

## VII

"No, no, and no!" Bormenthal said insistently. "Be so good as to tuck it in."

"Oh, for God's sake," grumbled Sharikov.

"Thank you, Doctor," Philip Philippovich said warmly, "I'm tired of reprimanding him."

"I will not let you eat until you tuck it in. Zina, take away his plate."

"What do you mean, 'take away'?" Sharikov protested unhappily. "I'll put it on right away."

With his left hand he shielded the plate from Zina, and with the right he stuffed the napkin into his collar, which made him look like a customer in a barbershop.

"And use a fork, please," added Bormenthal.

With a deep sigh, Sharikov began to fish for pieces of sturgeon in the thick sauce.

"Another shot of vodka?" he said tentatively.

"Don't you think you've had enough?" asked Bormenthal. "You've been overdoing it lately."

"D'you stint me?" inquired Sharikov with a sullen look.

"You're talking nonsense . . ." Philip Philippovich broke in sternly, but Bormenthal interrupted him.

"Don't worry, Philip Philippovich, I'll manage. You are talking rubbish, Sharikov, and the most outrageous thing is that you're so categorical and positive about it.

Of course, I don't stint you, particularly since the vodka isn't mine, but Philip Philippovich's. Simply, it's unhealthy. That is one reason. And the other is that you behave indecently even without vodka."

Bormenthal pointed to the taped-over sideboard.

"Zinusha, may I have more fish, please?" said the professor.

Sharikov, meantime, stretched his hand toward the carafe and, with a sidelong glance at Bormenthal, poured himself a glassful.

"And you must offer it to others, too," said Bormenthal. "First you serve Philip Philippovich, then me, and, last, yourself."

A faint, sarcastic smile touched Sharikov's lips as he poured the vodka into the glasses.

"All those rules you keep to, always on parade," he said. "Napkin here, tie there, and 'pardon me,' and 'please,' and 'merci'—but for the real thing, it isn't there. Torturing your own selves, just like in Tsarist times."

"And what would 'the real thing' be, if one may ask?"

Sharikov did not answer Philip Philippovich. Instead, he raised his glass and said:

"Well, here's to you . . ."

"And you, too," Bormenthal replied with some irony.

Sharikov poured the contents of the glass down his throat, screwed up his face, brought a piece of bread to his nose, sniffed it, then swallowed it, and his eyes filled with tears.

"Long experience," Philip Philippovich said curtly and almost absently.

Bormenthal gave him a surprised, sidelong look.

"Pardon me . . ."

"Long experience!" Philip Philippovich repeated with a bitter shake of the head. "Nothing to be done here—Klim."

Bormenthal peered sharply into his eyes and asked with lively interest:

"Do you think so, Philip Philippovich?"

"Think? I am certain."

"Can it really . . ." Bormenthal began and stopped, glancing at Sharikov, who frowned suspiciously.

"*Spater* . . ." said Philip Philippovich in an undertone.

"*Gut*," replied the assistant.

Zina brought in the turkey. Bormenthal poured Philip Philippovich red wine and offered it to Sharikov.

"Not for me. I'll stick to the vodka." His face became shiny, sweat stood out on his forehead, he began to feel jolly. Philip Philippovich was also mellowed by the drinks. His eyes cleared up, and he looked more benevolently at Sharikov, whose black head gleamed in the napkin like a fly in cream.

Bormenthal, on the other hand, was stimulated to activity.

"Well, and what shall we do this evening?" he asked Sharikov.

The latter blinked and said:

"The circus, I think, best of all."

"Every day the circus," Philip Philippovich remarked benignly. "It's pretty boring, to my mind. In your place, I would go to the theater for once."

"I won't go to the theater," Sharikov said peevishly and made a sign of the cross over his mouth.

"Hiccuping at the table spoils other people's appetite," Bormenthal commented mechanically. "If you excuse me . . . Why don't you like the theater?"

Sharikov looked through the empty glass as through binoculars, pondered a while, and thrust out his lips.

"Nothing but fooling around . . . Talk, talk . . . Counterrevolution, that's what it is."

Philip Philippovich threw himself against the gothic

back of the chair and roared with laughter, so that his teeth glittered like a golden picket fence. Bormenthal only shook his head.

"Why don't you read something," he suggested. "Otherwise, you know . . ."

"Eh, I read and read . . ." answered Sharikov and with a quick, greedy movement poured himself half a glass of vodka.

"Zina," Philip Philippovich cried anxiously. "Take away the vodka, dear. We don't need it any more. And what do you read?"

A picture suddenly flashed through his mind: an uninhabited island, a palm tree, a man in an animal skin and cap. "I'll have to get him *Robinson* . . ."

"Oh, that . . . What d'you call it . . . the correspondence of Engels with that . . . what the devil's his name—Kautsky."

Bormenthal's hand with a piece of white meat on a fork stopped midway, and Philip Philippovich spilled his wine. Sharikov expertly downed the vodka.

Philip Philippovich put his elbows on the table, peered closely at Sharikov, and asked:

"And what is your opinion of it, if I may ask?"

Sharikov shrugged.

"I don't agree."

"With whom? With Engels, or with Kautsky?"

"With neither," answered Sharikov.

"That's marvelous, I swear. Everyone who says the other . . . And what would you propose yourself?"

"What's there to propose? . . . They write and write . . . congress, Germans . . . who knows them. . . Makes your head spin. Just take everything and divide it up . . ."

"I thought so," exclaimed Philip Philippovich, slamming his hand on the tablecloth. "Exactly what I thought."

"Do you know how to do it, too?" asked Bormenthal with curiosity.

"How, how," Sharikov began, growing voluble after the vodka. "It's plain enough. What do you think? One man spreads himself out in seven rooms and has forty pair of pants, and another hangs around garbage dumps, looking for something to eat."

"With regard to the seven rooms," Philip Philippovich inquired, narrowing his eyes with pride, "you are hinting at me, of course?"

Sharikov hunched his shoulders and said nothing.

"Very well, I am not against division. Doctor, how many patients did you send away yesterday?"

"Thirty-nine," Bormenthal replied instantly.

"Hm . . . three hundred ninety rubles. Well, let's divide the loss among the three men. We won't count the ladies—Zina and Darya Petrovna. Your share is one hundred thirty rubles, Sharikov. Kindly pay up."

"A fine thing," Sharikov became alarmed. "What's this for?"

"For the faucet, and for the cat," Philip Philippovich roared suddenly, losing his ironic calm.

"Philip Philippovich," Bormenthal cried anxiously.

"Wait. For the havoc you wreaked, which made it impossible for me to see my patients. It's intolerable. A man jumps around the whole house like a Neanderthal, breaks faucets. Who killed Mme. Polasikher's cat? Who . . ."

