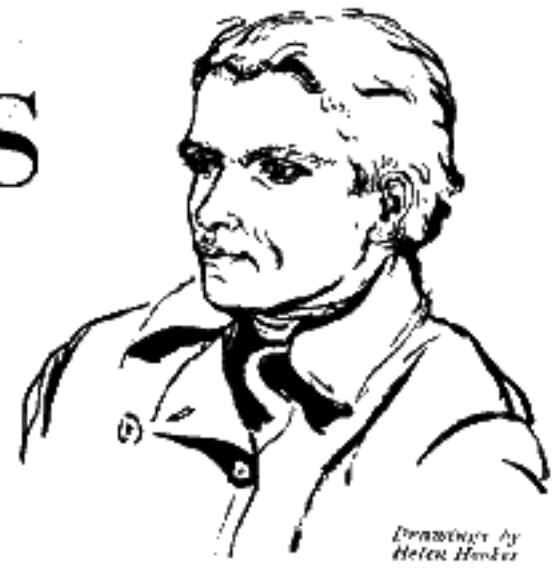
Liubov Alexandrovna told how she once chased a water sprite from her kitchen

How Red is Red Russia?



Drawings by Helen Hooker

This young Cossack asked if Ford's workmen are mangled in their machines for reporting late

Photograph by Nicholas Muray

Helen Huntington Hooker, whose sketch-book and camera led to difficulties with the secret police

By Adelaide Hooker

A Very Personal Report by a New York Society Girl of the Soviets' Experiment in "No Liquor, No Fox-Trots, No Tips, And No Religion"

ADELAIDE and Helen Hooker went to Russia out of curiosity and cussedness. In addition they shared a genuine enthusiasm for the almost unknown Russian ecclesiastical art and architecture, which is rapidly disappearing under the neglect and even active hostility of the Soviet government. After three months in Moscow, Helen painting while Adelaide read up on history, they decided on a sudden excursion into the country, where many of the most noted monuments of Russian history were located. After a visit to Vladimir to see the famous Ouspensky Cathedral, they went to Bogoliubov to visit the Church of the Intercession of the Virgin, on the River Nerli, the most beautiful church in all Russia.

OUR train back to Vladimir was an hour late, and we stalked up and down the platform to keep warm. The waiting-room air was as impossible as usual. The train came—at last—and we watched Bogoliubov out of sight with affection and regret. An inevitable feeling of sorrow always came over me in leaving Russian villages and people—a sort of certainty of never seeing them again.

The magic word "foreigners" spread through the coach in a minute, and we were surrounded by a questioning mob. This has to be faced often in Russia and coped with guardedly. It is better to be asker than the answerer. Nobody trusts anybody else in a Russian crowd, and no one wants an answer held up against him, but everybody is willing to ask anything. "Are you a spy?" and "What is your allowance?" are good general examples of the type of inquiry.

We arrived at Vladimir at about nine o'clock and drove up the long hill past the monastery. A soldier paced up and down in front of the gate. We had wanted to go in in the morning but the museum director said, "Oh, no, one can not enter there!" and we wondered why. We did get in later, but in a very different way from that which we had hoped.

On the public square a building was decorated with red lights and a poster saying, "Young Communists' Masquerade Ball." We were tired, and had to rise at six the next morning, but this was too good to miss. Could we crash it? We tried. Everybody was being turned away at the gate—no more tickets. I tried the word "foreigners." The magic worked. The young and harassed manager appeared in the midst of the squeezing, pushing rabble. We stated our case—said we wouldn't dance and take up room, were students from America, and were awfully interested to see Russian students—would just sit in the gallery and watch for a few minutes. He was very pleasant and was about to weaken when the crowd roared:

"Who are these strangers that can get in when we can not? The devil take them! Aren't Russians good enough for this ball?"

The manager reluctantly refused us, but we pressed our passports on him, and he said he would ask his superior. A few minutes later he appeared outside with the shoving rabble and conducted us back through and under numerous coat racks, to the stairs.

"*Mozhno?* (May I?)" I asked.

"*Mozhno* (You may)," he answered.

"But we must buy tickets," I said.

"Oh, no, Comrade, you will be the guests of the Communist students!"

He was a nice boy, pale blond hair and direct blue eyes, and with him was another boy with a simple Slavic face, thin and worn, with a rather wistful charm. This latter one wore trousers of large, brown plaid. They were both about eighteen years old, I should say.

Helen and I scooted up to the gallery, ashamed of our coats, grimy faces, and boots among these ribald merry-makers in gay

colors. The room was huge. At least six hundred dancers were seething in it—false beards—girls dressed as boys and *vice versa*—pink paper costumes—travesties on religion—mostly creations of wit rather than material. Accordions wheezed, and everybody shouted. Ages ranged from twelve to twenty-two. Eyes and cheeks were bright from excitement and hot air. There was no fox-trotting, only polkas and semi-folk waltzes. The fox-trot is taboo among Communists as vulgar and bourgeois. (However, Helen danced it with Comrade Litvinnov, the Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs, at his yearly ball for the Diplomatic Corps at Moscow!)

Our two friends came up for us.

"You can't stay up here, Comrades! You must come down and play with us and tell us about America! Are you Communists? Does America really hate Russia as much as they say here?"

We preferred to stay upstairs, being almost too tired to speak. I could not even take my coat off, I had such ragged and ill-fitting garments underneath. We showed them our boots.

"*Neechevo! Neechevo!* (It doesn't matter!)" they assured us, and dragged us down to dance.

