

7596
The Russian Butler
Even to Dmitri Alexandrovitch it seemed as if the world had come to an end. He was forty years old, sturdy, prosperous, genial. He was an excellent man of business. His life had been almost devoid of incidents ever since the death of his parents, which happened when he was still a boy. He was married and had four children, but had taken it very calmly. There had been no accidents, no tragedies. Life had gone on so smoothly for him that his years had never caught the sound of the ticking of its inexorable clock. Of course, youth is never particularly reflective, though it thinks it is. And the last ten years of his life had been progressively smooth sailing. And now, he realized that all this calm and prosperity had been built upon a single foundation; and this foundation would be withdrawn on the last day of the month. Gregory had given notice.

Gregory was only the butler and major-domo. But what a butler he had been! He had been an institution in the house as firm as fate itself. His parents were little more than a tender memory. The uncle, who had been his guardian during the remainder of his minority, was little more to him than the pleasant occasional stranger who descended at intervals bearing presents.

In possession of [unclear]

"Dmitri Alexandrovitch"

7596

unfinished

The Russian Butler

Alister Crowley

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"Dmitri Alexandrovitch"

Unfinished

The Russian Bo

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The Russian Boy

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*An impression of feeling
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*The Russian Butler
Hester Crowley*

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Gregory had been his real father. The old man now nearly seventy years of age had been his companion, his play-mate, his tutor. He had a German governess at one time, and an English tutor at another. But these people were obviously aliens. Gregory was part of the soil of the estate as much as the forests of birch and pine which covered so large a section of it. And there was really no reason at all why the old man should go. Everything in the house for many a year had been done in Gregory's way. No one ever dreamed of revolting against that mild and unassuming rule. The other servants had got so thoroughly into the habit of doing everything the way he had wanted, that Gregory had never had to give any order outside the routine of deciding what supplies were needed. Dmitri Alexandrovitch could not imagine the house without him. He was a loss obviously irreparable.

Thinking such things he stood on the steps of his house, and looked over the wide fields to where the forests softened the horizon. It had never occurred to him before that he (like the rest of mankind) was eternally independent, isolated, and his mind began to translate "isolated" into "desolated". There was a grey mist over the sky, and the rain was almost ready to fall. The earth was grey and moist. The trees had lost their leaves,

and as yet the snow had not come down to transform the face of nature into exhilarating gaiety. He thought of a couplet from a poem of Verlaine:

Ah ^a dans ces mornes séjours
Les jamais sont les toujours.

And just as the rain began to fall, old Gregory came from the barn round the corner of the house, leading by the hand the youngest of the four boys, Fedor, and urging him to run to escape the menace of the weather. Dmitri Alexandrovitch turned abruptly into the house, threw himself down upon his bed like a child and began to sob.

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