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~~touch and hearing, were always at a level of exquisite readiness—no, we call upon such faculties only when urgently needed to learn a good deal about a man or woman in a few moments. Here, however, as I must repeat, one was not able to approach. There were far too many Cudgels. Once again, I had to rely on the secondary materials that smaller devils had extracted from the numerous clients who dwell in the lower and middle reaches of the palaces of St. Petersburg and the churches of the Kremlin.~~

~~This, then, is what I learned from these more or less academic resources. Needless to say, I am hardly speaking of texts or of libraries. There was, however, a fund of copied material that had been collected by royal valets, chambermaids, and house servants who had become our clients, a full flow, indeed, of the most useful gossip and insights. It seemed~~

as if during this epoch, everyone in every royal family of Europe was writing letters to their parents, children, aunts and uncles, cousins, and intimates. In addition, they all kept diaries. The Tsarevitch, soon to be Nicholas the Second, had made an entry every day from boyhood on, and by the time of the Coronation he was so close to Alix (his Tsarina Alexandra) that she was always by his side, literally. His diary was not only exposed to

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Nonetheless, the boldness of such an assumption was disturbing.

Was He senile? When, on occasion, I find myself near the sea, it becomes difficult to believe that God is suffering any loss of His powers. Similar sentiments can also be aroused by a fine field, a rocky crag, or the ~~fast~~ retort of the heavens when lightning is followed by thunder. Again, a similar conclusion arises on witnessing a ~~memorable~~ ^{peerless} sunset. One could even speak of the dazzlements of light on wet grass when ~~the~~ dew is on the ground ~~in~~ ^{at} early morning.

Of course, He could have fashioned all of 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~~ ^{The skies and the waters}

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~~them by His humans~~. Did He now brood on the possibility that these human Creations had become His least successful? Were we now awash in the dithering of a divinity whose powers were not only old but askew? This Nicky and Alix—they seemed so naïve, so unfitted for the vast project they were to expedite. 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, as well as their letters to each other were well protected from scrutiny when, in fact, a copy of the key to this diary—courtesy of the second valet—had been in our possession for years and, now that she had joined him, I could peruse all of their old letters as well. Indeed, they even put numbers on the envelopes—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. If I now present a small record, not

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even a hundredth of 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 ~~monarchial~~^{royal} dilemmas awaiting them. Indeed, I had to wonder all over again whether the Dummkopf was still in command of minimal acumen. The question might as well have risen to a fever in me—why was God giving so much importance to Nicky and Alix?

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.

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." I like it so awfully, especially the melody of the bird and the fire! Now the Nibelungen

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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, after all, has so often visited with Queen Victoria, her own fabulous grandmother.

~~Nonetheless, Nicky's English is ~~one level better~~~~

That was in 1889. By June, 1894, they have managed to pass through a great emotional obstacle. To ~~be~~ ^{become} betrothed, she has had to give up her Lutheranism for Russian Orthodoxy. Of course, her older sister, Ella, even more beautiful than Alix, had already converted years ago in order to marry the Grand Duke Sergei Romanov, ~~a~~ ^{and he was the} brother of Nicky's father, Tsar Alexander III. So it was not as if there were no precedent for taking so major a leap from the strictures of Luther to the sacraments of the Moscow churches. ~~But for years~~ ^{Yes}, Alix's fear of moving from her first ~~nest~~ ^{fortress} of piety did stand very much in the way. She was as good as wed to Lutheranism, ~~until~~ ^{until} Ella ~~did her best to cut through a few knots.~~ ^{Ella} She assured her younger sister that the two religions were not all that different. ~~That~~ ^{It} was a large hypothesis, but then, theology—much of which, we have designed—has its talents for designing astonishing exits from its own ~~impossible~~ ^{philosophical} cul-de-sacs.

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~~Ella was doing her best to take advantage of every piece of dogma that was ready to be bent, but Alix was rigid with piety. Conversion, consequently, was slow and tricky.~~

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

**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.**

The campaign succeeded. Finally Alix agreed 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 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**

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love you my darling!!!!

Be it said, I took pains to count the exclamation marks. Is it not, after all, ^{sure} a rare point of kinship ^{between us?} ~~I can feel with him?~~ The observant reader may have noticed how fond I am of such punctuation myself, particularly at the end of a parenthesis!! (Interruptions of ~~one's~~ ^{the} attention should pretend, at least, to be vital!)

Four months later, Nicky's father is grievously ill. Alix, writing in Nicky's diary, 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 Nicky's anguish. 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

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weak! Our only reliance and hope is in the Mercy of the Lord, let His will be done!

~~This branch~~ ^{was}
I could not help but note how completely ~~royalty~~ ^{are} groomed to respect the Lord's will. But then, that Will when it appears to people is so often our voice ~~speaking~~ ^{speaking} in the guise of the Lord, ~~this particular~~ ^{this ability to speak} manipulation is indeed one of our delights, ~~how~~ ^{smug} our clients become at those moments. And ~~how~~ ^{weak} satisfied ~~we become~~ ^{by} the success of our deception.

