

ตอนที่ 4

นวนิยาย

หน่วยที่ 7

อเล็กซานเดอร์ โซลเซินนิทซิน

(ค.ศ. 1918-)

อเล็กซานเดอร์ โซลเซินนิทซิน (Alexander Solzhenitsyn) นับเป็นนักเขียนนวนิยายที่มีชื่อเสียงแพร่หลายไปทั่วโลก จากผลงานที่พยายามตีแผ่ลักษณะของสังคมโซเวียตภายใต้ระบบการปกครองของ โจชิฟ วิตสซาร์อิโอนอวิช สตาลิน (Josip Vissarionovich Stalin) อเล็กซานเดอร์เป็นนักเขียนนวนิยายคนที่ 4 ของสหภาพโซเวียตที่ได้รับรางวัลโนเบลสาขาวรรณคดี

เนื้อหาสำคัญ

อเล็กซานเดอร์ โซลเซินนิทซิน (Alexander Solzhenitsyn)

1. ชีวิตประวัติ
2. บทคัดตอนนวนิยายชื่อ One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich
3. บทวิจารณ์นวนิยายเรื่อง One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich

จุดประสงค์การเรียนรู้

หลังจากนักศึกษาเรียนหน่วยที่ 7 นักศึกษาสามารถ

1. บอกประสบการณ์ของผู้แต่งจากผลงานที่กำหนดให้ได้
2. บอกใจความสำคัญของเรื่อง (theme) ของผลงานที่กำหนดให้ได้
3. วิเคราะห์ลักษณะของตัวละครของผลงานที่กำหนดให้ได้



อเล็กซานเดอร์
โซลเซินนิทซิน

1. ชีวิตประวัติของอเล็กซานเดอร์ โซลเซินนิทซิน (Alexander Solzhenitsyn)

อเล็กซานเดอร์ โซลเซินนิทซิน เกิดเมื่อวันที่ 11 ธันวาคม ค.ศ. 1918 ที่เมืองคริสโตลวอดส์คในตระกูลนักปราชญ์ (a family of Cossack intellectuals) บิดาของอเล็กซานเดอร์ได้ประสบอุบัติเหตุเสียชีวิต ก่อนที่อเล็กซานเดอร์จะลืมตามองโลก ดังนั้น เขาจึงได้รับการอบรมสั่งสอนและเลี้ยงดูโดยมารดาของเขาที่มีอาชีพเป็นครูสอนหนังสือ

อเล็กซานเดอร์เข้ารับการศึกษาที่มหาวิทยาลัยแห่งรอสทอฟ-นา-ดอน (the University of Rostov-na-Donu) สาขาวิชาคณิตศาสตร์และเข้าศึกษาวรรณคดีที่มหาวิทยาลัยมอสโกว (the Moscow State University) ในระหว่างสงครามโลกครั้งที่ 2 อเล็กซานเดอร์เข้ารับราชการทหารแต่ในปี ค.ศ. 1945 เขาถูกพิพากษาจำคุกเป็นเวลา 8 ปี หลังจากได้ถูกฝากขังในค่ายกักกันถึง 3 ปี เพราะเขาเขียนจดหมายวิพากษ์วิจารณ์สตาลิน เมื่อเขาได้รับอิสรภาพ ใน ค.ศ. 1956 เขาได้ไปตั้งรกรากที่เมืองรยซัน (Ryazan) ซึ่งอยู่ตอนกลางของรัสเซียโดยประกอบอาชีพเป็นครูสอนวิชาคณิตศาสตร์ และอเล็กซานเดอร์เริ่มจับงานเขียนทั้งเรื่องสั้นและนวนิยาย

One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich นวนิยายเรื่องแรกของอเล็กซานเดอร์ที่นักอ่านงานวรรณกรรมรู้จักกันแพร่หลาย ได้รับการตีพิมพ์ในสหภาพโซเวียตใน ค.ศ. 1962 ส่วนผลงานอื่น ๆ ของเขาได้รับการพิมพ์เผยแพร่ในต่างประเทศเสียทั้งนั้น เช่น Cancer Word (ค.ศ. 1968) The First Circle (ค.ศ. 1968) และ August 1914 (ค.ศ. 1971) นวนิยายขนาดยาวของเขาคือ The Gulag Archipelago ซึ่งได้รับการพิมพ์เผยแพร่ในกรุงปารีส ประเทศฝรั่งเศสจากนวนิยายเรื่องนี้เองอเล็กซานเดอร์ถูกขับไล่ออกจากประเทศบ้านเกิดเมืองนอนของเขาจึงอพยพไปอยู่ที่ประเทศสวิสเซอร์แลนด์และย้ายไปตั้งรกรากที่รัฐเวอร์มอนต์ (Vermont) ประเทศสหรัฐอเมริกาตราบเท่าทุกวันนี้ อเล็กซานเดอร์ได้รับรางวัลโนเบลสาขาวรรณคดีในปี ค.ศ. 1970 หรือ 1 ปีหลังแชมป์วมวล เบ็ทเค็ท

