

THE WOMAN WITH THE FIVE ELEPHANTS

A FILM BY VADIM JENDREYKO

CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

"Thank God, that was only a dream," he said, sitting down under a tree and drawing deep breaths. "But what is it? Is it some fever coming on? Such a hideous dream!"

He felt utterly broken: darkness and confusion were in his soul. He rested his elbows on his knees and leaned his head on his hands.

"Good God!" he cried, "can it be, can it be, that I shall really take an axe, that I shall strike her on the head, split her skull open ... that I shall tread in the sticky warm blood, break the lock, steal and tremble, hide, all spattered in the blood ... with the axe ... Good God, can it be?"

He was shaking like a leaf.

"But why am I going on like this?" he continued, sitting up again, as it were in profound amazement. "I knew that I could never bring myself to it, so what have I been torturing myself for till now? Yesterday, yesterday when I went to make that ... experiment, yesterday I realised completely that I could never bear to do it ... Why am I going over it again, then? Why am I hesitating? As I came down the stairs yesterday, I said myself that it was base, loathsome, vile, vile ... the very thought of it made me feel sick and filled me with horror."

"No, I couldn't do it, I couldn't do it! Granted, granted that there is no flaw in all that reasoning, that all that I have concluded this last month is clear as day, true as arithmetic ... My God! Anyway I couldn't bring myself to it! I couldn't do it, I couldn't do it! Why, why then am I still ...?"

He rose to his feet, looked round in wonder as though surprised at finding himself in this place, and went towards the bridge. He was pale, his eyes glowed, he was exhausted in every limb, but he seemed suddenly to breathe more easily. He felt he had cast off that fearful burden that had so long been weighing upon him, and all at once there was a sense of relief and peace in his soul. "Lord," he prayed, "show me my path — I renounce that accursed ... dream of mine."

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The mystery surrounding the life and work of the world's greatest translator of Russian literature.

"A beautifully composed gem.
The director's style of gradually revealing
more and more keeps the viewer enthralled."

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