This glossary is organized in chronological order by song.
Page numbers in this document refer to the 2017 Samuel French edition of the libretto.
All references in the glossary will refer to the Vintage Classics edition of War and Peace *(2007) translated by Richard Pevear and Larissa Volokhonsky. The novel, however, is divided by volume, part, and chapters, so I will cite the novel using these rather than page numbers in case the reader has another edition of* War and Peace. *(The Rostovs, for example, first go to the opera in volume 2, part 5, chapter 8; in my edition this is pages 557-560, but I will cite it as 2.5.8.)*

Costume designer Zachary Payne has kindly allowed me to include some of his renderings.

"Prologue"
pp. 17-20


Vertrag von Tilsitz 1807, Adolphe Roehn

There's a war going on Out there somewhere. In 1812, during the events of the musical, there were many wars going on. These were the Napoleonic Wars, which involved most of Europe as well as the Ottoman Empire in Türkiye. In the United States, even, there was a War of 1812, as it is referred to here. In US American history this war is understood as a very important set of US events, but this war was a result of the Napoleonic Wars in Europe, which involved an entire series of shifting alliances between European powers. The Russians had been (in an alliance with Austria) at war with Napoléon, but the French Emperor and the Russian Emperor Alexander signed a treaty in 1807 in Tilsit, and the Russians found themselves allied with the French *against* the Austrians. This sparked a war between the Russians and the *British* that lasted until July 1812. There was also the ongoing Russo-Turkish War which had begun in 1806 and only ended in 1812. This is the period of events during which the musical takes place.

Things would all shift in a very large way in 1812, however (after *Natasha, Pierre & the Great Comet of 1812* is over). Napoléon did not keep to his terms of the Treaty of Tilsit, and so Alexander began to prepare for war with France yet again. He signed a treaty with Sweden for mutual defense in April 1812 and then signed a treaty ending the war with the Russo-Turkish War with the Ottoman Empire in May. Napoléon invaded Russia in June; Russia signed a peace treaty with Britain in July.

In other words, there are a lot of wars going on out there.

Andrey. (Андрей Николаевич Болконский) Prince Andréi Nikoláevich Bolkónsky, also called Andryúsha, especially by his sister Marya, and in French: *André*. Early in the novel, as the war begins, the narrator describes him this way: "among his comrades and colleagues, and in the army in general, as in Petersburg society, Prince Andrei had two completely opposite reputations. Some, the smaller part, considered Prince Andrei to be something distinct from themselves and from all others, expected great success from him, listened to him, admired him, and imitated him; and with these people Prince Andrei was simple and pleasant. Others, the majority, did not like Prince Andrei, considering him a pompous, cold, and unpleasant man. But with these people Prince Andrei was able to behave in such a way as to be respected and even feared." (1.2.3)

Andrey isn't here. After falling in love with Natasha in 2.3.18, Andrei proposes to Natasha in 2.3.23. He cannot get his father's consent to the marriage, however, because Prince Nikolai has a series of objections:

> *First, the marriage was not a brilliant one in terms of family, wealth, and distinction. Second, Prince Andrei was not in his early youth and his health was weak (the old man especially emphasized that), while she was very young. Third, there was [Prince Andrei's] son, and it would be a pity to hand him over to a young girl. Fourth, and finally, the old man said, with a mocking glance at his son, 'I beg you to put the matter off for a year, go abroad, take a cure, look, as you want to, for a German tutor for Prince Nikolai, and then, if this love, passion, obstinacy, call it whatever you like, is so great, you can marry. And that is my last word.'*

Andrei's solution to this is to do exactly what his father asks. The Rostovs agree to this because they, too, are skeptical of Andrei's relationship with Natasha. It seems to them slightly off somehow, though obviously he is socially an advantageous match.

Raz dva tri! This is a way of counting *One, two, three, go!* It does not, however, literally mean *one, two, three. Raz* is *time*, as in *an instance*. So, literally, this means *time, two, three!*

It's a complicated Russian novel. Война и Мир was first published serially in 1865 under the title *1805*. Tolstoy rewrote the book extensively, however, and republished it in 1869. The book is, indeed, very complicated, but it is easy to read, and because it was published serially, it is divided into easily digestible three-to-five-page segments.

Everyone's got nine different names. This is only slightly an exaggeration. Everyone has a first name, a patronymic, and a family name. For women, the family name can *also* differ, with the addition of a terminal *-a* or *-na*. And then there are a few diminutive or affectionate versions of the Christian name as well as, quite often, a much shortened nickname. In addition to this, because everyone in Russian society spoke French at this time, everyone also has a French name. And then there is the person's title, which some people occasionally use. I'll walk you through an example using Natasha.

Her name, properly, is Countess Natalya Ilyinichna Rostov. It breaks down like this.

- *Countess* is her title: you will notice that many people in the novel are princes, princesses, counts, and countesses. This has to do with ownership of land (principalities and counties) and stewardship of servants/serfs, who are always counted as "souls" in the Russian manner.
- *Natalya* is her Christian name, and from this we will get all sorts of smaller names, including Natasha. (For some characters there are many more.) Everyone has a French version of this Christian name, too, and hers is *Natalie.*
- *Ilyinichna* is her patronymic. Literally this means *daughter of Ilya,* and so Natasha's brothers and sisters also use (variously gendered) versions of this patronymic: i.e. Vera Ilyinichna, Nikolai Ilyich, and Pyotr Ilyich. Russians often will refer politely to a person by using the Christian name and the patronymic but not the family name, as in a phrase like *And where is Pyotr Kirillovich this evening?*
- *Rostov* is the family name and this can be used in two different ways. One could refer to Countess Rostova or the young Miss Rostov.

Natasha. (Наталья Ильинична Ростова) Countess Natálya Ilyínichna Rostóv (or Rostóva), also called Natásha, and in French: *Natalie*. She is thirteen years old when we first meet her in the novel and around seventeen or eighteen during the events of *Comet*. Natasha is the most charming, lovable character in the entire novel, and she is the book's focus. She also sings beautifully.

She loves Andrey with all her heart. It's true. In 2.3.23 right before Andrei proposes she thinks: "*Can it be that this stranger has now become* everything *for me?" she asked herself, and instantly answered: "Yes, everything. He alone is now dearer to me than anything in the world."*

Sonya. (Софья Александровна) Sófya Alexándrovna, also called Sónya, and in French: *Sophie*. She is the orphaned cousin of the younger Rostovs. Sonya grew up with the Rostov family and is in love with (and engaged to) Natasha's older brother Nikolai. This is a strain on the relationship with Nikolai and her parents because the Rostovs are not doing well financially, and they had hoped their Nikolushka would make a more advantageous match and be able to save their estates from financial ruin. But Nikolai will have none of this. He loves Sonya and she loves him devotedly and has since they were children. She and Natasha are very close, and this is partially due to how devoted Natasha is to her brother. These feelings are all wrapped together.

Marya. Márya Dmítrievna Akhrosímov (or Akhrosímova). Marya plays a large role in *Comet*, but in fact she barely appears in the novel until these events. She's an extraordinary figure, though, and she interacts with Natasha early on in 1.1.15-17, in which Natasha charms her with her boldness. Calling her "old-school" is an odd choice; she isn't *conservative* per se. She is rather wild, in fact, and she's in charge in every room she enters. The narrator describes her this way in 2.5.6:

Marya Dmitrievna lived alone. Her daughter was already married. Her sons were all in the army.

She held herself as straight as ever, and voiced all her opinions just as directly, loudly, and resolutely, and her whole being seemed to reproach other people for all sorts of weaknesses, passions, and enthusiasms, the possibility of which she did not acknowledge.

Anatole. (Анатолий Васильевич Курагин) Prince Anatóle Vassílievich Kurágin. Tolstoy's narrator describes him this way in 2.5.11:

> *He was not a gambler, at least he never cared about winning, and never even regretted losing. He was not vain. To him it made absolutely no difference what people thought of him. Still less could he be accused of being ambitious. Several times he taunted his father by ruining his career, and he made fun of all honours. He was not stingy and never refused anyone who asked of him. There was one thing he loved – merrymaking and women – and since, to his mind, there was nothing ignoble in these tastes, and since he was unable to reflect on the consequences that the satisfaction of his tastes had for other people, at heart he considered himself an irreproachable man, sincerely despised scoundrels and bad people, and with an easy conscience carried his head high.*

Hélène. (Елена Васильевна Курагина) Princess Eléna Vassílievna Kurágin, also called Lélya, and in French: *Hélène.* Is Hélène a slut? Yes, in fact. This isn't a bad description. The novel is very hard on Hélène, but let's say some good things about her: Hélène is understood by literally everyone as the most charming and witty woman in Moscow. Everyone goes to all of her parties, and she throws many of them. Pierre believes his wife to be quite stupid, and he is perhaps correct, but he is the *only* person to believe this other than perhaps Marya Dmitrievna. Everyone else wants to hang out with her, waits for her to say witty things, and finds her completely charming. In the novel, Hélène is rarely referred to by her Russian name, Elena. She evidently prefers the French pronunciation, which you can listen to here.

