

-14-

Nonetheless, the boldness of such an assumption had the power to torment me. When, on occasion, I find myself near the sea, it becomes difficult to believe that God is suffering any loss of His powers. As much could also be said for a fine field, a storm, or the vast retort of the heavens when lightning is followed by thunder. Or, equally, when one encounters any memorable sunset. One could even speak of such exquisite minor notes as

dazzlements of light on wet grass when the dew is on the ground in early morning.

Of course, all this could have been fashioned by Him untold ages ago when He was at the peak of His Creative Powers. The sky, after all, was not choked then with factory smoke, nor the rivers fouled by factory excrements put into them by His humans. Did He now brood on the possibility that His Highest Creation had become His least successful? Were we encountering a profound decision or dealing with the dithering of a divinity whose powers were old and askew? This Nicky and Alix—they were so young, they seemed so unfitted for the vast project they would encounter. If I had not been able to enter their living presence, I had certainly absorbed the tone of their love, their philosophy (such as it was!) and, over and over, their piety,

their innocence. They actually believed that Nicky's diary, and their letters to each other were well protected from scrutiny when, in fact, a copy of the key to his diary—courtesy of his valet—had been in our possession for years.

Ditto for the box that kept her letters, and, now that she had joined him, all of his old letters to her. Indeed, they even numbered them, back and forth—

Letter 96, Letter 109, et cetera. It never occurred to them that it took no exceptional skill to make a wax impression of a key or a lock, any more than we often needed high competence to find the maid or body-servant who was ready to betray a trust.

So, I knew how they spoke to each other. I had read hundreds of their letters and looked over several thousands of pages in his diaries for each year since 1880. If I now establish a small record,, a tenth, no a hundredth of all

the missives passing between them and a few close friends and relatives, is to give a sense of how trivial were most of these responses to the enormities awaiting them. Indeed, I had to wonder all over again whether the Dummkopf was still in command of even a minimal acumen. Why?—the question might as well have been a fever in me—why was God giving so much importance to Nicky and Alix?

I will offer a better sense, however, of the quandary in which I find myself by quoting here and there from there letters over the last couple of years, yes, let me take it from the middle of 1894 until the June of 1896 when I returned to Hafeld.

Be it said, they were not without some culture. Back in 1889, when she was seventeen, before they were ready to speak of their love for each

other, Alix wrote on March 17, "It was so good of you to write and it gave me great pleasure. My mad letter amused you then—well, I have been cracked enough to write another. We went last night to see the 'Rheingold' and I hope next week to see 'Walhure's Siegfried,'" to which he responds two weeks later, "Thank you so much for your dear little letter which was such an agreeable surprise to me . . . We also saw 'Siegfried' with Ella. I like it so awfully, especially the melody of the bird and the fire! Now the Nibelungen are all over, and I think it is a great pity."

Young Wagnerites at the edges of love! And they write to each other often in English. He has been tutored in the tongue since boyhood and she has visited so much and so often with Queen Victoria. Nonetheless, as will

be seen, his English is one level better at least, but then, he is also four years older than she.

That was in 1889. By now, on the second of June, 1894, and this is after one great emotional obstacle, since to marry him, she had to give up her Lutheranism for Russian Orthodoxy. Her older sister, Ella, much beloved by Alix, had done just that—she had converted in order to marry the Grand Duke Sergei Romanov, a brother of Nicky's father, Tsar Alexander III, so it was not as if there were no precedent for such a leap from the strictures of Luther to the ceremonies and sacraments of the Moscow churches. But it did hold Nicky and Alix up for years. Alix was wed to her Lutheranism even after Elle cut a few theological knots by assuring her younger sister that the two religions were not all that different—which under the circumstances, was an

interesting point of view—but even in 1889, Ella had commenced her campaign.

In a letter to Nicky on June 19, dated St. Petersburg, she writes, "I was told if one prayed well in a church going to be consecrated, God would hear one's prayers. Well, in Jerusalem, and in Paul's house, I prayed so deeply for you both to bring you together in love for each other. . . Faith and love go very far and if you have [that] in Him and each other, all will be for the best. Many affectionate kisses from Sergei and your loving Aunty." Let it be noted that this loving Aunty Ella was only a couple of years older than Nicky, and was beautiful, even more splendid in appearance than Alix.

By 1894, in the week after they are finally engaged, they "are completely worn out by the telegrams, Alix and I write them together. . . up to now we have received 220 of them."

A couple of months later on June 2, he is passionate in his declaration of happiness. "I love you too deeply and too strongly for me to show it: it is such a sacred feeling, I don't want to let it out in words, that seem meek and poor and vain! But now I will try to break the habit of hiding my feelings, because I think it wrong and selfish in some occasions. You also do not know, my precious one, how long my whole heart belonged to you and what sufferings it has gone through these dreary years! Darling primrosy-mine, I love you my darling!!!!!"

Four months later, Nicky's father is grievously ill. Alix writes:

October 15, writing in Nicky's diary, she says this: *"Sweet child, pray to God, he will comfort you don't feel too low, he will help you in your trouble, Your Sunny is praying for you and te beloved patient. Darling Boosy, he loves you, o so very tenderly and deep. Be firm and make the Drs Leyden or the other Z[akarin] come alone to you every day and tell you how they find him, and exactly, what they wish him to do, so that you are always the first to know. You can help persuading him then too, to do what is right. Don't let others be put first and you left out. You are Father dear's son and must be told all and be asked about everything. Show your own mind and don't let others forget who you are. Forgive me lovy."*

Two days later, after reading his diary which is full of woe over his father's illness, she writes: *"Tell me everything, dushka, you can fully trust me, look upon me as a bit of yourself. Let your joys and sorrows be mine, so that we may be ever drawn nearer together. My sweet One, how I love you, darling treasure, my very own One."*

"Dushka, when you feel low and sad, come to Sunny and she will try to comfort you and like her namesake warm you with her rays, God helping."

"Only yours, quite your very own little spitzbub, Pussy mine!"

There is an entry next day by Nicky, 18 October: "A terrible, sad day! Dear Papa did not sleep at all, and felt so unwell in the morning that we were all woken up and called upstairs. What a trial! Then Papa became a little calmer and dozed fitfully throughout the day."

"I did not dare absent myself from the house for any length of time.

What a support to have dear Alix; she sat with me the whole day while I read reports from various ministers. At about 11 o'clock there was a consultation with the doctors in Uncle Vladimir's room—it was awful! In the evening, Papa appeared a little better—but terribly weak! Our only reliance and hope is in the Mercy of the Lord, let His will be done!"

I could not help but note how completely the upper classes and royalty, most especially, are groomed (often by us when we can get to them) to respect the Lord's will. After all, that Will that they respect is so often ours, indeed, almost always, I would say, except for mortality itself.

They need that belief. Their lives are so peculiar, so frustrated on the one hand, so extreme on the other, so sensitive to proper conduct, and so drawn to the corrupt (what with the power they are given) that they like to believe the sad events in their lives have nothing to do with them. It's just the Lord's will.

But back to the letters. Nicky's father, Tsar Alexander III, is very close to death, then dies.

Nicky, diary, 20 October, Livadia: "My God, my God, what a day! The Lord has called unto Him our adored, dearly beloved Papa. "My head is going round, I cannot believe it—it seems inconceivable, a terrible reality.

"It was the death of a Saint! Lord, help us in thee terrible days! Poor, dear Mama! In the evening, at 9:30, we held Prayers for the Dead—in the same bedroom! I felt as if I were dead also. The pains in Alix's legs have returned. In the evening, I went to confession."

All through the Prayers, Nicky thought of the hour in his childhood when a nihilist had succeeded in putting a small bomb inside a railroad car in which his father had been travelling with the family. When it went off, given its placement, it blew upward rather than outward, and so no one in the royal family was critically injured, but the roof of the railroad car began to collapse on them. Tsar Alexander III, a giant of a Romanov, used his holy and unholy strength to hold up the beams of the ceiling long enough for the family to be

rescued. Only a saint was capable of such strength, decided his wife, a small but beautiful woman.

So felt Nicky as well. He was as small as his Danish mother, and revered his father. All through his adolescence, Nicky had worked at building his body with weights, but he always remained short and slight. He excelled at horsemanship, a point of honor to him, he grew a fine brown mustache and beard, yet never came to look like a Romanov. Now, he would be the Tsar.

His closest friend was Sandro who had this entry in his own memoirs for October 20, the date of Alexander III's death: "He knew he was the Emperor now, and the weight of this terrifying fact crushed him.

"Sandro, what am I going to do,' he exclaimed pathetically. 'What is going to happen to me, to you, to Xenia, to Alix, to mother, to all of Russia? I am not prepared to be a Tsar. I never wanted to become one. I know nothing of the business of ruling. I have no idea of even how to talk to the ministers.'"

Nicky, Diary, 21 October, Livadia: "In the midst of our deep sorrow, the Lord has sent us a quiet and radiant joy: at 10 o'clock in the presence of the family my dear darling Alix was anointed with the holy oils and after the service we took communion together, with dear Mama and Ella. Alix repeated her responses and prayers wonderfully well and distinctly!

"After luncheon we held Prayers for the Dead and again at 9 o'clock in the evening. The expression on Papa's face was wonderful, smiling as if he

were bout to laugh! Spent the whole day answering telegrams with Alix and attending to the papers brought by the last courier.

"22 October. Last night we had to carry Papa's body downstairs, as unfortunately, it has rapidly begun to decompose. Thank God, dear Mama is completely calm and is bearing her sorrow in a truly heroic way! I did nothing but answer the pile of telegrams.

"24 October. The day was grey—as it was in our hearts! I still cannot bring myself to go into the corner room where dear Papa's body is lying—he is so changed since being embalmed. I cannot bear to dispel the wonderful impression of the first day!"

It is probably worth including a letter from Kaiser Wilhelm II to Nicky, which he sent on 27 October which he sent from the Neues Palais, Potsdam:

"My dear Nicky,

"May Heaven comfort you in your grief and give you strength for your heavy duties, and may a long and peaceful reign give you the opportunity of looking after the welfare of your subjects. The sympathy and real grief at the so untimely end of your lamented father in my country will have shown you how strong the monarchical instinct is and how Germany feels for you and your subjects. As for me, you will always find me the same in undiminished friendship and love to you."

It would, of course, be years before they went to war.

In all of this, I was rarely certain where any of our agents might be, although there was one entry in Nicky's diary on November 2 in St. Petersburg that came to my attention:

"Slept well: but the moment I came to myself the memory of what has happene and the terrible feeling of oppression invaded my soul with renewed vigour! Poor Mama again felt unwell and during the afternoon she fainted.

"At 12 o'clock I received the full Council of State—I again had to make a speech! My dear Alix came to luncheon—it's sad to see her only at intervals! Alix, Uncle Bertie, Georgie [Duke of York] and I dined together at 9 o'clock. She sat with me in the evening."

Here, I must introduce another diary. It is by a nobleman I will call KR. He is as old as the Grand Dukes (the dead Tsar's brothers) and so he, too, could be an uncle to Nicky, he certainly loves him as much or more than any of the uncles who are a big, powerful lot, all four [CK] of them, and not, I would say, unavailable to us in normal circumstances, but I have yet to refer

to such specific matters. Leave it that KR adores Nicky. KR is, after all, a closet homosexual which is the bane and delight of his existence. He also writes well enough to offer me some pleasure when I can quote him.

KR, Diary, 2 November, St. Petersburg: "The young Tsar is the admiration of everyone, wherever His words are heard, either directly or on writing. I hear that the short speech he made in the Kremlin Palace to the Moscow nobility was delivered in a loud, clear, assured voice. Yesterday, when receiving the Council of State, He addressed them most beautifully. I watched him during the requiem service: the calm kind face, the thoughtful, deeply sad eyes, often half-closed. He is weighed down by his exalted rank. His modesty suffers from having to be everywhere and always the first."

KR, Diary, 3 November, St. Petersburg: "I have not yet talked to the Emperor's bride; but she smiles so sweetly whenever you greet her.

"In the evening they covered the Emperor's body in the coffin with a pall up to his chest, in order to hide the hands which are beginning to turn black. The head is already looking quite black."

On the seventh of November, one of our English agents had intercepted a communication from Lord Carrington to Queen Victoria, a detailed report on Tsar Alexander III's funeral. It was obvious Her Majesty was interested in details.

Lord Carrington to Queen Victoria: "The service was choral without organ—the Empress and Princesses standing or kneeling the whole time. The mass continued for an hour and a half, plaintive and monotonous and then the

usual daily funeral service was gone through. Tapers were lighted and handed round, but in consequence of the crowd, no ladies took any and so accident from fire was averted. At 12:30 the terrible ceremony of paying the last farewell took place. The Empress with heroic courage walked up steadily, knelt, and then took a last look at the late Emperor and kissed the sacred picture on His Majesty's breast, and then kissed his lips. The Emperor supported and took great care of Her Majesty and all the Royal Personages present kissed the sacred picture."

Like most English diplomats, it was obvious that he took considerable pleasure in his literary style. I had the impression that he was too pompous to offer easy entrance to the Cudgels or our own agents. Often, such people are

the worst for other humans to deal with. A little saintliness or a bit of the satanic does flavor the dish.

Lord Carrington to Queen Victoria, 7 November: "A mounted Guard of Honour of the Gardes a Cheval, although big men on large horses, did not strike the Lord Chamberlain as being as fine or as smart as Your Majesty's own Life Guards."

On November 14, Carrington added a spice to the monarch's taste: "Most of the saloons being so full that threading through them was not easy. All the ladies in Russian costume, some with fine diamonds but hardly any pretty faces; indeed, the absence of beauty as compared with that seen at one of Your Majesty's drawing rooms struck the Lord Chamberlain very much."

2. 12. 12

As always, upon all underlining

~~from the letter~~

2. Also, every section that has a ☒ in the typewritten separate pages

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1895

Nicky Diary - 1 January - St Petersburg

Today everything had a terribly different feel from other years! At 11 o'clock were present in church: Uncles Misha, Vladimir, Alexei and Aunt Michen. Lunched with them and Aunt Alix. At 2 o'clock the reception for the diplomatic corps began in the ball-room. It reminded me so much of the reception there 10½ years ago - on the day I took my oath of allegiance! On the other hand it is easier now because I am not alone - my dear Alix worked the ladies, while I took care of the men. After receiving the son of the Emir of Bokhara, we returned home at 3.30 - exhausted. Those wretched telegrams again took up all day! Finished writing and did some reading. Boris and Andrei¹ came for dinner. Went to bed early

3 January From the morning my Alix did not feel at all well, and at about 11 o'clock she went back to bed. I felt so sorry for my poor little wife all alone downstairs!

4 January We sat down to dinner at 7.30 as Aunt Alix (Princess of Wales) had to leave by 9 o'clock. We all accompanied her to the station. My heart aches at the thought that dear Mama will now be all alone upstairs! Help her, merciful God!

17 January An exhausting day. Went with Alix to the Winter Palace. Lunched with Xenia and Sandro. I was in a terrible state about having to go into the Nikolayevsky Hall and deliver a speech to representatives of the nobility, the zemstvos [local councils] and the town committees. Then there was a reception for each of the delegations in turn in the Concert Hall. Returned home at 4 o'clock. Strolled in the garden with Uncle Sergei.

separate pages

From Nicky's speech to the representatives of all estates
I am aware that recently in some zemstvos there have arisen the voices of people carried away by senseless dreams of taking part in the business of government.

Let everyone know that I will retain the principles of autocracy as firmly and unbendingly as my unforgettable late father.

¹ Sons of Grand Duke Vladimir.

1895

beginning of troubles

We went out together for a walk - the weather was like yesterday. Poor Alix had a
 oped a headache and was forced to go and lie down. Worked in the garden and rode
 my bicycle.

9 April Unfortunately dear Alix's headache continued all day. She did not go
 upstairs at all - neither to church, nor to luncheon. I managed to read a lot of the
 papers that had accumulated. Walked in the garden with Mama, Anna and Samson.
 Had tea with my darling. Dined at 8 o'clock with Mama, Misha and Andrei. I
 went to bed early.

10 April Dear Alix still has an unbearable pain in the temples, and she was forced
 remain in bed, on my advice. Had tea with Mama, Misha and Andrei. I
 looked through some old papers of Papa's, that had remained in his writing desk.

Nicky to Sergei - 10 April - St Petersburg

Dear Uncle Sergei

First of all I must thank you with all my heart for your kind letter, but as you
 know how busy I am most of the time, you will hopefully forgive my impotency.
 I know that unforgettable Papa, for all his labours, always answered the letters he
 received, so the same quantity of work is no excuse. But I am so recently married
 and have only just begun to enjoy bliss on earth - living together with one's darling
 is indeed - is it surprising I should devote the two or three hours left free to me
 during the day wholly to my darling wife?

Sometimes, I confess, tears well up in my eyes at the thought of how calm and
 lovely life could have been for me for many years to come, had it not been for
 October 20.⁵ But these tears reveal human weakness, these are tears of self-pity, and
 I try to dry them as soon as possible and humbly fulfill my heavy and responsible
 duty to Russia.

It is much easier in Tsarskoe, we stay there mostly alone, and it is better to work
 there. I hope that in three days I will be able to move in there for the whole spring.
 These past days we have lived on our reminiscences of last year in dear London. You
 and I embrace you and Ella fondly.

Nicky to Queen Victoria - 10 May - Tsarskoe Selo
 Dearest Grandmama,

I send you my fondest thanks for the two letters you were so kind to write to me.
 I am too sorry that these lines will reach you after your dear birthday, though all
 my wishes for that day, come from the depth of my heart! This year especially, as I
 recollect with such pleasure all the goodness and kindness you showed me during
 that never to be forgotten time I spent last summer in England. And now I can
 often talk about those charming days at Windsor and at Osborne, where I was so
 gay and all so quiet. Alas! how things have changed since then. I thought so much
 of you, dearest Grandmama, when you sent us the sad news of the death of the
 poor Duchess of Roxburghe! It must be too hard for words, to lose one's best

⁵ The day of his father's death.

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Letter to Queen Victoria 49 *May 18*

friends, like that, one after another - Sir H. Ponsonby, Sir J. Cowell and poor little Lord Drumlanrig. I know well what your feelings must be, having recently gone through one of the most fearful trials in this life - the loss of my dear and brave Father! But I try not to despair and not to lose courage, but to thank God for the good and happiness He has given me on the other side. I really could not be happier than I am, with such an angel for my wife, as darling Alix is - and I trust there to be found more.

In answer to your second letter mentioning the articles about England in the Russian papers, I must say that I cannot prevent people from putting their opinion openly in the newspapers. How often have I not been worried to read in English gazettes rather unjust statements in connexion with my country! Even books are being constantly sent to me from London, misinterpreting our actions in Africa or interior politics, etc. I am sure there is as little hostility intended in these writings as there is in the above mentioned ones. Nicky

I must say this satisfies some of my curiosity. By the way, I am sure you will be very glad to hear that I am well and happy. I am sure you will be very glad to hear that I am well and happy.

Nicky, Diary - 14 May - St Petersburg
It poured with rain all night, and for some time noticeably cooler. Because of the rain we did not go out. At 10 o'clock went to church.
(in Alix's hand) *A half a year now that we are married, how immensely happy you have made your Wifv you cannot think. God bless you, my own true, beloved husband - dearer, purer, stronger, deeper.*

→ R.T. Alix is pregnant

Nicky to Georgy [brother] - 14 May - Tsarskoe Selo

Since Mama's departure we have already been once to Gatchina with a visit to Sandro. We stayed in Apapa and Amama's rooms, which overlook the main courtyard. I'm glad we are not using your former rooms, because every time I enter this little flat, my soul is flooded with the bliss of happy, wonderful recent memories and I would not want to embarrass my dear Alix with a grief I am unable to conceal! I have only twice been in dear Papa's rooms; everything is down to the last object - has remained exactly in its place!

Nicky, Diary - 19 May - Tsarskoe Selo

The weather was unsettled. In the morning we went for a walk. After the reports, received visitors. We lunched alone. We looked over the upstairs rooms, over which we are planning to arrange for a certain purpose!

25 May Dear Alix is 23 years old! The first birthday that we are spending together, may God grant that we live many other such days together in quiet joy and happiness!

10 June - Peterhof At 7.30 there was a dinner at the Oldenburgs, afterwards we sat in the pavilion by the sea. The evening was heavenly, we went for a drive and returned home at 11 o'clock.

(in Alix's hand) My sweet old darling manykins, Wifv loves you so deeply and strongly

I am sure you will be very glad to hear that I am well and happy. I am sure you will be very glad to hear that I am well and happy.

