All happy families are the same. Each unhappy family is unhappy in its own way.

Leo Tolstoy - Anna Karenina

1 EXT. COUNTRYSIDE. DAY.

High angle of the steam train travelling through a wide river valley. The stack belching smoke against the Russian sky.

2 INT. SECOND CLASS CARRIAGE. COUNTRY SIDE. DAY.

Leo Tolstoy (80), sits writing on his lapboard. He is quite simply the greatest living writer in the world. His devotion to pacifism, his rejection of the trappings of Orthodoxy in favor of a simple Christian lifestyle convince many to regard him as a living saint. With him are his much younger wife, the COUNTESS SOFYA, favorite daughter SASHA, and his personal physician DUSHAN MAKOVITSKY. Sasha and Dushan write in their diaries. Sofya looks from one to the next a little impatient. The train begins to slow.

SOFYA
Why are we slowing down?

No one responds. Slower. Slower.

SOFYA
We're stopping. Why are we stopping?
SASHA
I don't know, mother. No idea.

Tolstoy look up from his work, asks a passing conductor.

SOFYA
Excuse me, why has the train stopped?

CONDUCTOR
It's the crowd, ma'm, the people. They're blocking the track.

In the distance we can here voices.

VOICES (O.S.)
Long live Tolstoy! Long live the old warrior!

SOFYA
But if they block the track, the train can't go...YOU HAVE TO MAKE THEM MOVE.

The conductor shrugs, walks away. She goes to the window to investigate. A crowd of a hundred peasants, students surround the engine, block the track. They carry a huge cloth banner honoring Tolstoy. We can hear voices chanting "Tolstoy. Tolstoy. Tolstoy", voices crying "You are the truth." "You are the hope of the Russian people."

SOFYA
Oh, they won't move. We are gonna die here. Leo, Leo, go and say something to them. It's the only way we are gonna get out of here.

The chanting grows in intensity. Tolstoy gets to his feet, walks to the window, shows himself to the crowd. A great shout goes up. Tolstoy lifts his hand for silence. Gradually, it comes.

TOLSTOY
I have seen your banner. And I've heard what you say. You think I'm the hope of Russia, do you? Well, that's not true. You are the hope of Russia. The hope of all the
world. You say, you want a new way to live? Well, you are not gonna find it making a fuss over me. So, I suggest that you get on with your work and let a poor old men get on with his.

The cries begin. "Clear the tracks. Let them pass. Let them go." Tolstoy closes the door and waves to the crowd as the train pulls away.

3 EXT. COUNTRYSIDE. DAY.

On the chanting crowd now as the train pulls away. We focus on a handsome young man, a little stiff maybe, a little intellectual. This is VALENTIN FEDOROVITCH BULGAKOV. He can't contain his enthusiasm. Over the noise of the train.

VALENTIN
Do you know who that is? That is the greatest man in the world.

The train pulls away into the distance.

TITLE OVER BLACK: SPRING 1910

4 EXT. YASNAYA POLYANA. DAWN.

The ancestral home of the Tolstoy family in the first budding of spring.

3.

Muzhiks (peasants) gather wood, carry water to the house. A cart arrives loaded down with mail bags.

5 INT. YASNAYA POLYANA. SOFYA'S BEDROOM. DAY.

A handsome room, walls covered with generations of family photographs. Religious icons are given pride of place, a testament, not to piety, but to an ingrained social conservatism, a certain position in the world.

Countess Sofya mumbles her morning prayers before a make shift altar. Wiping away tears, she leaves the room.
5A  INT. YASNAYA POLYANA. ENTRY/STAIR. DAY.

Sofya walks down the stairs and through the entry passed an old servant asleep in a chair. She continues to the basement.

6  INT. YASNAYA POLYANA. TOLSTOY'S BEDROOM/STUDY. DAY.

Tolstoy has moved himself out of the refined upper floors into a simple vaulted room he uses as both bedroom and study. The walls are bare except for a portrait of his daughter. The furniture is simple, some of it hand made: a small bed against the wall, a little writing desk in one corner stacked with books, littered with papers, more mail, opened and unopened. Pairs of rude homemade shoes line a work bench.

Tolstoy sleeps in his bed. Though it's late March and still cold, the window is open. Sofya closes it. She stands very still, watching Tolstoy sleep. Sitting on the bed, she gently touches his hand, whispers.

**SOFYA**

Darling.

She lies next to him, something girlish, hopeful in her face, as if waiting for him to wake up and adore her, but he sleeps on. She carefully takes his arm, positions it under her neck, and rolling toward him, wraps it around her. The image of love's intimacy, of wedded bliss.

His hand slips off her shoulder, once, twice. She moves awkwardly to replace it. He moves a little toward her. She kisses his neck, his cheek. We don't know if he's awake, but even this shadow of intimacy penetrates her soul.

7  OMITTED

8  INT. MOSCOW. STUDY. DAY.

A handsome study in the Moscow townhouse of VLADIMIR GRIGOREVICH CHERTKOV, Tolstoy's most articulate and dedicated disciple. He's interviewing Tolstoy's newly appointed secretary, VALENTIN BULGAKOV, the young man we met near the train, who, at the mention of sex, blushes a little.
CHERTKOV
But sex... You are twenty three.
Not an easy age for abstinence, is it?

VALENTIN
Tolstoy does not approve of
sexual relations. I know this.

CHERTKOV
He despises them, in fact...

Chertkov reaches for a small tin of moustache wax.

CHERTKOV
I don't want to belabor the
point, but I arranged for a
manservant last year who
proceeded to ruin two housemaids
just like that. He was very
upset.

VALENTIN
This would not be a problem. I'm
celibate. I'm also a strict
vegetarian.

Chertkov nods his approval, begins to worry his moustache.

CHERTKOV
Yes, I've heard many good things
about you. I've even read what
you've written. So has he.

Valentin's face flushes with pride. Chertkov steals a
glance at his reflection in the glass bookcase. One side of
his moustache droops a little. He tugs awkwardly at it.

CHERTKOV
My dear boy, if you were to
become Tolstoy's private
secretary, you would be given a
great gift. You'll be with him
every day, eat together, walk in
the forest by his side.

It's difficult to contain himself.

5.

VALENTIN
Believe me, since becoming a Tolstoyan, I have become so eager to learn, so committed to discussing ideas, improving my very soul.

**CHERTKOV**

(smiling)

Well, we have a lot to do if we are to get his work to the people.

**VALENTIN**

We?

They both laugh.

**CHERTKOV**

Yes, we. If we can encourage the spread of passive resistance...just think of it Valentin thousands of ordinary Russians casting off centuries of spiritual and political oppression-

**VALENTIN**

In the name of truth and freedom.

**CHERTKOV**

Truth and freedom, yes but still, my boy, there are so many enemies-

**VALENTIN**

Enemies?

Chertkov walks to the window, signals Valentin to follow him. He points to

**TWO MEN IN PLAINCLOTHES** standing in the street below.

**CHERTKOV**

The Czar's police...You'll be followed when you leave here...and the church will stop at nothing to bring him back into the fold. His children can't be trusted... only Sasha... and then of course there is the Countess... 

(beat)

Well, one doesn't like to come
between married people whatever the circumstances, but her dogged attachment to private property, her public criticism of our movement...

(MORE)

6.

CHERTKOV (cont'd)

(beat)
The point is, he needs a man of your intellectual gifts around him. Someone who can help him with the new work. Someone who understands his goals.

Chertkov returns to the desk.

CHERTKOV
And although they've allowed me to return to Russia, I can't see him. They keep me under house arrest... They might as well keep me in a cage.

Clearly upset, Chertkov pauses to get control of himself. He picks up a package, hands it to Valentin.

CHERTKOV
So, I need you to put these letters directly into his hands. One can't be sure what gets through to him.

Valentin looks at him, quizzical.

CHERTKOV
Sofya Andreyevna does not respect his privacy.

VALENTIN
She wouldn't open his private correspondence...

Chertkov raises an eyebrow. An ominous silence.

CHERTKOV
I have another task for you, my dear.

VALENTIN
Please.

CHERTKOV
You'll keep a diary for me.

He hands Valentin a notebook.

CHERTKOV
I need to know everything that goes on at Yasnaya Polyana. Let me know who visits the house, any talk of the copyright to his work, any contact with the church, what letters come and go. (beat) Anything Sofya Andreyevna says.

VALENTIN
Anything?

CHERTKOV
She's very, very dangerous.

EXT. MOSCOW. DOORWAY/STREET. EVENING.

Chertkov kisses Valentin delicately on both cheeks and ushers him into the dying light.

CHERTKOV
Godspeed, my boy.

Valentin makes his way to the droshky that awaits him.

CHERTKOV
And remember what I said.

He turns back to the dark figure in the doorway.

CHERTKOV
Write everything down! Go!

EXT. YASNAYA POLYANA. GROUNDS. MORNING.

SOFYA. Black and white film of her being handed the newspapers at the step. She looks up at the camera, irritated by its presence.
CUTTING OUT TO COLOR we see a cinematographer on the lawn cranking away at his camera. She goes into the house.

11 INT. YASNAYA POLYANA. TOLSTOY'S BEDROOM/STUDY. MORNING.

Where Tolstoy, awake and dressed, sits on his bed, pen in hand, writing in his diary. Dushan sits next to him, taking his pulse.

TOLSTOY
Nothing's working... Hand me my other boot, my friend, will you?

DUSHAN
Let me finish.

TOLSTOY
It doesn't matter. If my heart had stopped beating, I'd still go riding today.

DUSHAN
Your pulse is my responsibility...

(MORE)

8.

DUSHAN (cont'd)
and if you must ride, I insist you wear a coat. Even the sun is cold today.

He puts Tolstoy's arm down and hands him his riding boot. Sofya comes ranting into the room carrying several Russian and international dailies.

SOFYA
This is impossible! It really is!
These people are parasites!
Look...
(reading)
"Countess Tolstoy has become estranged from her husband. They barely speak."

She throws the paper on the floor.

SOFYA
You know who spreads all this rubbish....
She opens another paper, a French daily.

SOFYA
C'est la même en France. They gossip about us in Paris... "They do not share a similar view of either religion or politics."
Incroyable!

TOLSTOY
(smiling)
Peut-être. You think that's inaccurate?

SOFYA
I think it's none of the world's business.

She looks at Dushan who is transcribing every word into his diary. He does it with all the master's conversations.

SOFYA
What are you doing? Don't do that.

TOLSTOY
(smiling)
Dushan Petrovich, you're scribbling again?

Tolstoy moves with energy and purpose toward the door.

SOFYA
Darling, where are you going?

TOLSTOY
Riding with Sasha. Don't expect us for lunch.

Something strikes him. He walks to his desk, picks up his pen and quickly writes a sentence on a scrap of paper.

SOFYA
Leovochka, why do you insist on dressing like that.

TOLSTOY
What do you mean?

**SOFYA**
Like the man who looks after the sheep.

**TOLSTOY**
It's not meant to offend you.

**SOFYA**
But it does offend me, because it offends reason. You're a Count, for God's sake.

He puts his pen down, goes to her, kisses her gently on the forehead and leaves the room.

**SOFYA**
Oh darling, I have something else to say.

**TOLSTOY (O.S.)**
I doubt it not, my dear.

**DUSHAN**
He's forgotten his coat.

He runs after him, tripping over the long fur garment.

**DUSHAN (O.S.)**
Count Tolstoy, you've forgotten your coat.

Meanwhile Sofya notices a photographic portrait of Chertkov on the wall. She takes it down and tosses it in the corner.

12 **EXT. YASNAYA POLYANA. GROUNDS. DAY.**

As Tolstoy appears on the porch, we hear the WHIR of cameras. A crowd of photographers, film cameramen, journalists, and disciples try to catch a glimpse of the master. Dushan steps in front of him.

**DUSHAN**
Let him walk. Let him walk.

**JOURNALIST**
Count Tolstoy, you're no doubt distressed by the Czar's treatment of your secretary Nikolai Gusev?

TOLSTOY
These people are bandits.

DUSHAN
I said, let him walk.

TOLSTOY
They come into my house and arrest a man whose only crime is to express a view of life saner than that which prevails.

JOURNALIST
So Gusev is innocent?

TOLSTOY
(nods)
Of course, I'm the guilty one. I reject the Orthodox church. I condemn the established order and I make no secret of it.

A young peasant shouts from the crowd.

PEASANT
God bless you, Tolstoy. Thank you.

DUSHAN
Let him walk. Let him walk.
(to Tolstoy)
But you don't banish these people very much to your credit...I wish I had your largeness of spirit.

A photographer's flash goes off. An old Muzhik touches Tolstoy's sleeve, as if expecting a miracle.

Sasha, her father's soulmate, leads two horses toward them, her mount and her father's black gelding, Delire.

SASHA
Papa.

TOLSTOY
Sasha!

11.  

SASHA
Did you ride this morning?

A small crowd collects to watch father and daughter embrace, kiss.

A WIDE SHOT of the riders- cutting around we are

13 INT. YASNAYA POLYANA. ENTRY/STAIR. CONTINUOUS.  

Sofya watches her husband and daughter ride away.

14 EXT. RIVER VALLEY. DAY  

A steam train snakes through a broad valley.

15 INT. TRAIN CARRIAGE. DAY.  

Valentin in his buttoned up suit looks a little out of place in the overcrowded third class carriage. He writes in the diary given him by Chertkov. He glances up to see, on the bench across, a young mother taking out her breast to nurse her baby. He blushes, doesn't know where to look. An old peasant catches his eye, winks at him, laughs.

16 EXT. TELYATINKI. DUSK.  

Seven miles from Tolstoy's estate, this is Telyatinki, a communal center created by Chertkov dedicated to the study and practice of Tolstoyism.

