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BREAKING THE MORAL BARRIER:
ANNA KARENINA'S NIGHT TRAIN TO ST. PETERSBURG¹

Dante's dramatic situations are not lapses from his subject; they are his moral subject given in images of action . . . The "scenes" in Hell are the true demonstrations of the nature of error. They are "experience"—and as such properly contain the clues to all general ideas.

—Irma Brandeis,
The Ladder of Vision: A Study of Dante's Comedy

Anna's night journey to St. Petersburg (part 1, chapter 29) is one of the great transitional moments in her drama. Her experience dramatizes a state of intense moral and psychological conflict in which a powerful passion crashes through a barrier of will and conscience. Tolstoy's account of this internal experience is remarkable for its representation of Anna's epic crisis. The battle engages her entire being, physical, psychological, moral, and spiritual, drawing in her immediate surroundings and nature in the broadest sense of the term.

In Tolstoy's view, we are never separate from the world around us. We are inextricably a part of reality: we relate to it consciously and unconsciously; it participates in our moods, choices, and decisions. There is the fatality of individual human character, to be sure, but chance and circumstance, playing at its edges, ever seeking an entrance, probe and test our defenses, our strengths and weaknesses, our uncertainties and ambiguities, thus measuring what we are and defining our ever-shifting margins of freedom. We are free but within limits. Tolstoy's art and vision are based on this recognition.

Anna is free and therefore responsible. Yet as this scene discloses almost from its first line, she is increasingly ravaged by the opposite

¹ The essay published here appeared under the title of "The Night Journey: Anna Karenina's Return to Saint Petersburg," in *Approaches to Teaching Tolstoy's 'Anna Karenina'*, ed. Liza Knapp and Amy Mandelker (New York: MLA, 2003), 150-160. An earlier version of the essay appeared in *Life and Text: Essays in Honour of Geir Kjetsaa on the Occasion of his 60th Birthday*, ed. E. Egeberg, et al. (Oslo: 1997), 159-168.

pulls of her nature: overflowing energy and moral awareness, a sense both for what is right and good and for what she feels is good for her. In this respect, she embodies the human dilemma of all people at all times. One thing is certain: for Tolstoy, actions have consequences.

Anna's journey into the night begins with the words "Well, that's all over, thank God!"² Anna is referring to her encounter with Vronsky in Moscow. Two thoughts come to mind with respect to this exclamation: first, nothing is ever completely over or finished, least of all when a passion or obsession is involved. Where temptation and moral conflict are concerned, the moment of imagined freedom is often the moment of greatest vulnerability and danger. Such is the case with Raskolnikov in Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment* when, after his nightmare, he says to himself, "Thank God, it's only a dream!" and, a short while later, exclaims, "Freedom, freedom! He is free from that spell . . . from the temptation."³ Yet he is not free, as his fervent prayer for help attests, "Lord! . . . Show me my way, and I'll renounce this cursed . . . dream of mine" (part 1, chapter 5). God helps those who help themselves.

Anna thanks God a second time at the end of the first paragraph, "Thank God, tomorrow I shall see Seryozha and Alexei Alexandrovich again, and my good and accustomed life will go on as of old." Here, again, her feeling of release or freedom from the passion that has taken root in her is deceptive. She has not reflected seriously on her real feelings for Vronsky, on her actions in Moscow, or on what lies beneath her "good and accustomed life."

Every aspect of ourselves, even the slightest gesture, Tolstoy believes, belongs to a unity of self. Anna is playing a cunning game with herself. The narrator mentions her "deft (*lovkii*) little hands" as they reach into her red bag. "Lovkii" here may variously be translated as "deft, dexterous, agile," but the word may also suggest "cunning." Anna's deft hands (in this scene, her hands are very expressive of her feelings) at this moment suggest something of her evasive state of mind, her inability to face her feelings squarely. These same deft hands

² Quotations are from the Louise and Aylmer Maude translation of *Anna Karenina*. For purposes of analysis I have occasionally amended this translation.

³ We have here an interesting version of Dostoevsky's use of the indirect narrative style, one that in this instance underscores Raskolnikov's distance from the reality of his inner, unrecognized inclinations.

take out from her bag “a paper knife and an English novel,”⁴ both of which will play a role in her inner drama.

She settles down and tries to read the novel. But to grasp fully her slow descent into a state of profound, if momentary, mental and physical turmoil, one must take into account not only what is on her mind or just beneath its surface, but also the somewhat eerie and disorienting environment in which she finds herself: surroundings that seem at once to impress themselves on her inner world, and increasingly, to express what is going on in that world.

