

The Brothers Karamazov

The Brothers Karamazov

The first page of the first edition of *The Brothers Karamazov*

Author	Fyodor Dostoevsky
Original title	<i>Братья Карамазовы (Brat'ya Karamazovy)</i>
Country	Russia
Language	Russian
Genre	Philosophical novel
Publisher	The Russian Messenger (as serial)
Publication date	1879–1880; separate edition 1880
Preceded by	A Gentle Creature
Followed by	A Writer's Diary

The Brothers Karamazov ([Russian](#): Братья Карамазовы Brat'ya Karamazovy) is a [Russian novel](#) written by [Fyodor Dostoevsky](#). Dostoevsky said, "I'd die happy if I could finish this final [last] novel, for I would have expressed myself completely."^{[1][2]}

The Brothers Karamazov is the story of the lives of three [Russian](#) brothers who are very different in body, mind, and spirit, and are often thought of as [representing](#) those three parts of [mankind](#).^[3] It was written in 1879 to 1880 in Russia, mostly in [St. Petersburg](#).^[4] It was published in 1879 to 1880 in a series. It is his most [complicated](#) and deep novel, and most people think it is Dostoevsky's greatest.^[4]

There are four brothers in the Karamazov family: Ivan, the [atheist intellectual](#); Dmitry, the emotional lover of women; Alyosha, the "hero" and [Christian](#); and [twisted](#), [cunning](#) Smerdyakov, the [illegitimate](#) child, who is treated as the family servant.^[2] Fyodor Pavlovich Karamazov is a very careless father and woman-lover. Dmitry comes to hate him because his father loves the same woman as he does, Grushenka, and because of this, he often [threatens](#) that he will kill his father.^[2] When Fyodor Pavlovich is killed by Smerdyakov, he is [accused](#) of killing his father.

Throughout the book there is a search for truth: about man, about life, and about [God](#).^{[1][2][4]} After it was published, all kinds of people such as [Sigmund Freud](#),^[5] [Albert Einstein](#),^[6] and [Pope Benedict XVI](#)^[7] thought it was the greatest book in all [literature](#).^[8]

Background

[\[change\]](#) | [change source](#)

Dostoevsky's notes for Chapter 5 of The Brothers Karamazov

Notes for Chapter Five of *The Brothers Karamazov*, the book for which Dostoevsky had been preparing all his life.

[Fyodor Dostoevsky](#) was born in 1821, the son of an army doctor. While he was away at the Academy of Engineers, his father died - [reportedly murdered](#) by his own servants. Though [biographers](#) disagree whether Dostoevsky's father was really murdered or not, Dostoevsky [apparently](#) believed that his father had been murdered, and it is even possible that he felt feelings of [guilt](#) for it, as if he had been the one who had killed his father.^[2] People like [Sigmund Freud](#) argue that this had an influence when he wrote *The Brothers Karamazov*.^[2] After 17 years of schooling and family life in [Moscow](#), he spent six years in [St Petersburg](#) as an officer. He [resigned](#) in 1844, and two years later became famous with his first published book, *Poor Folk*.^[9] Young Dostoevsky began to become [involved](#) with the Petrashevsky Circle - a group of [political discussion](#) groups by young people in St Petersburg who did not like the rule of Emperor Nicholas I. Because of this, Dostoevsky was arrested and held for eight months in the prisons of the Fortress of St Peter and St Paul.^{[9][10]} Meanwhile, he was put on trial while he was away and sentenced to death.^[9]

On 22 December 1849 8 A.M. he was pretended to be led out, with twenty other people, for [execution](#) by [firing squad](#) in the Semenovskiy Square in St Petersburg.^[9] The first group was actually [blindfolded](#) and tied up, while the second group watched.^[11] This terrible [mock](#) execution made one of the prisoners go [insane](#).^[11] But then the order was suddenly changed, and he was given *katorga* (labor in [Siberia](#)) for four years.^[9] This had a great influence on his life.^[11] After that, he was to serve the [military](#) in Siberian [exile](#).^{[9][10][11]}

Dostoevsky's four years in [prison](#) camp greatly [influenced](#) his book and his life.^{[9][10]} He began to [suffer](#) from [epilepsy](#) when he was in prison, and would have epilepsy for the rest of his life. He shows how epilepsy feels like through the character Smerdyakov. Also, in prison he began believing in [God](#), and having [religious](#) and [philosophical inclinations](#). Through the character Rakitin, Dostoevsky makes fun of the "clever people" who jumped from one popular idea to another without caring about the truth. In prison, he also met Ilyinsky, who had been sent to prison for killing his father. Almost ten [years](#) after he met Ilyinsky, Dostoevsky found out that Ilyinsky was innocent and later became free when the real murderer [confessed](#). Dmitry Karamazov is like Ilyinsky in many ways.

Also, shortly before he wrote *The Brothers Karamazov*, his own son, Alexei, died. He creates in [Alyosha](#) what his son possibly might have been like, and reflects his own sadness in scenes where Captain Snegriev loses Ilyusha, or when Zosima comforts a woman who has lost her little son, Alexei.

Throughout, Dostoevsky was [concerned](#) with the [justice](#) of [God](#) and the idea that "if God does not exist, then everything is permitted (allowed)."^[10]

Summary

[[change](#) | [change source](#)]

Book I: The History of a Family

[[change](#) | [change source](#)]

When he was young, Fyodor Pavlovich Karamazov was a **vulgar** and **eccentric** man who liked **money** and **women** too much. From his first wife, Adelaida, he had one son, Dmitry Karamazov. From his second wife, Sophia, he had Ivan and Alyosha Karamazov. Karamazov does not care about his sons, and they are all brought up by friends and **relatives**. Dmitry, who is a soldier, comes back when he is twenty-eight **years** old to take an **inheritance** his mother had left to him. Karamazov wants the inheritance for himself, and they get angry and fight with each other. Cold, **clever** Ivan is called to stop their fight, and the **gentle**, **kind** Alyosha, who also lives at the town, comes to help. Alyosha studies in a **monastery** with the Elder Zosima. Dmitry and Fyodor agree that maybe Elder Zosima can help stop their fight, and Alyosha, though feeling worried about the meeting, says he will **arrange** it.

Book II: An Unfortunate Gathering

[[change](#) | [change source](#)]

Fyodor Karamazov is **vulgar**, **sarcastic** and **mocking** at the meeting, and tries to make everybody **angry** and uncomfortable with his talk and stories. Alyosha is very **sad** and **embarrassed**. The Elder Zosima, however, is calm, polite, and even kind to him even when Karamazov is mocking (making fun of) him, telling him to be **honest** with himself.

Dmitry arrives late, and the meeting soon becomes a big **fight** between father and son. They are not only **angry** at each other because of **money**: they are both in **love** with Grushenka, a beautiful **woman** living in the town. While they are **fighting**, the Elder Zosima suddenly bows down to Dmitry, saying, "Forgive me!" Dmitry is very **shocked**, and later Zosima explains to Alyosha that he knows Dmitry is going to have very much suffering. In the middle of their **fight**, the elder also goes out to give **advice** to lots of people, including Mrs. Khokhlakov, whose **crippled** daughter, Lise, keeps on **laughing** at the **awkward** Alyosha. He also comforts a **woman** whose three-year-old-son has died. This is probably an echo of Dostoevsky's **sadness** about his dead son.

