



- 0. ARRESTED - Story Preface
- 1. SAVED BY STENOGRAPHY
- 2. THE REAL ALEX
- 3. ARRESTED**
- 4. DEATH BY THE FIRING SQUAD
- 5. DOSTOEVSKY, THE GAMBLER
- 6. TRAGEDIES
- 7. THE REAL EMMA
- 8. ON TIME

After he was arrested, and during his trial in 1849, Fyodor Dostoevsky was imprisoned at the Alexis Ravelin, Peter and Paul Fortress, in St. Petersburg (Russia). This image, depicting the place, is online via Dartmouth College.

During Dostoevsky's formative years, Russia was flooded with philosophical and social ideas from the West. "Socialism" and "materialism" were new concepts even to Russian intellectuals. Caught up in the wave of "fixing" Russian society (its 20 million serfs were not freed until 1861), Dostoevsky learned first-hand how a repressive regime views "freedom of thought."

By 1848, as people in Western Europe revolted against restrictive government policies, the young writer (whose *Poor Folk* had already been published, to great acclaim, in the literary journal *Peterburgi Sbornik*) was emboldened. Could Russia also change? If so, how? Could the serfs be freed and censorship eliminated? If so, when?

Joining a secret society (known as the "Petrashevsky Circle") whose members (called "Petrashevtsy") wanted more freedom and less autocracy for Russia, Dostoevsky put himself on a dangerous path. Tsar Nicholas I, already worried about the winds of change blowing into Russia, would not tolerate dissent - or groups of young thinkers with access to printing presses. The government made sure informers were part of the group.

On the night of April 15, 1849, an informer heard Dostoevsky read a censored work (the forbidden letter from V.G.Belinsky to Nicholai Gogol) which included, among other things, the following observation:

...what Russia needs is for its people to be awakened to their own human dignity.

Not only did he read the letter - Dostoevsky allowed it to be copied. That was enough for the 27-year-old writer to be arrested (along with 23 other members of the Petrashevsky Circle).

The Peter and Paul Fortress (which dominates St. Petersburg's skyline) became Dostoevsky's 'home' for many months. As an investigation dragged on, he spent time with every imaginable form of vermin. His cell - number nine - had a notorious reputation. It was there, in the Alekseyevsky Ravelin, that Peter the Great had his son and heir, Alexey, tortured to death.

Another death sentence was about to be handed down to a resident of cell number nine.

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/ARRESTED-Alex-and-Emma>

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/ARRESTED-Alex-and-Emma>



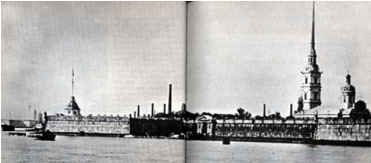
Alexy - Son of Peter the Great

Image online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

PD

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Alexy-Son-of-Peter-the-Great>



Peter and Paul Fortress

Image online, courtest the Dartmouth College website.

View this asset at: <http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Peter-and-Paul-Fortress1>



Portrait of Peter the Great

Image online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

View this asset at: <http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Portrait-of-Peter-the-Great>



Alekseyevsky Ravelin - Peter and Paul Fortress

Image online, courtesy the *dartmouth.edu* website.

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Alekseyevsky-Ravelin-Peter-and-Paul-Fortress>



Skyline - St. Petersburg, Russia

Image online, courtesy Bill Casselman's Words of the World website.

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Skyline-St.-Petersburg-Russia>



ARRESTED

View this asset at: <http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/ARRESTED>