Married to Pierre. Hélène and Pierre get married almost by accident in 1.3.2. It's arranged by Hélène's father. Pierre exists in a fog for an extended period after his father dies, not quite understanding how to behave in society or what to do. And so he lives in Hélène's father's house in Petersburg for a long while (at his request). He and Hélène get engaged when, unable to wait for Pierre to propose to his daughter, Hélène's father comes up to them one evening and congratulates them on their engagement.

> *"It's too late now, it's all over; and anyway I love her," thought Pierre.*
> *"Je vous aime!" he said, having remembered what needed to be said on these occasions; but the words sounded so meagre that he felt ashamed of himself.*
> *A month and a half laterhe was married and settled down, as they say, the happy possessor of a beautiful wife and millions of roubles, in the big, newly done-over house of the counts Bezukhov in Petersburg.*

Dolokhov. Fyódor Ivánovich Dólokhov, also called Fédya. He's "not too important" in the musical, but he is very important in the novel. He's a scoundrel, though, cheating at cards and swindling Nikolai Rostov out of a great deal of money. And, of course, there is his (presumed) affair with Hélène.

Chandeliers and caviar. The novel is divided into sections of war, which are described quite brutally, and sections of peace. These "peace" sections involve very wealthy people, living off of riches generated by peasants and tended to by servants. Their lives are mostly untouched by the many wars going on in other parts of Europe, and they spend their time happily ignoring this brutality and enjoying their lives as the ruling class.

Old Prince Bolkonsky. Prince Nikolái Andréevich (or Andréich) Bolkónsky. He is particular and rather awful throughout the novel, but he becomes especially so after Andrei's engagement to Natasha.

Mary. (Марья Болконская) Princess Márya Nikoláevna Bolkónsky or Bolkónskaya, also called Másha and Máshenka, and in French: *Marie.* Saying Mary is plain is unkind. This is how the narrator describes her in 1.1.22 when her friend Julie writes her that she misses her "look, so gentle, so calm, so penetrating, that look I loved so much and that I think I see before me as I write to you":

> *Princess Marya sighed and glanced into the pier glass that stood to the right of her. The mirror reflected an unattractive, weak body and a thin face. Her eyes, always sad, now looked into the mirror with particular hopelessness. "She's flattering me," thought the princess, and she turned away and went on reading. Julie, however, was not flattering her friend" indeed, the princess's eyes, large, deep, and luminous (sometimes it was as if rays of warm light came from them in sheaves), were so beautiful that very often, despite the unattractiveness of the whole face, those eyes were more attractive than beauty. But the princess had never seen the good expression of those eyes, the expression they had in moments when she was not thinking of herself. As with all people, the moment she looked in the mirror, her face assumed a strained, unnatural, bad expression.*

Balaga. Balaga is barely a character in the novel. We meet him for the first time when he drives Anatole for the abduction in 2.5.16. If you're playing Balaga, you ought to read (and will enjoy) the four pages of this chapter in their entirety.

Pierre. (Пётр Кириллович Безухов) Count Pyótr Kiríllovich (or Kirílych) Bezúkhov, called in French: *Pierre.* Pierre has become a count unexpectedly. He is his father's son by a woman other than his father's wife. But on his deathbed, his father Count Kiril Bezukhov, claimed him as his son and made him his heir, making him very, very rich. Old Count Bezukhov did this over the objections, especially of Hélène's father, who doesn't appear in *Comet.* Instantly upon inheriting this money as well as gaining legitimacy as Count Bezukhov, people treat Pierre very differently. As the novel progresses, many things happen to Pierre. He gets a government appointment, throws many parties, marries Hélène, and then separates from her in a rage. He also becomes a Freemason, and the reason for this is that Pierre truly believes in the idea of doing good for his fellow man. He believes he can make a difference and change people's lives. He is very bad at doing this because he is an impractical man who is not good with details, but he sincerely feels the desire to do good for others. This is one of the reasons his wife disturbs him so much: she is unkind.

"Pierre"
pp. 21-23

It's dawned on me suddenly. *After the engagement of Prince Andrei and Natasha, Pierre, without any obvious reason, suddenly felt the impossibility of going on with his former life. However firmly convinced he was of the truths revealed to him by his benefactor, however joyful for him had been that first enthusiastic inner work of self-improvement, to which he had given himself with such ardour – after Prince Andrei's betrothal to Natasha, […] the whole charm of that former life suddenly vanished for him.* (2.5.1)

Living as I am. By this Pierre means his life as a Freemason, but also his life as a courtier, married to Hélène.

Only the skeleton remains. *Only the skeleton of life remained: his house with his brilliant wife, who now enjoyed the favours of an important person; acquaintance with all Petersburg; and service with its dull formalities. And that former life suddenly presented itself to Pierre with unexpected vileness.* (2.5.1)

Our most dear, most kind, most smart. *All Moscow society, from old women to children, received Pierre like a long-awaited guest, whose place was always kept ready and vacant. For Moscow society, Pierre was the most dear, kind, intelligent, merry, and magnanimous of eccentrics, absent0minded and warm-hearted, a Russian squire of the old stamp. His purse was always empty, because it was open to everyone.* (2.5.1)

I drink too much. See "The Duel" below on p. 19 of this glossary.

My friend fights and bleeds. He means Andrei Nikolaevich, who was injured in the Battle of Austerlitz. Strictly speaking, during this song, Andrei is neither fighting nor bleeding, but it seems that for the span of *Comet*, the characters behave as if Andrei is off at the war. He is, more accurately, tending to his health, which was, indeed, damaged during the previous war with Napoléon.

And I sit at home and read. *He read, he read everything that came to hand, so that, on coming home, while the footmen were undressing him, he would take up a book and read – and from reading he would pass into sleep, and from sleep to chatter in drawing rooms and the club, from chatter to carousing and women, from carousing back to chatter, reading and wine.* (2.5.1)

Il est charmant; il n'a pas de sexe. Nearly everyone in *War & Peace* speaks French, and entire sections of the novel are in untranslated French. This was the language of the nobility and of Russian society. They also speak Russian, of course, but they almost always have entire conversations in French, even when the narrator conveys them to the reader in Russian. This phrase is conveyed in 2.5.1 in French. The women all love him because he is polite to everyone and doesn't give any special attention to any of the women.

Go here to listen to the Google translation pronunciation, which is quite good. Of especial note, perhaps, is that the *e* in *est* and *sexe* is not the same as the *e* in *de*.

There's a sickness in the world. *"What's going on in the world?" he asked himself with perplexity several times a day, involuntarily beginning to pinder the meaning of life's phenomena; but knowing from experience that there were no answers to these questions, he hastily attempted to turn away from them, picked up a book, or hurried off to the club.* (2.5.1)

"We all confess to the law of forgiveness of offences and love of one's neighbour, a law in consequence of which we have erected forty times forty churches in Moscow – but yesterday a deserter was flogged to death, and a priest, a servant of that same law of love and forgiveness, gave him the cross to kiss before execution." So Pierre reflected, and accustomed as he was to it, this whole general, universally acknowledged lie amazed him each time like something new. (2.5.1)

I'm different from you. *In moments of pride, when he thought of his position, it seemed to him that he was quite different, distinct from those retired gentlemen-in-waiting whom he had formerly despised, that they were banal and stupid, content and at peace in their position, "while I am not at all content even now, and keep wanting to do something for mankind," he said to himself in moments of pride, "And maybe all these comrades of mine struggled just like me, sought some new path of their own in life, and, just like me, by force of circumstances, society, breeding, by that elemental force against which man is powerless, were brought to where I am now," he said to himself in moments of modesty, and, having lived in Moscow for a time, he no longer despised, but was beginning to love, respect, and pity his comrades in fate as he did himself.* (2.5.1)

"Moscow"
pp. 25-28

Marya Dmitryevna Akhrosimova. See "Prologue" above for discussion of all the names and how they work. But here it is worth noting that they don't say their own names, they say the names of the people they greet.