"And the other day, Sharikov, you bit a lady on the stairs," Bormenthal hastened to add.

"You are . . ." growled Philip Philippovich.

"She banged me on the jaw," squealed Sharikov. "It's my jaw, not the government's!"

"Because you pinched her breast," shouted Bormenthal, turning over a wine glass. "You are . . ."

"You are on the lowest rung of development," Philip

Philippovich shouted still more loudly. "You are a creature just in the process of formation, with a feeble intellect. All your actions are the actions of an animal. Yet you permit yourself to speak with utterly insufferable impudence in the presence of two people with a university education—to offer advice on a cosmic scale and of equally cosmic stupidity on how to divide everything . . . And right after gobbling up a boxful of toothpowder too . . ."

"The day before yesterday," confirmed Bormenthal.

"There!" thundered Philip Philippovich. "Just get it straight! Keep your nose out of things—and, incidentally, why did you rub off the zinc ointment from it?—and remember that you must keep quiet and listen to what you are told. Try to learn, try to become a more or less acceptable member of socialist society. And, by the way, what scoundrel supplied you with that book?"

"Everybody's a scoundrel to you," said the frightened Sharikov, overwhelmed by the two-sided attack.

"I can guess," Philip Philippovich exclaimed, flushing angrily.

"Well, so what? So Shvonder gave it to me. He is no scoundrel . . . To help me develop . . ."

"I see how you are developing after Kautsky," Philip Philippovich screamed in a falsetto, his face turning yellow. He furiously pressed the button in the wall. "Today's case demonstrates it perfectly. Zina!"

"Zina!" cried Bormenthal.

"Zina!" howled the terrified Sharikov.

Zina came running. She was pale.

"Zina, out there in the waiting room . . . It is in the waiting room?"

"It is," Sharikov answered submissively. "Green, like vitriol."

"A green book . . ."

"Now they'll burn it," Sharikov cried desperately. "It belongs to the government, it's from the library."

"It's called *Correspondence*—between what's his name, Engels, and that devil . . . Into the stove with it!"

Zina flew out.

"I'd hang that Shvonder, I swear I would, on the first dry branch," cried Philip Philippovich, furiously driving his fork into a turkey wing. "The astonishing swine, like an abscess on the house. It's not enough for him to write all sorts of senseless libels in the newspapers . . ."

Sharikov began to squint at the professor with ironic malice. Philip Philippovich, in turn, sent him a side-long glance and broke off.

Oh, things won't come to any good in this apartment, I'm afraid, Bormenthal suddenly thought prophetically.

Zina brought in a round tray with a coffee pot and a rum cake, yellow on one side and browned on the other.

"I won't eat it," Sharikov declared at once with a threatening air.

"No one asks you to. Just behave decently. Doctor, please."

The dinner ended in silence.

Sharikov pulled a crumpled cigarette from his pocket and began to smoke. After the coffee, Philip Philippovich looked at his watch, pressed the repeater, and it delicately chimed eight-fifteen. Philip Philippovich leaned against the gothic chair back, as his custom was, and reached for the newspaper on the small table.

"Doctor, would you please take him to the circus? But, for God's sake, take a look at the program first—make sure they have no cats."

"How do they let such trash into the circus?" Sharikov wondered morosely, shaking his head.

"They let in all sorts," Philip Philippovich responded ambiguously. "What do they have?"

"In Solomonsky's Circus," Bormenthal began to read, "there are four . . . Yuesems, whatever they are, and a man at dead center."

"What sort of Yuesems?" Philip Philippovich inquired suspiciously.

"Heaven knows. First time I've seen the word."

"Well, then you'd better see what's at Nikitin's. We must make sure."

"At Nikitin's . . . At Nikitin's . . . hm . . . 'elephants, and the ultimate in human agility.'"

"I see. What will you say to elephants, my dear Sharikov?" Philip Philippovich asked Sharikov doubtfully. The latter was offended.

"What do you think, I don't understand anything? A cat is something else. Elephants are useful animals," he answered.

"Very well, excellent. If they are useful, go and take a look at them. And listen to Ivan Arnoldovich. No conversations in the buffet! Ivan Arnoldovich, I beg you, don't give Sharikov any beer."

Ten minutes later, Ivan Arnoldovich and Sharikov, in a cap with a duckbill visor and a heavy coat with the collar turned up, went off to the circus. The apartment was quiet. Philip Philippovich went into his office and turned on the lamp with the thick green shade. The huge room was peaceful in the muted light, and he began to pace back and forth. The tip of his cigar glowed for a long time with a pale-green fire. The professor walked with his hands in his trouser pockets, and some persistent thought seemed to torment the learned brow under the thinning hair. He smacked his lips, hummed "toward the sacred banks of the Nile" through his teeth, and muttered something. Finally, he put down the cigar in an ash tray, went

to the cabinet made entirely of glass, and turned on the three powerful ceiling lights, illuminating the whole office. From the third shelf in the cabinet, Philip Philippovich took out a narrow jar and began to study it, frowning, against the light. In the transparent, heavy liquid, the small white lump extracted from the depths of Sharik's brain was floating, without dropping to the bottom. Shrugging his shoulders, twisting his lips and grunting, Philip Philippovich devoured it with his eyes, as though trying to find in the white floating lump the reasons for the remarkable events that had turned all life in the Prechistenka apartment topsy-turvy.

It is very possible that the learned gentleman discovered those reasons. In any event, having stared his fill at the hypophysis, he returned the jar to the cabinet, locked it, and put the key in his vest pocket. After that, he threw himself onto the leather sofa, his head drawn into his shoulders and his hands deep in the pockets of his jacket. For a long time he burned a second cigar, chewing its end to a pulp, and finally, in total solitude, green, looking like an aged Faust, he exclaimed:

"By God, I think I will."

No one answered him. All sounds had died out in the apartment. By eleven, as we know, all traffic stops in Obukhov Lane. Infrequently, the steps of a belated pedestrian were heard in the distance, tapping somewhere beyond the curtains and dying away. The repeater in Philip Philippovich's pocket tinkled delicately under his fingers. . . . The professor impatiently awaited the return of Dr. Bormenthal and Sharikov from the circus.

## VIII

No one knows what decision Philip Philippovich had come to that night. He undertook nothing unusual in the course of the following week, and it was, perhaps, because of his inaction that life in the apartment was overwhelmed with events.

About six days after the incident of the tom and the water, a young man representing the house committee came to see Sharikov. The young man, who turned out to be a woman, handed Sharikov his documents, which he immediately stuffed into his pocket. Directly after that he called Dr. Bormenthal.

