

Гетьман Іван Виговський

Іван Нечуй-Левицький

**Hetman Ivan Vyhovsky
by
Ivan Nechuy-Levytskyi**

Chapter 3

<https://ukrclassic.com.ua/katalog/n/nechuj-levitskij-ivan/409-ivan-nechuj-levitskij-getman-ivan-vigovskij> (1st chapter, then go to bottom of webpage for other chapters)

III

The yard of the late Bohdan Stetkevich stood on the edge of the small Polish village of Mokran, on a barely noticeable small hill, as if he climbed that hill, saving himself from the swamp, which was besieging Mokran from three sides. With a high, pointed, blackened roof, with two narrow towers, which were set at two corners, with thick walls and narrow windows, the ancient brick palace was like the present-day wretched hovel, smoky, black, and inhospitable. The roof was held up by tall and thick masonry chimneys, covered from above from the rain by masonry caps, in which holes were blackened on both sides. These tall and wide chimneys from a distance looked like tall eaves, covered on top with knyshas or some kind of strange firewood. At the four corners of the palace, masonry supports, narrow at the top and wide at the bottom, were made: from a distance it seemed as if the palace like a turtle, he spread his merchant's thick legs and got ready to get down from the hill, but somehow he could not move from his place. The palace was surrounded by a deep moat, and the moat was restrained by a sharp oak stake. Behind the trench there were swamps, which in some places were green with sedges and thick reeds. In the thick sedge, in some places, it was as if the round bushes of verbolos and alder were drowning. A luxurious old garden spread out behind the palace, in which old, heavy oaks stood in places. Around the palace behind Mokrany, green pine forests loomed in all directions, as if a green and smooth sea surrounded both the palace and the village. And only in some places above the gray-green pines, pointed-topped old-age spruces stuck out high, as if they were looking with their spreading branches at the sea of pines and old oak forests. but could

not move from the place. The palace was surrounded by a deep moat, and the moat was restrained by a sharp oak stake. Behind the trench there were swamps, which in some places were green with sedges and thick reeds. In the thick sedge, in some places, it was as if the round bushes of verbollos and alder were drowning. A luxurious old garden spread out behind the palace, in which old, heavy oaks stood in places. Around the palace behind Mokrany, green pine forests loomed in all directions, as if a green and smooth sea surrounded both the palace and the village. And only in some places above the gray-green pines, pointed-topped old-age spruces stuck out high, as if they were looking with their spreading branches at the sea of pines and old oak forests. but could not move from the place. The palace was surrounded by a deep moat, and the moat was restrained by a sharp oak stake. Behind the trench there were swamps, which in some places were green with sedges and thick reeds. In the thick sedge, in some places, it was as if the round bushes of verbollos and alder were drowning. A luxurious old garden spread out behind the palace, in which old, heavy oaks stood in places. Around the palace behind Mokrany, green pine forests loomed in all directions, as if a green and smooth sea surrounded both the palace and the village. And only in some places above the gray-green pines, pointed-topped old-age spruces stuck out high, as if they were looking with their spreading branches at the sea of pines and old oak forests. In the thick sedge, in some places, it was as if the round bushes of verbollos and alder were drowning. A luxurious old garden spread out behind the palace, in which old, heavy oaks stood in places. Around the palace behind Mokrany, green pine forests loomed in all directions, as if a green and smooth sea surrounded both the palace and the village. And only in some places above the gray-green pines, pointed-topped old-age spruces stuck out high, as if they were looking with their spreading branches at the sea of pines and old oak forests. In the thick sedge, in some places, it was as if the round bushes of verbollos and alder were drowning. A luxurious old garden spread out behind the palace, in which old, heavy oaks stood in places. Around the palace behind Mokrany, green pine forests loomed in all directions, as if a green and smooth sea surrounded both the palace and the village. And only in some places above the gray-green pines, pointed-topped old-age spruces stuck out high, as if they were looking with their spreading branches at the sea of pines and old oak forests.

Olesya Stetkevychivna came from Kyiv to Mokrany and spent the whole summer waiting for Vyhovsky. But the summer has already passed, and he did not come. The harvest had already passed, the First Pure One had come,

but he was not there. Olesya was sad and complained more than once in her mind about men, that they are uncertain people, they don't know how to keep their word.

"Maybe he found someone better than me and fell in love with her, but forgot me?" Olesya thought more than once, walking around the old kindergarten with a sad thought on her forehead. "Everything happens in the world. Or maybe he turned away from me because, that he was offended by my kinsman, those princes of Lyubetzky. He is higher in government than those of my relatives, the princes of Lyubetzky and Solomyrsky. Having married him, I would be a great lady among the Cossacks, more worthy than the impoverished princess of Lyubetzky; then I too would raise my head high and I looked at all those princes with pride. Then I will make myself known to them!" - mused Olesya, walking near the old apple trees, proudly raising her head and looking at the apple trees, where the healthy, ripe apples were abundantly white and red on the branches.

The evening has come. Olesya returned to her room and, lighting the wax candles, set to work with her elderly cousin Rudnitskaya.

Pavlyna Rudnytska, an elderly maiden, had to be her father's sister in the first place. After becoming a widower, Bohdan Stetkevich invited Rudnytska to his house as a landlady and as a companion for Olesya. Rudnytska came from a poor family and willingly moved in with Bohdan Stetkevich. Ugly-faced, withered, dark-skinned, but agile and intelligent, Pavlyna Rudnytska, even in her old age, remained as romantic and dreamy as she was in her youth. She did not lose hope of getting married to a handsome, albeit poor groom, she kept hoping that he would come to her from somewhere, suddenly fall in love with her, and she would marry him, leave with him somewhere far away to the very edge of Ukraine or Poland, in some wide steppes or in wild forests, and will live happily with him. Miss Pavlyna was literate, loved to read, got books from rich neighbors I read several ancient novels of chivalry, translated into Polish, and I remembered them almost verbatim, up to the last minor events. Sometimes, in the evenings, she felt like telling Olesya those chivalrous stories, and she knew how to tell very well, so that Olesya listened to her stories as if she were reading a book herself. Miss Pavlyna also liked to read church books, but most of all she liked to read the lives of saints.

The rooms in which Miss Pavlyna and Olesya lived were small and low. Small windows with small round panes, pierced high up in the thick walls, as if looking into the rooms and as if they did not dare to let in much light from the outside. Dark in the daytime, the rooms in the evening, illuminated by light, were much friendlier and more pleasant, lined with carpets, cleanly decorated, hung with images in expensive gilded robes. Miss Pavlyna sat down on a stool near the base stretched on healthy fingers and began to make a carpet. Olesya was sitting at the table and embroidering a silk and gold coverlet for the church. Through the open door, a lamp shone in front of the images in Olesya's bedchamber, which was covered with carpets. Wax candles shed enough light on Miss Pavlyna's small room. The rooms were quiet, calm and clean, like in the monastery cells of a nun.

- So the summer passes, and Vyhovskyi does not come to us! Miss Pavlyna began to speak quietly. - God forbid that he doesn't come! Oh, how hard and hard it will be for you, Olesya's heart!

- I myself don't know why he was so late. Maybe the hetman doesn't let him, maybe he has a lot of work, because he hinted to me that the service under hetman Bohdanov is very difficult, - said Olesya.

- If only because of this, then nothing. I also had a husband... handsome, handsome, black, as drawn. Oh, oh! He visited my late master often, and then six months later he began to approach me. I gave my word, but when he left, when he went somewhere far away, to the war, or something, I only saw him. Oh! I don't trust those gentlemen. How uncertain they are in words! How fickle they are! How they play with our heart, like a ball! Oh, oh, oh! I have already convinced myself of this, - said Miss Pavlyna, and at the same time she sighed as hard as a person who has lost someone dear to her heart forever.

- Vyhovsky is not one of those people, Mrs. Pavlyna, I am sure that he is not one of those people. He is sensible, a certain man, because he is no longer very young. He must not break his word.

- Believe, believe them, my heart! And I've already cheated once and twice, so it will be with me for the rest of my life. One of my fiances proposed to me. Dad didn't want to pass me off as his, because he was a very poor nobleman. Then he persuaded me to run away with him, for God's sake, I confess that I already wanted to run away with him! - and he, as soon as he left, never

came back! - asked Miss Pavlyna in a tearful voice. - Oh, I don't trust them since that time, and I will order all the virgins not to trust them.

- Aunt Pavlyna! Vyhovskyi's position is respectable and high: it is embarrassing for him to fool me, the daughter of Bohdan Stetkevich and Princess Solomyretska. There is, probably, some other reason, and such a respectable and elderly Cossack cannot make a fool of me, a relative of senators and princes.

"Maybe you're telling the truth," said the aunt.

- Aunt! Tell me a story. You tell stories so beautifully, as if you are reading from a book, Olesya asked.

- I don't know what to tell you. Shall I tell you about Oleksiy, the man of God.

Olesya did not want to hear about the saints. The mention of Vyhovsky directed her thoughts to another path: she wanted to talk or listen about love.

- Wait, mother! Tell me a story about knights! You know a lot of those stories.

- Hold on! Let me remember, said the aunt.

- Where did you, Mrs. Pavlyna, get those books with such interesting stories that you told me?

- Well, dear Olesya, even when my master served as a manager for a Polish master in Volyn, he begged those books from the master for me, because he knew that I really like to read. I have not yet told you one story about the young knight Herman. And this story is very similar to your story with Vyhovsky.

- Similar! Olesya even shouted and stopped embroidering. - Tell me, dear woman, that story, when it is similar to mine.

