

<i>А.С. ПУШКИН</i> ПИКОВАЯ ДАМА	<i>A.S. PUSHKIN</i> THE QUEEN OF SPADES	<i>A.S. PUSHKIN</i> THE QUEEN OF SPADES
Однажды играли в карты у конногвардейца Нарумова. Долгая зимняя ночь прошла незаметно; сели ужинать в пятом часу утра. Те, которые остались в выигрыше, ели с большим аппетитом; прочие, в рассеянности, сидели перед пустыми своими приборами. Но шампанское явилось, разговор оживился, и все приняли в нем участие. – Что ты сделал, Сурин? – спросил хозяин. – Проиграл, по обыкновению. Надобно признаться, что я несчастлив: играю мирандолом, никогда не горячусь, ничем меня с толку не собьешь, а всё проигрываюсь! – И ты ни разу не соблазнился? ни разу не поставил на руте?.. Твердость твоя для меня удивительна. – А каков Германн! – сказал один из гостей, указывая на молодого инженера: – отроду не брал он карты в руки, отроду не загнул ни одного пароли, а до пяти часов сидит с нами, и смотрит на нашу игру! – Игра занимает меня сильно, – сказал Германн: – но я не в состоянии жертвовать необходимым в надежде приобрести излишнее. – Германн немец: он расчетлив, вот и всё! – заметил Томский. – А если кто для меня не понятен, так это моя бабушка, графиня Анна Федотовна. – Как? что? – закричали гости. – Не могу постигнуть, – продолжал Томский: – каким образом бабушка моя не понтирует! – Да что ж тут удивительного, – сказал Нарумов, – что осьмидесятилетняя старуха не понтирует? – Так вы ничего про нее не знаете?	<i>Translated by T. Keane</i> There was a card party at the rooms of Naroumoff of the Horse Guards. The long winter night passed away imperceptibly, and it was five o'clock in the morning before the company sat down to supper. Those who had won, ate with a good appetite; the others sat staring absently at their empty plates. When the champagne appeared, however, the conversation became more animated, and all too a part in it. “And how did you fare, Sourin?” asked the host. “Oh, lost as usual. I must confess that I am unlucky: I play mirandole, I always keep cool, I never allow anything to put me out, and yet I always lose!” “And you did not once allow yourself to be tempted to back the red?.. Your firmness astonishes me.” “But what do you think of Hermann?” said one of the guests, pointing to a young Engineer: “he has never had a card in his hand in his life, he has never in his life laid a wager, yet he sits here till five o'clock in the morning watching our play.” “Play interests me very much,” said Hermann: “but I am not in the position to sacrifice the necessary in the hope of winning the superfluous.” “Hermann is a German: he is economical – that is all!” observed Tomsy. “But if there is one person that I cannot understand, it is my grandmother, the Countess Anna Fedorovna.” “How so?” inquired the guests. “I cannot understand,” continued Tomsy, “how is it that my grandmother does not punt.” “What is there remarkable about an old lady of eighty not punting?” said Naroumoff. “Then you do not know the reason why?” “No, really; haven't the faintest idea.” “Oh! then listen. You must know that, about sixty years ago, my grandmother went to Paris, where she	<i>Translated by Tatiana and Ivy Litvinov</i> Card-playing was going on in the quarters of Narumov, an officer in the Horse Guards. The long winter night flew past; it was five in the morning when they sat down to supper. Those who had won, plied their forks eagerly; the rest sat in front of their empty plates with an air of abstraction. But champagne was set on the table, the talk became lively, and all took part in it. “How did you get on, Surin?” asked the host. “Lost as usual. It must be admitted that I am unlucky. I play for low stakes, I never get excited, always keep my head, and yet I lose all the time.” “And are you never tempted? Don't you ever long to raise the stakes on a card? Your firmness amazes me.” “Look at Hermann!” said one of the guests, pointing to a young officer from an engineer regiment. “Never picked up a card in his whole life, never doubled a stake, and sits beside us till five o'clock watching us play!” “I take a great interest in cards,” said Hermann, “but I am not in a position to sacrifice the necessary in the hope of gaining superfluous.” “Hermann's a Teuton, and therefore cautious – that's all!” remarked Tomsy. “Now, my grandmother, Countess Anna Fedotovna – she's an enigma, if there was one.” “What? What's that?” cried the guests. “I can't understand,” continued Tomsy, “how it is that my grandmother never gambles.” “What is there remarkable about an eighty-year-old woman not wanting a gamble?” said Narumov. “D'you mean to say you don't know anything about her?” “Nothing whatsoever. Upon my word!” “Then let me tell you.