2. **One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich**

นวนิยายเรื่อง One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich เป็นนวนิยายเรื่องแรกและเป็นนวนิยายที่ทำให้อเล็กซานเดอร์มีชื่อเสียงขจรขยายไปอย่างรวดเร็วทั้งในและนอกประเทศ One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich ได้ถูกตีพิมพ์ครั้งแรกในหนังสือพิมพ์ (journal) ในสหภาพโซเวียต ชื่อ โนวี เมียร์ (Novy Mir) หนังสือพิมพ์ฉบับดังกล่าวขายไปหมดเกลี้ยงในพริบตา และ One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich ก่อให้เกิดความรู้สึกทางการเมือง (a political sensation) ของผู้คนทั้งในและนอกประเทศ มีนักเขียนชาวรัสเซียหลายคนเดินตามรอยของอเล็กซานเดอร์ด้วยการเขียนนวนิยายเพื่อสะท้อนชีวิตของประชาชนภายใต้ระบอบการปกครองของสตาลิน นักอ่านในรัสเซียหลายคนอ่าน One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich เพื่อเตือนความทรงจำเก่าๆ ในยุคนั้น แต่บางคนปฏิเสธที่จะอ่านมันเพราะไม่อยากจะรำลึกถึงวันเวลาแห่งความทุกข์ทรมานนั้น



ภาพหน้าปกนวนิยายเรื่อง One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich

2. บทคัดตอนจากนวนิยายเรื่อง **One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich**
โดย อเล็กซานเดอร์ โซลเจนิทซิน

One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich

At five o'clock that morning reveille was sounded, as usual by the blows of a hammer on a length of rail hanging up near the staff quarters. The intermittent sounds barely penetrated the windowpanes on which the frost lay two fingers thick, and they ended almost as soon as they'd begun. It was cold outside, and the campguard was reluctant to go on beating out the reveille for long.

The clanging ceased, but everything outside still looked like the middle of the night when Ivan Denisovich Shukhov got up to go to the bucket. It was pitch dark except for the yellow light cast on the window by three lamps—two in the outer zone, one inside the camp itself.

And no one came to unbolt the barracks door; there was no sound of the barrack orderlies pushing a pole into place to lift the barrel of excrement and carry it out.

Shukhov never overslept reveille. He always got up at one, for the next ninety minutes, until they assembled for work, belonged to him, not to the authorities, and any old-timer could always earn a bit by sewing a pair of mittens for someone out of old sleeve lining; or bringing some rich loafer in the squad his dry valenki¹—right up to his bunk, so that he wouldn't have to stamble barefoot round the heap of boots looking for his own pair; or going the rounds of the warehouses, offering to be of service, weeping up this or fetching that; or going to the mess hall to collect bowls from the tables and bring them stacked to the dishwashers—you're sure to be given something to eat there, though there were plenty of others at that game, more than plenty—and, what's worse, if you found a bowl with something left in it you could hardly resist licking it out. But Shukhov had never forgotten the words of his first squad leader, Kuziomin—a hard-bitten prisoner who had already been in for twelve

¹ Knee-length felt boots for winter wear.

years by 1943 –who told the newcomers, just in from the front, as they sat beside a fire in a desolate outing in the forest:

“Here, men, we live by the law of the taiga. But even here people manage to live. The ones that don’t make it are those who lick other men’s leftovers, those who count on the doctors to pull them through, and those who squeal on their buddies.”

As for squealers, he was wrong there. Those people were sure to get through camp all right. Only, they were saving their own skin at the expense of other people’s blood.

Shukhov always arose at reveille. But this day he didn’t. He had felt strange the evening before, feverish, with pains all over his body. He hadn’t been able to get warm all through the night. Even in his sleep he had felt at one moment that he was getting seriously ill, at another that he was getting better. He had wished morning would never come.

But the morning came as usual.

Anyway, where would you get warm in a place like this, with the windows iced over and the white cobwebs of first all along the huge barracks where the walls joined the ceiling!

