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Dear Ken,

I like the general thrust of the first nine pages, but I also see a few small problems which you may want to attend to.

First, I wonder if we should begin so quickly with the plot. I suggest that you give Walden a page or two before Churchill arrives. The reader might see Walden wondering about the distance between him and his wife, or about his daughter's debut and her eventual marriage, or about plans for his village, his estate, whatever you think he might have on his mind at the moment, which could throw some insight into his character and most intimate relationships. Then, when Churchill arrives, and we have what is this rather bizarre reaction, we would begin with a point of view somewhat more sympathetic to our hero. ✓

By the way, might you introduce Pritchard at this point, rather than a butler who will not reappear in the story? ✓

A slight problem in the line-by-line writing is point of view. You switch rather freely back and forth from Walden to

an anonymous narrator. Instead of saying, "Churchill was the first Lord of the Admiralty in the liberal government, etc." . . . I think it would be better if Walden could still be smarting from some particular attack by Churchill, and thus Walden himself would have been subjected to this sort of "savage attack." "By God, that idiot said such-and-such, and now he dares to want to come into my home," . . .

A little further down the page, you say, "Society had begun by not inviting the Prime Minister," . . . Here again, I think you might specify an individual rather than society, someone Walden specifically remembers and thus Walden would know exactly how this chain was set in motion and how he himself became part of it.

When you say in the bottom paragraph, "He was a courteous man," again, you seem to be shifting away from Walden's own point of view. Then in the next sentence, you quite nicely switch back into it.

On page 3, his concern about being crossed off more and more invitation lists seems a bit superficial. Might there not be more dire consequences to his refusing the king a favor? **No.**

"More and more visitors came to Walden Hall by motor." Again, you seem to shift away from Walden's point of view.

When Churchill enters, again, I think we should see him totally through Walden's eyes.

Page 5. Here we could do with a bit less history, and I think a bit more of Walden's personal feelings about Churchill

as an individual. The long paragraph here is a bit of a history lecture. I think that you could easily and beautifully transform it into a very personal musing by Walden, one charged with emotion, his personal assessment, fears and hopes for England, and most importantly how he would love to see these things develop.

On page 6, we may need a bit more of Walden's feelings about Churchill along with the politics.

On page 8, I think Churchill ought to be specific about Walden's past coup in St. Petersburg. *A little more specific.*

In Walden's interior monologue on page 9, I think perhaps he ought to have a thought or two about the problems and difficulties of dealing with the Russians. As the Russians are discussed now, they seem to be no more than pieces on a chessboard. But Walden, after all, knows them to be real people, and also difficult people. ✓

Lydia's introduction, pages 9-13, works well for me. My one quibble is that you don't give us on page 10 quite as rich a description of Walden Hall in its entirety as I would like to have. Maybe she could remember the first time she saw the place, in all its immensity, and then we would learn whether it was of brick or stone, whether it was Georgian or classic or some other style, whether it had crenellations, spires, or other odd architectural features. The house after all is going to be very much part of the story, and I think that the reader needs to know not only about the number of its rooms, but how

it looks. Since she is harking back in her memory to the days when she was married, it would probably would be quite appropriate for her to remember her first view of this house. ~~God~~.

I like the Charlotte-Belinda scene a lot. I have only two thoughts. It would help to identify Charlotte ^{more sharply} ~~before~~, and to clarify her as a personality and a character, if now and again we could see through her own eyes how she contrasts herself with Belinda, how she sees herself as a bit different. ✓ She might wish she could be more like Belinda who perhaps she admires, but somehow she finds herself having different urges, different thoughts, etc. She might marvel, for example, at the intensity of her feelings on certain subjects, and envy Belinda who does not feel quite so intensely about these.

The other thought has to do with feeling a bit more fear as they crawl along the high-pitched roofs. I would assume that Charlotte might have to urge Belinda up and/or down some particularly sharp inclines, and as you have it, it all seems just a little too easy. ✓

Your introduction of Feliks works less well than the previous ones, I feel. The main problem is your choosing to give us his whole life history, or most of it, in a once over lightly. Two or three intense and richly-dramatic flashbacks would do the job more effectively, I think, than his whole life story.

At the beginning, I like the contrast between the British countryside, his first impressions of continental Europe, and the village where he grew up. I think that your political

thoughts at the end of the first paragraph and the beginning of the second paragraph break this rather nice flow. We have plenty of time for the politics a little later on in the scene. ^{Everything in politics for Belikov}

I would jump right to the flashback of the hanging of the assassins of Alexander III. ^{Yes.} Some of the stuff you have before this flashback and some of the stuff you have after it all could be worked into this highly dramatic memory, which he could be thinking of now and which could be spurring him on.

Then he might have a thought of the contrast between his comfortable railway carriage and the open rail car he slept on in the blizzard when he was on the fringes of civilization, ^{Yes.} this followed by the momentous discovery that there was nothing in the world that he could fear. But that, too, would have to be dramatized in terms of something rather frightening, a policeman, an arrest, a beating, and the simultaneous discovery that he no longer was afraid. ^{Yes.} That discovery, when put in a dramatic context, would be more convincing than the way you have it now which is a bit abstract. ^{Yes.}

Then you might jump to his wish to keep the Russian peasantry from fighting in this war, and his longing to assassinate Oblomof to accomplish this. He might gloat about how he grabbed off this juicy assignment for himself, how he got all the comrades in Switzerland to kick in the money so that he could be the one to go. He might dream of the glory that will accrue to him for doing this great deed. [?] I think that sort of stuff would be more interesting, and also more real, than all of the "likely

consequences," which you have the anarchists discuss on page 26.

I like his discovery of London and its riches.

Feliks at the railway station observing Oblomof's arrival works fine. But the first part of Chapter 2, I think, is flat and journalistic. ^{Put again.} You might consider perhaps two or three little scenes. One could be between Feliks and Dasha. In that one, in addition to renting the room, we could have Feliks' thoughts about the Jubilee Street anarchists. ^{Yes.} A second scene might be at a restaurant where he sneaks out without paying the bill, ~~you~~ and in that scene too we could have some thoughts about how he survives with food the rest of the time; and finally, we might have the scene in which he steals the bicycle.

