War and Peace Study Guide

War and Peace by Leo Tolstoy

BOOKRAGS

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Introduction

War and Peace is a historical novel that chronicles the tumultuous events inRussiaduring the Napoleonic war in the early nineteenth century. Focusing on an aristocratic way of life that had al-ready started to fade at the time that Leo Tolstoy wrote the book in the 1860s, it covers a comparatively short span of time□fifteen years□but it renders the lives of disparate characters from all segments of society with vivid, well-realized details. The story captures a generation on the brink of change, with some defending the existing class structure with their lives while others realize that the old way of life is disappearing. Part history lesson, part grand romance, part battlefield revisionism, and part philosophy lecture, *War and Peace* has captivated generations of readers with its gripping narrative and its clear, intelligible understanding of the human soul.

Author Biography

Leo Tolstoy was born to an upper-class Russian family on September 9, 1828, at the family's estate in Tula province, Russia. His father was Count Nikolay Tolstoy, a nobleman and prestigious landowner Tolstoy's mother died when he was two years old. Tragically, his father died when Leo was nine, leaving the young boy to be raised in the home of his aunts. He went to the University of Kazan when he was sixteen, studying Oriental languages and then law, but he left in 1847 without completing his degree.

In 1851 he went to the Caucasus to live with his brother, and began writing his first novel *Childhood.* Published in 1852, it was followed by *Boyhood (854)* and *Youth* (1856). During this time he served in the army at Sevastopol, fighting the Crimean War. His experience as a soldier in that war provided much of the experience that he drew upon in writing *War and Peace.*

After the war, Tolstoy returned to his family estate. In 1859 he started a school on his estate for peasant children. In 1861, after the emancipation of the serfs. Tolstoy served as Arbiter of the Peace, a temporary local judiciary position. The following year, after the deaths of two his brothers, he married Sophia Behrs, the daughter of a Moscow physician, and began an educational magazine, *Yasnaya Polyana,* which I. S. Aksakov called a "remarkable literary phenomenon" and an "an extraordinarily important phenomenon in our social life." Tolstoy edited the journal for a little more than a year.

After that, a second phase of his literary career began, the phase that produced his two greatest masterpieces. *War and Peace* and *Anna Karenina.* He retired to his estate with his new wife, wrote, hunted, farmed and socialized with his country neighbors. At the end of the 1860s, though, he found himself at a spiritual crisis, brought about by the deaths of several of his children and other relatives. He questioned the meaning of life and was not sure about whether he could or should go on. He drifted away from the Russian Orthodox Christianity he had been raised in and focused on a more rational world view that eliminated the need for church intervention between humanity and God. This religious conversion left him at odds with many members of his family, especially his wife.

Impacted by his evolving philosophical outlook, his later works of fiction were less ornamental and more direct. They include the novellas *The Death of Ivan Ilych, Master and Man,* and *Memoirs of a Madman.* Tolstoy also produced many philosophical works and religious tracts. His 1888 religious essay "What Is Art?" is still considered an important treatise on art and morality. Tolstoy died on November 20, 1910 of pneumonia.

Plot Summary

Book I

War and Peace is a massive, sprawling novel that chronicles events in Russiaduring the Napoleonic Wars, when the French Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte conquered much ofEurope during the first few years of the nineteenth century. Bonaparte unsuccessfully tried to expand his dominion intoRussia, only to be turned back in 1812. The novel opens in July of 1805, with Russiaallied with England, Austria, andSwedento stave off Bonaparte's aggressive expansion.

A member of a dissolute, upper-class crowd, Pierre Bezukhov is a troublemaker who criticizes governmental policies. At night he frequents drunken card parties with a fast crowd, including Anatole Kurgagin and Fedya Dolokhov, whom Tolstoy describes as "an officer and a desperado." Another member of the group, Prince Andrew, is a patriot who is determined to defend his country and aristocratic way of life. The novel soon introduces theRostov family as they prepare a celebration for their youngest daughter Natasha.

The illegitimate son of a well-known, wealthy aristocrat,Pierre's life changes when his father dies and recognizes him as his son. ThereforePierre is heir to his large fortune. Prince Andrew leaves to fight in the war against the French, leaving his pregnant wife with his father and sister Mary. Natasha's brother, Nicholas, gets into trouble in the army for threatening a superior officer whom he has caught cheating; later, in battle, Nicholas runs away from the enemy and realizes that he is the coward and cheat. Suddenly popular,Pierre marries Helene Kuragin. Her brother, Anatole, proposes to Mary, but her father will not allow her marriage. Prince Andrew is wounded in battle and left for dead at the end of Book I.

Book II

Nicholas Rostov is in love with his cousin Sonya, and she loves him; unfortunately, the family needs him to marry somebody with money because their wealth is dwindling.Pierre, reacting to rumors about an affair between his wife and Dolokhov, challenges him to a duel. WhenPierre wounds Dolokhov he runs away, questioning his own morals, and in an inn he meets an old acquaintance who introduces him to the Freemasons, a secret society that does good deeds.Pierre becomes an enthusiastic member, separating from Helene and arranging to give away his belongings to help humanity.

Prince Andrew returns from the war on the same day that his wife dies giving birth to their son. Nicholas encourages Sonya to accept Dolokhov's marriage proposal, but she refuses. Soon after his father puts him on a budget of two thousand rubles, Nicholas gambles with Dolokhov and loses forty-three thousand rubles, which the family has to

sell more property to pay. WhilePierre is busy freeing his serfs from their commitment to him, in accordance with his new Masonic beliefs, Prince Andrew is setting up new economic policies that will allow them to be self-sustaining after they earn their freedom.

In 1808 a truce is called in the Napoleonic War. Prince Andrew becomes disheartened with the difficulties of dealing with the army bureaucracy andPierre becomes disenchanted with being a Mason. In 1809, when Natasha is sixteen,Pierre falls in love with her. So does Andrew, and he proposes to the young lady. However, Andrew's father will not give his consent and tells him to wait a year before marrying. Andrew returns to the army Meanwhile, Nicholas' mother convinces him that he cannot marry Sonya□he must marry someone rich.

Impatiently waiting for Andrew to return, Natasha lets Anatole court her, secretly giving in to his charm. He makes plans to run away with her, but fails to tell her that he is already married in secret to a girl inPoland. The elopement is broken off when he comes to fetch her and is met by a huge doorman; like a coward, he runs away. Word of this gets back to Andrew, and he breaks the engagement Natasha tries poison herself but is unsuccessful.Pierre visits her and confesses his love.

Book III

The war begins again in 1812, when the French army moves intoRussiaThe novel narrates Napoleon's thoughts and impressions of the campaign, and then switches to Tsar Alexander, going back and forth between them. During the fighting, Nicholas comes to realize that his earlier cowardice was just a normal reaction to war and he forgives himself. Recovering from her suicide attempt, Natasha starts to attend morning mass and gains peace and serenity. Her younger brother, Petya, joins the army, but cannot find a way to tell his family.

As the French army advances toward their estate in the country, Mary's father has a stroke. After he dies, Mary rides into the town nearby to prepare to evacuate her household servants. When she sees the peasants starving she offers them all of the grain stored on the family estate, but they become suspicious and think it is some sort of trick to get them to leave their land. They are on the verge of rioting against her when Nicholas rides up, saves her, and falls in love with her.

People fleeMoscow to avoid the oncoming French army. Pierre travels out to Borondino, which is the last place where the French can be stopped Much of Part III is concerned with different views of the Battle of Borqndino□from Napoleon, Andrew, Pierre, and Kutuzov.

After the Russian defeat,Moscow has to be evacuated. Natasha insists that the wagons taking her family's belongings need to be emptied in order to bring some injured soldiers too. One of the injured soldiers turns out to be Andrew, who, seeing Natasha for the first time since their engagement was broken off, forgives her.

In desertedMoscow,Pierre comes up with a crazed scheme of assassinating Napoleon. Taken into custody by a French captain, he saves the man's life whenPierre's servant is going to shoot him, and, after being given the comforts of good food and drink he forgets his assassination attempt. He races mto a burning building to save a peasant's child, then assaults a French soldier who is molesting a woman, for which he is arrested.

Book IV

Pierre's wife dies while he is a prisoner of the French army. During a long march,Pierre becomes

even more at peace with himself. He meets Platon Karataev, a peasant who owns nothing but has a joyful outlook, and decides to be more like him.

Mary finds out that her brother, Andrew, is still alive. She travels to where Natasha and her family are caring for him, and the two women take turns nursing him until he dies.

Kutuzov, the Russian general, is pressured to overtake the fleeing French and kill them, but he knows his army does not have the energy. Petya Rostov admires Dolokhov's daring when he accompanies him on a scouting party into the French camp. The next day, they attack the French:Pierre is freed when the French soldiers flee, but Petya is killed. As the French menace fades,Pierre rejoins theRostov family and he and Natasha console each other over their grief: she has lost her brother, Petya, and her lover Andrew; he has lost many friends in the fighting. They fall in love.

First Epilogue

Nicholas and Mary marry, as do Pierre and Natasha. They all live at Bald Hills, the estate left to Mary by her father. On December 6,1820,Pierre arrives home from a trip toMoscow, where he has been meeting with a secret organization. Pierre and Nicholas disagree about a citizen's responsibility to the state, but everyone is happy living together□ especially Andrew's son Nicholas, who idolizesPierre.

Second Epilogue

Tolstoy discusses his view of history and how the weaknesses of the historian's methods fail to distinguish between those actions undertaken by free will and those which are caused by circumstance.

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Part 1, Chapters 5-8

Part 1, Chapters 5-8 Summary

The conversation turns unstoppably to politics, and Pierre makes his biggest blunder yet by saying that the execution of the Duc d'Enghier was a political necessity. This is shocking to most of the guests, and Hippolyte slaps his knee in amusement. Prince Andrei enjoys the conversation, but Anna Pavlovna gets more and more nervous as the men raise their voices in disagreement. Prince Hippolyte saves the day by telling a joke, for which his hostess is grateful.

The guests begin to leave the soiree. Pierre takes his leave awkwardly, and Anna Pavlovna tells him that she hopes he'll behave better next time. Hippolyte flirts shamelessly with the little princess as she waits for her carriage, and Andrei isn't pleased. Pierre goes home with Elizabeth (Lise) and Andrei Bolkonsky. The little princess goes upstairs to change, and the men relax in Andrei's study. Pierre asks Andrei why he is going to war, and Andrei says that his life here in Petersburg doesn't suit him. Lise joins the men in a different, but still very nice, dress. She begins with small talk, but when Pierre tells her they were talking about why Andrei wants to go to war, she becomes querulous. She proclaims that all men are egoists, and that's why they have wars. They don't mind leaving their families to go play at war and think only of themselves. Andrei becomes angry and argues with her. Pierre is uncomfortable with the conversation. The conversation ends abruptly and Andrei kisses Lise goodnight as he would a stranger.

Andrei and Pierre go to the dining room for supper. Andrei advises his friend to never get married. He says that once you are married, you are chained up, not free to do as you please. He says his wife is as good a woman as a man is likely to find, but even so he can't stand being married. Pierre is surprised because he admires Andrei and thinks he has everything. Then Andrei tells Pierre not to go to the Kuragins and participate in their dissipated lifestyle any more. He makes Pierre promise, and Pierre does.

Part 1, Chapters 5-8 Analysis

The political discussion in chapter five reveals much about the characters. Pierre is passionate and unassuming. Andrei cares little about what others think of him. Anna Pavlovna cares more than anything about what others think of her. Hippolyte cannot take anything seriously and has very few thoughts to call his own. The change in setting (public to private) is refreshing because all the characters in chapter six feel comfortable in their setting at the Bolkonsky's house.

In a private setting with his friend, Pierre becomes almost a different person, not so clumsy and out-of-place. Thus, we get to see another side to his character. This chapter shows the readers how very different Lise and Andrei are. Lise is flirtatious and chatty,

while her husband is serious and introspective. They clearly don't get along, and don't seem to even love each other much. Chapter eight is a continuation of chapter seven, except that Lise isn't present as Andrei explains his coldness about Lise to Pierre. The breach between Lise and Andrei is foreshadowing even greater conflict in the future.

Part 1, Chapters 9-12

Part 1, Chapters 9-12 Summary

When Pierre finally leaves the Bolkonsky's, it is past one o'clock. He wants to see what Anatole is doing but then remembers his promise to Andrei. He vacillates and finally decides to go to the Kuragins anyway. When he arrives, a large group of young men are drinking and gambling, and a young bear on a leash is pacing in the room. Dolohov is introduced. He is a well-known military man, who doesn't have much money but is quite charismatic. He uses Anatole for money and social connections. Dolohov devises a drinking game, betting that one of the men can't drink a whole bottle while sitting in a second story window frame without falling out. Pierre and all the other young men know this is folly, but they go along with it anyway because Dolohov is so persuasive. The man survives the game, and then they dance around with the bear and go out on the town.

A new set of characters is introduced: the Rostovs. Anna Mikhaylovna, the elderly widow who implored Vasili to help her son, Boris, is staying with her dear friends, the Rostovs, on the name days of Countess Rostov, and the countess's youngest daughter Natasha. It is a grand occasion, and friends come to call and stay for dinner and a party. Anna and the Countess talk about the latest gossip: Dolohov, Anatole, and Pierre put a bear in a carriage and went off to visit some actresses. When the police tried to interfere, the young men tied the bear back to back to one of the policemen and pushed them in a river. The bear swam to the riverbank with the police flailing around on its back. The count thinks this is funny, but the women think it's appalling.

Pierre has been sent to Moscow to get him away from the others and to hush up the gossip. They speak of Pierre's father and illegitimacy. The younger generation of the Rostovs and their friends are introduced in this chapter. They will be important characters throughout the book. Natasha at this time is eleven. She is charming, skinny, with copious amounts of curly, dark hair. Her older brother, Nicholas, and Anna Mikhaylovna's son, Boris, are good friends. The Rostovs' fifteen-year-old niece, Sonya, lives with the family as well. Petya, the youngest Rostov son, tags along with the rest. The visit continues. Nicholas and Boris have decided to join the military and go to war. The adults joke that they're such dear friends they both have to go. The Rostov's eldest daughter, Vera, is introduced. She wants to remain with the grown-ups, but they clearly don't want her around. Sonya's crush on Nicholas is transparent; she runs off when he appears to ignore her. Then he runs out after her.

Part 1, Chapters 9-12 Analysis

Tolstoy takes his readers to yet another setting. This one is raucous and loud, full of colorful characters and even a bear. Seeing Pierre in this setting further illustrates his character. He is very amused by the situations in this chapter but a little nervous at the

same time. By the end of the chapter the nervousness has worn off and he is a full participant in their drunken antics. Finding out the results of the previous night's folly through the mouths of two older gossips is a clever way to show the readers how society views the actions of Dolohov, Anatole, and Pierre.

The young people introduced in this chapter are so innocent and described in such youthful, fresh ways. They seem to have no cares in the world. The novel will follow them through the war, and their troubles will create a stark contrast to the way we see them now. Sonya's flight from the drawing room sets a pattern for her relationship with Nicholas that will be apparent throughout the story. One or the other of these characters always flees; the timing seems to never be right.

Part 1, Chapters 13-16

Part 1, Chapters 13-16 Summary

Natasha hides from Boris in the conservatory. While she's hiding, Sonya comes in crying and Nicholas comes in after her to ask what is wrong. They reconcile and Nicholas kisses her, which gives Natasha an idea. Nicholas and Sonya leave the room, and then Boris comes in. Natasha flirts with Boris and then kisses him. He chastises her for it but then promises to ask for her hand in marriage in another four years. The adults send Vera out of their presence, so she wanders to the room where all the other youngsters now are.

They are sitting in couples, and she makes fun of them for their romances. They are unpleasant to Vera, and she to them, so she soon leaves. Back in the drawing room, Anna Mikhaylovna appeals to her old friend Natalya Rostov, telling her that she is completely out of money and needs a great deal in order to outfit Boris for the military. Anna tells Natalya that she will go talk to the elder Count Bezuhov about sponsoring Boris and will return to the Rostovs' for dinner. Anna Mikhaylovna fetches her son, Boris, and tells him that they must go to visit Count Bezuhov and Vasili, who are distant, but very rich relations. He doesn't want to go and tells his mother that it's embarrassing, but the mother prevails. When they arrive, Vasili is less than friendly, and Anna Mikhaylovna plays up the relative card as best she can. Bezuhov's niece, who lives with him, is unfriendly as well. Anna tells Boris to go find Pierre and give him a dinner invitation to the Rostov's. Vasili says he would be only too glad if they'd take Pierre off his hands because the Count hasn't asked for him once. After the mess he'd gotten himself into in Petersburg, Pierre has been sent to Moscow and has been staying at his father's house. Three of his cousins, princesses, are also staying there, and they treat him either as a corpse or a leper. Boris appears and asks Pierre to dinner at the Rostovs. Pierre is very grateful for a friendly male to talk with and even more grateful for the prospect of dinner at the Rostov's. Anna Mikhaylovna returns from her visit with Vasili, overly expressing concern about the Count's health. She speaks with Boris of the will. Boris doesn't think the Count has any reason to leave them anything in his will, but that doesn't get in his mother's way.

Part 1, Chapters 13-16 Analysis

The romance between Nicholas and Sonya seems like a typical teenage romance, but the romance between Natasha and Boris seems comical. And yet, it draws us into wanting to know if it will really last four years until Natasha grows up. When the two adult women, Anna Mikhaylovna and Natalya Rostov are together, their long-time intimacy is apparent. Countess Rostov asks about Vasili, by whom she was courted in days past. Anna Mikhaylovna speaks of financial matters, which would seem like an intimate topic, but she is shameless when it comes to begging. In this chapter, Anna Mikhaylovna's position in society could be compared to that of Lily Bart's in Edith

Wharton's *The House of Mirth*. She is completely dependent on the goodwill or not-so-good will of those in her coveted social circle. The frank discussion between Pierre and Boris is refreshing juxtaposed with the artificial conversations conducted by Anna Mikhaylovna. Perhaps youth can have franker discussions because they don't have to worry about money and position as much as their elders.

Part 1, Chapters 17-20

Part 1, Chapters 17-20 Summary

Meanwhile, back at the Rostov's, Countess Rostov asks her husband for a great deal of money, 500 rubles. The Count doesn't hesitate in the least. He calls for Dmitri, their overseer, and tells Dmitri to bring 700 rubles right away. Dmitri begins to explain to Count Rostov the trouble of bringing so much money to him right away, but Rostov begins breathing heavily, as if his health were affected by such a statement, and Dmitri submits to the order. The Count asks why the Countess wants the money. When Anna Mikhaylovna returns from Count Bezuhov's, Countess Rostov gives the money to her, and the two women weep together.

While the women talk in the Rostov's drawing room, the men smoke and play cards in the study. Countess Rostov's cousin Shinshin, a sharp-tongued man, and Lieutenant Berg, whom Natasha teases her sister Vera about, talk about politics. They discuss who has received promotions in the army and who should. Berg has virtually no personality; he only wants to be accepted by society, and so he models others' behavior, down to how they dress and what furniture they buy. Maria Dmitrievna and Pierre arrive separately. Maria Dmitrievna is an elderly woman, who is well-known in both Petersburg and Moscow society; she much gossiped about for her frankness and rudeness. She scolds Pierre for tying the bear to the policeman as Pierre's father is lying on his deathbed and tells him he should go to war.

They all sit down to dinner. The men's end of the table gets quite loud as they talk about the war. Maria Dmitrievna tells them to keep it down and not get so excited, that the war is in God's hands, not theirs. Small talk resumes. Then, egged on by the other young people, Natasha asks her mother what kind of sweets they'll have for dessert. Her mother won't answer, but Natasha is relentless. Maria Dmitrievna is shocked and tells Natasha she won't have any sweets, but Natasha doesn't give up and keeps asking until she is standing and practically screaming. Then they tell her there will be pineapple ice. She sits down pleasantly and says that's all she wanted to know. Everyone laughs and is impressed with this little girl who can stand up to Maria Dmitrievna.

After dinner, the guests spread out among the two drawing rooms, the sitting room, and the library. The young people gather round the clavichord to sing. Natasha notices that Sonya is missing. Natasha finds Sonya in the nursery, where she is crying because Nicholas will be leaving for the military in one week. She thinks all will be fine for Natasha and Boris, but Sonya worries that because she is Nicholas' cousin and she has no money she won't be marrying Nicholas. She's also envious of Julie Karagina, who Nicholas was talking with during dinner. She knows that Countess Rostov would rather have Nicholas marry Julie than her. Natasha consoles Sonya. She gets Sonya to return to the rest of the company, and the youngsters sing a quartet. Then the dancing begins, and Natasha dances with Pierre, but it's Count Rostov who steals the show, dancing the "Daniel Cooper" with flair.

Part 1, Chapters 17-20 Analysis

This chapter reveals a considerable amount about the characters of Count and Countess Rostov. They are both so generous, though they cannot really afford to be. They cannot bear to see someone in need when they can help. This character trait will be important during the war, when they will see so many in need and not have much left to offer. Pierre has looked forward to this dinner as a means of escaping the frigid atmosphere at his father's house, but it seems he can't go anywhere without being scolded for one thing or another. Maria Dmitrievna serves as a foil for Natasha. In all her previous interactions with others, nobody has stood up to Maria Dmitrievna. Men, women, young, old, they are all intimidated by her. Now we see a skinny, little girl, who is not afraid of her. This tells us a great deal about Natasha Rostov.

For such a young and beautiful girl, Sonya seems incredibly weak and dependent on Nicholas. It's true that her social position leaves her helpless in some regards, but her only response to sorrow seems to be running away and crying. The pairing of Natasha and Pierre at the dance seems odd. It is the first time Natasha has danced with a grown man, but she is refreshing to him, and he is exciting to her.

Part 1, Chapters 21-24

Part 1, Chapters 21-24 Summary

While Pierre dances with Natasha at the Rostovs' Count Bezuhov suffers a sixth and final stroke. Bezuhov's doctors tell Vasili and the princesses that he may not last the night, so the priest comes and administers last rites. Prince Vasili talks to the eldest princess about the state of Bezuhov's affairs. Although Pierre is the Count's son, because he is illegitimate, he should inherit nothing. All of the Count's estate should go to his other direct heirs (the three princesses and Prince Vasili). Vasili has discovered that Count Bezuhov has applied to the Emperor for a document changing Pierre's illegitimacy to legitimacy, which the tsar will, of course, grant to a man in Bezuhov's position. Vasili asks the princess if she has seen the paper because Vasili wants to make certain it is destroyed before the Count dies. The princess is so tired of people scheming for the Count's money that she refuses to tell Vasili anything. The conversation grows heated as Vasili thinks she is ignorant, and the princess thinks Vasili is dishonest and scheming, but she holds her ground.

Anna Mikhaylovna and Pierre Bezuhov travel together in a carriage to Count Bezuhov's estate. When they arrive, Anna Mikhaylovna pushes her way in while Pierre assumes that he won't be wanted and starts toward his room. Pierre notices that everyone in the house is looking at him in an unusual way. Pierre and Anna Mikhaylovna are permitted to enter the dying man's room. Pierre is so uncomfortable with his father that he doesn't know what to do or how to behave. Anna Mikhaylovna tells him what to do, how to help him move his arm and prop up his pillow.

When the old man falls asleep, Pierre goes out of the room; it is a relief. In the Count's last moments, the emotions and greed of those in the house gets out of control. Anna Mikhaylovna and the eldest princess fight over a portfolio containing one of Count Bezuhov's wills and the letter requesting Pierre's legitimacy. The Count dies, and Vasili is distraught because he thinks he has lost his chance at the fortune. Nobody yet knows which of the Counts wills is valid. Anna Mikhaylovna doesn't miss anything; she tells Pierre that if he inherits the money, it will be his duty to take care of her son, Boris, because that's what the Count would have wanted.

Part 1, Chapters 21-24 Analysis

Tolstoy offers us another strong female character in this princess, Princess Catherine (Catiche). She is not nearly as appealing as Natasha, but it's lovely to see someone stand up to Vasili in such a way. She has quietly, all this time, watched and observed Vasili's behavior, and when he appeals to her, she rebuffs him. Anna Mikhaylovna needs Pierre's connections to get in to see the Count, but Pierre, the count's own son, doesn't feel as though he's entitled to see the great man. Pierre's humility will contribute to one of the book's themes: humility vs. pride.

Those around Count Bezuhov clamor for his affection in his last moments, each hoping for a large share of his fortune. Vasili and Anna Mikhaylovna especially, in their greed, do all they can to win the man over. It is clear in chapter twenty-three that Count Bezuhov is not aware of what's going on around him anymore. These characters and Catiche have tried to maintain decorum in the previous chapters, but as the Count's death looms closer and closer, they can't contain themselves. Catiche refers to Anna as "vile" and "scheming," and thinks it about Vasili, which is absolutely true. And in the midst of this, Pierre is nothing but confused.

Part 1, Chapters 25-28

Part 1, Chapters 25-28 Summary

A new setting is introduced: Bald Hills. Bald Hills is the country estate of Prince Andrew Bolkonsky's father, Nicholas Andreevich. Nicholas Andreevich is an intelligent, learned and austere man. Everything in his household runs on a strict schedule, and he expects much from everyone. His daughter, Princess Mary, does her very best to please him, but she is afraid of him. They are awaiting the arrival of Prince Andrew and his wife, Lise.

While they're waiting, Princess Mary receives a letter from her dear friend, Julie Karagina, in Moscow. Julie reports on the death of Count Bezuhov. She says that the princesses have received very little, Vasili nothing, and Pierre an immense fortune. Prince Andrew and Lise arrive at Bald Hills. Andrew knows better than to interrupt his father's schedule (nap time is not over for twenty more minutes), so they go to Mary's room. They first encounter Mademoiselle Bourienne, Mary's dear friend and companion. Mary and Lise are so glad to see one another, and they chatter away while Prince Andrew and his father talk about Napoleon and the war.

Dinner is served at Bald Hills and is a very formal affair. Old Nicholas Andreevich Bolkonsky with his powdered hair talks of Napoleon, remembering his years in the Russian military. He is stern and rules his house with his scathing wit. At the end of the meal Lise mentions to Mary that because Mary's father is so clever, maybe that's why Mary is afraid of him. Mary assures Lise that her father is kind. Lise has fallen asleep, and Mary visits Andrew's room where he is packing for his departure the following day. She begs him to overlook Lise's weaknesses, to be a little indulgent, and to recognize that she was raised very differently than they were. Andrew doesn't want to talk about Lise. He criticizes Mary's friend Mademoiselle Bourienne. Mary gives him an icon to wear for good luck and makes him promise that he'll wear it.

The next day, Andrew meets with his father in his father's study. They talk again of the war. Old Bolkonsky promises to take good care of Lise. Andrew tells his father that if he dies in the war, he wishes that Old Bolkonsky keep the child with him at Bald Hills if it's a boy, even if Lise is against it. Old Bolkonsky laughs but agrees. When Andrew leaves, Lise becomes hysterical and faints. This makes Andrew even more impatient with her, and he leaves with a slam of the door.

Part 1, Chapters 25-28 Analysis

In this chapter, Tolstoy employs a now-familiar technique. He lets a new character finish the story of an already-established character in order to let readers know what the public thinks about the story. Julia Karagina furnishes details about the inheritance, just as Countess Rostov and Anna Mikhaylovna finished the story about Pierre and

Dolohov's escapade with the bear and the policeman in Petersburg. The formality between Lise and Andrew is still apparent in this chapter. His going away to war hasn't helped their marriage. When she brings up that she wishes he wasn't leaving the next day, he tells her that she's tired and should have a nap. This dinner shows the sumptuousness that even a down-to-earth Russian aristocrat displays. Each diner has his own footman standing behind his chair. Andrew laughs at his father, but he is very much like him. Andrew's departure for the war is handled differently by his various family members. His father is proud, his sister is worried but supportive, and his wife is hysterical and unwilling to face the facts. Mary understands him best, but she seems to understand everyone and never has an unkind word for any of them.

Part 2, Chapters 1-4

Part 2, Chapters 1-4 Summary

The troops are in poor shape, and General Kutuzov wants the political leaders to be aware of this. The troops are to be inspected by a contingent of allied leaders, and Kutuzov wants their ragged uniforms to be apparent. Unfortunately, the aide-de-camp is not aware of Kutuzov's intentions and gets the troops looking their very best. Kutuzov is displeased and has them put on their great coats, which do not look good. As Kutuzov inspects them he comes across an insolent soldier who will not stand up straight because of a leg injury. It is Dolohov, of dancing bear fame.

The inspectors arrive. They include Russian and Austrian officials as well as a Croat convoy. They walk up and down the lines of soldiers, Kutuzov pointing out the worn boots and shaking his head. Kutuzov is an old military veteran, and he speaks with many men he knew during the Turkish war. Prince Andrew Bolkonsky is among the officers with the convoy. He laughs and talks with Timohin, a stout jovial young man. Dolohov has changed his clothes and penitently approaches Kutuzov, asking to be re-instituted to his former rank (after having been demoted after the bear affair). Kutuzov asks Timohin how he has been behaving. Timohin says he is punctilious and generally well-behaved, but his character is questionable: he nearly killed a Jew in Poland. Kutuzov comments on Dolohov's important connections and then implies that he can be re-instituted if Timohin sees fit.

After the review, Kutuzov takes the Austrian general into his private room to discuss strategy and conditions. Bolkonsky is called in to bring plans and maps. Bolkonsky has changed dramatically since we last saw him. He is now optimistic and self-satisfied. He smiles more and has a spring in his step. Prince Bolkonsky's father had been a comrade of Kutuzov's in previous conflicts, and Kutuzov has set apart Bolkonsky above other adjutants. The Austrian general and Kutuzov are discussing the fate of the Austrian army in a battle when General Mack, the Austrian general in charge of said battle, appears, bruised and defeated. Two other adjutants, Zherkov and Nesvitsky, joke about the Austrian's defeat, but Prince Andrew rails against them, saying that it is no laughing matter when your ally's army loses 40,000 men in a single battle.

Part 2, Chapters 1-4 Analysis

Throughout book one, the characters discuss the war at length, but now Tolstoy moves the setting to actual battlefront. A completely different set of rules governs behavior here than in the drawing rooms of book one, and we shall soon see what sort of character traits emerge as strong and valuable in such a setting. Chapter two introduces readers to the all-important concept of rank in the military. Everyone fears and respects the generals such as Kutuzov; the wealthy officers such as Bolkonsky and Timohin are comfortable and well-liked, as shown by their gaiety during a stressful time for the

soldiers. The common soldiers have to be very careful to stay in line and pay the proper homage to their leaders. Prince Bolkonsky's place in the military becomes apparent: he is very important to Kutuzov, the general of the Russian army. He takes his job very seriously, unlike his friends Zherkov and Nesvitsky. By the end of this chapter, a shadow has fallen over the Russian army, moving the plot forward into greater conflict.

Part 2, Chapters 5-8

Part 2, Chapters 5-8 Summary

Denisov's money is missing. Rostov suspects Telyanin and lets Denisov know that he suspects someone; an argument ensues. Against Denisov's orders, Rostov pursues Telyanin and finds him eating and drinking in an inn. He confronts him and Telyanin begs his forgiveness, Rostov leaves the inn without the money. The staff-captain wants an apology from Rostov for accusing a fellow officer so that the entire regiment isn't shamed. He accuses him of lying, which makes Rostov angry enough to consider a duel with him. Rostov refuses to apologize for something that he didn't feel was wrong. A regimental adjutant arrives saying that their regiment has been ordered to the front. Kutuzov falls back to Vienna. Nesvitsky is ordered to ride over and tell the hussars that they are to cross last and burn the bridge. There is a crush of traffic on the bridge: wagons and horses and soldiers must stand and wait as the traffic tries to push through. The generals must be allowed to pass. so the lay soldiers stand and wait, and as they wait, they give way to joking around and having fun. They get frustrated as they become thirsty and tired.

The infantry gets across the bridge, and the baggage wagons finally make it across as well. The last battalion steps onto the bridge, and Denisov's squadron is the only one left on the other side of the river facing the enemy. The French appear, only 600 yards from Denisov's squadron. Nesvitsky delivers his message to the colonel to burn the bridge. The colonel and Nesvitsky quarrel over what is to be done, and the colonel finally gives in, spitefully. The French cannons are upon them; men are falling. Rostov, wanting to be a hero, rushes onto the bridge but there is nothing for him to do. Several wounded men and one dead man are being carried off on stretchers. He cannot even help start the fire because he hasn't brought any straw as the other men have.

Part 2, Chapters 5-8 Analysis

This incident with the thievery accusation shows that the soldiers have been waiting around dormant for too long, and anticipation and stress are getting to them. They are utterly relieved when called up to battle. The conflict moves from within the army to outside the army. Nesvitsky's manner is jaunty as the battle begins. He even says he's going to pay the nuns a visit. Nesvitsky can maneuver his way through the crowd, being an adjutant and on a horse. The common soldiers are overlooked, and at first they put up with it but then get frustrated. The discrepancy between the privileged officers and the lay soldiers is apparent here. The battle begins. The seasoned soldiers and officers lament that they wish tsars would never have wars. The young soldiers, like Rostov, are excited and want to be heroes, although those dreams, for Rostov, don't come true.

Part 2, Chapters 9-12

Part 2, Chapters 9-12 Summary

The French army of 100,000 pursues the Russian army of 35,000 to the lower ground around the Danube. Here and there, during the retreat, skirmishes break out, but mostly the Russians concentrate on retreat. On the 28th of October, Kutuzov takes his army across the banks of the Danube. Prince Andrew has been slightly wounded in his arm from a bullet during a battle in which the Austrian general Schmidt is killed. As a special favor, Andrew is sent to the Austrian court with news of the victory.

Andrew receives a cool reception in Brunn, where the death of Schmidt is treated as a great calamity. All the happiness he had felt about the victory is gone, and the battle seems a long time ago. Prince Andrew stays in Brunn with a Russian acquaintance Bilibin. Bilibin explains to Andrew why the Austrian court isn't happy with the Russians: because their beloved general Schmidt has been killed, and this news arrives with congratulations on a victory, even though the Austrians are exposed to French forces.

In the morning, Andrew enters the Austrian court where he encounters Prince Hippolyte Kuragin (Vasili's son), who is a secretary to the embassy, as well as other fashionable young people. Andrew visits Emperor Francis, the Austrian emperor. The emperor questions Andrew about the battle. It's much like an interrogation, but the emperor is gracious and receives news of the victory with rejoicing. Andrew returns to Bilibin, stays for the afternoon, but returns to the army several days earlier than planned.