SERGEYENKO
Telyatinki was created by Vladimir Grigorevich as a center for the movement. Just last week we had a visitor from India. We talked to the group about the healing properties of cobra venum.

VALENTIN
Oh, goodness..It's a beautiful day.
SERGEYENKO
Yes, but we will pay for it.

Sergeyenko, Chertkov's joyless secretary, and Valentin stand on a second storey porch looking out across the central lawn where a number of young Tolstoyans tend the garden, work to put up a chicken coop.

SERGEYENKO
The meeting room is behind us.
This is the tool shed. The dormitory ahead.

He points out a larger building across the way.

17 INT. TELYATINKI. SLEEPING AREA. NIGHT. 17

They enter the building.

SERGEYENKO
Telyatinki is a place of freedom.
Nothing is forbidden here.

Except everything.

SERGEYENKO
Each man is alone with his conscience and his God.
(beat)
The kitchen is below. You'll be expected to assist with meals at least twice a week ...and to give a hand in the garden. We're all equals here, you know...as Tolstoy teaches us.

They start up the stairs.

INT. SLEEPING PORCH. TELYATINKI. DAY

SERGEYENKO
You are expected at Yasnaya
Polyana in the morning, first thing.

VALENTIN
I look forward to it.

SERGEYENKO
Yes... you're lucky....We're all envious.

13.

18 INT. TELYATINKI. VALENTIN'S ROOM: NIGHT

Small, sparse, perfect for the novice ascetic. Valentin nods his approval.

SERGEYENKO
Vladimir Grigorevich is anxious that you begin your reports as soon as possible. You have the notebook he gave you?

VALENTIN
Of course.

SERGEYENKO
You understand we must keep the existence of the diary a secret.

Valentin smiles.

SERGEYENKO
What is it?

VALENTIN
Just that...secrecy doesn't seem to me the essence of Tolstoy's thought.

SERGEYENKO
But you'll admit, you're no expert.

VALENTIN
Yes, I...I'll see you in the morning.

SERGEYENKO
If we're spared.
Sergeyenko leaves Valentin to his bare, little room.

19   EXT. TELYATINKI COMPOUND. MORNING.  
The sun rising. Already, disciples are at work the gardens.

20   INT. TELYATINKI. VALENTIN'S ROOM. MORNING.  
Valentin sleeps in his tiny room. A knock on the door.

VALENTIN  
Come in.

A lovely girl at his door. She's tall, twenties, high cheek bones, short blonde hair. This is MASHA.

MASHA  
I've brought you a glass of tea.

VALENTIN  
That's very kind of you.

MASHA  
It's your first day. Enjoy it.

She sits on the bed. He's a little taken aback, not used to this degree of familiarity. It makes no impression on Masha.

MASHA  
You met Sergeyenko?

VALENTIN  
Last night.

MASHA  
Ad what do you think?

VALENTIN  
He seems very sincere.

Masha hands him his tea.

VALENTIN  
Thank you. Why are you laughing?

MASHA
Say that again.

VALENTIN
I said he seems very... Why?

MASHA
Is that what you think?

VALENTIN
I just arrived... What's your name?

MASHA
Masha. But you should still say what you think. Not just about him. We all should.

VALENTIN
Thank you for the tea.

Their eyes meet, hold. Valentin's discomfort increases.

MASHA
Tomorrow you can make your own.

She walks to the door, turns to see him still watching her.

21   EXT. ROAD TO YASNAYA POLYANA. DAY. 21

A modest horse drawn cart. Valentin sits beside the driver, contemplates the birch trees that line the road, the long shadows they cast. Above, crows make lazy circles in the sky.

22   OMITTED 22

23   INT. YASNAYA POLYANA. ENTRY WAY/STAIRS. DAY. 23

Valentin stands in the entry way, waiting. He looks lost.

VALENTIN
Hello...hello...

VOICE (O.S.)
You're the new secretary.

He looks up to see Sasha examining him from the landing above.

SASHA
Papa's out. You can wait in the library. Ivan will show you up.

She disappears. He hears a door close. He notices a surly house servant, IVAN, who, inexplicably, leads a goat through the house. He points upstairs and walks away.

24 INT. YASNAYA POLYANA. LIBRARY. DAY.

Alone now among Tolstoy's books, Valentin makes his way slowly to a writing table, the holy of holies, on which War and Peace and Anna Karenina were written. He runs his hand along the old wood top. Emboldened by a backward glance, he sits in Tolstoy's chair. Before him are stacks of letters, pens and pencils, a pot of India ink. There's a notebook lying open. He leans forward to read it. A noise in the hall stops him.

Tolstoy enters from the dining room, red cheeked, beard dripping wet, the energy of a man ten years younger than he is. Valentin stands.

TOLSTOY
I'm glad you're here. So glad.

He tromps across the room, kisses the boy enthusiastically on both cheeks. Valentin is overcome by the great man's warmth.

VALENTIN
I'm... I'm... Here is-

Valentin interrupts himself with a sneeze.

TOLSTOY
God bless you.

VALENTIN
I'm sorry. Sometimes I...
Valentin pulls out a letter of introduction. Tolstoy takes it out and puts it down without a glance.

**TOLSTOY**
Vladimir Grigorevich has already written about you at length. I need your help badly. The manifesto against the government is hard work. They commit their idiotic abuses faster than I can catalogue them...and the new book...

**VALENTIN**
He told me about it...It's very exciting.

Tolstoy nods.

**TOLSTOY**
I've become convinced that all the world's religions have a single organizing principle. Can you guess what it is? Love! Love! Simple... Now, I want to talk about you. How are you? How was your journey? Come, sit down.

Tolstoy sits on the old sofa. Valentin follows suit.

**TOLSTOY**
You know, I was born on this sofa...

Valentin gets right back up. Tolstoy laughs, pats the sofa.

**TOLSTOY**
Sit. Sit.

Valentin sits down.

**TOLSTOY**
Myself, my brother, my children, at least five or six of them, right here.
(beat)
Now, I've read your essays. How's
your work progressing?

Valentin looks into the great man's kind old face. He tries to speak but he's overcome with emotion and begins to weep.

TOLSTOY
My boy, what is it?
(beat)
I upset you in some way. Was it the sofa? It's only a sofa.

Valentin shakes his head, smiling through his tears.

VALENTIN
I'm very happy. You are very kind. I'm no one and you are... you are Leo Tolstoy and you ask me about my work.

Tolstoy takes Valentin's hand, sits him back on sofa.

TOLSTOY
You rest for a moment and I'll fetch you a glass of tea. Rest, because there's work for both of us together.

He smiles and goes, leaving Valentin to contemplate his fortune.

25 OMITTED

26 OMITTED

27 OMITTED

28 EXT. YASNAYA POLYANA. GROUNDS. DAY.

Sofya, Sasha, Valentin, ANDREY, Tolstoy's son, and Tolstoy all clustered around a table taking tea. Dushan stands near the group fiddling with a gramophone that sits on a small table.

SOFYA
These people have nothing.
DUSHAN
It really is the most extraordinary thing.

Absolutely ignoring him.

SOFYA
It's not for lack of land that the muzhiks live in poverty. They have no will power and they drink too much.

TOLSTOY
I'm not suggesting they be given land. Private property is the root of the problem... We should be giving ours away.

ANDREY
Give it to whom?

SOFYA
It's all ridiculous. You think that poverty makes the peasants somehow morally superior.

TOLSTOY
I believe that wealth corrupts us all, yes I do.

A pause. Valentin fills the silence.

VALENTIN
It's a keystone of the movement.

SOFYA
Oh, I know all about the movement.

A pause. Valentin notices that people from the front lawn have moved up to watch all this. Life in the fishbowl, the Tolstoys seem neither to notice nor care.

TOLSTOY
If the peasants had money, they wouldn't surround themselves, as we do, with footmen costing ten rubles a month.

SOFYA
No, they'd spend it on drink and
whores.

TOLSTOY
Valentin Fedorovich, do you think fifty years from now, people will eat while grown men walk around and wait on them hand and foot?

19.

Valentin doesn't know what to say. A giggle from Dushan.

DUSHAN
Oh, that's good...that's good.

Dushan, having sat at table, tries surreptitiously to get down Tolstoy's words in the diary he holds below the table. Sofya flushes with anger.

VALENTIN
I think...(sneeze)

SOFYA
Stop scribbling!
(points to her husband)
You all think he's Christ, don't you? He thinks he's Christ.

There is an awkward pause.

DUSHAN
(flustered)
I'm not...I don't believe Leo Nikolayevich is Christ. Christ is Christ but...

SOFYA
But what?

DUSHAN
I believe he's one of the prophets. God speaks through him. I recognize the cadence in his voice.

SOFYA
This is unbearable. No wonder I feel lonely. I'm surrounded by morrons.

SASHA
Mama, you're being ridiculous.

**SOFYA**

Am I? I sit here and listen to this talk of love and God and equality, knowing full well that Count Generosity here is fully prepared to give away everything we have.

**TOLSTOY**

(exhausted)

You keep going on like that... Why do you think we should profit from the work I'm doing which is only meant for the sake of the people.

She turns to see Dushan scribbling again.

**SOFYA**

STOP IT! STOP WRITING NOW!

Valentin glances at Sasha, uncomfortable at these outbursts. A long pause. Dushan tries to relieve the tension.

**DUSHAN**

In defense of my gift, let me demonstrate. It's quite remarkable, really.

He gets up, places a record on the gramophone, needle on the record. What comes forth is not music, but Tolstoy's voice.

It is a recording of a recent speech against capital punishment. His voice booms, tinny and distorted. Dushan walks to the machine, stares at it in awe. Valentin is completely caught up in the technology.

**VALENTIN**

It's your voice. It's wonderful.

They all listen for a moment, look to Tolstoy for a response.

**TOLSTOY**

It's tiresome. Another
remarkable invention will supercede it.

Valentin blushes and looks at the table. Dushan tries to hide his disappointment.

**TOLSTOY**

Please excuse me.

Tolstoy rises, leaves the table, walks out onto the lawn. Dushan gets up quickly, bumping the table as he goes. Tea spills. Valentin moves to wipe it up, sneezes, a barrage of irritable blessings.

**DUSHAN**

Leo Nikolayevich is something of a Luddite, I fear.

Sofya crosses to the machine, removes the record from the gramophone, replaces it with another Dushan has brought.

Suddenly, the air is filled with the final duet from Mozart's Il Nozze di Figaro. She returns to her place. There is a long moment where all take in the sublimity of it. Tolstoy walks slowly back to the table. He stands completely still. Tears fill his eyes and roll down his cheeks.

21.

**TOLSTOY**

Oh, that's better. That's nice. Very nice indeed.

Sofya crosses to her husband, wipes the tears off his face. Valentin watches as they embrace.

**VALENTIN (O.S.)**

Do your parents often speak to each other so... bluntly?

29 INT. YASNAYA POLYANA. LIBRARY. EVENING.

Across from Tolstoy's writing desk is Sasha's world, a makeshift office lined with more bookcases where she does her work, sending cables, editing manuscripts, answering endless stacks of mail. Valentin sits near her, learning the ropes.

**SASHA**
My mother doesn't understand my father's goals, not since his work as a novelist became secondary. His commitment to the spiritual life offends her. They've fought about it for years.

VALENTIN
I'm sure she means well.

Sasha just looks at him.

VALENTIN
Your father is the greatest writer in the world.

SASHA
Quite.

A pause.

VALENTIN
I mean to say, I feel privileged to be here. It's an... honor.

Valentin feels himself slip further into mundanity. Sasha goes back to her letter. Valentin SNEEZES.

SASHA
God Bless You.

They read together for a moment. He sneezes again.

SASHA
(irritated)
God bless you.

22.

VALENTIN
I'm sorry. Sometimes I sneeze when I'm nervous.

She regards him like an animal in the zoo. Ivan appears at the door.

SASHA
What is it?

IVAN
It’s a note, for him.

He nods toward Valentin.

**SASHA**
Well, give it to him then.

Valentin reads the note.

**VALENTIN**
It’s from your mother. She wants to see me.

As Valentin goes,

**SASHA**
She is looking for allies. Pay attention. This is war.

---

**30**  **INT. YASNAYA POLYANA. SITTING ROOM. NIGHT.**

Sofya is settled on a divan in a small room off the dining room. Valentin sits beside her holding a glass of tea.

**SOFYA**
I see a fine young man before me. Clear eyes. Nice features, rather handsome in a peculiar way.

**VALENTIN**
Thank you, Countess…

**SOFYA**
Call me Sofya Andreyevna. We don't stand on formality here, as you may have observed.
(beat)
Many young men ruin their looks by loose living. You're a real Tolstoyan, I can tell!

**VALENTIN**
I admire your husband immensely.

**SOFYA**
That's excellent. He likes that.

---

**VALENTIN**
His ideas are beautiful...social justice...the idea...Don't you think?

Sofya drains her tea cup, signals for more.

SOFYA
He's very grateful for the help you've been giving him. He told me so himself. I think it surprises him that a young man would be so diligent. When he was your age, he was whoring in the Caucasus.

Valentin's eyes are wide. She nods.

SOFYA
He wrote it all down. He even gave me a copy, so I could read all the details...

VALENTIN
Thank you.

SOFYA
You've read War and Peace?

VALENTIN
Many times... twice.

Sofya smiles at his honesty.

SOFYA
When he was writing it, long before Chertkov created that monstrosity at Telyatinki, before all this "new religion" and revolutionary nonsense...

(beat)
What do you think of Chertkov, by the way?

VALENTIN
He's given me an extraordinary opportunity.

SOFYA
But you see what a fool he is, a self-serving puritanical idiot. I have to say, it's been extremely pleasant since they've locked him
in his house.

Sofya smiles. Valentin is nonplussed by her directness.