"Bormenthal!"

"Be kind enough to address me by name and patronymic!" Bormenthal answered, changing in the face. It must be said that in the course of those six days the surgeon had managed to have some eight quarrels with his charge, and the atmosphere in the apartment in Obukhov Lane was torrid.

"Well, then, call me by name and patronymic too!" Sharikov replied with complete justice.

"No!" Philip Philippovich thundered in the doorway. "I will not permit such a name and patronymic to be pronounced in my home. If you want us to stop addressing you familiarly as Sharikov, both Dr. Bormenthal and I will call you 'Mr. Sharikov.'"

"I am not a mister, all the misters are in Paris!" barked Sharikov.

"Shvonder's work!" shouted Philip Philippovich. "Very well, I shall settle accounts with that rascal. While I am in my home, there will be no one here but misters! Otherwise, either you or I shall leave, and it is most likely to be you. Today I shall place an ad in the newspapers, and I shall find you a room."

"So, you think I'm fool enough to leave this place?" Sharikov replied with utmost emphasis.

"What?" asked Philip Philippovich, and changed color so violently that Bormenthal rushed up to him and took him by the sleeve with anxious tenderness.

"You know, you had better stop your insolence, Monsieur Sharikov!" Bormenthal raised his voice. Sharikov stepped back, took three slips of paper from his pocket—one green, one yellow, and one white—and, poking his finger at them, said:

"Here. Member of the tenants' association. Assigned an area of sixteen square *arshin*.\* And it says definitely: Apartment Number 5; responsible lessee, Preobrazhensky." Sharikov thought a moment, and added a phrase which Bormenthal automatically noted in his mind as new: "If you please."

Philip Philippovich bit his lip and, forgetting all caution, hissed out through it:

"I swear, I will shoot this Shvonder in the end."

Sharikov listened to these words with the keenest attention, as evidenced by his eyes.

"Philip Philippovich, *forsichtig* . . ." Bormenthal warned.

"Well, you know . . . If it's a question of such base-ness! . . ." Philip Philippovich exclaimed in Russian. "But bear it in mind, Sharikov . . . Mister, that I . . .

\* Approximately twelve square yards.

that if you permit yourself just one more insolent outburst, you shall get no more dinners or any other meals in my home. Sixteen *arshin* are delightful, but that frog-green paper of yours does not oblige me to feed you!"

Sharikov was alarmed and his jaw dropped.

"I can't go without eating," he muttered. "Where will I get my grub?"

"In that case, behave yourself!" both doctors declared in chorus.

Sharikov was subdued for the rest of the day and did no damage to anyone except himself. Taking advantage of Bormenthal's brief absence, he took possession of his razor and slashed his cheek so badly that Philip Philippovich and Dr. Bormenthal had to stitch the cut, which made Sharikov howl long and piteously, weeping bitter tears.

On the following night two men sat in the green dusk in the professor's office—Philip Philippovich himself, and his loyal and devoted assistant, Dr. Bormenthal. Everyone else in the apartment was asleep. Philip Philippovich was dressed in his azure robe and red slippers, and Bormenthal was in his shirt-sleeves and blue suspenders. On the round table between the doctors, next to the plump album, stood a bottle of cognac, a saucer with lemon, and a box of cigars. The scientists, who had filled the room with smoke, heatedly discussed the latest event. That evening Sharikov had appropriated two *chervontsy*, which he had found under the paperweight in Philip Philippovich's office, and disappeared, returning late at night, hopelessly drunk. But that was not all. He was accompanied by two unknown individuals who raised a row on the front stairs, demanding to spend the night in the apartment as Sharikov's guests. These individuals departed only after Fyodor, who had come upon the scene in a heavy

coat over his underwear, telephoned the 45th precinct of the militia. They beat an instant retreat as soon as Fyodor hung up the receiver. Following their exit, the malachite ash tray was found to be mysteriously missing from the pier-glass table in the foyer, along with Philip Philippovich's beaver hat and his cane, on which there was an inscription in gold inlay: "To our beloved and esteemed Philip Philippovich from his grateful interns, on . . ." This was followed by the Roman numeral "X."

"Who are they?" Philip Philippovich bore down on Sharikov with clenched fists. Swaying and clinging to the coats, Sharikov muttered that he did not know them, but that they were not some trashy sons of bitches, but good men.

"The most astonishing thing is that both were drunk . . . How did they manage it?" Philip Philippovich exclaimed, staring with wonder at the stand which used to hold the memento of his anniversary.

"Specialists," explained Fyodor, going back to bed with a ruble in his pocket.

Sharikov flatly denied any knowledge of the two chervontsy, mumbling inarticulately that he was not the only one in the apartment.

"Ah, then, perhaps, it was Dr. Bormenthal who pinched them?" inquired Philip Philippovich in a low but terrifying voice.

Sharikov swayed, opened his utterly glassy eyes, and offered a hypothesis:

"Maybe Zinka took'em . . ."

"What? . . ." shrieked Zina, who appeared in the doorway like a ghost in an unbuttoned blouse, her hand over her breast. "How dare he? . . ."

Philip Philippovich's neck turned red.

"Calm down, Zinusha," he said, stretching a hand

toward her. "Don't get excited, we'll take care of everything."

Zina broke into sobs, her lips quivering loosely and her hand heaving up and down over her shoulder blade.

"Zina, aren't you ashamed? Would anyone suspect you? Such a disgrace!" Bormenthal spoke helplessly.

"Oh, Zina, what a fool you are, heaven forgive me," Philip Philippovich began.

But Zina's sobs had stopped of themselves, and everybody was silent. Sharikov began to feel sick. Knocking his head against the wall, he uttered a sound—something like "ee-ee" or "eh-h!" His face blanched and his jaws began to work convulsively.

"A pail, get a pail for the scoundrel! In the examination room!"

And everybody ran to take care of the sick Sharikov. Later, when he was being led off to bed, he swayed in Bormenthal's arms and swore tenderly and melodiously, his tongue twisting over the obscenities.

The entire incident occurred at about 1 o'clock, and now it was three in the morning, but the two in the office were wide awake, stimulated by the cognac and lemon. The smoke in the room was so thick that it floated in slow, dense, horizontal layers, without a quiver.

Dr. Bormenthal, pale, with resolute eyes, raised a glass with a stem as slender as a dragonfly.

"Philip Philippovich," he exclaimed in a voice full of emotion, "I shall never forget how I came to you as a half-starved student, and you gave me a place in the department. Believe me, Philip Philippovich, you are much more to me than a professor, a teacher . . . My immense regard for you . . . Permit me to kiss you, my dear Philip Philippovich."