- It happened somewhere far abroad, in German land. There lived a very rich knight, Prince Adolf. He had one daughter, Rosalia, beautiful as an angel; white-white, with blond curls; her cheeks were fresh and rosy, like roses, her mouth was like coral, and her eyes were blue like the sky. Her father was a rich knight and had his own considerable kingdom as a king. Many young

knights came to the palace, many of them courted Rosalia, but she did not want to marry anyone. Her father and mother were already angry with her, they forced her to choose a groom, but she seemed to hesitate: I don't want to, and I don't want to, because I don't like all those grooms.

- Why is that so? Didn't she think of getting her hair cut as a nun? Olesya asked her aunt.

- No, I didn't think so... Once upon a time, the old knight Adolf with his wife and daughter were sailing on a ship on some big river. They sailed near some city. Behind the city on a mountain above the river stood a palace with towers. At that time, young knights were walking on the river in boats, and with them was walking the young owner of that palace, Hermann, the handsomest of all German lands. Boats followed the ship. Rosalia stood in the garret of that ship, leaning on the handrails; she looked at that handsome man. The knights noticed Rosalia and could not look at her, she was so beautiful and magnificent. They began to throw flowers at her ship; Herman also threw a red rose. Rosalia bent down, took that single rose, braided her blonde braid with it and smiled at Herman. Since then, she loved him alone and could not forget him, as if he charmed her with his eyes. And Rosalia's father and mother did not know anything about it and did not disclose it.

But Rosalia keeps turning away from the grooms and sends them away from her father's palace with nothing. Her father says to his wife:

"I will gather knights in my court for a great tournament; let them make a great knightly battle. Perhaps Rosalia does not like gentlemen from the face, but she will love the one who will show great strength and skill at the tournament, who will show himself to be the strongest and bravest and to there are all significant wrestlers-knights".

The old prince Adolf, after consulting with the woman, gave notice in his kingdom and throughout the German land that in the spring, a week after Easter, he would hold a great tournament at his court, and that all the knights who were willing to show themselves would come to him. his strength and his convenience in battle; Prince Adolf promised the best winner of the tournament great rewards, which his daughter Rosalia would give out, and when Rosalia liked the knight-winner, the prince would give her in marriage to him.

Spring has come, Easter has passed. Knight Adolf had a healthy building with a spacious round square in the middle built for the tournament. Chairs covered with expensive red cloth were placed on the platform, around the square, next to the walls. Opposite the gate, the prince ordered a silk tent to be placed on a high platform, and a wide throne covered with a piece of gold was placed in the middle of the tent. Knights from everywhere began to gather, and with them came their fathers, mothers and sisters, and all sorts of guests to see that tournament and the glorious beauty Rosalia. The prince ordered to slaughter twenty oxen, fifty rams, ordered to kill all kinds of birds, to roll out several barrels of old wine from the cellars to receive guests.

The day of the tournament has come. Prince Adolf, his wife and daughter sat on the throne opposite the gate where the knights entered on horseback. The whole tent, all the walls above were hung with garlands of leaves and flowers. All the guests were seated around on chairs and chairs. Knights in gilded iron armor and iron caps began to ride out. The battle began. Many young knights went out to battle, but among them not a single strong and very brave one appeared. The sun had already risen high into the sky, when a certain unexpected knight with a covered face, as if encased in gilded iron, entered the square. Under him, the horse even won, even danced. The knight himself was tall, broad-shouldered; he proudly began to summon knights to battle. The knights rode out against him, but he knocked them all out of the saddle; they fell from their horses to the ground, as if ripe apples were falling from a tree. He beat them all and emerged victorious. The prince, the princess, all the guests in one voice, like one man, shouted to him: "Good! Vivat!" The prince called him to his bed, and Princess Rosalia gave him a bouquet of roses, an expensive gold cup, then took off an expensive silk scarf, tied it over his shoulder, and on that bandage hooked a sword with a golden handle. His father invited him and all the knights to his court for dinner.

It's time for dinner. The knights began to gather in the castle. An unknown knight also came, still wrapped in armor and with a closed view. Already the guests began to sit down at the tables, but the knight remained standing and did not reveal his face.

- Open your face, brave knight, so that we may know who you are and greet you as a knight and as a man. We ask you to sit down at the table with us! - said the host to the guest.

The young knight opened the view. Rosalia, as she stood, fell on the sofa: it was the handsome man she had seen on the Rhine sailing on a ship. The old father slowly got up from his seat and turned red, his eyes flashed with anger and revenge.

- You are Herman! You are the son of my tortured enemy! Your father once attacked my castle, robbed it, drove all my goods into the fields, looted my reds, burned all my bread, and also took a hundred of my boys captive! You are the son of my enemy, whom I hate and will not forgive him until my age!

- I am the son of your enemy, but I am not an enemy of you, nor an enemy of your beautiful daughter Rosalia, because I have loved her for a long time, I will love her alone until death. According to your condition, you must give your daughter in marriage to me.

- I agree to marry you, for you and no one else! - called Rosalia, getting up from the sofa. Beloved Herman stood in front of her, even better than he was before, handsome as the sun, fair-haired and curly, healthy, even, ruddy as an apple. He smelled of health and happiness.

- This will never happen in my lifetime! Will not! I am irreconcilable with my enemies and I will not give my daughters away to my enemies! - said the father menacingly.

Everything in the hall became silent and held its breath. All the guests thought that the old prince would throw his sword at Herman, that Herman would fall dead to the ground among the magnificent crowd of knights and ladies.

- You, young knight, although you are the son of my fierce enemy, but you remained the winner in the tournament on my holiday; because of this, I ask you to sit down at the table and be my honored guest; do not shun my bread and salt, because I am not your enemy, young knight, and I must honor you, and I do not want to be born with your father! I am asking to the table, to the knightly noble company! - added Prince Adolf.

- I have no knightly right to anger you with my refusal of your invitations, - knight Herman called gloomily and sat down at the table, but far from the host, even at the end of the table, from where he could see the beautiful Rosalia in a wreath of white roses and daffodils.

Meanwhile, as the aunt was telling the story, and Olesya was listening and her mind flew to Prince Adolf's castle, suddenly the door to the room slammed open and the gray head of old Hristofor Stetkevich, Olesya's uncle and guardian, in a small black yarmulke, stuck out from behind the door. Aunt Pavlyna and Olesya were both horrified, rushed, and shouted. Something seemed to both of them that they were sitting in the hall at Prince Adolf's table, and suddenly the terrible father of the Hermans rushed into the hall like a madman.

- What are you, Pavlyna, talking so long and loudly that even in my room it's almost as if someone is standing at the very door and babbling, - said Khristofor in the tone of a strict father and teacher.

"It's me, brother, at work I'm telling Olesya about... about Oleksiy, the man of God," Aunt Pavlyna said quietly and stuttered.

- That's good! This is a pious deed. Only, please, don't tell Olesya about those German novels you stuffed your head with. Young maidens should not be told about those chivalrous walks and romances with all sorts of maidens. Tell me, tell me, so that Olesya doesn't get bored of the world and doesn't get bored of...

The old man didn't quite understand what Vyhovsky was after, but somehow he held his tongue in time, opened the door and went to his room. For Pavlyna and Olesya, the broken illusions seemed to have been blown away by the wind. They again moved their thoughts from Prince Adolf's hall to their cramped room, illuminated by wax candles and a lamp in front of images.

- What happened next? Olesya couldn't stand it, asking her aunts.

- Oh, what happened, what happened next, it is sad to tell: it was one torment for both of them, for Rosalia and for Herman. The old prince did not let Herman into his court and did not let Rosalia out of the court, so they had nowhere to see each other. Herman did not return to his father in the castle; he settled near the castle of old Prince Adolf and spent the evenings around the castle, where Miss Rosalia was tired of the world. He knew in which room Rosalia lived, he knew which windows in the high tower of the castle were in her room; in the evenings he took a harp and a horn, stood by the stream on the bank, gave a signal with the horn, and then played on the harp a song

about love, which he composed himself, inserting his and her names into the song. Sometimes he shed tears, sometimes joy in those songs, and Rosalia understood those songs: sometimes she cried, sometimes she laughed from ardent love, listening sometimes to mournful, then cheerful melodies. Rosalia opened the window, looked at Herman from afar, he looked at her and greeted her, waving a white handkerchief. But the servants in the castle noticed this and told the old father. The father got angry and ordered his daughter to go to the room below the palace, from where neither the stream nor the grove could be seen. Then Herman found out which way his mother and Rosalia went for a walk in the healthy forest. He saddled his horse and rode out every evening to look at Rosalia. But quickly his mother noticed him and stopped going to that forest. He saddled his horse and rode out every evening to look at Rosalia. But quickly his mother noticed him and stopped going to that forest. He saddled his horse and rode out every evening to look at Rosalia. But quickly his mother noticed him and stopped going to that forest.

The young knight turned pale at the sight, fainted, had already reached the point of despair and wanted to cause his own death. German wrote a letter to old Adolf that he would kill himself if the prince did not give his daughter in marriage to him, begged him, begged him, said that he was sorry to lose his young life, to break his heart when his heart had blossomed like a lush flower. Having sent the letter to the castle, Herman waited for an answer near the gate. But the old prince did not even write a reply and ordered to tell Hermanov that he would not be sorry if Herman himself lost his life.

Herman lived not far from the castle for a long time, but he never had the chance to see his beloved Rosalia. He turned pale, withered like a plant in a dry land, and thought only of his dear Rosalia. One evening he was walking in the forest near the ruins of an old castle; there he saw some old scary gypsy woman. She came out from under the ruins of a small room and waved her hand at Herman. Herman approached her and got scared, looking at her terrible black face, at her wild healthy black eyes. She was a gypsy witch.