~~It does not~~
Royalty needs belief ~~no~~ ^{to} matter from whom it comes. How can they not? Their lives are so peculiar. Living in near total ~~isolation~~ ^{isolation} from common experience, painfully sensitive to the need for proper conduct, and invariably drawn to ~~the corrupt~~ ^{its opposite} (what with the opportunities they are ~~given~~ ^{provided}) they tend to believe that ~~any~~ ^{the} disruptive events which occur in their lives ~~have nothing to do with them~~ ^{a product of} but are 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.

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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 explosion went off, given its rough, ready, and untutored placement, the impact spewed upward rather than ~~outward~~ downward. As a result, no one in the royal family was critically injured by the blast. The roof of the railroad car began, however, 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, too, did Nicky believe that Alexander was a saint. Nicky was short like his Danish mother, and revered his father's physical power. All through his adolescence, Nicky ^{had} worked at body-building with weights, but he remained 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, married to Nicky's sister, Xenia, was his closest friend. Sandro had his own memoirs and I looked at the entry for October 20, the date of Alexander III's death:

"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

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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 may be worth including a letter from Kaiser Wilhelm II to Nicky, which was sent on 27 October 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 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.

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 an uncle to Nicky: he certainly loves him as much or more than any of these Grand Dukes, who are a big, powerful lot, and not, I would say, unavailable to us in more 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,

(Alexander the Third's brothers)

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uses at this time as a sexual deviant, a
 after all, what is known now in America as a closet homosexual. It is the
gentle man at the closet. He spends time in Turkish baths.
 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

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

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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, for us, the worst to deal with, the slowest.~~

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.

The ceremony was enough to make me feel wistful (a rare experience for a devil.) Nonetheless, I felt sad as well since I could hardly enjoy the emotion in full. How much it meant to those who watched! If the Tsar was the nearest Russian to God, then what could be of more importance than to commit to a wife, a Tsarina, who would bear His sons and so allow for the family line to continue to satisfy the High Deity.

It was, of course, a huge display, and I was offered many impressions
by our ^{resident} ~~loyal~~ Russian agents (a good year and a half, ^{by now} ~~of course~~, after the
event) of how it had been ^{back on} ~~that~~ November 14 of 1894, when the marriage
took place. To those of us who had been brought to Russia for the
Coronation and were in need of background, these resident devils ^{did} ~~offered~~ us
a set of memories vivid enough to ^{provide us with} ~~assume~~ the confidence that we had been
there, ^{and so} I can say that ~~(in comparison to other such vast events)~~ the great
rooms of the Winter Palace were, on this occasion, so filled with ^{notable}
^{spectators} ~~appropriately garbed~~ men and women that I would calculate over 10,000
^{people} ~~humans~~ were there in all their finery. Mind you, there were no seats. The
Russians understand that ceremonial occasions do well to be uncomfortable.
^{devotional services} ~~Let such events~~ prove as harsh on the body as ^{let the elevated} ~~devotional services~~ where the
hordes ⁱⁿ ~~in~~ the church ^{must} ~~must~~ stand for several hours while interminable
^{meanwhile} ~~and~~ the music continues, powerful and sad, yet in its
way, compelling, even majestic, due to the very depths of the liturgical
monotony. It is as though the deepest and most meditative groans of Jesus
Christ in extremis on the Cross are there to be heard again.

Ten thousand of the strong, powerful, and wealthy stood therefore in place while the ceremony continued, an assembly of the highest ~~military,~~ generals, admirals, and various hierarchies of upper and lower officers, as well as each and every last lady of St. Petersburg (as well as those from Moscow) who had ever been presented at Court, and all the dignitaries from the First, Second, Third and Fourth Class of the bureaucracies, plus a full medley of Mayors from large and small cities and towns, plus all too many of the new Russian businessmen, not to mention Senators and 60 or 70 maids of honor all dressed alike, ~~and so looking much like a gaggle of little girls.~~

Lord Carrington has a nice comment here:

One maid of honour was so old that she was propped up against a wall and finally a chair was brought for her in which she was placed until required.

One of our English devils, well installed in Queen Victoria's court, reported to us that the old Monarch was heard to exclaim on reading this, "Oh, these Russians, animals all! Poor Alix, she will need every bit of the fortitude one has implanted in her! Or, so I hope!"

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Carrington proved his sense of pomp in describing the climax of the wedding.

The Emperor in a very plain uniform walked with the Bride who looked simply magnificent--on her head she wore a circlet of diamonds with a diamond top which made it into a crown--2 long curls like the Princess of Wales used to wear on her shoulders, a splendid necklace and ornaments--and an enormous mantle of cloth of gold lined with ermine. She looked the perfection of what one would imagine an Empress of Russia on her way to the altar would be and moved along quite simply and with great dignity. She makes very marked bows with her head when she greets anyone, and this is much noted and appreciated.

Our devils, never in the least generous about such matters (except when protecting a client) remarked that this bobbing of her head was reminiscent of the pouter pigeon!

The ring was placed on the Bride and Bridegrooms' fingers, and then they walked 3 times around the altar, and knelt in front of it--gold crowns being held over their head the whole time. The Bride was proclaimed

Empress at five minutes past one.