Part 2, Chapters 9-12 Analysis

Andrew's disappointment in the aftermath of the battle mirrors Rostov's disappointment in the previous chapter. It seems that the anticipation and glory of war fall short of their expectations. Getting another perspective soothes Prince Andrew's nerves and gives the readers a broader perspective. Bilibin's smooth demeanor is a contrast from the ruffled countenances of most of the other characters we've seen in recent chapters. The society Andrew meets at Bilibin's home resembles the society we saw at Anna Mikhaylovna's party at the beginning, except there are no women present. Andrew seems to enjoy it. Wise Bilibin failed to accurately predict the emperor's reaction to the news Andrew brings. Once his duties are finished, Andrew wants nothing more than to return to the army, despite the comforts and charms of life at Bilibin's.

Part 2, Chapters 13-16

Part 2, Chapters 13-16 Summary

Andrew isn't sure where to find the army after his trip, so he talks to soldiers he meets along the way. He comes across a woman in a shawl who begs him for help. She is the wife of a military doctor and begs Andrew for protection. He helps her cart through the mass of traffic and then goes on his way. He finally finds Nesvitsky and the others and sees old Kutuzov. Bagration's unit is hungry and exhausted, and they need time to rest. Kutuzov accepts the proposal of capitulation to give the rest of the units time to catch up. Napoleon is angry at this move. Andrew joins Bagration, who informs him that there will probably be some fighting within the next day or two. Andrew helps Bagration in organizing his soldiers and boosting morale. Andrew recognizes a voice as he surveys the positions of the soldiers. It is Tushin, but before Andrew can speak with him, the fighting commences.

Part 2, Chapters 13-16 Analysis

The Russian military is in chaos; no one knows where to go. They are impatient and disorganized, a great disappointment after the Austrian court. The chaos adds more conflict to the novel, creating tension in the plot. Kutuzov shows his wisdom and experience here in not pushing his exhausted troops into the fray before it's time. He is patient and willing to take his time in order to attain favorable circumstances for battle. His patience should pace the war, but it creates more conflict in the plot because other characters want to push forward.

Part 2, Chapters 17-21

Part 2, Chapters 17-21 Summary

Bagration gives orders for two battalions from the center to reinforce the flank, which is under intense fire. Officers find Bagration, give him updates about the battle, and then wait for direction. Andrew notices that Bagration never really gives orders at all, but gives the appearance that everything the officers does is really Bagration's will. The officers find this soothing; it helps them regain their composure and return to their soldiers with cheer and pluck. The French are now in sight. Bagration is out in front with his men, and they charge down the hill towards the French. Tushin's forgotten group of men have set fire to the town of Schongraben and delayed the advance of the French. As the French stop to put out the fire, the Russians retreat.

A German colonel and Russian general get in a heated argument about how to proceed with the battle. Nikolai Rostov is knocked of his horse. His leg and arm are hurt and his horse killed. A Frenchman takes aim at Rostov but misses, and Rostov jumps into some bushes where he finds some Russian sharpshooters. Dolohov delivers trophies from his regiment's victory: a French sword and cartridge case. He tells the general about his achievements, showing his wound and bragging about his exploits. Bagration sends Andrew to Tushin's forgotten regiment. Another staff officer had been sent to Tushin, but the man was so afraid that he quickly ran off. When Andrew arrives, Tushin is trying to save cannons and move them to the platforms. Andrew stays in the horrific scene, stepping over corpses, to help Tushin. Tushin is so grateful for Andrew's help that he has tears in his eyes. Rostov, who is with Tushin's battery, is pale, his lower jaw trembling as though in a fever from the pain in his arm. They put Rostov on a cannon to wheel him away.

The casualties in Tushin's battery are tremendous, and many men are wounded. The officers eat in a cottage and discuss the battle, congratulating each other and showing off the French flags they'd captured. Andrew listens with disgust and then says that he was sent to Tushin's forgotten battery where he found two-thirds of the men and horses killed, two cannons disabled and no forces near to defend them. Andrew tells them "...we owe the success of the day more to the action of that battery and the heroic steadiness of Captain Tushin and his men than to anything else." Tushin is very grateful for Andrew's speech. Rostov is delirious, the pain in his arm excruciating. He dreams of his mother, Sonya, Natasha, and all the others from home. Tushin takes care of him.

Part 2, Chapters 17-21 Analysis

Andrew is an astute observer of people. He discerns Bagration's leadership style and notes its effectiveness in calming people down. Andrew symbolizes God, who looks down on his children and can see their strengths and weaknesses and uses those strengths in his great plan. Bagration shows not only good leadership skills but great

courage as he leads his men in a charge toward the French. The battle is in full swing. Men are getting injured and killed, and we see what's happening to one of the youngest soldiers, Rostov, who thinks he's going to die. In an epic story, climaxes rise and fall to further the plot. This is one climax, which, of course, leads readers on to the next climax. Dolohov and Bolkonsky are both shown to be men of great courage in this chapter, but they are very different in another way. Dolohov makes certain that everyone knows of his heroism, while Bolkonsky quietly and humbly praises others. The men of character stand out in this chapter, and they're not well-liked for it. Andrew and Tushin stick together and appreciate one another, but the other officers don't seem to like it. It is ironic that the men who sacrifice the most and are most humble don't earn the friendliness of their comrades.

Part 3, Chapters 1-4

Part 3, Chapters 1-4 Summary

Prince Vasili has failed to inherit Count Bezuhov's fortune, but realizes a way to make amends for this: get Pierre to marry his daughter Helene. Pierre's life has changed dramatically because of his large inheritance. People are always wanting things from him. He is suddenly busy with commitments, signing papers, attending meetings and social events. Vasili has done his best to take control of Pierre, and Pierre hasn't resisted much, since he doesn't know what he's doing.

There is another party at Anna Pavlovna's house, and Helene flirts endlessly with Pierre. Pierre goes home that night very troubled, because he knows she's not a good woman and that a marriage to her would be a calamity, and yet he is very tempted by her charms. Six weeks have passed since the evening at Anna Pavlovna's, and Pierre has been avoiding Helene. He can't avoid Vasili, though, and Vasili does his best to bring Pierre into the family. Helene and Vasili trick Pierre, and before Pierre realizes what has happened, he is engaged. Next, Vasili schemes to make a good marriage for his son, Anatole, and arranges a visit with Bolkonsky.

A good marriage to Vasili is a marriage wherein his children will gain a lot of money, so he sets his sights on Prince Bolkonsky's sister Maria. Old Bolkonsky has always had a poor opinion of Vasili's character. The little princess, Lise (Andrew's wife), is excited about the visit and tries to get plain Maria dressed up prettily, but Maria feels she is too ugly to bother. She desires with all her heart to have children of her own, so the prospect of getting married is pleasant. She is nervous. Maria's attendant, Mademoiselle Bourienne, clearly likes the looks of Anatole. He is a very good looking, though not very smart, man. Lise enjoys gossiping about society with him. Maria feels uncomfortable. After dinner, she plays the clavichord and can feel Anatole's eyes on her. She is excited about the prospect of being loved and having a family.

Part 3, Chapters 1-4 Analysis

Pierre is clearly in trouble. Whereas before, he was merely a young man who didn't know what he wanted out of life, he is now a young man with too much responsibility and too much temptation around him and probably not enough character or experience to handle it. Pierre's lack of initiative has led him into a situation he doesn't want. The conniving Vasili and Helene use him to meet their own ends because Pierre doesn't stand up for himself. The desires of the characters' hearts are apparent in this chapter. Vasili desires money. Anatole desires whatever his father desires because he is weak-minded. Bolkonsky desires honor. Lise desires society. Maria desires God's will for her. The women are all in a flurry of excitement at having a handsome man in the house, but Anatole flirts with every one of them, confusing and agitating them. Vasili can't fool Old Bolkonsky with his intentions.

Part 3, Chapters 5-8

Part 3, Chapters 5-8 Summary

Old Bolkonsky can't sleep that night. He's angry at Vasili and Anatole, and he's angry with Maria for falling for them. He has seen Anatole's flirtations with Mademoiselle Bourienne. The next morning he tells his daughter that a proposal has been made in her behalf. He hints that Anatole really wants Mademoiselle Bourienne, but that Maria should make up her mind and report back to him in an hour. During the hour, Maria walks into the conservatory and comes across Anatole with his arms around Bourienne. Maria rejects Anatole and tells her father that she never wishes to leave him.

The Rostov's receive a letter from Nikolai informing them that he has been wounded. They all miss him so much and spend a week writing him letters and then send all their letters in a package. Nikolai Rostov rides to Olmutz to meet Boris. They haven't seen each other in six months and both feel that the other has changed. Boris is even more of a sycophant than he was before. Nikolai is more down to earth and tougher, having seen action and been wounded. Before Nikolai leaves, he gets in an argument with Andrew Bolkonsky. The Russian tsar and Austrian emperor arrive in Olmutz to inspect their troops. Nikolai Rostov feels a passionate devotion for the Russian tsar and wants more than anything to die on the spot for him. The tsar praises them, and they all feel sure of victory.

Part 3, Chapters 5-8 Analysis

Honor runs in the Bolkonsky family. The conflict between the Bolkonskys and Kuragins is foreshadowing future problems. One small conflict between the families will erupt into larger conflicts later, just as the war will erupt on different fronts. Nikolai has such support from his family at home. Their love for him is almost overwhelming, and the reader feels certain he'll recover well because of it. This is our first glimpse of Nikolai and Boris as experienced soldiers. Their experiences have shaped them somewhat. Nikolai is bull-headed and honest, and Boris is more self-seeking than ever. Devotion to a man and a country can spur soldiers on to dramatic feats. Nikolai is primed.

Part 3, Chapters 9-12

Part 3, Chapters 9-12 Summary

The day after the review, Boris gets dressed up and goes to see Bolkonsky, hoping to profit by his friendship to obtain a better position. Andrew is very polite to Boris, wanting to help younger men in getting on in the world. He suggests getting a post with Dolgorukov, where the Tsar is stationed. They go to visit Dolgorukov, and Boris is in awe of these men who decide the fate of nations. The Tsar Alexander stops by Rostov's regiment and wants to be with them during a small battle in which they captured a squadron of the French.

Rostov sees the Tsar again later. The Tsar has tears in his eyes and is lamenting what a terrible thing war is. The regiment leader later makes a joke about Alexander, and Rostov pleads with him not to joke about him. Dolgorukov and Andrew discuss the upcoming battle. Andrew disagrees with the way the other officers are planning it, so Dolgorukov suggests that Andrew explain his plan at the council of war that evening. Kutuzov admits in private to Andrew that he fears the battle will be lost. The war council convenes at 10 o'clock that evening. Weierother, Austrian general, carries his maps and plans to Kutuzov's headquarters to discuss it. The meeting is disagreeable and contentious, and Andrew never gets a chance to give his ideas. He realizes that on the morrow he may well be killed.

Part 3, Chapters 9-12 Analysis

Boris has a serious appetite for power and position, but he feels that it's his duty to seek it because he is not blessed with money as is Rostov. Born poor though his mother is a princess, Boris represents a most reprehensible element of society in Tolstoy's eyes: those who seek the superficiality inherent to the upper class. Tolstoy claims that preceding the battle of Austerlitz, nine-tenths of the Russian army were in love with their tsar and the glory of the Russian arms. Rostov certainly was, but this love will create conflict in Rostov as the war increases in fury and loss. This chapter positions Andrew clearly in line with Kutuzov. They are the clear thinkers, who do not care what others think of them. They are very much in the minority, and the entire army will suffer because of it. This chapter is frustrating to read because we know that Andrew and Kutuzov have good ideas, but no one will listen to them because they don't play the same games as everyone else. The ending is ominous.

Part 3, Chapters 13-16

Part 3, Chapters 13-16 Summary

Rostov is on picket duty, very sleepy, guarding his regiment. He thinks of the tsar and Natasha and his mother. He detects the enemy, tells Bagration and Dolgorukov, and they are impressed with him. He shrugs them off when they ask if he is his well-known father's son, but Rostov asks if he can be attached to the first squadron in the morning. The sun rises and the fog is thick, which only adds to the muddle. A dispute arises between the Austrian officers and the Russian general. When the sun finally emerges from the fog after 10 o'clock, the French are ready. Kutuzov is in a vile temper, snapping at everyone with whom he speaks, but he is glad to be away from the war council and actually doing something. Tsar Alexander stops by on his horse and cheers the soldiers on. A French regiment comes upon Kutuzov's regiment suddenly. The soldiers panic and begin running. Kutuzov is hit by a bullet and is mortified that his soldiers are running. He tells Andrew to do something, so Andrew grabs the flag and starts running in the direction Kutuzov wants the soldiers to go. Andrew is wounded. As he is lying on the ground, he looks up at the sky and it looks different from any sky he's ever seen. It's immeasurably lofty, quiet, and peaceful. His perspective is greatly enlarged; he sees into the infinite. He wonders how he never noticed before how limitless is the sky.

Part 3, Chapters 13-16 Analysis

Rostov is so eager to be a hero that he puts himself in dangerous situations, glad to do anything for his beloved Tsar Alexander. Tolstoy uses Rostov to develop his theme of blind patriotism, which surfaces again and again through Tsar Alexander. Tolstoy pulls back from the characters we know and gives a broad description of the entire battle situation. He describes the rows of soldiers, the mountains and valleys, and the enormity of the war confronts us. Kutuzov is in the unpleasant situation of having to give orders he doesn't agree with and, in fact, thinks may be the downfall of the men he is leading, but his hands are tied and he can't do otherwise. This is the transformation of Andrew Bolkonsky from a cynical, though honest man, to one who doesn't quite belong on earth anymore. He will never be the same as before, and yet, ironically, his transformations will lead him away from his greatest loves.

Part 3, Chapters 17-19

Part 3, Chapters 17-19 Summary

Rostov is thrilled at the prospect of taking part in a general engagement. He runs into Boris, who has taken part in a battle, in the front line, and has won his battle. Suddenly, mayhem ensues, and shouts that the Germans have turned against them ring in the air. Rostov has been told that he can deliver a message to the Tsar, but when he gets to the village to do so, the Tsar has fled for safety. Rostov refuses to believe that Tsar Alexander would flee the battle. He thinks that the Tsar is wounded and so feels depressed. He rides his horse about two miles off and comes across Tsar Alexander in the middle of a field with one of his attendants. Like a person in love, he can't think of what to say, so he rides away in utter despair. Andrew is still lying on the hill with the flagstaff in his hands, losing blood and moaning. Napoleon and his men are surveying the battlefield. They pick up Andrew and take him to the ambulance. Some French men take Maria's relic from him but then put it back around his neck. The medic says that Andrew won't recover, and they put him with the rest of the hopeless cases.

Part 3, Chapters 17-19 Analysis

Rostov's emotions run the gamut from hope to seeing the Tsar to happiness at seeing his old friend to confusion about the battle, and finally fear that he'll have to retreat. He is conflicted between doing his humble duty and doing something great and daring for the Tsar. Through Andrew's ordeal, he still thinks only of the limitless sky. He is not afraid of death and doesn't mind when he hears them talking about his condition. Earthly concerns don't seem to matter anymore. Although he doesn't die, a part of him moves on past worldly concerns to a higher sphere and thinking.

Part 4, Chapters 1-4

Part 4, Chapters 1-4 Summary

It's the beginning of 1806, and Nikolai comes home on leave. He brings his friend, Denisov, with him. His family is ecstatic at his arrival. Natasha hugs and kisses Denisov, much to everyone's surprise. Nikolai is struck by sixteen-year-old Sonya's beauty, but the two speak to each other as if they were strangers, which Vera points out. Nikolai is surprised to see how dashing a figure Denisov is in the drawing room, having only seen him on the battlefield. Nikolai is received as a hero at home and in Moscow. While home, Nikolai drifts further away from Sonya. Anna Mikhaylovna comes to visit and tells them that Pierre is very unhappy in his marriage. The Russian people are bewildered by news of the defeat at Austerlitz. The English Club, a Russian men's club of the elite, meets on the third of March. All veterans are wearing their old uniforms. Bagration is there to tell them about the war. Nikolai is there with Denisov and Nikolai's father. And Pierre is there as well. They sing Russian songs and hail the Tsar. Rumors have been flying that Pierre's wife, Helene, has been secretly seeing Dolohov. Pierre has received an anonymous letter about this and cannot stop thinking about it. At the dinner at the English Club, Pierre realizes that these rumors might be true. Dolohov's toast and insolent expression to Pierre seem to admit that it is true; Pierre challenges him to a duel over Dolohov's taking a leaflet intended for Pierre. Dolohov, who has a cruel streak in him, accepts.

Part 4, Chapters 1-4 Analysis

It's a comforting trip back to the Rostov's home, where everyone is affectionate and open. They've all grown up some since we saw them last. The plot takes a sidestep on Rostov's return home, allowing him and the readers a reprieve from the chaos and stratagems of war. Chapter two gives us an idea of what the people at home are thinking about the war. They had thought the war was going their way, and they're worried and anxious for any news. Conflict between the military and the country's leaders and the everyday people at home grows. The communication is not as good as it should and could be. The English Club is a new setting, entirely male and very patriotic. The generations of Russian men show their love for their native land. The English Club symbolizes tradition, the past, and solidity. Pierre does not love Helene, but he feels he must duel to retain his honor. He would die for his honor (unwillingly) even if not for love for his wife, who obviously does not love him.

Part 4, Chapters 5-8

Part 4, Chapters 5-8 Summary

Pierre has absolutely no experience with dueling or with guns at all, for that matter. Denisov has to explain to him how a duel works. Dolohov, on the other hand, is a good, experienced shooter. Things look bad for Pierre. Somehow, though, Pierre shoots Dolohov.

As Rostov and Denisov accompany the wounded Dolohov back to Moscow, Dolohov says that this will kill his mother. He took care of his old mother and a hunchback sister and was the most tender son and brother. Pierre cannot sleep. He goes over and over in his mind why this tragedy has happened. He thinks of the coarseness and vulgarity of his wife's character and that he never loved her. He can confide his sorrows in no one.

In the middle of the night, he calls for his valet and asks him to pack him up to go to Petersburg Before he leaves in the morning, Helene walks into his room in a white satin dressing gown. She scolds him for making her a laughingstock. She tells him that she and Dolohov were not lovers. He suggests that they should part. She says she's glad to, as long as she gets his fortune. A week later, Pierre makes over to his wife the revenue from all his estates in Great Russia, which makes up the larger half of his property. He goes away to Petersburg alone. It's been two months since Austerlitz, and news has reached the Bolkonskys that Prince Andrew fell on the battlefield but that his body has not been recovered. Kutuzov writes a letter to Old Bolkonsky saying that he still has hopes that he'll be found.

Old Bolkonsky asks Maria to tell Lise. Maria feels that it would be best to not tell Lise because she is getting close to the end of her pregnancy, and Maria's afraid that a shock will cause problems. She must bear the news of her brother in silence. Maria notices that Lise is not looking well. She sends for the midwife, who comes and says the Lise's labor has begun. The labor doesn't go well, so Maria sends for a doctor. Horses arrive and Maria goes down to meet the doctor, but it is not the doctor. It is Andrew. He is pale, thin and soft and strangely transformed.

Part 4, Chapters 5-8 Analysis

Further tragedy comes from Pierre's weakness in marrying Helene. Now he has killed a man in a duel he did not wish to fight. The repercussions of his weakness are growing, signifying that a wrong cannot be turned into a right. It just keeps propagating further wrongs. Helene gets everything she wants: Pierre's fortune and the freedom to behave as she pleases. Pierre leaves in despair and self-loathing. At least, he is free of some of the money that brought him so many problems. Maria's character continues to bear up under great strain. She is ever mindful of others. She symbolizes strength in those who may be perceived as weak, as contrasted with her brother, who appears

uncompromisingly strong in all situations but is not seen as sympathetic or compassionate. Chapter eight has a dreamlike quality. In the terror of a delivery that is not going well, the husband (feared lost in battle) arrives in the nick of time. He is the same dashing figure but somehow changed to a gentler, kinder man.

Part 4, Chapters 9-12

Part 4, Chapters 9-12 Summary

Andrew sees Lise, who doesn't understand the miracle of his appearance, and then the midwife advises him to leave. He hears the baby's cry and tears come to his eyes. The doctor comes out and walks by without a word. Andrew enters the room to find Lise dead with an odd expression on her face. Her expression says, "I love you all, and have done no harm to any one, and what have you done to me?" Two hours later, Andrew goes to his father's room. His father throws his arms around Andrew's neck and sobs like a child. Three days later Lise is buried, and five days later the baby is baptized Nikolai Andreevich. Nikolai Rostov has been appointed an adjutant to the governor of Moscow, so he can't spend the summer with his family, but instead starts his new duties in Moscow.

Dolohov recovers, and Rostov becomes his devoted friend during his recovery. In the wintertime, Nikolai brings Dolohov home, and everyone likes him very much except for Natasha. It's the week between Christmas and New Year's, and a grand collection of young people are staying at the Rostov's home. Dolohov proposes to Sonya, and she refuses him because she still loves Nikolai. Dolohov would be a brilliant match for the dowerless orphan, but she cannot be persuaded. Natasha attends her first ball, held by her dancing master, Iogel. She is gorgeous and a wonderful dancer. Denisov is a brilliant dancer as well, and they have a wonderful time dancing together. However, Natasha is just having a great time, and Denisov, being older and more serious, is falling in love.

Part 4, Chapters 9-12 Analysis

With Lise's death, Andrew's old life is buried. He has become another person. With the baptism of his son, a new life begins. The metaphor of baptism extends to Andrew, cleansing him of a possible mistake in marrying Lise. This could be compared to Pierre's mistake in marrying Helene, only Pierre doesn't seem to have a way to be cleansed of his mistake. Dolohov's recovery is a surprise, and so is his friendship with Rostov. A new side of Dolohov emerges that we have not seen before. Perhaps Natasha is a truth seeker like some of the other characters we've seen: Andrew Bolkonsky, Kutuzov.

Sonya is throwing away perhaps her best offer of marriage. Though only sixteen years old, she has no dowry, nothing to offer except herself. And if she never marries, she must rely on the charity of the Rostovs. It's no wonder that her family thinks she's foolish. Natasha is still young, probably only fifteen, but she is stealing hearts. She is so in love with life itself, radiant and happy, a welcome ray of sunshine to those life-worn people around her.

Part 4, Chapters 13-16

Part 4, Chapters 13-16 Summary

Nikolai Rostov hasn't seen Dolohov since Sonya's refusal, and he feels ill at ease in seeing him. He comes across Dolohov sitting at a card table, placing bets with other men. Dolohov is angry with Nikolai, and he intimidates him into playing cards. As the game continues, the losses stack up against Rostov. He thinks that surely Dolohov can't want to ruin him, but the game continues ruthlessly. By the end of the game, Rostov owes 43,000 rubles. He can't pay it right then. Dolohov says Rostov is unlucky at cards, lucky in love. Rostov is upset that he would bring Sonya into this. He says he'll pay Dolohov the next day.

When Nikolai arrives home, the other young people are singing around the clavichord after an evening at the theater. The girls and Denisov are singing, and in Natasha's song Nikolai suddenly feels that the world will be right again. Nikolai thinks it's inevitable that he will have to confess his debt to his father, so he goes to him and asks for 43,000 rubles. The count thinks he's joking, but then he throws up his hands, says "It happens to everyone," quoting Nikolai's words incredulously. He says that although it will be very difficult to come up with the money, he'll see what he can do. Nikolai follows his father out of the room sobbing "Forgive me!"

Natasha runs in, saying that Denisov has proposed to her. The countess makes her refuse him. Denisov leaves the next day. It takes two weeks for the count to raise the 43,000 to pay off Nikolai's debt, and then Nikolai leaves to join his regiment in Poland.

Part 4, Chapters 13-16 Analysis

Nikolai is a friendly, good-hearted young man, and it pains him to be at odds with anyone, so he allows himself to be drawn in to Dolohov's challenge. We know from the past the Dolohov can be merciless. Getting involved with Dolohov is dangerous business, and now Nikolai must pay dearly. At home, Nikolai feels better, feels that no matter what the world throws at him, he can handle it with the help of his family. What was so jolly a party is broken up by two events in a matter of hours. Nikolai's debts and Denisov's proposal bring a pall over the house, and the young men can't stand to see what their actions do to the group, so they quickly leave to rejoin the army where personal affairs are of little import.

Part 5, Chapters 1-5

Part 5, Chapters 1-5 Summary

During his travels to Petersburg, Pierre is completely absorbed with fundamental questions: What is right and wrong? What is good and bad? What is life for? What force controls it all? Pierre meets a traveler whose gleaming old eyes draw him in. The stranger knows who Pierre is and introduces himself as a Freemason. He explains to Pierre a new way of thinking that makes sense to him. His name is Osip Alexeevich Bazdyev, one of the most well-known Freemasons and Martinists of his days. Osip Alexeevich leaves him, but Pierre is already a convert.

On reaching Petersburg, Pierre doesn't let anyone know of his arrival, but spends days reading Thomas a Kempis, a book which had been sent to him anonymously. A week after his arrival, a young Polish count, Villarsky, who Pierre knows only slightly from Petersburg society, comes to visit him. Villarsky is a Freemason and has been sent to talk with Pierre. After talking about freemasonry, Villarsky and Pierre go to the lodge, where Pierre is initiated and accepted into the brotherhood. He is so happy that he has tears in his eyes. When he goes home that evening, he feels utterly changed, having renounced his old habits and manner of life.

Next day, as Pierre studies a Freemason book, Vasili arrives to pay his son-in-law a visit. Vasili orders Pierre to make up with Helene. Vasili plays his usual tricks on Pierre, but this time Pierre doesn't stand for it. He tells Vasili that he didn't invite him to his home and tells him to leave. A week later he leaves for his country estates after having left great sums of money with the Freemasons.

Part 5, Chapters 1-5 Analysis

Pierre has been laid low by his wife and associates. He has been completely humbled and must figure out what life is all about and what his purpose is, but he needs help in his confusion. Help is on the way. In Pierre's crisis for direction and purpose, a person who can help is in his path. This Freemason is calm, confident and quiet, and he soothes Pierre. The freemason acts as a sort of middleman between Pierre and God, but at this point, Pierre feels he cannot appeal directly to God himself.

Pierre is an apt and eager student of freemasonry, looking for something more substantial than he has found in society, which has all but eaten him alive. Freemasonry represents a way out of the superficial to the more meaningful parts of life. Like Andrew, Pierre has seen a new way of looking at things. Fitting their new lives in with their old acquaintances and society will be difficult at best. Pierre finally gains courage enough to stand up to Vasili, who is completely taken aback by this development

Part 5, Chapters 6-10

Part 5, Chapters 6-10 Summary

Anna Pavlovna and company are repulsed and amused by Pierre, calling him "crack brained" while he's away. Boris makes an appearance at Anna Pavlovna's, and they are all very impressed with him—especially Helene. Helene tells Boris that she must see him on the following Tuesday about an important matter. Boris goes to her drawing room on Tuesday and there is no explanation for the urgency of the visit, except that she invites him to dinner the following day.

During that stay in Petersburg, Boris is constantly at the house of Countess Bezuhov. Old Bolkonsky has been appointed one of the eight commanders-in-chief of the Russian militias, and he is very busy with his duties. Maria is taking care of the baby, Prince Nikolai. Upon Andrew's return, the old prince made over part of his property to him, giving him a large estate about 30 miles from Bald Hills.

After the Austerlitz campaign, Andrew resolves never to serve in the army again. The baby is ill, and Andrew is almost out of his mind for fear that little Nikolai will die like his mother. Andrew has not slept for two days, keeping constant watch over his son. At this moment, he receives a letter from Bilibin. The long and detailed letter from Bilibin pulls Andrew's interests back to the war at a time when he sorely needs distraction. Then he notices that the nurse is hiding something from him with a scared face, and he fears that the baby has died. Andrew moves to the crib in a dazed panic, presses his lips to the sweaty baby to determine whether his fever has gone and realizes that the worst is over. Soone after, he moves away from the baby, saying that it is the one thing left to him now. Pierre arrives in Kiev where he speaks with the stewards of his Ukrainian estates. The details are all bothersome and mind-boggling to him, the responsibility more than he wants to deal with. Pierre makes unwise decisions, and the stewards think he's insane. Pierre goes back to Petersburg in the spring of 1807. He does not realize that the stewards now know how easily they can take advantage of him.

Part 5, Chapters 6-10 Analysis

Pierre is once more scorned by society, very much as he was at his first appearance at Anna Pavlovna's before his inheritance. Now, a suave Boris is the man of the hour. Boris has found his place in the society of his choice, and he learns his part adroitly, representing another cog in the societal wheel. Helene is spinning another web, but this time the reader feels that the man involved is less likely to be ruined by her because Boris does not care about depth or faith or God. He cares about the same things as Helene, and so therefore, they are a good, if dangerous, pairing.

Andrew is clinging to what's left of his little family, and the thought of losing his son is almost more than he can bear. His little son symbolizes his ties to earth and to the past.

His love for his son pulls him back down to earth with all its cares and worries. In chapter eight Andrew is worried almost to madness with only one thing (his child), but upon reading Bilibin's newsy letter, he is pulled back into life at a critical moment. Pierre is so simple and humble and childlike that others know immediately that they can use him to meet their own ends. Pierre thinks he's doing good things for the peasants, but he's really just making things more difficult for himself and others.

Part 5, Chapters 11-15

Part 5, Chapters 11-15 Summary

On his way back to Petersburg, Pierre stops by Bogucharovo to visit his old friend, Andrew Bolkonsky. Pierre is struck by Andrew's appearance. He appears thin, pale, his eyes lusterless and dead. Andrew is also struck by changes in Pierre. They have dinner together and discuss various topics: Pierre's marriage, future plans, religion, hospitals, military service, and liberating serfs. They drive to Prince Andrew's home under a starry sky and talk of God. They both feel joyful and youthful, happy to have found a comrade in their search for truth.

When Andrew and Pierre drive up to the house at Bald Hills, a few old women run away. Pierre asks who they are, and Andrew says they're Maria's God's folk. They are pilgrims who come to talk to Maria about religion. Old Bolkonsky doesn't approve, but this is the one way Maria disobeys him. Andrew teases Maria but Pierre is full of respect for her. Maria confides in Pierre that she is worried about Andrew's health. Old Bolkonsky arrives and quickly gets into a hot dispute with Pierre about the war. The entire household enjoys having Pierre there, and they all miss him when he leaves.

Upon returning to his regiment, Rostov feels he is coming home. He is so glad to see his comrades. He can put the awful situation with Dolohov and the discomfort of his relationship with Sonya behind him and get to work. Things have become bleak. It's cold; the horses are thin, and the soldiers are living on straw and potatoes. Denisov and Rostov are better friends than ever, though Denisov is heartbroken by Natasha's refusal to marry him.

Part 5, Chapters 11-15 Analysis

Both Andrew and Pierre have changed markedly since they were last together. Now they must get to know each other again, and find out where they stand with each other. The process is somewhat messy, a bit uncomfortable, but they find that they very much like each other, despite their differences. The sky again plays a large part in Andrew's peace of mind and feeling of wholeness. He feels again what he felt at Austerlitz after he had been wounded, that eternal lofty feeling he had been missing.

Maria seems to be the complete opposite of Helene, especially in Pierre's eyes. The Bolkonskys seem like a loving family to Pierre, a family he desperately wants. They represent solidity to him in a way that no one in society has. Although the Bolkonskys have their flaws, they care about each other and care for each other. Ironically, Maria feels that while she cares endlessly for her father, he hates her. Even in dire circumstances, at this point in his life, Nikolai would rather be with his fellow soldiers than at home with all its comforts. It seems that he has found a worthy and loyal friend in Denisov.

Part 5, Chapters 16-21

Part 5, Chapters 16-21 Summary

Denisov's soldiers have had scarcely any food in a fortnight, and he goes to find some food in the transports for them. He is called a robber for his action because the food was intended for the infantry. Denisov feels demoralized, gets wounded, and retreats to the hospital. Rostov visits Denisov in the hospital, which is a disorderly mess. Rostov is appalled by what he sees; men being treated like dogs, dying here and there. Denisov's wound, small as it is, still has not healed. Denisov doesn't seem pleased to see Rostov.

Denisov has lost interest in everything except his quarrel with the officials. He wants a pardon more than anything. Rostov visits Boris, who seems annoyed with his visit. Boris has become an important person and has no time for trifles. Rostov speaks to Boris about Denisov's affair, and Boris has no sympathy for it. Rostov leaves feeling irritated. Nikolai happens to be where the Emperor will be coming out the next morning. He carries with him the petition from Major Denisov and wants to deliver it personally. He tells a general about Denisov's plight, the general expresses his sympathy and then asks for the letter.

When Tsar Alexander appears, the old enthusiasm for him rises up in Nikolai's chest, and he runs after him with the rest of the crowd. Rostov watches Napoleon and Tsar Alexander as they meet in a public square. They greet each other cordially and with great pomp. He thinks of the hospital with its stench of corpses, its limbless soldiers, and his unpardoned friend and strange reflections fill his head.

Part 5, Chapters 16-21 Analysis

A man of honor, Denisov can't stand to be called a brigand, a robber. He would rather die than be a villain, and so he loses his will to live. Rostov's hospital visit shows us one of the darkest sides of war and the miserable conditions the Russian endured in this part of the war. A single problem has eaten away at Denisov until he is sickly, unable to heal, and miserable.

Denisov exhibits a belief of Tolstoy's, that sicknesses of the heart are reflected in the the body. Boris has outgrown his need for Rostov, who can no longer help him in his ascent up the ladder. The past means nothing to Boris unless it helps him to his goal. What is ironic is that without his past friends and their help, including the Rostovs' funding of his military equipment, he would not find himself in such a good situation.

Rostov has grown up considerably since his last encounter with the emperor. This time he determines to keep his head and does a much better job. Rostov's inner conflict over his loyalty to the tsar is a good reality check. Rostov resolves his conflict within and becomes a saner man. Rostov wonders why men such as the soldiers in the hospital

have to die and suffer for Tsar Alexander and Napoleon with their white hands, full stomachs, and expensive clean clothing. It's a lot to think about.

Part 6, Chapters 1-7

Part 6, Chapters 1-7 Summary

It is 1809. Prince Andrew Bolkonsky has spent two years in the country away from the war. He has been reforming his estates and turning serfs into free cultivators, who pay rent. As he is traveling between estates one day, he spies an old oak tree, which seems to say to him that his life is over, that there is nothing new or hopeful to come for him. Prince Andrew's duties as trustee of his son's Ryazan's estates take him to an interview with the marshal of the district, Count Rostov. He has to stay the night at the Rostov's in order to see the count. He overhears Natasha talking to Sonya about the moon and something is stirred in his soul.