The new steps were too intricate for us to grasp in our weary condition, so they sat with us on the stage and watched. Others gathered around. It was almost impossible to talk against the noise, but we got snatches of conversation here and there and observed much. There was no paint and not a sign of liquor. The Communists are very abstemious. I thought of the many stories of corruption among children, sad results of lax marriage laws, but this looked like as happy and healthy a bunch as you would see in any high school at home.

There were a few faces of delicacy and refinement, but the average had a proletarian cast of features. Their ideas, too, were simple, more recited than reasoned. The forebears of these minds have remained dormant for centuries. Quickening to life for the first time, they have bitten off large mouthfuls, perhaps more than they have

Madonna and child in beautiful 16th century hand embroidery; bought by the author from the Soviet

the ability to handle just yet. There is no hereditary mental discipline to fall back on. They wanted to discuss every imaginable question with us and were curious and interested in everything we said about America. How they would love to see it—the great machines—the many automobiles! Did workers really have them? But why did we hate Russia so? Why would America lend her no money to help her workers along?

I knew I was treading dangerous ground, but took a chance. "Because the Soviets spend money for propaganda against our Government," I said.

Most of them were surprised.

A tall, stringy Jewish boy who had just come up snarled, "Well, why don't you get a decent government like ours, and then we wouldn't have to?"

He slunk off in the crowd without waiting for my answer. I was furious, but said nothing. A moment later he returned, whispering something to the blond manager whom he brought with him. Blue eyes narrowed and looked at me sternly. "*Nu shto-zhe?* (What's this?)" I could see his thoughts in his worried face. Had we brought contra-revolutionary influences into the midst of the young Communists? What a fool he had been!

I had no time to answer before all the people around me chimed in.

"Avram was a fool and very rude. He had insulted the Comrade Guest's country when they were all having a friendly discussion and had not even waited to hear her answer. That was no way to behave!"

The blond boy reprimanded Avram and apologized to me. Avram slunk away again, muttering something about *bourzhui* foreigners, which I omitted to hear.

The costume prize was to be given, and every one marched across the stage. Applause was the judge. The prize was given to a rather crude anti-religious joke—two boys harnessed together in what represented a confessional—one as priest and one as a layman. (*Continued on page 194*)

A scene in Suzdal, painted by Helen Hooker. This town of only two thousand people was a famous ecclesiastical center of the past

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(*Continued from page 55*)

They carried a board painted with the words, "*Religia wrak naooka* (Religion is the enemy of science)."

I had completely lost my voice by this time, so we said good-night to our host, who came to the door with us. The brown checked trousers saw us home. His name was Kotsakoff, and he studied geology at Moscow University. He had a sensitive face. He came to see me two or three times later in Moscow, but the effort of conversation was pretty strenuous.

Just as Russian hunger can be satisfied by Russian food, so our rather repulsive Vladimir beds looked good to our weary bones; and again fully clothed we sank into them. I fell asleep wondering how it was possible to have seen inside of three hours the Church on the Nerli and the Bolshevik Ball.

NEXT morning we were aroused at six. The moon and stars were shining, and the bugs were biting through our boots and fur coats. But it didn't matter. We were going to Suzdal for the day. Comrade Selezniov told us to take the bus at seven A.M. Suzdal is twenty-five miles back in the country and has no railroad. We were to ask for Tovarishtch Alexandrov at the village museum. He would show us all in the quickest possible time, and we would return to Vladimir with the bus at five in the afternoon, call for our purchased "loot," and catch the night train for Moscow. I had a bit of a cold, so he insisted that I take his warm throat scarf for the day. But these were plans.

We had our tea and "*boolki*" by candle-light and were at the bus station at seven. The hotel chambermaid told us it always left promptly. At seven fifteen, still no bus. I inquired of a street cleaner if this were the right corner.

"It's the right corner, miss, certainly, but the bus only runs for two months in summer time."

The dear old misinformation! I was desperate. He pointed out a garage. First streaks of dawn appeared. In the garage were two busses of a fairly primitive type. I asked if there were any small cars in Vladimir. There were none. Would he take two ladies in a bus? No, he wouldn't, not in that snow! What could be done? Obstacles always whetted our enthusiasm for a place.

Two *izvoschiks* (drivers) were sleeping and freezing slowly in their sleighs at a corner. I cracked them both, suggested Suzdal as a trip, and set them to underselling each other while I went to get Helen. We both came down to the curb market and found the price had sunk from forty to twenty rubles in my absence. A little more work was necessary. They talked their horses up, and I talked the price down, until we settled with one for fifteen rubles, about seven dollars and a half.

I went back to the chambermaid to ask her if she would let us take two of the blankets off the beds to keep us warm. I promised we would not let the driver put them on the horse (this is the custom with carriage robes in general). With all honesty I said,

"They've been used for that anyway; I can tell by the smell."

She answered without a smile, "Oh, no, *baroshnaya*, that's just the kind of people we have here."

We left our keys with her, and our passports she had already. Our simple belongings and books remained in the "stall," as we had come to call our bedroom, because it did smell as if horses had recently been boarded there. Armed only with money and cameras, we started off on our trip.

Down the hill and off into the country. If you've a penchant for sleigh-riding, go to Russia! Not a wheel in sight for six months! We passed a beautiful new hospital under construction and a large cemetery at a convenient distance—crossed a creek and left the town behind. Our horse was frisky and strong, and we climbed a curving incline of considerable height at a brisk trot. At the top was a typical Russian village—one main street with a long row of brown wooden houses on each side, cuckoo-clock style, one story high. At one end is a church and belfry, at the other a great, covered well. Past the last house and out on the rolling plains.

