

The effect was marvellous. As Mr. Hayward went on, the young man flushed rosy red; all doubt and fear left him. When the Chief had finished his tale, Fomenko rose, all tremulous, and in a tumult of feeling wrung his hand twice or thrice. Then, yielding to an Oriental impulse, he fell on the elder's bosom and sobbed aloud for a minute with almost inaudible murmurs. He spoke very low and cautiously, but he spoke out of his full heart.

'Ruric Brassoﬀ, Ruric Brassoﬀ!' he cried, in a tone of profound shame, 'forgive me, forgive me! If for one second I seemed to doubt you, it was not *you*, but *them*, that I feared and doubted. I doubt no longer now. I fear no longer. I know you at once by your great words for Russia's truest son. I thank God I have lived to hear that noble voice. Command, and I will obey. I am yours, for Russia.'

A sympathetic moisture stood dim in Mr. Hayward's eyes. The revolutionist within him was now thoroughly awakened once more. Ashamed as he felt of himself and of the double part he was perforce playing, he was yet proud of disciples like Michael Fomenko. And, after all, he said to his own heart, it *was* for Russia—for Russia. For was it not better in the long-run for Russia that she should have Owen Cazalet's sympathy and aid from afar off in England, than that he should be cut off in all his youth and strength and beauty, who might do and dare so much in quieter and more peaceful ways to serve and befriend her?

He sat down at the table, took a pen in his hand, and wrote a few words on a scrap of paper, which he handed to Fomenko.

'There,' he said, 'if you want more proof, is the last order I sent you, from the inn at Smolensk.'

But Fomenko, hardly looking at it, made answer in a tone of the most fervid enthusiasm:

'I need no proof at all. I only ask your pardon. Now I have once heard Ruric Brassoﬀ's own grand words, Ruric Brassoﬀ's own authentic voice, I require nothing further. Your speech is enough. It is the tongue of a seer, a priest, a prophet.'