While we wait on our fiancés. Sonya has only just gotten engaged to Nikolai Rostov, who has returned to his regiment for a while. Natasha has been engaged to Andrei for nearly nine months. Neither of them is fighting in the war, but that isn't to say that the young women don't imagine them to be doing this.

Get the samovar ready. This is a rather large metal device for brewing tea that originated in Russia. There were entire factories devoted to making samovars in Tula, where Tolstoy grew up.

Sonyushka bonjour. *"Sonyushka bonjour," she said to Sonya, giving a special shade by this French greeting to her slightly scornful and affectionate attitude towards Sonya.* (2.5.6)

Scruffy and cozy

Like an old dressing gown. This comes from a slightly early description of how Pierre feels about Moscow: *In Moscow, as soon as he moved into his huge house with the dried- and drying-up princesses, with its enormous staff, as soon as he saw – on driving through the city – the Iverskaya Chapel with countless candles burning before the gold casing, saw the Kremlin Square with its untrampled snow, the cabbies, the hovels of the Sivtsev Vrazhek, saw old Moscow men, who desired nothing and were not hurrying anywhere as they lived out their lives, saw little old women, Moscow ladies, Moscow balls, and the Moscow English Club – he felt himself at home, in a quiet haven. For him Moscow was comfortable, warm, habitual, and dirty, like an old dressing gown.* (2.5.1)

I can't bear this waiting. *Natasha, who had borne the initial time of her separation from her fiancé lightly and even cheerfully, now grew more and more troubled and impatient with every day. The thought that her best time, which she could have used in loving him, was being wasted like that, for nothing, tormented her unremittingly. His letters mostly made her angry. It offended her to think that, while she lived only by thoughts of him, he was living a real life, seeing new places and new people who interested him. The more diverting his letters were, the more vexed she felt.* (2.4.13)

First thing tomorrow to Madame Chambord's. In the novel she is *Mme Aubert-Chalmet, who was so afraid of Marya Dmitrievna that she always let her have dresses for less, so as to get rid of her quickly.* (2.5.6) For pronunciation help go here.

We'll buy what we can afford. The Rostovs, in fact, have come to Moscow precisely to sell off some of the Count's land because the Rostovs are not in a good financial position. This raises the stakes of Natasha's relationship with Anatole. Prince Andrei was to have given her a very comfortable life.

A game of boston. People are forever playing this game at parties in *War & Peace*. Everyone knows how to play. This game was devised in France in the late 18th century, which is, of course, why the Russians are so interested in playing it at their social events.

Card Players in a Drawing Room, Pierre Louis Dumesnil

One of the finest matches in all of Russia. Prince Andrei is a widower. His first, late, wife, Elizavetna Karlovna (Liza), died during childbirth.

But you're a clever girl. *Natasha said nothing, out of shyness, as Marya Dmitrievna thought, but, in reality, Natasha disliked any interference in the matter of her love for Prince Andrei, which appeared to her so set apart from all human affairs that no one, to her mind, could understand it. She loved and knew only Prince Andrei; he loved her and was to come one day soon and take her. She needed nothing else.* (2.5.6)

"The Private and Intimate Life of the House"
pp. 29-32

I've aged. *Distinct signs of senility appeared in him: falling asleep unexpectedly, a forgetfulness of recent events and a good memory of those long past, and the childish vanity with which he accepted the role of head of the Moscow opposition. Despite [this senility], when the old man, especially in the evenings, came out to tea in his fur-trimmed jacket and powdered wig and, prompted by someone, began his curt stories of the past or his still more curt and cutting opinions of the present, he aroused in all his guests the same feeling of deferential respect.* (2.5.2)

Fiddling with your incense and icons. Marya's greatest pleasure at Bald Hills, their house in the country, is spending a lot of time with traveling religious people who go from holy place to holy place begging and honoring the god and the saints. In fact, Marya's real dream is to be one of them, and she has actually outfitted a traveler's suit for herself so that she can become a mystic wanderer. One of the things that makes almost no appearance in *Comet* is Marya's real devotion to religion, to Christian self-sacrifice, and to faith in a divine plan for everyone's life. She insists that Andrei wear an icon when he goes to war, and she is very grieved when he treats her religious sincerity with mockery.

I have no friends. *She was deprived in Moscow of her best joys – conversations with the people of God and solitude, which refreshed her in Bald Hills – nor did she have any of the advantages or joys of life in the capital. She did not go into society; everybody knew that her father would not let her go without him, and he could not go on account of ill health, and so she was never invited to dinners or soirées. Princess Marya had abandoned all hope of getting married. She saw the coldness and animosity with which Prince Nikolai Andreich received and sent away the young men, possible suitors, who occasionally appeared in their house. Princess Marya had no friends.* (2.5.2) Princess Marya has corresponded for years and years with her friend Julie Karagin (not related to the Kuragins), but once in Moscow, they find that they are nothing alike and completely foreign to one another.

I know they'll like me. *Natasha, wearing her best dress, was […] in a most cheerful mood. "It can't be that they won't come to love me," she thought, "everyone has always loved me. And I'm so ready to do everything they want for them, so ready to love him, because he's his father, and her, because she's his sister, there's no reason why they shouldn't love me!"* (2.5.7)

This passage always reminds me of an earlier passage in the novel when Natasha's brother Nikolai first encounters the French army and people who are quite literally trying to kill him:

> *He looked at the approaching Frenchmen and, though a moment before he had been galloping only in order to meet these Frenchmen and cut them to pieces, their closeness now seemed so terrible to him that he could not believe his eyes. "Who are they? Why are they running? Can it be they're running to me? Can it be? And why? To kill me?* Me, *whom everybody loves so?" He remembered his mother's love for him, his family's, his friends', and the enemy's intention to kill him seemed impossible.* (1.2.19)

Will I never be anyone's wife? In fact, she once had the opportunity to marry Anatole Kuragin—I leave you to consider whether that might have made her happier than staying with the prince. Anatole and his clever father even visited Bald Hills. But the visit was a disaster, and Old Bolkonsky terrorized her and made her cry; Marya finally refused Anatole's marriage proposal. (Later in the novel, she will, indeed, become someone's wife.)

Maybe I'll marry someone myself. Old Prince Bolkonsky threatens to marry Marya's French companion Mademoiselle Bourienne, and he even begins treating her like she's the lady of the house instead of Princess Marya, ordering, the servants, for example, to serve her dinner before serving the princess. This is one of his horrible capricious behaviors, but of course it hurts Marya a great deal. *At the end of dinner, when the butler, out of old habit, again served the coffee starting with the princess, the prince suddenly flew into a rage, flung his cane at Filipp, and at once gave orders for him to be sent as a soldier.*

"They don't hear … I told them twice! … they don't hear! She's the first person in this house; she's my best friend," cried the prince. "And," he shouted wrathfully, addressing Princess Marya for the first time, "if you allow yourself once more, as you did yesterday … to forget yourself before her, I'll show you who is master in this house. Out! I don't want to see you! Apologize to her!" (2.5.2)

Where are my glasses? *At such moments a feeling resembling the pride of sacrifice father in Princess Marya's soul. And suddenly at those same moments, in her presence, this father whom she had judged would either search for his spectacles, fumbling just next to them and not seeing them, or forget what had just happened, or make a false step with his weakening legs and look around to see if anyone had noticed his weakness, or, which was worst of all, over dinner, if there were no guests to excite him, would suddenly doze off, dropping his napkin, and hanging his shaking head over his plate. "He's old and weak, and I dare to judge him!" she would think with self-loathing at such moments.* (2.5.2)

"Natasha & Bolkonskys"
pp. 33-35

And from the first glance I do not like Natasha. *Princess Marya disliked Natasha at first sight. She seemed to her too well dressed, flightily merry, and vain. Princess Marya did not know that, before seeing her future sister-in-law, she had already been ill-disposed towards her, being involuntarily envious of her beauty youth and happiness, and jealous of her brother's love. Besides this insuperable feeling of antipathy for her, Princess Marya was also troubled just then because when the arrival of the Rostovs was announced, the prince had cried out that he did not want them, that Princess Marya could receive them if she liked, but that they were not to be admitted to him. Princess Marya had decided to receive the Rostovs, but was afraid every moment that the prince might perform some escapade, being very agitated by the Rostovs' arrival.* (2.5.7)

And from the first glance I do not like Princess Mary. *Natasha was offended […] by the unnatural tone of the princess, who, as it seemed to Natasha, was doing her a favour by receiving her. And therefore she found everything disagreeable. She did not like Princess Marya. She found her very plain, affected, and dry. Natasha suddenly shrank morally and involuntarily adopted such a casual tone that it made her still more repellent to Princess Marya.* (2.5.2)

Dear Natalie. *"Dear Natalie," said Princess Marya, "please know that I am glad my brother has found happiness…" She stopped, feeling that she was saying an untruth. Natasha noticed this pause and guessed the reason for it.*

"I think, Princess, that now is not the right time to speak of it," Natasha said with outward dignity and coldness, and with tears that she could feel in her throat.