- Young knight! - the gypsy woman said to him. - I am a fortune teller and a sorceress; I know all your grief; I know that old Prince Adolf will not give his daughter in marriage to you as long as he is old. But it is possible to prevent your sorrow: it is possible to make the old prince forget about his grievance against your father, forget everything that was long ago, as if it had never

happened to him, as if he had been born a second time. Then he will love you, because he will not recognize you and will give his daughter for you.

- Maybe you, sorceress, will do it with your charms? Herman asked the gypsies.

- No, I can't, I don't have such strength. But go to the Indian kingdom, all the way to the sunrise. My sister Sandala lives there in the capital. Ask about her, and everyone will tell you where she lives, because everyone knows her. Sandala is a great sorceress. She alone knows such a way that a wicked and evil man will become good, a vengeful man will forget about his revenge, a liar will love the truth and become truthful. Don't waste time, get on your horse and ride all the way to the rising sun to the Indian kingdom. The witch will give you the medicine. You will return here, put those spells in the wine or in the bread that are being served to the old prince, as soon as he drinks that wine or eats a piece of that bread, then in one moment he will change from a wolf's character to a human character.

Herman thanked the gypsy, got on his horse and rode to the sunrise to a distant Indian kingdom to seek advice. He traveled for six months through all the kingdoms, then he came to the great sea, boarded a merchant ship and sailed to a great Indian city, so great that it was as if he had no land. He lived there for six months, had already learned the Indian language, and then he began to ask about the sorceress Sandala. He was shown a house in a distant suburb, among high rocky mountains, where she lived. German entered the house. The sorceress was then at home, sitting on the spread white mats and going through all the potions, putting them in bunches and bundles. Sandala was an old and scary-looking gypsy, similar to the one he saw near the ruins of the castle: she was her older sister. Herman greeted her, gave her a bow from his sister,

- Fine! - called the gypsy woman. - For the sake of my younger sister, I will do this for you and help you. Come tomorrow evening to our largest temple, stand by the door and wait for me. Tomorrow we have a big holiday. You must go with me to our temple and pray to our great gods, because without that I will not help you either.

"But I'm not of your faith, I'm a Christian," said Herman.

- It's okay! There is one God in the world and in us and in you. You must first pray to our gods, then my medicine will help you more, - said Sandala, sorting through the potions and flowers, from which a terribly heavy spirit, sometimes pleasant, sometimes unpleasant, spread around the hut.

Herman looked around the hut. The hut was poor, simple, with small windows. Rows of idols stood on the shelves, scary and ugly, scaly, with faces, ears, with bared teeth. Among them was an idol of the devil. Sandala herself was pitch-black and toothless. Strands of gray braids came out from under the handkerchief. She really looked a little like the sorceress whom the young knight met in the forest near the ruins of the old castle. German said goodbye and left.

The next day in the evening, he went to the temple, stood by the door and waited for Sandala. The priests opened the temple. The solid iron door creaked. The temple stood on a hill, healthy and wide as a rock. In front of the hillock there was a pond, in which black crocodiles dedicated to the gods swam like blocks. Around the entire hillock, around the pond stood a tall brick crenellated wall, studded with towers. The people poured into that cemetery and poured into the wide doors of the temple like a river. Soon Sandala also came, took Herman by the hand and led him to the temple. The windows were small. The temple was as dark as a cave, as if carved out of rock. Three terrible idols stood on altars opposite the door. One had four faces on four sides, with white protruding teeth; the second held a scythe, and white skulls and bones were lying around his feet. The third was eared and horned, black with white teeth,

- Oh woman! What a terrible story you tell! Oh my god, I won't sleep tonight, and when I do, I'll dream about those idols all night, Olesya said.

But Aunt Pavlyna knew very well that Olesya liked to listen to stories about all kinds of fear, as well as about love, and she continued her story about fear, because she herself loved everything romantic, and most of all scary. Once at night she dreamed that her husband was abducting her, that she was already running away with him through some woods and forests, although that husband would never have even thought of kidnapping such a girl as Pavlyna was in her youth. Aunt Pavlyna continued to tell:

Sandala led Herman to the pond and said:

"Fall prostrate on the ground and worship the holy crocodiles! These are the servants of our gods. Once upon a time, our God himself was incarnated on earth in one crocodile." And Herman fell prostrate and had to worship the crocodiles. Then she took the knight by the hand, led him to the temple and stood with him in front of the very idols. Candles were lit in the temple. The priests hit their tambourines and began to sing and shout wildly.

"Fall on the ground and bow to our gods," she whispered quietly in the ear of Sandal Knight.

"I can't, I can't pray to these terrible gods. They are not gods, but devils!" - called Herman.

As soon as he said these words, lightning flashed and seemed to ignite the temple; a terrible thunder rumbled. The rain poured down like a bucket. The thunder rumbled, groaned, cracked until the ground shook. The lightning seemed to illuminate the terrible idols with fire. The temple trembled. The idols seemed to move on the thrones and sway, as if they were ready to go down alive. Fear struck Herman. And the thunder crackled and rumbled. It seemed that the heavy temple was about to collapse and fall on the people. People shouted and began to pray loudly to the gods. The priest turned to the people and said: "Among us in the temple there are people who are not of our faith. Look for them! It is because of them that such a disaster has happened!"

"Fall on the ground and pray to our gods, because you will be in trouble!"

- Oh my God, I was so scared! Oh woman! "Don't tell me any more," said Olesya; the needle fell out of her hands a long time ago, and the blanket slipped from her lap and fell to the floor.

At that time, both Pavlina and Olesya heard someone knocking at the gate. In the silence of the night, in the silent, even dead rooms, it was distinctly heard that they were knocking on the gate of the courtyard with something wooden, like a dove.

- Oh my God! Who is knocking at the gate at such a late hour? Olesya said, listening. - I'm scared!

- Maybe the manager is late somewhere and is coming home, - the aunt comforted, but even her eyes became frightened.

The knocking quickly subsided. The room became quiet. Both women were silent for a long time. It was felt how Pavlyna was breathing heavily from fright.

- Nothing at all. "Maybe the wind knocked down the wood or knocked down the shards," said the aunt.

- Tell the woman, go on! "What will be the end," asked Olesya, and in her mind she put herself in the place of the talentless Rosalia, and Vyhovsky - in the place of the knight Herman. Comparing her fate to hers, she very much wanted to know the end of that story.

After the service, when the thunder died down and the rain stopped, Sandala took Herman out of the temple and said to him:

"Come to me tomorrow, when the sun rises on the evening path, and I will give you charms and medicine."

The next day, the young knight could not wait for the evening. He was no longer interested in the city, he was not interested in the temples, nor the strange residents of that city, dark-skinned and dry-skinned, dressed in flowery stockings, and sheets, and all kinds of colorful clothes. The sun stood on its evening course, rolled over the palm forests and seemed to be entangled with a red ray in the sharp-leaved palm tops, as if a fiery bird was entangled in the gills with its red wings. German went to Sandala and found her at home. She sat over a pile of potions, held a healthy viper in her arms, like a child, and fed it milk from a spoon. Herman shuddered and jumped back from the threshold.

"Don't be afraid, young knight, because you won't get charms. Sorcery requires courage. If you want to get charms from me, you must first resist the temptation. Come with me to my palace. I accept only common people in this hut, and you come from the knees of great lords," said Sandala, and led him through the sun into a lush garden of palms, dates, figs, and oranges. So many fragrant herbs and flowers were sown in the garden that Herman felt dizzy.

As soon as they left the porch, Sandala whistled. Four thick and long vipers crawled out of the laurel and rose bushes. They crawled right up to Herman, swaying their golden heads and sticking out their sharp stingers. Sandala stepped back and stood behind Herman. The vipers crawled right under Hermanov's feet and were ready to wrap themselves around him. His spirit also froze. Then Sandala took the vipers in her hands, stroked them, hooked them on her shoulder, wrapped one, the smallest viper, around her neck and led him further through the garden.

In the middle of the garden stood a luxurious house with a porch, furnished with stone green columns. The house was all painted like a fairy, with sparkling windows and a terrace below the porch, furnished with white columns. Both the porch and the veranda were covered with white mats, and a flowery Persian carpet was spread over the open door. As soon as they stepped over the threshold, two old lions ran out of the room. Seeing Herman, they bared their sharp teeth and rushed at Herman. Herman thought that his death had already come. Then Sandala waved her paw, and the lions, like puppies, ran after her into the room.

Sandala led Hermann through a series of sumptuous rooms, covered with Indian carpets, upholstered in expensive fabrics with golden flowers, and led him to the last room, where there was a healthy stove. Sandala collected the potion, put it in a cauldron, lit a fire and put the cauldron on the fire. The fire broke out immediately. The cauldron boiled. The smoke, black as pitch, went into a wide chimney. Sandala stirred the potion in the cauldron and kept whispering something.

"There you go and the charms are ready!" Sandala finally said.

She poured a green fragrant drink into a crystal bottle, gave it to Germanov and said: "Go home now. You will enter the palace of the old prince, now sprinkle the palace with this drink, wet your handkerchief, sprinkle your clothes. When they smell the spirit of this potion, then now the untruthful will become truthful, the unkind will become good. Their hearts will be filled with love and affection for people and for you. They will forget about revenge; anger will disappear in their souls, and kindness and kindness will reign in their hearts. Then ask the old prince and Princess, whatever your soul desires, Rosalia will be yours."

Herman thanked Sandala, paid her a lot of chevrons, got on a ship himself, swam the ocean, and then day and night he rode a horse to the old knight's castle.

- So what? Did those spells do anything? Olesya couldn't stand it and asked her aunt.