SOFYA
When my husband was writing it, in the mid-sixties, he'd bring me pages to re-copy everyday. I was the only one who could read his handwriting. I could read his intentions, too. Afternoons, we'd drink tea and discuss changes. "Natasha wouldn't say that to Prince Andrey," or "Pierre's too simple here. He's not stupid."

She smiles at the memory.

SOFYA
But I don't count anymore.

Silence. She sips her tea. She glances out the door to see Sasha hovering nearby. Listening? Sasha walks away.

SOFYA
You must help me, Valentin Fedorovich. I want only what is best for my husband and my family. I could tolerate the situation if it only concerned me. What I can not do is sit back while they steal my children's inheritance. Do you know I was the only person. I could understand his intention.

VALENTIN
I don't believe anyone wants to do that.

Sofya gives him a condescending smile. She produces a package from the table beside her, hands it to him.

SOFYA
I have a little gift for you

He opens it, extracts a small leather bound book. He stares at it.
SOFYA
It's a diary.
(beat)
Everyone should always keep a diary.

VALENTIN
It's a very popular activity around your husband.

SOFYA
You're teasing me, but I trust you'll write the truth.

VALENTIN
That may not be so easy.

SOFYA
Nonsense. You've been listening to your friends at Telyatinki...
(beat)
Write what you see. That's always the place to begin.
(slowly)

Valentin fingers the package, stifles a sneeze.

SOFYA
More tea?

31 EXT. TELYATINKI COMPOUND. DAY

Valentin rides into the compound. A number of the disciples are outside working. There is the ringing of metal on wood. He looks for the source. As the way clears a little, he sees Masha chopping away with an axe. He stops his horse to watch her.

MASHA
You're finished for the day?

VALENTIN
He didn't need me this afternoon.

He gets down off his horse. Masha continues to chop. He picks up an axe, holds it awkwardly.
VALENTIN
Leo Nikolayevich disapproves of women doing physical labor.
(beat)
Don't you find that reactionary?

MASHA
No, I find it sweet. I find you reactionary.

She laughs. Valentin picks up a log, sets it on end and begins to chop. He doesn't do it well. Masha smiles at his struggle.

MASHA
He admires you, I believe.

What's she saying?

MASHA
Sergeyenko told me. He's miserable about it.

26.

VALENTIN
Tolstoy's kind to everyone.

The log is stuck to the blade of his axe. He's really struggling now.

MASHA
What do you talk about when you're with him?
(beat)
Why are you blushing?

VALENTIN
We talk about me.

MASHA
Really.

VALENTIN
He wants to know everything about me, my parents, my relations with women, my experience of god -

He looks up to see Masha smiling at him.

MASHA
And what relations are these?

Valentin blushes, goes back to trying to chopping. Almost immediately the log becomes stuck to the blade of the axe. He bangs it, bangs it trying to free it. He glances up to see her still looking at him. He pounds again and again.

She stops, reaches for his axe, touching him as she does. She lifts the big axe, log and all, above her head, bringing it down hard. The log splits. She hands the axe to him.

**MASHA**
I had a lover before I came here... headmaster of a school where I taught. He was married - happily married. It was difficult. We could make love only at school.

This is somehow more than Valentin had bargained for.

**VALENTIN**
At school?

**MASHA**
In the gymnasium, after the girls had gone. There were straw mats on the floor.

**VALENTIN**
I see...

He looks away to hide his confusion.

**MASHA**
Have I upset you?

He looks at her.

**VALENTIN**
No...I appreciate your frankness

**MASHA**
But you disapprove of me. I see it in your eyes.

**VALENTIN**
I don't. Not at all...I think
sexual activity...how men and women combine their physical parts is completely neutral.

**MASHA**
Listen to you. You're a prig. Just like Sergeyenko. Why else would they have hired you?

**VALENTIN**
That's not fair

**MASHA**
I don't care if it's fair. It's true...neutral...my God...

**VALENTIN**
I'm going.

He puts down the axe.

**MASHA**
Do as you like.

She goes back to chopping. We track in front of him as he walks toward the house. The chopping stops.

**MASHA**
Valentin Fedorovich.

He stops, relieved and turns to face her.

**MASHA**
You forgot your horse.

**VALENTIN**
Yes. You know, I think that I... never mind.

He hesitates for a moment, then starts toward her. Her back is to him. She begins to chop again. The color rises in his face as he tries to salvage a little dignity.

28.

He grabs the reins and starts again toward the buildings, trips in a ditch, almost falls flat. Red faced, he rights himself. The chopping behind him remains constant. Sergeyenko watches him from the porch.
32    INT. YASNAYA POLYANA. LIBRARY. DAY

CLOSE on the CABLE MACHINE.    A message coming through.

32A  INT. YASNAYA POLYANA. ENTRY WAY/STAIR. DAY.

Sofya walks into the house with another stack of mail. Sasha comes piling down the stairs.

SASHA
Where's papa?

Without waiting for the answer, Sasha races past her and out the door

33   OMITTED

34    EXT. YASNAYA POLYANA. ZASYEKA WOODS. DAY

Valentin and Tolstoy walk together in the woods.

TOLSTOY
I couldn't write. I was distracted I think...I had a dream last night, about a Tartar girl I knew in the war.

VALENTIN
A girl who died?

TOLSTOY
No, no...A girl I had sexual intercourse with... Sometimes we did it twice a day.

Valentin sneezes.

TOLSTOY
God bless...I've never forgotten our time together, the position of our bodies, the taste of her...

VALENTIN
You shouldn't torture yourself. It was a long time ago.

Tolstoy laughs out loud.
TOLSTOY
Torture? You are a virgin, aren't you.

VALENTIN
I try to...you know, to...

TOLSTOY
To be what, a good Tolstoyan?

Tolstoy smiles.

TOLSTOY
You see, I myself am not a very good Tolstoyan. You should think twice about asking my advice about anything... Torture...(he laughs)

VALENTIN
Are you alright?

TOLSTOY
Kalya, her name was...She's an old woman now, white hair, old body like me. She'd hardly remember my name, I suspect. She may even be dead. (beat) Do you think that meant something?

VALENTIN
What do you mean?

TOLSTOY
I mean that little romance. Was there some meaning to it?

VALENTIN
It's interesting. I think you would say..I mean, I've read where you say that the physical body isn't real. That it's all an illusion.

TOLSTOY
I say lots of things. What do you say? What do you think?

VALENTIN
I...I don't know.

Leo Nikoleyevich smiles.

**TOLSTOY**
I don't know, either.

He inhales deeply.

**TOLSTOY**
Smell that...

**VALENTIN**
Lilac?

He looks up as he hears Sasha off screen. "Papa. Papa."

**TOLSTOY**
Precisely. It's lilac. The smell's stronger when the sun goes down.

He presses Valentin's hand.

**SASHA**
Papa!

**TOLSTOY**
I've enjoyed myself, my boy.
(shouting for Sasha)
**WE'RE HERE.**

As he starts in the direction of her voice. Sasha appears in the clearing, telegram in hand.

**SASHA**
He's free. He's free...He's coming back

Smash cut to

35 **EXT. RAILWAY. COUNTRYSIDE. DAY**

A train roars past camera, shaking the world.

36 **OMITTED**
Chertkov climbs down from his droshky. Suddenly, Tolstoy is there. Valentin watches them embrace.

**TOLSTOY**

My dear, dear man.

Tears run down his old cheeks. They embrace again.

**SOFYA (O.S.)**

He'll try again to convince your father to change his will.

---

Andrey and Sofya stand together at the window, watching the joyful reunion.

**SOFYA**

To give the copyright as "a gift to humanity."...the reptile.

**ANDREY**

Papa's not in his right mind. He can't defend himself against these thieves.

(beat)

My tooth is killing me.

**SOFYA**

You're a fine son, darling. None of this make believe chastity and made up religion. I wish all my children had turned out like you.

Andrey's finger in his mouth, massages the offending molar.

**ANDREY**

A man's responsibility is to his family.

From her POV, we see the two men walk away together arm in arm, talking animatedly.

**SOFYA**

Chertkov's notions of virtuous behavior are calculated to
destroy me.

ANDREY
To destroy uth all.

SOFYA
There is nothing more pathetic than impoverished aristocrats.

She walks out of the room.

39  EXT. GROUNDS. YASNAYA POLYANA. DAY.

And into the drive to greet Chertkov. He moves immediately to her, offers her his hand and an unctuous smile.

SOFYA
Vladimir Grigorevich, what a surprise.

CHERTKOV
Sofya Andreyevna, I'm happy to see you.

Valentin watches her match him smile for smile.

* 

SOFYA
And I'm happy to make you happy...always.

40  OMITTED

41  EXT. ROAD TO TELYATINKI. DAY

Valentin and Chertkov sit together in the droshky, an awkward silence.

CHERTKOV
I'm glad to have a moment alone with you, Valentin. How do you think you're getting on?

VALENTIN
(a little nervous)
I hope my work is pleasing to Leo Nikolayevich.

CHERTKOV
Yes. He seems satisfied and that's good. The reports I've received from you however... There seems to be some confusion.

VALENTIN
What do you mean?

CHERTKOV
You send me never ending commentary on Tolstoy's writing. That's all very interesting but not very useful. I need to know what goes on with Sofya Andreyevna. You must see by now she's committed to undermining her husband's best intentions.

VALENTIN
It's not quite so obvious to me.

CHERTKOV
Because she is duplicitous. You are very bright. Too bright to let her into you.

Chertkov fixes the boy with his intense gaze.

CHERTKOV
You value our work?

VALENTIN
I do.

CHERTKOV
The ideals we share?

VALENTIN
That's why I'm here.

CHERTKOV
Good, of course it is. (beat) Do you think the Countess suspects something?
VALENTIN
Well, I think the Countess is very suspicious by nature.

CHERTKOV
How so?

VALENTIN
I don’t think she likes you very much.

CHERTKOV
What does she say?

VALENTIN
It’s a tone I’ve picked up.

CHERTKOV
We simply want to distribute Tolstoy’s work to the widest audience possible. She just has no understanding what it is we are trying to do. There’s nothing in it for any of us but a real chance to increase the world’s happiness.

He takes Valentin’s hand.

CHERTKOV
I can only be of limited help to the master if I don’t know what’s going on. Any effort she makes to shore up control of the copyright, I must know. The survival of our movement depends on it. Remember who your friends are. What you’ve come here to do.

Chertkov turns away to watch the countryside. Valentin stares straight ahead, his nose twitches slightly.
Valentin, in bed, writes in his diary. Closing his eyes, he begins to drift off when there is a noise outside his door.

VALENTIN
Hello... Hello?

After a moment, it opens a crack.

VALENTIN
Masha?

She is there. She puts two fingers to her lips and walks toward him. She carries a candle which reveals her short hair, her lovely eyes.

VALENTIN
Masha.

She says nothing, simply crawls into bed, positions her knees on either side of him. She leans forward and kisses him.

VALENTIN
Masha.

MASHA
Ssshh.

She begins to move against him. Their faces touch. She doesn't kiss him, but he can feel her breath. She sits up.

MASHA
Move the book.

VALENTIN
What?

MASHA
Your book.

It's true. Valentin still clutches the diary to his chest. He puts it aside. Masha, then, pulls her nightdress over
head, exposing her small breasts, her flat stomach.

35.

She reaches under the sheets, curls her fingers around him. He flinches at the pleasure of it.

MASHA
Is it alright?

He can't speak. Only nod. He bites his lip as she slips him into her and begins to rock. The pleasure is too much, and he comes too quickly. She falls forward on him, begins to laugh.

VALENTIN
What...what is it?

MASHA
You really are a virgin.

Valentin tenses a little.

MASHA
I'm playing. It's fine. It's wonderful...
(beat)
Hold me.

He does, as if he'll never release her.

48  EXT. TELYATINKI COMPOUND. MORNING.

Activity in the compound. Chairs on the lawn, a banner being erected, a long table being set. Preparations being made.

49  INT. TELYATINKI. VALENTIN'S ROOM. MORNING.

Light spills into Valentin's room. He lies with his arms around naked Masha.

VALENTIN
Wake up, wake up.

MASHA
I am awake.

VALENTIN
I want to ask you something. Say it again.

MASHA
It was wonderful.

They both giggle.

VALENTIN
Why did you come to a place like this?

MASHA
What do you mean?

VALENTIN
You don't follow any of the rules.

Mashya smiles.

MASHA
You mean, why does someone who doesn't follow the rules come to a place like this?

MASHA
..it's not about rules. Not for Tolstoy anyway...

A knock at the door startles them.

SERGEYENKO (O.S.)
Valentin Fedorovich.

Valentin is suddenly in a panic.

VALENTIN
What is it?

49A  INT. TELYATINKI. CORRIDOR. DAY.

Sergeyenko hovers outside the bedroom door.

SERGEYENKO
Open the door.

VALENTIN (O.S.)
At the moment, I'm indisposed.

**SERGEYENKO**
Yes, well...Leo Nikolayevich is here. He wants to see you.

49B  **INT. TELYATINKI. VALENTIN'S ROOM. DAY.**  49B

Valentin blanches.

**VALENTIN**
Tell him... I'll be down at once.

**SERGEYENKO (O.S.)**
Yes...and tell Maria Filipovna we could use another hand in the kitchen.

They look at each other.

37.

**VALENTIN**
If I see her I will...

**SERGEYENKO (O.S.)**
If you see her...yes. And if you're going to behave like rabbits, you should go live in the woods.

Valentin is up, immediately.

**VALENTIN**
Let me go out first...give me five minutes...

Masha just looks at him.

50  **EXT. TELYATINKI COMPOUND. DAY.**  50

A Tolstoyan photo op. A delegation of orphans have come to pay their respects to Tolstoy. He sits in a chair beside Chertkov beneath a large banner: "Leo Tolstoy, Friend of the People.". Behind him, the disciples lay out a vegetarian feast on a plank table. Photographers and a cinematographer are strategically positioned to record the event.
Each child gives Tolstoy a flower. Chertkov, in turn, hands each child a photograph of the Count giving money to the poor.