"What have I said, what have I done!" she thought as soon as she left the room. (2.5.2)

"No One Else"
pp. 36-37

First time I heard your voice. In the novel, this episode is told from Andrei's perspective. He goes to see Count Rostov, Natasha's father, at their estate in the country. The Count insists on him staying the night, but he cannot sleep: *Prince Andrei got up and went to open the window. As soon as he opened the shutters, moonlight, as if it had been watching at the window a long time waiting for that, burst into the room. He opened the window. The night was fresh and stilly bright. […] Prince Andrei leaned his elbows on the windowsill and fixed his eyes on this sky.*

Prince Andrei's room was on the middle floor; there were also people in the rooms above him, and they were not asleep. He heard feminine talk overhead.

"Just one more time," said a feminine voice overheard, which Prince Andrei recognized at once. (2.3.2)

Once Andrei and Natasha begin their courtship, he tells her about this event, and so it becomes a part of her memory too.

And I hear guitars. Natasha learns to play the guitar after falling in love with its rustic sound while staying in the country before coming to Moscow. *Natasha went to the reception room, took her guitar, sat in a dark corner behind a little cupboard, and began to pluck at the bass strings, picking out a phrase she remembered from an opera she had heard in Petersburg with Prince Andrei. For an uninitiated listener, what came of her playing would have been something that had no meaning, but in her imagination a whole series of memories arose from these sounds. She sat behind the little cupboard, her eyes fixed on a strip of light coming from the pantry door, listened to herself, and remembered. She was in a state of remembrance.* (2.4.9)

We were angels once. This is from a philosophical conversation Natasha has with Sonya and Nikolai in the country before they come to Moscow: *"I think that when you remember, remember, remember everything like that, you could go on until you remember what was there before you were in the world."*

"That's metempsychosis," said Sonya, who had always been a good student and remembered everything. "The Egyptians believed that our souls were in animals and will go back into animals."

"No, you know, I don't believe we were in animals," Natasha said in the same whisper, though the music had stopped. "I know for certain that we were angels somewhere, and visited here, and so we remember everything…" […]

"If we were angels once, why did we end up lower?" asked Nikolai. "No, that can't be!"

"Not lower, who told you it's lower? … How do I know what I used to be?" Natasha objected with conviction. "The soul is immortal … which means, if I will live for ever, then I also lived before, lived for the whole eternity." (2.4.10)

This winter sky. *"You sleep, I can't," the first voice [Natasha's] answered, coming close to the window. She evidently leaned all the way out of the window, because he could hear the rustle of her dress and even her breathing. Everything became hushed and stone-still, like the moon and its light and shadows. Prince Andrei was also afraid to stir, lest he betray his involuntary presence.*

"Sonya! Sonya!" the first voice was heard again. "How can you sleep! Just look how lovely it is! Ah, how lovely! Wake up, Sonya," she said almost with tears in her voice. "There's never, never been such a lovely night."

Sonya made some grudging reply.

"No, just look, what a moon! … Ah, how lovely! Come here. Darling, dear heart, come here. Well, you see? I'd like to sit on my heels, like this, take myself by the knees – tight, as tight as possible, you've got to strain – and fly away! Like this!" (2.3.2)

Maybe he'll come today. This is from a section in the book right before the Rostovs come to Moscow: *She went on sitting, thinking about what it meant that it had all happened before, and, not resolving the question and not regretting it in the least, was again carried back in her imagination to the time when she was with him and he was looking at her with amorous eyes.*

"Ah, if only he'd come soon. I'm so afraid it won't happen! And above all, I'm getting old, that's the thing! What's in me now won't be there any more. But maybe he'll come today, right now. Maybe he has come and is sitting there in the drawing room. Maybe he already came yesterday and I forgot." (2.4.9)

"The Opera"
pp. 39-44

Bare arms and shoulders. The bare arms and shoulders of the women at the opera is a central image of the visit to the opera in 2.5.8-10. My favorite of these moments is a description of Hélène as "totally undressed" in 2.5.9. As for Natasha, *Natasha had grown prettier in the country, as everybody told her, and that evening, owing to her agitated state, she was especially pretty. She struck people by her fullness of life and beauty, combined with her indifference to everything around her. Her black eyes gazed at the crowd without seeking anyone, her slender arm, bared above the elbow, rested on the velvet rail, her hand*

opening and closing, obviously unconsciously, in time with the overture, crumpling the program. (2.5.8)

I've never felt like this before. *For a long time she had not experienced that feeling, both pleasant and unpleasant, of hundreds of eyes looking at her bare arms and neck, which suddenly seized her now, calling up a whole swarm of memories, desires, and emotions corresponding to that feeling.* (2.5.8)

Alexey, home from the war at last. This can be whomever you like. There's no actual corresponding character in *War and Peace*.

Michael Kirilovich has grown still stouter. This name appears in 2.5.8, but who he is is unclear, other than that he is quite fat.

Boris and Julie, engaged. Boris was Natasha's childhood sweetheart. She was in love with him at age thirteen. Later when she was sixteen, Boris again courted her, though he was also constantly visiting Hélène Bezukhov. But Natasha's mother put a stop to this. Boris was not a good match for Natasha, and Natasha didn't love him anyway. Julie Karagin, as I noted above in "The Private and Intimate Life of the House", was Princess Marya's best friend and correspondent. Julie's brothers have recently died and she has become one of the most marriageable women in Moscow. Boris, who is a rather clever but slightly desperate social climber, has courted her, and the two have become very recently engaged.

Anna Mikhaylovna. Anna Mikhailovna has been a very good friend to the Rostovs, especially the older countess. She has also been quite poor and found herself frequently needing to ask the Rostovs for money. She is one of these women in Russian society who is a sincerely good friend to ladies and stays in rich women's houses as their companion. But she is also an old society woman who *used* to have a position that mattered but has been diminished. Things are on the rise, however, because Boris, who seemingly had no prospects, will now marry the wealthiest young heiress in Moscow. Life is good for Anna Mikhailovna.

Fedya Dolokhov. Dolokhov was once in love with Sonya and proposed to her. This would actually have been in some ways a very good match for Sonya who is, after all, an orphan. Sonya, however, was and is completely in love with her fiancé Nikolai Rostov, and she refused Dolokhov utterly.

He dominates Moscow's most brilliant young men. Dolokhov is a strong military man and a fighter, who has distinguished himself in the war more than once. He is a hothead, who never seems to behave correctly with his military superiors, but he is a complete badass at all times and is an excellent soldier.

Dolokhov was in the Caucasus. This the mountainous region that borders Russia to the south between the Caspian Sea and the Black Sea, what is now Georgia, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Iran, and Türkiye. Dolokhov was in the Caucasus because he was fighting in the Russo-Turkish War, see "Prologue".

A map of the Caucasus region in the 19th century

He killed the Shah's brother. Indeed, Dolokhov has appeared at the opera *in Persian dress.* "He stood in full view of the theatre, aware that he was attracting the attention of the entire audience, as freely as if he was standing in his own room. Around him in a cluster stood the most brilliant young men of Moscow, and he was clearly first among them." (2.5.8)

Hélène Bezukhova. The servant here gives Hélène's last name the feminine ending I discussed above in "Prologue".