Andrew leaves the next day without speaking with the women in the household. Six weeks later, he passes by the same oak tree, which is now in full bloom. His attitude has changed and he thinks that perhaps life is not over. He begins to find reasons to go to Petersburg in the autumn. Andrew arrives in Petersburg in August of 1809. He presents himself at court and personally to Count Araktcheev, minister of war, to propose new army regulations. Araktcheev doesn't approve of Andrew's well-studied proposal, but he puts him on the committee of army regulations. Andrew spends more time with Speransky. Speransky is cynical about the committee for army regulations. Within a week, Andrew is a member of the committee for the reconstruction of the army regulations and also chairman of the section for the revision of legal code. Despite his involvement with the Freemasons, Pierre's life has slipped back to his old ways of laxity and temptation. In the summer of 1809, Pierre returns to Petersburg, and the Freemasons there hope that Pierre will assist the progress of freemasonry in Russia. He gives a speech to the lodge in Petersburg, which is not well-received.

Part 6, Chapters 1-7 Analysis

Although Andrew scarcely knows anything about Natasha, he feels that fate somehow has a hand in his meeting her when he is just on the brink of re-entrance into life. Andrew is not an old man, but he has seen so much of life that he feels old. The ancient oak tree he comes across puts his own life into perspective. It's time to live again. At thirty-one years

, Andrew is finding the enthusiasm of youth that he possibly never felt before. He sees promise in the future. The oak tree, with its seasons, is an interesting metaphor for what Andrew is going through. After a barren winter, he is ready for spring.

Although Andrew hasn't sought society's favor, he is able to slip back in with only a few whispers. He is able to do this because of his talents, looks, and abilities. Andrew looks up old acquaintances in Petersburg and attends various soirees. In speaking with some of his acquaintances, such as Speransky, he realizes that his ideas are very different

from others'. Andrew was always a free thinker, but his time in the country has made him even more different than his peers. His ideas now are progressive, very different from those of other landholders'. With Speransky's prodding, Andrew quickly puts his ideals into action. Pierre has failed to stick with the religion that he hoped would change his life. Although he is still socially involved with the free masons, his personal life doesn't reflect any permanent change, and so he feels dissatisfied once again.

Part 6, Chapters 8-14

Part 6, Chapters 8-14 Summary

Pierre is once again depressed after the poor reception of the speech he made to the lodge and his visit with Basdeev, in which he is told that he must look to be a better Freemason. His mother-in-law comes to him in tears and pleads with him to reconcile with Helene, and so he grudgingly does. During Helene and Pierre's separation, Helene has been brilliantly successful in society. In Petersburg, she is now above reproach, even pitied and admired for her circumstance and her "brave" acceptance of her "cross"; her companionship is sought for by all. At this time, an absent-minded, eccentric husband is exactly what she needs to be a foil for her in the drawing room, so she wants him back. Boris is at Helene's house daily. Pierre doesn't like him at all.

Pierre writes in his diary about his continual struggles with mastering himself. He reads the scriptures but then gives way to sloth. He seeks out other Freemasons for advice, but can't seem to get past the theories and apply doctrine to his life. The Rostovs' financial situation, which has never been good because they live beyond their means, has gotten worse in the last two years. Nikolai's debts threw them into desperate straits, and budget restrictions have not helped much. Vera accepts a proposal from Berg. The count cannot give Berg the dowry right away because he hasn't the money, so he gives him a very large I.O.U.

Natasha is now sixteen, the age at which Boris had promised to marry her. Since that night she has not once seen him, but he comes now. He remembers Natasha as a little girl but is charmed by her now. Natasha is very friendly with him, paying him a great deal of attention, and Boris gives up his visits to Helene, spending entire days at the Rostovs'. Natasha goes into her mother's room for one of their usual late night talks and speaks to her about Boris. Countess Rostov tells Natasha that she can't marry him because he's poor, he's a relative, he's young, and she (Natasha) doesn't love him. The next day when Boris visits, the countess talks to him alone, and Boris gives up visiting at the Rostovs'. It's New Year's Eve, and there is a grand ball, which Tsar Alexander himself and the diplomatic corps will attend. This is Natasha's first great ball. She spends all day getting everyone ready and then has to rush to get herself ready. She is gorgeous, of course, and they are all quite late as they must stop to pick up Peronskaya, a maid of honor of the Dowager Empress.

Part 6, Chapters 8-14 Analysis

A few short years ago, Pierre stood up to his father-in-law; now he caves in to his mother-in-law. He has not found a way to sustain his strong backbone. Pierre's character sustains a theme of backsliding. Tolstoy often felt himself that it was difficult to overcome human frailty, and Pierre symbolizes that trait. Pierre's bumbling makes

Helene's grandeur seem even more than it is. He is a character foil for her, both as a literary device and as a means of furthering her self-proclaimed deception.

Something is keeping Pierre from living honorably, which is how he wants to live. His marriage to Helene only exacerbates the problem because he doesn't want to be united with someone he despises. This is the main conflict of Pierre's life. Years of living beyond their means have put the Rostovs into a crisis situation, spurred on by Nikolai's gambling debt to Dolohov. The count tries to make measures to cut back but doesn't seem to be able. In fact, he exacerbates the problem by getting them into further debt. The count can be compared to Pierre in lack of self-control. Natasha's charms must be powerful to pull Boris away from the exquisite and sophisticated Helene. Tolstoy has built up Helene as the pinnacle of beauty and charm, so she is a foil for Natasha.

With financial security as her largest worry, Countess Rostov is going to do everything she can to make certain her children don't suffer in the same way. So although she loves Boris like a son, she will not allow her daughter to marry him. The fact that the great ball occurs on New Year's Eve is significant. This ball is the eve of something new for several people. New Year's Eve symbolizes a new beginning for Andrew and Natasha.

Part 6, Chapters 15-20

Part 6, Chapters 15-20 Summary

Peronskaya indicates to the Rostovs that Helene is the "the Queen of Petersburg." Natasha is very impressed with her. Natasha recognizes Pierre and Andrew. Peronskaya does not like Andrew, through most of Petersburg society is wild about him, according to her. The Tsar (Alexander) arrives and everyone is in awe of him. Natasha is not interested in Alexander; she is only wondering if someone will ask her to dance the polonaise.

Pierre takes Andrew by the arm and points Natasha out as a dancing partner. They are both wonderful dancers, and as they dance he feels young and youthful again. After Andrew, Boris asks Natasha to dance, followed by many other young men. She is happy and excited. Andrew is so taken with her that the thought of marriage briefly occurs to him, certain that she is so rare a girl that she won't last a month in society without becoming engaged. Pierre is ill-tempered and distracted at the ball, humiliated by his wife's social position.

The next day, Andrew goes to Speransky's house. He doesn't understand why he was so taken with Speransky previously, finding him unnatural and different. Andrew leaves early and goes home to reflect on his life in Petersburg these last four months. The following day Andrew pays a visit to the Rostovs. He dines with them, and afterward, Natasha plays the clavichord and sings for everyone. It makes him feel like weeping. At home he can't sleep, but he begins once again making plans for the future. Berg pays a visit to Pierre to ask him and Helene to dinner. Helene refuses the invitation, considering Berg and Vera beneath her, so Pierre goes by himself. Berg and Vera want nothing more than to be accepted in Petersburg society; they are vacuous and empty in themselves. Others arrive, such as Boris.

Part 6, Chapters 15-20 Analysis

We have seen the upper crust of society from the very first chapter of the book, but this is the first time that Natasha has been in contact with many of them. How she will find her place in it will be interesting. Natasha can help Andrew bring back the springtime of his life. She is youthful and genuine and honest, a refreshing breath of air for him. Natasha's happiness is contagious and radiating. Andrew can see that his life would be much pleasanter with her in it.

Natasha represents the innocence Andrew wants to recapture. She can add a piece to his soul that will make him feel whole. Natasha has changed the way Andrew looks at life. Things he thought were important yesterday are trivial today. It's difficult to move on in life after the tragedy Andrew faced, but he feels ready to do it and wants Natasha to be part of it. Tolstoy talks about political changes and wars being fated, and he speaks

about human relationships in the same way. Andrew and Natasha both feel that there's nothing they can do to advance or avoid this relationship; it just has to happen. Berg and Vera are not the kind of people Pierre likes to be with, but he feels sorry for them because of how his wife treats them, and he wants to show his kindness. Again, he shows an inner conflict, wanting to please everyone, whether he really likes them or not.

Part 6, Chapters 21-26

Part 6, Chapters 21-26 Summary

Pierre is one of the most honored guests at the dinner, and Natasha is there as well (because she is Vera's sister). Pierre notices that something is wrong with Natasha and that something is different in Andrew. He knows something is going on between them but doesn't have a chance to talk to Andrew about it. Andrew spends the entire next day at the Rostovs'. Natasha is afraid of him and afraid of what she's feeling for him. After talking with her mother that night, Natasha confesses that she is really very happy. Andrew goes to the Bezuhovs' (Pierre and Helene) that night and talks about his feelings for Natasha with Pierre. Andrew wants his father's consent to get married, so he travels to Bald Hills to get it. Old Bolkonsky doesn't like the idea and asks his son to defer the matter for one year, hoping he'll forget about it. Natasha waits expectantly for Andrew, but he doesn't come for weeks because he is visiting his father. When he finally returns, three weeks later, he asks for Natasha's hand. Her parents accept, even knowing that the marriage won't occur for a year. When Andrew talks to Natasha, she accepts the delay well, but then, looking into her eyes, he doesn't love her in the same way: it had previously been romantic, but now he feels the weight of responsibility and the seriousness of the change in their relationship now that they are engaged. And when he tells her the engagement will be a year long, she is very upset. He tells her the engagement will be kept secret, and that she is free to break it off at any time. There is no formal announcement made about their engagement. Andrew tells Natasha that he is going away, and if she wants to talk to anyone about their engagement or anything else while he's gone, she should talk to Pierre. When Andrew leaves, Natasha wanders around the house, busying herself with trivial matters.

Old Bolkonsky has grown feebler since his son left for Petersburg He is more irritable than ever, and it's Maria who bears the brunt of his irritability. Maria's winter has been bleak. She writes to her friend, Julie Kuragin, asking her to find out if it's true that Andrew is in love with "the little Rostov girl." She can't imagine such a thing. Princess Maria receives a letter from Switzerland from her brother Andrew. He informs her of his engagement. He asks her to beg their father to let him get married sooner. She tries, but the grouchy old man says to tell Andrew to wait until he's dead. Maria spends her time teaching little Nikolai and helping her God's people.

Part 6, Chapters 21-26 Analysis

Pierre is very observant and attentive to others. He is the first to detect that something is going on between Andrew and Natasha. It doesn't take long for Andrew to realize what is happening and to make a decision based on his feelings for Natasha. This is scary for Natasha, though, because she is so young. Again, Tolstoy gives the reader the feeling that this relationship is set in the stars, not unlike Romeo and Juliet. Things don't

go the way Andrew wants them to, but he forces the engagement anyway to fulfill his father's terms.

The Rostovs are clearly displeased that the engagement will be so long, but they submit. Andrew has an iron will. Natasha's extremely brief period in society without being married was thrilling and invigorating, but now she will grow up very quickly. Andrew has shown a pattern of stealing life and vigor from young girls, with his first wife quite literally, and with Natasha more in a figurative manner. Maria is ever the responsible vigilant daughter and sister, taking care of her ailing and irritable father and her brother's young, motherless son. Being in the country, she doesn't have the support and constant help of her friends. She feels very much alone and burdened.

Part 7, Chapters 1-6

Part 7, Chapters 1-6 Summary

Nikolai Rostov has become a "bluff, good-natured fellow, who would have been thought rather bad form by his old acquaintances in Moscow, though he was loved and respected by his comrades, his subordinates, and his superior officers, and was well content with his life." He feels badly about his family's financial situation and his parents ask him to come home to help. He decides to go home after receiving a pleading letter from his mother. Sonya is nearly twenty now, but she's still in love with him. Nikolai finds Natasha changed, composed, a real princess. Nikolai seeks out an activity at home that is most like what he could be experiencing if he were still with the military. The rough, outdoorsy life suits him best.

Nikolai sets out to look at the family finances, but the pages of numbers boggle his mind and after a hot dispute with the steward he soon gives up.

The Rostovs set out on a hunting expedition. Petya (thirteen years old now) and Natasha want to come along. The head huntsman is skeptical about having Petya and Natasha along, but they come anyway. The wolf hunt is still on. They meet up with "Uncle", a distant relative of the Rostovs, who is also hunting the same pack of wolves. Nikolai hopes his borzoi will catch the wolf mother. In a rare display of faith, Nikolai prays for success in the wolf hunt. Rostov is taken with a small hunting dog belonging to Ilagin, a neighbor. Uncle's dogs catch a hare.

Part 7, Chapters 1-6 Analysis

Nikolai has found something that many of the characters have not: satisfaction. He may not be well-liked by everyone, but he likes himself and that's enough. In this way he is a foil to Pierre, who doesn't know what to do with himself unless others point the way, and then he is upset when the way doesn't turn out how he wants. The wolf hunt is symbolic of the war. The wolf is France, and the hunters are Russia, reversing the attack. The wolf hunt is an integral part of male Russian culture, as seen in Tchaichovsky's Peter and the Wolf. Nikolai plunges himself into the hunt, representing his love of the military and military life, and feels happier during the hunt than any other time while he's away from the war.

Part 7, Chapters 7-13

Part 7, Chapters 7-13 Summary

"Unlce" invites Nikolai, Petya, and Natasha to stay for dinner with him, since they are far from home. They have an enjoyable evening in his cottage. "Unlce" pulls out his guitar and plays and sings Russian folk songs. Natasha dances to the Russian folk dances, bringing joy and patriotism to everyone. The Count and Countess Rostov are worried about their money. The countess thinks it will help to get Nikolai married off to an heiress, so she contacts her friend Madame Karagin in Moscow to see if she's interested in her daughter Julie marrying Nikolai. Madame Karagin agrees that it would be a fine match but that Julie must decide for herself. Sonya and Nikolai are both sad, and Nikolai doesn't pursue the marriage with Julie Karagin. Natasha receives a letter from Andrew in Rome. She has fits of depression, feeling that her time is being wasted. Christmas comes and goes, and Natasha is depressed. She sends servants on errands, just to give herself something to do. Sonya, Natasha, and Nikolai sit and talk on the divan about their childhood days and all that has happened since. They decide to put on a play and go visit the neighbors to perform for them. Sonya is dressed up in a man's costume. Their neighbors love the theatrical.

During and after the performance, Nikolai is struck with Sonya's beauty, even though she's dressed up like a man. He kisses her. Nikolai tells Natasha that he has made his mind up about Sonya. Natasha is very glad. That night Sonya and Natasha talk about their happiness and future marriages. The maid had earlier set some looking-glasses on Natasha's table so they could look into the future with the help of candles. Natasha tries but doesn't see anything. Then Sonya tries and says that she sees Andrew lying down, looking cheerful, and his face turning toward her. They have a hard time sleeping. After Christmas, Nikolai speaks to his mother about his love for Sonya. She tells him that he's talking nonsense. Natasha sets about to reconcile her brother and mother to Nikolai and Sonya marrying. Nikolai leaves for his regiment, determined to finish things there, retire, then come home and marry Sonya. After Nikolai leaves, the Rostov household seems more depressed than ever. The countess is hostile toward Sonya, and Natasha is weary of her endless engagement. At the end of January, the count takes Sonya and Natasha with him to Moscow.

Part 7, Chapters 7-13 Analysis

Natasha represents Russia in this chapter—traditional, joyous, and very much alive. She makes everyone proud to be Russian with her beauty and vitality. Tolstoy creates in her a very likable character we would all like to know better. Likewise, he creates a Russia worth dying for. It is not a happy time in the Rostov household. Financial matters have made them alter their natural affections. Nikolai feels torn between helping his parents and being true to his feelings. Sonya is torn between loyalty and her love, and Natasha is miserable in Andrew's absence. Sending servants on errands for the fun of it

is something that Andrew Bolkonsky would never dream of doing. It shows a huge gap in maturity levels between the two.

Nikolai and Natasha are acting joyful, more like children than they have in years. It makes them feel happy and forget about their current worries a little. It is ironic that after so much life experience they can become as happy and as carefree as children for a brief time. Nikolai knows with his mind that his parents would never approve a marriage to Sonya, but he does love her, and those feelings overwhelm him. It's all too good to be true, and the chapter ends on an unsure note when the girls try to see the future in their looking glasses. Nikolai shows his bolder side when standing up to his mother in favor of Sonya. He fails to see why he should pay for his parents' mistakes, and presses forward with his own plans.

Part 8, Chapters 1-6

Part 8, Chapters 1-6 Summary

Pierre gives up keeping a diary, avoids his brother masons, and annoys his wife. On advice from Helene, he goes to Moscow to keep from embarrassing her. Moscow society is very pleased to have him back. He reflects on the deception of some people, namely Napoleon and his wife, and he begins reading and drinking a great deal. Old Prince Bolkonsky and Maria come to Moscow as well because he is playing the part of leader of the Moscow opposition. He is deteriorating physically and mentally. Maria feels very out of place in Moscow. She misses her God's folk and the solitude of the country. Old Bolkonsky acts affectionately toward Mademoiselle Bourienne in Maria's presence just to annoy her. A celebrated French doctor, Metivier, is one of the few doctors ever allowed to see Old Bolkonsky. Old Bolkonsky now thinks that Metivier is a French spy, coordinating with the French Mademoiselle Bourienne. He blames Maria for allowing such a thing to happen.

That evening, Old Bolkonsky has dinner with some of the greatest political minds of Moscow. Pierre and Boris are also there. Boris has been visiting the Bolkonskys quite a bit since they returned to Moscow. Pierre talks with Maria about Boris' visits to Julie Karagin, that Boris wants to marry an heiress. She confides in Pierre that it is unbearable to love some one dear to you and feel you can do nothing for him, speaking of her father, and she bursts into tears. Then they discuss Natasha. Boris had not succeeded in marrying an heiress in Petersburg, and he is determined to do so in Moscow. Julie is twenty-seven years old, and, because of the deaths of her two brothers, extremely wealthy. She is decidedly plain. The courting is going well when Boris' mother, Anna Mikhaylovna, warns him that Vasili is sending one of his sons to Moscow to court Julie. Boris speeds things up and gets engaged right away. Count Rostov, Natasha, and Sonya arrive in Moscow. Maria Dmitrievna, the indomitable matron of Moscow society we saw at the beginning of the novel, comes to visit. Maria Dmitrievna takes Natasha and Sonya under her wing—taking them to church, and ordering most of Natasha's trousseau herself.

Part 8, Chapters 1-6 Analysis

Pierre is thoroughly disillusioned at this point. He sees hypocrisy everywhere and most especially in himself. This follows the theme of superficiality in the Russian high culture during this era. Bolkonsky's joy in irritating those around him makes the lengthy engagement between Natasha and Andrew seem particularly cruel. Bolkonsky symbolizes that great burdens the war places on citizens. The dinner conversation reveals that though Bolkonsky is a brilliant man, his age and paranoia are getting the best of him. He represents the crumbling of old ways in Russia.

The Napoleonic Wars and changes are forcing out the old Russian way of life as surely as time forces older generations out of existence. Pierre may not be brilliant during political dinner conversations, but he is brilliant when it comes to interpersonal one-on-one conversation. He could sense that Maria needed someone to talk to, and she feels so comfortable with him that she can tell him anything. Boris knows what he wants, which is the same thing his mother wants. Contrast this situation with Nikolai and Countess Rostov. Nikolai knows what he wants, and it's very different from what his mother wants. In the beginning of the novel, we saw Natasha stand up to Maria Dmitrievna when none of the adults would. It's appropriate then for Maria Dmitrievna to be a motherly figure for Natasha at a time when she is entering the adult world.

Part 8, Chapters 7-12

Part 8, Chapters 7-12 Summary

The next day, Count Rostov and Natasha call on Old Bolkonsky. The old man refuses to see them, making Maria entertain them. From the first glance, Maria dislikes Natasha, thinking her too vain and fashionable. Natasha is distressed after this visit that she is so unwanted in her new family. That evening the Rostovs go to the opera. Natasha doesn't want to go, but she cannot refuse Maria Dmitrievna's kindness in securing a box for them. Natasha is so strikingly beautiful that people throughout the theater admire her. Dolohov and Anatole Kuragin are there, and Anatole flirts shamelessly with Natasha. Also, Helene wants to meet her. At intermission, Anatole comes to the Rostovs' box and Helene introduces her brother. Anatole gives her a flower and begs her to come to a fancy dress ball. She is flattered and keeps her eye on Anatole during the rest of the opera.

Only upon returning home does Natasha realize with horror that she has betrayed Prince Andrew. Helene Bezuhov comes to Maria Dmitrievna's house to visit Natasha and personally invite her over for a get-together at her house in the evening. Helene flatters Natasha endlessly. She tells Natasha that her brother Anatole is madly in love with her, but Helene acknowledges Natasha's engagement and assures her that Andrew would not like her to be cloistered while she's gone. Natasha rationalizes that since Pierre will be there, it will be okay. Maria Dmitrievna warns Natasha against Helene after Helene leaves.

Part 8, Chapters 7-12 Analysis

Once again, Old Bolkonsky puts Maria in an awkward situation to suit his own purposes. He rationalizes that he's letting the future sisters-in-law get to know one another, but he's using Maria to fulfill his own ends. Anatole comes to visit Natasha in her box. When he isn't visiting her in her box, he is staring at her, and this affords Natasha some satisfaction, for he is very good looking. Helene asks Count Rostov if she can entertain Natasha and Sonya while they are in town. Villains abound at the opera, and Natasha is too young and inexperienced to recognize which people are the villains and which aren't. She is like a lamb, ready to be sacrificed for the pleasure (or sins) of others.

Knowing the character of all the Kuragin family, the reader should be alerted that Natasha is in real danger if two of them are paying her significant attention. The Kuragins do not expend energy on people unless they want something from them. Natasha has not been out in society for some time, so she is flattered and tempted by the attention she receives from the dashing Anatole. Anatole symbolizes the temptations and debauchery of high society. Following the theme of superficiality in high society, Anatole seems to get away with anything. This summary of Anatole's past makes the reader aware of the danger Natasha is in. Tolstoy gives the reader more information

than Natasha has at this point. Therefore, the suspense is increased, since we see our heroine go blindly into a bad situation. Helene is an expert when it comes to flattery, and Natasha is in awe of Helene's beauty and reputation. Only a few years apart, Natasha and Helene are worlds apart in worldliness. Natasha's parents have good intentions if not great skills, while Helene's parents have selfish intentions and all the skills and experience to get what they want.

Part 8, Chapters 13-17

Part 8, Chapters 13-17 Summary

Count Rostov takes his two girls to the Bezuhovs that evening. Helene throws together an improvised ball. During a waltz Anatole tells Natasha that she's bewitching, and he loves her. She tells him to not say such things to her because she's betrothed and in love with another man.

Natasha doesn't sleep that night, wondering which man she loves. Maria Dmitrievna has gone to see Old Bolkonsky to try to persuade him to allow Andrew to marry Natasha sooner. Old Bolkonsky doesn't budge, so Maria Dmitrievna advises the count to take the girls home to the country to wait until Andrew's return. Count Rostov approves of the suggestion. A maid secretly gives Natasha a love letter from Anatole. It says, "Since yesterday evening my fate is sealed: to be loved by you or to die. There is nothing else left for me." She thinks she loves him. Sonya finds the love letter after Natasha is asleep and is horrified, realizing what Anatole Kuragin really is. Natasha in love with Anatole, and Sonya is afraid. She is determined the Rostov family will not be disgraced. Dolohov is helping Anatole plan the abduction of Natasha. He has a carriage and money ready, as well as witnesses for a mock marriage ceremony. When the carriage pulls up to Maria Dmitrievna's house to get Natasha, Anatole meets Dmitrievna's groom, who says he has orders to show him in.

Part 8, Chapters 13-17 Analysis

The Kuragins have expertly set a trap for Natasha to feed the lust of Anatole. Natasha falls for it and is now confused about where her loyalties lie. Natasha is caught like the wolf in a wolf hunt. Maria Dmitrievna's advice is right on but a few days too late. The mis-timing of her interaction furthers the conflict and adds momentum to the plot. Tolstoy uses Maria Dmitrievna's character to bring a voice of reason to a confusing and plot-turning point.

More rational than her cousin, Sonya can see the situation clearly and knows that Natasha is in grave danger. She must take action, but this role falls to a character who normally does not like taking action. Tolstoy forces this character into an ironic role. She, who has been misused by the Rostovs, must sacrifice her nature for their good name. Dolohov doesn't approve of the kidnapping but wants to make Anatole happy, so he goes along with the plan, involving his shady friends. Ever smart and aware, Maria Dmitrievna has the wits to stop the kidnapping.

Part 8, Chapters 18-22

Part 8, Chapters 18-22 Summary

Maria Dmitrievna has come across Sonya weeping in the corridor. Sonya confesses everything, Maria reads the letter, and that's how Maria Dmitrievna knows Anatole is coming. Maria lectures Natasha but then keeps the matter private, not even telling Count Rostov. Pierre has been avoiding Natasha because he has feelings for her that he thinks a married man should not have for the betrothed of his friend. Maria Dmitrievna writes to him, summoning him to her to talk about a matter regarding Bolkonsky and Natasha. Maria Dmitrievna tells Pierre the whole story. She wants him to tell Anatole, his brother-in-law, to leave Moscow. Maria Dmitrievna tells Natasha that Anatole is already married to a Polish woman. She doesn't believe Maria, so she asks Pierre if it's true. She believes Pierre. Pierre immediately goes to find Anatole, who is dining with Dolohov, discussing how to achieve their exploit that has miscarried.

Pierre confronts Anatole, and Anatole leaves for Petersburg the next day. Old Bolkonsky has heard the rumors and heard that Natasha has broken off the engagement, and this news makes him happy. Andrew returns home. Pierre expects him to be heartbroken, but he doesn't seem to be. Andrew asks Pierre to return to Natasha her letters and portrait. Natasha asks Pierre to plead with Andrew to forgive her. She knows that it is all over with him, but she wants his forgiveness. She feels that her whole life is over, but Pierre reassures her that her whole life is ahead of her. She is comforted by him, and Pierre's heart feels bright.

Part 8, Chapters 18-22 Analysis

Although Natasha thinks that Maria Dmitrievna hates her and that's why she's foiling Natasha's plans, there is no better mother for her at this moment. Her own mother wouldn't have handled it half as well. Whether or not it's because of Andrew's admonition to Natasha to trust Pierre, Natasha gives more credence to Pierre's words than to anyone else. Natasha's trust in him gives Pierre more confidence. Natasha has brought the stand-up man back in Pierre. He confronts not only Anatole but also Helene, telling them that they're a vile, heartless tribe and banishing Anatole to another city entirely. Although he seems to take the news in stride, it has clearly affected Andrew, for his cynical, pessimistic side has taken over once more. Natasha knows how she has hurt Andrew, and she knows that he won't take her back, but she has found a steady friend in Pierre. Pierre's ever-ready shoulder is foreshadowing what will happen later.

Part 9, Chapters 1-6

Part 9, Chapters 1-6 Summary

It is 1812, and Napoleon pushes eastward in a war that will affect millions. Napoleon's men are unflinchingly faithful. In this chapter, a colonel unnecessarily flings himself into a river to please his commander. He is given an award. The army pushes eastward at an increasing rate. The Russian army is not ready for war. Tsar Alexander has spent more than a month holding reviews and vacillating in his plans, attending balls and parties instead of readying his troops. Boris and Helene happen to be in attendance at one of these balls, and though both are married, they spend a lot of time together. News of Napoleon's crossing of the Niemen River arrives during the ball.

In the middle of that night, Tsar Alexander sends Balashov out with a message to Napoleon. Balashov encounters Murat, who doesn't show him any respect. Next, sentinels detain Balashov at the outposts. Balashov meets with Davoust, an official in the French army. Davoust makes Balashov wait to speak to Davoust for four days. By the time Balashov returns to Vilna (where he left Tsar Alexander), Vilna is occupied by the French, with Napoleon installed in Tsar Alexander's previous quarters. Balashov finally sees Napoleon. Napoleon is condescending in all that he says, except for his closing remarks: "Assure the Emperor Alexander from me that I am devoted to him as before; I know him thoroughly, and I prize very highly his noble qualities."

Part 9, Chapters 1-6 Analysis

Tolstoy pulls his reader away from the details of a few lives to show how the war is affecting Europe as a whole. Napoleon is portrayed as not only ruthless, but extremely powerful as well. His men never question him. The Russians don't seem to understand the threat Napoleon poses. While the Russians dance, Napoleon and his troops are knocking at their door. Tolstoy presses with the theme that Tsar Alexander doesn't take his position as seriously as he needs to. He cares more about his social position than his military position. Not only are the French in hot pursuit of the Russians, but they don't seem to be playing by the old rules of war, which increases the conflict and confusion. Tsar Alexander's method of dealing with the French assault is so poor and mishandled that the Russians have had to retreat before he's finished his initial communication with Napoleon. From his remarks it is clear that Napoleon is not at all interested in negotiations. He wants Russia, and flattering Tsar Alexander might make the tsar cave in all the easier.

Part 9, Chapters 7-12

Part 9, Chapters 7-12 Summary

Balashov has dinner with Napoleon and his commanders. It is all very civil, but Napoleon will not budge. Tsar Alexander reads the messages about the visit, and the war begins. Again, Tolstoy touches on the theme that Alexander doesn't take the war seriously; he has to be forced into action. Prince Andrew goes to Petersburg to see Anatole and possibly to propose a duel, but Anatole is no longer there. In Petersburg, Andrew encounters Kutuzov and he receives a post on the staff of a commander in Turkey. Before leaving, he stops at Bald Hills to see his father, son, and sister. Old Bolkonsky is as bad as ever, but Andrew notes that Maria is bolder than she once was. He feels sorry for Maria that she has to stay, and is grateful that as a man he can leave.

Andrew finds comfort in the familiarity of army life. He is once again interested in the war and inspects the army's positions and organization. Russian patriotism is high. The German commander Pfuhl has a scientific plan for the ally's defense. He is headstrong and unlikable. Andrew despises him. The council of war, once again, is exasperating because of the many opinions. At a review, Tsar Alexander asks Andrew where he wants to serve. Bolkonsky asks to be sent to the front. Nikolai finally hears about the breaking off of Natasha's engagement. He writes to Sonya that he will return to her as soon as the war is over. Rostov and his friends go to dinner at an inn. The dinner is hosted by Maria Hendrihovna, wife of the regimental doctor. They all love her.

Part 9, Chapters 7-12 Analysis

Sitting in the drawing room that Alexander had occupied only four days earlier, Balashov knows that the outlook does not look good for Russia. He is uneasy, and rightly so, but Tolstoy's theme of pride vs. humility, with humility eventually getting the upper hand, will serve Russia well. Andrew struggles to decide what of all his options would be the most honorable: duel with Anatole for his honor or let it go for Natasha's sake. In the end, he is spared from making the decision because Anatole is nowhere to be found. Like Nikolai Rostov, Andrew likes the comfort of army life. Personal issues and romance must be put aside, and that's a relief. Many different personality types emerge in the army leadership, and it's difficult for all to get along, let alone to make a decision.

The French army, on the other hand, has one strong personality, Napoleon, and the rest are submissive followers. Andrew could have chosen any post in the army, even a post in attendance to Alexander, which would have been safe and extremely respected. Instead, he asks to be sent to the front like a common soldier, where the battle is hot and death is likely. Rostov's army experience is muddy, drizzly, and primitive, but he thoroughly enjoys his companions and the army life. His devotion to Sonya has not changed, but it hasn't been long since he made the promise.

Part 9, Chapters 13-18

Part 9, Chapters 13-18 Summary

Rostov and all his friends flirt shamelessly with Maria Hendrihovna. The doctor, who is sleeping, wakes up and is displeased with them all. They think it's very funny to see the dismay of the doctor and the delight of the doctor's wife. In the middle of the night, a command is brought to Rostov's regiment to advance upon a little place called Ostrovna. They are all excited to be moving and possibly seeing some action. Rostov is one of the first to detect the blue dragoons, and he leads his regiment forward, without realizing what he's doing or why. He comes across a Frenchman and aims a blow at him with his sword. The man surrenders. All that day Rostov feels remorse, even though he has won the St. George's Cross for his exploit. The Rostovs move back home from Maria Dmitrievna's house.

Natasha has been very ill ever since the Anatole debacle. Doctors have tried all kinds of remedies to help her, but nothing has worked. Natasha shuns all forms of entertainment. She is calmer but not happier. After so many months of illness, a doctor finally says she is on the mend. At the beginning of July rumors about the war's progress become more and more alarming to the residents of Moscow. On Saturday, July 11th, the manifesto is received but is not yet in print. Pierre promises the Rostovs that he will obtain a copy of the manifesto from Count Rastoptchin and bring it to them on Sunday. Natasha goes to church on Sunday and really prays for the first time. She feels that God hears her prayer.

Part 9, Chapters 13-18 Analysis

Rostov and his friends are still very immature to behave in such a way with the doctor's wife. They are a jolly group. Even though he has been wounded in battle before, Rostov doesn't seem apprehensive about the upcoming combat. He is devoted to his country and glad to defend it. Being so close to the Frenchman, Nikolai realizes that the Frenchman is just like him, and he cannot take pride or joy in his award. Tolstoy introduces another theme, that men and women are the same throughout the world, that it's world leaders, not commoners, who cause all the trouble.

In chapter sixteen, Tolstoy satirizes the methods doctors use to "cure" patients. He thinks people go to doctors just to do something in the face of illness but that the doctors don't know what they're doing and oftentimes actually further the illness instead of curing it. Natasha is undergoing a major transformation. The old Natasha was fully of gaiety and levity, but the new Natasha is more serious and reflective. Pierre has come to love the Rostovs. Natasha has found religion as part of her transformation, and it brings her hope. In finding religion, Natasha becomes much more like several other main characters: Maria, Andrew, and Pierre.

Part 9, Chapters 19-23

Part 9, Chapters 19-23 Summary

Pierre is doing some strange things. He creates an alphabet chart, assigning numbers to the French alphabet and then using this chart to decipher messages. To Pierre, the messages he deciphers mean that he will do something great, something fated, in the war. Pierre brings a bag of letters to the Rostovs, including one from Nikolai, as well as the manifesto. Pierre considers joining the army. At dinner on Sunday, the Rostovs are very pleased that Nikolai has been awarded the St. George's Cross. Natasha and Pierre discuss Andrew. Sonya reads the manifesto aloud for everyone. They are all moved with patriotism. Petya wants to join the army, but his mother doesn't want him to. Pierre tells Natasha that he loves her and then makes up his mind not to visit the Rostovs anymore.