Charlotte's meeting with Oblomof is delicious, but I found the earlier portion of that scene a bit flat. I suggest that you begin making it clear in the very first sentence that we are in Lydia's point of view. Lydia might have thoughts and feelings about Marya and about Madame Bourdon. The long description of the dress should be mixed, I think, with Lydia's feelings about it and about Charlotte wearing it. I wouldn't save all that until the top of page 36 as you now have it.

Lydia's thinking Charlotte to be so frivolous is a good point, and I think you wanted to linger on that just a bit more.

You have a nice chance for some ~~of~~ mother-daughter camaraderie when Charlotte admires her mother's skill at managing a train. I think we could have a bit more of a glow between them before ^{the} interruption with the announcement of Oblomof's arrival. ^{Yes.}

Lydia then, I think, should have a fresh little emotional reaction at the news that the Russian actually is here.

I like the moments of intimacy and warm feeling she has for Walden.

I'm not clear on how she actually feels about Oblomof. Does she find him attractive, repulsive? Would she like to see him marry Charlotte, or Belinda? She probably would relate him to the memories she has of his parents, which might be happy or unhappy ones. Everything going on here is very much on the surface, and I'd like to know at least one good intimate thought she has about Oblomof before Charlotte enters.

The little scene with Feliks watching the Walden house seems just fine to me.

I find it hard to buy Walden's impulsive decision to marry Lydia. True, he needed a wife; but he could just as easily have done the same thing on his return to London and married a woman of his own background, religion, etc. Maybe what's needed here is some inner sense that English women are less desirable or make wives that are less wonderful than Russian women, or something of that ilk. Or maybe at that dinner party, Lydia could have said or done something just a little bit marvelous, something that might have made Walden catch his breath, and then we could go along with his impulsive decision.

Also, I'm puzzled why he thinks he's "such a lucky man." Obviously this has to do with Lydia, but it's not clear exactly what Lydia does for him that makes him feel so lucky.

The Oblomof-Walden scene reminds me somewhat of those discussions between Golda Meir and Moshe Dayan which we cut out of one of the earlier versions of Triple. Here again we have historical-political discussion which is undramatic and seems to slow down the action, if not stop it altogether. The scene can work dramatically only if there is some emotional feeling between these two characters as characters. And that may be impossible to create, given the fact that they are indeed two impersonal actors in a political drama. A better scene might be written between Walden and Churchill, one in which Walden reports to Churchill, and the two men have some sort of angry confrontation as to how the British government should deal with Oblomof's demand. Or maybe the whole subject could be kept right in the household. You might begin the scene just after Walden and Oblomof complete the discussion. Walden could be fuming, upset, etc. And then he could have a scene, perhaps, with Pritchard, or even with Charlotte, who seek to calm him down, pacify him, while Walden might rant about the difficulties of dealing with this odd Russian demand. Or Walden might take an opposite tack, be in sympathy with the Russian request, but be fuming because he knows or suspects that Churchill is going to refuse to go along. In other words, let's get this information over to the reader in the context of a scene between two characters who mean more to each other than Walden and Oblomof.

Feliks getting his gun works very well indeed. I know that he is supposed to be fearless, but I think that the scene

might work just a little better if at moments we could feel more of his tension, if not fear.

Charlotte's point of view and true feelings don't come out as much in the next five pages as I think they could. You begin, "Charlotte was ready." But does Charlotte feel ready?

Charlotte describes all the possible catastrophes that could happen to Marya, and appears to make a joke of them. But you don't make it clear really that Charlotte probably is covering up a lot of tension which is why she is making the joke, and probably there are one or two things that she may really be afraid of, and it would make us feel closer to her if we knew what they were.

And how does she feel about this whole household of servants seeing her out? About Oblomof? About all this fuss which is being made about her? Is she pleased, annoyed, expecting great things, or expecting to be bored?

The physical details are all super.

Lydia's observing Charlotte make her debut works fine. Here again, I would like to be brought closer to Lydia, in that early on I would like to know more of how she feels about this particular ritual, about the king and queen, and about her hopes for her daughter.

I don't think it's a good idea for you to refer to Walden all through the book as the Earl of Walden. For me, this has a "distancing" effect. When you do a section from his point of view, as on page 68, I think it might be smarter to begin

referring to him either as Steven or just as Walden.

In Walden's case, too, it might be interesting for the reader to know how he personally feels about the king. Also, is there anything that Walden covets from the king in terms of favors, a higher niche in the hierarchy, etc.?

On the whole, the little scene with Churchill works well, but I think I would enjoy it more if it were colored some by a bit of calculation on Walden's part as to how he's going to twist Churchill around his little finger, or maybe some concern about how Churchill is going to react. We now have some interaction between Churchill and Walden here, but if we can have even more, that would be better. The politics, as before, in themselves are only marginally interesting.

Feliks's scene is excellent.

But I think we need to feel his anguish more that his plan is in ruins. In fact, you might consider dramatizing the moment in which he makes this discovery.

At the bottom of 73 we have the beginnings of a fantasy of his returning to Russia. It might be helpful to have a sentence or two more of his thoughts and dreams in this regard.

I think we need a word or two about how well or how poorly the coachman's clothes fit him.

On page 76, I like his wondering whether he would get out of this alive. But it sounds a bit cool and detached. I think we could use a bit more here both of his lust for the kill and his fear of the horrors which might befall him if he were to

fail. And indeed he might fear these same horrors if he were to succeed.

On page 78, shouldn't he notice that there are women entering the carriage? And might he not be concerned about how he'll be handling them when he sets about killing Walden and Oblomof?

From your ending on page 79 to your beginning on page 80, in between those two points, a lot of good stuff happens which you leave out, and which I think the reader would very much enjoy, and I urge you to consider adding a paragraph or so of that action. Also, it might be nice to know exactly what it is that Lydia cries out.

After that point, I think it's terrific.

On page 81, you tell us that he is "full of despair." But I think we need to feel the pain and weight of this more. He is so busy running away that we don't really share in his enormous disappointment. I think we need to.

On page 82, you say, "Once already he had completely lost etc. . . ." Of course later on, you are going to elaborate on this, and we don't want or need a full explanation at this point, but I think we do need another phrase or two, so that the reader has at least an inkling of what's in Feliks's mind.

