

LEON. (*Smiles.*) Kulyenchikov, I like it! It's exactly as I pictured: a quiet, pleasant village, not too large . . . the perfect place for a new schoolteacher to begin his career . . . Well, to be honest, I did spend mornings for two years in a small children's school in Moscow teaching tiny tots rudimentary spelling and numbers, but this, *this* is my first bona-fide, professional appointment as a full-time schoolmaster. Acutally, I never even heard of Kulyenchikov until I saw the advertisement that a Dr. Zubritsky placed in the college journal. Although the position was in a remote village in the Ukraine, I jumped at the chance, but I don't mind telling you that my heart is pounding with excitement. I have this passion for teaching . . . Greek, Latin, astronomy, classic literature. I get goose bumps just thinking about it . . . (*He looks around.*) I don't see anyone around . . . Maybe I arrived a little early — I'm one of those extremely eager and enthusiastic people who's up at the crack of dawn, ready to begin his work. This is a very, very auspicious day in my life. (*We hear a ram's horn off-stage.*) Oh! Excuse me.