Petya locks himself in his room and cries because he can't join the army. Then he sneaks out and goes to see if he can find the Tsar. He nearly gets crushed in the city square where Alexander is supposed to be. Alexander comes out onto a balcony to address the people. He is still holding a biscuit in his hand from dinner, and the biscuit breaks off on the railing and falls to the ground below. The crowd scrambles to retrieve crumbs of the biscuit. Petya knocks over an old woman in pursuit of a crumb. He feels so happy and goes home, announcing that he will join the army. The next day, Count Rostov goes to inquire if a commission could be made for Petya where there would be little danger. Next day, Pierre attends an assembly for noblemen where the manifesto will be read. Most of the men are wearing military uniforms. A letter is read from Alexander, asking for money, serfs, and supplies. Pierre suggests that they ask the emperor to tell them what forces he already has and what is the position of the army. The men are shocked at Pierre's "impudence," saying that they have no right to ask such questions of the tsar. Suddenly, Count Rastoptchin comes in, announcing the Tsar. Alexander thanks everyone for their help and calls them to action with great feeling; everyone, including Pierre, feels that they'll do anything for him. Pierre pledges to furnish one thousand men and their equipment.

Part 9, Chapters 19-23 Analysis

Pierre, unlike most of the young men his age, is leading a relatively idle life, not sacrificing much for his country. His idleness leads him to foolishness such as his alphabetic deciphering. Pierre is caught in a very unhappy marriage. He wants Natasha but Pierre is not available. He always seems to want what he can't have and have what he doesn't want. Tolstoy insinuates that you can't get on in life if your actions don't meet your beliefs. In other words, you've got to have integrity. In the scenes from the army, it's clear that Alexander is not always a great commander, but the Russian people are so in love with him that they'll do anything just to get a glimpse or contact him in any way. From our standpoint, Pierre's request seems very reasonable, but in the furor of

patriotism and war, the crowd nearly mauls him for it. The whole of society becomes unreasonable, almost a mob, when fired up about political concerns. Away from the tsar's presence, Pierre can be rational, but no one, except perhaps Andrew and Kutuzov, seem to be able to resist the tsar in person. Pierre doesn't yet possess the self-discipline to hold his own opinion in the face of one so great

Part 10, Chapters 1-7

Part 10, Chapters 1-7 Summary

Tolstoy poses the idea that the war was not caused by Napoleon or Alexander or any of the thousands of men involved, but rather that it was fate carrying the course of human history along, and that all the men involved were just playing their parts. Old Bolkonsky blames Maria for the quarrel he had with Andrew before Andrew left again for war. He refuses to speak with her for a week. Andrew sends a letter asking for his father's forgiveness, and Old Bolkonsky immediately grants his forgiveness. Old Bolkonsky is becoming so much trouble. He refuses to sleep in his room. So his servant Tihon has to move his bedstead every day to the room the old prince wants to sleep in that night. One of Bolkonsky's serfs, Alpatitch, is given a message from Bolkonsky to deliver to the governor. As Alpatitch approaches town, he hears firing in the distance and sees oat fields being mown down for soldiers to forage.

An officer assures Alpatitch that the town of Smolensk is not in the slightest danger, but people are roving about uneasily in the streets. Prince Andrew sees Alpatitch and tells him that Smolensk has surrendered, and Bald Hills will be occupied within a week. Andrew tells Alpatitch to order his family to leave for Moscow. Prince Andrew is in command of a regiment. He receives news that his father, son, and sister have left for Moscow. He goes to Bald Hills and finds Alpatitch there alone who gives him an account of the property. A letter is sent from Prince Bagration to Alexander, saying that there are rumors that he will surrender for peace, but please don't do it. Anna Pavlovna is still holding her soirees where Vasili's opinions hold sway. They don't like Kutuzov. The Russians cannot get organized enough to fight until the French reach Borodino. Napoleon is determined to take Moscow.

Part 10, Chapters 1-7 Analysis

As has been the pattern, Tolstoy pulls away from the characters' concerns at the beginning of a new section and focuses on the broad picture of the war. This allows us to gain a grander glimpse without pulling too far away from the plot and pacing. In his haste to leave his father, Andrew was glad to get away but acknowledged that his sister could not leave if she wanted to. Old Bolkonsky forgives Andrew immediately upon his apology, but he gives Maria absolutely no gratitude for her daily, relentless service to him. Old Bolkonsky is becoming increasingly childlike in his demands, like a senile person. He can't go on much longer. Andrew can always be counted on to tell the truth, as seen in this chapter. Things are falling apart quickly as the Russians continually retreat eastward. The soldiers seem to have more determination than their commanders. Still trying to hold their society together in the midst of war, Anna Pavlovna, Vasili, and the like can do nothing but criticize as they idly sit by. The war is going so well for Napoleon at the moment that he dreams of having it all, even "the Asiatic capital of this great empire, the holy city of the peoples of Alexander, Moscow,

with its innumerable churches in the form of Chinese pagodas!" Napoleon's description of Moscow shows his lust for power and occupation.

Part 10, Chapters 8-13

Part 10, Chapters 8-13 Summary

Maria is not in Moscow as Prince Andrew supposes. Old Bolkonsky refuses to leave and rallies his energies to assemble the militia. Maria defies her father by refusing to leave him, bringing a fury of his wrath upon her. She goes to Bogutcharovo with her father and nephew, but it isn't safe there, so Maria makes preparations to move them all to Moscow. While in Bogutcharovo, Old Bolkonsky dies. Before he dies he thanks her, calls her "dear one," and asks her to forgive him. He has never spoken tenderly to her before. After his death, she berates herself for sometimes longing for his death. Because Andrew had somewhat liberated the serfs at Bogutcharovo, they have quite a different character from the serfs at Bald Hills. One in particular, Dron, doesn't like having Maria there and is obstinate to any orders or direction given from Alpatitch, the servant who accompanied them from Bald Hills.

After the funeral, Maria orders the serfs to load their things in order to leave for Moscow. Dron tells her that no horses are available and then he demands to be discharged. Maria doesn't understand what he wants but says that she's ready to do everything for him and for the peasants. Maria is dejected and solemn. She offers all the corn on the property to the peasants. They say they don't want corn; they want freedom. She promises to provide for them and doesn't understand why they're not satisfied with that. She repeats her orders to Dron to have horses ready the next day. Maria has nightmares and flashbacks about her father's death. She feels terrorized by her situation. Rostov and his friends Ilyin and Lavrushka ride through Bogutcharovo. They are in lively spirits, singing as they ride. Rostov encounters the drunken, rebellious peasants, who have not gotten horses ready for Maria's departure to Moscow. Maria begs Rostov for help and he says he will do all that he can.

Part 10, Chapters 8-13 Analysis

Old Bolkonsky's abuses of his daughter over the years leave her conflicted about him even after his death. She has shown unflinching loyalty to him while tolerating his verbal abuse and emotional neglect. This is interesting social commentary about slavery. The serfs who have been given some education, health care, and freedom become rebellious and obstinate. The same arguments were given in the United States during the slavery years and Civil War. Dron is taking advantage of a woman in mourning and distress to meet his own desires. Maria is faced with problems she has never encountered before and doesn't know how to handle them. She has had to shoulder so much more responsibility than many of the other characters in the novel. This situation, with its shrieks and terror, adds to the feeling of chaos as the Russian countryside is falling apart in an onslaught from the French. Using an age-old situation, like a knight in shining armor, Nikolai Rostov arrives on the scene just in time to save the damsel in distress.

Part 10, Chapters 14-19

Part 10, Chapters 14-19 Summary

Ilyin is charmed by Maria's maid, Dunyasha. Rostov causes a raucous with the peasants, talks to the town elders, and within two hours the horses and carts required for the trip are standing in the courtyard. Maria makes sure that Andrew's books are packed at the expense of furniture and other expensive items. Maria falls in love with her hero. He is pleased with himself and wonders if might he love Maria back. But what of Sonya?

Kutuzov becomes the chief commander of the army and wants Andrew's help, so he summons him to headquarters. Kutuzov expresses condolences on his father's death and tells him that he has always thought of him as a son and would like Andrew to consider him a father. Kutuzov has grown fatter and more unhealthy since Andrew last saw him. Many officers have been pining for battle, but Kutuzov, in his wisdom and experience, is trying to hold them back, saying patience will be the best policy in the long run. Andrew feels more reassured about the course of the war after talking with Kutuzov.

Before the war, the Moscow and Petersburg elite often spoke French with one another. Now it is the fashion to speak only Russian, and Julie Dubretskoy (Boris's wife) leads this new trend. Julie prepares band-aids for the soldiers and has trouble sometimes expressing herself in Russian. Pierre is still debating whether he should join the army or not. He decides that he wants to sacrifice all, but he cannot tell for whose sake or for what object he is sacrificing. The sacrifice itself gives him a new, joyful sensation. In their retreat from Borodino, the Russians put themselves in a poor position for battle, and they suffer terrible losses in the fight.

Part 10, Chapters 14-19 Analysis

A man on the scene changes Maria's outlook. She needs someone to depend on and Rostov comes to the rescue. He's already thinking about his promise to Sonya and what it means. Kutuzov is one of the clear thinkers in the novel, and he wants another clear thinker by his side, which is why he calls for Andrew. This association tells us about their character traits. Andrew and Kutuzov make a good team, but they are almost alone in their viewpoints and may not be able to hold back the tide. Some of the ways people try to assist the war effort are helpful, and some are superficial or just for show, although sometimes just building morale by a superficial, patriotic action can indirectly help a war effort. The elite seem to have trouble differentiating between what is really helpful and what is not. As has happened in the past, Pierre can't make up his mind for himself. His heart is in the right place, but he has a hard time putting his intentions to action. Tolstoy refutes popular claims made about the battle of Borodino, giving the Russians more credit than they've received in the past.

Part 10, Chapters 20-28

Part 10, Chapters 20-28 Summary

Instead of actually joining the army, Pierre decides he'll go have a look and see what the army is doing. He drives around in a carriage, asking a doctor questions about the army's positions. The doctor is tired but answers Pierre's questions as best he can because Pierre is a count. Pierre gets very mixed messages from those he asks. He wants to find someone in authority who can tell him what's going on. The army seems to be in chaos. The men hold a religious service, with a relic of the Holy Mother from a Smolensk church. Kutuzov is there. He bows to the ground in front of the relic and then has a hard time standing up again. Boris Dubretskoy encounters Pierre and tells him where he'll get the best view of the army. Pierre joins Bennigsen's suite to inspect the position. Bennigsen explains to Pierre what the army has been doing as far as trenches and fortifying the flanks.

Pierre doubts his own capacity to even understand military matters. Andrew feels nervous and excitable, as he felt before the battle that injured him seven years ago. He wonders why all this is happening, recalling that Maria says it's a trial sent from above. Pierre finds Andrew. Andrew is unhappy to see Pierre because it reminds him of Natasha. Andrew is angry and sarcastic and doesn't want to be left alone with Pierre. Andrew rants about the battle at Austerlitz. Andrew cannot sleep that night for thinking of Natasha. He feels conflicted about the way he has been thinking about her, so thinks about cutting off the relationship based on what society sees as honorable.

In Napoleon's quarters, the French are discussing the next day's battle. Napoleon is already planning what he'll do when they take Moscow. After inspecting his troops, Napoleon writes a plan for his generals that is so confusing and obtuse, that none of his instructions can be understood or carried out. Tolstoy expounds on why the French lose at Borodino and refers back to his theory that each person just plays a part in a grand scheme.

Part 10, Chapters 20-28 Analysis

Pierre wants to be involved in the war, but his methods are annoying to others. Still, he is coming to some realizations about the war, especially when he sees the young soldiers marching and wonders if they'll still be alive tomorrow. Kutuzov's difficulty in getting up is foreshadowing. It's clear that most of the army has no idea what is happening, and even Boris, an officer, doesn't know much, but Boris's connections allow Pierre to find those in authority.

Pierre always doubts himself before doubting anyone else. Another person might doubt the army's communication system upon hearing such confusing answers from one in authority. As always, Andrew is introspective at a difficult time. Pierre's intrusion is seen

as an intrusion from another world, a world Andrew was glad to leave behind. Usually cool and composed, Andrew is tortured by his circumstances: the battle before him, his broken engagement, the futility of war, his father's death, and his irritability with his friend. Unless he feels love towards his fellow men, he cannot feel whole and healthy. The Russians are worried to distraction, but the French are feeling extremely confident. Napoleon's overconfidence has affected his judgment. He feels that he cannot lose, no matter what. Interestingly, we readers find out what happens in the battle before the characters do. Perhaps Tolstoy wrote it this way because his original audience knew about the result of the battle.

Part 10, Chapters 29-39

Part 10, Chapters 29-39 Summary

Still on the eve of the battle, Napoleon is excited that on the morrow he'll get to decide what to do with Kutuzov. Let the game begin. In the morning, firing begins before the soldiers can see clearly and Pierre wakes up. Pierre longs to be in the midst of the action. Pierre finds a safe place on a mound to watch the battle. The infantry men look worried and afraid, but the men guarding the battery are eagerly and excitedly engaged in their work. Several hours later, though, all the men in the battery have been killed and the ammunition is left unguarded. Pierre rushes forward, not knowing what he's doing, but wanting to help. He gets to the ammunition boxes and then gets hit by something and knocked out.

Pierre recovers his senses an hour later. The French who captured the battery flee. He can't see what's happening, but the cannons and musketry grow louder and more desperate. From below it's impossible to know what's going on, so Napoleon finds higher ground. Messengers come to him with conflicting news: Davoust has been killed, the attack repulsed, Davoust is alive and well. The troops in their confusion lose all discipline and dash to and fro. Napoleon experiences the bitter feeling of a reckless gambler who has to face that he's losing. The smoke begins to rise and he can see how very much killing has happened in such a small space. One of his officers suggests that the Old Guards advance into action, but Napoleon will not allow it. Kutuzov stops giving orders and just gives or withholds his assent when officers propose a plan. An old general reports that the French have been repulsed on all fronts.

Kutuzov sends an order with a messenger to tell everyone that they will attack the next day. The worn-out men take comfort and courage from this order. Prince Andrew's regiment is in reserves. By two o'clock, they have lost 200 men. He is standing in an oat field, trying to read the signs of the battle when he is hit by shrapnel from a shell. A great stain of blood covers the grass beneath him. The militiamen carry him away. He wonders what it was about life that he didn't want to leave. Andrew is carried into the hospital tent and laid on a table. On the table next to him is a man whose leg is being amputated. The man is screaming and writhing in pain. Andrew feels so sorry for him and then realizes that it's Anatole Kuragin. He feels pity and compassion for Anatole, and he thinks that all that's left for him is to learn to love his fellow men. Napoleon leaves the battle scene and finds a place to wait it out. He feels responsibility for the war but feels no remorse for the hundreds of thousands dead. Tolstoy postulates that the battle of Borodino was the beginning of the end of the Napoleonic Wars.

Part 10, Chapters 29-39 Analysis

Readers look at Napoleon's confidence differently after finding out the result of the battle in the previous chapter. Having led a sedentary, society life, Pierre is

understanding what it is about army life that his friends enjoy. This is Pierre's chance to do something to help. Without thinking about it, he enters the fray. Without thinking before he acts, but just following his instincts, he acts with integrity, leading him to do something good. Pierre sees the terror of the battle, the screaming dying horses, the dead men. It's overwhelming to him. Napoleon climbs the hill expecting to see his glorious victory; instead he sees confusion and can't tell what's happening.

Though he realizes his defeat, Napoleon has not given up yet, as evident from his preserving his Old Guard. Napoleon's actions help to back up Tolstoy's theme of pride vs. humility. Kutuzov is very different from Napoleon. He is not optimistic, realizing that anything can happen. He knows how to buoy up his men. He is wise and experienced and knows that Napoleon's methods can't last indefinitely. This time, Andrew isn't doing anything great or heroic when he is injured. He's just standing in the wrong place at the wrong time. And yet, he feels that dying is the right thing to happen. Andrew has been greatly troubled by Natasha's infidelity, even considering proposing a duel with Anatole, but now, seeing Anatole suffer he feels love and compassion toward him and the bitterness goes away. Tolstoy portrays Napoleon as not quite human, with no regard for human life. Tolstoy is proud of his country, proud of its accomplishments, and extremely bitter toward Napoleon, who stole so much from Russia for the sake of his ego.

Part 11, Chapters 1-7

Part 11, Chapters 1-7 Summary

Tolstoy philosophizes about history: "Every conclusion of history can, without the slightest effort on the part of the critic, be dissipated like dust, leaving no trace, simply through criticism selecting, as the object of its analysis, a greater or smaller disconnected unit, which it has a perfect right to do, seeing that the unit of history is always selected arbitrarily." The Russians retreat beyond Moscow. The French reach Moscow and stop there. For five weeks after that, there isn't a single battle. Kutuzov writes to the Tsar and tells him that the battle of Borodino was a victory, but his desire to attack the next day did not come to fruition. Instead, the Russian army retreats again and again from lack of motivation and consensus. After talking with some of the men, Kutuzov sees that the defense of Moscow is a physical impossibility. He can't understand how or when he allowed Napoleon to reach Moscow, especially after the victorious battle of Borodino. The Russian officers meet at a peasant's house to discuss their position and strategy. Bennigsen does not yet consider the game lost. Kutuzov knows that Moscow must be abandoned. He is angry and disconsolate. Many of the wealthy citizens of Moscow have already left, retreating to country estates. Count Rastoptchin publishes that it is base to leave Moscow.

Helene is in love with two men, neither of whom is her husband. When she returns to Petersburg, she's in a bind because they are both there. She sees no reason why she can't have them both, but one of them, a young foreign prince, begs her to marry him. The other man, a middle-aged Frenchman, is a fresh breath to her soul. She talks to her spiritual adviser about the situation. Helene argues that Pierre is guilty of entering into a religious ceremony (marriage) without considering its significance. Helene charms Pierre into condoning her infidelity. Helene decides that the public must come to see her relationships her way. The rumor is immediately all over Petersburg that Helene is hesitating about which of two suitors she should marry—despite the fact that she is already married. A few strait-laced people, such as Maria Dmitrievna, reprimand Helene, but most people accept the idea readily because Helene is so beautiful and interesting. Helene asks Bilibin which man she should marry. He suggests she marry the older man because he will die and then she can have the younger prince as well. Helene beams and calls him a true friend. Bilibin asks her what Pierre thinks of all this. Helene responds that Pierre loves her so much that he'd do anything for her. At the beginning of August she writes to Pierre her intention of marrying someone else and asking him to take the necessary steps to obtain a divorce. The letter is delivered to Pierre's house while he is on the field at Borodino.

Part 11, Chapters 1-7 Analysis

Tolstoy looks back at the Napoleonic wars from a distance, and historical analysis helps him (and us) to make sense of it all. These beginning chapters of part 11, don't move

the plot along, but they teach us history and help us to understand Tolstoy's major themes. Kutuzov is a brilliant strategist, but he is not charismatic enough to rally everyone to his point of view. In fact, he is disliked by many because he doesn't play by the high society rules, so most men refuse to align with him. Somehow Napoleon has bested Kutuzov. Kutuzov is getting old and weary of war, but still he cares desperately about what happens to his army and country. Kutuzov is willing to take the blame about Moscow on his weary shoulders. As usual, Kutuzov faces opposition when he gives orders. Rastoptchin has no idea what is going on, but he thinks it will be politically wise to stay in Moscow. Helene has always gotten her way, but this time she may go too far. Tolstoy seems to believe that laws of God can only be mocked for so long. There comes a point when the laws of God and the will of men cannot abide any longer. The conflict becomes too great, and something has to give. Of course, in a battle between man and God, the outcome is obvious. The phenomenon of the public accepting anything Helene wants to do is a phenomenon that has become prevalent in our day. Celebrities continue to push the envelope, and because they're so interesting and beautiful, the general public accepts their choices.

Part 11, Chapters 8-15

Part 11, Chapters 8-15 Summary

At the end of the day at Borodino, all Pierre wants to do is get away. He stops at the campfire of some soldiers and talks to them for a while. He can't find room in the inn, so he sleeps in his carriage. After speaking with the common soldiers, Pierre can think of no better life than that of a common soldier. The next day, he puts his carriage in the service of a wounded general. On the way to Moscow he hears about the death of his brother-in-law Anatole and his friend Prince Andrew. When he returns to Moscow at the end of August, a messenger tells Pierre that Count Rastoptchin urgently wants to see him. Instead of going home, he hails a cab and goes to see the governor. Rastoptchin wants to talk to him about Napoleon's proclamation that has appeared in the gazette. It turns out that the proclamation was made up, and the forger has been sentenced to hard labor. The Rostovs remain in Moscow until September 1, the day before the French arrive in the city. Characteristically, Count Rostov does not begin making preparations until the 28th. The countess is excited about the prospect of Nikolai marrying Maria Bolkonsky. Petya, who is recently back from war, and Natasha are happy and excited about the change. On August 31st the Rostov's household is turned upside down. Some wounded officers come to their door, seeking shelter. Natasha wants to help them, so she persuades her parents to let them in. Natasha takes control of the packing, repacking and looking for more efficient methods.

That night as Natasha and Sonya are sleeping in their day-dresses in the drawing room, the wounded Prince Andrew is brought to the Rostovs' house for shelter along with other men. Next day, Countess Rostov berates her husband for mismanaging their property, that their children will inherit nothing if they don't pack up all their valuables. Berg, Vera's husband, appears on their doorstep.

Part 11, Chapters 8-15 Analysis

Although he is one of the richest men in Russia, Pierre doesn't mind sleeping in his carriage. He is truly humble. Pierre didn't choose his societal and financial position, although it's a position that millions of Russians want. He wants to choose his own life, a simple life with simple pleasures. With his new dream of being a common man, Pierre is impatient with political affairs and with Rastoptchin, who represents the superficial political intrigue Tolstoy has little patience for himself. Natasha has mostly recovered from the debacle with Anatole. She is like herself, but more mature and wiser. In fact, Natasha has become more like Andrew through her ordeal with Anatole. She will not be taken in again by flattery. The girl who once ordered servants around just for fun has developed compassion. Natasha doesn't usually take an active interest in household affairs unless it involves something she wants. Now she's in command and energetic. Tension has caused the count and countess to become irritable. They are classic

procrastinators, waiting for a crisis to think about lifelong problems. Their procrastination is a symptom of their easy distraction and preoccupation, not unlike Pierre's.

Part 11, Chapters 16-24

Part 11, Chapters 16-24 Summary

Berg has come to ask his father-in-law a favor. With the mass exodus out of Moscow, furniture and valuables are being sold cheaply. He wants to buy some furniture but doesn't have room in his cart for it. He wants the Rostovs to move it for him. The count and Natasha want to give all their carts up to move the wounded. Berg and the countess are bewildered and alarmed by this. Natasha begs and the countess gives in. With great zeal, she helps to get the carts unloaded, leaving all the Rostovs' possessions behind in order to move as many wounded men as possible. Sonya finds out the Prince Bolkonsky is in one of the Rostovs' carts and tells the countess that he is dying. The countess and Sonya decide not to tell Natasha. On their way out of Moscow they see Pierre, wearing a coachman's coat. Natasha wants to stay in Moscow to see what happens, but, of course, her parents won't permit it. Pierre disappears without telling even his servants and goes to the home of his dead benefactor, Osip Bazdyev, the man who first introduced him to freemasonry. In the previous days, he has found the letter from his wife asking for a divorce, and he is overcome with hopelessness. Napoleon arrives in Moscow. He is offended that all the citizens of Moscow have fled. He wanted them to be his subjects and love him. Tolstoy compares empty Moscow to a beehive. Napoleon has not yet exploded like his men predict. By 2 o'clock the next day, the remaining inhabitants and wounded soldiers have abandoned Moscow. In the Rostovs' house, however, two of their servants remain. A young soldier, a nephew of the Rostovs', comes to the door, asking for Count Rostov and is quite disappointed when he hears that they have left. In another quarter, a tavern owner beats off young men who want what's left in his tavern. Rastoptchin is trying to figure out what to do. Should he try to take charge of all the government property? He is angry with Kutuzov for putting him in such a position.

Part 11, Chapters 16-24 Analysis

Berg is hopelessly selfish and superficial, but we see Natasha here, willing to sacrifice her future comforts for the comfort of the wounded soldiers. So great a sacrifice makes her feel happy and whole. In an effort to spare Natasha, the countess and Sonya deprive her of what she and Andrew need most: reconciliation. That reconciliation could not only save their relationship but also save their souls, as their good qualities have emerged from the situation. In his despair, Pierre turns to religion, even if it comes in the form of the empty home of his religious mentor. Pierre's inner conflict needs to resolve itself so he can have the ill and strength to deal with the crumbling social situation all around him.

It's not enough for Napoleon to have conquered a city. He wants to be adored and respected. The extended metaphor of Moscow as a beehive is quite comprehensive. The bees represent the citizens of Moscow. The beekeeper is Napoleon. The remaining

activity in the beehive is gone. The hive is dead. It's nearly impossible for families to reunite in the chaos of the evacuation. The remaining police cannot keep order. People are hungry and without provisions. They expect that common laws have been abolished. Rastoptchin refused to face facts towards the beginning of the war, so he wasn't prepared when it became bitter. He blames Kutuzov for his own lack of preparation.

Part 11, Chapters 25-29

Part 11, Chapters 25-29 Summary

To save face, Rastoptchin has a young man arrested. This young man is Vereshtchagin. Rastoptchin says, "This man, Vereshtchagin, is the wretch by whose doing Moscow is lost." Rastoptchin claims that this man is a traitor, a deserter to Bonaparte. Through his words and actions, Rastoptchin lets the crowd know that they can do with him as they please. Like wild beasts the crowd falls upon him and kills him with whatever they have in their hands. Rastoptchin feels sick, but then he goes and tells Kutuzov that none of this would have happened if he hadn't allowed Moscow to fall. At 4 o'clock Murat's troops enter Moscow in an orderly manner, even though they are hungry and exhausted. The moment that the army disperses into the wealthy, well-stocked houses of Moscow, the army is lost forever. They will no longer take orders, so order disintegrates. Moscow is burned through the recklessness of its soldiers, causing fires in kitchen stoves and campfires.

During this time, Pierre has been at Osip Alexyevitch's home, reading and looking inward. Soldiers arrive and bang on the door. French soldiers enter and begin to take prisoners. The soldiers don't know that Pierre, having gone to school in Paris, speaks French. A drunken man in Osip Alexyevitch's home lunges at the soldier, and Pierre breaks up the confrontation. The dramatic Frenchman claims that Pierre has saved his life. The Frenchman is named Ramballe. He is disappointed that the beautiful Russian women are gone, now that the French army has arrived. Over lots of wine, Ramballe tells Pierre of his many conquests with women during the war. Pierre, too, talks about himself, and Ramballe is impressed that a man of such great wealth would abandon his Moscow palaces but still stay in the city.

Part 11, Chapters 25-29 Analysis

Unlike Kutuzov, Rastoptchin refuses to take responsibility for his failures. He not only blames Kutuzov but also sacrifices an innocent man to the crows. Rastoptchin can be compared to King Herod of the Bible. The French army remains strong until they get used to a comfortable life again. Then they fall apart. Tolstoy, in his later life, refuses his riches, believing that they corrupt his spiritual life. Pierre's withdrawal from the world comes at a time when it's impossible not to be impacted by outside events. For once, Pierre's out-of-country education makes an ally for him, making him more valuable and safer. Tolstoy brings a human element to the French army, reminding us that the army is merely composed of people with individual personalities, trials, and dreams. This is a continual theme, especially as the war winds down.

Part 11, Chapters 30-34

Part 11, Chapters 30-34 Summary

The Rostovs spent the first night very close to Moscow because of their late start, the traffic, and the trips their servants had to make back to Moscow to retrieve forgotten items. They see the fires in Moscow. Some sigh, some pray, and some sob. Petya has gone ahead with his regiment marching to Troitsa. Natasha doesn't seem to care about the burning. She has been told that Andrew is wounded and traveling in their company. When her mother and Sonya are asleep that night, Natasha creeps out of their sleeping quarters and finds Andrew. He smiles and holds his hand out to her. Seven days have passed since Andrew was wounded at Borodino. Since that time he has been in a state of almost continual delirium. The doctor is certain that he won't recover from his wounds. On the seventh day, he eats bread and tea and his fever goes down. He has been asking for a copy of the New Testament. He is half deep in thought, half delirious. When he regains consciousness he sees Natasha, the person he most wants to see in the world. She asks for forgiveness, and he says he loves her even more than before. The doctor wakes up and is disturbed that a woman would sneak in during the middle of the night and tells her to leave.

From that time, Natasha never leaves Andrew's side as they travel, and the doctor admits that for a young girl, she is a very skilled nurse. After his long night with Ramballe, Pierre ventures out to see what's happening in the streets. He comes across a peasant family, who is frantic because their little girl is missing. Pierre finds her and rescues her from a fire. After he rescues the child he cannot find her family, so he gives her to another woman to caregive. Then he sees a beautiful Armenian girl being harassed by some French soldiers, so he confronts them. He is taken prisoner and put under strict guard.

Part 11, Chapters 30-34 Analysis

Splitting up his characters among different venues, Tolstoy allows us a comprehensive view of what's happening to the inhabitants of Moscow and to see the human side of the war from the perspective of prisoners of war, citizens, soldiers and generals. Now that Natasha knows about Andrew, nothing, not even the burning of Moscow, matters to her. Andrew's recent experiences (seeing Anatole in agony, being wounded himself, and facing death) have led him to think of love in a different way. He is more than willing to forgive and forget; he only seeks love. After his retreat, Pierre wants to go out and do some good, but doing good isn't always as easy as it seems, as he previously experienced with his serfs in the country. One good deed leads to another, but his second good deed puts him in prison camp. Now he will truly experience what his soldier friends have gone through.

Part 12, Chapters 1-8

Part 12, Chapters 1-8 Summary

Back in Petersburg, Anna Pavlovna's circle is talking of Helene Bezuhov, who has missed several social events in a row and is said to be very ill. Helene dies quite suddenly of the illness that had been so amusing to talk about. Some stick to the illness theory, but others talk of a drug overdose. The abandoning of Moscow, however, overshadows news of Helene's death. Nine days after the abandonment of Moscow, a courier from Kutuzov finally arrives in Petersburg to inform the Tsar of the surrender. The messenger tells Alexander that the soldiers are burning to fight, which is exactly what Alexander wants to hear. Nikolai attends a ball in the country and impresses everyone with his dancing, friendliness, and handsome appearance. Nikolai spends the evening flirting with a married woman, whose husband, the governor, is less than pleased.

Unknown to Nikolai, Princess Maria Bolkonsky is traveling through the same town. Nikolai confides in the governor's wife that he rather likes Maria, and if he married Maria, it would make his mother very happy. He also tells her about Sonya and how he loves her. The governor's wife tells Nikolai that he shouldn't consider marrying Sonya. Incredible demands on Maria Bolkonsky—the travel, worries about her brother, taking care of and educating her nephew, new people and a new home to organize—make her melancholy and almost overcome. The governor's wife contacts Maria and invites her to a soiree where Nikolai will be. She goes, and Nikola thinks she has grown even better looking since he last saw her. Little Nikola, Andrew's son, comes into the room and likes Rostov right away. Maria is so happy to see it. After the visit, Rostov thinks constantly of Maria, although he cannot picture a future with her.

The picture of Maria, Nikolai, and Andrew's son is foreshadowing, and so is the feeling of dread Nikolai has when he thinks of a marriage with Maria. Although conflicts are inherent in relationships, Tolstoy illustrates that some marriages are more prone to conflicts than others. Upon hearing about the battle of Borodino and the abandonment of Moscow, Rostov feels uneasy. Maria is afraid for Andrew, having heard nothing definite, and Nikolai tries to comfort and reassure her. Nikolai is impressed with Maria's spirituality, which he thinks Sonya is lacking. Two letters arrive for him: one from his mother and one from Sonya. Sonya breaks off their engagement, citing family discord. The letter from his mother describes their last days in Moscow and Andrew's condition. He immediately gives Maria the news, and they are much closer than ever before. Nikolai leaves to join his regiment. Countess Rostov had forced Sonya to write that letter. Sonya gave in, sobbing hysterically, ready to sacrifice herself for the family she loved. Natasha is so happy because Andrew is getting better. Then, Sonya sees Andrew sitting up and screams because it is the picture she saw in the mirror all those years ago that made her think Andrew would die.

Part 12, Chapters 1-8 Analysis

Helene's father, Vasili, doesn't seem especially affected from her death. He is still at every soiree, talking politics and seeking favor. It seems strange that such a famous woman would receive so little sympathy upon an untimely death. Tsar Alexander is a dreamer, always ready to look to the future instead of facing the present. This is the second time we've seen Nikolai flirt with a married woman. Back at the beginning of the war, Nikolai and his friends spent an evening courting the army doctor's wife. Nikolai wears his heart on his sleeve and may be impressionable enough to follow a stranger's advice. Sonya, ever devoted to Nikolai, is opposite Nikolai when it comes to loyalty. She will wait her entire life if she must, but Nikolai can't stay loyal for even the shortest time. The picture of Maria, Nikolai, and Andrew's son is foreshadowing, and so is the feeling of dread Nikolai has when he thinks of a marriage with Maria. Although conflicts are inherent in relationships, Tolstoy illustrates that some marriages are more prone to conflicts than others. The timing of Sonya's letter, breaking off the engagement just when he is considering marrying Maria, makes Nikola think it must be fate. Still, he feels uneasy with Maria because Maria is so much deeper and spiritual than he. At the time Sonya initially saw Andrew in the mirror, she wasn't sure if she made it up or not. Now, years later, she's sure that she saw Andrew's doom. Could it be just the influence of her own heartbreak?

Part 12, Chapters 9-16

Part 12, Chapters 9-16 Summary

Pierre is taken to a guarded room and treated with hostility. On the following day he finds out that all the prisoners, including himself, are charged with arson. More fires break out and the prisoners are moved. Walking through the streets of Moscow, Pierre can hardly breathe, so suffocating is the smoke. The prisoners wait four days in a coach-house, possibly for execution. Up to this point, Pierre has not revealed his name to his captors, but he finally does so when he's brought before Davoust, who recognizes him. Pierre is to be condemned to death. The prisoners are taken to a meadow to be executed. Eight of them are shot, but the soldiers doing the executions can hardly do it. The sharpshooter who is to shoot Pierre is very young, and he gets sick and weak before he can shoot. An older sharpshooter drags the young one away, and they give up shooting the rest of the prisoners. After the execution, the remaining prisoners are left in a filthy church. The prisoners get to know each other, and Pierre is particularly drawn to one peasant, Karataev. Karataev is a breath of fresh air to Pierre. Pierre spends four weeks in these quarters.