Also, I think we ought to feel Feliks's enormous relief and his pleasure too when he discovers that his bicycle is where he had left it. He probably should doubt that he is going to succeed in escaping, so that when he does, we should share in his joy--even though he is numb and half dead.

The Lydia-Feliks love scene is wonderful.

Could a bookshop in Moscow in those days sell the sorts of things that Feliks would want to read? And indeed could a known leftist operate a bookshop? *Secretly?*

At the bottom of page 91 you talk about "a hefty young man with a stupid face." And on 92, I think you are referring to the same person whom you now describe as "the big guard." But it's not really clear that these two are the same person, and I think you'll have to use the same adjectives both times, or maybe give him a name. *WJ.*

At the bottom of 93, what does Feliks feel? His pain is the climax, and it clearly is implied. But I wonder if that's enough. Couldn't you write a bit of that in? After all, he's been carrying that pain with him now for nineteen years.

I love Charlotte's little scene in the kitchen with the servants. It would be even better, I think, if we had some mention of how she herself feels about what happened in the park. Is she still trembling, or is she relishing the whole thing? And how does Charlotte feel about the servants in the kitchen, all of them in general, or any of them in particular? She and they would both be more interesting, if she were to have some particular feelings about them.

Churchill and Walden in this scene and in the earlier ones deal with each other as no more than distant acquaintances. I think that Churchill would be more interesting, and the relationship between the two men would be more involving if

there were some sort of past history between the two of them as individuals. For example, what if some years ago both men were pursuing the same actress as a mistress, and let's say Walden got her and Churchill didn't. It's all ancient history now, but the thing might still rankle a bit in Churchill's mind, and give some sort of an edge to their encounters. Walden might always wonder whether Churchill's antagonism stemmed from the issue of the moment or whether Churchill was bitter still over having been bested by Walden. You may decide that this is a lousy idea, but if you do, then I beg you please to think of a better one. Something along these lines would help.

There ought to be, I think, some emotion in Walden's retelling of the assassination attempt. That either could come out in the words Walden speaks, or if you deem him too cool a character openly to express this sort of thing, then we must have it in his inner thoughts as he retells this horror story. Walden too, I think, must display some fear of the future and some concern for the safety of Oblomof. Also, shouldn't he worry about the talks being aborted if a future assassination attempt were to succeed? Ken, the surface here is fine, but you need to inject more emotion through this early part of the scene. The ending, after Churchill leaves and Walden starts thinking in bed is terrific.

Lydia's thinking it was a "terribly frightening experience," is not quite enough, I feel. I would suggest that you still have her somewhat trembling over the whole thing, before she lets her mind wonder about the men involved.

Also, I question your use of the word, orgasm. In this context, I feel it's a bit clinical. I would prefer that you actually describe the physical sensations which she feels. *Earlier said than done.*

I have many notes on Belinda's coming out ball, but on the whole I love it. Generally what's missing, I feel, is some carry-over from the assassination. Walden seems totally unconcerned. Lydia appears to have a marvelous time. There is no mention of Oblomof or his safety. The scene, of course, is written from Charlotte's point of view, which would limit what might be observed or felt in this regard, but still I think we need something.

Page 102 ought to start, I think, clearly from Charlotte's point of view and then continue that way as you do through most of the scene. There are bits here which slip into an anonymous narrator.

I would enjoy all this description more, for example, if we experienced it through Charlotte's eyes and knew whether she thought it was marvelous, ugly, overdone, festive--or whatever.

At the top of 103, I would like to know why Charlotte observes that her dress and her mother's are old-fashioned. Further down that page, I think I would enjoy knowing what Charlotte thinks of these boys, and especially Freddy. On page 108 she sees marriage with Freddy unthinkable, but I have no idea why.

On page 107, the point about Lydia's ankles showing needs just a little expanding. You equate, it seems to me, a studied

reserve with not minding if "her ankles showed"; and I had to read that sentence two or three times to understand it.

I would enjoy knowing on 108 what Charlotte thinks about smoking and about tobacco. On 109 Charlotte begins to enjoy herself, but it's not quite clear to me what it is that she's enjoying. Has she had some drink? Is she now feeling herself part of this group of young people? Is she now finally feeling relaxed being in the company of young men? Spell this out, please, just a bit.

Charlotte's discovery of the world's cruelty is quite a wonderful element in the novel, I think; but I feel too that you move much too quickly in having her take so strong a position against this cruelty and particularly against her parents. Initially, I think that this should be a scene of wonderment, discovery, horror, etc. Then, perhaps later on, once she has confirmed her suspicions, etc., her taking so strong a position would be both more realistic and appropriate. In other words, I feel that there are some transitions missing here; and I'll now go ahead and point out a few lines where I think you have problems in this regard.

"What a dreadful world this is." Charlotte appears here to be jumping to a conclusion much too quickly. She has just made the discovery of poverty. That is quite enough for the moment, I would think. Sure, she could think about all the empty rooms, all the wasted food, etc.; but would she at the very same moment conclude that the world is dreadful? Also,

the idea, "the strong should take care of the weak." This seems so strong an idea to come from so unformed as yet a mind. If she is going to say something like this, and mean it, then I think we have to set up that she has read something or heard something, so that the idea does not come out of nowhere. *from Walden.*

On page 111, why is Lydia so sharp? Does Lydia feel threatened, so that she feels a need to take so strong a counter-position? My sense is that she would feel secure enough to be more gentle with Charlotte about this.

Charlotte's saying, "I'm just beginning to realize how much," is another example I feel, of Charlotte's moving ahead too fast to conclusions, while she is first making discoveries.

Annie, as we discussed in France, needs to come into the story much earlier, if we are to be able to share Charlotte's strong affectionate and friendly feelings toward her. Maybe in the very early scene between Charlotte and Belinda, Annie might stand as a look-out while the two girls go through the library cupboard, or Annie might even go further, the girls could be caught with the evil book, and Annie could take the blame on herself, or Annie might hold some adults at bay while the two girls make their getaway.

On 114, again we have Charlotte with her conclusions. I think it would be better if she wondered if her parents had betrayed her. If she wondered whether her education might have been a conspiracy to deceive her in some way. Her life, I would think, has been too good for her totally to turn against it so

quickly and so abruptly. She might suspect deceit, before she in fact decides that it was deceit. The last paragraph on 114, I think, is too strongly accusatory.