He didn’t get up. He lay there in his bunk on the top tier, his head buried in a blanket and a coat, both feet stuffed into one tucked-under sleeve of his wadded jacket.

He couldn’t see, but his ears told him everything going on in the barrack room and especially in the corner his squad occupied. He heard the heavy tread of the orderlies carrying one of the big barrels of excrement along the passage outside. A light job, that was considered, a job for the infirm, but just you try and carry out the muck without spilling any. He heard some of the 75th slamming bunches of boots onto the floor from the drying shed. Now their own men were doing it (it was their own squad’s turn, too, to dry valenki). Tiurin, the squad leader, and his deputy Pavlo put on their valenki without a word but he heard their bunks creaking. Now Pavlo would be going off to the bread-storage and Tiurin to the staff quarters to see the P.P.D.²

² Production Planning Department

Ah, but not simply to report as usual to the authorities for the daily assignment. Shukhov remembered that this morning his fate hung in the balance: they wanted to shift the 104th from the building shops to a new site, the "Socialist Way of Life" settlement. It lay in open country covered with snowdrifts, and before anything else could be done there they would have to dig holes and put up posts and attach barbed wire to them. Wire themselves in, so that they wouldn't run away. Only then would they start building.

There wouldn't be a warm corner for a whole month, Not even a doghouse. And fires were out of the question. There was nothing to build them with. Let your work warm you up, that was your only salvation.

No wonder the squad leader looked so worried, that was his job—to elbow some other squad, some bunch of suckers, into the assignment instead of the 10 th. Of course, with empty hands you got nowhere. He'd have to take a pound of salt pork to the senior official there, if not a couple of pounds.

There's never any harm in trying, so why not have a go at the dispensary and got a few days, off if you can? After all, he did feel as though every limb was out of joint.

Then Shukhov wondered which of the campguards was on duty that morning. It was "One-and-a-half" Ivan's turn, he recalled. Ivan was a thin, weedy, darkeyed sergeant. At first sight he looked like a real bastard, but when you got to know him he turned out to be the most good-natured of the guards on duty; he didn't put you in the guardhouse, he didn't head you off before the authorities. Shukhov decided he could lie in his bunk a little longer, at least while Barracks 9 was at the mess hall.

The whole four-bunk frame began to shake and sway. Two of its occupants were getting up at the same time; Shukhov's top-tier neighbor, Alyosha the Baptist, and Buinovsky, the ex-naval captain down below.

The orderlies, after removing both barrels of excrement, began to quarrel about which of them should go for hot water. They quarreled naggingly, like old women.

"Hey you, cackling like a couple of hens!" bellowed the electric welder in the 20th squad. "Get going." He flung a boot at them.

The boot thudded against a post. The squabbling stopped.

In the next squad the deputy squad leader growled quietly: "Vasily Eyodorovich, they've cheated us again at the supply depot, the dirty rats. They should have given us four twenty-five-ounce loaves and I've only got three. Who's going to go short?"

He kept his voice down, but of course everyone in the squad heard him and waited fearfully to learn who would be losing a slice of bread that evening.

Shukhov went on lying on his sawdust mattress, as hard as a board from long wear. If only it could be one thing or the other—let him fall into a real fever or let his aching joints ease up.

Meanwhile Alyosha was murmuring his prayers and Buinovsky had returned from the latrines, announcing to no noe in particular but with a sort of malicious glee: "Well, sailors, grit your teeth, It's twenty below, for sure."

Shukhov decided to report sick.

At that very moment his blanket and jacket were imperiously jerked off him. He flung his coat away from his face and sat up. Looking up at him, his head level with the top bunk, was the lean figure of The Tartar.

So the fellow was on duty out of turn and had stolen up.

"S 854," The Tartar read from the white strip that had been stitched to the back of his back jacket. "Three day's penalty with work."

The moment they heard that peculiar choking voice of his, everyone who wasn't up yet in the whole dimly lit barracks, where two hundred men slept in bug-ridden bunks, stirred to life and began dressing in a hurry.

"What for, citizen³ chief?" asked Shukhov with more chagrin than he felt in his voice.

With work—that wasn't half so bad. They gave you hot food and you had no time to start thinking. Real jail was when you were kept back from work.

"Failing to get up at `reveille. Follow me to the camp commandants' office," said The Tartar lazily.

His crumpled, hairless face was imperturbable. He turned, looking around for another victim, but now everybody, in dim corners and under the lights, in upper

³ Prisoners were not allowed to use the word comrade

The others shouted advice from below:

“See you don’t breathe on it. It’ll push up the temperature.”