"Surely, my dear friend . . ." Philip Philippovich

mumbled with embarrassment and rose toward him. Bormenthal embraced him and planted a kiss on his fluffy, smoke-browned mustache.

"Believe me, Philip Philo . . ."

"I am so moved, so moved . . . Thank you," spoke Philip Philippovich. "My dear, I shout at you sometimes during operations. Forgive an old man's temper. In fact, you know, I am so lonely . . . From Seville and to Granada . . ."

"Philip Philippovich, how can you? . . ." the fiery Bormenthal exclaimed with all sincerity. "Don't speak of such things to me again if you don't want to offend me . . ."

"Well, thank you . . . Toward the sacred banks of the Nile . . . Thank you . . . And I have become very fond of you as a capable physician."

"Philip Philippovich, I say to you . . ." Bormenthal exclaimed passionately. He rushed to the door leading into the hallway, closed it more firmly, and returned, continuing in a whisper, "it is the only solution. Of course, I would not presume to advise you, but, Philip Philippovich, look at yourself, you are utterly worn out, it is impossible to go on working under such conditions!"

"Absolutely impossible," Philip Philippovich agreed, sighing.

"Well, you see, it's unthinkable," whispered Bormenthal. "Last time you said you were afraid for me, if you knew, my dear Professor, how you moved me by it. But I am not a boy, I realize myself how badly it might turn out. But I am deeply convinced there is no other way out."

Philip Philippovich got up, waved his hands and exclaimed:

"Don't tempt me, don't even mention it." The professor began to pace the room, and the layers of

smoke billowed around him. "I won't listen. Do you understand what will happen if we're caught? We'll never get away with it, even if it is our first offense, particularly 'taking into account the social origin.' Your origin isn't too suitable, either, is it, my dear?"

"Suitable! My father was an examining magistrate in Vilno," Bormenthal replied dolefully, finishing his cognac.

"There you are. It's a rotten heredity. Couldn't imagine anything nastier. But no, excuse me, mine is even worse. My father was an archpriest in a cathedral. Merci. From Seville and to Granada . . . in the quiet of the night . . . the devil take it."

"Philip Philippovich, you are a world celebrity. They wouldn't . . . And for the sake, if you'll pardon the expression, of some son of a bitch. They wouldn't dare touch you!"

"That's all the more reason for not doing it," Philip Philippovich objected pensively, pausing to throw a glance at the glass cabinet.

"But why?"

"Because you are not a world celebrity."

"Oh, I . . ."

"There you are. As for abandoning a colleague in the event of a catastrophe, and getting off safely myself on the strength of my world reputation . . . Forgive me . . . I am a Moscow scientist, not Sharikov."

Philip Philippovich proudly lifted his shoulders and began to look like an old French king.

"Philip Philippovich, ah . . ." Bormenthal exclaimed ruefully. "But what else? Wait until we succeed in turning this hoodlum into a man?"

Philip Philippovich stopped him with a gesture of the hand, poured himself some cognac, sipped it, sucked on a slice of lemon, and began:

"Ivan Arnoldovich, what do you think, do I know



anything about the anatomy and physiology of, say, the human brain? What is your opinion?"

"Philip Philippovich, how can you ask!" Bormenthal answered with strong emotion, spreading his hands.

"Very well. False modesty aside, I also think I am not the least man in this field in Moscow."

"And I think that you are the first and greatest not only in Moscow, but also in London, and in Oxford!" Bormenthal broke in fervently.

"Oh, well, perhaps. And so, I say to you, future Professor Bormenthal—no one can ever succeed in that. Definitely not. You need not even ask. You may quote me. Say that Preobrazhensky said so. Finitas, Klim!" he suddenly proclaimed in solemn tones, and the instrument case replied with a delicate tinkle. "Klim," he repeated. "Bormenthal, you are my best pupil, and also my friend, as I have become convinced today. And I shall tell you in confidence, as a friend—and, of course, I know that you will not taunt me with it: the old ass Preobrazhensky pulled a boner with this operation like a third-year student. True, it led to a discovery, and you know what this discovery is yourself," Philip Philippovich dolefully pointed both hands at the window shade, evidently indicating Moscow. "But the only result of this discovery, Ivan Arnoldovich, will be that all of us will now have this Sharik up here," and Preobrazhensky patted himself on his thick, apoplectic neck. "You may rest assured! If anyone," Philip Philippovich went on voluptuously, "would stretch me out here and give me a whipping, I swear I would pay him five chervontsy! From Seville and to Granada... The devil take me . . . I spent five years digging out hypophyses from brains . . . Do you know what work went into it—the mind could not conceive! And now I ask you—what for? So that I might one day transform a perfectly delightful dog into such filthy scum

that your hair stands up to think of it!"

"Something extraordinary!"

"Quite. And that's what happens, Doctor, when the investigator, instead of feeling his way and moving parallel to nature, forces the question and tries to raise the curtain: there, take your Sharikov and lump him."

"Philip Philippovich, but what if it were Spinoza's brain?"

"Yes!" barked Philip Philippovich. "Certainly! If the wretched mutt does not die under my knife—and you saw what kind of an operation this is. To put it briefly, I Philip Philippovich Preobrazhensky, have never done anything more difficult in my life. Certainly, it might be possible to graft the hypophysis of Spinoza or some such devil, and turn a dog into a highly advanced human. But what in hell for? Tell me, please, why is it necessary to manufacture Spinozas artificially when any peasant woman can produce them at any time? Didn't Mme. Lomonosov bear her famous offspring out in Kholmogory? Doctor, the human race takes care of this by itself, and every year, in the course of its evolution, it creates dozens of outstanding geniuses who adorn the earth, stubbornly selecting them out of the mass of scum. Do you understand now, Doctor, why I rejected your conclusions in Sharik's case history? My discovery, may it be damned, of which you make so much, isn't worth a rap . . . No, no, don't contradict me, Ivan Arnoldovich. I understand this now. You know I never throw words to the wind. Theoretically it is interesting, yes. The physiologists will be ecstatic. Moscow will go wild . . . But practically? Whom do we see before us?" Preobrazhensky pointed in the direction of the examination room, where Sharikov was taking his repose.

"An exceptional scoundrel."