– Нет! право, ничего!

– О, так послушайте:

Надобно знать, что бабушка моя, лет шестьдесят тому назад, ездила в Париж и была там в большой моде. Народ бегал за нею, чтоб увидеть *la Vénus moscovite*; Ришелье за нею волочился, и бабушка уверяет, что он чуть было не застрелился от ее жестокости.

В то время дамы играли в фараон. Однажды при дворе она проиграла на слово герцогу Орлеанскому что-то очень много. Приехав домой, бабушка, отлепивая мушки с лица и отвязывая фижмы, объявила дедушке о своем проигрыше, и приказала заплатить.

Покойный дедушка, сколько я помню, был род бабушкина дворецкого. Он ее боялся, как огня; однако, услышав о таком ужасном проигрыше, он вышел из себя, принес счета, доказал ей, что в полгода они издержали полмиллиона, что под Парижем нет у них ни подмосковной, ни саратовской деревни, и начисто отказался от платежа. Бабушка дала ему пощечину, и легла спать одна, в знак своей немилости.

На другой день она велела позвать мужа, надеясь, что домашнее наказание над ним подействовало, но нашла его непоколебимым. В первый раз в жизни она дошла с ним до рассуждений и объяснений; думала усовестить его, снисходительно доказывая, что долг долгу розь, и что есть разница между принцем и каретником. – Куда! дедушка бунтовал. Нет, да и только! Бабушка не знала, что делать.

С нею был коротко знаком человек очень замечательный. Вы слышали о графе Сен-Жермене, о котором рассказывают так много чудесного. Вы знаете, что он выдавал себя за вечного жида, за изобретателя жизненного эликсира и философского камня, и прочая. Над

created quite a sensation. People used to run after her to catch a glimpse of the ‘Muscovite Venus’. Richelieu made Love to her, and my grandmother maintains that he almost blew out his brains in consequence of her cruelty. At that time ladies used to play faro. On one occasion at the Court, she lost a very considerable sum to the Duke of Orleans. On returning home, my grandmother removed the patches from her face, took off her hoops, informed my grandfather of her loss at the gaming-table, and ordered him to pay the money. My deceased grandfather, as far as I remember, was a sort of house-steward to my grandmother. He dreaded her like fire, but, on hearing of such a heavy loss, he almost went out of his mind; he calculated the various sums she had lost, and pointed out to her that in six months she had spent half a million francs, that neither their Moscow or Saratoff estates were in Paris, and finally refused point blank to pay the debt. My grandmother gave him a box on the ear and slept by herself as a sign of her displeasure. The next day she sent for her husband, hoping that this domestic punishment had produced an effect upon him, but she found him inflexible. For the first time in her life, she entered into reasoning and explanations with him, thinking to be able to convince him by pointing out to him that there are debts and debts, and that there is a great difference between a Prince and a coachmaker. But it was all in vain, my grandfather still remained obdurate. But the matter did not rest there. My grandmother did not know what to do. . She had shortly before become acquainted with a very remarkable man. You have heard of Count St. Germain, about whom so many marvellous stories are told. You know that he represented himself as the Wandering Jew, as the discoverer of the elixir of life, of the philosopher’s stone, and so forth. Some laughed at him as a charlatan; but Casanova, in his memoirs, says that he was a spy. But be that as it may, St. Germain, in spite of the mystery surrounding him, was

“You must know that my grandmother, sixty years ago, visited Paris, and was all the fashion there. People followed her about to have a look at *la Vénus moscovite*; Richelieu paid her court, and my grandmother vows that her cruelty almost drove him to suicide.