I now had a slightly better notion of why the D.K. was so committed to Russia. How ~~these~~ ^{these} people believed in Him! One could say the same for many a church group in America, but the differences were significant even then. In the states all the emphasis is on the Son. Americans live, dream, argue, and search for a closer relation to Jesus. (It is as if He is out there ^{was trying} with little to do but wait for their approaches.) And the Father, ~~was~~ ^{is} to that subtle degree, ~~is~~ ^{except} superannuated, His name ~~not~~ ^{is} that much invoked ~~but~~ ^{except} for funerals ~~or~~ ^{on} catastrophes. Otherwise, it was all about Jesus, ~~and~~ ^{and} given my recent ~~and~~ ^{most contemporary} years in America as a young student from Berlin named Dieter, I can say it is still the same in half of that vast, inchoate, ~~monotonous~~ ^{endlessly patriotic and} technological land. "Boy," say half the Americans, "if your faith is not in Jesus, ~~then~~ ^{your} ass is in jeopardy."

Forgive me, I digress. I am obviously not too happy an American if I have become so idle as to be reduced to writing this most subversive ~~novel~~ ^{tract}. Of course, ~~even~~ ^{back also} then I felt out of my element. ~~Russia was~~ ^{Russians were} not for me. ~~Of course, that was for other reasons~~ ^{of late} They were so much more intense than the Germans and Austrians with whom I was ~~familiar~~ ^{familiar}. One need only return

to that grave ceremony when Nicky and Alix walked around the altar three times. Yes, the D.K. could enjoy that. For the Russians, such numbers are ^{great} as powerful, yet as intimate as the faces of beasts who visit Russians in their dreams. Yes, they were proclaiming the Trinity, and with such a great catch in their heart.

Such thoughts reminded me of a letter that dear, sweet, shy, silly, imperious Alix (with her as yet undeveloped need to control all before her-- a need yet to prove as rigid and throbbing as an unsophisticated but untrammelled penis—yes, a letter Alix had already written six months earlier when she and Nicky were first betrothed. Alrcady, she sensed that her mother-in-law, Marie, that sweet little Danish Empress, the then-Tsarina, would yet be a thorn in her breast. On the 15th of April, 1894, Alix sent ^{Marie} her message from the Palais Edinbourg, Coburg:

Darling Motherdear,

Nicky tells me I may call you so, oh thank you so much--you are too kind and good to me. How can I thank you enough for the magnificent present you were so awfully kind to send me? It is much too beautiful for me.

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Later, after many thanks for the gift and the letter that accompanied it,

Alix writes:

He is in church now, and whilst he is kneeling there,
my thoughts and prayers are with him. With God's help,
I will soon learn to love his Religion too, and I am sure he
will help me. But I must not bother you with a long
letter.

With my fondest love to dear Father, I am, Darling
little Motherdear,
Your deeply affectionate and
Dutiful Child Alix

I had to smile at the reference to Darling little Motherdear. ^{E. then} Alix was
still so simple that she did not realize to what degree beautiful women who
are not tall dislike being reminded of this by beautiful women who tower
above them. Or was Alix en route to disliking the Empress Marie to the
point where her head would begin to ache with ~~so many~~ choked-up furies
^{had she not been able to}
~~that she could not avoid this obvious pitfall?~~

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After their wedding, *written then in 1894*
Needless to remark, I read all the letters my agents could supply to me, and
~~in the period after their wedding,~~ but a close study opened ~~many~~ questions.

~~Just~~ ³ 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 26th of November, off by themselves in Tsarskoe Selo, he
remarks,

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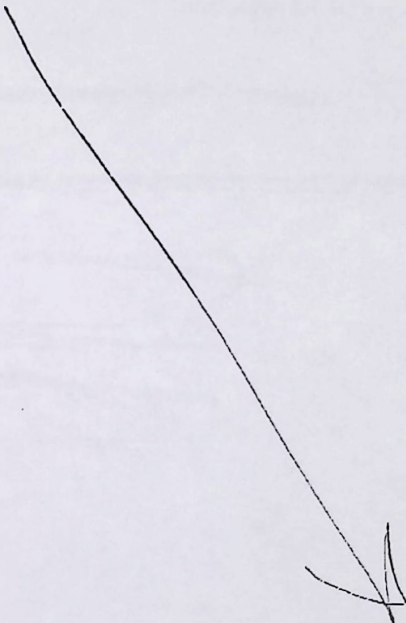
Such a dear place for us both; for the first time since
our wedding we have been able to live alone and live
truly soul-to-soul,

Immediately this is followed by Alix's reaction to reading these 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 monumetal confidence. She was so certain 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!**

What ~~veriginous~~ ^{mutually} degrees of self-intoxication were being brewed!
Rarely had I encountered newly-weds who were as infatuated. Like very
young lovers, they ^{spoke and wrote as if they} had no need to distinguish between the wild honey of
first sex and the nectars of ^{pure} ^{honest} love. But Nicky, after all, was twenty-six,
and no neophyte, not to sex. (His military days had offered their expected
bounty.) In contrast, Alix was very much a virgin. ^{In addition to} She possessed the usual
host of imaginative fears, ^{she still lived with} ~~plus~~ the prodigious woe of losing her mother at
the age of six. Add ^{devotion} ~~her~~ religious intensity and ~~her~~ social timidity—I found

it difficult on the basis of these letters to accept her romantic intensity at the full value of her words. They were so over-ventilated, ^{There was such an} with the absolute necessity to be profoundly in love.

