IN THE DRAWING ROOM

In the drawing room, Ivan announces that he must go to Moscow and that Katerina Ivanovna won't see him for a long time. Katerina says she is glad, which surprises Alexei. Alexei suggests that maybe Katerina never loved Dmitri at all, and that Dmitri doesn't love her either but honors her. Alexei says that no one in the room wishes to speak the truth: Katerina is tormenting Ivan because she loves him. She only loves Dmitri from "strain," "not in truth." She's convinced herself that she loves Dmitri. Katerina gets angry and calls Alexei "a little holy fool."

*Katerina pretends to be happy that Ivan is leaving so that he won't be aware of her affection for him. Alexei is more than likely right in his assessment of the relationship between Katerina and Dmitri. They hardly took the time to know each other before getting engaged, and seemed to be invested in each other for the sole reason that each feels obligated to the other.*

Katerina Ivanovna's anger makes Ivan laugh. He tells Alexei that he doesn't think that Katerina ever loved him, though she's always been aware of his love for her. They've never been friends, and she only kept him close for "constant revenge." Ivan listened to Katerina's expressions of love for Dmitri, but if Dmitri reformed, Ivan says, she'd drop him. She needs "to continually contemplate [her] high deed of faithfulness, and to reproach him for his unfaithfulness."

*The "constant revenge" Ivan refers to is Katerina's attempt to make Dmitri feel jealous about her supposed involvement with his brother. Ivan thinks that Katerina is really more interested in seeing herself as a martyr than in being truly happy.*

As Ivan leaves, Alexei calls after him. He blames himself for Ivan's spiteful words, though Madame Khokhlakov compares him to "an angel" and assures him that he did nothing wrong. Katerina Ivanovna approaches Alexei with two hundred roubles and asks him to go to a captain named Snegiryov, who Dmitri beat up outside of a tavern, and give him the money. She says that he needs the financial help because he did something wrong during his time in the army and got expelled. However, he has "a wretched family of sick children and a wife" who may be insane. She tells Alexei that the captain lives on Lake Street in the house of a woman named Kalmykov.

*Madame Khokhlakov, due to her religious zealotry, idolizes Alexei. However, there is also something pure about his honesty, which seeks the truth even when it's socially unacceptable. Katerina's wish to help the captain is an expression of empathy that may not be unrelated to her father's dishonorable behavior in the military. It's never made clear what Captain Snegiryov did to cause his ejection from the military, but his action led to his financial ruin.*

## PART 2: BOOK 4, CHAPTER 6: STRAIN IN THE COTTAGE

Dmitri lives on the way to Lake Street, so Alexei decides to go to him first. However, Dmitri's not at home. Alexei leaves the house, which is owned by an old cabinetmaker, his son, and his wife, and goes to Mrs. Kalmykov's house—"a decrepit, lopsided little house" with only three windows facing the street and a filthy courtyard. Captain Snegiryov lives in "a peasant cottage." When Alexei knocks, someone shouts in a "forcedly angry voice." Alexei opens the door and enters a spacious room, cluttered with people and junk.

*The decrepit condition of the house reflects Captain Snegiryov himself—an old man who once enjoyed a noble reputation as a military officer but made a mistake, besmirching his honor. This caused his reputation and career to fall into disrepair and to become something of a relic. His anger is probably the result of feeling frustrated with his mistake and his inability to change things.*

Captain Snegiryov is about forty-five and "weakly built" with reddish hair and a thin red beard. This was the same man who shouted earlier, for there is no other man present. Alexei introduces himself and the captain does the same. Alexei says that he stopped by to have a word with the captain. The captain invites the monk to have a seat. Alexei starts to say that he's come to address the matter regarding his brother, Dmitri. Suddenly, Alexei hears a boy's voice from behind a curtain in the corner. When the curtain is pulled aside, Alexei sees the little boy who bit his finger. His name is Ilyusha. The boy confesses to the assault. Alexei confirms that the boy did it, and the captain threatens to whip the boy, but Alexei protests.

*The thin red beard is the "whiskbroom" to which the boys were referring. The nickname is ironic because a whiskbroom is something that one would use to maintain a neat appearance, while the captain is often dirty and wears tattered clothing. So, the nickname insults both the thin beard—a sign of his reduced masculinity—and his general appearance. Ilyusha does the opposite of what most children would to avoid trouble. He immediately confesses to his crime, demonstrating his characteristic courage.*

Captain Snegiryov mocks Alexei's assumption that he'd whip his son in front of him and then offers, sarcastically, to chop off his four fingers, too. Alexei realizes that the little boy merely loves his father and attacked him because he is the brother of the captain's offender. Alexei repents for Dmitri, but the captain is unconvinced. He introduces Alexei to his wife, Arina Petrovna, and declares that his family comes from "simple people." Arina mistakenly calls Alexei "Mr. Chernomazov." She then proceeds to give a rather mad monologue before bursting into tears. The captain then introduces Alexei to his daughters, Varvara and Nina, before leading him outside.

*The captain mocks Alexei out of resentment for what he perceives as the Karamazovs' entitlement. Alexei realizes that the attack has little to do with him personally and everything to do with Ilyusha's willingness to stand up for his father—a man whom everyone laughs at. Arina is mentally ill, and Nina has a hunched back. The reader develops more sympathy for the captain due to his inability to provide help to his wife and daughter.*

## PART 2: BOOK 4, CHAPTER 7: AND IN THE FRESH AIR

Captain Snegiryov invites Alexei to walk with him in the fresh air because his "castle" isn't clean, "not in any sense." He says that his "whiskbroom" was thicker just a week ago—that is, until Dmitri dragged him out of the tavern and into the square by his beard. Just then, the schoolboys were getting out of school and Ilyusha, his outraged son, was with them. Alexei assures the captain that Dmitri will sincerely repent for this; otherwise, he'll disown his older brother.

*The thing man is often most proud of—his house, which is a sign of his wealth and social status—is representative of the captain's failure. Furthermore, it isn't his house because he can only afford to rent rooms. Snegiryov seems to recognize how embarrassing his thin beard is.*

Captain Snegiryov says that he won't challenge Dmitri to a duel because, if he's killed, there would be no one to feed his family. The captain also thought of suing Dmitri, but he's not sure that he'd get much compensation for "a personal offense." Then, Grushenka summoned the captain and told him that, if he sues, she'll tell everyone that he got beat up for cheating and then she will "turn him out" and tell Samsonov to turn him out, so that the captain can never again earn money from them. As a result, the captain decided to remain quiet on the matter.

*The captain can't address his dishonor in court and, even if he does, it wouldn't be worth it to him financially. It isn't clear what the captain does to earn a wage from Samsonov and Grushenka. Given his willingness to participate with Fyodor in a scheme to ruin Dmitri, and Grushenka and Samsonov's reputations as people of ill-repute, it's implied that Snegiryov makes money by scheming.*

Alexei expresses his wish to make peace with Ilyusha but announces that he's come to the house "with an errand." Alexei tells Captain Snegiryov how Dmitri's fiancée, Katerina Ivanovna, heard about the incident outside of the tavern and asked that the captain accept two hundred roubles as compensation for his injuries. The bills make "a terrible impression" on the captain, who's astonished to receive them. He talks about how much the money will mean for his family, how he can get treatments for his wife, Arina, and his hunchbacked daughter, Nina. He describes his daughter as "God's angel" who suffers from being "rheumatic all over." Varvara, he says, is also "an angel" who brought home the sixteen roubles that she earned from giving lessons and set aside to go back to St. Petersburg. The family ended up living off of this income. Now, she can't return to the city.

*The "terrible impression" seems to be that the captain is surprised that anyone cares enough about his suffering to compensate him for a wrong. The captain initially seems to see the money as an opportunity to relieve some of his family's suffering and to restore his pride in himself. His mention of Nina, often called "Ninotchka," as an "angel" correlates with how Alexei is often described. Those who are described as angelic in the novel also suffer greatly, sometimes in their effort to assist others, as Alexei does. Varvara is an angel because she had to give up her dream to look after her family.*

Alexei is glad to see that he's caused such happiness for Captain Snegiryov. The captain says that, if he could pay off "one miserable debt," he'd buy a horse and a covered cart and take his family out of town. Alexei assures him that Katerina Ivanovna will send him more money, if he needs it, and Alexei can give him some, too. Alexei goes to embrace the captain.

*The captain lives in poverty and is unable to escape the debt that remains unmentioned. He wants to start over, but he lacks the means to do so. Alexei, not understanding the value of money or the amount of the captain's debt, makes a lofty promise.*

Suddenly, Captain Snegiryov starts moving his lips, saying something but emitting no sound. Then, the captain offers to show Alexei a "little trick." He then crumples up the bills and throws them "with all his might on the sand." He tramples them with his right heel before leaping back and straightening up to form "a picture of inexplicable pride." He tells Alexei to report to those who sent him that he won't sell his honor. He could never tell Ilyusha that he accepted money for his disgrace. The captain then runs off, leaving Alexei to pick up the bills, smooth them, and put them in his pocket before returning to Katerina Ivanovna to tell her the result of her errand.

*Like his son Ilyusha, pride and honor matter more to the captain than his well-being. This is ironic because Snegiryov was willing to accept money from Fyodor to contribute to Dmitri's ruin, so the reader knows that he's not averse to dishonor. Instead, he's a very prideful man, and takes an "inexplicable" pleasure in denying the charity of others.*

## PART 2: BOOK 5, CHAPTER 1: A BETROTHAL

Madame Khokhlakov is again the first to meet Alexei. She whispers at how Lise now regrets, "almost to the point of tears," having laughed at Alexei. On the other hand, she's never regretted laughing at her mother, but suddenly, everything has become serious. Madame Khokhlakov tells Alexei to go to Lise to cheer her up.

*Lise regrets laughing at Alexei because she feels guilty for the possibility of making him think that she was mocking him. She respects Alexei greatly, probably more so than she does her mother.*

Alexei enters the room. Lise looks embarrassed and blushes. She asks about Alexei's errand to give two hundred roubles to Captain Snegiryov. Alexei tells her the story, recreating "the scene of the wretched man trampling on the money."

*Lise is clearly self-consciousness around the young man she likes.*

Lise asks Alexei to go to the door to see if Madame Khokhlakov is eavesdropping. He tells Lise that no one is there. Lise then summons Alexei back to her, asks for his hand, and tells him that the letter she sent was no joke. She hides her eyes with her hand, ashamed to make this confession. She takes Alexei's hand and kisses it three times. Alexei tells her that he was "completely sure" about her earnestness, which offends her. Alexei then kisses Lise on the lips, which embarrasses her again. Alexei says that he'll be leaving the monastery in a few days to go out into the world. He knows that he ought to get married and decides that he should marry her.

*This is a tender moment between Alexei and Lise, both of whom are learning about romantic love through each other. Lise hides her eyes out of modesty and embarrassment, due to the girl's understandable unfamiliarity with intimacy. When Alexei kisses her on the lips, it's a bold expression of his desire for her. Sexuality embarrasses her, just as it usually embarrasses Alexei.*

Lise again asks Alexei to see if her mother is eavesdropping and he asks her why she suspects Madame Khokhlakov of "such meanness." Lise says that it isn't meanness and that she, too, eavesdrops on her mother. Lise then says that she'll also spy on Alexei after they're married and will open his letters and read them. She asks if he'll submit to her, and he says that he will; but, he'll resist her on "important things" to do what's best. Lise agrees that she'll submit to him "in the most important things, but will also yield to [him] in everything."

*The Khokhlakovs seem to spy on each other simply because neither has anything else to do. Lise is confined to her wheelchair, which limits her engagement with others, and her mother is bored and overprotective. Lise doesn't think that she'll relinquish this habit and even thinks that it's an expression of love. She learned this, it seems, from her mother, who also confuses obsessive behavior with love.*

Lise asks Alexei about his sadness. He admits that he's sad, but he can't quite explain why. She commiserates about his brothers and his father "tormenting" him and says that she doesn't like Ivan. Alexei is surprised by her remark but doesn't ask her more about it. Instead, he talks about how his brothers "are destroying themselves," and that the Spirit of God may not be enough to stop it. Alexei wonders if he even believes in God. On top of all that, Zosima is dying. When he's left all alone, he says, he'll go to Lise. She kisses him, tells him to return to Zosima's side, and makes the sign of the cross over him.

*Lise blames Alexei's unhappiness on the discord within his family. She's partly right, and her initial mistrust of Ivan is also justified, given his wish to taint Alexei's warmth and generosity of spirit toward others. Later, Lise will reverse this position by developing what seems to be an infatuation for Ivan, whose cynicism will appeal to her hardened spirit. For now, though, she remains devout and aligned with Alexei.*

Alexei tries to leave without seeing Madame Khokhlakov, but she appears to him anyway as soon as he goes down the stairs. She discourages Alexei from taking Lise's affections seriously. Alexei changes the subject to Katerina Ivanovna's health. Madame Khokhlakov says that she's still delirious and that her aunts have arrived, but they do nothing but put on airs in front of Madame Khokhlakov. Herzenstube came but became so frightened and useless that Madame Khokhlakov thought to send for another doctor. She then demands to see the letter that Lise wrote, but Alexei refuses. He offers to return the next day, however.

*Madame Khokhlakov wants to see the letter so that she can spy on her daughter. Her dismissal of her daughter's feelings comes from a wish to maintain control over her. She doesn't want Lise to grow up, get better, and fall in love because these events would lead to Madame Khokhlakov being left alone. Herzenstube's shock at Katerina's condition is rather comic, as is Madame Khokhlakov's offer to get another doctor.*

## PART 2: BOOK 5, CHAPTER 2: SMERDYAKOV WITH A GUITAR

Alexei climbs over the wattle fence and goes into the gazebo where he met Dmitri the day before. There's no one there. He sits in the same place as yesterday and observes the imprint left on the green table from yesterday's glass of cognac. Barely fifteen minutes later, he hears the strumming of a guitar. A male voice sings a verse "in a sweet falsetto." Then, a female voice speaks. Alexei realizes that it's Smerdyakov and that the lady must be "the daughter of the house" from Moscow, Maria Kondratievna. They're sitting on a bench some distance away.

*Alexei goes to the old gazebo and observes the imprint as though he wants to contemplate his conversation with Dmitri, in which his elder brother proclaimed his "insect sensuality." Here, Smerdyakov reveals another one of his talents, further proving that he isn't what his brothers say he is.*

Smerdyakov tells Maria Kondratievna how verse is "nonsense" because no one talks in rhymes. She praises his intelligence and asks how he got to be so smart. Smerdyakov tells her that he could've been greater, if it weren't for his "destiny ever since childhood." He talks about how he "[hates] all of Russia" and wishes that they had been subjected by the French under Napoleon. He says that he agrees with Fyodor's assessment that the Russians "need thrashing," though Fyodor and his children are madmen. He expresses resentment for Ivan calling him "a stinking lackey." Dmitri, on the other hand, is "worse than any lackey." Smerdyakov sings another verse about going away to the city to be free and never grieving.

*Smerdyakov's comment about verse reveals that he shares his brothers' preference for what is real and eschews sentiment. In this instance, Smerdyakov reveals what will later be understood as his motive for killing Fyodor and framing Dmitri. He feels that he's been oppressed by the Karamazovs and by his country, for no reason other than not being legitimately born into a noble family. Smerdyakov hates the simplicity and backwardness of his town and longs for cosmopolitan life. He wants to go to a place where no one knows him, so he could remake himself.*

Alexei sneezes, causing Smerdyakov and Maria Kondratievna to go quiet. Alexei gets up and walks toward them. He asks if Dmitri will soon return, and Smerdyakov tells him that he doesn't know; he isn't Dmitri's keeper. Alexei tells Smerdyakov that Dmitri "precisely" informed him that it's Smerdyakov who knows about everything that goes on in the house, and that it is he who promised to let Dmitri know when Grushenka shows up. Smerdyakov asks how Alexei got in, since the gates are latched. Alexei says that he climbed over the fence. He apologizes, saying he only did so because he was in a hurry to see Dmitri. Maria notes that Dmitri enters the garden the same way.

*When Smerdyakov says that he isn't Dmitri's keeper, he's making a clear distinction between his loyalty to Fyodor, probably borne out of a wish to be accepted by him, and what he feels for his brothers. The line about "my brother's keeper" is also a quote from the Bible, spoken by Cain—who killed his brother, Abel. Maria's mention of the way Dmitri climbs over the fence predicts how Dmitri will later get access to Fyodor again.*

Smerdyakov says that Dmitri twice threatened him with death. Maria Kondratievna says that, the other day, Dmitri threatened to "grind [Smerdyakov] in a mortar." Smerdyakov tells Alexei that, at daybreak, Ivan sent him to Dmitri's place on Lake Street, asking that they meet at the local tavern, the Metropolis, for dinner. However, Smerdyakov asks Alexei not to mention this, certain that Dmitri would use it as an excuse to kill him. Alexei refuses Maria's request to open the wattle fence. He climbs back over it and walks to the tavern. He thinks it would be improper to enter in his monk's robe, but when he arrives, Ivan opens a window and shouts down for him to come in.

*Dmitri's threat to Smerdyakov foreshadows his later act of grabbing a pestle off of Fenya's table, with the intent of attacking his father. The image of Dmitri "grinding" Smerdyakov also calls back to Fyodor's previous threat to "crush" Dmitri like a cockroach. The hatred and jealousy that has festered between the Karamazovs results in their not merely wanting to kill each other but to turn each other into dust, reflecting mutual shame in their existences.*

## PART 2: BOOK 5, CHAPTER 3: THE BROTHERS GET ACQUAINTED

Ivan isn't in a private room, as he claimed, but at a place by the window that's separated by screens. Alexei knows that Ivan doesn't like taverns, so he must have shown up to meet with Dmitri, who isn't there. Ivan offers to order fish soup for Alexei, who accepts. He remembers how much Alexei liked cherry preserve when he was little, so he orders that, too.

*It isn't clear why Ivan would identify this as a room—perhaps to feel as though he's enjoying an exclusive privilege, given his propensity for pretension. His attention to Alexei's food preferences is an attempt to show that he has some knowledge of his brother.*

Ivan says that he wants to live and "love with [his] insides." He plans to move to Europe. Alexei expresses joy at his brother's desire to love life, and believes that people should in order to understand its meaning. Ivan asks if it's true that he's leaving the monastery. Alexei says he will because Zosima is "sending [him] into the world."

*Ivan seems to want to become less cerebral and to adopt a closer connection with life's pleasures and with other people, without falling into the kind of dissipated lifestyle that corrupted both his brother and his father.*

Alexei wonders how things will end between Dmitri and their father, causing Ivan to snap and to feel as though he's being turned into his brother's keeper. He repeats that he's finished his affairs and will be leaving. He says that "Dmitri is only a strain" and that, one day, Katerina Ivanovna will realize that she doesn't love him at all but loves Ivan. Then again, maybe she'll never realize it.

*Ivan's comment about not being his brother's keeper echoes that of Smerdyakov (and again quotes the Biblical Cain, who killed his brother). Neither is interested, at this point, in protecting Dmitri from his worst impulses. In fact, Smerdyakov will exploit them and Ivan will ignore them to focus on his own interests.*

Ivan asks how Katerina Ivanovna is doing. Alexei tells him about her hysterics. Ivan admits that he decided to dine at the tavern to avoid eating with their father. He then tells his brother not to worry so much about his leaving, for they'll have all of eternity to talk, though that doesn't really matter. He insists that they should talk only about "the eternal questions" that preoccupy all of "young Russia": questions about God, immortality, socialism and anarchism, and the transformation of humanity "to a new order."

*Ivan doesn't seem to like his father very much, though Fyodor expresses an appreciation for Ivan due to his intellectual abilities. In that regard, Ivan is very eager to talk to Alexei about Russia's future. The "eternal questions" concern not only the fate of the nation but also that of humanity.*

Ivan insists that he won't fixate on "all the modern axioms," which come from Europe anyway. Ivan explains what he believes in and hopes for. He accepts God "pure and simple." He believes that God created Earth in accordance with Euclidean geometry and that he, too, has "a Euclidean mind" that cannot understand things that aren't of this world. He accepts that God's wisdom and purpose are unknown to mortals. Ivan believes "in order, in the meaning of life," and "in eternal harmony." It isn't God that he doesn't accept but the world that he's created, with all of its suffering. During "the world's finale," he thinks that something precious will be revealed and that it will "redeem all human villainy" and make forgiveness possible. Alexei asks Ivan why he doesn't accept the world. Ivan, suggesting that he'd like to be healed by Alexei, proceeds to explain.

*The "modern axioms" would probably be Enlightenment ideas that were exported to Russia during the reigns of Peter the Great and Catherine the Great. Ivan's notion of an ordered and geometric world reflects the ideas of the Deists, who believed that God created the world, ensured its proper function, and then abandoned it. The Deists, like Ivan, never claimed to know why God did this. Unlike the Deists, Ivan dislikes the world as it is, equating it with a cesspool for evil. He appeals to Alexei to disabuse him of this notion.*

## PART 2: BOOK 5, CHAPTER 4: REBELLION

Ivan admits that he's never understood "how it's possible to love one's neighbors." He recalls a story about John the Merciful (a saint) in which "a hungry and frozen passerby came to him and asked to be made warm." So, John lay with him in bed, embraced him, and began breathing into the itinerant's mouth, "which was foul and festering with some terrible disease." Ivan thinks that the saint did it out of duty because, it one is truly going to try to love a man, the man must stay hidden. Exposure of one's humanity makes one less lovable.

*Ivan regards one of Jesus' principle teachings as ridiculous. He also reveals his misanthropy, which makes it difficult for him to believe that others can express love or empathy for a smelly, filthy person. His anecdote contrasts with the kindness with which Stinking Lizaveta was received in town. However, that kindness may only confirm Ivan's view that people are only kind to feel good about themselves.*

Alexei says that the elder Zosima mentioned something similar—how "a man's face often prevents many people…from loving him." Alexei insists that there "is still much love in mankind, almost like Christ's love." Ivan thinks that Christ's love is "a miracle impossible on earth." People can love each other abstractly, or if suffering took place only on a stage, but "hardly ever up close."

*Whereas the elder Zosima acknowledged how aesthetics or distaste could influence people's reactions to others, he and Alexei wouldn't regard these as good excuses to dismiss others. Ivan, on the other hand, does. For him, knowing a man is what makes it impossible to love him.*

Ivan decides that it's better for them to talk about the suffering of children because people can love children, "even dirty or homely children," up close. Adults, on the other hand, are not only "disgusting" and unworthy of love, but know too well about good and evil while children know nothing of it and are, therefore, not guilty of anything. Ivan says that he loves children very much and observes how "cruel people—passionate, carnivorous, Karamazovian—sometimes love children very much."

*Ivan thinks that children are more lovable because they are vulnerable and pure. Others regard them as not having been tainted by the evils and temptations that exist in the world. However, children's innocence also appeals to sadists who wish to exploit their helplessness.*

Ivan narrates stories to Alexei about cruelty toward children. A Bulgarian whom he met in Moscow told him about how the Turks there delight in torturing children. He describes how they cut them out of their mothers' wombs, and how they toss nursing infants into the air and catch them on the blades of their bayonets before the mothers' eyes. The main delight, he says, comes from performing the tortures in front of the mothers. Another trick is to "fondle the baby" and make it laugh. At that moment, the cruel Turk will aim a pistol four inches from the babe's face, watch as the child "laughs gleefully" and reaches its little hands out to the pistol, before the Turk pulls the trigger and shatters its little head. Ivan then notes how they say that Turks are "very fond of sweets."

*There has long been tension between Bulgarians and ethnic Turks who are a minority in the country. The biggest influx of Turks into Bulgaria didn't occur until the late 1980s, but their presences were perceived as a threat long before they became a more visible objective reality, due to their Muslim faith and different cultural practices. Knowing this, it's dubious whether or not the man whom Ivan met was telling the truth. His stories about Turkish cruelty may be fantasies concocted to demonize them.*

Alexei asks Ivan to describe his point. Ivan says that, "if the devil does not exist, and man has therefore created him, he has created him in his own image and likeness." In Russia, they have "the birch and the lash." In Europe, they no longer practice beatings, but they have other ways of expressing cruelty. Ivan mentions a pamphlet he read about a recently executed "villain and murderer named Richard." He was an illegitimate child sent to Swiss shepherds who raised him to work but otherwise neglected him. He wasn't even given the mash that the pigs ate. When he stole mash from the pigs, the shepherds beat Richard. So, he grew up to steal. Richard eventually robbed and killed an old man. The religious community of Geneva goes to the twenty-three-year-old man and helps him to repent. He goes to the guillotine, assured that he will be sent to the Lord.

*Ivan's mention of Richard's story seems to be an allegory about the hypocrisy of both society and religious communities, which failed to protect Richard before he could grow up to become a robber and a murderer. Richard's faith may bring him comfort, but he will ultimately be executed, and Ivan suggests that his faith is based on false hope. His story slightly mirrors that of Smerdyakov, who is also the product of illegitimacy, routinely shunned and demeaned by those around him. Smerdyakov also resents the society that has villainized him, but he will later exact his revenge by refusing to admit to his crimes.*

Ivan says that he's collected many stories about children, and tells one about a five-year-old girl—the child of educated officials—who was subjected "to every possible torture." They beat, flogged, and kicked her, without even knowing why. They locked her in the outhouse for not telling them when she needed to use the bathroom. Her mother also "smeared her face with her excrement and made her eat the excrement." Ivan realizes that he may be tormenting Alexei with these stories and offers to stop, but Alexei tells him to continue because he wants to suffer.

*This is one of the most memorable anecdotes in the novel due to its graphic nature and unique depravity. Ivan tells Alexei that the girl's parents were "educated officials" to demonstrate that social position and learning do not always prevent people from exhibiting the worst aspects of their natures. Alexei wants to hear the story so that he can better understand how others suffer in the world, but he may also take a morbid interest.*

Ivan tells another story about a general who lived at the beginning of the century. He kept "hundreds of dogs in his kennels and nearly a hundred handlers" for the dogs. A house-serf, only eight years old, one day threw a stone while he was playing and "hurt the paw of the general's favorite hound." When the general asked why the canine was limping, someone reported to him about the boy and the stone. The general locked the boy up that night. In the morning, the boy was led out, undressed, and taken into the forest where the general hunted. The house-serfs, including the boy's mother, were also brought along. The general commanded the huntsmen to release all of the wolfhounds, who proceeded to tear the boy to pieces.

*The general is also a misanthrope, but unlike Ivan, he can't even demonstrate kindness toward children. The general's inhumanity toward the boy may also related to serfdom, which encouraged the tendency to dehumanize those condemned to servitude, including children. The general regarded the boy as his possession, an item with monetary value, just like the dog. However, he determined that the dog was more valuable to him.*

Ivan says that the general was later declared too incompetent to manage his estate. He asks Alexei if the general should've been shot, and Alexei agrees that he should've been. Ivan then says that "a little devil" does sit in Alexei's heart after all. Alexei asks why Ivan is testing him. Ivan says that he's merely "a bedbug" who doesn't understand why things are as they are. All he knows is that there is suffering and that he doesn't want more suffering. If the suffering of children is what's needed to buy truth, then he asserts that the truth isn't worth the price.

*Alexei's view is probably the result of his embrace of God's law—"an eye for an eye"—which is an Old Testament view of justice. Christ rejected this in the New Testament's Gospel of Matthew, in favor of "turning the other cheek." Alexei's response to the story is visceral, so he can't be blamed for his spontaneous reaction to such cruelty. Ivan's argument against God is essentially that the world is so evil that no benevolent creator could have made it.*

Alexei says that his brother's speech amounts to a rebellion. Ivan asks Alexei to imagine that he's "building the edifice of human destiny with the object of making people happy in the finale, of giving them peace and rest at last." He asks if Alexei would "torture just one tiny creature" if it were necessary to build the foundation. Alexei says that he wouldn't. Ivan then asks him to admit that the people for whom he's building the monument would soon agree to have their happiness built "on the unjustified blood of a tortured child." Alexei refuses to admit this. He reminds Ivan that humanity's happiness is already being built with the blood of the one who has already given his body for everyone and everything—Christ. Ivan says that he hasn't forgotten about him and is surprised that Alexei didn't mention him sooner. Ivan then says that he composed a poem and committed it to memory. It's called "The Grand Inquisitor."

*Ivan tests Alexei's view that all human life is precious by asking if he would be willing to sacrifice one to preserve the whole. With his typical cynicism, he argues that, if Alexei is telling the truth, he is unique, for most would willingly terminate one life for the sake of all humanity. However, Alexei doesn't wish to believe that people are capable of such indifference, and he doesn't believe that the ends justify the means. Besides, he thinks that no such mortal sacrifice is necessary because Christ has already suffered for everyone's sins. Ivan presents "The Grand Inquisitor" to question Alexei's view that humanity will always be rescued by Christ's sacrifice.*

## PART 2: BOOK 5, CHAPTER 5: THE GRAND INQUISITOR

Ivan tells Alexei that his action takes place in the sixteenth century. Back then, it was common in poetic works for higher powers to come down to Earth. For so many centuries, people cried out to God to reveal himself to them. One day, he appeared, "only for a moment" to grace "his tormented, suffering people." The action of Ivan's poem is set in Seville, Spain during "the most horrible time of the Inquisition, when fires blazed every day to the glory of God." Christ walked amongst men "in the same human image in which he had walked for three years among men fifteen centuries earlier." The day before, the Cardinal Grand Inquisitor had burned nearly "a hundred heretics at once."

*Ivan's epic poem, which is one of the most famous passages in literature, uses the device of* deus ex machina*—"god from the machine," or God descending to Earth. This was a device frequently used in ancient Greek theater. Typically, the gods would descend to Earth and relieve the mortals of their suffering. The same occurs here, but Ivan manipulates the device to show what could happen if God descended and circumstances were such that the community turned against Him.*

When Christ appeared, he did so "inconspicuously," but everyone still recognized him. People flocked to him, "drawn to him by an invincible force." He healed a blind man. People wept and kissed the earth upon which he walked. Children threw flowers down before him and cried hosannas. He even raised a dead seven-year-old girl from the coffin. This causes a great commotion. The Cardinal Grand Inquisitor arrives, crossing the square in front of the cathedral, where the girl's little, white coffin sits on the porch. The cardinal scowls at the exalted figure and then orders a guard to take him away. The cardinal's power is so great that the crowd parts for his guards.

*Christ is the opposite of the cardinal, marked by his unconditional love, boundless goodness, and supernatural power. What is ironic is that the cardinal is supposed to be acting in service of Christ. However, he merely exploits the savior to instill the fear that keeps him in power. The community obeys the Church to keep a vague idea of evil at bay, not realizing, or being too afraid to admit, that the cardinal himself embodies evil.*

Christ, now a prisoner, is taken to a "small, gloomy, vaulted prison in the old building of the holy court." The Cardinal Grand Inquisitor enters his cell, carrying a lamp. He is alone. He asks the prisoner, "Is it you?" Getting no response, he tells him to "be silent" and then asks why he came to "interfere" with the community. He adds that he doesn't know who the prisoner is and does't want to know but, tomorrow, he'll condemn the prisoner and have him burned at the stake. The very people who kissed his feet will turn on him and, with just "a nod" from the cardinal, will "rush to heap the coals up around [the] stake."

*The lamp that the cardinal carries suggests the search for truth, reminiscent of the ancient Greek cynic Diogenes's supposed use of a lantern to look for an honest man. (Yet, ironically, the cardinal sees the truth but chooses to reject it.) Despite being a clergyman, the cardinal doesn't welcome the reappearance of Christ due to the threat that the Savior poses to his power. The cardinal reminds Christ of the real, physical influence that he wields. He also holds a cynical view of humanity and its fickle cruelty, similar to Ivan himself.*

Alexei asks if the prisoner just sits silently. Ivan says that the Cardinal Grand Inquisitor tells him to be silent because "he has no right to add anything to what has already been said" and that this is "the most basic feature of Roman Catholicism," in Ivan's view. Everything already belongs to the pope. The old cardinal says that, if Christ introduces anything new, it'll be a miracle that will encroach upon "the freedom of faith" that the devout have handed over to the Church in exchange for their happiness. The cardinal says that God surely has not come to take this right away from the Church, so why, then, is he interfering?

*The cardinal is unwilling to let Christ interfere with what has already been committed to the New Testament, and Christ is symbolically silent in response. In this part of the poem, Ivan explains how the institutional power of the Church and its wish for self-preservation would prevent its authorities from being willing to welcome the Second Coming. This is why the cardinal refers to the Savior's reemergence as interference.*

The Cardinal Grand Inquisitor tells the prisoner that people will submit to enslavement in exchange for being fed. Christ has promised "heavenly bread," but can this "compare with earthly bread?" What will become of those millions who do not have the strength to forego earthly bread for heavenly bread? The weak, the cardinal says, are very dear to the Church. Though they are "depraved," they will eventually become "obedient." He insists that humanity is eager to hand over its freedom in exchange for peace and that Christ has left them in "confusion and torment," thereby laying "the foundation for the destruction of [his] own kingdom."

*The cardinal uses the desperation of the populace, particularly their poverty, to keep them in line. He tells Christ that he will use their physical hunger as a means to demand their loyalty and devotion. He also stresses that physical suffering is more immediate and palpable than any idea of spiritual suffering, which the devout can only imagine. To avoid discomforts in the here and now, which the cardinal insists were created by Christ, followers will grant the Church authority over them. This reflects Ivan's conversation with Zosima—Ivan thought people would fear the Church's physical punishments, while Zosima thought the Church could truly punish criminals by morally condemning them. The cardinal takes Ivan's view, again demonstrating a cynical view of humanity and its basest impulses.*

The Cardinal Grand Inquisitor tells the prisoner that he didn't realize that, "as soon as man rejects miracles, he will at once reject Christ as well, for man seeks not so much God as miracles." Humanity will even seek out "quacks, or women's magic." The cardinal says that Christ has overestimated humanity. They are "slaves" who were created as "rebels." However, with the Church, no one will rebel any longer or destroy each other. They will submit because "freedom, free reason, and science will lead them into such a maze" that they will either exterminate themselves or each other. The remaining third will crawl back to the Church, which will help to save them from themselves. The flock will then gather and submit "once and for all."

*The "miracles" that the cardinal says people seek are modes of temporarily alleviating their suffering on Earth. Here, the cardinal refers to those who promote superstitious tricks or "black magic." When he talks about "women's magic," he's likely referring to witchcraft—an offense for which women were burned at the stake at this time. The cardinal contrasts the Church's offer of submission with modernity's offer of science (the Scientific Revolution coincided with the Inquisition), which he insists will only confuse the masses by offering too much freedom.*

The Cardinal Grand Inquisitor says that the flock will become timid and "tremble limply before [their] wrath." The Church will make them work and, in the free hours, "arrange their lives like a children's game, with children's songs, choruses, and innocent dancing." They will be allowed to sin, and they will have no secrets from the Church. The Church will either allow or forbid them to have mistresses, all depending on their obedience. The flock will "gladly and joyfully" submit to be delivered from the "present terrible torments of personal and free decision" in exchange for happiness. They will then die peacefully, and "beyond the grave they will find only death." The cardinal repeats that, tomorrow, he shall burn the stranger for interfering. If anyone deserves the stake, he says, it's him.