1895

continuation from 126

you are my one and all. A few months still and then ... oh, my angel, what happiness ... ours ... our very own ... what happiness could be greater; only Wifey must try and be as good and kind as possible, else another little person might suffer from it. A big kiss

☒ This is for June. To the family ...

Kaiser Wilhelm II to Nicky - 28 June - Sweden

Dearest Nicky

Let me once more thank you with all my heart for the sending of those splendid ships of yours, which so ably and powerfully represented the Russian navy. Alexei was kindness and joviality itself and did everything in his power to make intercourse with our Russian comrades, everything that could be wished.

Goodbye, dearest Nicky, my best love to Alix and to you, with wishes for a quiet summer and a nice little boy to come. Believe me, dear Nicky, ever your most affectionate friend and cousin

Willy

Nicky, Diary - 3 July - St Petersburg

was working after tea when I was suddenly told that dear Xenia has had a daughter, Irina! Alix and I flew to the Farm. Thank God everything went all right. We saw Xenia and our little niece. Dined with Misha. We went to say goodnight to Maria, who has calmed down after her agitation!

Xenia to Nicky - 23 August - Bernsdorf

My dear darling Nicky

Here we are again in Denmark! But what a difference with our previous visits how many changes since then! You cannot imagine how difficult it is to be here without dear Papa, and how much we miss him! In general it's not much fun here which is understandable!

First we found poor Georgy in bed! Two days before our arrival he started to cough up blood (and just when he was beginning to feel better) and it happened again last night, but not as badly as the first time. Of course this affects him terribly and makes him very upset!

Here all the girl cousins are learning to ride bicycles with great enthusiasm. I shall also have to put myself to it, although it seems to me I will never master how to do it.

I hope that dear Alix is in good health and feels quite well, and that the children are not wearing her out too much with their endless hopping. You have no idea how much I miss our delightful little daughter! Of course she will be absent from you with you, but I feel terribly sad without her!

Alix telegraphed me today to say that she [Irina] is quite well and is growing every day. Everybody here is very interested in her, and keeps asking me whom she looks like.

Sandro to Nicky - 6 September - steamship *Petersburg*

I had rather a boring time in Bernsdorf, and went to town in all three times. I spent most of the time lying down, and was ill at the beginning. Our dear have been realized - Georgy's stay in Denmark unfortunately did him harm. In my opinion there is absolutely no need for Leyden. Chigayev is a wonderful doctor and

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should be given complete charge of Georgy's treatment. We should not forget that Leyden is a German, and on top of that a Jew, and that he does not care at all what happens to Georgy. Besides which Georgy needs to be left in peace, so let him and the doctor decide what to do together, without any outside pressure.

Xenia to Nicky - 11 September - Abas Tuman

Thank God that our little one is well, and thank you both for looking after her and showing so much interest, Alix was even there for her bath! In a few days you should be moving to Tsarskoe, there she will be nearer and it will be more convenient.

Georgy [brother] to Nicky - 11 September - Abas Tuman

The *Polar Star* was delayed, and at that moment I started this wretched spitting up of blood again and I had to take to bed; as it occurred several times I had to stay there for a full eight days. It was no fun at all, and to make matters worse I was forbidden to smoke. It was awful, but I managed for the whole eight days after which I gradually began to smoke again. I felt fine as long as I was in bed, but for the first weeks of my stay there I had an almost constant fever, and I cannot say that I felt particularly well. Of course I was delighted to see the family after 4 years, but it did not really do me any good, as I lost even more than the 5 pounds which I had put on with such difficulty in May and June; I also get out of breath more easily now. These are the results of my trip. Very annoying.

Kaiser Wilhelm II to Nicky - 14 September - Jagdhaus Romingen
Dearest Nicky

God knows that I have done all in my power to preserve the European Peace, but if France goes on openly or secretly encouraged like this to violate all rules of international courtesy and Peace in peacetime, one fine day, my dearest Nicky, you will find yourself volens-volens suddenly embroiled in the most horrible of wars Europe ever saw! Which will by the masses and by history perhaps be fixed on you as the cause of it. Pray don't be angry, if I perhaps hurt you quite unintentionally, but I think it my duty to our two countries and to you as my friend to write openly. As the seclusion and retirement the deep mourning has imposed upon you debars you from seeing people and following in detail what is happening - behind the scenes. Think of the awful responsibility for the shaking bloodshed!

Now goodbye, dearest Nicky, best love to dear Alix and believe me ever your most devoted and faithful friend and cousin,

Nicky, Diary - 28 September - Tsarskoe Selo

Happily Alix felt well and spent the whole day lying on the sofa in the mauve room.

6 October From the evening Alix again started getting pains, which she felt at night whenever she woke up. As they continued in the morning, I decided not to go hunting and stayed at home. At about 10 o'clock Alix got up and spent the

7 October My darling wife felt wonderful all day - things seem to have come to a halt, and we were so hoping that by Sunday the great event would have taken place!

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FROM : FM

FRX NO. : 5084872136

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authentic
Kaiser Wilhelm II to Nicky - 13 October - Neues Palais, Potsdam

1895

Dearest Nicky

chronology - early

That it is not the fact of a 'Rapport' or friendship between Russia and France that make me uneasy - every sovereign is sole master of his country's interests and he shapes his policy accordingly - but the danger which is brought to our Principle of Monarchism through the lifting up of the Republic on a pedestal by the form under which the friendship is shown. The constant appearance of Princes, Granddukes, statesmen, generals in 'full fig' at reviews, burials, dinners, races - with the head of the Republic or in his entourage makes Republicans - as such - believe that they are quite honest excellent people, with whom Princes can concoct and feel at home! Now what is the consequence at home in our different countries? The Republicans are Revolutionists de nature and treated - rightly too - as people who must be shot or hung, they tell to our other loyal subjects: 'Oh, we are no dangered bad men, look at France! There you see the Royalties hobnobbing with the Revolutionnaires! Why should not it be the same with us?' The R[epublic] F[ranc]aisel is from the same source as the R[epublic] R[uss]e and is bound to do so, the ideas of it. Don't forget, that Fauré - not his personal fault - sits on the throne of the King and Queen of France 'by the grace of God' whose heads Frenchmen Republicans cut off! The Blood of their Majesties is still on that country!

Look at it, has it since then ever been happy or quiet again? Has it not staggered from bloodshed to bloodshed? And in its great moments did it not go from war to war? Till it caused all Europe and Russia in streams of blood? Till at last it had the Commune over again? Nicky, take my word on it, the Curse of God has struck that People for ever! We, Christian Kings and Emperors have one holy duty imposed on us by Heaven, that is to uphold the Principle 'von Gottes Gnaden' [by the grace of God].

Your most devoted and affectionate friend and cousin, *WILHELM*

Book 4 10/27/04 triple

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Double-upse from

told her for all letters
no matter how brief.
The one exception is
Italy for us to Alla
makes in which of course

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Nonetheless, the boldness of such an assumption had the power to

disturb

~~torment~~ me. When, on occasion, I find myself near the sea it becomes

greatly

difficult to believe that God is suffering any ~~loss~~ of His powers. As much

can

~~could~~ also be said for a fine field, a storm, or the vast ~~reign~~ of the heavens

(The same conclusion is present in

when lightning is followed by thunder. ~~Or, equally, when one encounters~~

encountering)

(a memorable sunset. One could even speak of such exquisite minor notes as

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dazzlements of light on wet grass when the dew is on the ground in early morning.

Of course, ^{He} ~~all this~~ could have been fashioned by ^{all this} ~~His~~ untold ages ago

when ~~He was~~ ^{He} at the peak of His Creative Powers. The sky, after all, was not

choked then with factory smoke, nor the rivers fouled by factory excrements

put into them by His humans. Did He now brood on the possibility that ^{these} ~~His~~

^{last Creation?} Highest Creation had become His least successful? Were we ^{never a fresh} ~~encountering~~

ⁱⁿ ~~profound decision or dealing with~~ the dithering of a divinity whose powers

were old and askew? This Nicky and Alix—they were so young, they

seemed so unfitted for the vast project they would encounter. ^{which} ~~I~~ had not

^{come near enough to} ~~approach~~ been able to ~~enter~~ their living presence, I had certainly absorbed the tone of

their love, their philosophy (such as it was!) and, over and over, their pity,

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their innocence. They actually believed that Nicky's diary, and their letters to each other were well protected from scrutiny when, in fact, a copy of the key to ^{this} his diary—courtesy of ^{the ~~French~~} valet—had been in our possession for years

Ditto for the box that kept her letters, and, now that she had joined him, all of his old letters to her. Indeed, they even ^{put numbers on} numbered them, back and forth—

Letter 96, Letter 109, et cetera. It never occurred to ^(Nicky or Alice) them that it took no

exceptional skill to make a wax impression of a key or a lock, any more than ^{were in need of} we ~~often needed~~ high competence to find the maid or body-servant who was

ready to betray a trust.

So, I knew how they spoke to each other. I had read hundreds of their letters and looked over several thousands of pages in his diaries for each year since 1880. If I now establish a small record,, a tenth, no, a hundredth of all

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the missives passing between them and ^{their} a few close friends and relatives (it's

to give a sense of how trivial were most of these responses to the enormities
of decision)
(awaiting them. Indeed, I had to wonder all over again whether the

Dummkopf was still in command of ~~even~~ a minimal acumen. Why?—the

question might as well have been ^{risen to} a fever in me—why was God giving so

much importance to Nicky and Alix?

I ^{can} offer a better sense, ^{some} however, of the quandary in which I find

myself by quoting ~~here and there~~ ^{there} from ~~these~~ letters over the last couple of

years, yes, let me take it from the middle of 1894 until the June of 1896 ^{just} ~~when~~

^{before}
(I returned to Hafeld.

Be it said, they were not ^{at together} without ~~some~~ culture. Back in 1889, when

she was seventeen, before they were ready to speak of their love for each

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bold face
 other, Alix wrote on March 17, "It was so good of you to write and it gave

me great pleasure. My mad letter amused you then—well, I have been

cracked enough to write another. We went last night to see the 'Rheingold'

and I hope next week to see 'Wagner's Siegfried,' to which he responds two

weeks later, "Thank you so much for your dear little letter which was such an

agreeable surprise to me . . . We also saw 'Siegfried' with Ella. I like it so

awfully, especially the melody of the bird and the fire! Now the Niebelungen

are all over, and I think it is a great pity."

Young Wagnerites at the edge of love! And they write to each other

often in English. He has been tutored in the tongue since boyhood and she

(so often) *who is, we must not forget her grandfather*
 has visited so much and so often with Queen Victoria, Nonetheless, as will

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Nicky's *at the least*
 be seen, ~~his~~ English is *one level better at least*, but then, he is also four years

older ~~than she~~.

By June of 1894, they had
 That was in 1889. ~~By June of 1894, they had~~

passed through a *To be betrothed, & he had*
 after one great emotional obstacle, ~~since to marry him~~, she had to give up her

was already converted
 Lutheranism for Russian Orthodoxy. Her older sister, Ella, much beloved by

converted
~~Alix, had done just that. She had converted~~ in order to marry the Grand Duke

the leap
 Sergei Romanov, a brother of Nicky's father, Tsar Alexander III, ~~so it was not~~

So, it was not taking
 as if there were no precedent for such a leap from the strictures of Luther to *the*

but for years it
 the ceremonies and sacraments of the Moscow churches, ~~but it did hold things~~

up. And for
 Nicky ~~and Alix~~ *up for years*. Alix was wed to her Lutheranism ~~even after~~

her best to
 cut a few theological knots by assuring her younger sister that the two

~~but it remained a long time~~
 religions were not all that different, *which under the circumstances was an*
 but, theology is not without its *talents*

*or which we had designed for erecting
 an impassable moral cul-de-sac. Ella was doing
 her best, but Alix was pious and conversion in
 consequence was tricky.
 we certainly*

FROM : nm

FAX NO. : 5084872136

20 2 11 12 4 PM F 7

FROM : JMWORDCRAFT

FAX NO. : 17136243782

17 2 11 14 1 PM P

Book 4 10/27/04 triple

436

~~in 1889, when Ella commenced her~~
interesting point of view, but even in 1889, Ella had commenced her

~~campaign~~

It took five years. Back in June 1889, ^{Ella} ~~in a~~
letter to Nicky ~~on June 30 dated St. Petersburg,~~ she writes, "I was

told if one prayed well in a church going to be consecrated, God would hear

one's prayers. Well, in Jerusalem, and in Paul's house, I prayed so deeply for

you both to bring you together in love for each other. . . Faith and love go

very far and if you have [that] in Him and each other, all will be for the best.

Many affectionate kisses from Sergei and your loving Auntie." Let it be noted

that this loving Auntie Ella ^{was only four} ~~was only a couple of years~~ older than Nicky, ~~and~~

^{and} ~~was~~ beautiful, ~~even more splendid in appearance than Alex~~

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The campaign succeeded. Alix agreed to ~~accept~~ accept the Russian Orthodox Church, ~~By 1894, in the week after they are finally engaged, they are~~ and the news of their engagement was given to the world by the newspapers of Europe. In June of 1894, completely worn out by the telegrams, Alix and I write them together up to their engagement just two months old, now we have received 220 of them."

~~After~~ ^{Nicky} A couple of months later on June 2, he is passionate in his declaration

of happiness. "I love you too deeply and too strongly for me to show it it is

such a sacred feeling, I don't want to let it out in words, ^{so} that seem meek and

poor and vain! But now I will try to break the habit of hiding my feelings,

because I think it wrong and selfish in some occasions. You also do not

know, my precious one, how long my whole heart belonged to you and what

sufferings it has gone through these dreary years! Darling primrosy-mine, I

love you my darling!!!!!!" (Be it said, I took pains to count the exclamation marks. It was one of the points of kinship I felt with him. The observant reader may have noticed how ~~few~~ ^{few} I am myself of such punctuation, especially in parentheses!!)

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~~now we have received 220 of them"~~

Nicky

especially in parentheses !!)

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3/4

Four months later, Nicky's father is grievously ill. Alix writes:

supposed
(whose power they often share)

October 15, writing in Nicky's diary, she says this: "Sweet child, pray
offer this: *Sweet child, pray*

to God, he will comfort you don't feel too low, he will help you in your

trouble, Your Sunny is praying for you and *the* beloved patient Darling

Boysy, me loves you, o so very tenderly and deep. Be firm and make the *Doctors*

~~Doctors~~ the other ~~Doctors~~ come alone to you every day and tell you how

they find him, and exactly, what they wish him to do, so that you are always

the first to know. ~~You can help persuading him then too, to do what is right~~

Don't let others be put first and you left out. You are Father dear's son and

must be told all and he asked about everything. Show your own mind and

don't let others forget who you are. Forgive me lovy."

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she enters his diary again. She will
Two days later, ~~after reading his diary which is full of wee over his~~

share his

(father's illness, *she* writes: *Tell me everything, dushka, you can fully trust*

me, look upon me as a bit of yourself. Let your joys and sorrows be mine so

that we may be ever drawn nearer together. My sweet One, how I love you,

darling treasure, my very own One.

*Tushka, when you feel low and sad, come to Sunny and she will try to
comfort you and like her namesake warm you with her rays, God helping.*

Only yours, quite your very own little spitzbub, Pussy mine!

There is an entry next day by Nicky, 18 October: *A terrible sad day!*

Dear Papa did not sleep at all, and felt so unwell in the morning that we were
all woken up and called upstairs. What a trial! Then Papa became a little
calmer and dozed fitfully throughout the day.

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I did not dare absent myself from the house for any length of time.

What a support to have dear Alix; she sat with me the whole day while I read reports from various ministers. At about 11 o'clock there was a consultation with the doctors in Uncle Vladimir's room—it was awful! In the evening, Papa appeared a little better—but terribly weak! Our only reliance and hope is in the Mercy of the Lord, let His will be done!

} close-up

I could not help but note how ~~completely the upper classes and~~ royalty,

~~most especially~~ are groomed (often by us when we can get to them) to

respect the Lord's will. After all, that Will ~~that they respect~~ is so often ours,

indeed, almost always, I would say, except for mortality itself. ~~That is,~~ This particular manipulation

is indeed, one of our sources of delight — ~~But~~ ~~Remember~~ how singing our clients become at those moments when they feel closest to God, ~~and we are the ones to all the~~

Write that we are offering the message

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no matter from whom it comes,
How much more they need,
 They need that belief. Their lives are so peculiar, so frustrated on the
 to whose isolation from ~~any~~ *any* common experience, painfully
 one hand, so extreme on the other, so sensitive to proper conduct and ~~so~~

invariably)
 drawn to the corrupt (what with the power they are given) that they like to *they do long*

that may (directly) better to
 to believe the sad events in their lives have nothing to do with them. It's just the
 assign all that to the *the Romanovs*
 Lord's will. Even so, *they are hardly nearly*

for
 But back to the letters, Nicky's father, Tsar Alexander III. *to be so*
and then to die.
 to death then dies.

Nicky's
 Nicky's diary, 20 October, Livadia: "My God, my God, what a day

The Lord has called unto Him our adored, dearly beloved Papa

"My head is going round, I cannot believe it—it seems inconceivable, a

terrible reality.

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It was the death of a Saint! Lord, help us in thee terrible days! Poor,

dear Mama! In the evening, at 9:30, we held Prayers for the Dead in the

same bedroom! I felt as if I were dead also. The pains in Alix's legs have

returned. In the evening, I went to confession.

All through the Prayers, Nicky thought of the hour in his childhood

when a nihilist had succeeded in putting a small bomb inside ^{the} a railroad car in

which his father ^{the Tsar} had been travelling with the family. When ^{the blast} it went off, given its

(untutored) ^{the explosion erupted} its placement, it blow ^{and downwards} upward rather than outward, and so no one in the royal

^{Nonetheless} family was critically injured, ^{At the same time} but the roof of the railroad car began to collapse

on them. Tsar Alexander III, a giant of a Romanov, used his holy and unholy

strength to hold up the beams of the ^{compartments} ceiling long enough for the family to be

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rescued. Only a saint was capable of such strength, decided his wife a small

but beautiful woman.

(Nicky was 8)
did believe that Alexander was a saint *and so*
 So felt Nicky as well. He ~~was~~ *hardly do* small as his Danish mother, and
she could have (less than also)
 revered his father. All through ~~his~~ *he* adolescence, Nicky ~~had~~ worked at

building his body with weights, but he ~~always~~ remained short and slight. He

and at hunting,
 excelled at horsemanship. *A* point of honor to him, he grew a fine brown

he
 mustache and beard, yet *he* never came to look like a Romanov. Now, he would

be the Tsar. *Nicholas II, Nicholas the Second,*
A cousin named Sandra was his closest friend!
(and brother-in-law) cousin. Sandra had
 His closest friend was Sandra who had this entry in his own memoirs *and*

the way shows this entry
 for October 20, the date of Alexander III's death: *He* knew he was the

Emperor now, and the weight of this terrifying fact crushed him.

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"Sandro, what am I going to do," he exclaimed pathetically "What is going to happen to me, to you, to ^(Nicky's sister) Xenia, to Alix, to mother, to all of Russia?

I am not prepared to be a Tsar. I never wanted to become one. I know nothing of the business of ruling. I have no idea of even how to talk to the ministers."

Nicky, Diary, 21 October, Livadia: "In the midst of our deep sorrow, the Lord has sent us a quiet and radiant joy: at 10 o'clock in the presence of the family, my dear darling Alix was anointed with the holy oils and after the service we took communion together, with dear Mama and Ella. Alix repeated her responses and prayers wonderfully well and distinctly!

After luncheon we held Prayers for the Dead and again at 9 o'clock in the evening. The expression on Papa's face was wonderful, smiling as if he

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^{about}
were ~~how~~ to laugh! Spent the whole day answering telegrams with Alex and attending to the papers brought by the last courier.

22 October. Last night we had to carry Papa's body downstairs, as unfortunately, it has rapidly begun to decompose. Thank God, dear Mama is completely calm and is bearing her sorrow in a truly heroic way! I did nothing but answer the pile of telegrams.

24 October. The day was grey—as it was in our hearts! I still cannot bring myself to go into the corner room where dear Papa's body is lying— he is so changed since being embalmed. I cannot bear to dispel the wonderful impression of the first day!"

It is probably worth including a letter from Kaiser Wilhelm II to Nicky, which ^{was} ~~he~~ sent on 27 October ~~which he sent~~ from the Neues Palais, Potsdam

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"My dear Nicky,

"May Heaven comfort you in your grief and give you strength for your heavy duties, and may a long and peaceful reign give you the opportunity of looking after the welfare of your subjects. The sympathy and real grief at the so untimely end of your lamented father in my country will have shown you how strong the monarchial instinct is and how Germany feels for you and your subjects. As for me, you will always find me the same in undiminished friendship and love to you."