"Above all, do not lie to yourself. A man who lies to himself and listens to his own lie comes to a point where he does not discern (find out) any truth either in himself or anywhere around him, and thus (because of this) falls into disrespect for himself and others...he ceases to **love**, and having no love, he gives himself up to the passions and coarse pleasures... and in his vices (badness) reaches complete bestiality (**animal**-likeness), and it all comes from lying continually to others and to himself."^[1]

— Elder Zosima, *The Brothers Karamazov*

Book III: The Sensualists

[[change](#) | [change source](#)]

Four years ago, Fyodor Karamazov became a father to a fourth son, Smerdyakov. Smerdyakov's mother was a [retarded](#) and mute (unable to speak) woman called "Stinking Lizaveta."^[1] Lizaveta died when she gave birth to Smerdyakov, and he became Karamazov's servant. Smerdyakov grows up to have a strange and [mean](#) personality, and has [epilepsy](#). Even though Karamazov always treats him like a servant, though, he is not [stupid](#). He likes to talk about [philosophy](#) with Ivan and soon agrees with lots of Ivan's ideas, especially the idea that the soul does not live forever and so there is no good or evil.

Dmitry explains to Alyosha that when he was a soldier, he was angry that [beautiful](#) Katerina kept on [ignoring](#) him and he tried to [seduce](#) her by saying he would give her 4,500 [rubles](#) her father needed to pay his [debt](#) if she came to his house. When her father tries to kill himself because of the debt, she comes to Dmitry's house at night like he told her to. However, he is so [amazed](#) and [awed](#) by her self-sacrifice that he just gives her the money without trying to seduce her. Shocked, Katerina kneels and bows down to him, "like a simple Russian woman,"^[1] and runs out. Later, when a relative gave her a lot of [money](#), she offered to [marry](#) Dmitry, and they became [engaged](#). But when they came to Karamazov's town, he fell in love with Grushenka instead, and even stole 3,000 rubles from Katerina to have a wild party with Grushenka. He asks Alyosha to tell Katerina that he cannot be engaged to her anymore, and also asks Alyosha to get 3,000 rubles from his father so he can pay Katerina back. Alyosha sadly agrees. He goes to his father's house, where he argues about [God](#) with Ivan. In the middle of their argument, Dmitry suddenly runs in and "...all hell seemed to have broken loose..."^[1] He beats up his father and [threatens](#) to kill him someday. Alyosha helps his hurt father, and goes to visit Katerina at Mrs. Khokalov's [house](#).

When he goes there, he is shocked to see Grushenka there, too. Grushenka had just promised Katerina she would not marry Dmitry, and she would [marry](#) a lover she used to have long ago instead. Katerina is so [happy](#) she cries out that Grushenka is a "...dear [angel](#),"^[1] and that she "has brought me back to life and made me happy."^[1] Katerina even [kisses](#) Grushenka's [hands](#) and [lips](#), and "...acted as though she were in [love](#) with Grushenka."^[1] But Grushenka suddenly insults Katerina, saying she might stay with Dmitry after all. "...just now I thought to myself: 'And what if I take a fancy to him again, that Mitya fellow, since I took a fancy to him once and it lasted nearly a whole [hour](#)? I may even go right now and tell him to come and stay with me'...That's how fickle (changing) I am."^[1] She also [maliciously](#) talks about Katerina's visit to Dmitry at night, crying, "...going to visit gentlemen after dark to try and peddle (sell) your charms for [money](#)? Why, I know all about that."^[1] This makes Katerina so [angry](#) she goes into a [hysterical](#) fit. As Alyosha goes out of the house, a [maid](#) gives him a letter from Lise. Lise writes that she [loves](#) him and wants to marry him. Alyosha [laughs](#) "quietly

and sweetly” as he reads the [letter](#), and praying for all the sad people he loves, he goes to a peaceful sleep.^[1]

Book IV: Torment

[\[change\]](#) | [change source](#)

Zosima, knowing he will die soon, talks to the monks and to Alyosha about [faith](#), [love](#), and goodness. He also says that humans should not be judgmental, and “...above all, remember—do not be proud!” He also says, “Do not hate...Never cease to explain the [Gospels](#) to the people...Do not be avaricious (greedy)...Do not hoard...Have [faith](#) and defend its banner. Raise it, raise it high.”^[1]

Alyosha goes to visit Mrs. Khokhlakov’s house to see Katerina. On the way, he sees a group of boys throwing rocks at another small boy, who proudly and [fiercely fights](#) back. When the boy runs away, Alyosha tries to talk to him, but the boy hits him with a rock and bites his [finger](#).^[1] Alyosha is [concerned](#) and [sad](#).

He is surprised to see Ivan with Katerina, and realizes they [love](#) each other very much. He tries to make them be honest with themselves and realize their own feelings, but they are too [proud](#) to do so. Ivan [scornfully](#) thinks his love is not important and that Katerina needs Dmitry in her life, not him. Katerina, who has been very hurt because of Dmitry, thinks that she can never be [happy](#) and everybody will betray her in the end, so she proudly tries to [sacrifice](#) herself for other people.^[12] Ivan leaves.

Katerina tells Alyosha that Dmitry beat and [humiliated](#) a man named Captain Snegriev in front of his young son, and she asked him to “very tactfully, very delicately, as you and you only can do...try to give him these two hundred roubles.”^[1] Alyosha agrees. He goes to Captain Snegriev’s house and finds out that he is suffering even more than they knew: he was [extremely](#) poor, his children were sick, and his wife was [mad](#); and Dmitry’s angry humiliation of him had taken away his [honor](#), too. He also realizes that Ilyusha, his son, was the boy who bit his [finger](#) angrily, and now he knows that Ilyusha did like that because he was Dmitry’s brother: and because a rock hit Ilyusha in the [chest](#), he has gotten very sick.^[1] Alyosha tries to give the 200 roubles to Captain Snegriev. At first he is overjoyed, but he is too proud to take it, and throwing the [money](#) down, runs away [crying](#).^[1]

Book V: Pro and Contra

[\[change\]](#) | [change source](#)

Alyosha has [lunch](#) with his brother Ivan in a [restaurant](#), and Ivan explains to him why he cannot believe in [God](#): “Listen: if everyone must suffer, in order to buy eternal harmony with their suffering, pray tell me what have children to do with it? It’s quite [incomprehensible](#) why they should have to suffer, and why they should buy harmony with their suffering.”^[1] He says that to love

God would be like a [tortured](#) man loving his torturer. Alyosha reminds Ivan about [Christ](#), and Ivan, in a famous chapter of the book, says a [prose poem](#) he made up called The Grand [Inquisitor](#).