- Before he had time to fly to old Adolf's castle, when he looked, the castle gate in the high tower opened, and a procession came out of the gate. All the bells are ringing. Xiondzi in black robes. The gate is covered with black cloth. A tall chariot, upholstered in black silk and velvet, drives out of the gate; the horses are covered with black blankets. They were taking the old knight Adolf.

The next day Herman went to the castle. Rosalia and her mother ordered him to be let in. Herman splashed the enchanted green potion in the rooms. A wonderful spirit went through all the rooms. The old mother became kind from evil, and her hard heart softened like warm wax. She happily greeted Herman and agreed to marry him to Rosalia. Herman and Rosalia got married and were happy all their lives.

Olesya sighed, as if her soul felt lighter. The room became very quiet. When it was outside, the gate was knocked even harder, as if someone wanted to break down the gate and break into the yard by force. The gate was rattling. The dogs barked and howled. In the room, in the silence of the night, every knock on the gate could be clearly heard. Both the aunt and the poor man jumped out of their seats and became a pillar.

- Oh our God! Someone is attacking our palace! Aunt Pavlyna shouted.

- Oh my God! Not Tatars at times! Or maybe it was our boys who rebelled and want to drive us out of the village? - said Olesya.

- Probably, the boys rebelled. God forbid, they will set fire to the palace. What in God's world will we do then? They are still killing us here in the room! - shouted the aunt.

- Here, God bless you! You, woman, are a good scarecrow. "I will take this gun and put a fat bullet in the forehead of one and the other who dares to

break into the palace, the others will not be in a hurry to go where they shouldn't," said Olesya.

She went to her room, took out the gun and the saber and began to load the gun with a cartridge, putting the saber on the table.

- Aunt! Take the second gun and load it! - brave Olesya called out.

- Oh my dear! I'm afraid to even touch the gun. But don't twist that gun, maybe it's loaded with bullets, then it will shoot me itself, - said Aunt Pavlyna, stumbling behind the crucified base of the carpet. - What will we do if the enemies tear out the windows and climb into our room? - said Aunt Pavlyna through the strands of the warp.

- Then I will hit that enemy on the forehead with a handgun or poke him in the eyes with a saber, - said Olesya.

- Oh, it's scary! O Lord, save us and have mercy on us from calamities - prayed the aunt, as if behind a string of threads.

Meanwhile, outside the yard, the knocking did not stop. The dogs whined as they rushed to the gate. The host Hristofor Stetkevich himself threw down his Calvinist books in fright, jumped out the back and ran outside. Servants had already run to the gate, Khristofor's distraught and sleepy housekeeper ran.

- Who is knocking there? - shouted the housekeeper, leaning his face against the strong oak gate. - Is it yours or your enemies?

- Not your enemies. I am the scribe of the Zaporizhia troop - Vyhovskyi. "Inform the honorable Mr. Stetkevich that I came to visit him, but got late on the way," Vyhovskyi said. - Don't be afraid of anything.

- Fine! - said the economist. – – But are you sure you are a writer? - asked the economist.

- Probably. I am not fooling you. Miss Olesya knows me, she even recognizes my voice, Vyhovskyi said.

The housekeeper went to the porch and alerted Stetkevich. Stetkevich did not trust anyone in those anxious and troubled times. He summoned Olesya. Olesya ran out with a gun in her hands. Having learned that Vyhovsky was knocking on the gate, she respectfully walked across the yard with a gun and recognized Vyhovsky's voice. Stetkevich ordered the gate to be opened. Servants brought a lit resin pine branch and lit it. Ivan Ostapovich rode into the open gate on a magnificent horse, with a rifle over his shoulder and a saber at his side. The world of the tar knot fell on him and on the head of the Basque horse. Olesya shouted with great joy.

- He, dear uncle! He! An old friend of mine!

- And this is you, Miss Olesya! Why are you shooting me with a gun? Probably, they thought that some Crimean murza with Tatars drove by at night to disturb the peace.

- That's what we thought. "You, Mr. Ivan, scared us well in our forests," said Olesya.

Vyhovsky jumped off his horse and threw the reins into the hands of the Cossack, and he himself greeted Olesya. Vyhovsky took off his cap and bowed low to old Hrystoforov, asking for forgiveness for being late on the road and disturbing the peace of good people in the middle of the night.

- It's okay, it's okay! - said old Stetkevich. - When you got lost in the forests and found yourself in our wet slums, please go to your rooms. Be my honored guest. I have already heard about you from Mrs. Pavlovskaya and other relatives of mine. I'm asking for light! The groom with a pitched, healthy rolling pin went forward. Everyone followed him.

The groom raised a burning Polish torch high above his head. The red light from the burning resin flooded the palace, as if with blood. The palace stood out clearly against the background of the black night, like a magnificent decoration on a stage with towers at the corners, with a porch, with some kind of peg attached to the wall near the tower, with heavy pyramidal supports. The light poured onto the strange heavy palace, flashed, spilled over the walls. Nooks, crannies, twists and turns around the hinges hid in a black shadow, as if they were afraid of the light and turned black, as if the black columns were snuggled up to the palace. The tall white chimneys dreamed of a red-matte light high above the black roof, plunging into the

shadows from below, as if they were hanging above the palace somewhere in the clouds and looked down on that unexpected movement and chatter of people in the yard, on the group of people who were moving towards the palace.

Vyhovsky looked around the palace with curious eyes and noticed that the Stetkevychs did not come from a high nobility, that they did not come from a majestic magnate's palace.

- Please to our Lord! - old Stetkevich asked Vyhovsky, pointing to the open narrow door, rounded at the top, as if hollowed out of a thick wall, like in a fortress.

A young boy lit them with a wax candle in his hands and illuminated the small, narrow streets. Vyhovsky threw off his expensive blue kuntush and followed old Stetkevich and Olesya into the skylight. The hall was elongated and small. Some figures were sculpted on the ceiling in the corners and in the middle: leaves, stems, flowers and all sorts of strange arabesques, between which pot-bellied cupids, pecked and full-breasted busts of nymphs and Venus seemed to be entangled. All those decorations were painted in rough, sharp green, blue, and red colors. The rosy cheeks of the cupids and nymphs seemed to rise with all their might, so that they were not flushed, but as if cut blood: it seemed that the cheeks of the nymphs and cupids were about to burst from the terrible tension.

Old Bohdan Stetkiewicz, Olesya's father, staying in Warsaw with a rich family of senators, picked up new foreign customs there and created a new atmosphere in his palace, albeit in the crudest forms.

Khristofor Stetkevich threw off his kuntush, and Vyhovsky noticed that Olesin's old uncle was dressed in all black and looked like some kind of Catholic monk: he was wearing a robe and wide trousers made of black velvet. Around the neck, the collar was white in gatherings and folds. A small black yarmulke was blackened on his head, from under which gray strands of hair protruded and fell over his ears, descending to his shoulders.

"Oh Lord! Is this a Jew, or a monk, or some hermit, wild in the Polish forests? What kind of manifestation is it?" Vyhovsky thought, looking at Stetkevich's tall, straight figure in gray knee-length stockings, black boots, with legs as thin as a goat's.

- Are you looking at me and probably wondering about my outfit? - the old man asked Vyhovsky, noticing his interesting and inquisitive sharp look. - I am a Calvinist now, but once I was a Socinian; I am neither Catholic nor Orthodox, and I wear the clothes of my foreign brothers, Socinians and Calvinists. In our country, everything should be simple and not ostentatious, unlike Catholic Poles or Cossacks.

And the old man mockingly looked at Vyhovsky, and his sharp eyes stared at the lush crimson robe, as if painted with gold, at the red sapiens and at the blue wide trousers.

- Please sit down and rest in our house! - said old Stetkevich, pointing to a wide and heavy sofa with rocking chairs on both sides, covered with a cheerful, as if painted, Turkish carpet.

-Is that you, Miss Elena, with a gun, as if on a wolf? Vyhovsky asked Olesya, noticing that Olesya was taking the rifle off her shoulders and putting it in a corner.

- I thought that either some enemies were attacking the palace, or our boys rebelled, so I prepared for the defense, - said Olesya, laughing.

- You see, Mr. Vyhovsky, my late brother, and her father Bohdanov, had the idea to teach her to ride a horse and shoot a gun, just in case in our troubled times, - said Stetkevich. - In our country, even women sometimes have to defend themselves from strangers and from their own enemies, if there was an attack on their home, because in Poland and Ukraine the nobility still hasn't gotten rid of their destructive tendencies: some kind of evil will come, Satan, who is at war with you, will destroy he will take the palace, the house, the goods, drive away the sheep, beat the servants, and take the land and forests for himself and possess them. You yourself know very well that even if you don't look for a court in Poland, don't ask: you can live quietly for a long time, as long as the case drags on in all kinds of courts, and in the meantime, an evil neighbor will consume your wealth, letting you go around the world with bags. Bad habits! Not all orders are good even in Poland!

Sitting with Stetkevych on the sofa, Vyhovsky glanced at the skylight. Along the walls stood rows of old-fashioned chairs with turned legs, with high backs, upholstered in yellow sapian; the handles were made in the form of

thick vipers, as in the palace of Prince Lubetsky; only in Stetkevich's palace, these vipers did not hang their heads down sadly, but raised them a little, and even opened their mouths, as if hissing out of anger and getting ready to bite.

"And there are vipers in Kyiv, and vipers here... These vipers are a bad sign for me," Vyhovsky thought.

- Mrs. Pavlovska gave you, dear Mr. Stetkevich, a greeting, and she asked you, Miss Elena, to come to visit her, - said Vyhovsky.

- Thank you, thank you! Didn't Prince Lubetsky bow to me? How is he doing there? How are his economic affairs in the estates? - asked Stetkevich and stared at Vyhovsky with a watchful eye, as if he was questioning him: have you been to Lyubetsky's? have you seen him? does he help you?