“In those days ladies used to play faro. One day, while playing cards at court, she incurred a debt of honour for a great sum of money to the Duc d’Orléans. When she got home, my grandmother, while removing the patches off her face, and slipping out of her hooped skirt, recounted her losses to my grandfather, and ordered him to pay up.

“My late grandfather, as far as I can remember, was a kind of steward to my grandmother. He feared her like the plague; but when he heard of such appalling losses he flew into a rage, took up abacus and proved to her that they had spent half a million during the last six months, that they had no Moscow or Saratov estates in the neighbourhood of Paris, and flatly refused to pay. My grandmother gave him a box on the ears, and banished him from her bedroom as a token of her disfavour.

“The next day she sent for her husband, hoping that the domestic chastisement would have had its effect on him, but she found him adamant. For the first time in their married life she condescended to argument and explanations. She tried to shame him by pointing out condescendingly that there were debts and debts, and that there was a difference between a prince and a coachmaker. Useless! My grandfather rebelled. He said no, and that his ‘no’ was final. My grandmother was at her wits’ end.

“Among her intimates was a very remarkable individual. You have heard of Count Saint Germain, of whom such extraordinary tales are told. You know he gave himself out to be the Wandering Jew, the discoverer of the elixir of life and the philosopher’s stone, and so on. People laughed at him as a charlatan,

ним смеялись, как над шарлатаном, а Казанова в своих Записках говорит, что он был шпион, впрочем Сен-Жермен, не смотря на свою таинственность, имел очень почтенную наружность, и был в обществе человек очень любезный. Бабушка до сих пор любит его без памяти, и сердится, если говорят об нем с неуважением. Бабушка знала, что Сен-Жермен мог располагать большими деньгами. Она решила к нему прибегнуть. Написала ему записку, и просила немедленно к ней приехать.

Старый чудак явился тотчас, и застал в ужасном горе. Она описала ему самыми черными красками варварство мужа, и сказала наконец, что всю свою надежду полагает на его дружбу и любезность.

Сен-Жермен задумался. —

"Я могу вам услужить этой суммой", сказал он, "но знаю, что вы не будете спокойны, пока со мною не расплатитесь, а я бы не желал вводить вас в новые хлопоты. Есть другое средство: вы можете отыгаться" — "Но, любезный граф", отвечала бабушка, "я говорю вам, что у нас денег вовсе нет". — "Деньги тут не нужны", возразил Сен-Жермен: "извольте меня выслушать". Тут он открыл ей тайну, за которую всякой из нас дорого бы дал...

Молодые игроки удвоили внимание. Томский закурил трубку, затаился, и продолжал:

— В тот же самый вечер бабушка явилась в Версале, *au jeu de la Reine*. Герцог Орлеанский метал; бабушка слегка извинилась, что не привезла своего долга, в оправдание сплела маленькую историю, и стала против него понтировать. Она выбрала три карты, поставила их одну за другою: все три выиграли ей соника, и бабушка отыгралась совершенно.

— Случай! — сказал один из гостей.

— Сказка! — заметил Германин.

a very fascinating person, and was much sought after in the best circles of society. Even to this day my grandmother retains an affectionate recollection of him, and becomes quite angry if anyone speaks disrespectfully of him. My grandmother knew that St. Germain had large sums of money at his disposal. She resolved to have recourse to him, and she wrote a letter to him asking him to come to her without delay. The queer old man immediately waited upon her and found her overwhelmed with grief. She described to him in the blackest colours the barbarity of her husband, and ended by declaring that her whole hope depended upon his friendship and amiability.

"St. Germain reflected.

" 'I could advance you the sum you want,' said he; 'but I know that you would not rest easy until you had paid me back, and I should not like to bring fresh troubles upon you. But there is another way of getting out of your difficulty: you can win back your money.'