"But who is he? Klim, Klim," cried the professor. "Klim Chugunkin (Bormenthal's mouth dropped open)—that's what it is: two arrests, alcoholism, 'divide everything,' my hat and two chervontsy gone (Philip Philippovich turned purple at the memory of his anniversary cane)—a boor and a swine . . . Never mind the cane, I will find it! In short, the hypophysis is a secret chamber which determines the aspect of the given human individual. The given one! From Seville and to Granada . . ." Philip Philippovich shouted, fiercely rolling his eyes, "and not the human aspect generally. It is the brain itself, in miniature. And I have no use for it, to the devil with it! I was concerned with something else altogether—eugenics, the improvement of the human species. And then I pull this boner with rejuvenation! You don't think I've been doing all those operations for the money? I am a scientist, after all."

"A great scientist!" said Bormenthal, swallowing some cognac. His eyes became bloodshot.

"I wanted to perform a little experiment, after I had first extracted the sex hormone from the hypophysis two years ago. And what did I get instead? Good Lord! These hormones in the hypophysis, oh, God . . . Doctor, I am before a hopeless dunce. I swear, I am utterly lost."

Bormenthal suddenly pushed up his sleeves and said, crossing his eyes to the tip of his nose:

"In that case, I will tell you, my dear teacher: if you don't want to do it, I shall give him arsenic at my own risk. To the devil with it, even if my father was an examining magistrate! After all, he is your own creature, the product of your experiment."

Philip Philippovich, suddenly extinguished, limp, sank deep into his chair.

"No, this I shall not permit, my dear boy. I am sixty years old, and I can advise you. Never attempt a crime,

no matter against whom it might be directed. You must reach old age with clean hands."

"But, Philip Philippovich, what if that Shvonder goes on meddling with his 'education'? Good God, I am only just beginning to realize what this Sharikov can turn into!"

"Ah! It dawned on you? And I realized it ten days after the operation. But the point is that this Shvonder is the worst fool of all. He does not understand that Sharikov is a far greater menace to him than he is to me. Today he does everything to sick him on me, without realizing that if anyone should then turn him against Shvonder himself, nothing will be left of him or his."

"But of course! Look at that business with the cats! A man with the heart of a dog."

"Oh, no, no," Philip Philippovich sang out. "You are mistaken, Doctor. In heaven's name, don't malign the dog. The cats are only temporary . . . It's a question of discipline and two or three weeks. I assure you. Another month or so, and he will stop attacking them."

"But why not now?"

"Ivan Arnoldovich, that's elementary . . . Really, why are you asking? The hypophysis is not suspended in the air. After all, it was grafted onto a dog's brain. Give it time to take properly. Today Sharikov manifests only the remnants of a dog's nature, and you must realize that the cats are the least of his sins. The whole horror, you see, is that his heart is no longer a dog's heart, but a human one. And the vilest you could find!"

Bormenthal, beside himself, clenched his strong, lean hands into fists, moved his shoulders, and said firmly:

"Of course, I will kill him!"

"I forbid it!" Philip Philippovich replied emphatically.

"But . . ."

Philip Philippovich was suddenly alert and raised his finger.

"Wait . . . I thought I heard steps."

Both of them listened, but the hallway was quiet.

"It seemed to me," said Philip Philippovich, and began to speak heatedly in German. The Russian word "criminality" was heard several times in the flow of German phrases.

"One moment," Bormenthal suddenly said and stepped up to the door. The steps could now be heard clearly, approaching the office. Besides, a voice was mumbling something. Bormenthal flung open the door and sprang back with astonishment. The utterly stunned Philip Philippovich remained frozen in his chair.

Before them, in the bright rectangle of the hallway, was Darya Petrovna, in nothing but a nightgown and with an angry, flaming face. Both the doctor and the professor were overwhelmed by the amplitude of her powerful and, as it seemed to them in the first moment of shock, entirely naked body. Darya Petrovna was dragging something behind her in her powerful hands, and this "something" resisted, trying to sit down on its rear and dragging its small feet, covered with black down, on the parquetry. The "something" was, of course, Sharikov, utterly unnerved, still drunk, tousled, and wearing nothing but his undershirt.

Darya Petrovna, grandiose and naked, shook Sharikov like a sack of potatoes, and said:

"Look at him, Mr. Professor, look at our visitor Telegraph Telegraphovich. I was married, but Zina is an innocent girl. It's lucky I woke up."

Having delivered this tirade, Darya Petrovna suddenly realized her nakedness, covered her breast with her hands, and dashed away.

"Darya Petrovna, in heaven's name, excuse us," the

scarlet Philip Philippovich cried after her, recovering himself.

Bormenthal pushed up his shirt-sleeves still higher and made a move toward Sharikov. Philip Philippovich glanced into his eyes and was appalled. "Oh, no, Doctor! I forbid it . . ."

Bormenthal took Sharikov by the collar with his right hand and shook him so violently that the shirt ripped.

Philip Philippovich rushed to stop him and began to pull the puny Sharikov away from the surgeon's clutching hands.

"You have no right to hit me!" the half-choked Sharikov screamed, sitting down on the floor and sobering up.

"Doctor!" Philip Philippovich yelled.

Bormenthal collected himself a little and loosened his hold on Sharikov, upon which the latter immediately began to whimper.

"All right," hissed Bormenthal, "we'll wait till morning. I'll teach him a lesson when he sobers up." He seized Sharikov under the arms and dragged him off to the waiting room to sleep.

Sharikov made an attempt to kick, but his legs refused to obey him.

Philip Philippovich spread his feet wide, so that the azure skirts of his robe flared out, raised his hands and his eyes to the ceiling light in the hallway, and cried, "Well, well . . ."

## IX

Sharikov's lesson, promised by Bormenthal, did not, however, take place on the following morning for the simple reason that Polygraph Polygraphovich had disappeared from home. Bormenthal flew into a frenzy of despair, called himself an ass for not hiding the front door key, shouted that it was unforgivable, and ended by wishing Sharikov to fall under a bus. Philip Philippovich sat in his office, his fingers in his hair, and said:

"I can imagine what will happen in the street. . . . I can i-ma-gine. From Seville and to Granada, good God . . ."

"He may still be at the house committee office," Bormenthal raged and ran off somewhere.

At the office he quarreled so violently with the house committee chairman, Shvonder, that the latter finally sat down to write a complaint to the people's court of the Khamovnichesky District. As he was writing the complaint, he shouted that it was not his duty to watch over Professor Preobrazhensky's ward, especially since Polygraph had only yesterday proved himself to be a crook, having taken seven rubles from the house committee, allegedly to buy textbooks at the cooperative store.

Fyodor earned three rubles by searching the house from top to bottom, but discovered no trace of Sharikov.

Only one fact was established: Polygraph had left at dawn in his cap, muffler and coat, with all his documents, a bottle of ashberry brandy from the sideboard, and Dr. Bormenthal's gloves. Darya Petrovna and Zina gave stormy vent to their jubilation and made no secret of their hope that Sharikov would never return. Darya Petrovna revealed that she had lent Sharikov three rubles and fifty kopeks only the day before.