Pierre the cuckold sits at home. In the novel, Pierre is at the opera and chats with Natasha for a long while during one of the three intermissions. But Malloy has merged the Pierre–Hélène–Dolokhov plot from earlier in the novel, which will culminate in the duel, with the Natasha–Anatole affair. Here's a little section from 2.1.2:

> *Anna Mikhailovna raised her eyes, and her face expressed deep sorrow …*
> *"Ah, my friend, he's very unfortunate," she said. "If what we've heard is true, it's terrible. And could we have thought of it when we rejoiced over his happiness? And such a lofty, heavenly soul, this young Bezukhov! Yes, I pity him with all my soul, and I'll try to give him comfort, as far as it depends on me."*
> *"But what is it?" asked both Rostovs, old and young.*
> *Anna Mikhailovna signed deeply.*
> *"Dolokhov, Marya Ivanovna's son," she said in a mysterious whisper, "they say he has totally compromised her. He introduced him, iunvited him to his house in Petersburg, and now … She has come here, and that daredevil after her," said Anna Mikhailovna, wishing to express her sympathy for Pierre, but by involuntary intonations and a half smile expressing her sympathy for the daredevil, as she called Dolokhov. "They say Pierre is totally crushed by his grief."*

There's a woman one should stay far away from. Marya Dmitrievna does not keep company with Hélène. (2.5.12)

I cannot follow the opera. Tolstoy hated opera, and his description of this opera is hilarious and mean. Tolstoy did write plays, though. They are part of the realist school, including a particularly brutal one called *The Power of Darkness*. As for the opera that the Rostovs watch… I imagine it to be *Askold's Grave*, an opera in four acts by Alexey Verstovsky with a libretto by Mikhail Zagoskin, but Tolstoy might actually have just made up a fake opera.

Began to pass into a state of intoxication. *She did not remember who she was and where she was and what was happening before her. She looked and thought, and the strangest thoughts flashed through her head unexpectedly, without connection. Now the thought came to her of jumping up to the footlights*

and singing the aria the actress was singing, then she wanted to touch a little old man who was sitting not far way with her fan, then to lean over to Hélène and tickle her. (2.5.9)

Mais charmante. But how charming! Pronunciation here.

"Natasha & Anatole"
pp. 45-47

Ever since the Naryshkin's ball. Anatole in fact paid no attention at all to Natasha at the Naryshkin's ball in 2.3.15, a fact she noticed at the ball, but does not seem to remember here.

Semonova. Ekaterina Semenova was one of the leading actresses of her day.

A costume tournament. Sometimes you throw a costume party and have a contest.

There's not that barrier of modesty. *Looking into his eyes, she felt with fear that between him and her that barrier of modesty which she had always felt between herself and other men was not there at all. Without knowing how herself, after five minutes she felt terribly close tot his man. Whenever she turned away, she was afraid he might take her bare arm from behind or kiss her on the neck. They talked about the simplest things, and she felt that they were closer than she had ever been with any man. […] She also smiled at him, just as he did, looking straight into his eyes. And again she felt with horror that between him and her there was no barrier of any sort.*

Ce sont les jolies femmes. This is untranslated French in the novel: *it's pretty women.* Pronunciation via Google translate here. Anatole also says the lines about the flower that are here rendered in English in untranslated French in the novel: *Vous serez la plus jolie. Venez, chère comtesse, et comme gage donnez-moi cette fleur.* (2.5.10)

"The Duel"
pp. 49-55

The doctors warn me. *Though the doctors told him that, with his corpulence, wine was dangerous for him, he drank a great deal. He felt perfectly well only, when, without noticing how, having poured several glasses of wine into his large mouth, he experienced a pleasant warmth in his body, an affection towards all his neighbours, and a mental readiness to respond superficially to every thought, without going deeply into its essence. Only when he had drunk*

a bottle or two of wine did he become dimly aware that the tangled, terrible knot of life, which had formerly terrified him, was not as frightening as it seemed to him. With a buzzing in his head, chattering, listening to conversation, or reading after dinner and supper, he constantly saw that knot from some one of its sides. But only under the influence of wine did he say to himself: "Never mind. I'll disentangle it – I've got a ready explanation right here. But I have no time now – I'll think it all over later!" But this later never came. (2.5.1)

Keep drinking old man. Pierre, in fact, is specifically introduced in the novel as a *young* man. He is probably barely 30 years old.

Her arms, her shoulders. See the entry on *Bare arms and shoulders* above under "The Opera".

Better wait till she's married. Dolokhov sincerely attempts to talk Anatole out of this affair. It is messy, and although Dolokhov is very messy himself, he has a genuine affection for the Rostov women. This is, perhaps, the moment to speak in more detail about marriage in general. A woman's social position was secured by marriage, and once married, one could always deny that one was having an affair. This is, in fact, what Hélène will do with Pierre: simply say that none of the rumors are true. In any case there will be no real consequences for having an affair as long as one can deny it… if one is married. But while still unmarried the rumor mill can have material effects on the woman's prospects of finding a husband. And this is essential for all women in Russian society.

Anatole is a married man. The novel doesn't relate the episode of Anatole's marriage to the young Polish girl; in fact, Anatole is not a character the novel follows very much. Instead we hear about his marriage after the visit to the opera: *There was talk of several intrigues of his with Moscow ladies, and at balls he paid court to some. But he never approached young girls, especially rich, marriageable ones, who were for the most part plain, the less so in that Anatole – something no one but his closest friends knew – had gotten married two years before. Two years before, while his regiment was stationed in Poland,*

a modest Polish landowner had forced Anatole to marry his daughter.
Anatole quite soon abandoned his wife and, for the money he promised to send his father-in-law, reserved for himself the right to pass himself off as a bachelor. (2.5.11)

Here's to the health of married women, and their lovers! Before Dolokhov makes this toast, Pierre is mostly unsure about his wife's infidelities, but when Dolokhov says this, a change comes over him. *Pierre looked at Dolokhov, the pupils of his eyes sank: the something terrible and ugly that had sickened him during dinner rose up and took possession of him.* (2.1.4)

Enough! In the novel, Hélène is not at the party where this happens, but that doesn't matter much. The emotions on the lines matter a lot: *"You … you … are a scoundrel! I challenge you!" he said and, having moved his chair back, he got up from the table. The very second he did so and uttered those words, he felt that the question of his wife's guilt, which had tormented him all that past day, was definitively and indubitably resolved in the affirmative. He hated her and was severed from her for ever.* (2.1.4)

As the adversaries have refused a reconciliation, we shall proceed with the duel. What's extraordinary about this sequence in the novel is how much Pierre sort of sleepwalks through the whole thing—as if it is a thing that *must* be done, even though dueling was illegal and could have gotten even the duelists' seconds in trouble with the emperor or the military. Pierre, in addition, has no idea how to duel. He just sort of *does* all of this without caring very much. This is how the second addresses Pierre in the novel:

> *"Then allow me to convey your regrets, and I'm certain that our adversaries will agree to accept your apology," said Nesvitsky (like the other participants in the affair, and like everyone in similar affairs, not believing that things would go so far as an actual duel). "You know, Count, it's much more noble to acknowledge your mistake than to bring the matter to a point beyond repair … There was no offence on either side. Allow mm to talk it over…"*
>
> *"No, what is there to talk about!" said Pierre. "It makes no difference … So, are we ready?" he added. "Only tell me, where am I to go and where am I to shoot?" he said with an unnaturally meek smile. He took the pistol in his hands and began asking how to pull the trigger, because until then he had never handled a pistol, something he did not want to admit. "Ah, yes, like that, I know, I just forgot," he said.* (2.1.4)

No wait. Dolokhov was Pierre's very good friend and drinking companion, so this affects him very deeply. *Pierre, barely holding back his sobs, ran toward Dolokhov and was about tot cross the space separating the barriers when Dolokhov cried: "To the barrier!" And Pierre, realizing what it was about, stopped at his sword. Only ten paces separated them.* (2.1.5)

Pierre, stand back! They ask him to turn and cover himself. Even Dolokhov's second cries out to his adversary to protect himself.