" 'But, my dear Count,' replied my grandmother, 'I tell you that I haven't the money left.'

" 'Money is not necessary,' replied St Germain: 'be pleased to listen to me.'

"Then he revealed to her a secret, for which each of us would give a good deal..."

The young officers listened with increased attention. Tomskey lit his pipe, puffed away for a moment and then continued:

"That same evening my grandmother went to Versailles to the *jeu de la reine*. The Duc of Orleans kept the bank; my grandmother excused herself in an off-handed manner for not having yet paid he debt, by inventing some little story, and then began to play against him. She chose three cards and played them one after the other: all three won sonika, and my grandmother recovered every farthing that she had lost."

"Mere chance!" said one of the guests.

"A tale!" observed Hermann.

and Casanova wrote in his memoirs that he was a spy; despite his mysterious reputation, however, St. Germain had a most respectable appearance and knew how to make himself agreeable in society. My grandmother loves him to distraction to this day, and will not allow him to be spoken of disrespectfully. She knew St. Germain had a great amount of money at his disposal, and, deciding to have recourse to his aid, sent him a note asking to come to her at once.

"The old eccentric responded to her summons immediately and found my grandmother overcome with grief. She painted in the darkest colours her husband's cruelty, and ended by declaring that her only hope was in St. Germain's friendship and chivalry.

"St. Germain pondered. 'I could let you have this sum,' he said, 'but I know you would never have any peace until you had paid me back, and I should not like to cause you fresh cares. There is another means — you can win it back.' 'But my dear Count,' replied my grandmother, 'I tell you we have no money at all.' 'You will not need money,' said the Count. 'Be so kind as to hear me out.' And he told her a secret which any of us would pay dear to know..."

The youthful gamblers redoubled their attention. Tomskey lit his pipe, inhaled the smoke, and continued:

"That same night my grandmother appeared at Versailles, *au jeu de la Reine*. The Duc d'Orléans dealt. My grandmother gave some slight apology for not having brought the money for her debt, inventing a little story in her justification, and began playing against him. She selected three cards, which she played one after another — all three proved to be winning cards, and my grandmother won back the whole of her debt."

"A mere fluke!" said one of the guests.

"A fairy-tale," said Hermann.

"Perhaps the cards were marked," put in another.

"Hardly," replied Tomskey with dignity.

– Может статься, порошковые карты? – подхватил третий.

– Не думаю, – отвечал важно Томский.

– Как! – сказал Нарумов: – у тебя есть бабушка, которая угадывает три карты сряду, а ты до сих пор не перенял у ней ее кабалистики?

– Да, чорта с два! – отвечал Томский: – у ней было четверо сыновей, в том числе и мой отец: все четыре отчаянные игроки, и ни одному не открыла она своей тайны; хоть это было бы не худо для них, и даже для меня. Но вот что мне рассказывал дядя, граф Иван Ильич, и в чем он меня уверял честью. Покойный Чаплицкий, тот самый, который умер в нищете, промотав миллионы, однажды в молодости своей проиграл – помнится Зоричу, – Около трех сот тысяч. Он был в отчаянии. Бабушка, которая всегда была строга к шалостям молодых людей, как-то сжалилась над Чаплицким. Она дала ему три карты, с тем, чтобы он поставил их одну за другою, и взяла с него честное слово впредь уже никогда не играть. Чаплицкий явился к своему победителю: они сели играть. Чаплицкий поставил на первую карту пятьдесят тысяч, и выиграл соника; загнул паролы, паролы-пе, – отыгрался, и остался еще в выигрыше...

Однако, пора спать: уже без четверти шесть.

В самом деле, уже рассветало: молодые люди допили свои рюмки, и разъехались.

“Perhaps they were marked cards!” said a third.

“I do not think so,” replied Tomsy gravely.

“What!” said Naroumoff, “you have a grandmother who knows how to hit upon three lucky cards in succession, and you have never yet succeeded in getting the secret of it out of her?”