Stetkevich heard through people a long time ago that Vyhovsky was wooing Olesya.

Vyhovsky lowered his eyes: he guessed old Stetkevich's thoughts from his eyes.

However, the old Calvinist did not show in front of Vyhovsky that he guessed with what measures Vyhovsky came to visit him. He spoke kindly and willingly to the guest. The magnificent and cheerful appearance of Vyhovsky, his handsome and courageous figure, new rich clothes, the intelligent and eloquent conversation of the guest, who seemed to stir the sleep of a slumbering among the forests and forests of the quiet palace, all this had a good effect on the soul of the old strict Calvinist.

After chatting about Pavlovsk, the Lyubetzkys, and Kyiv, Stetkevich turned to Olesya and said:

- What, my God! A guest and traveler is a man of God, as they say. It's time to feed and drink the guest and give him a rest. Is dinner ready yet?

"It's probably already ready, because I hear that Aunt Pavlyna is already hanging around the door and rattling the plates," Olesya called out and left the hall.

- I, Mr. Vyhovskiy, have dinner early, I don't stay late, I go to bed early, I get up early, because I am the owner, and our Calvinist rules of life require it. Moderation, regularity in everything, humanity towards everyone - these are the rules of the humanistic age.

- Good rules! There is nothing to say about it. The only thing I like about Socinians is that they love science and enlightenment and try to spread enlightenment and sow the seeds of science in the region. This is a very bright sign in Socinian.

- You are right, Mr. General Clerk! The door opened, and Olesya announced that Aunt Pavlyna had been waiting for them with dinner for half an hour.

- Please, dear guest, do not shy away from our bread and salt! - the old man asked the guest, getting up little by little from the sofa with both long dry hands, with which he leaned behind him on the sofa and seemed to support his dry, long, as if built from one long bones, figure. Old Stetkevich looked across the hall like a long-legged crane, kneading his senile rickety legs. Vyhovskiy, stepping on his tiptoes, quietly followed his master.

The dining room was long, narrow and cramped, as all the rooms in the old palace were cramped. The table was already set. Stetkevich asked the guest to sit at the table. Aunt Pavlyna stood at the end of the table, her eyes widened at Vyhovskiy and she looked at him intently, not even blinking, as children look at strangers. Olesya sat down at the table, and Pavlyna stood still and even forgot that she had to sit down to dinner, she was very impressed by the new guest.

- Aunt Pavlyna! "Sit down and have dinner, because the hare is cold," said Olesya to her aunt, who jumped at her words.

Stetkevich drank a small glass of vodka and poured a healthy glass for Vyhovskiy.

- You are a Cossack, so you are also a Cossack, and I am from Socin and love peace in everything, - said Stetkevich.

Starving and lost on the way, Vyhovskiy ate at a table for two in a truly Zaporozhian way. Stetkevich drank only one small cup of Hungarian wine for dinner and asked Vyhovskiy everything about Hetman Bohdan, about his

further plans and plans for Ukraine, about the Moscow voivode and the archers who raided the larger parts of Ukraine. Vyhovsky, clutching his food, barely had time to answer him.

- Now neither the hetman nor the tsar will let the Catholics-dydics into their estates, which is a great pity, because they were already enlightened people, unlike the Moscow boyars. The hetman, who took Ukraine away from Poland, committed a bad deed, Stetkevich said in a calm voice.

- But the Catholics-Dydics took away their freedom from the Cossacks, regardless of their education; and it should be added that those gentlemen are not of Polish, but of Ukrainian descent, only they became friends, converted to Catholicism and became enemies for Ukraine, for the people and for the Cossacks; these traces of our blood have done us as much harm as the true Polish lords, even more than them, - said Vyhovsky, expressing not his own, but rather the official opinions of that time, the opinions of Hetman Bohdan.

- So it is, yes, but with the passage of time all that would change, it would happen differently and better order would come in both Poland and Ukraine, because everywhere in Europe everything is going to a better, not a worse situation, is going to humanism. The world of humanism shone there, and it would enlighten Poland, and after it, Ukraine. This world will not leave Moscow, but it would be extinguished there if it entered there: they will not let him there, there is nothing to say about that.

- When it has already happened, it is difficult to change it now, - called Vyhovsky, tilting the cup of Hungarian.

- You are right, Mr. General Clerk! Everything is God's will... I am a Calvinist and I believe in God's unchanging purpose for all states and for individual people. As God has judged from the beginning of time, so it will be. But the Cossacks did a bad deed, not good. Bad, bad! Calvinists recently had the will to stick to their faith in Poland, we removed the dark shackles from the human mind, we love science and enlightenment, we love to spread them in society.

Stetkevich thought, and Vyhovsky, managing to get around the hare, took up the roast with teteri and poured it with Hungarian, looking at Olesya.

- The Cossacks destroyed the nobility in Ukraine, leveled all strata of society, due to which the enlightened Orthodox nobility that remained in Ukraine, which had not yet embraced Catholicism and Socinianism, would be simplified. Oh, I don't love Hetman Bohdan for that! - the old Calvinist sighed heavily and looked contemptuously at Vyhovsky. - Bad! Bad, Mr. General Clerk! Badly!

"And this one sings the same song that Prince Lubetsky sang to me, albeit in a quiet Socinian voice. They are at war against the Cossacks. Will my business succeed? Will the old crane agree to marry Olesya for me?" Vyhovsky, having satisfied his appetite, and himself he thought, bowing his head. "It's bad for me to have such Olesina as a relative! Now I can say for this black grandfather: bad! bad!"

Olesya, an eyewitness, was fed up with this conversation of the old uncle and also with a sad refrain: bad and bad! For her now, she wanted everything in the world to be beautiful, even very beautiful. She could not help but look at the magnificent Vyhovsky, dressed in a bright crimson robe, with a shaggy figure, with black curls, with magnificent clear eyes that sparkled, as Vyhovsky cast a quick glance at Olesya. Olesya could not fall in love with his appearance, no matter how many times she looked at him. And the brilliance of manly beauty, and Cossack courage, and Vyhovsky's high position - everything charmed a young girl locked in an ancient palace with a black, respectable Calvinist and an old relative. It's as if Vyhovsky brought with him to the smoky palace the very life, alive, cheerful, enchanting young soul.

- Why did you, Mr. Yvan, delay so much, did not come to us all summer? - Olesya couldn't stand it and asked Vyhovsky.

- The Hetman did not let me in. There was a lot of work due to all kinds of new orders that had to inevitably come into being since the union of Ukraine with Moscow. But I also had my work to do: I finished the Chigyrin Monastery, which I founded a long time ago, and it was recently consecrated.

- So you, Mr. General Clerk, built the monastery, maybe even at your own expense? - asked Stetkevich, raising his head and as if waking up from a heavy thought.

- Yes, dear Mr. Goodness! He built a new monastery for the salvation of his soul and for his entire family, Vyhovsky called himself.

- And that's bad! Badly!

"Well, that's what this grandfather dared with his: it's bad and bad! It's as if he's bought up to goof around all evening; what did we do, he's all bad," Vyhovsky thought, and Olesya glanced at him furtively and smiled.

- Why is it bad? I am a God-loving man and I wanted to do a good deed and to support and strengthen the ancient faith of my father in the people, Vyhovsky said.

- No one needs monasteries, neither yours nor Catholic ones. One should only be a humane, enlightened man, treat people humanely, even boys. I am a Christian, like all of you. Once upon a time, I was a pure Socinian in my youth, I believed that there is one God in one person, I believed in one supreme essence, and I considered Christ as a man who redeemed the human race from sin not with his blood and death on the cross, but with his moral high teachings. And now I have become a Calvinist and recognize Christ as God, but I believe that it is not human virtuous deeds that save people, but God's original appointment, God's original will. And our teacher Calvin taught that monasteries are unnecessary when there is God's primordial destiny for every person:

"And the old man began to weave some nonsense! He won't let Vyhovsky say a word! She would have taken him and thrown him out of the house, and she herself would have spoken to the Cossack to the white world," thought Olesya and listened to Vyhovsky's voice, as if she were listening to wonderful music, melodies.

- Bad, Mr. Goodness, bad! - said Stetkevich in an even, unanimous voice without anger, without any sign of emotional disturbance.

"And this wooden old man is boring!" thought Vyhovsky.

The dinner was over, everyone was sitting at the table in silence. Aunt Pavlyna got up and tiptoed, like a cat, did not go, but as if moved in the door to the bakery, and then came back again and sat down.

- Well, now it's time to sleep at least! Stetkevich said. - I, Mr. Vyhovsky, go to bed early and get up early. And you, Pavlyna and Olesya, better go to bed

now. Do not sit for embroidery. And if Pavlyna did not prove to you, Olesya, the life of St. Alexei, let her prove it tomorrow. Light is expensive now, because the wars destroyed the beehives. Wax became expensive.

- So you entertain yourself in the evenings with stories about saints? - Vyhovsky happily asked Olesya.

- Aunt Pavlyna was telling me this evening at work about St. Alexei, the man of God, Olesya said and lowered her eyes. Pavlya also felt uncomfortable and bowed her head.

"It's good that you like to entertain yourself with pious stories," said Vyhovsky. - I love brave maidens, such as our Cossacks, I love that they know how to ride a horse and shoot a gun, because now the times are restless; enemies around us: we must be able to do everything we can to defend the land; but I also love devout virgins, whom no Jesuit fathers will lead astray, will not lure to Catholicism.

Stetkevich got up from the table and did not cross himself at the insults. Pavlyna took a candle from the table, called a servant and ordered him to take Vyhovsky to rest in a small room.

