

Closely read the passage below. Then select the best answer to each

A Lady's Story

Nine years ago Pyotr Sergeyitch, the deputy prosecutor, and I were riding towards evening in haymaking time to fetch the letters from the station.

5 The weather was magnificent, but on our way back we heard a peal of thunder, and saw an angry black storm-cloud which was coming straight towards us. The storm-cloud was approaching us and we were approaching it. ...

Then the first wave raced through the rye and a field of oats, there was a gust of wind, and the dust flew round and round in the air. Pyotr Sergeyitch laughed and spurred on his horse.

"It's fine!" he cried, "it's splendid!"

10 Infected by his gaiety, I too began laughing at the thought that in a minute I should be drenched to the skin and might be struck by lightning.

Riding swiftly in a hurricane when one is breathless with the wind, and feels like a bird, thrills one and puts one's heart in a flutter. By the time we rode into our courtyard the wind had gone down, and big drops of rain were pattering on the grass and on the roofs. There was not a soul near the stable. ...

15 "What a crash!" said Pyotr Sergeyitch, coming up to me after a very loud rolling peal of thunder when it seemed as though the sky were split in two. "What do you say to that?"

He stood beside me in the doorway and, still breathless from his rapid ride, looked at me. I could see that he was admiring me.

20 "Natalya Vladimirovna," he said, "I would give anything only to stay here a little longer and look at you. You are lovely to-day."

His eyes looked at me with delight and supplication,¹ his face was pale. On his beard and moustache were glittering raindrops, and they, too, seemed to be looking at me with love.

25 "I love you," he said. "I love you, and I am happy at seeing you. I know you cannot be my wife, but I want nothing, I ask nothing; only know that I love you. Be silent, do not answer me, take no notice of it, but only know that you are dear to me and let me look at you." ...

"You say nothing, and that is splendid," said Pyotr Sergeyitch. "Go on being silent."

30 I felt happy. I laughed with delight and ran through the drenching rain to the house; he laughed too, and, leaping as he went, ran after me.

Both drenched, panting, noisily clattering up the stairs like children, we dashed into the room. My father and brother, who were not used to seeing me laughing and lighthearted, looked at me in surprise and began laughing too. ...

35 When I went to bed I lighted a candle and threw my window wide open, and an undefined feeling took possession of my soul. I remembered that I was free and healthy,

that I had rank and wealth, that I was beloved; above all, that I had rank and wealth, rank and wealth, my God! how nice that was!... Then, huddling up in bed at a touch of cold which reached me from the garden with the dew, I tried to discover whether I loved Pyotr Sergeyitch or not,... and fell asleep unable to reach any conclusion. ...

40 And what happened afterwards? Why—nothing. In the winter when we lived in town Pyotr Sergeyitch came to see us from time to time. Country acquaintances are charming only in the country and in summer; in the town and in winter they lose their charm. When you pour out tea for them in the town it seems as though they are wearing other people's coats, and as though they stirred their tea too long. In the town, too, Pyotr Sergeyitch spoke
45 sometimes of love, but the effect was not at all the same as in the country. In the town we were more vividly conscious of the wall that stood between us: I had rank and wealth, while he was poor, and he was not even a nobleman, but only the son of a deacon and a deputy public prosecutor; we both of us—I through my youth and he for some unknown reason—thought of that wall as very high and thick, and when he was with us in the town he would
50 criticize aristocratic society with a forced smile, and maintain a sullen silence when there was anyone else in the drawing-room. There is no wall that cannot be broken through, but the heroes of the modern romance, so far as I know them, are too timid, spiritless, lazy, and oversensitive, and are too ready to resign themselves to the thought that they are doomed to failure, that personal life has disappointed them; instead of struggling they merely
55 criticize, calling the world vulgar and forgetting that their criticism passes little by little into vulgarity.

I was loved, happiness was not far away, and seemed to be almost touching me; I went on living in careless ease without trying to understand myself, not knowing what I expected or what I wanted from life, and time went on and on.... People passed by me with their
60 love, bright days and warm nights flashed by, the nightingales sang, the hay smelt fragrant, and all this, sweet and overwhelming in remembrance, passed with me as with everyone rapidly, leaving no trace, was not prized, and vanished like mist.... Where is it all?

My father is dead, I have grown older; everything that delighted me, caressed me, gave me hope—the patter of the rain, the rolling of the thunder, thoughts of happiness, talk of
65 love—all that has become nothing but a memory, and I see before me a flat desert distance; on the plain not one living soul, and out there on the horizon it is dark and terrible. ...

A ring at the bell.... It is Pyotr Sergeyitch. When in the winter I see the trees and remember how green they were for me in the summer I whisper:

“Oh, my darlings!”

70 And when I see people with whom I spent my spring-time, I feel sorrowful and warm and whisper the same thing. ...

Not knowing what to say I ask him:

“Well, what have you to tell me?”

“Nothing,” he answers. ...

75 I thought of the past, and all at once my shoulders began quivering, my head dropped, and I began weeping bitterly. I felt unbearably sorry for myself and for this man, and passionately longed for what had passed away and what life refused us now. And now I did not think about rank and wealth.

I broke into loud sobs, pressing my temples, and muttered:

80 “My God! my God! my life is wasted!”

And he sat and was silent, and did not say to me: “Don't weep.” He understood that I must weep, and that the time for this had come. ...

¹supplication — a humble plea

1 The primary function of lines 1 and 2 is to

- ① establish a setting of the story
- ② present the central idea of the story
- ③ provide analysis of new characters
- ④ create a mysterious atmosphere

2 Pyotr’s reaction to the storm in lines 7 and 8 reflects his

3 What is revealed about the narrator in lines 32 and 33?

- ① She rarely reveals her intelligence.
- ② She is usually a very serious person.
- ③ She does not want to alarm her father.
- ④ She is unwilling to act like an adult.

4 The reference to Pyotr’s “forced smile” and “sullen silence” in line 50 reveals his

- ① contempt for status
- ② indifference to wealth
- ③ fear of commitment
- ④ lack of confidence

5 Lines 59 through 62 contribute to a central idea in the text by depicting the

- ① passing of youth
- ② uncertainty of love
- ③ futility of hope
- ④ intolerance of society

6 In line 65, the phrase “flat desert distance” is used by the narrator to describe her

7 Which are the two most likely reasons why Natalya does "not think about rank and wealth"

- ☐ She has lost her controlling
- ☐ She remains true to her convictions about
- ☐ She feels it's too late for Pyotr Sergeyitch and
- ☐ She no longer has her inheritance.
- ☐ She regrets her mistake about

8 Lines 81 and 82 develop a central idea by depicting a

- ① sense of loss
- ② lack of comfort
- ③ desire for memories
- ④ longing for attention

9 The author structures the text around references to