It would, of course, be ^{twenty} years before they went to war, ~~against each other~~.

In all of this, I was ~~surely certain where any of our agents might be~~.

~~although~~ there was one entry in Nicky's diary on November 2 in St.

^{did excite}
Petersburg that ~~came to my attention~~:

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Slept well: but the moment I came to myself the memory of what has

happened and the terrible feeling of oppression invaded my soul with renewed vigour. ^d
~~The terrible feeling of oppression! I did not~~
~~know whether that came from a dream or from~~
~~reality! Poor Maria again felt unwell and during the afternoon she fainter.~~
~~might have succeeded in installing — all is possible~~
~~in these matters — or, whether it was his own~~
~~natural fear at where he now found himself?~~
 At 12 o'clock I received the full Council of State — I again had to

make a speech! ~~My dear Alix came to luncheon — it's sad to see her only at~~

~~intervals! Alix, Uncle Bertie, Georgie [Duke of York] and I dined together at~~

~~12 o'clock. She sat with me in the evening.~~

Here, I must introduce ^{another} another diary. It is by a nobleman ^{who signs himself} ~~with call~~

^{the same age)} ^(that is, the brothers of the dead Tsar)
 as KR. He is ~~as old~~ as the Grand Dukes ~~(the dead Tsar's brothers)~~ and so he,

too, could be an uncle to Nicky, he certainly loves him as much or more than

^{Romanov uncles}
~~those~~ any of the ~~uncles~~ who are a big, powerful lot, all four ~~of~~ of them and not, I

would say, unavailable to us in normal circumstances, but I have yet to refer

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(Indeed he capitalizes every reference to him.)
to such specific matters. Leave it that KR adores Nicky. (KR is, after all, ~~what is called today a~~
closet homosexual ~~which~~ ^{that} is the bane and delight of his existence. He also
writes well enough to ~~offer me some pleasure when I can~~ quote him, ^{finally,}
~~He~~

KR, Diary, 2 November, St. Petersburg: "The young Tsar is the
admiration of everyone, ~~wherever His words are heard, either directly or on~~
~~writing.~~ ^{He} I hear that the short speech ~~he~~ made in the Kremlin Palace to the
Moscow nobility was delivered in a loud, clear, assured voice. Yesterday,
when receiving the Council of State, He addressed them most beautifully. I
watched him during the requiem service: the calm kind face, the thoughtful
deeply sad eyes, often half-closed. He is weighed down by his exalted rank.
His modesty suffers from having to be everywhere and always the first ^{to}

KR, Diary, 3 November, St. Petersburg: "I have not yet talked to the

Emperor's bride; but she smiles so sweetly whenever you greet her

"In the evening they covered the Emperor's body in the coffin with a
pall up to his chest, in order to hide the hands which are beginning to turn
black. The head is already looking quite black."

On the seventh of November, one of our English agents had intercepted
a communication from Lord Carrington to Queen Victoria, a detailed report
on Tsar Alexander III's funeral. It was obvious Her Majesty ^{a most alert} ~~had~~ ~~was~~ ~~interested in~~

more for
[details.]

Lord Carrington to Queen Victoria: "The service was choral without
organ—the Empress and Princesses standing or kneeling the whole time. The
mass continued for an hour and a half, plaintive and monotonous and then the

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usual daily funeral service was gone through. Tapers were lighted and handed round, but in consequence of the crowd, no ladies took any and so accident from fire was averted. At 12:30 the terrible ceremony of paying the last farewell took place. The Empress with heroic courage walked up steadily, knelt, and then took a last look at the late Emperor and kissed the sacred picture on His Majesty's breast, and then kissed his lips. The Emperor supported and took great care of Her Majesty and all the Royal Personages present kissed the sacred picture."

Like most English diplomats, it was obvious that he took ^{pride} ~~considerable~~

pleasure in his literary style. I ^{also} ~~had~~ the impression that he was too pompous to ~~be at quick use~~ ^{any kind of assistance} to offer easy entrance to the Cudgels or our own agents. ^{A most singular Englishman.} (Often, such people are

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(Especially for their humaneness)
 the worst for other humans to deal with. *A little saintliness or a bit of the*
Flesh
 satanic does flavor the ~~dish~~

Lord Carrington to Queen Victoria, 7 November: *A* mounted Guard

of Honour of the Gardes a Cheval, although big men on large horses, did not
 strike the Lord Chamberlain as being as fine or as smart as Your Majesty's
 own Life Guards. *e*

On November 14, Carrington added *another emolument* *Queen's vanity* a spice to the monarch's taste.

~~Most of the saloons being so full that threading through them was not easy.~~

All the ladies in Russian costume, some with fine diamonds but hardly any
 pretty faces; indeed, the absence of beauty as compared with that seen at one
 of Your Majesty's drawing rooms struck the Lord Chamberlain very much *e*

Book 4 10/28/04 double, diary indents

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-15-

Needless to remark, I read all the letters my agents could supply to me

in the period after their wedding, but a close study opened many questions

Just a few days later on the 17th of November, Nicky wrote,

I am unbelievably happy with Alix, it's only a pity that
my work takes up so much of the time I would like to
spend exclusively with her!

} double space, not triple space

to which on November 19th he adds,

Had tea at home and read together. We simply don't
have the strength to leave each other.

Throughhand!
indented two spaces
less or more! Right now, it has
the same spacing
as a new paragraph
Sep 459

On the same day, in a letter to his brother Georgy, ~~I must say Nicky~~

~~(and Georgy diminutives to grate on me!)~~ Nicky adds,

a completely new life has started for me. I cannot thank God enough for the treasure He has sent me in my wife. I am immeasurably happy with my darling Alix and feel that we will remain as happy together until the end of our lives.

} Double space

On the 26th of November, off by themselves in Tsarskoe Selo, he

remarks,

[It] has become such a dear place for us both; for the first time since our wedding we have been able to live alone and live truly soul-to-soul,

} Double space

immediately to be followed by Alix's insertion after reading his words of love:

Never did I believe there could be such utter happiness in this world, such a feeling of unity between two mortal beings. I love you - those three words have my life in them.

On the next day she adds,

At last united, bound for life, and when this life is ended, we meet again in the other world to remain together for all eternity.

See
Ind. int.
note
on p453

I was overcome with her assurance, her ignorance, her monumental confidence that they lived with a joint passport to the hereafter. Yet on December 14, more than two weeks later, he wrote:

Today it is one month since we married—strange to say.
I am only just beginning to get used to the idea! My love
for Alix keeps growing!

} double for
I had to ask myself what vertiginous degrees of self-intellect^{ex} were being brewed by them. Up to now, I had had very little experience ~~and~~
~~nothing hands-on, so to speak,~~ with monarchs, no, not for centuries (if I ^{may} ~~am~~
^{a flawed} be forgiven this ~~bragging~~ reminder of how long I have been working for the
Maestro.) Even with the wealthiest of nouveau-riches, however, and only
occasionally with ~~harder~~ ^{class couples} working people had I encountered newly-weds who
^{as in debutantes} were ~~small~~ ^{as in debutantes} dithyrambic, and then they were so much younger ^{that they} ~~that they~~ ^{had}
~~could not~~ ^{no place to} distinguish between the wild honey of first sex and the nectars of
true love. Nicky was, after all, twenty-six years old, and no neophyte, ^{not} ~~to sex~~
^{to contrast} ~~to contrast~~ ^{his military days had offered their hands} Alix was twenty-two and very much a virgin with a host of fears, family
tragedies, religious encasements, social timidity—I found it difficult to come
to some decent assessment on the basis of these letters as to how sincere they

FROM :nM

FAX NO. :5084872136

Oct 28 2004 12:30PM F 35

FROM :JMWORDCRAFT

FAX NO. :17186243782

Oct 28 2004 11:56AM P4

Book 4 10/28/04 double, diary indents

456

were and how much they were fully over-ventilated with the absolute
necessity to be profoundly in love

Yet, I could not be certain. He was the Emperor of a vast land with the deepest spirits and the most untamable barbarians. Yet ~~he~~ could not ~~ride in a~~ ~~carriage and~~ pass by a lovely copse of forest without thinking to himself that it was his land, His ~~land~~ ^{land}. He was next to the Son of God if you got down to it. And all the while he felt ~~so~~ small, ~~so~~ unworthy ^{and} so unready. How then, could he (He?) ~~ignore love (love?)~~ ^{fail to appraise his love} (He was like a booze-hound who will go mad if he cannot find a drink. And ~~love~~ ^{he} was a mountain on which ~~one~~ must always be climbing upward.

If I had been capable of real compassion instead of possessing ^{the} a keen ability to simulate ^{its presence in needs} ~~it for my clients~~, I could have felt sorry for Nicholas the Second.

Yet, still, I could come to no firm conclusions, not from ^{this} ~~my~~ study of their letters in 1894. There was still the damnable question pending—what was the Dumkopf up to? It was not impossible that in His huge desire to ^{transcendently} make their marriage ~~next to immortally~~ effective in its beatitude, God was supplying them ~~directly~~ with the most incredible ^{and literal} physical ecstasies.

FROM :nm

FAX NO. :5084872138

DATE : 25-10-04 TIME : 10PM EST

FROM :JMWORDCRAFT

FAX NO. :17186243782

DATE : 25-10-04 TIME : 5 PM EST

Book 4 10/28/04 double, diary indents

457

How could I know? I had only those stolen fragments from their letters and the hypothesis that if God was going to choose a Tsar, He would be ready to offer His wisdom and strength—against, of course, the no small means of the Maestro and our own aptitudes ~~to subvert His plans~~ to subvert His plans.

FROM :nM

FAX NO. :5084872138

Oct 28 1994 12:00 PM F23

FROM :JMWORDCRAFT

FAX NO. :17186243782

Oct 28 1994 4:11 PM F5

Book 4 10/28/04 double, diary indents

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-16-

Nicky was, of course, all but totally unprepared to become the Tsar

~~He and his father had shared a mutual confidence.~~ Alexander the Third was
had been
so physically powerful that it ~~was~~ assumed by all that he would rule for ~~at~~
one more
least ~~another~~ generation. Some measure of *Nicky's* unpreparedness is present in

these few lines from KR's diary:

Indirect note
I asked whether He [Nicky] had received any advice from his Father before the latter's death. Nicky replied that his Father had never once mentioned the responsibilities that awaited Him.

KR not only loved Nicky with all the intensity of his homosexual heart but was altogether ready to deify him and his father. ~~Yes, to be the Lord was to go~~ halfway up the mountain to Godhead.

One need only contrast this confidence with Nicky's own small feelings,

from his diary:

} Close-up to deify

Nicky, Diary, 17 January 1895, St. Petersburg:

An exhausting day. Went with Alix to the Winter Palace.

I was in a terrible state about having to go to the

Nikolayevsky Hall and deliver a speech to the representatives of the nobility, the zemstvos [local councils] and the town committees.

} Clarified

Yes, he had been closeted with the Grand Dukes before he gave the

speech, and they had assured him that he must follow religiously in his father's footsteps. Russia was like a mad giant, ^{they assured him,} so vulnerable to some grand mal that one misstep could release a frenzy. Absolute allegiance to autocracy was the only formula to follow.

From Nicky's speech to the representatives of all estates:

17 January 1895, St. Petersburg:

I am aware that recently in some zemstvos there have

See p 493

This is exactly what we need to avoid.

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arisen the voices of people carried away by senseless
 dreams of taking part in the business of government.
 Let everyone know that I will retain the principles of
 autocracy as firmly and unbendingly as my unforgettable
 late father.

Double space

He was not always so firm and unbending. It depended a great deal on
 which minister was the last to speak to him. He ^{detested} ~~hated~~ his duties ~~ever and~~
~~over~~ he indicates as much in his ~~diaries~~. His repetitive lament is that he
 cannot spend enough time with Alix.

Then, as the first winter of their marriage passed into spring, Alix like
 many another good Victorian woman, began to develop symptoms. They

were our stock-in-trade. Proper Victorian women were never easy to invest,

^{but} and we could always ^{and a shiver} ~~and~~ a shudder into their feverish defense of personal

^{merely} virtue by touching their dreams. ~~Nothing so drastic as an etching~~ with one

~~(Rarely didn't need to be so drastic as an etching)~~
 or another unholy, or worse, smelly thought. ~~It was often enough to spoil~~

~~A touch, as I say, was enough to spoil~~
 many a day in their marriages. So, an entry from Nicky's diary, 9 April, 1985,

St. Petersburg:

Unfortunately, dear Alix's headache continued all day. She

did not go upstairs at all—neither to church nor to luncheon.

I managed to read a lot of the papers that had accumulated.

Had tea with my darling. Dined at 8 o'clock with Mama,

Misha, and Andrei. We went to bed early.

3 Doublespace

This had always been his short-hand for indicating that they made love,
~~but it did not seem likely on this night.~~

Nicky's Diary, 10 April 1895, St. Petersburg:

Dear Alix still has an unbearable pain in the temples and
 she was obliged to remain in bed, on my advice.

I was now ready to assume

~~In her case, free of our direct influence, I had to assume that there was~~

a flaw in the perfection of their romance.

An ongoing headache

~~A serious flaw, indeed! We understood the nature of such headaches.~~

When intense enough to be characterized as migraine, *those headaches* they spoke to us of the

—a desire baffled by
 clear desire to commit murder, and its total impossibility I did not believe

Alix had such sentiments toward her husband, but it was doubtless another

matter with her mother-in-law, the Empress Marie. That beautiful little

brunette had adored her poor dead husband for the best of reasons and one of

them was that she was always an Empress. Now, still an Empress

also ~~She uses naught but the word~~
~~indefinitely~~, she was ~~less~~. *Already*, the two women were developing
~~were obliged to banish~~
 sentiments they ~~must keep under lock and key~~.

Poor Nicky! He is bewildered by Alix's unhappy symptoms, haunted by the empty boredom, that is to say, the horror of endless official meetings, plus the fear of contending with the four huge Grand Dukes, his overbearing uncles of whom Uncle Sergei, husband to Aunt Ella, is the most formidable.

this uncle
 Nicky cannot protect himself in writing to ~~him~~ about the death of his father,
 six months ago. *Double space*

Nicky to Sergei, 10 April 1895, St. Petersburg

Dear Uncle Sergei,

Sometimes, I confess, tears well up in my eyes at the thought of how carefree and lovely life could have been for me for many years to come, had it not been for October 20. ~~[note: The day of his father's death]~~ But these tears reveal human weakness; these are tears of self-pity and I try to dry them as soon as possible and humbly fulfill my heavy and responsible duty to Russia.

Double space
 He is so afraid of Uncle Sergei, and for good cause. He had always sensed how jealous was Sergei of his brother Alexander, yet Sergei had

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his brother the Tsar
 always pretended to love ~~him~~ when he did not. Nicky could always sense as

~~much.~~

} Double space

The young Tsar is much happier writing to Queen Victoria. He had
Everyone agreed that he
 charmed her years ago when he visited London. He and her son George
hair to her throat, if
 looked so much alike, and George was ~~dear to her~~. There ~~fine cut off by~~
she ever got around to dying.
~~far too close to side margin]~~

Nicky to Queen Victoria, May, 7 1895, St. Petersburg

... In answer to your second letter mentioning the articles
 about England in the Russian papers, I must say I cannot
 prevent people from putting their opinion openly in the
 newspapers. How often have I not been worried to read
 in English gazettes rather unjust statements in connexion ~~with~~
 with my country! Even books are being constantly sent to me
 from London, misinterpreting our actions in Asia, on interior
 politics, etc. I am sure there is as little hostility intended in
 these writings as there is in the above mentioned ones.

Nicky

~~I must say this satisfied some of my curiosity as to how monarchs~~

~~might address each other.~~

FROM :nm

FAX NO. :5084872135

10/28/04 12:30 PM F 3-

FROM :JMWORDCRAFT

FAX NO. :17186243782

10/28/04 1:17 PM P17

Book 4 10/28/04 double, diary indents

464

} Double space

By the middle of May, Alix was free of the migraines and could enjoy the weather again.

Nicky, Diary, 14 May 1895, St. Petersburg: [in Alix's hand]

A half year now that we are married, how immensely happy you have made your Wify you cannot think. God bless you my own, true, beloved husband—daily purer, stronger, deeper.

} Double space

She is also pregnant, and in another entry in Nicky's diary on June 10, she adds:

My sweet old darling manykins, Wify loves you so deeply and strongly, you are my one and my angels, what intense happiness. . .ours. . .our very own. . .what happiness could be greater; only Wify must try and be as good and kind as possible lest another little person suffer for it. A big kiss

Nicholas diary & others 1891 to 1896 6/11/04

7

tuple space

pages 70, 70A, 70B, 70C, 70D,
followed by pp. 71, 72, 72A, 72B, 73.

D.T. If she had been married to an Englishman [for out off 27 lines]
rather than a Russian who at the time
he would have detected her logic
write these lines [cannot get]

Double-space

This is June, but the baby will not be born until November. For the latter part of the year, ~~the baby will not be born~~ ^{and} I was obliged to go back to the little mystery of the migraines.

In truth, the real problem was that I did not feel comfortable in my comprehension of their love. ~~Their~~
love much more genuine, had most
was exaggerated. Some of us were very
ready to admit as much to ourselves
not certainly to the "Maestros," but ~~that~~.
the presence of real love often introduced
a dull spot ^{in life} in the clear customary ~~clear~~
~~clear~~ ~~characteristics~~ in our pattern of analysis.
~~so~~ we could penetrate every aspect of → 7000

① We are truly demons at our worst, the devil in us of love to show it out in the imperfections of love

false ~~love~~ or overinflated love, or (TOA) could play many a game on a man or woman, feeling with such confidence, ~~but not~~ ^{we hardly} for that matter, not even the need to capture or cajole them into becoming our clients. ^{the average} the state of being in love leaving man or woman wide open to angel and demon, transference and envy, hatred and for that matter, are all at the edge of the heart, as indeed some of the sharpest engagements are fought between the angels and ourselves, involve the ecstasies and vicissitudes that thrill and pullulate among ~~lovers~~ lovers, especially in the early stages, ② It is a caustic contest. The angels have powerful secrets to offer, and we know how to disguise jealousy, doubt, distrust, even intense if momentary rebellion ~~for~~ toward the beloved, & would say that we possess ~~more~~ ^{more} ~~than~~ ^{than} improvisation, still than the even the most gifted of the angels, but we do lack an quality which I hesitate to confess, even

hate to confess, although I must,
 or what I offer will make no ^{great} sense. It is that I know something
 about love, but how itself I can
 recall nothing of my experience ~~as~~
 I may not even believe I can explain
 as that state, although for some reason
 I am certain that I was indeed, at
 one time, a man, but this I cannot
 I have never known love. I can
 expatiate upon its properties and
 tendencies, its dilemmas, ^{diminutions},
 even the reasons for its ^{augmentation} ~~or disappearance~~, I can tell you
 everything about it except for some
 knowledge missing at the core. It
 is that I cannot distinguish true
 love from its most developed and
 artistic substitution.

Witness then my confusion before
 Nicky and, ~~Ally~~, particularly, Ally,
~~the~~ I could begin to comprehend
 him (the?). ~~the~~ Given his looks, ~~and~~
~~his~~ ~~characteristics~~ he needed love
 the way others require bread.

But Ally? ~~I cannot say~~ I cannot
 not say whether she was a rare if

(126)

somewhat silly and tasteless. But truly in love, or whether a rarefied species of amorous hypochondria, he quite to extraordinarily intense if errate heights of passion, pleasure and devotion.

~~Given~~ however that curious & somewhat, "Wife must try and be as good and kind as possible ~~but~~ lest another little person suffer ~~from it~~," ~~A big thing I think I can~~ a conclusion. She was declaring a moratorium on sex when it was not necessary. I had ~~watched many~~ ^{with her} on many a ~~small~~ ^{small} (see). I had watched many a pregnant woman enjoying the act even in their eighth or ninth month. Of course, ~~when~~ Alice was preparing for the heir to be born the next year, and one couldn't have any ^{such} ~~development~~ ^{development} ~~with~~ still! I ~~learned~~ ^{learned} now to the hypothesis that she had strained mightily to rise to the passionate heights she deemed necessary for this first period of their marriage.