*The cardinal explains to the visitor how the Church organizes people's lives, not only because, according to the old adage, "idle hands are the devil's workshop," but also because idleness gives people the opportunity to think. With their lives properly organized by the Church into work and play, they will neither consider their suffering nor the control that the clergy holds over them. In this section, the cardinal also reveals that he doesn't believe in an afterlife (despite talking directly to Christ himself), but it's important for the flock to believe that their lives are ordered for the purpose of being rewarded in heaven.*

Ivan then stops, flushed from speaking, and smiles. Alexei finds the poem absurd and reminds Ivan that it doesn't "revile" Christ but "praises" him. He denies that there could be "such a fantastic person" as the Cardinal Grand Inquisitor and asks who the "bearers of the mystery" could be who have taken responsibility for men's happiness. Ivan laughs and tells his brother not to get excited, reminding him that it's only "a fantasy." He then asks Alexei if "this whole Catholic movement of the past few centuries" is really nothing more than a pursuit of money. Alexei says that it isn't. Ivan asks why there can't be someone like the Cardinal Grand Inquisitor who sees that most mortals will never be able to manage their own freedom. Alexei says that Ivan's Inquisitor doesn't believe in God, which Ivan admits is true.

*Alexei finds that the poem "praises" Christ, because the Savior's goodness is illuminated alongside the cardinal's dark, evil character. What Alexei seems to find unrealistic is that a man like the cardinal would speak directly to Christ and still deny his power and the existence of Heaven. He might also be scoffing at the idea that there could be such a direct conspiracy on the part of the Church to rule the world. Ivan (and Dostoevsky through him) is presenting complex and ambiguous ideas here—that a man could believe in God and still rebel against him, presuming to know better regarding how the world should be run.*

Alexei asks Ivan how the poem ends. Ivan says that Christ approaches the Cardinal Grand Inquisitor and kisses him gently "on his bloodless, ninety-year-old lips." The cardinal walks to the door, opens it, and tells the stranger to leave and not to come again. The prisoner walks out into the "dark squares of the city" and "goes away." As for the old cardinal, the kiss "burns in his heart," but he remains fixed on his ideas.

*Christ demonstrates unconditional love toward the cardinal, despite his atheism, exploitation of faith to maintain control over the populace, and his threat to destroy Christ to secure his position. The burning in his chest is the guilt of his conscience. Though the cardinal feels this "burning," the poem's ending suggests that he has "won" the encounter, and that Christ abandons the world to be ruled by men like the Grand Inquisitor. This would fit with Ivan's worldview, that God might exist, but that he has abandoned the world to evil.*

Alexei asks Ivan how he can love with such ideas in his heart. Ivan says that "the Karamazov force" can "endure everything." Alexei then asks if he believes that "everything is permitted," and Ivan says he does. Alexei stands, silently goes to Ivan, and kisses him gently on the lips. Ivan humorously accuses him of "literary theft," then says that it's time to go. Even if he doesn't go away and they meet again, Ivan says he doesn't want to hear about Dmitri ever again. He asks Alexei to kiss him and then return to Zosima's bedside. Ivan then leaves. Alexei will wonder later in his life how he "so completely [forgot]" about Dmitri, when he resolved that morning to find him, even if it meant not returning to the monastery.

*Alexei wonders how Ivan's cynicism gives him any ability to love or empathize with others. When Ivan mentions "the Karamazov force," he's referring to the sensuality and passion that Dmitri previously mentioned. Though Dmitri derided it as "insect sensuality," it's a basic instinct that keeps Ivan engaged with and interested in humanity, though he despises how the world is ordered. Ivan's belief that "everything is permitted" is a modern notion that people create their own code of morality. It has also become a famous quote used to justify many things, including Smerdyakov's murder of Fyodor even within the world of the book.*

## PART 2: BOOK 5, CHAPTER 6: A RATHER OBSCURE ONE FOR THE MOMENT

Ivan goes to his father's house, feeling anguished. He wonders if he hates Fyodor. He then wonders if he's bothered by his conversation with Alexei. Ivan reaches his father's house "in a very bad and irritated state of mind." Glancing at the gate from some distance away, he realizes what's bothering him: Smerdyakov, who's sitting on a bench by the gate. Ivan looks at him and feels that the lackey is "also sitting in his soul."

*Ivan is initially uncertain about his feelings. He comes to the conclusion that Smerdyakov is the problem because he is so accustomed to scapegoating the lackey. However, Ivan's true problem is a feeling of guilt. Later, we'll learn that he harbors a secret desire to be rid of his father, which fosters this guilt.*

Ivan wants to curse Smerdyakov but, instead, asks him if Fyodor is "asleep or awake." He's asleep, Smerdyakov says. The lackey talks about how both Fyodor and Dmitri have gone crazy with their "childishness." Smerdyakov says that Fyodor will soon get up and ask him, nearly every minute, if Grushenka has come.

*Smerdyakov describes their jealous rivalry as "childishness" because it seems petty to him. Smerdyakov never expresses romantic passion during the novel, so he can't understand why anyone would suffer for it.*

Ivan assures Smerdyakov that Dmitri's threats are "just passionate talk," and that he won't kill anyone. Smerdyakov fears that he'll be regarded as an accomplice if Dmitri does something to Fyodor. He told Dmitri about the knocking signals that he and Fyodor created to inform the latter of when Grushenka arrives. If Dmitri turns up (Fyodor is afraid of him), Smerdyakov is to tell Fyodor.

*Ivan underestimates his brother's desire for Grushenka and his hatred and resentment of his father. His ignorance is probably partially due to his distance from family affairs. Smerdyakov reveals the ways in which Fyodor completely depends on him for his safety.*

Smerdyakov says that he told Dmitri about the signals when he threatened to break Smerdyakov's legs for deceiving him. Ivan says that if Smerdyakov thinks that Dmitri will try to use these signals to get in, he mustn't be let in. Smerdyakov wonders how he could stop him if he happens "to be laid up with a fit." In that case, Ivan says, he should warn Grigory, who will certainly not let Dmitri in. Smerdyakov says that he would never tell Grigory about the signals without Fyodor's permission. Anyway, both Grigory and Marfa Ignatievna would probably be asleep anyway.

*According to Dmitri, the deception would be in plotting with Fyodor to arrange for a secret visit from Grushenka. What is remarkable about Smerdyakov is that he reveals to Ivan his exact plan for how he will eventually kill Fyodor. He presents Ivan with the possibility of his having an epileptic fit, so Ivan lays the responsibility of looking after Fyodor with Grigory, despite the servant being elderly.*

Ivan calls Smerdyakov's speech "drivel" for how neatly he thinks everything will come together. Ivan then asks why Dmitri would show up if Grushenka doesn't come. Smerdyakov thinks he'll show. Also, Dmitri knows that Fyodor has "a big **envelope** prepared, and there are **three thousand roubles** sealed up in it, with three seals…tied round with a ribbon and addressed by his own hand" to Grushenka.

*Ivan doesn't realize it, but Smerdyakov is telling him how he will eventually commit the crime. This "drivel" is the truth of how Fyodor's murder will take place.*

Ivan says that Dmitri wouldn't steal money. Smerdyakov reminds Ivan that Dmitri's broke. Furthermore, he considers that **three thousand roubles** to be his own money. He says that it's also possible that Grushenka will marry Fyodor, which will rob all three brothers of their inheritance of one hundred and twenty thousand roubles to be split between the three of them. Smerdyakov says that, if he were in Ivan's place, he'd go to Chermashnya to be away from the whole business. After a bit of silence, Ivan calls Smerdyakov an "idiot" and "a terrible scoundrel" and walks away from him. Ivan feels rage but suppresses it and says that he's leaving for Moscow the next morning. Smerdyakov says that he might get a telegram there. He could also be troubled in Chermashnya, but that town is much closer.

*In Dmitri's view, he wouldn't be stealing the money—he would be taking what he thinks is owed to him. Smerdyakov goes on to manipulate Ivan into wishing for his father's death to preserve his inheritance. Smerdyakov likely senses that Ivan will not want to go to Chermashnya. He will later use this against him to suggest that he wanted to be away from the Karamazov household during Fyodor's murder. Ivan gets angry with Smerdyakov because he resents the implication that he's so greedy to be concerned with the inheritance when there's such enmity between his father and brother.*

## PART 2: BOOK 5, CHAPTER 7: "IT'S ALWAYS INTERESTING TO TALK WITH AN INTELLIGENT MAN"

When Ivan enters the house, Fyodor appears in a hurry to tell him something. However, Fyodor then turns and disappears back up the stairs. Smerdyakov says that he's angry about something. Half an hour later, after the house is locked up, Fyodor starts wandering through the rooms, trembling in expectation of the secret knocks. Ivan goes to bed around two. He feels, however, an urge "to go downstairs, unlock the door, [and] go out to the servants' cottage" for the express purpose of beating Smerdyakov. He feels the need to take revenge on someone and even feels hatred for Alexei, in recollection of the day's conversation.

*Fyodor wants to talk to Ivan about going to Chermashnya on his behalf, but he avoids the subject when Ivan enters because he seems vexed. Meanwhile, Fyodor is both anxious for Grushenka's visit and worried about Dmitri possibly breaking into the house. Ivan's anger toward Smerdyakov comes from feeling as though the lackey has found out some secret within him. He had this sense earlier, too, when he saw Smerdyakov by the fence.*

Ivan wakes up the next morning at about seven o'clock. He goes downstairs to have tea. He greets his father "affably" and announces that he's leaving for Moscow in an hour and "for good." Fyodor listens but expresses no grief or surprise. He then asks Ivan to stop off at Chermashnya again. Ivan says that he can't because he has to catch a train. Fyodor insists that he go as a favor to him. He has a woodlot there "on waste lands." A little merchant named Lyagavy, who calls himself Gorstkin, has come along, he says, and wants to offer eleven thousand for the lot. However, the priest at Ilyinskoye says he'll only be in Chermashnya for another week.

*Ivan's affable manner seems to make up for his surliness the night before. Ivan resists going to Chermashnya, probably because he's eager to return to his cosmopolitan life in Moscow and no longer wants anything to do with the chaos within his family. Fyodor's "woodlot" is the same piece of property that Dmitri claims as his inheritance.*

Ivan suggests that the priest settle things with Lyagavy. Fyodor says that won't work because the priest "has no eye for business." Also, Lyagavy is a liar. Ivan says that he has no "eye" either, but Fyodor says that he'll do fine because he'll tell him Lyagavy's "signs." He tells Ivan to watch the merchant's "red, ugly, thin little beard." If it shakes and he looks angry when he talks, then he's telling the truth. If he strokes his beard with his **left** hand and chuckles, he's lying. He says that Ivan should never look into the man's eyes, which are "murky water." If Ivan is able to settle with him, Fyodor says, he should send a note "at once." Ivan should insist on eleven thousand and knock no more than a thousand off of the asking price.

*Fyodor figures that the priest, like Alexei, is too indifferent to material things to help him make a good deal. The left hand, or objects on the left, recur throughout the novel. They indicate dishonesty or an allegiance with evil.*

Once again, Ivan says that he has no time, and, once again, Fyodor asks Ivan to do his father a favor. Ivan says that he'll decide whether or not he'll go when he sets off on his trip. Fyodor scribbles a note for Ivan to present to Lyagavy. Then the horses are sent for and cognac is served "with a bite to eat." Fyodor says goodbye to Ivan on the porch and asks if he'll return, because he'll always be glad to see him. Smerdyakov, Grigory, and Marfa also come out to say goodbye. Ivan gives them each ten roubles. While Ivan sits in the carriage, Smerdyakov runs up to smooth out the rug and says that "it's always interesting to talk with an intelligent man."

*It's possible that Fyodor wants Ivan to perform this task for him because he's concerned about Dmitri trying to cash in on the property. Fyodor makes the matter seem urgent. Fyodor's pleasant goodbye to his son is perhaps flattery, but also admiration for his son's reputation. Smerdyakov's obsequiousness seems like an attempt to ingratiate himself with Ivan. His last comment will, in hindsight, seem like a form of mockery. He has been assuming a subtext to their conversation—that Ivan is leaving so that Smerdyakov can kill his father—and mockingly compliments Ivan's intelligence in also seeing this subtext (which Ivan clearly does not).*

The carriage races off. Ivan finds that he feels very good. He wonders what Smerdyakov meant with his parting words. The carriage pulls up to Volovya station. Ivan gets out and is surrounded by coachmen. He haggles with them over a ride to Chermashnya, which is eight miles away by country road. He'll go in a hired carriage. Ivan then decides not to go to Chermashnya and asks one of them to see Fyodor and tell him that he didn't go. Ivan gives the man, whose name is Mitri, a tip for this service.

*Smerdyakov's departing words tell Ivan what he wants to hear about himself. However, Smerdyakov will later prove to be much cleverer and more insightful about human character. Smerdyakov knows that Ivan will likely choose not to run his father's errand. Here, Ivan contrasts with Alexei, who makes it his purpose to fulfill others' needs.*

Ivan boards the seven o'clock train to Moscow, feeling as though he has left behind "the old world forever." Then, a feeling of grief overcomes him and he feels that he has acted like "a scoundrel." He recalls how happy his father was with his decision just hours before. Meanwhile, back at the house, Smerdyakov goes to the cellar for something and falls from the top step. Marfa hears his cry and goes to him. She sees that he hasn't broken any bones, but he doesn't regain consciousness and he suffers recurring fits. Fyodor sends for Dr. Herzenstube, who examines Smerdyakov and concludes that he suffered an extraordinary fit. Smerdyakov is put to bed in the cottage, in a small room next to Grigory and Marfa's. Then, Fyodor learns that Grigory, too, is bedridden. His back has gone out.

*For Ivan, it's a relief to return to Moscow and to be far away from the intrigue in Skotoprigonyevsk. Ironically, his family life in a provincial town is no comfort; he prefers the more hectic nature of Moscow, which is a further indication of how unpleasant his family life is. At the same time, Smerdyakov is plotting the first step in his murder and frame-up. It's clear that there's little understanding about epilepsy if Smerdyakov is able to fake a fit and have it mistaken for a major episode. Again, Dostoevsky would have personal experience of this as well, as he himself suffered from epilepsy. Grigory becoming bedridden is then just a lucky turn of fate for the lackey.*

Fyodor still awaits Grushenka's arrival that evening. He paces the rooms and listens for the knocks. However, he's also on the alert for the possibility that Dmitri could be watching out for her to knock at the window. Fyodor's heart is "bathed in [sweet] hopes," for he is sure that Grushenka will come.

*Fyodor's emotions waver between anticipation of the object of his desire and fear for his violent son. It's unlikely that he loves Grushenka, but his passion for her is also a life-giving force that contrasts with his imminent death.*

## PART 2: BOOK 6, CHAPTER 1: THE ELDER ZOSIMA AND HIS VISITORS

Alexei enters the elder Zosima's cell. To his surprise, he finds the old man sitting in an armchair, looking "cheerful and gay." He's surrounded by visitors and conversing with them. Those who are gathered for what will probably be the elder's last talk are Father Iosif, Father Paissy, Father Mikhail, and Brother Anfim. Zosima loves Brother Anfim, though he has said very little to him. Forty years ago, they spent many years together, traveling all over Russia, collecting alms for their monastery in Kostroma.

*Zosima is close to death, but he's not suffering from pain or fear. He loves Brother Anfim because of their shared memories of his youth and the time when he first entered the monastery. For Zosima, that was a time in which his life was simpler, and he wasn't weighed down with the great moral authority that he now carries.*

Dusk is falling. When Zosima sees Alexei, he smiles and holds out his hand. Alexei goes to him and weeps. Zosima tells him not to weep yet, for he could live for another twenty years. He tells Alexei to stand and asks him if he saw his brother today. Alexei says that he saw one of his brothers, but Zosima is asking about Dmitri. Alexei says that he saw him the day before, but he couldn't find him today. Zosima encourages him to "make haste" and find him, for the sake of preventing something "terrible."

*Alexei weeps because he loves the elder. He is afraid, too, of what could happen when he is left all alone, without advice, to deal with his brothers and his father, all of whom are morally corrupted. What would be perceived as another one of the elder's prophecies is really another example of his sharp insight. Having observed Dmitri and Fyodor's exchange, he senses something evil.*

Father Iosif and Father Paissy exchange looks, while Alexei asks Zosima about what "suffering" awaits Dmitri. Zosima says that he saw something in Dmitri's face that "horrified" him, something that seemed to show his whole fate. He says that he sent Alexei to Dmitri because he thought that his "brotherly countenance would help him."

*Zosima seems to intuit Dmitri's suffering, which still doesn't exactly make him a prophet—it makes him attentive and intuitive. Zosima's words here suggest that Alexei could have averted disaster if only he had gone to see Dmitri before it was too late.*

Zosima then goes on to talk about how he had an older brother who died his youth and that, without this brother, he may never have entered the monastery. Alexei, he says, resembles his brother "spiritually." Zosima announces to his visitors that he wishes to speak of his brother. This talk has been partly preserved in writing because Alexei wrote it down "from memory" sometime after Zosima died.

*Zosima connects with the Karamazov saga because there are parallels with his early life and his own family. Alexei's pursuit of truth and a life worth living is similar to Zosima's long-dead older brother, Markel, and Zosima's early indulgent habits mirror Dmitri's.*

## PART 2: BOOK 6, CHAPTER 2: FROM THE LIFE OF THE HIEROMONK AND ELDER ZOSIMA, DEPARTED IN GOD, COMPOSED FROM HIS OWN WORDS BY ALEXEI FYODOROVICH KARAMAZOV

The elder Zosima starts his narrative by saying that he was born in a northern province. His father was noble, but not high-ranking. He died when Zosima, then named Zinovy, was two, and left his mother with "a small wooden house" and a bit of money. Zinovy's older brother's name was Markel, who was eight years older, "hot-tempered and irritable by nature." Otherwise, he was kind, silent, and a good student. Markel had no friends among his schoolmates but visited "a certain solitary man" in town known for being a freethinker. He was also "a great scholar and distinguished philosopher at the university." Markel spent his evenings with him until the man was called back to government service in Petersburg.

*Zosima was born into a life of some privilege. Like Alexei, he comes from a family of some nobility—in title only, not character or reputation—and some wealth. Also, like Alexei, he had a hot-tempered older brother. The similarities between them make it easier for Zosima to relate to Alexei and to sympathize with the discord in his family.*

When Lent came around, Markel refused to fast and then announced that there was no God. This horrified the family and the servants. In the sixth week of Lent, Markel became ill. They found out that he had consumption so bad that he wouldn't live through spring. Their mother became fearful for the fate of his soul and begged Markel to observe Lent. Markel had known for a year that he was sick. To please his mother, he agreed to keep the fast and go to church for a little while before taking to his bed.

*Markel's atheism concerns the family, which now worries about the fate of his soul, with death looming over him. One aspect of Lent is fasting to atone for one's sins. Markel's lack of belief could be a result of the professor's influence, or it could his rebellion against God for his illness, or both.*


Though he was very ill, Zinovy (Zosima) saw that his older brother still got out of bed, dressed, and tried to sit in his armchair. Markel seemed glad and discouraged his mother from weeping. He said that, if he were to live, he would serve his mother, for everyone must serve everyone. His mother insisted that it was his illness talking because, in her view, it's impossible not to have masters and servants. He went on to say that everyone is guilty of something before everyone. Therefore, it's unnecessary to quarrel or to remember offenses.

*Markel's example remains with the elder Zosima to date and probably influences his insistence on sitting up in his armchair as though he's well, despite his suffering. Markel's message that everyone should be of service to everyone is also uttered later by Zosima when he first enters the monastery. He goes to parties and encourages the guests and hosts to reconsider their standard of having servants.*


One day, Zinovy (Zosima) went into Markel's room alone. The evening was bright, and the sun was setting. Markel told his younger brother to go out and play for him—to live! Zinovy obeyed. Markel died in the third week after Easter.

*The setting sun marks the end of Markel's life. He encourages Zosima to enjoy the remnants of the day because he won't even live to see the night.*


Acquaintances advised his mother to send Zinovy (Zosima) to Petersburg to the Cadet Corps. The purpose was for him to later enter the Imperial Guard. Zinovy was in the Cadet Corps for nearly eight years. While there, he suppressed many of his childhood memories and took up new habits, which turned him "into an almost wild, cruel, and absurd creature." He acquired some polish, due to learning manners and the French language, but he also learned to engage in "drunkenness, debauchery, and bravado." Soon, he came into some money and used it to engage in "a life of pleasure." Zinovy read books then, but never the Bible, though he always carried it with him.

*Zinovy's dissipation mirrors that of Dmitri, who also went to military school, and then learned to become self-indulgent and greedy. Zosima's story suggests that he, too, could have ended up as depraved and selfish as Dmitri if certain events had not occurred to convince him to take another path. His early choices influence the elder's belief that being cultured and educated isn't enough to encourage moral behavior.*

After serving for four years, Zinovy (Zosima) ended up in a nameless town starting with the letter "K." His regiment was stationed there for a while. Zinovy was well-received in the community and soon met an attractive young woman with "reputable parents." He became infatuated with her and assumed that she felt the same way. He was not in love with her, however, and was too selfish to propose marriage. Zinovy then went away and returned two months later to discover that the girl was married to a wealthy older man who was a local landowner. Zinovy realized that this man had been the girl's fiancé for some time and that he had met the other man "many times in [her] house" but was too "blinded by [his] own merits" to realize that they were involved.

*A minor motif in the novel is love triangles. Dmitri, Fyodor, and Grushenka are all a part of a love triangle. Katerina, Ivan, and Dmitri are in another, though it's unlikely that Katerina and Dmitri were ever truly in love. Here, Zosima reveals his competition with another man for the affection of a woman. However, Zosima admits that he didn't really care for the woman but only wanted to claim her as a prize. His ego demanded that he not lose something to another man.*

Zinovy (Zosima) was embarrassed by his obliviousness, and then became him angry. He decided that the girl must have been laughing at him. She had not really been, but usually broke off his amorous conversations in jest and changed the subject. Zinovy didn't realize this at the time and continued to burn with revenge, thinking that he had been made to look like a fool.

*Zinovy's embarrassment is typical of a young man whose pride has been wounded. He didn't consider how embarrassed the girl may have been to hear such words from him, knowing that she wasn't interested while also worried about his reaction to rejection.*

At a gathering, Zinovy (Zosima) confronted the girl's fiancé and insulted him, "wittily and cleverly," according to other guests. He challenged his "rival" to a duel and the other man accepted, having felt some jealousy toward his fiancée's relationship with Zinovy. It was the end of June and the men were scheduled to meet the next day, "outside town, at seven o'clock in the morning."

*Zinovy believed that he could both mend his wounded ego and claim the girl for himself if he killed her fiancé. Both men agreed to the duel, less out of love for the girl than as attempts to prove to the other who the superior man was.*

Zinovy (Zosima) returned home that evening and got angry with his orderly, Afanasy. He struck the servant twice in the face, causing blood to pour. Forty years later, the elder recalls the assault with "shame and anguish." That night, Zinovy went to bed, "slept for about three hours," and woke up at daybreak. He went to the window, opened it, and watched the sun rise over his garden. He felt something "mean and shameful" in his soul. It wasn't because of the impending duel, but because he hurt Afanasy.

*Zosima takes out his anger on the one person who can't fight back. He was unable to sleep because of his guilty conscience. This places him in contrast to someone like Dmitri, who beat up Grigory seemingly without regret. It took this impulsive act of cruelty against someone weaker than himself to make Zosima truly rethink his life.*

Zinovy (Zosima) then remembered his brother Markel's last words to the servants before he died. He asked them why they were serving him and if he was worthy of being served. He also remembered how his older brother said that everyone is guilty "before everyone and for everyone." Suddenly, Zinovy understood what he was about to do: he was going to kill another man. Just then, his comrade, the lieutenant, came in with the pistols to take him to the site of the duel. They walked out to the carriage, then Zinovy went back in, pretending to have forgotten his purse. He went to Afanasy's room and asked for forgiveness. Afanasy looked afraid, so Zinovy threw himself on the floor at his feet and, again, begged for forgiveness. Afanasy was astounded and also wept.

*Markel's memory saves Zinovy, serving as inspiration for him to find the better part of his nature and cancel the duel. He realizes the gravity of what he is preparing to do, but then risks dishonoring the regiment to prove his new understanding that nothing is more precious than human life. He is guilty for having made the error of thinking that he had the right to judge who deserves to live and die.*

Zinovy (Zosima) went back outside and jumped into the carriage, commanding it to drive. Suddenly, he was excited. When they got to the site of the duel, his rival was already waiting. The men were set "twelve paces apart" and the rival took the first shot, which only grazed Zinovy's cheek. When it was his turn, he threw his pistol up into the trees. He then asked his adversary for forgiveness, apologizing for his foolishness and for causing offense. His adversary and the seconds got angry. The lieutenant, who served as Zinovy's second, accused him of dishonoring the regiment. Zinovy knew that he'd be regarded as a coward, but he was too enraptured by "the divine gifts" all around them to care. His opponent was convinced by his sincerity and shook his hand. Zinovy returned home with the lieutenant, who scolded him, while Zinovy kissed him.

*Zinovy is excited because he's eager to demonstrate his new awareness, which will become the seed of his religious faith. His plea for forgiveness and expression of humility contradicts the image of a stoic and ruthless military man, which is what Zinovy is supposed to be. This is why the lieutenant scolds him for dishonoring the regiment; he has revealed what could be perceived as weakness. Zinovy is blithely unaware of his transgression and kisses the lieutenant to express love and, perhaps, to forgive the lieutenant for being willing to conspire in taking another man's life.*

When his comrades heard the news, they accused Zinovy (Zosima) of dishonoring the regiment and demanded that he "resign his commission." Some defended him, noting that Zinovy couldn't be a coward because he stood up against a shot from his adversary. Zinovy announced that he had already resigned and intended to join the monastery. They all laughed, saying that he should have told them that straight away; for, they never would have passed judgment on a monk. Even his detractors were soon won over. The same happened in local society, which had received him cordially before, but now vied for his attention.

*Those who accused Zinovy of being a coward took offense with his unwillingness to shoot his adversary, again contradicting the image of a soldier. When he announces that he's becoming a monk, however, he quickly regains the respect of his detractors, and develops a reputation within local society. It's almost humorous how quickly the opinions of other change based on what role he is supposed to fill.*

Most of those who sought his attention were ladies. One evening, Zinovy (Zosima) saw the woman over whom he had started the duel. She stood up, went over to him, and offered her hand. She thanked him and expressed her respect for what he did. Then, her husband—Zinovy's former rival—also came over and "all but kissed [him]." Their love filled Zinovy with joy. Then, an older gentleman came up to him. He knew the man by name, though they had never officially met nor "exchanged a word" until that party.

*Zinovy attracts the attention of women who, in the context of the novel, are often the most devout. Alexei will also have a reputation for appealing most to women, including Madame Khokhlakov. The monks are probably sources of comfort because there is little threat of romantic relations developing.*

The man was an official with a prominent position. He was a wealthy, fifty-year-old philanthropist, married to a young wife with whom he had three small children. The next evening, the man visited Zinovy (Zosima) at his home. By then, Zinovy had moved to a place that he rented from "the old widow of an official." The man said that he had been going to various houses, listening to him talk, and had wanted to make his acquaintance for some time. He told Zinovy that he was impressed by his "great strength of character," which led him to risk "suffering general contempt" in favor of the truth. The man tactfully asked if Zinovy could describe to him what he felt at the moment when he asked for forgiveness at the duel.

*The visitor, who will later reveal himself to have been a murderer, is a successful man who lives in great comfort. His philanthropy is an attempt to atone for his past action, however. His family, wealth, and social privilege are mentioned to express that, by confessing to murder, he would be compromising a great deal. The visitor looks at Zinovy as someone of a similar social station who chose honesty and goodness over not doing anything to risk his reputation. The man finds this willingness to suffer courageous.*

Zinovy (Zosima) started from the beginning, which involved the story of what happened between him and Afanasy. The man was interested and soon paid Zinovy regular visits nearly every evening. He said "hardly a word about himself," but kept asking about Zinovy. Zinovy developed love for the man and confided in him. He was impressed that someone so much older wouldn't "disdain [his] youth." As a result of these visits, Zinovy stopped going out. He had become less popular anyway.

*Zinovy's change of heart began when he realized that his unjust society had taught him to be callous and indifferent toward others' rights to existence. He's pleasantly surprised that the visitor is listening to him, as someone as young as Zinovy wouldn't normally be consulted for guidance.*

Zinovy (Zosima) soon noticed that his new friend wanted to tell him something important. He then revealed that he once killed someone. Over the course of three days, the man told Zinovy the story of how he had committed the crime fourteen years earlier over the "young and beautiful" widow of a landowner. He tried to persuade her to marry him, but she was already engaged to "an officer of noble birth and high rank, who was then away on campaign." She then asked the man to stop visiting her. He obliged but, one night, broke into her apartments and "plunged a knife straight into her heart." He arranged things so that the servants would be blamed: he took money and large baubles, neglecting the smaller ones that were worth more.

*The visitor actually commits the crime for which Dmitri will later be accused and sentenced, as his jealousy and entitlement led him to murder. Instead of respecting the lady's engagement as well as her wish to cease all relations, Zinovy's visitor decided to destroy what he could not have. Like Smerdyakov does later, the visitor makes it look like someone else robbed his victim.*

The lady's serf, Pyotr, became the main suspect. The lady had intended to send him into the army and he had already been overheard, during a drunken night in a tavern, threatening to kill her. Two days before her death, he left her home and was living somewhere in town. The day after her murder, someone found him on a road outside of town, drunk, "with a knife in his pocket," and his hand stained with blood. He said that his nose had been bleeding, but no one believed that. He was arrested, but a week later, he succumbed to fever and died in the hospital. Still, everyone was convinced that the serf had committed murder.

*Ivan would consider these details to be "mathematical proof" of the serf's guilt, just as everyone in this town did. The evidence, which is rather arbitrary, worked against Pyotr partly because the town wanted to believe that he was guilty. It made sense to think that a resentful serf would kill his mistress out of contempt for her control over his life. Like Dmitri later in the novel, he is condemned without anyone knowing the truth.*

Zinovy's (Zosima) "mysterious visitor" admitted that he felt no remorse for the lady's murder. He only regretted that "he had killed the woman he loved," not a fellow human being. The stolen articles and money "troubled him little" because he had only taken them to divert attention away from himself. Moreover, the value of what he had taken was small. He donated "the entire sum and even much more for the almshouse that was being established in [their] town."

*The story about the mysterious visitor reveals the toxic nature of jealousy, which can propel a person not only to threaten or kill a romantic rival, but even the object of their passion. The visitor also seemed to have an extreme indifference to human life and its value.*

Zinovy's (Zosima) visitor then told him how he got married to "a wonderful and sensible girl" shortly thereafter. He figured that marriage and, eventually, children would help him to forget about his past crimes. He then began to worry about his wife finding out that he committed murder. He began to have dreams about his victim, in which he saw her blood. He endured this torment and continued with his philanthropic activities, for which he became well-known. The visitor tells Zinovy that he thought about committing suicide. Then, he decided that he would confess his crime to the public. For three years, he fantasized about doing so. Then, inspired by Zinovy's courage at the duel, he decided to do it.

*The visitor talks about how his evil deed didn't mar his good fortune. Instead, the fact that he continued to lead such a blessed life, despite his crime, causes him to feel guilty (and also proves how unjust his society is). However, there's also the possibility that he didn't really feel guilty but only wanted to avoid facing any consequences for what he did, as he mostly fears his wife finding out. He decides that it's better to confess so that he can stop suffering and maintain some honor.*


Zinovy (Zosima) mentioned that no one would believe the visitor. He had no proof of his crime. The visitor worried about the fate of his wife and children, but Zinovy assured him that his children would later praise the "magnanimity" of his decision. Though the man claimed to have made up his mind, he continued to go to Zinovy for two weeks thereafter, as though he were still unable to make up his mind.

*The visitor worries about the consequences of his revelation on his family, and of the possibility that they could become outcasts because of him—guilty by proxy. Zinovy assures him that his children will honor him for his willingness to suffer to do what is right.*


On his birthday, the visitor gave a big party. The whole town was there. After dinner, he walked into the middle of the room with a paper in his hand, which was to be "a formal statement to the authorities." He read it—a complete account of his crime. He then placed on the table the gold objects that he had taken from his victim, along with a letter from the woman's fiancé and her unfinished reply to him. Everyone was "astonished and horrified." The authorities were unsure of how to proceed because the objects could have been gifts from the woman, since they were acquainted.

*The visitor's choice to announce his crime to the entire town expresses that his feeling of guilt is more excruciating than any concern over what others will think of him, especially given that murder contrasts with his philanthropic reputation. It seems strange that the authorities do not believe a man who has confessed to a crime, but this is likely related to his high social standing.*

Five days later, the visitor succumbed to madness. The man's wife accused Zinovy (Zosima) of upsetting him and bringing on his anguish. Zinovy went to see the man, who told him that he felt "joy and peace for the first time after so many years." The man then whispered to Zinovy that he visited him once at midnight with the intention of killing him—hating Zinovy for expecting the man to turn himself in, while he was ambivalent about doing so. A week later, the man died. The whole town attended his funeral and "the archpriest made a heartfelt speech." Once he was buried, the whole town turned against Zinovy. Then, people began to believe the truth of the man's confession and agreed to receive Zinovy again.

*On his deathbed, the man feels peace because he has relieved his conscience and probably believes that he can now go to heaven. The man's confession about considering murder again strongly suggests that he's a wrathful person who strikes out when he no longer feels in control of himself or others. This aspect of the man's nature is only known to Zinovy, however. Others do not want to believe that the man with the generous reputation would kill because to do so would be admitting, in some way, of having been fooled.*

## PART 2: BOOK 6, CHAPTER 3: FROM TALKS AND HOMILIES OF THE ELDER ZOSIMA

Zosima talks about what a monk is and his significance. Though he acknowledges the presences of those who are "pleasure-seekers," there are others who are "humble and meek." He talks, too, about how people are saying that the world is becoming more united in a "brotherly communion." He encourages his listeners not to believe this. The monastic way is "the way to real and true freedom."

*Unlike Father Ferapont, Zosima is less interested in the rituals of monasticism than he is in the service that monks perform for the public. He believes that they can act as examples of what an egalitarian society could look like.*

Zosima asserts that Russia will be saved by its people and that the monastery has always been on the side of the people. However, the people "are festering with drink." Children as young as ten, Zosima says, work in factories and crave wine. Still, he thinks that God will save Russia, which knows that it is sinning—that is, the simple man knows, while his betters think that they can create a just order with reason alone.

*Zosima thinks that the country, which is shifting to a modern era, will revert to the better part of human nature and create a mutually beneficial society. However, he mentions that the country has grave social ills, such as the corruption of children, that it still must overcome.*

Zosima goes on to say that, in Europe, people are rising up against the rich. On the other hand, in Russia, despite two centuries of serfdom, the people are neither "vengeful" nor "envious." They honor those who have more but also demand that they be regarded as men equally worthy of respect. Zosima believes that God will save a country that is so "great in her humility." He says that "the most corrupt" rich men will be ashamed of their obscene wealth, resulting in class equality.

