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*Crime and Punishment**

A NOVEL IN SIX PARTS
WITH AN EPILOGUE

PART ONE

I

TOWARDS EVENING on an exceptionally hot day* at the beginning of July, a young man emerged from his garret room on S— Lane, where he was lodging, and went out into the street. Slowly, as if undecided what to do, he set off for K—n Bridge.*

He managed to avoid meeting his landlady on the stairs. His little room was at the very top of a tall five-storey building, and was more like a cupboard than an apartment. His landlady, from whom he was renting his room together with food and service, lived one staircase below, in her own apartment. This meant that every time he had to go down to the street, he had to walk past her kitchen, with its door almost always wide open onto the staircase. And every time the young man walked past the kitchen, he felt sick with apprehension – something which made him grimace with shame. He was deeply in debt to her, and was afraid of meeting her.

It wasn't so much that he was a cowardly, downtrodden figure – quite the opposite in fact. It was just that, for some time now, he had been in an irritable and overwrought state, close to hypochondria.* He had become so absorbed with himself, so distanced from everyone else, that he was afraid to meet anybody, let alone his landlady. Although crushed by poverty, he had recently found that even his straitened circumstances had no longer become a burden to him. He had totally stopped engaging in essential day-to-day concerns, or wanting to do so. In actual fact, he wasn't afraid of any landlady, whatever she might be threatening him with. But to have to wait on the staircase and listen to all that drivel about all kinds of banal rubbish that didn't interest him in the slightest, all that pestering for money, all those threats and complaints, combined with the need to prevaricate, to apologize, to lie – no, he'd rather slink past down the stairs like a cat and slip out into the street without anyone noticing.

On this occasion, however, as he walked out onto the street, he was struck precisely by how worried he was about meeting his landlady.

“Here I am wanting to do *that*, while at the same time fussing about such trivia!” he thought with an odd smile. “Hmm... yes... man is capable of doing anything, and yet he lets it all slip by him simply out of cowardice... it's a universal principle... What is it, I wonder, that people are most afraid of? Taking a new step forward, saying something new – that's what it is...”

However, I'm talking too much – that's why I never do anything. Or perhaps I talk so much because I don't do anything. During this last month I've learnt to chatter away to myself, lying in my little hole for days on end and thinking... living in cloud-cuckoo-land. But why am I going there *now*? Am I really capable of doing *that*? Can *that* be serious? No, not serious at all. It's simply some fantasy to keep me amused, some game I'm playing! Yes, maybe it's just a game!"

Outside, the appalling heat, together with the airlessness, the crowds, the slaked lime, scaffolding, bricks and dust everywhere, and that especial St Petersburg stench of summer so familiar to all those unable to own an out-of-town dacha – all this combined to have a distressing effect on the young man's already overwrought nerves. The unbearable stench from the pothouses, of which there were a particularly large number in that part of town, and the drunks he found himself continually bumping into, despite it being a perfectly normal workday, added the finishing touch to the misery and revolting nature of the whole picture. For a moment an expression of utmost disgust flitted across the young man's sensitive features. He was, we should add, an exceptionally good-looking young man – slim, well built, of above-average height, with beautiful dark eyes and dark-brown hair. But soon he seemed to fall into some kind of deep trance (or even, rather, a state of semi-consciousness), carrying on walking without even noticing his surroundings, and indeed not wishing to notice them, merely muttering to himself from time to time, arising from his habit of talking to himself – a habit which he himself had just acknowledged. At that moment he was the first to admit that his thoughts were sometimes confused, and that he had become very weak: this was now the second day he'd had practically nothing to eat.