“That’s the deuce of it!” replied Tomsy: “she had four sons, one of whom was my father; all four were determined gamblers, and yet not to one of them did she ever reveal her secret, although it would not be a bad thing either for them or for me. But this is what I heard from my uncle, Count Ivan Ilitch, and he assured me, on his honour, that it was true. The late Chaplitsky – the same who died in poverty after having squandered millions – once lost, in his youth, about three hundred thousand roubles – to Zorich, if I remember rightly. He was in despair. My grandmother, who was always very severe upon the extravagance of young men, took pity, however, upon Chaplitsky. She gave him three cards, telling him to play them one after the other, at the same time exacting from him a solemn promise that he would never play at cards again as long as he lived. Chaplitsky then went to his victorious opponents, and they began a fresh game. On the first card he staked fifty thousand roubles and won sonika; he doubled the stake and won again, till at last, by pursuing the same tactics, he won back more than he had lost...”

“But it is time to go to bed: it is a quarter to six already.”

And indeed it was already beginning to dawn: the young men emptied their glasses and then took leave of each other.

“What!” said Narumov. “You have a grandmother who can play three winning cards running, and you have not yet been able to discover the secret of these cabalistics!”

“It’s not so simple, dammit!” replied Tomsy. “She had four sons, one of whom was my father. All four were desperate gamblers, and she did not disclose her secret to any of them, although this would have been no bad thing for them – not for me either, for that matter. But this is what my uncle, Count Ivan Ilyich, told me, on his word of honour. The late Chaplitsky, the same Chaplitsky who died in poverty, having squandered millions, once lost about three hundred thousand rubles in his youth – to Zorich, I think. He was in despair. My grandmother, who was always very hard on the vagaries of young men, for some reason took pity of Chaplitsky. She named three cards to him, which he was to play in succession, but extorted from him the promise, on his word of honour, never to gamble any more. Chaplitsky went to the rooms of his fortunate opponent, and they sat down to the card-table. Chaplitsky staked fifty thousand on the first card and won; then he doubled and redoubled the stake, and won back his losses with a generous margin...”

“But it’s time to go to bed – it’s a quarter to six.”

Indeed, it was getting light already – the young men finished what was in their glasses and dispersed.

<i>A.C. ПУШКИН</i> ПИКОВАЯ ДАМА	<i>A.S. PUSHKIN</i> THE QUEEN OF SPADES	<i>A.S. PUSHKIN</i> THE QUEEN OF SPADES
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– Да что ж тут удивительного, – сказал Нарумов, – что осьмидесятилетняя старуха не понтирует?

– Так вы ничего про нее не знаете?

– Нет! право, ничего!

– О, так послушайте:

Надобно знать, что бабушка моя, лет шестьдесят тому назад, ездила в Париж и была там в большой моде. Народ бегал за нею, чтоб увидеть *la Vénus moscovite*; Ришелье за нею волочился, и бабушка уверяет, что он чуть было не застрелился от ее жестокости.

В то время дамы играли в фараон. Однажды при дворе она проиграла на слово герцогу Орлеанскому что-то очень много. Приехав домой, бабушка, отлепивая мушки с лица и отвязывая фижмы, объявила дедушке о своем проигрыше, и приказала заплатить.

Покойный дедушка, сколько я помню, был род бабушкина дворецкого. Он ее боялся, как огня; однако, услышав о таком ужасном проигрыше, он вышел из себя, принес счета, доказал ей, что в полгода они издержали полмиллиона, что под Парижем нет у них ни подмосковной, ни саратовской деревни, и начисто отказался от платежа. Бабушка дала ему пощечину, и легла спать одна, в знак своей немилости.

На другой день она велела позвать мужа, надеясь, что домашнее наказание над ним подействовало, но нашла его непоколебимым. В первый раз в жизни она дошла с ним до рассуждений и объяснений; думала усовестить его, снисходительно доказывая, что долг долгу розь, и что есть разница между принцем и каретником. – Куда! дедушка бунтовал. Нет, да и только! Бабушка не знала, что делать.