The Grand Inquisitor is a story about how in the [16th century](#), [Jesus](#) comes to a town in [Spain](#). He begins to heal sick people, but a very powerful [cardinal](#) puts him in jail. At night, the cardinal says to [Jesus](#) that free will for humans is bad and impossible. "You overestimated them...[Man](#) is weak and [despicable](#)."^[1] He talks about Jesus' rejecting (saying no) to [Satan](#)'s three [temptations](#) were wrong. He says that people with free will are usually too weak to have strong [faith](#), and most people will be [damned](#) forever. Because of this, he says, the [Church](#) is trying to give people [security](#) instead of [freedom](#). He finishes his speech by saying angrily, "...if anyone has ever deserved our fire, it is You, and I shall have you [burned](#) tomorrow. Dixi!"^[1] He waits for his prisoner to say something. But suddenly, quietly, Jesus goes to the old man and "[kisses](#) him gently on his old, [bloodless lips](#). And that is His only answer."^[1] The Grand Inquisitor, shocked, lets Jesus out and says he must never come back. Jesus leaves. When Alyosha asks, "What about the old man?" Ivan replies, "The [kiss glows](#) in his [heart](#)...But the old man sticks to his old idea."^[1]

As Ivan finishes his story, he says, "...everything is permitted, but then, will you, too, turn your back on me?"^[1] But Alyosha goes to him and kisses him softly on his lips. Ivan is [touched](#), and says Alyosha took that from his [poem](#).^[1] Ivan leaves, and Alyosha goes back to Zosima, who is dying.

Book VI: A Russian Monk

[\[change\]](#) | [change source](#)

Alyosha hears Zosima's last lesson of love and forgiveness for everyone, saying that humans should not judge each other but have trust in God. He says that Alyosha reminds him of his older brother, who died when he was young. When Elder Zosima was young, he had been a wild and [impious](#) man in the army. He had [challenged](#) another man to a duel because of a girl. Before the duel, however, his heart was changed, and after the other man shot at him, he did not shoot his gun at the other person. He left the army and joined the [monastery](#) shortly after. He talks about how much he loves the [Bible](#) and how people should all love each other. When he has finished his speech, he suddenly goes down to the floor, opens his arms as if he is embracing (hugging) the world, "[praying](#) and [kissing](#) the ground—as he had taught others to do—quietly and joyfully he gave up his [soul](#) to God."^[1] Zosima's last lesson is very different from Ivan's arguments, and the story about the guilty man who repented (was sorry), becomes free, and is [forgiven](#) is almost an opposite with the story of the Grand Inquisitor, where an [innocent](#) man is put in jail and [judged](#). Zosima dies happy, and his final act is a [symbol](#) of everything he taught in his life.

Book VII: Alyosha

[\[change\]](#) | [\[change source\]](#)

Most people all think that because Zosima was so holy, his body will not [decay](#), and some [miracle](#) will happen. It shocks everybody when Zosima's body begins to have a bad smell and decay very quickly after his death. His enemies [rudely](#) say this means Zosima was not a [saint](#) but an [evil person in disguise](#): for instance, [harsh Father Ferapont](#) crazily tries to make [demons](#) go out of Zosima's room. Alyosha is very, very shocked and feels even [angry](#) that [God](#) could let such a [wise, holy](#) and good man like Zosima be so [humiliated](#). He feels [doubtful](#) and sad, and without thinking, says yes when Rakitin makes him visit Grushenka. Rakitin and Grushenka both wanted Alyosha to be "sinful" like them. But instead of his [purity](#) becoming defiled (dirty), Alyosha and Grushenka become comforted by each other. They become friends: Grushenka makes Alyosha have [faith](#) and hope again after Zosima's death, and Alyosha helps the confused Grushenka [spiritually](#). That night, he sees Zosima in a dream, and Zosima tells him he has done a good deed for Grushenka. He wakes up standing, and going outside, falls down and kisses the [earth](#), like how Zosima died: "He did not know why he was [hugging](#) the earth, why he could not [kiss](#) it enough, why he longed (wanted) to kiss it all...He kissed it again and again, drenching (making wet) with his [tears](#), vowing (promising) to [love](#) it always, always...He was a weak [youth](#) when he fell on the ground, and he rose a strong and determined fighter. He knew it...And never, never thereafter (after that) would Alyosha forget that moment."^[1]

Book VIII: Mitya

[\[change\]](#) | [\[change source\]](#)

Dmitry tries all kinds of things wildly to try to pay Katerina the money he has stolen from her. No one will lend him the money, and he has nothing to sell. Finally he goes to Grushenka's house, and when he finds she is not there, he [rushes](#) to his father's house. There, he is caught by Gregory, an old servant, and [panicking](#), he hits Gregory and leaves him bloody and [unconscious](#). He goes back to Grushenka's house, and is shocked when he hears that Grushenka went back to her old lover. He decides he must kill himself, but wants to see Grushenka one last time before he does. However, when he goes to see Grushenka, her "real lover" is actually a silly, old and ugly [Pole](#) who cheats at [cards](#).^[1] When Grushenka sees him cheat and hears the coarse and mean things he says, she realizes she actually [loves](#) Dmitry, not the Pole. When he [insults](#) her, Dmitry locks him up in the room. They begin a wild party with fruit and wine he has bought with thousands of rubles he mysteriously and suddenly has gotten, and he and Grushenka plan their future together. Dmitry is still worried about paying Katerina back, and he is afraid Gregory might die. Suddenly, some officers rush in and arrest him. Fyodor Karamazov has been [murdered](#), and they think Dmitry did it.^[1]

Book IX: Preliminary Investigation

[\[change\]](#) | [\[change source\]](#)

The [police question](#) Dmitry, and are very [suspicious](#) of him because he has suddenly gotten so much money, and because everybody said he had [blood](#) on his [hands](#) as soon as he came out of his father's house. They say he must stand on [trial](#). Dmitry says that the money he had was gotten this way: when he had stolen money from Katerina, he had spent only half of it and sewed the rest secretly into a little [bag](#), and when he had heard Grushenka had run off with the Pole, he had decided to just spend the rest of it in a wild [party](#) before he killed himself; however, nobody believes him, and he is put in [jail](#).

Book X: The Boys

[\[change\]](#) | [\[change source\]](#)

Meanwhile, Alyosha has made friends with the [schoolboys](#) who had been throwing rocks at Ilyusha, and makes them be friends again. Alyosha helps Ilyusha's family, and all the [boys](#) love him very much. He becomes friends with Kolya, a boy about two years older than Ilyusha, who is proud and "immensely enjoyed" bossing the younger boys around. Kolya is very impressed with Alyosha, and says, "...there's only one person in the world who can tell Kolya Krasotkin what to do,"^[1] meaning Alyosha; he even cries, "Oh, Karamazov, we'll become very close friends. And shall I tell you what I like most about you? It's that you treat me just like an equal. But we are not equals—you are by far my superior (better than me)!"^[1] Kolya is very clever and knows it, but when he talks to Alyosha about what he thinks of life, Alyosha quickly sees that his "[philosophy](#)" is just lots of ideas mixed up together from Rakitin; however, Alyosha respectfully listens to him and tells him clearly what *he* thinks about life. A [doctor](#) that Katerina sent comes and says that Ilyusha will die, and Kolya finally begins to [cry](#) out loud at the sight of his sick, [unhappy](#) friend.

Book XI: Ivan

[\[change\]](#) | [\[change source\]](#)

Alyosha visits Grushenka, who has changed [spiritually](#). Even though she is still [fiery](#)-tempered and proud, there is a new gentleness in her. He also visits Lise, who has become [extremely hysterical](#). She says she does not want to [marry](#) him, and often [laughs](#) and [cries](#) for no reason. She says she hates the world and wants to die. When he leaves, she slams the [door](#) on her finger and whispers, "I'm a vile, vile, vile (evil), [despicable](#) creature."^[1] Alyosha meets Ivan, and tells Ivan that he knows that Ivan thinks that he is involved in the [murder](#) of his father, and says, "It was not you who killed father...it was not you, not you! [God](#) has sent me to tell you this."^[1] Surprised and troubled, Ivan hurries angrily away.