He was so shabbily dressed that even someone used to walking about in scruffy clothing would have been ashamed to go around outside in such rags in daylight. It was, however, a part of the city where very few people would be concerned what others might or might not be wearing. The proximity of the Haymarket, the presence of so many establishments of a certain sort, and the preponderance of labourers and craftsmen crowded together in these streets and alleyways of central St Petersburg, together with the sheer variety of different types to be seen, meant that no one, however oddly dressed, would have excited much surprise. But the young man's heart had become so full of malicious contempt that, despite his at times very youthful sensitivity, the fact that he was walking about the place so scruffily dressed was the least of his worries. It would have been quite a different matter had he come across anyone he knew or former fellow

students – people he generally didn't like meeting anyway... And yet when one inebriated man, who, goodness knows why, was being carried along the street in an enormous cart harnessed to a huge dray horse, suddenly shouted at him as he went past, "Hey, look at you, you German hatmaker!", yelling at the top of his voice and pointing at him, the young man suddenly stopped and convulsively clutched at his hat. It was a tall, round hat from Zimmerman's,* but now totally dilapidated, rust-red with age, full of holes and covered in patches, without a brim and lopsided in the most unattractive way imaginable. But he was gripped not by a feeling of shame, but by a totally different emotion that was close even to fear.

"I knew it!" he muttered in confusion. "That's just what I was afraid of! It's the worst thing that could have happened! So unbelievably stupid... such a trivial little detail, but the whole plan could be ruined! Yes, the hat's far too obvious... its absurdity makes it stand out. With the rags I've got on, it would have been better to have worn a cap – any old flat pancake of a cap would have done, but not this monster. No one wears hats like that: you can spot them a mile away – people notice them, remember them... that's the point: people would remember them – they'd become evidence. Right now I need to be as inconspicuous as possible... It's the little details, the tiny little details that matter... It's the little details that always ruin everything..."

He didn't have far to go – he even knew how many steps it was from the gate of his tenement building: precisely seven hundred and thirty. He had counted them once when he'd been lost in his dreams. At the time he hadn't believed in those dreams himself, merely feeling exasperated at the thought of their monstrous, albeit appealing, audacity. But now, a month later, he had already begun to look at things differently – and, despite all his mocking monologues about his own feebleness and indecision, he had involuntarily become accustomed to looking on his "hideous" dream as a viable idea, even though he still didn't believe in it himself. Even now, in fact, he was on his way to a *rehearsal* of his idea, becoming more and more excited with each step he took.

Shaking from nerves and with a sinking heart, he approached an absolutely enormous house, one wall of which overlooked the canal, and the other — Street.* The house was divided entirely into tiny apartments, in which all sorts of working people lived: tailors, locksmiths, cooks, various Germans, girls making some kind of a living for themselves, petty clerks, and so on. People were constantly scurrying in and out of both entrances and through the two courtyards. The building was serviced by three or four caretakers. The young man was very pleased not to come across a single one of them as he slipped unnoticed through the gate on the right and onto the staircase.

It was a “back” staircase, dark and narrow, but, having studied it, it was already familiar to him. He knew it well, and liked the whole feeling of the place: in such darkness even the most inquisitive eyes posed no threat. “If I’m so scared now, what would it be like if I were *really* going to do it?” he wondered involuntarily as he arrived at the third floor. Here his way was blocked by a group of retired soldiers carrying some furniture out of one of the apartments. He already knew that this apartment was occupied by a German clerk and his family: “That means the German is now moving out, so the old woman will be the only occupant of the third floor on this staircase. That has to be a good thing...” he said to himself as he rang the old woman’s doorbell. The bell tinkled faintly, as if made of tin rather than brass. You will almost always find bells like that in such tiny little apartments. He had forgotten how that bell sounded, and now the particular sound it made seemed suddenly to remind him of something and to bring it clearly to the forefront of his mind... He came to with a shudder – by this time he had become terribly on edge. A little later the door opened merely a tiny chink. The old woman peered at her visitor through this chink with evident distrust: all he could see were her eyes glittering in the dark. But on noticing that there were a large number of people outside on the landing, she grew bolder and opened the door wide. The young man stepped across the threshold and into the dark hallway that was partitioned off from the minute little kitchen. The old woman stood there in front of him without saying a word, giving him an enquiring look. She was a tiny, desiccated little woman about sixty years old, with sharp, spiteful eyes, a pointed little nose and bareheaded. Her fair, slightly greying bristly hair was liberally smeared with oil. Some kind of flannel rag was wrapped around her long thin neck, which resembled a chicken leg. Despite the heat, a frayed fur cape, yellow with age, hung round her shoulders. She stood there, constantly coughing and grunting. The young man must have given her a very special kind of look, as her eyes gleamed again with that same expression of distrust.