Valentin enters, flushed and blushing. He pauses beside Dushan who records the scene in his diary, tears in his eyes.

**DUSHAN**

Look at the love in him, like Jesus...suffering the children...all that...

Tolstoy greets a little boy affectionately, rubs his knuckles over the boy's shaved head. A little girl approaches, takes a photograph. He bends forward to kiss her head but she pulls away.

**TOLSTOY**

An old man is a very ugly thing.

Tolstoy sees Valentin, lights up.

**TOLSTOY**

My dear boy. Come and kiss me.

Valentin, beet red, goes to him. He is warmly embraced.

Masha comes to stand beside him. She glances at Valentin but he won't make eye contact with her.

**TOLSTOY**

Now, who is this? Maria Filipovna.

You're both looking so well. Life here at Telyatinki obviously agrees with you.

Valentin sneezes mightily, moves a little away.

**TOLSTOY**

God bless you, boy. What are you nervous about, now? Sit down. Sit down.

Valentin takes the chair beside him.
TOLSTOY
Dear Masha, Valentin tells me you're the great treasure of Telyatinki. He claims you're a very gifted teacher.

Sergeyenko lifts an eyebrow "Indeed.". Valentin is in agony.

MASHA
We're happy to have you with us.

Tolstoy notices a mosquito on Valentin's cheek. He takes the bug between his big fingers, squeezes until it pops. Chertkov watches in horror, whispers loudly.

CHERTKOV
What are you doing?

TOLSTOY
What do you mean?

He motions to the photographers.

CHERTKOV
You've killed a living thing.

Chertkov hears a laugh behind him. It is Masha who has over heard the whole thing.

CHERTKOV
Do you have something to say?

MASHA
It's absurd. That's all.

Chertkov is taken aback. Valentin stares at her.

39.

VALENTIN
What are you saying?

MASHA
I'm sorry but- It's a mosquito.

TOLSTOY
Forgive him. He can't help it. He's a better Tolstoyan than I am.
She can't help laughing again. Valentin sees the color rise in Chertkov's face.

CHERTKOV
It's not the message we want to send.

Sasha suddenly appears. She holds a cable in her hand.

SASHA

51 INT. TELYATINKI. CHERTKOV'S STUDY. DAY.

Chertkov is there. Tolstoy, Valentin and Sasha.

SASHA
Don't give in to her, Papa. It'll never end...I swear to God, that woman has an instinct for knowing when you're just about to enjoy yourself

A knock on the door. Valentin opens it. It's Dushan with another cable. Tolstoy gestures for him to read it aloud.

DUSHAN

SASHA
Who taught her to use that damned machine?

Valentin starts to sneeze, stifles it, starts again, stifles, starts, explodes. Guilty.

CHERTKOV
Perhaps Sasha's right. Encouraging this may not be the best thing.

SASHA
It's a trick, Papa. She'll drain you. You'll be miserable.
Tolstoy looks from one to the other, gets up from his chair.

**SASHA**

Then, let me go with you.

**TOLSTOY**

No, my dear, I'll go alone.

---

52 **OMITTED** 52

53 **INT. YASNAYA POLYANA. SOFYA'S BEDROOM. NIGHT.** 53

Close on Sofya lying in bed. She looks ravishing in the candle light. In the background, Tolstoy arrives in the bedroom door.

**TOLSTOY**

Sofya.

A sly smile on her lips, the tension gone from her face, she seems twenty years younger.

**TOLSTOY**

Sofya, are you ill?

She rolls toward him making it clear she's quite naked under the sheets. This is no sick bed.

**SOFYA**

I'm fine...now that you're home.

**TOLSTOY**

It's no good, you know, all this. You frightened everyone.

**SOFYA**

Did I really? I don't believe it. Not you. I'm your little bird. You know the sounds I make.

**TOLSTOY**

That was some sort of love call?

**SOFYA**

It brought you back to me.

She reaches out her hand to him.
SOFYA
Come out of the dark... where I can see you.

He takes a step toward her, then stops.

TOLSTOY
Why? Why? Why, do you do it? We live in the country and you insist on making it an opera house. What's wrong with a little peace now and then?

Sofya laughs.

SOFYA
Look at me. This is who I am. This is what you married. We're older, maybe we're old, but I'm still your little chicken (beat)
You're still my big cock.

She smiles at him.

SOFYA
Let me make you crow.

A pause, then a huge laugh comes up from the very center of him. He twists his neck, thrusts his head upward, crows like a rooster.

He virtually runs to her, embraces her, kisses her. She is a giddy girl in his arms. He breaks the embrace and begins strutting around the room.

SOFYA
Let me make you sing.

He takes her in his arms, again, begins to kiss her neck.

SOFYA
Do you love me?

TOLSTOY
I do.

SOFIA
I want you to love me.

He stops kissing her, looks her in the eye. Then, another loud crow. Laughing, they fall into each other again.

53A EXT. YASNAYA POLYANA. GROUNDS. NIGHT. 53A

And we hear their laughter over the dark old house.

42.

54 EXT. TELYATINKI. PORCH. NIGHT. 54

Valentin sits by himself on the porch, writes in his diary. Down below, some of the disciples listen to peasants play music around a bonfire. A voice from the darkness.

MASHA
I'm not supposed to do this either.

He locates the speaker by the glow of her lit cigarette.

VALENTIN
Masha. You are not supposed to smoke at Telyatinki.

MASHA
You wouldn't look at me.

VALENTIN
It was difficult in front of the others.

MASHA
But it wasn't difficult in your bed... When it was only you and me in front of God.

VALENTIN
I'm not sure I was conscious of God.

Masha emerges from the shadows, but keeps her distance.

MASHA
So, I made you forget God?

VALENTIN
No...
MASHA
Yes, only for a moment. You forgot your rules and remembered love.

VALENTIN
You make it sound very simple.

MASHA
It is simple. What we did is what men and women do, have done, will continue doing. What could be more simple? We touched each other-- stayed close together. Something passed between us. Something real. That is a betrayal of what? Of nothing.

(MORE)

MASHA (cont'd)
But you're afraid... All your ideas. What are you afraid of?

VALENTIN
I'm afraid I've hurt you, haven't I?

MASHA
No. I feel a little sad, but it is not for me. It's for you.

She disappears into the house. Valentin looks after her.

55 INT. YASNAYA POLYANA. SOFYA'S BEDROOM. MORNING.

The Countess wakes to find her bed empty.

56 EXT. YASNAYA POLYANA. BACK TERRACE. DAY.

She comes through the dining room to find Tolstoy on the back terrace. Wrapped in a blanket, he writes in his diary, a cup of tea in front of him.

SOFYA
Good morning, my darling? Do you mind if I join you?
Without looking up

TOLSTOY
Of course, my dear.

He continues to write. She watches him for a long moment. She opens her diary and begins to write as well.

SOFYA
It's quite insane, my darling. Everyone is making fun of you.

He looks up.

TOLSTOY
What are you talking about?

She continues to write.

SOFYA
Even the muzhiks. I heard them laughing in the barn.

TOLSTOY
About what?

Sofya looks at him knowingly.

44.

TOLSTOY
Laughing about what?

SOFYA
I don't want to ruin last night.

She sips her tea, goes back to her writing. A pause. He follows suit. After a moment...

SOFYA
Laughing about the fact that you've developed a senile crush on a fat middle aged flatterer. Your passion for Chertkov has become a standing joke.

TOLSTOY
I have a great affection for Vladimir Grigorivich. Let them laugh if they find it amusing.
SOFYA
But it's not amusing, darling. It's sick. It's not normal. You hang on his every word.

TOLSTOY
We have a great deal in common.

SOFYA
You have nothing in common. You are a genius. He's a sycophant and a pervert.

TOLSTOY
Because he understands what I'm trying to do? Because he tries to help me accomplish it?

SOFYA
He is using you. You just can't seem to see it.

TOLSTOY
This is absolute nonsense.

SOFYA
That bold, obese, idiotic man. You treat him...

He turns to her...his face red with anger and frustration.

TOLSTOY
It's impossible for you not to distract me. Let me alone... for God's sake. You're like a spoiled child.

45.

He rises, spits on the ground, goes into the house. Sofya follows.

57  INT. YASNAYA POLYANA. DINING ROOM. CONTINUOUS.  57

Catching him up.

SOFYA
Do you love me, Lyovochka?

TOLSTOY
Of course, I do.

**SOFYA**
Then why would you betray me?

**TOLSTOY**
Why do you say that?

**SOFYA**
Because of the will?

---

57A      INT. YASNAYA POLYANA. ENTRY WAY/STAIRS/LANDING. DAY     57A

Tolstoy, taken aback, says nothing.

**SOFYA**
The new will.

**TOLSTOY**
There's no new will.

She stares at him in silence.

**TOLSTOY**
There is no new will.

**SOFYA**
Does Chertkov have it?

**TOLSTOY**
There's no new will.

He walks up the stairs. She follows.

**SOFYA**
But that's why he's come back. You talk about it, you and your boyfriend. You plan for it. You have no heart for the people who really love you. You'd rather be seduced by charlatans and deluded by flatterers, all in the name of love....You can't even love your own children. You can't even love me.

46.

**SOFYA**
Tell me where it is?
TOLSTOY
There is no new will.

58 INT. YASNAYA POLYANA. LIBRARY. CONTINUOUS.

He goes to his desk, tries to ignore her.

SOFYA
Then, promise me there never will be.

A moment's hesitation.

TOLSTOY
I've told you the truth. Now, let me work. Please, will you?

He walks to his desk.

59 OMITTED

60 INT. YASNAYA POLYANA. LIBRARY. CONTINUOUS. DAY.

Tolstoy looks up from his work. Sofya stands in the doorway.

SOFYA
Tomorrow, I'll go to the Station and lie down on the track.
Tolstoy's wife becomes Anna Karenina herself! See how the papers will like that!

As he goes, we hear.

TOLSTOY (O.S.)
This is unbearable. You don't want a husband. You want a Greek chorus.

Sofya is taken aback by his response. She walks out of the room.

61 EXT. ROAD TO TELYATINKI. DAY

Four peasants pull a water cart down a rough country road.
We pan off to see Sofya in her droshky, resplendent in a white dress.

62 INT. TELYATINKI. CHERTKOV'S STUDY. DAY.

CHERTKOV and SERGEYENKO look through a crack in the interior window.

THEIR POV - the Countess on the sofa drinking a glass of tea.

Valentin enters from the meeting room.

VALENTIN
She's here to question you about the new will.

Chertkov nervous, tugs at his moustache.

CHERTKOV
How does she know it even exists?

VALENTIN
She claims Leo Nikolayevich told her she could examine the draft.

CHERTKOV
He is obviously not thinking clearly. And now we have to put up with her petty grasping.

VALENTIN
It doesn't seem petty to me.

CHERTKOV
I beg your pardon?

VALENTIN
He's her life. The work, in her mind, is theirs...together.

CHERTKOV
And you're her advocate? You've been taken in by her celebrity. I worried about this.

VALENTIN
I'm talking about their history --- simply that.
CHERTKOV
We should see her. Act as if nothing has happened.

VALENTIN
Nothing has happened.

63 INT. TELYATINKI. MEETING ROOM. DAY.

The men enter the meeting room.

48.

CHERTKOV
Sofya Andreyevna, at last, you honour us with your visit.

Valentin watches her match him smile for smile.

SOFYA
And I'm happy to make you happy...always.

She looks at him curiously.

SOFYA
What is it?

CHERTKOV
Your moustache is...

Drooping, one side of it anyway.

CHERTKOV
(nodding)
It's a problem of the wax.

Sofya takes them in.

SOFYA
Let me get to the point. Vladimir Grigorivich, I don't wish to be your enemy. I'm delighted that my husband has a friend who understands and shares his ideals. All I want is what's reasonable - an opportunity to evaluate the new will. If you agree, I'm sure we can be
friends.

CHERTKOV
You're very kind. Sofya Andreyevna. But I can't help you. Not without specific instructions from your husband.

SOFYA
(to Bulgakov)
Leo Nikolayevich has agreed, hasn't he Val-

CHERTKOV
No witness you produce will change my position. But I'll certainly talk to Leo Nikolayevich at the first opportunity.

Sofya is livid.

SOFYA
Very well.

CHERTKOV
I want us to be friends, too, Sofya. Leo Nikolayevich is the most valuable thing in the world, for both of us. We should endeavor to set things right between us. Give him peace. Let him work.

SOFYA
Yes.
(beat)
Valentin Fedorovich...are you coming back to the house with me?

Valentin glances between them, searching for middle ground.

VALENTIN
I'll escort the Countess home and be back in time for supper.

Sergeyenko sneers.

SERGEYENKO
Masha will be overjoyed.

Valentin's nose twitches. He looks at the floor.

**SOFYA (O.S.)**
Have you been keeping something from me? How delightful.

64 EXT. ROAD TO TELYATINKI. DAY.

They are back in the droshky, the return trip to Yasnaya Polyana. Valentin doesn't respond.

**SOFYA**
We've become close friends, I think. Tell me everything, dear boy. I love a romance.

**VALENTIN**
It's nothing, really.

**SOFYA**
A young woman in your life is nothing?

**VALENTIN**
Masha is a friend.

**SOFYA**
A lover?

50.

**VALENTIN**
A good friend.

**SOFYA**
That sounds serious enough.

Valentin looks away.

**SOFYA**
I don't mean to annoy you.

**VALENTIN**
I'm not annoyed.

**SOFYA**
You forget that I'm an experienced reader. I can read
your face, every letter. It's beautifully clear.  
(beat)  
Do you love her?