His most pleasant memory from this time is Platon Karataev, who tells wonderful stories and breaks into song to cheer his mates. Upon hearing that her brother is still alive, Maria prepares to go to him immediately. Bourienne and Maria's other servants are astounded at her energy and determination. She is very happy about Nikolai Rostov's attentions to her and believes that he loves her. She arrives at the home the Rostovs have taken. When she sees Natasha, she recognizes one who shares her grief, and they sob on one another's shoulders. Natasha knows that she cannot hold back any of the truth from Maria, so she just leads her into Andrew's room, saying, "No, not that, but worse. You will see. O Marie, he is too good, he cannot, he cannot live, because..." Upon seeing her brother, Maria understands what Natasha is talking about.

Andrew's body is doing better, but his spirit has changed. He is detached from earthly concerns, aloof, far away, as if he's trying to remember things. They bring Andrew's son in to see him. When Maria cries, Andrew reminds her that she knows the Gospel. Andrew's son takes a great liking to Natasha, and Natasha and Maria take turns by the side of the dying man. Prince Andrew feels that he is already half dead. He thinks it's strange that fate would bring Natasha back to him just for him to die. He has a dream that death is an awakening. In the last days Maria and Natasha feel that he's slipping away. He dies, and everyone cries for different earthly reasons. Maria and Natasha cry from the "emotion and awe that filled their souls before the simple and solemn mystery of death that had been accomplished before their eyes."

Part 12, Chapters 9-16 Analysis

Once again, Pierre has gotten himself into a dangerous situation because he craves it. The safe, wealthy life he has been handed is not for him. Pierre is ashamed of his name that means so much in Russia. The sharpshooters feel so guilty for this obviously unjust execution that they can't finish it. Pierre sees the guilt in their faces. In a despoiled church, Pierre finds a new mentor to replace Osip Alexyevitch, but this time his mentor is a person, who could have been one of his serfs in previous days. In squalor and hunger, Pierre is able to find solace in another human soul. He recognizes Karataev's good points and wants to be like him. The last time Maria and Natasha met, Maria was more than unimpressed with Natasha. Since then, Natasha has grown and changed into someone quite like Maria. Now they understand one another completely. Tolstoy insinuates that Andrew is too good to live on earth anymore. His consciousness has reached a level so high that earthly concerns only matter to him because he loves people who are concerned about them. Tolstoy manages to convince us that the afterlife really is something greater and better than earth life. Andrew slips away to where he wants to go, and he wants to go even though he finally has the love (from Natasha) that he has sought his whole life.

Part 13, Chapters 1-5

Part 13, Chapters 1-5 Summary

The Russian army moves to Tarutino, a central position along communication and supply lines. The French spend a month pillaging Moscow, while the Russians are quietly encamped in Tarutino. The French dissipate, and the Russians gain strength. The Russians have been sending men out to hunt now and again. One day, one of them, a Cossack, returns saying that Muat and his army are less than a mile away. The inevitable movement cannot be held back any longer. On the morning of the 4th, Kutuzov signs the disposition of the forces. The battle doesn't come off, so Kutuzov wants to wait a little longer, but Bennigsen, Konovnitsyn, and Toll want to do it the next day. Kutuzov has to acquiesce.

Part 13, Chapters 1-5 Analysis

Tolstoy pulls his readers back to a larger view once again at the beginning of a section to give a broader view of the conflict. Although the French still think they have the upper hand, the momentum is shifting to the other army. Kutuzov's patience pays off. The Russian army gains strength and waits until the time is exactly right. Kutuzov, symbolizing a god figure, knows the bigger picture, but people don't always pay attention to God's timetable. Kutuzov is now a decrepit old man, prone to fury when contradicted. Perhaps because of his physical state, the other generals don't pay him as much heed.

Part 13, Chapters 6-13

Part 13, Chapters 6-13 Summary

Next day, the troops are massed in their appointed places by evening. Toll decides that he doesn't like the position he's given, so he changes it. As a result, he and many of his men are killed early in the battle. A messenger comes to Kutuzov, reporting that Murat's troops are in retreat. Kutuzov orders his troops to advance. The whole battle is fought by one regiment. The battle is not as great and large as some generals hope, but it's enough to put Napoleon's army to flight. History is baffled by the self-destruction of Napoleon's army in Moscow. Of the many courses Napoleon could have taken, none would be as injurious as the one he chose: to stay in Moscow. Napoleon had presented Moscow with a new constitution, a municipal council, and comprehensive government. All of Napoleon's plans are a waste of time. The remaining inhabitants of Moscow do not take him seriously. "Napoleon in his activity all this time was like a child, sitting in a carriage, pulling the straps within it, and fancying he is moving it along." Pierre's clothing now consists of a dirty, tattered shirt, a pair of soldier's pants tied with string round the ankles, a full peasant's coat, and a peasant's cap. Physically he has changed a great deal. He has long tangled hair full of lice. His eyes, once slack, are calm and alert. He still loves Karataev, who is positive, resourceful, and very intelligent. Pierre's dreams now turn to the time he will be free. His companions think highly of him for his knowledge of languages, his generosity, his strength, and his gentleness. On the night of October 6th, the march of the retreating French army begins. The prisoners are to accompany the French army. Pierre has only a pair of shoes Karataev has made for him. One of the men is very ill, so they kill him. On their way out of their camp, they see a dead man propped up in the trees with soot on his face.

Part 13, Chapters 6-13 Analysis

Pride comes before the fall. Kutuzov prefers to abide by the philosophy of "just enough but not too much." It works. The regiments who seek greatness, like Toll's, lose several hundred men for nothing. Tolstoy is once again refuting the claim that Napoleon was a genius. The destruction of the French army is Tolstoy's latest evidence. Napoleon is clearly mad. He is taking possession of an abandoned city, trying to win the inhabitant's love and save them from their former leaders. The Russian people have won. Napoleon has not been able to pull off his great scheme to conquer Russia. Through horrible trials, Pierre has become the person he wants to be. He has determination of his own now and knows he can handle anything. His desires have fallen into line with his action; he has attained true integrity. The visitors of drawing rooms of Petersburg and Moscow couldn't see much in Pierre, but these common men in harsh conditions think he's a hero. On their way out, the prisoners can't help staring at the dead man in the trees, symbolizing the natural man in all of us.

Part 13, Chapters 14-19

Part 13, Chapters 14-19 Summary

Thanks to his height, Pierre can see over the great crowds as they push along. The French soldiers beat the Russian prisoners if they don't keep up or stray off the road. Pierre is afraid. Early in October another messenger comes to Kutuzov from Napoleon with overtures for peace. Kutuzov answers that there can be no question of peace. Tolstoy talks about a couple of men in the Russian army, Dokturov and Konovnitsyn, who are never given much praise but who are indispensable to the army. Like all old people, Kutuzov has trouble sleeping at night. He spends those quiet hours reflecting on the war and strategy. A messenger comes in to give him news that Napoleon has left Moscow. He says, "Lord, my Creator! Thou hast heard our prayer. Russia is saved. I thank Thee, O Lord." Then he bursts into tears. The Russian army nearly captures Napoleon one day during the retreat, but the Russian soldiers are distracted by the booty dropped down by the Emperor. All the Russian soldiers are clamoring for action and distinction. They kill and are killed by the thousands, unnecessarily

Part 13, Chapters 14-19 Analysis

For most Russians, the war is over, but for Pierre and the other prisoners there is still no end in sight. Napoleon cannot pull the wool over old Kutuzov's eye (he only has one eye). Tolstoy recognizes that the common soldiers, the ones who throw themselves in front of the fire, are the heroes of the war, and that battles could never be won without them. In his humility, Kutuzov never expected to win the war, as evident by his emotional and prayerful outbreak upon hearing news of Napoleon's evacuation of Moscow. Tolstoy again reminds us that pride leads to failure, never to success. Kutuzov's patience should have been emulated as the French retreat. Battle will only cause death in both camps.

Part 14, Chapters 1-6

Part 14, Chapters 1-6 Summary

Victory does not always bring the desired results. Hunger ensues because of the reckless burning of hay, and pillaging and war lead to death and despair. The French army is so dispirited that they huddle together in crowds, leaving their former regiments abolished. Denisov leads a band of irregulars, bands of marauding and foraging parties of soldiers. Without communicating with higher authorities, Denisov attacks a transport with his small band. Denisov comes across Petya Rostov. Petya begs Denisov to let him stay with him. He consents, and they ride off toward the edge of the woods. Tihon Shcherbaty, a peasant, is one of Denisov's men. He is the bravest and most useful man in their band. Tihon has captured a French soldier. He wanted the man's shoes, but they turn out to be no good. So he goes to get another soldier, but his shoes aren't any good either. They have a good laugh.

Part 14, Chapters 1-6 Analysis

Pulling back again, Tolstoy talks about what the French and Russian historians make of the ending of the war. The larger conflict has been resolved, but the human conflicts go on. The French army further disintegrates as winter sets in, and they become more afraid. Tolstoy uses the metaphor of ice melting to describe what is happening to the French army as they move westward. Denisov is putting himself and his men in harm's way, but he finds it exhilarating. Denisov has a flashback to the time that he spent with the Rostovs, and remembering their kindness is foreshadowing. At the beginning of the chapter, Denisov is reprimanded for his dangerous activity, but he shrugs it off and then allows a very young soldier to come with him. The kind of men who survive in these irregular bands are tough, like Tihon. It's no place for Petya Rostov. Denisov's premonitions will serve him well but won't be enough for Petya. The French certainly don't feel like laughing at this point, but the Russians are making sport out of the remaining conflict.

Part 14, Chapters 7-12

Part 14, Chapters 7-12 Summary

Petya tells Denisov all about his exploits in the military. He feels as though the exciting things are always happening where he is not. Petya, at sixteen years old, so wants to be liked by these older men he admires so that he keeps giving his things to them. He gives one man a coffee pot and another man some sweets. Dolohov joins Denisov and his men. After talking for a while, Dolohov says he's going to check out the French troops, and Petya begs to go. Dolohov says there's no need for him to go, and Denisov says he won't let him. Petya doesn't relent, so Dolohov finally gives in. Petya and Dolohov, dressed in French uniforms, ride up to the French camp. They speak to the sentinel, trying to get information about Colonel Gerard's whereabouts. Their foray is a success, and Petya is thrilled. Denisov is incredibly relieved when Petya turns up safe back in camp. Petya's fantasies, though, have been fueled by his success. He dreams he is conductor of a grand symphony. In the morning, he wakes to Denisov's orders for everyone to get ready. During the attack, Petya gallops to the spot where he hears firing and sees thick smoke. His horse steps on some mouldering ashes and stops short. Petya is thrown from his horse and then shot in the head by a French soldier. Denisov utters a sound that resembles the howl of a dog. Among the prisoners rescued in this attack is Pierre Bezuhov. Going back in time a few days, Karataev becomes ill with a fever but he must push onward. Pierre's feet are so blistered he thinks there's no way he can walk on them. He's grateful for the horse-flesh that nourishes him and the lice that help keep him warm.

Part 14, Chapters 7-12 Analysis

Petya fits the role of a typical youngest child. He wants so much to be liked by the older people around him, and he does what he can to please them. He is Pierre to the extreme, caring little for his own self-respect and caring mostly for what others think of him. Dolohov and Denisov, both veterans, understand the inherent danger in what Dolohov is doing, but neither of them withstands the begging of a teenage boy. It seems to be, once again, fate. Dolohov is very smooth and adroit in confrontations. The French sentinel wants the password, and although Dolohov doesn't know it, he gets by anyway. In Petya's young brain, he is now invincible, and every chance for conflict is a thrill. Having loved the Rostov family, Denisov is heartbroken. However, the Rostovs sacrifice one son to save another, as will be seen shortly. Pierre is utterly transformed, body and soul. Now that he has experienced true prison, he no longer feels that he can trap himself in the psychological prison he lived in before. He thinks about free will.

Part 14, Chapters 13-19

Part 14, Chapters 13-19 Summary

Karataev is not getting any better, but he still tries constantly to serve his friends. He tells Pierre a story about a merchant that he's told him six times before, but it makes as big an impact as ever. The prisoner convoy is getting up and going. Karataev cannot get up and appeals to Pierre with his eyes, but Pierre can't do anything for him. As the prisoners begin marching up the hill, the French soldiers shoot Karataev under the tree where he lay. The prisoners don't even turn around. They just keep marching. As he marches on, Pierre thinks of lessons Karataev has taught him. All of a sudden, the prisoners are rescued by Dolohov, Denisov, and the others. They give the prisoners clothing, boots, and bread. Pierre cannot speak. He begins sobbing and hugs the first soldier who comes up to him. Denisov buries Petya in a garden. From the 28th of October, the frosts begin, and the French retreat becomes more tragic. Men begin to freeze to death at night or get burned to death from getting to close to the fires. The Russian army continues to pursue the French. At Berezina, the French are thrown into confusion. Some drown, some surrender. Whoever can, runs away. The rest surrender or die. Napoleon runs away from his army. Tolstoy says, "And it never enters any one's head that to admit a greatness, immeasurable by the rule of right and wrong, is but to accept one's own nothingness and immeasurable littleness." Although the war had its terrible moments for the Russians, their main aim was satisfied, which was to rid their country of invaders. They had to act as a whip following a fleeing animal.

Part 14, Chapters 13-19 Analysis

Karataev talks about forgiveness just before he dies, just as Jesus Christ said "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do." Karataev symbolizes the Savior for Pierre, a personal savior who helps him through his transformation. The prisoners have seen too much to turn and mourn for their dear friend. They can't risk feeling too much, or their actions may lead them to doing something that would get them killed. The attack instigated by Dolohov and Denisov killed one young boy but saved many others. Tolstoy illustrates the principle of sacrifice, following up on the symbolism of Christ as Karataev earlier in Part 14. Tolstoy points out further evidence of Napoleon's lack of genius: He orders a retreat when his soldiers are not prepared for the winter. The French army is all but disintegrated, following the metaphor of ice melting. Tolstoy again hits on his theory that humility wins in the end. Those of the upper crust and those filled with pride cannot see clearly enough to find success in their lives and endeavors. Historians have evaluated the war differently, criticizing the Russians for different failings, but Tolstoy points out that they did what they needed to do.

Part 15, Chapters 1-8

Part 15, Chapters 1-8 Summary

Natasha and Maria find comfort in being together, though they don't talk much and avoid all references to the future. Natasha's health is failing again, and Maria asks the count and countess if Natasha can come with her to Moscow. They agree. Later in the day, news of Petya's death arrives. The countess is so distraught that she refuses to believe her precious Petya is dead. She shrieks and howls and won't eat or sleep. For three days Natasha never leaves her side but beckons her back to living. Maria puts off her departure to help at the Rostovs. She notices that Natasha is not well, having slept little and not taken care of herself. She puts Natasha to bed in the middle of the day. They leave for Moscow at the end of January.

Kutuzov wants to slow the pace of the Russian army's march. The weather is terrible and the men are exhausted. The Tsar is dissatisfied with Kutuzov, who is accused of blunders. Kutuzov has been criticized on all sides, but when he gives a speech to a group of soldiers after the battle of Krasnoe, the soldiers are so moved that they shout and guffaw. Kutuzov is moved by their appreciation of him. A regiment of 3000 musketeers has been reduced to 900 in the battle of Krasnoe. Without a word of command they build fires, make supper, count off their number, and take care of everything. The Russian soldiers are cold, hungry and have heads full of lice, but their dispositions are cheerful and optimistic

Part 15, Chapters 1-8 Analysis

Maria and Natasha feel a close bond because of their love for Andrew. They understand each other's pain. Natasha is about to be dealt another blow. This time, though, with her experiences with Andrew, she will have enough strength to lend to others. Because of what Natasha has been through with Andrew, she knows how to help her mother when they learn of Petya's death. As Andrew once did, now Natasha represents wisdom and patience because of all she's been through. Maria and Natasha have formed a lasting bond. Their friendship remains strong after their mourning for Andrew is lessened. Their suffering (Maria at the hand of her father and Natasha at the hand of society) has helped them to understand one another, and their loss of Andrew seals the bind. Tolstoy again wants to give Kutuzov the credit he's due. Because he was not flashy or prideful, historians have largely forgotten him. Kutuzov symbolizes Christ. Christ was not respected by those he saved while on earth. Likewise, Kutuzov has sacrificed his life in service of the Russian people. Tolstoy show his respect for Kutuzov through the common soldiers, the humble of society. In the same way, Christ received respect from the humbler elements of society, such as the shepherds who followed the star at his birth. This example is a stark contrast to the French at the end of the war. The Russian soldiers are orderly and self-sufficient. The Russians have resolved their inner conflicts.

Beyond being orderly and self-sufficient, the Russians are happy, which represents another contrast with the French army.

Part 15, Chapters 9-15

Part 15, Chapters 9-15 Summary

In the middle of the night, the Russian 5th company hears footsteps in the woods. It is Ramballe and Morel. They are hungry and weak. The Russians give these Frenchmen porridge and vodka, and they visit at the campfire for a long time. One soldier says, "They are men, too. Even the wormwood has its roots." Kutuzov reaches Vilna, where he is at home and among friends. He has twice been governor of Vilna. The Tsar is there and tells Kutuzov that he's displeased with the slowness of the pursuit of the French. Kutuzov is given the Order of St. George of the first rank. During his stay in Vilna, the Tsar is increasingly irritated with Kutuzov, so he transfers all power back to himself without openly talking to Kutuzov about the change. Nothing is left for Kutuzov to do, so he dies.

On the day of his rescue, Pierre sees the dead body of Petya Rostov, hears of Andrew's death a month after Borodino, and learns of his wife's death.

Denisov off-handedly mentions Helene's death to him, supposing that he has known about it for quite some time. He falls ill and gradually grows accustomed to the idea that nobody will drive him on tomorrow, that he could count on getting dinner every day. Then he feels the full magnitude of his freedom, including freedom from his wife. He has found faith and God. "All his life he had been looking far away over the heads of all around him, while he need not have strained his eyes, but had only to look in front of him." Pierre's cousin, who has never liked him, nurses him back to health and becomes fond of him. Pierre no longer has trouble deciding whether or not to give money to a petitioner. He just seems to know what to do and what not to do. He receives letters from Vasili, asking him to pay Helene's debts. He decides to go to Petersburg to settle his wife's affairs and then to Moscow to rebuild it.

Before the end of the year, Moscow's population exceeds its population from before the war. Dead bodies are taken out of the city, and food from the country is brought in. Count Rastoptchin starts writing his posters again. On Pierre's third day in Moscow, he hears that Maria Bolkonsky is in town, so he calls on her that evening. Maria's drawing room is dimly lit. She is wearing a black dress and has a companion in a black dress, though Pierre can't see who it is. Pierre asks about the Rostovs, and Maria says, "You don't recognize her?" He can't believe how Natasha has changed, how stern, thin, and pale her face is, but he realizes that he loves her.

Part 15, Chapters 9-15 Analysis

Tolstoy turns the conflict away from man vs. man at the end of this chapter when all the soldiers look at the sky and see signs of frost. The conflict is turned to a higher authority: man vs. nature. Clearly, the Tsar doesn't like Kutuzov, but he underhandedly

shows his appreciation. Russia uses up a great resource in Kutuzov, and when the resource is no longer needed, it dries up and goes away. Like Natasha, Pierre is a new person. He has found what he is looking for and now has great strength within. They are not pure and undefiled as defined by society and culture, but they have been transformed through their Savior and through experience. Pierre is now decisive, self-confident, and well-liked. People will no longer be able to take advantage of him. Through the fire of adversity, he has gotten rid of character traits that led him into the hands of those who would use him for their own ends. The conflict in his soul is gone. It doesn't take long for Moscow to get back to normal. Tolstoy introduces a new theme that will prevail throughout the epilogue: no matter what happens to people, they can rise again and bring normalcy back to life. The war has so changed everyone that they must get to know each other again. They must learn to recognize their exteriors, as well as their interiors. Dynamic characters make for an interesting, forward-moving novel, even more so than plot development.

Part 15, Chapters 16-20

Part 15, Chapters 16-20 Summary

Pierre tells Natasha about Petya's death, and Maria tells Pierre about Andrew's last days. Pierre comments on how wonderful it is that Andrew saw Natasha again. Natasha opens up and talks about Andrew; she hasn't done so since Andrew's death. When Andrew's son comes in, he looks so like Andrew that Pierre has to look away. Pierre stays for dinner. At dinner, the women want to hear Pierre's stories as a prisoner and about the death of his wife. He tells them of Karataev, about saving the child from the fire, about everything he can think of. When they finish talking it's 3 o'clock in the morning. That night Pierre can't sleep. He wants to marry Natasha. Pierre goes to Maria's house again the next night, goes to church with them, and stays to visit, but they don't have as much to talk about. Pierre asks Maria if she thinks he has a chance with Natasha. She tells him to write to Natasha's parents and leave the rest to her. As Pierre looks through his dead wife's papers, he feels nothing but pity that she had not known the happiness he knows now. His love for Natasha spreads so that he loves everyone. Natasha is happy, too. Maria is surprised at the change in Natasha and initially takes it to mean that she hadn't really loved her brother. Seeing how happy she is, she forgets that thought. Natasha is so excited about Pierre and also excited that she and Maria will be sisters-in-law.

Part 15, Chapters 16-20 Analysis

Coming together and talking about their losses is exactly what these three characters need. It helps them to heal. It helps them to resolve their conflicts and to relate once more. Natasha sums up the change in Pierre when she says to Maria, "He has become so clean and smooth and fresh; as though he had just come out of a bath; do you understand? Out of a moral bath. Isn't it so?" A moral bath could be compared to a baptism. Pierre finally gets a shot at a true romance, not a fabricated romance such as the one he experienced with Helene. This is the happiness that Pierre has always searched for, the happiness of a relationship built on trust and integrity, which he now understands and possesses in himself. True love, free from immoral motives, leads to true happiness. Pierre and Natasha have finally found it. The resolution of the main conflict is within the souls of these main characters. The resolution of the physical and political conflict resolves itself through the course of history. Each person must work out the conflict they came to earth to resolve.

Epilogue

Epilogue Summary and Analysis

Natasha and Pierre Bezuhov marry in 1813, and live in Petersburg. Count Rostov dies that same year, and the family is broken up.

Nikolai is beset by creditors who never hounded Count Rostov while he was alive. With his familial responsibilities, Nikolai feels that he cannot return to the army. He borrows 30,000 rubles from his brother-in-law, Pierre, to pay the most pressing creditors.

Sonya takes care of Countess Rostov and helps Nikolai hide their financial troubles from his mother. Nikolai sees no end to his troubles in sight.

Princess Maria visits the Rostovs and is received coldly, especially by Nikolai, so she resolves not to visit again. Nikolai, at his mother's insistence, goes to return her call, though, and they recognize their love for one another.

Maria and Nikolai marry in the autumn of 1813. Countess Rostov and Sonya move in with Maria and Nikolai, which is difficult for Sonya. Maria is jealous of the time Nikolai spends outside. He finds that he is passionate about farming and agriculture. They often don't see eye to eye, but they love each other very much.

Sonya grows more and more tolerant, loving, and patient. She never marries but is endlessly helpful with the children and household.

By 1820, Pierre and Natasha have four children, and Natasha finds that there's nothing in the world she likes better than motherhood. She doesn't hire wet nurses for her children but nurses them herself. She finds little pleasure in high society, preferring the comforts of home with her husband and children.

Nikolinka Bolkonsky, Andrew's son, is now fifteen years old. He adores his Uncle Pierre and looks forward to every moment spent with him. He is a thin, delicate, intelligent boy.

Pierre still remembers the lessons he learned from his greatest teacher, Platon Karataev.

Life moves on for the Bezuhovs and Rostovs and for the whole of Russia. The Napoleonic Wars forever changed the families of Russia. The Rostovs lost Petya. The Bolkonskys lost Andrew. Life continues on and finds new, vibrant paths.

Characters

Prince Andrew Bolkonsky

Prince Andrew is a dashing, romantic figure. For much of the book, he and Natasha are in love but are separated by the war. In the beginning he is married to the pregnant Princess Elizabeth (Lise), "the little princess," and is active in the army. At the Battle of Austerlitz, he is wounded and listed as dead, but he shows up alive just as his wife dies while giving birth to their son, Nicholas. When he falls in love with Natasha Rostov, he asks her to marry him right away, but his domineering father tells him to wait for a year to see if their love will endure. He is wounded at the Battle of Borodino and again news comes that he is dead, but while Moscow is being evacuated wounded soldiers are brought to the Rostov house and Andrew is one of them. Nastasha stays with him through the evacuation, but he eventually dies. In the end, he reaches a new level of spiritual enlightenment.

Elizabeth Bolkonskaya

Elizabeth is Prince Andrew's wife. She dies while giving birth to their son, Nicholas.

Mary Bolkonskaya

Mary is the sister of Prince Andrew. She is a devoutly religious woman who stays devoted to her father even though her devotion nearly ruins her life. Early in the book she is engaged to Anatole Kuragin, but her father objects, and she finds that she cannot ignore his objection. While Andrew goes off to war, Mary stays on the family estate, watching after her father and Andrew's son, Nicholas Bolkonsky. Her father, Prince Nicholas Bolkonsky, becomes more and more verbally abusive in his old age, and Mary becomes more involved with the religious pilgrims who stop at their estate. When Nicholas Rostov stops at Bolkonsky, he protects her from the peasants and they fall in love. After her father's death she is immersed in guilt, feeling that he was not so bad after all and that it was awful of her to not be with him in his last moments. She ends up marrying Nicholas.

Napoleon Bonaparte

Napolean is the Emperor of France. Napoleon mistakenly thinks that his army's progress is due to his own skill, not taking into account the role of fate. On the eve of the great Battle of Borodino, for instance, he is more concerned with a painting of his infant son than with devising an effective battle plan for his troops.

Pierre Buzekhov

Pierre is the central character of this novel and its moral conscience. When he first appears, he is a loud, obnoxious man only interested in himself and the next party.Pierre is forced to change when his father dies: after some uncertainty over the will, it is determined that the old Count did recognizePierre as his son. Suddenly rich and titled as Count Buzekhov,Pierre finds himself very popular. He marries Princess Helene Kuragin.

After hearing rumors of an affair between Helene and Dolokhov,Pierre challenges him to a duel. After wounding him,Pierre escapes, and while he is traveling across the country he is invited by an old acquaintance to join the Freemasons, a secret society. As a Mason,Pierre releases his servants and spends millions on charitable endeavors, often without knowing that he is being swindled. He is still married to Helene, but they lead different lives, and he finds himself attracted to Natasha Rostov. As the battle is waged against the French outside ofMoscow,Pierre hangs around curiously asking questions of the officers; after his return toMoscow, he plans to Ml Napoleon. He is captured after saving a child from a burning building, and is taken as a prisoner when the French march back to Paris .

After the war, when he is freed,Pierre marries Natasha. They have children, and at the end of the novel he is involved in a secret society that gathers against the government's knowledge to overthrow the social structure that kept men as serfs. The society described resembles the one that led the Decembrist uprising that was to take place inRussiafive years later.

Vasili Dmitrich Denisov

Denisov is the model of a professional military man. Angered at the inept bureaucracy that is not getting provisions to his troops, Denisov rides off to the division headquarters and threatens a commander, which gets his troops food but makes Denisov subject to court martial. Returning from the division headquarters, Denisov is shot by a French sharpshooter. When Nicholas Rostov tries to visit him at the hospital the place quarantined with typhus, with only one doctor for four hundred patients. Eventually, the court martial is averted, but Denisov retires from the service disillusioned. At the end of the book he is staying with the family of Count Nicholas at their estate.

Fedya Dolokhov

Dolokhov comes off as a rogue, a man of small means who manages to impress society's elite and get ahead by using his social position. As a gambler, he wins thousands off of Nicholas Rostov. As a lover, he fights a duel with Pierre Bezukhov over rumors about Dolokhov andPierre's wife. He is wounded in the duel, but that makes him even more of a romantic figure. He proposes to Sonya, but she rejects him. While the Russian forces are chasing the French army out of the country, Dolokhov makes the

bold move of riding into the enemy camp in disguise on a scouting mission; young Petya Rostov idolizes him for his courage.

Boris Drubetskoy

Drubetskoy's rise in the military is due to the social machinations of his mother, who is a wealthy society widow and not afraid to ask, or even peg, highly-placed officers to give her son a good position in the army

Platon Karataev

Platon is a Russian soldier who gives spiritual comfort to Nicholas.

Anatole Kuragin

Anatole is a scoundrel. His role in the book is to break up the engagement of Natasha and Prince Andrew. He starts paying attention to her out of a sense of adventure, considering her as another in his string of conquests. When he proposes to her and arranges to elope with her, even his friend and companion Dolokhov finds the scheme ridiculous. Anatole is already married inPoland, and the priest and witnesses that he arranges for the wedding are gambling friends willing to go along with a hoax. The wedding plans fail to transpire when, approaching the house, Anatole is asked in by a huge doorman, and he runs away instead. Later, at a field hospital with an injury, Prince Andrew is put on a stretcher next to Anatole, the man who ruined his wedding plans, who is having his leg amputated. Anatole later dies of complication from that operation.

Helene Kuragin

Helen is Anatole's sister, and she is every bit as devious as he is. WhenPierre inherits his father's fortune, she marries him. After he fights a duel with Dolokhov over her honor, they lead separate lives. Helene is known inPetersburg polite society. She converts to Roman Catholicism, and, under the pretense that to the church her marriage toPierre is invalid, plans to marry one of her two suitors. When she dies, it is from a botched operation to cure an illness that is not clearly described in the book, indicating that it might be an abortion: 'They all knew very well that the enchanting countess' illness arose from an inconvenience resulting from marrying two husbands at the same time, and that the Italian's cure consisted in removing such inconvenience."

Kutuzov

The commander of the Russian Army, the novel follows Kutuzov through some of his decision-making process, especially focusing on his wisdom in ignoring the popular decision that he should attack the French army as it was fleeing back home.

Natasha Rostov

In the course of the story, Natasha (also known as Nataly) grows from a petulant child to a mature woman who knows the sorrows of war. Natasha is pretty and flirtatious, and the young soldiers are smitten with her. When she and Andrew are engaged, she is delighted to feel like a grown-up, but as time goes by she grows impatient. Kuragin, convincing her that she is in love with him, arranges to elope with her, even though he is already secretly married. When Andrew learns about it, he breaks up with her. She tries to poison herself, in shame.

Later, whenMoscow is being evacuated, Natasha is the one who convinces her parents to leave some of their fine possessions behind so that they can take some wounded soldiers. When she finds out that Prince Andrew is one of the wounded, she writes to his sister Mary and together they nurse her until his death. Natasha marriesPierre after he is the only person who she can talk to about Andrew's death.

NatalyRostov

See Natasha Rostov

Nicholas Rostov

Presented as a typical example of a nobleman,Rostov lived a wasteful life with little intellectual or spiritual depth. Early on he joins the army because he needs the money. He loses great sums of money gambling. Passing by the town near the Bolkonsky estate, he finds the peasants accusing Mary of trying to steal their land by making them evacuate. His aristocratic sensibilities are offended; unarmed, he makes the mob rulers quiet down and turn away. At the end of the book he is a retired gentleman, arguing with his brother-in-law Pierre that he should leave the government alone to handle the situation of the serfs properly.

Peter Rostov

The youngest member of theRostov family, Peter is mostly forgotten in the background, playing childish games, until, at age sixteen, he enlists in the army. He is killed in the same attack that freesPierre from the retreating French forces.

Sonya

Sonya is a pathetic figure, always in love but too meek to do anything about it. She is a cousin of and lives with theRostov family, and early in the book she and Nicholas Rostov pronounce their love for one another. His family, in bad financial shape, object

and hope that he will find a woman with a better dowry to offer. Sonya is Natasha's confidante, and stands by her during her various disastrous love affairs.

Themes

Class Conflict

Although there is not much open conflict between members of the different classes of this novel, there is an underlying tension between them.

Members of the older generation, such as Countess Rostova and Prince Nicholas Bolkonsky, verbally abuse the peasants who are under their command. In a patronizing manner, they openly discuss how lost the peasants would be without their guidance. At the same time, there are characters like Platon Karataev, a poor man who leads a simple and happy life.

The closest the novel comes to an open-class conflict is when Mary is confronted by peasants at Bogucharovo, near her family's estate, as she is planning to evacuate before the French arrive. Tolstoy is clear about the fact that they act, not out of resentment for the social privilege Mary has enjoyed at their expense, but because of their fear that they have no leader. They are starving, but will not accept the grain that Mary offers them because they fear angering the French. The greatest danger that they pose to her is blocking her horse when she plans to leave. When Nicholas arrives they automatically fall under his spell and comply with his demands without hesitation, apparently in recognition of his superior breeding and intelligence. He orders the leaders of the insurrection bound, and several men in the crowd offer their belts for that purpose. "How can one talk to the masters like that?" says a drunken peasant to his former leader as he is being led away. "What were you thinking of, you fool?"

Duty and Responsibility

The greatest motivation for the noble families in this novel is their duty to the serfs in their care. In other words, the upper classes believe that they have the responsibility to care for their serfs, looking after them as one would look after children. This assumption stems from the common perception that the serfs were not intelligent enough to survive without their help. To do this is an important part of the code of honor; any nobleman that violates this trust is recognized and punished by his peers.

In fact, this code of conduct controls almost every aspect of upper-class life. It dictates how a gentleman should act in any given situation; to deviate from it invited the censure of one's peers. After the drunken revelers at a poker party throw a policeman in the canal, the act is derided as improper for well-bred gentlemen:

And to think it is Count Vladomirovich Bezukhov's son who amuses himself in this sensible manner 1 And he was said to be so educated and clever That is all that his foreign education has done for him 1

Later, Bezukhov, undergoes a series of transformations that raise his sense of social responsibility. He joins the Freemasons with the idea of working among society's elite to help the poor. He visits the army at the Battle of Borondino and tours the field; half-crazed, he decides he should get a gun and shoot Napoleon. In peacetime, he works with a secret organization to rearrange the social order and free the serfs from their oppression.

Art and Experience

Any historical novel such as *War and Peace* raises questions about the interplay between fiction and reality. The battle scenes in this novel are commended for their realism, but Tolstoy did not actually experience these battles; instead, they are drawn from his exhaustive research of the war against France and his own experiences in the Crimean War At the end of the novel, Tolstoy dispenses of the fictional story altogether and talks directly to the reader about how historians impact history. Reality is too large and complex for humans to comprehend, Tolstoy contends, and so historians cannot cover all of the diverse aspects of historical events.