(No holding here!)

but that done, and the head-to-be (701)
now ~~ready~~ nicely in place, & he
was ready to take a rest; yes, we must
not do it "but another little person
suffer."

intense belief in the putative (7)
 superiority of the German soul and
 race, was happy - as Chamberlain saw
 it - to pass on the baton to Hitler.
 What Chamberlain had envisioned
 in his philosophies might now
 actually come to pass in the exception
 of a more ~~uncharacteristic~~ figure
 of a leader ~~present in the future~~
 who had been guided to pay a visit
 to a great mind - or so Hitler had
 been assured by his intellectual
 mentor, Dietrich Eckhart. Chamberlain
 was virtually on his deathbed when
 they met, but the coronation he
 offered to Hitler had its ^{own} weight.
 Chamberlain had been ^{already} the intellectual
 most favored, honored, and
 respected by Kaiser Wilhelm the Second
 whose ideas (as will be seen in the
 next two letters) were waiting for a
~~philosopher~~ philosopher to embellish them.

In September and October, 1929,
 14th of the first month and the 13th
 of the next month, ~~consistently~~
 Adolf Hitler wrote to the
 new Russian Tsar, his English -

STIA

Nicholas diary & others 1891 to 1896 6/11/04

was not perfect, but his ideas were very important
Kaiser Wilhelm II to Nicky

14 September 1895

Jagdhaus

Romingen

Dearest Nicky,

** not at all unimportant to him*

God knows that I have done all in my power to preserve the European Peace, but if France goes on openly or secretly encouraged like ~~this~~ to violate all rules of international courtesy and Peace in peacetime, one fine day my dearest Nicky, you will find yourself nolens-volens suddenly embroiled in the most horrible of wars Europe ever saw. Which will be by the masses and by history perhaps be fixed on you as the cause of it. Pray don't be angry, if I perhaps hurt you quite unintentionally, but I think it my duty to our two countries and to you as my friend to write openly. ~~As the negotiation and retirement the deep mourning has imposed on you debars you from seeing people and following in detail what is happening behind the scenes.~~ Think of the awful responsibility for the shaking bloodshed.

Now goodbye, dearest Nicky, best love to dear Alix, and believe me ever your fond devoted and faithful friend and cousin,

Willy

FROM : nm

FAX NO. : 508487213E

Oct 25 1995 10:41 PM F11

FROM : JMWORDCRAFT

FAX NO. : 17186243782

Oct 25 1995 10:39 PM F11

Nicholas diary & others 1891 to 1896 6/11/04

(12 B)

Kaiser Wilhelm II to Nicky 13 October 1895 Neues Palais, Potsdam

Dearest Nicky,

That it is not the fact of a "Rapport" or friendship between Russia and France that make me uneasy—every sovereign is sole master of his country's interests and he shapes his policy accordingly—but the danger which is brought to our Principle of Monarchism through the lifting up of the Republic on a pedestal by the form under which the ~~friendship is shown~~. The constant appearance of Princes, Granddukes, statesmen, generals ~~in full fig~~ at reviews, burials, dinners, races—with the head of the Republic or in his entourage makes Republicans—as such—believe that they are quite honest excellent people with whom Princes can concoct and feel at home. Now what is the consequence ~~at home~~ in our different countries? The Republicans are Revolutionists de nature and treated—rightly so—as people who must be shot or hung, ^[bat] they tell to our other loyal subjects, "Oh, we are no endangered bad men, look at France! There you see the Royalties hobnobbing with the Revolutionaires! Why should it not be the same with us?" ~~The Republic~~ ~~francaise~~ is from the ~~[line obscured]~~ Don't forget that Faure—not his personal fault—sits on the throne of the King and Queen of France by the

FROM :nM

FAX NO. :5084872136

Oct 29 11:36:36 AM FLD

FROM :JMWORDCRAFT

FAX NO. :17186243782

Oct 29 11:36:36 AM FLD

Nicholas diary & others 1891 to 1896 6/11/04

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K.W. to Nicky p. 2

grace of God whose heads Frenchman Republicans cut off. The blood of their Majesties is still on that country!

Look at it, has it since then ever been happy or quiet again? Has it not staggered from bloodshed to bloodshed? ~~(And in its great moments did it not go from war to war? Till it bathed all Europe and Russia in streams of blood.)~~ ~~(Till at last it had the Commune over again?)~~ Nicky, take my word on it, the Curse of God has stricken that People forever! We Christian Kings and Emperors have one holy duty imposed on us by Heaven, that is to uphold the Principle "von Gottes Gnaden." [by the grace of God.]

Your most devoted and affectionate friend and cousin,

Willy

~~p-129~~

-15-

Needless to remark, I read all the letters my agents could supply to me in the period after their wedding, but a close study opened many questions. Just a few days later on the 17th of November, Nicky wrote, "I am unbelievably happy with Alix, it's only a pity that my work takes up so much of the time I would like to spend exclusively with her!" to which on November 19th he adds, "Had tea to home and read together. We simply don't have the strength to leave each other. On the same day, in a letter to his brother Georgy—I must say Nicky and Georgy diminutives to grate on me!—Nicky adds, "a completely new life has started for me. I cannot thank God enough for the treasure He has sent me in my wife. I am immeasurably happy

with my darling Alix and feel that we will remain as happy together until the end of our lives."

On the 26th of November, off by themselves in Tsarskoe Selo, he remarks, "[It] has become such a dear place for us both; for the first time since our wedding we have been able to live alone and live truly soul-to-soul," immediately to be followed by Alix's insertion after reading his words of love: "Never did I believe there could be such utter happiness in this world, such a feeling of unity between two mortal beings. I love you—those three words have my life in them." On the next day she adds, "At last united, bound for life, and when this life is ended, we meet again in the other world to remain together for all eternity."

I was overcome with her assurance, her ignorance, her monumenal

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I was overcome with her assurance, her ignorance, her monumetal confidence that they lived with a joint passport to the hereafter. Yet, on December 14, more than two weeks later, he wrote: **Today it is one month since we married—strange to say, I am only just beginning to get used to the idea! My love for Alix keeps growing!**

I had to ask myself what vertiginous degrees of self-intoxication were being brewed by them. Up to now, I had had very little experience, and

nothing hands-on, so to speak, with monarchs, no, not for centuries (if I can be forgiven this brusque reminder of how long I have been working for the Maestro.) Even with the wealthiest of nouveau-riches, however, and only occasionally with harder-working people had I encountered newly-weds who were equally dithyrambic, and then they were so much younger that they could not distinguish between the wild honey of first sex and the nectars of true love. Nicky was, after all, twenty-six years old, and no neophyte to sex; Alix was twenty-two and very much a virgin with a host of fears, family tragedies, religious encasements, social timidity—I found it difficult to come to some decent assessment on the basis of these letters as to how sincere they were and how much they were fully over-ventilated with the absolute necessity to be profoundly in love.

Yet, I could not be certain. He was the Emperor of a vast land with the deepest spirits and the most untamable barbarians. Yet he could not ride in a carriage and pass by a lovely copse of forest without thinking to himself that it was his land, His land, He was next to the Son of God if you got down to it. And all the while he felt so small, so unworthy, so unready. How, then, could he (He?) ignore love (Love?) He was like a booze-hound who will go mad if

he cannot find a drink. And love was a mountain on which one must always be climbing upward.

If I had been capable of real compassion instead of possessing a keen ability to simulate it for my clients, I could have felt sorry for Nicholas the Second.

Yet, still, I could come to no firm conclusions, not from my study of their letters in 1894. There was still the damnable question pending—what was the Dumkopf up to? It was not impossible that in His huge desire to make their marriage next to immortally effective in its beatitude, God was supplying them directly with the most incredible and literal physical ecstasies. How could I know? I had only those stolen fragments from their letters, and the hypothesis that if God was going to choose a Tsar, He would be ready to offer His wisdom and strength—against, of course, the no small means of the Maestro and our own aptitudes for subversion.

-16-

Nicky was, of course, all but totally unprepared to become the Tsar. He and his father had shared a mutual confidence. Alexander the Third was so physically powerful that it was assumed by all that he would rule for at least another generation. Some measure of his unpreparedness is present in these few lines from KR's diary: **I asked whether He [Nicky] had received any advice from his Father before the latter's death. Nicky replied that his Father had never once mentioned the responsibilities that awaited Him.**

KR not only loved Nicky with all the intensity of his homosexual heart but was altogether ready to deify him and his father. Yes, to be the Tsar was to go halfway up the mountain to Godhead.

One need only contrast this confidence with Nicky's own small feelings from his diary:

Nicky, Diary, 17 January 1895, St. Petersburg: **An exhausting day. Went with Alix to the Winter Palace. I was in a terrible state about having to go to the Nikolayevsky Hall and deliver a speech to the representatives of the nobility, the *zemstovs* [local councils] and the town committees.**

Yes, he had been closeted with the Grand Dukes before he gave the speech, and they had assured him that he must follow religiously in his father's footsteps. Russia was like a mad giant, so vulnerable to seizure of grand mal that one misstep could release a frenzy. Absolute allegiance to autocracy was the only formula to follow.

From Nicky's speech to the representatives of all estates 17 January 1895, St. Petersburg: **I am aware that recently in some *zemstovs* there have arisen the voices of people carried away by senseless dreams of taking part in the business of government.**

Let everyone know that I will retain the principles of autocracy as firmly and unbendingly as my unforgettable late father.

He was not always so firm and unbending. It depended a great deal on which minister was the last to speak to him. He hated his duties. Ever and ever he indicates as much in his diaries. His repetitive lament is that he cannot spend enough time with Alix.

Then, as the first winter of their marriage passed into spring, Alix, like many another good Victorian woman, began to develop symptoms. They were our stock-in-trade. Proper Victorian women were never easy to invest, and we could always end a shudder into their feverish defense of personal virtue by touching their dreams—nothing so drastic as an etching—with one or another unholy, or worse, smelly thought. It was often enough to spoil many a day in their marriages. So, an entry from Nicky's diary, 9 April, 1885, St. Petersburg:

Unfortunately, dear Alix's headache continued all day. She did not go upstairs at all—neither to church nor to luncheon. I managed to read a lot of the papers that had accumulated. Had tea with my darling.

Dined at 8 o'clock with Mama, Misha, and Andrei. We went to bed early.

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A serious flaw, indeed! We understood the nature of such headaches. When intense enough to be characterized as migraine, they spoke to us of the clear desire to commit murder, and its total impossibility. I did not believe Alix had such sentiments toward her husband, but it was doubtless another matter with her mother-in-law, the Empress Marie. That beautiful little brunette had adored her poor dead husband for the best of reasons and one of them was that she was always an Empress. Now, still an Empress, indefinably, she was less. Already, the two women were developing sentiments they must keep under lock and key.

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Nicky to Sergei 10 April 1895 St. Petersburg

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Then, as the first winter of their marriage passed into spring, Alix, like many another good Victorian woman, began to develop symptoms. They were our stock-in-trade. Proper Victorian women were never easy to invest, and we could always end a shudder into their feverish defense of personal virtue by touching their dreams—nothing so drastic as an etching—with one or another unholy, or worse, smelly thought. It was often enough to spoil many a day in their marriages. So, an entry from Nicky's diary, 9 April, 1985, St. Petersburg:

Unfortunately, dear Alix's headache continued all day. She

**did not go upstairs at all—neither to church nor to luncheon.
I managed to read a lot of the papers that had accumulated.
Had tea with my darling. Dined at 8 o'clock with Mama,
Misha, and Andrei. We went to bed early.**

This had always been his short-hand for indicating that they made love,
but it did not seem likely on this night.

Nicky's Diary, 10 April 1895, St. Petersburg:

**Dear Alix still has an unbearable pain in the temples and
she was obliged to remain in bed, on my advice.**

In her case, free of our direct influence, I had to assume that there was
a flaw in the perfection of their romance.

A serious flaw, indeed! We understood the nature of such headaches.
When intense enough to be characterized as migraine, they spoke to us of the
clear desire to commit murder, and its total impossibility. I did not believe
Alix had such sentiments toward her husband, but it was doubtless another
matter with her mother-in-law, the Empress Marie. That beautiful little
brunette had adored her poor dead husband for the best of reasons and one of
them was that she was always an Empress. Now, still an Empress,

indefinably, she was less. Already, the two women were developing sentiments they must keep under lock and key.

Poor Nicky! He is bewildered by Alix's unhappy symptoms, haunted by the empty boredom, that is to say, the horror of endless official meetings, plus the fear of contending with the four huge Grand Dukes, his overbearing uncles of whom Uncle Sergei, husband to Aunt Ella, is the most formidable. Nicky cannot protect himself in writing to him about the death of his father six months ago.

Nicky to Sergei, 10 April 1895, St. Petersburg

Dear Uncle Sergei,

Sometimes, I confess, tears well up in my eyes at the thought of how carefree and lovely life could have been for me for many years to come, had it not been for October 20. [note: The day of his father's death] But these tears reveal human weakness; these are tears of self-pity and I try to dry them as soon as possible and humbly fulfill my heavy and responsible duty to Russia.

He is so afraid of Uncle Sergei, and for good cause. He had always sensed how jealous was Sergei of his brother Alexander, yet Sergei had

always pretended to love him when he did not. Nicky could always sense as much.

The young Tsar is much happier writing to Queen Victoria. He had charmed her years ago when he visited London. He and her son George looked so much alike, and George was dear to her. There [line cut off by fax—too close to side margin]

Nicky to Queen Victoria, May ? 1895, St. Petersburg
. . . In answer to your second letter mentioning the articles about England in the Russian papers, I must say I cannot prevent people from putting their opinion openly in the newspapers. How often have I not been worried to read in English gazettes rather unjust statements in connexion [sic] with my country! Even books are being constantly sent to me from London, misinterpreting our actions in Asia, on interior politics, etc. I am sure there is as little hostility intended in these writings as there is in the above mentioned ones.

Nicky

I must say this satisfied some of my curiosity as to how monarchs might address each other.

By the middle of May, Alix was free of the migraines and could enjoy the weather again.

*Nicky, Diary, 14 May 1895, St. Petersburg: [in Alix's hand]
A half year now that we are married, how immensely happy
you have made your Wify you cannot think. God bless you,
my own, true, beloved husband—daily purer, stronger, deeper.*

She is also pregnant, and in another entry in Nicky's diary on June 10, she adds:

*My sweet old darling manykins, Wify loves you so deeply
and strongly, you are my one and my angels, what intense
happiness. . .ours. . .our very own. . .what happiness could
be greater; only Wify must try and be as good and kind as
possible lest another little person suffer for it. A big kiss.*

-15-

Needless to remark, I read all the letters my agents could supply to me in the period after their wedding, but a close study opened many questions. Just a few days later on the 17th of November, Nicky wrote, "I am unbelievably happy with Alix, it's only a pity that my work takes up so much of the time I would like to spend exclusively with her!" to which on November 19th he adds, "Had tea to home and read together. We simply don't have the strength to leave each other. On the same day, in a letter to his brother Georgy—I must say Nicky and Georgy diminutives to grate on me!—Nicky adds, "a completely new life has started for me. I cannot thank God enough for the treasure He has sent me in my wife. I am immeasurably happy

with my darling Alix and feel that we will remain as happy together until the end of our lives."

On the 26th of November, off by themselves in Tsarskoe Selo, he remarks, "[It] has become such a dear place for us both; for the first time since our wedding we have been able to live alone and live truly soul-to-soul," immediately to be followed by Alix's insertion after reading his words of love: "Never did I believe there could be such utter happiness in this world, such a feeling of unity between two mortal beings. I love you—those three words have my life in them." On the next day she adds, "At last united, bound for life, and when this life is ended, we meet again in the other world to remain together for all eternity."

I was overcome with her assurance, her ignorance, her monumenal confidence that they lived with a joint passport to the hereafter. Yet, on December 14, more than two weeks later, he wrote: "Today it is one month since we married—strange to say, I am only just beginning to get used to the idea! My love for Alix keeps growing!"

I had to ask myself what vertiginous degrees of self-intoxication were being brewed by them. Up to now, I had had very little experience, and

nothing hands-on, so to speak, with monarchs, no, not for centuries (if I can be forgiven this brusque reminder of how long I have been working for the Maestro.) Even with the wealthiest of nouveau-riches, however, and only occasionally with harder-working people had I encountered newly-weds who were equally dithyrambic, and then they were so much younger that they could not distinguish between the wild honey of first sex and the nectars of true love. Nicky was, after all, twenty-six years old, and no neophyte to sex; Alix was twenty-two and very much a virgin with a host of fears, family tragedies, religious encasements, social timidity—I found it difficult to come to some decent assessment on the basis of these letters as to how sincere they were and how much they were fully over-ventilated with the absolute necessity to be profoundly in love.

Yet, I could not be certain. He was the Emperor of a vast land with the deepest spirits and the most untamable barbarians. Yet he could not ride in a carriage and pass by a lovely copse of forest without thinking to himself that it was his land, His land, He was next to the Son of God if you got down to it. And all the while he felt so small, so unworthy, so unready. How, then, could he (He?) ignore love (Love?) He was like a booze-hound who will go mad if

he cannot find a drink. And love was a mountain on which one must always be climbing upward.

If I had been capable of real compassion instead of possessing a keen ability to simulate it for my clients, I could have felt sorry for Nicholas the Second.

Yet, still, I could come to no firm conclusions, not from my study of their letters in 1894. There was still the damnable question pending—what was the Dumkopf up to? It was not impossible that in His huge desire to make their marriage next to immortally effective in its beatitude, God was supplying them directly with the most incredible and literal physical ecstasies. How could I know? I had only those stolen fragments from their letters, and the hypothesis that if God was going to choose a Tsar, He would be ready to offer His wisdom and strength—against, of course, the no small means of the Maestro and our own aptitudes for subversion.

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Nicky was, of course, all but totally unprepared to become the Tsar. He and his father had shared a mutual confidence. Alexander the Third was so physically powerful that it was assumed by all that he would rule for at least another generation. Some measure of his unpreparedness is present in these few lines from KR's diary: "I asked whether He [Nicky] had received

any advice from his Father before the latter's death. Nicky replied that his Father had never once mentioned the responsibilities that awaited Him."

KR not only loved Nicky with all the intensity of his homosexual heart but was altogether ready to deify him and his father. Yes, to be the Tsar was to go halfway up the mountain to Godhead.

One need only contrast this confidence with Nicky's own small feelings from his diary:

Nicky, Diary, 17 January 1895, St. Petersburg: **An exhausting day. Went with Alix to the Winter Palace. I was in a terrible state about having to go to the Nikolayevsky Hall and deliver a speech to the representatives of the nobility, the *zemstovs* [local councils] and the town committees.**

Yes, he had been closeted with the Grand Dukes before he gave the speech, and they had assured him that he must follow religiously in his father's footsteps. Russia was like a mad giant, so vulnerable to seizure of

grand mal that one misstep could release a frenzy. Absolute allegiance to autocracy was the only formula to follow.

From Nicky's speech to the representatives of all estates 17 January 1895, St. Petersburg: **I am aware that recently in some *zemstovs* there have arisen the voices of people carried away by senseless dreams of taking part in the business of government.**

Let everyone know that I will retain the principles of autocracy as firmly and unbendingly as my unforgettable late father.

He was not always so firm and unbending. It depended a great deal on which minister was the last to speak to him. He hated his duties. Ever and ever he indicates as much in his diaries. His repetitive lament is that he cannot spend enough time with Alix.

Then, as the first winter of their marriage passed into spring, Alix, like many another good Victorian woman, began to develop symptoms. They were our stock-in-trade. Proper Victorian women were never easy to invest, and we could always end a shudder into their feverish defense of personal virtue by touching their dreams—nothing so drastic as an etching—with one or another unholy, or worse, smelly thought. It was often enough to spoil

many a day in their marriages. So, an entry from Nicky's diary, 9 April, 1885, St. Petersburg:

Unfortunately, dear Alix's headache continued all day. She did not go upstairs at all—neither to church nor to luncheon. I managed to read a lot of the papers that had accumulated. Had tea with my darling. Dined at 8 o'clock with Mama, Misha, and Andrei. We went to bed early.

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A serious flaw, indeed! We understood the nature of such headaches. When intense enough to be characterized as migraine, they spoke to us of the clear desire to commit murder, and its total impossibility. I did not believe Alix had such sentiments toward her husband, but it was doubtless another

matter with her mother-in-law, the Empress Marie. That beautiful little brunette had adored her poor dead husband for the best of reasons and one of them was that she was always an Empress. Now, still an Empress, indefinably, she was less. Already, the two women were developing sentiments they must keep under lock and key.

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Nicky to Sergei 10 April 1895 St. Petersburg

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pity and I try to dry them as soon as possible and humbly fulfill my heavy and responsible duty to Russia.

