

ACT ONE

~~WIFE But you stopped. If he went on and on, don't stop. Either go on and on or let's go to bed.~~

~~HUSBAND Well, he said how much he envied me. How much he wanted someone to look at him the way you look at me.~~

Start
WIFE How does he know how I look at you?

Scene 1
~~HUSBAND Well, that day in the gardens. He must have been looking at you when you were looking at me. It sent a tingle through my whole body.~~

WIFE The way I looked at you?

~~HUSBAND Exactly, my precious.~~

WIFE But you were looking at him. So you couldn't have seen how I was looking at you. As a matter of fact, I was looking at the flowers because he made me nervous the way he kept avoiding looking at me . . . You must have tingled for some other reason.

~~HUSBAND It's getting rather confusing . . . The point is, he found you fascinating. I thought it would please you.~~

WIFE Well, it doesn't. I would rather you didn't tell me such stories . . . Are you planning to see him again soon?

~~HUSBAND Tomorrow for lunch.~~

SEXTON (*Puts his hands up*) I pray for you. I pray to the Saints and to our dear Lord in Heaven . . . Be gentle with me. Spare me pain.

Start

Man. 2

KURYATIN My dear Sexton, we are living in an age of advanced science. In skilled hands, there is no longer need for pain. If it's gentleness you want, it's gentleness you'll have . . . Now, are you ready? (*The SEXTON nods*) Good. Now please open your mouth so I can examine you. (*The SEXTON stiffens*) Come, come, open your mouth, please. (*The SEXTON grips the chair, but won't open his mouth*) My dear Sexton, inexperienced as I am, I know it's essential you open your mouth. It's mandatory to all work concerning the mouth to have it open first. It would be highly impractical for me to pull your tooth from the out side. Now, please open up. (*The SEXTON opens his lips, but his teeth remain clenched*) Not the lips, the entire mouth. I don't want to brush your teeth, I want to examine them.

SEXTON Will you be gentle?

KURYATIN Didn't I promise you I would?

SEXTON As a child I was promised many things I never got.

KURYATIN There is no pain connected to this part. This part is merely an examination to find out what must be done where and how. NOW OPEN UP! (*The SEXTON opens his mouth*) Good. Now, let's have a look. (*KURYATIN peers in. The SEXTON groans in pain*) Ahh, yes. There it is. There's the ugly little fellow . . . You're a nasty one, aren't you?

SEXTON Stop talking to it! Don't make friends with it, pull it out!

THE GOOD DOCTOR

Start
Mans. 3

MISTRESS Julia! (JULIA stops, turns) Come back here.
(She goes back to the desk and curtsies again) Why did you thank me?

~~JULIA For the money, ma'am.~~

MISTRESS For the money? . . . But don't you realize what I've done? I've cheated you . . . *Robbed* you! I have no such notes in my book. I made up whatever came into my mind. Instead of the eighty rubles which I owe you, I gave you only ten. I have actually stolen from you and still you thank me . . . Why?

~~JULIA In the other places that I've worked, they didn't give me anything at all.~~

MISTRESS Then they cheated you even worse than I did . . . I was playing a little joke on you. A cruel lesson just to teach you. You're much too trusting, and in this world that's very dangerous . . . I'm going to give you the entire eighty rubles. (*Hands her an envelope*) It's all ready for you. The rest is in this envelope. Here, take it.

~~JULIA As you wish, ma'am.
(She curtsies and starts to go again)~~

~~MISTRESS Julia! (JULIA stops) Is it possible to be so spineless? Why don't you protest? Why don't you speak up? Why don't you cry out against this cruel and unjust treatment? Is it really possible to be so~~

THE GOOD DOCTOR

Star +
Memo. 4

MISTRESS That's not a satisfactory answer, Julia . . .
Why would I make a note of giving you ten rubles if
I did not in fact give it to you, eh? . . . No answer?
. . . Then I must have given it to you, mustn't I?

~~JULIA Yes, ma'am. If you say so, ma'am.~~

MISTRESS ~~Well, certainly I say so. That's the point of~~
this little talk. To clear these matters up . . . Take
twenty-seven from forty-one, that leaves . . . ~~four-~~
~~teen, correct?~~

~~JULIA Yes, ma'am.~~

(She turns away, softly crying)

MISTRESS What's this? Tears? Are you crying? Has
something made you unhappy, Julia? Please tell me.
It pains me to see you like this. I'm so sensitive to
tears. What is it?