On 116 the scene should end, I think, with some final thought or feeling in Charlotte's mind or heart about her parents.

No problem with Feliks' next scene. The phrase, "licking his psychological wounds," is I feel too condensed. I understand it intellectually, but it does not put me inside his grief, disappointment, self-hatred, etc. Nor does it really tell how he is trying to rebuild his courage and self-esteem. This sort of stuff, I feel, is worth at least a good solid paragraph.

On page 120, would he think of Walden as an old man?

On 122, would Feliks know about such things as clubs and country houses?

On 123, it's fascinating the way he considers Lydia's possible reactions to him; but I for one would love to know which, if any, of these reactions he himself would long for the most. How would he like her to be? And on 125, how does he feel, calm, nervous, etc.?

The Lydia-Feliks scene is wonderful, as all of them seem to be. The paragraph at the top of 128 goes on a bit too long, I think, perhaps losing itself after the climax, which to me is the underlying^{ing} portion. I would suggest cutting some of this.

On 131, the transition from present to past is not altogether clear. ✓

On 132, would the maid normally carry a needle and thread?

And ten rubles in those days might have been a great deal of money.

On pages 134-135, as this scene now is replayed from Lydia's point of view, again I think we need a moment of at least some communion which would then play a part in sparking Walden's proposal. *Or maybe furious antagonism.*

When Lydia is summoned before her father, I think we need to feel her worry more, and then feel it mount more as the scene begins.

On 137, would Feliks' door be open?

On 138, when the neighbor grins about Feliks' being an anarchist, Lydia I think needs to feel more pain for Feliks and for herself, before she begins blaming her father. In other words, let the horror, the personal horror, set in more, before she turns away to think of anyone else, even the cause of it, i.e., her father.

On 139, I find her thoughts about her brothers rather impersonal. Sure, she could conclude as she does, but as you describe them, they hardly seem to be brothers.

On 144, the line, "even from you, Feliks, I still have one secret," does not work for me. I know what you're getting at, of course; and I'm unsure whether the notion needs to be expressed better or whether it ought to be left out--but as you have it, it does not seem right to me. Maybe it might work better if you expressed it in terms of her wish, her longing to have told him. And then some relief that she had held herself back from doing what she had longed to do.

His shopping for acid brings to mind his financial condition. My recollection is that he is broke, or virtually broke; and yet he's going all over town buying things. This needs a bit of bolstering.

Also, this whole bomb thing seems to come out of nowhere. I wonder if first we oughtn't to have him mentally hatching a scheme. After all, why a bomb, now that he has a gun? Or is it his shooting hand that was injured? *He dropped the gun.*

At the bottom of 144, I like his proving to himself that he has not gone soft, but I would suggest that you expand this just a bit more to make absolutely clear that he is indeed fearful that he has gone soft.

The making of the nitroglycerine bomb is a bit distancing and factual. Feliks ought, I think, to have some thoughts and feelings either about Oblomof, Lydia, or his future life while he does this.

The little scene between Charlotte and Walden at the beginning of Chapter 7 is lovely.

Walden's interior monologue at the start, though, did not work all that well for me. First, would he refer to England as "it"? It seems to me he would say, "he was proud of her. Her industry . . ." But more importantly, I wonder about the focus of these thoughts. It seems to me that you could inject all this information much more dramatically if you were to focus his thoughts on two specific problems, one, how to successfully conclude the negotiation with Oblomof; and two, his thoughts

about votes for women. Most of the other information about politics and social conditions could be woven around these two problems, and they might give some intensity to his thoughts which now seem to me to ramble.

On 154, you mention a ball. A tiny point, but I think you ought to mention whose ball it is.

On 157, I think we need to feel Lydia's anguish and maybe pain at the thought that one of the two men she loves is surely going to kill the other. No.

I like the suffragette meeting a lot.

I think Charlotte walking the streets alone ought to remember the attack in the carriage and be somewhat afraid. The peril which Feliks represents should, I think, be present in almost every scene at least in some small way.

I think we could use a bit more description of the hall and also of where Charlotte's seat is located as she sits down. You mention that the ladies look middle class, but here again I think a bit more specific description would be helpful to characterize the dress of middle class women of that period. In a sense, you also say that the speakers are less than fashionable, and again we ought to know, I think, what Charlotte perceives to be less than fashionable clothing.

Finally, I think you give us a bit too much Mrs. Pankhurst. I suggest that her speech might be cut at least by a third, and possibly as much as half. There is a lot of interesting history there, but for the purposes of this story, I think we would relate to it more if there were less. No.

I wonder if Feliks does not appear too cool, mechanical, factual, as he proceeds to The Savoy and finds Oblomof's room. I suggest that he might have moments here and there of intense fear and perhaps also intense elation.

On page 168 I am puzzled that he is looking for clean hands, finds dirty ones, and does nothing. At least, I think we need a mental decision to ignore the dirty hands. Also, I think that you ought to move the bottom paragraph on 168 up a few lines to where he decides to hire the boy. That, it seems to me, would be a ^{more} logical place for him to wonder about the child's honesty.

On 169, I am puzzled as to why Feliks after he has killed Oblomof would then decide also to go after Walden. At this point, is it blood lust, or politics? And after all, all sorts of people have seen him sitting in that hotel lobby. Is it likely that he could plant his bomb, kill his target, get away, and then not be hunted down like a dog if he were to remain at hand? ² *Unconscious.*

I love the little scene in which Walden catches the bottle of nitroglycerine. I think you passed by the first climactic moment too quickly. "The door opened, and there he stood." The climax, I think, is how Walden feels at this moment. Fear, fury, all sorts of visceral reactions, etc. I think we need some of these before you go into your description.

Also, I'm puzzled as to where Oblomof is. I would like for him to be in an inner room, perhaps watching the action through

a crack in the door, and then perhaps emerging as Feliks runs away, so that he could be a witness to Walden's heroic act.