“Push it up? Not fucking likely. My breath won’t have any effect.”

Tiurin of the 104th–Shukhov’s squad–was not among them. Shukhov put down the pail, tucked his hands into his sleeves, and watched with interest.

The man up the pole shouted hoarsely: “Seventeen and a half. Not a damn bit more.”

And, taking another look to be sure, slid down.

“Oh, it’s cockeyed. It always lies,” someone said. “Do you think they’d ever hang one up that gave the true temperature?”

The squad leaders scattered. Shukhov ran to the well. The frost was trying to nip his ears under his earflaps, which he had lowered but not tied.

The top of the well was so thickly coated with ice that he only just managed to slip the bucket into the hole. The rope hung stiff as a ramrod.

With numb hands he carried the dripping bucket back to the guardroom and plunged his hands into the water. It felt warm.

The Tartar was no longer there. The guards–there were four now–stood in a group. They’d given up their checkers and their nap and were arguing about how much cereal they were going to get in January (food was in short supply at the settlement, and although rationing had long since come to an end, certain articles were sold to them, at a discount, which were not available to the civilian inhabitants).

“Shut that door, you scum. There’s a draft,” said one of the guards.

No sense in getting your boots wet in the morning. Even if Shukhov had dashed back to his barracks he wouldn’t have found another pair to change into. During eight years’ imprisonment he had known various systems for allocating footwear: there’d been times when he’d gone through the winter without valenki at all, or leather boots either, and had had to make shift with rope sandals or a sort of galoshes made of scraps of motor tires–“Chetezes” they called them, after the Cheliabinsk tractor works. Now the footwear situation seemed better; in October Shukhov had received (thanks to Pavlo, whom he trailed to the warehouse) a pair of ordinary, hard-wearing leather boots, bit enough for a double thickness of rags inside. For a week he went about

as though he'd been given a birthday present, kicking his new heels. Then in December the valenki arrived, and, oh, wasn't life wonderful?

But some devil in the bookkeeper's office had whispered in the commandant's ear that valenki should be issued only to those who surrendered their boots. It was against the rules for a prisoner to possess two pairs of footwear at the same time. So Shukhov had to choose. Either he'd have to wear leather throughout the winter, or surrender the boots and wear valenki even in the thaw. He'd taken such good care of his new boots, softening the leather with grease! Ah, nothing had been so hard to part with in all his eight years in camps as that pair of boots! They were tossed into a common heap. Not a hope of finding your own pair in the spring.

Now Shukhov knew what he had to do. He dexterously pulled his feet out of the valenki, put the valenki in a corner, stuffed his foot rags into them (his spoon tinkled on the floor—though he'd made himself ready for the guardhouse in a hurry, he hadn't forgotten his spoon.), and, barefoot, sloshed the water right under the guards' valenki.

"Hey there, you slob, take it easy," one of the guards shouted, putting his feet on a chair.

"Rice?" another went on. "Rice is in a different category. You can't compare cereal with rice."

"How much water are you going to use, idiot? Who on earth washes like that?"

"I'll never get it clean otherwise, citizen chief. It's thick with mud."

"Didn't you ever watch your wife scrub the floor, pig?"

Shukhov drew himself up, the dripping rag in his hand. He smiled ingeniously, revealing the gaps in his teeth, the result of a touch of scurvy at Ust-Izhma in 1943. And what a touch it was—his exhausted stomach wouldn't hold any kind of food, and his towels could move nothing but a bloody fluid. But now only a lisp remained from that old trouble.

"I was taken away from my wife in forty-one, citizen chief. I've forgotten what she was like."

"That's the way the scum wash... They don't know how to do a fucking thing and don't want to learn. They're not worth the bread we give them. We ought to feed them on shit."

“Anyway, what’s the **fucking** sense in washing it every day? Who can stand the damp? Look here, you, 854. Just wipe it over lightly to make it moist and then **fuck off**”

“No, you can’t compare cereal with rice.”

Shukhov knew how to manage anything.

Work was like a stick. It had two ends. When you worked for the knowing you gave them quality; when you worked for a fool you simply gave him eyewash.

Otherwise, everybody would have croaked long ago. They all knew that.

Shukhov wiped the floorboard with a damp rag so that no dry patches remained, tossed the rag behind the stove without wringing it out, pulled on his valenki near the door, threw out the rest of the water onto the path used by the camp authorities, and, taking short cuts, made a dash past the bathhouse and the dark, cold club to the mess hall.