As far as you could see, a white sheet was spread, tucked in at the horizon. I have never before been conscious of such expanses. A horizon on shipboard has no such extent. There was not a single tree to break the monotony. Only a wandering line of telegraph poles which served us as a guide. There is no road in winter. You travel cross-country.

The steppes rolled like the sand waves of the Sahara, and the wind blew and was murderously cold at the top of each ridge. We crouched together, collars up, faces wound around with scarves. Two pairs of gloves were no warmer than tissue-paper. There was *nowhere* I could hide my hands from the prying cold. Our heavy, leather boots were no protection at all. They only carefully kept our feet in the frozen condition they were in already. We couldn't even shift our stiffening limbs, because moving a muscle always let in another darting fork of the enemy. The wind came from the right, so our right sides and sleeves were caked with snow. Little icicles of frozen breath hung from our hats and scarves.

Thus we sat for an hour and a half, seeing nothing, hearing nothing, barely able to think. On the horizon, like a ship at sea, was a gray speck. It became first a belfry, then a village. It was a hope, but another half-hour passed before we actually reached it. I was vaguely conscious of a row of houses.

"*Chai! Chai!!*" (Tea! Tea!) called our driver as he helped us out at one of the doors.

He threw the one robe over the horse, whose eyes were bulging and sides heaving with strain. He had trotted the whole way. His belly was fringed with icicles, and they hung six inches long from his muzzle.

There was a sign, "*Traktir*," on the house, and we groped our way up a rickety stair to the door. We almost fell into a low-ceilinged room, tiny and dark, with two wooden tables and a dilapidated range. It was all I could do to keep Helen from climbing right into the stove. We took off our boots warily, not knowing whether our feet would come off in them or not. The room seemed warm, but our breath caused clouds of steam, so I imagine it was only relatively so. Anyhow, glasses of scalding tea were soon in front of us, and shortly within us. All of a sudden warming from within and from without met at a point, and our minds began to work. Where were we? Almost half-way! I couldn't bear it! To have to live through that again. Well, we would have to live through it again if we turned back, so we might as well go forward.

THERE were several muzhiks (peasants) in the *traktir*. They are a beautiful race. Such straight noses and radiant coloring, and such red beards! Two rather debonair-looking youths sat down with us and began to talk. They satisfied themselves that we were not in the G.P.U. and then proceeded to express themselves about the Government. Their language was almost unprintable. I am surprised that the Soviet did not collapse from "absent treatment." I asked them if they were not afraid of being put in jail for talking that way.

"Then they'd have to put us all in jail, *baroshnaya*, and they'd have no one to till the fields."

There were potatoes and onions frying on the stove, and we asked for some. The woman who was in charge said she was sorry, but that it was for her and the children. However, we could have some ————or some————; she mentioned two dishes. We had never heard of either, so we ordered the first. It turned out to be black bread and great hunks of sausage. It was a welcome sight. We ate enormously of it, and what we left on our plates our *izvoschik* gathered up in a handkerchief and put in his pocket.

One muzhik with curling mustache and a roving eye was also on his way to Suzdal and invited us to spend the night with him there. We were interested in the proposition, and when we found that he had a wife and three children, and that it would be a sociological experience rather than a romantic one, we accepted—in the event of its being too late to return to Vladimir.

Having finished four glasses of tea each, we were ready to face the elements again. The *izvoschik* took off one of his sheepskin *shubas* and gave it to us as an extra robe. We were reluctant, but accepted when we saw that he had two others underneath. That explained the well-stuffed look of the average Russian driver. With a crack of the whip we were off again. "One hour to Suzdal," said the driver. We wondered.

ON THE outskirts of the town a dog was sitting straight up in the snow. He looked a bit unnatural. I inquired.

"Oh, that dog has been sitting there for three months. The wolves killed him, and he froze in that position, so they just sat him there. All the wolves don't know he's frozen, so when they come back for him, they are shot at."

"So there were wolves about?" I smiled nonchalantly. It was a sweet thought.

"Oh, yes, *baroshnaya*, but they haven't been bad this year. The Soviets are trying hard to kill them off."

We had forgotten our movie conception of Russia—Grand Duchesses in *troikas* being chased by herds of wolves, the left horse unharnessed and turned loose as the victim, the right horse next—the center horse dropping dead at the door of the Church—the Grand Duchesses saved by a miracle. Well, here we were on the steppes with only one horse. Dear! dear! it *was* nice to know that the wolves weren't so bad this season.

In a few minutes our oasis was far behind, and the wind came roaring down the valleys of snow. The horse's pace was not what it once was, and he looked pretty gaunt.

"Mark my words," said Helen, "this *loshad* (horse) is good for another ten minutes only. You should have taken the other one. We've saved five rubles, but we're going to freeze to death. By tomorrow we'll be set up as wolf-bait, so get yourself in a pretty position!"

The *loshad* certainly was weakening. He was ambling along at a slow walk. Our laughter kept us warm. We followed the poles down a long, gentle slope. At the bottom a bridge was barely visible. Just before reaching it our *loshad* shied to one side. What could it be? A dead *loshad*, frozen stiff, four hoofs in the air. It was ominous, but we couldn't laugh any more. *Rigor mortis* was already setting in. I will spare you further description of the temperature. Enough that two hours later we were cracked off the seat and led into a *traktir* on the open marketplace of Suzdal.

As soon as tea had seeped through to our minds, we told the *izvoschik* we would have to stay all night. What was a toothbrush to one who had made such a trip, and nightgowns had passed out of our consciousness.