- Good night, Mr. Guest! Good night, Pavlyna and Olesya! Don't depend on it and get up early tomorrow, prepare breakfast for yourself and your guests, because the guest in the house is a man of God, - said Stetkevich, like a priest from the pulpit, and went across the hall to his bedroom.

"My soul hears that this Calvinist scarecrow will not give Olesya for me," Vyhovsky thought, remaining alone in a room as small as a monastery cell. he doesn't love Cossacks, he loves Poland. He has everything bad that exists in Ukraine, everything bad that the hetman and the Cossacks have done. As for Olesya and me, he will rub his "bad" on us too. There will be no other word for us than him. But as long as Olesya does not resist, I will steal her from this black grandfather and marry her in Kiev. Then, grandfather, it will be bad for you too!"

And Vyhovsky fell on the bed and after a rough Polish road through the pine roots now fell asleep, as if he had been shot, in a sound and sweet sleep.

The next day, Vyhovsky fell asleep after a long and difficult journey. The sun had already risen when he woke up and sweetly stretched himself on the bed to the full length of his tall stature.

"I will steal Olesya from this grandfather! I will steal her today! Let her get on a horse and follow me! The old Calvinist will console himself with the fact that this was God's original purpose," Vyhovsky thought and calmed down with this thought.

Having washed and dressed himself, Vyhovskyi went out into the yard after a long night and went to inspect Stetkevich's farm. In the spacious yard, three cranes were restrained by the wells. The cranes were creaking, sometimes descending into the well, sometimes rising high up: water for the bakery was drawn for hire, horses and oxen were watered. Next to the old garden there was a visibly healthy teak, lined with old sedges, but there were few paths around the healthy beech tree: it was an eye-witness that even non-Catholic gentlemen were hard at work in those troubled times. Threshers used to thresh rye and seed. People were walking and talking around the stream: truckers were transporting green vegetables, oats, and millet. The waiters used pitchforks to feed the sheaves onto the paths. The sheaves seemed to fly from the carts onto the path, and the stackers barely had time to put the sheaves into the long layers of the path. A junction was lying on the current; the sheaves shook with splashes. The fragrant spirit of oat straw and rye wafted into the clean air. Having rested and slept well after the Truska road, Vyhovsky walked along the stream, along the garden, breathing in the healthy forest air with all his might. The whole house smelled of resin, the pleasant scent of sun-baked pine trees. On all sides, as far as the eye could see, there were old thick forests turning green and blue.

- Will you thresh for money, or will you listen to the master's land, which the master gives you for sowing? Vyhovsky asked the men.

- But we will listen for the land, because we don't have our own, - called the threshers.

"This is what they are doing to the Stetkevychs," thought Vyhovsky. "And now I could say to the black grandfather: bad! bad! The truth and humanism are only in his head, but all this has not yet come to fruition."

Vyhovsky entered the hall fresh, cheerful, with cheerful thoughts in his head. Fresh green forests and meadows, fresh air refreshed his soul and body. The office door swung open, and Stetkevich stood in the doorway, straight as an arrow, dressed in all black.

- Good morning to you, master! And I overslept a little on the way, said Vyhovsky, approaching Stetkevich.

- Good health, Mr. Vyhovskiy! The guest also fell asleep, and so did ours. Probably, their breakfast is not ready, but I already want to eat. Please come to my office and let's chat while our Peacock comes home with breakfast.

Vyhovsky joined the tight cabinet. The sun poured an oblique ray into the two narrow windows and cheered up the cramped, simple, even shabby office, similar to a monk's cell. A simple bed stood against one wall. Two walls were lined with shelves on which books of all formats lay and stood.

- This is my Calvinist goodness! While everyone was sleeping, I read a lot from this book out of boredom, - said Stetkevich. - We Socinians also love books, but we love our Calvinist books more than anything, because their thoughts are clearer and do not confuse the mind in all kinds of dogmatic abstractions, like yours and Catholic books. Our books are clear and understandable, like a simple and clear human healthy head. In Poland, we were free to open libraries and schools, but now only God knows what will happen to us. Bad, Mr. Vyhovsky, bad!

At that time, Olesya appeared in the door of the office, in a light-blue summer dress, like the spring sky. This outfit, delicate and clear, went unusually well with her blond braid and white lily face. On her neck shone an expensive mother's pearl necklace, in her ears were earrings with diamonds. There was nothing colorful about her, but the delicate tones of the outfit really suited her lily-white face and blond hair. Olesya was like a lush May moonlit night with her delicate tones and dusk. Vyhovsky cheered her up with his arrival: her cheeks were freshened up, flushed with blush. There was joy in his eyes.

- I'm asking for breakfast, because the sun has already risen high, and my aunt and I, forgive us, dear uncle, fell asleep a little. Probably, Mr. Ivan, you are hungry already? –

Thank you! I will have breakfast with a good appetite, - Vyhovsky called, and they went to the dining room, where Pavlyna Rudnytska was waiting for them with breakfast.

After breakfast, Vyhovsky went out with Stetkevych into the hall and got right down to business, announcing that he was wooing her and that the god had already given him her word back in Kyiv.

- I already heard about your courtship through Pavlovsk and through the Princes of Lubetsky. I guessed why you got stuck so far away, in Mokhrany. But I will tell you, Mr. General Clerk, that nothing will come of your matchmaking. Both I and my relatives, having consulted, decided not to marry Olesya to you.

- Why is that, dear Mr. Goodness? I love Miss Stetkevichivna, and she loves me...

- So what! A noblewoman, and a noble one, Cossacks are not a match. Look for yourself, Mr. Vyhovsky, a Cossack woman, beautiful, simple, homely. You have simple customs, you have a simple situation, you have a military city, restless, like a military camp in the middle of the steppe during a war. We don't want to pass off our god for you. She is of a different kind, used to a different environment, to a different society. It is bad, it will be bad for her with you.

- What's wrong? I am a man of wealth. I have a good income. Envoys from all countries present me with rich gifts. Miss Elena will introduce me to the situation that will be to her liking.

- No, no, no! Bad, Mr. Scribe! It will be bad for her! Different people, different society, different customs, everything about you is different. She will be bored in your Chigyrin.

The servant asked Stetkevich to go out to the housekeeper, who had come to him on business. Old Stetkevich left the hall. At that time, Olesya jumped into the hall and began to ask Vyhovsky what the old uncle answered him.

- The same as Lyubetzky: we will not give it away! You will be bad for her, yes. You know what, Olesya! As soon as I leave the yard with my horse, I will tell you to saddle your horse and leave the yard for a walk in the grove. I

will wait for you in the grove. Let's ride on horses to Kyiv and get married, because I see that all your significant family is going against me. I still have to tell you something. Hetman is already weakening and will soon die; his son Yuri is still a young man. In the meantime, while Yuri finishes his studies at the Kyiv College, the Cossacks will choose me as hetman. You will be Hetmansha!

- I agree! Olesya said. - I will get on my horse as soon as my uncle sits down for his Socinian books in the office, and I will catch up with you. We will come to aunt Pavlovska and get married, said Olesya, offering her hand to Vyhovsky. - There is nothing to count on my relative, because because of her I will never get married.

Vyhovsky hugged and kissed Olesya warmly. Olesya blushed, but in her face, in her eyes, the courage and tenacity of the plum Cossack was clearly revealed.

- I know for sure that my relative will oppose our marriage and will never agree to it. I will go out after you, as if for a walk. No one will pay attention to me, because I often walk my horse in the groves around the village by myself, Olesya said.

Vyhovsky ordered his horse to be saddled and began to say goodbye to the old Calvinist.

- Forgive me, dear good man, that I do not agree to give Olesya into your Cossack hands. Let's say goodbye and part with peace and grace, - said old Stetkevich in farewell.

Olesya and her aunt Pavlyna came out and said goodbye to Vyhovsky. As a good hostess, Pavlyna carried food in a bag for the guests on the road: baked grouse, pies, pies and monkfish and tied the bag to the saddle.

- You will drive through our forests for a day and you will not see a single village, you will not find a piece of bread anywhere. Enjoy your health and remember me too, - said Pavlyna, wiping her tears.

Olesya has already told her aunt that she will leave home and catch up with Vyhovsky, and then marry him in Kyiv.

- You will do well! If I had done as my husband wanted to steal me away from my father, I would have been happy all my life, - said Pavlyna. - I will only feel sorry for you, Olesya! Now I will be left alone with old Mr. Khristofor, and he will not entertain me with anything. Oh, I'm bitter!

Before Vyhovsky left the yard, and old Stetkevich sat down with his books, Olesya sent her aunt to order the groom to saddle the horse for a trip through the groves. Soon the horse stood saddled in the yard. Olesya fell on Aunt Pavlyna's shoulder and cried. Pavlyna burst into tears.

Olesya ran through the snow, jumped on her horse and quietly said:

- Aunt! I don't even run away from home; I'm just going to Kyiv, to Aunt Pavlovska's, without my uncle's permission. Farewell! Farewell!

Olesya left the yard little by little, slowly drove around the tree, and as soon as she entered the grove among the live oaks, she touched the horse's spurs. The hot horse flew like an arrow, only oaks flashed in Olesya's eyes. She looked around and threw her eyes at the blackened old palace that flashed among the oaks and lindens, saw the tall spires, the slender cranes, and pity took her heart. She did not feel sorry for her strict uncle, who disgusted her with his morals and teachings; she felt sorry for her aunt Pavlyna, kind, cheerful, eloquent and talkative, who entertained her on winter evenings with stories about saints and German knights. Olesya remembered that her aunt had become an orphan, and sighed heavily.