The “semi-light” or “semidarkness” (the narrator uses both phrases) of the train compartment mimics a marginal world of consciousness, one precariously balanced between reality and dream. The invalid and two other women in the compartment; the noise of the train and the bustle of people passing through; the muffled conductor on his way through the train covered with snow on one side; the maid Annushka with her broad hands and a hole in one of her gloves; the snatches of conversation; the movement of the cars; the erratic changes in heat and cold in the compartment; and the talk of “an awful snowstorm . . . raging outside” —all this not only distracts Anna, but also enters into her anxious mental state. As though to underscore the unsettling impact of her surroundings, the narrator reiterates:

And so it went on and on: the same jolting and knocking, the same beating of the snow on the windowpane, the same rapid changes from steaming heat to cold, and back again to heat, the gleam of the same faces through the semidarkness, and the same voices—but at last Anna began to read and to follow what she read.

“My good and accustomed life will go on as of old,” Anna had remarked complacently as she settled down in her seat. However, the unsettling experience of the train and the railroad itself, of this invention of modern industrial capitalism tearing into and tearing up the old agricultural and patriarchal way of life of Russia, an essential ingredient in Tolstoy’s conception of the tragedy of Anna in general, portends a different outcome.

⁴ “Razreznoi nozhik” —a little paper knife or paper cutter (*nozhik* is a diminutive for *nozh* [knife]).

Seated in the semidarkness of the compartment, Anna tries to make her way into the uncut pages of an English novel. "At first she could not read" and only later "began to read and to follow what she was reading."⁵ Anna is not actively reading or only a part of her is reading. Her attention is drawn to what is going on around her. Finally, however, "she read and understood, but it was unpleasant to read." Anna wants to live. "She was too eager to live herself." This phrase in Russian (*ei khotelos'*), an impersonal reflexive form of the verb "to want" that is used four times⁶ not only underscores Anna's desire but also suggests a drive to live that is almost outside her. "But there was nothing to be done, so she forced herself to read, while fingering (*perebiraia*) the smooth little paper knife."

The paper knife first appears as a utility tool that cuts a path into the romantically engaging English novel. The instrument, however, fits Anna's hands, as it were, lending itself to her deep psychic needs and desires. Her restless fingering of the paper knife speaks of her frustrated desire to make her way into a novel or romance of her own life. "She was too eager to live herself . . . But there was nothing to be done."

What she desires arouses in her a feeling of shame. The question of shame comes up in connection with the English novel and its hero. "The hero of the novel had nearly attained to his English happiness of a baronetcy and an estate, and Anna wanted to go off to the estate with him, when suddenly she felt that he must have been ashamed, and that she was ashamed of the same thing—but what was he ashamed of? 'What am I ashamed of?'" asks Anna, opening up a dialogue with herself. Tolstoy, master of the interior monologue, so often consisting of a dialectic of inner voices disclosing and advancing conflict, opens the processes of Anna's troubled consciousness and conscience.

She conflates the hero and heroine in the English novel with herself and Vronsky. She challenges herself over her shame; indignant, she asks herself, "What am I ashamed of?" "She put down her book,

⁵ The use of impersonal or passive constructions (*chitalos'*, *chitaemoe*) in the Russian original accents the passive character of Anna's reading, her distraction or detachment.

⁶ On this point see Richard F. Gustafson's discussion in his study, *Leo Tolstoy, Resident and Stranger: A Study in Fiction and Theology* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1986), 304-305.

leaned back, and clasped the paper-knife tightly in both hands. There was nothing to be ashamed of," comes the answer. Appropriately, this declaration of her freedom from shame directly follows the observation that she was clasping the paper knife tightly in both hands, an advance beyond merely fingering it.

The paper knife in Anna's hands now seems to give expression not only to her restlessness and impatience, but also to her will to self-empowerment. The gripping hands point to the destructive character of her passion.⁷ What is implicit here is not only the defiance of social convention, but the destruction of family life as a consequence of arbitrarily making her way out of family life and entering another novel or romance of adultery. The pen knife as metaphor unites Anna's physical and mental action of reading, the narrative action of the English novel, and her overpowering will to life, a will that in the nature of things must involve the cutting of bonds.

On the note of no shame, Anna sorts through (*perebrala*) her Moscow recollections. "They were all good and pleasant." Tolstoy's use of the verb *perebrat'*—earlier used in its imperfective form to describe Anna fingering or toying with the paper knife, but now used in the related sense of sorting out or sifting through recollections—is not accidental. Anna undergoes a process of remembering or more tangibly working her way toward the source of her restless feelings and desires: her passionate attraction to Vronsky.