In the *traktir* was a wonderful collection of peasant types. We were back in the country now, and there was no city veneer on the people. Helen reached for her sketchbook, but found that her mind had thawed before her fingers. An old seer was sitting at the table with us. His white beard was fully a foot long, and his hair hung thick over the shoulders of his long linen blouse. He would not be drawn into conversation, but shook his head and murmured every few minutes:

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...z Ameriki! Dalyoko! Dalyoko! (From America! Far! Far!)"

His eyes followed us wherever we moved, and he seemed to have a continuous mental struggle to reconcile our presence in Suzdal with his conception of America's location. He watched us wistfully out of the door and then stood at the window, shaking his head, until we were out of sight. He had never been away from Suzdal, had never seen a foreigner, and could not cope with this sudden enlargement of his horizon.

We found Tovarishtch Alexandrov in the Museum. It was located in the former Theological Seminary, a beautiful seventeenth century building. From the twelfth century on, Suzdal was always a great ecclesiastical center. Though now a small town of about two thousand inhabitants, it had, up to the Revolution, four monasteries besides the seminary, and an amazing number of saints, martyrs, venerated relics, etc.

The Pokrovski Convent has been the voluntary or involuntary exile of many distinguished Russian princesses, among them the Tsaritsa Eudoxia Lapoukhina. She was the first wife of Peter the Great, and after the ill-fated rebellion of the Streltzi she was sent there by him to be shorn and imprisoned. She was too reactionary for his Western reforms. With a woman this did not matter so much. She could take vows, and he could marry again. But when her son, the Tsarevitch Alexis, betrayed similar ideas, he died in a peculiar manner. Peter the Great was ruthless.

In the little village museum are priceless Ikons and embroideries taken from the treasuries of these monasteries. Russian sixteenth-century embroideries impress the foreigner as very ugly at first, but when used to them you like their stiff, gray, stitched faces with the features outlined in black. There is one masterpiece here, done by the unlucky Tsaritsa herself. The collection of crosses here was the most interesting I had seen outside of Leningrad and Moscow.

Tovarishtch Alexandrov was a nice little man with an air of being "city folks." He had been a school teacher before the revolution and appeared now to be a town official as well as museum director. He was polite and dapper and wore one of those black coats, with collar and peaked hat of Persian lamb, which "upper" Russians wear. For some reason or other he wanted to rush us through the center room which was plastered with anti-religious posters. Maybe he thought that what was good for Russians would create a bad impression on Americans.

HE CALLED his assistant and gave him what looked like the keys of the Bastille, and directions about where to take us. We passed the cathedral, but did not go in until later. It was in typical Vladimir style, but rather marred by being restored in a mud-brown color. The domes enraptured us as usual—five colossal, bottle-blue onions with gold stars all over them. Above each was a lacy gold cross with chains dripping down to hold it in place. Each had the usual second crosspiece near the bottom placed on a slant, and an upturned crescent beneath that. It seems that according to Russian legend Christ had one foot shorter than the other, thus proving His earthly humility. The diagonal, at the place where his feet are nailed side by side, symbolizes that defect. The crescents are a relic of Tartar invasions. The Christian churches had been changed into mosques by the Tartars, but when the Russians reconquered them, they left the crescents, placing crosses over them as a symbol of victory.

We followed our guide down the main street between low, whitewashed buildings and many gaudily painted churches. On every side rose tiers of little domes, "candles on the altar of heaven," as an old monk told me once, when I inquired about the onion form. We passed the Rizopolozhenski monastery, with its white walls and beautiful, double-turreted gate, but were not allowed to enter—it is a military garrison now.

Down a hill and out a way into the country, and we saw the Pokrovsky convent—not so beautiful as it is historically interesting. Beyond, however, on a bluff across a stream, was a long, red fortress wall with twelve massive, red-and-white turrets.

"*Shto taquoi* (what is that?)"? I asked our guide.

He looked at me queerly. "That is the Spasso-Yefimsky monastery, formerly a prison for ecclesiastical misdemeanors," he hesitated, "now a contra-revolutionary prison." He changed the subject quickly. "There was once a church deacon imprisoned there for life, because he dropped the communion cup." Inordinate laughter followed.

This guide of ours was an odd creature, tall, dressed practically in rags, but with an intelligent face. His intention of being clean-shaven was poorly executed. He had little keen eyes, a big blue nose, and a generally moth-eaten appearance.

"Member of the Party?" I asked.

"Oh, yes," he answered.

"May I take a picture?" The sky-line was nice.

"Of everything except the prison," he said.

I included the prison, but he didn't seem to mind.

IT WAS getting dark, and Pokrovsky convent looked gray and bleak. In the big gateway was the diminutive cell of Eudoxia adjoining a pretty Annunciation chapel. Here she lived for twenty years, until she was moved north to Old Ladoga. She was kept prisoner there until her grandson, Pyotr Alexeivitch, came to the throne.

We dug the snow away from the door of the crypt. No one had been in for six months certainly. It was horrible and dank, and we had to rub our noses every minute to keep them from freezing. The Comrade struck matches. We were in a maze of frescoed arches. Like billowing scarves they hovered low over our heads, the corners pulled down to short columns not more than two feet high. It is a style peculiarly Russian. You can pass from one arch to the other only in the middle, if you don't want to bump your head. Under these frescoed canopies are slabs with the names of the royal, or princely, nuns.