*The conditions that Zosima describes are prophetic; they seem to anticipate the Russian Revolution of 1917. However, he also overestimates the egalitarian spirit of his people. Envy and the desire for revenge are natural responses for those who have been oppressed and exploited. Smerdyakov is an example of the serf who rises up against the rich.*

Zosima narrates a story in which he one day met Afanasy by chance in a marketplace. It had been eight years since they had last seen each other. Afanasy was delighted and took Zosima to meet his wife and two small children. The family sold items at the market. Afanasy lived in a home that was "poor, but clean, [and] joyful." He wept at the sight of his former master and asked Zosima what he did with his wealth. Zosima said that he gave it to the monastery. After tea, Zosima said goodbye to the family. Afanasy hurriedly gave him fifty kopecks—a donation to the monastery. Zosima never saw him again, but, when they kissed, "a great human communion" took place. Zosima wonders if such a communion might one day take place throughout Russia.

*Afanasy can relate more easily to Zosima now because he is poor and has humbled himself before the Lord. This proves, to some degree, Zosima's belief that true brotherhood can exist through the monastery, which teaches men how to regard others as their natural equals. Despite his poverty, Afanasy wants to give money to the Church, a sign of his own devotion as well as his wish to show that he is willing to contribute to Zinovy's purpose—another gesture that equalizes them. Zinovy relies on such donations as much as Afanasy relies on the Church for comfort.*

Zosima advises that one pray sincerely. for prayer is education. He also says that one shouldn't be afraid of another man's sin but should love him. One should love all of God's creations, particularly children who are "sinless, like angels." It was Father Anfim who taught Zosima to love children. He would spend some of the kopecks given to them as alms on gingerbread and candy.

*Zossima sees prayer as a form of meditation, intended to bring one into closer communion with God. In this communion, one accepts the weaknesses of others, seeing that we are all children of the same God. Like Ivan, Zosima focuses on the innocence of children, but he draws a much more positive conclusion from his musings than Ivan does.*

Zosima then tells his listeners about hell, which he defines as no longer being able to love. People speak of the material torment of flames, but these would be preferable over "spiritual torment." There are, however, "those who remain proud and fierce even in hell," who are "in communion with Satan and his proud spirit." For them, hell "is voluntary and insatiable." They suffer, Zosima says, according to their own will, due to cursing God. They will burn "in the fire of their wrath," but they will never find death.

*Zosima dissuades people from thinking about hell as a literal place filled with fire and devils who torment them—an image evoked both from Scripture and later Church doctrine. Instead, he sees hell as the state of misery. The "devils" are not actual evil beings, but the evil acts that attack one's conscience.*

Alexei's manuscript ends here, but it is "incomplete and fragmentary." The elder Zosima's death comes rather unexpectedly. He seems to feel pain in his chest. He then turns pale and "pressed his hands firmly to his heart." Everyone rises from their seats and rushes toward him. He gazes at them, smiling. He "lowered himself from his armchair to the floor and knelt." He then bows his face to the ground and stretches out his arms. Before dawn, the town hears about his death. Townspeople rush to the monastery. That same day, something "strange, disturbing, and bewildering" occurs.

*Zosima's reaction to death is not fear or an expression of pain. His gesture of pressing his hands to his heart could easily be perceived as a gesture of love, while his smile signals a feeling of rapture. He then descends to his knees for what seems to be a final prayer. With his elder gone, Alexei must now reenter the world and engage in the complexities of his family life, which will overwhelm him. The world Zosima represents is about to be replaced by the darker, more sensual, and sometimes even nihilistic world of the Karamazovs.*

## PART 3: BOOK 7, CHAPTER 1: THE ODOR OF CORRUPTION

Father Zosima's body is prepared for burial. The established rite is that the body must remain unwashed. Instead, Father Paissy wipes it with warm water, after making the sign of the cross with a Greek sponge on the various parts of the deceased's body. He then dresses the body in monastic garb and wraps it in a cloak. Towards morning, it's transferred to a coffin, which they leave in Zosima's cell all day.

*It's possible that the body must remain unwashed to maintain the integrity of the soul which, in Russian Orthodox tradition, is said to linger near the body until burial. Zosima's body is left in a coffin for the purpose of a wake, or public viewing.*

The monks and lay visitors expect "something extraordinary" to occur. People arrive, particularly with sick children, hoping to receive some "immediate healing power." Father Paissy sees vanity within these expectations. He resents that, somewhere in his soul, he, too, expects some miracle.

*People believe that Zosima is imbued with supernatural power. Father Paissy doesn't object to their superstition but to the fact that they're more interested in how they will benefit from his death than in his actual passing.*

Mikhail Rakitin is present, after having been sent "on a special errand from Madame Khokhlakov." After learning that she wouldn't be admitted to the hermitage, she immediately dispatched Rakitin and told him to report everything that happened every half-hour. She mistakenly views Rakitin as a devout man because he is "skillful" at "presenting himself to everyone according to the wishes of each."

*Rakitin, as the seminarian, is in the position to report on what occurs. Though he is a student of the monastery, he has no real religious faith. It seems unclear why he's actually there, beyond using the position to advance himself socially.*

Around three o'clock in the afternoon, the "odor of corruption" begins to emanate from Zosima's coffin. This is rather strange because Father Varsonofy had died fairly recently and people remembered that no smell emanated from his coffin. The same was true of the elder Job, a famous ascetic who lived to be one hundred and five. Some monks are pleased to notice the smell from the coffin and go out to tell others the news. This results in an "influx of lay visitors." Father Paissy continues reading the Gospel aloud, as though he notices nothing. Meanwhile, denunciations pour down on the memory of the departed elder, referring to him as unrighteous because he preached about "great joy and not tearful humility." They also judge him for not fasting and allowing himself sweets. Others say that he was prideful.

*The "odor of corruption" is the natural odor that a corpse emits when it hasn't been embalmed. It seems that some jealous monks are glad when the stink emanates from the coffin because it seems to mean that Zosima is less remarkable than his reputation. They can then share their new information with laypeople who worshipped the departed. Dostoevsky reveals how pettiness, envy, and strife don't elude the monks just because they've made a vow to God. Though they strive toward more benevolent behavior, they remain all too human.*

Suddenly, Father Ferapont appears. He rarely leaves "his little wooden cell in the apiary," not even to attend church. Everyone knows that Father Ferapont "intensely disliked" Zosima. He stops at the threshold to the cell, raises his arms, and begins to make signs of the cross. He yells, "Get thee hence, Satan!" He has come to drive out the guests who "are destroying the holy faith." He points to Zosima's coffin and says that, because he "denied devils," they are breeding "like spiders in the corners." Father Paissy demands that Father Ferapont leave, for this is a matter for only God to judge. However, Father Ferapont continues to condemn Zosima for not fasting, while Father Paissy calls his speech nonsense and, again, tells him to leave. Father Ferapont returns to his cell, still exclaiming, but rather incoherently.

*Father Ferapont is a fanatic, obsessed with the rigor and self-denial of monasticism. His interpretation of the order is very different from that of Zosima, and this ideological difference forms the basis of what could be perceived as a rivalry (though Zosima, it seems, didn't reciprocate in Father Ferapont's enmity). Father Ferapont's accusation about Zosima denying "devils" likely comes from Ferapont's belief that Zosima was insufficiently condemnatory of those who have sinned, thereby tolerating "devils," or evil.*

Father Paissy hands over the reading of the Gospel to Father Iosif. Father Paissy feels great sadness and wonders if it's because Alexei means so much to him now. Alexei passes just then, and their eyes meet. Alexei looks away and Father Paissy senses that a change is taking place in him. He asks if Alexei is losing faith. He then asks Alexei where he's going. Is he leaving the hermitage without permission? Alexei looks at Father Paissy, who is set to become his new elder, gives him a twisted smile, and waves his hand at him, as though to say that nothing matters. He then walks toward the gates of the hermitage.

*Father Paissy is sad both because of the passing of Zosima and the great responsibility he will take on in looking after Alexei's soul. Father Paissy seems to have an important connection with Alexei already, due to his ability to sense that something is awry with his charge. Alexei feels like no one can understand what he's feeling, and the perceived injustice of Zosima's death threatens to shake his faith.*

## PART 3: BOOK 7, CHAPTER 2: AN OPPORTUNE MOMENT

Contrary to Father Paissy's suspicion, Alexei isn't becoming one of little faith. He's running away in dismay because his faith is so great. Long thereafter, Alexei would consider this day "one of the most painful and fatal days of his life." Alexei was expecting a "higher justice" that would take the form of a miracle. Everyone in the monastery, in fact, had expected this. It hurt Alexei that Zosima, the one who "was to have been exalted higher than anyone in the whole world" was being disgraced. Alexei loves God, but he murmurs against Him. He feels "some vague but tormenting and evil impression" left over from his conversation with Ivan the day before.

*Alexei's dismay comes partly from not witnessing the miracle that he expected. He's in pain because Zosima was insulted by the other monk and because a part of Alexei may suspect that there is some truth in the others' suspicion that Zosima was merely ordinary. Alexei is also angry with God because he feels that he's been cheated. He then begins to wonder if there's some validity to Ivan's conversation from the day before. In all, he is disillusioned.*

It's already quite dark when Rakitin passes through a pine grove and notices Alexei "lying face down on the ground under a tree, motionless and as if asleep." Rakitin calls him by name. He says that he's been looking for Alexei for two hours and asks what he's doing. Alexei raises his head and leans back against the tree. He isn't crying, but he wears "an expression of suffering." Rakitin notes the change in his look and asks if he's angry with someone. Alexei snaps at him, telling Rakitin to leave him alone. Rakitin asks if his dismay has been caused by the stink from Zosima's corpse. Alexei cries out about how much he wants to believe, while Rakitin points out that even "thirteen-year-old schoolboys" no longer believe in such things.

*When Alexei is disappointed by monastic life, he takes solace in nature. In this regard, he and Zosima are very similar because the elder also found comfort in nature's beauty. Rakitin envies the favoritism that has been shown to Alexei and the Karamazovs at the monastery, so he delights in taunting his naivete in revenge. Rakitin's reference to thirteen-year-old schoolboys prepares the reader for Kolya Krasotkin, who is thirteen and remarkably cynical.*

Alexei gives Rakitin a long look, but it's not a look of anger. He then says that he's not rebelling against God, he just doesn't accept his world. Rakitin doesn't understand what he means, and Alexei doesn't clarify. Rakitin changes the subject by offering him a hunk of sausage. He then invites Alexei back to his place and even offers a shot of vodka, which Alexei surprises him by accepting.

*Alexei quotes Ivan, thereby acknowledging that he was deeply affected by his brother's speech the day before. Rakitin's offer of sausage is his first temptation of Alexei. He wants to dissuade the monk from his fast. The next temptation will be getting Grushenka to seduce him.*

Rakitin asks Alexei if he knows that Ivan has left for Moscow, and Alexei says he does. He mentions that he has to stop off to see Madame Khokhlakov to give her the requested report. Rakitin then stops suddenly, takes Alexei by the shoulder, and suggests that they go to Grushenka's instead. Alexei agrees. Rakitin is delighted. There are two benefits for him—one is material and the other is "vengeful." He's eager to see Alexei fall "from the saints to the sinners."

*Rakitin is envious of Alexei. Part of his resentment is related to Alexei's higher social class; another part is jealousy for the way he's idealized as an angel by Madame Khokhlakov and the favoritism that Zosima expressed toward him. Rakitin feels inferior to Alexei, so he wants to bring him down to his level.*

## PART 3: BOOK 7, CHAPTER 3: AN ONION

Grushenka lives in the busiest part of town, near the cathedral square in the home of the merchant Morozov, from whom she rents "a small wooden cottage." A widow took Grushenka in to please her relative, Samsonov, who is also Grushenka's patron. Samsonov brought Grushenka to the house about four years ago, when she was a "timid, shy, eighteen-year-old." Then, she also looked "delicate, thin, pensive, and sad." There was a rumor that she had been deceived and abandoned by an officer. She's also rumored to be "from an honorable family" and "the daughter of a retired deacon." Grushenka is notorious for being "hard to get" and is called "a real Jew" for her business acumen. She emancipates herself from Samsonov, after assuring him of her loyalty.

*This description of Grushenka highlights her transformation. When she entered Samsonov's life, she was very vulnerable. It's unclear if Grushenka's transformation is entirely due to the influence of Samsonov—a hard and greedy man—or if it also results from her bitterness over being abandoned by the Polish officer, Pan Mussyalovich. The derisive reference to her business acumen reflects both anti-Semitism and sexism, given how money frees Grushenka.*

Grushenka has two servants—one is a very old cook and the other is a twenty-year-old young woman who serves as her maid (Fenya). She lives frugally in her three-room cottage. When Rakitin and Alexei arrive, it's dusk. The maid answers the door and tells her mistress, "It's not him, miss, it's some others, they're all right." Grushenka stands up by the sofa and greets Rakitin. She's surprised to see him with Alexei. She says that she thought Dmitri was trying to force his way into the house. She orders Fenya to go outside to see if Dmitri is there, hiding and spying on her.

*Part of Grushenka's good sense with money comes from the fact that she spends little of what she earns. However, it is true that she is not averse to using men for money or other favors. At the same time, these gifts convince Fyodor and Dmitri that they are entitled to her loyalty and affection, which explains Dmitri's jealousy. Her frugality contrasts with Dmitri's extravagance.*

Grushenka says that she's expecting "a certain golden message" and that it would be best if he weren't around. She says that, when it comes, she'll "jump up and fly away" and Rakitin won't see her ever again. She then goes "friskily" over to Alexei and sits next to him on the sofa, looking at him admiringly. She has "a kind expression" on her face that surprises Alexei. They had never met before the previous day, and Alexei had negative ideas about Grushenka based on her "vicious" action toward Katerina Ivanovna. However, her "whole manner" seems suddenly different since the day before. She seems simpler and no longer affected. She tells Alexei how glad she is to see him, though she doesn't know why. Rakitin reminds her that she has been pestering him to bring Alexei.

*The message that Grushenka is expecting is from her former fiancé, Pan Mussyalovich, saying that he'll take her back. Grushenka remains in love with him. She then seemingly contradicts this by trying to seduce to Alexei. In his naïveté, Alexei doesn't realize that her "kind expression" is part of her flirtation. He also doesn't realize that this is all an act orchestrated by Rakitin to tempt Alexei into submitting to lust, like Fyodor and Dmitri. Rakitin does this out of envy for what he perceives as Alexei's innocence and the favoritism he's shown at the monastery.*

Grushenka asks why Alexei looks so sad. Rakitin tells her that "his elder got smelly." Grushenka finds Rakitin's talk foolish and tells him to "shut up." Then, suddenly, she springs up and leaps onto Alexei's knees, "like an affectionate cat." She embraces his neck with her right arm and tells him that she'll make him feel better. Alexei is quiet and sits as though he's "afraid to move." Rakitin sits watching them, "carnivorously." However, this "horrible" woman doesn't arouse fear in Alexei—the kind that usually springs up in him. Instead, he feels curiosity.

*Rakitin explains that Alexei is sad because the elder Zosima's body decomposed as any other human body would, thereby denying the miracle that Alexei expected. Grushenka's movements are described as feline to reflect her ease and nimbleness with flirtation. Rakitin's carnivorous gaze is less for Grushenka than for Alexei. He wants Grushenka to "eat him up," as he claims she said, to consume the innocence that Rakitin finds enviable.*

Grushenka tells Rakitin that her officer is in Mokroye but will be coming soon. Rakitin asks if Dmitri knows about the officer and she says he doesn't. If he did, he'd kill her. Grushenka goes back to charming Alexei, apologizing for being "a bitch" at Katerina Ivanovna's. She then tells Alexei that she loves him "with all [her] soul." Rakitin reminds her of her officer, but she insists that she loves Alexei differently. She tells Alexei that, when she looks at him, she feels ashamed of her bad behavior.

*Grushenka is certain that Dmitri would fly into a jealous rage if he knew about her relationship with the Polish officer. Dmitri later says that, if he had known that Grushenka was in Mokroye with the officer, he wouldn't have come and would only have wished for her happiness. Given his passionate character, though, it's difficult to find this plausible.*

Fenya comes in with a bottle of champagne and three already filled glasses. Rakitin takes one glass, drinks it, and pours himself another. He then offers Alexei a glass. Alexei takes it and sips it, then sets it down, deciding that he'd better not indulge. Grushenka decides to join him in his abstinence. Rakitin taunts her for being sentimental, saying that Alexei is grieving and rebelling against God, but Grushenka has no excuse not to drink. Rakitin then tells her that Zosima died today. She crosses herself piously and then jumps out of Alexei's lap, suddenly aware that she's being inappropriate.

*In refusing the champagne, Alexei rejects self-indulgent pleasure and the temptation to forget, instead deciding to bear his suffering over Zosima. When Grushenka learns about Zosima's death, her act of devotion—crossing herself piously—reveals that she is someone who holds some things sacred and, contrary to popular belief, is a moral person.*

Alexei gives Grushenka "a long, surprised look" and a light seems to come into his face. He scolds Rakitin for taunting him for his rebellion against God and says that, because he doesn't want to hold any anger, Rakitin should be kinder, too. He tells him that he's lost a treasure that Rakitin has never had, which makes him unqualified to judge Alexei. He then turns to Grushenka and tells her that she has "restored [his] soul." Rakitin laughs at the notion of Grushenka saving Alexei and tells him that, just a moment before, she was going to "eat [him] up."

*Alexei's look of surprise reflects his ability to see Grushenka differently, as someone kind, moral, and even devout. The "treasure" that Grushenka says Rakitin has never had is true faith and love. Rakitin is also a cynic with a negative opinion of humanity, contrasting with Alexei's view of boundless, Christ-like love. The image of restoration contrasts with that of being consumed. Alexei's faith has been strengthened.*

Grushenka jumps up, outraged, and declares that she'll tell the truth. She says that, though she's wicked, she gave an **onion**. She tells Alexei the fable about the woman who ended up condemned to hell because she failed to repeat the selfless act that she had once shown during her lifetime—giving an onion to a beggar. Grushenka sees herself similarly as someone who once gave a little onion, which means that she isn't much good. She confesses that she told Rakitin that she'd give him twenty-five roubles in exchange for bringing Alexei, whom she planned to seduce. Rakitin denies it, but she flings the bill at him, and he takes it, saying that "fools exist for the intelligent man's profit."

*The "onion" is a symbol of aid during a moment of duress and torment. Alexei was suffering from grief, so he was tempted to allow himself to be corrupted by Grushenka. Instead, he realizes that someone who seems to be the most "lost" or without a sense of goodness can sometimes perform the most generous acts. Rakitin's admission of his bribe and his open expression of greed reveal him to be the more immoral character, as well as having never been a friend to Alexei.*

Grushenka goes on to tell "the whole, pure truth" of how she intended to "ruin" Alexei. She wanted to do this, she says, because Alexei always refused to look at her in the street. This made her angry, so she became determined to seduce him. She then tells Alexei about the officer who left her and broke her heart. She obsessed about getting revenge against him. In the meantime, she began saving money and gained weight, but she insists that she hasn't gotten any smarter. A month ago, she got a letter from the officer, saying that his wife has died and he wants to see her. Grushenka wondered if she would "crawl to him like a little dog" if she sees him, which made her angry with herself. She says that she's been "toying with Mitya (Dmitri)" just to avoid her officer.

*Grushenka's wish to tell the "pure truth" contrasts with her original sinful intentions. Here, she expresses the desire to appeal to better parts of her own nature. She also expresses great self-awareness and introspection when she wonders if she truly feels love for her officer or only obsession. She describes Dmitri and Fyodor as distractions to her thoughts about the officer—a harsh contrast to both men's obsessions with her.*

Alexei tells Rakitin that Grushenka is "higher in love" than they. Rakitin asks, mockingly, if Alexei has fallen in love with Grushenka, and she tells Alexei to ignore him. She says that she was just about to ask for Alexei's forgiveness for having been rude, but now she wants to confide him: does Alexei think that she really loves this officer? Should she forgive him? Alexei says that she's already forgiven him, and Grushenka agrees. She wonders if she has only come to love her feeling of revenge and not the officer himself.

*Alexei makes this assessment about Grushenka based on her willingness to be honest with him about her ill intentions. Her confession makes him comfortable with her for the first time, revealing that she's not the evil person he imagined her to be. She proves herself emotionally wise here in analyzing her own feelings, though she also torments herself with whether or not she loves her former beau or mistakes her fixation for something else.*

Rakitin announces that they have to go back to the monastery. Grushenka doesn't want Alexei to leave. All her life, she says, she's been waiting for someone like him, who would forgive her for her wickedness. He reminds her that all he did was to give her an **onion**. Then, he starts weeping. Fenya enters, announcing that a carriage has come from Mokroye. Grushenka runs to her bedroom. Rakitin says that he and Alexei should leave. He's grown tired of her "tearful screams." As they depart, Grushenka opens her bedroom window and asks Alexei to bow to Dmitri for her and not to think ill of "his wicked woman."

*Alexei and Grushenka have both helped each other: she has helped to restore his faith by reassuring him that, indeed, Christ-like love can exist in people, and he has helped to affirm that she isn't as wicked as everyone says. Grushenka is on her way to Mokroye to see the Polish officer. In asking Alexei to tell Dmitri that she bows to him, she inadvertently mimics Dmitri's request that Alexei do the same on his behalf to Katerina, when he left her for Grushenka.*

Rakitin explains that the officer is from Poland and has served in Siberia. Rumor has it that he's lost his job and has heard that Grushenka has come into some money, which explains his desire to return to her. Rakitin then mocks Alexei for thinking that he "converted a sinful woman." He asks Alexei if he resents him for selling "a true friend" for twenty-five roubles, but Alexei tells him that he's forgotten about that. This angers Rakitin. He says that he doesn't want to know Alexei anymore and urges him to go back to the monastery alone. Rakitin turns down another street, leaving Alexei to walk "alone in the dark."

*Rakitin doesn't believe that the Polish officer is in love with Grushenka, but that he's only going to use her for money. This is likely to be true, given what the reader later learns about his poverty. The fact that Alexei isn't angry with Rakitin and has forgotten about the bribe (Alexei is never one to hold on to an offense) makes Rakitin even more cross, unable to stand Alexei's generous nature, which contrasts with his own covetous one.*

## PART 3: BOOK 7, CHAPTER 4: CANA OF GALILEE

Alexei returns to the hermitage very late. The gatekeeper lets him in "by a special entrance," and Alexei goes to the elder's cell, where his coffin now rests. Father Paissy is reading the Gospel over the coffin. The window is open, letting in "fresh and rather cool" air. Alexei thinks that the smell must've gotten worse for them to open the window. He listens to Father Paissy reading passages from the Gospel about the marriage that took place in Cana of Galilee. Alexei comments on the part that he loves, when Christ turns water into wine, bringing joy. Then, he starts dozing off.

*Reading the Gospel is part of the funerary ritual according to the Russian Orthodox Church. The idea of the elder Zosima's still-rotting flesh is a reminder of what the monk never denied—he's human, not divine. This is also why he was so aligned with the natural world and the more sensual aspects of life. Alexei is, too, though he doesn't yet seem to know it. His interest in the aforementioned Biblical passage is an indication of this, as he enjoys the fact that Christ made wine simply to bring delight to his friends. This seems much more aligned with Zosima's view of Christianity than the harsher, more ascetic religion of some of the monks.*

Suddenly, Alexei hears the elder Zosima's voice. The voice asks Alexei why he's hiding, and tells him to join the others in drinking wine—"the wine of a new and great joy." In the dream, they are at a wedding. Zosima, who appears as a "little wizened man," says that he's there because he gave an **onion** and that there are many others who gave only "one little onion." Zosima tells Alexei that he, too, was able "to give a little onion to a woman who hungered." Alexei feels a burning in his heart, then "tears of rapture nearly burst from his soul." He stretches out his hands, gives a little cry, and wakens.

*Alexei's "hiding" suggests his tendency to avoid physical pleasures as an avowal of his communion with God. This is demonstrated when he refuses Rakitin's offer of champagne, when he chooses only to drink coffee when his father offers him breakfast, and, most particularly, in his embarrassment around women, who remind him of his potential for sexual desire. The return of the image of the onion is a reminder of the idea that a single act of love has the potential to redeem a person.*

Alexei fell asleep on his knees, but now he's standing. He goes to the coffin and looks at it for about thirty seconds. Zosima's corpse is covered up, and there's an icon on his chest. Just a moment ago, Alexei heard the elder's voice, and now he wants to hear more. Suddenly, his soul yearns for freedom. He walks outside. He's in a state of rapture and begins to weep, but he doesn't know why. He feels that he wants "to forgive everyone for everything, and to ask forgiveness" for everything. Three days later, Alexei decides to leave the monastery, following the words of his elder, who encouraged him to "sojourn with the world."

*Alexei's feeling of wanting to forgive mirrors Zosima's deathbed narrative about his older brother Markel who, before he died, was overwhelmed by empathy and wished to forgive all offenses and take on the suffering of those who had been offended. This overflow of emotion is also an example of the characteristic Karamazov passion, though Alexei turns this kind of fervor to a productive rather than destructive purpose. With Zosima gone, Alexei has no reason to remain at the monastery, and many of its members have now offended him by trying to dishonor Zosima's memory.*

## PART 3: BOOK 8, CHAPTER 1: KUZMA SAMSONOV

For two days, Dmitri has been in "an unimaginable state." He's sure that Fyodor will propose to Grushenka, if he hasn't already. He figures that Grushenka's "torment" comes from not knowing which of them to choose, whether father or son would be more profitable to her. He didn't think at all of her Polish officer. She had shown Dmitri the officer's letter, but he placed little value in it, figuring that the man would never really turn up. After that, Grushenka stopped talking about the officer.

*Grushenka has the adoration of both Fyodor and Dmitri (she will choose the latter for reasons that may not be unrelated to her wounded pride), but she remains devoted to a man who chose another woman over her. In many of the novel's relationships, Dostoevsky seems to imply that we often love those who don't love us back—that people tend to want what they can't have.*

Ironically, Dmitri was just as worried about Grushenka offering herself to him as he was about her marrying his father. He didn't know how he would get the money to care for her. He knows that Grushenka has money, but he wants them to start a new life with his money, not hers. He becomes desperate to find the "fatal money" that will help him take her away. What he knows now is that it's first necessary to return the **three thousand roubles** that he took from Katerina Ivanovna. He doesn't want to start anew as "a scoundrel."

*Despite the rather dishonorable circumstances around Grushenka and Dmitri's relationship, it's very important to him that they marry as honorably as possible. In accordance with the traditions of the time, he insists on looking after her in the way most husbands would, as opposed to relying on her income. The thought of sponging off of Grushenka aggrieves him.*

When Dmitri arrives at Samsonov's, his visit is announced by a young servant. Samsonov twice refuses to admit him. Dmitri then writes on a piece of paper that he has important business to address, regarding Grushenka. Samsonov tells the servant to ask Dmitri to wait in the drawing room. Dmitri sits and awaits his fate with "nervous impatience." When Samsonov appears, Dmitri jumps up and walks toward him "with his long, firm, military stride."

*Samsonov doesn't want to see Dmitri, and will later both fool him and condemn him, because if Grushenka leaves with Dmitri, Samsonov will lose any remaining hold that he has on her. Dmitri walks with his "military stride" both out of habit and to impress the merchant with his strength and resolve.*

Samsonov asks Dmitri what he wants. Dmitri sits again and repeats the story Samsonov already knows about how his father cheated him of his inheritance. Dmitri says that a lawyer told him that he has land in Chermashnya that he inherited from his mother. He says that it would be possible to start a court action to take the land from Fyodor, which couldn't be worth "less then twenty-five thousand," maybe thirty. Because he can't deal with a lawsuit or the possibility of a countersuit, he offers Samsonov to take over all of his claims on the land and just give Dmitri **three thousand roubles**. He promises Samsonov that he can't lose in this case. He'll supply all of the documents if Samsonov pays him three thousand now.

*Dmitri proceeds to make a very stupid offer, though one that could have been very beneficial to Samsonov, had he accepted. As the reader learned earlier, the woodlot is worth at least ten thousand roubles. In his haste and recklessness, Dmitri is willing to sell it for a fraction of its proper worth. However, he also overestimates the cost of the lot, revealing his poor sense for business and a general tendency to assume that he has more than he actually does.*

Samsonov tells Dmitri that he doesn't engage in that kind of business. Dmitri suddenly feels weak, not knowing what to do next. Samsonov suggests that Dmitri go to a local man named Lyagavy who "trades in timber." He tells Dmitri that this same trader has been "bargaining for a year with Fyodor Pavlovich" over a woodlot, but they can't agree on a price for it. He says that, if Dmitri were to get to him before Fyodor and make him the same offer that Dmitri made Samsonov, he might take an interest. Lyagavy is currently staying in Ilyinskoye with a priest.

*Samsonov makes it clear that he doesn't engage in land dealings, though it's unclear what kind of business exactly he is engaged in. The reader knows that he's an old shopkeeper, but the source of his wealth, beyond his miserliness, remains unclear. It's possible that Grushenka is Samsonov's main source of wealth—that is, acting as her procurer, which would explain his hostility to Dmitri.*

Dmitri is excited by Samsonov's "brilliant idea." He thanks Samsonov effusively, saying that it's all "for her." Dmitri then goes back to his lodgings. He isn't sure if the old man has given him good business advice or if he was laughing at him. The second of his thoughts turned out to be true. Later, after the Karamazov "catastrophe," Samsonov would recall how he had made a fool of the captain.

*Dmitri is excited by the idea, believing that it'll rescue him from his father's financial clutches and will grant him the life that he wants with Grushenka. Samsonov would've been averse to this because, if Grushenka went off with Dmitri, he'd no longer have control over her.*

## PART 3: BOOK 8, CHAPTER 2: LYAGAVY

Dmitri sets out on a back road from Volovya station and goes to Ilyinskoye. The priest isn't home but in a neighboring village. The priest tells Dmitri that Lyagavy is now in Sukhoy Possyolok. He's spending the night in the forester's hut because he's buying timber there, too. The priest agrees to go with Dmitri to Sukhoy Possyolok on foot. The priest struggles to keep up with Dmitri's "long strides" and, on the way, Dmitri talks about his plans concerning Lyagavy. When Dmitri talks about his disputes with his father over his inheritance, the priest seems frightened. He has "some sort of dependent relation to Fyodor." The priest does, however, make a point of telling Dmitri that Lyagavy prefers to be called "Gorstkin" and takes great offense at being called Lyagavy.

*It's rather ironic that Dmitri takes the journey to Ilyinskoye with a priest. The juxtaposition of a clergyman and a moral reprobate, temporarily united by a common purpose, reinforces the sense that, however different on the surface, people can share mundane things in common. However, the priest is frightened by Dmitri's talk about Fyodor due to the violence of his speech. Interestingly, in that speech, it never becomes clear to the priest that they are father and son, revealing the perverted nature of their relationship.*

When they get to Sukhoy Possyolok, they go into Lyagavy's room in his hut. He's in there, "stretched out on a bench…snoring heavily." Dmitri is briefly unsure of what to do. He starts shaking Lyagavy, but he won't wake up. Dmitri realizes that he's drunk. He then tugs the sleeping man's arms and legs and lifts him up, only getting Lyagavy to mumble at him. The priest tells Dmitri that it might be best for him to wait until morning to talk to Lyagavy. The forester is also present and says that the trader has been drinking all day. Dmitri says that he can't wait till morning. Instead, he'll stay and try to catch the right moment. He offers to pay the forester for the night's lodging.

*Dmitri's trip to Sukhoy Possyolok ends up being a farce and a pointless exercise. Lygavy is the person he must go through to sell the deed to his property and get the money he believes he so desperately needs, but Lyagavy is semi-conscious much of the time and disinterested in any business deal. Samsonov sent Dmitri on this fool's errand knowing that it would not amount to anything.*

The priest leaves and wonders if he should inform Fyodor Pavlovich, his benefactor, of this strange incident. The forester goes back to his room. Dmitri sits on a bench, waiting "to catch the right moment." He goes over to look at the sleeping man's face. Lyagavy is lean and "not yet old, with a very oblong face." Dmitri regards him with hatred. He hates that so much depends upon this man who lies snoring. His head begins to ache.

*The reader learns here that Fyodor's power and influence stretches rather far. The priest is in his employ, probably as a timber buyer. The priest likely doesn't inform Fyodor of the incident because nothing comes of it. Dmitri's headache is the result of frustration, as all his attempts to improve his life (foolish though they might be) have derailed.*

Dmitri dozes off and then falls asleep, sitting up. He's awakened by "an unbearable pain in his head." It takes a while for him to regain full consciousness and to understand what is happening: the room is full of fumes from the candle. The forester wakes up. They open the door and fling the windows open. Dmitri assumes that Lyagavy is dead. He gets a bucket, dips it in water, finds a rag, and puts it to Lyagavy's head. Dmitri fusses over him for about half an hour, then falls asleep. He wakes up at nine o'clock in the morning and sees that Lyagavy is already drunk again.

*Dmitri doesn't realize it, but he and the others may have nearly died. The paraffin wax in candles release toxins that are carcinogens. The prospect of dying to make a terrible land deal, in addition to Lyagavy's perpetual drunkenness, further contributes to the absurdity of what Dmitri is doing.*

Despite Lyagavy's drunkenness, Dmitri introduces himself and states his business with the woodlot. However, Lyagavy accuses Dmitri of lying and says that he doesn't know "any Fyodor Pavlovich of [his]." He then begins to stroke his beard and narrows his eyes "slyly." Dmitri is dumbfounded. He wonders how he, "an intelligent man after all," could've been suckered so easily. Lyagavy is a drunk who'll go on drinking. Did Samsonov send him here on purpose? Lyagavy watches Dmitri and chuckles. At any other time, Dmitri might have killed a man like this in a fit of rage. However, this time, he just puts on his coat and leaves the room. He takes fifty kopecks out of his pocket and leaves them on the table to pay for his lodging.

*Dmitri isn't aware of Lyagavy's "signs," one of which is that he strokes his beard when he's lying. Dmitri, like Ivan, also overestimates his intelligence. He certainly isn't a dimwitted man, but he tends to assume knowledge that he doesn't have, which feeds into his sense that everything will ultimately work out in his favor. Lyagavy is amusing himself with his lie and Dmitri knows it, but he doesn't have time to indulge in his anger.*

When Dmitri steps out of his hut, he sees nothing but forest. Some passersby—a coachman taking an old merchant to Volovya—see Dmitri and offer to take him along with them. They arrive at Volovya station three hours later. Dmitri orders horses and, while they're being harnessed, he eats breakfast and washes it all down with three glasses of vodka. He thinks up a new plan for getting that "accursed money before evening." His thoughts are only spoiled by others about Grushenka, which "[stab] his soul…like a sharp knife."

*Dmitri feels disoriented when he leaves the hut. He doesn't know what to do next, and he barely understands where he is. Dmitri's recent existence is defined by trying to invent schemes to come up with the money he has convinced himself he needs to "earn" Grushenka's love and to buy his way out of his engagement to Katerina. He feels as though he's being stabbed because he is anguished by potential failure.*

## PART 3: BOOK 8, CHAPTER 3: GOLD MINES

That morning, in the horse-drawn wagon, Dmitri decides to lend his "pair of fine dueling pistols" to a young official for ten roubles. Dmitri then goes to Fyodor's gazebo, looking for Smerdyakov. Finally, he goes next door to Maria Kondratievna's, where he hears about Smerdyakov's illness. He also learns that Ivan left for Moscow on the same morning as Smerdyakov's falling fit. He's only worried about Smerdyakov because, with him ill, there will be no one to keep watch. He decides to go to Samsonov's house to see if Grushenka is there.