Ivan has been visiting Smerdyakov, who keeps on saying he knows that Ivan secretly wanted Fyodor Pavlovich Karamazov to die. Feeling worried and

[guilty](#), he goes to visit Katerina, who shows him a [letter](#) written by Dmitry when he was [drunk](#), [threatening](#) to kill his father and get the 3,000 rubles. Ivan decides that Dmitry has killed his father, until he visits Smerdyakov again – and Smerdyakov openly admits that he killed Fyodor Pavlovich. Smerdyakov also says that he was able to do this because of Ivan's ideas that "everything was allowed."^[1] Ivan is horrified and so [guilty](#) he sees a [devil](#) that keeps on [taunting](#) him, and finally goes mad on the day Smerdyakov [hangs himself](#).

Book XII: Miscarriage of Justice

[[change](#) | [change source](#)]

The next day, the [trial](#) of Dmitry Karamazov opened in the [court](#). Katerina tells the story of Dmitry helping her father and giving her money without saying anything bad about him. The clever [lawyer](#), Fetyukovich, makes all the [witnesses](#) who think Dmitry is [guilty](#) look silly. Dmitry's case seems to be going well until Ivan comes and says that he has murdered his father, which makes everybody confused. Then Katerina, horrified, [jumps](#) up and screams that Ivan is [innocent](#), and shows everybody the [letter](#) Dmitry wrote to her, doing the very [opposite](#) of her first [testimony](#). Immediately after this she feels so [guilty](#) and [sad](#) for "betraying" Dmitry that she goes into [hysterics](#). The [prosecutor](#), Ippolit Kirrillovich, say that Dmitry is [guilty](#), not [crazy](#), and that he has done the worst [sin](#) – a son killing his own father. On the other hand, the lawyer Fetyukovich says that there is no real proof that Dmitry is [guilty](#), and that Fyodor Pavlovich Karamazov was never a real father to Dmitry; he also says that the only way for Dmitry to start a new life is to be set free. Almost everybody thinks Dmitry is innocent, feels [sorry](#) for him, and thinks he will be set free. However, the [jury](#) says he is [guilty](#), and he is put into jail to wait for his [exile](#) to [Siberia](#).

Epilogue

[[change](#) | [change source](#)]

After the [trial](#), Katerina takes Ivan to her [house](#) and [nurses](#) him. Alyosha asks her to see Dmitry, who has decided to escape, and she agrees. She goes to see Dmitry, and they forgive each other. Grushenka suddenly comes in and is shocked to see Katerina. Katerina asks her to forgive her, too, but Grushenka [angrily](#) says no. Katerina hurries away, and Alyosha, who has seen everything, goes to Ilyusha's [funeral](#) – he has died. There, he says a speech to the [schoolboys](#) about [love](#) and forgiveness, asking them to remember this day always, and the book ends hopefully with the [boys](#) cheering, "Three cheers for Karamazov!"^{[1][12]}

Main characters

[[change](#) | [change source](#)]

Alexei (Alyosha) Fyodorovich Karamazov

[[change](#) | [change source](#)]

For the main article, see [Alyosha Karamazov](#).

Also called: Alyoshka, Alyoshenka, Alyoshechka, Alxeichick, Lyosha, Lyoshenka

Dostoevsky calls him the “hero” of *The Brothers Karamazov*. At the beginning of the [book](#), Dostoevsky describes him:

The reader may imagine, perhaps, that my young [man](#) was sickly, [exalted](#), an undersized (small), puny (thin), pale, and [consumptive dreamer](#). Just the opposite was true: Alyosha was then the [picture](#) of health, a sturdy (strong), [red-cheeked](#), clear-[eyeed](#) nineteen-year-old [boy](#). He was very handsome, too, and slender, above [average](#) height, with dark-[brown](#) hair, a regular although rather long [face](#), and shiny dark-[gray](#) wide-set [eyes](#), which gave a thoughtful and serene (calm) look.

— Dostoevsky, from *The Brothers Karamazov*, Book I, Chapter Five, p.32^[1]

He is special because of his very deep faith in [God](#), his unselfishness, and his love for all [humans](#).^[12] He refuses (does not) to [judge](#) people, and often is very [sensitive](#) to other people’s [feelings](#). He is gentle, modest (not proud), and very kind, but never [foolish](#) or naïve, and because of this almost everybody likes and trusts him. “The gift of making people [love](#) him was [inherent](#) in him; he gained people’s affection directly and effortlessly; it was part of his nature.”^[1] Dmitry calls him “the cherub”;^[1] Fyodor Pavlovich Karamazov “...had come to love his son deeply and sincerely; in fact, his feelings for Alyosha were such as a [man](#) like him could never have expected to have for anyone.”^[1] He says to Alyosha, “...with you alone I feel like a decent person at certain moments...”,^[1] and that Alyosha is his “only true son...the only one I’m not afraid of.”^[1] Ivan says that he likes Alyosha because he has strong beliefs, and is one of the only people he talks really sincerely to. While Ivan is horrified at children’s sufferings and says that this is one of the reasons why he cannot believe in [God](#), Alyosha actively helps and [loves](#) children, like Kolya and Ilyusha. He is almost a [symbol](#) of love and forgiveness, and represents the spiritual part of mankind.^[12] He influences the schoolboys and teaches them what Zosima taught him.

Dmitry (Mitya) Fyodorovich Karamazov

[[change](#) | [change source](#)]

Also called: Dmitri, Mitka, Mitenka, Mitri Fyodorovich

He is described as “unruly as a [boy](#) and as a young [man](#)...irresponsible (not responsible), [violent](#), passionate (with strong [emotions](#)), unruly, impatient...” He has Alyosha’s good [heart](#), but his father’s [sensuality](#). He is usually controlled by his strong [emotions](#), like when he runs madly after Grushenka even after he had engaged with, and sincerely even loved, Katerina. He is a [symbol](#) of humans and their struggle between good and evil (bad), and more especially the bodily part of mankind. The prosecutor in the book says, “...Dmitry Karamazov represents [Russia](#) directly, as it is today...she is all there, our old mother Russia; we can smell her! Oh, like him, we are such a...sincere people; we are an amazing mixture of good and evil; we love enlightenment and Schiller, but we also love to rage and storm in [taverns](#) and to tear out the beards of our drunken drinking [companions](#).” He becomes a better and stronger man in the end, and this shows the writer’s belief in hope for [humankind](#).^[12]

Ivan (Vanya) Fyodorovich Karamazov

[\[change\]](#) | [change source](#)