Here lies Solomonia Sabourova, wife of Vassili Ivanovitch, canonized as Saint Sophia. In the year 1505 the Grand Prince decided to marry and demanded that all the beautiful daughters of the Boyars and princes be paraded before him. Out of the fifteen hundred beauties he chose Solomonia as his bride, but when she had no children he consigned her to the convent at Suzdal and married Elena Glynskaya, who bore him his son, Ivan Grozni (the "Terrible"). Solomonia resented this treatment deeply, but resigned herself to the holy life and became so loved for her goodness and piety that her grave was venerated as a holy shrine. It is in sad decay now.

Nearby slabs cover the remains of Alexandra, sister of Vassili Ivanovitch, and his daughter Anastasia. Then there is Anna Vassilchikova, the fourth wife of Ivan the Terrible, and Alexandra, the little wife of his son and heir, whom he murdered in a fit of jealousy. I thought of the ghastly canvas of Repin on this subject, which hangs in the Tretyakov Gallery in Moscow. A few years ago a fanatic rushed into the gallery with a razor and slashed the two faces in the portrait, crying:

"Beloved Russia has seen so much blood! Why must blood be painted on the wall of her galleries?"

The canvas has been so cleverly repaired that no one would ever know of the disaster now, and Ivan's neurotic and tragic face still continues to weave its nauseating spell.

The peculiar, perverse nature of Ivan the Terrible is shown in the story of his own visit to the Pokrovsky Convent. He was on his way to Kazan to fight the Tartars, and the Abbess predicted that he would become Tsar of Kazan.

"Very well," said Ivan, "for your kind prophecy I will not order you executed, but if I do not become Tsar of Kazan, then beware of me!"

Many other famous princesses lie in that icy posterity, but we shuddered and crawled out to the waning daylight. I asked our strange comrade what he thought of the ascetic life, and his cynical answer was:

"Spasso-Yefimsky monastery was for men; beside it was the Pokrovsky convent for women. Half the time the monks went over to pray with the nuns, and the rest of the time the nuns came to pray with the monks. The State supported them all, and the workers starved." He snapped his fingers. "That is what I think of the ascetic life. Swine, all of them!"

We walked slowly back to the museum and cathedral. The bells were tolling for afternoon service. Our Tovarishtch was carrying the Abbess' tall stick which Helen had found in the church. It was modern, and valueless from a museum's point of view, but Helen wanted to buy it as a curio. Our companion brought us to the cathedral door. He had spent three or four hours of his time with us and nearly frozen to death for us. What were we to do about it? We would have jolly well known what to do about it in France or Italy, but this was Russia, and this man was a Communist, though he was in rags. We thanked him profusely and said we were at a loss to show him our appreciation.

"You have thanked me. There is nothing else, citizenesses," he said abruptly.

We understood and admired the Communist principle which scorns gratuities.

A moment later he opened the great bronze doors with considerably more noise than we considered necessary. It echoed up the vast heights of the Byzantine arches. The *Archiyerie*, or arch-priest, was reading the service by a taper in the center of the church. He waited for quiet. Our Comrade dropped the stick and began talking to us in a voice three times as loud as the priest's. We were furious and both in the same breath whispered to him to keep quiet and get out of the church. He answered with a loud guffaw. The priest stood silent, and his long, purple-striped gown trembled. He looked up and crossed himself.

THE church was gorgeous with frescoes and a sumptuous gold *Ikonostas*. It was lighted only with candles. The effect was mysterious and awe-inspiring. The most barbaric unbeliever could not help but be esthetically impressed. The priest started reading again. Our companion turned on his heel and walked out, banging the bronze portal so that the cathedral shook. I stood frozen with rage. I felt as if my entire nervous system had been sandpapered.

For two hours we stood in the shadow, watching and absorbing the beauty of the orthodox service. People who have been to the Russian church services in Paris or New York have no conception of the superior beauty of those in the historic shrines of Russia herself. It is hard for untemperamental Americans to appreciate the deep, religious mysticism which has brought down the Bolsheviks' criticism, and the just as fanatical Communism, which is as much a religion as that which it is trying to destroy.

I was chilled to the marrow, and my throat was sore, so we crept out on tiptoe, leaving a comparatively large sum of money in the plate as a partial apology for our guide. We went to a larger *traktir* which Alexandrov had recommended and asked for a "number,"

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as rooms are called in Russia. Downstairs was a restaurant and tea hall jammed with visitors and so smoky you couldn't breathe. We were directed up a filthy staircase, the walls of which were covered with ooze. I could hardly bear to touch the doorknob.

A nice, bright-eyed little man seemed mystified at two American girls wandering into his "joint," and asked to see our passports. We had never given them a thought. Why, they were in the hotel at Vladimir. Well, the citizenesses could not stay without them. Didn't we know that nobody could rent a room in Russia without a pass? We did, but we had not intended to stay all night, and it was too late to return now. He shook his head, said he would have to telephone for permission, but would show us a room in the meantime.

They only had two. A big room, it was perhaps more airy—two free beds in the corner—three men had beds in the other corner—or we might prefer to be alone, in the little room, if we didn't mind sleeping two in one bed. The bed was a narrow, board cot, and I suggested bringing one in from the large room, so as to leave the three men in peace. He was willing and said if we would go down and get our supper, he would light the stove and have the beds ready when we came up. He would telephone the G.P.U—and he was sure that under the circumstances it would be all right about the passports.

We ordered the "menu"—you can't get anything else—and the usual meat balls came in, not half bad this time. My cold was very bad, however. I drank many glasses of tea and went up to bed. The little, beady-eyed man showed us our chamber with pride. He had procured a sheet for each of us, if we were willing to pay a ruble apiece for the night, otherwise it would be fifty kopecks. One sheet is worse than none, because you have to decide whether it is more unpleasant to touch the blanket or the mattress, and the difference is hardly worth the effort of decision. There was a horrible sort of pad on the bed, and I sank wearily on it.