Walden's scene with Thomson to me is flat. A lot of it is old information that the reader already knows. I think it could benefit from a dramatic focus. For example, you might build the scene as if Walden were, as it were, conducting a job interview, trying to decide on Thomson's competence. Or it might be constructed as a test of wills. Thomson might want to put Oblomof in some incredibly secure place, while Walden might feel equally strongly that Oblomof must come to Walden Hall, which would be a much more suitable place to conclude negotiations. In a confrontation of that kind, we would have some drama, and you could also convey all the same information to the reader. *Walden accuses Thomson of incompetence & Thomson defends himself.*

The scene ought to begin, I think, with Walden being something of a hero to Thomson because of Walden's having caught the nitroglycerine. Walden also internally still ought to feel shaky or feel something, considering what he's just been through.

I don't think we need Thomson's life history. We're really much more interested in Walden's feelings and impressions of the man, and Walden probably might know only one sentence out of that life history.

The scene ought to end, I think, with Walden somehow prevailing but at the same time having real respect for Thomson's professionalism.

The factual progression of Feliks' scene (177-180) is fine.

You might consider starting with Feliks being breathless, exhausted, terribly disappointed, etc. In addition to feeling betrayed by Lydia, he must feel some real pain, both physical exhaustion and severe depression at his failure, and we need at least a little, I think.

Again, I wonder that he keeps having money to spend, as for his spectacles. Somewhere earlier on, you are going to have to give him a source for this money.

Bridget is so good to him that I think he ought to have a moment of emotion for her as he takes his leave.

At the end of the scene, I would like to feel his ferocious determination. You make him sound dogged and persistent, but I would like to see something stronger expressed.

I like Lydia's dream.

Feliks on the bicycle (182-184) ought to have some dimension over and above physical action. Feliks needs, I think, to hope, dream, hate--some further feelings about Walden or Oblomof or Lydia would make this more interesting.

On 185 I wonder if Charlotte needs to feel so definite that she could not trust her parents to tell her the truth in the future. Might she not just as well wonder whether or not she could trust them? *Yes.*

At the top of 186, I think the newspaper article ought to be a bit more specific and newspaperlike in its details about the deputation going to the palace. For example, I think we need the date, time, all that sort of thing, etc. *Problem.*

On 188 I wonder if Charlotte ought not to remind Feliks of Feliks' mother or sister, or at least someone out of his past in Russia.

I think, too, that Feliks ought to have some sort of reaction to this "street full of marching women." Is he shocked, amazed, delighted, etc.?

The suffragette march and rescue by Feliks is great.

On 188, are the stewards keeping the women in line men or women? I assume that they are women, but this should be made clear.

On 189, there seemed to be thousands of policemen, and I think you should tell us that they line the route or that they are at the intersections, or both; but we should have some idea of their location vis-a-vis the marchers.

On 190, when it occurs to Charlotte that she might end the day in prison, I think she should be more worried and fearful than she seems to be.

On 191, we have the action swirling all around Charlotte, and I think we need to feel her a bit more in the middle of all this. As she sees and hears all these things going on around her, I think we need to feel more sensations in her of anger, terror, hostility, etc.

On 192, there is a moment of climax, I think, which is somewhat missed. Maybe two moments. The first would be the sense of having been rescued, and the second would be one of being definitively out of danger.

The conversation between Feliks and Charlotte, for my taste, is a little long on theory and a little short on Charlotte's emotional reactions, both to Feliks and to the things he's saying. Basically I like what you have, but I would suggest that you alter the balance a little.

Feliks' discovery at the end is just fine. How does he feel at this point? Express it a bit. *No. Widdling the lily again.*

The opening scene of Chapter 9 works beautifully. I'm not sure about your use of the word, options, on 200. It sounds so modern. On 203 where the scene ends, I would like to see Charlotte have an additional thought or feeling about Feliks. And I wonder if she ought not hesitate a bit before she says, "I don't want anybody to see me with you."

The Walden-Oblomof scenes as a group continue to be probably the weakest element in the book. It occurs to me that in all of them Walden must feel desperately pressured to bring the negotiation to a successful conclusion. Thus, if on the surface we were to see this calm, cool, almost complacent man; yet underneath, we knew how anxious he felt for England's safety and future, then perhaps we could relate both more to him and to what he's doing in each of these scenes with Oblomof. What if at the very beginning of the book Walden's interior monologue were to grow out of his reading a newspaper account. He might be sick with fear that Germany was going to take over Europe, strangle England, reduce his proud land to some sort of German vassal, etc. He could be furious, angry, fulminating--

I'm not sure what, but in a mood like that when Churchill arrives. That sort of feeling in him might give the sort of thrust we need to all these scenes with Oblomof, including the one starting on 203. By now, of course, his concern (and perhaps even dread) is not only for England but also for his own physical safety and especially for Oblomof's. The scene as a whole needs more feeling and perhaps less fact. Thus, in addition to Walden's concern for England's safety and future, he might also feel pressured both by Churchill and by the king. You have not introduced any really overt antagonism between Churchill and Walden, but it might be interesting if Walden felt that Churchill thought (and maybe even said) that he (Walden) was doing a lousy or a not-so-good job. Walden might feel some additional need to prove himself with Churchill and with the king. Finally, again I think we need some sort of "personal thing" going between Walden and Oblomof. They are, I think, too nice to each other, too cool, too pleasant. *Sam syndrome*.

I realize that I have little or no idea how Marya looks, and in the scene when Charlotte returns home from the suffragette march, Marya is quite important.

As the scene progresses and Charlotte continues to castigate her mother and Marya, we need to be reminded once or twice that she is still smarting from her mother's slap. Otherwise, she comes on as just a bit brutal. In that vein, Charlotte should have some sort of internal reaction when her mother bursts into tears and runs from the room. On the whole, though, this is a good scene.

On 211, I like the idea of Lydia's internal monologue and the substance of her thoughts. I think though that they ought to be more frenzied and more desperate. I suggest that the sentences be made less perfect, that they contain strong expressions of feeling, supplications to God, perhaps curses-- all the things that one does in desperation.

Feliks' scene (212-215) is a jewel.

Except for the last page or so, Walden's scene (215-223) is very slow. At the outset, the bit with Churchill is too satiric, I think. I prefer Churchill for once being genuinely impressed with what Walden has accomplished, and perhaps Walden basking in Churchill's praise, or maybe his grudging admiration.