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Nicky to Queen Victoria May ? 1895 St. Petersburg

. . . In answer to your second letter mentioning the articles about England in the Russian papers, I must say I cannot prevent people from putting their opinion openly in the newspapers. How often have I not been worried to read in English gazettes rather unjust statements in connexion [sic] with my country! Even books are being constantly sent to me from London, misinterpreting our actions in Asia, on interior

politics, etc. I am sure there is as little hostility intended in these writings as there is in the above mentioned ones.

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She is also pregnant, and in another entry in Nicky's diary on June 10, she adds:

My sweet old darling manykins, Wify loves you so deeply and strongly, you are my one and my angels, what intense happiness. . .ours. . .our very own. . .what happiness could be greater; only Wify must try and be as good and kind as possible lest another little person suffer for it. A big kiss.

-14-

Nonetheless, the boldness of such an assumption had the power to disturb me. When, on occasion, I find myself near the sea, it becomes difficult to believe that God is suffering any loss of His powers. As much can also be said for a fine field, a storm, or the vast retort of the heavens when lightning is followed by thunder. The same conclusion is present on encountering a memorable sunset. One could even speak of such exquisite minor notes as dazzlements of light on wet grass when the dew is on the ground in early morning.

Of course, He could have fashioned all this untold ages ago when at the peak of His Creative Powers. The sky, after all, was not choked then with factory smoke, nor the rivers fouled by factory excrements put into them by His humans. Did He now brood on the possibility that these last Creations had

become His least successful? Were we now awash in the dithering of a divinity whose powers were old and askew? This Nicky and Alix—they were so young, they seemed so unfitted for the vast project they would encounter. While I had not been able to come near enough to their living presence, I had certainly absorbed the tone of their love, their philosophy (such as it was!) and, over and over, their piety, their innocence. They actually believed that Nicky's diary, and their letters to each other were well protected from scrutiny when, in fact, a copy of the key to this diary—courtesy of the valet—had been in our possession for years. Ditto for the box that kept her letters, and, now that she had joined him, all of his old letters to her. Indeed, they even put numbers on them, back and forth—Letter 96, Letter 109, et cetera. It never occurred to Nicky or Alix that it took no exceptional skill to make a wax impression of a key or a lock, any more than we were in need of high competence to find the maid or body-servant who was ready to betray a trust.

So, I knew how they spoke to each other. I had read hundreds of their letters and looked over several thousands of pages in his diaries for each year since 1880. If I now establish a small record,, a tenth, no, a hundredth of all the missives passing between them and their close friends and relatives, it is to give a sense of how trivial were most of these responses to the enormities of decision awaiting them. Indeed, I had to wonder all over again whether the Dummkopf

was still in command of minimal acumen. Why?—the question might as well have risen to a fever in me—why was God giving so much importance to Nicky and Alix?

I can offer some sense of the quandary in which I find myself by quoting from their letters over the last couple of years, yes, let me take it from the middle of 1894 until the June of 1896 just before I returned to Hafeld.

Be it said, they were not altogether without culture. Back in 1889, when she was seventeen, before they were ready to speak of their love for each other, Alix wrote on March 17, **It was so good of you to write and it gave me great pleasure. My mad letter amused you then—well, I have been cracked enough to write another. We went last night to see the "Rheingold" and I hope next week to see "Walkure's Siegfried,"** to which he responds two weeks later, **Thank you so much for your dear little letter which was such an agreeable surprise to me . . . We also saw "Siegfried" with Ella. I like it so awfully, especially the melody of the bird and the fire! Now the Nibelungen are all over, and I think it is a great pity.**

Young Wagnerites! At the edge of love! They write to each other in English. He has been tutored in the tongue since boyhood and she has so often visited with Queen Victoria who is, we must not forget, her grandmother.

Nonetheless, as will be seen, Nicky's English is, at the least, one level better, but then, he is also four years older.

That was in 1889. By June, 1894, and they have passed through a great emotional obstacle. To be betrothed, she had had to give up her Lutheranism for Russian Orthodoxy. Her older sister, Ella, has already converted years ago in order to marry the Grand Duke Sergei Romanov, a brother of Nicky's father, Tsar Alexander III. So it was not as if there were no precedent for taking a leap from the strictures of Luther to the sacraments of the Moscow churches, but for years, it did hold things up. Alix was wed to her Lutheranism. Ella did her best to cut a few knots by assuring her younger sister that the two religions were not all that different, but theology is not without its talents—much of which, be certain, we have designed—for erecting impassable cul-de-sacs. Ella was going her best, but Alix was pious and conversion, in consequence, was tricky.

It took five years. Back in June 1889, in a letter to Nicky, Ella writes, **I was told if one prayed well in a church going to be consecrated, God would hear one's prayers. Well, in Jerusalem, I prayed so deeply for you both to bring you together in love for each other. . . Faith and love go very far and if you have [that] in Him and each other, all will be for the best. Many affectionate kisses from Sergei and your loving Aunty.** Let it be noted that this loving Aunty Ella was only four years older than Nicky, and beautiful.

The campaign succeeded. Alix agreed to accept the Russian Orthodox Church, and the news of their engagement was given to the royal families of Europe. In June of 1894, their engagement just two months old, Nicky is passionate in his declaration of happiness. **I love you too deeply and too strongly for me to show it: it is such a sacred feeling, I don't want to let it out in words that seem meek and poor and vain! But now I will try to break the habit of hiding my feelings, because I think it wrong and selfish in some occasions. You also do not know, my precious one, how long my whole heart belonged to you and what sufferings it has gone through these dreary years! Darling primrosy-mine, I love you my darling!!!!** (Be it said, I took pains to count the exclamation marks. It was one of the points of kinship I felt with him. The observant reader may have noticed how find I am myself of such punctuation, especially in parentheses!!)

Four months later, Nicky's father is grievously ill. Alix, writing in Nicky's diary, (whose supposed privacy they often share) offers this: *Sweet child, pray to God, he will comfort you don't feel too low, he will help you in your trouble, Your Sunny is praying for you and the beloved patient. Darling Boysy, me loves you, o so very tenderly and deep. Be firm and make the Doctors come alone to you every day and tell you how they find him, and exactly, what they wish him to do, so that you are always the first to know. Don't let others be put*

first and you left out. You are Father dear's son and must be told all and be asked about everything. Show your own mind and don't let others forget who you are. Forgive me lovy.

Two days later, she enters his diary again. She will share his father's illness. She writes: *Tell me everything, dushka, you can fully trust me, look upon me as a bit of yourself. Let your joys and sorrows be mine, so that we may be ever drawn nearer together. My sweet One, how I love you, darling treasure, my very own One.*

Dushka, when you feel low and sad, come to Sunny and she will try to comfort you and like her namesake warm you with her rays, God helping.

Only yours, quite your very own little spitzbub, Pussy mine!"

There is an entry next day by Nicky, 18 October: **A terrible, sad day! Dear Papa did not sleep at all, and felt so unwell in the morning that we were all woken up and called upstairs. What a trial! Then Papa became a little calmer and dozed fitfully throughout the day.**

I did not dare absent myself from the house for any length of time. What a support to have dear Alix; she sat with me the whole day while I read reports from various ministers. At about 11 o'clock there was a consultation with the doctors in Uncle Vladimir's room—it was awful! In

the evening, Papa appeared a little better—but terribly weak! Our only reliance and hope is in the Mercy of the Lord, let His will be done!

I could not help but note how royalty are groomed (often by us when we can get to them) to respect the Lord's will. After all, that Will is so often ours, indeed, almost always, I would say, except for mortality itself. This particular manipulation is indeed one of our sources of delight—how smug our clients become at those moments when they feel close to God, all the while that we are offering the messages.

How much royalty needs belief no matter from whom it comes. Their lives are so peculiar. Living in next to total isolation from common experiences, painfully sensitive to proper conduct, and invariably drawn to the corrupt (what with the power they are given) they do tend to believe that sad events in their lives may have nothing to do with them directly. Better to assign all that to the Lord's will. Even so, the Romanovs are hardly ready for Nicky's father, Tsar Alexander III, to be so close to death, then to die.

Nicky's diary, 20 October, Livadia: My God, my God, what a day! The Lord has called unto Him our adored, dearly beloved Papa.

My head is going round, I cannot believe it—it seems inconceivable, a terrible reality.

It was the death of a Saint! Lord, help us in these terrible days!
Poor, dear Mama! In the evening, at 9:30, we held Prayers for the Dead—
in the same bedroom! I felt as if I were dead also. The pains in Alix's legs
have returned. In the evening, I went to confession.

All through the Prayers, Nicky thought of the hour in his childhood when a nihilist had succeeded in putting a small bomb inside the railroad car in which his father, the Tsar, had been travelling with the family. When the blast went off, given its untutored placement, the explosion erupted upward rather than outward and downward, and so no one in the royal family was critically injured. Nonetheless, the roof of the railroad car began to collapse on them. Tsar Alexander III, a giant of a Romanov, used his holy and unholy strength to hold up the beams of the compartment's ceiling long enough for the family to be rescued. Only a saint was capable of such strength, decided his wife, a small but beautiful woman.

So did Nicky believe that Alexander was a saint. Nicky was 5 and small as his Danish mother, and so could hardly do less than also revere his father. All through his adolescence, Nicky worked at building his body with weights, but he remained short and slight. He excelled at horsemanship and at hunting, a point of honor to him, he grew a fine brown mustache and beard, yet he never came to

look like a Romanov. Now, he would be the Tsar. Nicholas II, Nicholas the Second.

A cousin named Sandro was his closest friend. Sandro had his own memoirs and they show this entry for October 20, the date of Alexander III's death: **He knew he was the Emperor now, and the weight of this terrifying fact crushed him.**

"Sandro, what am I going to do," he exclaimed pathetically. "What is going to happen to me, to you, to Xenia, to Alix, to mother, to all of Russia? I am not prepared to be a Tsar. I never wanted to become one. I know nothing of the business of ruling. I have no idea of even how to talk to the ministers."

Nicky, Diary, 21 October, Livadia: In the midst of our deep sorrow, the Lord has sent us a quiet and radiant joy: at 10 o'clock in the presence of the family, my dear darling Alix was anointed with the holy oils and after the service we took communion together, with dear Mama and Ella. Alix repeated her responses and prayers wonderfully well and distinctly!

After luncheon we held Prayers for the Dead and again at 9 o'clock in the evening. The expression on Papa's face was wonderful, smiling as if he were about to laugh! Spent the whole day answering telegrams with Alix and attending to the papers brought by the last courier.

22 October. Last night we had to carry Papa's body downstairs, as unfortunately, it has rapidly begun to decompose. Thank God, dear Mama is completely calm and is bearing her sorrow in a truly heroic way! I did nothing but answer the pile of telegrams.

24 October. The day was grey—as it was in our hearts! I still cannot bring myself to go into the corner room where dear Papa's body is lying—he is so changed since being embalmed. I cannot bear to dispel the wonderful impression of the first day!

It is probably worth including a letter from Kaiser Wilhelm II to Nicky, which was sent on 27 October from the Neues Palais, Potsdam:

My dear Nicky,

May Heaven comfort you in your grief and give you strength for your heavy duties, and may a long and peaceful reign give you the opportunity of looking after the welfare of your subjects. The sympathy and real grief at the so untimely end of your lamented father in my country will have shown you how strong the monarchical instinct is and how Germany feels for you and your subjects. As for me, you will always find me the same in undiminished friendship and love to you.

It would, of course, be twenty years before they went to war against each other.

In all of this, there was one entry in Nicky's diary on November 2 in St. Petersburg that did excite my attention:

Slept well: but the moment I came to myself the memory of what has happene and the terrible feeling of oppression invaded my soul with renewed vigour!

The terrible feeling of oppression! I did not know whether that came from a dream etching we might have succeeded in installing--all is possible in these matters--or whether it was his own natural fear at where he now found himself.

At 12 o'clock I received the full Council of State—I again had to make a speech!

Here, I must introduce another diary. It is by a nobleman who signs himself as KR. He is the same age as the Grand Dukes (that is, the brothers of the dead Tsar) and so he, too, could be an uncle to Nicky, he certainly loves him as much or more than any of these Romanov uncles who are a big, powerful lot, all four of them, and not, I would say, unavailable to us in normal circumstances, but I have yet to refer to such specific matters. Leave it that KR adores Nicky. (Indeed, he capitalizes every reference to him.) KR is, after all, what is called today a closet homosexual. It is the bane and delight of his existence. He also writes well enough to quote him fully.

KR, Diary, 2 November, St. Petersburg: The young Tsar is the admiration of everyone. I hear that the short speech He made in the Kremlin Palace to the Moscow nobility was delivered in a loud, clear, assured voice. Yesterday, when receiving the Council of State, He addressed them most beautifully. I watched him during the requiem service: the calm kind face, the thoughtful, deeply sad eyes, often half-closed. He is weighed down by his exalted rank. His modesty suffers from having to be everywhere and always the first.

KR, Diary, 3 November, St. Petersburg: I have not yet talked to the Emperor's bride; but she smiles so sweetly whenever you greet her.

In the evening they covered the Emperor's body in the coffin with a pall up to his chest, in order to hide the hands which are beginning to turn black. The head is already looking quite black.

On the seventh of November, one of our English agents intercepted a communication from Lord Carrington to Queen Victoria, a detailed report on Tsar Alexander III's funeral. It was obvious Her Majesty had a most alert nose for details.

Lord Carrington to Queen Victoria: The service was choral without organ—the Empress and Princesses standing or kneeling the whole time. The mass continued for an hour and a half, plaintive and monotonous and

then the usual daily funeral service was gone through. Tapers were lighted and handed round, but in consequence of the crowd, no ladies took any and so accident from fire was averted. At 12:30 the terrible ceremony of paying the last farewell took place. The Empress with heroic courage walked up steadily, knelt, and then took a last look at the late Emperor and kissed the sacred picture on His Majesty's breast, and then kissed his lips. The Emperor supported and took great care of Her Majesty and all the Royal Personages present kissed the sacred picture.

Like most English diplomats, it was obvious that he took pride in his literary style. I also had the impression that he was too pompous to be of quick use to the Cudgels or to our own agents. A most insular Englishman. Often, such people are the worst to deal with. (Especially for their fellow humans.) A bit of the satanic does flavor the flesh.

Lord Carrington to Queen Victoria, 7 November: A mounted Guard of Honour of the Gardes a Cheval, although big men on large horses, did not strike the Lord Chamberlain as being as fine or as smart as Your Majesty's own Life Guards.

On November 14, Carrington added another emolument to the Queen's vanity: **All the ladies in Russian costume, some with fine diamonds but hardly any pretty faces; indeed, the absence of beauty as compared with**

that seen at one of Your Majesty's drawing rooms struck the Lord Chamberlain very much.

He went on. The occasion was the wedding of Nicky and Alix which had to be brought off post-haste since it would hardly do for the Tsar of all Russia to be an unmarried man.

-15-

Needless to remark, I read all the letters my agents could supply to me in the period after their wedding, but a close study opened many questions. Just a few days later on the 17th of November, Nicky wrote,

I am unbelievably happy with Alix, it's only a pity that my work takes up so much of the time I would like to spend exclusively with her!

to which on November 19th he adds,

Had tea at home and read together. We simply don't have the strength to leave each other.

On the same day, in a letter to his brother Georgy, Nicky adds,

a completely new life has started for me. I cannot thank God enough for the treasure He has sent me in my wife. I am immeasurably happy with my darling Alix and feel

**that we will remain as happy together until the end of
our lives.**

On the 26th of November, off by themselves in Tsarskoe Selo, he remarks,

**[It] has become such a dear place for us both; for the
first time since our wedding we have been able to live
alone and live truly soul-to-soul,**

immediately to be followed by Alix's insertion after reading his words of
love:

*Never did I believe there could be such utter happiness
in this world, such a feeling of unity between two mortal
beings. I love you—those three words have my life in them.*

On the next day she adds,

*At last united, bound for life, and when this life is ended,
we meet again in the other world to remain together for
all eternity.*

I was overcome with her assurance, her ignorance, her monumenal
confidence that they lived with a joint passport to the hereafter. Yet, on
December 14, more than two weeks later, he wrote:

**Today it is one month since we married—strange to say,
I am only just beginning to get used to the idea! My love
for Alix keeps growing!**

I had to ask myself what vertiginous degrees of self-intoxication were
being brewed by them. Up to now, I had had very little experience with

monarchs, no, not for centuries (if I may be allowed this reminder of how long I have been working for the Maestro.) Even with the wealthiest of nouveau-riches, however, and only occasionally with working-class couples had I encountered newly-weds who were as infatuated, and then they were so much younger. They had no need to distinguish between the wild honey of first sex and the nectars of true love. Nicky was, after all, twenty-six years old, and no neophyte, not to sex. (His military days had offered their bounty.) In contrast, Alix was very much a virgin with a host of fears, family tragedies, religious encasements, social timidity—I found it difficult to come to some decent assessment on the basis of these letters as to how sincere they were, and how much they were fully over-ventilated with the absolute necessity to be profoundly in love.

Yet, I could not be certain. He was the Emperor of a vast land with the deepest spirits and the most untamable barbarians. He could not pass by a lovely copse of forest without thinking to himself that it was his land. His Land. He was next to the Son of God if you got down to it. And all the while he felt small, unworthy, and so unready. How, then, could he (He?) fail to aggrandize His Love? He was like a booze-hound who will go mad if he cannot find a drink. Love was a mountain on which he must always be climbing upward.

If I had been capable of real compassion instead of possessing the keen ability to simulate its presence for my clients in need, I could have felt sorry for Nicholas the Second.

Yet, still, I could come to no firm conclusions, not from this study of their letters in 1894. There was still the damnable question pending—what was the Dumkopf up to? It was not impossible that in His huge desire to make their marriage transcendently effective in its beatitude, God was supplying them with the most incredible physical ecstasies. How could I know? I had only those stolen fragments from their letters, and the hypothesis that if God was going to choose a Tsar, He would be ready to offer His wisdom and strength—against, of course, the no small means of the Maestro and our own aptitudes to subvert His Plans.

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Nicky was, of course, all but totally unprepared to become the Tsar. Alexander the Third was so physically powerful that it had been assumed by all that he would rule for one more generation. Some measure of Nicky's unpreparedness is present in these few lines from KR's diary:

I asked whether He had received any advice from his Father before the latter's death. Nicky replied that his Father had never once mentioned the responsibilities that awaited Him.

KR not only loved Nicky with all the intensity of his homosexual heart but was altogether ready to deify him and his father halfway up the mountain to Godhead.

One need only contrast this confidence with Nicky's own small feelings from his diary:

Nicky, Diary, 17 January 1895, St. Petersburg:

An exhausting day. Went with Alix to the Winter Palace.

**I was in a terrible state about having to go to the
Nikolayevsky Hall and deliver a speech to the
representatives of the nobility, the *zemstvos* [local councils]
and the town committees.**

Yes, he had been closeted with the Grand Dukes before he gave the speech, and they had assured him that he must follow religiously in his father's footsteps. Russia was like a mad giant, they assured him, so vulnerable to grand mal that one misstep could release a frenzy. Absolute allegiance to autocracy was the only formula.

From Nicky's speech to the representatives of all estates:

17 January 1895, St. Petersburg:

**I am aware that recently in some *zemstvos* there have
arisen the voices of people carried away by senseless
dreams of taking part in the business of government.
Let everyone know that I will retain the principles of
autocracy as firmly and unbendingly as my unforgettable
late father.**

He was not always so firm and unbending. It depended a great deal on which minister was the last to speak to him. He detested his duties. His repetitive lament is that he cannot spend enough time with Alix.

Then, as the first winter of their marriage passed into spring, Alix, like many another good Victorian woman, began to develop symptoms. They were our stock-in-trade. Proper Victorian women were never easy to invest, but we could always send a shiver into their feverish defense of personal virtue by touching their dreams with one or another unholy, or worse, smelly thought. A touch, as I say, was enough to spoil many a day in their marriages. So, an entry from Nicky's diary, 9 April, 1895, St. Petersburg:

Unfortunately, dear Alix's headache continued all day. She did not go upstairs at all—neither to church nor to luncheon. I managed to read a lot of the papers that had accumulated. Had tea with my darling. Dined at 8 o'clock with Mama,

This had always been his short-hand for indicating that they made love, but it did not seem likely on this night.

Nicky's Diary, 10 April 1895, St. Petersburg:

Dear Alix still has an unbearable pain in the temples and she was obliged to remain in bed, on my advice.