My head certainly felt queer. My thoughts wandered to Peterhof, Peter the Great's Versailles. On the mantelpiece of one of the guest chambers, with satin bed coverings and hangings, are framed the "Rules of the Palace" in Peter's own handwriting. Rule number ten reads, "Guests are requested not to go to bed in their boots." I drowsily reasoned with myself. Well, they probably had two sheets in the Palace and no bedbugs. I wrestled with the latter all night and after a few minutes' fitful sleep woke up stifling for air and feeling dizzy.

NOW, if you have to have the flu, don't have it in a Park Avenue apartment! Have it in Suzdal, as I did. It's much more interesting. I ate nothing, but drank quarts of weak tea, and Helen went in search of a doctor. I was nervous—expected an old peasant to bring a leech and bleed me—but a nice-looking young man came, seeming very harassed and worried. He, too, was shabby, but "city folks." We had a bit of difficulty getting on at first, because my Russian vocabulary was more or less confined to architecture and economic subjects. Anatomy was excluded. But one can only live and learn, and I learned many new words. I think I could have anything from leprosy to housemaid's knee in Russia now, and cope with it. At least the word "influenza" is the same in all languages. He wrote out a prescription, used a stethoscope from the Paleolithic age, and told me I would have to stay in bed at least four days, perhaps longer.

I asked him to call again the next day.

Why should he? Wouldn't I know when I was well? He was terribly busy with sick people. Just remember and don't leave this room until fever and cold are over.

I thought I was pretty sick and needed a lot of attention. But I was soon put in my place

He could not be bothered with anything so paltry as the flu. He said he was the only doctor in the countryside.

I don't believe he was more than twenty-two years old, though he had already graduated from the Leningrad Medical Academy. I told him that we had made several visits to the experimental laboratories of the great Pavlov, in Leningrad, and were most interested in Russian science. Oh, he would love to hear about it, and medicine in New York, but he couldn't stay. There were so many sick people. He shook his head, and I noticed the dark shadows and tired lines in his face.

I asked what I owed him for his call, and he said there was no special charge—anything I felt I could give. I took out a five-ruble note ($2.50), but he said:

"Oh, no, that is much too much, citizeness! One ruble would be very generous!"

I insisted, and he looked dazed, but finally took it and thanked me profusely.

"I can buy a pair of warm gloves," he said, smiling. "It is terrible to have to operate when your hands are half-frozen. Good-by, drink lots of tea and don't go out."

He was gone, and I heard his hurried footsteps slip on the oozy staircase.

I felt so badly that I didn't give a whoop about my surroundings. I drove Helen out of the room—anywhere where she wouldn't catch flu. A peasant woman who lived down below came up and stared silently at me for a while. She went out and returned with three children. They all had a good look. She returned again in half an hour with a dish of hot cereal—"*manna kasha*," as they call it.

"*Kooshitye, va imye Bogoo!* (eat in the name of the Lord!)" It was the first word she had uttered.

The *kasha* did taste good! I asked her if she knew of any place where my sister could sleep.

"She can come right down with us," she said; "we have extra space."

That was a load off my mind.

Helen went to the "*apteke*" and got my medicine. The little box was written in German. I couldn't believe it. Yes, the man was a German, she said. To think that the apothecaries of the world have penetrated even to Suzdal!

On the same floor with us, at the end of the hall, was the *Krasni Oogel*, or "Red Corner." Every town in the Soviet Union has one, and it is the Communist social center. There is a radio, newspapers, books, agricultural journals for the peasants—it is, in fact, the culture and propaganda center of the new régime. Yakov Vassilievitch, the beady-eyed man, walked in. No one ever knocks.

"Any time you would like to visit the *Krasni Oogel*, we would be delighted to welcome you. I belong to the Party. Do you come from the *Commintern* (the Communist International Organization)?"

"No," Helen answered, "I am a painter, and my sister is an archæologist. We know nothing about politics."

He looked at me with his lips pursed up. "You shouldn't have come without a passport. The G.P.U. has tried to telephone to Vladimir, but the wires are down. How long will you have to stay?"

"Three or four days, the doctor said."

He shook his head ominously.

I took my medicine. The sanitary conditions were unbelievable. I washed my face in a teacup. Helen went downstairs for the night.

THE next thing I knew, I was sitting straight up in bed at ten o'clock the next morning. God only knows what the doctor gave me, but it certainly caused me twelve hours' peace and quiet anyway. I have a feeling that I had been sitting up all night in that same position.

Helen appeared at the door looking rather peaked.

"How was it?" I asked.

"Not bad, but I think I will come back here tonight. There was a narrow bench all around the wall. On it were sleeping four men in sheepskins, two women, and three children, but I had all of six feet to myself. Everybody coughed horribly and spat on the floor during the night, and it was gol-darn cold. I think I would rather sleep with you, because if I catch something, at least I shall know *what* I'm getting."

The day was very social. I was feeling better and could look around. Helen left me to rest and went out in the street to sketch during the short daylight. The fun began. The door burst open, and a grisly peasant looked in at me. I said nothing, and after studying my face and every object in the room, he inquired,

"*Amerikanka?*"

"*Amerikanka*," I answered.

He shook his head. "*Dalyoko* (far)," he commented.

"*Dalyoko*," I agreed.