Of course, I could not be certain. ^{Nicky?} He ~~was~~ the Emperor of a vast land teeming with deep spirits and untamable barbarians. He could not pass by a copse of forest without thinking that this loveliness was his ~~land~~. His Land. He was one of the chosen of God. 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, ^{Madness lies ahead if you} who will go mad if he cannot find a drink. Love was ^a the mountain ^{and} on which he must always be climbing upward ^{on it}.

If I had been capable of real compassion instead of possessing the keen ability to simulate its presence for my clients whenever they were 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 ~~letters written a year and a half before~~ their letters in 1904. There was still the damnable question pending—what was the Dummkopf up to? It was conceivable that in His Desire to make their marriage transcendently effective in its beatitude, God was supplying

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them with the most incredible physical ecstasies. How could I know? I
could not come near. I had only ^{these} ~~these stolen~~ fragments from their letters,
and the hypothesis that if God was going to choose a Tsar, He would be
ready to deliver His wisdom and His strength against the no small skills of
the Maestro ~~as well as our aptitudes to subvert His Plans.~~

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Nicky was, of course, all but totally unprepared to become the Tsar. Alexander the Third had been so big and healthy for so long that it had been assumed by all he would rule ^{so} ~~at least~~ 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 ^{a catamite} ~~his homosexual~~ heart but was ready (as we see by his near-sacrilegious use of capitals) to deify ^{Nicky} him and his father ^{right} ~~halfway~~ up the mountain to Godhead.

X

KR's close concern

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

feelings:

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.

the Grand Dukes

He had been closeted with the Grand Dukes before he gave the speech. *for these last heads of the local councils, and* They had assured him that he must follow absolutely in his father's *Nicky, never forget! Your was* absolute footsteps. *His* grandfather, Alexander II, had been assassinated, *Your* and his father had had such a close call. Russia *is* like a mad giant, they *Our water is* assured him, and so vulnerable to *can* grand mal that one misstep could release a *So drink up!* frenzy. *It is the* Absolute allegiance to autocracy. *the only formula.*

From Nicky's speech to the representatives of all *these large and small* 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

X

late father.

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

Then, as the first winter of their marriage came to an end, Alix, like many another good Victorian woman, began to develop symptoms. We counted on that. Symptoms were our stock-in-trade. Proper Victorian women were never easy to invest, but we could always send a shiver into their defense of personal virtue by touching their dreams with one or another unholy, or, worse, a smelly thought. That was enough to spoil many an hour in their marriages.

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.

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.

X

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 baffle 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 no more than ^{an} ~~a~~ highly elevated widow. Already, the two women were developing sentiments they were obliged to ~~grind to bitter powder~~ ^{pulverize} in the mills of their minds.

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 huge Grand Dukes, all of 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 himself.

Nicky to Sergei, 10 April 1895, St. Petersburg

X

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. For good cause. He had always sensed how jealous was Sergei of his brother, the Tsar Alexander III, yet

Sergei had always pretended to love him, ^{But Sergei did not love Alexander} when, obviously, he did not. Or so

I was told by the local devils. Already, I had decided that if we were looking to pull off a mighty mischief, Sergei might be of assistance.

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 his first cousin} and her son George looked so much alike, ^{very} and George was heir to her

~~throne~~, should Victoria ever get around to dying,

Nicky to Queen Victoria, May 10 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

X

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~~ 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.

X

This is June, but the baby will not be born until November. Is Alix removing her body from contact with him until after the baby arrives? I was obliged to go back to the little mystery of the migraines.

In truth, the real problem was that ^{still} I did not feel comfortable in my comprehension of their love. Again and again, I had to ask: 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 ^{of} in our powers of analysis. We could penetrate every aspect of false love, we had, for that matter, not even the need to have such people as clients--the state of being in love leaves the average man or woman wide open to angels and demons, to transports and to suspicions, beatitudes and/or heartbreaks. Indeed, some of the sharpest engagements ever fought between the Cudgels and ourselves involve the ecstasies and viscissitudes that pullulate among lovers in the early stages. We are truly demons at converting the sensitivities of love to the all-out imperatives of lust where we come into command except for those special occasions when God decides lust will be beneficial for one of His chosen.

X

It is a curious contest. The angels have powerful sweets to offer, and we know how to inspire jealousy, doubt, distrust, even 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, or what I offer will make no great sense. It is that I know everything about love but Love itself. I can hardly bear to make such a confession, but it is true. I can recall nothing of my existence as human, not even whether I ever did exist 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 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, Alix. I could begin to comprehend him. Given his situation, he needed love the way others require blood.

X

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 rarefied species of amorous hysteria was hiding ~~an~~ extraordinarily intense heights of the passion to control every aspect of 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 temporary moratorium on sex. On many a milk-run, I had watched many a pregnant woman enjoying the act even in her 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 such *an important and quintessential* development, but still!—no sex from 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 in place, she was ready to take a rest, yes, we must not do it "lest another little person suffer."

