

## Betrothed

(*Garnett*)

Andrey Andreitch, Father  
Andrey's son,<sup>1</sup> was standing  
by listening attentively. [...]

There was a feeling of May,  
sweet May! One drew deep  
breaths and longed to fancy  
that not here but far away  
under the sky, above the trees,  
far away in the open country, in  
the fields and the woods, the  
life of spring was unfolding  
now, mysterious, lovely, rich  
and holy beyond the under-  
standing of weak, sinful man.  
And for some reason one  
wanted to cry.<sup>2</sup> [...]

"Tick-tock, tick-tock . . ."  
the watchman tapped lazily,  
". . . Tick-tock."<sup>3</sup> [...]

She went upstairs to her own  
room to pack, and the next  
morning said good-bye to her  
family, and full of life and  
high spirits left the town—as  
she supposed for ever.<sup>4</sup>

## The Bride

(*Paulson*)

Beside Nina Ivanovna stood  
Andrey Andreych, Father  
Andrey's son,<sup>1</sup> who was  
listening attentively. [...]

There was a feeling of May,  
sweet May, in the air. You  
found yourself breathing  
deeply, and you imagined that  
some-where else, somewhere  
beneath the sky and above the  
treetops, somewhere in the open  
fields and the forests far from  
the town—somewhere there the  
spring was burgeoning with its  
own mysterious and beautiful  
life, full of riches and holiness,  
beyond the comprehension of  
weak, sinful man. And for some  
reason you found yourself  
wanting to cry.<sup>2</sup> [...]

"Tick-tock, tick-tock . . ."  
came the lazy tapping of the  
night watchman. "Tick-  
tock . . ."<sup>3</sup> [...]

She went upstairs to her own  
room to pack, and the next  
morning said good-bye to her  
family, and left the town. She  
was full of life and high  
spirits, and she expected  
never to return.<sup>4</sup>

## A Marriageable Girl

(*Hingley*)

Father Andrew's son—himself  
an Andrew<sup>1</sup>—stood by  
listening attentively. [...]

May, lovely May, was in the air.  
Nadya could breathe freely,  
and liked to fancy that there  
was another place—beneath  
the sky, above the trees, far  
beyond town, in fields and  
woods—where springtime had  
generated a secret life of its  
own: a life wonderful, right and  
hallowed . . . a life beyond the  
understanding of weak, sinful  
man. She felt rather like  
crying.<sup>2</sup> [...]

A desultory clicking thud was  
heard: that watchman again.<sup>3</sup>  
[...]

She went up to her room to  
pack. Next morning she said  
good-bye to the family. Vigor-  
ous, high-spirited, she left  
town: for ever, presumably.<sup>4</sup>

## \*The Bride

(*Apollonio*)

Father Andrei's son Andrei  
Andreitch<sup>1</sup> stood next to them,  
listening attentively. [...]

The orchard was filled with a  
feeling of May, dear May! The  
air came in deep breaths and  
it was tempting to think that  
not here, but somewhere else,  
between the treetops and the  
sky, in the field and forests far  
beyond the town spring had  
begun its mysterious, beautiful,  
rich, sacred life, inaccessible to  
the understanding of weak and  
sinful human beings. For some  
reason, it brought on a feeling  
close to tears.<sup>2</sup> [...]

"Tick-tock, tick-tock . . ."  
rapped the guard lazily.  
"Tick-tock . . ."<sup>3</sup> [...]

She went upstairs to pack,  
and the next morning she said  
her farewells and, alive, happy,  
left the town behind—as she  
thought, forever.<sup>4</sup>

1. The inexorable patriarchal continuity that's hard to miss in the Russian, with its un-  
interrupted chain of Andreys (*syn otisa Andreia, Andrei Andreich*), but hard to reproduce  
in grammatical English, comes through with varying degrees of force in these four  
translations.  
2. This passage is complicated by the use of impersonal constructions in the Russian,  
verbal expressions that do not specify *who* might be breathing, longing, crying, and so  
on. The solutions of our translators range from Hingley's, which attributes all action

3. The point about Hingley's tactics when it comes to inarticulate sounds has already  
been made repeatedly, but this one is too much fun to miss.  
4. Chekhov's last words (in a short story, that is), famous for the uncertainty created by  
the interpolation of "as she supposed" into the otherwise unambiguous "she left the  
town forever," inspire an interesting variety of English formulations.