"It serves you right!" growled Philip Philippovich, shaking his fists. The telephone rang all day and all of the following day. The doctors received an extraordinary number of patients. But on the third day they faced the question head on, and decided that the militia had to be notified so that it might search Sharikov out in the maelstrom of Moscow.

But no sooner had the word "militia" been spoken, than the reverential hush of Obukhov Lane was shattered by the barking of a truck, and the windows of the house shook. Then came a confident ring at the door, and Polygraph Polygraphovich made his appearance. He entered with an air of enormous dignity, removed his cap in total silence, hung up his coat on the horns of the coat rack, and presented himself in an entirely new state. He wore a leather jacket, obviously second-hand, frayed leather trousers, and high English boots, laced to the knee. An overpowering smell of cats immediately spread throughout the foyer. Preobrazhensky and Bormenthal crossed their arms on their chests as though by command, and took up positions at the doorway, awaiting the first words of Polygraph Polygraphovich. He smoothed his coarse hair, cleared his throat, and carefully studied himself in the mirror, obviously trying to mask his confusion by an air of utmost ease.

"Philip Philippovich," he finally began, "I have found myself a position."

Both doctors emitted an indefinite, dry, guttural

sound and stirred. Preobrazhensky recovered first. He held out his hand and said:

"Let me see the paper."

The document read: "This will certify that the bearer of same, Comrade Polygraph Polygraphovich Sharikov, is the director of the sub-section for purging the city of Moscow of stray animals (cats, etc.) of the Moscow Communal Property Administration."

"I see," Philip Philippovich said with difficulty. "And who arranged this for you? However, I can easily guess it myself."

"Well, yes, it was Shvonder," replied Sharikov.

"And may I inquire, what is this nauseating smell that you are spreading?"

Sharikov sniffed his jacket with a worried air.

"Well, what can you do, it smells . . . Naturally—it's the profession. We choked them and choked them yesterday . . . Cats."

Philip Philippovich gave a start and looked at Bormenthal. The doctor's eyes resembled two black muzzles of guns aimed straight at Sharikov. Without a word, he moved toward Sharikov and grabbed him easily and confidently by the throat.

"Help!" squealed Sharikov, turning pale.

"Doctor!"

"Don't worry, Philip Philippovich, I won't do anything wrong," Bormenthal replied in an iron voice and shouted: "Zina, Darya Petrovna!"

The women appeared in the foyer.

"Now repeat after me . . ." said Bormenthal, squeezing Sharikov's throat just a little as he leaned against the fur coat on the rack. "Forgive me . . ."

"Oh, all right, I'll repeat it," the utterly stunned Sharikov answered hoarsely. He suddenly filled his lungs with air, tried to break away and cry "Help,"

but the cry did not come out, and his head was pushed all the way into the fur.

"Doctor, I beg you."

Sharikov nodded his head, indicating that he submitted and would repeat the words.

". . . Forgive me, Darya Petrovna and Zinaida? . . ."

"Prokofievna," Zina said in a frightened whisper.

"Uph . . . Prokofievna . . . for permitting myself . . ."

"A filthy trick at night in a drunken state."

"Drunken . . ."

"I will never again . . ."

"Never ag . . ."

"Let him go, let him go, Ivan Arnoldovich," both women begged in chorus. "You'll strangle him."

Bormenthal released Sharikov and said:

"Is the truck waiting for you?"

"No," Polygraph replied respectfully, "it only brought me here."

"Zina, tell the driver he can go. Now listen here: have you come back to Philip Philippovich's apartment?"

"Where else am I to go?" Sharikov answered timidly, his eyes wandering.

"Fine. You'll behave now and watch your step. Any more trouble, and you'll have to deal with me. Is that clear?"

"It's clear," answered Sharikov.

Philip Philippovich remained silent throughout Sharikov's chastisement. He seemed to have shrunk pathetically as he stood by the door, chewing at his nail, eyes lowered to the parquet. Then he suddenly raised his eyes to Sharikov and asked in a flat, expressionless voice:

"And what do you do with those . . . with the cats you kill?"

"They'll be used for coats," said Sharikov. "They'll be made into squirrels and sold to workers on credit."

After that quiet reigned in the apartment. It lasted two days. Polygraph Polygraphovich left by truck, in the morning, returned in the evening, and dined quietly with Philip Philippovich and Bormenthal.

Although Bormenthal and Sharikov both slept in the waiting room, they did not speak to one another, and Bormenthal was the first to become restive.

Two days later a young lady appeared in the apartment. She was thin, with penciled eyebrows and cream-colored stockings, and she was visibly abashed at the magnificence of the apartment. Dressed in a shabby little coat, she followed Sharikov in and almost collided with the professor in the foyer.

The startled professor stopped short, screwed up his eyes, and asked:

"Explain, if you don't mind?"

"We're going to register. She is our typist, she'll live with me. Bormenthal will have to move from the waiting room. He has his own apartment," Sharikov said with gloomy animosity.

Philip Philippovich blinked several times, thought for a while, looking at the violently blushing young lady, and very civilly invited her in.

"Would you please step into my office for a moment?"

"I'll come with her," Sharikov said quickly and suspiciously.

At this point, Bormenthal materialized out of nowhere.

"Sorry," he said. "The professor will have a little chat with the lady, and we shall wait a while right here."

"I don't want to," Sharikov snapped back, trying to follow Philip Philippovich and the young lady, fiery with embarrassment.

"Now, if you'll excuse me," Bormenthal said, taking Sharikov by the wrist and leading him off into the examination room.

For some five minutes nothing was heard from the office, then suddenly there was the sound of muted sobs.

Philip Philippovich was standing near the table, and the young lady was crying into a soiled lace handkerchief.

"He said, the rotter, that he was wounded in the war," the young lady sobbed.

"He is lying," Philip Philippovich answered implacably. He shook his head and continued. "I am sincerely sorry for you, but this is impossible, my child . . . One should not take up with just anyone, simply because of his job . . . Now look here . . ." He opened the desk drawer and brought out three bills of three chervontsy each.

"I'll poison myself," the young lady cried. "Every day it's corned beef in the cafeteria . . . and he threatens . . . He says he is a Red commander . . . You'll live with me, he says, in a luxurious home . . . advances every day . . . my psyche, he says, is very kind, it's only cats I hate . . . He took my ring for a memento . . ."

"There, there . . . a kind psyche . . . From Seville and to Granada," muttered Philip Philippovich. "You must have patience, you are still so young . . ."

"Was it really that same gateway?"

