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"Not one. I knew you would ask."

"Messages?"

"That you can hardly stop me doing," said Pavlof, with a smile, "but none that will do you any harm."

And next morning they shook him warmly by the hand, and even felt some regret at parting from him. For, if he was a hard man, he was just, according to his lights and the cast-iron nature of his environment, and to them he had proved a good friend and one who did not forget.

Colonel Zazarin was still too ill to care a kopeck what became of them or of the whole settlement. His thoughts were wandering in such strange and shadowy places that Anna Roskova sat in his room with her fingers stuffed into her ears, and her heart full of loathing and pity at these self-revelations of a tortured soul.

Captain Sokolof provided Paul with the necessary papers for securing their immunity on the road, and furnished him with the usual orders for post-horses at the various stations.

And so, with hearts at ease, such as they had been very far from feeling on the last occasion, they once more turned their faces towards freedom. And if those who crowded to the