Also called: Vanka, Vanechka

The brother of Alyosha by the same mother, Sofia, Ivan is perhaps one of the most complicated characters in the story. He is an extremely clever [student](#), (it is probable that he represents, in the novel, the intellectual part of mankind) and is proud and filled with doubt. Dmitry calls him “silent as the [grave](#).” He cannot believe in God, or thinks that if God is real, he must be a very mean [God](#) who doesn’t care about [humans](#). He says that “everything is possible” – there is no “good” or “bad.” However, he is [disgusted](#) at the life of his father, which [logically](#) is right according to his beliefs. He is too proud to follow his own [happiness](#) by acting on his own love for Katerina. His final [madness](#) shows the novel’s rejection of his beliefs. The sad [problem](#) with Ivan is that “his head is not in harmony with his [heart](#)”: with his [feelings](#) he loves God’s world, although with his reason he can’t accept it.^[13] Ivan has both a strong sense of [justice](#), like Alyosha, and is unhappy at the suffering of children;^[13] but, unlike Alyosha, who actively makes friends with and helps children, Ivan does not do anything about it.^[12] It is unclear what will happen to him: but the novel ends so cheerfully it suggests he will probably find some way of spiritual [redemption](#).^[12]

Other characters

[\[change\]](#) | [change source](#)

• Fyodor Pavlovich Karamazov

The father of Dmitry, Ivan, Alyosha, and probably Smerdyakov. [Lustful](#), vulgar, [lying](#), coarse, and without caring about who he hurts, he is extremely selfish and cares only about his own [desires](#). He is more afraid of Ivan than Dmitry, but he likes Alyosha, even though he likes to tease and scare him. He does not care much about his sons or his wives. Joyce Carol Oates

describes him as "...a certain perverse (strange) blend (mix) of the [degraded](#) and the [spiritual](#), a brilliant [comic](#) creation who cannot sit down to drink without [questioning](#) the meaning of life."^[14] However, together with his [lustfulness](#), there is a surprising simpleness in him:

"As a general rule, people, even the wicked, are much more naive and simple-hearted than we suppose (think). And we ourselves are, too."^[1]
^[14]

• **Agrafena (Grushenka) Alexandrovna Svetlova**

Also called: Grusha, Grushka

Betrayed when she was young by a lover, she comes to town and makes almost all the men in the town fall in love with her. Dmitry and Fyodor Karamazov both love her and hate each other because of her. The book says "...in all fairness, it must be said, she was very, very beautiful and her beauty was that typical [Russian](#) beauty which inspires (creates) passion in so many men... She was twenty-two and she looked exactly her age." She is very clever, for instance. She saves up [money](#) very well, proud, and actually much purer than most people think. She likes to [torture](#) both Dmitry and his father for fun, to laugh at them, and to have revenge for the hurt she received from her first lover; she can also be quite [cruel](#), like when she lied to Katerina, hurting and [insulting](#) her. However, a hidden gentleness, sincerity, and kindness inside her opens up and begins to grow after she becomes friends with Alyosha. Alyosha said, "I expected to find a wicked soul...But instead I have found a true sister, a [treasure](#), a loving [soul](#)..."

• **Pavel Fyodorovich Smerdyakov**

Silent, cunning. Smerdyakov is the son of an [idiot](#) woman named "Stinking Lizaveta," which is where his name comes from. He was brought up by the [servants](#), Martha and Gregory, and later became Fyodor Karamazov's [cook](#). He has [epilepsy](#) and is very mean, sometimes showing his evil openly, and sometimes pretending to be very humble and afraid. He sometimes plays the [guitar](#) to Maria, the landlady's daughter. He has great respect for Ivan, and Ivan's beliefs strongly influence his [murder](#) of Mr. Karamazov. He is Ivan's "shadow", and puts into [action](#) all Ivan's secret thoughts and wishes.^[14] He [hangs himself](#) later.

Smerdyakov is almost Ivan's "double" at times; when [Alyosha](#) asks him politely if he knows where Dmitry is, he replies coldly, "It's not as if I were his keeper" (p. 269).^{[1][14]} A few pages later, Ivan says, "'You are always harping upon it! What have I to do with it? Am I my brother Dmitri's keeper?'" (p. 275)^[14] Later, when Fyodor Pavlovich is drunkenly talking about how he made Alyosha's mother, Sofya, become unhappy by [insulting](#) her [God](#), Ivan angrily reminds him that Sofya was his mother, too. Fyodor exclaims in surprise:

"Your mother?...What do you mean? What mother are you talking about? Was she?...Why, damn it! of course she was yours too!...Excuse

me, why, I was thinking Ivan...He, he, he!" He stopped. A broad (wide), drunken, half senseless grin overspread his face. (p. 164)

It is possible that he was thinking that Ivan was Lizaveta's son - perhaps he even confused Ivan with Smerdyakov himself. ^[14]

- **Katerina (Katya) Ivanovna Verkhovstev**

Also called: Katka, Katenka

An extremely proud, beautiful, and sensitive young woman who is Dmitry's [fiancée](#). She has a pale [oval](#) face, [sparkling](#) black eyes, and is very tall – even taller than Grushenka. She tries to pretend to be a [martyr](#) and by being very loyal and suffering a lot, wants everybody to see the evil of the people around her. She [loves](#) Ivan, but does not admit it, even to herself, until the end of the novel.

- **Zosima (Zossima, Zimovy)**

The kind, loving, "rather cheerful" and wise elder who is Alyosha's [mentor](#) and teacher before he dies. His real and [sincere](#) goodness shows the faults of other people – even the very good Alyosha is embarrassed and [awkward](#) around Lise and his father, while Zosima is quiet, kind, and calm. He sees people clearly. Alyosha is influenced by his teachings and uses them to teach the schoolboys he becomes friends with. It is probable that his character was [inspired](#) by Saint [Tikhon of Zadonsk](#). ^[15] Dostoevsky wrote to poet A. Maikov, "To you alone I make this confession...I am going to portray (picture) the real Tikhon of Zadonsk, whom I long ago received into my heart with real delight." ^[15] When he first wrote *The Brothers Karamazov*, the name "Tikhon" was inside, and was later replaced by "Elder Zosima". ^[15]

- **Katerina Ospovna Khokhlakov (Madame Khokhlakov)**

A rich lady in the town, a friend of the Karamazovs and Katerina. She is a bit selfish and shallow, and worries very much about her daughter, Lise. She unknowingly [parodies](#) what Elder Zosima seriously says about people being unable to judge each other, saying cheerfully about Dmitry,

"Let them acquit [Mitya]—that's so humane (kind), and would show what a blessing reformed (changed) law courts are...And if he is [acquitted](#), make him come straight from the law courts to dinner with me, and I'll have a party of friends, and we'll drink to the reformed law courts. I don't believe he'd be dangerous; besides, I'll invite a great many friends, so that he could always be led out if he did anything. And then he might be made a [justice of the peace](#) or something in another town, for those who have been in trouble themselves make the best judges. And, besides, who isn't suffering...nowadays?" (p. 703) ^{[1][14]}

- **Liza (Lise) Khokhlakov**

Mrs. Khokhlakov's pretty but mischievous and [crippled](#) daughter. She is in love with Alyosha and becomes [engaged](#) to Alyosha, but decides not to

marry him. She grows more and more [hysterical](#) and wishes to suffer. Though people like Dmitry become spiritually new because of their suffering, Lise's "suffering" is silly and selfish – like when she tries to slam the door on her [fingernail](#). Ivan says that he "likes Lise," but is very contemptuous about that "[hell kitten](#)."

