The Squire's Daughter by Alexander Pushkin

This work is free of known copyright restrictions.

Contents
Alexander Pushkin
Epistolary Novel
Chapter 1
Chapter 2
Chapter 3
Chapter 4
Chapter 5
Chapter 6
Chapter 7
Chapter 8
Chapter 9
Chapter 10
Chapter 11
Chapter 12
Chapter 13
Chapter 14
Chapter 15
Chapter 16
Chapter 17
Chapter 18
Chapter 19
Chapter 20
Chapter

would not obey her, but in a few minutes she could trace the letters pretty well.

"How wonderfully we get on, faster than by the Lancaster method."

Indeed, at the third lesson Akulina could read words of even three syllables, and the intelligent remarks with which she interrupted the lessons fairly astonished Alexis. As for writing she covered a whole page with aphorisms, taken from the story she had been reading. A week passed and they had begun a correspondence. Their post-office was the trunk of an old oak, and Nastia secretly played the part of postman. Thither Alexis would bring his letters, written in a large round hand, and there he found the letters of his beloved scrawled on coarse blue paper. Akulina's style was evidently improving, and her mind clearly was developing under cultivation.

Meanwhile the new-made acquaintance between Berestoff and Muromsky grew stronger, soon it became friendship. Muromsky often reflected that on the death of old Berestoff his property would come to Alexis, who would then be one of the richest landowners in that province. Why should he not marry Lisa? Old Berestoff, on the other hand, though he looked on his neighbour as a lunatic, did not deny that he possessed many excellent qualities, among them a certain cleverness. Muromsky was related to Count Pronsky, a distinguished and influential man. The count might be very useful to Alexis, and Muromsky (so thought Berestoff) would probably be glad to marry his daughter so well. Both the old men pondered all this so thoroughly that at last they broached the subject, confabulated, embraced, and severally began a plan of campaign. Muromsky foresaw one difficulty—how to persuade his Betty to make the better acquaintance of Alexis, whom she had never seen since the memorable dinner. They hardly seemed to suit each other well. At any rate Alexis had not renewed his visit to Prelutchina. Whenever old Berestoff called Lisa made a point of retreating to her own room.

"But," thought Muromsky, "if Alexis called every day Betty could not help falling in love with him. That is the way to manage it. Time will settle everything."

Berestoff troubled himself less about his plans. That same evening he called his son into his study, lit his pipe, and, after a short silence, began:

"You have not spoken about the army lately, Alexis. Has the Hussar uniform lost its attraction for you?"

"No, father," he replied respectfully. "I know you do not wish me to join the Hussars. It is my duty to consult your wishes."

"I am pleased to find you such an obedient son, still I do not wish to force your inclinations. I will not insist upon your entering the Civil Service at once; and in the meantime I mean to marry you."

"To whom, father?" exclaimed his astonished son.

"To Lisa Muromskaia; she is good enough for any one, isn't she?"

"Father, I did not think of marrying just yet."

"Perhaps not, but I have thought about it for you."

"As you please, but I don't care about Lisa Muromskaia at all."

"You will care about her afterwards. You will get used to her, and you will learn to love her."

"I feel I could not make her happy."

"You need not trouble yourself about that. All you have to do is to respect the wishes of your father."

"I do not wish to marry, and I won't."

"You shall marry or I will curse you; and, by Heaven, I will sell and squander my property, and not leave you a farthing! I will give you three days for reflection, and, in the meanwhile, do not dare to show your face in my presence."

Alexis knew that when his father took a thing into his head nothing could knock it out again; but then Alexis was as obstinate as his father. He went to his room and there reflected upon the limits of parental authority, on Lisa Muromskaia, his father's threat to make him a beggar, and finally he thought of Akulina.

For the first time he clearly saw how much he loved her. The romantic idea of marrying a peasant girl and working for a living came into his mind; and the more he thought of it, the more he approved it. Their meetings in the wood had been stopped of late by the wet weather.

He wrote to Akulina in the roundest hand and the maddest style, telling her of his impending ruin, and asking her to be his wife. He took the letter at once to the tree trunk, dropped it in, and went much satisfied with himself to bed.

Next morning, firm in resolution, he started early to call on Muromsky and explain the situation. He meant to win him over by appealing to his generosity.

"Is Mr. Muromsky at home?" he asked reining up his horse at the porch.

"No, sir, Mr. Muromsky went out early this morning."

How provoking, thought Alexis.

"Well, is Miss Lisa at home?"

"Yes, sir."

And throwing the reins to the footman, Alexis leapt from his horse and entered unannounced.

"It will soon be over," he thought, going towards the drawing-room. "I will explain to Miss Muromsky herself." He entered … and was transfixed. Lisa!… no, Akulina, dear, dark Akulina, wearing no *sarafan* but a white morning frock, sat by the window reading his letter. So intent was she upon it that she did not hear him enter. Alexis could not repress a cry of delight. Lisa started, raised her hand, cried out, and attempted to run away. He rushed to stop her. "Akulina! Akulina!" Lisa tried to free herself.

"*Mais laissez moi donc, Monsieur! mais êtes vous fou?*" she repeated, turning away.

"Akulina! my darling Akulina!" he repeated, kissing her hand.

Miss Jackson, who was an eye-witness of this scene, knew not what to think. The door opened and Grigori Muromsky entered.

"Ah!" cried he, "you seem to have settled things between you."…

The reader will excuse me the unnecessary trouble of winding up.

Related Posts:

1. **The Queen of Spades by Alexander Pushkin**
2. **The Shot by Alexander Pushkin**
3. **The Undertaker by Alexander Pushkin**
4. **Alexander Pushkin**

← Previous Post

Next Post →

Leave a Comment

Your email address will not be published. Required fields are marked *

Type here..

Name*

E-mail*

Post Comment »

Copyright © 2023 The Fresh Reads