Valentin looks at Sofya, tears in his eyes.

**VALENTIN**
Maybe I do.

**SOFYA**
Not something they'd understand, these so called disciples of my husband. They've never understood a word he's written.  
(beat)  
What do any of them know about love?

---

**65 EXT. TELYATINKI COMPOUND. DAY. 65**

Masha carries two water buckets suspended from a pole across her shoulders. Arriving at a stream, she takes each bucket and fills it. It's hot work. Pausing a moment, she kneels to splash water on her face.

Another P.O.V. - someone watches her from the trees.

As Masha wets a cloth, puts it around her neck. Suddenly someone grabs her from behind. She screams, wrestle her way free. She turns to see Valentin, flushed, smiling, excited. He steps toward her, kicks over one of the buckets.

**VALENTIN**
Sorry, sorry, I'll... I didn't mean to scare you...Are you alright.

**MASHA**
Fine...fine...Why did you...?

**VALENTIN**
I came back as soon as I could.  
It was a strange day. Leo Nikolayevich,...I love to listen to him. I love nothing more...
He moves closer to her.

**VALENTIN**

But today I could hardly concentrate.

He's very close to her, now.

**VALENTIN**

All I could think of was you.

Masha shakes her head, moves away from him. Begins to gather the pole, to refill the spilled bucket. Stops her, turns her to him.

**VALENTIN**

What's wrong?

**MASHA**

I think I've confused you. I've confused us both.

**VALENTIN**

No. No. You didn't confuse me...I was stupid. I was afraid, but I'm not afraid anymore.

Valentin wants to fight through the awkwardness. He tries to kiss her. She won't have it. She pulls away.

**VALENTIN**

I love you, Masha!

**MASHA**

Maybe you could help me a little.

In silence, he gets the filled buckets balanced on the pole. Without another word, Masha starts toward the buildings. He doesn't know what to do. He's losing her. He shouts.

**VALENTIN**

Masha...

She turns

52.

**VALENTIN**

Before the other night...I'd committed the act of copulation
many times in my heart.

He has her attention now, as well as that of a number of the disciples who look up from their work in the yard.

**MASHA**

Yes...

**VALENTIN**

I think about you all the time. In my heart I’ve committed the act of copulation many times. I just want to say...It was never like it was with you.

Masha bursts out laughing.

**MASHA**

I'll wait for you, then.

As Valentin goes to catch her up, he sees Sergeyenko watching from outside the unfinished chicken coop.

---

Sofya wakes up. She looks relaxed, then she sniffs, sniffs again. Out of bed, she grabs a dressing gown. Opening her door, she spots Ivan in the hall.

**SOFYA**

Ivan, who's wearing that awful perfume?

Ivan a gesture indicating an elaborate moustache. She steps into the hall in time to see Tolstoy, Chertkov, Valentin and Sasha disappear into the library, ducks back into her room to avoid being seen.

Sofya approaches the door, listens. She can make out only a few words. "Mama cannot find out", Chertkov shushing her, whispers. We push in on Sofya's anxious face.
Chertkov, Sasha, Dushan, Valentin and Tolstoy sit in a little clump by his desk. Tolstoy his head in his hands, looks at the floor.

**CHERTKOV**
I hate to say it but the Countess has become more and more dangerous.

**TOLSTOY**
Not dangerous... She's concerned for the welfare of the family.

**CHERTKOV**
(to Tolstoy)
And we're concerned for the welfare of mankind.
(to Bulgakov)
Take this down.

Valentin records the conversation in his diary.

**TOLSTOY**
It’s a terrible thing you ask. I can’t do it.

**INT. YASNAЯ POLYANA. SOFYA’S BEDROOM. DAY.**

Sofya, still in her dressing gown, climbs out her bedroom window onto a narrow ledge that runs along the second floor.

**EXT. YASNAЯ POLYANA. GROUNDS. DAY.**

Sofya stand on the window ledge high above the ground. She begins to move toward the library balcony.

**INT. YASNAЯ POLYANA. LIBRARY. DAY.**

**CHERTKOV**
You've been more than reasonable. She already controls the income from your property.

**SASHA**
Listen to him, papa. He has our best interests at heart.
Tolstoy looks at Valentin, who looks at the floor.

**CHERTKOV**

We're speaking only of the rights to your words, your ideas.

(MORE)

**CHERTKOV (cont'd)**

With all love and respect, the Countess is too interested in making a profit from your work.

---

72 **EXT. YASNAЯ POLYANA. SECOND STORY BALCONY. DAY.**

Sofya moves along the narrow ledge as if it's a perfectly normal activity. Looking down, she sees a couple of gawkers watching her from the lawn. She shoos them away.

73 **INT. YASNAЯ POLYANA. LIBRARY. DAY.**

Valentin turns his head. Did he hear something?

**TOLSTOY**

She's my wife. She's part of me. We've been together now, so many years....

Chertkov drives the point home.

**CHERTKOV**

But you're more than a husband and father. She must understand that. The best interests of the people are one with your own. You belong to them.

Valentin glances up...and is shocked to see SOFYA LOOKING IN AT THE STUDY WINDOW. She disappears.

74 **EXT. YASNAЯ POLYANA. SECOND STORY BALCONY. DAY.**

Sofya has reached the french doors. She can hear clearly now.
TOLSTOY (O.S.)
But she won't. She'll never understand.

HER P.O.V. a crowd of gawkers gather on the lawn below her. One man sets up photographic equipment. She waves him away turns back to the window.

75 OMITTED

76 OMITTED

75

76

77

INT. YASNAYA POLYANA. LIBRARY. DAY.

Chertkov pushes his point.

CHERTKOV
She's unstable...I wonder if she isn't ill.

DUSHAN
It's sadly more than possible.

SASHA
I know it's hard for you, papa. But we must be realistic.

We pan to the french doors to see Sofya furious face as she listens to the betrayal.

CHERTKOV (O.S.)
Do you really think she's fit to control the final disposition of the will?

We pan back to the conspirators. Before Tolstoy can respond, Sofya charges into the room. As she does, she steps on the hem of her long dressing gown and ends up sprawled on the floor. The conspirators just stare at her.

SOFYA
How dare you?

SASHA
What are you doing?
SOFYA
You're all plotting against me.
In my own house, too. I bear you
thirteen children. How can you
betray me like this?
(beat)
Someone help me up.

No one moves. Tolstoy slumps in his chair.

SOFYA
Give everything you've got to
him, your fat little catamite.
"What will it be, my dearest
dear, my Vladimir Grigorivich? My
wife's heart on a platter? Her
kidneys? With salt? But of
course, my dear Chertkov,
whatever pleases you. The china.
The estate. Permanent copyright
on everything I've ever written?
Anything for you, my love."

Her eye falls on Dushan, who very unfortunately, has chosen
to take this down in his diary.

SOFYA
Give me that. Give it to me, you
little weasel.

She grabs the offending volume. The struggle begins.

DUSHAN
Please, Countess Sofya-

SASHA
Mama, please...

She rips the book away and after brandishing it above her
head, throws it through the open doors with a guttural,
rumbling growl. She turns on her tormentors.

SOFYA
Now...

TOLSTOY
(mumbles)
Can I not...Can I not have...
His face is red, his body rigid with anger.

SASHA
You'll kill him, Mama. That's what you want, isn't it? You want him to die!"

She helps him up, takes him to his bedroom. Valentin follows.

She looks at Chertkov.

SOFYA
You! Don't think you deceive me for one little moment! I know exactly what you're doing. I want to see the will. It's my right, in the name of god.

CHERTKOV
What are you afraid of?

SOFYA
You. I'm afraid of you.

Chertkov looks at her with undisguised disgust.

CHERTKOV
The press is bloodthirsty. Had I wished, I could've demolished you and your family. You make it easy.

SOFYA
Tell them anything you like. Go ahead. Ruin us.

CHERTKOV
I have too much respect for Leo Nikolayevich. You're lucky.

SOFYA
Why can't my husband see you for what you are?

Chertkov's face is red. He starts to speak, stops. He walks to the door, then very deliberately.

CHERTKOV
If I had a wife like you, I would have blown my brains out long ago.

(beat)
Or gone to America.

He leaves the room. Sofya sinks back to the floor, a flower wilting. She begins to weep. An Aria from Madame Butterfly comes over

78 INT. YASNAYA POLYANA. DINING ROOM. NIGHT.

From a record on the gramophone. The table is set for ten, although no one is at dinner but Sofya Andreyevna and Valentin. He is visibly uncomfortable. An awkward silence.

VALENTIN
I hope you're feeling better.

SOFYA
Do you like the opera?

VALENTIN
I took singing lessons for years. I thought about a career in music. The only thing I lacked, in the end, was talent.

(beat)
I'm sorry about everything.

She smiles.

SOFYA
This aria is very beautiful. It is about a woman who is abandoned by the man who loves her...Everyone is very moved by that...in the opera.

A long pause. The clink of soup spoons. Tolstoy enters. He doesn't sit.

58.

TOLSTOY
Our life together has become intolerable.

Stifling a sneeze, Valentin gets up to leave, tries to flee the inappropriateness of all this.
SOFYA
Sit down, Valentin.

VALENTIN
Really, I'm expected at Telyatinki.

She waves it off.

SOFYA
No, no, no. Enjoy your dinner. We've had a disagreement. No more than any other married couple.

TOLSTOY
I didn't come for more recrimination. Despite good cause for alienation between us, I have never stopped loving you.

SOFYA
Of course...

TOLSTOY
God knows you don't make it easy.

SOFYA
Why should it be easy? I'm the work of your life. You're the work of mine. It's what love is.

Aside to Valentin.

SOFYA
Everything with him is hysterics

VALENTIN
I should go.

TOLSTOY
Sit down.
(beat)
So, this is what love is. Does that surprise you, boy?

They both look at him

VALENTIN
I thought it might be quieter, but-
He sneezes violently.

TOLSTOY/SOFYA
God bless you

Tolstoy turns to Sofya.

TOLSTOY
He's right, though. If we cannot live a decent, quiet life, if I cannot work, if I cannot find some peace, I shall simply go away.

SOFYA
Go? Where?

TOLSTOY
Not to Chertkov, but I shall go.

SOFYA
Go where?

TOLSTOY
Dushan says you're killing me.

Sofya rises up in cold rage.

SOFYA
Then go! Go! Anywhere you please!

She smashes a plate on the table to punctuate it and another and another.

SOFYA
I hate you. I hate what you've become.

She picks up another plate, lets it fall. Now, she acts as if she's choking or gasping for breath.

VALENTIN
Countess...Are you alright?

She fights with her collar, rips open the front of her dress.

TOLSTOY
(shouts)
DUSHAN!!!

SOFYA
You'll destroy me.

Dushan runs into the room. Sofya continues to tear at her clothes, stops, begins to pant, then falls to the floor in a faint.

60.

VALENTIN
Is she alright?

Tolstoy tries to answer, but is overcome by a coughing fit. Dushan starts toward him but Tolstoy waves him in the direction of Sofya. He kneels beside her.

DUSHAN
Sofya! Open your eyes.

SOFYA
My back. My back... I'm hurting.

DUSHAN
You're lying on a fork. Sit up and you'll improve markedly... Valentin, help to get her upstairs, would you?

Valentin helps Sofya to her feet. Dushan gets up himself and walks to Tolstoy.

DUSHAN
She's alright. I'm more concerned for you... We should all go to bed before something else happens.

79 OMITTED

80 EXT. TELYATINKI COMPOUND. NIGHT.

Valentin sits at the bonfire, with other disciples. After a while he walks towards the house.

81 INT. TELYATINKI. KITCHEN. NIGHT.
It's late. The house is quiet. Valentin walks into the kitchen to see Masha washing the dishes. Exhausted, he sits, stares at the floor.

**VALENTIN**
It was terrible there today... between them. They loved each other so much, but you see what it becomes.

She stays at the sink, says nothing.

**VALENTIN**
Masha, what's the matter?

She speaks without turning to him.

**MASHA**
I'm going back to Moscow.

**VALENTIN**
What?

He gets up, goes to her.

**MASHA**
Chertkov spoke with me this afternoon. He says I could be more useful there...which means...

Valentin shakes his head. His lip trembles.

**VALENTIN**
This is him punishing us, punishing me for befriending Sofya Andreyevna. For not... This is Chertkov.

**MASHA**
We've both disappointed him.

**VALENTIN**
I don't care. You can't go away. I'll talk to him. I'll make him change his mind. I'm going to make you stay.

**MASHA**
No, I want to go.

**VALENTIN**

What?

**MASHA**

I'm leaving the movement.

**VALENTIN**

You can't leave Tolstoy.

**MASHA**

I am not. Look, when I read his Confession, it moved me, Valya. He was searching for freedom. Freedom from anger. Freedom from attachment. Freedom from all the superstition and nonsense of the church. It moved me so much. I thought that's what it would be about. Isn't that what it's about? Freedom and love? But they mix it all up.

Masha reaches out and puts her arms around him. Her head falls against his shoulder.

62.

**MASHA**

Come with me. Please.

Bulgakov doesn't know what to say. The silence gets more awkward as it gets longer. Slowly, she disengages herself from him, looks him in the eye. She nods.

**MASHA**

I'm going to my room.

As she starts away.

**VALENTIN**

Don't leave me, Masha...

I need you.

She turns back for a moment.

**MASHA**

I know you do...I know.

Then she's gone.
Sofya in her bed. A team of doctors hover over her. One of them peers into her eyes with a sextant-like instrument.

We move into the hall to find DR. ROSSOLIMO, an expert in mental illness, conferring in the hall with Tolstoy and Dushan.

ROSSOLIMO
I believe the Countess suffers from a mental degeneracy, paranoid and hysterical, chiefly the former.

DUSHAN
Yes.