*In his latest money-making scheme, Dmitri decides to pawn his pistols. He doesn't intend to sell them outright, however. Dmitri, like Ivan, dislikes Smerdyakov and takes no interest in his well-being. However, he needs Smerdyakov in order to know if Grushenka will visit Fyodor or not.*

Before heading to Samsonov's, Dmitri goes back to his room, washes up, combs his hair, brushes his clothes, gets dressed, and goes to Madame Khokhlakov's. His plan is to borrow the **three thousand roubles** from her. The reason he didn't go to Madame Khokhlakov first, given that he knows her and she is of his social station, is because "he had almost broken off relations" with her and had only been slightly acquainted with her before. More importantly, Dmitri knows that she can't stand him. She wanted Katerina Ivanovna to drop him and marry "the dear, chivalrously educated Ivan Fyodorovich, who has such beautiful manners." She detests Dmitri's manners.

*Dmitri wants to make himself presentable to Madame Khokhlakov, who prefers men to be well-tailored, neat, and attractive. However, Madame Khokhlakov dislikes Dmitri, which will be her motive for offering him the supposed opportunity in the mines. Her assessment of Ivan is based only on his superficial behavior. For her, that's sufficient; Madame Khokhlakov is a superficial woman, which is why Dmitri prepares to appeal to this sensibility to get money from her.*

Dmitri figures that, being so against his marrying Katerina Ivanovna, Madame Khokhlakov will give him the **three thousand roubles** to be rid of him. When he enters Madame Khokhlakov's home, she receives him promptly—a good sign. She tells him that she was expecting him. He discusses his business with her and mentions that he's in a hurry. She asks him if he's heard that the elder Zosima has died, and he says that he hasn't.

*Dmitri is willing to use Madame Khokhlakov's hatred to serve him. Madame Khokhlakov doesn't usually receive visitors right away—usually, they go through her maid for initial approval. This occurs when Pyotr Ilyich visits regarding Dmitri.*

Madame Khokhlakov says that she knows that Dmitri is "in a fever," but she can help him. She mentions how she helped her cousin's husband who was financially ruined, but she rescued him by sending him into horse-breeding. She asks Dmitri if he knows anything about horse-breeding. He says he doesn't, and implores her to listen to him; he's in despair. Madame Khokhlakov waves her hand at him and says he can tell her about that later. She knows that he needs **three thousand roubles**, but she's prepared to give him much more.

*Madame Khokhlakov is referring to Dmitri's fever of passion and his general ill temper. She is trying to sell Dmitri on the idea of going to the gold mines so that Katerina can be rid of him. She may sympathize with Katerina's pain, but it's more likely, given Madame Khokhlakov's meddlesome nature, that she's trying to arrange for the coupling she would like to see.*

Dmitri is overwhelmed by Madame Khokhlakov's words. He then assures her that, though she has his "eternal gratitude," he only needs **three thousand roubles**. Madame Khokhlakov asks him what he thinks about gold mines. Dmitri says he's never thought anything about them. She says that, by his gait, she can tell that he'd "find many mines." He asks her again about the three thousand, but she returns to the subject of mines, saying that he can make millions and help the poor.

*Dmitri thinks that Madame Khokhlakov will offer him a substantial portion of her own money. She remarks on his gait—a feature he is very proud of—to appeal to his vanity and convince him that he would make a great prospector. Dmitri is being set up for grave disappointment as Madame Khokhlakov prattles on.*

Dmitri implores Madame Khokhlakov once again to give the **three thousand roubles**, but she seems not to know what he's talking about. She then says that she hasn't got three thousand. Dmitri becomes confused. When she said that it was as good as in his pocket, she was referring to the money he could make in the gold mines. She says that, at the moment, she has no money with her at all. Even if she did, she says, she wouldn't give it to Dmitri—or to anyone. Lending money leads to quarrels, she says. Dmitri roars in anger and bangs his fist on the table. He leaves the house, beating his chest like a madman. Tears begin to run down his cheeks. He resolves that, if he can't obtain the money, he'll kill himself.

*Madame Khokhlakov has gotten so carried away with her sales pitch that she remained oblivious to what Dmitri came to her for in the first place. Madame Khokhlakov's philosophy about money is in keeping with her attention to manners. Dmitri's outburst is then contrary to Madame Khokhlakov's ideas about propriety, as is his general demeanor, which is why she prefers Ivan. She's typically oblivious to Dmitri's obvious suffering. Dmitri beating his chest is not just a sign of passion, but also later revealed to be significant—he was perhaps striking the small pouch of money he kept around his neck.*

Dmitri enters the square and bumps into a little old woman whom he almost knocks over. He recognizes her as Samsonov's serving woman. He asks her if Grushenka is now at Samsonov's. She tells him that Grushenka left some time ago. Dmitri yells at her and accuses her of lying. The little old woman is frightened, but he quickly leaves her and goes to the widow Morozov's house. Fenya is there, sitting in the kitchen. Dmitri runs in, causing Fenya to scream. She tells him that Grushenka hasn't returned, but Dmitri also accuses her of lying before rushing out. Before leaving, he grabs a brass pestle off the table.

*Dmitri's suffering makes him appallingly indifferent toward others, even those who are vulnerable and who play no role in causing his distress. He has become so obsessed with Grushenka and with ensuring that she doesn't marry his father that he abuses those who may be privy to information that he doesn't have. He's also angry because Grushenka promised him that she would remain at Samsonov's.*

## PART 3: BOOK 8, CHAPTER 4: IN THE DARK

Dmitri goes to his father's house, assuming that Grushenka ran straight to Fyodor. He jumps over the wattle fence and into Fyodor's garden. He sees a light on in Fyodor's bedroom and assumes that Grushenka is there. He sees his father through the window, wearing a "new striped silk dressing gown" and "a fine Dutch shirt with gold studs." Fyodor stands near the window, then jerks his head up, as though to listen to something. Hearing nothing more, he goes to pour himself a glass of cognac. Dmitri realizes that he's likely alone. When Fyodor turns to look out the window, Dmitri jumps back into the shadows.

*It is jealous rage that causes Dmitri to spy on his father. Fyodor, like Smerdyakov, takes great care, when he wants to, over how he looks. He chooses clothing that displays his good taste and discernment, as well as his wealth, hoping to further interest Grushenka in being with him. Normally, Fyodor cares little about presentation, as even his home remains in a state of some disrepair.*

Dmitri makes up his mind. He reaches out and taps out the signal agreed upon between Fyodor and Smerdyakov: twice slowly and three more times, quickly. This signal means that Grushenka has arrived. Fyodor opens the window and sticks his head all the way out, calling for Grushenka. Dmitri realizes that he's alone for sure. Fyodor says that he has a present, and Dmitri thinks that his father is referring to **the envelope with the three thousand roubles**. Dmitri watches Fyodor from the side, feeling loathing for the sight of his profile. Dmitri is suddenly beside himself and takes the brass pestle out of his pocket.

*Dmitri decides that he's going to pretend to be Smerdyakov to put his father at ease, so that the old man will then open the window. These details make it apparent that Dmitri initially intended to kill or at least attack his father. This was also the reason for his grabbing the pestle—for a bludgeoning weapon. Dmitri's loathing for Fyodor at the sight of him reveals a degree of personal contempt. It's also a bit ironic, since Fyodor is very proud of his "Roman" profile.*

Just then, Grigory wakes up, feeling a pain in the small of his back. Smerdyakov "lay in the next room without moving" and Marfa Ignatievna is also still. Grigory remembers that he didn't lock the garden gate that evening. He limps down the porch steps, wincing with pain, and sees that the gate is open. He hears a noise and sees that his master's window is open. He wonders why it's open; it's not summer. Grigory sees a figure running in the darkness and goes after him. He reaches the fence just as the intruder does, and clutches his leg with both hands. Suddenly, Grigory recognizes the man—the "monster" and "parricide." He shouts, "Parricide!" Then, he falls "as if struck by a thunderbolt." Dmitri throws the brass pestle in the grass. Grigory's head is covered with blood.

*The only person Dmitri is guilty of harming on this fateful evening is Grigory, whom he nearly killed. One could read this as another form of parricide, given that Grigory helped to raise Dmitri, while Fyodor did not. It also seems to be a truer one, because Grigory demonstrates some love toward Dmitri, while Fyodor never has. Grigory's strong sense of loyalty, despite his foolishness, contrasts with the disloyalty that is often shown among the Karamazovs, both among each other and toward others.*

Dmitri takes out a white handkerchief and puts it to Grigory's head. He then wonders why he's bothering. If he killed Grigory, there's nothing more to do. Dmitri stuffs the blood-soaked handkerchief back into his pocket and runs into the street. He goes back to the widow Morozov's and knocks at the gate. The head porter, Nazar Ivanovich, opens the gate and lets him in. He tells Dmitri that Grushenka left about two hours ago for Mokroye to see an officer. Dmitri leaves and runs to see Fenya.

*It is Dmitri's underlying love for Grigory, who raised him, and his sense of loyalty, which cause him to reach down to ensure that the old man is all right. However, the white handkerchief is then stained red, in a potent image of the fatal actions of this night.*

## PART 3: BOOK 8, CHAPTER 5: A SUDDEN DECISION

Fenya is sitting in the kitchen with her grandmother. Both women are preparing for bed. Dmitri rushes in and seizes Fenya by the throat. The women shriek, while Fenya rattles out that Grushenka has gone to Mokroye to see the officer who left her five years ago. Dmitri loosens his grip and then lets go. Fenya sees that Dmitri's hands are stained with blood, and there are red patches on his forehead and right cheek. Dmitri drops down into a chair beside Fenya. Suddenly, he starts speaking gently to Fenya, as though he has completely forgotten how he just assaulted and frightened her. Fenya gives him all the details of that day, including Rakitin and Alexei's visit. She then remarks on Dmitri's bloody hands. He gives her a rambling, unclear explanation and then bids her goodbye, saying that he will "remove [himself]" and knows how to do it.

*Dmitri has been driven mad by his jealousy and his frantic worry about not getting the money that only he believes he desperately needs. Dostoevsky uses Dmitri's behavior to contemplate fanaticism, or what can happen when a person becomes overly fixated on one idea or person. He is so fixated on Grushenka that he acts like a clumsy criminal, validating Smerdyakov's later assessment of him. This sloppiness is partly what the lackey relied upon to frame Dmitri for Fyodor's murder. Dmitri's threat to "remove himself" is a hint toward his plan to give up on finding the money and instead commit suicide.*

Dmitri leaves and, exactly ten minutes later, walks into the rooms of Pyotr Ilyich Perkhotin—the official to whom he gave his pistols. Dmitri asks for the pistols back, and he returns the money. Pyotr Ilyich is surprised by the sudden turn. Pyotr Ilyich later testified that Dmitri was not quite himself when he returned—he seemed to be in some kind of "ecstasy." He also had a wad of cash, around two or **three thousand roubles**. Finally, he seemed to be in a hurry.

*Pyotr Ilyich is a foil for Dmitri. Whereas Dmitri is passionate and hot-headed, Pyotr is methodical and cool, later instructing Dmitri on ways to keep calm and to look after himself properly. Pyotr is careful with money, whereas Dmitri is careless with it. Pyotr sees that Dmitri is suffering, but thinks much of it is due to his bad habits.*

Pyotr Ilyich asks if Dmitri has fallen, wondering if that explains why he's covered in blood. He invites Dmitri to wash at the basin. Dmitri hands Pyotr Ilyich a hundred-rouble bill, but Pyotr doesn't have any change and Dmitri doesn't have any smaller bills. Pyotr Ilyich asks Dmitri how he got so "rich" all of a sudden. Pyotr Ilyich then says that he can have his servant go to Plotnikov's for some change because they close late. Dmitri tells the servant boy to send the message that Dmitri will go over to Plotnikov's himself shortly, and to have some champagne ready—three dozen bottles, "packed the same way as when [he] went to Mokroye." He also asks for some cheese, pâté, caviar, fruit, and other delicacies. He says that it should all come to about **three thousand roubles**.

*During this episode with Pyotr Ilyich, who remains incisive and steady while Dmitri is vague and frantic, the contrast between the two men is especially clear, causing one to wonder if their friendship isn't based on the possibility that Pyotr is the steadiest person in Dmitri's life. It seems, however, that Dmitri only goes to Pyotr when he needs something. In this instance, he needs help to minimize his guilt, not realizing how much more trouble he will cause for himself by appearing to several people in a bloody shirt.*

Pyotr Ilyich helps Dmitri take off his frock coat and sees that there's blood on that, too. Pyotr Ilyich helps Dmitri wash up. They see that Dmitri's whole right cuff is also bloody. Pyotr Ilyich demands, once again, to know how Dmitri got this way. He asks if Dmitri killed someone, and Dmitri calls that "nonsense."

*Dmitri won't tell Pyotr about the source of the blood because he's afraid that he killed Grigory. In regard to this attack, Dmitri has shown his willingness to lie to get out of seeming guilty.*

Pyotr Ilyich still wonders how Dmitri got so rich all of a sudden and asks him if he has a gold mine. The remark makes Dmitri laugh. Pyotr Ilyich asks Dmitri where he's going, and he announces that he's leaving for Mokroye. He loads the pistol with gunpowder and examines the bullet before putting it in. He tells Pyotr Ilyich that he wants to look at the bullet that will go into his brain. He then gets a pen and a piece of paper and writes two lines on it. He folds the paper and puts it in his waistcoat pocket. He then puts the pistols back in their case and locks it.

*The offhanded guess about the gold mine is now amusing to Dmitri, whereas hours ago, it made him furious. He's in a lighter mood because he knows that he'll kill himself; therefore, nothing matters anymore. Dmitri's decision makes a sharp contrast to his previous behavior. Whereas before he was scattered and wrathful, he's now calm and methodical.*

Pyotr Ilyich asks Dmitri why he needs to go to Mokroye. He says that there's a woman there, but he refuses to say more. Pyotr Ilyich says that, though Dmitri is a "savage," he still worries about him. Pyotr Ilyich's servant, Misha, comes back with a wad of small bills and says that everyone is busy at Plotnikov's, arranging Dmitri's order. Dmitri takes a ten-rouble note and gives it to Pyotr Ilyich. He then gives another to Misha. Pyotr Ilyich gets offended at how Dmitri is tossing money around, knowing that he'll come back to him to ask for more. Dmitri then invites his friend to Mokroye with him. When he refuses, he suggests that Pyotr Ilyich have a drink with him at Plotnikov's, in the back room.

*Dmitri doesn't want to tell Pyotr Ilyich about Grushenka, though it isn't clear why. Given that he's decided to kill himself, it shouldn't matter who he plans to see. However, he may avoid mentioning Grushenka's name to avoid implicating her in what he will do. Dmitri's carelessness with money irritates Pyotr because he regards this as central to Dmitri's troubles. He loses money repeatedly by going on sprees and getting further into debt, thereby adding to his own suffering.*

Plotnikov's is two doors away from Pyotr Ilyich's place. Dmitri is "awaited with impatience at the shop." A few weeks before, he had put in another big order of specialty goods and wines. They remembered him coming with a wad of money in his hand, just as he does now. When Pyotr Ilyich and Dmitri arrive, there's a cart at the door, harnessed to a troika, and the coachman, Andrei, is waiting for Dmitri.

*Dmitri is awaited with "impatience" because he always spends a lot of money at the shop. Buying champagne and specialty goods makes Dmitri feel good. He not only feels like a rich man but can also engage in the sensory pleasure that's now essential to him, especially given his decision to kill himself. He wants to have a last hurrah before the end.*

As Dmitri sits in his carriage, Fenya runs up, begging him not to harm Grushenka. Pyotr Ilyich figures that's what Dmitri is up to. He demands the pistols back. Dmitri assures him that he intends to toss the firearms in a puddle. He tells Fenya that he'll not harm anyone anymore. He asks her forgiveness for hurting her. If she won't forgive him, he says, it doesn't matter, because now nothing matters. He then tells Andrei to get going.

*Like Grigory, Fenya demonstrates great loyalty to her mistress. Pyotr takes Fenya's plea as evidence that Dmitri plans to shoot and kill Grushenka. However, Dmitri would sooner harm himself. This is less out of love for Grushenka than out of the sense of being enamored with the idea of his martyrdom.*

## PART 3: BOOK 8, CHAPTER 6: HERE I COME!

Mokroye is fifteen miles away, but Andrei's troika is going so fast that they make it in an hour and fifteen minutes. Dmitri's soul is troubled and yearns for Grushenka. There was a moment when he thought of stopping Andrei, getting out of the carriage, and killing himself. However, the closer he came to his goal and the more he thought of Grushenka, all "terrible phantoms" faded from his heart.

*The troika in this scene parallels the symbolic troika that will be mentioned in Ippolit Kirillovich's speech. If the troika is symbolic of Russia's progress, determined by those driving the carriage forward, Dmitri is someone who forebodes ruin.*

After an hour, Dmitri asks Andrei about the possibility of everyone being asleep. He prompts Andrei to go faster. Andrei says it's possible that everyone's gone to Plastunov's inn to play cards. He points ahead to "a solid black mass of buildings" with his whip, announcing that they are arriving in Mokroye—a city of only two thousand. When they look at the windows of Plastunov's inn, they see that the windows are lit; everyone is awake.

*Dmitri wants Andrei to go faster so that he can reach Grushenka before she goes to sleep. Dmitri is excited to get to Mokroye—the site of his last spree with Grushenka, and a place that becomes associated with his pleasure-seeking and freedom from the burdens imposed by his father.*

Dmitri jumps out of the cart just as the innkeeper, Trifon Borisich, peers out from the porch. He is a "robust man of medium height." Dmitri asks right away where Grushenka is. Borisich says that she's staying at the inn with some visitors, including a Pole. One of the other people present is Maximov, who's been going around with Pyotr Fomich Kalgonov. The innkeeper reports that Grushenka is bored with her officer. Dmitri sends Borisich to get some people who can play music for him and the group inside, saying he's willing to pay two hundred roubles.

*It's possible that Trifon Borisich mentions the officer and how Grushenka is responding to him to stir up jealousy in Dmitri, who he knows has a relationship with Grushenka. Trifon Borisich is an opportunist. He knows that Dmitri will spend money to aid him in seducing Grushenka, which he does by ordering musicians and dancers.*

Trifon Borisich leads Dmitri inside and first puts Dmitri in a dark corner, where he can watch the company undetected. Grushenka is sitting at the end of the table, in an armchair, beside Pyotr Fomich, who is saying something to Maximov. On a chair, by the wall, Dmitri sees some stranger—a "plumpish, broad-faced little man." His companion is "exceedingly tall." Dmitri walks into the blue room to join them, and Grushenka notices him first.

*Trifon Borisich gives Dmitri the opportunity to survey the room so that Dmitri can observe his competition. The Pole doesn't sound particularly attractive. Dostoevsky sets up a rather comic-looking duo between the petite "pan" and his extremely tall companion, as though to make them seem even more ridiculous and the scene more surreal.*

## PART 3: BOOK 8, CHAPTER 7: THE FORMER AND INDISPUTABLE ONE

Dmitri walks up to the table and asks if he may stay with them until morning. The "fat little man with the pipe" tells him that it's a private party. Pyotr Fomich ignores him and invites Dmitri to sit. They shake hands, though Dmitri grips Pyotr Fomich's too hard. Grushenka senses something different in Dmitri's manner. Next, Maximov greets the visitor. He then asks the panie (the Polish officers) to excuse him for intruding and invites them to have a drink. Grushenka asserts that she wants Dmitri to sit with them and, if he leaves, she'll leave. With that, the short Polish officer sitting on the sofa invites Dmitri to join them.

*The "fat little man" is Pan Mussyalovich, Grushenka's former fiancé. Dostoevsky doesn't say much else about him beyond this description, which conveys to the reader that there is nothing remarkable about this man. Dmitri, it seems, is much more impressive. It's possible that Grushenka only remained fixated on him because he rejected her. He is the "indisputable one" because he is the only man to choose another over her.*

The group drinks champagne and Dmitri takes time to examine the panie. The one with the pipe speaks Russian well. Maximov tells a story, saying that he was once married to a Polish woman. She was lame but concealed it; Maximov thought she was just skipping from being in high spirits all the time. Pyotr Fomich laughs and asks if Maximov thought that she was skipping from the joy of being married to him. Maximov says that he did think that. Supposedly, his wife jumped over a puddle during her younger years and injured her foot. Pyotr Fomich and Grushenka laugh at this story.

*There is tension between Dmitri and the panie, part of it due to Pan Mussyalovich's relationship with Grushenka, while the other part could be cultural, representative of Russia's traditionally tense relations with Poland. In 1795, Russia conducted three partitions of Poland that erased the country from the map. Maximov's silly stories inject sorely needed levity into the moment.*

Pyotr Fomich says that Maximov is talking about his first wife; the second one is still alive but ran away. Maximov explains how his second wife ran off with another man, but first transferred his village to her name. He says that Dmitri is "an educated man," so he'll always be able to make a living, but Maximov was left with nothing.

*Maximov seems to care less about his second wife's infidelity than he does about the property she took from him, leaving him destitute. He never speaks with bitterness, however, but with self-pity, as though he is a victim of fate.*

Pyotr Fomich says that, if Maximov is lying, it's fine because it's the kind of lie that amuses everyone. Maximov can be mean, he says, but it is natural to him, not a behavior that he puts on to gain something. He also lies frequently and said that Nikolai Gogol wrote about him in *Dead Souls*, which does include among his characters a landowner named Maximov.

*Pyotr Fomich isn't sure if Maximov's suffering is authentic or a show that he performs to gain sympathy from those willing to listen to him. Like Fyodor, he's a theatrical storyteller who, in his tales, often comes out looking like a buffoon.*

The Polish officer with the pipe, Pan Mussyalovich, addresses the tall pan, Pan Vrublevsky, with a bored look. Grushenka expresses irritation with their boredom, but encourages Maximov to continue his story. Maximov refrains from saying anything more "because it's all foolishness." The tall Polish officer begins pacing while Grushenka looks at him contemptuously. The shorter officer keeps glancing "irritably" at his friend. Dmitri invites them both to a drink and pours three glass of champagne. Finally, the officers introduce themselves. They toast to Poland, then to Russia. Pan Vrublevsky toasts "to Russia within her borders before 1772." When Dmitri calls them fools, the officers get angry and Grushenka commands them not to quarrel.

*The Polish officers are bored because they have no real interest in socializing with Grushenka and her friends. Later, it will become clear that they have only come to Mokroye to convince Grushenka to give them money. Pan Vrublevsky's reference is to the first partition of Poland, which occurred in 1772. The enmity between the men is increased by the enmity between their countries. As military men, there is equal obligation to defend their countries.*

Dmitri suggests that they do something fun. Maximov offers that they play another game of baccarat. They all agree, and Dmitri bets two hundred roubles. He wins the first hand. Quickly, he starts doubling his stakes and loses. Pyotr Fomich covers the bills with his hand and orders, "Enough!" He won't let Dmitri bet anymore. Grushenka agrees that he should quit, but the panie are offended. Pan Vrubelvsky shouts at Pyotr Fomich, and Grushenka scolds him.

*Pyotr worries that Dmitri will land himself in greater debt, furthering his desperation over money. Once again, Pyotr acts as the reasonable advisor, helplessly watching Dmitri destroy himself. However, given that Dmitri has already confessed to his intention to commit suicide, his efforts seem pointless.*

Dmitri invites the panie into the other room, assuring Grushenka that they'll be back momentarily. In the other room, Dmitri offers the officers **three thousand roubles** to take and go wherever they would like. He also offers to have his troika harnessed for the officers, if they will just leave and not return. Dmitri offers to give them five hundred roubles now and swears on his honor to produce the two thousand five hundred the next day. The panie exchange glances and Dmitri ups his offer to seven hundred. The panie spit and tell Dmitri that he should be ashamed of himself. Dmitri feels despair and says that the officers are only refusing his offer because they expect to get more money from Grushenka. Pan Mussyalovich reddens at the insult and walks back into the main room.

*Dmitri, in another desperate and foolish act, tries to bribe the Polish officers into leaving. Strangely, he bribes them with the very same amount of money that he needs to overcome his troubles, again suggesting that he is fixated on this particular amount as a kind of magic number. The fact that he swears on his honor is comical, given the ease with which he betrays others (Grigory and Katerina) and his lack of family loyalty. The officers become more contemptuous of him and use his offer to make themselves seem superior. Dmitri's accusation against them, however, is accurate.*

The panie are speaking Polish angrily, and Grushenka loses patience and demands that they speak Russian. Pan Mussyalovich says that he came to her to forget the past and to forgive it. He tells her that Mitya offered him **three thousand roubles** to leave. Grushenka angrily asks Dmitri if this is true, if he really acted as though she were for sale. Dmitri says that it's a lie. He says that Grushenka is pure and they have never been lovers. She's more offended by his defense of her virtue. Dmitri says that the officer was willing to take money from him, but he wanted all three thousand at once. Grushenka then figures that her former fiancé has only returned because he heard that she has money. She tells him to leave and says that she feels like a fool.

*Grushenka reveals something important about herself here. Though she is a woman of ill-repute, known for taking money and other favors from men, she insists on doing things on her own terms. Moreover, Grushenka is unimpressed by Dmitri's defense of her virtue. Dmitri is trying to protect himself against Grushenka's potential anger or disfavor. In this instance, she learns the truth about her relationship with Pan Mussyalovich and admits that it was all a fantasy.*

When the Mokroye girls enter to sing, Pan Vrublevsky demands that the innkeeper throw them out. Trifon Borisich tells him to shut up. He then reports that the panie played baccarat with marked cards. The innkeeper shows his own deck, which remained unopened. Pyotr Fomich says that he saw one of the panie "palm a card twice." Pan Vrublevsky turns to Grushenka and calls her a "public slut," prompting Dmitri to rush at him, lift him up, and carry him from the room. Trifon Borisich offers to give Dmitri the money that the officers cheated him out of, but Dmitri refuses. Grushenka praises him for being above it all.

*The Polish officers are so desperate for money that they cheat at cards. This act contrasts with their pretension of resenting Dmitri for his dishonorable offer, and seems to prove Dmitri's suspicion that they rejected his offer in favor of the potential promise of a larger sum. During this episode in Mokroye, Dostoevsky reveals the various ways in which people dishonor themselves and others due to coveting money.*

## PART 3: BOOK 8, CHAPTER 8: DELIRIUM

Grushenka calls for wine and says that she wants to get drunk. Dmitri recognizes the girls from his last spree. His spirits are high. Trifon Borisich is scurrying around, looking out constantly for Dmitri's interests. Grushenka catches his hand and pulls Dmitri toward her. She says that she was frightened when he walked in that evening. She then asks if Dmitri was willing to give her up to the Pole. He says that he didn't want to ruin her happiness. She tells him to go enjoy himself, and that she'll soon call him back.

*Both Grushenka and Dmitri want to lose themselves in drunkenness and revelry to forget about their misery. Grushenka, in this moment, seems to be developing a preference for Dmitri. This is likely based on her realization that she doesn't like the Pole as much as she had convinced herself she did, and she actually gets along much better with Dmitri. She realizes that she's a much different person now.*

Fifteen minutes later, Grushenka calls Dmitri back to her and asks how he knew she was in Mokroye. Dmitri starts to tell her everything that had happened the day before. She asks if he was really going to shoot himself.

*Grushenka senses that Dmitri was going to kill himself out of the anguish of losing her. His confession intrigues her and appeals to her vanity.*

Grushenka then goes over to the sleeping Pyotr Fomich and kisses him tenderly. She praises his beauty. He opens his eyes and looks at her, asking where Maximov is. Grushenka asks Dmitri to go find Maximov, who, it turns out, is still with the chorus girls. Maximov then offers to show them the "well-bred society dances" that he learned when he was a boy. Pyotr Fomich wants to go watch, rejecting Grushenka's offer to sit with him. They all go to watch Maximov, whose dancing is unremarkable and produces no admiration in anyone but Dmitri.

*Pyotr shows no interest in Grushenka. He seems to be the only man in the novel whom she doesn't impress with her looks and sex appeal. It's possible that Dostoevsky was trying to present the character as homosexual or asexual. Dmitri admires Maximov's dancing because it's an expression of unmitigated joy and a reflection of Dmitri's changing sentiments.*

After it is finished, Dmitri offers Maximov a cigar, but he takes a cigarette and some liqueur. He whispers to Dmitri to help him meet one of the dancers. Dmitri initially refuses, saying the girls come only to dance. He then agrees to arrange something.

*Maximov wants to offer the girl money to sleep with him. He has no money, so he'd probably take more from Dmitri, who would be using Katerina Ivanovna's money.*

Dmitri's head hurts. He walks out onto the veranda for some fresh air. He thinks that now would be a good time to shoot himself. He commits to scrounging up the **three thousand roubles**. He doesn't want to lose Grushenka. On the veranda, he runs into Trifon Borisich, who seems irritable. Dmitri figures that it's because he wants to go to bed. He assures the innkeeper that he'll get to sleep soon. Dmitri goes into the room where the girls were dancing to find Grushenka, but she's not there. Dmitri finds her behind the curtain in that room, weeping.

*His headache returns, though this time, it could be the result of his excessive drinking. Dmitri doesn't realize that Trifon Borisich has already been tipped off by the police about Dmitri being a murder suspect. Dmitri remains so fixated on the money, that, once again, he's unaware of what else may be going on around him.*

Grushenka admits that she still loved her ex-fiancé. She tells Dmitri that she wants to confess something else: she now loves Dmitri. Dmitri gazes into her eyes, embraces her, and begins kissing her. She asks him to forgive her for tormenting him. Then she breaks away from him and says that she wants to get drunk and dance. Grushenka goes out through the curtain and Dmitri follows her, as though he's already drunk. Dmitri goes and drinks another glass of wine, which is the one that puts him over the edge and makes him drunk. Suddenly, everything whirls around him, as though he's in a state of delirium.

*It's unclear if Grushenka really loves Dmitri or if she chooses him because she has run out of other options. Of course, she could have married Fyodor, but the old man is too foolish and ugly to be a suitable partner for her. She realizes, too, that her love for Pan Mussyalovich has disappeared, both because she sees that he was only after money and because they now bore each other. It's also possible that her relationship with Dmitri is a mixture of love and other, more selfish motives.*

Grushenka watches the girls dance, and then goes to each one and either kisses them or makes the sign of the cross over them. Maximov runs up to her every other minute to kiss her hands "and each little finger." He dances once more to an old song, and sings. Grushenka encourages Dmitri to give him a present, because he's poor now. Grushenka babbles drunkenly, saying that she'll join a convent and that, if she were God, she would forgive all people. She takes out a white cambric handkerchief and waves it while dancing. Maximov hops in front of her, singing, but Grushenka chases him away with her handkerchief. She tells Dmitri to summon the panie to watch her, but they won't come.

*This is the second time in the novel in which Grushenka makes the sign of the cross. Her actions reflect her tendency to waver between sensuality and a desire to seem devout. The white handkerchief shows up again (previously used by Dmitri to clean up Grigory's blood). Grushenka is still eager to impress the Polish officer, which is why she asks for them to come see her. Grushenka's rush of emotion and desire to forgive everyone reflects the feelings experienced by both Alexei and Zosima's brother Markel.*

Grushenka feels weak and asks Dmitri to take her. She pleads with him not to "touch" her yet, for she isn't his yet. He assures her that he reveres her too much ever to do such a thing. She asks him to take her far away; she no longer wants to be at the inn. Dmitri presses her into his arms and agrees to do as she wishes. First, he tells her about the money he took from Katerina Ivanovna, but Grushenka offers that she can give him the money he owes. She tells Dmitri not to love Katerina anymore, otherwise she'll "strangle her." She then falls asleep for a moment.

*Grushenka is asking Dmitri not to have sex with her just yet. The fact that she asks him this reveals her sense that he could rape her. Grushenka is strong but aware of her vulnerabilities, and of Dmitri's drunkenness and lust. Part of the reason why she exploits men is because she is aware of how they can exploit her and make her suffer, and so she gains a sense of agency in turning the tables on them. However, she's also a very jealous and possessive type.*

When Grushenka awakens, she sees that someone is looking at them. A voice calls out to Dmitri, who steps from behind the curtain. It's the district police commissioner, Mikhail Makarich. He's there with the deputy prosecutor and the deputy commissioner, Mavriky Mavrikich. Dmitri realizes that this is all about "the old man and his blood." Mikhail Makarich calls Dmitri a "parricide and monster" and says that it's "delirium" that Dmitri should be here, "with a disreputable wench." The prosecutor tells Dmitri that he has been charged with the murder of his father, Fyodor Pavlovich Karamazov.

*There are several scenes in the novel in which people hide behind curtains and then reveal themselves. This could be symbolic of how people's true characters can remain hidden. It may also be a device that Dostoevsky borrows from Shakespeare and many other works. In Hamlet, for example, Polonius hides behind a curtain and is then killed by Hamlet for spying. The police commissioner is also spying on Grushenka and Dmitri.*

## PART 3: BOOK 9, CHAPTER 1: THE START OF THE OFFICIAL PERKHOTIN'S CAREER

Pyotr Ilyich Perkhotin knocks vigorously at the gates of the widow Morozov's house. Fenya rushes to the porter, begging him not to open the gate, thinking it's Dmitri. The porter asks who is at the gate. Pyotr Ilyich announces himself and says that he needs to speak to Fenya about an important matter, so the porter lets him in. Going to the kitchen with Fenya, Pyotr Ilyich questions her and learns that Dmitri took the pestle from the mortar and returned without it later, but his hands were covered with blood. When Fenya asked him about his bloody hands, Dmitri told her he had killed a man. Then, he ran out like a madman, she says. Fenya figured he would go to Mokroye to kill Grushenka. She says that she ran out to beg him not to. He was then at Plotnikov's shop, and his hands were no longer covered in blood.

*Fenya's fear of Dmitri points to a different way he is guilty: of terrorizing those he believed stood between him and happiness with his beloved. When Pyotr Ilyich speaks to Fenya, she confirms much of what he suspected. However, her vague mention of Dmitri killing a man leads Pyotr to think that the man he was talking about was Fyodor, when it was actually Grigory. Fenya's recollection of the fateful night confirms Pyotr's worst suspicions and even makes Dmitri seem like a caricature of himself—a man so bent on his own needs that he'll destroy everyone else. Of course, that is exactly how he was acting on the night of the murder.*

Pyotr Ilyich considers going to Fyodor's house, but worries that the old man will later accuse him of trying to force his way into his home at midnight. So, Pyotr Ilyich decides to go to Madame Khokhlakov's to ask if she had given Dmitri **three thousand roubles**. If the answer is no, Pyotr Ilyich resolves to go to the police commissioner. He arrives at her home at eleven o'clock. Her maid comes down and Pyotr Ilyich says that the matter is important; otherwise he wouldn't have come at such an hour.