- **Mikhail Osipovich Rakitin**

A young student that Alyosha thinks of as his friend, but who secretly dislikes Alyosha. [Irritable](#) and [sarcastic](#), he does not believe in God and likes to use fashionable [philosophical](#) theories, saying that he is a [socialist](#) and saying things that [Nietzsche](#) said. He is annoyed by Alyosha's real [purity](#) and tries to introduce him to Grushenka, hoping that she will shake his religious faith.

- **Nikolai Ivanov Krasotkin (Kolya)**

A brave, proud, and clever young boy who makes friends with Alyosha after Ilyusha becomes ill.

Important themes

[[change](#) | [change source](#)]

Inside The Brothers Karamazov, people struggle between [religious faith](#) and [doubt](#).^{[12][16]} When Fyodor Karamazov asks, "Is there a God or not?" Ivan says, "No, there is no God." Fyodor turns to Alyosha: "Alyosha, does God [exist](#)?" Alyosha firmly answers, "God does exist." Dostoevsky writes in his book that a life of faith is higher, better, purer, and happier than a life of doubt, cold, hurting, and confusing. Zosima and Alyosha love [humans](#) and are a [symbol](#) of faith, while Dostoevsky shows that he thinks that [doubt](#) is bad^[12] by Ivan's madness and Smerdyakov's murder. Dostoevsky also shows in the chapter "The Grand Inquisitor" that though [faith](#) may not be able to be solved by [logic](#), there is something in it deep, moving, and impossible to explain by words – like in [Jesus](#) and Alyosha's [kiss](#), or in Zosima's bowing down to the ground. It also searches about [free will](#): Ivan says that free will is a heavy [burden](#), while Zosima and Alyosha agree that free will is a joy and a gift of God to humans. Another important theme is that of forgiveness: Zosima says everyone must forgive and love, and Alyosha never judges or [criticizes](#) people.^{[12][17]} Zosima says that people should forgive each other freely, because people's sins are so connected with each other that everybody has some [responsibility](#) for each other, like when Dmitry, without thinking much about it, grabs Captain Snegriev's beard and pulls him, leading finally to Ilyusha's death.^[12] People like Ivan do not like this idea: he continues to [insist](#) that he does not have any responsibility for other people's sins, and when he finally is forced to [accept](#) it, he becomes [insane](#).

Dmitry also, though he did not kill his father, at first wants to suffer to find peace and a new life.^[13] Both brothers feel [guilty](#) as if they were the ones who killed their father.^[13] Alyosha's strong sense of responsibility makes

Elder Zossima tell him to "go out into the world", for he has work to do there.^[13] Dostoevsky thought that people should be "married" to the world around them, for, he argues, everyone is a part of God's creation.

Grand Inquisitor

[\[change\]](#) | [change source](#)

See the main article: [The Grand Inquisitor](#)

The [existence](#) of God has concerned people for a long time: is there a God, or not? Dostoevsky evidently thought there was.

He wrote in his books the two opposite sides of the question: from Ivan, the atheist intellectual's view, and the Elder Zosima's view. The author called the part in which Ivan and Elder Zosima each speak their beliefs as "the culminating point of the novel" (*Letters*, 7567, 859). Dostoevsky wrote in his notebook about *The Grand Inquisitor*: "Those blockheads have never even conceived (thought of) so powerful a rejection of God as exists (is) in the Inquisitor and the preceding chapter (the chapter before it), to which the whole book will serve as answer.... Throughout [Europe](#) there has not been and does not exist so powerful an expression from the [aesthetic](#) point of view as mine."^[11]

In the book, Ivan's argument is that there is no justice in the world. He is very unhappy with the suffering of people on earth, and says: "I must have retribution (justice), or I will destroy myself. And not retribution in some remote (far away) infinite time and space, but here on earth, and that I could see myself."^[2] But there is no [absolute](#) justice in the world. So, Ivan says that there are only two things that can be true: either God is not real, or if He is real, He must be an unjust and unwise God.

Ivan has also not forgotten [Jesus Christ](#). When Alyosha exclaims, "But...you asked whether there was in the world 'a single creature who could forgive'. Well, there is. And He can forgive everyone for everything, because He Himself gave His innocent blood for everyone's sins and for everyone's sake. You forgot to mention (talk about) Him..."^[1] Ivan replies by the story of *The Grand Inquisitor*. In *The Grand Inquisitor*, Ivan shows to Alyosha what he believes is the wrong of Jesus' rule, and a possibly better, "more just" one.^[2]

Readers immediately wrote letters to Dostoevsky after Book Five about *The Grand Inquisitor* was published in great worry, and Dostoevsky replied, "...my hero's [blasphemy](#) will be triumphantly refuted (replied to) in the next issue, on which I am now working with fear, trembling, and [veneration](#), since I consider my task (job) . . . a [civic](#) deed."^[2] However, when Book Six, Dostoevsky's "answer" to *The Grand Inquisitor*, was published, he was much more worried: "'I don't know whether I succeeded. I reckon myself that I wasn't able to express one tenth of what I wanted...I tremble for it in this sense: will it be answer enough? . . . I wrote it with a great deal of love."^[2] D.H. Lawrence felt that "we cannot doubt that the Inquisitor speaks Dostoevsky's own final opinion about Jesus."^[2]

Elder Zosima

[[change](#) | [change source](#)]

The Elder Zosima's words before he dies is evidently Dostoevsky's "reply" to Ivan. Elder Zosima believes in a kind and just Jesus, who loves people very dearly and cares for them so much that he died for them.

About suffering, the Elder Zosima says that since God is kind and just, all the suffering comes from [man](#).^[2] But since everyone's lives are connected, Elder Zosima says, we cannot blame anybody: "[A]ll is like an ocean, all is flowing and blending; a touch in one place sets up movement at the other end of the earth".^[2] Instead of [demanding](#) justice, he says everyone should begin changing and forgiving each other. Instead of saying, "nobody is [guilty](#)", he says, "everybody is [responsible](#)".^[2]

The pain of suffering, according to Elder Zosima, is a passing thing - it will not last. He [refers](#) to the [Book of Job](#) and says,

But how could [Job] love those new ones when those first children are no more, when he has lost them? Remembering them, how could he be fully [happy](#) with those new ones, however dear the new ones might be? But he could, he could. It's the great mystery of human life that old grief (sadness) passes gradually (in time) into quiet [tender](#) joy. The mild serenity (calmness) of age takes the place of the riotous (wild) [blood](#) of youth.

