

"My heart felt torn into a thousand pieces. My feet were lame, my arms stiff. I could not move from the spot. I thought of the warning that had been given me when I first spoke of my wish to work for the peasants. While I was still a girl, they said, 'Wait! You will get married, and that will tie you down. Your young blood will be calmed; your running brook will become a quiet lake.' And the time came when I was married, and I was conscious of no change in my spirit. I felt for the people's cause as strongly as ever — even more strongly. And then friends told me, 'Just wait, you will have an estate of your own to care for, and that will take up all your time and thoughts.' But my husband and I bought an estate, and no such result followed; for I could never let one tiny estate outweigh the vast plains of all Russia. My spirit and my convictions remained the same. And with time came new counsel from friends. Now they argued: 'Yes, you have remained unchanged by husband and home, but you will succumb to the command of Nature. With the birth of a child will come the death of your revolutionary ideals. The wings you have used for soaring high in the air among the clouds you will now use to shelter your little one.' And I gave birth to a little one. I felt that in that boy my youth was buried, and that when he was taken from my body, the fire of my spirit had gone out with him. But it was not so. The conflict between my love for the child and my love for the revolution and for the freedom of Russia robbed me of many a night's sleep. I knew that I could not be a mother and still be a revolutionist. Those were not two tasks to which it was possible to give a divided attention. Either the one or the other must absorb