

## CONFESSIONS OF A STUPID MAN

I don't remember what I said. I don't want to remember. Forward, ever forward. Running from, fleeing the past, the immediate past, the distant past, anything past. Bury it. Forward, the same mistakes again and again--flee from it, run from it, don't pause to consider it. Nothing can be learned from it. I can't learn, only repeat, repeat the mistakes. It's in my genes, I'm a prisoner of my own body, which includes the brain as a higher development. The brain a slave of the body, the hormones and neurotransmitters--and I a slave of the brain.

Occasionally my mouth wells up and makes a remark, invariably stupid. This has been going on a long time. I really can't stand it. I run away, I can't learn, I do it again, I'm doing it now.

It's happening again. Tomorrow it'll happen again too. Please make it stop. But who could answer such a prayer? It's in my genes--that's a good excuse, isn't it? All problems: caused by bad genes. The current world situation in a nutshell: bad genes. And I--a microcosm, the sun reflected in a drop of water, as Tolstoy used to say.

I speak elliptically. The truth is too awful to face honestly, let alone communicate. I can only run from it, flee from it--a man with no inner strength, no spiritual strength, fleeing from himself, running, skimming over the ground, barely lighting on the ground, too fearful to stop. Stopping leads to reflection and that to regret--always over the same things again and again. Slapping the forehead doesn't help. Better to not come to rest on solid ground--best to keep running away, skimming over the ground, pretending it doesn't exist.

"Confessions"? An honest record of the facts? I haven't the fortitude for that. That would require standing on the ground, even digging down into it, uncovering the foundations, the Truth with a capital "T". Who has the nerve for that? Not I. What I've stated so far cuts deep enough; some would say it's barely a surface scratch, but I'm very timid, to me it's as if it sliced right into the bone. If I said more, you might be astonished about just what is humanly possible. What's been said is merely the surface of a bottomless pit--and reality is a bottomless pit in any case. That's why there is something rather than nothing: reality is an infinite depth packed into a finite space.

Now I'm trying to sound intelligent--a philosopher indeed! It's a trick of mine: given a safe distance and enough time to think about what to say, I can manage to pull it off. But who am I kidding? Quite a few people, in fact. I even have a reputation for being intelligent. If only they knew. Sometimes they get a glimpse, especially when I'm under the influence of drink. They can't believe their eyes and seem to forget it after a short time. So my secret is safe, if only tentatively. Or maybe it's not, but for the sake of politeness they pretend that it is.

That's it. That's the extent of my confession. It wasn't much, but it's the most you'll get out of me for now. I'm not ready for more, for more honesty. The ground for more has not been prepared yet. The ground must be tilled: that which is below must be brought to the top, and I feel comfortable only when skimming over it, not tilling it or digging into it; I'd rather the stuff that lies below just stay there for now. That's the best place for it as far as I'm concerned. Self-interest, you know. "Truth" with a capital "T" doesn't exist anyway--that's my excuse.

The facts are receding into the background. That the degree of my stupidity is a blasphemy, a crime against nature, now seems remote, as does the fact that my inner state resembles that of the eldest Karamazov brother when he was running through the woods in a state of such anxiety that a small child could have knocked him over. That is safely in the past for now. Tomorrow it'll happen all over again. And the day after that. I'll go on. I'll flee.