X

-17-

I would not wish my readers to forget that the Romanovs are only present temporarily at the center of my interest, whereas Adolf Hitler is 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 fool who had helped to lose World War I for Germany, 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 devoted racist, and an intense believer in the putative superiority of the

X

German soul, was happy to pass on the baton to Hitler. What Chamberlain had envisioned in his master work--Foundations of the Nineteenth Century--might now actually come to pass through the exceptional if most uncharacteristic figure of this new leader who was ready to pay a visit to a great mind. Chamberlain's vanity may still have been intact, but he was virtually on his death-bed when they met. Nonetheless, his support offered substance to Adolf. Chamberlain had been, after all, the intellectual who had been most favored, honored, and respected by Kaiser Wilhelm the Second whose own ideas (as will be suggested in the next two letters) were waiting for a philosopher to enrich 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**

X

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*

~~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

X

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*

~~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?*

~~again?~~

Has it not staggered from bloodshed to bloodshed? Nicky, *take*

~~take~~

my word on it, the Curse of God has stricken that People forever! We Christian Kings and Emperors have one holy *duty*

~~duty~~

imposed on us by Heaven, that is to uphold the Principle "von Gottes Gnaden." [by the grace of God.]

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22

21.

"Christ be with you," KR had said, and there was everything in the

world to contemplate ~~over that~~ *concerning those few words,* ~~if the human wish was clear enough, the~~

there is, after all, such a

labyrinth of relations between the Maestro and the Dummkopf, including as well as the endless compromises, brutalities,

~~and inevitable compromises,~~ *who given the* our best devils, and the Lord's most superior Cudgels, which, in many a case

local cage, are often

~~were~~ His Russian Orthodox priests, still alive, still human, but wholly

common, their big nose

designed to become Cudgels so soon as they ~~exhibited~~ *pass through* their mortality,

converted in advance so to speak by the unwavering intensity of their living out,

Among ~~us~~ *our own* schools of diabolical scholars who contemplated the

their mysteries of priestly behavior, regimen, sanctification, and, often, most

their difficult of all, ceremonial procedure, *which they identify with* the relics employed in the

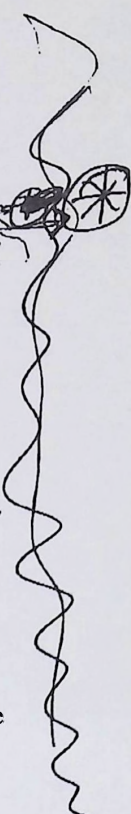
~~service~~, the thrice-holy icons, the instruments of ascension, the chain, the

their cross, the Crown, the insignia on standards, the sceptre to be placed in ~~his~~ *the Tsar's*

then the Throne itself, right hand and the orb in his left, and most resonant with blessings and

as well as, and not least, the hallowed Throne curses from both sides, the throne itself, upon which the Tsar Michael

power, deceits, by reversals, and with it all, real ongoing negotiations between



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23

~~Fyodorovitch~~ *who, then, can disagree that that was*
~~The confessor~~ sat in the year 1613, ~~Who could measure the intensity of the~~

the intensity of belief that
~~belief that~~ an indispensable magic power derived directly from God ~~and that was~~

was
~~and indeed~~

?
 entered the pores, the flesh and the heart of the Tsar. I could not even state

to a certainty how much of this immanence belonged to the ~~D.K.~~ and how

Dummkopf

h. m. d. g. and (secretly!)
~~how~~ much derived from our own E.O. There was no question in my mind that

our Maestro wanted Nicky to believe in the God whom he ~~already believed~~

expected

out
 was there for him going through *her mutual* ~~his~~ paces with his bride, hearing the

Metropolitan Palladius state aloud: "The seal of the Gift of the Holy Spirit,"

hearing the hundred and one bells and *her* ~~a~~ hundred and one salvos fired off by

cannon to herald the perfection of the Unction, hearing the conclusion of

this Eucharist whose origins were embedded in the bowels (theological

also
 structures ~~have~~ bowels) of Orthodox Russia. Recognizing our own

knowledge, since there are hours when well-protected material objects can

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*Follows p1487**At 2*

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

~~This he writes on the eve of the 14th when the Coronation will take place. And, as usual, his instinct for an occasion is sensitive and precise~~

~~If the last time I had seen Nicky was from a distance while watching the procession to the Kremlin on May 9th, I know that I failed to mention how many duties would weigh on how much had been done to change the face of Moscow, nor how many~~

~~individual preparations had been made. Indeed, the six days from May 9 to~~

May 13th had been plunged into work of the worst sort for our Nicky. On

the 10th of May and the 11th, he had had to hold ceremonial receptions,

celebrated
long list of ambassadors and envoys ~~extraordinary~~ had been presented to him

him as the final step
many with reputations carefully underlined ~~him~~
him on lists carefully underlined to show those to whom he must pay the

for him in advance
~~distinguished~~ influences to whom he must pay the greatest attention. As he complained to Alix afterward and to his mother, as

*Between pp 15 & 16
there is an insert
page to go on p 15.*

NOTE

*Pays
① to 90*

Chapter 19

(82)

~~25. 1st~~ 25,

Those of us who were privileged to be near enough to Nicholas II

when he appeared at the public celebration at the far end of Khodynskoe

Field were able by means of the narrow and much beleaguered passage ^{by Maestro} ~~at~~

~~still possessed into~~
~~had obtained~~ his mind ~~to~~ to report, or so at least it came back to me —