“Raskolnikov, student – was here a month ago,” the young man muttered hastily with a slight bow, remembering the need to be polite.

“I remember, my dear sir, I remember you coming here very well,” the old woman replied, clearly articulating her words, still keeping her enquiring eyes on his face.

“So... here I am again, come to see you on a little matter...” a somewhat flustered Raskolnikov continued, rather put out by the old woman’s mistrustful expression.

“Perhaps she’s always like this – it’s just that I can’t have noticed it last time,” he thought with a sense of unease.

For a moment the old woman said nothing, as if undecided what to do. Then she stepped to one side and, pointing to the door of the room, allowed her visitor to go ahead of her: “Go on in, sir,” she said.

The little room in which the young man now found himself, with its yellow wallpaper, geraniums and muslin curtains on the windows, was brightly lit in the setting sun.

“So this is how the sun will be shining... *then!*...” The thought flashed through Raskolnikov’s mind as if from nowhere, and he quickly looked round the whole room, trying as far as possible to make a note of how everything was arranged. But there was nothing particularly special to note. The furniture, all very old and of yellow wood, consisted of a sofa with a huge curved wooden back, a round oval-shaped table in front of the sofa, a dressing table with a mirror fixed on the wall between two windows, some chairs along the walls, a couple of cheap prints in yellow frames depicting young German girls holding birds – and that was all. A lamp was burning in front of a small icon. Everything was very clean: the furniture and the floors had been polished – everything was gleaming. “Lizaveta’s doing,” the young man went on thinking. There wasn’t a speck of dust to be seen in the whole apartment. “Typical of a spiteful old widow to keep a place so clean,” Raskolnikov thought, casting an inquisitive glance at the chintz curtain over the door that led into the second tiny little room containing the old woman’s bed and chest of drawers, which he had never yet seen inside. The apartment consisted entirely of these two rooms. “What can I do for you?” asked the old woman severely, coming into the room. As before, she stood right in front of him, so that she could look him straight in the eyes.

“I’ve brought something for you... take a look at this!” And he took an old flat silver watch out of his pocket: there was a globe depicted on its back, and it had a steel chain.

“But the time’s up on the last one you brought in. The month ended two days ago.”

“Just wait a bit and I’ll bring you the interest for another month.”

“That’s up to my good self to decide, sir: I can wait or I can sell the thing you brought me.”

“How much will you give me for the watch, Alyona Ivanovna?”

“You come here with such paltry stuff, sir... barely worth a thing. Last time you came I gave you two roubles for your ring, but you can buy it new from the jeweller’s for one and a half.”

“Give me four roubles for it, then – I’ll bring you the money. It was my father’s. I’ll be getting the money very soon.”

“One and a half roubles, with interest in advance – take it or leave it.”

“One and a half roubles?” shouted the young man.

“Please yourself.” And the old woman handed him back the watch. The young man took it, so beside himself with rage he was on the point of walking out. But he immediately thought better of it, realizing that there was nowhere else he could go, and that he had come for something else as well.

“All right, I’ll take it!” he said brusquely.

The old woman fished in her pocket for her keys and went into the other room behind the curtain. The young man stood there alone in the middle of the room, weighing up what to do and listening intently. He could hear her opening the chest of drawers. “Very probably the top drawer,” he decided. “So she keeps her keys in her right-hand pocket, all in one bunch on a metal ring... And there’s one key that’s three times bigger than the others, with deeply indented notches, nothing to do with the chest of drawers of course. In that case she must have some other case or strongbox... That’s interesting: strongboxes always have such keys... But this is all so vile...”

The old woman came back.