*Pyotr goes to Madame Khokhlakov because she is the only other person Dmitri knows with the means to give him the money. If she didn't give it to him, Pyotr assumes that Dmitri killed his father (thereby explaining the blood) and took the three thousand roubles from him that were originally intended for Grushenka.*

Pyotr Ilyich explains that Dmitri borrowed ten roubles from him that afternoon. Then, at nine o'clock, he walked into Pyotr Ilyich's rooms carrying a wad of money. Dmitri said that he got the **three thousand roubles** from Madame Khokhlakov, in exchange for agreeing to go to the gold mines. Madame Khokhlakov says that she didn't give Dmitri any money and concludes that he must have murdered Fyodor. She claims that she "foresaw it all," and thinks of how close she must have been to death. Pyotr Ilyich stands and says that he'll go to the police commissioner and tell him everything. Madame Khokhlakov agrees to Pyotr Ilyich's request to write a note, declaring that she didn't give Dmitri any money. She crosses Pyotr Ilyich three times and invites him to return before he runs off to the police commissioner.

*Madame Khokhlakov uses Pyotr Ilyich's story as an excuse to feel sorry for herself. She then gives herself the power of clairvoyance, a trait that she normally attributes to Zosima. Madame Khokhlakov enjoys pretending to suffer, especially if it brings her attention, as it does in this case. For Pyotr Ilyich, this visit is an attempt to get at the truth about Dmitri and whatever crime he certainly committed. Here, Dostoevsky reveals the tricky nature of the truth. Pyotr Ilyich is certain that he's gathering all the right evidence against Dmitri, and he is, but it's for the wrong crime.*

## PART 3: BOOK 9, CHAPTER 2: THE ALARM

The district police commissioner, Mikhail Makarovich Makarov, is "a retired lieutenant colonel, a redesignated state councilor…a widower and a good man." He arrived in town and got his position three years ago. He lives with his widowed daughter who has two grown-up girls. Mikhail Makarovich isn't a bright man and is rather uneducated, but he's competent in his job.

*Dostoevsky mentions all of this to show what kind of person has been designated to question Dmitri (and, as is his style, to present portraits of a wide variety of characters). Makarov is not a bright enough man to be aware of the scheming of someone like Smerdyakov.*

Pyotr Ilyich is sure that there will be others at the police commissioner's that evening. Varvinsky, the district doctor, and Ippolit Kirillovich, the deputy prosecutor that everyone calls the prosecutor. The young district attorney, Nikolai Parfenovich Nelyudov, is in the next room. It is by a coincidence that they all end up at the police commissioner's at the same time and on the same night of Fyodor Pavlovich Karamazov's murder.

*Pyotr Ilyich's sense that he will not be alone at the police commissioner's house is accurate. He knows that Dmitri is guilty of something. Dmitri's carelessness regarding his shirt would mean that others would know something, too.*

When Pyotr Ilyich enters the police commissioner's house, he learns that Fyodor Pavlovich really was murdered and robbed at his home. Marfa Ignatievna woke up and rushed to Smerdyakov, who was "struggling and gasping horribly." When she called Grigory, she realized that he wasn't in bed. She went out to the porch, called him, and got no answer, but heard some groans from the garden. The sounds reminded her of Stinking Lizaveta's visit to the garden years before. Marfa saw that the garden gate was open. Suddenly, Grigory called out to her in a weak voice. She found her husband some distance away from the fence, covered in blood.

*Pyotr Ilyich's suspicions are confirmed. Marfa's sense of the sounds of death and childbirth being similar reflects the notion that suffering is involved in both one's first and last moments of life. Her thought of Stinking Lizaveta is also significant, because it is the illegitimate birth of Smerdyakov (caused by Fyodor's own horrific act of rape) that causes all of the events that occur at the Karamazov house that night.*

Grigory muttered incoherently to Marfa Ignatievna. She began to scream and saw that Fyodor Pavlovich's window was open. She called out to Fyodor. She then looked through the window and saw Fyodor lying on his back, not moving. His white shirt was soaked with blood. Marfa rushed away, horrified, and went to Maria Kondratievna's. Maria recalled that she had heard a "piercing cry" from the Karamazov garden before nine o'clock. What she heard was Grigory crying out. Foma, a wanderer, was staying with Maria and went with her to help the women carry Grigory to the cottage. Maria then gave the alarm to everyone at the commissioner's house, five minutes before Pyotr Ilyich's arrival.

*Everything occurs very quickly in this scene. The frenzy and horror will later contribute to the lack of clarity about what actually happened. It's highly likely that Smerdyakov anticipated all of this as well, in addition to everyone's inevitable prejudice to blame Dmitri and Dmitri's blunders incriminating himself. Pyotr Ilyich's later suspicion that everyone knows about the murder will turn out to be right because of Maria's decision to sound the alarm.*

The assistant police chief rounds up four witnesses. They then go to Fyodor's house and conduct an investigation. They search near the fence and find the brass pestle on the garden path. Nothing is disorderly in Fyodor's room, but they find a big **envelope** on the floor. On it is inscribed a message to Grushenka, notifying her that the envelope contains a "little treat of **three thousand roubles**." They also find the pink ribbon with which the envelope was tied.

*The police are collecting the evidence, and all of what they find points to Dmitri's presumed guilt. He grabbed the pestle in a fit of rage and, in that moment, nearly killed Fenya. Everyone knows that Dmitri coveted three thousand roubles and, in his frenzy, would've left the envelope behind.*

Pyotr Ilyich remembers that Dmitri threatened suicide and would probably kill himself before dawn. They need to hurry to Mokroye. The group is detained, however, by the investigation, so the deputy commissioner Mavriky Mavrikievich Shmertsov will go to Mokroye, "without raising any alarm," and keep watch on the criminal until the proper authorities arrive. Only Trifon Borisich is alerted to the secret after the deputy's arrival. This explains the sudden change in the innkeeper's attitude toward Dmitri when they meet on the veranda.

*Pyotr Ilyich thinks that Dmitri threatened to kill himself over guilt about murdering Fyodor, when really he threatened to kill himself because he thought he had killed Grigory. Here, Trifon Borisich's awkward behavior toward Dmitri is explained as his realization that Dmitri committed murder before arriving.*

The remaining authorities arrive after four o'clock in the morning. Varvinsky stays behind at Fyodor's home, with the object of doing an autopsy. However, he becomes more interested in Smerdyakov's condition, noting how strange it is for "severe and protracted fits" to recur "uninterruptedly over two days." He believes he's discovered a rare find. The doctor adds that Smerdyakov won't live till morning.

*Smerdyakov has faked a fit. This scene reveals how epilepsy fascinated medical professionals but that the condition was also one that they understood very poorly. This lack of expertise assists Smerdyakov in convincing everyone that he's an innocent.*

## PART 3: BOOK 9, CHAPTER 3: THE SOUL'S JOURNEY THROUGH TORMENTS. THE FIRST TORMENT.

Dmitri declares himself "not guilty." Grushenka then emerges, collapses at Mikhail Makarovich's feet, and declares herself guilty. He agrees that she is, indeed, "the chief criminal." Grushenka begs him to judge her alongside Dmitri, who throws himself on his knees beside her. Several men pull Dmitri away from her and sit him at a table. The district attorney asks if he asserts that he's not guilty of murdering his father, and Dmitri says that he isn't. He's shed the blood of an old man, but not that of his father. They tell him that he needn't worry about Grigory; he's alive. Dmitri is thankful for the news.

*There are a lot of histrionics in this scene, which seem to replace actual emotion. Grushenka was relatively indifferent to Dmitri the day before, but is now behaving as though she is willing to lay down her life for him. Dmitri's display of feeling is likely more authentic. He is desperate for Grushenka's love and was even willing to kill himself over the prospect of losing it.*

Ippolit Kirillovich goes on to say that Grigory has given them important evidence regarding Dmitri. Dmitri then tries to leave to go to Grushenka, but the authorities detain him. Nikolai Parfenovich prompts him to drink more water. Dmitri admits that he's a bit drunk. Nikolai Parfenovich tells Dmitri to write down that he denies the accusation against him. Before continuing, the district attorney also seeks confirmation of the fact that Dmitri disliked his father, was in a dispute with him, and wanted to kill him.

*The important evidence that Grigory has given will later be revealed in court during his testimony. The prosecutors prompt Dmitri to drink water to help him clear his head because he's been drinking all night, and also seems feverish and confused. The district attorney, meanwhile, seems bent on finding Dmitri guilty.*

Dmitri says that it was no secret that he wanted his father dead. He then asks how Fyodor was killed. Ippolit Kirillovich says that they found the old man on his back, "with his head smashed in." Nikolai Parfenovich asks Dmitri what guided him in his hatred of Fyodor. Was it jealousy? Dmitri says that it was, but it was also about money. Nikolai mentions the **three thousand roubles**. Dmitri says the old man owed him much more, but he was willing to settle for three thousand. The district attorney prompts Dmitri to write that he considered the contents of **the envelope** to be his own property.

*To his credit, Dmitri has been honest, both about the crime that he committed against Grigory and about his enmity toward Fyodor, which was, indeed, well-known. The prosecutors try to understand the motives for the enmity between father and son, but Dmitri remains vague in his responses, further incriminating himself. He never mentions Grushenka, not wanting anyone to think ill of her, and he doesn't mention the dispute over his inheritance.*

## PART 3: BOOK 9, CHAPTER 4: THE SECOND TORMENT

Dmitri tells the authorities that he pawned his pistols for ten roubles after he got back to town. They are surprised to learn that he went thirty miles out of town. He tells them he went to Samsonov to borrow **three thousand roubles** from him "on the best security." Ippolit Kirillovich asks why he needed that amount. Dmitri calls this detail a trifle and doesn't answer. He then tells him that they should unlearn and then adjust their "official method of interrogation." Ippolit Kirillovich expresses appreciation for Dmitri's "sensible advice," and then says that they must still know why he needed three thousand roubles.

*The authorities are surprised because they don't know about Dmitri's farcical trip to Sukhoy Possyolok to convince Lyagavy to buy a tract of land that Dmitri may or may not have the authority to sell, in exchange for the fateful three thousand roubles. Dmitri initially remains vague on the matter, perhaps not wanting to embarrass himself. He also avoids explaining why he needs three thousand in particular for the same reason. As will become a pattern, his very specific but strict sense of honor regarding smaller issues only leads him to seem guilty of the greatest dishonor of all—murdering his father.*

Dmitri says that he needed it to repay a debt, but he won't say to whom. They tell him to write down that he won't reveal the name of his debtor. However, they tell him that he could be doing himself harm by refusing to answer the question. He does offer to tell them about how Samsonov "hoodwinked" him two days earlier, now recognizing that he had been made a fool. He also describes his trip to see Lyagavy and his "jealous torments over Grushenka." Everyone listens attentively. He talks, too, about the despair he felt when he left Madame Khokhlakov's. He says that he had the thought of putting a knife into someone just to get the **three thousand roubles**.

*Dmitri decides to relinquish a bit of information, perhaps realizing that it could help him. If the authorities understand him, maybe they'll understand why he isn't guilty. He gives a testimony in which he constructs himself as an innocent victim of others—of Samsonov's dishonesty, of Lyagavy's insufferable drunkenness, of Grushenka's sensual torments, and of Madame Khokhlakov's uselessness. At the same time, his talk of murderous rage and greed only hurt his testimony.*

Dmitri then gets to the point in the story when he learns about Grushenka deceiving him and leaving Samsonov's, though she told him that she would be there until midnight. He talks about wanting to kill Fenya but not having time. The district attorney stops him and takes the brass pestle out of his briefcase. He asks Dmitri if he recognizes the object. Dmitri says that he does. The district attorney asks how Dmitri got hold of it. Dmitri tells them how he took it from the mortar on Fenya's table and ran. They ask him what his purpose was, and Dmitri says that he had no purpose. He then says that he grabbed it to "keep off the dogs" or "because it was dark." The district attorney asks him if he always grabs a weapon because it's dark. Dmitri then cries out in annoyance, saying it's impossible to talk to these men.

*Dmitri believed that Grushenka had left Samsonov's to go to his father. This is why he went to his father's house with the intent to kill Fyodor. Dmitri also cavalierly mentions killing Fenya, though the maid had no control over Grushenka's actions. This is yet another example in the novel of how members of higher social classes believe that they are permitted to take out their frustrations on servants. Though serfdom ended, the attitudes associated with it persisted, and Dmitri in particular acts without restraint around people of a class lower than himself. Dmitri's explanation about why he took the pestle sounds like a hasty lie.*

Annoyed, Dmitri tells them that they can go ahead and record that he took the pestle to kill his father, if that'll please them. Ippolit Kirillovich expresses understanding but tells him that it's essential that they hear the story. Dmitri repeats that he doesn't know why he took it. He says that he often dreams that someone is chasing him in the dark, but he doesn't want to record this. He says that now, it's happening in real life: he's the wolf and they're the hunters.

*Dmitri's feeling of being chased arises from his own conscience. He feels guilty for his actions, though not for the murder of his father, which he didn't commit. He likely feels guilty about deceiving Katerina, about nearly murdering Grigory, and now about the possibility of leaving Grushenka alone.*

## PART 3: BOOK 9, CHAPTER 5: THE THIRD TORMENT

Dmitri recounts the story of how he arrived at his father's house. When he gets to the point of seeing his father leaning his head out the window, he says that he took the pestle from his pocket. The district attorney asks him what happened next. Dmitri offers that he smashed the old man on the head, and he's saying this—not because it happened—but because it's what the authorities want to hear. In his version, Dmitri ran to the fence. Fyodor saw him, cried out, and jumped back from the window. Grigory then caught up with him at the fence.

*In the section of the novel that deals with the story of the murder, Dostoevsky highlights how there are multiple narratives and that all of the narratives are valid, in a way, because everyone experienced this event in their own way. This is a very modern technique, and one of many ways that Dostoevsky was such a literary innovator and influencer of other writers. Dmitri decides to contribute the narrative that the authorities would prefer, figuring that they will not believe in what he actually did.*

The prosecutor Ippolit Kirillovich asks Dmitri if he noticed that the door to the garden was open. Dmitri says it wasn't. He asks if the authorities found the door open, and they say they did. The prosecutor says that the murderer went in through that door and left the same way. It's clear to the investigators that the murder took place in the room and not through the window. Dmitri is shocked because he distinctly remembers the door being shut when he was in the garden and when he ran out of it. Moreover, the signals were known only by him and Smerdyakov and Fyodor wouldn't have opened the door for anyone else.

*The question regarding the garden door is key to the perception of Dmitri's guilt, and helps to seal Dmitri's fate. Grigory is the only one who expresses certainty that the door was open, despite being disoriented at the time of the murder. Smerdyakov counted on the old man's stubbornness, which he knows well, to make it seem as though Dmitri is guilty.*

Ippolit Kirillovich asks Dmitri what "signals" he's talking about. Dmitri toys with them and says that he might not tell them. Then, he tells them that they were signals to alert Fyodor to Grushenka's arrival. The prosecutor then offers the possibility that Smerdyakov committed the crime. Dmitri refuses to acknowledge the possibility that Smerdyakov is guilty. Nikolai Parfenovich then asks if he suspects someone else. Dmitri doesn't know of anyone else who would do it, but it's certainly not Smerdyakov. They ask him how he can be so sure. He goes on to say that Smerdyakov is "a man of the most abject nature and a coward." Secondly, he's "sickly, epileptic, [and a] feebleminded chicken, who could be thrashed by an eight-year-old boy." Finally, Smerdyakov doesn't care about money. Anyway, he ventures, why would he kill the old man? He may, after all, be his son.

*Dmitri's coyness with the police is interesting. Though they have the power to have him imprisoned, he also asserts his power to withhold information. Yet again, prejudice against Smerdyakov prevents others from seeing him as he truly is. Dmitri, like Ivan, is fixated on the idea that Smerdyakov is helpless and stupid. They assume that his illness prevents him from being any significant threat. Smerdyakov is aware of these prejudices and uses them to his advantage to have Dmitri framed for a crime that he didn't commit. Dmitri is also wrong about Smerdyakov's supposed indifference to money.*

Nikolai Parfenovich asks Dmitri how he could've gone to Fenya with his hands covered in blood. Dmitri says that he didn't notice the blood. Ippolit Kirillovich mentions that such a thing is plausible. Dmitri then tells them that he decided to kill himself. He reaches into his waistcoat pocket and pulls out the suicide note he wrote at Pyotr Ilyich Perkhotin's, while he was loading his pistol. Dmitri asks the authorities how they arrived so soon. They tell him that Perkhotin told them that, when Dmitri visited, he had a wad of hundred-rouble notes in his hand, and his hands were blood-stained. Nikolai Parfenovich asks where Dmitri got the money, when the evidence shows that he didn't go back to his lodgings. Dmitri says that he won't tell them.

*The prosecutor thinks it's possible for someone not to notice blood on their hands due to being in shock. Dmitri continues to be elusive with the facts, still not wanting to tell the authorities about his outstanding debt to Katerina Ivanovna. His secrecy on this matter reveals that this is the only thing about which Dmitri feels tremendously and truly guilty, because it is the only thing so far that he has not been willing to confess. However, without knowing the source of the money, all the evidence it suggests that he stole it from Fyodor.*

Nikolai Parfenovich then asks if Dmitri can at least tell them how many roubles were in his hands when he visited Pyotr Ilyich. Dmitri refuses to state that as well. Nikolai Parfenovich reminds Dmitri that he told Pyotr Ilyich about **three thousand roubles** that he got from Madame Khokhlakov. Dmitri doesn't confirm that. He then briefly tells them, upon request, the story of how he arrived in Mokroye. Nikolai Parfenovich concludes the interrogation and asks Dmitri to empty his pockets. He has eight hundred and thirty-six roubles and forty kopecks. Nikolai Parfenovich figures that Dmitri originally had fifteen hundred roubles, given his expenses over the course of the evening. He tells Dmitri that they'll need to search his clothes, too, so he must undress. Dmitri agrees to go behind the curtains.

*Dmitri continues the testimony by withholding key information—once again clinging to a small point of honor that makes him seem guilty of murder. However, Nikolai Parfenovich is able to assess correctly that Dmitri had fifteen hundred roubles on him in Mokroye, not yet knowing that Dmitri spent the other half on another spree in the town with Grushenka a month before. Curtains reappear in this scene, for the very practical reason of providing the suspect with privacy while he undresses, but they could also be regarded as a symbol of how the truth about people can be hidden.*

## PART 3: BOOK 9, CHAPTER 6: THE PROSECUTOR CATCHES MITYA

Dmitri submits to the strip-search, though with feelings of "pride and contempt." Nikolai Parfenovich and Ippolit Kirillovich go behind the curtain with him, along with several peasants, who seem to be there to physically detain Dmitri if necessary. Huge spots of blood are on his coat and on his trousers. Nikolai Parfenovich feels along the collar, looking for more money. They suspect that Dmitri may have sewn money into his clothes. Dmitri is offended at how they are treating an officer like a thief. Nikolai Parfenovich then notices the "tucked-under right cuff" of Dmitri's shirt sleeve, which is also stained with blood. Dmitri explains how he stained it due to fussing over Grigory, then tucked it under while washing up at Pyotr Ilyich's. They tell him that they must take the shirt as evidence.

*Dmitri resents having strangers look at his body, as there is something demeaning about it. His feeling of offense toward being treated like a thief strongly suggests that he's not guilty of stealing from his father, though this subtlety would be lost on the authorities, and it contradicts his general feeling of being a thief in regard to the money that he took from Katerina Ivanovna. The authorities are going over the smallest details to determine if Dmitri killed his father. They are unsure if he's telling the truth about Grigory or washed himself to cover up his murder of Fyodor.*

Nikolai Parfenovich then says that the next part of the investigation will be to question the witnesses. Dmitri insists that, if he had really killed his father, he wouldn't conceal it. He also wouldn't have waited for the authorities to collect him; he would've killed himself. He insists that whoever it was who opened Fyodor's door was the one who killed and robbed him, though he doesn't know who that is.

*Dmitri's admission that he is someone who tells the truth is valid, based on all that the reader knows, but a prosecutor would be unconvinced, of course, especially in the face of the mounds of evidence against the suspect.*

Ippolit Kirillovich informs Dmitri that it was Grigory who told them that the door to the garden was open. The servant has also concluded that Dmitri must've run out of that door. Dmitri calls this a lie, though Grigory stands firm in his testimony. Nikolai Parfenovich then shows Dmitri **the envelope** with the **three thousand roubles**. They say that they didn't find any money inside. Suddenly, Dmitri cries out that it was Smerdyakov who committed the murder and robbery. Dmitri asserts that he's seeing the envelope now for the first time, though the authorities remind Dmitri that it was he who told them that the envelope was under Fyodor's pillow. Dmitri insists that he just guessed. He says that only Smerdyakov knew where the envelope was, and only he who knew the signals; so, he must've killed Fyodor.

*Grigory isn't lying about seeing the garden door open, as Dmitri suspects. The old man really believes that he saw the door open. Grigory's testimony is important because he knows Dmitri very well and, both being a loyal servant and having raised him, the authorities might consider him less likely to lie. There is also the matter of the empty envelope. Despite Dmitri's insistence that he has never seen it before, the fact that he won't confess about where he got the money for his spree still makes the police think that he stole three thousand roubles from his father.*

Ippolit Kirillovich reminds Dmitri that there was no need to give signals if the door was already open. The prosecutor reminds him that there's the matter of the open door, which he probably ran out of, and Dmitri's silence regarding where he got the money. He asks Dmitri what they should believe. Dmitri finally agrees to reveal where he got the money. Nikolai Parfenovich adds that a "sincere and full confession" may "contribute towards an immeasurable alleviation" of his sentence. Before he can continue, Ippolit Kirillovich nudges him under the table so that Nikolai Parfenovich can stop himself in time.

*The prosecution seems bent on pinning the murder on Dmitri. This is confirmed by the prosecutor's nudging of Nikolai Parfenovich. The prosecutor isn't interested in alleviating Dmitri's sentence but in successfully prosecuting a case that is likely to gain a great deal of attention all over the country. This will secure Ippolit Kirillovich's reputation and grant him the recognition that he covets.*

## PART 3: BOOK 9, CHAPTER 7: MITYA'S GREAT SECRET. MET WITH HISSES.

Dmitri asserts that the money was his. He also says that it amounted to fifteen hundred. He had sewn it up in a rag and hung it around his neck. He carried it with him for a long time, "with shame and disgrace." In his view, he stole it from Katerina Ivanovna, who entrusted him with the **three thousand roubles** "to send to her sister and some other relative in Moscow." Around that time, he fell in love with Grushenka and took her two Mokroye. In two days, he "squandered half of that cursed three thousand" and kept the other half, but then spent much of it the day before.

*Dmitri carried the amulet as though it were a stigma of his shame. Earlier, he gets offended by the strip search, as it made him feel like a common thief, though he does regard himself as such due to his guilt over taking money from Katerina Ivanovna. Really, Dmitri's sense of guilt has less to do with the money and more with how the money indicates his disregard and lack of love for his fiancée.*

Nikolai Parfenovich mentions how Dmitri told everyone that he squandered **three thousand roubles** during his first spree in Mokroye. Dmitri says it was only fifteen hundred. Ippolit Kirillovich asks if there's anyone else who would know about this circumstance. Dmitri says that he didn't tell anyone. The prosecutor wonders why he kept it such a secret because many people have already guessed that Dmitri took money from Miss Verkhovtsev. It's common gossip. It's incredible that Dmitri has expressed a preference for penal servitude over confessing his well-known secret. The prosecutor asks Dmitri why he set aside half of the money that Katerina Ivanovna gave him.

*In this instance, Dmitri's penchant for bragging works against him. He inflated the amount of money he had to seem more impressive. The fact that he told everyone, including the innkeeper Trifon Borisich, that he had three thousand roubles, makes it more difficult to believe what he says now. It does speak to Dmitri's honor, however, that he would rather go to prison than tell anyone about how he humiliated Katerina.*

Dmitri says that he intended to go to Katerina Ivanovna and admit that he's a "dishonest" and "cowardly" man but still not a thief. With that, he could return the other half to her. Ippolit Kirillovich fails to see this as "a fatal difference," but Dmitri thinks that it is, because, if he could always decide to give it back, that meant that he wasn't "a scoundrel." The prosecutor asks why Dmitri separated fifteen hundred from the sum he took from Katerina. Dmitri apologizes for "tormenting" them by not "explaining the main thing." He says that he was thinking about Grushenka one day wanting to be with him. Well, he would have to prove to her that he wasn't poor. Dmitri says that what ended up tormenting him the most was, not that he may have killed Grigory, but that he spent the money in his amulet.

*Dmitri communicates that he always had the intention of paying Katerina Ivanovna back. He imagines that the authorities were as "tormented" in their effort to learn the truth as he was to withhold it. The authorities, of course, are not tormented but merely want to know as much as possible to ensure that they have a strong case against Dmitri. Dmitri is honest about having less remorse for his treatment of Grigory than for his treatment of Katerina. He is, therefore, less ashamed of being a murderer than he is of being a thief, due to thievery being, to him, a baser and more common crime (and also probably because Grigory is lower-class and Katerina is nobility).*

Ippolit Kirillovich expresses sympathy for Dmitri. Then, he asks why he couldn't have just asked Katerina Ivanovna for the money for his expenses. Surely, with "her generous heart" and the securities he was willing to offer to Samsonov and Madame Khokhlakov, she would've given him the **three thousand roubles**. Dmitri says that such a thing would be "base." Nikolai Parfenovich reminds him that, "until the very last hour," Dmitri still considered going to Miss Verkhovtsev for the money. Dmitri begs them to leave that out of his testimony. He covers his face in despair.

*The prosecutor doesn't understand that, though Katerina Ivanovna would've given Dmitri the money—and, given her need to suffer to feel noble, would have gladly done so—he couldn't bring himself to demand money from a woman he had already betrayed. Indeed, such a request would be base and would make Dmitri seem even more callous. His sense of honor is what allows the reader to maintain some sympathy for him, though it also helps to condemn him in the eyes of the authorities.*

Ippolit Kirillovich asks Dmitri if the amulet he wore was very big. Dmitri says it wasn't. He tore it off of his neck after he left Fenya's and was heading to see Pyotr Ilyich Perkhotin. He thinks he left it in the town square. He sewed it using a piece of linen from his landlady's bonnet. When they ask where Dmitri got the needle and thread, he shouts that he won't go on. He bends his head and covers his face with his hands. He reminds them that Grushenka is guilty of nothing and asks what they'll do with her. The prosecutor says that they have no need to trouble her. He thanks them. Before they begin interrogating the witnesses, Nikolai Parfenovich suggests that they break for tea.

*The authorities' questions about tiny details annoy Dmitri, since it's highly unlikely that the source of Dmitri's needle and thread are relevant to the case. Dmitri is more interested in Grushenka's well-being than he is in his own. He worries that she may suffer for his wrongdoings. Once again he maintains a strict sense of honor, particularly when it comes to women and keeping them from shame.*

## PART 3: BOOK 9, CHAPTER 8: THE EVIDENCE OF THE WITNESSES. THE WEE ONE.

During the interrogation of the witnesses, the investigators focus all of their attention on the **three thousand roubles** and whether Dmitri had three thousand or fifteen hundred during his first party in Mokroye, a month ago, and whether it was three thousand or fifteen hundred that he had yesterday. Trifon Borisich is the first to be questioned. He testifies firmly and "without hesitation" that it was three thousand that Dmitri spent a month ago and that Dmitri himself claimed to have the sum. In response, Dmitri said that he probably had no more than five hundred but never counted. As for yesterday's amount, Trifon Borisich says that Dmitri announced, as soon as he dismounted from his carriage, that he had three thousand. He also says that Dmitri declared that he'd spent six thousand altogether at the inn. Dmitri denies this. The peasants who were present the night before also back Trifon Borisich's testimony.

*Trifon Borisich is a witness who works against Dmitri. This isn't just because he, like Grigory, is fixed on asserting his certainty about things. It's also because he seems to quietly dislike Dmitri and only engages with him because Dmitri is good for business. Trifon Borisich is an untrustworthy and duplicitous character, which makes him an untrustworthy witness. He lies about Dmitri dismounting from his carriage and announcing how much money he had. It's possible that the innkeeper assumed that Dmitri had three thousand again, just like the month before, because he ordered many of the same things the second time as he did during his first visit.*

Next, Pyotr Fomich Kalganov arrives. He admits that he, too, heard about the six thousand. However, he didn't really know how much money Dmitri had. He also testifies that the panie had cheated at cards. Once they were banished, Dmitri's relations with Grushenka improved. From Pyotr Fomich, they learn the details of Dmitri's "romance."

*The six thousand roubles is a matter of legend, further indicating that people experience things differently and develop their own versions of the truth.*

After this, the panie are interrogated. They say that they went to their room but didn't sleep all night. Pan Mussyalovich, Grushenka's ex-fiancé, refers to Dmitri as "a scoundrel." He also tells them about Dmitri's attempt to bribe the man to go away. Pan Mussyalovich recalls that Dmitri said that the remainder of the **three thousand roubles** he would give were in his town. Ippolit Kirillovich thinks that some of the money may have been in town, or even in Mokroye, which explains why only eight hundred were found on Dmitri. This is the only evidence, so far, that works out in Dmitri's favor.

*It's possible that the Polish officers' sleeplessness was related to their inability to get the money they wanted out of Grushenka. With their testimony, they hope to malign and dishonor Dmitri. However, they also end up telling the authorities something that works in Dmitri's favor because, if some of the money is in town, then that would indicate that Dmitri didn't take three thousand roubles from his father.*

Then, Maximov is called in. He decisively testifies that, when he borrowed ten roubles from Dmitri, he saw twenty thousand appear in Dmitri's hands. Nikolai Parfenovich wonders if Maximov has ever seen twenty thousand roubles before. They then dismiss him and bring in Grushenka. The investigators worry about the effect her appearance with have on Dmitri, but he assures them that "there would be no disturbance." They ask what her relations have been with Dmitri. She says that, for the past month, they've been acquaintances. She liked him but had not been in love with him and was only tempting him with her "vile wickedness." She didn't really care that much for him or Fyodor, she admits.

*As the testimonies continue, the legend of the money becomes increasingly fanciful. Three thousand roubles inflates to six thousand and now, humorously, to ten thousand. Maximov is a poor man who covets the elevated status he once had as a landowner (assuming his stories about that are true). Therefore, it's easy for him to enter a state of wonder at the sight of many bills, envisioning more money than there actually is. In Grushenka's testimony, she is self-condemnatory. Her language increasingly reflects her growing sense of martyrdom.*

Nikolai Parfenovich asks her if **three thousand roubles** were spent in Mokroye last month, and she confirms that they were. However, she claims that she only heard Dmitri tell others about the sum. She confirms, too, that she heard him mention the number many times. Ippolit Kirillovich is very pleased to hear this evidence. She also says that she knew the money came from Katerina Ivanovna.

*The prosecutor is pleased because Grushenka's testimony is key. She is honest about what she knows and clear that she was already aware of Dmitri's betrayal of Katerina Ivanovna. The commonness of this knowledge makes one wonder why Dmitri tried so hard to hide it.*

Nikolai Parfenovich then asks if Dmitri ever mentioned a wish to kill his father. Grushenka exclaims that he has, "several times, always in a fit of anger." She never believed, though, that he'd do it. She trusted too much in Dmitri's nobility. Dmitri requests a word with Grushenka in the authorities' presence, and they grant it. He declares that he's not guilty of murdering his father. In regard to yesterday's money, she says she doesn't know how much Dmitri had. He also had not "stolen" yesterday's money from Katerina Ivanovna. Grushenka is then dismissed.

*Grushenka correctly assesses Dmitri's character. He did, indeed, snatch the pestle with the intention of killing his father, but then decided against it. This indicates that he is too decent to commit parricide, even in a fit of rage. Dmitri dissipates himself in drink and is careless with money, but she asserts that he does have a moral code. For this reason, she also doesn't believe that he stole anything from Katerina Ivanovna.*

## PART 3: BOOK 9, CHAPTER 9: MITYA IS TAKEN AWAY

After the transcript is signed, Nikolai Parfenovich reads out the "Resolution" that makes note of the charges against Dmitri. While he's declared himself "not guilty," he's not brought anything forward to vindicate himself. Meanwhile, testimonies from the witnesses "show him to be guilty to the highest degree." Dmitri is to be taken away by the deputy commissioner, Mavriky Mavrikievich. Nikolai Parfenovich assures him that the investigation is not yet over and will be continued in town. Dmitri requests to see Grushenka before he's led away. He asks for her forgiveness for "[ruining]" her "with [his] love." He wants to say something more, but he stops himself and walks out.

*No one believes Grushenka's testimony because she has no basis for any of her claims and she has a reputation as an immoral woman. Also, the authorities don't believe what Dmitri says about the fifteen hundred because he never told anyone else about it. Even if they were able to recover the amulet, it wouldn't have been certifiable proof that he didn't, in fact, have three thousand roubles. The witnesses' testimony is simply too damning. Still, Dmitri is more worried about how all of this will affect Grushenka.*

When Dmitri gets in the cart that will escort him to jail, he bids everyone crowded at the gates, including the witnesses, "farewell." Dmitri twice says "farewell" to Trifon Borisich, who doesn't reply. Mavriky Mavrikievich also snaps "fiercely" at Dmitri for calling him "old fellow" instead of addressing him by his title. Pyotr Fomich Kalganov bids Dmitri farewell, however, and Dmitri returns the greeting. Kalganov then runs back into the front hall, sits down in a corner, bends his head, and cries. He believes "almost completely" in Dmitri's guilt and, at that moment, doesn't want to live in the world as it is.

*Trifon Borisich expresses his underlying contempt for Dmitri in this moment. Mavriky Mavrikievich also exposes his class contempt, triggered by Dmitri's overfamiliarity. Kalgonov is the only one to sympathize with Dmitri, as he knows him personally. He is an innocent who's likely confounded by the whole case, unable to believe in either Dmitri's guilt or innocence but sad that he lives in a world in which an act such as patricide is conscionable.*

## PART 4: BOOK 10, CHAPTER 1: KOLYA KRASOTKIN

The widow of the official Krasotkin, Anna Fyodorovna Krasotkin, lives in a small house close to Plotnikov's shop. Her husband died almost fourteen years earlier. Mrs. Krasotkin was eighteen and had just borne a son. She has since devoted herself to the upbringing of her boy, Kolya. When the boy started school, his mother studied all of his subjects with him. She got acquainted with his teachers and their wives and even made a point of being sweet to his classmates so that they wouldn't bully him.

*At what seems to be a climactic peak in the narrative, Dostoevsky suddenly shifts focus and turns to a new set of characters—the children tangentially connected to Dmitri and Alexei. The widow devotes herself to Kolya and becomes fiercely protective of him because he is the only family that she has left. Her excessive attention may have contributed to his sense of being special, which he lords over those around him.*

Kolya Krasotkin looks down on everyone and accepts respect as his due, but he still behaves "in a comradely way." With his mother, he behaves "despotically." When this occurs, she cries hysterically and makes "heartfelt effusions." The more she does this, however, the colder he becomes.

*Kolya both craves his mother's affection and resents her for it, as it seems to hinder his ability to assert his manhood. He takes a sadistic pleasure in causing his mother suffering.*

Kolya loves reading and playing pranks. One night, he offers to lie down on the rails when the eleven o'clock train comes. Kolya already knew that it was possible to stretch and flatten oneself out so that the train could pass over someone lying there. When he tells this to a group of fifteen-year-olds who regard him as a "boy," much to Kolya's offense, they laugh at him. That night, the boys gather to await the train, and Kolya lies down between the rails. After the train goes by, the boys rush to Kolya, who isn't moving. He tells them that he pretended to be unconscious to frighten them, but he actually fainted. Still, his reputation as a "desperado" is firmly established.