С нею был коротко знаком человек очень замечательный. Вы слышали о графе

‘No, nothing, absolutely nothing!’

‘Well, listen, then. I must tell you that some sixty years ago my grandmother went to Paris and was quite the rage there. People would run after her to catch a glimpse of *la Venus moscovite*; Richelieu was at her beck and call, and grandmamma maintains that he very nearly blew his brains out because of her cruelty to him. In those days ladies used to play faro. One evening at the Court she lost a very considerable sum to the Duke of Orleans. When she got home she told my grandfather of her loss while removing the beauty spots from her face and untying her farthingale, and commanded him to pay her debts. My grandfather, so far as I remember, acted as a sort of major-domo to my grandmother. He feared her like fire; however when he heard of such a frightful gambling loss he almost went out of his mind, fetched the bills they owed and pointed out to her that in six months they had spend half a million roubles and that in Paris they had neither their Moscow nor their Saratov estates upon which to draw, and flatly refused to pay. Grandmamma gave him a box on the ear and retired to bed without him as a sign of her displeasure. The following morning she sent for her husband, hoping that the simple punishment had had its effect, but she found him as obdurate as ever. For the first time in her life she went so far as to reason with him and explain, thinking to rouse his conscience and arguing with condescension, that there were debts and debts, and that a prince was different from a coach-builder. But it was not a bit of good – grandfather just would not hear of it. “Once and for all, no!” Grandmamma did not know what to do. Among her close acquaintances was a very remarkable man. You have heard of Count Saint-Germain, about whom so many marvellous stories are told. You know that he posed as the Wandering Jew and claimed to have discovered the elixir of life and the philosopher’s

‘Well, in that case lend an ear:

‘I should tell you that about sixty years ago my grandmother went to Paris and became all the rage. People flocked after her for a glimpse of *la Venus moscovite*; Richelieu laid siege to her and was on the point of shooting himself because of her cruelty, or so grandmother assures me. In those days the ladies used to play faro. On one occasion at court she lost a considerable sum to the Duke of Orleans. Back home, as she was peeling off her beauty-spots and undoing her hooped petticoat, she informed grandfather of her losses and instructed him to pay up. My late grandfather, as I recall, was a sort of major-domo to his wife. He was mortally afraid of her; however, when he heard of her appalling losses, he flew into a rage and fetched the accounts to demonstrate to her that she had got through half-a-million in six months, that they had no estates near Paris as they had at Moscow and Saratov, and flatly refused to pay. Grandmother slapped his face and went to bed by herself, as a mark of her displeasure. Next day she sent for her husband, trusting that this domestic punishment had proved effective, but found him immovable. For the first time in her life she went so far as to argue with him and explain how matters stood; she thought to shame him by pointing out condescendingly that there are debts and debts, and that there was a difference between a prince and a coach-builder. He was having none of it. Grandfather had risen in revolt. No meant no! Grandmother did not know what to do.

‘She was intimately acquainted with a most remarkable man. You’ve heard of the Count of Saint-Germain, the subject of so many weird and wonderful tales. You know he passed himself off as the Wandering Jew, the inventor of the elixir of life and the philosopher’s stone, and so forth. People used to ridicule him as a charlatan, and Casanova

Сен-Жермене, о котором рассказывают так много чудесного. Вы знаете, что он выдавал себя за вечного жида, за изобретателя жизненного эликсира и философского камня, и прочая. Над ним смеялись, как над шарлатаном, а Казанова в своих Записках говорит, что он был шпион, впрочем Сен-Жермен, не смотря на свою таинственность, имел очень почтенную наружность, и был в обществе человек очень любезный. Бабушка до сих пор любит его без памяти, и сердится, если говорят об нем с неуважением. Бабушка знала, что Сен-Жермен мог располагать большими деньгами. Она решила к нему прибегнуть. Написала ему записку, и просила немедленно к ней приехать.