The Anna who has just expressed her freedom from shame now recalls her "good and pleasant" Moscow stay.

She recalled the ball and Vronsky and his humble, enamoured gaze, and their relations with one another; there was nothing to be ashamed of. And yet at that very point of her recollections when she remembered Vronsky, the feeling of shame grew stronger and some inner voice seemed to say to her, "warm, very warm, hot!" "Well, what of it?" she finally said to herself with decision, changing her position on the seat.

Increasingly, Tolstoy suggests the interaction of heat in the compartment and erotic heat in Anna's consciousness. The heat on the train seems to prompt her words and passion as she moves closer to

⁷ See the discussion of the paper knife in Edward Wasiolek, *Tolstoy's Major Fiction* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1975), 135.

the source of her alternating feelings of shame and defiance. Again, Tolstoy, master psychologist, points to the subtle interplay of the objective and subjective worlds, of the physiological and psychological. He also points to the sometimes imperceptible pressures that external experience or phenomena, at critical moments and in the way of chance, may have on the subtle oscillations of an inner conflict.

"Warm, very warm, hot": to this conventional phrase that in the ubiquitous guessing game announces that the player is getting closer and closer to the truth, that is, closer to guessing some place, object, or phenomenon; to this inner voice Anna, resolutely shifting in her seat, answers with a phrase that suggests that she knows very well what the matter is about but doesn't care: "Nu, chto zhe?" — an expression in Russian that may be translated as "Well, so what?" or "Well, what of it!"

The guessing-game words do not prelude a disclosure. They constitute the disclosure: erotic heat, passion. ("Hot" here is a translation of the Russian *goriachii*, a word that may also be translated as "burning" or "passionate.")

Anna's "Well, so what?" or "What of it?" both concedes the reality of her erotic interest and defiantly embraces it. And yet with a degree of uncertainty Anna still asks herself at this point, "What does this mean? Am I really afraid to look straight at it?" And again, as though taking a good look at the matter, she responds again, "Well, what of it?" She then discloses what is on her mind: "Is it possible that there exists, or could exist, between me and this officer-boy any relations differing from those with other acquaintances?" She smiles "disdainfully and again took up her novel; but now she absolutely could not understand what she was reading." The narrative of her own life has blotted out the fictional world of reading. A relationship between a married woman and an officer boy strikes her as incongruous. Yet incongruities lie at the root of life. Anna herself wishes to relive her youth.

She asks whether sexual relations exist or could exist between her and Vronsky. The use of the present tense in the first part of the phrase suggests that an erotic relationship already exists between her and Vronsky, that is, she clearly has experienced an erotic attraction to him.

She smiles disdainfully at the idea, yet thoughts, emotions, questions, and answers follow rapidly on each other in her mind. Her smile dissolves almost instantly into another kind of feeling, an awareness that marks a resolution of her internal dialogue. This

new feeling is accompanied by a gesture with the paper knife: "She passed her paper knife over the window-pane, then pressed its cold smooth surface against her cheek and almost laughed aloud, suddenly overcome with unreasoning joy."

The paper knife, which at first served a concrete function as a paper cutter, then served figuratively as an embodiment of her restless desire to open a way to a romance of her own, then made manifest the destructive implications of her passion and will to self-empowerment, now in an organic way conveys to Anna the heat of her passion. Whether the warmth of her cheeks is the flush of shameful erotic awareness, the warmth of her body or both—Tolstoy indeed is pointing again to the responsiveness of two temperatures to each other—the message is clear.

The testing of the cold blade against the warmth of her cheeks signals the moment when the heat of passion, the object of passion, and the acceptance of passion merge in Anna's consciousness. Anna embraces her shame, and shame becomes shameless. Her loud but suppressed cry of almost primitive, orgiastic joy preludes her breaking through the barrier of her inner sense of what is good or right (all that motivates her sense of shame) to her egoistic sense of what she feels is good for her. Ethical reality is momentarily lost in an esthetic or sensual reality. The ideal unity between the good and the beautiful is sundered when the pull of passion triumphs.