*Kolya is both an intelligent boy and a physically daring one. His stunts are attempts to assert his manhood and to release himself from his mother's overly protective grasp. To prove himself to the older boys, he makes a risky bet, and it pays off.*

After the railway incident, Kolya's relationship with his mother changes. When Anna Fyodorovna heard about her son's deed, she nearly lost her mind from terror. She had hysterical fits for days, causing Kolya to give her his word that he'd never play such a prank again. He burst into tears but, the next morning, he "woke up as unfeeling as ever." As the woman's anxiety increases, the romantic hopes of Dardanelov, Kolya's world history teacher, also increase. He has developed romantic interest in Anna Fyodorovna. While Kolya previously despised Dardanelov for his "feelings," Kolya decides to speak more kindly of him around his mother, which Anna Fyodorovna gratefully takes for her son's approval. When Dardanelov comes around, however, Kolya distracts himself with his dog, Perezvon. Kolya is the boy whom Ilyusha stabbed in the thigh with a penknife.

*Kolya wavers between love for his mother and resentment of her, as he senses that she's impeding his growth into manhood. Really, Kolya longs for connection with older male figures, someone who can serve either as a surrogate brother or father figure. Alexei will later fulfill both of these roles. Kolya associates sensitivity with weakness, which explains his suddenly cold behavior the next morning. Dardanelov's romantic feelings for Anna Fyodorovna fall into this category of supposedly contemptible expression. Kolya doesn't yet understand love and has learned from his culture to have contempt for women.*

## PART 4: BOOK 10, CHAPTER 2: KIDS

On a cold Sunday morning in November, Kolya Krasotkin is sitting at home. There's only one other apartment in the house—two rooms across the hall from Anna Fyodorovna's apartment, which she rents out to a doctor's wife and her two children, Nastya and Kostya. Kolya has designated himself the children's guardian, and when Agafya, the maid, and his mother are out, he guards the house with Perezvon. Kolya finds various games to play with the kids, whom he refers to as "squirts," including "soldiers" and "horses." On this particular day, he has ordered them to read. He checks in on them. Each time he opens the door, they smile brightly at him.

*All of the children in the household are fatherless. Because Kolya has never known what it is to have a father (the official Krasotkin died before he was born), he creates himself in his idea of a paternal image. Kolya is very eager to establish his adolescent maturity, which is why he refers to the children diminutively. The children enjoy his attention because he is an older figure who indulges them, and their mother seems to be absent frequently.*

Kolya is waiting for Agafya to return because he has to leave, but the maid is late. He goes into the children's room and asks if they would be all right if they were left alone. When the children express grief, he says that he'll cheer them up. He takes a little bronze cannon out of his bag and places it on the table. Nastya asks if he has any powder; he says he does. He takes out a small bottle and pours a little of its contents into his palm. He then asks the "squirts" if he can go. When they make as though they'll cry, Kolya brings in Perezvon to perform tricks for their amusement. During the last trick, Agafya enters.

*Despite Kolya's insensitivity to his mother, he expresses great love and care for the children who are boarding in the house. He empathizes with their sense of abandonment, also feeling somewhat lost due to the death of his father. Looking after the children also gives him the adult responsibility that he craves to prove that he's not a child himself anymore.*

Agafya has just returned from the market. Kolya asks why she's late, referring to her as "female sex." She calls him a "pipsqueak." He asks her to swear that she'll look after the children. She says that she needn't swear; she'll simply do it. Kolya bids the "chicks" goodbye and leaves.

*Kolya has developed a negative view of women, fostered by his culture, his historical era, and his own insecurities, which explains his poor treatment of both Agafya and his mother.*

## PART 4: BOOK 10, CHAPTER 3: A SCHOOLBOY

Kolya walks out of the gate and heads down the street. He pulls out a whistle and whistles "with all his might." A minute later, Smurov emerges. He tells Kolya that he's been waiting for him for an hour. Smurov sees that Kolya has brought Perezvon. He suggests that they lie and tell Ilyusha that it's Zhuchka—Ilyusha's dog that ran away, but Kolya says he won't. Kolya asks how Ilyusha is doing. Smurov reports that he probably has consumption. He says that Dr. Herzenstube keeps going to the house. Kolya curses all doctors as "medical scum." He says that he rejects medicine, though he plans to go into it.

*Kolya's authority with the younger boys is made clear here. Smurov is extremely dedicated to Kolya to the point of obsequiousness, which is why he spends an hour waiting for him outside. He probably remains dedicated to Kolya because of the latter's reputation as a "desperado" and also because Smurov's father disapproves of Kolya. The friendship is Smurov's form of rebellion.*

Smurov says that ten boys from the class go to visit Ilyusha every day. He thinks Ilyusha will be glad to see Kolya. The boys started going to the captain's house, first with Alexei Karamazov. Kolya says that Alexei is "a riddle" to him. He's formed an opinion about him, but he isn't sure if it's valid. Kolya then points to a peasant whose "long, light brown beard" contains frost. Kolya cries out that the peasant has a frozen beard. The peasant calmly utters that "many have got their beards frozen." Smurov tells Kolya not to pick on him. Kolya has a brief exchange with the man, who calls himself Matvey. Kolya is proud of himself for "talking with the people."

*Many of the same boys who go to visit Ilyusha were in the crowd that earlier gathered to corner and stone the small, weak boy. Their ability to rally around him now, despite their past differences, reveals the wonderful ability that children often have to quarrel and then forget. Alexei has the same ability, which is both why he never holds on to an offense and why children gravitate toward him. The boys form a second family around Ilyusha.*

The boys then walk through the market. Kolya greets a woman whom he calls by the wrong name. He's then approached by a young man who irritably claims to know him. Kolya makes a fool of the man in front of the market women, prompting them all to laughter. Kolya tells Smurov that he likes "stirring up fools in all strata of society." He then encounters a burly peasant, whom he decides to taunt. However, this one turns out to be intelligent. When the boys get close to Captain Snegiryov's house, Kolya stops and asks Smurov to have Alexei Karamazov meet him outside. Smurov questions him, prompting Kolya to snap at him. Smurov then runs to carry out the order.

*Kolya's devilish nature is expressed when he pokes fun at people in town. He uses people's own foolishness against them, though he often comes off as cruel or pretentious in doing so. His comment about poking fun at everyone, regardless of class, reveals the influence of Rakitin's socialist writings on his attitude and thinking. Despite this tendency, Kolya is drawn to Alexei, whose generous nature contrasts with Kolya's cynicism. This strongly suggests that Kolya wishes to be different but worries that, if he is, he won't be accepted.*

## PART 4: BOOK 10, CHAPTER 4: ZHUCHKA

Alexei emerges and hurries up to Kolya. His face is joyful, making Kolya think, with pleasure, that Alexei is happy to see him. Alexei says that Ilyusha is in poor condition and "will certainly die." Kolya decides to tell Alexei the story of how he befriended Ilyusha. He also talks about how Ilyusha befriended Smerdyakov, who taught Ilyusha the nasty trick of taking a soft piece of bread, sticking a pin in it, and feeding it to starving yard dogs. They did this one day with a dog named Zhuchka, a hungry yard dog. She ate the bread, then ran away, squealing. Ilyusha was ashamed of what he did. Kolya called him "a scoundrel," and they stopped being friends. Shortly thereafter, Ilyusha stabbed him with the penknife.

*Kolya is eager to befriend Alexei and to ensure that the former monk has a high opinion of him. Therefore, he starts to explain himself, which also explains why Ilyusha was cornered by the boys. Kolya sought to take Ilyusha under his wing, just as Kolya hopes that Alexei will provide him with guidance. However, Ilyusha was also under the poisonous influence of Smerdyakov, who taught him to perform an act that causes Ilyusha lingering regret. Once again, Smerdyakov's acts of violence against animals suggest amorality or psychopathy.*

Kolya says that he and Smurov have been trying to assure Ilyusha that Zhuchka is alive. Kolya then tells Alexei that the dog with him is his dog, Perezvon. Kolya decides that he likes Alexei, who, he thinks, is "to the highest degree on an equal footing with him."

*Alexei becomes something like an older fraternal figure, given the amity between him and Kolya, as well as a paternal figure who admonishes Kolya's bad behavior.*

## PART 4: BOOK 10, CHAPTER 5: AT ILYUSHA'S BEDSIDE

The room in which Captain Snegiryov's family lives is crowded with visitors. Ilyusha even sees his former enemies in the room, but not Kolya, which saddens him. He regrets stabbing the boy who was his only friend and protector with a penknife. For two weeks, Ilyusha hasn't left his bed "in the corner near the icons." Captain Snegiryov has been in anguish over the boy's impending death, but he makes an effort to amuse him with stories, jokes, and impressions of people. The captain eventually accepted the two hundred roubles from Katerina Ivanovna, as Alexei predicted. After learning about Ilyusha's illness, Katerina visited the home and became acquainted with the whole family.

*Ilyusha, knowing that death is near, seeks to make amends with Kolya. His family has placed him near the icons with the hope that some divine intervention could save his life. Captain Snegiryov is a good father, though he is economically incapable of taking care of any of his children. His pride at having formerly been an officer initially prevented him from taking the money from Katerina Ivanovna, but the impracticality of such a decision, given his family's needs, leads him to change his mind.*

Three days earlier, Ilyusha heard that he would be given a mastiff puppy, which now lies at his side. Though he likes the dog, he misses Zhuchka. Suddenly, one of the boys cries out that Kolya has arrived. Kolya goes to stand by Ilyusha's bed. Ilyusha rises and looks at Kolya, whom he hasn't seen in two months. When Kolya asks how he's doing, Ilyusha feels that he's going to cry. Kolya reaches out and strokes Ilyusha's hair. He then remarks on the puppy. Kolya mentions that he has a dog named Perezvon. Ilyusha asks him about Zhuchka, and Kolya says that she "ran off somewhere and died." Kolya orders Smurov to open the door and Perezvon rushes in.

*Ilyusha loved Zhuchka, which makes it strange that he would perform an act that hurt the dog—he may have just been showing off or genuinely curious about Smerdyakov's "experiment." Ilyusha feels that he's going to cry because he's both happy to see Kolya and sad about how things occurred between them. Kolya is planning to make a grand gesture, so he initially acts callous in his description of what probably happened to Zhuchka.*

Ilyusha takes one look at the dog and proclaims that it is Zhuchka. Kolya then exclaims "in a ringing, happy voice" that it is, indeed, Zhuchka. He points to the marks on the dog's body, which Ilyusha previously described. Ilyusha goes pale and can't speak. The boys cry out, "Bravo!" and applaud Kolya. Kolya explains how he worked to train the dog after finding it. He has it perform tricks for the crowd. He then summons Perezvon to jump up in bed with Ilyusha. Kolya sits back down on Ilyusha's bed and shows him a little cannon that's he's brought. He holds it up and everyone looks upon it with delight.

*Kolya has been planning this moment for a long time—both to bring joy to Ilyusha and to make everyone praise* him *for his cleverness and generosity. There is certainly a loving aspect to this gesture, but in his desire to create the greatest spectacle possible Kolya also seems to forget that Ilyusha is near death and could be seriously affected by such a shock.*

Arina Petrovna, Ilyusha's mother, reaches out for it. Captain Snegiryov assures her that Ilyusha will let her play with it, and that the cannon will belong to both of them. Arina insists that she wants it only to be hers. Ilyusha offers the cannon to his mother. Arina is ecstatic to be in possession of the toy. Kolya offers to bring gunpowder.

*Arina's mental illness causes her to seem developmentally stunted. She behaves like a child, which prevents her from being able to parent any of her children. Here, she is struggling with her son over a toy.*

The group launches into stories about Kolya's "desperado" exploits. He tells another story in which he tricked a fool into rolling the wheel of a cart over a goose's neck. When the matter was taken to the justice of the peace, the fellow Kolya tricked cried and claimed that Kolya made him kill the goose, as an experiment. They then talk about how he "showed up" Dardanelov over the matter of who founded Troy. Kolya insists that he only knew the answer, while Dardanelov didn't, because he is the only person to own a copy of Smaragdov's history. Another boy notes that Kolya is first in Latin. Kolya shrugs this off, but he's pleased by all the praise. At the same time, he worries what Alexei thinks of him.

*Alexei will later comment on how important Kolya seems to think it is to impress others. Kolya wants very much to be liked, which is the reason for his superior attitude—he quietly thinks himself unworthy of attention or acclaim, and so must constantly be performing and one-upping himself to ear praise. Moreover, with the boys, he's formed some version of the family that he never had. Ilyusha is like a younger brother to him, so it's very important to Kolya to get the approval of the others.*

Nina Nikolaevna announces the arrival of the doctor. Kolya calls Perezvon down from the bed but says that he's not leaving. He'll just wait in the entry way until the doctor leaves. The doctor enters as though he's come to the wrong place. The crowd and the poverty of the room confuse him. He addresses Captain Snegiryov and confirms his identity. The doctor looks around "squeamishly" and takes off his fur coat. He then asks where the patient is.

*Despite being someone whose job it is to care for others, the doctor appears to be a snob who regards the suffering of the family with disgust instead of sympathy for their poverty. This suggests Ivan's view that people can only love each other in the abstract and not up-close.*

## PART 4: BOOK 10, CHAPTER 6: PRECOCITY

Kolya asks Alexei what he thinks the doctor will say to Ilyusha. He then says that the doctor has "a disgusting mug" and talks about hating medicine. Alexei sadly replies that it seems certain that Ilyusha will die. Kolya goes on about how "medicine is a swindle," but says that he's glad to have met Alexei. He says that he heard that Alexei is a mystic, but that "the touch of reality" will cure him of that. Alexei is surprised by this talk and asks Kolya if he's an atheist. Kolya says that "God is only a hypothesis." He stops talking, assuming that Alexei believed that he was just showing off to prove how grown-up he is.

*Kolya's ideas about medicine are the result of a skepticism that likely originates in the era's wariness toward science. As Russia transitions into modernity, it struggles to accept new ideas. Doctors also aren't helped along much by the fact that they know so little about common conditions, such as epilepsy. Part of Kolya's attraction to Alexei is his sincere religious faith, though he is reluctant to admit this.*

Kolya claims that he's a socialist. Alexei laughs, remarking that Kolya is just thirteen. Kolya corrects him: he'll be fourteen in two weeks. He insists that his convictions are important, not his age. He says that he's not against Christ, whom he thinks was very humane; but, if Christ were living in their time, he would join the revolutionaries. Alexei asks Kolya what "fool" he's been talking to. Kolya says that he often talks to Rakitin, though they often disagree. Kolya then asks if Alexei despises him. Alexei is confused by the question and says that he's merely sad that "a lovely nature" such as Kolya's "should already be perverted by all this crude nonsense."

*Alexei thinks that Kolya is too young to have political ideas. This seems true, but one's political ideas usually begin to develop in early adolescence, and Kolya is thirteen. Still, he doesn't yet completely understand everything that he's talking about. Many of his ideas are also derived from Rakitin, who is certainly not a trustworthy source. Alexei finds it nonsensical to include Christ within a political paradigm, believing that the Savior's purpose was to rise above such earthly squabbles.*

Kolya says that he's "profoundly unhappy" and imagines that the whole world is laughing at him. Alexei says that it doesn't matter if someone seems ridiculous because anyone is capable of that. Kolya feels comforted. He tells Alexei that he loves him. Just then, the doctor emerges and Kolya wonders what he's going to say.

*Kolya is a deeply insecure boy. Part of this is the pain of trying to learn who he is. However, another part of it is that he never knew his father and his mother has never given him enough space to develop independently from her interference. Like many people who see themselves as a corrupt or inferior (for example, Grushenka), Kolya is then drawn to Alexei and his kind and non-judgmental nature.*

## PART 4: BOOK 10, CHAPTER 7: ILYUSHA

The doctor is just coming out of the room. He still has the "squeamish" look, as though he's afraid of dirtying himself on something. Captain Snegiryov runs after him, bowing low. The doctor suggests that he take Ilyusha to Syracuse, due to the more favorable climate there. Kolya remarks that that's in Sicily, and the captain gestures around his home, as though to say that he can't afford to move his family to Sicily. The doctor says that the matter of money isn't his business—he's only basing his advice on science. The doctor then looks anxiously at Perezvon. Kolya assures him that the dog won't bite him, and calls the doctor a "leech." The doctor says that Kolya should be whipped. Alexei warns Kolya that if he says anything more, he'll "break with [him] forever." Kolya obeys.

*The Moscow doctor is a snob who doesn't usually treat, and doesn't care to treat, people of Ilyusha's social station. He's only there because Katerina Ivanovna sent for him as a favor to the family. The doctor is someone who represents modern Russia's scientific advancement, though his attitude is in keeping with the country's loyalty to an old class system. His aversion to the family and his indifference over their inability to afford his remedy also reiterates Ivan's view that people often have difficulty loving each other up close.*

Captain Snegiryov goes back to Ilyusha and begins to cry. Ilyusha comforts him, saying how sorry he feels for his father. He tells his father that, when he dies, he can get another little boy and call him "Ilyusha" and love him instead. Kolya tells Ilyusha to "shut up" and says that he'll get well. Nina Nikolaevna weeps quietly in her chair. Kolya embraces Ilyusha, but then says that he has to leave to go home for dinner. He says he'll return after dinner, however, and will bring Perezvon. Kolya then runs to the hall and begins to cry. Alexei finds him and reminds Kolya that he must keep his word, or Ilyusha will feel terrible. Kolya asks if Alexei is returning, and he says that he will, in the evening. Kolya then shouts fiercely to the dog for him to come and quickly strides back home.

*The captain cries out of both sadness and frustration, as he's upset over his inability to help his son. Kolya gets angry and snaps at Ilyusha because it frightens him to think that Ilyusha could die. Kolya likes to be able to control situations through his own ingenuity, but he has no control over his friend's death. Ilyusha's helpless suffering triggers grief in everyone else, and only Alexei is able to maintain some composure. His recent experience with the elder Zosima's death has helped him to grow accustomed to the inevitability of losing someone he loves. Kolya hasn't yet had this experience.*

## PART 4: BOOK 11, CHAPTER 1: AT GRUSHENKA'S

Alexei goes to see Grushenka at the widow Morozov's house. Grushenka tells him that she took pirozhki (stuffed pastries) to Dmitri at the prison today and he threw them back at her. He got jealous over Samsonov, and thinks that she's returned to her former keeper. Alexei tells her that Dmitri is worried about her. Grushenka says that she understands his worry—after all, his trial is tomorrow. She says that she's afraid to think of what will happen and that Dmitri also still talks about "the Pole." Maximov comments that his former wife was also jealous of the chambermaid. Grushenka takes this for a joke and tells him she's in no mood for humor.

*Grushenka's personality begins to resemble that of Katerina Ivanovna, who also took great care to look after Dmitri because she believed it was her duty to care for him in an effort to alleviate his pain (and to feel righteous in the process). Much of Dmitri's suffering is still caused by his incurable jealousy. Maximov's joke may be an attempt to poke fun at the situation, but it could also be true.*

Grushenka mentions that her ex-fiancé, Pan Mussyalovich, sent her "an extremely long" and "flowery letter," in which he asked for three roubles. She had already received many of these letters and, when she fell ill, the panie visited her. When the panie sent a final letter asking for one rouble, Grushenka felt sorry for them and visited their dwellings. She found them living in "abject poverty," with no food and "in debt to their landlady." The two hundred roubles they got out of Dmitri had disappeared.

*It turns out to be true that the Polish officers only reconnected with Grushenka with the express purpose of getting her to give them money. However, when one reads about the severity of their poverty, their attempts to swindle money out of Grushenka, as well as their cheating during cards, are revealed as acts to keep them from starvation.*

Grushenka says that she made the mistake of telling Dmitri that she was going to send pirozhki to the panie. He got jealous. She says that Dmitri may seem to be suffering, but he gets jealous on purpose. Alexei doesn't understand. Grushenka says that she doesn't think Dmitri loves her, especially given how he still praises Katerina Ivanovna. She covers her eyes and bursts into tears. Alexei assures her that Dmitri doesn't love Katerina, but Grushenka says that they'll soon know for sure.

*Grushenka begins to suspect that Dmitri's expressions of jealousy may be an act, and that he still actually loves Katerina Ivanovna. This seems absurd, given Dmitri's lack of interest in Katerina and his willingness to exploit her in favor of being with Grushenka. Both Dmitri and Grushenka are hopelessly jealous, and this makes their relationship so volatile.*

What really torments Grushenka is what will happen tomorrow at Dmitri's trial. She's certain that Smerdyakov killed Fyodor but bets that no one has questioned him. Alexei says that he has, in fact, been "closely questioned," but he's been very sick since his last falling fit. He adds that he, Ivan, and Katerina Ivanovna have put up **three thousand roubles** for the lawyer Fetyukovich to represent Dmitri. The lawyer would have charged more, but the Karamazov case has become known all over the country.

*Grushenka believes Dmitri's suspicion that Smerdyakov is the murderer because he is the only other person who was aware of the signals to note Grushenka's arrival. No one is likely to question Smerdyakov, both because he's ill and because Dmitri himself nixed the idea that Smerdyakov could ever really accomplish murder.*

Grushenka then asks Alexei a question that she's been wanting to ask for a long time: is Ivan in love with Katerina Ivanovna, as Dmitri said? Alexei says he doesn't think Ivan loves her. Grushenka now thinks that Dmitri lied to her. Again, she cries bitter tears. Alexei rises and says that he's sure that Dmitri loves Grushenka, and only her, more than anyone. He then says that he's not going to try to get Dmitri's secret out of him, but if he learns it, he'll tell Dmitri that he's promised to share it with Grushenka. He bids her goodbye. He's in a hurry, and there's much to do.

*Often in the novel, Alexei assumes knowledge about people that he doesn't actually have. Everyone relies on his counsel, because he is a respected monk, but the subjects on which he advises them are sometimes beyond his understanding because of his limited engagement with the world. This indicates that there is something comforting about Alexei that causes others to overlook this potential flaw in his advice.*

## PART 4: BOOK 11, CHAPTER 2: AN AILING FOOT

Alexei first goes to Madame Khokhlakov's house. She says that she's preparing to go to Dmitri's trial. She'll be carried there in a chair, as one of the witnesses. but she doesn't know what she'll say. She's dismayed with the publicity around the case, too. She shows Alexei an article from a paper that identifies her as Dmitri's "dear friend." Madame Khokhlakov isn't really upset, just confused by this. The article, however, does describe her as "a bored widow" and "rather girlish," though she already has a grown daughter. It mentions that two hours before Fyodor's murder, she offered him **three thousand roubles** to go to the gold mines in Siberia. She's certain that the article is about her and that it was written by Rakitin who, she says, has fallen in love with her.

*The fact that Madame Khokhlakov will be carried into court on a chair is rather amusing and a testament to her lofty sense of self. In her view, she's too delicate to walk. She doesn't like that an article has identified her as Dmitri's friend, due to the harm that this could do to her reputation. It is possible that Rakitin wrote the article in a jealous rage. It's also possible that Rakitin hasn't fallen in love with Madame Khokhlakov at all and is merely using her, as he does so many people, because of her social position. Madame Khokhlakov likes the idea of young men fancying her.*

Alexei says that he needs to leave to get to Dmitri in time. Madame Khokhlakov asks Alexei what a "fit of passion" is. He isn't sure how to respond. She says that she thinks that Dmitri killed in a fit of passion. If Dmitri says that he didn't kill Fyodor, Madame Khokhlakov thinks that it's probably because he just doesn't remember. She thinks that Dmitri should be forgiven and that, after the trial, he should come to her home for dinner. She doesn't think Dmitri is dangerous, and even thinks that later he can maybe become a justice of the peace, because the best judges are those who've suffered some misfortune.

*Madame Khokhlakov cannot help but to give her assessment of why Dmitri committed the murder, though she isn't quite sure of what she's saying. She assumes that he did it out of jealousy over Grushenka, as everyone else does. Madame Khokhlakov's wealth and social prestige lead her to believe that she is smarter and more knowledgeable about things than she really is, but as usual she is a rather farcical character.*

Madame Khokhlakov then tells Alexei that she thinks Lise has gone mad. Though she trusts Alexei with her daughter, she doesn't trust Ivan, who visited Lise without Madame Khokhlakov's knowledge. She says that, six nights ago, he visited Lise for five minutes and then left. A couple of days later, Lise went into hysterics and demanded that her mother not receive Ivan again. She asks Alexei to go to Lise and find out what happened.

*It's never made clear what occurred during Ivan's brief visit. The reader later learns that Lise offers herself sexually to Ivan, much to the latter's surprise. It's possible that she went into hysterics after being rejected by Ivan. Ivan also likely visited at Lise's invitation.*

## PART 4: BOOK 11, CHAPTER 3: A LITTLE DEMON

When Alexei enters Lise's room, he finds her sitting in her former wheelchair. She doesn't move but looks at him sharply. She tells Alexei that she just overheard his entire conversation with her mother. Alexei notes that there's something "wicked and guileless" about Lise now. She tells Alexei that she loves him very much, but she doesn't respect him. Alexei asks why Lise sent for him. She says that she wants someone to marry her and torment her. Then, she expects that person to deceive her and leave her; she doesn't want to be happy. She wants "disorder." She would even like to set fire to her house.

*Lise is sitting in her former wheelchair, though she now has the ability to walk, because she doesn't seem to believe that she'll be accepted if she isn't infirm. At the same time, she seems to resent this and registers anger. She no longer respects Alexei because of his indomitable goodness—Lise is now choosing pain and disorder, as though she wants everyone else to suffer as much as she believes she has to.*

Alexei says that her rich life is the cause of her discontent, but Lise doesn't think it's better to be poor. Lise says, in fact, that she'd love to remain rich while everyone else is poor. She'll "eat candy and drink cream" and share none of it. She waves a hand in indifference. If she's ever poor, she says, she'll kill someone. Then again, maybe she'll do that anyway.

*Lise's anger could be partly the result of her mother continually frustrating her burgeoning sexuality with her spying and overprotecting. She becomes resentful and finds pleasure in what she's permitted: suffering. She wants to feel it and inflict it. Lise has changed drastically and is having a crisis common to many of Dostoevsky's characters, becoming transgressive and nihilistic in the face of a meaningless world.*

Alexei says that Lise takes "evil for good," which he chalks up to "a momentary crisis," due to her illness. Lise says that she wants to do evil, and her illness has nothing to do with it. Alexei asks if Lise isn't ashamed. She replies that she wants to ruin herself. She mentions a boy who lay down under the rails while a train went over him (Kolya) and calls him "lucky." She also mentions that people actually love that Dmitri killed his father, though they say that it's terrible. Lise says that she's "the first to love it."

*Lise feels incapacitated and frustrated, and lashes out in response. Like Kolya, she suffers from an overprotective mother. Unlike him, her gender and her paralysis prevent her from emancipating herself through forms of rebellion, though she attempts this by offering herself to Ivan. Alexei chalks up her frustration to an absence of faith.*

Lise tells Alexei to go to his brother. She pushes him out the door and gives him a letter addressed to Ivan. She demands that he give it to his brother. This, Lise says, is the reason she sent for Alexei. She then slams the door. Once he's gone, she unlocks and opens the door, puts her finger into the chink, and slams it again, crushing her finger "with all her might." She returns to her chair, looks at her blackened finger and the blood oozing from the fingernail, and whispers to herself about how mean she is.

*It's never made clear what Lise says to Ivan in the letter, but he never replies to her. He only mentions to Alexei that Lise once offered herself to him, but it seems more likely that that occurred during Ivan's unchaperoned visit. Lise's self-mutilation is the result of believing that no one will pay attention to her unless she is in pain—it is also a reversal of how concerned she was about Alexei's hurt finger not so long ago. This is a brutal ending for Lise (who doesn't appear again in the book), as she turns to inflicting pain on herself and others in an attempt to make sense of the world.*

## PART 4: BOOK 11, CHAPTER 4: A HYMN AND A SECRET

It's already late by the time Alexei gets to the prison gate and rings the bell, but he knows he'll be allowed to see Dmitri. Just as he enters, he sees Rakitin with Dmitri. Lately, Rakitin doesn't like seeing Alexei and even greets him with difficulty. Seeing Alexei come in, Rakitin frowns "more than usual" and looks away. As Rakitin is leaving, Alexei asks Dmitri why Rakitin comes so often now. Are they friends? Dmitri says that they aren't, but he's an intelligent man.

*Rakitin continues to resent Alexei for not being at all upset over his taking a bribe from Grushenka in her attempt to seduce Alexei. Alexei's indifference to the slight makes Rakitin feel like Alexei doesn't even think about him. Though he dislikes Alexei, he at least wants to be significant to him in some way (even a negative one).*

Dmitri sits on a bench, and Alexei sits beside him. Dmitri says that Rakitin wants to write an article about him. The article is going to say that it was impossible for Dmitri not to kill, as he is a product of his environment. Alexei mentions the vindictive article that Rakitin has already written about Madame Khokhlakov.

*Rakitin, who will later give a monologue at Dmitri's trial about depravity in Russian society, seems to be trying to use Dmitri to legitimize his own ideas. However, Rakitin also uses his writing to take revenge on those who've hurt or wronged him.*

Alexei announces that he can't stay long. Dmitri kisses him and says that he's wanted to see Alexei for some time. He tells his younger brother that he doesn't fear his fate. He wants to live, even if he's "locked up in a tower." However, he's tormented by God and wonders if Rakitin is right—what if God is "an artificial idea of mankind?" Rakitin says that it's possible to love mankind without God. Life seems simple for Rakitin, but Dmitri wonders what would stop people from cheating each other without God? Also, he wonders, what is virtue? Is it relative?

*Dmitri seems to enjoy talking to Alexei and finds comfort in his presence. Alexei can also help him answer some of the questions with which Dmitri is struggling. Dmitri seems ambivalent about God. He isn't agnostic—he wants to believe, but he's uncertain if what he's believing in is real. As many of the characters do, he also has trouble imagining any standard of morality that isn't backed up by religion.*

Dmitri says that Ivan doesn't have God. Alexei asks if Dmitri has talked with his lawyer. Dmitri curses the man and calls him "a smooth Petersburg swindler" who doesn't believe a word he says. Grigory, of course, stands by his testimony. He's honest, Dmitri says, but a fool.

*Dmitri has little hope in his case because he thinks that Fetyukovich is only interested in money and fame anyway, and the stubborn Grigory refuses to reconsider his testimony.*


Dmitri asks Alexei to go to Katerina Ivanovna so that she won't testify about how Dmitri once lent her forty-five hundred roubles. It'll make him look even more shameful when everyone hears about how she bowed. He talks, too, about how thoughts of Grushenka are "killing [him]." Alexei mentions that Grushenka was rather upset over Dmitri today. Dmitri acknowledges that he got jealous and then didn't ask for her forgiveness. Alexei asks why. Dmitri laughs at him and says that women never forgive directly, but will use a man's mistake against him.

*Dmitri doesn't want anyone to know that Katerina bowed to him. It will make the court more sympathetic to her than to him when they think of how a woman of high birth humbled herself in a moment of distress. Dmitri loves Grushenka, but he has no respect for her sex. On some level, he believes that all women, including Grushenka, are conniving and exist only to amplify men's suffering.*

Alexei then repeats everything that Grushenka told him earlier. Dmitri is surprised to learn that she's not angry with him. He decides that he'll love Grushenka "infinitely" and wonders if he'll be allowed to marry her. Dmitri walks around the room, and then decides to reveal the "secret" that Grushenka suspects exists between him, Ivan, and Katerina Ivanovna: Ivan has suggested that Dmitri escape if he's sent to prison. Alexei asks if Dmitri has any hope for acquittal. Dmitri shrugs and shakes his head. He then says that it's time for Alexei to go. They embrace and kiss each other. Dmitri grabs Alexei's shoulders and asks if he believes that he killed their father. Alexei says he never believed it. Dmitri thanks him, and Alexei leaves in tears. He goes to see Ivan.

*Dmitri realizes that his feelings of jealousy were baseless. Knowing this, he believes that he can trust Grushenka enough to marry her. However, with the prospect of his imprisonment, this may become impossible. Dmitri is a man who seems ready to submit to his fate, realizing that he has little control over it at this point. He asks Alexei what he believes, because Alexei's opinion of him is important. It saddens Alexei to see Dmitri suffer over a crime that Alexei thinks it's unlikely his older brother committed.*

## PART 4: BOOK 11, CHAPTER 5: NOT YOU! NOT YOU!

On the way to seeing Ivan, Alexei stops at the house where Katerina Ivanovna is staying. It's been more than a week since Alexei has seen her. He thinks that Ivan may be with her. When Alexei goes in, he mentions Dmitri's request that Katerina Ivanovna not testify about "bowing down for the money." She asks if Dmitri is afraid for himself or for her. Alexei says he's afraid for both of them. She says that Alexei may want to "trample" her after she testifies, but he says he's confident that Katerina will testify honestly. She says that she's been to see Smerdyakov, whom Ivan told her is "a parricide." Ivan prepares to leave, but she sends Alexei after him because the doctor told her that he has "a nervous fever." Alexei goes after his brother. Ivan irritably tells Alexei that Katerina thinks he's crazy. Alexei knows she's mistaken, but agrees that Ivan looks ill.

*Katerina Ivanovna asks the question about what Dmitri is afraid of because she wants to see if he still has any regard for her. Alexei equivocates, admitting what Katerina may suspect—that Dmitri is worried about how the jury will regard him after such a testimony. However, Alexei also thinks that Dmitri retains respect and affection for Katerina Ivanovna. It's unclear what Katerina Ivanovna discussed with Smerdyakov during her visit, but it's possible that the lackey manipulated her into refusing to believe what Ivan says, something Smerdyakov warned Ivan he would do.*

Alexei hands Lise's letter to Ivan. Ivan laughs, recognizes the handwriting, and calls her a "little demon." He tells Alexei that she offered herself to Ivan, as a loose woman would. Alexei scolds him for offending a child. Ivan tells Alexei that they shouldn't talk more about it. Ivan mentions that Katerina Ivanovna will pray all night over Dmitri. Alexei says that Katerina loves Ivan. Ivan doesn't know, but he knows that he doesn't "fancy her." Alexei wonders why he gives her hope. Ivan says that he's waiting until they pass the sentence, so that Katerina won't take revenge against him by destroying Dmitri. He tells Alexei about the letter Katerina has, "[proving] mathematically" that Dmitri killed Fyodor.

*Ivan is amused by Lise's actions, which may either mean that he doesn't know the severity of her suffering or doesn't care. Ivan lies about not having any interest in Katerina Ivanovna. Perhaps he feels slightly ashamed to be in love with his brother's fiancée, despite Dmitri's love for Grushenka. It's also rather contradictory of him to worry about Katerina "destroying" Dmitri in court when Ivan already knows about the letter which seems to make it apparent that Dmitri killed their father.*

## PART 4: BOOK 11, CHAPTER 6: THE FIRST MEETING WITH SMERDYAKOV

This is the third time that Ivan has gone to talk to Smerdyakov since returning from Moscow. Ivan returned to town five days after his father's death. On the train back from Moscow, he thought often about his last conversation with Smerdyakov. Ivan questioned Herzenstube and Varvinsky about Smerdyakov's "falling sickness" and asked them if he may have been "shamming" on the day of the murder. He visited Smerdyakov in the hospital. The lackey grinned mischievously, or at least Ivan perceived the smile as such. Otherwise, Ivan was convinced "beyond doubt" of Smerdyakov's illness.