"Well, now, take the money when it's offered to you, it's a loan," growled Philip Philippovich.

He solemnly flung the door open, and Bormenthal led Sharikov in at Philip Philippovich's invitation. Sharikov's eyes ran furtively from corner to corner, and the fur on his head stood up like a brush.

"Swine," the young lady said, her tear-stained eyes flashing, her make-up smeared over her cheeks and her streaked, powdered nose.

"Why do you have a scar on your forehead? Kindly tell this lady," Philip Philippovich asked insinuatingly.

Sharikov tried to bluff his way:

"I was wounded fighting Kolchack," he barked.

The young lady got up and went out, weeping loudly.

"Stop it!" Philip Philippovich cried after her. "And wait a moment. The ring, please," he said, turning to Sharikov, who meekly removed the cheap little ring with an emerald stone from his finger.

"All right," he said viciously. "You'll remember it. We'll have a reduction in personnel tomorrow."

"Don't be afraid of him," Bormenthal cried after her. "I will not permit him to do anything." He turned and gave Sharikov a look that made him back away and knock his head against one of the cabinets.

"What is her name?" Bormenthal asked him. "Her name!" he suddenly roared and became terrifying in his fury.

"Vasnetsova," answered Sharikov, his eyes searching for an opportunity to slip away.

Bormenthal took hold of the lapel of Sharikov's jacket and said: "I shall personally make daily inquiries of the purge office to make sure that citizen Vasnetsova has not been fired. And if you . . . if I find out that she was, I will . . . I will shoot you here with my own hands. Look out, Sharikov—I am telling you in plain language!"

Sharikov's eyes were fixed, unblinking, on Bormenthal's nose.

"I can find a revolver or two myself. . . ." mumbled Polygraph, though listlessly. And suddenly, with a quick movement, he freed himself and spurted out through the door.

"Take care!" Bormenthal shouted after him.

The night and the first half of the following day hung heavy like a cloud before a storm. But everyone

was silent. Polygraph Polygraphovich, who had awakened with a pang of nasty premonition, had gone off to work in the truck in a sullen mood. And a little later, Professor Preobrazhensky received one of his former patients at an hour entirely outside his usual schedule. The visitor, a tall and stout man in a military uniform, had urgently insisted on seeing the professor, and was finally given an appointment. Entering the office, he courteously clicked his heels in greeting the professor.

"Have your pains returned, my friend?" asked the professor, haggard-faced. "Sit down, please."

"Merci. No, Professor," replied the guest, placing his peaked helmet on the corner of the table. "I am most grateful to you . . . Hm . . . I've come in connection with a different matter, Philip Philippovich . . . my great regard for you . . . hm . . . to warn you. It's obvious nonsense. He is simply a scoundrel. . . ." The patient opened his briefcase and took out a sheet of paper. "Fortunately, it was reported directly to me. . . ."

Philip Philippovich saddled his nose with pince-nez over his glasses and began to read. He muttered to himself for a long time, changing color every second. ". . . and also threatening to kill the house committee chairman, from which it can be seen that he owns firearms. And he makes counterrevolutionary speeches, and even ordered his social servant Zinaida Prokofievna Bunina to throw Engels into the stove, as an open Menshevik with his assistant Bormenthal, Ivan Arnoldovich, who secretly lives in his apartment without registration. Signed, Director of the purge sub-section P. P. Sharikov—attested to by Chairman of the House Committee, Shvonder, and Secretary Pestrukhin."

"Will you permit me to keep this?" asked Philip Philippovich, his face becoming spotty. "But pardon me, perhaps you need it to pursue the matter further according to law?"

"I beg your pardon, Professor," the patient said in an extremely offended tone, flaring out his nostrils. "You really take much too contemptuous a view of us. I . . ." and he began to puff himself up like a turkey.

"Oh, forgive me, forgive me, my friend!" muttered Philip Philippovich. "Forgive me, I did not mean to offend you. My dear, don't be angry, I'm at my wits' end with him. . . ."

"I thought so myself," the patient said, entirely mollified, "what a bastard he is, after all! I'd be curious to have a peek at him. Moscow is simply buzzing with all sorts of legends about you. . . ."

Philip Philippovich only spread his hands in despair. The patient looked at him, thinking that the professor had begun to stoop lately, and had turned quite gray.

The crime had ripened, and it fell like a stone, as, indeed, it usually does. Polygraph Polygraphovich returned in the truck with something tugging unpleasantly at his heart. Philip Philippovich's voice invited him into the examination room. The astonished Sharikov entered and glanced with vague anxiety at the black muzzles staring at him from Bormenthal's face and then at Philip Philippovich. A cloud seemed to move around the assistant, and his left hand, holding a cigarette, was trembling faintly on the shiny arm of the obstetric examination chair.

Philip Philippovich spoke with a calm control that boded no good:

"Take your things immediately—your trousers, your coat, everything you need—and get out of this apartment!"

"How's that?" Sharikov was genuinely surprised. "Out of this apartment—today," Philip Philippo-

vich repeated monotonously, squinting down at his nails.

Some demon seemed to take possession of Polygraph Polygraphovich. His fate was evidently already lying in wait for him, and the end was just behind his back. He threw himself into the arms of the inevitable and barked out sharply and maliciously:

"What is this, really! You think I won't find justice against you? I have my sixteen *arshin* here, and here I stay."

"Get out of the apartment," Philip Philippovich repeated in a strangled whisper.

Sharikov invited his own death. He raised his left arm toward Philip Philippovich and made an obscene gesture with his scratched fist which reeked intolerably of cats. Then with his right hand, he took a revolver from his pocket and aimed it at the dangerous Bormenthal. Bormenthal's cigarette dropped like a falling star, and a few seconds later Philip Philippovich was rushing back and forth in mortal terror from instrument case to sofa, jumping over broken glass. On the sofa, the director of the purge section lay supine and gurgling, with the surgeon Bormenthal astride his chest and choking him with a small white pillow.

A few minutes later Dr. Bormenthal, his face distorted beyond recognition, went out of the front door and pasted a note near the bell:

"Due to the professor's illness, there will be no visiting hours today. Please do not ring the bell."

With a shiny penknife he cut the bell wire, examined in the mirror his scratched and bloodied face, and then his torn and trembling hands. Then he appeared in the kitchen doorway and told the anxious Zina and Darya Petrovna:

"The professor asks you not to go out anywhere for the present."



"We won't," Zina and Darya Petrovna answered timidly.

"Allow me to lock the back door and take the key with me," said Bormenthal, covering his face with his hand and trying to hide behind the door. "This is only for a short time, and it does not mean that you are not trusted. But somebody may come, and you may be unable to refuse and open. And we must not be disturbed. We are busy."