The doctor walks back into the bedroom. Tolstoy red in the face, walks away down the hall. Dushan catches him.

TOLSTOY
Why did you bring him here?

DUSHAN
He's an old friend, you know, from Rome.

TOLSTOY
And astoundingly stupid in the way of all scientists.

Dushan is wounded by his uncharacteristic lack of generosity.

TOLSTOY
I'm sorry, my friend, but this is all very upsetting to me.

DUSHAN
Yes.

Tolstoy sits on a small staircase at the end of the hall. Bulgakov is already there on the step above him.

TOLSTOY
Take them downstairs. Thank them
for me. Offer them a drink.

**DUSHAN**
You'll be alright?

**TOLSTOY**
Valentin Fedorovich will stay with me, won't you, boy

Valentin nods. Dushan goes to collect the doctors.

**MOMENTS LATER**—Tolstoy goes to Sofya's bed. He takes her hand. She looks at him with all the love of a new bride. Tears come to his eyes. He kisses her hand.

**SOYA**
Ya...your...your...I can't remember now...Yo, what did I say? What did you mean?

**TOLSTOY**
You rest now.

Valentin watches from the doorway as Tolstoy leaves the bedside and walks out.

83 **EXT. ZASYEKA WOODS. DAY.**

It is an autumn afternoon. Valentin and Tolstoy pick their way through the thick undergrowth.

As they come into a clearing. Valentin is surprised to see a portable table and several chairs set up like lawyers office in the middle of the wood. Sergeyenko fiddles with a piece of paper on the desk. Chertkov comes toward them.

Tolstoy stops his horse. He turns to Valentin with tears in his eyes.

**TOLSTOY**
You see, I no longer feel I have a choice in the matter. She isn't...

He rides forward toward the approaching Chertkov.

**CHERTKOV**
Good afternoon, Leo Nikolayevich.
TOLSTOY

Is it?

They help Tolstoy dismount. They lead him to a nearby stump and place the writing board before him. Sergeyenko hands a document to Chertkov who lays it on the board.

CHERTKOV

This will insure that the complete works will live in the public domain.

SERGEYENKO

Monumentous.

CHERTKOV

Your work is the birthright of the Russian people. Now, they possess it forever.

Tolstoy looks up at them.

CHERTKOV

Yes?

TOLSTOY

I need a pen.

CHERTKOV

Of course.

Chertkov looks at Sergeyenko who swallows hard. No pen.

SERGEYENKO

I...uh...

CHERTKOV

What?

Sergeyenko moves close to Chertkov, close enough to whisper.

CHERTKOV

You're a secretary. How can you not have a pen?

Sergeyenko points at Valentin.

SERGEYENKO

He's a secretary, too. Ask him.
CHERTKOV
Valentin Fedorovich, do you have a pen?

Valentin hesitates for a moment, looks at Tolstoy, seated on the stump, staring into the middle distance.

VALENTIN
I do.

Valentin fetches it from his satchel.

Pen in hand, Tolstoy hovers over the document. A long moment.

CHERTKOV
Are you alright?

TOLSTOY
I feel like a conspirator.

Sergeyenko laughs. Chertkov glares at him. It's beyond awkward. Valentin looks to the sky, sees the crows circling again.

Without further hesitation, Tolstoy picks up the pen and signs the document. Then he moves away from the group. Valentin watches him.

84 EXT. ZASYEKA WOODS. DAY.

Valentin and Tolstoy water their horses at a stream. Tolstoy seems weary.

VALENTIN
Maybe we should get back. It'll be dark soon. May I ask you something that has nothing to do with work?

TOLSTOY
Of course, my dear.

VALENTIN
Do you love your wife?

TOLSTOY
" Your youth and your desire for
happiness reminds me cruelly of my age and the impossibility of happiness for me." When I was courting Sofya, she was so young and pure, it seemed impossible that I'd ever have her. I didn't want to tell her how I felt and I wanted to tell her nothing else. So I wrote down a string of letters and asked her if she could decipher them. She looked completely confused, thinking it was a game or...

Tolstoy looks into the middle distance, remembering his love.

**TOLSTOY**

I gave her one clue. The first two Y's, I said, stand for "your youth" and then the most miraculous thing happened. She simply spoke the phrase, my phrase...

Tolstoy looks at Valentin as if the boy might offer some explanation of the miraculous.

**TOLSTOY**

...as if she had read my mind. In that moment, we both knew we would always be together. For those first years, we were incredibly happy, terrifyingly happy.

His old eyes are wet.

**TOLSTOY**

And now this.

Tolstoy reaches into his boot, extracts his SECRET DIARY. He takes a pen from his shirt, begins to write. Valentin is amazed. HE HAD A PEN ALL THE TIME.

**INT. TELYATINKI. MEETING ROOM. NIGHT.**

Valentin exhausted, sits at the long table. Chertkov
appears at his office door.

CHERTKOV
Thank you again, Valentin Fedorovich, for your forethought.

VALENTIN
I'm a secretary, after all.

Chertkov let's it go.

CHERTKOV
You know I had thought for a time to suggest that Leo Nikolayevich look for someone else. But...he said no. He said "He reminds me of myself when I was young."

He goes. After a moment, Valentin gets up and goes to the study door.

VALENTIN
I'm leaving Telyatinki.

67.

CHERTKOV
Really.

VALENTIN
I am going to Moscow.

CHERTKOV
She is leading you around the nose.

VALENTIN
Look, you say the movement's about love-

CHERTKOV
Yes... The love he tells us to practice, the love of the Gospels. Why do I have to explain this? Perfect love. Eternal love. The love that binds mankind together.

VALENTIN
But I've never met mankind, only men and women, imperfect men,
imperfect women.

CHERTKOV
Leo Nikolayevich also teaches us love can not be weakminded. Go. You won't be missed ...a naive sentimentalist

Valentin looks at him for a long moment, then bursts out laughing, walks away

CHERTKOV
Why are you laughing? You think I'm ridiculous.

VALENTIN
I'm laughing because I didn't sneeze.

86 OMITTED

87 OMITTED

88 OMITTED

68.

89 INT. YASNAYA POLYANA. TOLSTOY STUDY/BEDROOM. DAY.

Tolstoy has fallen asleep at his desk, his SECRET DIARY open before him. Sofya enters without knocking. He bolts up groggily, tries to hide the little book. Sofya, meanwhile, holds up the letter in her hand.

SOFYA
Lyovochka? Prozeveskeny wants to purchase the rights to your work after your death.

TOLSTOY
Then I shall try and die as soon as is convenient.

SOFYA
Don't be silly. They've offered one million rubles.

Silence.
SOFYA
How can you not be pleased?

TOLSTOY
I don't write for publishers. I write for people.

He gets up from his desk.

SOFYA
Where are you going?

TOLSTOY
Valentin's in the library. He's asked to speak to me.

SOFYA
Splendid...while your wretched family is left to starve.

TOLSTOY
I don't see anyone starving in this house. On the contrary, our privilege revolts me.

He goes. She calls after him.

SOFYA
But you're always first to the trough...always have been.

Sofya sinks into his chair. On the desk is the photograph of herself and Tolstoy that we saw her hang on the wall in the early part of the film. She looks at the wall. There in it's place is the offending photograph of CHERTKOV that she had removed earlier.

She can fix that. But as she picks up the photo of her and her husband, she notices A SMALL VOLUME, THE SECRET DIARY, lying under it. She begins to read.

INT. YASNAYA POLYANA. LIBRARY. DAY.

Valentin waits on the sofa. Tolstoy walks in, goes to him.

TOLSTOY
What is it, dear boy? You look
unhappy. What do you want to say?

But before Valentin can respond A GUNSHOT RINGS OUT.

Sofya sits in a chair, firing shot after shot at the photograph of Chertkov. Tolstoy and Valentin enter.

**TOLSTOY**

Sofya, what are you doing?

She turns toward him, waves the gun in his direction. Valentin ducks against the wall.

**SOFYA**

How could you do this to me?

**TOLSTOY**

You're not well.

**SOFYA**

You hurt me again and again. You take little pieces of me until I become nothing. I don't know who I am anymore.

(beat)

I read your diary. I know what you've done.

**TOLSTOY**

You behave like this, I have no choice. Now give me the gun.

**SOFYA**

No! Give me the gun!

**TOLSTOY**

Give it to me, please.

Sofya throws the gun at her husband. She runs out of the room. We see the shattered photograph of Chertkov.
After a moment, Tolstoy into his chair. Valentin watches him in silence.

**TOLSTOY**

I'd like you to stay here tonight.

**VALENTIN**

Yes, of course.

With that, the old man gets up and leaves the room, leaving Valentin in the wreckage of his world.

93 **EXT. YASNAYA POLYANA. GROUNDS. NIGHT.**

The wind blows the trees around the old house. We see a lighted lamp move up the stairs.

94 **INT. YASNAYA POLYANA. LIBRARY. NIGHT.**

Valentin in his makeshift bed.

**SASHA (O.S.)**

Valentin. Valentin.

He is immediately awake. Sasha, lamp in hand, crouches beside him.

**SASHA**

Get up. He's leaving.

**VALENTIN**

What?

**SASHA**

He's leaving.

95 **INT. YASNAYA POLYANA. TOLSTOY'S BEDROOM/STUDY. NIGHT.**

Bags are being prepared. Sasha is packing clothes.

**TOLSTOY**

Essentials only. Nothing that isn't absolutely necessary.

Valentin struggles to close a case full of books and papers.

**TOLSTOY**
Please...we must hurry.

VALENTIN
Where will you go?

No one responds. Dushan comes to Tolstoy, sits down and begins the ritual taking of the pulse. Meanwhile, Sasha wraps a heavy fur coat around his shoulders. She smiles at him.

SASHA
Absolutely essential.

DUSHAN
A lantern, I think. It's very dark tonight.
(beat)
And the apparatus for giving an enema.

96 EXT. YASNAYA POLYANA. GROUNDS. NIGHT.

The horses are hitched to the droshky, the bags are up on the back.

SASHA
Everything's ready.

Dushan climbs into the carriage. Tolstoy turns abruptly and walks back toward the house.

SASHA
Papa...?

DUSHAN
He's changed his mind. He's going back to the house.

They watch as Tolstoy kneels on the wet grass, bending low to rub his hands against the earth. After a moment, Valentin goes to him, kneels next to him.

VALENTIN
Do you want to go back?

TOLSTOY
When I was a boy, my brother Nikolai once brought me to a place when I was a boy. He told me he'd found a green stick with some words on it... the secret to happiness for all men everywhere. He hid it in the ground. I looked for it very often. I've looked for it all these years. I really believed I would find it here...but I never did.

Tolstoy looks at him.

**TOLSTOY**
I never did...but this life is behind me now.

He kisses the ground of his beloved home, gets up and they walk back to the droshky.

**TOLSTOY**
Help me up, will you?

As they go, he hands Valentin an envelope.

**TOLSTOY**
Give this to Sofya.

**VALENTIN**
I will.

They reach the carriage. Sasha embraces him, kisses him over and over.

**SASHA**
Be well. Be well.

**TOLSTOY**
Don't cry. I'll send for you when I can.

They help him up onto the droshky and the carriage starts slowly away from the old house.

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97 **EXT. YASNAYA POLYANA. GROUNDS. MORNING**

Out in front of the house, an old peasant woman pulls the
feathers off a chicken. Over her impassive face, we hear deep, heavy sobs.

98 INT. YASNAYA POLYANA. SITTING ROOM. DAY.

Sofya is in a rage. Sasha sits nearby.

SASHA
I'm simply telling you what happened. He's gone. I have no idea where. Nobody does.

SOFYA
You're a liar.
(beat)
Liar!

Sasha won't rise to the bait.

Valentin comes into the room.

73.

SOFYA
So, he's gone.
(to Bulgakov)
For good.

VALENTIN
I think so, yes.

There is a pause. Sofya suddenly smiles, becomes solicitous.

SOFY
Darling Sasha, where is your father? I know you know. Please, please. Don't play games with me. Now it's not the moment.

SASHA
Honestly, I have no idea.

SOFYA
DON'T PLAY GAMES WITH ME.

VALENTIN
I have this for you.

It is a letter. She grabs it, as if it is something that
might feed a terrible hunger at the center of her. Moving into a corner, she tears it open and begins to read.

They both watch Sofya's passion. Her face quivers, the muscles in her neck stand out. Her shoulders begin to shake.

Crumbling the paper in her hand, she twists her head and screams. Then, gathering up her dress, she runs out the door.

Sasha move immediately to the window. From her P.O.V., we see Sofya streaking across the lawn.

They look at each other

SASHA

The pond!

They run out.

99  EXT. YASNAYA POLYANA. GROUNDS. DAY.

Sofya sprints away from the house and into the trees. A couple of servants join the chase, Ivan and VANYA, a fat manservant. Valentin, head of the group, sees Sofya move out of the birches. She's heading straight to the pond.

Sasha suddenly steams past him.

SASHA

Mama, Mama! Stop. Not this. Hurry! Hurry!

VALENTIN

Countess!

100  EXT. YASNAYA POLYANA. POND. DAY

Sofya has reached the bathhouse. Peasant women watch her as they do their wash. She glances back her pursuers, races on.

Tiring now, she goes to her knees. She crawls along the jetty toward the water. At the edge of the jetty, she
falls on her back then turns over, most ungracefully, and rolls off sideways into the pond.

HIGH ANGLE. Sofya sinks into the black water. The sound of her rescuers fades away and is replaced by Tolstoy's voice, reading the farewell note she still clutches in her hand.

**TOLSTOY (V.O.)**

My position in the house has become intolerable. What I'm doing now is what people have commonly done - leave their worldly life behind to spend their last days in peace and solitude.

SLOW MOTION She floats, strangely relaxed, beneath the water.