I was ready to assume that there was a flaw in the perfection of their romance.

An ongoing headache, indeed! When intense enough to be characterized as migraine, these headaches spoke to us of the clear desire to commit murder--a desire that baffled her by its total impossibility. I did not believe Alix had such

sentiments toward her husband, but it was doubtless another matter with her mother-in-law, the Empress Marie. That beautiful little brunette had adored her poor dead husband for the best of reasons and one of them was that she was always an Empress. Now, still an Empress, she was also less. She was naught but the widow. Already, the two women were developing sentiments they were obliged to banish.

Poor Nicky! He is bewildered by Alix's unhappy symptoms, haunted by the empty boredom, that is to say, the horror of endless official meetings, plus the fear of contending with the four huge Grand Dukes, his overbearing uncles of whom Uncle Sergei, husband to Aunt Ella, is the most formidable. Writing to this uncle about the death of his father, Nicky cannot protect himself.

Nicky to Sergei, 10 April 1895, St. Petersburg

Dear Uncle Sergei,

Sometimes, I confess, tears well up in my eyes at the thought of how carefree and lovely life could have been for me for many years to come, had it not been for October 20. But these tears reveal human weakness; these are tears of self-pity and I try to dry them as soon as possible and humbly fulfill my heavy and responsible duty to Russia.

He is so afraid of Uncle Sergei, and for good cause. He had always sensed how jealous was Sergei of his brother Alexander, yet Sergei had always pretended to love his brother when he did not.

The young Tsar is much happier writing to Queen Victoria. He had charmed her years ago when he visited London. Everyone agreed that he and her son George looked so much alike, and George was heir to her throne if she ever got around to dying.

Nicky to Queen Victoria, May ? 1895, St. Petersburg
. . . In answer to your second letter mentioning the articles about England in the Russian papers, I must say I cannot prevent people from putting their opinion openly in the newspapers. How often have I not been worried to read in English gazettes rather unjust statements in connexion [sic] with my country! Even books are being constantly sent to me from London, misinterpreting our actions in Asia, on interior politics, etc. I am sure there is as little hostility intended in these writings as there is in the above mentioned ones.

Nicky

By the middle of May, Alix was free of the migraines and could enjoy the weather again.

*Nicky, Diary, 14 May 1895, St. Petersburg: [in Alix's hand]
A half year now that we are married, how immensely happy
you have made your Wify you cannot think. God bless you,*

my own, true, beloved husband—daily purer, stronger, deeper.

She is also pregnant, and in another entry in Nicky's diary on June 10, she adds:

My sweet old darling manykins, Wify loves you so deeply and strongly, you are my one and my angels, what intense happiness. . .ours. . .our very own. . .what happiness could be greater; only Wify must try and be as good and kind as possible lest another little person suffer for it. A big kiss.

This is June, but the baby will not be born until November. Is she calling off all sex until then? I was obliged to go back to the little mystery of the migraines.

In truth, the real problem was that I did not feel comfortable in my comprehension of their love. How much was genuine, how much was exaggerated? None of us were ever ready to admit as much to ourselves, not certainly to the Maestro, but the presence of real love often introduced a dull spot upon the customary clear lens in our power of analysis. We could penetrate

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In truth, the real problem was that I did not feel comfortable in my comprehension of their love. How much was genuine, how much was exaggerated? None of us were ever ready to admit as much to ourselves, not certainly to the Maestro, but the presence of real love often introduced a dull spot upon the customary clear lens in our power of analysis. We could penetrate every aspect of false or overinflated love, we could play many a game on a man or woman's feeling with such confidence, we had, for that matter, not even the need to capture or cajole them into becoming our clients--the state of being in love leaves the average man or woman wide open to angels and demons, transports and envies, beatitudes and/or heartbreaks are all at the edge of the

heart, indeed, some of the sharpest engagements ever fought between the Cudgels and ourselves involve the ecsasties and viscissitudes that throb and pullulate among lovers, especially in the early stages. We are truly demons at converting the sensitivities of love to the all-out imperatives of lust.

It is a curious contest. The angels have powerful sweets to offer, and we know how to inspire jealousy, doubt, distrust, even intensity of momentary revulsion toward the beloved. I would say that we possess more improvisational skills than even the most gifted of the Cudgels, but we do lack one quality which I hesitate to confess, even hate to confess, although I must, as what I offer will make no great sense. It is that I know everything about love but Love itself. I can recall nothing of my existence as human, not even whether I ever existed in that state, although for some reason I am certain that I was indeed, at one time, a man, but this I can say--I have never known love. I can even expatiate upon its

properties and tendencies, its dilemmas, dissipations, even the reasons for its augmentation or disappearance, I can tell you everything about it except for some knowledge missing at the core. It is that I cannot distinguish true love from its most developed and artistic substitutes.

Witness, then, my confusion before Nicky and, particularly, Alix. I could begin to comprehend him. Given his looks, he needed love the way others require blood.

But Alix? I could not say whether she was a rare if somewhat silly and tasteless princess, but truly in love, or whather a rareified species of amooous hysteria was her guide to extraordinarily intense if ersatz heights of passion, pleasure, and devotion.

Given, however, that curious line in her letter, "Wify must try and be as good and kind as possible lest another little person suffer for it," I came to a

conclusion. She was declaring a moratorium on sex when it was not necessary.

On many a milk-run, I had watched many a pregnant woman enjoying the act even in their eighth or ninth month. Of course, Alix was preparing for the heir to be born, the next Tsar, and one couldn't havy any rumpus attending such development, but still. I leaned now to the hypothesis that she had strained mightily to rise to the passionate heights she deemed necessary for this first period of their marriage, but that done, and the heir-to-be nicely in place, she was ready to take a rest, yes, we must not do it "lest another little person suffer."

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I would not wish my readers to forget for an instant that the Romanovs are not at the center of my interest. Adolf Hitler is at the core of my motive in writing this book, so it may be wise to remind ourselves that Kaiser Wilhelm II was also very much in Nicky's mind. This Kaiser, whom Hitler was later to look upon as a fool, who had lost World War I for Germany, had abdicate and spent his last futile years in exile in Holland, was still connected to Adolf by way of an English philosopher named Houston Chamberlain who was a great Wagnerite and married, indeed, to Wagner's daughter, Winifred. In 1923, Hitler would

meet him in Bayreuth, and Chamberlain, very much an elitist, a racist, and an intense believer in the putative superiority of the German soul and race, was happy--as Chamberlain saw it--to pass on the baton to Hitler. What Chamberlain had envisioned in his philosophies might now actually come to pass in the exceptional if most uncharacteristic figure of a leader who had been guided to pay a visit to a great mind--or so Hitler had been advised by his intellectual mentor, Dietrich Eckart. Chamberlain as virtually on his death-bed when they met, but the coronation he offered to Hitler had its weight. Chamberlain had been, after all, the intellectual most favored, honored, and respected by Kaiser Wilhelm the Second whose ideas (as will be seen in the next two letters) were waiting for a philosopher to embellish them.

In September and October of 1895, on the 14th of the first month and the 13th of the next month, Alix's Uncle Willy wrote to the new Russian Tsar. His

English was not perfect, but his ideas were obviously not at all unimportant to him.

Kaiser Wilhelm II to Nicky, 14 September 1895, Jagdhaus Romingen

Dearest Nicky,

God knows that I have done all in my power to preserve the European Peace, but if France goes on openly or secretly encouraged like this to violate all rules of international courtesy and Peace in peacetime, one fine day, my dearest Nicky, you will find yourself nolens-volens suddenly embroiled in the most horrible of wars Europe ever saw. Which will be by the masses and by history perhaps be fixed on you as the cause of it. Pray don't be angry, if I perhaps hurt you quite unintentionally, but I think it my duty to our two countries and to you as my friend to write openly. Think of the awful responsibility for the shaking bloodshed.

Now goodbye, dearest Nicky, best love to dear Alix, and believe me ever
your fond devoted and faithful friend and cousin,

Willy

Kaiser Wilhelm II to Nicky 13 October 1895 Neues Palais, Potsdam

Dearest Nicky,

That it is not the fact of a "Rapport" or friendship between Russia and
France that make me uneasy—every sovereign is sole master of his country's
interests and he shapes his policy accordingly—but the danger which is brought
to our Principle of Monarchism through the lifting up of the Republic on a
pedestal. The constant appearance of Princes, Granddukes, statesmen, generals
at reviews, burials, dinners, races—with the head of the Republic or in his
entourage makes Republicans—as such—believe that they are quite honest,

excellent people with whom Princes can concoct and feel at home. Now what is the consequence in our different countries? The Republicans are Revolutionists de nature and treated—rightly so—as people who must be shot or hung, [but] they tell to our other loyal subjects, "Oh, we are no dangered bad men, look at France! There you see the Royalties hobnobbing with the Revolutionaires!" Don't forget that Faure—not his personal fault—sits on the throne of the King and Queen of France by the grace of God whose heads Frenchman Republicans cut off. The blood of their Majesties is still on that country!

Look at it, has it since then ever been happy or quiet again? Has it not staggered from bloodshed to bloodshed? Nicky, take my word on it, the Curse of God has stricken that People forever! We Christian Kings and Emperors have one holy duty imposed on us by Heaven, that is to uphold the Principle "von Gottes Gnaden." [by the grace of God.]

Your most devoted and affectionate friend and cousin,

Willy

Nicky to Empress Marie - St Petersburg

Alix stood up wonderfully to the whole of the midnight service and liturgy; she rested only while I washed my face after the greeting ceremony.

This time, for the first three days, I had to kiss far more people than usual, as the Winter Palace was added to the rest. In all, judging by the number of eggs given away, it seems I have embraced 1600 people - a whole regiment! My cheeks are terribly sore after all this. I am longing to go to Tsarskoe, but at the same time I want to show Alix the breaking of the ice on the Neva, and indeed to see it myself, it should happen within the next few days.

Nicky, Diary - 29 March - St Petersburg

In the morning I did a lot of reading and received visitors after the reports. Dorgoruky and Mendorf came to luncheon. The new English ambassador O'Connor came to present his credentials. At 3 o'clock we went to the islands and went for a walk on Blagin. At dinner we went to the theatre. There was an excellent play called *Friends* (in Alix's hand) Sweet precious Nicky mine, no words can express how deeply I love you - more and more, day by day, deeper - truer. Love sweet do you believe it, do you feel hearty throb so quickly, and only for you, my husband.

4 April The weather was good but overcast. Xenia brought Irina to our little omnibus. She also weighs 20 1/2 pounds, but our daughter is fatter!

Kaiser Wilhelm II to Nicky - 7 April - Coburg

Dearest Nicky,

The merry wedding which is taking place here and the faces of many of the guests remind me of two years ago when it was my good fortune to be able to help you secure that charming and accomplished angel who is now your wife. The days of April 1891 were also days of joy and love. I would send you my warmest wishes for the future. May God's blessing be on you both especially in the next month when you are going to be crowned under admiring assistance of the world. Your affectionate cousin and friend,

R, Diary - 10 April - St Petersburg

How sweet and friendly she is: it's only a pity that she can't stop feeding the baby before her departure for Moscow. At the moment she is reeding once a day, in the morning while she has coffee with the Emperor; I asked when exactly: before or after the coffee? She replied that the infant feeds while she is drinking her coffee. How delightful!

The coronation of Nicholas as Tsar of all the Russias had been fixed for 14 May.

J- Any Darker Than This, The goes Black.

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Because of this, the inspection of the camp and ceremonies revealed were cancelled. Uncle Freddie arrived to stay with us in Petrovskoe. We dined with him and the Connaughts. Spent a good evening with George and Nicky (of Greece).

~~6 May. At 4 o'clock we went to meet dear Mama, who arrived from Leningrad via Petersburg. They all took very brown bread tea and dined on family. At 4 o'clock the whole family, both from here and abroad, gathered to hear a concert, beautifully sung by 1100 members of different choral groups.~~

KR, Diary - 8 May

At 9 o'clock I went to Petrovskoe, where the whole family had gathered round the Emperor, together with the foreign princes and princesses, to hear a serenade. It was performed in the courtyard of the palace by a thousand or more singers.

Every imaginable Moscow choir was there with its musicians, each singer carried a staff with a lantern – a sea of flickering lights; a huge number of people were crowded round the palace. We all listened from the balcony with their majesties, after the first song, the Emperor said: Let's clap. A huge hurraha rang out in answer to our applause; the night was quiet and softly luminous, a new moon shone in the sky.

5 May To describe today adequately would take a lot of talent. When we woke up this morning we were all delighted to see that the weather, which has been such a source of anxiety, had at last improved. It was calm and warm, the sun was shining joyfully as if wishing to join the Muscovites in greeting the Emperor as he entered his first city.

What exultation! A mass of people, the stands were crowded with spectators; the top rows taken up by thousands of *volost* [smallest administrative unit] representatives, the chime of bells filled the air. Then the first salute sounded, signaling that the Tsar had left Petrovskoie palace; the bells rang out even more joyfully; everyone removed their hats and crossed themselves. And then, through the sparkling gates, the head of the procession came into sight - the gendarmes behind them His Majesty's own escort, then the sovereign's cossacks, behind them the Tsar's hunt, the court musicians and finally the golden coaches.

The procession stretched for a long, long way. Now there was a halt. The Emperor and Empresses had stopped to pray at the Iverskaya. The procession moved on again: the court liveries, the golden coaches and carriages, the embroidered uniforms, the horses covered with golden cloths. The Emperor appeared through the Spassky gates on a white horse, holding his hat in his hand. We also gave a huge cheer. The Tsar did not manage to salute the troops; without waiting for his greeting they welcomed him with an enormous roar. Before dismounting he greeted only the 3rd and 4th companies.

A coach with a golden crown drew up; in it sat the Dowager Empress. The young Tsarina rode behind her in another coach without a crown. The Emperor walked between them into the Uspensky cathedral. I saw how they knelt together before the icons and the relics of the holy martyr Philip. From the Uspensky they proceeded to the Archangel cathedral, and from there past the cathedral of the Annunciation to the main steps, from the top of which the Tsar and the two Tsarinas bowed three times to the people. What a wonderful moment!

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1890

Because of this, the inspection of the camp and ceremonial reveal were a called Uncle Freddie arrived to stay with us in Petrovskoe. We joined with him and the Connaughts. Spent a good evening with George and Nicky of George.

8 May. At 4 o'clock we went to meet dear Mama, who arrived from Leningrad via Petersburg. They all look very brown. Had tea and dined en famille. At 6 o'clock the whole family, both from here and abroad, gathered to hear a singing by a choir sung by 1100 members of different choral groups.

KR, Diary - 8 May

At 9 o'clock I went to Petrovskoe, where the whole family had gathered and the Emperor, together with the foreign princes and princesses, to hear the concert. It was performed in the courtyard of the palace by a thousand or more singers.

Every imaginable Moscow choir was there with its musicians, each carrying a staff with a lantern – a sea of flickering lights; a huge number of people were crowded round the palace. We all listened from the balcony with our fists; after the first song, the Emperor said: Let's clap. A huge hoarse shout in answer to our applause; the night was quiet and softly luminous, a new dawn in the sky.

9 May To describe today, I'd quietly would take a lot of calm, to have it make up this morning we were all delighted to see that the weather, which had been such a source of anxiety, had at last improved. It was calm and warm. The sun was shining joyfully as it wishing to join the Muscovites in greeting the Emperor as he entered his first city.

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The procession stretched for a long, long way. Now there was a turn to the right and Empresses had stopped to pray at the Iverskaya. The procession moved on again: the court liveries, the golden coaches and carriages, the male soldiers in uniform, the horses covered with golden cloths. The Emperor appeared through the Spassky gates on a white horse, holding his hat in his hand. We all gave a huge cheer. The Tsar did not manage to salute the troops; without warning, on his greening they welcomed him with an enormous roar. Before dismounting, He greeted only the 3rd and 4th companies.

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Se pavelo poyt

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1896

The young Tsarina is the embodiment of kindness and goodness. The Dowager Empress looked as young as she did 13 years ago on the day of her own Coronation.

When the Emperor and his consort mounted their thrones, the courtiers carrying their regalia and their assistants blocked my view, so that I could hardly see anything; I could only glimpse the Emperor with difficulty, but I could hear perfectly as he recited the Credo. His assistants were Vladimir and Mishka. They both put on the purple mantle; at this point his large Andreievskaya star with the diamonds broke.

I could just see as he raised the crown onto his own head, and took the orb and sceptre; but I could not see anything of the Empress kneeling before him. I was only able to catch sight of him raising her to her feet and kissing her. I could hardly hear the speech of the Metropolitan Palady. In the same way, I hardly heard the prayer read by the Emperor as he knelt. It was only when everybody else fell to their knees and the Emperor alone remained standing, that I was able to gaze on him.

The Emperor embraced me; I nearly burst into tears and said 'Christ be with you.'

Nicky, Diary - 14 May - Moscow

A great, solemn day for Alix, Mama and myself, but one full of joyful gravity. We were on our feet from 8 o'clock in the morning, though our procession did not move off until 9.30. Luckily the weather was heavenly.

The Grand Staircase presented a glittering sight. Everything took place in the Uspensky cathedral, and although it seems like a dream, I will remember it all my life. At 9 o'clock we went up onto the top balcony, where Anx switched on the electric illuminations on the Ivan the Great bell tower, after which all the towers and walls of the Kremlin were lit up successively.

We went to bed early.

KR, Diary - 15 May - Moscow

The Numinations were magical – a sea or fire. We went to the palace: the Emperor was receiving congratulations from senior dignitaries and the nobility. A constant stream of costly dishes were offered along with the bread and salt. They arranged several big tables in the Andreysky hall; what a useless expense. How much good could that amount of money have been put to?

17 May Yesterday there was a gala performance at the Bolsho Theatre. The Empress was in a silver brocade dress.

Nicky, Diary - 17 May - Moscow

The weather was wonderful all day. For the first time the moon was free. We went to visit Xenia and Sandro and then Ernie and Ducky. We had luncheon w/ Mama and then at 2 o'clock gathered upstairs for the ladies' congratulations. The Grand Duchesses, then the ladies - waiting and after the ladies

Nicky to Empress Marie, [? Date crossed out] St. Petersburg

Alix stood up wonderfully well to the whole of the midnight service and liturgy; she rested only while I washed my face after the greeting ceremony.

This time, for the first three days, I had to kiss far more people than usual, as the Winter Palace was added to the rest. In all, judging by the number of eggs given away, it seems I have embraced 1600 people--a whole regiment! My cheeks are terribly sore after all this. I am longing to go to Tsarskoe, but at the same time I want to show Alix the breaking of the ice on the Neva, and indeed to see it myself if it should happen within the next few days.

Nicky, Diary, 29 March, St. Petersburg [in Alix's hand] sweet precious

Nicky mine, no words can express how deeply I love you--more and more,
day by day, deeper--truer. Lovy sweet do you believe it, do you feel hearty
throb so quickly, and only for you, my husband.

Kaiser Wilhekl II to Nicky, 7 April 1896, Coburg

Dearest Nicky,

It was my good fortune to help you secure that charming and accomplished angel who is now your wife. May God's blessing be on you both, especially in the next month when you are going to be crowned under admiring assistance of the world.

Your affectionate cousin and friend,

Willy

KR, Diary, 10 April 1896, St. Petersburg

How sweet and friendly she is; it's only a pity that she finds it so difficult to overcome her shyness. At the moment she is feeding once a day, in the morning while she has coffee with the Emperor; I asked when exactly, before or after the coffee! She replied that the infant feeds while she is drinking her coffee, how delightful!

[The coronation of Nicholas as Tsar of all the Russias had been fixed for 14 May]

Nicky to Empress Marie, 16 April 1896, Tsarskoe Selo

. . .because for five whole years I repeated them every night as I prayed to God to smooth Alix's path to Orthodoxy and to give her to me as my wife. Forgive me, dear Mama, for writing to you this way, but I do not know if I told you of this before?

D.T. writes on the variation of that theme around "My faith was not pure enough." Our safety valve.

This ploy works so well that I feel wistful not to have conceived it myself. The pious, whether loyal ultimately to the D.K. or, unknowingly, to us, are always telling themselves that their faith was lacking.

Indeed it was. We kept the D.K. much too occupied for Him to have time to listen to them.

Nicky to Empress Marie, 29 April 1896, Starskoe Selo

It seems to me that we should look upon all the difficult ceremonies in Moscow (the coronation) as a great trial sent to us by God, as at every step we will have to repeat what we did during those wonderful happy days thirteen years ago! The only thought that consoles me is that we will never have to perform the same rite again in our lives, and henceforth our existence will be smooth and even, I truly believe this, God will help us!