HE WENT out, and outside the door I heard two women's voices whispering, "Two Americans—one sick." They also enjoyed a good long stare and passed on. One by one the whole village tramped by my door. Some peeped and hurried on. Some made an analytic study, some came in and asked questions, but all had wondering, curious eyes. I felt just like a corpse laid out in state, only no one left a posy.

The same little woman brought me *kasha* again, and this caused much congestion in the hall. Every one wanted to see the *Amerikanka* eat. The whole situation struck me as so funny that I giggled to myself occasionally. Some thought it was part of my malady, and others laughed a bit nervously with me. Helen came home and drove out the hordes saying that the *Amerikanka* was tired. She had been sketching peasants all day in the *traktir* and was ecstatic about the types she had found.

One old crone remained in our room. Helen asked her to pose. She sat as still as a mouse.

I asked her her name.

"Liubov Alexandrovna, of the family Zaprudnova of Suzdal." She smiled slowly, and her face wrinkled like a baked apple. She adjusted her scarf. "What is yours?"

"Adelaida Elonovna (daughter of Elon) of the family Hooker of New York."

She shook her head. "*Dalyoko!*" she said.

"*Dalyoko*," I said.

"Are you a Communist?" I asked.

"Oh, I don't understand politics," she answered.

"Have you ever seen a *rusalka*," I asked again.

She looked frightened and nodded her head quickly. *Rusalkas* are water sprites who live at the bottom of the pools and have long, green hair. They are mischievous and cause the peasants many little worries. They have even been known to spirit away young peasant girls, who join their mysterious bands and never come home again.

"The last one I saw," said Liubov Alexandrovna, "was two years ago at the time of Peter and Paul. She ran out of my back door, and I chased her, but she got away. *Gospodi Pamilui!* (Lord have Mercy!) The next morning all the milk was sour!"

"Tell me, Liubov Alexandrovna, when is the festival of the Christening of our Lord?"

She sat and counted on her fingers. "On the seventh, by the old; on the twentieth, by the new. At four o'clock, by the old; at three, by the new."

This may seem like Greek to you, but we understood. Up to the revolution the Russian calendar was thirteen days behind ours. Lenin changed it to the western system, but the church and the peasants are not yet reconciled, though twelve years have gone by. In Suzdal the time meridian was altered as well, and it is more than the simple people can bear.

Helen had supper upstairs, and a fresh galaxy of visitors came into our room. There were three young Communists, one very

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How Red Is Red Russia?

lame, and one with his right hand and two fingers of his left missing. The latter was a Cossack from the Don, named Luka Petrovitch. They explained to us that there was an invalid home in Suzdal for old people, and an occupational center for wounded veterans of the revolution.

Luka Petrovitch was about the most sympathetic Bolshevik I had yet met. He was about twenty-seven and had been in the Tsar's own Cossack regiment. I told him once:

"It is hard for us Anglo-Saxons to understand you Russians. Human life is so cheap here."

"Yes," he said, "in the Tsar's regiment we used to gallop along the road, and if a peasant was in our way, we would lash him with a long whip, leaving him lying along the roadside perhaps hurt, perhaps dead. It didn't matter. You are right. Life is cheap here, but ideas are expensive."

He was very charming and had beautiful, black eyes.

THE next evening I got up and sat on a chair in the hall, huddling close to the stove. The beady-eyed Yakov came, Luka Petrovitch, Sergei Alexandrovitch, a tall and very nice director of the home, and we had a delightful but wearing evening, discussing America and Russia. I learned a lot of Russian in two or three hours. Their ideas of America were fantastic. Luka Petrovitch asked me in all sincerity,

"Is it true that in Mr. Ford's factory, if a workman is two minutes late after the lunch hour, he is pushed into his machine so that it will mangle him?"

His dark eyes were pleading for me to deny the awful story.

I was really enraged. "You Bolsheviks talk about enlightening the world with your science and culture, and then you believe such nonsense. It's ridiculous!"

We discussed pros and cons most animatedly, and I shall never forget Luka Petrovitch's beautiful appreciation of the Soviet Government. His big eyes glowed.

"Just suppose I had lost my hand in the Tsar's army. I would have been thrown aside to die. In those days the boys were forced into the army, horribly treated, and if sick or hurt, thrown out without a thought."

He told other stories of cruelty and oppression which are inconceivable to the Western mind.

"It must have been like the Middle Ages here in those days," I said.

"It is like the Middle Ages in America now!" a woman's voice snapped from out of the darkness.

Against the wall was leaning a dark-complexioned young woman with a cigarette dangling from her lips. Her slanting, Oriental eyes were almost closed, and her upper lip was raised scornfully.

"When were you in America?" I asked politely.

"I haven't been there, but your workers have sent delegates here, and they have told us. I know very well what it is like there!"

"There are discontented people who leave every country," I tried to ignore her insulting tone, "but do you think I form my judgment of Soviet Russia from the stories told by the Grand Dukes in Paris? If the workers are so miserable in America, why don't they come over here to live?"

She was furious. "They would come here, every Russian who ever sailed to America, if your Government would allow them to leave, but the cursed capitalists keep them there as slaves and do not allow them to get passports!"

I looked her straight in the face. "*That* is a lie," I said slowly, "and you know it, or, if you don't, get some education, and you will soon find it out! An American citizen does not have to ask his country's permission to travel wherever he pleases. How do you think I got into Russia?"

"*You* lie! You're probably a swine of a capitalist yourself!" she sneered and turned on her heel.

I stood up, seeing red. I know now what the impulse is that makes people want to kill.

Luka Petrovitch grabbed my arm with his three fingers, and held it like a vise. "Sit down!" he said. "She's crazy!"

