

## CHAPTER XIX

Having returned to the regiment and told the commander the state of Denísov's affairs, Rostóv rode to Tilsit with the letter to the Emperor.

On the thirteenth of June the French and Russian Emperors arrived in Tilsit. Borís Drubetskóy had asked the important personage on whom he was in attendance, to include him in the suite appointed for the stay at Tilsit.

"I should like to see the great man," he said, alluding to Napoleon, whom hitherto he, like everyone else, had always called Buonaparte.

"You are speaking of Buonaparte?" asked the general, smiling.

Borís looked at his general inquiringly and immediately saw that he was being tested.

"I am speaking, Prince, of the Emperor Napoleon," he replied. The general patted him on the shoulder, with a smile.

"You will go far," he said, and took him to Tilsit with him.

Borís was among the few present at the Niemen on the day the two Emperors met. He saw the raft, decorated with monograms, saw Napoleon pass before the French Guards on the farther bank of the river, saw the pensive face of the Emperor Alexander as he sat in silence in a tavern on the bank of the Niemen awaiting Napoleon's arrival, saw both Emperors get into boats, and saw how Napoleon—reaching the raft first—stepped quickly forward to meet Alexander and held out his hand to him, and how they both retired into the pavilion. Since he had begun to move in the highest circles Borís had made it his habit to watch attentively all that went on around him and to note it down. At the time of the meeting at Tilsit he asked the names of those who had come with Napoleon and about the uniforms they wore, and listened attentively to words spoken by important personages. At the moment the Emperors went into the pavilion he looked at his watch, and did not forget to look at it again when Alexander came out. The interview had lasted an hour and fifty-three minutes. He noted this down that same evening, among other facts he felt to be of historic importance. As the Emperor's suite was a very small one, it was a matter of great importance, for a man who valued his success in the service, to be at Tilsit on the occasion of this interview between the two Emperors, and having succeeded in this, Borís felt that henceforth his position was fully assured. He had not only become known, but people had grown accustomed to him and accepted him. Twice he had executed commissions to the Emperor himself, so that the latter knew his face, and all those at court, far from cold-shouldering him as at first when they considered him a newcomer, would now have been surprised had he been absent.

Borís lodged with another adjutant, the Polish Count Zhilínski. Zhilínski, a Pole brought up in Paris, was rich, and passionately

fond of the French, and almost every day of the stay at Tilsit, French officers of the Guard and from French headquarters were dining and lunching with him and Borís.

On the evening of the twenty-fourth of June, Count Zhilínski arranged a supper for his French friends. The guest of honor was an aide-de-camp of Napoleon's, there were also several French officers of the Guard, and a page of Napoleon's, a young lad of an old aristocratic French family. That same day, Rostóv, profiting by the darkness to avoid being recognized in civilian dress, came to Tilsit and went to the lodging occupied by Borís and Zhilínski.

Rostóv, in common with the whole army from which he came, was far from having experienced the change of feeling toward Napoleon and the French—who from being foes had suddenly become friends—that had taken place at headquarters and in Borís. In the army, Bonaparte and the French were still regarded with mingled feelings of anger, contempt, and fear. Only recently, talking with one of Plátov's Cossack officers, Rostóv had argued that if Napoleon were taken prisoner he would be treated not as a sovereign, but as a criminal. Quite lately, happening to meet a wounded French colonel on the road, Rostóv had maintained with heat that peace was impossible between a legitimate sovereign and the criminal Bonaparte. Rostóv was therefore unpleasantly struck by the presence of French officers in Borís' lodging, dressed in uniforms he had been accustomed to see from quite a different point of view from the outposts of the flank. As soon as he noticed a French officer, who thrust his head out of the door, that warlike feeling of hostility which he always experienced at the sight of the enemy suddenly seized him. He stopped at the threshold and asked in Russian whether Drubetskóy lived there. Borís, hearing a strange voice in the anteroom, came out to meet him. An expression of annoyance showed itself for a moment on his face on first recognizing Rostóv.

“Ah, it's you? Very glad, very glad to see you,” he said, however, coming toward him with a smile. But Rostóv had noticed his first impulse.

“I've come at a bad time I think. I should not have come, but I have business,” he said coldly.

“No, I only wonder how you managed to get away from your regiment. Dans un moment je suis à vous,” \* he said, answering someone who called him.

\* “In a minute I shall be at your disposal.”

“I see I'm intruding,” Rostóv repeated.

The look of annoyance had already disappeared from Borís' face: having evidently reflected and decided how to act, he very quietly took both Rostóv's hands and led him into the next room. His eyes, looking serenely and steadily at Rostóv, seemed to be veiled by something, as if screened by blue spectacles of conventionality. So it seemed to

Rostóv.

“Oh, come now! As if you could come at a wrong time!” said Borís, and he led him into the room where the supper table was laid and introduced him to his guests, explaining that he was not a civilian, but an hussar officer, and an old friend of his.

“Count Zhilínski—le Comte N. N.—le Capitaine S. S.,” said he, naming his guests. Rostóv looked frowningly at the Frenchmen, bowed reluctantly, and remained silent.

Zhilínski evidently did not receive this new Russian person very willingly into his circle and did not speak to Rostóv. Borís did not appear to notice the constraint the newcomer produced and, with the same pleasant composure and the same veiled look in his eyes with which he had met Rostóv, tried to enliven the conversation. One of the Frenchmen, with the politeness characteristic of his countrymen, addressed the obstinately taciturn Rostóv, saying that the latter had probably come to Tilsit to see the Emperor.

“No, I came on business,” replied Rostóv, briefly.

Rostóv had been out of humor from the moment he noticed the look of dissatisfaction on Borís’ face, and as always happens to those in a bad humor, it seemed to him that everyone regarded him with aversion and that he was in everybody’s way. He really was in their way, for he alone took no part in the conversation which again became general. The looks the visitors cast on him seemed to say: “And what is he sitting here for?” He rose and went up to Borís.

“Anyhow, I’m in your way,” he said in a low tone. “Come and talk over my business and I’ll go away.”

“Oh, no, not at all,” said Borís. “But if you are tired, come and lie down in my room and have a rest.”

“Yes, really...”

They went into the little room where Borís slept. Rostóv, without sitting down, began at once, irritably (as if Borís were to blame in some way) telling him about Denísov’s affair, asking him whether, through his general, he could and would intercede with the Emperor on Denísov’s behalf and get Denísov’s petition handed in. When he and Borís were alone, Rostóv felt for the first time that he could not look Borís in the face without a sense of awkwardness. Borís, with one leg crossed over the other and stroking his left hand with the slender fingers of his right, listened to Rostóv as a general listens to the report of a subordinate, now looking aside and now gazing straight into Rostóv’s eyes with the same veiled look. Each time this happened Rostóv felt uncomfortable and cast down his eyes.

“I have heard of such cases and know that His Majesty is very severe in such affairs. I think it would be best not to bring it before the Emperor, but to apply to the commander of the corps.... But in general,

I think..."

"So you don't want to do anything? Well then, say so!" Rostov almost shouted, not looking Boris in the face.

Boris smiled.

"On the contrary, I will do what I can. Only I thought..."

At that moment Zhilinski's voice was heard calling Boris.

"Well then, go, go, go..." said Rostov, and refusing supper and remaining alone in the little room, he walked up and down for a long time, hearing the lighthearted French conversation from the next room.