Success and Failure

A large part of what drives Tolstoy in the novel is his rejection of conventional historical perceptions of the war: Napoleon, who eventually lost inRussia, is viewed as a shrewd commander today, while the Russian commander, Kutuzov, is dismissed as a blunderer. As Tolstoy perceived the situation, those detractors who considered the Russians as failures because they did not destroy Napoleon's army were not accounting for the army's weakened condition. Moreover, those who credited Napoleon with brilliant strategy were not taking into consideration his good luck. In the end, Tolstoy reminds readers of the role of chance involved in life, and the sometimes small difference between success and failure.

Style

Structure

Since *War and Peace* was first published, critics have discussed the ambiguous structure of the novel. Some contend that Tolstoy raced through the book, putting down ideas as they came to him; therefore, any structure in the story is accidental. As evidence of this, they point to the final chapters, which seem if the author's attention was distracted and he followed his interests rather than doing what the novel would require for completion. Some critics consider the free-floating structure to the appropriate device for the ideas that Tolstoy was trying to convey about free will, and they credit him with utilizing a structure that permitted him to balance necessity with chance.

Some critics perceive a clear pattern to the overall book: the alternation of chapters about war with chapters about peace; the symmetry and repetition in the amount of time spent on the march to Moscow and the march from it; in the scenes of blithe society and the scenes of existential angst; and in the scenes about love and the scenes about death. The question of whether Tolstoy planned the patterns that can be found in his book or whether they were coincidences is an issue that will be debated throughout history.

Setting

In the early nineteenth century,Russiawas going through a tumultuous and transitional time. The old feudal system was disappearing. Conventional ideas of honor were losing ground to pragmatic ideas from the Enlightenment. Military victories were seen as a result of luck. Tolstoy took advantage of these unique circumstances to set his sprawling tale of love, war, and changing political and social ideas. It took genius to recognize the potential of this setting and exploit it, but his philosophical case was helped greatly by the fact that this was a situation rich in possibility.

Hero

Prince Andrew is a hero in a conventional sense: he overcomes initial fear in battle to ride bravely against the enemy, and he has a beautiful woman waiting for him at home, dreaming of his return. He has qualities, though, that are less than heroic, such as a fear of commitment. He is all too willing to accept his father's demand that he put off his marriage for a year. During that time, Natasha is drawn to another man, Anatole, who almost ruins her socially. In the end, Andrew remains an idealized hero by dying a soldier's death after he has been reunited with his beloved.

On the other handPierre is more of a modern hero. He is not a warrior, but a thinker: the struggle he fights is with his conscience, after he is made rich with an unexpected

inheritance. He is not a dashing figure, and he bears his love for Natasha silently instead of declaring it. Yet in the end, he is the one who wins her hand.

Narrator

Toward the end of the story, Tolstoy increasingly addresses the reader directly, stepping out from behind the persona of the third-person narrator who has told the stories of the characters. Throughout the novel, there are breaks from the action where the theoretical aspects of war are discussed. Sometimes these are written like textbooks, describing troop movements; sometimes the important figures of the war are discussed as characters, describing their specific movements and thoughts. At the end, the narration directly addresses the reader, referring to thoughts presented as having come from "I," apparently abandoning the structure of the story to talk about philosophy. The narrator becomes a character who hijacks the novel by the second and last epilogue, lecturing his audience about his theories of historical truth.

Historical Context

The Napoleonic Wars

In 1789, the French Revolution swept throughFrance, marking one of the true turning points in Western civilization. In part, this revolt was inspired by the success of the American Revolution, which had rejected the old English monarchy and established a new country based on democratic principles. Mostly, though, the French Revolution was a protest against the widespread abuses of the French aristocracy, who lived in decadence while the lower classes had to endure higher taxes and economic restrictions. When the peasants realized that the French government was going to use force against protesters, they became violent. The violence escalated as the people systematically began to eliminate anyone of aristocratic lineage. After a long fight, King Louis IX was beheaded inParis in 1793. There followed a two-year period called the Reign of Terror, during which the revolutionary leaders executed more than 17,000 people.

During this time, France's enemies tried to take advantage of the situation As a result,Francewas constantly at war. Out of all of this confusion, conservative elements in the government supported the rise of military commander Napoleon Bonaparte, whose solution to the government's instability was to take control. He was appointed First Consul by the constitution of 1799, and in 1802 he appointed himself that position for life In 1804, a new constitution appointed him Emperor, a title which was to pass down to his heirs.

Napoleon's influence was seen in almost all aspects of French social life However, his true interest was in waging war. As Englandand Francehad always been enemies, he aimed to conquer England; but since Englandwas the most powerful and important country in the world at that time, his plans were foiled. He turned his attention to Russia. The Treaty of Tilsit, which he signed with Russia's emperor Alexander I in 1807, divided Europe into half: the French controlledHolland, Westphalia, Spam, and Italy. By 1809 Napoleon was the ruler of most Europe, except for Russian and England In 1812 he invadedRussiawith 500,000 troops, a situation depicted in *War and Peace.*

Emancipation of the Serfs

From the 1600s until the middle of the nineteenth century, the Russian economy had been based upon an economic principle of serfdom. Serfs were agricultural laborers, legally bound to work on large estates and farms. Moreover, serfs were owned by the people who owned the land they worked on. The serf could buy his freedom or work it off, but this happened rarely (serfs were always males, female peasants were attached to spouses or parents and, likewise, the property of the landowners). Landowners had a responsibility to take care of their serfs, and in hard times they might have to incur losses to make sure that their serfs were all adequately fed.

This social system was always fraught with tension. As in *War and Peace,* when the war broke up society and forced landlords to flee their land, open rebellion was only avoided by those serfs who felt loyalty to the tradition. In America, the slave system that was in place at the same time was justified by theories of one race being inferior to another, but the Russian system had even less justification for saying why one human had a right to rule over another Many members of the aristocracy realized this, and in the years after the Napoleonic Wars they banded together to form the secret societies that would lead the Decembrist uprising.

The Decembrist uprising was the first real revolution of modernRussia. In 1817 landowners started forming secret societies, patterned on societies such as the Masonic Order. These societies, such as the Society of Russian Knights and the Union of Welfare, started as gentlemen's clubs; but as they grew in number their rhetoric became more revolutionary. When Tsar Alexander I died unexpectedly in December of 1825, there was confusion about who was to assume power,-and in the temporary confusion about who was to be the next ruler the members of the uprising were able to gather three thousand soldiers to their cause. Alexander's successor, Tsar Nicholas, gathered fifteen thousand soldiers; the result was a massacre in

Senate Square. Members of the secret societies were gathered up and jailed. After trials, the leaders were executed and over a hundred received jail sentences, but revolutionaries inRussiasince then have acted in the names of the Decembrists.

Not surprisingly, Nicholas' reign was conservative in its nature and intolerant of dissent, but even he realized that the days of the old aristocracy were disappearing. He appointed commissions to study the question of serfdom In 1855, when his son Alexander II became took power, it was clear that the country was headed for chaos, that the serf system would not survive. He had a committee work for four years on the right way for Russiato evolve beyond the serf structure with the least change.

The system that Alexander announced with his Imperial Manifesto Emancipating the Serfs arranged for land to be divided: landlords were to keep half of their land, and communes, or *mirs,* were to distribute the other half equally between the serfs. The peasants had a forty-nine year period to pay back the cost of their land. This proclamation was read at churches throughout Russiain February of 1861, two years before Tolstoy began writing *War and Peace.* These reforms still left the former serfs, now peasants, under the control of a government ruled by an aristocracy. The issues of freedom and of class continued to boil inRussia, and eventually led to the Russian Revolution in 1917.

Critical Overview

Much of the earliest critical reaction to *War and Peace* focused on how well Tolstoy had accurately portrayed historical events in Russia. Although Tolstoy took great pains to research the historical documents, he did not feel obliged to stick firmly to the common historical interpretations. Still, since many critics had lived through the events described, while many others had grown up hearing about them, it was difficult for critics to not talk about how Tolstoy's version related to their own. In general, they found the novel to be quite accurate.

Some critics took exception with the way that Tolstoy had presented the military commanders as less instrumental in the outcome of the war. At the other extreme were those critics who faulted Tolstoy for failing to improve the social consciousness of the time. Edward Wasiolek explains that radical critic Dmitry Pisarev commented that the first half of the book, which was all that was published before his death, was "a nostalgic tribute to the gentry."

Wasiolek also relates the comments of N. K. Strakhov, whose criticism of the novel he describes as "the best criticism on *War and Peace* at the time, and possibly the best in Russian since." He credits Strakhov for his appreciation of the psychology of the novel and for recognizing the fact, which is commonly accepted today, that Tolstoy's greatness was in being able to render a full character in just a few words. Strakhov appreciated the novel, but he could not fully account for its greatness: as he noted, "among all the various characters and events, we feel the presence of some kind of firm and unshakable principle on which the world of the novel maintains itself."

The ambiguity of that "firm and unshakable principle" was what earned the book a lukewarm reception when it was translated into English. Matthew Arnold, in his review for *Fortnightly Review,* noted that Tolstoy wrote about "life" but not "an." Perhaps the most lasting criticism by an English-speaking author was that of novelist Henry James. In his introduction to the book *The Tragic Muse,* as in the introductions to most of his works. James considered philosophical matters of art. Considering Tolstoy and Alexandre Dumas, the French author of *The Three Musketeers* and *The Count of Maine* ***Cristo,*** James wondered, "What do such large loose baggy monsters, with their queer elements of the accidental and the arbitrary, artistically *mean?"* He went on to assort that "there is life and life, and as waste is only life sacrificed and thereby prevented from 'counting,' I delight in a deep-breathing economy and organic form."

After the Russian Revolution in 1917, Tolstoy fell into favor with new Communist government.

Up until then, his literary reputation was maintained by people who had known him (he died in 1910) and a few stalwart fans. In a 1924 article, the author Maxim Gorky relates Lenin talking about *War and Peace* in the Kremlin in 1918: "'He, brother, is an artist! ... Whom could one put next to him inEurope"?' Then [Lenin] answered himself 'No one.'" It was not long before Tolstoy studies went beyond personal reminiscences to intellectual

scholarship in Russia. At a time when many other significant Russian authors were banned because of their views, Tolstoy was embraced as a fore-sighted nobleman who wrote about the value of common people and the arbitrary nature of class distinctions.

Today, Tolstoy's career is divided into two eras: the spiritualism of the later novellas and the sweeping romances of the earlier novels, such as *War and Peace* and *Anna Karenina.* Critics perceive within *War and Peace* one phase of his life leading into the other: how the prodigious novelist of the 1860s and 1870s evolved into the thoughtful spiritual man he was by the turn of the century. There is no question of Tolstoy's greatness today.

Criticism

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- Critical Essay #2
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Critical Essay #1

David Kelly is an instructor of Creative Writing and Literature at College of Lake County jznd Oakton Community College inIllinois. In the following essay, Kelly discusses why the people most likely to avoid reading War and Peace *are the ones who would probably enjoy and benefit from it most.*

It would be difficult to question the quality of Leo Tolstoy's *War and Peace.* Although most critics would not go as far as E. M. Forster did in *Aspects of the Novel,* proclaiming this to be the greatest novel ever written, all would swear to its overall excellence. As with any work, critics consider different ideas about its relative merits and weaknesses, no matter how revered.

Still, with such universal acclaim, no one ever feels the need to ask why *War and Peace* isn't read more often□anyone who has ever looked at it on a bookshelf, taking up the space of four or five average novels, knows at a glance the secret of its unpopularity. It's huge. All across the world *War and Peace* is mentioned in pop culture, but usually it is discussed in terms of how difficult the speaker's education was, or would have been, if they had actually gone ahead with things like reading big novels.

Literary critics tend to skip quickly past this issue of the book's enormous size, although the general public can never get past it. In the literary world, bringing up a book's length is as tasteless as mentioning its price□both being worldly concerns, not artistic considerations. Unfortunately, the result is a huge gap between the values of critics and the values of readers, especially students. Many students find the page count intimidating, and would be just as happy reading three hundred pages of nonsense as a thousand worthwhile pages. This is where the jokes about *War and Peace* come in, reinforcing the idea that it is not only unimportant, but is ridiculous. Students end up making their decision about whether or not to read it without ever looking at a page, judging the book by the distance between its covers. To students who do not care for literature this book seems the most dreaded of all possibilities.

Actually, this is the book that students who do not like literature have been asking for. It is not too clever, too wound up in an artistic style, to be appealing to the general reader. We all feel life's pace□its mix of chance and fate□and some people find themselves particularly irritated by the way that life is compressed to fit into a book of a few hundred pages. They sorely miss the rich incidental details that are trimmed off on the edges of the writer's frame. Young readers, who are dissatisfied with books that don't represent life, need a book like this: one that can take bends, back up, or plow straight ahead, according to what happens in the world we know□not according to some literary theory. Ernest J Simons' classic examination of *War and Peace* quoted an anonymous reader saying it best: "if life could write it would write just as Tolstoy did."

Of course, all writers write about life in their own way, but what makes this case different is that *War and Peace* is successful at reflecting a true pace of life without having to dwell upon how poignant it is or oversell its own sensitivity. It is not difficult to

understand. The book has something in it to remind readers of all of then: own experiences. Working with such a long form gives Tolstoy freedom to follow the lives of his characters as they zig and zag, as they live out their intentions or fall to fate's control.

Freedom is what *War and Peace* is about, although Tolstoy does not formally declare this intention until nearly twelve hundred pages are done.

By that time, after we have felt the looseness of his style, the emphasis on freedom of the mind is no surprise. The feeling of freedom takes time to establish. A novel that is tightly plotted can get to its point in a few sentences, but these are the books that raise the suspicions of those wary readers who hate the artificiality of art. For an author like Tolstoy to follow the rhythms of life, especially the easygoing lives of the leisured class, means taking time.

The idea of freedom, which Tolstoy talks about in the Second Epilogue, is evident in the way that this book came to be, having ended up a far, far different thing than it was when he first thought of it. It originally spanned over fifty years□at the pace *War and Peace* as we know it unravels, that would come out to nearly five thousand pages. When the idea first came to Tolstoy, the character Pierre Bezukhov was to be a veteran of the Decembrist uprising, returning toMoscow in 1856 after being exiled inSiberia for thirty years for his part in the uprising. That led the story back to 1825, but writing about the upnsing raised the broader question: Who were these revolutionaries 9 They were Russian noblemen who had tried to overthrow the government to gain freedom for the country's peasants. What gave them the idea to act against their own self-interests? Searching for the answer to that question took Tolstoy even deeper into the past.

Eventually, the sections taking place in 1856 and 1825 were dropped from the novel. Instead, the action begins in 1805, when the major characters are young adults and the Russian aristocracy is first being politicized by the threat of Napoleon, and concludes in 1820, when Pierre is just starting to discuss the ideas that later led to the Decembrist uprising. This flexibility led the book in directions that could not have been anticipated when Tolstoy started it□directions that the readers do not see coming. Reluctant readers might not buy the idea that the book is a "thrill-ride," but it certainly plays out unlike any other novel, which in itself should cut short most objections to reading it

To get the full effect readers need to take their time unraveling this book, which is not the same thing as saying that it is difficult to understand. The language is not difficult, and the situations are clear enough, but the wealth of details just will not be understood as quickly as busy people want Of course, there will always be readers who think that any novel that does not happen in their own towns within their own lifetimes is irrelevant to their life.

They foolishly think that human nature has somehow become different as the times have changed, or that it is significantly different from one place to another. There isn't much that will change these people's minds, because they will always find excuses to hate reading.

It is one of the great ironies of literature that many people will not touch *War and Peace* because they do not consider themselves to be fans of history. They feel that history is not real or relevant. These people could have sat down with Leo Tolstoy and, language problems aside, gotten along just fine. He disliked history, too□at least, the way that historians present it. The novel's long, winding road leads to its Second Epilogue, where Tolstoy addresses the problems with historical interpretation of the past and how he thinks events should be recorded as time passes. It is almost beyond worth mentioning to say that anyone who feels that she or he cannot understand history has not had it presented to them in the right way before. They might have been told about "heroic" deeds that were obviously done out of desperation, not good character, or heroic figures with despicable personal lives, or "common" people who are more interesting than the focal subjects of history. Overgeneralization makes historians liars, a fact that bothered Tolstoy as much as it bothers people who feel that reading stories based in the past are not worth the effort.

Sometimes people feel that they are not qualified to read *War and Peace* because they do not know enough about its time and setting. The book certainly mentions a lot of historical detail, but it also explains the significance of the details. If it did not explain the references within the novel, it would not have to be so frighteningly long□that is what all of those hundreds of pages are for All one should do before starting is to take out a map, find France, find Moscow, and know that in 1812 the French army marched across Europe and Russia to Moscow, then quickly turned around and marched back to France. Any further knowledge of the events of the time□why they advanced, why they retreated, who the principle actors were□would be nice, but it is not necessary.

There will always be people who do not want to read□whatever their reasons, and there are millions of them, they feel that reading is not worth their time, and, if you haven't heard it all your life, *War and Peace* takes time to read. But it is not much more reader-friendly than books a fraction of its size. It is not much more difficult to figure out what is going on than it is to catch up with the characters on a soap opera, and it is, in the end, a better experience: soap operas do not consider the questions of reality and freedom that make non-readers shun novels in the first place.

Source: David Kelly, in an essay for *Novels for Students.* Gale, 2000.

Critical Essay #2

In the following excerpt. Maude praises Tolstoy for his artistry, for "clearness of form and vividness of colour," for showing things as his characters saw them, and for presenting the soul of man "with unparalleled reality."

Nothing can be simpler than most of the occurrences of *War and Peace.* Everyday events of family life: conversations between brother and sister, or mother and daughter, separations and reunions, hunting, holiday festivities, dances, card-playing, and so forth, are all as lovingly shaped into artistic gems as is the battle of Borodino itself. Whatever the purpose of the book may be, its success depends not on that purpose but on what Tolstoy did under its influence, that is to say it depends on a highly artistic execution.

If Tolstoy succeeds in fixing our gaze on what occupied his soul it is because he had full command of his instrument□which was art. Not many readers probably are concerned about the thoughts that directed and animated the author, but all are impressed by his creation. Men of all camps□those who like as well as those who dislike his later works□unite in tribute to the extraordinary mastery shown in this remarkable production. It is a notable example of the irresistible and all-conquering power of art.

But such art does not arise of itself, nor can it exist apart from deep thought and deep feeling. What is it that strikes everyone in *War and Peace?* It is its clearness of form and vividness of colour. It is as though one saw what is described and heard the sounds that are uttered. The author hardly speaks in his own person; he brings forward the characters and then allows them to speak, feel, and act; and they do it so that every movement is true and amazingly exact, in full accord with the character of those portrayed. It is as if we had to do with real people, and saw them more clearly than one can in real life ...

Similarly Tolstoy usually describes scenes or scenery only as reflected in the mind of one of his characters. He does not describe the oak that stood beside the road or the moonlight night when neither Natasha nor Prince Andrew could sleep, but he describes the impressions the oak and the night made on Prince Andrew The battles and historic events are usually described not by informing us of the author's conception of them, but by the impression they produce on the characters in the story.... Tolstoy nowhere appears behind the actors or draws events in the abstract; he shows them in the flesh and blood of those who supplied the material for the events.

In this respect the work is an artistic marvel. Tolstoy has seized not some separate traits but a whole living atmosphere, which vanes around different individuals and different classes of society....

The soul of man is depicted in *War and Peace* with unparalleled reality. It is not life in the abstract that is shown, but creatures fully defined with all their limitations of place, time, and circumstance. For instance, we see how individuals *grow.* Natasha running

into the drawing-room with her doll, in Book I, and Natasha entering the church, in Book IX, are really one and the same person at two different ages, and not merely two different ages attributed to a single person, such as one often encounters in fiction. The author has also shown us the intermediate stages of this development. In the same way Nicholas Rostov develops;Pierre from being a young man becomes aMoscow magnate; old Bolkonsky grows senile, and so forth....

In judging such a work one should tread with caution, but we think a Russian critic judged well when he said that the meaning of the book is best summed up in Tolstoy's own words: "There is no greatness without simplicity, goodness and truth."

Source: Aylmer Maude, "Life of Tolstoy," reprinted in *Tolstoy The Critical Heritage,* Edited by A V Knowles, Rout-ledge & Kegan Paul, 1978, pp. 225-32

Critical Essay #3

An English poet and novelist, Bayley is best known for his critical studies of Tolstoy, Alexander Pushkin, and Thomas Hardy. In the following excerpt from his Tolstoy and the Novel, *Bayley discusses the depiction of characters and historical events and the themes of life and death in* War and Peace.

Pushkin's tale, *The Captain's Daughter,* which describes the great rebellion of Pugachev in 1773, during Catherine's reign, is the first imagined relation of an episode from Russian history, but it is no more a historical novel than is *War and Peace.* It strikes us at first as a rather baffling work, with nothing very memorable about it. Tolstoy himself commented, as if uneasily, on its bareness, and observes that writers cannot be so straightforward and simple any more. Certainly Pushkin's way of imagining the past is the very opposite of Tolstoy's. *War and Peace* has a remarkable appearance of simplicity, but this simplicity is the result of an emphasis so uniform and so multitudinous that we sometimes feel that there is nothing left for us to think or to say, and that we cannot notice anything that Tolstoy has not. The simplicity of Tolstoy is overpowering that of Pushkin is neither enigmatic nor evasive, but rapid and light. He writes about the past as if he were writing a letter home about his recent experiences. The horrors of the rebellion cause him neither to heighten, nor deliberately to lower, his style. And he is just as prepared to "comment" as Tolstoy himself, though he does it through the narrator, who composes the book as a memoir. The Captain, Commandant of a fortress in the rebel country, is interrogating a Bashkir.

The Bashkir crossed the threshold with difficulty (he was wearing fetters) and, taking off his tall cap, stood by the door I glanced at him and shuddered I shall never forget that man He seemed to be over seventy. He had neither nose nor ears His head was shaven, instead of a beard, a few grey hairs stuck out, he was small, thin and bent, but his narrow eyes still had a gleam in them

"Aha," said the Commandant, recognising by the terrible marks one of the rebels punished in 1741. "I see you are an old wolf and have been in our snares. Rebelling must be an old game to you, to judge by the look of your head. Come nearer; tell me, who sent you?"

The old Bashkir was silent and gazed at the Commandant with an utterly senseless expression.

"Why don't you speak 9 " Ivan Kuzmich went on "Don't you understand Russian? Yulay, ask him in your language who sent him to our fortress."

Yulay repeated Ivan Kuzmich's question in Tartar But the Bashkir looked at him with the same expression and did not answer a word.

"Very well," the Commandant said. "I will make you speak 1 Lads, take off his stupid striped gown and streak his back. Mmd you do it thoroughly, Yulay'"

Two soldiers began undressing the Bashkir. The unfortunate man's face expressed anxiety. He looked about him like some wild creature caught by children But when the old man was made to put his hands round the soldier's neck and was lifted off the ground and Yulay brandished the whip, the Bashkir groaned in a weak, imploring voice, and, nodding his head, opened his mouth in which a short stump could be seen instead of a tongue

When I recall that this happened in my lifetime, and that now I have lived to see the gentle reign of the Emperor Alexander, I cannot but marvel at the rapid progress of enlightenment and the diffusion of humane principles Young man! If ever my notes fall into your hands, remember that the best and most permanent changes are those due to the softening of manners and morals, and not to any violent upheavals.

It was a shock to all of us.

The tone of the commentary, and the lack of exaggerated horror, are exactly right. In his late story, *Hadji Murad,* Tolstoy has the same unobtrusive brilliance of description, but□too intent on the art that conceals art□he is careful to avoid the commentary, and so he does not achieve the historical naturalness and anonymity of this narrative. He is too careful in a literary way□almost a Western way□to avoid being shocked....

[The] passage gives us an insight, too, into the reason why all the great nineteenth-century Russians are so good on their history. They feel continuingly in touch with it□horrors and all□in a direct and homely way. They neither romanticise it nor cut themselves off from it, but are soberly thankful (as Shakespeare and the Elizabethans were thankful) if they are spared a repetition in their own time of the same sort of events. Scott subtitled his account of the '45 "'Tis Sixty Years Since," and Pushkin was almost exactly the same distance in time from Pugachev, but their attitudes to the rebellion they describe could hardly be more different. Pushkin borrows greatly from Scott... But he does not borrow Scott's presentation of rebellion as Romance, safely situated in the past and hence to be seen□in contrast to the prosaic present□as something delightful and picturesque. Nor does he see the past as something over and done with, and thus the novelist's preserve. Unemphatically placed as it is, the comment of the narrator in the penultimate chapter□"God save us from seeing a Russian revolt, senseless and merciless 1 "□strikes like a hammer-blow. It is a comment out of Shakespeare's histories, not Scott's novels.

Tolstoy also borrows from Scott, in particular from the device of coincidence as used in historical romance ("Great God! Can it really be Sir Hubert, my own father?") without which the enormous wheels of *War and Peace* could hardly continue to revolve. Tolstoy avails himself of coincidence without drawing attention to it. It is a convenience, and not, as it has become in that distinguished descendant of Tolstoy's novel□*Dr Zhivago*□a quasi-symbolic method. Princess Mary's rescue by Nicholas Rostov, and Pierre's by Dolokhov, are obvious instances, and Tolstoy's easy and natural use of the device makes a satisfying contrast to the expanse of the book, the *versts* that stretch away from us in every direction. It also shows us that the obverse of this boundless geographical space is the narrow dimension of a self-contained class; the rulers of *War*

and Peace, its *deux cents families* ["two hundred families"], are in fact all known to one another (we are told halfway through that Pierre "knew everyone in Moscow and St Petersburg") and meet all over Russia as if at a *soiree* or a club. Kutuzov and Andrew's father are old comrades in arms; Kutuzov is an admirer ofPierre's wife; and hence Andrew gets the *entrie* to Auster-litz andPierre toBorodino~and we with them.

Yet Tolstoy's domestication by coincidence gives us an indication why we have from *The Captain's Daughter* a more authentic feel of history than from *War and Peace* Pushkin respects history, and is content to study it and to exercise his intelligence upon it: to Tolstoy it represents a kind of personal challenge□it must be attacked, absorbed, taken over. And in "Some Words about *War and Peace"* [see excerpt dated 1868] Tolstoy reveals the two ways in which this takeover of history is to be achieved. First, human characteristics are invariable, and "in those days also people loved, envied, sought truth and virtue, and were earned away by passion"□i.e. all the things I feel were felt by people in the past, and consequently they are all really *me.* Second, "There was the same complex mental and moral life among the upper classes, who were in some instances even more refined than now"□i e. my own class (which chiefly interests me) and which was even more important then, enjoyed collectively the conviction that I myself do now: that everything stems from and depends upon our own existence To paraphrase in this way is, of course, unfair, but I am not really misrepresenting Tolstoy. All his historical theories, with their extraordinary interest, authority and illumination, do depend upon these two swift annexatory steps, after which his historical period is at his feet, asEurope was at Napoleon's.

Let us return for a moment to the extract from *The Captain's Daughter* quoted above. The day after the events described, the fortress is taken by Pugachev, and the old Bashkir sits astride the gallows and handles the rope while the Commandant and his lieutenant are hanged Nothing is said about the Bashkir's sentiments, or whether this was his revenge on the Russian colonial methods the Commandant stood for, and whether it pleased him. The hero, Ensign Grinyov, is himself about to be hanged, but is saved by the intervention of his old servant; he sees the Commandant's wife killed, and finally "having eaten my supper with great relish, went to sleep on a bare floor, exhausted both in mind and body." Next day he observes in passing some rebels pulling off and appropriating the boots of the hanged men.

I have unavoidably given these details more emphasis than they have in the text: the point is that this conveys exactly what the hero's reaction to such events would have been at that time. It is not necessarily Pushkin's reaction, but he has imagined□so lightly and completely that it hardly looks like imagination at all: it is more like Defoe and Richardson than Scott□the reactions of a young man of Grinyov's upbringing, right down to the fervent plea that manners and methods may continue to soften and improve. Now let us take a comparable episode in *War and Peace,* the shooting of the alleged nicendiarists by the French inMoscow. Pierre, like Grinyov, is waiting□as he thinks□for execution; and his eye registers with nightmare vividness the appearance and behaviour of the people round him He ceases to be any sort of character at all, but is merely a vehicle for the overpowering precision of Tolstoyan detail, and Tolstoy concedes this by saying "he lost the power of thinking and understanding. He could only

hear and see." But here Tolstoy is not being quite truthful.Pierre is also to feel an immense and generalized incredulity and horror, which his creator compels the other participants to share. "On the faces of all the Russians, and of the French soldiers and officers without exception, he read the same dismay, horror, and conflict that were in his own heart." Even the fact that he has himself been saved means nothing to him.

The fifth prisoner, the one next toPierre, was led away□alone,Pierre did not understand that he was saved, that he and the rest had been brought there only to witness the execution. With ever-growing horror, and no sense of joy or relief, he gazed at what was taking place. The fifth man was the factory lad in the loose cloak The moment they laid hands on him, he sprang aside in terror and clutched atPierre. (Pierre shuddered and shook himself free.) The lad was unable to walk. They dragged him along holding him up under the arms, and he screamed. When they got him to the post he grew quiet, as if he had suddenly understood something Whether he understood that screaming was useless, or whether he thought it incredible that men should kill him, at any rate he took his stand at the post, waiting to be blindfolded like the others, and like a wounded animal looked around him with glittering eyes Pierre was no longer able to turn away and close his eyes His curiosity and agitation, like that of the whole crowd, reached the highest pitch at this fifth murder. Like the others this fifth man seemed calm; he wrapped his loose cloak closer and rubbed one bare foot with the other.

When they began to blindfold him he himself adjusted the knot which hurt the back of his head; then when they propped him against the bloodstained post, he leaned back and, not being comfortable in that position, straightened himself, adjusted his feet, and leaned back again more comfortably.Pierre did not take his eyes from him and did not miss his slightest movement

Probably a word of command was given and was followed by the reports of eight muskets; but try as he would Pierre could not afterwards remember having heard the slightest sound of the shots He only saw how the workman suddenly sank down on the cords that held him, how blood showed itself in two places, how the ropes slackened under the weight of the hanging body, and how the workman sat down, his head hanging unnaturally and one leg bent under him Pierre ran up to the post No one hindered him Pale frightened people were doing something around the workman. The lower jaw of an old Frenchman with a thick moustache trembled as he untied the ropes The body collapsed. The soldiers dragged it awkwardly from the post and began pushing it into the pit.

They all plainly and certainly knew that they were criminals who must hide the traces of their guilt as quickly as possible

The concluding comment is not that of a man of the age, but that of Tolstoy himself (it shows, incidentally, how impossible it is to separate Tolstoy the moralist from Tolstoy the novelist at any stage of life) and though the description is one of almost mesmeric horror, yet it is surely somehow not completely moving, or satisfactory. This has nothing to do with the moral comment however. I think the explanation is that it is not seen by a real character, or rather by a character who retains his reality at this moment. It is at

such moments that we are aware ofPierre's lack of a body, and of a past□the two things are connected□and we are also aware of Tolstoy's need for such a person, with these assets, at these moments. If any member of theRostov or Bolkonsky families had been the spectator, the scene would have been very different. It would have been anchored firmly to the whole selfhood of such a spectator, as are the deeds of the guerrillas which Petya hears about in their camp....

The point is that a character like this makes us aware of the necessary multiplicity of human response, of the fact that even at such a scene some of the soldiers and spectators must in the nature of things have been bored, phlegmatic, or actively and enjoyingly curious. But Tolstoy wants to achieve a dramatic and metaphonc *unity* of response, as if we were all absorbed in a tragic spectacle; to reduce the multiplicity of reaction to one sensation□the sensation that he had himself felt on witnessing a public execution inParis For this purposePierre is his chosen instrument. He never *becomes* Tolstoy, but at these moments his carefully constructed physical self□his corpulence, spectacles, good-natured hang-dog look, etc.□become as it were the physical equivalent of Tolstoy's powerful abstract singlemindedness, they are there not to give Pierre a true self, but to persuade us that the truths we are being told are as solid as the flesh, and are identified with it. We find the same sort of physical counterpart of an insistent Tolstoyan point in Karataev's *roundness.* It is one of the strange artificialities of this seemingly so natural book that Tolstoy can juggle with the flesh as with truth and reason, forcing it to conform to the same kind of willed simplicity.

ForPierre's size and corpulence, Karataev's roundness, are not true characteristics of the flesh, the flesh that dominates the life of Tolstoy's novels. The process makes us realise how little a sense of the flesh has to do with description of physical appearance. It is more a question of intuitive and involuntary sympathy. Theoretically, we know much more about the appearance of Pierre and Karataev than about, say, that of Nicholas Rostov and Anatole Kuragm. But it is the latter whom we know in the flesh. And bad characters, like Napoleon and Anatole, retain the sympathy of the flesh. Napoleon, snorting and grunting with pleasure as he is massaged with a brash by his valet; unable to taste the punch on the evening before Borodino because of his cold, above all, at Austerlitz, when "his face wore that special look of confident, self-complacent happiness that one sees on the face of a boy happily in love"□the tone is overtly objective, satirical, even disgusted, but in fact Tolstoy cannot withhold his intuitive sympathy with, and understanding of, the body Physically we feel as convinced by, and as *comfortable* with, these two, as we feel physically uncommitted with Pierre and Karataev.

Anatole was not quick-witted, nor ready or eloquent in conversation, but he had the faculty, so invaluable in society, of composure and imperturbable self possession If a man lacking m self-confidence remains dumb on a first introduction and betrays a consciousness of the impropriety of such silence and an anxiety to find something to say, the effect is bad. But Anatole was dumb, swung his foot, and smilingly examined the Princess's hair. It was evident that he could be silent in this way for a very long time "If anyone finds this silence inconvenient, let him talk, but I don't want to," he seemed to say

Inside Anatole, as it were, we "sit with arms akimbo before a table on the corner of which he smilingly and absentmindedly fixed his large and handsome eye"; we feel his sensations at the sight of the pretty Mile Bourrienne; and when his "large white plump leg" is cut off in the operating tent after Borodino, we seem to feel the pang in our own bodies.

But with Prince Andrew, who is lying wounded in the same tent, we have no bodily communication.