He still had to fit in a visit to the dispensary. He ached all over. And there was that guard outside the mess hall to be dodged-the camp commandant had issued strict orders that prisoners on their own were to be picked up and thrown into the guardhouse.

That morning-a stroke of luck-there was no crowd, no lines, outside the mess. Walk in.

The air was as thick as in a Turkish bath. An icy wave blew in through the door and met the steam rising from the stew. The squads sat at tables or crowded the aisles in between, waiting for places to be freed. Shouting to each other through the crush, two or three men from each squad carried bowls of stew and oatmeal on wooden trays and tried to find room for them on the tables. Look at that damn **stiff-necked** fool. He doesn’t hear, he’s bumped a tray. Splash, splash! You’ve a hand free, hit him on the back of **the** neck. That’s the way. Don’t stand there blocking the aisle, looking for something to swipe!

There at the table, before dipping his spoon in, a young man crossed himself, A West Ukrainian, that meant, and a new arrival, too.

As for the Russians, they’d forgotten which hand to cross themselves with.

They sat in the cold mess hall, most of them eating with their hats on, eating slowly, picking out putrid little fish from under leaves of boiled black cabbage and

spitting the bones out on the table. When the bones formed a heap and it was the turn of another squad, someone would sweep them off and they'd be trodden into a mush on the floor. But it was considered bad manners to spit the fishbones straight out on the floor.

Two rows of trestles ran down the middle of the hall and near one of them sat Fetiukov of the 104th. It was he who was keeping Shukhov's breakfast for him. Fetiukov had the last place in his squad, lower than Shukhov's. From the outside, everyone in the squad looked the same—their numbered black coats were identical—but within the squad there were great distinctions. Everyone had his grade. Buinovsky, for instance, was not the sort to sit keeping another zek's⁴ bowl for him. And Shukhov wouldn't take on any old job either. There were others lower than him.

Fetiukov caught sight of Shukhov and with a sigh surrendered his place.

"It's all cold. I was just going to eat your helping. Thought you were in the guardhouse."

He didn't hang around—no hope for any leftovers to scrape out of Shukhov's bowl.

Shukhov pulled his spoon out of his boot. His little baby. It had been with him his whole time in the North, he'd cast it with his own hands in sand out of aluminum wire, and it was embossed with the words "Ust-Izhma 1944."

Then he removed his hat from his clean-shaven head—however cold it might be, he could never bring himself to eat with his hat on—and stirred the cold stew, taking a quick look to see what kind of helping they'd given him. An average one. They hadn't ladled it from the top of the kettle, but they hadn't ladled it from the bottom either. Fetiukov was the sort who when he was looking after someone else's bowl took the potatoes from it.

The only good thing about stew was that it was hot, but Shukhov's portion had grown quite cold. However, he ate it with his usual slow concentration. No need to hurry, not even for a house on fire. Apart from sleep, the only time a prisoner lives for himself is ten minutes in the morning at breakfast, five minutes over dinner, and five at supper.

⁴Abbreviation of Russian for prisoner.

The stew was the same every day. Its composition depended on the **kind** of vegetable provided that winter. Nothing but salted carrots last year, which meant that from September to June the stew was plain carrot. This year it was black cabbage. The most nourishing time of the year was June; then all vegetables came to an end and were replaced by grits. The worst time was July-then they shredded nettles into the pot.

The little fish were more bone than flesh; the flesh had been boiled off the bone and had disintegrated, leaving a few remnants on head and tail. Without neglecting a single fish scale or particle of flesh on the brittle skeleton, Shukhov went on chomping his teeth and sucking the bones, spitting the remains on the table. He ate everything-the gills, the tail, the eyes when they were still in their sockets but not when they'd been boiled out and floated in the bowl separately-big fish-eyes. Not then. The others laughed at him for that.

This morning Shukhov economized. Since he hadn't returned to the barracks he hadn't drawn his rations, so he ate his breakfast without bread. He'd eat the bread later. Might be even better that way.

After the vegetable stew there was *magara*, that damned "Chinese" oatmeal. It had grown cold too, and had set into a solid lump. Shukhov broke it up into pieces. It wasn't only that the oatmeal was cold-it was tasteless even when hot, and left you no sense of having filled your belly. Just grass, except that it was yellow, and looked like cereal. They'd got the idea of serving it instead of cereals from the Chinese, it was said. When boiled, a bowlful of it weighed nearly a pound. Not much of an oatmeal but that was what it passed for.

Licking his spoon and tucking it back into his boot, Shukhov put on his hat and went to the dispensary.