*True to his intellectual nature and his reliance on facts in guiding his thinking, Ivan consults with doctors who would be experts in understanding Smerdyakov's condition. It's unclear if Smerdyakov is slowly revealing his evil with his mischievous grin or if it's merely Ivan's perception, as he gradually realizes that Smerdyakov isn't at all helpless or feeble-minded, as his prejudices determined.*

Ivan asked if Smerdyakov foretold that he would have a falling fit as he was descending into the cellar. He knows that a falling fit cannot be predicted, so he wants to know how Smerdyakov knew that he would have a fit, unless he feigned it. Smerdyakov said that, while it's true that one can't predict the day or the hour of a falling fit, one can always have a feeling.

*Ivan suspects that Smerdyakov shammed an epileptic fit to seem helpless so that no one would think to suspect him of murder. He finally starts to consider that Smerdyakov is guilty, though he previously found it impossible that the lackey could kill.*

Ivan then asked why Smerdyakov wanted him to go to Chermashnya. Smerdyakov said that he said it only out of pity because he sensed that things would be bad at home. Ivan asked if Smerdyakov thinks that everyone is a "coward" like him. Smerdyakov said that he did think Ivan was like him. Ivan remembered his compliment: "It's always interesting to talk with an intelligent man." He figured that Smerdyakov was praising him because he was glad that Ivan was leaving. Smerdyakov insisted that it was because Ivan had agreed to go to Chermashnya, which is closer than Moscow. However, Smerdyakov said that he spoke these words as a "reproach" and not as praise, because he was worried that Ivan was abandoning Fyodor and that Smerdyakov could've been blamed for the **three thousand roubles**.

*Smerdyakov is hinting at the calamity that will soon take place in the Karamazov home. His subtle warning to Ivan, who he knows will choose to go on to Moscow, works to plant a seed of guilt in him. Later, he will think that he could have done something to help prevent his father's murder, but didn't because he secretly wanted Fyodor dead himself. With his "reproach," Smerdyakov suggests that Ivan should have known that something unfortunate would happen and should have stayed close.*

Ivan asked if Smerdyakov told the district attorney and prosecutor about the knocking signals. Smerdyakov said that he did. Ivan recalled Smerdyakov telling him that he could "sham a falling fit," but the lackey said that he could do no such thing and was only bragging. Dmitri, Ivan said, accused Smerdyakov of the murder and robbery. Smerdyakov said that no one would believe him with all of the evidence saying otherwise.

*Smerdyakov is now lying about his ability to "sham" a fit, which, Ivan will later learn, is exactly how he was able to commit the murder without anyone ever thinking he could be a suspect, despite knowing the location of the money and knowing about the knocking signals.*

Ivan rose and said that he didn't believe that Smerdyakov committed the murder. He thought it ridiculous even to accuse the lackey. He bade Smerdyakov goodbye and asked if he needed anything. Smerdyakov said that he got all that he needed from Maria Kondratievna. Ivan said that he wouldn't mention at the trial that Smerdyakov knows how to sham fits. Smerdyakov offered that in turn, he won't mention his conversation with Ivan by the gate. When Ivan left, he realized that Smerdyakov's last words contained "some offensive meaning." He decided against turning back and left.

*Ivan doesn't think that Smerdyakov is intelligent enough to pull off a murder, which is a gross underestimation of his half-brother's abilities and a misunderstanding of his character. The conversation to which Smerdyakov refers is the one in which he advised Ivan to go to Chermashnya instead of Moscow, so that he could be close in case anything happened at the Karamazov house. Mentioning this would suggest that Ivan knew something would happen.*

In the next few days, Ivan "acquainted himself with all the evidence" and decided that Dmitri was guilty. Meanwhile, Alexei insisted that Dmitri didn't do it. Ivan prompted him to recall the night when Dmitri burst into Fyodor's house after dinner and beat him up. That night, Ivan wished for their father's death. Ivan may also not have minded helping, he said. Alexei was shocked to hear this, but Ivan demanded to know what Alexei thought at the time. Alexei admitted that he thought Ivan would do so, too. Ivan thanked Alexei in a snappish way, then walked away. Afterwards, Alexei noticed that his brother began to shun and dislike him. Ivan then made his way back to Smerdyakov's.

*The break between Ivan and Alexei comes as a result of two things. Firstly, Ivan focuses more on the evidence against Dmitri than he does on any aspect of his brother's character, which could suggest that he's not the culprit. Ivan's insistence on his certainty contributes to his undoing. Secondly, Ivan is annoyed with Alexei's denial of what he seems to think are natural murderous impulses. Alexei seems self-righteous in a way that's off-putting to Ivan, who is also feeling guilty about having such impulses himself.*

## PART 4: BOOK 11, CHAPTER 7: THE SECOND VISIT TO SMERDYAKOV

Smerdyakov has been discharged from the hospital. He lives with Maria Kondratievna and her mother now. When Ivan sees Smerdyakov, he concludes that he's recovered "completely" because his face is "fresher" and "fuller." Ivan asks Smerdyakov what he meant by offering that, as long as Ivan didn't tell anyone about Smerdyakov's ability to fake fits, Smerdyakov wouldn't tell the district attorney about their conversation at the gate. Ivan angrily asks if Smerdyakov was threatening him.

*Now that Smerdyakov is healthy, Ivan feels more comfortable going and talking to him. Smerdyakov offers this compromise to Ivan, sensing that Ivan will not want anyone to know that he quietly wished for his father's death. However, there is no way that Smerdyakov could prove this without Ivan's admission. Ivan's anger is his own admission of guilt.*

Smerdyakov says that Ivan knew that Fyodor would be killed and "left him then as a sacrifice." Smerdyakov was promising not to tell the authorities so that no one would judge Ivan poorly. Ivan asks how he would have known anything about the murder. Smerdyakov says that Ivan wished for Fyodor's murder. This prompts Ivan to strike Smerdyakov on the shoulder, causing Smerdyakov to weep. Ivan feels ashamed for hitting a weak man.

*Smerdyakov claims that Fyodor was the "sacrifice." Ivan, according to Smerdyakov, was willing to sacrifice his father to get more money out of a promised inheritance. What irritates Ivan most about the lackey is how he seems able to see into Ivan's true character, beneath the gentlemanly façade.*

Smerdyakov says that he stopped Ivan at the gate to test him on whether or not he wanted Fyodor dead. Smerdyakov's "insistent, insolent tone" helps Ivan realize that Smerdyakov killed their father, and he accuses him of such. Smerdyakov grins "contemptuously" but denies his guilt. Ivan asks how he could have led Smerdyakov to think he would wish for murder. Smerdyakov says that Ivan would wish for it so that he could get a larger share of the one hundred and twenty thousand rouble inheritance, to be split between him, Dmitri, and Alexei.

*Smerdyakov's tone is not that of a servant—he speaks to Ivan as though he holds some power over him, which he does. The first time Ivan asks Smerdyakov about the murder, the lackey lies. He does this, not because he's afraid to admit that he killed Fyodor, but to keep Ivan at bay so that he can slowly drive him mad with guilt.*

Ivan insists that, if he had been "counting on" anyone to commit murder, it would've been Smerdyakov. Smerdyakov agrees that Ivan was counting on him and, for that reason, made his feelings more visible to the lackey. Ivan says that he's not afraid of Smerdyakov's accusations and only hasn't yet beaten the lackey to death because he wants to expose him in court. Smerdyakov says that the court may not believe what he just told Ivan, but the public will. Ivan "snarls" that it must be nice "to talk with an intelligent man," and Smerdyakov agrees.

*Smerdyakov accurately points out that the court officials may side with Ivan, whose gentlemanly intellectualism they may identify with, but the public opinion is more important. Those people are simpler and would be more likely to align with Smerdyakov's take on events. This distinction will later become important because it will be the peasants who'll decide the outcome of the case.*

Ivan leaves Smerdyakov and goes to Katerina Ivanovna's. He frantically tells her about the conversation he just had. Ivan says that, if it was Smerdyakov who killed Fyodor, then he agrees that he played a role in putting the lackey up to it. This would make Ivan a murderer, too.

*Ivan feels guilty because he harbored the wish for his father to die, though he doesn't reveal this to Katerina. He played no actual role in the murder (other than unknowingly giving Smerdyakov "permission" to kill Fyodor), but he feels guilty for wishing something into existence.*

Katerina Ivanovna gets up and goes to her desk and takes out a piece of paper. She hands it to Ivan. It's "a frenzied, verbose, and incoherent letter" that Dmitri wrote at the Metropolis tavern. In it, he confesses to killing Fyodor.

*Katerina Ivanovna offers what Ivan will later consider "mathematical proof" of his brother's guilt, despite the irrational nature of the confession.*

Ivan recalls how Katerina Ivanovna would say that Ivan convinced her of Dmitri's guilt, which is strange because she showed Ivan the letter, proving that Dmitri was the murderer. She also claimed that she visited Smerdyakov, which prompts Ivan to wonder what the lackey told her. Ivan decides to go to Smerdyakov and thinks to himself that, this time, he might kill him.

*Katerina, still feeling loyal to Dmitri, can't bring herself to go against him during her first testimony. She continues to remain faithful to him despite his faithlessness, again contrasting her own virtue with his depravity.*

## PART 4: BOOK 11, CHAPTER 8: THE THIRD AND LAST MEETING WITH SMERDYAKOV

On his way, to see Smerdyakov, Ivan comes across a drunk peasant who is singing loudly. The peasant collides with Ivan who, in a fit of anger, pushes him down into the snow. The peasant lies motionless on the ground, but Ivan just leaves him there and continues on.

*As Ivan loses control, he lashes out in anger like Dmitri, taking out his frustration on those around him who are powerless.*

When Ivan arrives, Maria Kondratievna tells him that Smerdyakov is very sick. She assures Ivan that Smerdyakov isn't "violent" but "very quiet." When Ivan enters Smerdyakov's room, he sits, and then asks if Katerina Ivanovna visited. Smerdyakov confirms that she did. Smerdyakov asks what Ivan is worried about. He says that he won't say anything against Ivan because it wasn't Ivan who killed Fyodor. When Ivan says that he knows this, Smerdyakov expresses skepticism of Ivan's certainty. Ivan calls Smerdyakov a viper, which causes Smerdyakov to taunt Ivan a little. In the sense that Ivan wished for his father's death, he does bear some responsibility. Smerdyakov then says that Ivan was "the main killer" and Smerdyakov was just his "minion" who performed the deed as Ivan wished.

*What Maria means is that Smerdyakov is no longer having violent fits, and he's calmed down. Smerdyakov's calm likely also comes from his certainty that no one will ever believe that he is the real killer. Smerdyakov is amused by Ivan's assessment of his character because Ivan, too, is not without blame. A person described as a "viper" is someone who cannot be trusted. Smerdyakov posits that Ivan's wish for his father's death is more important because he constructed the idea that led to Fyodor's murder.*

Ivan goes cold and begins shivering. He asks if Smerdyakov killed Fyodor. Smerdyakov pulls his **left** leg up and rolls up the trouser leg. Underneath, he's wearing a long white stocking. He fishes around in his stocking and pulls something out, which looks like a bundle of papers. He places them on the table. He tells Ivan that the **three thousand roubles** are all there. Ivan sinks down into a chair and goes pale. He asks if Smerdyakov and Dmitri killed Fyodor together. Smerdyakov insists that he committed the murder only with Ivan's help, and that Dmitri is "as innocent as could be."

*Here, the left side is significant again because it is a symbol of wrongdoing. By pulling out the money, Smerdyakov unequivocally reveals himself to be the murderer. Because Ivan still can't bring himself to believe that Smerdyakov could be capable of committing a crime on his own, he asks if Dmitri helped. Instead, Smerdyakov says,* Ivan *was the one who helped him.*

Ivan asks Smerdyakov for details about how he committed the murder. Smerdyakov admits that he faked the falling fit. Then, in the hospital the next morning, he had a true fit and went unconscious for two days. That night, he expected that Dmitri would jump over the fence, go to the Karamazov house, and kill Fyodor. Ivan says that if Dmitri killed Fyodor, he'd surely take the money. So, what would be the benefit to Smerdyakov? The lackey says that Dmitri wouldn't have found the money because Smerdyakov misled him about where it was.

*Smerdyakov here reveals himself not only to be guilty but also to have a sharp, methodical mind. He seems to be the only character in the novel with the gift of foresight that Madame Khokhlakov believes she and the elder Zosima have. Smerdyakov's keen understanding of human character, and particularly of his half-brother, gives him this ability to predict what people will do.*

When Smerdyakov heard Fyodor cry out, he laid in bed, waiting. Then, he went to Fyodor's window and took a step to **the left** to see if his master was still alive. Fyodor called out to him, saying Dmitri was there and that he killed Grigory in the garden. Smerdyakov then decided to kill Fyodor. He figured that, even if Grigory were still alive, he was unconscious. The only risk was that Marfa Ignatievna might wake up. Smerdyakov went to the window again and announced that Grushenka had arrived. He recalls how Fyodor was startled. Initially, he was reluctant to open the door, causing Smerdyakov to realize that Fyodor was, indeed, a little afraid of him. Soon, though, he did. Smerdyakov tempted Fyodor by telling him that Grushenka was waiting in the bushes. While the old man's back was turned, he grabbed a paperweight from his desk and smashed his skull three times.

*Fyodor cried out because he saw Dmitri by the window and also witnessed his son nearly bludgeon his servant to death. Smerdyakov knows that it's safe to kill Fyodor, but he'll have to be quick, given that Marfa is likely to wake up, see that her husband is missing, and go look for him. It's Fyodor's obsession with Grushenka that ultimately kills him—not only his desperation to be with a younger woman but to win her over his son. Smerdyakov kills Fyodor as Dmitri intended to, but, more sensibly, with an object already in the room. Though Fyodor trusted Smerdyakov with his secrets, he was also afraid of him (and with good reason)—the old man was paranoid because he knew that he had many enemies and no real friends.*

Smerdyakov wiped the paperweight off, put it back, took the money, and dropped **the envelope** to the floor with the pink ribbon next to it. He then went back to bed. He figured that, if Grigory lived, he would be a witness against Dmitri. He began groaning to waken Marfa Ignatievna, who rose, saw that Grigory was missing, and went into the garden. Ivan asks about the door: if Fyodor opened it, how did Grigory testify that he saw that it was already open? Smerdyakov tells Ivan that it's only Grigory's stubbornness that convinces him of this. Ivan then asks why Smerdyakov left the envelope on the floor. He said it was to make it look like Dmitri was taking the money in haste. He wanted it to seem like the work of an inexperienced thief, such as Dmitri.

*Smerdyakov carefully planned the murder-robbery, considering ahead of time what each of those present, or likely to be suspected, would be inclined to do. He knew, from having been raised by Grigory, that he is a man who stubbornly adheres to his convictions, even after they have been proven to be very faulty or just wrong. Smerdyakov learned this during instances in which Grigory provided him with religious instruction. He also knows that Dmitri's well-known hot-temperedness would make him careless.*

Ivan says that he and Smerdyakov must go to court and confess everything. Smerdyakov refuses and says that, if Ivan confesses, Smerdyakov will deny having told him anything. Smerdyakov then offers Ivan the **three thousand roubles**, saying he took it thinking that he could start over in Moscow. He based his dream on Ivan's notion that "everything is permitted," but he's since given up on this notion. He then states that Ivan turned out the most like his father of all of Fyodor's children. Ivan is struck by this, and says that he used to think that Smerdyakov was "stupid." Smerdyakov insists that it was only Ivan's pride that gave him this idea. Ivan says that he'll show the money in court the next day, but Smerdyakov assures him that no one will believe his story of how he got it. He bids Ivan farewell.

*Ivan has a sudden surge of conscience and wants to confess his guilt as well as Smerdyakov's. Honor means nothing to Smerdyakov. Given his loathing for Russia and for the Karamazovs, as well as his lack of faith in any god or sense of meaning in life, he is indifferent and nihilistic—he feels he has nothing to lose. He has, however, given up his idea of leading the cosmopolitan life that he's always wanted. He doesn't even try to keep the money he stole, but instead just tries to destroy Ivan with his act, his reasons for it, and his characterization of Ivan as merely a greedy sensualist like Fyodor. Smerdyakov has been wronged throughout his life, but he responds to this by becoming an entirely destructive man. Ivan doesn't realize that this is the last time he'll see Smerdyakov.*

Outside, Ivan steps into a blizzard. He trips over something and realizes that it's the peasant he struck down earlier. Snow covers the man's face. Ivan pulls him up and gets a local tradesman to help him carry the peasant to the police station. He stays there for an hour, arranging for a doctor to see the peasant. Ivan is pleased with himself, figuring that he wouldn't have performed such a good deed if not for his decision to confess in court the next day. He returns home, feeling ill and weak, and sits down. His eyes dart around the room, as though searching for something. Finally, they focus on one spot, the sofa that stands against the opposite wall. There's something there that torments and troubles Ivan.

*Due to believing that he played a role in his father's murder, Ivan is suddenly keen on demonstrating good will toward others. At the very least, he regards his past behavior as entitled. However, it's too late because he's succumbing to brain fever—what would today be called inflammation of the brain, perhaps caused by meningitis or encephalitis. The disease has been popularly featured as an ailment in other fiction. Here, it serves as Ivan's gateway to hell and also seals Dmitri's fate.*

## PART 4: BOOK 11, CHAPTER 9: THE DEVIL. IVAN FYODOROVICH'S NIGHTMARE

That evening, Ivan succumbs to brain fever, which will soon take "complete possession of his organism." He had already seen a doctor that Katerina Ivanovna sent from Moscow when he began to exhibit symptoms. The doctor warned him that he could suffer from hallucinations. He was advised to begin "serious treatment" but ignored this advice. In this moment, he's aware that he's delirious. Suddenly, someone appears to be sitting on the sofa—"a certain type of Russian gentleman," middle-aged, and in well-tailored but tattered clothing.

*Soon, Ivan will be completely incapacitated and looked after by Katerina Ivanovna. For weeks, he downplayed his condition and continued his life as usual. However, his illness, compounded with the stress of his brother's trial and Ivan's sense of guilt, force him to hallucinate his worst nightmare—the devil whose existence he denied. The Gentleman somewhat resembles Fyodor Karamazov.*

Ivan talks to the Gentleman, but never abandons the belief that he's only talking only to himself. He refuses to accept the phantom as truth. He says that the Gentleman only says what Ivan already thinks but picks out his bad thoughts. The Gentleman says that, in society, everyone agrees that he's "a fallen angel," though he doesn't understand how he could ever have been an angel. That said, he sincerely loves people. His dream is to become "incarnate…in some fat, two-hundred-and-fifty-pound merchant's wife." The Gentleman will then believe everything she believes. He'll go into church "with a pure heart" and light candles.

*Ivan insists that the Gentleman, who is Satan, is merely a double, or a manifestation of his own ego (doubles are a common motif in Dostoevsky's work). The reader knows that this character is Satan because he announces himself as "a fallen angel." Ivan, too, is notable for his rebellion against his country's Orthodox faith. The devil here is also a sensualist like the Karamazovs, desiring only worldly pleasures and the security of an easy faith.*

Ivan starts pacing, and the Gentleman tells him that his "nerves are unstrung." He tells Ivan that he's always angry and "[wants] reason only." Ivan asks him if there's a God, and the Gentleman says that he doesn't know. This ignorance confirms that the Gentleman is merely a projection of himself. The Gentleman agrees that he shares Ivan's philosophy of not dealing with matters that he can't see.

*The Gentleman is, in a way, a projection of Ivan's ideas. If one keeps to the notion that there's no literal devil, just as there could be no literal hell, then Ivan's idea about all of this being no more than a manifestation of his own spiritual torment makes sense. It's also notable that even though the devil is a supernatural being, he also claims to share Ivan's atheistic philosophy.*

Ivan asks the Gentleman to tell him a "funny anecdote." He tells a story about a man who was sentenced "to walk in darkness a quadrillion kilometers." After that, the doors of paradise would open to him. The man stood, looked down the road, and refused to walk. He laid down in the road. Ivan laughs, saying it's the same whether the man walks forever or lies down forever. The Gentleman says he arrived long ago, and the doors of paradise opened. The man believed that the walk was worthwhile. Ivan says that he made up the anecdote about the man walking a quadrillion kilometers. This surely proves that the Gentleman doesn't exist.

*An existential dilemma is presented here. Should one choose to "walk," or continue on with life, or "lie down" and opt for apathy? Ivan ignores this, however, and keeps trying to reassure himself that the devil is not real, and the Gentleman is only a projection of his own fevered brain (which is very possible).*

The Gentleman says that he only wanted to make Ivan laugh. He tells Ivan other stories. Ivan begs the Gentleman to leave him; his head is throbbing. The Gentleman admits that, before he arrived, he thought of appearing to Ivan as a jokester. He says that he never claimed to be Ivan's intellectual equal. The Gentleman repeats that he is the only man who "desires good." He says he was there when Christ died on the cross, and he wanted to sing and shout "Hosannah" with the others, but common sense prevented this. He wonders why he's the only being in the world condemned "to be cursed by decent people." He insists that there's a secret in the world that will not be revealed to him.

*The Gentleman again takes on Ivan's ideas, claiming to value common sense and facts above else, while also mocking these ideas in his very person (and by claiming to be intellectually inferior to Ivan). He resembles the Grand Inquisitor as well, since he claims to "desire good" while doing evil. In all, the Gentleman is a chilling portrait of the banality of most evil.*

The Gentleman says that, once humans have renounced God, they will be able to conquer nature. They will also accept death. He tells Ivan that the present question is whether or not such a time will ever come. If it does come, "the new man is allowed to become a man-god." In such a world, "everything is permitted." Suddenly, Ivan hears a firm knocking on the window, causing him to jump up. He wants to go to the window, but something seems to bind him. The knocking grows stronger. Finally, the bind breaks and the Gentleman has disappeared. Ivan is now convinced that he wasn't dreaming. It's Alexei at the window. Smerdyakov, he says, has hanged himself.

*Dostoevsky suggests that the Gentleman—or, the devil—would be on the side of modern science and socialist politics, which find little necessity for God. If humanity is capable of reaching a social contract, according to adherents of modern philosophies, there is no need for God. Yet the Gentleman claims that in a world in which everyone has their own moral code, each human being becomes their own god and there is no longer any singular truth. Once again a character reaches the conclusion that if there is no God, "everything is permitted."*

## PART 4: BOOK 11, CHAPTER 10: "HE SAID THAT!"

Smerdyakov left a note, saying, "I exterminate my life by my own will and liking, so as not to blame anybody." Alexei left the note where it was at Maria Kondratievna's and went to the police commissioner. From there, he came straight to Ivan. He remarks on how ill and bewildered Ivan looks. Ivan tells Alexei that Satan was present and taunted him. Alexei tells Ivan to sit. He then wets a towel and puts it on Ivan's head. Ivan says that the Gentleman "slandered" him by saying that Ivan will announce that Smerdyakov killed Fyodor at his suggestion. Alexei tells Ivan that this isn't true, and he's only delirious.

*Smerdyakov fully commits to his nihilistic and destructive worldview by taking his own life. He has gained nothing by his actions, but only destroyed himself and others—literally killing Fyodor, driving Ivan mad, and ensuring that Dmitri is imprisoned. Of course, Smerdyakov's suicide ensures that Ivan will never get the confession out of him that he covets. Ivan, meanwhile, is succumbing further into illness, but in his delirium he is more lucid than ever. The thing that Ivan believed in the least has forced him to confront truths he previously avoided.*

Ivan jumps up, throws off the towel, and paces. He says that he feels as though he's awake in his sleep. Alexei thinks of getting a doctor, but he's afraid to leave Ivan alone. However, Ivan allows Alexei to take him to bed, and he falls fast asleep. Alexei lies down on the sofa and, while falling asleep himself, prays for Ivan and Dmitri. He thinks that the root of Ivan's illness is that God's truth is overcoming his heart and Ivan doesn't want to submit. Alexei knows God will win. Ivan will either "rise into the light of truth" or "perish in hatred, taking revenge on himself and everyone for having served something he does not believe in."

*Ivan actively rebelled against believing in God, but now must reckon with the potential that Satan (and, therefore, God as well) truly exists. If God is real and present, then Ivan must choose to accept him or else rebel directly against him—which, Alexei believes, would make Ivan turn into a hateful, resentful man (like Smerdyakov). Unfortunately, Ivan is also suffering from a severe illness at the time of this existential crisis.*

## PART 4: BOOK 12, CHAPTER 1: THE FATAL DAY

The trial of Dmitri Karamazov begins at ten o'clock in the morning at the district court. Visitors arrive from the provincial capital and from numerous cities around Russia, including Moscow and Petersburg. The tickets sell quickly to lawyers, noblemen, and ladies. Nearly all of the ladies favor Dmitri's acquittal. This is probably because they have an idea of him as "a conqueror of women's hearts." For this reason, Katerina Ivanovna becomes a person of interest. They are also excited to get a look at Katerina's rival, Grushenka. The ladies regard her as the person who destroyed both Fyodor Pavlovich and his son. On the other hand, the ladies' husbands dislike Dmitri. Some had been personally insulted by him during his stay in town.

*Dostoevsky again makes a dramatic shift in the narrative as he jumps from Ivan's descent into a mental hell to the ridiculous spectacle of the trial. The trial is essentially entertainment, which is indicated by the fact that tickets are sold to the event. The murder has made news all over the country, both due to the scandalous nature of the crime and because of the famous attorneys who have taken the case. The ladies favor Dmitri because he seems to be a passionate romantic hero who killed over a woman he loved. Instead of blaming Dmitri for his behavior, they blame Grushenka, in keeping with the sexist standards of their time.*

Everyone is excited by the arrival of the famous lawyer Fetyukovich, whose legal talents are widely known. Supposedly, Ippolit Kirillovich fears going against the famed defense attorney, who may cause the prosecutor to lose the case that could save "his flagging career." The presiding judge is "an educated and humane man." He's vain but concerned with social progress.

*The legal authorities in the court have competing interests. For the judge, his interest is in presiding over a case whose decision could reveal something significant about the fate of Russia, whereas the lawyers are more interested in what the case can bring to their reputations.*

The courtroom is a lofty space. The jury sits to the right of the judges, and the defendant and his attorney sit on **the left side**. In the center is all of the material evidence, including the brass pestle, Fyodor's bloody dressing gown, and Dmitri's bloodstained shirt and frock coat. The pistol and **the envelope that contained the three thousand roubles** are also there. The twelve jurors consist of four officials, two merchants, and six local peasants and tradesmen. The presiding judge announces the start of the hearing, and a marshal brings out Dmitri. The tall, bird-like Fetyukovich comes out with the defendant.

*Again, the left side is symbolic, as the defendant sits on the left because he is presumed to be guilty (like the guilty who are sent to the left side of Christ in the Bible). Here, however, the symbol is used ironically; for Dmitri is actually innocent. The jury is mixed, consisting of people from the wealthier class, the middle class, and the lower class.*

The list of persons called for questioning is read. Four of the witnesses are absent, including Pyotr Alexandrovich Miusov, who is in Paris, Madame Khokhlakov, Maximov, who is ill, and Smerdyakov, who is dead. Most people don't yet know about his suicide. The prosecutor asks Dmitri how he pleads. He pleads guilty, but only to "drunkenness and depravity." All of the present witnesses are then brought in to take the oath. The Karamazov brothers are permitted to testify without the oath.

*Miusov hasn't been heard from since his visit to the monastery, which he took only to reach a settlement about his land rights. Madame Khokhlakov imagines herself to be too fragile to appear in court. Dmitri knows that the evidence is against him and he has wronged many people, but he still maintains his innocence in the fundamental act of murder.*

## PART 4: BOOK 12, CHAPTER 2: DANGEROUS WITNESSES

Grigory Vasilievich testifies that Fyodor cheated Dmitri out of his settlement and owed him several thousands. When the prosecutor asks how he knows this, Grigory offers no factual evidence. He then describes the scene when Dmitri burst into the house and beat up his father. Grigory says that Dmitri also hit him in the face, but he forgave him for that a long time ago. Regarding Smerdyakov, Grigory crosses himself and says that he was "a capable fellow but stupid and oppressed by illness." Also, he was "a godless man." Finally, he confirms, "with stubborn insistence," that the door to the garden was open. When Fetyukovich asks about **the envelope**, Grigory confirms that he never saw it. Fetyukovich asks all of the witnesses about the envelope, and they all say they haven't seen it.

*Grigory expresses some sympathy, it seems, for Dmitri's anger and resentment toward Fyodor. By acknowledging that Dmitri was cheated out of something, he allows room for the jury to understand what could have driven a son to kill his father. Grigory's sympathy for Dmitri, especially his willingness to forgive Dmitri for hitting him in the face, suggests that he still has some paternal affection for his former charge. However, he remains insistent on the only supposed fact that he brings to the case.*

Fetyukovich gets Grigory to admit that he drank some of the balm he made to soothe his back, and that it contained vodka. This casts doubt on whether or not he was awake when the door to the garden opened. When Grigory steps down, Dmitri says that Grigory's testimony is all true, except for the bit about the door. He confirms that Grigory has always been honest and as faithful to Fyodor "as seven hundred poodles."

*Grigory becomes less credible when Fetyukovich gets him to admit that he was drunk when he claims that he saw the garden door open. In a show of respect and possible gratitude for Grigory's long-standing loyalty, Dmitri stands up for him. Dmitri is, as ever, concerned with honor and honesty, despite his many other failings.*

Rakitin is next to take the stand. He describes Dmitri's deeds at the Metropolis tavern and tells the story about him beating up Captain Snegiryov. Rakitin portrays Dmitri as "gloomy and fatal," winning over the audience with his eloquence. He refers to Grushenka as "the merchant Samsonov's kept woman." During Fetyukovich's round of questioning, he asks if Rakitin did not, in fact, accept twenty-five roubles from Grushenka to bring her Alexei Karamazov. Rakitin says it was only a joke, but his admission diminishes his nobility. Dmitri adds that Rakitin was always asking him for loans, even when he was in prison.

*Rakitin's talent for weaving narratives allows him to portray Dmitri as a dark and sinister character, swaying the jury against the defendant. Rakitin shows, yet again, that he is neither loyal nor trustworthy, given the supposed friendship that he formed with Dmitri while the latter was imprisoned. However, Fetyukovich completely dismantles Rakitin's self-righteous monologue by revealing him as the unsavory character he is.*

Captain Snegiryov testifies next, looking "all tattered" and dirty. When he's asked about Dmitri's brutality toward him, he says that Ilyusha has asked him not to speak about it. He then bursts into tears and throws himself at the judge's feet, prompting the laughter of the crowd.

*The captain is a pitiable figure, laughed at by society because he made one mistake that condemned him to a lifetime of poverty. The contempt shown toward him reveals the unforgiving nature of the fickle public.*

Trifon Borisich then testifies to seeing **three thousand roubles** in Dmitri's hands. When Fetyukovich accuses him of taking one hundred roubles that Dmitri dropped to the floor, the innkeeper initially dodges the question, but then says that he returned the money. The panie testify next, saying that Dmitri offered them three thousand "to buy their honor." Fetyukovich then reveals that they cheated Dmitri out of money during a card game. The defense attorney does this with all of the "dangerous witnesses," morally tainting them.

*Like Rakitin, Trifon Borisich is another duplicitous character who has presented himself as friendly toward Dmitri while actually having ill intentions toward him. The source of Borisich's dislike is less apparent than that of Rakitin, who envies the Karamazovs' social influence. Fetyukovich is a skilled lawyer who is at this point concerned not with proving Dmitri's innocence, but rather presenting his accusers as untrustworthy.*

## PART 4: BOOK 12, CHAPTER 3: MEDICAL EXPERTISE AND ONE POUND OF NUTS

Drs. Varvinsky and Herzenstube, as well as the Moscow doctor, are called as expert witnesses. Herzenstube declares that "the mental abnormality of the defendant is self-evident." Having known Dmitri for many years, he expresses sympathy with him and says that, as a boy, he had a good heart. The Moscow doctor confirms that Dmitri's condition is abnormal, "even in the highest degree." He speaks, too, about "mania" and the "fit of passion." When the subject of the **three thousand roubles** arose, he says, Dmitri flew into "some sort of frenzy." Varvinsky is the last to be questioned. He thinks that Dmitri is in a normal condition and attributes his behavior to "jealousy, wrath, [and] continual drunkenness." Everyone ends up agreeing with Varvinsky.

*Dr. Varvinksy, the least experienced of the medical experts, gives the most sensible testimony. Dr. Herzenstube is a less reliable witness because he knew Dmitri as a boy and, therefore, knew the neglect in which he grew up, which causes him to have pity for him and to identify Fyodor's poor parenting as the source of all of his eldest son's current troubles. The Moscow doctor, who is supposed to know more than all of them, grossly inflates Dmitri's problem (though Dmitri was certainly fixated on the three thousand roubles).*

## PART 4: BOOK 12, CHAPTER 4: FORTUNE SMILES ON MITYA

Alexei is called to testify. He describes his brother to the prosecutor as passionate but also "noble, proud, and generous." Regarding the rivalry between Grushenka and Katerina Ivanovna, he prefers not to say anything. He also says that Dmitri never said anything directly about wanting to kill Fyodor. He admits to believing, briefly, that Dmitri could do such a thing, but thought that a higher power would save him. Alexei insists that his prediction came true, because he's sure that Dmitri didn't kill their father. Alexei says that he believes Smerdyakov is the murderer, due to Dmitri's words and the look on his face, assuring Alexei that he wasn't lying.

*Alexei is someone who can see the best in anyone. Even when he believed Dmitri was guilty, he sensed that his brother could one day atone for his crime. For this reason, the court finds it difficult to take seriously his testimony regarding Dmitri's character. There is also the obvious bias that he would have as the defendant's brother. He honorably doesn't speak about the rivalry between the women because everything is known to the public already, and he doesn't want to seem to show favor to one or the other.*

Fetyukovich recalls an episode in which Alexei witnessed Dmitri pounding on his chest, but a bit below the heart. He then realized that Dmitri was gesturing at the amulet that contained the fifteen hundred roubles. Though he had the means to pay back half of his debt to Katerina Ivanovna, he couldn't part with the money. Alexei clarifies that Dmitri didn't so much pound; he pointed his finger at his chest. Dmitri confirms that he could've returned the money and didn't.

*The amulet was a reminder to Dmitri that he couldn't truly be free to pursue his love with Grushenka until he had completely closed out his affairs with Katerina Ivanovna. He was torn between wanting to be honorable but also being unable to resist his urge to go on sprees and self-indulge.*

Katerina Ivanovna is next. The presiding judge speaks to her "with extreme respect," afraid of causing her pain. She says that she knew about Dmitri's disputes with Fyodor but didn't hear any threats. She says that, if Dmitri had only come to her, she would've relieved him of the debt. She says that she, too, once owed him money. She recalls that whole episode to the court, even the "bow to the ground." Dmitri believes he's condemned.