In general, I am terribly fatigued, there are so many petty meaningless affairs before Moscow. It is as if my gentlemen ministers have decided to wear me out, they are so persistent and tiresome. I'm amazed my head hasn't burst with all the rubbish being stuffed into it. Alix and the baby are doing extremely well, thank God, and look wonderful. Our little daughter gets rounder and chubbier.

KR Diary 8 May 1896

At 9 o'clock I went to Petrovskoe, where the whole family had gathered around the Emperor, together with the foreign princes and princesses to ear a serenade. It was performed in the courtyard of the palace by a thousand or more singers.

Every imaginable Moscow choir was there with its musicians, and each singer carried a staff with a lantern--a sea of flickering lights; a huge number of people were crowded round the palace. We all listened from the balcony with their Majesties; after the first song, the Emperor said: Let's clap. A huge hourray rang out in answer to our applause; the night was quiet and softly luminous, a new moon hung in the sky.

D.T. On the weather, its obstacle to us

KR Diary, 9 May 1896

What exultation! A mass of people, the stands were crowded with spectators, the top rows taken up with thousands of volost (smallest administrative) and representatives, the chime of bells filled the air. The first salute sounded, signaling that the Tsar had left Petrovskote palace, the bells rang out even more joyfully, everyone removed their hats and crossed themselves. And then through the Spasky gates, the head of the procession came into sight--the gendarmes headed them, His Majesty's own escort, then the sovereign cossacks, behind them the Tsar's hunt, the court musicians, and finally the golden coaches.

The procession stretched for a long, long way. Now there was at last the Emperor and Empresses had stopped to pray at the Iverskaya. The procession proceeded on again: the court liveries, the golden coaches and carriages, the embroidered uniforms, the horses covered with golden cloths. The Emperor appeared through the Spasky gates on a white horse, holding his hat in his hand. We also gave a huge cheer. The Tsar did not manage to salute the troops. Without waiting for his greeting, they welcomed him with a enormous roar.

KR Diary 9 May 1896 (continued)

The Emperor walked between them into the Uspensky Cathedral. I saw how they knelt together before the icons and the relics of the holy martyr Philip. From the Uspensky, they proceeded to the Archangel Cathedral, and from there past the Cathedral of the Annunciation to the main steps, from the top of which the Tsar and the two Tsarinas bowed three times to the people. What a wonderful moment.

KR Diary 9 May 1896 the morning

In the crowd, many were praying, many made the sign of the cross as the Emperor passed. The Empress Marie cried the whole time in her golden carriage. It was too painful for her to remember how 13 years ago she had participated in the same celebration with her beloved husband.

KR Diary 9 May 1896

Some confusion arose at the moment of leaving the Uspensky cathedral for the Archangel: the priests who were walking on front of the Emperor made for the north gate, rather than the south. Vladimir (who is unable to speak quietly) shouted in a loud voice to the Metropolitan, who turned round and the procession then proceeded as it should! There were crowds of people on the street. Our carriage had to go at a snail's pace. I did not notice a single drunk.

KR Diary 13 May 1896 Moscow

So the great day is at hand. The heart beats in anticipation of something out of the ordinary, significant, and full of deep meaning.

KR Diary, 18 May 1896 Coronation

That evening I felt as if I had woken up after a wonderful dream. It did not seem possible that everything I had seen, heard and experienced could have been real. By 7 o'clock, I had already crossed the great rooms of the palace, which were full of people, and found myself on the main steps.

The Ivan the Great bell started to ring out, a salute was fired. There was not a single cloud in the sky, the cathedral square was flooded with bright sunshine. High up in the blue skies the swallows darted with shrill cries. It was already hot. The troops were forming up, the spectators taking their places in the stalls. At eight o'clock, the family and foreign princes gathered in the great hall of the palace.

At 8:45, the doors opened and the Empress Marie appeared. Our hearts bled when we saw her; she was wearing a crown and a heavy purple mantle like a victim prepared for the sacrifice. Her face expressed suffering.

We all followed her into the Uspensky Cathedral. She was escorted by Alexei and the Danish crown prince. The procession was so long, due to the number of foreigners, that by the time she entered the cathedral we had not even reached the main entrance. We heard the sound of cheers coming from far away on the square greeting her appearance on the front steps. Inside the cathedral, the Grand Duchesses and Princesses stood to the right of the

throne, a little below the dais; we men stood on the left. The Empress took her place on her throne, a little to the right of the thrones of the Emperor and young Tsarina. We took our places.

A roar from the square heralded their Majesties' procession. The priests went out to greet and asperse them with holy water. And then their Majesties entered and bowed to the cathedral icons. The Emperor was concentrated; his face had an expression of piety and supplication, his whole countenance expressed majesty. The young Tsarina is the embodiment of kindness and goodness, and the Dowager Empress looked as young as she did 13 years ago on the day of her own Coronation.

When the Emperor and His consort mounted their thrones, the attendants carrying their regalia and their assistants blocked my view so that I could not see anything. I could only glimpse the Emperor with difficulty as he recited the Credo. His assistants were Vladimir and Misha who helped him put on the large purple mantle. At this point, his large Andreev chain with the diamonds broke.

I could just see as he raised the crown onto his own head and took the orb and the sceptre; but I could not see anything of the Empress kneeling before him as I was only able to catch sight of him raising her to her feet and ~~kissing~~ kissing her. I could hardly hear the speech of the Metropolitan Palady. In the

same way, I could hardly hear the prayer read by the Emperpor as he kneeled. It was only when everybody else went to their knees and the Emperor alone remained standing that I was able to gaze on him.

The Emperor embraced me; I nearly burst into tears and said, "Christ be with you."

D.T. Rushing to get daily notes from his diary. Pressure on the servants by

D.T.

Nicky, Diary, 14 May 1896, Moscow

A great, solemn day for Alix, Mama and myself, but one full of moral gravity.

We were on our feet from nine o'clock in the morning, though our procession did not move off until 9:30. Luckily, the weather was heavenly.

The Grand Staircase presented a glittering sight. Everything took place in the Uspensky cathedral, and although it seems like a dream, I will remember it all my life. At 9 o'clock we went up onto the top balcony, where Alix switched on the electric illuminations on the Ivan the Great bell tower after which all the towers and walls of the Kremlin were lit up successively.

We went to bed early.

D.T. His way of saying that they made love.

-14-

Nonetheless, the boldness of such an assumption had the power to

disturb me. When, on occasion, I find myself near the sea, it becomes difficult

to believe that God is suffering any loss of His powers. As much can also be

said for a fine field, ~~a storm~~, for the vast retort of the heavens when lightning is

followed by thunder. The same conclusion is present on encountering a

memorable sunset. One could even speak of such exquisite minor moments.

dazzlements of light on wet grass when the dew is on the ground in early morning.

Of course, He could have fashioned all this untold ages ago when at the peak of His Creative Powers. The sky, after all, was not choked the new with factory smoke, nor the rivers fouled by factory excrements put into them by His humans. Did He now brood on the possibility that these ~~last~~ ^{human} creations had

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become His least successful? Were we now awash in the dithering of a minority whose powers were old and askew? This Nicky and Alix—they ~~were~~ ^{have and} ~~young, they~~ seemed so unfitted for the vast project they would undertake.

While I had not been able to come near enough to their living presence, I had certainly absorbed the tone of their love, their philosophy (such as it was) and, over and over, their piety, their innocence. They actually believed that Nicky's ^{as well as} diary, and their letters to each other were well protected from scrutiny when, in fact, a copy of the key to this diary—courtesy of the valet—had been in our possession for years. Ditto for the box that kept her letters, and, now that she had joined him, ^{I could peruse all of their} ~~all of his old letters to her~~. Indeed, they even put numbers on ^{as well} ~~the envelopes —~~ them, back and forth—Letter 96, Letter 109, et cetera. It never occurred to Nicky or Alix that it took no exceptional skill to make a wax impression of a key or a lock, any more than we were in need of high competence to find the maid or body-servant who was ready to betray a trust.

So, I knew how they spoke to each other. I had read hundreds of their ^{loving communications back and forth,} ~~letters and looked over several thousands of pages in his diaries for each year since 1880.~~ If I now establish a small record,, a tenth, no, a hundredth of all the missives passing between them and their close friends and relatives, it is to give a sense of how trivial were most of these responses to the ^{monarchical} ~~enormities of~~ ^{challenges} ~~decision~~ awaiting them. Indeed, I had to wonder all over again whether it

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Dummkopf was still in command of minimal acumen. ~~Why?~~ ^{become} He is a non
might as well have ^{risen} to a fever in me—why was God giving so much
importance to Nicky and Alix?

~~I can offer some sense of the quandary in which I find myself by quoting
from their letters over the last couple of years, yes, let me take it from the
middle of 1894 until the June of 1896 just before I returned to Halden.~~

Be it said, they were not altogether without culture. Back in 1889 when
she was seventeen, before they were ready to speak of their love for each other,

Alix wrote on March 17: It was so good of you to write and it gave me great
pleasure. My mad letter amused you then—well, I have been cracked

enough to write another. We went last night to see the "Rheingold" and I
hope next week to see "Walkure's Siegfried," to which he responds (w)

weeks later Thank you so much for your dear little letter which was such

an agreeable surprise to me . . . We also saw "Siegfried" with Ella. I like it
so awfully, especially the melody of the bird and the fire! Now the
Niebelungen are all over, and I think it is a great pity

Young Wagnerites! At the edge of love! They write to each other in
English. He has been tutored in the tongue since boyhood and she has ^{after all has} 6 ten
visited with Queen Victoria who is, we ^{may remind ourselves,} must not forget, her grandmother

1 1/2
specia
student

From
Now
on,
I will
indicate
this
by
ND

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Nonetheless, as will be seen, Nicky's English is ~~at the least~~ ^{Of course} one I can b. tier, ~~but then~~ ^{but then} he is also four years older.

That was in 1889. By June, 1894, ~~and~~ ^{managed to} they have ~~passed~~ ^{has} through a great emotional obstacle. To be betrothed, she ~~had~~ ^{for} had to give up her Lutheranism ~~and~~ ^{Of course, her} for Russian Orthodoxy. Her older sister, Ella, had ~~already~~ ^{Duke} converted years ago in order to marry the Grand Duke Sergei Romanov, a brother of Nicholas's uncle, Tsar Alexander III. So it was not as if there were no precedent for taking a leap ^{so major}.

Alix ~~was~~ ^{Alia} ~~born~~ ^{born} ~~in~~ ⁱⁿ ~~Germany~~ ^{Germany} ~~and~~ ^{and} ~~her~~ ^{her} ~~parents~~ ^{parents} ~~were~~ ^{were} ~~Lutherans~~ ^{Lutherans} ~~and~~ ^{and} ~~she~~ ^{she} ~~was~~ ^{was} ~~wed~~ ^{wed} ~~to~~ ^{to} ~~her~~ ^{her} ~~Lutheranism~~ ^{Lutheranism}. Ella did her best to cut a few knots by assuring her younger sister that the two religions ^(a large hypothesis, but then) were not all that different, ^(and astonishing exits from the) but theology is not without its talents—much of which, be certain, we have designed—for erecting impassable cul-de-sacs. ^(to take advantage of every law that could be) Ella was doing her best, but Alix was ~~pious~~ ^{slow and} and conversion, in consequence, was ^{tricky} ^{rigid with} ^{picture} ^{desperate} ^{traps} ^{beats}.

It took five years. Back in June 1889, in a letter to Nicky, Ella wrote:

I was told if one prayed well in a church going to be consecrated God would **TND** hear one's prayers. Well, in Jerusalem, I prayed so deeply for you both to bring you together in love for each other. . . Faith and love go very far and if you have [that] in Him and each other, all will be for the best. Many

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affectionate kisses from Sergei and your loving Aunty. ^{CP} Let it be noted that this loving Aunty Ella was only four years older than Nicky, and beautiful.

The campaign succeeded. Alix agreed ^{finally} to accept the Russian Orthodox Church, and the news of their engagement was given ^{out} to the royal families of Europe. In June of 1894, their engagement just two months old, Nicky was passionate in his declaration of happiness. *I love you too deeply and too strongly for me to show it: it is such a sacred feeling, I don't want to let it out in words that seem meek and poor and vain! But now I will try to break the habit of hiding my feelings, because I think it wrong and selfish in some occasions. You also do not know, my precious one, how long my whole heart belonged to you and what sufferings it has gone through these dreary years! Darling primrosy-mine, I love you my darling!* ^{Is it not after all, a rare}

^{It be it} said, I took pains to count the exclamation marks. ^{point of kinship I can feel with him?} ~~It was one of the points of kinship I felt with him.~~ The observant reader may have noticed how ^{fond} and I am ^{at the end of a parenthesis} myself of such punctuation, especially in parentheses!! ^{Interruptions of one's attention should pretend at least}

^{Four months later,} Nicky's father is grievously ill. Alix, writing in Nicky's diary, ~~(whose supposed privacy they often share)~~ offers this ^{exciting} "Sweet

child, pray to God, he will comfort you don't feel too low he will help you in your trouble, Your Sunny is praying for you and the beloved patient. Darling Boysy, me loves you, o so very tenderly and deep. Be firm and make the

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Doctors come alone to you every day and tell you how they find him, exactly, what they wish him to do, so that you are always the first to know. Don't let others be put first and you left out. You are Father's dear son and must be told all and be asked about everything. Show your own mind and don't let others forget who you are. Forgive me love.

(ND)

Two days later, she enters his diary again. She will share ^{Nicky's} ~~his father's~~
 ~~anguish~~ ~~grief~~. She writes: *Tell me everything, dushka. you can fully trust me. Look upon me as a bit of yourself. Let your joys and sorrows be mine, so that we may be ever drawn nearer together. My sweet One, how I love you, darling treasure, my very own One.*

(ND)

Dushka, when you feel low and sad, come to Sunny and she will try to comfort you and like her namesake warm you with her rays. God help us.
Only yours, quite your very own little spitzbub, Puss, mine."

There is an entry next day by Nicky, 18 October: *A terrible, sad day. Dear Papa did not sleep at all, and felt so unwell in the morning that we were all woken up and called upstairs. What a trial! Then Papa became a little calmer and dozed fitfully throughout the day.*

(ND)

I did not dare absent myself from the house for any length of time. What a support to have dear Alix; she sat with me the whole day while I read reports from various ministers. At about 11 o'clock there was a

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consultation with the doctors in Uncle Vladimir's room—it was awful! In the evening, Papa appeared a little better—but terribly weak! Our only reliance and hope is in the Mercy of the Lord, let His will be done

completely
I could not help but note how royalty are groomed ~~often by us when we~~
~~can get to them~~ to respect the Lord's will. After all, ~~that Will is so often ours,~~
But then, when it appears to people is so often ours, speaking in the
indeed, almost always, I would say, except for mortality itself. This particular ~~guise of the Lord. This particular~~ *how*
manipulation is indeed one of our ~~sources of delights~~ *how* ~~smug our chests~~
~~they get over~~
become at those moments ~~when they feel close to God, all the while that we are~~
~~offering the messages~~

How can they not?
~~How much~~ *How much* royalty needs belief no matter from whom it comes (Their lives are so peculiar. Living in next to total isolation from common experiences, painfully sensitive to proper conduct, and invariably drawn to the corrupt (what with the ~~power~~ *the need for* ~~they are given~~ *Capotantins* ~~any~~ *any*) they do tend to believe that sad events *which occur* in their lives may have nothing to do with them directly. Better to assign all that to the Lord's will. Even so, the Romanovs are hardly ready for Nicky's father, Tsar Alexander III, to be so close to death, then to die

Nicky's diary, 20 October, Livadia: My God, my God, what a day!

The Lord has called unto Him our adored, dearly beloved Papa. TIME

My head is going round, I cannot believe it—it seems inconceivable, a terrible reality.

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It was the death of a Saint! Lord, help us in these terrible days
Poor, dear Mama! In the evening, at 9:30, we held Prayers for the Dead—
in the same bedroom! I felt as if I were dead also. The pains in Alex's legs
have returned. In the evening, I went to confession. [initials]

All through the Prayers, Nicky thought of the hour in his childhood when a nihilist had succeeded in putting a small bomb inside the railroad car in which his father, the Tsar, had been travelling with the family. When the blast went off, given its untutored placement, the explosion ^{erupted} ~~erupted~~ upward rather than outward ^{or} ~~and~~ downward, ^{and so} ~~and so~~ no one in the royal family was critically injured. Nonetheless, the roof of the railroad car began to collapse on the Tsar Alexander III, a giant of a Romanov, used his holy and unholy strength to hold up the beams of the compartment's ceiling long enough for the family to be rescued. Only a saint was capable of such strength, decided his wife, a small but beautiful woman.

So ^{too did} ~~did~~ Nicky believe that Alexander was a saint. Nicky was ^{ghost} ~~small~~ like his Danish mother, and ^{revered his father's strength} ~~he could hardly do less than also reverence his father~~.

All through his adolescence, Nicky worked at building his body with weights, but he remained ~~short and~~ slight. He excelled at horsemanship and at hunting—
 a point of honor to him. ⁷ ~~he~~ grew a fine brown mustache and beard, yet he never

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came to look like a Romanov. Now, he would be the Tsar Nicholas

Nicholas the Second.

married to Nicky's sister, Xenia
 A cousin named Sandro was his closest friend. Sandro had his own
I looked at the
 memoirs and they show this entry for October 20, the date of Alexander II's death;
~~off Nicky's~~
~~death. He knew he was the Emperor now, and the weight of this terrifying~~
~~fact crushed him.~~

off "Sandro, what am I going to do," he exclaimed pathetically. "What
 is going to happen to me, to you, to Xenia, to Alix, to mother, to all of
 Russia? I am not prepared to be a Tsar. I never wanted to become one. I
 know nothing of the business of ruling. I have no idea of even how to talk
 to the ministers."

Nicky, Diary, 21 October, Livadia: In the midst of our deep sorrow,
 the Lord has sent us a quiet and radiant joy: at 10 o'clock in the presence
 of the family, my dear darling Alix was anointed with the holy oils and
 after the service we took communion together, with dear Mama and Ella.
 Alix repeated her responses and prayers wonderfully well and distinctly!

After luncheon we held Prayers for the Dead and again at 9 o'clock
 in the evening. The expression on Papa's face was wonderful, smiling as if
 he were about to laugh! Spent the whole day answering telegrams with
 Alix and attending to the papers brought by the last courier.

ND

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22 October. Last night we had to carry Papa's body downstairs, is unfortunately, it has rapidly begun to decompose. Thank God, dear Mama is completely calm and is bearing her sorrow in a truly heroic way! I did nothing but answer the pile of telegrams.

24 October. The day was grey—as it was in our hearts! I still cannot bring myself to go into the corner room where dear Papa's body is lying—he is so changed since being embalmed. I cannot bear to dispel the wonderful impression of the first day!

^{may be}
It is ~~probably~~ worth including a letter from Kaiser Wilhelm II to Nicky, which was sent on 27 October from the Neues Palais, Potsdam:

My dear Nicky,

May Heaven comfort you in your grief and give you strength for your heavy duties, and may a long and peaceful reign give you the opportunity of looking after the welfare of your subjects. The sympathy and real grief at the so untimely end of your lamented father in my country will have shown you how strong the monarchical instinct is and how Germany feels for you and your subjects. As for me, you will always find me the same in undiminished friendship and love to you.

It would, of course, be twenty years before they went to war against each other.

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In all of this, there was one entry in Nicky's diary on November 1, 1918, in St. Petersburg that did excite my attention:

Slept well: but the moment I came to myself the memory of what has happened and the terrible feeling of oppression invaded my soul with renewed vigour!

The terrible feeling of oppression! I did not know whether that came *etching is stalked by one of our past demons* from a dream *etching we might have succeeded in installing* (all is possible in *Nicky's* these matters--or whether it was his own natural fear at where he now found himself.

At 12 o'clock I received the full Council of State—I again had to make a speech!

Here, I must introduce another diary. It is by a nobleman who signs himself as KR. He is the same age as the Grand Dukes (that is, the brothers of the dead Tsar) and *in spirit he feels like* so he, too, could be an uncle to Nicky. *Grand Dukes* he certainly loves him as much or more than any of these Romanov uncles *more* who are a big powerful lot, all four of them, and not, I would say, unavailable to us in *more* a circumstances, but I have yet to refer to such specific matters. Leave that to KR adores Nicky. (Indeed, he capitalizes every reference to him & KR is, after a little what is called today a closet homosexual. It is the bane and delight of his existence. He also writes well enough to quote him fully.