"Farewell, old parental nest! Will I have to visit you again? Or maybe I won't cross your thresholds forever? Now in Ukraine, life is swirling and clattering like water in a quagmire. Maybe that whirlwind will catch me and spin me and my fate," thought Olesya, flying on a coma with pine trees, impatient to catch up with Vyhovsky as soon as possible. Something seemed to her that she would not catch up with him, would not find him in the thick groves and return to the old palace.

But quickly among the green hazel a kuntush lured, golden possums glistened in the sun. A horse's head with sharp alert ears could be seen from behind the bushes; among the green leaves, the top of the Cossack cap turned red. Vyhovsky saw Olesya and jumped out from behind the hazel.

- Now let God guide us on the way to our happiness! - said Vyhovsky and galloped his horse next to Olesya.

- But you know what, dear Mr. Ivan? My uncle is not as quiet and calm as you think. The ancient courage and tenacity of the Ukrainian nobleman sometimes growl in him. As soon as he finds out where I have been, he will put ten guys on horses and let this wolf pack chase after us. We need to deviate from the simple path and take tricks and detours, - said Olesya.

- So, yours is the truth, dear Olesya. You know all the ways and paths here. Lead me, rule me, and I will gallop after you.

Olesya turned onto a narrow forest path, as if cut through young, level pines. The hot spirit of pine and resin, healthy and invigorating, hit from the pine alley, as if from a flooded furnace, until it choked the spirit. Olesya galloped ahead. Vyhovsky flew after her.

For a long time they drove through this forest thicket, as if through a tunnel, and soon they came out onto a well-worn road. They drove along this road for a long time, and the sun had already turned from the south when they reached a large farm in the middle of the forest. The walking nobility lived in the farm by itself.

- And what, beloved Olesya? Did the road break you down? Will it be difficult for you to travel a long way on a horse?

- It will be difficult, because I am not a Cossack. I already feel tired and broken, Olesya said from the saddle.

- I thought so. I am looking for a nobleman in this village who has foals. Let's hire a driver when possible, harness our horses and get to Kyiv that way, said Vyhovsky and ran to the farm.

Olesya jumped off the horse and lay down on the grass under the oak, holding the horse by the reins. The horse nibbled on the low grass and neighed, turning its head to Olesya. Olesya got up, tied the horse to a young hornbeam and lay down again under the oak, resting her head on the stump of a log lying on the grass. Olesya was tired of a long miss on horseback, which was unusual for her. She stretched herself to her full height, stretched herself twice and lay motionless, looking up at the luxurious old branch of a

hundred-year-old oak. The young maiden felt calmness slowly spreading over her nerves. Never at her age had she felt so joyful, even happy. It seemed to her that she had become free as air in the midst of the green grove and forests, that all the obstacles, all the efforts of a significant family had been left somewhere far behind her, that they have already disappeared forever and no one will cling to her with their advice, no one will dare to separate her from her beloved. She lifted her eyes up and looked at the oak leaf carved into the tooth, at the patches of blue, like turquoise, sky that shone between the dark green leaves. She looked at the meadow, and the green meadow seemed to laugh at her. She was also soothed by the grayness of the dense pine trees in the distance, and the old, hollow, gnarled pines that grew on the side of the green meadows and, like cripples, stuck out their thick reddish branches twisted on all sides.

"How beautiful God's world is! How easy, how cheerful my soul is! Here I am free, like a bird in the forest," thought Olesya, stretching on the grass.

Vyhovsky walked along the alley of the farm with two noblemen, all shiny, beautifully dressed, bathed in the light of the hot sun, in the middle of a green grove, like an ancient knight, about whom Aunt Pavlyna often told her on winter evenings. Olesya admired his even condition and figure from afar, and as he approached her, she gazed into his clear, sparkling eyes.

"How clever in his eyes! Oh, he is telling the truth that he will be hetman in Ukraine. His eyes tell me that. I will be hetmanshchina (hetman's first lady)."

Olesin's proud and ambitious soul seemed to dance with joy and happiness. For her, it was as if in one moment the green grove disappeared somewhere, the grayness of the distant forests disappeared, all the poetry of the forest disappeared. In her thoughts, like the magnificent radiance of that clear day, hetmanship, glory, respect, the brilliance of a high position, which will overshadow both the princes of Lubetsky and the princes of Solomyretsky, who are not attached to her sweetheart, dreamed.

- So I found a reason! – said Vyhovsky, sitting down on the grass next to Olesya. - And it would be time for us to eat. Thanks to my aunt for tying a bag of food to my saddle.

And Vyhovsky ordered the Cossack to untie and bring that bag. He took out the baked tetera, the chicken and salt, and cut everything into pieces. Olesya

spread a handkerchief and put the food on the handkerchief. Shlyakhtych put a jug of milk and two mugs on the grass. And healthy, young Olesya dined with such taste that she had never dined in her father's palace.

Having finished his repast, Vyhovsky ordered the nobleman to get ready for the road. Viz was simple, cowardly. Shlyachtych put two balls in the jar, and placed straws on the balls and swam over them with faces. Vyhovskiy harnessed his horse, and tied Olesyny to the wagon from behind. The nobleman got behind the driver, and the carriage rolled quickly along the worn forest road to Kyiv.

Once again, the Polish road winding through ravines and meadows, through dense pine forests. The sun was setting on the evening path as they entered the large village of Mykytyani. At the end of the village stood a deserted palace of some rich man; the grandfather, according to eyewitnesses, was a Catholic and had to leave his estate. In the palace, all the windows were broken, all the doors were broken, all the goods were scattered. Olesya looked at that palace, at that desolation, and her heart felt heavy.

They did not have time to enter the village, when men from the inn rushed to their wagon and stopped the horses, grabbing their rumps.

- What do you need from us, good people? Vyhovsky asked.

- And what's more, you shouldn't come back here! - called one man gloomily.

The peasants, seeing the cart on which the gentlemen were riding, began to gather and stand around the cart. Some men ran out with sticks. Olesya silently looked at that community, and her soul grew cold.

- So, this is a Yahnyan kid! Oh God, he is! He is returning from Poland to his village, one man called out.

- But I'm not a Yahnyan kid! I'm a Cossack, I'm from a Cossack eldership! Vyhovsky shouted angrily. - Drive on, it will be destroyed!

- Well, don't rush! You won't go further, sir, but maybe you'll come back, when the Yahnians, your ancient Panschans, don't find out about you yet, - said one man.

- This is an ancient Yahnyan knight, and this is his wife! And if it's not him, then his brother, because he really fell on him, - said one grandfather. - Let's not let him into Yakhny! Go back to Poland, sir, when you feel sorry for yourself.

- What made you think that I am a Yahnyan kid? Look, I'm wearing a Cossack robe, a Cossack hat! Why are you picking on me?

- Is it a great difficulty to put on a Cossack outfit and slip into Yakhny? God knows you! Bring it back! Hetman Bohdan did a bad thing, that he conspired with the king to return the Catholic lords to the estates and harness people to the lordship, - the old grandfather grumbled.

- But now it is not the Polish king who rules in Ukraine, but the Moscow tsar, because the hetman and the Cossacks swore allegiance to the tsar, and the tsar will no longer allow the Catholic lords to return to their villages and palaces in Ukraine, Vyhovsky called out.

- And the holy God knows. We haven't heard anything about it, we don't know anything, but we only know that the Polish lords are returning from Poland and enslaving people, forcing them to do lordship, - said the grandfather.

- But he is lying, this gentleman! He wants to escape! He is the one who, when they heard, good people, that used to follow his noblemen in the fields with a gun and shoot the disobedient ones with bullets, for God's sake, he! Stick him! with sticks! Do not believe him! - shouted one healthy man, an eyewitness, a staunch enemy of the masters. - Go back, amazing son, with your lady, because this will be the end of you! Look what Basque horses he is bringing from Warsaw! And how much did he put on himself!

The man swung a thick stick at Vyhovsky. Olesya sat neither alive nor dead. She became yellow as wax.

- This is what an attack happened to me on the way! The hetman is waiting for me in Chigyrna, and here you are!... Good people, take me to the priest! The priest will tell you what kind of person I am, said Vyhovsky.

- Let's take it! - called one grandfather, an eyewitness, a capable and not evil man.

The nobleman drove the horse to the priest's yard, and the congregation with the squires followed the cart. Fortunately for Vyhovskiyi, the father really guessed that Vyhovskiyi was from the Cossack chieftainship. Vyhovsky told him who he was. Batyushka returned to the house, put on an epitrachil, took a cross in his hands, left the house and saw Vyhovsky as a significant person at the door of the house. The community raised their hats. Vyhovsky and Olesya kissed the cross and the father's hand.

- Hey, respected general scribe, our boys, unrepentant Polish people, thought you were a Catholic bastard and shot you as an enemy? - said the father.

- Yes, it's true, sir! They didn't treat me with those drekolias for a while, and they didn't understand that I was a Cossack. Reassure them, sir, that you have seen me more than once in Kyiv, because you also remind me of something, said Vyhovskiyi.

- Please come to my house! Father asked. Olesya crept into the door like that, as if escaping sudden death; Vyhovsky soon joined the sons. She ran into the skylight and, completely unconscious, did not sit down, but fell on a chair. Batyushka told the community who the visiting Cossack was. The community, bowing their heads, left the yard.

Having spent the night in the cramped, simple house of a village squire, Vyhovskiyi and Olesya then reached Kyiv without incident and stopped by the yard of Yakilyna Pavlovska's aunt. Pavlovska ran out into the yard and now she remembered everything. She was happy with this coincidence, as her happiness.

- Hey, did the two of you leave Mokran? I'm guessing that it wasn't Hristofor Stetkevich who let you out of the house on your own: you let yourself go. Eh?
- Yakylyna Pavlovska asked, laughing.