~~JULIA Only once since I've been here have I ever been~~
~~given any money and that was by your husband. On~~
~~my birthday he gave me three rubles.~~

MISTRESS Really? There's no note of it in my book.
I'll put it down now. *(She writes in the book)* Three
rubles. Thank you for telling me. Sometimes I'm a
little lax with my accounts . . . Always shortchang-
ing myself. So then, we take three more from four-
teen . . . leaves eleven . . . Do you wish to check my
figures?

~~JULIA There's no need to, ma'am.~~

THE GOOD DOCTOR

~~GENERAL (Wiping himself) You germ spreader! You maggot! You insect! You are lower than an insect. You are the second cousin to a cockroach! The son-in-law of a bed bug! You are the nephew of a ringworm! You are nothing, nothing, do you hear me? . . . NOTHING!~~

~~(CHERDYAKOV backs away, and returns home)~~

Start
Mono. 5

WRITER At that moment, something broke loose inside of Cherdyakov . . . Something so deep and vital, so organic, that the damage that was done seemed irreparable . . . Something drained from him that can only be described as the very life force itself . . . (CHERDYAKOV takes off his coat. He sits on the sofa, head in hands) The matter was over, for once, for all, forever. What happened next was quite simple . . . (CHERDYAKOV lies back on the sofa) Ivan Ilyitch Cherdyakov arrived at home . . . removed his coat . . . lay down on the sofa—and died!

(CHERDYAKOV's head drops and his hand falls to the floor)

Blackout

ACT ONE

Start
Monologue

CHERDYAKOV (*On top of the situation now*) What is it? . . . What is it, you ask? You sit there behind your desk and ask, What is it? You sit there in your lofty position as General and Minister of Public Parks, a member in high standing among the upper class and ask me, a lowly civil servant, What is it? You sit there with full knowledge that there is no equality in this life, that there are those of us who serve and those that are served, those of us that obey and those that are obeyed, those of us who bow and those that are bowed to, that in this life certain events take place that cause some of us to be humiliated and those that are the cause of the humiliation . . . and still you ask, "WHAT IS IT?"!

GENERAL (*Angrily*) *What is it?* Don't stand there gibbering like an idiot! What is it you want?

CHERDYAKOV *I'll tell you what I what! . . .* I wanted to apologize again for sneezing on you . . . I wasn't sure I made it clear. It was an accident, an accident, I assure you . . .

GENERAL (*Stands and screams out*) *Out! Out, you idiot! Fool! Imbecile! Get out of my sight! I never want to see you again. If you ever cross my line of vision I'll have you exiled forever . . . WHAT'S YOUR NAME?*

CHERDYAKOV Ch—Cherdyakov!
(*It comes out as a sneeze—in the GENERAL's face*)

THE GOOD DOCTOR

HUSBAND I tried to make that clear. I again urged him to come home to dinner with me. But he said he can't face people. He is so depressed he can't stay home . . . He paces in the public garden where we met him, every night.

WIFE What time?

HUSBAND Between eight and nine. (*Gets into bed*) By the way, we're invited to the Voskovecs tomorrow. Is eight o'clock all right for you?

WIFE No, I'm visiting Aunt Sophia tomorrow. She's ill. I'll be there at nine . . . or a little after.

(*The lights go down on the bedroom and come up on the gardens where PETER is strolling, waiting for his prey*)

Start
Mon. 7

PETER (*To the audience*) Please, no applause. I couldn't have done it alone. I share that honor with my good friend and collaborator, her husband. He wooed her so successfully that there is no carriage fast enough for her to be in my arms. She ran all the way . . . Observe! (*The WIFE, wearing a cloak, rushes into the garden and then stops breathless*) Now for the conclusion . . . You *will* understand if I ask you to busy yourselves with your programs or such. These next few moments are private and I *am*, after all, a gentleman. (*He turns to the WIFE*) My dear . . . My sweet, dear angel. At last I can speak the words that I've longed—

~~WIFE No! Not a word! Not a sound! Please . . . I couldn't bear it . . . Not until you've heard what's in my heart. (*She takes a moment to compose herself*)~~