

The narrator prefaces the story with his comments on a crushed, but still living thistle he finds in a field (a symbol for the main character), after which he begins to tell the story of Hadji Murat, a successful and famed separatist guerrilla who falls out with his own commander and eventually sides with the Russians in hope of saving his family. Hadji Murat's family is being contained and controlled by the Chechen leader who abducted his mother, two wives, and five children. Aside from the fact that Murat wants to save his family, he additionally wants to avenge the deaths of other family members. The story opens with Murat and two of his followers fleeing from Shamil, the commander of the Caucasian separatists, who is at war with the Russians. They find refuge at the house of Sado, a loyal supporter of Murat. The local people learn of his presence and chase him out of the village.

His lieutenant succeeds in making contact with the Russians, who promise to meet Murat. He eventually arrives at the fortress of Vozdvizhenskaya to join the Russian forces, in hopes of drawing their support in order to overthrow Shamil and save his family. Before his arrival, a small skirmish occurs with some Chechens outside the fortress, and Petrukha Avdeyev, a young Russian soldier bleeds out in a local military hospital after being shot. Tolstoy makes a chapter-length aside about Petrukha: childless, he volunteered as a conscript in place of his brother who had a family of his own. Petrukha's father regrets this because he was a dutiful worker compared to his complacent brother.

While at Vozdvizhenskaya, Murat befriends Prince Semyon Vorontsov, the Viceroy's son, his wife Maria and his son, and wins over the good will of the soldiers stationed there. They are at once in awe of his physique and reputation, and enjoy his company and find him honest and upright. The Vorontsovs give him a present of a watch which fascinates him. On the fifth day of Murat's stay, the governor-general's adjutant, Mikhail Loris-Melikov arrives with orders to write down Murat's story, and the reader learns some of his history: he was born in the village of Tselmes and early on became close to the local Khans due to his mother being the royal family's wetnurse. When he was fifteen some followers of Muridism came into his village calling for a holy war (ghazavat) against Russia. Murat declines at first but after a learned man is sent to explain how it will be run, he tentatively agrees. However, in their first confrontation, Shamil—then a lieutenant for the Muslims hostile to the Russians—embarrasses Murat when he goes to speak with the leader Gamzat. Gamzat eventually launches an attack on the capital of Khunzakh and kills the pro-Russian khans, taking control of this part of Dagestan. The slaughter of the khans throws Hadji and his brother against Gamzat, and they eventually succeed in tricking and killing him, causing his followers to flee. Unfortunately, Murat's brother is killed in the attempt and Shamil replaces Gamzat as leader. He calls on Murat to join his struggle, but Murat refuses because the blood of his brother and the khans are on Shamil.

Once Murat has joined the Russians, who are aware of his position and bargaining ability, they find him the perfect tool for getting to Shamil. However, Vorontsov's plans are ruined by the War Minister, Chernyshov, a rival prince who is jealous of him, and Murat has to remain in the fortress because the Tsar is told he is possibly a spy. The story digresses into a depiction of the Tsar Nicholas I of Russia, which reveals his lethargic and bitter nature and his egotistical complacency, as well as his contempt towards women, his brother-in-law Frederick William IV of Prussia, and Russian students.

The Tsar orders an attack on the Chechens and Murat remains in the fortress. Meanwhile, Murat's mother, wife and eldest son Yusuf, whom Shamil hold captive, are moved to a more defensible location. Realizing his position (neither trusted by the Russians to lead an army against Shamil, nor able to return to Shamil because he will be killed), Hadji Murat decides to flee the fortress to gather men to save his family.

At this point the narrative jumps forward in time, to the arrival of a group of soldiers at the fortress bearing Murat's severed head. Maria Dmitriyevna—the companion of one of the officers and a friend of Murat—comments on the cruelty of men during times of war, calling them 'butchers'. The soldiers then tell the story of Murat's death. He had escaped the fortress and shook off his usual Russian escort with the help of his five lieutenants. After they escape they come upon a marsh that they are unable to cross, and hide amongst some bushes until the morning. An old man gives away their position and Karganov, the commander of the fortress, the soldiers, and some Cossacks surround the area. Hadji Murat and his men fortify themselves and begin to fire upon the troops, dying valiantly. Hadji himself runs into fire after his

men are killed, despite being wounded and plugging up his fatal wounds in his body with cloth. As he fires his last bullet his life flashes before him and the soldiers think he's dead; he gets up for one final struggle and falls to his death. Victorious, the Russian soldiers fall upon and decapitate him. The nightingales, which stopped singing during the battle, begin again and the narrator ends by recalling the thistle once more.

Hudgi Murat ↗

The story begins with the childhood and exceptional and accomplished youth of Prince Stepan Kasatsky. The young man is destined for great things. He discovers on the eve of his wedding that his fiancée Countess Mary Korotkova has had an affair with his beloved Tsar Nicholas I. The blow to his pride is massive, and he retreats to the arms of Russian Orthodoxy and becomes a monk. Many years of humility and doubt follow. He is ordered to become a hermit. Despite his being removed from the world, he is still remembered for having so remarkably transformed his life. One winter night, a group of merry-makers decide to visit him, and one of them, a divorced woman named Makovkina, spends the night in his cell, with the intention to seduce him. Father Sergius discovers he is still weak and in order to protect himself, cuts off his own finger. Makovkina is stunned by this act, and leaves the next morning, having vowed to change her life. A year later she has joined a convent. Father Sergius' reputation for holiness grows. He becomes known as a healer, and pilgrims come from far and wide. Yet Father Sergius is profoundly aware of his inability to attain a true faith. He is still tortured by boredom, pride, and lust. He fails a new test, when the young daughter of a merchant successfully beds him. The morning after, he leaves the monastery and seeks out his cousin Pashenka (Praskovya Mikhaylovna), whom he, with a group of other boys, had tormented many years ago. He finds her, now in all the conventional senses a failure in life, yet imbued with a sense of service towards her family. His path is now clearer. He begins to wander, until eight months later he is arrested in the company of a blind beggar who makes him feel closer to God. He is sent to Siberia, where he now works as the hired man of a well-to-do peasant, teaching the gentleman's young children and working in the gardens.

Father Sergius

DO II - <sup>LOVE</sup> Selfishness good, <sup>! = love</sup> egoism bad / <sup>only people you can love</sup> strangers good / LOVE IS THE ONLY GOOD

2 models of love, switches his mind throughout

Son - spiritual comfort, selfish --- <sup>→ marriage</sup>

Gerasim - physical comfort, distant, selfless

Kretzer Sonata

Communication bad / <sup>chastity</sup> solitude good / <sup>music (Beethoven)</sup> fills myself with your content (false) → adultery

selves are separate & egotistical

sex - selfish

in women - revenge

Communicative hostility = GOAL

Father Sergius

Important Scenes:

FS + fiancee → Adam & Eve, discovers evil, all mankind/human life is worthless

monk/monastery → elder tells him what to do → T thinks elders are probably pretty good

monastery nr. city → temptations from people

abbott

hermitage

divorcee → goes after him/why?

14-year old sick boy

sex w/ simple-minded woman → falls → small temptation, why? people visiting weaken him

Pushkina (distant cousin) → leaves for her, what?

beggar/works for peasant family (Siberia) → hide from world, be nobody

get in touch w/ God, easiest to get away from people, by yourself, hear voice of God inside you  
blend in, in plain sight, nobody will notice you

p512 → 514 : hard not to judge people / can't not hate their weaknesses

moral of story

goal-directedness is bad?

} people  
suck