After the sufferings he had been enduring Prince Andrew enjoyed a blissful feeling such as he had not experienced for a long time All the best and happiest moments of his life□especially his earliest childhood, when he used to be undressed and put to bed, and when leaning over him his nurse sang him to sleep and he, burying his head in the pillow, felt happy in the mere consciousness of life□returned to his memory, not merely as something past but as something present

We assent completely, but it is from our own experience, not from our knowledge of Prince Andrew Like Pierre, he does not have a true body:

there is this difference between both of them and the other characters, and it is not a difference we can simply put down to their being aspects of Tolstoy himself. The difference is not total... but it is significant, for no other novel can show such different and apparently incompatible kinds of character living together It is as if Becky Sharp and David Copperfield, Waverley and Tom Jones and Tristram Shandy, together with Onegm and Julien Sorel, Rousseau's Emile and Voltaire's Candide and Goethe's Wilhelm Meister and many more, were all meeting in the same book, taking part in the same plot, communicating freely with one another. For in addition to drawing on his own unparalleled resources of family and class experience, Tolstoy has borrowed every type of character from every kind of novel: not only does he know a lot of people at first-hand□he has absorbed all the artificial ways of describing them.

Moreover, his genius insensibly persuades us that we do actually in life apprehend people in all these different ways, the ways imagined by each kind of novel, so that we feel that Pierre and Andrew are bound to be seekers and questioners because the one has no past and the other no roots in life, forgetting that Tolstoy has deprived them of these things precisely in order that they should conform to the fictional, *Btldungsroman,* type of the seeker. Andrew is a son from *&Bildungsroman* with a father from a historical novel, from Scott or *The Captain's Daughter,* Old Bolkonsky (who was closely modelled on Tolstoy's own grandfather, together with recollections he had heard about Field-Marshal Kamensky) is entirely accessible to us, as much in what we imagine of his old military days, "in the hot nights of the Crimea," as in what we see of his patriarchal life at Bald Hills But his son, as does happen in life, is distant We receive vivid perceptions through him (see the childhood passage) but they remain generalized Tolstoy: they are not connected specifically with him. What was he like as a child at Bald Hills? When did he meet the Little Princess, and how did his courtship of her proceed?

We share this uncertainty about Andrew with Natasha, and□more significantly□with her mother Embedded in life, the Rostovs cannot really believe that the marriage will take place, any more than they can believe they will die. When Natasha sings, her mother remembers her own youth and reflects that "there was something unnatural and dreadful in this impending marriage of Natasha and Prince Andrew." It is like a marriage of life with death.

Like Death, Andrew remains a stranger to the Rostovs. They cannot see him as a complete being any more than we can□any more than his own son can on the last page of the novel. He has become a symbolic figure, by insensible stages and without any apparent intention on Tolstoy's part. Natasha fights for his life, as life struggles against death, and when he dies old Count Rostov□that champion of the flesh□has to realise death too, and is never the same again. Not only death is symbolised in him, but dissatisfaction, aspiration, change, all the cravings of the spirit, all the changes that undermine the solid kingdom of the flesh, the ball, the supper, the bedroom. Tolstoy's distrust of the spirit, and of the changes it makes, appears in how he handles Andrew, and how he confines him with the greatest skill and naturalness to a particular *enclave.*

This naturalness conceals Tolstoy's laborious and uncertain construction of Andrew, which is intimately connected with the construction of the whole plot. First he was to have died at Austerlitz Tolstoy decided to keep him alive, but that it was a risk to do so is shown by the uncertainty and hesitations of the ensuing drafts. His attitude of controlled exasperation towards the Little Princess was originally one of settled rudeness, culminating in a burst of fury when she receives a *billet* from Ana-tole. His rudeness is that of Lermontov's Pechorin and Pushkin's Onegin; it must have been difficult to head him off from being a figure of that kind. When he first sees Natasha he is bewitched because she is in fancy dress as a boy (an incident later transferred to Nicholas and Sonya) but in another version he takes no notice of her at all. Tolstoy's bother is to avoid nailing down Andrew with the kinds of *apergu* he is so good at: he must not be open to the usual Tolstoyan "discoveries." (It would be out of the question, for instance, forPierre to perceive that Andrew doesn't *really* care about the beauties of nature, as the "I" of *Boyhood and Youth* suddenly realises about his great friend and hero Nekhludyov who is something of a Prince Andrew figure.) Such stages of illumination would be all wrong, as would be any particular aspect of Natasha (fancy dress, etc.) which would reveal something further about him by their attraction for him. Her attraction must be symbolic of life itself.

At last Tolstoy□remembering an experience of his own□hit on the way to convey this. Andrew hears Natasha and Sonya talking together at night as they lean out of the window below his, and in this way her reality□her sense of her family and her happy sense of herself that make up this reality□comes before him in the right abstract and ideal way, in a way that could not have been conveyed by Natasha herself in a direct confrontation with him. Natasha's own reactions presented an equal difficulty. In one version she is made to tell Sonya that Prince Andrew was such a charming creature that she has never seen and could never imagine anyone comparable! This clearly will not do, and neither will another version in which she says she doesn't like him, that "there is something proud, something dry about him." In the final version the magical ball takes

over, and removes the need for any coherent comment from her. Indeed, Tolstoy ingeniously increases her reality by this method, implying her readiness for life that can take even the shadowy Prince Andrew in its stride; that is then dashed by the prospect of a year's delay; and finally pours itself helplessly into an infatuation with a "real man" (real both for us and for her)□Anatole Kuragin.

Natasha's mode of love presents a marked contrast with that of Pushkin's Tatiana, so often compared with her as the same type of vital Russian heroine Natasha's love is generalised, founded on her own sense of herself and□less consciously□ on her almost explosive expectancy, her need not to be *wasted.* Onegin, whom Tatiana loves, is like Andrew an unintimate figure, but for quite different reasons. He gets what reality he has from the delighted scrutiny of Pushkin, and the devoted scrutiny of Tatiana. His own consciousness is nothing. As Nabokov observes, "Onegin grows fluid and flaccid as soon as he starts to feel, as soon as he departs from the existence he had acquired from his maker in terms of colourful parody." Significantly, Natasha's love is solipsistic, in herself, typical of Tolstoyan *samodovolnost* ["self-satisfaction"], it does not need to know its object, and its object is correspondingly unknowable in terms of objective scrutiny. But when Tatiana sees the marks that Onegin's fingernail has scratched in the margins of his books and realises that he is nothing but a parody, a creature of intellectual and social fashion□it does not destroy her love for him, it actually increases it! Finding the loved person's un-derlinings in a book is almost as intimate as watching them asleep. The two heroines are alike in the vigour of their affections, but it is a very different kind of affection for all that In Onegin, Pushkin presents an *object* for us to enjoy, and for his heroine to love. In Andrew, Tolstoy creates the symbolic figure of a spectator of life, in the presence of whom Natasha can show what life there is in herself.

Andrew is created for death. He looks towards death as something true and real at last; and after all the false starts, alterations and reprieves, he achieves his right end. Of course this is something of a Tolstoyan *post hoc ergo propter hoc* ["faulty reasoning"], but it is a fact that all the characters in *War and Peace*□from the greatest to the least□ get exactly what their natures require. The book is a massive feat of arbitration, arrived at after countless checks and deliberations: though its huge scale gives an effect of all the random inevitability of life, it also satisfies an ideal. It is an immensely audacious and successful attempt to compel the whole area of living to acknowledge the rule of art, proportion, of what is "right." What Henry James deprecatingly called "a wonderful mass of life" is in fact a highly complex patterning of human fulfilment, an allotment of fates on earth as authoritative as Dante's in the world to come. It is significant that the first drafts of the novel earned the title "All's well that ends well."

In his old age Tolstoy said, "when the characters in novels and stories do what from their spiritual nature they are unable to do, it is a terrible thing." To live, as the novel understands and conveys life, is what Prince Andrew would not have been able to do. It is impossible to imagine him developing a relation with Natasha, or communicating with her as Pierre and Natasha communicate in the last pages of the novel. For him Natasha represents life. It is his destiny as a character to conceptualise what others embody. He perceives through metaphor and symbol, as he sees the great oak-tree, apparently bare and dead, coming again into leaf. A much more moving instance of this, to my mind,

than the rather grandiloquent image of the oaktree, is his glimpse of the two little girls as he visits the abandoned house at Bald Hills on his retreat with his regiment.

. two little girls, running out from the hot-house carrying in their skirts plums they had plucked from the trees there, came upon Prince Andrew On seeing the young master, the elder one, with frightened look, clutched her younger companion by the hand and hid with her behind a birch tree, not stopping to pick up some green plums they had dropped

Prince Andrew turned away with startled haste, unwilling to let them see that they had been observed He was sorry for the pretty frightened little gift, was afraid of looking at her, and yet felt an irresistible desire to do so. A new sensation of comfort and relief came over him when, seeing these girls, he realized the existence of other human interests entirely aloof from his own and just as legitimate as those that occupied him Evidently these girls passionately desired one thing□to carry away and eat those green plums without being caught□and Pnnce Andrew shared their wish for the success of their enterprise. He could not resist looking at them once more. Believing their danger past, they sprang from their ambush, and chirruping something in their shrill little voices and holding up their skirts, their bare little sunburnt feet scampered merrily and quickly across the meadow grass.

We can see from this passage exactly why Andrew "loved" Natasha□it resembles the scene where he hears the two of them talking by the window□and why the word "love" in the novel has no meaning of its own apart from the continuous demands and rights of life. He loves the idea of life more than the actuality. When he rejoins his soldiers he finds them splashing about naked in a pond, and he is revolted at the sight of "all that healthy white flesh," doomed to the chances of war. Nor do we ever have a greater sense, by contrast, of what life means, than when Andrew, after all his intimations of death, "the presence of which he had felt continually all his life"□in the clouds above the battlefield of Austerlitz and in the birchtree field before Borodino□confronts Natasha and the Princess Mary on his deathbed.

In one thin, translucently white hand he held a handkerchief, while with the other he stroked the delicate moustache he had grown, moving his fingers slowly His eyes gazed at them as they entered

On seeing his face and meeting his eyes Princess Mary's pace suddenly slackened, she felt her tears dry up and her sobs ceased She suddenly felt guilty and grew timid on catching the expression of his face and eyes.

"But in what am I to blame"' she asked herself. "Because you are alive and thinking of the living, while I " his cold stem look replied

In the deep gaze that seemed to look not outwards but inwards there was an almost hostile expression as he slowly regarded his sister and Natasha

I have suggested that Andrew is not subject to "discoveries," and to Tolstoy's intimate kinds of examination, but this is not entirely true. Tolstoy's genius for character, as

comprehensive and apparently involuntary as Shakespeare's, and with far more opportunity for detailed development than Shakespeare has within the limits of a play, could not avoid Andrew's becoming more than a centre of reflection and of symbol. The sheer worldliness of Tolstoy's observation keeps breaking in. We learn, for example, that Andrew befriends Boris, whom he does not much care for, because it gives him an apparently disinterested motive for remaining in touch with the inner ring where preferment is organised and high-level gossip exchanged. And Tolstoy notes that his exasperated criticism of the Russian military leadership both masks and gives an outlet to the tormenting jealousy that he feels about Natasha and Kuragin. But these are perceptions that could relate to someone else: they are not wholly him. What is? I observed that the scene with the two little girls reveals his attitude to life, and so it does; but the deeper and less demonstrated veracity in it is Andrew's *niceness,* a basic quality that we recognise and respond to here, though we have hardly met it before at first-hand. In the same way the deathbed quotation above shows something else about him that we recognise□in spite of the change in him he is still the same man who used to treat the Little Princess with such cold sarcasm: The life he disliked in her he is fond of in his sister and adores in Natasha, but now that it is time to leave it his manner is much the same as of old. Though he has only grown a moustache on his deathbed we seem to recognise that coldly fastidious gesture of stroking it.

"There, you see how strangely fate has brought us together," said he, breaking the silence and pointing to Natasha "She looks after me all the time "

Princess Mary heard him and did not understand how he could say such a thing. He, the sensitive, tender Prince Andrew, how could he say that, before her whom he loved and who loved him 1 ' Had he expected to live he could not have said those words in that offensively cold tone. If he had not known that he was dying, how could he have failed to pity her and how could he speak like that in her presence' The only explanation was that he was indifferent, because something else, much more important, had been revealed to him.

The conversation was cold and disconnected, and continually broke off

"Mary came by way ofRyazan," said Natasha

Prince Andrew did not notice that she called his sister *Mary,* and only after calling her so in his presence did Natasha notice it herself

"Really"" he asked.

"They told her that allMoscow has been burnt down, and that. ."

Natasha stopped It was impossible to talk It was plain he was making an effort to listen, but could not do so.

"Yes, they say it's burnt," he said. "It's a great pity," and he gazed straight before him absently stroking his moustache with his fingers.

"And so you have met Count Nicholas, Mary?" Prince Andrew suddenly said, evidently wishing to speak pleasantly to them. "He wrote here that he took a great liking to you," he went on simply and calmly, evidently unable to understand all the complex significance his words had for living people.

Apart from the theme of death, the passage is full of the multitudinous meaning□like the significance of Natasha's use of the name *Mary*□which has been building up throughout the book. It is checked once by Tolstoy's remark□"he was indifferent because something else, much more important, had been revealed to him " Certainly Andrew may think so, but Tolstoy announces the fact with just a shade too much determination: the surface of almost helpless mastery is disturbed. For where death is concerned, Tolstoy in *War and Peace* was under the spell of Schopenhauer. Life is a sleep and death an awakening. "An awakening from life came to Prince Andrew together with his awakening from sleep. And compared to the duration of life it did not seem to him slower than an awakening from sleep compared to the duration of a dream." As Shestov points out, the second sentence comes almost verbatim from *The World as Will and Idea.* In Andrew, Tolstoy has deliberately created the man who fits this conception of death. With his usual confidence Tolstoy annexes death through Andrew, to show that it must *be* something because life is so much something. Yet life and death cannot understand one another.

□"Shall I live? What do you think?"

"I am sure of it!□sure 1 " Natasha almost shouted, taking hold of both his hands in a passionate movement.

Natasha "almost shouts" her belief because she can do nothing else□she cannot believe in anything but life. Even when after the last change in Andrew she sees he is dying, she goes about "with a buoyant step"□a phrase twice repeated. This has a deep tragic propriety, for the two are fulfilling their whole natures. Only old Count Rostov is touching. He cries for himself at Andrew's death, because he "knows he must shortly take the same terrible step", and he knows this because his old assurance□his *samodovolnost*□has gone.

He had been a brisk, cheerful, self-assured old man, now he seemed a pitiful, bewildered person .. he continually looked round as if asking everybody if he was doing the right thing. After the destruction ofMoscow and of his property, thrown out of his accustomed groove, he seemed to have lost the sense of his own significance and to feel there was no longer a place for him in life

As Isaiah Berlin points out, Tolstoy's conception of history resembles in many ways that of Marx, whom he had never heard of at the time he was writing *War and Peace,* and this applies to his sense of personal history as well as the history of nations. His imaginative grasp of the individual life is such that freedom does indeed become the recognition of one's personal necessity, and "to each according to his needs" is not only the ideal of society but seems in *War and Peace* the law of life and death...

Source: John Bayley, *Tolstoy and the Novel,* Viking Press, 1967, pp 66-68, 68-72,73-82.

Critical Essay #4

Christian is an English educator, translator, and critic specializing in Russian literature. He wrote Tolstoy's "War and Peace," *which is a book-length study of the work. In the following excerpt from that book, Christian analyzes characterization in* War and Peace.

The subject [of characterization in *War and Peace]* is complicated by the sheer number and variety of the dramatis personae, but we can narrow it down from the very start by drawing a general distinction between the treatment of historical and non-historical characters in the novel. It is a fact that the generals and statesmen, the great historical names of the period of the Napoleonic wars, are almost without exception flat and static figures. Little or nothing is revealed of their private lives We do not see them in intimate relationships with other people. Their loves, their hobbies, their personal dramas are a closed book to us. This is not accidental. As Prince Andrei reflects at Drissa in 1812 1

Not only does a good commander not need genius or any special qualities, on the contrary, he needs the absence of the highest and best human qualities□ love, poetry, tenderness, and philosophic, inquiring doubt He must be limited God forbid that he should be humane, love anyone, pity anyone, or think about what is right and what is not

Their thoughts are rarely scrutinized either through interior monologue or by extended description from the author. Some characters, such as Arakcheev, for example, use only direct speech. Nothing is conveyed of their thought processes or the motives behind the words they utter. Nor do they develop with the action of the story The statesmen and the generals in *War and Peace* are either bearers of a message or bureaucratic Aunt-Sallies for Tolstoy to knock down. This fact illustrates the unity which exists between Tolstoy's ideas and their expression through his characters. Static characters generally speaking deserve static treatment Theme and style are as one.

An exception to the rule that generals are flat characters might be made in the case of Kutuzov.

Although he is a general, he is not, as Tolstoy understands him, arrogant or self-satisfied. The Kutuzov of *War and Peace* has some claim to be three-dimensional. It is not that he is shown by Tolstoy to have grown sufficiently in stature with the course of events to justify the remark□true though it may well have been in real life□that "In 1805 Kutuzov is still only a general of the Suvorov school; in 1812 he is the father of the Russian people " But his little acts of kindness, his friendly words to the soldiers who fought with him in his earlier campaigns, his unaffected behavior in the company of his inferiors, his present of some sugar lumps to the little girl at Fill, his request to have some poems read to him□all these small things reveal positive and humane qualities which more than balance his lethargy and lechery. Again it is in keeping with Tolstoy's purpose that a general who is not *uposeur* or an egoist or a careerist should emerge as a more rounded personality than any of his professional colleagues....

[Our] remarks will be confined to the fictitious or, rather, non-historical characters. Here again the range is enormous, and in order to restrict it as much as possible we shall concentrate mainly on the men and women who figure most prominently in *War and Peace...*. Tolstoy's first step as a novelist was to draw thumbnail sketches of his future heroes and group their main characteristics together under such headings as wealth, social attributes, mental faculties, artistic sensibilities and attitudes to love. In this respect, incidentally, his rough notes and plans are very different from those left by Dostoevsky, and illustrate an important difference of approach. Dostoevsky in the preliminary stages of his work is concerned with how to formulate his ideas (a generation earlier, Pushkin had tended to jot down first of all the details of his plots). But Tolstoy was interested primarily in the personalities of his characters□in the fact, for example, that Nikolai "is very good at saying the obvious"; that Natasha is "suddenly sad, suddenly terribly happy"; or that Berg has no poetical qualities "except the poetry of accuracy and order."

The problem of actually bringing his major characters on to the stage was one to which Tolstoy attached the greatest importance, and one which, as we have seen, gave him a great deal of difficulty. Broadly speaking, the problem was tackled in a fairly uniform manner, and the technique employed is clearly recognizable, though not of course invariable. All the main characters are introduced very early on. They are introduced with a minimum of biography and with a minimum of external detail (but such as there is typical and important, and likely to recur). Attention is drawn to their features, the expression on their faces, the expression in their eyes and in their smile, their way of looking or not looking at a person. This is a fact which has attracted the notice of most critics of Tolstoy's novels, and inspired Merezhkovsky to make his much-quoted *mot* "with Tolstoy we hear because *we see"* (and its corollary "with Dostoevsky we see because *we heat").* From the very beginning, the fundamental characteristics of the men and women as they then are enunciated. There is little or no narration to elaborate these characteristics. Almost at once the men and women say something or make an impression on somebody, so that the need for any further direct description from the author disappears.Pierre, for example, is introduced with one sentence about his appearance (stout, heavily built, close cropped hair, spectacles); one sentence about his social status, and one sentence about his life to date. He is then portrayed through the impression he makes on other people present He is summed up by four epithets which all refer to his *expression (yzglyad)*□clever, shy, observant, natural□and which at the same time distinguish him from the rest of the company and reveal the essence of his character as it then is. Similarly Prince Andrei is given a sentence or two of "author's description"□handsome, clear-cut, dry features, measured step, bored expression *(vzglyad)*□while the impression he makes on the company and his reaction to them is at once sharply contrasted with the mutual response of Prince Andrei and Pierre to one another. Virtually nothing is said about the earlier lives of these two men. What didPierre do inParis' Why did Prince Andrei marry Lisa? We are not told. Both men immediately catch the eye, for both are bored and ill at ease. They are introduced in fact into an environment which is essentially foreign to their real natures, although their way of life requires that they should move in this environment. Despite the fact that the manner of their first appearances attracts attention, there is nothing to suggest that they will be the

main heroes of the novel, in the sense that no extra length or detail goes into their description.

By contrast, Natasha and Nikolai are both introduced in their own domestic environment□ home-loving creatures on their home ground□integrated in the family and, as it were, part of the furniture. But again they are presented with a minimum of external description (in which facial expressions are conspicuous); again their salient characteristics□Natasha's charm and vivacity, Nikolai's frankness, enthusiasm and impetuosity□ are conveyed from the very start; and again we are told nothing about their earlier lives (for example, Nikolai's student days). This lack of biographical information is important in the sense that it enables us to be introduced to the characters as we usually meet people in real life□that is to say, as they now are, and without any knowledge of the forces which shaped them before we met them and made them what they are. It could even be argued that a novelist who introduces his heroes by reconstructing their past when that past plays no direct part in the novel, actually risks sacrificing, by the accumulation of historical detail such as we do not have about people whom we are meeting for the first time, that immediate lifelikeness which, in the case of Tolstoy's greatest characters, is so strikingly impressive.

Once the men and women have made then- entrances the author has to face another problem. Are they to remain substantially as they are, with the reader's interest diverted towards the details of the plot? Or are they to grow and change as the plot progresses? If they are to develop, must they do so because the passage of time and the inner logic of their own personalities dictate it? Or because of the pressure of the events which form the plot? Or because the author wishes to express an idea of his own through their medium? In *War and Peace* the main characters do grow and change, and they do so for all these reasons. In the course of the time span of the novel the adolescents grow to maturity and the mature men reach early middle age.

War and marriage make their impact on men and women alike, and experience teaches them what they failed to understand before The Pierre of the opening chapter of the novel, with his self-indulgence, Ms agnosticism and his admiration for Napoleon, is very different from the spiritually rejuvenated middle-aged man who has discovered a focus for his restless and dissipated energies, and who no longer has any illusions about the grandeur of power. The course of events brings Prince Andrei round from a cynical disillusionment in life, through a feeling of personal embitterment, to a belief in the reality of happiness and love, in the face of death his vanity and ambition are humbled by the realization of the insignificance of this world, and he acquires a hitherto unknown peace of mind. Natasha acquires an unsuspected strength of character after her younger brother's death, and an unaccustomed staidness as the wife ofPierre□to some readers an astonishing violation of her nature, but to others a change which is fully comprehensible in the transition from adolescence to motherhood. Even Nikolai's impetuosity is curbed and experience gives him greater solidity and stability. These changes do not result from the fact that our knowledge of the main heroes gradually increases throughout the novel, as it inevitably does, and the picture of them grows fuller and fuller with each successive episode. They are changes of substance, qualitative rather than quantitative changes. Tolstoy's achievement in contriving the

development of his main characters lies in the fact that all the reasons mentioned above for their development are so carefully interwoven that the reader is not conscious of many strands but only one. The characters change because they grow older and wiser. But the events which form the plot, and in particular the Napoleonic invasion, give them greater wisdom and experience, for characters and events are organically connected. And the state to which the main heroes come at the end of the novel□marriage, and the simple round of family life□the state which is the ultimate expression of Tolstoy's basic idea□is the natural outcome of the impact on them of the events they have experienced as they have grown older and their realization of the shallow-ness of society and the vainglory of war. The profoundly subjective basis of Tolstoy's art may be seen in the fact that Pierre and Natasha, Nikolai and Princess Marya all achieve the state which he himself had achieved, however imperfectly, and which he sincerely believed to be the most desirable of all states. But this does not mean that their characters are distorted in order to force them into the channels which for him were the right ones.

Pierre has so much of Tolstoy in him that he needs no forcing Natasha, we may remember, was from the very earliest draft of *War and Peace* "crying out for a husband," and needing "children, love, bed." Nikolai and Princess Marya, for all the difference between their personalities, interests and intellectual attainments, never seem likely to stray far from the family nest or to be seduced from the family estate by the allurements of *le monde* ["the world"].

Change and development are at the centre of Tolstoy's characterization, and the process is a consistent and logical one. But however great the changes in his main heroes may seem to be, it must not be forgotten that they occur within certain well-defined bounds, and that the characters themselves remain in the camp to which they have always belonged and continue to be what they have always been□some of the finest and most sympathetic representatives of the Russian landowning aristocracy.

There is no need to labour the point that Tolstoy's principal heroes change and develop. We can turn instead to the question how he achieved the effects he desired by the devices of characterization at his disposal. It seems to me that the essence of Tolstoy's technique is to show that at every stage in the life of his heroes the likelihood of change is always present, so that at no time are they static, apathetic or inert, but constantly liable to respond to some new external or internal stimulus. Very often the stimulus is provided by a person from the opposite camp□a "negative" character, a selfish, complacent or *static* man or woman.

These people act as temptations to the heroes; they are obstacles in their path which have to be overcome.Pierre, for example, is momentarily blinded by the apparent greatness of Napoleon. He is trapped into marriage with Hellene, with whom he has nothing in common, and is in danger of being drawn into the Kuragm net. After their separation he is reconciled with her again, only to bemoan his fate once more as a retired gentleman-in-waiting, a member of the Moscow English Club and a universal favourite inMoscow society. Prince Andrei, likePierre, is deceived by the symbol of Napoleon, and likePierre he finds himself married to a woman who is as much his intellectual inferior as Helene is morally beneathPierre. Natasha for her part is attracted

at first by the social climber Boris Drubetskoy and later infatuated by the same Anatole Kuragin who had actually begun to turn Princess Marya's head. Julie Karagina looms for a while on Nikolai 1 s horizon. From all these temptations and involvements the heroes and heroines are saved, not by their own efforts but by the timely workings ofProvidence. Prince Andrei's wife dies.Pierre is provoked by Dolokhov into separating from his wife, and after their reconciliation he is eventually released by Helene's death. Natasha is saved from herself by the solicitude of her friends. By chance Princess Marya catches Anatole unawares as he flirts with Mile Bounenne. (Nikolai, to his credit, is never likely to obey his mother's wishes and marry Julie.) It seems as if fate is working to rescue them from the clutches of egocentricity. But it is not only external circumstances such as personal associations with people of the opposite camp which are a challenge to Tolstoy's heroes and heroines. There are internal obstacles against which they have to contend, without any help fromProvidence. Tolstoy made it a main object of his characterization to show his positive heroes at all important moments "becoming" and not just "being," beset with doubts, tormented by decisions, the victims of ambivalent thoughts and emotions, eternally restless. As a result, their mobility, fluidity and receptivity to change are constantly in evidence, as they face their inner problems. Princess Marya has to overcome her instinctive aversion to Natasha. Nikolai has to wage a struggle between love and duty until he finds in the end that they can both be reconciled in one and the same person.Pierre's inner disquiet and spiritual striving express his determination, now weak, now strong, to overcome in himself the very qualities of selfishness and laziness which he despises in other people. Outward and inward pressures are continually being exerted on Pierre, Prince Andrei, Princess Marya, Natasha and Nikolai, and their lives are lived in a state of flux.

And yet Tolstoy felt himself bound to try and resolve their conflicts and bring them to a state which, if not final and irreversible, is a new and higher stage in their life's development. It is not a solution to all their problems, a guarantee that they will not be troubled in future. The peace of mind which Prince Andrei attains before his death might not have lasted long if he had lived.Pierre's uneasy religious equilibrium may not be of long duration. The very fact that we can easily foresee new threats to their security, new stimuli and new responses, is a proof of the depth, integrity and life-likeness of the two finest heroes of Tolstoy's novel.

But although there is not and cannot be any absolute finality about the state to which Tolstoy's men and women are brought, there is nevertheless an ultimate harmony, charity, and sense of purpose in their lives which represent the highest ideals of which they are capable, given the personalities with which they have been endowed and the beliefs of the author who created them.

The novelist who wishes to create a vivid illusion of immediacy and mobility in his heroes must avoid exhaustive character studies and biographical reconstructions concentrated in a chapter or series of chapters in his novels, whether at the beginning, in the middle or at the end. Many novelists begin with lengthy narrative descriptions of their main heroes.... But Tolstoy by dispensing largely with "pre-history" and allowing his men and women to reveal themselves little by little as the novel progresses, avoids the

necessity for set characterization pieces, static and self-contained as they often are in other writers.

Another factor which aids the illusion of reality and movement is the continued interaction of all the elements which make up Tolstoy's novel men and women, nature, and the world of inanimate objects. Very seldom is a person seen or described in isolation just as in real life, human beings cannot be divorced from the infinite number of animate and inanimate phenomena which make them what they are and determine what they do. Tolstoy is at pains, therefore, in striving after truthfulness to life in his characterization, to show the interdependence and interpenetration of man and nature. The stars, the sky, the trees, and the fields, the moonlight, the thrill of the chase, the familiar objects of the home all affect the mood and the actions of the characters no less than the rational processes of the mind or the persuasions of other human beings. That this is so in life is a commonplace; but there have been few authors with Tolstoy's power to show the multiplicity of interacting phenomena in the lives of fictitious men and women.

Movement is the essence of Pierre, Prince Andrei and Natasha and this is shown both externally and internally. Externally their eyes, their lips, their smile are mobile and infectious; their expressions continually alter. Internally their thoughts are in a state of turbulence and their mood is liable to swing violently from one extreme to another from joy to grief, despair to elation, enthusiasm to boredom. There are times indeed when two incompatible emotions coexist uneasily and the character does not know whether he or she is sad or happy.

Princess Marya is not such a forceful or impulsive character as her brother or sister-in-law Her qualities of gentleness, deep faith, long-suffering, humility and addiction to good works are not combined with a searching mind or a vivacious personality. But she is, nevertheless, a restless person, and as such is clearly a favourite of Tolstoy (she even quotes his beloved Sterne 1). The anxieties and disturbances in her relations with Anatole Kuragin, Mile Bourienne and Natasha are evidence that she is a rounded and dynamic figure, and not, as it were, conceived in one piece. In the presence of Nikolai she is brought to life with all the magic of Tolstoy's art. Nikolai too, for all his apparent complacency and limited horizons, does not stand still. He has his moments of doubt, uncertainty, and fear just as he has his outbursts of uninhibited enthusiasm and emperor worship. He is given his own inner crisis to surmount when at Tilsit "a painful process was at work in his mind" as he tried to reconcile the horrors of the hospital he had recently visited, the amputated arms and legs and the stench of dead flesh, with his hero the Emperor Alexander's evident liking and respect for the self-satisfied Napoleon. The crisis, it is true, soon passes after a couple of bottles of wine. But it could never have been allowed to come to a head at all by his friend Boris Drubetskoy.

By contrast, the less prominent figures in *War and Peace* are not shown in the critical stages of their change and development. Even Sonya's conflict (she is described in an early portrait sketch in typically Tolstoy fashion as "generous and mean") the conflict between her loyalty to the family and her love for Nikolai emerges rather through Tolstoy's description of it than through the inner workings and sudden vacillations of her

mind. Vera and Berg, Akhrosimova, Bolkonsky and many other minor figures, however vital and many-sided they might be as individuals, are fundamentally static characters who are fully-grown from the beginning. The ability to respond to change, the qualities of restlessness, curiosity, flexibility and dynamism are essentially the perquisites of the main heroes of the novel, and in particular Pierre, Prince Andrei and Natasha. And one may add that it is the growth and development of precisely these three people which reflects above all the changes in Tolstoy himself and those closest to him at Yasnaya Polyana, and is a convincing proof of the personal basis of Tolstoy's art.

In examining the characters of a novel with an historical setting, three questions immediately spring to mind. In the first place, do they emerge as individuals' 7 Secondly, do they unmistakably belong to the historical environment in which they are made to move? And thirdly, do they embody universal characteristics which make them readily comprehensible to people of a different country and a different age"? If we apply these questions to Pierre, Prince Andrei and Natasha, the answer to the first is indisputably yes. There is nothing bookish, contrived or externally manipulated about their actions. They can never be confused with any other characters. They have an outward presence and an inner life which mark them off as highly individualized personalities. To the second question the answer is less obvious and critical opinion is divided. For my own part I am inclined to think that there is nothing about them specifically representative of their own age, which is not also representative of Tolstoy's own generation.

They are the products of a class and a way of life which had not materially altered when Tolstoy began to write. That they experienced the impact in their homes of a great patriotic war is a fact which distinguishes their lives from the lives of Tolstoy's own contemporaries, but the development of their characters cannot be explained solely in terms of that particular war.Pierre might ask different questions from Levin or put the same questions in a different way, but his spiritual journey is fundamentally the same. Prince Andrei's reactions to war could have been those of one of the many obscure defenders ofSevastopol. Natasha's progress to motherhood, while it is not identical with Kitty's, is not peculiar to the first half rather than to the second half of the nineteenth century. The third question, however, like the first, is easily answered. In Tolstoy's heroes in *War and Peace* there is a basic denominator of human experience which is common to all men and women regardless of class, country, age and intellectual attainment Their mental, spiritual and emotional problems, their pleasures and pursuits, their enthusiasms and their aversions are as relevant to Englandtoday as they ever were to Tolstoy's Russia. And it is ultimately this fact which ensures that *War and Peace* and especially the main heroes of *War and Peace* will always be a part of the literary heritage of the reading public throughout the world.

Characterization cannot be considered in isolation from the many other sides of a novelist's art.... First there are the changes which occur in Tolstoy's characters themselves as the successive draft versions are written and discarded. Then there are the features which they inherit from their various historical and living prototypes. There are the ideas of the novelist himself which are transmitted to his heroes and heroines, so that they in turn express his own prejudices and beliefs and inPierre's case, the gulf between what Tolstoy was and what he wanted himself to be. There is the question of

the composition of the novel which is so designed that the character development should proceed *pari passu* ["at an equal pace"] with the development of the plot, and not fortuitously or independently of the main action. Finally there are the different linguistic devices at Tolstoy's disposal which play their part in characterization□interior monologue, the contrasting use of the French and Russian languages, speech mannerisms, irony....

In the final analysis it is the characters which a novelist creates which are the greatest and most memorable part of his achievement. In *War and Peace* they range over the scale of good and evil and they are treated by the author with varying degrees of sympathy and dislike. In later life Tolstoy wrote to the artist N. N. Gay that in order to compose a work of art: "It is necessary for a man to know clearly and without doubt what is good and evil, to see plainly the dividing line between them and consequently to paint not what is, but what should be. And he should paint what should be as though it already was, so that for him what should be might already be."