— Elder Zosima, *The Brothers Karamazov*^[2]

Though Dostoevsky wrote of Elder Zosima's reply as the reply of Ivan's arguments, he defends [Christianity](#) throughout the whole book and through the characters themselves. Elder Zosima is happy and respected, loved and loving, and dies peacefully and joyfully, but Ivan, who is so unhappy for the justice of humans, says, "I could never understand how one could love one's neighbor"^[2] and knocks a [peasant](#) into the [snow](#) to freeze. "'He will freeze,' thought Ivan, and he went on his way".^[2] And at the end, his [horror](#) at the thought that he was, in a way, his father's murderer, drives him [insane](#). Elder Zosima, however, is very different; he blesses and helps people even when he is dying, and "Alyosha almost always noticed that many, almost all, went in to the elder for the first time with apprehension (fear) and [uneasiness](#), but almost always came out with bright and happy faces".^[2] Even Ivan respects Father Zosima after meeting him and seriously "receive[s] his blessing, [and] kisse[s] his hand".^[2]

Style

[[change](#) | [change source](#)]

The narrator (person telling the story) is unnamed, and though he knows the coldness and darkness of the subjects he writes about, he writes warmly and [inventively](#) in a tone of serious [comedy](#).^[18] Although the narrator is sometimes allowed to be [omniscient](#), he also talks of himself as "I", says things that are not directly related to the plot, in a style that some people have criticized. It is possible that this writing style is because of the way Dostoevsky's books were written:^[19] in the day, he would hurriedly write down ideas in his notebook, and at night, his wife, Anna Snitkina Grigoryevna, who was a [stenographer](#), would have them copied neatly out:

While Dostoevsky was [dictating](#), he never stopped [pacing](#) around the room and even, at difficult (hard) moments, pulled his hair...The style with its triple (three times) repetitions, its sentences punctuated as in speech, its accumulation (collection) of [nouns](#) and [adjectives](#) with similar meanings, its constant (continuous) [reticence](#), reflects this uninterrupted pacing within a [confined](#) space. From this time on, the [rhythm](#) of the Dostoevskian sentence may be defined (explained) as a walking movement, where the breath of the spoken word is marked in the written style.

—Jacques Catteau,^[20]

Influence and reception

[[change](#) | [change source](#)]

The critical reception of *The Brothers Karamazov* has been quite special and strong. Dostoevsky [published](#) his books in a series of journals, and every one made people argue about it and think very much about it. [Sigmund Freud](#) called it "the most magnificent novel ever written." Franz Kafka was greatly influenced by Dostoevsky's works.^[21]

Critic Robin Feuer Miller wrote that *The Brothers Karamazov* was Dostoevsky's "...last and arguably greatest novel."^[22]

Virginia Woolf said, "Alone among writers Dostoevsky has the power of reconstructing(making again) those most swift(quick) and complicated states of mind.... This is the exact opposite of the method(way) adopted(used), perforce(for instance), by most of our novelists. They reproduce all the external(outside) appearances-tricks of manner, landscape, dress, and the effect of the hero upon his friends-but very rarely, and only for an instant, [penetrate](#) to the [tumult](#) of thought which rages within his own mind. But the whole [fabric](#) of a book by [Dostoevsky](#) is made out of such [material](#).... We have to get rid of the old tune which runs so persistently (continues) in our ears and to realize how little of our [humanity](#) is expressed in that old tune."^[22]

On 7 June, 1880, on the night before his famous "Pushkin speech", he wrote at midnight to his wife: "As I walked across the hall during intermission, a host of people, youths and graybeards and ladies, rushed toward me exclaiming, 'You're our prophet. We've become better people since we read The Karamazovs.' (In brief, I realized how tremendously important The Karamazovs is.)"^[22] The next evening, after the triumph of his speech, he wrote to her, "When I appeared on the stage, the auditorium thundered with applause.... I bowed and made signs, begging them to let me read-but to no avail(no use): elation(joy), enthusiasm (all because of The Karamazovs)!"^[22]

However, not everybody loved *The Brothers Karamazov*. [Tchaikovsky](#), an important writer of music in Russia, was interested in *The Brothers Karamazov*, but finally decided that it was "[intolerable](#)" and that all the characters were "crazy".^[13] Some people, like [Henry James](#),^[22] [Vladimir Nabokov](#)^[22] and [D. H. Lawrence](#)^[22] were very critical of it (did not like it). For example, Lawrence said that in *The Brothers Karamazov*, he did not like "these [morbidly introspective](#) Russians, morbidly wallowing (swimming) in adoration (love) of [Jesus](#), then getting up and spitting in His beard.... It's all [masturbation](#), half-baked, and one gets tired of it. One gets tired of being told that Dostoevsky's Legend of the *Grand Inquisitor* 'is the most profound (deepest) declaration which ever was made about man and life.' ... The more Dostoevsky gets worked up (excited) about the tragic (sad) nature of the human soul, the more I lose interest. I have read the *Grand Inquisitor* three times, and never can remember what it's really about."^[22] He also said *The Brothers Karamazov* was too depressing "because, alas, more drearily true to life. At first it had been lurid romance. Now I read *The Grand Inquisitor* once more, and my heart sinks right through my shoes."^[22]

Reading more

[\[change\]](#) | [\[change source\]](#)

- Belknap, Robert L. *The Genesis of The Brothers Karamazov : The Aesthetics, Ideology, and Psychology of Text-Making*. Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1990.
- *The Structure of The Brothers Karamazov*. The Hague and Paris: Mouton, 1967.
- Dostoevsky, Fyodor. *Crime and Punishment*. Translated by David McDuff. New York: Penguin Classics, 1993.
- *The Idiot*. Translated by Alan Myers. New York: Oxford University Press, 1998.
- Frank, Joseph. *Dostoevsky*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1996.
- Mochulsky, Konstantin. *Dostoevsky: His Life and Work*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1967.
- Sutherland, Stewart R. *Atheism and the Rejection of God: Contemporary Philosophy and The Brothers Karamazov*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1977.
- Terras, Victor (1981, 2002). *A Karamazov Companion*. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press.

References

[[change](#) | [change source](#)]

1. ↑ [1.00](#) [1.01](#) [1.02](#) [1.03](#) [1.04](#) [1.05](#) [1.06](#) [1.07](#) [1.08](#) [1.09](#) [1.10](#) [1.11](#) [1.12](#) [1.13](#) [1.14](#) [1.15](#) [1.16](#) [1.17](#) [1.18](#) [1.19](#) [1.20](#) [1.21](#) [1.22](#) [1.23](#) [1.24](#) [1.25](#) [1.26](#) [1.27](#) [1.28](#) [1.29](#) [1.30](#) [1.31](#) [1.32](#) [1.33](#) [1.34](#) [1.35](#) [1.36](#) [1.37](#) [1.38](#) [1.39](#) [1.40](#) [1.41](#) [1.42](#) [1.43](#) Dostoevsky, Fyodor (1984). *The Brothers Karamazov*. United States of America, New York: Bantam Books (a division of Random House, Inc.). ISBN 978-0-553-21216-7.
2. ↑ [2.00](#) [2.01](#) [2.02](#) [2.03](#) [2.04](#) [2.05](#) [2.06](#) [2.07](#) [2.08](#) [2.09](#) [2.10](#) [2.11](#) [2.12](#) [2.13](#) [2.14](#) [2.15](#) [2.16](#) [2.17](#) [2.18](#) Townsend, James (1997). "[Grace in the Arts: Dostoevsky and His Theology](#)". Journey of Grace Evangelical Society. Retrieved 2010-02-18. "The Brothers Karamazov is one of the leading candidates for top honors as the world's greatest novel."
3. ↑ *Original Penguin Classics Introduction to [Sense and Sensibility](#)* by Tony Tanner, 1969
4. ↑ [4.0](#) [4.1](#) [4.2](#) "[Biography of Fyodor Dostoevsky: The Brothers Karamazov](#)". Encyclopedia Britannica. Retrieved 2010-02-20. "Dostoyevsky's last and probably greatest novel, *Bratya Karamazovy* (1879–80; *The Brothers Karamazov*), focuses on his favourite theological and philosophical themes: the origin of evil, the nature of freedom, and the craving for faith."
5. ↑ Freud, Sigmund [Writings on Art and Literature](#)
6. ↑ *The Collected Papers of Albert Einstein, Volume 9: The Berlin Years: Correspondence, January 1919 - April 1920*
7. ↑ *Encyclical Letter Spes Salvi*, 2007
8. ↑ "[Free Summary About Fyodor Dostoevsky and his books](#)". Bibliomania.com.LTD. 2010. Retrieved 2010-02-13. "Dostoyevsky's 1880 novel, *The Brothers Karamazov*, is a tale of bitter family rivalries. It is the last of Dostoyevsky's famous and well-regarded novels and begins on a bright day in August at a meeting that has been organised to settle the differences of the Karamazov family."
9. ↑ [9.0](#) [9.1](#) [9.2](#) [9.3](#) [9.4](#) [9.5](#) [9.6](#) Ronald Hingley, *Introduction to Memoirs from the House of the Dead*, Oxford University Press, Inc
10. ↑ [10.0](#) [10.1](#) [10.2](#) [10.3](#) "[Biography of Fyodor Dostoevsky](#)". Christian Classics Ethereal Library. Retrieved 2010-02-13. "In *The Brothers Karamazov*, his last novel, Dostoevsky portrayed the relationships of four brothers to their depraved and spiteful earthly father on the one hand, and to a mysterious, often ambivalent heavenly Father on the other. Throughout, Dostoevsky was concerned with the justice of God and the idea that "if God does not exist, then everything is permitted." "
11. ↑ [11.0](#) [11.1](#) [11.2](#) [11.3](#) [11.4](#) Hansen, Bruce (4 December 1996). "[Dostoevsky's Theodicy](#)". Archived from [the original](#) on 2001-08-22. Retrieved 2010-02-18. "Dostoevsky was no stranger to affliction, either. A brief survey of his life's history will show how he suffered one hardship after another, bearing a seemingly endless series of crosses. Born in Moscow in 1821 to a family of "impoverished nobility," he was raised in a largely content though hardly rich and quite strict household