~~it~~ because I am obliged to admit that not all of our Devils are paragons of

accuracy no matter how the Maestro seeks to enforce such standards) ^{that} But it

~~was enough in any event for me to say this much. Merely, he was certainly~~

Nicky was
 pale as he approached the field, *He had a*
~~He was~~ pale with rage, the fury at the

peasants comparable to Alix's. How could they be so pushy, so grabby so

stupid, so ungrateful, so ridiculous, so self-destructive and yet

it was his
~~that you had~~

duty to

(forgive them? He felt a disappointment close to rage at the ineptitude of the

police. But most of all and this was most enervating—hence the pallor of his

skin—he was furious at himself for the general impotence of his

at the

own performance
~~condition~~

He was not supposed to *attend to* know such things yet why had he not paid more

attention to how many soldiers would be there? *for* How much protection to the

Kiosks? How much of this, *could have been prevented, he did not*
~~how much of that he could not know~~ Later that

night, before he went to sleep, he wrote a letter to himself in his diary which *and it*

received the following day from our Valet-in-Waiting, *contents on the*
~~so to speak~~ And it is

certainly
~~most certain~~ worth quoting here:

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just 29
H. (there)No, not all are ready for Holy Unction, and yet I have to wonder where is not

the genius of Russian Orthodoxy. The length of the service captured others

in the congregation who had
 who had less interest in the beginning. It was as if one never knew when in
 far certain when a heart was about
 to be captured by the T.V. or the Evil One
 Russia when one would have their attention and when one did not. So I will

So I will ^{pass} ~~pass~~ ^{steps} ~~pass~~ ^{took up}
 pass over all the ~~pages~~ that the Tsar and the Tsarina after the descent of the

dais. The floor was covered with crimson velvet and decorated with golden

^{pages}
 A measured three ~~steps~~ ^{pages} here, and three ~~steps~~ there, the Trinity to be

commemorated again and again, and again. For even those who believed in

the Father and in the Son were never certain about the Holy Ghost, or such

was our assumption, for the Maestro often hinted to us that we had quite a

purchase on ^{this} the last element of ~~the Trinity~~ and I know

the Maestro always spoke well
 of the Trinity as if he knew what
 others did not. I have seen the
 best man at a wedding who, unknown
 to all but the bride, has had carnal
 knowledge of her, and there is a
 subtlety in the posture of such a fellow
 that ~~is~~

I do not find dissimilarity from the subtle
 appreciation for the Maestro as a always
 offering to the Holy Ghost.

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22.

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On it went, the Tsar and his retinue moved from Assumption Cathedral to Archangel Cathedral where the service was repeated with a few variations, and then on to the Annunciation Cathedral ~~with~~ as much again.

I was told that after all this, the Tsar and Tsarina were in need of rest, but were facing the ceremonial meal in the Hall of Facets. ~~It is certain~~ in his diary, he would write that night, "All that happened in the Assumption Cathedral, though it seems but a dream, is not to be forgotten for life." To that he added, "We went to bed early." Whether this was from fatigue, or a resurgence of lust from the good and happy sense that it was done, and they would never have to do it again, for indeed, it was a day like no other, I could not begin to say. Never more, however, would I have liked to have been in their room as they lay down. At the least, I would have learned how much the corrupt sanctity—I use precisely those two words—the corrupt

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sanctity of those holy and possibly captured Metropolitans had to do with

Nicky and Alix's raptures and how powerful ^{had been} the emanations from the relics

themselves ^{with what resonance had they adorned} that adorned the hall as historical ornaments. It would have

~~the Cathedral, Still, I would never know~~

~~been a study for me, or at least the opening of an inquiry, into how much~~

~~force of emanation molded into historical ornaments could muster. I would~~

~~never know. I would not learn on this occasion, it was obvious, how much~~

~~the~~ ^{the} symbolic gestures performed by ~~the~~ ^{those} most accomplished priests,

~~could serve as enhancements to the would-be ever-soaring sweet bubble of~~ ^{had been able to} ~~happy~~

concupiscence. I did not know, and so suffered all the pains of a devil. For

we are very little without our knowledge.

If it seems strange that I am so hungry always to learn more, if this

seems at odds with the more common notion that Gods and devils have all

power, I would suggest that the handiest rule of thumb for comprehending

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my intelligence, my percipience, my mental powers, is to assume that I am

just as much brighter and more knowledgable than the *most mentally* brightest, most-

a accomplish (that) knowledgable human one can think of is brighter than a *in his or her time* human clod in a *poor day*

poorly-endowed school. *I still cannot* And yet, this distance established, it hardly means

~~that I~~ begin to command answers to the vast questions that bedevil

humankind. Even as a devil, I am *can be humanned* bedeviled by the extent of all I do not

know.

In any event, busy with my own preparations for the Peasants'

Festival, I missed the banquet that evening. ~~This was the banquet~~ in the

Palace of Facets ~~that night~~. It was the event of the season *not only for* for all of Russia.