The sky was still quite dark. The camp lights drove away the stars. The broad beams of the two search-lights were still sweeping the zone. When this camp, this "special" (forced-labor) camp, had been organized, the security forces had a lot of flares left over from the war, and whenever there was a power failure they shot up flares over the zone-white, green, and red-just like real war. Later they stopped using them. To save money, maybe.

It seemed just as dark as at reveille but the experienced eye could easily distinguish, by various small signs, that soon the order to go to work would be given. Khromoi's assistant (Khromoi, the mess orderly, had an assistant whom he fed) went off to summon Barracks 6 to breakfast. This was the building occupied by the infirm, who did not leave the zone. An old, bearded artist shuffled off to the C.E.D.⁵ for the brush and paint he needed to touch up the numbers on the prisoners' uniforms. The Tartar was there again, cutting across the parade ground with long, rapid strides in the direction of the staff quarters. In general there were fewer people about, which meant that everyone had gone off to some corner of their to get warm during those last precious minutes.

Shukhov was smart enough to hide from The Tartar around a corner of the barracks—the guard would stick to him if he caught him again. Anyway, you should never be conspicuous. The main thing was never to be seen by a campguard on your own, only in a group. Who knows whether the guy wasn't looking for someone to saddle with a job, or wouldn't jump on a man just for spite? Hadn't they been around the barracks and read them that new regulation? You had to take off your hat to a guard five paces before passing him, and replace it two paces after. There were guards who slopped past as if blind, not caring a damn. but for others the new rule was a godsend. How many prisoners had been thrown in the guardhouse because of that hat business? Oh no, better to stand around the corner.

The Tartar passed by, and now Shukhov finally decided to go to the dispensary. But suddenly he remembered that the tall Lett in Barracks had told him to come and buy a couple of glasses of home-grown tobacco that morning before they went out to work, something Shukhov had clean forgotten in all the excitement. The Lett had received a parcel the previous evening, and who knew but that by tomorrow none of the tobacco would be left, and then he'd have to wait a month for another parcel. The Lett's tobacco was good stuff, strong and fragrant, grayish-brown.

Shukhov stamped his feet in vexation. Should he turn back and go to the Lett? But it was such a short distance to the dispensary and he jogged on. The snow creaked audibly underfoot as he approached the door.

⁵ Culture and Education Department

Inside, the corridor was, as usual, so clean that he felt quite scared to step on the floor. And the walls were painted with white enamel. And all the furniture was white.

The surgery doors were all shut. The doctors must still be in bed. The man on duty was a medical assistant—a young man called Kolya Vdovushkin. He was seated at a clean little table, wearing a small white cap and a snow-white smock. Writing something.

There was no one else in sight.

Shukhov took off his hat as if in the presence of one of the authorities and, letting his eyes shift, in the camp manner, where they had no business to shift, he noticed that Kolya was writing in even, neatly spaced lines and that each line, starting a little way from the edge of the page, began with a capital letter. He realized at once, of course, that Kolya was not doing official work but something on the side. But **that** was none of his business.

“Well, Nikolai Semyonich, it’s like this... I’m feeling sort of . . . **rotten** . . .” said Shukhov shamefacedly, as if coveting something that didn’t belong to him.

Kolya Vdovushkin raised his big placid eyes from his work. His number was covered up by his smock.

“Why’ve you come so late? Why didn’t you report sick last night? You know very well there’s no sick call in the morning. The sick list had already been sent to the planning department.”

Shukhov knew all this. He knew too that it was even harder to get on the sick list in the evening.

“But after all, Kolya.. You see, when I should have come... last night... it didn’t ache.”

“And now it does? And what is it?”

“Well, if you stop to think of it, nothing aches, but I feel ill all over.”

Shukhov was not one of those who hung around the dispensary. Vdovushkin knew this. But in the morning he had the right to exempt from work two men only, and he’d already exempted them—their names were written down under the glass—it was greenish-on his desk, and he’d drawn a line across the page.

“Well, you ought to have considered that earlier. What are you thinking about? Reporting sick just before roll call. Come on, take this.”

He pulled a thermometer out of one of the jars where they stood in holes cut in pieces of gauze, wiped it dry, and handed it to Shukhov, who put it in his armpit.

Shukhov sat on a bench near the wall, right at the very end, so that he nearly tipped it up. He sat in that uncomfortable way, involuntarily emphasizing that he was unfamiliar with the place and that he'd come there on some minor matter.

Vdovushkin went on writing.

The dispensary lay in the most remote and deserted corner of the zone, where no sounds of any sort reached it. No clocks or watches ticked there—prisoners were not allowed to carry watches; the authorities knew the time for them. Even mice didn't scratch there; they'd all been dealt with by the hospital cat, placed there for the purpose.

