



0. DOSTOEVSKY in LOVE - Story Preface

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This image depicts Polina Suslova as she appeared in 1867. After the death of his first wife in 1864, Dostoevsky proposed to Suslova, but she turned him down. Image online via Wikimedia Commons.

After completing four years as a penal colony prisoner, Dostoevsky was conscripted as a private with the Siberian Seventh Line Battalion. When he was first sent to Semipalatinsk, not far from the Chinese border (in today's Kazakhstan), he had no idea how long he would serve. One thing he did know: To get out of the military, he would need the Tsar's pardon.

As it happened, Dostoevsky served four years in Siberia. While there, he married his first wife, a widow with consumption named Maria Dimitrievna Isayeva. Never really suited for each other, Dostoevsky still loved her in his own way. (As one readily learns from the author's novels, loving - for Dostoevsky - always included large doses of self-sacrifice.) Church records, signed on February 6, 1857, state:

*The groom is thirty-four years old, the bride twenty-nine, and both are in command of their full faculties.*

With the marriage came Pavel, Maria's son, who brought no joy to the writer's life.

Once freed from his sentence, Dostoevsky returned to St. Petersburg where he and his new family lived in an apartment. Not long after, he joined with his brother, Mikhail, to produce a literary journal called Vremya ("Time").

During a trip to Europe (taken, ostensibly, to deal with his increasingly severe bouts of epilepsy), the married novelist (who was once again writing noted works such as Memoirs from the House of the Dead) fell madly in love with a young woman named Apollinaria ("Polina") Suslova. And he developed what would become a financially disastrous addiction to the roulette wheel.

Some Dostoevsky scholars believe that Polina was the love of Dostoevsky's life. Twenty years old when they met, the red-headed beauty was a complicated woman. She brought the writer enormous joy and gut-wrenching sorrow. Beginning in about 1862, Polina toyed with Fyodor's emotions as though it were her favorite sport.

Dostoevsky, on the other hand, toyed with the roulette wheel. He studied everything about it. He came to believe he could master it. Time and again, while playing at the Wiesbaden casino, he would win vast sums but then gambled them away. He felt compelled to win more.

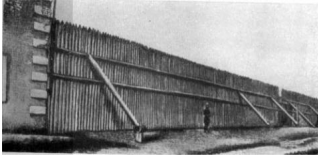
Or maybe, as scholars suggest, he felt compelled to lose as a way to punish himself.

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

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/DOSTOEVSKY-in-LOVE-Dostoevsky>

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/DOSTOEVSKY-in-LOVE-Dostoevsky>



## Penal Colony - Omsk Perimeter Fence

Image online, courtesy the dostojewski blog site.

View this asset at: <http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Penal-Colony-Omsk-Perimeter-Fence>



## Map Depicting Semipalatinsk

Image online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

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## Maria Dimitrievna Isayeva - First Wife of Dostoevsky

Image online, courtesy Dartmouth College website.

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## Pavel Isaev Dostoevsky - Stepson of Fyodor Dostoevsky

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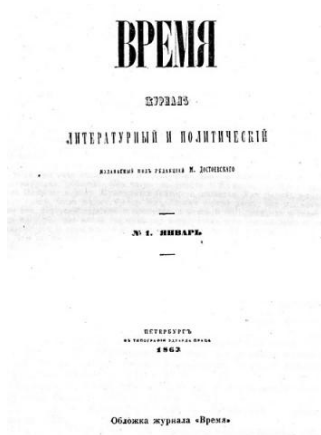


## Dostoevsky's Apartment in St. Petersburg

Image online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

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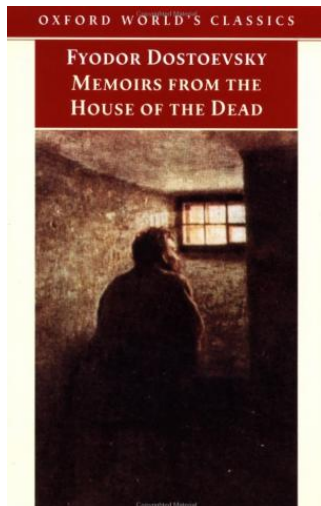


## Vremya

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## Memoirs from the House of the Dead - by Fyodor Dostoevsky

Image online, courtesy [amazon.com](http://amazon.com) website.

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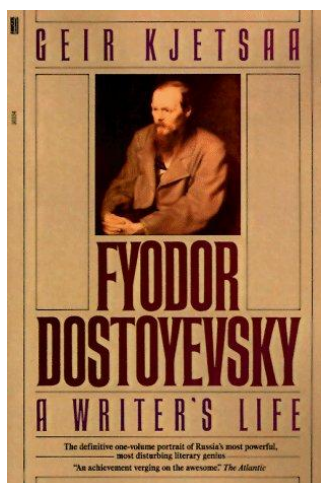
<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Memoirs-from-the-House-of-the-Dead-by-Fyodor-Dostoevsky0>



## Apollinaria (Polina) Suslova

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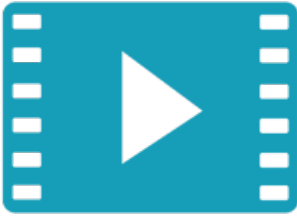


## Fyodor Dostoevsky: A Writer's Life - by Geir Kjetsaa

Image online, courtesy the [amazon.com](http://amazon.com) website.

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### Tuberculosis - "Consumption"

Video clip by VOA, online via YouTube.

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