"All right," replied the women, turning pale. Bormenthal locked the back door, the front door, and the door from the hallway into the foyer and his steps disappeared near the examination room.

Silence shrouded the apartment, crept into every corner. Twilight slithered in—a northern, watchful twilight—in short, murk. True, the neighbors across the yard said afterward that all the lights had been on that night in the examination room, which looked into the yard, and even that they had caught sight of the professor's own cap. . . . This is difficult to verify. It's true, also, that when everything was over, Zina babbled that Ivan Arnoldovich had given her the fright of her life in the office after he and the professor had left the examination room. Ivan Arnoldovich, she said, was squatting on his haunches before the fireplace in the office and feeding a blue copybook into the fire with his own hands—one of those books that were used for keeping records of case histories of the professor's patients! The doctor's face, she said, was altogether green, and all, but all of it . . . covered with scratches. Neither was Philip Philippovich like his usual self that evening. And also . . . However, it may be that the ignorant girl from the Prechistenka apartment was lying . . .

One thing can be vouched for: the apartment that evening was totally and frighteningly quiet.

## EPILOGUE

Exactly ten days after the battle in the examination room, the bell rang sharply in Professor Preobrazhensky's apartment on the Prechistenka.

"Criminal police and investigating officer. Be kind enough to open."

Steps ran and clattered, people came in, and quite a crowd assembled in the brilliantly lit waiting room with new glass in the cases. Two men in militia uniforms, one in a black coat, with a briefcase, a gloating and pale Shvonder, the youth who was a woman, the doorman Fyodor, Zina, Darya Petrovna, and the half-dressed Bormenthal, who was modestly covering his throat without a tie.

The office door opened to let Philip Philippovich out. He emerged in the well-known azure bathrobe, and everybody could see at once that Philip Philippovich had improved in health considerably during the past week. It was the old imperious and energetic Philip Philippovich, who presented himself in his full dignity before his nocturnal guests, and apologized for greeting them in his robe.

"Please don't worry, Professor," the man in civilian clothes replied with great embarrassment. Then he hesitated a moment, and began: "It is most awkward. We have a warrant to search your apartment and,"

the man threw a sidelong glance at Philip Philippovich, and concluded, "and to make an arrest, depending on the results."

Philip Philippovich narrowed his eyes and asked: "Arrest whom, if I may ask, and on what charges?"

The man scratched his cheek and began to read the paper he had taken from his briefcase:

"Preobrazhensky, Bormenthal, Zinaida Bunina and Darya Ivanova, on the charge of murdering the director of the purge section of the Moscow Communal Property Administration, Polygraph Polygraphovich Sharikov."

Zina's sobs almost drowned the last words. There was a movement in the crowd.

"I don't understand anything," answered Philip Philippovich, raising his shoulders with a royal air. "What Sharikov? Ah, sorry, you mean my dog . . . on whom I operated?"

"If you will pardon me, Professor, not the dog, but when he was already a man. That's the point."

"You mean, he spoke?" asked Philip Philippovich. "But this does not yet mean being a man. However, that is unimportant. Sharik is still alive, and no one has killed him."

"Professor," the black little man said with astonishment, raising his eyebrows, "in that case you will have to produce him. He has been missing ten days, and the indications, if you will excuse me, are quite bad."

"Doctor Bormenthal, be kind enough to present Sharik to the investigating officer," commanded Philip Philippovich, appropriating the warrant. Dr. Bormenthal went out with a crooked smile.

When he returned, he whistled, and a strange dog jumped out after him from the office. He was bald in

spots, and his fur was growing back in spots. He came out like a trained circus animal, on his hind legs, then he dropped on all fours and looked around him. Dead silence congealed in the waiting room like jello. The monstrous-looking dog with a purple scar on his forehead rose again to his hind paws and sat down in a chair with a smile.

The second militiaman crossed himself hurriedly and backed away, stepping on both of Zina's feet.

The man in black stuttered without closing his mouth.

"But how . . . allow me . . . He worked at the purge section. . . ."

"I never appointed him there," answered Philip Philippovich. "It was Mr. Shvonder who recommended him, if I am not mistaken."

"I don't understand anything," the black one said, totally perplexed, and turned to the first militiaman. "Is that him?"

"It's him," the militiaman answered soundlessly. "It sure is."

"It's him, all right," said Fyodor's voice. "Only he's grown his fur back, the scoundrel."

"But he spoke . . . khe . . . khe . . ."

"He still speaks, but less and less. I would suggest you take advantage of the moment, because he'll soon grow silent altogether."

"But why?" the black man inquired in an undertone. Philip Philippovich shrugged his shoulders.

"Science has not yet discovered methods of transforming animals into humans. I tried, but unsuccessfully, as you can see. He spoke for a while, and then began to revert to his original state. Atavism."

"No indecent language here!" the dog barked suddenly from his chair and stood up.

The black man blanched suddenly, dropped his briefcase, and began to fall sideways. The militiaman caught him from the side, and Fyodor from behind. Confusion ensued, and in the midst of it three phrases were heard most clearly:

Philip Philippovich's: "Valerian. He has fainted."

Dr. Bormenthal's: "I shall throw Shvonder down the stairs with my own hands if he appears again in Professor Preobrazhensky's apartment."

And Shvonder's: "I demand that these words be entered into the record."

The gray accordions of the radiators hummed. The curtains shut out the dense Prechistenka night with its solitary star. The superior being, the dignified benefactor of dogs, sat in his armchair, and the dog Sharik lay sprawled on the rug near the leather sofa. The March fogs gave the dog headaches in the morning, which gripped him with a ring of pain around the seam on his head. But by evening, the warmth dissipated the pain. And now, too, it was going, going, and the thoughts that flowed through the dog's head were pleasant and warm.

I've been so lucky, so lucky, he thought, dozing off. Just incredibly lucky. I'm set for life in this apartment. I am absolutely convinced that there was something shady in my ancestry. There must have been a Newfoundland. She was a whore, my grandmother, may she rest in the Heavenly Kingdom, the old lady. True, they've slashed up my whole head for some strange reason, but it'll heal before my wedding. It's not worth mentioning.

Glass jars tinkled quietly in the distance. The bitten one was tidying up the instrument cases in the examination room.

And the gray-haired wizard sat, humming:

"Toward the sacred banks of the Nile . . ."

The dog witnessed terrible doings. The important man plunged his hands dressed in slippery gloves into jars, pulled out brains, a stubborn man, a persistent one, searching for something all the time, cutting, examining, squinting and singing:

"Toward the sacred banks of the Nile . . ."

*Moscow*

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