Moscow but all of Russia for to be present on such an evening. ... It was one of those *social occasions* events which

where I can offer great profit for the future for those who are invited. *if you happen to be invited - an orgy* There was not *to be - speak for the richest of the* so to speak for the *you can rich. There had not been* richest of the *another event in the previous ten years so important to attend and then of*

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of course, there was great souring of many of the most ambitious souls, ^{who were} not happy with where they had been seated. If this ^{was} any (long before the notion of the A list ^{versus the} and the B list) was introduced to ^{this occasion} American society, the category may have been invented ^{for} American fancy dinners, it was present here. One knew if one had ^{certainly}

become one of the ^{most} distinguished guests to be invited from other ^{on taking one's seat and studying the rest} of the room exactly how high ^{at so high} countries, or up from the provincial capitals, or indeed, exactly how high

was one's status ^{Indecently} in Saint Petersburg or here in Moscow, because only the

most elevated of the guests were fortunate enough to sit ^(be placed) in the same room as

the Tsar and Tsarina and the Dowager Empress. Only ^{cream of the} the diplomatic corps,

^{was there} the high clergy, the Holy Synod, the very highest of the court ladies, the

Grand Marshall and the Grand Master of Ceremonies, ^(those) ^{were granted} could be seen in the

^{such a privilege} ^{first room} The others, ah, yes, the B list, were sent ^{packing?} to the Hall of

Saint Vladimir. Nonetheless, the souring of ambition is the last emotion

even the ^{most naive} ^{simplest} of monarchs wishes to arouse among his guests, and so

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Nicholas made a point of visiting ^{every table in company} in procession with Alexandra, ~~the Dowager~~

^{on the} Dowager Empress, the Queen and Prince of Naples, the Duchess of

Edinburgh, the Crown Prince of Sweden, Duchess Elisabeth and Grand

^{yes, table by table all the way and were in turn} Duke Alexei, through the Hall of Saint Vladimir, where they were greeted

with an ovation that could come only from ~~those hungry and near-distorted~~

^{the parched} ^{had been} throats of people who were ready to assume that after all they had gone

through to obtain ~~such~~ a high invitation, they were to be forgotten after all.

What relief, what applause!

I will not describe the meal. Since I do not need to eat except when

^{corporeal} present in ~~human~~ form, it would give me small pleasure to describe the gold

plates, the French dishes, ^{several} the species of caviar, the wines, ^(French and Russian) the vodka, the

champaign. All banquets, no matter how fancy, succeed finally in

generating the same gastric acids in those who have been blessed by an

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(Be it added that) ^{each}
invitation. For those who ~~are~~ not used to being waited on by three servants
wearing red coats with gold trim, the ~~repart~~ ^{been the same since 1812}
for each individual guest, may have been the ones who enjoyed the meal the
most. ~~was enjoyed, and superbly so.~~
~~most. The servants were red coats splendid with gold trim, white breeches,~~
~~white stockings, splendid pastel vests. The menus were written in Russian~~
~~and lavishly illustrated. The Imperial Band played throughout the course of~~
the dinner, ^{sparkled} The Palace of Facets gleamed. It was the culmination of the

Feast of Lights that had given such splendor to the city.

In that era, journalists were ^{not} encouraged to be dithyrambic, and ~~not~~
~~encourage~~ to speak ill of the great and mighty, and certainly not on formal
occasions. And so they all declared that this Coronation and the banquet in
the Palace of Facets would ^{never} ~~not~~ be forgotten by posterity. The Palace of
Facets was, after all, famous for its celebrations. Only the most important
events in Russian history could open its doors. Ivan the Terrible and Peter

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translation
the Great had had their *panquets* here. One of the reporters from America,

bewitched by the honor of attending the Imperial feast (although I never

learned whether she was in the front room or the back) concluded her piece

adding
by saying: "So ended the greatest day of our lives, the one to be

remembered for years. We all felt that we had seen the grandest sight that

could possibly be imagined and we were pretty lucky mortals, everything

had gone so beautifully." She all but said, and then she did say, that such

beauty introduced one to the realm of the gods. " Another reporter, an

American, John Logan, stated that he now believed not only in Russia's

immense potential for grandeur, but ~~also~~ in Nicholas' legitimacy. If there

were those who *would* *his opinion* *add that* challenged ~~that~~ *legitimacy* he, for one, would now ~~say~~

Russia was more prosperous and more peaceful than she had been for years.

total face value
~~Reporters had more pity in those days~~ "The restless *was* of the radicals seems

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39

X

~~Game 11~~
~~say that there are few pleasures so keen and so difficult to achieve as the~~
~~corruption of a priest and the ensuing ability we develop to control of him.~~

~~Finally, such remarks are trivial.~~ ~~12/20/04~~ One of the damnable disadvantages

of being a devil is the manner in which we become obsessed ^{just say} (with details,
^{Prey to such avidity,}
 particularly ~~frustrating details.~~ ~~By that measure,~~ we can often appear

ridiculous to ourselves. In this narrow sense, we are more intolerant of our

^{most} faults than ~~are humans, but that may be due~~ ~~unsure how to finish~~ ~~leave a~~

~~space~~

~~note that new chapter may start here. Rape ends.~~

Novel notes 2 12/22/04

Novel notes 2

23

~~22~~~~23~~~~Chapter 21~~

One item that gave great pleasure to the Maestro was that Nicky was

not very Russian. Indeed, French ambassador, Maurice Paleologue, on

giving his opinion to intimates, ^{thought} stressed the opinion that Nicky's heritage

was probably ^{Romanov} one hundred and twenty-eighth Russian at best, ^{and this was} provided

that Catherine the Great, who ^{so only if} was certainly a German princess to begin

with, had actually sired her son ^{Paul} ~~Son~~ through Peter III. ^{a bona-fide Romanov} He believed,

^{Paleologue believed} however, that the natural father was ^{a gentleman} someone named Count Saltykov rather

than Peter III. If that was true, there was no Russian blood in Nicholas ^{Romanov} at all.