This opinion was expressed some twenty years after *War and Peace* was written, but the first part of it at least is applicable to that novel. Tolstoy knew, as well as any man can, the dividing line between good and evil, although in *War and Peace* he devoted much more time to painting things as they are than as they should be. For a novelist, however, to know what is right and what is wrong is not the same thing as to concentrate virtue in one character and vice in another, or to pass an unqualified moral judgement on any of the people he creates. "The Gospel words 'judge not'," Tolstoy wrote in 1857, "are profoundly true in art- relate, portray, but do not judge." Tolstoy's purpose in his first novel, as a creator of living characters, was to entertain and not to judge. One of the most interesting pronouncements he made about the function of an artist occurs in a letter which he wrote in 1865 while actively engaged on his novel, but which he never sent.... The letter was addressed to the minor novelist Boborykin and contains some mild strictures on the latter's two latest novels. Tolstoy wrote:

Problems of the Zemstvo, literature and the emancipation of women obtrude with you in a polemical manner, but these problems are not only not interesting m the world of art; they have no place there at all. Problems of the emancipation of women and of literary parties inevitably appear to you important in your literaryPetersburg milieu, but all these problems splash about in a little puddle of dirty water which only seems like an ocean to those whom fate has set down in the middle of the puddle. The aims of an artist are incommensurate (as the mathematicians say) with social aims. The aim of an artist is not to solve a problem irrefutably but to make people love life in all its countless inexhaustible manifestations. If I were to be told that I could write a novel whereby I might irrefutably establish what seemed to me the correct point of view on all social problems, I would not even devote two hours work to such a novel, but if I were to be told that what I should write would be read in about twenty years time by those who are now children, and that they would laugh and cry over it and love life, I would devote all my own life and all my energies to it

To make people laugh and cry and love life is a sufficient justification for even the greatest of novels....

Source: R. F. Christian, *Tolstoy's "War and Peace". A Study,* Clarendon Press, 1962, pp 167-68,177-79.

Critical Essay #5

In the following excerpt, Fadiman describes Tolstoy's writing as lacking in artistic style, suspense, and originality but also as clear, good, and able to express the ordinary and real.

In a way writing about *War and Peace* is a self-defeating activity. Criticism in our day has become largely the making of finer and finer discriminations. But *War and Peace* does not lend itself to such an exercise. If you say the book is about the effect of the Napoleonic Wars on a certain group of Russians, most of them aristocrats, you are not telling an untruth But you are not telling the truth either. Its subject has been variously described□even Tolstoy tried his hand at the job□ but none of the descriptions leaves one satisfied

.

You can't even call the book a historical novel. It describes events that are part of history, but to say that it is about the past is to utter a half-turth. *Ivanhoe, Gone With the Wind*□these are historical novels. Kipling (a part of him, I mean) has suddenly become for us a historical novelist: Gandhi made him one. But the only sections of *War and Peace* that seem historical are the battle pieces. War is now apocalyptic; it was not so in Tolstoy's time.Austerlitz andCannae are equally historical, equally antique, equally part of the springtime of war. Now our weapons think for us; that is the revolutionary change that has outmoded all previous narratives of conflict.

But, except for these battle pieces, *War and Peace* is no more a historical novel than is the *Iliad.* Homer is not history, not Greek history, not Trojan history, he is□Homer. So with Tolstoy.

No, you say little when you say that *War and Peace* has to do with the Napoleonic Wars, Borodino, the burning ofMoscow, the retreat of 1812. As a matter of fact the vaguer your critical vocabulary, the less precisely you describe the subject of *War and Peace,* the nearer you get to the truth. It is really□yes, let us use un-twentieth-cen-tury words□about Life and People and Love- those abhorred capital-letter abstractions that irritate our modern novelists and against which they persistently warn us....

Tolstoy is not an artist at all, as, let us say, Virginia Woolf, Hemingway, Faulkner, Proust, are artists. He does not appear, at least in translation, to have any "style." There is no such thing as a Tol-stoyan sentence or a Tolstoyan vocabulary. The poor chap has no technique. He knows nothing of flash-backs, streams of consciousness, symbols, objective correlatives. He introduces his people flatly and blurts out at once their dominant characteristics. He has unending insight but no subtlety. Compared to such a great master as Henry James, or such a little master as Kafka, he seems deficient in sheer brain power, the power to analyze, the power to discriminate.

He never surprises you. All his characters are recognizable, most of them are normal Even his villain, Anatole Kuragin, seems merely an impetuous fool compared to the monsters of labyrinthine viciousness that our Southern novelists can create with a touch of the pen.

He isn't even a good storyteller, if by a good storyteller one means a master of suspense. You do not read *War and Peace* in order to see "how it comes out," any more than you live your life m order to see how it will end. His people grow, love, suffer, die, commit wise or foolish actions, beget more people who are clearly going to pass through the same universal experiences; and that's about all there is to the "story." There are plenty of events, but they are not arranged or balanced or patterned. Tolstoy is not a neat writer, any more than your biography or mine is neat. He is as shapeless as the Russian land itself.

I found myself struck with the originality of *War and Peace,* but by a kind of reverse English.

It is original because it is unoriginal. Kafka is original. Faulkner is original. Eudora Welty is original. In fact most of our most admired modern writing is original, full of strange people, strange feelings, strange ideas, strange confrontations. But Tolstoy portrays pleasant, lively, ordinary girls like Natasha. His book is crowded with people who are above the average in intelligence or wealth or insight□but not extraordinarily so. He balks at portraying genius: he makes of Napoleon a fatuity, and of the slow-thinking, almost vacant-minded Kutuzov the military hero of the war. And when he writes about war, he does not describe its horrors or its glories. He seizes upon the simplest of the truths about war and sticks to that truth: that war is *foolish.*

Tolstoy has a genius for the ordinary, which does not mean the commonplace. It is this ordinariness that to us moderns, living on a literary diet of paprika, truffles, and cantharides, makes him seem so unusual. When we read him we seem to be escaping into that almost forgotten country, the real world.

Another odd thing□Tolstoy does not seem to have any "personality." Many fine writers are full of personality, Hemingway for instance; but the *very* finest write books that seem to conceal themselves, books like the *Iliad* or *Don Quixote* or *War and Peace.* I do not mean that Tolstoy writes like an impersonal god, but that he seems to intrude into his book only in the sense that he and the book are one and the same.

I believe this effect of desingularization springs from his instinctive refusal to load any scene or indeed any sentence with more meaning than it will bear. He has no "effects." He is unable to call attention to his own mastery. He knows what he is doing, but he does not know how to make *you* know what he is doing. The consequence is that, despite the enormous cast of characters, everything (once you have waded through the rather difficult opening chapters) is simple, understandable, recognizable, like someone you have known a long tune. In our own day the good novelists tend to be not very clear, and the clear novelists tend to be not very good. Tolstoy is clear and he is good....

Source: Clifton Fadiman, "'War and Peace', Fifteen Years After," in *Any Number Can Play,* Harper & Row, 1957, pp. 361-69.

Critical Essay #6

Fadiman became one of the most prominent American literary critics during the 1930s with his often caustic and insightful book reviews for the Nation *and the* New Yorker *magazines. He also managed to reach a sizable audience through his work as a radio talk-show host from 1938 to 1948.*

I hope merely to set Tolstoy's masterpiece before the reader in such a way that he will not be dismayed by its labyrinthine length or put off by its seeming remoteness from our own concerns.

War and Peace has been called the greatest novel ever written. These very words have been used, to my knowledge, by E. M. Forster, Hugh Walpole, John Galsworthy, and Compton Mackenzie; and a similar judgment has been made by many others....

Let us ... try to discover together why it is a great novel.

The first thing to do is to read it. A supreme book usually argues its own supremacy quite efficiently, and *War and Peace* is no exception. Still, we may be convinced of its magnitude and remain puzzled by certain of its aspects□for no first-rate book is completely explicit, either.

On finishing *War and Peace* what questions do we tend to ask ourselves? Here is a very simple one: What is it about? ...

[We] are forced in the end to make the apparently vapid judgment that the subject of *War and Peace* is Life itself....

We do not know what Tolstoy had in mind as the main subject of *War and Peace,* for he stated its theme differently at different periods of his career. Looking back on it, as a fairly old man, he said that his only aim had been to amuse his readers ... More seriously, Tolstoy at times spoke of *War and Peace* as a picture of the wanderings of a people.

But whatever he thought its subject was, he transcended it. In one sense he put into this book everything that interested him, and everything interested him. That he managed to make it more than a collection of characters and incidents is equivalent to saying that in addition to being a man with a consuming interest in life he was also an artist who was not content until he had shaped that interest into harmonious forms.

Now, there are some who would demur, who feel that it is precisely in this quality of form that *War and Peace* is defective.. .

Suppose we admit at once that there is no classic unity of subject matter as there is, for instance, in the *Iliad....* This simple unity Tolstoy does not have. But a profounder unity I think he does have. When we have come to feel this unity, the philosophical and historical disquisitions cease to seem long-winded and become both interesting in

themselves and an integral part of the Tolstoyan scheme. We are no longer disturbed as we should be if such digressions appeared in a work of narrower compass. We accept the fact that mountains are never pyramids.

Let us see whether we can get this clear. In the course of one of his digressions Tolstoy writes, "Only by taking an infinitesimally small unit for observation (the differential of history, i.e., the individual tendencies of men) and attaining to the art of integrating them (i.e., finding the sum of these infinitesimals) can we hope to arrive at the laws of history." [In] this sentence, perhaps, is concealed the theme of the book: the movement of history which Tolstoy must examine by observing "the individual tendencies of men," on the one hand, and by attempting to "integrate them," on the other. Putting it in another way, we may say that it is not enough for Tolstoy to examine the individual lives of his characters as if they were separate atoms. He must also sweep up all these atoms into one larger experience. Now, this larger experience is the Napoleonic campaign. But the campaign itself, which fuses or enlarges or focuses the lives of Andrew and Natasha and Pierre and the rest, must itself be studied, not merely as a background□that is how an ordinary historical novelist would study it□but as thoughtfully as Tolstoy studies each individual life. In order fully to understand this focusing experience he is forced to elaborate a theory of history to explain it. And so he is forced to understand the major historical characters, such as Napoleon, Kutiizov, and the others, who are the dramatic symbols of the experience.

The result of this integration may not please everyone, but the integration is there. When one reflects upon the task, one is driven to concede, I think, that Tolstoy, in his attempt to understand history through human beings and human beings through history, is undertaking the greatest task conceivable to the creative novelist of the nineteenth century, just as Milton, attempting to justify the ways of God to man, undertook the greatest poetical theme possible to a man of his century....

War and Peace is so vast that each reader may pick out for himself its literary qualities he most admires. Let us select three: its inclusiveness, its naturalness, its timelessness.

The first thing to strike the reader is the range of Tolstoy's interest and knowledge....

At first glance the inclusiveness seems so overpowering that one inclines to agree with Hugh Walpole when he says that *War and Peace* "contains everything," or with E. M. Forster who is no less sure that "everything is in it" Naturally, these statements cannot be literally true But it is true to say that when we have finished *War and Peace* we do not feel the lack of anything. It is only when one stops short and makes a list of the things Tolstoy leaves out that one realizes he is a novelist and not a god. We get very little awareness, for example, of the Russian middle class which was just beginning to emerge at the opening of the nineteenth century. Also, while Tolstoy does describe many peasants for us, the emphasis is thrown disproportionately on the aristocratic class with which he was most familiar. Another thing: obeying the literary conventions of his period, Tolstoy touches upon the sex relations of his men and women with great caution□and yet, so true and various is his presentation of love that we hardly seem to notice his omissions. That, after all, is the point: we do not notice the omissions, and we

are overwhelmed by the inclusiveness... It is Tolstoy's attitude toward his own tremendous knowledge that makes him great rather than merely encyclopedic...

The key word here is "love " One of the most penetrating comments ever made about *War and Peace* is Mark Van Doren's, "I think he can be said to have hated nothing that ever happened." This exaggeration contains a profound truth. Tolstoy's love for his characters in *War and Peace* is very different from the mystic and, some would say, morbid sentimentality of his later years. It is more like the enthusiasm of a young man for everything he sees about him during the period of his greatest vigor....

At his best Tolstoy seems to write as if Nature herself were guiding his pen....

There is no formula to explain how Tolstoy does this. All we know is that he does it. .

The constant impression of naturalness one gets from reading Tolstoy comes partly from his

lack of obsessions. He does not specialize in a particular emotion, as Balzac, say, specializes in the emotions deriving from the desire for money. Perhaps we may say that if Tolstoy has an obsession, it is a passion for showing people *merely living....*

It is because his eye is always on the central current of life that his perceptions seem so inevitable....

Tolstoy's natural sympathy overleaps the boundary of sex; his women are as convincing as his men. Indeed, he has a special talent for the presentation of women at their most female ..

We think of certain Tolstoyan scenes as other men would do them and then we realize the quality of his supremacy....

It is *normal.* Tolstoy is the epic poet of the conscious and the "normal," just as Dostoevski, complementing him, is the dramatic poet of the subconscious and the "abnormal." His instinct is always to identify the unnatural with the unpleasant....

This almost abnormal normality in Tolstoy makes him able to do what would seem a very easy thing but is really very hard: describe people engaged in *nothing but being happy....*

The inclusiveness of *War and Peace.* Its naturalness. Finally, its timelessness. ..

[Even] when his characters seem almost pure representatives of their class, they still have a permanent value as symbols....

Here is a book, too, that seems to deal with people caught in a particular cleft of history. As that limited epoch recedes, we might suppose the people should dim accordingly. Yet this is not the case. It is impossible to say just how Tolstoy manages to give the impression both of particularity and universality....

War and Peace may not have a classic form. But it does have a classic content. It is full of scenes and situations which, in slightly altered forms, have recurred again and again, and will continue to recur, in the history of civilized man....

It is as if the human race, despite its apparent complexity, were capable of but a limited set of gestures To this set of gestures only great artists have the key....

Also the very looseness of the book's form, the fact that it has neither beginning nor end, helps to convey the sense of enduring life....

Has *War and Peace,* then, no defects? It has many. It is far from being a technically perfect

novel, like *Madame Bovary*__There are also many places in the narrative where the pace lags. Certain characters in the crowded canvas tend to get lost in the shuffle and never become entirely clear.... At times, so complex is the panorama that the reader has difficulty following the story, just as we have difficulty in following everything happening in a three-ring circus. Some of these defects seem to disappear on a second or third or fourth reading. Some are permanent. But none of them is so great nor are all of them taken together so great as to shake *War and Peace* from the pinnacle it occupies. Flaubert cannot afford to make mistakes. Tolstoy can....

The insights in Tolstoy are at their best enormously moving and exactly true. But they rarely give us that uneasy sense of psychic discovery peculiar to Dostoevski....

So far in these comments I have emphasized those qualities□inclusiveness, naturalness, timelessness□that make *War and Peace* universal rather than Russian. But part of its appeal for us, I think, derives from the fact that though there is nothing in the book that is incomprehensible to the American or the Western European, everything in it, owing to its Russian character, seems to us just a trifle off-center. This gives the novel a piquancy, even a strangeness at times, that it may not possess for the Russians....

There are certain central motives in *War and Peace* that are particularly (though not uniquely) Russian. The motive of moral conversion is a case in point...

In *War and Peace,* with varying degrees of success, the characters study themselves. All their critical experiences but lead them to further self-examination....

The purpose, if we may use so precise a word, of the regeneration experience is to enable the characters to attain toPierre's state: "By loving people without cause, he discovered indubitable causes for loving them." In this sentence, a sort of moral equivalent of the James-Lange theory, lies the essence, the center, the inner flame, of the pre-revolutionary Russian novel. It is only after one has pondered its meaning that one can understand what lies back of the sudden changes in Tolstoy's and Dostoevski's characters....

The conflict in the soul of the Russian aristocrat derived not only from the conflict of cultures within him but from the moral falsity of his social position. Although Tolstoy—and this is one of his omissions—does not lay great stress on it, the Russian upper class in varying degrees suffered from a guilt-feeling arising from the institution of serfdom....

Much of the soul-searching in *War and Peace,* though it would seem to pivot only on each individual's personal problems, is in part a result of this vague pervasive guilt-feeling. Perhaps, indeed, a large part of the genius of the pre-revolutionary Russian novel comes from the conflict born of this sense of guilt.

Finally, the Russian sought spiritual regeneration because he found no outlet for his idealistic energies in the state itself....

I have made these perhaps hackneyed comments in order to show that Tolstoy is a Russian novelist first and a universal novelist only by accident of genius.... He wrote as a Russian about Russian people—indeed about his own family, for many of the characters in *War and Peace* are transcripts from reality. But he wrote about them not only as Russians but as people. And therein lies part of the secret of his greatness.

There remains for us at least one more aspect of *War and Peace* to consider—that is, Tolstoy's view of men, war, history, and their interrelationships....

Tolstoy's theory of history is that there is no theory of history. Or, to put it more cautiously, if there are grand laws determining the movement and flow of historical events, we can, in the present state of our knowledge, only guess at them. Until our vision and our knowledge are so extended that they reveal these underlying laws, the most intelligent thing for us to do is at least to deny validity to all superficial explanations of historical experience. ...

In *War and Peace* he attacks those theories which were popular in his own time....

It is part of the purpose of *War and Peace* to prove that there is no such thing as chance and no such thing as genius....

For Tolstoy the fate of battles therefore is decided less by prefabricated strategies than by the absence or presence of what he calls "moral hesitation," or what we would call morale....

Were Tolstoy alive today would he moderate his views because the character of warfare has changed so radically in the interim?....

Tolstoy, I think, would reply that any change is only apparent and only temporary. He would say that human nature is a constant, that it will rise to the surface despite all the deformation, the drill, the conditioning, the dehumanizing to which is may be subjected.

It is a constant, then, in war. It is a constant in peace. And it is a constant in *War and Peace....*

Source:Clifton Fadiman, reprinted as "War and Peace," in *Party of One- The Selected Writings of Clifton Fadiman,* The World Publishing Company, 1955, pp 176-202

"Tolstoy's 'Peace and War

In the following review, the reviewer praises Tolstoy for his accurate presentation of how people act and talk and points to Tolstoy's presentation of the moral imperfection of all and of the folly of self-will in historical events.

This book of Tolstoy's [*War and Peace]* might be called with justice 'The Russian Comedy,' m the sense in which Balzac employed the word. It gave me exactly the same impression: I felt that I was thrown among new men and women, that I lived with them, that I knew them, that none of them could be indifferent to me, that I could never forget them. I entered into their souls, and it seemed almost as if they could enter into mine. Such a power in a writer is almost a miracle. How many novels have I not read, and, after having read them, and admired many qualities□the beauty of the style, the invention, the dialogues, the dramatic situations□have still felt that my knowledge of life had not increased, that I had gained no new experience. It was not so with *War and Peace...*

It would be difficult to give a proper definition of the talent of Tolstoy. First of all, he is an *homme du monde.* He makes great people, emperors, generals, diplomats, fine ladies, princes, talk and act as they do act and talk He is a perfect gentleman, and as such he is thoroughly humane. He takes as much interest in the most humble of his actors as he does in the highest He has lived in courts: the Saint-Andres, the Saint-Vladimirs have no prestige for him□nor the gilded uniforms; he is not deceived by appearances. His aim is so high that whatever he sees is, in one sense, unsatisfactory. He looks for moral perfection, and there is nothing perfect. He is always disappointed in the end. The final impression of his work is a sort of despair....

[A] fundamental idea of fatalism pervades the book Fate governs empires as well as men: it plays with a Napoleon and an Alexander as it does with a private in the ranks; it hangs over all the world like a dark cloud, rent at times by lighting. We live in the night, like shadows; we are lost on the shore of an eternalStyx; we do not know whence we came or whither we go. Millions of men, led by a senseless man, go from west to east, killing, murdering, and burning, and it is called the invasion of Russia. Two thousand years before, millions of other men came from east to west, plundering, killing, and burning, and it was called the invasion of the barbarians. What becomes of the human will, of the proud *I,* in these dreadful events? We see the folly and the vanity of self-will in these great historical events; but it is just the same in all times, and the will gets lost in peace as well as in war, for there is no real peace, and the human wills are constantly devouring each other.... We are made to enjoy a little; to suffer much, and, when the end is approaching, we are all like one of Tolstoy's heroes, on the day ofBorodino .

[Tolstoy's book] is by far the most remarkable work of imagination that has been lately revealed to us.

Source: "Tolstoy's 'Peace and War,'" in *Nation,* Vol. 40, No 1021, January 22, 1885, pp. 70-71

Topics for Further Study

Compare the protests in Americaduring the Vietnam War in the late 1960s and early 1970s to the Decembrist uprising, whichPierre is involved with at the end of the book. What were the Decembrists protesting? Were there any similarities in the way the Decembrist andVietnamprotests were organized?

The Society of Freemasons, which is so influential inPierre's life, is still an active organization. Investigate the modern-day Masons. Considering the fact that it is still a secret organization, how much information can you find out about them"? How have their practices and goals changed from the time of Tolstoy's novel?

DuringWorld War II, Russiawas an ally of Americaand Great Britain. Yet for most of the twentieth century, AmericaandRussiawere bitter rivals. Research the relationship between the two countries at the time of the novel and report on it. What is America's relationship toRussiatoday?

Compare and Contrast

1805: Americais still developing an identity after winning its independence from Englandin 1783. A second war againstEnglandwill be fought in 1812-1814.

1866-1869: In the aftermath of the Civil War, Americaundergoes a period known as the Reconstruction.

Today: Americais a stable country. It is considered the dominant economic and military power in the world.

1815: News of Napoleon's defeat atWaterloo is reported four days later byLondon's *Morning Chronicle,* which scooped the competing British newspapers.

1866: Telegraph communication is the most common way to communicate over long distances. In America,Western Union controls 75,000 miles of wire, becoming the first great monopoly.

Today: News events are available instantly from all corners of the globe, thanks to the Internet.

1807: Former Vice President Aaron Burr is arrested for his part in a scheme to form an independent nation of Mexicoand parts of theLouisiana Territory.

1868: President Andrew Johnson faces an impeachment trial, charged with dismissing the

Secretary of War, a violation of a year-old law prohibiting removal of certain cabinet officers without the consent of Congress. Opposition forces end up one vote short of the number necessary to impeach him.

Today: President Bill Clinton is impeached by the Senate for crimes related to a sex scandal. After his acquittal, his approval ratings are higher than ever

1805-1815: Napoleon Bonaparte is the Emperor of France. He assumes that position after his rise to military power during the French Revolution.

1866-1869: Naploean HI is Emperor of France, having named himself emperor in 1852. A nephew of Napoleon Bonaparte, he is elected president in 1848 and then seizes dictatorial power.

Today: Franceis a republic; the people democratically elect a president.

1805: The Russian population is approximately thirty-three million people.

1866: The population of Russiahas increased to approximately seventy-six million people.

Today: Russiahas a population of approximately 149 million people.

What Do I Read Next?

Thomas Hardy was an English author who lived at approximately the same time as Tolstoy One of the crowning achievements of his later life was a long poem, *The Dynasts,* written between 1903 and 1908. It is an epic drama with nineteen acts and 135 scenes that are impossible to produce for the stage. The work focuses onEngland's role in the Napoleonic Wars.

Tolstoy's other great masterpiece is *Anna Karemna,* his 1877 novel about an aristocratic woman's illicit affair with a count.

Crime and Punishment is considered to be the masterpiece of Fyodor Dostoyevsky's literary career. It was published in 1866, the same year as the first installment of *War and Peace.*

Russian writer Ivan Turgenev was a friend of Tolstoy. Contemporary critics consider his 1862 novel *Fathers and Sons* to be his greatest work.

Patient readers who can work their way through this novel's mass may be ready for *Moby Dick,* Herman Melville's 1851 opus about a whaling ship captain and the object of his obsession, the great white whale of the title.

Henri Troyat's biography, *Tolstoy,* was published in 1967 by Doubleday and Co. It chronicles the life and times of this intriguing author.

Further Study

Berlin, Isaiah, "Tolstoy and Enlightenment," in *Mightierthat the Sword,* MacMillan & Co., 1964.

An influential assessment of the often-repeated charge that Tolstoy was a good fiction writer but a flawed philosopher.

Christian, R. F., *Tolstoy's* War and Peace- *A Study,* The Clarendon Press, 1962.

A comprehensive and recommended study of the novel.

Citati, Pietro, *Tolstoy,* Schocken Books, 1986.

Written by an Italian literary critic, this is a short biography that introduces students to the key elements in Tolstoy's life and works

Crankshaw, Edward, *Tolstoy: The Making of a Novelist,* The Viking Press, 1974.

Traces Tolstoy's development as a novelist

Crego Benson, Ruth, "Two Natashas," in *Women in Tolstoy: The Ideal and the Erotic,* University of Illinois Press, 1973.

Examines the conflict between Tolstoy's portrayal of Natasha as a strong complex heroine and his tendency to see women only as objects of beauty

Debreczeny, Paul, "Freedom and Necessity: A Reconsideration of *War and Peace,"* in *Papers on Language and Literature: A Journal for Scholars and Critics of Language and Literature,* No 2, Spring, 1971.

Debreczeny's understanding of Tolstoy's basic philosophy allows him to read the diverse aspects of the novel as one continuous, homogeneous narrative.

Greenwood, E B , "The Problem of Truth in *War and Peace,"* in *Tolstoy The Comprehensive Vision,* St Martin's Press, 1975.

Explores Tolstoy's interest in the problem of historical truth.

Johnson, Claudia D., *To Kill a Mockingbird: Threatening*

Boundaries, Twayne, 1994

A book-length analysis of the novel that provides historical and literary context as well as discussion of key themes and issues.

Morrison, Gary Saul, *Hidden in Plain View: Narrative and Creative Potentials in "War and Peace",* Stanford University Press, 1987

Discusses the structure of the novel

Sampson, R. V., "Leo Tolstoy 'God Sees the Truth, But Does Not Quickly Reveal It'," in *The Discovery of Peace,* Pantheon Books, 1973.

Sampson examines several key writers who have influenced the history of the moral debate about war.

Simmons, Ernest J, "War and Peace," in *Introduction to*

Tolstoy's Writings, The University of Chicago Press, 1968.

In this chapter in a book about the Tolstoy's major works, Simmons provides a stylistic and thematic analysis of the novel.

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Introduction

Purpose of the Book

The purpose of Novels for Students (NfS) is to provide readers with a guide to understanding, enjoying, and studying novels by giving them easy access to information about the work. Part of Gale's□For Students□ Literature line, NfS is specifically designed to meet the curricular needs of high school and undergraduate college students and their teachers, as well as the interests of general readers and researchers considering specific novels. While each volume contains entries on □classic□ novels

frequently studied in classrooms, there are also entries containing hard-to-find information on contemporary novels, including works by multicultural, international, and women novelists.

The information covered in each entry includes an introduction to the novel and the novel's author; a plot summary, to help readers unravel and understand the events in a novel; descriptions of important characters, including explanation of a given character's role in the novel as well as discussion about that character's relationship to other characters in the novel; analysis of important themes in the novel; and an explanation of important literary techniques and movements as they are demonstrated in the novel.

In addition to this material, which helps the readers analyze the novel itself, students are also provided with important information on the literary and historical background informing each work. This includes a historical context essay, a box comparing the time or place the novel was written to modern Western culture, a critical overview essay, and excerpts from critical essays on the novel. A unique feature of NfS is a specially commissioned critical essay on each novel, targeted toward the student reader.

To further aid the student in studying and enjoying each novel, information on media adaptations is provided, as well as reading suggestions for works of fiction and nonfiction on similar themes and topics. Classroom aids include ideas for research papers and lists of critical sources that provide additional material on the novel.

Selection Criteria

The titles for each volume of NfS were selected by surveying numerous sources on teaching literature and analyzing course curricula for various school districts. Some of the sources surveyed included: literature anthologies; Reading Lists for College-Bound Students: The Books Most Recommended by America's Top Colleges; textbooks on teaching the novel; a College Board survey of novels commonly studied in high schools; a National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) survey of novels commonly studied in high schools; the NCTE's Teaching Literature in High School: The Novel;and the Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA) list of best books for young adults of the past twenty-five years. Input was also solicited from our advisory board, as well as educators from various areas. From these discussions, it was determined that each volume should have a mix of □classic□ novels (those works commonly taught in literature classes) and contemporary novels for which information is often hard to find. Because of the interest in expanding the canon of literature, an emphasis was also placed on including works by international, multicultural, and women authors. Our advisory board members□educational professionals□ helped pare down the list for each volume. If a work was not selected for the present volume, it was often noted as a possibility for a future volume. As always, the editor welcomes suggestions for titles to be included in future volumes.

How Each Entry Is Organized

Each entry, or chapter, in NfS focuses on one novel. Each entry heading lists the full name of the novel, the author's name, and the date of the novel's publication. The following elements are contained in each entry:

- Introduction: a brief overview of the novel which provides information about its first appearance, its literary standing, any controversies surrounding the work, and major conflicts or themes within the work.
- Author Biography: this section includes basic facts about the author's life, and focuses on events and times in the author's life that inspired the novel in question.
- Plot Summary: a factual description of the major events in the novel. Lengthy summaries are broken down with subheads.
- Characters: an alphabetical listing of major characters in the novel. Each character name is followed by a brief to an extensive description of the character's role in the novel, as well as discussion of the character's actions, relationships, and possible motivation. Characters are listed alphabetically by last name. If a character is unnamed□for instance, the narrator in Invisible Man-the character is listed as □The Narrator□ and alphabetized as □Narrator.□ If a character's first name is the only one given, the name will appear alphabetically by that name. □ Variant names are also included for each character. Thus, the full name □Jean Louise Finch□ would head the listing for the narrator of To Kill a Mockingbird, but listed in a separate cross-reference would be the nickname □Scout Finch.□
- Themes: a thorough overview of how the major topics, themes, and issues are addressed within the novel. Each theme discussed appears in a separate subhead, and is easily accessed through the boldface entries in the Subject/Theme Index.
- Style: this section addresses important style elements of the novel, such as setting, point of view, and narration; important literary devices used, such as imagery, foreshadowing, symbolism; and, if applicable, genres to which the work might have belonged, such as Gothicism or Romanticism. Literary terms are explained within the entry, but can also be found in the Glossary.
- Historical Context: This section outlines the social, political, and cultural climate in which the author lived and the novel was created. This section may include descriptions of related historical events, pertinent aspects of daily life in the culture, and the artistic and literary sensibilities of the time in which the work was written. If the novel is a historical work, information regarding the time in which the novel is set is also included. Each section is broken down with helpful subheads.
- Critical Overview: this section provides background on the critical reputation of the novel, including bannings or any other public controversies surrounding the work. For older works, this section includes a history of how the novel was first received and how perceptions of it may have changed over the years; for more recent novels, direct quotes from early reviews may also be included.
- Criticism: an essay commissioned by NfS which specifically deals with the novel and is written specifically for the student audience, as well as excerpts from previously published criticism on the work (if available).

- Sources: an alphabetical list of critical material quoted in the entry, with full bibliographical information.
- Further Reading: an alphabetical list of other critical sources which may prove useful for the student. Includes full bibliographical information and a brief annotation.

In addition, each entry contains the following highlighted sections, set apart from the main text as sidebars:

- Media Adaptations: a list of important film and television adaptations of the novel, including source information. The list also includes stage adaptations, audio recordings, musical adaptations, etc.
- Topics for Further Study: a list of potential study questions or research topics dealing with the novel. This section includes questions related to other disciplines the student may be studying, such as American history, world history, science, math, government, business, geography, economics, psychology, etc.
- Compare and Contrast Box: an □at-a-glance□ comparison of the cultural and historical differences between the author's time and culture and late twentieth century/early twenty-first century Western culture. This box includes pertinent parallels between the major scientific, political, and cultural movements of the time or place the novel was written, the time or place the novel was set (if a historical work), and modern Western culture. Works written after 1990 may not have this box.
- What Do I Read Next?: a list of works that might complement the featured novel or serve as a contrast to it. This includes works by the same author and others, works of fiction and nonfiction, and works from various genres, cultures, and eras.

Other Features

NfS includes □The Informed Dialogue: Interacting with Literature,□ a foreword by Anne Devereaux Jordan, Senior Editor for Teaching and Learning Literature (TALL), and a founder of the Children's Literature Association. This essay provides an enlightening look at how readers interact with literature and how Novels for Students can help teachers show students how to enrich their own reading experiences.

A Cumulative Author/Title Index lists the authors and titles covered in each volume of the NfS series.

A Cumulative Nationality/Ethnicity Index breaks down the authors and titles covered in each volume of the NfS series by nationality and ethnicity.

A Subject/Theme Index, specific to each volume, provides easy reference for users who may be studying a particular subject or theme rather than a single work. Significant subjects from events to broad themes are included, and the entries pointing to the specific theme discussions in each entry are indicated in boldface.

Each entry has several illustrations, including photos of the author, stills from film adaptations (if available), maps, and/or photos of key historical events.

Citing Novels for Students

When writing papers, students who quote directly from any volume of Novels for Students may use the following general forms. These examples are based on MLA style; teachers may request that students adhere to a different style, so the following examples may be adapted as needed. When citing text from NfS that is not attributed to a particular author (i.e., the Themes, Style, Historical Context sections, etc.), the following format should be used in the bibliography section:

□Night.□ Novels for Students. Ed. Marie Rose Napierkowski. Vol. 4. Detroit: Gale, 1998. 234-35.

When quoting the specially commissioned essay from NfS (usually the first piece under the □Criticism□ subhead), the following format should be used:

Miller, Tyrus. Critical Essay on □Winesburg, Ohio.□ Novels for Students. Ed. Marie Rose Napierkowski. Vol. 4. Detroit: Gale, 1998. 335-39.

When quoting a journal or newspaper essay that is reprinted in a volume of NfS, the following form may be used:

Malak, Amin. □Margaret Atwood's □The Handmaid's Tale and the Dystopian Tradition,□ Canadian Literature No. 112 (Spring, 1987), 9-16; excerpted and reprinted in Novels for Students, Vol. 4, ed. Marie Rose Napierkowski (Detroit: Gale, 1998), pp. 133-36.

When quoting material reprinted from a book that appears in a volume of NfS, the following form may be used:

Adams, Timothy Dow. □Richard Wright: □Wearing the Mask,□ in Telling Lies in Modern American Autobiography (University of North Carolina Press, 1990), 69-83; excerpted and reprinted in Novels for Students, Vol. 1, ed. Diane Telgen (Detroit: Gale, 1997), pp. 59-61.

We Welcome Your Suggestions

The editor of Novels for Students welcomes your comments and ideas. Readers who wish to suggest novels to appear in future volumes, or who have other suggestions, are cordially invited to contact the editor. You may contact the editor via email at: ForStudentsEditors@gale.com. Or write to the editor at:

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