Oh my mother, my angel. It's one of the characteristics of Tolstoy's novel that he makes each character, even the ones who seem the most two-dimensional, deeply complex by reminding us that we know very little about the people in our lives, and that many of them are secretly wonderful:

> *"My friend," said Dolokhov in a halting voice, "where are we? We're in Moscow, I know. Never mind me, but I've killed her, killed … She won't survive it. She won't survive…"*
>
> *"Who?" asked Rostov.*
>
> *"My mother. My mother, my angel, my adored angel, my mother." And Dolokhov wept, pressing Rostov's hand. When he had calmed down a little, he explained to Rostov that he lived with his mother, that if his mother saw him dying, she wouldn't survive it. He begged Rostov to go and prepare her.*
>
> *Rostov went on ahead to carry out his errand, and to his great surprise, discovered that Dolokhov, this rowdy duellist, lived in Moscow with his old mother and hunchbacked sister, and was a most affectionate son and brother.* (2.1.6)

"Dust and Ashes"
pp. 56-58

They say we are asleep. Malloy has transposed a passage that is not really Pierre's into Pierre's mind. This is from a letter Denisov has written to his beloved during the war, which he recites to Nikolai Rostov in 1.2.4: *We're asleep until we love. We're children of dust … but fall in love – and you're God, you're pure as on the first day of creation.*

All that I know is I don't know a thing. *"Nothing has been discovered," Pierre again said to himself, "nothing has been invented. We can know only that we know nothing. And that is the highest degree of human wisdom."* (2.2.1)

Let the death bells chime. *"What is bad? What is good? What should one love, what hate? Why live, and what am I? What is life, what is death? What power rules over everything?" he asked himself. And there was no answer to any of these questions except one, which was not logical and was not at all an answer to these questions. This answer was: "You will die – and everything will end. You will die and learn everything – or stop asking." But to die was also frightening.* (2.2.1)

Was happiness within me the whole time? Much, much later in the novel after the events of *Comet*, Pierre is imprisoned by the French. This is from that section: *In captivity, in the shed, Pierre had learned, not with his mind, but with his whole being, his life, that man is created for happiness, that happiness is within him, in the satisfying of natural human needs, and that all unhappiness comes not from lack, but from superfluity; but now, in these last three weeks of the march, he had learned a new and more comforting truth – he had learned that there is nothing frightening in the world. He had learned that, as there is no situation in the world in which a man can be happy and perfectly free, so there is no situation*

in which he can be perfectly unhappy and unfree. He had learned that there is a limit to suffering and a limit to freedom, and that those limits are very close; that the man who suffers because one leaf is askew in his bed of roses, suffers as much as he now suffered falling asleep on the bare, damp ground, one side getting cold as the other warmed up; that when he use to put on his tight ballroom shoes, he suffered just as much as now, when he walked quite barefoot […]. He learned that when, by his own will, as it had seemed to him, he had married his wife, he had been no more free than now, when he was locked in a stable for the night. (4.3.12)

"Sunday Morning"
pp. 59-60

Natasha and I lit a candle. In the novel, this soothsaying ritual is performed while the young women are still in the country. Natasha jokes that she sees her own face, but to joke about a ritual is to prevent the ritual from working.

I see a shape in the darkness. *With the help of Sonya and the maid, Natasha found the right position for the mirror; her face acquired a grave expression, and she fell silent. For a long time she sat looking at the row of candles going into the depths of the mirrors, supposing (according to stories she had heard) that she would see a coffin, or that she would see him, Prince Andrei, in that last dim, blurry square. But however ready she was to take the smallest spot for the image of a man or a coffin, she saw nothing.* (2.4.12)
What happens next in the novel is that Sonya pretends to have seen a figure lying down, a figure she only refers to as "him", so that it might be either Nikolai or Prince Andrei. Sonya convinces herself she sees something, perhaps Andrei, cheerfully turning his face toward her.

I don't understand. Natasha doesn't really understand what is happening to her or to her relationship with Andrei. She is confused completely even after only having spoken with him at the opera: *"Am I lost for Prince Andrei's love, or not? She asked herself, and with a placating smile, she answered herself: "What a fool I am to be asking that! What happened to me? Nothing. I did nothing, I didn't provoke it in any way. No one will know of it, and I will never see him again," she said to herself. "So it's clear that nothing happened,*

that there's nothing to repent of, that Prince Andrei can love me like this. But what's this like this? Ah, my God, my God! Why isn't he here?" Natasha would calm down doe a moment, but then again some instinct would tell her that, although it was all true and nothing had happened – this instinct would tell her that all the former purity of her love for Prince Andrei was lost. And again in her imagination she would repeat her whole conversation with Kuragin, and picture the face, the gesture, the tender smile of that handsome and bold man when he pressed her arm. (2.5.10)

"Charming"
pp. 61-62

This one, "metallic gauze". *[Hélène] nodded to the dressmaker, whom she knew, and who curtsied to her deferentially, and sat down in an armchair near the mirror, picturesquely spreading the folds of her velvet dress. She kept babbling away gaily and good-naturedly, ceaselessly admiring Natasha's beauty. She examined her dresses and praised them, boasted of her own new dress* en gaze métallique*, which she had received from Paris and advised Natasha to order one like it.* (2.5.12)

Charmante, charmante. Pronunciation from Google here. It frustrates me to no end that it is pronounced incorrectly on the recording, but listen, I'm not in charge; do what you like. Malloy claims that this mispronunciation works for him and that he didn't want to alter the rhythm of the song as he had written it, but one doesn't need to pronounce the word incorrectly to keep the rhythm; one just needs to pronounce that terminal *e* as the French would: *e* rather than *é*.

Even if you're engaged. Everyone seems to know that Andrei and Natasha are betrothed, even though it is technically a secret and, indeed, Natasha is technically still free to refuse him. But such a thing would be impossible to keep secret. Princess Marya wrote about it to Julie Karagin as soon as she found out, and Natasha and Marya Dmitrievna have gone to the dressmakers to purchase a trousseau.

My brother dined with me yesterday. In characteristic generosity to his characters, Tolstoy describes Hélène in this way: *Hélène, for her part, sincerely admired Natasha and wished to entertain her. Anatole had asked her to bring him and Natasha together, and she had come to the Rostovs' for that. The thought of bringing her brother together with Natasha amused her.*

Despite the fact that she had formerly been vexed with Natasha, in Petersburg, for having won Boris away from her, she did not think of that now, and in her own way wholeheartedly wished Natasha well. (2.5.12)

Alliez dans le monde. Google pronunciation here. This is how this looks in the novel, which will give you a good idea of how the French language peppers the text: *"How she blushes, how she blushes, ma délicieuse!" said Hélène. "Be sure to come. Si vous aimez quelqu'un, ma délicieuse, ce n'est pas une raison pour se cloîtrer. Si même vous êtes promise, je suis sûre que votre promis aurais desire que vous alliez dans le monde en son absence plutôt que dépérir d'ennui."* The part from *Comet*, "*alliez dans le monde / plutôt que dépérir d'ennui*", can be translated *You should go into society before you perish from boredom.*

What once seemed so terrible. "*So she knows I'm betrothed, so she and her husband, Pierre, the upright Pierre," thought Natasha, "have talked and laughed about it. So it's nothing at all." And again, under Hélène's influence, that which formerly had appeared to be frightening, now seemed simple and natural. "And she's such a grande dame, such a sweet lady, and she clearly loves me with all her heart," thought Natasha. "And why shouldn't I have fun?" she thought, looking at Hélène with astonished, wide-open eyes.* (2.5.12)

"The Ball"
pp. 63-66

How I adore little girls. *"You know," said Anatole, "j'adore les petites filles: she'll get all flustered."*
"You already got caught once over a petite fille," said Dolokhov, who knew about Anatole's marriage. "Watch out."
"Well, as if it can't happen twice! Eh?" said Anatole, laughing good-naturedly. (2.5.11)

And during the Ecossaise. The Écossaise is a country-style dance that became very popular in Europe during the late 18th and early 19th centuries. *Écossaise* literally means *Scottish*, and the dance's name probably referred to some sort of continental idea of Scottish dance. Google pronunciation help here.

I do not see or hear anything. *Natasha, animated and alarmed, looked around with wide-open frightened eyes and seemed merrier than usual. She remembered almost nothing of what happened that evening. They danced the* écossaise *and the Grossvater, her father invited her to leave, she begged to stay. Wherever she was, whomever she talked with, she felt his eyes upon her. Then she remembered that she asked her father's permission to go to the dressing room an straighten her dress, that Hélène came after her, spoke to her, laughingly, of her brother's love, and that in a small sitting room she again met Anatole, that Hélène disappeared somewhere, the two of them were left alone, and Anatole, taking her hand, said in a tender voice…"* (2.5.13)

Of that there is no doubt. *Having returned home, Natasha did not sleep all night; an insoluble question tormented her: whom did she love, Anatole or Prince Andrei? She did love Prince Andrei – she clearly remembered how strongly she loved him. But she also loved Anatole, that was beyond doubt. "Otherwise how could all this have happened?" she wondered. "If, after that, in saying goodbye to him, I could respond to his smile with a smile, if I could let it go that far, it means that I loved him from the first moment. It means that he is kind, noble, and beautiful, and it was impossible not to love him. What am I to do, if I love him and love the other?" she said to herself, finding no answers to these terrible questions.* (2.5.13)

"Letters"
pp. 67-71

I've been studying the Kabal. This is the Kabbalah. Remember that Pierre is a Freemason, and so he is deeply invested in Christian mysticism, including the Christian Kabbalah. Later in the book, not long after the events in *Comet*, Pierre begins studying numerology.