The lunch with Thomson doesn't work for me for two reasons. First, there is nothing interpersonal going on between these two characters, and in fact we have no interest in Thomson as a character at all. Second, the bulk of the lunch is devoted to passing information to us, most of which we as readers already know, even if Walden doesn't. The most interesting thing that happens is the consumption of all that food, and that goes on without any particular comment or notice. *It must.*

What if you were to skip the meetings both with Thomson and with ^{Churchill}Walden, and simply make it into a scene between Walden and Lydia? The real drama, it seems to me, is conveying some of Thomson's information to Lydia. Lydia is someone in whom we're deeply interested, as we are in the relationship between Walden and Lydia. Walden could begin by telling her about the

meeting with Churchill, then about the lunch. He might recount the whole menu, and even comment on how Thomson might have been gorging himself.

The essence of the scene, though, ought to be fear, fear that Feliks has not been caught, that despite Thomson's new information, he still may fail to catch the man, and therefore they all are still in mortal danger, as is all England. I think we need much more of this sense of peril, if we are to keep the "thriller" element working for us.

A small point. Thomson reveals information that Feliks is a top killer. But as far as I know, he has never killed anyone. Or has he?

Feliks' ruminations (224-226) are fine, but these are agonizing choices to make, and right now I don't feel his agony. You seem to express it more in terms of an algebra or a geometry problem, with various possible choices, as opposed to choices either way which would cause him great pain, and in fact he's having pain even in just thinking about it.

While Walden watches the trap being set for Feliks, you say he is elated; but as the scene proceeds, I feel no elation in him. In that same little paragraph you say, "the worst of Walden's worries would be over." And again, a continuing problem is that we really ^{do not} feel Walden's worry. This little scene itself proceeds, I feel, too coolly. Granted the dialogue between the special branch and the police may be cool, crisp, businesslike-- but as readers we must sense the enormous tension all these

people must feel, and most especially Walden. On both 226 and 227, Thomson refers to Feliks, and I wonder if he would use his Christian name. Wouldn't he be more likely to use his last name or call him the assassin or something of that ilk?

It was not immediately clear to me on 228 why in working class clothes "it was more difficult for him to steal." I think you need to add a line to the effect that storekeepers might watch him more carefully, etc.

On 229, when Feliks discovers the courtyard full of policemen, I think we need a moment of shock, adrenalin pumping, before he becomes cool and analytical.

On 230, I like his using the bomb. ^{We} ~~He~~ already ^{have} ~~has~~ had ample opportunities to see his "soft side," so do you really feel it's essential here to have the woman and baby? I think it would be quite an exciting touch to have the bomb go off, confuse and slow down the chase, and then of course have it proceed again at full momentum.

I imagine that running on the peak of this roof would be almost like a high-wire act in a circus, and I think we need to feel a bit more of the danger involved, if not the terror. Feliks must worry about maintaining perfect balance, etc., and we probably ought to have some richer sense of how far he would fall if he fell.

On 232, when he slides down and hits the gutter, I wonder if there ought not to be a moment of "give." He could not be sure for a moment whether or not the gutter might collapse

under his weight, and then of course it holds. Similarly, he ought to be worried when he lowers himself to the window below.

The little chase scene from Thomson's point of view (232-233) ought I think to be from Walden's point of view. We ought to feel more desperation, panic, disappointment, and not just get the technical details of the chase. We could have some of those details as Walden hears them, but that should not be the main thrust.

On 234, I think Feliks ought to glimpse Walden, who could of course by now be in the forefront of the chase. Again, I think we need to feel more of what's going on inside of Feliks as concerns the strain he feels, and the desperation, and the awfulness of his mission being aborted.

At the end of Walden's tiny scene on 235, you imply that Walden is disappointed, but I think you ought to be explicit about this. *No.*

I very much like the ending on 236.

I like your descriptions of the vagrants on 237. I think we could use a bit more of Feliks' physical sensations, his aches, cricks in his neck, how he feels after sleeping outdoors on presumably a hard pavement.

The news accounts and Feliks' political reasoning (238-241) go on a bit long, I think. I suggest that you trim these and then cut fairly quickly to Feliks' conclusion that, "If only Russia were to quarrel with her allies . . . and Feliks could start such a quarrel," by finding Oblomof.

The first interior monologue on 243 does not work for me. I suggest you consider giving it one focus. Charlotte might imagine what it could be like being married to Freddie, or she could have thoughts about what war might mean, or she might still be smarting from her mother's slap and wondering what's happening with her mother these days. But the paragraph you have covers too many things too quickly, and it would work better if you confined yourself to one topic.

Since this scene is written from Charlotte's point of view, I wonder if at the bottom of 244 Charlotte would know about all the types of people who are banned from the duchess's table.

On 246, I think you make your point about the duchess and the lower orders a few too many times. One outrageous statement about the lower orders contrasted with the service in her own home would make the point.

On 247, I think Charlotte can have a moment of exuberant pleasure discovering that Feliks is there and she has not missed him.

On 249, Charlotte's gasping does not seem to me to be quite a strong enough reaction to Feliks' disclosure. Her heart must plummet to her stomach, her hands grow cold, etc., I think, when she discovers that this man who she has admired so deeply is indeed a cold-blooded killer. Only after this strong visceral reaction should she, I think, start wondering about whether he's serious or pretending, mad or sane. Further down, when he says, "Let me go"; I think we need to feel much more

urgency and desperation, if only in her thoughts. Similarly, on 251, when Feliks reveals that he was the robber in the carriage, indeed the would-be assassin, again her reaction must be very strong. "She felt sickened and depressed" is okay, but I would like to see something longer and stronger.

Then we have the turnabout, her agreeing to take sides with him against her parents, her upbringing, and maybe even her country. A momentous decision. The reasoning which you give her is excellent, but it's, I think, too cool and analytical. Yes, she must come to this conclusion, but she must feel a fair amount of pain and guilt in doing so, and I suggest that you try to give her some internal agony and self-doubt, and maybe guilt too, before she agrees to work with Feliks.

On 252, the second long paragraph, after she says, "Or, I will be responsible for the death of millions," I think you can cut the rest of that paragraph.

Further down, just before Charlotte says, "I will help you," again, I think we need to feel a little pain in her before she comes right out and says this.