Старый чудака явился тотчас, и застал в ужасном горе. Она описала ему самыми черными красками варварство мужа, и сказала наконец, что всю свою надежду полагает на его дружбу и любезность.

Сен-Жермен задумался. –

"Я могу вам услужить этой суммой", сказал он, "но знаю, что вы не будете спокойны, пока со мною не расплатитесь, а я бы не желал вводить вас в новые хлопоты. Есть другое средство: вы можете отыгаться" – "Но, любезный граф", отвечала бабушка, "я говорю вам, что у нас денег вовсе нет". – "Деньги тут не нужны", возразил Сен-Жермен: "извольте меня выслушать". Тут он открыл ей тайну, за которую всякой из нас дорого бы дал...

Молодые игроки удвоили внимание. Томский закурил трубку, затаился, и продолжал:

– В тот же самый вечер бабушка явилась в Версале, *au jeu de la Reine*. Герцог Орлеанский метал; бабушка слегка извинилась, что не привезла своего долга, в оправдание сплела маленькую историю, и стала против него

stone, and so on. People laughed at him as a charlatan, and Casanova in his *Memoirs* says that he was a spy. Be that as it may, Saint-Germain, in spite of the mystery that surrounded him, had a most dignified appearance and was very amiable person in society. Grandmamma is still to this day quite devoted to his memory and gets angry if anyone speaks of him with disrespect. Grandmamma knew that Saint-Germain had plenty of money at his disposal. She decided to appeal to him, and wrote a note asking him to come and see her immediately. The eccentric old man came at once and found her in terrible distress. She described in the blackest colours her husband's inhumanity, and ended by declaring that she laid all her hopes on his friendship and kindness. Saint-Germain pondered. "I could oblige you with the sum you want," he said, "but I know you would not be easy until you had repaid me, and I should not like to involve you in fresh trouble. There is another way out – you could win it back."

"But, my dear count," answered grandmamma, "I tell you I have no money at all."

"That does not matter," Saint-Germain replied. "Listen now to what I am going to tell you."

'And he revealed to her a secret which all of us would give a great deal to know...'

The young gamblers redoubled their attention. Tomsy lit hi pipe, puffed away for a moment and continued:

'That very evening grandmamma appeared at Versailles, at the *jeu de la reine*. The Duke of Orleans kept his bank. Grandmamma lightly excused herself for not having brought the money to pay off her debt, inventing some little story by way of explanation, and began to play against him. She selected three cards and played them one after the other: all three won, and grandmamma retrieved her loss completely.'

'Luck!' said one of the party.

says in his memoirs that he was a spy; however that might be, Saint-Germain, for all his air of mystery, was outwardly most respectable, and a model of courtesy for society. Grandmother adores him to this day and gets cross if anyone speaks slightly of him. She knew that Saint-Germain had a large fortune at his disposal. She resolved to avail herself of his help and wrote him a not asking him to come and see her at once. The singular old man turned up straight away and found her in a dreadful state. She described her husband's barbarous behaviour in the blackest of colours, and concluded by saying that she was reposing all her hopes on his friendship and kindness. Saint-Germain pondered. "I can accommodate you as far as the sum of money goes," he said, "but I know you would not be at ease until you had repaid me, and I would not wish to encumber you with fresh worries. There is another way – you can win it back."

'But my dear Count,' grandmother replied, "I'm telling you, we have no money at all."

'Money is not necessary in this case,' said Saint-Germain, "be good enough to hear me out." It was at this point that he revealed to her a secret which any one of us would give a great deal to possess...

The young gamesters redoubled their attention.

'That same evening, grandmother presented herself at Versailles, *au jeu de la Reine*. The Duke of Orleans was holding the bank; grandmother casually excused for not bringing what she owed, spinning some little story as cover, and began staking against him. She selected three cards, betting on them one after the other: all three won and grandmother recouped every bit of her losses.'

'Pure luck!'

A tall story,' remarked Hermann.

'The cards might have been marked,' pursued a third.