- But hey! - called Vyhovsky, shaking the straw from his dear kuntush and from Olesya's clothes. - Olesya had to let herself go to Kyiv when others wouldn't let her.

- Please, to God! Have dinner and rest, because you must have become expensive, and you have passed out from hunger and fatigue, - said Yakilyna.

Having rested well, Vyhovskiy went to spend the night with old Yevstafiy Vyhovskiy, and now, after breakfast, he ran on his horse to Podil to give a wedding reception to a man of the house. He left the court, and now Princess Lyubetska happened to visit Yakilyna Pavlovskaya, and she also brought with her her relative, Mrs. Sukhodolska, who had already been completely converted to Catholicism and reconciled. It was not for nothing that Olesya thought that no one in Kyiv knew about her coming to Kyiv together with Vyhovskiy. While they were driving down the street, they were spotted by the butler of Prince Lubetsky; he also caught sight of Olesya, who was sitting on the cart next to Vyhovskiy. As a good watcher, and also an interesting one, he went to Princess Lubetskaya and told her about this very unusual incident. The princess now realized everything and the next day she ran early to Pavlovskaya to fight back Olesya from Vyhovskiy.

After breakfast, Olesya sat down on the sofa, as if hiding in a corner of the sofa, drew her legs up, leaned on the rocking chair-pillow and rested. She felt tired and broken after the long trudging road, she was pale in appearance, and her eyes showed great weariness and disturbance of the soul due to the unexpected events of those days.

Lyubetska and Sukhodolska ran into the skylight and began to stare at the nooks and crannies with their eyes. They looked at Olesya in the corner of the healthy, as if in a nursery, sofa.

For Olesya, this early visit was so unpleasant that she grimaced and did not cry a little. She had already dozed off a little; she was so beautiful and calm in the silence, in the corner of the wide sofa. Golden dreams flew in a swarm before her eyes, like bees in the sun in an apiary. She kept thinking about her beloved, imagined his appearance, his eyes, and was happy with dreams of her future high position as a hetman, the first person in Ukraine after the hetman.

- Oh! And you, Olesya, in Kyiv? - Lubetska shouted.

- Oh! You are here! Not in Mokran? And where is Mr. Hristofor Stetkevich? Did you come here with him or with Aunt Pavlyna? - shouted the loud Mrs. Sukhodolska to all the rooms.

- I, a woman, arrived in Kyiv with Ivan Ostapovich Vyhovsky, - said Olesya, greeting her relatives and again nestling in the corner of the sofa.

- And why so? - asked Lubetska.

- What kind of miracle is this? Miss Olesya arrived with a Cossack in tow: they traveled for two days and one night through the slums and forests, through the forests... This is a miracle and a day! Sukhodolska shouted.

- And there is no miracle here. My uncle wouldn't let me, but I wanted to go to Kyiv. I should not go alone in such dangerous times. A good man happened to take me, thanks to him, to Kyiv, in good health, Olesya said quietly.

- There is something here! There is something! It was not for nothing, Olesya, that you embarked on such a journey with Vyhovsky and even without the guardian's permission, - Lyubetska said.

- Well, it's simple, my dear wife. I came to Kyiv for a visit, Olesya said.

- Tell the truth, my dear Olesya! Hey, did you make that mistake with Mokran with that Cossack to marry him? Hey, did you run away from home? - asked Lubetska.

- Well, I didn't run away, kryagine! In the middle of a clear day, I ordered my horse to be saddled and rode with Vyhovsky to Kyiv. That's all! Olesya said.

- But you just arrived in Kyiv to marry Vyhovsky without asking anyone? - asked Mrs. Sukhodolska.

"I still don't know for sure myself whether I will marry Vyhovsky in Kyiv or not," said Olesya with annoyance, breaking away from a sincere confession.

- Oh, I know for sure that you will get married! - yelled the old and loud Sukhodolska. - Why would you go with Vyhovsky to such a distance?

- What are you thinking, dear Olesya? Are you a Cossack? You are a noblewoman from grandfathers, from great-grandfathers; you are from a senatorial and princely family, and he... Who is he? A simple Khodachkov

nobleman from the village of Vyhova in Volyn, now a Cossack, although he serves as a scribe under the hetman there, the old noblewoman rehearsed.

- He, aunt, holds a high government position under the Hetman, has large incomes; he is a man of wealth, because he recently built the Chigyrin monastery with his own money, - said Olesya quietly.

- So what's up! Princess Lubetska rehearsed. - He will take you among Cossacks and Cossacks. They will put you in their boyish ancient clothes: they will put you in a sheet and a red spare. Now you are quite a virgin, like a sincere Warsaw woman, but there you will become a man, you will be completely simplified. Oh, grief is heavy for me!

- If I don't want to, no one will put me anywhere in a sheet and a red spare. "I don't even think of dressing in it. When I come to Chigyrin, I will come with splendor and honor, like a born noblewoman, like a modern lady, and I will stay like that there," Olesya said proudly.

- Oh my God! Woe to those unfortunate orphans! No one takes care of them, no one brings them up, okay. They grow freely, like pines in a forest. You, Olesya's heart, an orphan, have no mother; you would listen to us, because we wish you good and happiness. You are still young; you will find husbands among important Ukrainian nobles, and maybe Polish ones, - said Sukhodolska and did not shed tears for a while.

- Even though I am an orphan, I am not without a mind, and in every situation I will show myself to be both a new world person and a noblewoman, loyal not to Moscow, but to Poland. I will give myself advice when I marry the Cossack nobleman Vyhovsky, - said Olesya quietly and calmly.

- Well, let's take care of ourselves! - Lyubetska shouted already excitedly.

- Well, take care of yourself if you don't want to listen to us! - Sukhodolska already rehearsed angrily. - God is with you, when you shun your family, you shun the princess who became your real mother. Let's go home, sister!

- Let's go, sister! A submissive calf needs two mothers, and an unsubmissive one does not want one.

"Oh, if only these mothers would get out of the house sooner! Oh, they bore me with their advice and shouting!" Olesya thought silently.

- Let's go, sister! Do, Olesya, as you know, but then don't complain about us, but only complain about yourself, - said Lyubetska and left the skylight, without even saying goodbye to Olesya.

- Let's go! Ah! We will only waste time in vain! Let's go! Sukhodolska shouted and left, not saying goodbye to Olesya either.

"Glory be to you, Creator! Although I will not hear the cry and any advice," Olesya thought.

Aunt Yakylna entered and looked at Olesya. Olesya sat angry and pale.

- Did you go? - asked Yakylna.

- Praise God, let's go. They didn't say anything out of annoyance, Olesya said.

- The counselors went, and our counselor was sick. However, soon Vyhovskiy arrived on a horse and said that he had already agreed to a wedding with a priest. In the evening, Vyhovskiy and Olesya went to St. Sophia's Cathedral for matins and confessed, and the next day they received Holy Communion and were married in Podol. Happy and cheerful, they returned for lunch to the affectionate and kind aunt of Yakylna Pavlovskaya. Yakylna was still happy, as if she herself had married Ivan Vyhovskiy. And no one in the world sympathized with Vyhovskiy and Olesya in their happiness as sincerely as Aunt Yakylna. She was always happy and satisfied when she had to pair a boy with a young lady.

Ivan Ostapovich Vyhovskiy lived for a week at Yakylna Pavlovskaya's house, as if in paradise, and he could not be satisfied with his Olesya. He seemed to have rejuvenated, cheered up and rested his soul even after the difficult journey to Mokran, and after the struggle with Olesya's family, he also rested from the difficult clerical service under the cranky old hetman. But in Olesya, all those remaining worries turned into a nervous illness, which the amiable Vyhovskiy could not even soothe with his caress and love. And the clinging stubborn family, and the long drawn-out courtship, and the unexpected escapes from home by the old Stetkevich, and the unexpected,

as if stolen, marriage against the will of the entire family - all this caused the delicate and pampered Olesya to suffer from nervous weakness.

In the meantime, Danylo Vyhovsky came from Chygyrin to Kyiv and told Ivan Ostapovich to go to Chygyrin now, because there were many things to do, and Hetman Bohdan had already begun to scold Vyhovsky and was even angry about his dealings with his marriage in Kyiv. Vyhovsky entrusted the care of Olesya to aunt Yakylyna and old Ostap Vyhovsky, and he himself hurried to Chygyrin as quickly as possible.

Meanwhile, Olesya's weakness lingered. She would recover, get better a little, then get sick again. Vyhovsky often visited Olesya, tried for a week or two at the house of aunt Yakylyna, but was afraid to take her to Chygyrin, because bad weather had already set in, it was getting cold. Olesya did not like the Cossacks, reluctantly planned to go to Chygyrin and, as an eyewitness, delayed leaving herself.

- Let my Olesya spend the winter with you, dear aunt, and in the summer we will transport her in a warm and dry climate, so that our Chygyrin will seem better to her, - said Vyhovsky to her aunt.

- So be it. I have her like my own mother. I will take care of her like my own child. God forbid, she will catch a cold in the winter on the road in those steppes and in those steppe winds! What will happen to her then? - said aunt Yakylyna.

Meanwhile, spring came, cold and bad. Easter has already passed, but the cold weather has not passed, as if they dared to harm Vyhovsky and Olesya. Summer has come. Olesya gave birth to a son Yuri.

- I'm having trouble with Olesya again! Even the Cossack elder laughs that I am hiding my noblewoman somewhere in Kyiv and am afraid to show her to the Cossacks in Chyryna, so that she does not take her away from me, Vyhovsky said to Yakylyna's aunt.

Next: Chapter IV