I've calculated the number of the beast
It is Napoleon
Six hundred threescore and six. *French letters, given numerical values like the Hebrew, in which the first nine letters represent units, and the rest tens, will have the following significance:*
a.1, b.2, c.3, […] k.10, l.20, m.30, n.40 […] z.160
Writing the words l'empereur Napoléon *in this alphabet of numbers, it turns out that the sum of the figures equals 666 and that Napoleon is therefore that beast prophesied in the Apocalypse.* (3.1.19)
There's a lot more of this insanity in 3.1.19. By moving letters around on purpose to get the result he wants, Pierre finds himself tied to Napoléon somehow and decides he will commit a great deed of some sort.

How else could I have his letter in my hand? *With trembling hands Natasha held this passionate love letter, composed for Anatole by Dolokhov, and, reading it, she found in it echoes of everything she thought she felt herself.* (2.5.14)

"Sonya & Natasha"
pp. 72-75

How was it I noticed nothing? This sequence is almost word for word and leaves very little out of the opening three pages of 2.5.15.

"Sonya Alone"
pp. 76-77

And the letters come. Anatole is getting letters to and from Natasha through a servant girl, "a timorous maid" as the narrator puts it in 2.5.15.

I see by the sad look on her face. *And it suddenly became clear to Sonya that Natasha had some terrible plan for that night. Sonya knocked on her door. Natasha did not let her in.*
"She's going to elope with him!" thought Sonya. "She's capable of anything. Tonight there was something especially pathetic and resolute in her face. She cried as she said goodbye to uncle," Sonya recalled. "Yes, it's certain, she's going to elope with him – but what am I to do?" Sonya

wondered, recalling the signs which clearly proved to her that Natasha had some terrible intention. "The count isn't here. What am I to do? Write to Kuragin, demanding an explanation from him? But who will tell him to reply to me? Write to Pierre, as Prince Andrei asked me to do in case of misfortune? … But maybe she has indeed already refused Bolkonsky (she sent a letter to Princess Marya yesterday). Uncle's not here!"
To tell Marya Dmitrievna, who had such faith in Natasha, seemed terrible to Sonya.
"But one way or another," thought Sonya, standing in the dark corridor, "now or never, the time has come to prove that I remember the family's kindness to me and that I love Nicolas. No, even if I don't sleep for three nights, I won't leave this corridor, and I'll jeep her back by force and not let shame fall upon their family," she thought. (2.5.15)

"Preparations"
pp. 78-81

The plan for Natalie Rostova's abduction. This sequence is taken from the first three pages of 2.5.16.

Anatole and his troika. A *troika* is a traditional Russian harness driving combination, using three horses abreast, usually pulling a sleigh. It differs from most other three-horse combinations in that the horses are harnessed abreast. The term *troika* means *trio* or *triplet.*

They'd ride forty miles to the village of Kamenka
Where an unfrocked priest was to make 'em get wed
Then back into the troika off they'd go
Take the Poland highroad to the wedding bed. The plan is to leave Moscow and head *west*. It'll take a long while to get to Poland, even at Balaga's pace.

Ah ma chère, ma chère
Quel pied, quel regard! Google pronunciation help here.

"Balaga"
pp. 82-85

Who's that madman flying at full gallop down the street? The description of Balaga and his exploits is taken from 2.5.16)

From Tula to Moscow and back in just one night. Tula (where they had the samovar factories I mentioned in "Moscow" above) is 113 miles due south of Moscow. By car,

one way, this would take 2½ hours. In the novel, the city discussed is Tver, to the northwest of Moscow; the distance is the same, though.

Drinking and dancing with my Ruska Roma. Ruska Roma (Руска Рома) are Russian Gypsies, the largest group of Romani people in Belarus and Russia. Google pronunciation help here.

"The Abduction"
pp. 86-89

Goodbye my Gypsy lovers. Russian Gypsies appear frequently in the novel. These are Romani people, an oppressed, abused, and enslaved people during this period. The English term Gypsy originates from the Middle English *gypcian*, short for *Egipcien*. The Spanish term *Gitano*, French *Gitan*, and Russian *Tsygan* have similar etymologies. They are ultimately derived from the Greek Αιγύπτιοι (*Aigyptioi*), meaning *Egyptian*, via Latin. This designation owes its existence to the belief, common in the Middle Ages, that the Romani or some related group were itinerant Egyptians. This exonym is sometimes considered derogatory because of its negative and stereotypical associations. The Council of Europe considers that *Gypsy* or equivalent terms are not in line with European recommendations. In Britain, many Romani proudly identify as "Gypsies", and, as part of the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller grouping, this is the name used to describe all para-Romani groups in official contexts. In North America, the word Gypsy is most commonly used as a reference to Romani ethnicity, though lifestyles and fashions are at times also referenced by using this word, including musicians and actors on tour.

Goodbye, Matryosha. Matryoshka or Matryosha (these names are both used in the novel) is Matryona Matveevna; she is one of Dolokhov's servants, although in the musical she seems to have her own residence, as if she, perhaps, keeps a public house of some sort. The narrator describes her as a beautiful, pale, thin Gypsy girl with black eyes and curly black hair. In the novel she brings in a sable coat for Anatole to bring when he abducts Natasha; he kisses her and there is some play and nonsense around this. (2.5.17)

Remember me to Steshka. Steshka is a simplification of the name Styoshka. She was a real Gypsy singer, Stepanida (Styosha) Soldatova, who became famous in Moscow in the early nineteenth century, greatly admired by the Moscow élite.

Smash the glasses on the floor. Russians are forever throwing their glasses to the floor and smashing them after a toast.

Vsego Horoshego
Napososhok
Poekhali. Всего хорошего / На посошок/ Поехали. Google pronunciation help here. This means, roughly, *Best of luck! One for the road! Let's go!*

First we have to sit down. This is a Russian custom: to sit down for a few moments of silence and/or a prayer before going on a long journey.

Dolokhov stayed by the gate. In the novel, what happens is that Anatole goes in the gate, and Dolokhov stays out. The maid, who has been instructed by Marya Dmitrievna, tells Anatole to come all the way in or he'll be seen. Then, Marya Dmitrievna's footman grabs him and says he's going to bring Anatole directly to his mistress. Another porter runs to lock the gate *behind* Anatole: Marya Dmitrievna is trying to trap Anatole in the house! Both Anatole and Dolokhov realize what has happened at once. Dolokhov, because he has stayed by the gate, is able to prevent Anatole from getting locked in, grabs him by the arm, and runs with him back to the troika.

"In My House"
pp. 91-93

You shameless good-for-nothing. This sequence corresponds precisely to 2.5.18, except that Malloy has (as in the entirety of *Comet*) omitted the presence of Count Rostov, Natasha's father.

One other thing worth noting here is that Sonya hasn't *tattled* on Natasha. Marya Dmitrievna finds Sonya weeping in the corridor waiting to prevent Natasha from doing anything, and she forces her to tell her all she knows.