**TOLSTOY (V.O.)**

I beg you to forgive me for everything I've done to you, just as I forgive you with all my soul for everything you've done to me.

The silence is suddenly ripped apart by the rescuers. Sasha and Valentin jumping into the pond. Sasha, barely able to swim herself, thrashes in the water.

**VALENTIN**

Sasha, go back to the jetty. Here, let me help you.

He offers his arm, using it to push her to safety.

**SASHA**

No! She's drowning. Help her!

75.

**VALENTIN**

I will. I will. Stay here.

With that, he pushes away from the dock and makes a sharp plunge under the water.

Sasha watches, waits...and after a long moment Valentin surfaces pulling Sofya with him.
On the dock, the servants and Sasha help him to get her heavy body, water soaked dress, back onto the bank.

She looks terrible. Her tongue lolling out, water drizzling from her open mouth. Sasha is overcome.

**SASHA**

She's dead. My mother. She's dead.

Ivan takes action. He rolls her on to her stomach, works to expel water from her lungs. This goes on for an agonizing length of time. Valentin looks to the sky... dull and gray.

Then a sound, coughing sputtering. She is alive. Sasha, Valentin, and the servants help up.

**SASHA**

Let me take you to the house, mother.

**SOFYA**

Let me die. Please. Why would you rob me of that?

**SASHA**

Let's go to the house.

Sofya is suddenly clear, almost calm.

**SOFYA**

Ivan, go to the station. Find out which train the master took.

Ivan looks at Sasha for approval.

**SASHA**

I see no harm in it. Let's get her to bed.

Valentin nods. Ivan appears beside him.

**IVAN**

Life returns to torture her for awhile.

He laughs out loud, then walks away.
Sasha walks into dining room. Valentin pours them tea.

**SASHA**
She's exhausted herself. She's slept for nearly four hours.

**VALENTIN**
I'm glad she can sleep. The pain subsides a little.

**SASHA**
The noise subsides a little.

They smile at each other.

**SASHA**
Well, a little.

Ivan comes down the stairs. He stops in the doorway.

**SASHA**
Come in.

**IVAN**
A message, miss.

**SASHA**
For me?

**IVAN**
No, for your father. From the Countess, miss.

**SASHA**
She's allowed to send a note to my father. I just don't know where to tell her to send it.

**IVAN**
She's addressed it to train number 9. That's the train the master took. The station master told me...

**SASHA**
Why are you giving it to me? She is allowed to send my father a note!

Ivan steps forward and hands her the note to inspect. Sasha can't help but laugh.
SASHA
She never gives up.
(reading the note)
"Dearest papa. Return at once.
(MORE)

77.

SASHA (cont'd)
Sasha." She signed it with my name.

VALENTIN
Ingenious.

SASHA
Obvious.

She pockets the note. Ivan continues to stand there. Sasha looks at him.

SASHA
Yes?

IVAN
He gave me this as well...the stationmaster. A note for you.

Sasha opens it, reads. She looks up, flushed with excitement.

SASHA
He's with my aunt. At the Shamardino.

Sasha runs out of the room.

102   EXT. YASNAYA POLYANA. GROUNDS. DAY                          102

Sasha, on horse back, rides up and by the camera and away down the alley of trees that lead away from the house.

SOFYA (O.S.)
They've all gone

103   INT. YASNAYA POLYANA. LIBRARY. DAY.                          103

Sitting at his desk, Valentin looks up to see Sofya standing in the doorway. She looks exhausted.
VALENTIN
I'm here.

She walks to his desk.

SOFYA
You're writing to your girl.
That's lovely.

Sofya touches his shoulder with real affection, then walks across the room to her husband's desk.

VALENTIN
I don't know if she's my girl.

SOFYA
But you believe you'll see her again.

VALENTIN
I very much hope so.

SOFYA
Yes. Refuse to believe in the end of love. Do all you can to prevent it...

Sofya picks up a photograph of the two of them, examines it.

SOFYA
I know you know where he is, Valentin.

Valentin hesitates. She walks back to him.

SOFYA
I won't ask you to betray his trust...but I need you to go to him. I do. I have to see him. I have to talk to him. I won't make a scene. Promise him that. I must see him.
EXT. COUNTRYSIDE. DAWN

Clouds of steam against the white sky. A great black train travels through the bleak world

INT. THIRD CLASS CARRIAGE. DAY.

Tolstoy rests on the hard bench of the third class carriage he always insists on. He writes on his lapboard. We pan to an adjacent bench to find VALENTIN, now with them. He and Sasha have a map spread out in front of them.

SASHA
He's right, you know, to go. She will be right behind us.

VALENTIN
I've told you she has promised she wouldn't make any problems. But besides, where are we going?

Tolstoy has overheard them.

TOLSTOY
We don't need a plan, my dears, we'll simply go

Dushan appears with several newspapers. As he hands them the papers, he reads the HEADLINES.

DUSHAN
TOLSTOY ABANDONS HOME! WHEREABOUTS UNKNOWN...SAGE OF YASNAYA POLYANA TAKES FLIGHT!

Tolstoy looks up from the papers, smiles.
I guess our little secret is out.

INT. YASNAYA POLYANA. SITTING ROOM. DAY

Sofya sits surrounded by the papers. Andrey appears.

ANDREY
There's a reporter outside from the Russian World.

SOFYA
Tell him we've received an apologetic letter from your father...very embarrassed. We expect him back any day...

ANDREY
But that's a lie, right?

SOFYA
Yes, that's a lie.

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE. DAY

The huge iron wheels grind on.

INT. THIRD CLASS TRAIN CARRIAGE. DAY

Tolstoy sleeps. People still crowd around him.

VALENTIN
Please move back. Please let him breathe. Please give him some room.

SASHA
(to Valentin)
He can't breath. Valentin, please.
    (to Dushan)
The smoke is too much.
DUSHAN
I know. Stay back.

Tolstoy stirs.

TOLSTOY
Where are we?

DUSHAN
It's alright. Everything's fine.

He reaches out to touch Tolstoy's forehead. He goes pale.

TOLSTOY
Where are we?

DUSHAN
Let me take your temperature.

The old man lifts his shirt, takes the thermometer under
his arm. Dushan reaches for his wrist. Valentin and Sasha
look at each other, wait for the vital signs. He takes the
thermometer from Tolstoy, reads it.

He's clearly shaken.

TOLSTOY
Good old Dushan,...you needn't
worry. Remember, you are my
doctor, not my angel. Whatever
happens, it's not your fault...
I'm feeling much better now. I
just need to sleep.

DUSHAN
Good, good. Yes.

He drifts off again, Dushan stares at the thermometer. His
eyes fill with tears.

81.

DUSHAN
He will be fine.

114  EXT. ASTAPOVO. PLATFORM. DAY

The train pulls into a small, dusty station, ASTAPOVO.
Valentin and Dushan support, help him off the train. Sasha looks at the sad, empty platform.

SASHA
We've come to the end of the world.

115 EXT. ASTAPOVO. PLATFORM. DAY.

Dushan and Tolstoy sit on a bench on the platform. Sasha and Valentin appear.

VALENTIN
The stationmaster says we may have his house for as long as we need it. There are no inns nearby, so we're lucky.

TOLSTOY
Very lucky.

DUSHAN
Yes.

They help Tolstoy up. A little bearded man, the stationmaster, waits to escort them.

SASHA
You'll be comfortable here, papa. The rest of us...we'll find cots or sleep in the station.

TOLSTOY
And then we'll be on our way.

116 OMITTED

117 OMITTED

118 INT. ASTAPOVO. TELEGRAPH OFFICE. NIGHT.

Valentin approaches the operator.

VALENTIN
Hello, hello? Could you send a cable for me?
A message comes over the cable machine.

VALENTIN (O.S.)
Tolstoy ill at Astapovo.
Temperature high. Send it to
Sofya Andreyevna, Yasnaya
Polyana.

Sofya paces. Andrey lolls on the couch reading the paper.

SOFYA
We must leave at once.

ANDREY
We'll make inquiries in the
morning, mother.

SOFYA
We'll rent a train.

ANDREY
That'll cost a fortune.

SOFYA
Don't say irrelevant things,
Andrey. It's unbecoming.
Contact someone. I'll go and
pack.

ANDREY
Rent a train? God!

Press and various hangers on have begun to arrive at
Astapovo. Outside the station master's house, Dushan gives
an update, temperature, pulse.

Valentin emerges from the telegraph office, telegrams and
cables in his hands. A long passenger train pulls in from
the north. There's general commotion at the new arrival.
"The Countess." "Is it the Countess?"... More press, a
cinematographer lugging his gear and CHERTKOV. He spots
Valentin. There is no greeting, no embrace.
CHERTKOV
Bulgakov! Where is he? Take me to him.

As they make their way across the tracks, Chertkov can barely contain his glee.

83.

CHERTKOV
He left...astonishing...He actually, finally left.

VALENTIN
He wasn't well enough to travel. It's very cold.

Chertkov doesn't hear, He's basking in his victory.

CHERTKOV
It's a triumph for the movement.

122 INT. ASTAPOVO. STATIONMASTER'S HOUSE. DAY.

Valentin leads Chertkov through the door. Chertkov stops short, whispers

CHERTKOV
He looks so small.

Now, Tolstoy sees him, wakes up, smiles.

SASHA
Papa.

TOLSTOY
It's(hic)you.

The men embrace. Tears roll down the both men's cheeks. Tolstoy continues to hiccup throughout.

CHERTKOV
My dear friend, waht is all of this?

TOLSTOY
I needed (hic) to see you. Thank you. We have so much (hic) to do. (hic) I'm sorry. Damn hic
ups.
(beat)
Have you seen Sofya?

CHERTKOV
I've made a point not to.

TOLSTOY
I don't know when (hic) she'll come. But she'll come (hic). I know it.

CHERTKOV
And we'll be ready.

VALENTIN
Ready for what?

Chertkov doesn't respond.

DUSHAN
I'm sorry, but it's time for your enema.

TOLSTOY
Don't apologize, my friend. Your enemas (hic) have become the news of the world.
(smiles)
Now, all of you, help turn me over.

123 INT. ASTAPOVO. STATIONMASTER'S HOUSE. NIGHT.

Everyone is asleep. Valentin keeps a vigil at Tolstoy's bedside. His rest is fitful, his breathing ragged. Valentin stands and walks out.

124 INT. ASTAPOVO. TELEGRAPH OFFICE. NIGHT.

Valentin approaches the little window.

VALENTIN
I'd like to send another cable.

The man nods, readies his pencil.
VALENTIN
At Astapovo. Stop. Tolstoy Ill.
Stop. Heart breaking. Stop.
Please Come.... That's it.

The man looks to him for an address.

VALENTIN
It goes to Masha...to Maria
Filipovna Melinov, Moscow. Thank
you.

125 EXT. ASTAPOVO. PLATFORM. DAY.

The media circus is in town. There are snack bars and huts,
an army camp with typewriters instead of guns. Several news
cameras are set up near the stationmaster's house. Tents
have been erected as make shift shelters and offices.
Reporters struggle to get into the telegraph office. Word
goes around something big is happening.

At the platform, we see the highly polished private train
pull in. The Countess has arrived.

85.

SOFYA APPEARS in her handsome traveling clothes. An
unctuous little orthodox priest follows her out of the
train.

ORTHODOX PRIEST
If the Count should have a change
of heart...if in the last moment
he chooses to confess, mother
church is there to embrace him
with open arms.

She nods.

SOFYA
I'll see what I can do, father.

She moves with purpose across the tracks and through the
throng Reporters pelt her with questions.

126 INT. ASTAPOVO. STATIONMASTER'S HOUSE. DAY.

Chertkov, Sasha and Valentin watch through the window.
SASHA
She's coming this way.

Chertkov starts to put on his coat.

CHERTKOV
Not before she stops to tell them lies, catalogue my atrocities.

VALENTIN
Let me speak to her.

He heads toward the door.

127 EXT. ASTAPOVO. PLATFORM. DAY 127

Sofya has reached the edge of the platform where Dushan gives his medical update, temperature and pulse, to the press. She pulls Dushan aside. Reporters surround them.

SOFYA
I want to see my husband.

DUSHAN
Yes I'll...uhm...

SOFYA
I want to see him. Now!

Dushan is terrified. Valentin arrives at the platform.

VALENTIN
Countess!

86.

SOFYA
Valentin...Will you help me? I have to see him. Please.

VALENTIN
Of course. But I'm not certain if it's the best time, Countess.

She starts toward the building.

SOFYA
It is. It's the right time for me.
VALENTIN
Sofya Andreyevna...
(to the crowd) Stay back, stay back.

128 EXT. ASTAPOVO. STATIONMASTER'S HOUSE. DAY

As Valentin arrives outside the door, he see Sofya physically recoil. She is confronted by Chertkov and Sasha blocking the door.

SOFYA
I want to see my husband.

Members of the press, crowd `round trying to listen.

SASHA
He's too weak now, mother.

SOFYA
But he's not too weak to see you. Not too weak to see that...

She gestures in Chertkov's direction. The passion attracts more onlookers.

CHERTKOV
Do you really want to do this here?

She does her best to ignore him.

SOFYA
I am the leper outside the gate, while he sleeps with the devil himself.

SASHA
Vladimir Gregorovich is here because father asked him to be here.

This stops Sofya for a moment. She looks to Valentin.

SOFYA
Is that true?
Valentin nods. She tries another tack.

**SOFYA**
Have you told him I nearly drowned in the pond?

**SASHA**
We didn't have to. It was in all the papers.

Valentin is very aware of the publicness of it all.

**VALENTIN**
Let me take you back.

But she plows on.

**SOFYA**
What did he say?

**SASHA**
That if you killed yourself, he'd be upset.

**SOFYA**
He'd be upset?

**SASHA**
Horribly upset...but he could not have acted other than he did.

Sofya begins to sob.