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KR, Diary, 2 November, St. Petersburg: The young Tsar is the admiration of everyone. I hear that the short speech He made in the Kremlin Palace to the Moscow nobility was delivered in a loud, clear assured voice. Yesterday, when receiving the Council of State, He addressed them most beautifully. I watched him during the requiem service: the calm kind face, the thoughtful, deeply sad eyes, often half-closed. He is weighed down by his exalted rank. His modesty suffers from having to be everywhere and always the first.

KR, Diary, 3 November, St. Petersburg: I have not yet talked to the Emperor's bride; but she smiles so sweetly whenever you greet her.

In the evening they covered the Emperor's body in the coffin with a pall up to his chest, in order to hide the hands which are beginning to turn black. The head is already looking quite black.

On the seventh of November, one of our English agents intercepted a communication from Lord Carrington to Queen Victoria, *which often* a detailed report on Tsar Alexander III's funeral. It was obvious Her Majesty *was attracted to* ~~had a most clear nose~~ *for* details.

Lord Carrington to Queen Victoria: The service was choral without organ—the Empress and Princesses standing or kneeling the whole time. The mass continued for an hour and a half, plaintive and monotonous and

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then the usual daily funeral service was gone through. Tapers were lighted and handed round, but in consequence of the crowd, no ladies took any and so accident from fire was averted. At 12:30 the terrible ceremony of paying the last farewell took place. The Empress with heroic courage walked up steadily, knelt, and then took a last look at the late Emperor and kissed the sacred picture on His Majesty's breast, and then kissed his lips. The Emperor supported and took great care of Her Majesty and all the Royal Personages present kissed the sacred picture.

Like most English diplomats, it was obvious that he took pride in his literary style. I also had the impression that he was too pompous to be of quick use to the Cudgels or to our own agents. A most insular Englishman. Often, such people ^{for us,} are the worst to deal with, ^{the slowest.} (Especially for their fellow human beings.) A bit of the satanic does flavor the flesh.

Lord Carrington to Queen Victoria, 7 November: A mounted Guard of Honour of the Gardes a Cheval, although big men on large horses, did not strike the Lord Chamberlain as being as fine or as smart as Your Majesty's own Life Guards.

On November 14, Carrington added another emolument to the Queen's vanity: ^{of} All the ladies in Russian costume, some with fine diamonds but hardly any pretty faces; indeed, the absence of beauty as compared with

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**that seen at one of Your Majesty's drawing rooms struck the Lord
Chamberlain very much.**

He went on. The occasion was the wedding of Nicky and Alexandra
had to be brought off post-haste since it would hardly do for the Tsar of
Russia to be an unmarried man.

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14.

p463 - similar

isolated page
found

Ltr to J.M.W.

These indentations are fine. ^{the left margin}
 would move them for 2 space to the right
 but extend the ~~line~~ ^{line} of length of
 the line 4 ~~space~~ ^{space} to the right

-15-

Needless to remark, I read all the letters my agents could supply to me in the period after their wedding, but a close study opened many questions. Just a few days later on the 17th of November, Nicky wrote,

I am unbelievably happy with Alix, it's only a pity that ^{unhappy}
 my work takes up so much of the time I would like to
 spend exclusively with her!

to which on November 19th he adds,

Had tea at home and read together. We simply don't
 have the strength to leave each other.

On the same day, in a letter to his brother Georgy, Nicky adds ^{2 spaces and 1 1/2}

a completely new life has started for me. I cannot thank
 God enough for the treasure He has sent me in my wife.
 I am immeasurably happy with my darling Alix and feel

**that we will remain as happy together until the end of
our lives.**

On the 26th of November, off by themselves in Tsarskoe Selo
remarks,

~~(It has become)~~ Such a dear place for us both; for the
first time since our wedding we have been able to live
alone and live truly soul-to-soul,

this is reaction to these
Immediately to be followed by Alix's insertion after reading his words of
love. ~~She~~ *adds to his diary.*

*Never did I believe there could be such utter happiness
in this world, such a feeling of unity between two mortal
beings. I love you—those three words have my life in them*

On the next day she adds,

*At last united, bound for life, and when this life is ended,
we meet again in the other world to remain together for
all eternity.*

I was overcome with her assurance, her ignorance, her monumental

confidence *she was so certain that* that they lived with a joint passport to the hereafter. Yet on

December 14, *a bit* more than two weeks later, he wrote:

Today it is one month since we married—strange to say.

**I am only just beginning to get used to the idea! My love
for Alix keeps growing!**

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I had to ask myself what vertiginous degrees of self-immolation ~~had~~
~~being brewed by them. Up to now, I had had very little experience with~~
~~monarchs, no, not for centuries (if I may be allowed this remainder of life for~~
~~I have been working for the Maestro.) Even with the wealthiest of houses~~
~~riches, however, and only occasionally with working-class couples had I~~

Rarely had I

~~(encountered newly-weds who were as infatuated, and then they were so much~~
~~younger. They had no need to distinguish between the wild honey of first sex~~

~~and the nectars of true love. (Nicky, ~~was~~ after all, twenty-six years old, and a~~
~~neophyte, not to sex. (His military days had offered their bounty.) In contrast~~

~~Alix was very much a virgin with a host of fears, family tragedies, religious~~
~~the usual host of imaginative fears plus the prodigious~~
~~encasements, social timidity—I found it difficult to come to some decent~~

Add her religious intensity, and her

~~assessment on the basis of these letters as to how sincere they were, and how~~
~~to accept her romantic intensity at the full value of her~~
~~much they were fully over-ventilated with the absolute necessity to~~

~~profoundly in love.~~

Of course

~~I could not be certain. He was the Emperor of a vast land with the~~

~~with~~ ~~deep~~ ~~spirits~~ and ~~the most~~ ~~untamable~~ ~~barbarians~~. He could not pass by a

~~lovely copse of forest without thinking to himself that it was his land. His~~

~~Land. He was next to the Son of God if you got down to it. And all the while~~

~~he felt small, unworthy, and so unready. How, then, could he (He!) fail to~~

~~aggrandize His Love? He was like a booze-hound who will go mad if he~~

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cannot find a drink. Love was ^{the} a mountain on which he must always be climbing upward.

If I had been capable of real compassion instead of possessing the ^{whenver they were} ability to simulate its presence for my clients, in need, I could have been so for Nicholas the Second.

Yet, still, I could come to no firm conclusions, not from this study of their letters in 1894. There was still the damnable question pending—what was the ^m ~~Dunkopf~~ up to? It was ^{conceivably} ~~not~~ impossible that in His ~~huge~~ desire to make their marriage transcendently effective in its beatitude, God was supplying them with the most incredible physical ecstasies. How could I know? ~~I could not come near. I had only~~ ^{I could not come near. I had only} only those stolen fragments from their letters, and the hypothesis that if God was going to choose a Tsar, He would be ready to offer His wisdom and strength—against, of course, the no small ^{skills} ~~means~~ of the Maestro ^{as well as our} ~~and our own~~ aptitudes to subvert His Plans.

-16-

Nicky was, of course, all but totally unprepared to become the Tsar. Alexander the Third was so physically powerful that it had been assumed by all that he would rule for one more generation. Some measure of Nicky's unpreparedness is present in these few lines from KR's diary

I asked whether He had received any advice from his Father before the latter's death. Nicky replied that his Father had never once mentioned the responsibilities that awaited Him.

*larger
for
indulgent in
practic
conform
to Czarist
L.A.*

KR not only loved Nicky with all the intensity of his homosexual heart
(as we see by his near-groveling use of capital)
but was altogether ready to deify him and his father halfway up the mountain to Godhead.

One need only contrast this confidence with Nicky's own small feelings

~~from his diary:~~

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Nicky, Diary, 17 January 1895, St. Petersburg

An exhausting day. Went with Alix to the Winter Palace.

I was in a terrible state about having to go to the Nikolayevsky Hall and deliver a speech to the representatives of the nobility, the zemstvos [local councils] and the town committees.

~~He~~ ^{absolutely} had been closeted with the Grand Dukes before he gave the speech, and they had assured him that he must follow religiously in his father's

^{absolute} (His grand father Alexander II had been assassinated) footsteps. Russia was like a mad giant, they assured him, so vulnerable to grand mal that one misstep could release a frenzy. Absolute allegiance to autocracy ~~was~~ the only formula.

From Nicky's speech to the representatives of all estates

17 January 1895, St. Petersburg:

I am aware that recently in some zemstvos there have arisen the voices of people carried away by senseless dreams of taking part in the business of government. Let everyone know that I will retain the principles of autocracy as firmly and unbendingly as my unforgettable late father.

He was not always so ~~firm and~~ unbending. It depended ^{continued to} a great deal on which minister was the last to speak to him. He detested his duties. His repetitive lament is that he cannot spend enough time with Alix.

IND
Don't
quite
like
you
religiously
or
morally
and
his
father
was
dead
so
close
call.

IND

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Then, as the first winter of their marriage passed into spring, ~~like~~ ^{We counted on that} many another good Victorian woman, began to develop symptoms. ~~They were~~ ^{Our symptoms were} our stock-in-trade. Proper Victorian women were never easy to move, but we could always send a shiver into their feverish defense of personal virtue by touching their dreams with one or another unholy, or worse, smelly, touch. ~~A touch, as I say,~~ ^{That} was enough to spoil many a day in their marriages. ~~So, at entry~~

~~from~~ Nicky's diary, 9 April, 1895, St. Petersburg: ~~Bored for~~

Unfortunately, dear Alix's headache continued all day. She did not go upstairs at all—neither to church nor to luncheon. I managed to read a lot of the papers that had accumulated. Had tea with my darling. Dined at 8 o'clock with Mama.

~~This had always been his short-hand for indicating that they made love~~ ^{Double-speak}
~~but it did not seem likely on this night~~

Nicky's Diary, 10 April 1895, St. Petersburg

Dear Alix still has an unbearable pain in the temples and she was obliged to remain in bed, on my advice.

~~I was ready to assume that there was a flaw in the perfection of their~~ ^{Double-speak}
~~romance~~

An ongoing headache, indeed! When intense enough to be characterized as migraine, these headaches spoke to us of the clear desire to commit murder—a desire ^{guaranteed to} that baffled her by its total impossibility. I did not believe who had

such sentiments toward her husband, but it was doubtless another matter with her mother-in-law, the Empress Marie. That beautiful little brunette had loved her poor dead husband for the best of reasons and one of them was that she was always an Empress. Now, still an Empress, she was also ^{than good. It was} ~~less a widow~~ ^{an elevated} ~~but the~~ widow. Already, the two women were developing sentiments they were obliged to ^{pulverize in their minds,} ~~banish~~.

Poor Nicky! He is bewildered by Alix's unhappy symptoms haunted by the empty boredom, that is to say, the horror of endless official meetings, plus the fear of contending with the ~~few~~ ^{all four} huge Grand Dukes (his overbearing uncles of whom Uncle Sergei, husband to Aunt Ella, is the most formidable. Writing to this uncle about the death of his father, Nicky cannot ^{control} ~~protect~~ himself.

Nicky to Sergei, 10 April 1895, St. Petersburg

Dear Uncle Sergei,

Sometimes, I confess, tears well up in my eyes at the thought of how carefree and lovely life could have been for me for many years to come, had it not been for October 20. But these tears reveal human weakness; these are tears of self-pity and I try to dry them as soon as possible and humbly fulfill my heavy and responsible duty to Russia.

He is so afraid of Uncle Sergei, ~~and for~~ good cause. He had always sensed how jealous was Sergei of his brother Alexander, yet Sergei had always pretended to love his brother when ^{obviously} he did not. ^{Already I know that if we were looking to pull off a mighty mischief, Sergei}
 The young Tsar is much happier writing to Queen Victoria. He has ^{never} ^{lost} ^{his} ^{charm} charmed her years ago when he visited London. Everyone agreed that he and her son George looked so much alike, and George was heir to her throne ^{he}
 ever got around to dying.

^{10 (L.K.)}
 Nicky to Queen Victoria, May 1895, St. Petersburg

... In answer to your second letter mentioning the articles about England in the Russian papers, I must say I cannot prevent people from putting their opinion openly in the newspapers. How often have I not been worried to read in English gazettes rather unjust statements in connexion with my country! Even books are being constantly sent to me from London, misinterpreting our actions in Asia, on interior politics, etc. I am sure there is as little hostility intended in these writings as there is in the above mentioned ones.

Nicky

By the middle of May, Alix was free of the migraines and could enjoy the weather again.

*Nicky, Diary, 14 May 1895, St. Petersburg: [in Alix's hand]
 A half year now that we are married, how immensely happy you have made your Wify you cannot think. God bless you.*

my own, true, beloved husband—daily purer, stronger, deeper.

She is also pregnant, and in another entry in Nicky's diary (1 June 1900), she adds:

*My sweet old darling manykins, Wify loves you so deeply
and strongly, you are my one and my angels, what intense
happiness. . . ours. . . our very own. . . what happiness could
be greater; only Wify must try and be as good and kind as
possible lest another little person suffer for it. 4 big KISS*

This is June, but the baby will not be born until November. ^{After} ~~Is she~~
removing her body from contact with him until after
the baby is born (see above)
calling off all sex until then? (I was obliged to go back to the little myste of
the migraines.

In truth, the real problem was that I did not feel comfortable in my
comprehension of their love. How much was ~~genuine, how much was~~
exaggerated? None of us were ever ready to admit as much to ourselves, not
certainly to the Maestro, but the presence of real love often introduced a dull
spot upon the customary clear lens in our powers of analysis. We could

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penetrate every aspect of false ~~or overinflated~~ love, ^{with confidence} we could ~~play many games~~.

on a man or woman's feelings with such confidence, we had ~~for this~~ that we did not

even the need to capture ~~or cajole~~ them into becoming ^{as} our clients. ~~Our~~ task of

being in love leaves the average man or woman wide open to angels and

demons, ^{to} transports and ^{to suspicious} envies, beatitudes and/or heartbreaks, ^{and} are all at the edge

of the heart, indeed, some of the sharpest engagements ever fought between the

Cudgels and ourselves involve the ecstasies and viscissitudes that ~~there are~~

pullulate among lovers, ^{especially} in the early stages. We are truly demons at

converting the sensitivities of love to the all-out imperatives of lust, ^{where we} ~~are in command~~ (except for those special occasions when God decides lust will be beneficial ^{for} ~~us~~ ^{or} ~~close~~).

It is a curious contest. The angels have powerful sweets to offer, and we

know how to inspire jealousy, doubt, distrust, even intensity of momentary

revulsion toward the beloved. I would say that we possess more

improvisational skills than even the most gifted of the Cudgels, but we do lack

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one quality which I hesitate to confess, even hate to confess although I must,

^{or} what I offer will make no great sense. It is that I know everything about

(I can ~~hardly~~ hardly bear to make such a confession in love but Love itself. I can recall nothing of my existence as human not even

whether I ever ^{did} existed in that state, although for some reason I am certain that I

(but
+
s
true)

was indeed, at one time, a man, but this I can say--I have never known ~~love~~ e. I

can even expatiate upon its properties and tendencies, its dilemmas

dissipations, even the reasons for its augmentation or disappearance. I can tell

you everything about it except for some knowledge ^{that seems to be} missing at the core. It is

that I cannot distinguish true love from its most developed and artistic

substitutes.

Witness, then, my confusion before Nicky and, particularly, Alex. I

could begin to comprehend him. Given his ^{situation} ~~looks~~ he needed love the way

others require blood.

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But Alix? I could not say whether she was a rare if somewhat silly and tasteless princess, but truly in love, or whether ^{her own} a rarefied species of nymph as hysteria was ^a her guide to extraordinarily intense ~~pleasure~~ heights of passion, pleasure, and devotion.

Given, however, that curious line in her letter, "Willy must try and be as good and kind as possible lest another little person suffer for it," I came to a conclusion. She was declaring a ^{temporary} moratorium on sex, ~~when it was not necessary.~~

On many a milk-run, I had watched many a pregnant woman enjoying the act even in their eighth or ninth month. Of course, Alix was preparing for the heir to be born, the next Tsar, and one ^{wouldn't dare to bruise} couldn't have any rumpus attending to the development, but still, ^{June to November} I leaned now to the hypothesis that she had strained mightily to rise to the passionate heights she deemed necessary for this first period of their marriage, but that done, and the heir-to-be ^{now} nicely in place, she

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was ready to take a rest, yes, we must not do it "lest another battle must

suffer."

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are only present temporarily
I would not wish my readers to forget ~~for an instant~~ that the Germans
~~are only present temporarily~~
~~are not~~ at the center of my interest. *whereas* Adolf Hitler is ~~at~~ the core of my motive in

writing this book, *so* it may be wise to remind ourselves that Kaiser Wilhelm II

was also very much in Nicky's mind. This Kaiser, whom Hitler was later to

look upon as *the* a fool, who had *helped to lose* lost World War I for Germany, had ~~abdicated~~ *abdicated*

Nonetheless, he
~~to spend his last futile years in exile in Holland,~~ was still connected to Adolf by

way of an English philosopher named Houston Chamberlain who was a great

Wagnerite and married, indeed, to Wagner's daughter, Winifred. In 1923

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English was not perfect, but his ideas were obviously not at all unimportant to him.

Kaiser Wilhelm II to Nicky, 14 September 1895, Jagdhaus Romberg

Dearest Nicky,

God knows that I have done all in my power to preserve the European Peace, but if France goes on openly or secretly encouraged like this to violate all rules of international courtesy and Peace in peacetime, one fine day, my dearest Nicky, you will find yourself nolens-volens suddenly embroiled in the most horrible of wars Europe ever saw. Which will be by the masses and by history perhaps be fixed on you as the cause of it. Pray don't be angry, I perhaps hurt you quite unintentionally, but I think it my duty to our two countries and to you as my friend to write openly. Think of the awful responsibility for the shaking bloodshed.

IND

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Now goodbye, dearest Nicky, best love to dear Alex, and best love ever
your fond devoted and faithful friend and cousin,

Willy

Double-space

Kaiser Wilhelm II to Nicky 13 October 1895 Neues Palais Potsdam

Dearest Nicky,

W.D.
That it is not the fact of a "Rapport" or friendship between Russia and
France that make me uneasy--every sovereign is sole master of his country's
interests and he shapes his policy accordingly—but the danger which is
brought to our Principle of Monarchism through the lifting up of the Republic
on a pedestal. The constant appearance of Princes, Granddukes, statesmen,
generals at reviews, burials, dinners, races—with the head of the Republic or in
his entourage makes Republicans—as such—believe that they are quite honest,

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excellent people with whom Princes can concoct and feed at home. Now that is the consequence in our different countries? The Republicans are Revolutionists de nature and treated—rightly so—as people who must be shot or hung, [but] they tell to our other loyal subjects, "Oh, we are no dangerous bad men, look at France! There you see the Royalties hobnobbing with the Revolutionaires!" Don't forget that Faure—not his personal fault—sits on the throne of the King and Queen of France by the grace of God whose heads Frenchman Republicans cut off. The blood of their Majesties is still on that country!

END

Look at it, has it since then ever been happy or quiet again? Has it not staggered from bloodshed to bloodshed? Nicky, take my word on it the Curse of God has stricken that People forever! We Christian Kings and Emperors

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have one holy duty imposed on us by Heaven, that is to uphold the Principle

"von Gottes Gnaden," [by the grace of God.]

Your most devoted and affectionate friend and cousin

Willy

CAD

~~Willy~~
 If there is no record of any reflection
 by Willy to this weighty ~~letter~~ ^{German}
 so filled with ^a spirit of ~~discovery~~ ^{discovery}
~~about~~ ^{war and} ~~black revolution~~ ^{to come}
~~the new year~~
 It is possible ~~that~~ ^{the} ~~in~~ ^{is} ~~paying~~ ^{no}
^{Willy's reply is a gloomy German and}
 attention. Felix is more than frequent
 in belly is huge for so long a season,
 and they are all ~~waiting~~ ^{the} ~~birth~~ ^{of}
 the heir. The young man's baby will ~~be~~ ^{all}
 become the treasure to Willy.

It is the mark of their breeding, indeed
 it is virtually the honor of the Romanovs,
 that ~~no disappointment is expressed~~ ^{no disappointment is expressed}
 when the infant is born.
 For it is a truly a strapping ten-pound
 infant whose christening is ~~OK~~ ^{OK}.

Indeed, Willy's love is ~~so~~ ^{so} ~~direct~~ ^{direct}
 that his relief is pure. He wishes the ~~all~~ ^{all}
 the infant ~~all~~ ^{all} is safe!