“Here we are, sir. If we say ten copecks per rouble a month, that means fifteen copecks for a month’s interest in advance. And if we add the two roubles from last time, that makes another twenty copecks – thirty-five in all, then. That means you get one rouble fifteen copecks for your watch. Here you are.”

“What? So it’s only a rouble fifteen copecks now, is it?”

“Exactly so, sir.”

Without arguing further, the young man took the money. He looked at the old woman, in no hurry to leave, as if he wanted to do or say something else, but without any idea precisely what it was...

“I could well be bringing you something else in a day or two, Alyona Ivanovna... silver... good-quality... cigarette case... just need to get it back from a friend...” He dried up in confusion.

“Well, in that case we can discuss the matter, sir.”

“Goodbye... Are you always at home alone? What about your sister?” he asked as casually as possible, as he went out into the hallway.

“What business is that of yours, sir?”

“None in particular, I was just asking. You’re now... Goodbye Alyona Ivanovna!”

Raskolnikov left in a state of definite confusion that was becoming more and more intense. As he went down the stairs, he even stopped several times, as if suddenly struck by something. Finally, once he was outside, he exclaimed:

“Oh God, this is all so disgusting! Will I really, really?... No, rubbish, just absurd!” he added decisively. “What on earth made me dream up such an appalling idea? But it just shows what filth my heart is capable of! Yes, above all, filthy, nasty, vile – so vile!... And here I’ve been, for a whole month...”

But there were no adequate words or exclamations to express his agitation. The feeling of boundless disgust that had begun to oppress and torment his heart while he was on his way to see the old woman now reached such a pitch and expressed itself with such clarity that he had no idea where he could hide from his sense of anguish. He walked along the pavement as if drunk, bumping into passers-by without noticing them, not coming to his senses until he was in the next street. As he stood there looking around him, he noticed he had stopped right by a tavern that was entered by steps leading down from the pavement to the basement. Just at this point two drunks emerged from the tavern doorway and started climbing up to the street, supporting one another and swearing. Raskolnikov hesitated for a moment, and then went down the steps. He had never gone into a tavern before in his life, but now his head was spinning, and, besides, he was wracked by a terrible thirst. He wanted a cold beer – all the more so since he considered that the reason for his sudden weakness lay in the fact that his stomach was so empty. He sat down at a greasy table in a dark and dirty corner and ordered a beer, which he gulped greedily down. At once his feeling of oppression lifted, and his mind became clear. “That was all such rubbish,” he thought, buoyed by a sense of hope. “Nothing to get worked up about at all! Physically out of sorts, that’s all! One glass of beer, a piece of dry bread, and there you are: immediately my mind feels stronger – I can think more clearly... I know what I’m doing! But, my goodness, it’s all so petty!” But despite the scorn with which he spat this out, he was now looking quite cheerful, as if he’d suddenly been relieved of some terrible burden, and he looked round at the others in the room with an amiable expression. But even now, at this very moment, he had a distant premonition there was something not quite right about this more optimistic mood of his.

The tavern was far from full at this time. The two drunken men he had met on the steps had been followed out by a whole group of about five men and a girl with an accordion. After their departure the room had become quiet and rather empty. There remained a slightly drunk man with the air of a tradesman sitting behind a glass of beer. His companion, a huge, extremely drunk fat man with a grey beard wearing a Siberian kaftan, lay snoozing on the bench. From time to time, as if half awake and without getting up, he’d suddenly click his fingers with his hands apart and his upper body bouncing on the bench, while at the same time singing some absurd ditty or other, struggling to remember how it went:

A whole year his wife he fondly loved,
A whole year... his wife... he fondly loved...

Or he would suddenly wake up again and sing:

Walking along the familiar street,
My former love I once more did meet...

But no one shared in his good fortune – his silent companion regarded all these outbursts with some hostility and mistrust. The only other man present had the air of a retired civil servant about him. He sat apart from everyone, every so often taking a sip at his drink and looking around the room. He too seemed a little agitated.

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