(Frank 1:6-22). By the time he was 19 years of age, however, both his parents were in the grave. His much-beloved mother died of illness in 1836 (37), and three years later while Dostoevsky was attending the Academy of Engineers in St. Petersburg his father died, many say killed by his own peasants. Whether he was actually murdered or simply died of a stroke or seizure is still a subject of debate among biographers; the important fact here is that Dostoevsky himself believed throughout his life that his father had, in fact, been murdered (86-7)."

12. ↑ [12.00 12.01 12.02 12.03 12.04 12.05 12.06 12.07 12.08 12.09 12.10](#) ["The Brothers Karamazov: Analysis of Major Characters"](#). Sparknotes LLC. Retrieved 2010-02-13. "His faith in a loving God, strengthened by his close relationship with the monastic elder Zosima, reinforces his love of mankind and his immense capability to do good. Even when Alyosha experiences doubt, his doubt is always resolved by his commitment to do good. At the end of the novel, Alyosha has become the mature embodiment of Zosima's teachings, and he even helps to guarantee Zosima's legacy by spreading his teachings among the young schoolboys of the town, who adore him."
13. ↑ [13.0 13.1 13.2 13.3 13.4 13.5](#) Strauch, Kendrick; Kissel, Adam (2007). ["Study Guide for the Brothers Karamazov"](#). 1999-2010 Gradesaver LLC. Retrieved 2010-02-13.
14. ↑ [14.0 14.1 14.2 14.3 14.4 14.5 14.6](#) Oates, Joyce Carol. ["Tragic and Comic Visions in The Brothers Karamazov"](#). Archived from [the original](#) on 2005-08-30. Retrieved 2010-02-19. "There is no writer who better demonstrates the contradictions and fluctuations of the creative mind than Dostoevski, and Dostoevski nowhere more astonishingly than in The Brothers Karamazov. Of the psychology of Dostoevski's works a great deal has been said—Nietzsche pronounced him the only psychologist from whom he learned anything—and of the ideas of The Brothers Karamazov much has been argued."
15. ↑ [15.0 15.1 15.2](#) Nadejda, Gorodetzky (1951). *Saint Tikhon of Zadonsk: Inspirer of Dostoyevsky*. Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press. ISBN 978-0-913836-32-3.
16. ↑ Mochulsky, Konstantin, *Dostoevsky and The Brothers Karamazov*
17. ↑ *The official Biography of Fyodor Doestoevsky*, by James Townsend, Bible Editor, Cook Communications, Elgin, IL <http://www.faithalone.org/journal/1997ii/Townsend.html>
18. ↑ ["The Brothers Karamazov: Major Facts"](#). Sparknotes LLC. 2010. Retrieved 2010-02-13. "An unnamed, first-person narrator who acts as a storyteller, relating events in which he plays no part. The narrator frequently refers to himself as "I," and his erratic voice leaves a noticeable sardonic mark on an otherwise serious novel."
19. ↑ William Mills Todd III, *Introduction to The Idiot*, Penguin Books
20. ↑ Jacques Catteau, *Dostoyevksy and the Process of Literary Creation* (Cambridge:Cambridge University Press, 1989), p.178
21. ↑ Struc, Ronald S. (1981). ["Kafka and Dostoevsky as "Blood Relatives" "](#). International Dostoevsky Study. Archived from [the original](#) on 2012-07-04. Retrieved 2010-02-14. "Kafka's private library, unfortunately recorded a decade after his death, contained Dostoevsky's "Letters", "The Brothers Karamazov", "Crime and Punishment", and a one volume collection of shorter works with the

title "The Gambler". (4) In 1914 a German translation of Dostoevsky's "Complete Works" had become available. On the basis of Kafka's Letters and Diaries we know that he read many other works besides those in his library, including Nina Hoffmann's Dostoevsky biography and Strachov's introductory essay to Dostoevsky's "Collected Works". Further it will become obvious that, although unmentioned, Kafka was familiar with "The Double". As early as 1913, in a letter to his fiancée Kafka wrote: "the four men, Grillparzer, Dostoevsky, Kleist and Flaubert, I consider to be my true blood-relations"."

22. ↑ [22.0](#) [22.1](#) [22.2](#) [22.3](#) [22.4](#) [22.5](#) [22.6](#) [22.7](#) [22.8](#) Robin Feuer Miller, *The Brothers Karamazov: Worlds of the Novel*, Chapter Two

Other websites

[[change](#) | [change source](#)]

Wikiquote has a collection of quotations related to: ***Fyodor Dostoevsky***

[Wikisource](#) has original writing related to this article:
[The Brothers Karamazov](#)

Wikimedia Commons has media related to ***[The Brothers Karamazov](#)***.

- [The Brothers Karamazov](#), e-text of Garnett's translation (1.9 MB).
- The Grand Inquisitor* at [Project Gutenberg](#)
- [The Brothers Karamazov Archived 2007-04-19 at the Wayback Machine](#)
Free PDF [from PSU's Electronic Classics Series Archived 2007-04-18 at the Wayback Machine](#)
- [The Brothers Karamazov](#), HTML version of Garnett's translation (as one file) at the Christian Classics Ethereal Library
- [Full text in the original Russian](#)

Retrieved from "https://simple.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=The_Brothers_Karamazov&oldid=9803616"