The focus here is not primarily on the paper knife as a phallic object or image. Tolstoy recognizes the universal sign and its significance in the realm of the subconscious. He is not concerned with sexual imaging, however, but with relationships. He is interested, in this final appearance of the pen knife, in the way it mediates the relation between mind and body, between the sensuous and sensual, between the storm outside and the storm within; he is concerned with depicting that moment when sexuality, suffusing Anna's whole being and consciousness, makes its age-old claims. It is the sublimation of the sexual object, of phallic imaging, not its actualization or realization in explicit imaginative terms that gives this episode its power.

Anna's deliriums, her hallucinations, or what we might, for convenience's sake, call her nightmare, follow on her recognition and her joyful acceptance of her sexuality, her shame, her passion for Vronsky. Her passion is the focal point of her nightmare, but the nightmare itself centers on the conflict this passion arouses in her, with her inner

awareness of the consequences of her passion for Vronsky. What we are witness to are the convulsions of conscience. The emotional climax of those convulsions is both a vicarious experience of sexuality and a premonition of death—a premonition linked with her encounter with Vronsky at the railroad station and her troubled reaction to the death of the guard.

There is, finally, the biological link that Tolstoy establishes between the procreative sexual instinct and death: he alludes to it, for example, in "Father Sergius" (1891). In the temptation scene of that story, the beautiful widow Makovkina calls out to Father Sergius in his cell, "For God's sake! Oh, come to me! I am dying, oh!" A moment earlier Sergius formulated the temptation he is prey to with an image that shares with Makovkina's words a common subtext: "a solitary couch is a coffin."⁸ In the deepest biological sense, then, Tolstoy perceives the sexual drive as beyond good and evil; it serves the laws of nature, the ineluctable rhythms of life and death. Procreation, not pleasure, governs sexuality, Tolstoy insists in *Anna Karenina*. Yet in the same breath, he recognizes that his beloved Anna, like every human being, moves freely about within the iron triangle of desire, conscience, and the law of life.

Anna's struggle for and against her passion (her nightmare is about this struggle) is complex. It is presided over by a living conscience; it is marked by what Anna's sister-in-law Dolly Oblonsky calls Anna's "too gloomy" (*slishkom mrachno*) way of looking at things and by what Princess Betsy (a person wholly disinclined to meditate on moral issues) with irony calls Anna's inclination "to take things too tragically." This complexity, Anna's whole nature, one that includes a fully awakened sexuality, manifests itself in her delirious inner turmoil. In respect of this deep and essentially tragic nature, Anna is much the opposite of her brother Stephen Oblonsky (his dalliance with a former French governess is a focus of attention at the beginning of the novel), a person of good heart but shallow nature, a man in whom the erotic drive is also powerful, but unlike in Anna, transparent and trivial.

Anna's experience of joy quickly passes into an experience of disorientation, delirium, and terror. Tolstoy conveys the implications

⁸ For full discussion of this episode, see my essay, "Father Sergius and the Paradox of the Fortunate Fall," in *Russian Literature* 40 (1996): 469-472.

of her distress in lines of extraordinary artistic and psychological power and depth:

She felt that her nerves were being stretched like strings drawn tighter and tighter round pegs. She felt her eyes opening wider, her fingers and toes nervously moving, and something inside her stopping her breath, and all the forms and sounds in the swaying semidarkness around struck her with unusual vividness. Momentary doubts kept occurring in her mind as to whether the train was moving forwards or backwards, or standing still. Was it Annushka who was sitting beside her, or a stranger? "And am I here, myself? Am I myself or another?" She was afraid of giving way to this oblivion (*zabyt'e*). Something seemed to draw her to it, but she could at will yield to it or resist. To get over it she rose, threw off her wrap, and took off the cape of her coat. She came to her senses for a moment, and knew that the lean peasant in the nankin coat with a button missing who had come into the compartment was the carriage stoker and was looking at the thermometer, and that the wind and snow rushed in when he opened the door; but afterwards everything again became confused . . .⁹

The transition in Anna to a new perception of herself and life, the overcoming of moral resistance in herself to her involvement with Vronsky, takes on the form of violent and chaotic sensations that seize her entire being. The implications of her passion are traumatic. She experiences her choice in the form of an almost delirious disorientation. The storm of sensory experience around her, like the furious wind and snow that bursts into the train in the wake of the peasant-stoker who has come to check the thermometer, not only symbolizes her disorientation but also contributes to her inner turmoil.