"A Call to Pierre"
pp. 94-95

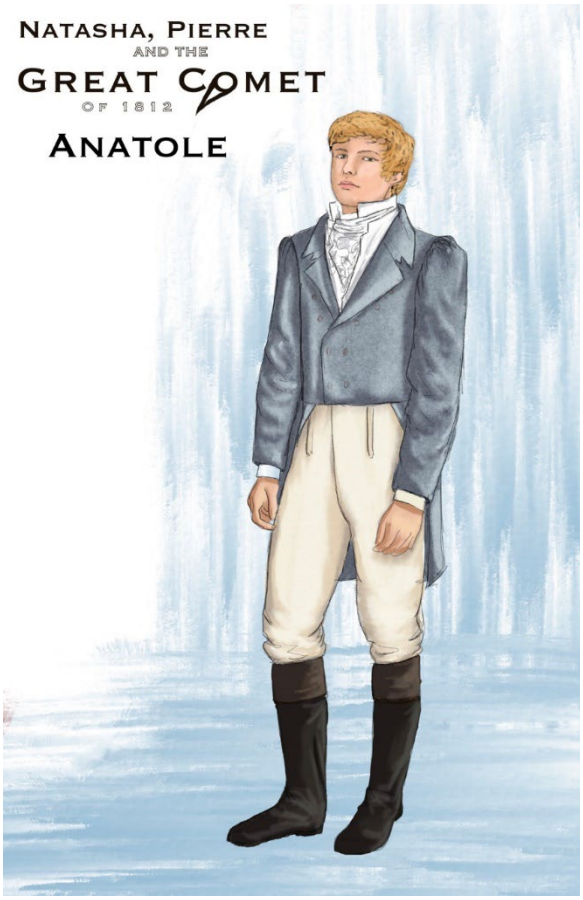
So I am not the only man. *The sweet impression of Natasha, whom he had known since she was a child, could not be combined in his soul with the new notion of her baseness, stupidity, and cruelty. He remembered his wife. "They're all the same," he said to himself, thinking that he was not the only one to have the sad lot of being connected with a vile woman. But still he pitied prince Andrei to the point of tears, pitied his pride. And the more he pitied his friend, the greater was the contempt and even loathing with which he thought of this Natasha, who had just walked past him in the reception room with an expression of such cold dignity. He did not know that Natasha's soul was filled with despair, shame, humiliation, and that it was not her fault that her face happened to express calm dignity and severity.* (2.5.19)

He will challenge Anatole to a duel. This is a sincere worry that everyone has. Anatole has affronted the honor of both Count Rostov, Natasha's father, and Natasha's fiancée, Prince Andrei. Indeed, if Count Nikolai Rostov, Natasha's brother and Sonya's fiancé, were to hear of this, he too would probably feel deeply affronted. Each of these men might challenge Anatole to a duel as a kind of payment for the offense. This would be illegal, in the first place, and it might end up in any or all of the men getting themselves killed. The women and Pierre, then, work hard to keep the entire business quiet.

"Find Anatole"
pp. 96-97

Not at the Ice Hills
Not at Matreshka's
Not at Komoneno's. The Ice Hills and Komoneno's don't appear elsewhere in the novel. They are random places, although Komoneno must be one of Anatole's friends in Moscow. Matreshka I've identified above under "The Abduction".

I don't believe that he is married. *Marya Dmitrievna had told Natasha that Anatole was married. Natasha refused to believe her and demanded that Pierre himself confirm it. Sonya told that to Pierre as she was bringing him down the corridor to Natasha's room.*



Natasha, pale, stern, was sitting next to Marya Dmitrievna, and her feverishly glittering, questioning gaze met Pierre just at the door. She did not smile, did not nod to him, she only looked at him fixedly, and her gaze asked him only this: was he a friend, or, like everybody else, an enemy in her relation to Anatole? Pierre himself evidently did not exist for her.
"He knows everything," said Marya Dmitrievna, pointing to Pierre and addressing Natsha. "Let him tell you whether I've spoken the truth."
As a wounded animal at bay looks at the approaching dogs and hunters, Natasha looked from one to the other.
"Natalya Ilyinichna," Pierre began, lowering his eyes and feeling pity for her and loathing for the operation he had to perform, "it should make no difference to you whether it's true or not, because…"
"So it's not true that he's married?"
"No, it's true."
"He was married, and long ago?" she asked.
"Word of honour."
Pierre gave her his word of honour.
"Is he still here?" she asked quickly.
"Yes, I just saw him."
She was obviously unable to speak and made signs with her hands that they should leave her. (2.5.19)

I will not greet you. Pierre's words to his wife are very few in the novel: *"Wherever you are, there is depravity and evil," Pierre said to his wife. "Anatole, come, I must have a talk with you," he said in French.* (2.5.20)

"Pierre & Anatole"
pp. 98-100

Mon cher. *My dear man.* Google pronunciation help here.

Have you any letters of hers? This is a very high-stakes question. Any love letters Anatole has that Natasha has written to him are evidence that she is compromised in some kind of way according to Russian high society. Pierre is carefully collecting the evidence against Natasha so that it may be destroyed.

Amuse yourself with women like my wife. *Amuse yourself with women like my spouse – with them you're within your rights, they know what you want from them. They're armed against you with the same experience of depravity. But to promise a girl you'll marry her … to deceive her, make off … How can you not understand that it's as mean as to bean an old man or a child! …"* (2.5.20)

Is it satisfaction you want? Again we get the threat of a duel. Pierre must apologize. If he doesn't, there might be a duel in which, of course, either of them might die and then either of them might be punished by the emperor.

"Natasha Very Ill"
p. 101

Natasha very ill. This sequence is a musicalization of the first paragraph only of 2.5.21.

"Pierre & Andrey"
pp. 102-103

And he smiled like his father. *"I deeply regret her illness," said Prince Andrei. He grinned coldly, spitefully, unpleasantly, like his father.*
"But Mr. Kuragin did not, then, bestow his hand upon Countess Rostov?" Andrei asked. He snorted through his nose several times.
"He couldn't marry, because he's already married," said Pierre.
Prince Andrei laughed unpleasantly, again resembling his father. (2.5.21)

Well, goodbye. This sequence is very similar to the events in 2.5.21, but I do think it's worth relating the novel's discussion of Princess Marya and Old Prince Bolkonsky at this point, as well as the remarkable change of heart Pierre has toward Natasha because of what he comes to understand at the Bolkonskys':

> *Pierre left and went to see the old prince and Princess Marya.*
> *The old man seemed more animated than usual. Princess Marya was the same as ever, but Pierre saw in her, beyond her compassion for her brother, her joy that her brother's marriage had been thwarted. Looking at them, Pierre realized what contempt and spite they all felt for the Rostovs, and realized that it was impossible in their presence even to mention the name of her who could exchange Prince Andrei for whomever it might be.* (2.5.21)

"Pierre & Natasha"
pp. 104-106

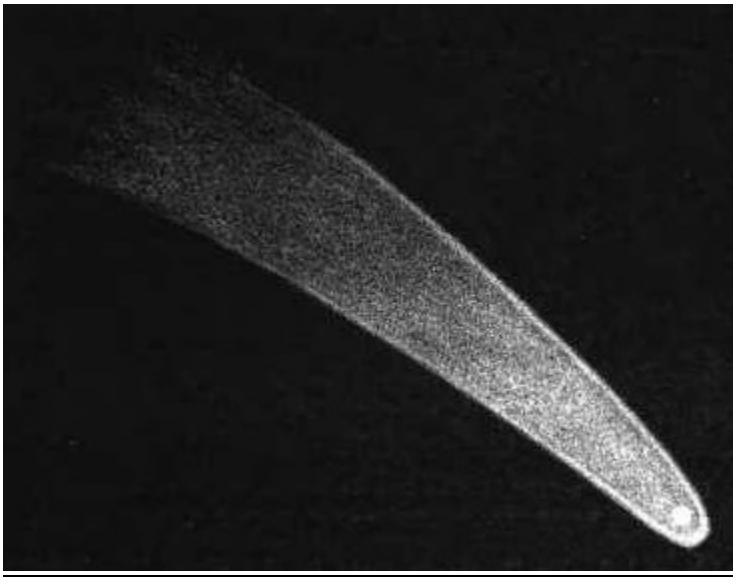
No, I know that all is over. *"No, I know it's all over," she said hastily. "No, it can never be. I'm only tormented by the wrong I've done him. Tell him only that I beg him to forgive me, to forgive me for everything…" Her whole body shook, and she sat down on a chair.*
A feeling of pity such as he had never experienced before overflowed Pierre's soul. (2.5.22)

I leave the room smiling. Only this is an addition to 2.5.22. The rest is as it is in the novel.

"The Great Comet of 1812"
pp. 107-108

Shines the great comet of 1812. The Great Comet of 1811 was visible to the naked eye for around 260 days, the longest recorded period of visibility until the appearance of Comet Hale–Bopp in 1997. It was at its most sustainedly visible in October 1811, but it *was* still visible in the sky in January of 1812.

The comet said to portend
Untold horrors
And the end of the world. The comet was popularly thought to have portended Napoléon's invasion of Russia (even being referred to as "Napoleon's Comet") and the (US American) War of 1812, among many other events.



The Great Comet of 1811, William Henry Smyth