The Walden-Churchill-Asquith scene (253-256) stops the action. I think we are going to have to recast the scene. Essentially, in terms of the progress of the story, two things happen. Walden is told that his scheme will not work, and second, he is given a new assignment to try and fulfill. My thought is that we might get much greater drama out of these two steps if you were to write the scene as an interior monologue

as Walden is leaving Downing Street. First, he could be feeling enormous gloom that Lloyd George has seemingly wrecked his negotiation; and then he could pick himself up off the floor and start worrying and wondering about how he might be able to try this new ploy on Oblomof--all the while worrying about Oblomof's safety and peripherally about his own. Thomson's guard ought to be lurking somewhere nearby to give all of this some sort of physical weight. And Walden too might be feeling extra annoyance at the government's failure so far to apprehend the assassin. And he might even now begin personally fearing the man, since Feliks managed so cleverly and so brilliantly to escape from what appeared to be an army of policemen and a sure trap.

I like Lydia's scene (257-260). Lydia's concern for Charlotte, I think, ought also to be colored by a bit of affection and liking for her daughter. As you have it now, Charlotte appears in Lydia's eyes almost as no more than a possession.

On 263, we see Charlotte's tears, but we don't really share her pain, and I think we should. Also, Walden here seems so very different from the affectionate father we have met earlier in the book. I think that in the end he must do all the things to Charlotte which you have him do, but I think too that he ought to feel a bit of pain in doing them, and Charlotte ought to see this. And I wonder if it's necessary (and/or useful) to make Lydia so shallow?

The last part of the Feliks scene (265-271) works well.

In the first part, I think we need to feel more anxiety in Feliks, more of a desperate urge for her to come. He ought to be counting the time, perhaps marking off five or fifteen-minute intervals, after each of which we feel a new and ever more intense frustration in him. Also, I think you ought to heighten his sense of being in danger. We have it a little, in that you move him around and so forth, but he doesn't seem to be really worried about being apprehended. He might also be somewhat cautious about going back to Camdentown. After all, the police did manage to track him to his previous location, and he knows that by now they probably know about the Camdentown location. Ken, I'm not suggesting that you change very much, but just "punch up" his concerns.

On 269, I think Bridget ought to have a larger reaction than, "So that's it" to his news. She strikes me as an emotional sort, and news like that I expect would bring forth a larger reaction.

I wonder about Charlotte's line on 270, ". . . you're the only person I ever met who talks sense to me." "Talks sense" seems to me to be too weak a reason for doing what she is going to be doing. How about something like, "You are the only one who has given me something to believe in," or "You are the only one who seems to know how to make the world a better place"--but something a bit more positive in his favor and which would also suggest more of her feeling for him.

Churchill-Walden (271-273) is again a flat scene. Here

are a few ways in which you might consider injecting more drama into it. Walden might be terribly concerned that Lloyd George or someone else in the cabinet might be throwing a new roadblock in his path now that he has Oblomof's agreement, and now that war seems more imminent than ever. If we set Walden up in this way, then Churchill's news that Lloyd George will go along can be made immensely gratifying. Walden also might be very concerned about time, whether or not for example the treaty can be drawn and signed quickly enough, before there is any possibility of Russia not allying with England in this hour of need. And finally, Walden must be continuously worried about Oblomof's safety. And to a lesser extent his own.

If, as I suggested earlier, you set up some sort of "an edge" between Churchill and Walden, then Walden could feel properly self satisfied that he once again has accomplished something which perhaps he thinks Churchill thought that Walden would not be able to do. Or maybe, to be more generous to Churchill, Churchill might think that no one could do--given the Russian temperament, political position, etc. So, this could be a huge personal triumph for Walden.

On 274-275, we feel a lot with Walden in the first part of the scene, but then he fades out of it on the bottom of 274 and on the top of 275. What he thinks at the end of the scene probably is more dramatically meaningful than what he says, and I think you should put in what he thinks and/or feels.

On 277, Feliks ought to have a visceral pang of some sort

at the moment of recognition that he is being followed by a cop.

Walden's scene (281-284) comes alive when he says, "Damnation!" on 281, but after that the scene flags. Walden may remember his manners, but I think we must feel his seething anger and worry all through the rest of it. On 284, I find Walden's last line curiously anticlimactic. *(because his anger has frozen)*.

Lydia's scene (284-287) works well until the bottom of 286. Once Lydia makes the discovery that Charlotte is involved with Feliks, I think that you must inject much more emotion into the writing than Lydia now appears to express. I have to feel the horror that she feels, and the intense worry, the desperation even. And all that jumble of terrified feelings has to be mixed in, I think, with the rational thoughts which she now has.

(287-297) I wonder if Feliks doesn't get to Walden Hall just a little too easily. It seems to me that he ought to get lost at least once, or if not that, he ought to have one tight squeeze with a constable or a passing farmer or a dog. Granted, he's got to get there, but I would make it just a little harder for him.

How does Charlotte feel while she is looking for Feliks? How does she feel when she finds him? I very much like Charlotte's dreamlike thoughts starting at the bottom of 293, but before she has those, I think she needs more of a gut reaction to Feliks' revelation. And at the end, how does she feel about his request to get her into the house, before she agrees that she can?

The top half of 296 seems to me a bit mechanical. We miss Feliks' reaction to what Charlotte is doing, to the route they are taking, to this house which he is seeing for the first time and its roof. We start getting some of this at the bottom of the page, but I think we need to start with this right away.

At the end of the scene on 297, the climax must be how Feliks feels at this point: relieved, happy, depressed--I'm not sure, but you must tell us.

Lydia's scene (297-306) is terrific. 301-302 sags a bit, and on 303 I would like to be tuned in to Lydia's feelings for Walden. But I absolutely love the way you have done the last bit.

A parenthetical thought. Lydia is terribly concerned for Feliks. But I wonder too if she oughtn't in this sequence also be a bit concerned about Oblomof and Walden.

Unlike most of your Charlotte-Feliks scenes which are wonderful, this one, I think, is flat. (306-309) At this stage, I wonder if Feliks shouldn't be more of a caged tiger, on the one hand trying to be civilized, pleasant, tender towards Charlotte, but on the other hand, busting to burst forth from his cage and go for the kill. We're very close here now to the climax of the book, and I think we need to build momentum and excitement in every one of these little scenes.