In all this chaos of dying and birth, it would seem that Anna is at the mercy of an implacable determinism, at the mercy of elements, internal and external, driving her into a new world of judgment and experience. Yet the elements that participate in this upheaval (and chance plays a role here) express both her elemental breakthrough to a new state of consciousness and her conflict and resistance. Anna is

⁹ *Zabyt'e* (oblivion) is linked etymologically with *zabyt'* (to forget); it may refer to a half-conscious state, oblivion, a drowsy state, or a moment of distraction or separation from surroundings, as when in excitement people lose track of their whereabouts or of what is going on around them.

not a victim. She is conscious of her freedom throughout.¹⁰ "She was afraid of giving way to this oblivion. Something seemed to draw her to it, but she could at will yield to it or resist (*i ona po proizvolu mogla otdavat'sia emu i vozderzhivat'sia*).

I have translated Tolstoy's "po proizvolu" as "at will." *Proizvol* has roughly three distinct though related meanings in Russian: one's own choice, desire; self-will (*svoevolie*); arbitrariness. Tolstoy's use of this phrase is marked by calculated ambiguity. In the context, Anna can freely choose to yield to oblivion (*zabyt'e*) or to resist it. Yet the phrase also suggests that yielding to oblivion involves a certain anarchic self-will. If, as we read the passage silently or out loud, we take in as a unity the first semantic unit—"ona po proizvolu mogla otdavat'sia emu"—we become aware of the meaning of *proizvol* as "self-will" or "arbitrariness" (thus, we might translate, "out of self-will she could yield to [oblivion]"). As we read on, however, and take in the phrase "i vozderzhivat'sia" (or resist), thereby forming a new and larger semantic unit, our understanding of the word *proizvol* reverts to the idea of "at will," that is, to the idea of freedom to choose.

Using the Russian phrase *po proizvolu* with its variant meanings to convey Anna's thought processes, Tolstoy encapsulates the conflicting pulls in her, strains that find expression as we have noted, in such strange sensations as "whether the train was moving forwards or backwards," or in her wondering who was sitting beside her or whether she was herself or somebody else. Anna fears giving way to this oblivion, that is, to the condition of a person who has lost a sense of her whereabouts or relation to what is going on around or in her. The Russian word for oblivion also evokes the terror of forgetting that she is married.

Anna, then, still possesses moral freedom, though this freedom (as with all freedom) is not unconditional, not absolute.¹¹ It is manifested in her awareness that she can yield to or resist the forces drawing her into the abyss, but it is also—her moral consciousness, her agonizing choice—the storm she experiences, her disorientation, her terror.

¹⁰ Gary L. Browning also makes this point in "The Death of Anna Karenina: Anna's Share of the Blame," *Slavic and East European Journal* 30 (1986): 329.

¹¹ Tolstoy broadly develops this idea in his historical-philosophical discourse in the second epilogue of *War and Peace*.

"But afterwards everything again became confused . . ." (*no potom opiat' vse smeshalos' . . .*): these words form the gateway to the dramatic and ominous climax of Anna's nightmare. The first time the narrator uses the phrase *vse smeshalos'* (everything was confused) is in the second paragraph of *Anna Karenina*: "Everything was [in confusion] in the Oblonsky's household" (*Vse smeshalos' v dome Oblonskikh*). The painful dismemberment of the family (the body, the body of the family household; on the symbolic plane, the church and its congregation) constitutes the subtext of the opening two paragraphs of the novel, which introduce, as we have noted, the infidelity of Stephen Oblonsky and its familial consequences.¹² Not without reason do the words "everything was in confusion" prelude the ominous ending of Anna's hallucinations, one marked by a sense of almost apocalyptic chaos, dismemberment, and destruction.

Everything was in confusion . . . The peasant in the long coat started gnawing at something on the wall; the old woman began stretching her legs the whole length of the carriage and filled it with a black cloud; then something squeaked and clattered in a dreadful manner, as if someone were being torn to pieces; then a blinding red light appeared, and at last everything was hidden by a wall. Anna felt as if she had fallen through the floor. But all this did not seem dreadful, but gay. The voice of a man wrapped up and covered with snow shouted something just above her ear. She rose and came to herself.

These lines—the images of the black cloud and the red fire, the dreadful screech and clatter, the sense of somebody "being torn to pieces," and the wall (death) blanking out everything—clearly point back to the terrible accident at the railroad station an accident that so morbidly affected Anna ("It is a bad omen") precisely in the context of her nascent interest in Vronsky. In this accident, a muffled guard on the tracks is caught unaware and crushed by a train. The same lines depicting Anna's hallucination also point forward to the "darkness" (*mrak*) of her state of mind before her suicide and to her dismemberment

¹² See my discussion of the first and second paragraph of *Anna Karenina*, "On the Ambivalent Beginning of *Anna Karenina*," in *Semantic Analysis of Literary Texts: To Honour Jan van der Eng on the Occasion of his 65th Birthday*, ed. Eric de Haard, et al. (Amsterdam: Elsevier, 1990), 345-352.

at a railroad station. Her death is closely linked with the unraveling of her relationship with Vronsky and with the destruction of the family.