For Shukhov it was a strange experience to sit in that spick-and-span room, in such quietness, to sit under the bright lamps for five long minutes doing nothing. He cast his eyes around the walls and found them empty. He looked at his jacket—the number on the chest was almost rubbed off. That might be noticed. He ought to have it touched up. He ran his free hand over his chin and felt the stubble. His beard had grown fast since his last bath, over ten days back. But that didn't worry him. Next bath day was about three days off and he'd have a shave then. What was the sense in lining up at the barber's? Who did he have to doll himself up for?

Then as he eyed Vdovushkin's snow-white cap he remembered the hospital on the banks of the River Lovat where he'd been taken with a smashed jaw, and then—what a dope he was!—volunteered for the front again, though he could have lain there in bed for five days.

And now here he was dreaming of being ill for two or three weeks, not dangerously ill, of course, not so bad that they'd have to operate, yet bad enough to go to the hospital and lie in bed for three weeks without stirring; and let them feed him on nothing but that clear soup of theirs, he wouldn't mind.

But, he recalled, now they didn't let you lie in bed even in the camp infirmary. A new doctor had arrived with one of the latest replacements—Stepan Grigorych, a

fussy, loud-voiced fellow who gave neither himself nor his patients any peace. He invented jobs in and around the infirmary for all the patients who could stand on their feet—fencing the garden, laying paths, bringing soil to the flowerbeds, and, in wintertime, erecting snow barriers. Work, he said, was a first-rate medicine for any illness.

You can overwork a horse to death. That the doctor ought to understand. If he'd been sweating blood laying blocks he'd quiet down, you could be sure of that.

Vdovushkin went on with his writing. He was, indeed, doing some work “on the side,” but it was something beyond Shukhov's understanding. He was making a fair copy of a long new poem that he'd finished the previous evening and had promised to show that day to Stepan Grigorych, the doctor who advocated work therapy.

As can happen only in camps, Stepan Grigorych had advised Vdovushkin to describe himself as a medical assistant, and had taken him on at the infirmary and taught him to make intravenous injections on ignorant prisoners, to whose innocent minds it could never occur that Vdovushkin wasn't a medical assistant at all. Vdovushkin had been a university student of literature, arrested while still in his second year. The doctor wanted him to write when in prison what he'd been given no opportunity to write in freedom.

The signal for the roll call was barely audible through the double-paned, frost-blurred windows. Shukhov heaved a sigh and stood up. He still had that feverish chill but evidently he wouldn't be able to skip work.

Vdovushkin reached for the thermometer and read it.

“H'm, neither one thing nor the other. Ninety-nine point two. If it had been a hundred it would have been clear to anyone. I can't exempt you. Stay behind at your own risk, if you like. The doctor will examine you. If he considers you're ill, he'll exempt you. If he finds you fit, he won't. Then you'll be locked up. You'd better go back to work.”

Shukhov said nothing. He didn't even nod. Pulling his hat over his eyes, he walked out.

How can you expect a man who's warm to understand a man who's cold?

The cold stung. A murky fog wrapped itself around Shukhov and made him cough painfully. The temperature out there was -17° ; Shukhov's temperature was $+99^{\circ}$. The fight was on.

He ran at a jog trot to his barracks. The whole parade ground was deserted, the camp looked empty. It was that brief moment of relaxation when, although everything has been decided, everyone is pretending to himself that there will be no march to work. The sentries sit in warm quarters, their sleepy heads propped against their rifles—it's not all milk and honey for them either, lounging on the watchtowers in such cold. The guards at the main gate tossed coal into the stove. The campguards in their room smoked a last cigarette before searching the barracks. And the prisoners, now clad in all their rags, a rope around their waists, their faces bound from chin to eyes with bits of cloth against the cold, lay on their bunks with their boots on and waited, eyes shut, hearts aquake, for their squad leader to yell: "Out you go."

The 104th were with the rest in Barracks 7—all except Pavlo, the deputy squad leader, who moved his lips as he totted something up with a pencil, and Alyosha, Shukhov's clean and tidy neighbor, who was reading from a notebook in which he'd copied out half the New Testament.

Shukhov ran headlong, but without making any noise, straight to Pavlo's bunk.

Pavlo looked up.

"So they didn't put you in the guardhouse, Ivan Denisovich? All right?" he asked with a marked Ukrainian accent, rolling out the name and patronymic in the way West Ukrainians did even in prison.