^{Indecently} extraordinary conclusion, but no matter how the matter was measured, ~~no~~

~~was hardly less German and to stress the matter, Alex was hardly less~~

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~~Russian than he was, and could blame Peter the Great since whose time the~~

~~were all but German, having~~
~~over and over~~

~~the Romanovs had married again and again and again with German nobility.~~

~~joke in Moscow circulated, I suspect by some of us, was that Nicholas,~~

~~Given such confusion in his blood, to be seen as the epitome of Russia when~~

~~he wasn't Russian at all, could only exaggerate his inability to make up his~~

~~mind—poor fellow! Small wonder that he was told, nay, encouraged by his~~

~~closest advisors to tell the Tsar something when they spoke to the throne of—~~

~~"the rights of public individuals and institutions to be firmly safe-guarded,"~~

~~his answer became, "I shall maintain the principle of autocracy as firmly and~~

~~unflinchingly as it was preserved by my unforgettable dead father,"~~

~~that were not enough, he was encouraged to go further and tell them that~~

~~their determination held within itself hateful seeds of destruction, and he~~

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kept repeating the words, "senseless dreams," as his opinion of their
 aspirations.

Having learned this much, I was ready for more. Certain elements in

the massive preparations building toward the Coronation were now

becoming more clear to me. Why the D.K. was totally devoted to Nicholas

the Second's future was never altogether clear to me, but I could see why so

many of the grand Dukes and his most influential advisors had come to the

conclusion so soon as Alexander III died and it was known that Nicky and

Alix would be the rulers that the event had to be presented and paraded as

an occasion incomparably beyond anyone's experience. The advisors were facing

profound problems. If Russia was immensely rich, it was also

extraordinarily poor. What was relevant to America, the United States and

the more developed European countries, far behind by any measure of wide

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scale industrialization. Foreign investment was crucial. ~~the country was~~ ⁴³

ever to become an economic equal to Europe and America. ~~So this~~

So, foreign investment was
investment was encouraged at a prodigious rate. It went up from 100

million rubles in 1880 to 200 million ^{one} a decade later, and by 1900 at the turn

of the century, it was up to 900 million (I will not count the horses for those

tubers.) ^{to attract (large foreign investment)} Crucial to the development had been the completion of the Trans-

^{for that} Siberian Railroad. ~~for once completed,~~ it would open trade to the Far East ~~and~~

^{thereby multiply the volume of} ~~would multiply the power of their trade relations with Europe. To~~ ^{earn the}

^{enough foreign funds} ~~to build that railroad, however, Russia had been obliged, or so~~

^{most of ~~the~~ grain to the west} ~~insisted the relevant ministers, that a great portion of their grain had to be~~

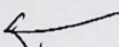
~~exported to the West~~ The Minister of Finance under Alexander III, Ivan

^{Grain was} ~~the only commodity they could~~ Vyshnegradskii, declared that the country had no other choice. ~~That~~

^{industrialization vis a vis Europe was at such a low point that grain was}

~~(1-2-2-113011)~~

84


 Nicky Diary May 18, 1896 Moscow

Bold face incident

Up until now, thank God, everything went perfectly but today a great sin has taken place. The crowd spending the night on the Khodinka meadow, in anticipation of the distribution of food and mugs, broke through the barrier and there was a terrible crush, during which it is terrible to say about ~~1200~~ ¹³⁰⁰ people were trampled!!

The news left an ugly impression. We lunched at 12:30 and then Alix and I went to the Khodinka to be present at the unfortunate popular celebration. There was nothing in particular to see; we looked out ~~from~~ ^{from} the pavilion over the huge crowd surrounding the platform, where the orchestra kept on playing the national anthem and "Be Glorified!"

(85)

Needless to say this entry ^{had been} ~~was~~ written at night and very much in the ^{echo} ~~bitter~~ spirit of the aftermath. I kept studying the phrase 'a great sin has taken place'

but could not determine what he meant. Nor, so far as I know, could any of

our people. Word of the disaster was to have endless repercussions which I

will discuss in their place. But I can say for the moment that ^{on the} ~~that~~ afternoon

of May 18, after the disaster,

(Sergei Witte, who may have been the most intelligent, cold blooded, and

effective statesman ^{possessed} ~~that~~ Russia had ^{at} the time, sent word to the ^{TS} ~~TS~~ ^{war} and his

ministers (Witte never knew ^{whose} ~~who~~ he was reaching nor with what accuracy of

message) "In respect for the dead all festivities should be cancelled

immediately." Then he added, "Most particularly, the French Ambassador's

Ball." That was to take place on the same night. It was the largest social

event of the Coronation. In return, the Governor General of Moscow, Grand

Duke ^{Sergei} ~~Sergei~~ Alexandrovich, who was married to Alix's sister Ella and had