Death images dominate the climax of Anna's hallucinations. Every detail in Tolstoy's art carries meaning. The mysterious old lady (*starushka*) of Anna's hallucination "began stretching her legs the whole length of the carriage." The Russian phrase "protiagivat' nogi" —to stretch out, to extend one's legs (forward)—also may mean, colloquially, "to turn up one's toes," that is, to die. Stretched out the full length of the railroad carriage, the old lady lies as in a coffin. The symbolic message of the old woman of Anna's hallucination and of the black cloud is death.

Tolstoy's image of the old woman is probably an allusion to Baba the Bony-Legged One, the notorious sorceress of Slavic mythology. Baba Yaga, as she is known, lives in a forest in a hut that stands on chicken legs; it is surrounded by a fence of human bones and skull heads. She likes to eat people, and is consequently, continually trying to stuff them into her oven. The folklorist Vladimir Propp suggested that the reason Baba Yaga's head, body, and legs fill the hut is not because she is large, but because, appropriate to her role as guardian of the realm of death, she lives in a coffin. The old woman of Anna's hallucination echoes the fat woman who at the beginning of part 1, chapter 29, talks about the heat as she wraps up her legs. The railroad carriage is of course coffin-shaped; as we have noted, the railroad in *Anna Karenina* (as in Tolstoy's later work *The Kreutzer Sonata*) is both as symbol and social phenomenon, an embodiment of death and destruction.

Anna instinctively comprehends the images of death in her dream, but their full message does not reach her in her conscious state. After a massive inner conflict over her passion, she falls. Figuratively speaking, she dies; her death, however, is also rebirth, but in a fallen state.

Her recognition of her desire for transgression begins with "unreasoning joy" and is quickly replaced by feelings of terror; in turn, her terror, at the end, abruptly is replaced by an unnatural sense of gaiety. This strange levity would seem simultaneously to symbolize both her denial of and delight in her fall. "But all this [experience of falling] did not seem dreadful, but gay." The account of her night journey ends on not a falling but a rising note. Her state of mind seems artificially illuminated, like the station platform.

The train arrives at a station. Anna steps out onto the platform where the whistling wind disputes with her over whether she should go out of the door of the carriage or whether it, the wind, should go in. "And this too struck her as gay." She steps out into the fresh air: the wind whistles gaily "and tried to seize and carry her off." We have here a final reminder of what Anna's internal storm has accomplished and of the euphoric feelings it has paradoxically engendered in her. She has arrived at a new station in her life. "With enjoyment she drew in full breaths of the snowy, frosty air as she stood beside her carriage looking round at the platform and the lighted station." Does she, like Raskolnikov after his nightmare, feel inwardly free of her temptation and obsession? Whatever the answer, her meeting with Vronsky on the same station platform only moments later makes it clear that she is not at all free. "Her face beamed with a joy and admiration she could not repress."

What connection, we may ask in conclusion, is there between the beginning of chapter 29—"Well, that's all over, thank God!"—and its end? We can, indeed, say at the end of the chapter that everything is over: not her relations with Vronsky, however, but her "good and accustomed life," a life that until now has taken a routine and familiar course. That particular chapter in the novel of her life has come to an end. A new chapter will open, just as a new one has begun for Vronsky, a man who, unlike Anna, is not inclined to view things tragically. This new drama, involving Anna, Vronsky, Karenin, and her son Serezha, among many others, will be not routine or simple in character but fatefully complicated; it will bring Anna into conflict with society and herself; it will finally lead her to the realization that one cannot get away from oneself.

For the moment, however, "all this did not seem dreadful, but gay," remarks the narrator immediately after her fall. We have a hint of the future in the line that follows this remark, "The voice of a man wrapped up and covered with snow shouted something just above her ear." What this man, a conductor or trainman, literally shouts into her ear is not of significance to us; what this same cloaked man, clearly a fate-figure in the novel, shouts into her unhearing ear she will learn in the final moments of her life, when "the candle, by the light of which she had been reading that book filled with anxieties, deceptions, grief, and evil, flared up with a brighter light than before, lit up for her all that had before been dark, flickered, began to grow dim, and went out for ever."