Picking up Shukhov's bread ration he handed it to him. A spoonful of granulated sugar lay in a small mound on top of the hunk. Shukhov had no time to spare but he answered properly (the deputy squad leader was also one of the authorities, and even more depended on him than on the camp commandant). And, though he was in a hurry, he sucked the sugar from the bread with his lips, licked it under his tongue as he put his foot on a support to climb up to make his bed, and took a look at his ration, weighing it in his hand and hastily calculating whether it reached the regulation sixteen ounces. He had drawn many a thousand of these rations in prisons and camps, and though he'd never had an opportunity to weigh them on

scales, and although, being a man of timid nature, he knew no way of standing up for his rights, he, like every other prisoner, had discovered long ago that honest weight was never to be found in the bread-cutting. There was short weight in every ration. The only point was how short. So every day you took a look to soothe your soul—today, maybe, they haven't snitched any.

He decided he was half an ounce short as he broke the bread in two. One half he stuck into a little clean pocket he'd specially sewn under his jacket (at the factory they make jackets for prisoners without pockets). The other half, which he'd saved by going without at breakfast, he considered eating on the spot. But food gulped down is no food at all; it's wasted; it gives you no feeling of fullness. He started to put the bread into his locker but again thought better of it—he recalled that two barrack orderlies had been beaten up for stealing. The barracks was a big place, like a public yard.

And so, still clutching the hunk of bread, he drew his feet out of his valenki, deftly leaving inside them his foot rags and spoon, crawled barefoot up to his bunk, widened a little hole in the mattress, and there, amidst the sawdust, concealed his half-ration. He pulled off his hat, drew out of it a needle and thread (hidden deeply, for they fingered the hats when they frisked you; once a guard had pricked his finger and almost broken Shukhov's skull in his rage). Stitch, stitch, stitch, and the little tear in the mattress was mended, with the bread concealed under it. Meanwhile the sugar in his mouth had melted. Every nerve was strained to breaking point. At any moment the roster guard would begin shouting at the door. Shukhov's fingers worked fast but his mind, planning the next move, worked faster.

Alyosha the Baptist was reading the Testament under his breath (perhaps especially for Shukhov—those fellows were fond of recruiting).

“If you suffer, it must not be for murder, theft, or sorcery, nor for infringing the rights of others. But if anyone suffers as a Christian, he should feel it no disgrace, but confess that name to the honor of God.”

Alyosha was smart—he'd made a chink in the wall and hidden the little book in it, and it had survived every search.

With the same rapid movements as before, Shukhov hung up his coat on a crossbeam and pulled what he wanted from under the mattress: a pair of mittens, a

second pair of old foot rags, a length of rope, and a piece of cloth with tapes at each end. He smoothed the sawdust in the mattress (it was lumpy and dense), tucked in the blanket, arranged the pillow, and slid down onto his bare feet and started binding them with the rags, first with the good ones, then, on top, with the torn.

Just then Tiurin stood up and barked: "Sleep's over, One hundred and fourth! out you go."

And at once the entire squad, drowsing or not, got up, yawned, and went to the door. Tiurin had been in for nineteen years and never turned his men out for the roll call a moment too soon. When he said, "Out you go," it meant you'd better.

And while the men with heavy tread and tight lips walked into the corridor one by one and then onto the porch, and the leader of the 20th, following Tiurin's example, called in turn "Out you go," Shukhov drew his valenki over the double thickness of foot rags, slipped his coat over his wadded jacket, and fastened a rope tightly around him (leather belts had been removed from zeks who had them-leather belts weren't allowed in "special" camps).

So Shukhov managed to get everything done and to catch up with the last of his companions, just as their numbered backs were passing through the door onto the porch. Looking rather bulky, for they had wrapped themselves up in every garment they possessed, the men shuffled diagonally toward the parade ground in single file, making no attempt to overtake one another. The only sound was the crunch of their heavy tread on the snow.

It was still dark, though in the east the sky was beginning to glow with a greenish tint. A light but piercing breeze came to meet them from the rising sun.

There is nothing as bitter as this moment when you go out to the morning roll call-in the dark, in the cold, with a hungry belly, to face a whole day of work. You lose your tongue. You lose all desire to speak to anyone.

A junior guard was rushing around the parade ground.

"Well, Tiurin, how long do we have to wait for you? Late again?"

Maybe Shukhov might get scared of him but not Tiurin, oh no. He wouldn't waste breath on him in the cold. Just stomped on in silence.

And the squad followed him through the snow. Shuffle, shuffle, squeak, squeak.