*Katerina Ivanovna is shown respect because she is of a higher social class. Her suffering is deemed more important than that of Captain Snegiryov, and she is perceived as more delicate and worthy of respect than Grushenka. Dmitri knows that the idea of such a noble woman bowing will result in the court's contempt for Dmitri.*

Grushenka appears next. Regarding her relationship with Fyodor, she says "there was nothing to it." She says that the whole thing is her fault for laughing at him and Dmitri. She heard from "the villain" about an **envelope** with money but never saw it. The "villain" to whom she refers is Smerdyakov. She insists that the lackey killed Fyodor, though she has no grounds for her accusation. Grushenka insists that it was Katerina Ivanovna—"that man-stealer"—who ruined Dmitri. She recounts how Katerina once sent for her and tried to charm her.

*Grushenka, who, like Dmitri, is willing to admit unflattering things about herself, tells the court that she initially pretended to be in love with both father and son, contributing to the perverse relations between them. It doesn't help Dmitri that the only people who believe he's innocent are his brothers and his lover.*

Fetyukovich asks why Grushenka offered Rakitin twenty-five roubles for Alexei. Grushenka says it's because Rakitin is her cousin, though he doesn't want anyone to know. Everyone is surprised by this. It discredits Rakitin's testimony and nullifies Rakitin's earlier speech "against the civil disorder of Russia." Grushenka leaves a bad impression on the public, who regard her contemptuously as she steps down. The next witness is Ivan Fyodorovich.

*The novel reveals the specific familial relation between Rakitin and Grushenka: their mothers are sisters. Part of Rakitin's resentment comes from being related to the most dishonorable woman in town, who had become the romantic object of two Karamazovs.*

## PART 4: BOOK 12, CHAPTER 5: A SUDDEN CATASTROPHE

The presiding judge tells Ivan that he's not under oath and should provide testimony "in good conscience." Ivan listens and looks at the judge "dully." The judge asks if he's well. Ivan assures him that he's well enough. When questioning begins, he replies reluctantly, "with exaggerated brevity," and even with disgust. To some questions, he pleads ignorance. He then asks the presiding judge to let him go because he's feeling unwell. Before stepping down without permission, he pulls out a wad of money, saying it was the same that was in the **envelope**. The judge asks how he could've gotten that same money. Ivan says that he got it from Smerdyakov the day before. He then says that it was the lackey who killed Fyodor, on Ivan's instructions.

*Ivan is clearly ill during his testimony, succumbing further to brain fever. His curt answers are likely the results of both his illness and his irritation with the trial. Not being in his right mind, Ivan didn't consider that the court would find his presentation of the three thousand roubles as inadmissible, because the money could have come from anywhere. Ivan is trying to do what he set out to do—make it clear to the public that Smerdyakov is the true killer and schemer—but his efforts are fruitless. Ivan also admits his own guilt here, making the same claim that Smerdyakov accused him and saying that he instructed the lackey to murder Fyodor. This is an important personal step for him, though it means little to the public.*

No one believes him. Alexei jumps up and says that he's delirious and shouldn't be believed. The presiding judge tells Ivan that his testimony is "incomprehensible." If he actually has something to say, he should calm himself and say it. Also, he asks, how can Ivan confirm what he's saying? Ivan says the trouble is that he has no witnesses, and that Smerdyakov won't send any "evidence from the other world…in an **envelope**." Ivan has only one witness, but the judge would find him "inadmissible."

*Alexei tries to defend Ivan, but it's unnecessary because nothing that Ivan says makes sense to anyone in the courtroom. When Ivan makes reference to the envelope, he's indicating that the unknown will not be revealed in court because Smerdyakov didn't testify. The only other person who knows the truth is the Gentleman, and he is of course "inadmissible." Ivan is stuck in his own head, and so he comes across as a completely incoherent and untrustworthy witness.*

Turmoil ensues in court. Katerina Ivanovna goes into hysterics. Suddenly, she offers a piece of evidence. She demands that they take her letter, the one Dmitri wrote at the tavern, which, she says, proves that he's the murderer. She then says that she gave Dmitri the **three thousand roubles**, saying it was for her sister, but she knew that he would take it and run off with Grushenka. She says that the debt tormented him. He also needed money for "that creature," so he killed his father. Dmitri acknowledges the letter as his. Katerina says that she lied before to save Dmitri. She also says that, for two months, Ivan drove himself mad over how to save his brother, "the monster and murderer."

*Katerina Ivanovna acts quickly in her desire to help Ivan and to save him from further tormenting himself on Dmitri's behalf. By doing this, she proves that she loves Ivan and not Dmitri. At the same time, she still resents Grushenka for supposedly taking Dmitri away from her. In her anger and panic she lashes out at both Grushenka and Dmitri, and in the process seems to seal Dmitri's fate with the jury.*

Grushenka rushes to Dmitri and says to the court that Katerina Ivanovna has revealed herself to be a snake. The guards try to remove her from the courtroom, but she fights and strains to reach Dmitri. He, too, is seized. The spectacle is a rich one for the public. The letter is added to material evidence. At eight o'clock in the evening, Ippolit Kirillovich begins his statement for the prosecution.

*The court relishes the sight of the romantic rivalry between the women, as well as Katerina Ivanovna's hysterical "confession." The trial really is turning into a piece of entertainment, despite the morbid act that it hinges upon.*

## PART 4: BOOK 12, CHAPTER 6: THE PROSECUTOR'S SPEECH. CHARACTERIZATIONS

Ippolit Kirillovich talks about how the Karamazov case has resounded throughout Russia. However, there's nothing particularly "horrifying" about it. He asks what the reasons might be for the public's relative indifference. It seems that hourly they read similar tales. He tells the story of "a brilliant young officer of high society" who kills both a petty official and the official's serving woman to steal a promissory document and some cash. This young man is a monster, but not "an isolated monster."

*The prosecutor contextualizes the case within its social and historical significance. He tries to show the court that, if Dmitri isn't found guilty, the decision will reflect poorly on the nation, suggesting that there is a tolerance for theft and murder, and that familial ties aren't enough to prevent such behavior. He admonishes the crowd's spectatorship as well as the mundane nature of the crime.*

Ippolit Kirillovich says that the public is "horrified" by the Karamazov case or, rather, pretends to be, while actually "relishing the spectacle." When the public one day regards itself "soberly and thoughtfully," they will take a look at themselves as a society and understand their duty to each other. He asserts that all of Europe "respectfully stand[s] aside" for Russia, which he characterizes as a "troika galloping by at breakneck speed."

*The prosecutor imagines a future in which people, knowing better and having done better for society, will regard this prurience as a shame and a lesson of what not to do going forward. He says that Russia has the potential to lead Europe, if only it will appeal to the best side of its nature. The image of Russia as a galloping troika has become a famous passage.*

Ippolit Kirillovich then recounts the history of the Karamazov family, how Fyodor was born into nobility but pretended to be a peasant to collect his fortune, lived in dissipation, and behaved very poorly as a father. He says that, of all the sons, Ivan resembles his father most, due to his cynicism. Here, the prosecutor gets carried away, taking revenge against Ivan for having "publicly snubbed him once or twice in argument." After calling the amulet with the fifteen hundred roubles a "legend," he mentions everything from the investigation about the property dispute and relations between Fyodor and Dmitri. He then brings up the medical opinions concerning Dmitri's obsession with the **three thousand roubles**.

*The prosecutor gives a thorough history, which provides some insight into how Dmitri turned out the way that he is. However, Kirillovich gets side-tracked with a personal vendetta against Ivan. The prosecutor has no basis for saying that Ivan is most like his father, though this does echo Smerdyakov's astute observations. He does make the good argument that there's no proof of the amulet, which is essential to proving Dmitri's innocence.*

## PART 4: BOOK 12, CHAPTER 7: A HISTORICAL SURVEY

Ippolit Kirillovich says that the medical experts tried to claim that Dmitri is a madman, while he asserts that he's in his right mind. He says that he shares Varvinsky's opinion that Dmitri was "embittered." The prosecutor declares jealousy as the reason for this. He goes on to describe Dmitri's "fatal passion for Grushenka." The prosecutor says that the **three thousand roubles** wasn't the point in itself, but that this inheritance seemed to be the key to Dmitri's happiness. Therefore, the thought of killing Fyodor emerged. Ippolit Kirillovich describes all of Dmitri's efforts to obtain the money without committing the crime, including the adventures with Samsonov and Lyagavy. He also mentions his going to Madame Khokhlakov. The prosecutor claims that, if Fenya had mentioned that Grushenka was in Mokroye with the panie, nothing may have occurred. Beside himself, Dmitri snatched what the prosecutor thinks is the murder weapon—the pestle.

*Kirillovich agrees most with Dr. Varvinksy's assessment that Dmitri got carried away by emotion. However, the prosecutor strips away Varvinsky's acknowledgment of strong feelings that affect character to paint the murder as a cold, calculated crime. According to Kirillovich, Fyodor's murder was merely a means to an end: Dmitri needed money and the old man had it. The three thousand roubles was Dmitri's obsession and everyone else was damned to suffer for it. However, if any aspect of the evening had turned out differently, Dmitri might not have gone to his father's house. If Fenya mentioned that Grushenka had reunited with her lover, Dmitri may not have bothered with the trip. The prosecutor thus makes the crime seem relatable and Dmitri even seem sympathetic—but also indisputably guilty.*

## PART 4: BOOK 12, CHAPTER 8: A TREATISE ON SMERDYAKOV

On the subject of Smerdyakov, Ippolit Kirillovich says that Dmitri was the first to cry out that the lackey was the true murderer. The only other two to confirm this are his brothers and Miss Svetlov (Grushenka). The prosecutor then briefly outlines Smerdyakov's character. He mentions the lackey's illness and his reputation for cowardice. He says that people who suffer from "falling sickness" also suffer from guilt. This explains why Smerdyakov didn't want Ivan, Fyodor's sole protector, to leave for Moscow. After all, Dmitri had written in a letter that he'd kill his father, if only Ivan would leave. With Ivan gone, insecurity seized Smerdyakov, and he had his falling fit in the cellar.

*The prosecutor claims that Alexei and Ivan are merely in step with Dmitri's claim that Smerdyakov killed Fyodor. Kirillovich sees this as no more than familial loyalty and an attempt to pin blame on someone else. To further exonerate Smerdyakov of guilt, Kirillovich invents a superstition about epilepsy. The prevalence of misinformation regarding the disorder allows the prosecutor to turn Smerdyakov's condition to his own ends (as Smerdyakov himself did by shamming a seizure).*

Ippolit Kirillovich then encourages everyone to "lay aside psychology" and focus on the facts. How would Smerdyakov have killed Fyodor? Alone or with Dmitri? He says that it's possible that Smerdyakov pretended to be sickly so that no one would suspect him, and informed Dmitri about the money just to tempt him into coming. However, when would Smerdyakov have killed Fyodor, whom the prosecutor insists was already dead, after the alarm had already been raised over Grigory?

*In trying to dissuade the jury from believing that Smerdyakov is the killer, Kirillovich inadvertently stumbles upon the truth of what happened. However, Kirillovich's timing is off because he believes that Dmitri had already bludgeoned Fyodor when Smerdyakov could've gone into the main house.*

In regard to the money that Ivan presented, Ippolit Kirillovich insists that it's no proof. Having the **three thousand roubles** doesn't prove that it came from the same envelope. Also, having such information, the prosecutor asks, why wouldn't he report it at once instead of putting it off until the next morning? The prosecutor figures that Ivan felt that a dead man could be denounced, particularly if it would help to save his brother. The prosecutor reminds the jury that the envelope was found on the floor. No sensible and calculating robber-murderer—what some are saying Smerdyakov was—would have left it behind. Finally, the prosecutor asserts that Dmitri didn't check on Grigory's condition out of pity, but to be sure that his only witness was dead.

*Predictably, the prosecutor says that Ivan could've gotten the three thousand roubles that he presented from anywhere. In regard to Ivan's delay in reporting it, the prosecutor doesn't know that this was due to Smerdyakov's unwillingness to go. Then, Ivan very quickly succumbed to the symptoms of his illness, making him unable to file a report. Much of Dmitri's suffering and inability to clear his name will come as a result of turns of fate, suggesting that much in our lives is determined by chance or bad luck.*

## PART 4: BOOK 12, CHAPTER 9: PSYCHOLOGY AT FULL STEAM. THE GALLOPING TROIKA. THE FINALE OF THE PROSECUTOR'S SPEECH

Ippolit Kirillovich describes Dmitri as someone who always lives in the present. The prosecutor says that Dmitri ran back to get his pistols because he believed that "all paths were closed to him by his crime." The prosecutor accuses Dmitri of "romantic frenzy," of believing that Grushenka would see how much he loved her and feel sorry for him. The prosecutor then wonders why Dmitri didn't shoot himself. He concludes that his "passionate thirst" for Grushenka made him forget his fear of being arrested.

*The prosecutor is saying that Dmitri lacks foresight. Like a child—or an "insect" sensualist—he can only focus on his basic needs, sometimes at the expense of others. Grushenka is the only thing in his life that causes him to think about the future and to hope for more beyond his spending sprees and bouts of drunkenness.*


Dmitri, Ippolit Kirillovich says, only considered himself guilty for the supposed murder of Grigory. The prosecutor claims that this was merely an act of sincerity to win over the authorities' confidence. The prosecutor returns to the matter of the amulet, which no one has found. Dmitri claimed that he made it by tearing a patch out of one of his shirts, but the authorities never found this shirt with a piece torn from it. Moving on to his concluding remarks, the prosecutor reminds the jury that all of Europe awaits to ensure that the Russian people don't provide a verdict that justifies parricide. Everyone is impressed with the prosecutor's speech. Some say that, whatever Fetyukovich might say, his argument won't get around their peasants.

*The prosecutor makes a strong case against Dmitri, presenting the faults in all of the supposed evidence that would support his claim of innocence. The prosecutor erodes confidence in Dmitri and then goes on to say that the jury, if it acquits him, may as well lose confidence in the nation's sound future. Kirillovich contextualizes the Karamazov case, which does incorporate some of the dilemmas of modern society, within Russia's uncertain fate. In this case of (what seems to be) the corrupting effects of modernization and Westernization, the public places their faith in the moral fortitude and common sense of Russia's peasants.*

## PART 4: BOOK 12, CHAPTER 10: THE DEFENSE ATTORNEY'S SPEECH. A STICK WITH TWO ENDS

Fetyukovich begins speaking. His voice is loud but attractive. His speech has two parts: bitter critique and a refutation of charges in the first half, and, in the second half, pathos that leaves the courtroom "trembling with rapture." The defense attorney describes himself as a newcomer, and describes Dmitri as "a man of stormy and unbridled character." He takes issue, however, with Ippolit Kirillovich's claim that Dmitri couldn't have been expressing sensitivity toward Grigory after striking him. He says that Dmitri was able to be piteous because his conscience was clear to begin with. He wasn't focused on self-salvation, as a murderer would be.

*Fetyukovich tries to ingratiate himself with the members of the small-town courtroom. He humbles himself as a newcomer, though everyone in the room knows that he's a famous lawyer from St. Petersburg. He must do this because if the jury doesn't like him, they'll be more likely to find Dmitri guilty. He asserts that the unpredictable nature of Dmitri's personality does make it possible for him to strike Grigory in one moment and to try to help him the next. At the same time, he lacks the true malice and foresight to actually commit murder.*

## PART 4: BOOK 12, CHAPTER 11: THERE WAS NO MONEY. THERE WAS NO ROBBERY

The most striking thing in Fetyukovich's speech is his "complete denial" of the **three thousand roubles**. He expresses uncertainty that the money ever existed. People knew about the money but never saw it. If, as Smerdyakov claimed, the money was under the mattress, how would the defendant have pulled it out without messing up the bed at all? He then addresses the envelope on the floor—but, he asks, does anyone know that it contained money? If the envelope lying on the floor is asserted as evidence, the defense will simply assert it as the opposite.

*Fetyukovich paints the money as a matter of legend—indeed, it is. The witnesses gave some credence to this when no one could express, with certainty, exactly how much money Dmitri had in Mokroye. Similarly, Kirillovich offered the possibility that the amulet Dmitri claims he wore never existed. Fetyukovich uses the same trick, and thus reveals it as a trick.*

In regard to the fifteen hundred roubles, Dmitri has been firm regarding where he got the money—from Miss Verkhovtsev (Katerina Ivanovna). Fetyukovich then says that Katerina's second testimony may, in fact, be the incorrect one. It's possible, he says, that "a vengeful woman" may exaggerate some things. The prosecutor rejects the accusation of robbery "with indignation," for there can be no such accusation if it's "impossible" to indicate what exactly has been taken. Then, there's the question as to whether Dmitri killed his father without robbing him. This hasn't been proven either.

*Fetyukovich presents Dmitri as credible while asserting that Katerina Ivanovna is a fickle and unreliable witness—which, given her performance in court, is not altogether untrue. However, Fetyukovich also paints Katerina Ivanovna within the sexist stereotype of a scorned woman trying to get back at the man who left her. This shifts guilt away from Dmitri and on to her.*

## PART 4: BOOK 12, CHAPTER 12: AND THERE WAS NO MURDER EITHER

Fetyukovich then expresses uncertainty that the pestle "is a proof of arming and premeditating." He admits that Dmitri shouted in the taverns about killing his father. However, that's common, idle talk, he says.

*It is true that people threaten to kill others all the time without actually doing it. This is the idle talk to which Fetyukovich refers.*

Fetyukovich recalls that Dmitri testified at the investigation that, once he was convinced that Grushenka wasn't at his father's house, he ran away. In regard to the open door, only Grigory, who wasn't in any condition to know for sure, testified to it being open. That night in Mokroye, however, the defendant suffered over Grigory, believing he had killed him. Indeed, Dmitri wanted to kill himself because of it. Why should this interpretation of events be deemed unacceptable?

*It would make sense for Dmitri to leave his father's house after realizing that Grushenka wasn't there. That night, every move he made was in pursuit of her. His only interest in finding Fyodor was to see if Grushenka was with him. Dmitri did indeed suffer tremendous guilt over Grigory, which seems like further proof that he didn't kill his father.*

So, who killed Fyodor Karamazov? Fetyukovich admits that Ivan Karamazov is ill. Still, he uttered Smerdyakov's name, and the prosecutor doesn't think that the lackey should be dismissed as a suspect. The prosecutor says that he met with Smerdyakov and, though he was ill, he found no "timidity" or "guilelessness" in him. Instead, he was spiteful, ambitious, and "burning with envy." He also hated Russia and dreamed of remaking himself as a Frenchman. Fetyukovich says that Smerdyakov admitted that he helped Fyodor "put the money in the envelope." The sum, which could've helped the lackey start a new life, was a point of rage.

*This slightly contradicts Fetyukovich's earlier argument that nothing at all may have existed in the abandoned envelope, as he gives multiple options that all absolve Dmitri of guilt. Fetyukovich pushes the idea of Smerdyakov as an angry, disenfranchised man of talent, unable to change his fate and contemptuous of a country that condemned him to it. This is a more accurate portrait than the one Ippolit Kirillovich presented.*

Fetyukovich encourages the jury to find the error in his account. However, if there is "at least a shadow of possibility," the jury should withhold its sentence. He insists that there's more than a "shadow." He encourages the jury to be "sincere." Here, the defense attorney's speech is interrupted by loud applause. Fetyukovich then continues.

*Fetyukovich provides many hypotheses with the purpose of getting the jury to doubt that Dmitri committed murder. However, he also offers that, even if Dmitri committed murder, there's no proof he committed robbery. It's a far less linear argument than Kirillovich's, which arguably makes it less successful.*

## PART 4: BOOK 12, CHAPTER 13: AN ADULTERER OF THOUGHT

Fetyukovich says that Dmitri is "ruined" because they are arguing over the corpse of his father. If it were "simply" homicide, the jury would reject the accusation due to the "unsubstantiated" and "fantastic nature" of the facts. But because it is a "parricide," they might find it too hard to acquit the defendant. Fetyukovich then discourses on the nature of fatherhood, and recalls how Dr. Herzenstube testified that Fyodor left Dmitri running around barefoot and in tattered clothes when he was a boy. Later, Fyodor stole Dmitri's mistress from him, abd this same old man complained about his son's "irreverence and cruelty." Fetyukovich concludes that Fyodor was an unworthy father, unworthy of his son's love. At this, fathers and mothers applaud.

*Fetyukovich, like his opponent, also gives the jury an account of Dmitri's history. He admits that the public is particularly appalled by a son murdering his father. Then, he goes on to question what kind of father Fyodor really was to Dmitri, who, we are reminded, was left in dirty, tattered undershirts in the servants' quarters while his father conducted drunken orgies in the main house. It is no wonder that Dmitri grew up with bad habits and contempt for his father.*

Fetyukovich goes on to say that Dmitri didn't break into the house to kill Fyodor. If that were the case, Dmitri would've already arranged for a weapon. Instead, he instinctively grabbed the pestle. If some other man had been Dmitri's offender, perhaps he wouldn't have thought of grabbing the pestle to kill him. However, the "offender" was his father, who seemed to hate him from childhood. This caused a "natural fit of passion" in Dmitri, who was overcome by rage but still didn't kill. He "merely swung the pestle in disgusted indignation," then ran away. This, the prosecutor says, can't be labeled as a true murder or parricide. Fetyukovich then returns to Ippolit Kirrilovich's image of Russia as a "mad troika," and says that instead the country is a "stately Russian chariot," and it is in the hands of the jury to preserve the "fate of our Russian truth."

*Here, Fetyukovich allows for the possibility that Dmitri did cast a blow to Fyodor's skull instead of focusing on Smerdyakov as the culprit. His statements offer the jury with several possibilities that point either to innocence or, in this case, manslaughter. Fetyukovich overwhelms his audience with hypotheses instead of sticking to a single story, as the prosecutor did. Fetyukovich also returns to the image of Russia as a troika, again making the trial into a larger statement about the fate of the country.*

## PART 4: BOOK 12, CHAPTER 14: OUR PEASANTS STOOD UP FOR THEMSELVES

Fetyukovich concludes his speech to "the rapture" of his listeners. Just then Ippolit Kirillovich stands to object. People glare at him hatefully for daring to do so. He mentions that the prosecution has been accused of inventing novels, but that's just what the defense has done. Fetyukovich has turned Smerdyakov into a "Byronic hero," avenging himself on society for casting him down and out. Also, he asks, what is this matter of a son bursting into his father's home to kill him but then not killing him? Fetyukovich doesn't object.

*Fetyukovich is a master orator and these skills serve him well, despite the scattered nature of his arguments. What both attorneys present are multiple narratives of what could have happened that night. The most far-fetched story, presented by Fetyukovich, is the one that turns out to be true.*

Dmitri speaks. He says that he's not guilty of killing his father. He begs to be spared. The presiding judge is very tired. He weakly instructs the jury to be "impartial." The jury retires, allowing people to eat at the buffet and walk around. The ladies however, are "hysterically impatient" and think that an acquittal is "inevitable." The men think the same. Some are glad, but others frown, because they don't want an acquittal. One man wonders what the peasants will say. Then, the bell rings. The jury has deliberated for exactly one hour. The public resumes their seats. The presiding judge asks, "Did he [Dmitri] commit murder for the purpose of robbery, and with premeditation?" The foreman of the jury says, "Yes, guilty!"

*This plea contrasts with his initial one in which he pled guilty only of drunkenness and depravity. It seems that Dmitri now feels the weight of what can happen to him—namely, that he and Grushenka could be apart for the rest of their lives. Among the public, the ladies remain on Dmitri's side, taken with romantic ideas about a crime of passion. Some of the men assume that Dmitri will be acquitted because of his social station, which displeases them.*

Chaos breaks loose. Many of the men in the room seem pleased. Dmitri cries out that he swears he's not guilty. He tells Katerina Ivanovna that he forgives her and asks that everyone have pity for Grushenka. He breaks into sobs. A piercing cry rings out: it's from Grushenka. On the way out of the courtroom, someone says that Dmitri will "get a twenty-year taste of the mines." Others say that the peasants stood up for themselves and "finished off" Dmitri.

*Dmitri tells Katerina Ivanovna that he forgives her for what he thinks was an attempt to ruin him out of jealousy, though she was also trying to save Ivan. The peasants decided the outcome of the case, demonstrating a social shift in which the lower classes with have more power—a harbinger for what the next century would bring. This also seems to present Ippolit Kirillovich's vision of Russia as the victor for now: the "galloping troika" of modern amorality has been wrangled by the common sense and piety of the Russian peasantry. The problem, of course, is that the supposedly "moral" judgment was actually incorrect.*

## EPILOGUE, CHAPTER 1: PLANS TO SAVE MITYA

Five days after Dmitri's trial, before nine o'clock, Alexei goes to see Katerina Ivanovna. She talks with him in the same room in which she once received Grushenka. Ivan lies in the next room, feverish and unconscious. He's being treated by Varvinksy and Herzenstube, both of whom are unable to give any hope that Ivan will recover. Katerina says that Ivan already made contacts to arrange for Dmitri's escape. She says that she'll show Alexei the plan "in detail."

*Ivan is suffering from brain fever and his mind, which is his most precious possession, is deteriorating. Ivan's end is tragic because he was neither able to save his brother nor able to save himself from descending into madness and guilt.*

Katerina Ivanovna says that, when Ivan first revealed the plan to her, they quarreled because she got "furious" at the idea of Dmitri fleeing abroad with "that creature"—Grushenka. Then, Ivan came again and brought Katerina a sealed **envelope** containing the details of the escape. She says that Ivan seemed to foresee his illness. He left Katerina ten thousand roubles with the instructions.

*Initially, Katerina Ivanovna allowed jealousy to get the best of her, blinding her to the fact that the most important thing is to do what's best for Dmitri. In this instance, the envelope recurs as a symbol containing something secret.*

Katerina Ivanovna condemns her own character and says that Ivan, too, will probably leave her for "someone easier to live with, as Dmitri did." She confesses that she was the one who tried to convince Ivan that Dmitri was the murderer due to her rage and jealousy. She says that she is "the cause of it all" and is "guilty." Alexei notices that Katerina is suffering over her betrayal of Dmitri. She's sure, however, that Dmitri will agree to escape. Ivan will be well by then and will handle the arrangements.

*Katerina Ivanovna feels regret for her second testimony in court and only obsesses over Dmitri leaving her for Grushenka because she feels unworthy. To keep from wallowing, she remains focused on plans for Dmitri's escape, which can redeem her. She's also optimistic about Ivan getting better, though the doctors seemed less hopeful.*

Alexei tells Katerina Ivanovna that Dmitri has asked to see her. She resists, but he tells her that she must go. She says that she can't leave Ivan, but Alexei assures her that it'll only take a moment. He says that he'll tell Dmitri she's coming. She agrees to go, but doesn't want him to know beforehand. Alexei says they'll be waiting for her, and leaves the room.

*Katerina Ivanovna feels too guilty to go to Dmitri. She makes the excuse of needing to stay and take care of Ivan to avoid her responsibility of apologizing to Dmitri. She may want the visit to be a surprise so that Dmitri doesn't have a chance to reject the even the idea of it.*

## EPILOGUE, CHAPTER 2: FOR A MOMENT THE LIE BECAME TRUTH

Two days after the verdict, Dmitri succumbed to nervous fever. He was sent to the town hospital's section for convicts but, at Alexei's request, Dr. Varvinsky arranged for him to be placed apart from the convicts. He is in the same room Smerdyakov occupied. Alexei walks in and finds Dmitri sitting on a cot, wearing a hospital robe. Dmitri is certain that Katerina Ivanovna won't come, but he also feels that it's impossible for her not to come. Alexei understands how he feels. Alexei says that she will come; he just doesn't know when. He reports that Katerina has also said that, if Ivan doesn't recover, she'll make arrangements for the escape herself.

*"Nervous fever" is another illness common to nineteenth-century literature. More scientifically, Dmitri has either come down with a psychosomatic illness due to stress or he has typhoid fever, which was often referred to as "nervous fever." Dmitri believes that Katerina Ivanovna owes him a visit, though she will probably be too embarrassed and ashamed over her actions to come (which is true). Still, her sense of duty ensures that she will help with the escape.*

Alexei asks if Grushenka knows about the escape. Dmitri says she does, but she won't come this morning. She seems fine with Katerina Ivanovna making all of the arrangements, however, and knows that she loves Ivan and not Dmitri. Dmitri expresses his love for Grushenka and how desperate he is to be with her.

*It seems that the former love triangle has reached some sort of compromise. Dmitri and Grushenka are a couple, but Grushenka will tolerate Katerina Ivanovna's presence as essential to helping Dmitri.*

Dmitri tells Alexei that, if he does run away, he won't be running with joy or happiness in his heart. He loves Russia and knows that Grushenka won't fare particularly well abroad either. His plan is that, when they arrive, they'll "set to work, digging the land." They'll go to the West. They'll learn English and, as soon as they do, they'll return to Russia—but not to Skotoprigonyevsk—as American citizens. He asks if Alexei approves, and Alexei says that he does.

*Like so many Europeans who became outcasts in their home countries, Dmitri dreams of going to America and starting over, becoming someone new. He asserts that he will return to Russia, but he will return as something different—an American citizen—which will distract everyone from his criminal past.*

Suddenly, Katerina Ivanovna appears in the doorway. She rushes toward Dmitri and seizes hold of his hands. She says that she's come to embrace him. Though their love is gone, she says, and they both love other people, she wants to be sure that they'll care for each for eternity. Dmitri asks Katerina if she believes that he killed his father. She says that she doesn't, but persuaded herself that she did, out of hatred. She rises suddenly, gives a loud cry, and steps back. Grushenka comes into the room.

*Katerina Ivanovna and Dmitri have their last tender moment together. It's important to her that Dmitri not forget her—otherwise, she will feel insignificant, which is a thought that Katerina cannot stand. It's uncertain how much either of them means what they say. There are certainly strong feelings between them, but they've hurt each other too much for it to be love.*

Grushenka stares at Katerina Ivanovna and says that they're both "wicked." Dmitri reproaches Grushenka for not forgiving Katerina, and Alexei scolds him for this. Grushenka insists that it was just Katerina's "proud lips speaking, not her heart." She then runs out. Dmitri tells Alexei to go after her. Katerina also leaves. Alexei tells her that Dmitri didn't know that Grushenka would come. She asks him to drop the subject and says she can't go to Ilyusha's funeral, though she sent flowers and promises to assist the family financially in the future.

*Grushenka insists on retaining her bitterness toward Katerina Ivanovna, whom she blames for Dmitri's imprisonment. This is a kind of internalized misogyny, as women are frequently blamed or blame themselves for situations they neither actually caused nor exacerbated. Though Katerina may have contributed to Dmitri's imprisonment, the stack of evidence against him probably would have led to his sentence anyway.*

## EPILOGUE, CHAPTER 3: ILYUSHECHKA'S FUNERAL. THE SPEECH AT THE STONE

Alexei is late for the funeral. Ilyusha died two days after Dmitri was sentenced. The pallbearers carry the coffin to the church without Alexei. When he arrives, Kolya Krasotkin greets him with a handshake. He then asks Alexei if Dmitri is innocent or guilty. Alexei insists that Smerdyakov killed his father. Smurov is there, too, and says he agrees. Kolya says that he envies how Dmitri has become a sacrifice for truth.

*Dmitri is a sacrifice for the truth, while Ilyusha is a sacrifice for innocence. Seeing Dmitri falsely imprisoned helps others to realize the importance of seeking the truth, while Ilyusha's death, and his courage in the face of it, indicates that the value of truth and honor must be instilled when people are young.*

Alexei goes into the room with the blue coffin. He looks at Ilyusha's face, which is emaciated and serious. Nina Nikolaevna has been picked up in her chair and placed close to the coffin, against which she leans her head, as though she's weeping. Captain Snegiryov looks "animated" and "bewildered." He says that he doesn't want his son buried in the churchyard, but rather by the family stone. He's been saying this for days but got overruled, particularly by his landlady, who didn't want Ilyusha to be buried like a hanged man. The captain agrees for his son to go wherever they want to take him.

*The description makes Ilyusha sound like a wizened old man. The illness, as well as his life-long poverty and his father's shame, all forced him into a maturity that he wouldn't have otherwise had. It's unclear why the captain is initially averse to church burial. He may prefer the family stone so that he can be buried in proximity to his son. He may also be angry with the Church.*

It's only three hundred steps to the church. The day is clear and a bit frosty. Captain Snegiryov worries that he forgot the crust of bread for the funeral, but the boys remind him that it's in his pocket. The captain tells Alexei that Ilyusha wanted him to crumble bread on his coffin for the birds to eat. Alexei praises the idea, and the captain says that he'll do it every day.

*Bread is reminiscent of the body of Christ, which is eaten during the Eucharist, or a celebration commemorating the Last Supper. Ilyusha, like Christ, requested that his loved ones use bread to remember him after his death. The parallel with the funeral allows a gathering between Alexei, Kolya, and the other boys who rely on Alexei's guidance.*

The party arrives at the church and sets the coffin down. During the liturgy, Captain Snegiryov seems calmer. When the funeral service begins, though, he sobs, and when it's time to cover the coffin, he throws his arms around it. Soon thereafter, the gravediggers lower the coffin. The captain leans so far into the grave, with flowers in his hand, that the boys have to pull him back. Then, he remembers to crumble the crust of bread. All of the boys are crying. The captain goes home to Arina Petrovna and tells her that Ilyusha has sent her flowers. The mad woman demands to know where the captain took Ilyusha, which prompts Nina Nikolaevna to sob. Kolya runs from the room. Alexei goes out after him.

*The liturgy may have been calming to the captain because it is a communal practice in which worshipers praise God and offer repentance. These activities may have taken his mind off of his son's suffering and death. However, it also could have caused him to reflect on his actions, which contributed to Ilyusha's contraction of consumption. This may be the reason why he behaves as though he wants to be buried, too. Kolya runs because the family's misery is too great to bear, and he can't stand to lose control of his emotions in front of others.*

Kolya admits that he's very sad and would give anything to resurrect Ilyusha. They and the other boys walk along the path and run into the stone his father wanted to bury him under. Alexei decides to have a word with the boys at this spot. He says that they should never forget Ilyusha, especially his honesty and bravery. The boys may one day be involved in important things, but they should never forget how good they once felt here, united. He says that there's nothing better or stronger than a good memory from childhood. He compliments Ilyusha's gifts, as well as Kolya's, but says that all of the boys are dear. Alexei wishes for Ilyusha's memory to be eternal. The boys tell Alexei that they love him. They all then go to the memorial dinner. Kolya cries out, "Hurrah for Karamazov!" and the other boys join in.

*The boys form their own family around Alexei, who serves as their elder brother and guide. In his speech, Alexei strongly resembles his former elder, Zosima. Like the departed monk, Alexei expresses an appreciation for the natural goodness of humanity and for brotherhood. Alexei transgresses a bit here from Zosima, however, who only believed that true brotherhood could exist in the monastery. Alexei encourages the boys to remember what was great about Ilyusha and to connect it to what is great about themselves. "Memory eternal" is also a chant in the Russian Orthodox Church to praise the departed. The book then ends on this ambivalent note, with Dmitri's escape plan only beginning, Ivan's health in limbo, and Alexei in a seemingly transitional state in his life. Dostoevsky intended to write a sequel, but died soon after finishing* The Brothers Karamazov.

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