**SOFYA**
I want to see him.
(beat)
He's not your husband. He's my husband.

**SASHA**
You're unbearable.

Sasha goes back toward the door.

**SOFYA**
And you are a stone-hearted bitch of a daughter.

Sasha disappears back inside. Sofya screams after her.
SOFYA
I lost five children. Why couldn't one of them have been you?

Chertkov watches, makes little attempt to conceal his pleasure.

CHERTKOV
Are you finished?

A pause. Sofya is suddenly aware of the crowd around her.

SOFYA
Valentin, will you take me back?

Valentin nods.

VALENTIN
Yes, of course.

Sofya takes his arm, starts back across the platform. Shaken, she tries her best to maintain her dignity as she walks through the crowd. She leans against Valentin, whispers.

SOFYA
I've behaved badly, haven't I?

VALENTIN
No, Countess, Don't worry. Not at all.

Around her, journalists ask questions, photographers call out "Turn to us, Countess." "Show us your eyes."

129 OMITTED
129

130 INT. ASTAPOVO. PRIVATE TRAIN. DAWN.

Valentin, in his wrinkled suit, is asleep in a chair. He wakes to see Sofya stretched out on the sofa. He watches her. She doesn't stir. After a moment, he goes out.
Valentin emerges from the telegraph office. He walks along the platform, a stack of letter and telegrams in his hands. A few reporters type their early morning dispatches.

Valentin comes into the room, acknowledges Chertkov who sits at his makeshift desk going through letters and cables. He goes to the bedside, stops next to Dushan. Silence, interrupted only by Tolstoy's incessant hiccups. Valentin notices Dushan is on the verge of tears.

VALENTIN
What is it? Dushan, what's wrong?

DUSHAN
Listen to him. I'm supposed to be a doctor, for God's sake.

Weak, feverish, Tolstoy sits up in bed. Sasha moves to help him.

TOLSTOY
Sofya!

DUSHAN
What is it? What is it?

Valentin goes to Tolstoy. He's in a kind of panic. Chertkov comes into the room.

TOLSTOY
She's come, hasn't she? She's here.

He points to the corner. But it is nothing, a gray shape thrown by a coat rack.
CHERTKOV
You're imagining things.

DUSHAN
It's true, Leo Nikolayevich.

TOLSTOY
Sasha...where's your mother?

Tolstoy's eyes fill with tears. Valentin looks to Sasha. She looks from him to Chertkov.

CHERTKOV
She's at home.

TOLSTOY
If she wanted to see me I couldn't refuse her.
(beat)
Is she going to come here?

All eyes are on Sasha.

SASHA
I don't think so...I don't know, Papa. There's no way to...

TOLSTOY
To what?

Will she waiver? A long, agonizing beat.

SASHA
She's at home. I'm sure of it.

Valentin looks at the floor.

TOLSTOY
At home.

SASHA
Yes, Papa.

Tolstoy nods, pats Sasha's hand.

TOLSTOY
Very beautiful isn't it?
SASHA

Our home?

TOLSTOY

Yes.

He leans back against the pillow and drifts again. Sasha gets up and goes outside. After a moment, Valentin follows.

135 EXT. ASTAPOVO. STATION MASTER'S HOUSE. DAY

Valentin sees her leaning against the wall. She's in pain.

SASHA

He said to me once..."you're like your mother. You're so full of anger."

She turns to him.

SASHA

I know it's terrible...but who will protect him? I don't want him to die.

Valentin touches her face, goes back inside and into

91.

136 INT. ASTAPOVO. STATION MASTER'S HOUSE. LIVING ROOM. DAY.

Where Chertkov has made a makeshift office. He pores through the cables, letters and telegrams that litter the station master's dining table. He holds one up for Valentin.

CHERTKOV

Kind thoughts from George Bernard Shaw.

Valentin walks to the table.

VALENTIN

You lied to him.

CHERTKOV

Keep your voice down.
VALENTIN
He wants to see her. You heard him say it.

CHERTKOV
What exactly do you think she will bring him?

VALENTIN
I don´t know, they´ve been married for 48 years.

CHERTKOV
I´ll tell you what she´ll bring...Vanity, fuss and noise.

VALENTIN
She promised me-

CHERTKOV
What? Promised you what? You´ve seen her at close quarters, boy. You think she´s capable of restraining herself?

VALENTIN
They have a whole life together. Why do you have to deny that?

CHERTKOV
You´re a victim of her romantic nonsense. You seem to forget she wants to destroy everything we do. She travels with that unctious little priest.

VALENTIN
Keep the priest away-

CHERTKOV
These people are vultures. They send in at the last moment and welcome him back to the church. That's their fantasy.

(beat)
A death bed recantation. Do you have any idea the damage it would do? Everything he's dreamed of, everything we've worked for will
be gone. A simple noble death is what we want. It is what he wants.

VALENTIN
No, you want an icon. You want to take photographs and give out postcards. You want people to kneel in front of an image you've created. But he doesn't want that. He never wanted that, and it will give him no peace.

(beat)
He wants to see her...let her come.

They see Sasha looking from the door. She turns and closes it.

CHERTKOV
I will do everything in my power to prevent that.

VALENTIN
Oh, God. You exhaust me.

CHERTKOV
I used to think you were just naive, Valentin, maybe a little stupid. I see now you're more dangerous than she is.

He turns back at the door.

VALENTIN
Tell me one thing. That image you want to create, just looks like you, doesn't it?

Valentin leaves the room.

137 EXTERIOR. ASTAPOVO. PLATFORM. NIGHT.

The circus sleeps. Valentin sits on a bench outside the station master's house. The tents erected by the press glow like lanterns in the field.
Some people lie on the hard platform. He looks across the tracks at Sofya's private car. A single light burns in the window.

138 INT. ASTAPOVO. PRIVATE TRAIN CARRIAGE. NIGHT.

Sofya keeps her solitary vigil. The priest has fallen asleep sitting up. She finishes her prayers, gets up, looks across at the lonely cottage. She can make out Valentin's figure on the platform.

139 EXT. ASTAPOVO. PLATFORM. NIGHT

Dushan appears in the doorway. Solemn, he gestures for him to come inside. Valentin stands.

140 INT. ASTAPOVO. PRIVATE TRAIN CARRIAGE. NIGHT.

Sofya watches the two figures disappear inside.

141 INT. ASTAPOVO. STATIONMASTER'S HOUSE. NIGHT.

Valentin sees Chertkov standing near the bed. Dushan returns to the chair next to Tolstoy. His cheeks are damp, his breathing irregular.

SASHA
It can't be right. His fever is down.

DUSHAN
His pulse, you see...

Dushan begins to cry. Suddenly, Tolstoy becomes lucid.

TOLSTOY
Sofya...my dear Sofya. So much has (hic) fallen to her.

Everyone moves nearer the bed. Tolstoy looks at Valentin.

TOLSTOY
Who's going to look after her?
(beat)
Someone needs to look after her.

There is a long pause. Sasha looks at Valentin.
SASHA
Shall I call her?

TOLSTOY
This is it (hic). The end.

He seems to smile.

SASHA
Do you want to see her, papa?

TOLSTOY
Sasha, Sasha...
It's (hic) nothing...Nothing.

He falls onto his pillow, asleep.

CHERTKOV
It's almost over.

Sasha looks at him, shakes her head.

SASHA
I can't do this anymore.

CHERTKOV
He won't know who she is anyway.

142 INT. ASTAPOVO. TRAIN CARRIAGE. NIGHT.

Everyone sleeps but Sofya. There is a knock on the door. Sofya opens it. It is Sasha. A pause.

SOFYA
Has he asked for me?

SASHA
I want you to come. Take a coat.
It's cold.

143 EXT. ASTAPOVO. STATIONMASTER'S HOUSE. NIGHT.

Sofya and Sasha walk to the door. The reporter calls out

REPORTER
Countess...Countess...Do you have any information? Countess...Is he
dying? Is he dead?

Sasha takes her mother's hand.

144 INT. ASTAPOVO. STATIONMASTER'S HOUSE. NIGHT.

She steps into the room. For a moment, she seems overwhelmed at the sight of him. She looks at Valentin, who nods at her as if to say go on. Sofya walks past Chertkov without acknowledging him. Dushan lets go his hold of Tolstoy's wrist and gets out of the chair, out of her way. She approaches her sleeping, husband, the love of her life, her cross, her everything.

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SOFYA
Lyovochka!

There is no response. She throws her arms around him.

SOFYA
Please forgive me, my darling!

SASHA
Mother...

SOFYA
I'm a fool. I'm a selfish woman. But I love you. Please believe me. Please understand me. Please forgive me for all my weakness and badness. Please! Please! Love me!

SASHA
Mother!

Sasha takes her hand, whispers.

SASHA
Control yourself.

SOFYA
Was I shouting?

SASHA
You have to control yourself.
Sofya looks around and sits back. Strangely, she does control herself. She becomes very still. She takes her husband's hand, begins quietly to speak to him.

**SOFYA**
You don't speak, but I hear you.

She carries on two sides of an impossible conversation.

**SOFYA**
"Do you love me, Lyovochka."
(beat)
"Never stopped, my little bird."
(beat)
"And you will never stop"
(beat)
"Never."
(beat)
"Nor ever leave me again."
(beat)
"Never, ever again."
(beat)
"Good...good... let's go home"

She sits very still holding her husband's hand. Then, it seems she feels the slightest of movements, the slightest squeeze of her hand. She looks down to see Tolstoy open his eyes. He looks at her for a moment, the hint of a smile, then closes his eyes again.

Valentin sees it, glances at Sasha. Then, he begins to fight for breath.

**DUSHAN**
First cessation.

A general sense of panic at the proximity of death. Tolstoy fights for a last breath.

**DUSHAN**
Second cessation.

Sofya whispers quietly to her dying husband.

**SOFYA**
Please forgive me if I cry a little now.

Tolstoy continues to struggle, then silence, silence.
Sasha starts to sob. Sofya reaches out to her daughter. Sasha comes to her mother who holds her.

She feels someone next to her. She looks up. It's Chertkov.

**CHERTKOV**

I am sorry, Sofya Andreyevna.

The most unlikely thing, she pats his hand.

**SOFYA**

It's alright. What happens from now on... it will never really matter. Not really. Everything's finished.

Chertkov sits beside them. She turns to Dushan.

**SOFYA**

Dushan, could you tell them your great friend is gone?

**DUSHAN**

Yes.

He nods, walk out into the dawn light to tell the world Leo Tolstoy is dead.

145 **EXT. ASTAPOVO. PLATFORM. DAY**

A sizeable crowd has assembled, the usual reporters, photographers, cinematographers, but students, too, and soldiers, factory workers, housewives.

Dushan faces the crowd. Quiet. Quiet.

**DUSHAN**

At ten minutes after six in the morning, a great soul passed from our world. Leo Nikoleyevich Tolstoy is dead.

As Dushan finishes his tribute, a single voice begins to sing the old Russian hymn, Eternal Memory. Gradually, more and more of the crowd picks it up. Valentin begins to sing. His eyes run over the crowd of mourners. Then, something
stops the flow of his gaze. His eyes fill with tears.

**VALENTIN**

Masha...

Masha. She walks slowly toward him out of the crowd. He goes to her, takes her in a long embrace.

**VALENTIN**

Masha...Masha...I'm so sorry he's gone. He’s gone.

**MASHA**

Yes. Yes. I know, but I came for you, Valya. I came for you, too.

**VALENTIN**

I love you. I do. I love you.

**MASHA**

Then, hold me. Hold me. Hold me.

The song, the voices swell around them. They hold each other like they will never let go.

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**EXT. ASTAPOVO. PLATFORM. DAY.**

A black draped funeral train waits in the station. Many mourners are congregated on the platform. Chertkov comes out of the little house, followed by Andrey, Valentin and Dushan carrying Tolstoy's coffin to the train.

Sofya appears with Sasha, who escorts her through the crowd. The Orthodox priest approaches.

**ORTHODOX PRIEST**

As a daughter of the church, I'm sure you wouldn't object to my saying a few words at the funeral.

Sofya stares at him for a long moment.

**SOFYA**

My husband needs no justification. Besides, it’s been enough talking as it is. Thank
you, father.

She climbs onto the train.

147 INT. ASTAPOVO. PRIVATE CARRIAGE. DAY.

Sofya settles into the comfort of the private car. She sits next to Sasha. Andrey and Dushan are near her. There's a noise from outside.

**VOICE (O.S.)**
Countess...Countess.

She looks out. Below the train window, Valentin and Masha stand hand in hand. She gets up and opens the window.

148 EXT. ASTAPOVO. PLATFORM. DAY.

**VALENTIN**
Excuse me, Countess. This may not be the time, but-

Sofya smiles

**SOFYA**
Valentin... and who's this...

**VALENTIN**
Masha...this is Masha.

Sofya nods.

**SOFYA**
This is your girl. Good. Good. Is there anything I can do for you?

**VALENTIN**
No, no. Not at all. I just wanted to say good bye.

**SOFYA**
Yes...Good bye, good bye. God bless you.

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**VALENTIN**
God bless you, too.
Sofya sits back down with Sasha. They hold hands.

**SOFYA**
Well, I'm ready to go now.
(to Andrey)
Why aren't we moving? Can't someone make it move?

But at that moment, the train begins to move.

**SOFYA**
Oh!

Sofya looks out the window, sees the people lined up along the rail, mourn her loss. As she looks away, we see the people reflected in the glass, some of them kneel, some of them remove their hats.

Valentin watches the train pull away. He holds Masha to him.

As the train moves slowly through the corridor of mourners, some of them fall in and walk behind it. The camera travels up and up as the train travels north taking Sofya and her husband back to Yasnaya Polyana.