Walden's scene (309-313) is good, but we need some more emotional highs. On page 312 particularly, when Thomson tells Charlotte that she may go to jail, Walden needs a moment of

horrified shock which I think must pierce him through and through, and then more of the same when Thomson suggests that she may be hanged. After these ferocious moments, then Walden could have the more reasonable thoughts which you give him.

On 310, at the bottom he says, "You fight for your country, etc. . . .," I find him a bit stuffy. It seems to me that all his pain now is coming now from his own daughter whom he loved and loves, and that if he says anything he should focus on her.

The scene between Charlotte and Walden (313-316) does not work. The drama here lies in Charlotte's feelings for her father, and we get these with some oomph only at the very end. Charlotte and Walden may converse a bit about politics and life, but these discussions and/or arguments must be relegated to Charlotte's pain, guilt, internal efforts to justify herself, while at the same time she feels miserable as she does so, her consciousness almost continuously of the pain she's causing her father, etc. We must feel this pain grow and grow within her until it's so huge that it no longer can be contained, and that should be when she bursts into tears.

Lydia's scene (316-319) is wonderful.

By the way, in two earlier scenes, I note that you have Walden referring to Feliks as Feliks. Again I wonder if he wouldn't call him the bombthrower, the assassin, or use Murontsiv?

I very much like the Feliks-Lydia scene (320-323).

The scene in which Feliks prowls through the house in the dark and then chooses a gun and obtains ammunition could stand

a bit more tension. The tension could be internal inside Feliks, or it could stem from external sources too, but we need to have lots of suspense at this point, and I don't think he can go about doing something like this as calmly as he seems to.

Lydia's ruminations on suicide work very well, but the real drama of the scene is the little interchange between Lydia and Charlotte, and that works less well. Also ^{lots} ~~it's~~ of incredible things have to be going on inside of Lydia as she finds out first that Charlotte knows, second that Charlotte does not hate her, and third that Charlotte loves her. Lydia must in some way be emotionally knocked out at each of these discoveries, and I assume that she is, but you don't really put this into words, and I think you should.

On pages 327-329, it is not easy to follow what Feliks is doing, nor to be involved emotionally with him here, since he seems so cool. Again, we need to feel his tension as well as greater clarity as to what he's up to. Physical details in themselves can be off-putting.

Lydia's confession to Walden (329-330) seems to me unduly rushed. The scene is so momentous a one that I think it requires more space, especially in terms of thoughts and feelings, and it also ought to be prepared for, I think, with Lydia having some sort of interior monologue, a painful one, before she decides to spill the beans. And as she spills them, she must want to censor things all along the way, and then at the last minute decide what she will tell and what she won't. And is

she still planning to commit suicide? And why is she telling Walden all this? Does she want Feliks now to be caught? And if she does, I think she must feel the horror of revealing his location before she reveals it. Also, we want some sense of where she's now heading... *with her life*

Feliks' setting of the fire, I find, rather mechanical. Again we need inner tension, concern about the future, etc.

Walden must be an excited hunter closing in for the kill, filled with bloodlust after the revelations he has just heard, but you don't clue us in to his inner workings, so that we feel his eager murderous urges. Then too, we must feel the enormous shock ^{in him} at the house being on fire.

You begin the next section, "Feliks watched anxiously," but we must feel his anxiety in almost every sentence.

Lydia's discovery of Charlotte must be more panic-stricken than it seems to be, more desperate. We must feel Lydia all but overwhelmed with fear.

The finale (336-340) is fine as far as the physical action is concerned and the sequence of events. But this too I think is rushed. This is the most exciting moment in the book and the readers will want to savor it to the fullest, which means that we need to feel all the important things which Feliks feels on 336-337. Lydia needs more time and a richer expression of emotion as she saves Feliks from being shot by Thomson. Charlotte's terror at being burned alive could benefit from richer expression. Walden's thoughts, terrors, etc. also want putting

down on paper as he and Feliks carry out their rescue operation.

The ending (339-340) seems rather impersonal. Feliks is dead, but we don't feel Lydia's pain. Nor do we feel her joy and relief at being reunited with Stephen, or that Charlotte has been saved; and I think we need all these things.

Oblomof I thought was dead, and yet in your epilogue you have him survive the war. The epilogue, I think, is too long. I'm not sure what portion I would suggest that you keep, but I would limit it at most to two paragraphs.

Ken, to sum up, I think The Russian Prince has the potential to be both your best and your ^{most} successful novel. The characters to me are fascinating, the period rich with color and intriguing mores, and the plot itself full of lovely twists. Most of your work, ^{to come} I feel, is in all the details I've spoken about above. At the moment, I think Lydia is your most successful character. Feliks also is very good, but he is not as successful as an anarchist-terrorist as he is as a lover and father. I feel that his character is going to need an additional injection, if you will, of blood lust. His criticism of the social order most of the time strikes me as dispassionate rather than blazing with fury. It seems to me that if he is determined enough to go around killing people, we must feel this blazing anger in him more than we do. I adore Charlotte. One problem I feel about her as a character is that sometimes she seems "programmed" by the author. She takes such strong doctrinaire positions so quickly. I think that at moments she ought to feel more unsure

of herself than she seems to, and that you might consider having her even be silly at times.

The major character who presents a serious problem, and his is the only serious one I think, is Walden. On the whole, he strikes me as too complacent a man to be a character in a thriller. I quite agree that Walden in life would probably be just the way you have written him. But on the other hand, for him to work in this kind of book, I think he needs to be much more driven than you now have him. What if he were personally affronted with certain things which Germany and Germans have done in the last year or two? What if he were to feel that his personal honor and glory were to be besmirched by a German victory? I think we need to sense in him a deep antipathy for the Germans, and an enormous fear that Germany may (if not subjugate) dishonor England. If these sorts of concerns dominate his waking hours, then I think you have wrought with him what we need. This isn't to say that I want you in any way to take away his deep concern which he now has for Lydia and Charlotte. That's wonderful, and I'd like to keep it; but I feel that we must add this other dimension to him.

Ken, believe it or not, that's it.

Love,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Ken', written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.