понтировать. Она выбрала три карты, поставила их одну за другою: все три выиграли ей соника, и бабушка отыгралась совершенно.

– Случай! – сказал один из гостей.

– Сказка! – заметил Германн.

– Может статься, порошковые карты? – подхватил третий.

– Не думаю, – отвечал важно Томский.

– Как! – сказал Нарумов: – у тебя есть бабушка, которая угадывает три карты сряду, а ты до сих пор не перенял у ней ее кабалистики?

– Да, чорта с два! – отвечал Томский: – у ней было четверо сыновей, в том числе и мой отец: все четыре отчаянные игроки, и ни одному не открыла она своей тайны; хоть это было бы не худо для них, и даже для меня. Но вот что мне рассказывал дядя, граф Иван Ильич, и в чем он меня уверял честию. Покойный Чаплицкий, тот самый, который умер в нищете, промотав миллионы, однажды в молодости своей проиграл – помнится Зоричу, – Около трех сот тысяч. Он был в отчаянии. Бабушка, которая всегда была строга к шалостям молодых людей, как-то сжалилась над Чаплицким. Она дала ему три карты, с тем, чтобы он поставил их одну за другою, и взяла с него честное слово впредь уже никогда не играть. Чаплицкий явился к своему победителю: они сели играть. Чаплицкий поставил на первую карту пятьдесят тысяч, и выиграл соника; загнул пароли, пароли-пе, – отыгрался, и остался еще в выигрыше...

Однако, пора спать: уже без четверти шесть.

В самом деле, уже рассветало: молодые люди допили свои рюмки, и разъехались.

‘A fairy tale!’ remarked Hermann.

‘Marked cards, perhaps,’ put in a third.

‘I don’t think so,’ replied Tomskey impressively.

‘What!’ said Narumov. ‘You have a grandmother who knows how to hit upon three lucky cards in succession, and you haven’t learnt her secret yet?’

‘That’s the deuce of it!’ Tomskey replied. ‘She had four sons, one of whom was my father; all four were desperate gamblers, and she did not reveal her secret to a single of them, though it would not have been a bad thing for them, or for me either. But listen to what my uncle, Count Ivan Ilyich, used to say, assuring me on his word of honour that it was true. Tchaplitsky – you now him, he died a pauper after squandering millions – as a young man once lost three hundred thousand roubles, to Zorich, if I remember rightly. He was in despair. Grandmamma was always very severe on the follies of young men, but somehow she took pity on Tchaplitsky. She gave him three cards, which he was to play one after the other, at the same time extracting from him a promise that he would never afterwards touch a card so long as he lived. Tchaplitsky staked fifty thousand on his first card and won; doubled his stake and won; did the same again, won back his loss and ended up in pocket...

‘But, I say, it’s time to go to bed: it’s a quarter to six already.’

And indeed dawn was breaking. The young men emptied their glasses and went home.

‘I don’t think so,’ Tomskey responded gravely.

‘What do you mean?’ said Narumov. ‘You have a grandmother who can predict three cards in sequence, and you haven’t learned the magic formula from her?’

‘Not much chance of that!’ Tomskey replied. ‘She had four sons, including my father, all four were desperate gamblers and she hadn’t told one of them her secret, though it would have been very much to their advantage, not to mention mine. But this is what my uncle, Count Ivan Ilyich, told me, on his word of honour. As a young man, the late Chaplitsky, the one who died penniless after getting through millions, once lost – to Zorich, I think it was – around three hundred thousand. He was in despair. Grandmother always disapproved of youthful frolics, but took pity on Chaplitsky for some reason. She gave him three cards to bet on in succession, and made him give his word of honour never to play again. Chaplitsky went back to his conqueror; they sat down to play. Chaplitsky bet fifty thousand on the first card and won straight off; doubled the stakes, redoubled – and recouped his losses and a bit besides...’

‘Still, time for bed: it’s quarter to six already.’

And indeed, day was already dawning. The young men drained their glasses and dispersed.

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