Nice Sergei Alexandrevitch looked frightened. Yakov Vassilievitch watched me intently.

"Who *is* that young woman? She is not a Russian," said Luka.

"She is a Jewess from the Ukraine, a delegate to a Party meeting," answered Yakov.

"Well, I thought the Communist Party had more brains than that!" was my rather rude comment.

I lay down on my board cot, trembling from excitement and the flu, and the three men stood in the doorway.

"Don't let it worry you. I told you she was crazy," repeated Luka Petrovitch.

"*Spakuoinya notche* (good-night)," they all said, and closed the door.

I blew out my lamp. I thought of the way that woman had walked away, and felt apprehensive.

Next morning I was better, but still coughing and weak. Helen had just got into her coat for a sketching bout, when the door opened, and old Liubov Alexandrovna came fluttering in, wringing her hands.

"Oh, *baroshnaya! baroshnaya!*" she whispered in a weak, frightened voice.

I was startled and felt chilly. Behind her were three soldiers—an officer and two men. They knocked. The officer was fairly young, pock-marked and stern-looking. The soldiers were mere boys.

The officer made a polite speech, the gist of which was that we were wanted by the G.P.U. No one who has not lived in Russia can imagine the feelings that go through one's mind on such an occasion. However, I pretended to feel very casual. I said I was so sorry to have caused them trouble about our passes, but surely they had telephoned to Vladimir? They had only to ask at the hotel. I opened my eyes very wide and spoke and understood very little Russian all of a sudden. Well, what could we do for them? They wished us at the G.P.U. Bureau immediately.

"But I have been ill, citizen, and the doctor has forbidden me to go out of the house."

Helen shook her head and pointed at me. "Very, very sick," she said. "I will go with you, and then I can tell my sister afterward what it is."

AFTER much persuasion, he seemed satisfied, though I was hardly happy to see my young sister walk off in the hands of the Secret Service. Still I decided that if it were really serious, they would have insisted upon my going, too.

But what a three-quarters of an hour until she returned! Strange as it may seem, I had never heard of the *Tcheka*, or G.P.U., before coming to Russia, but you hear of nothing else after arriving there—the dread Intelligence Service, that knows your thoughts before you think them. If arrested by the police, you have a "people's trial," but if arrested by the G.P.U. your life is in the hands of a small tribunal. It is a disconcerting combination of protection and menace.

The letters stand for the Russian words "State Political Administration." You can not say those three letters to any Russian without a change of expression coming over his face. It may be fear or horror, it may be self-satisfaction or enigmatic "in-the-know," it may be innocence or feigned innocence, but there is always a reaction of some kind or other. The G.P.U. is the Force that rules Russia, and no

one—not even Trotsky, as has recently been seen—has the upper hand with it. It is the power which makes a little over a million Communists able to rule a hundred and fifty million people. Whether for good or for evil, take off your hat to its strength. But at the same time think of my feelings when Helen was led away by it!

However, she returned. "Not going to be shot yet," she exclaimed.

"What did they want? Quick!" I said.

"I was taken in a little office, and a rather stern-looking officer asked for my *boomashki* (papers). I explained in my inimitable Russian, and he could hardly keep the stern air when he heard it. He said no one could come to Suzdal at all without a permit from the Kremlin at Moscow.

" 'Well, if that's so, you should let them know in Moscow. The Voks Bureau knew we were coming,' I said.

" 'But why have you come?' he asked severely again.

" 'Why should anybody come and make that horrible trip except to see the glorious old churches and monasteries, and learn more of Russian history!'

"His face was a perfect blank. I don't believe he knows a thing about Suzdal except the political prison.

" 'But where did you hear of Suzdal?' he asked.

" 'From books, from architecture books, history books, from your own Soviet guidebook!'

"It was more than he could grasp, and he looked at me curiously. He told me we would have to leave immediately—that we could not stay here another moment without *boomashki*.

"I said 'Impossible go today! Doctor say sister need bed. Sister very, very sick. Sister die if go away.'

"He kept murmuring '*Boomashki, boomashki*,' but finally said we could stay until you were well enough, but that we must report to him before leaving.

"I agreed and asked about going to see the church at Kideksha, and he said that was all right, though he still registered a blank about our archeological interests; so here I am! Toora-lee! Oh, but I did find out something! The reason they are so scared about our being here is because *the members of the Duma who are still alive are in prison here.* That's pretty exciting, isn't it? Well, we can go home from Russia with our experience complete now. We have seen the inside of the G.P.U. My, but I'd hate to be caught red-handed by those people, though. Whew!"

She sat down to blow off steam. "Let's have some *chai* for a change!"

(TO BE CONCLUDED)

A Man of Honor

(*Continued from page 75*)

Mademoiselle Marigny, now well past her youth, rejoiced with him and volunteered sweetly to share his duties. It was a wife's privilege to help her husband, she declared. Their wants were modest, and life was slipping away from them.

"If I can make you happy," she told him with a faint flush, "why deny me that joy?"

"You've made me the happiest man in the world," he declared. "But I'd hate myself if I brought you the hardships that I suffer. I live a despicable sham. The pay for this position is something to be ashamed of; it's barely enough to keep body and soul together. My darling! In my eyes you're not just a woman to possess, to enslave in the chains of a wretched poverty. You're my goddess. I worship you. Your unselfishness is an inspiration, and it convinces me that this embarrassment is only temporary. Something will turn up."

Once again Delphine knelt beside her chest of wedding garments and wept.

As for Alcée, he took comfort out of the

In using advertisements see page 6