

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS for the March 26th, 2026, discussion of *Rudin***

- 1.) The first major character presented in the novel is Aleksandra Pavlovna Lipina. What is her background, what kind of person is she, what's her occupation, how does brother Sergei help her?
- 2.) Under what circumstances does Dmitry Nikolaevich Rudin make his first appearance in the novel? How old is he and what does he look like? What's his family and educational background?
- 3.) What is Darya Mikhailovna Lasunskaya's family history, and what are her circumstances at present? What kind of person is Darya Mikhailovna, and what does Moscow society think of her?
- 4.) What is Afrikan Semyonich Pigasov's background, and what kind of person is he? What do he and Rudin argue about at Darya Mikhailovna's social gathering? Who is the winner and why?
- 5.) What kind of person is Natalya Alekseevna (aka Natasha—Darya Mikhailovna's older daughter). How old is she? What does Rudin think of her, and what does she think of Rudin...and for what reasons? Why is Darya upset with Natasha and Rudin, and why is Sergei Pavlych Volyntsev (Alexandra's brother) also upset with the situation (for a related, but different reason)?
- 6.) What is Mihailo Mihailych Lezhnyov's background, how old is he, what does he look like, what kind of person is he, what are the roots of his relationship with Rudin, and how has their relationship changed over time? Whose house does Mihailo frequent (besides Darya's) and why?
- 7.) What is Basistov's background, what kind of person is he, how is he employed at Darya's estate, how does he contrast with Rudin in character, and in what way does Rudin inspire him?
- 8.) Though playing a minor role, Konstantin Diomidych Pandalevsky is no less a memorable character in the novel. What strikes you about his on-the-job comportment at Darya's estate?
- 9.) Despite five characters falling in love with this or that other character by the end of the novel (not counting the Epilogue), only one marriage emerges. What are the relationships like and why?
- 10.) What does Rudin's letter to Natasha at the end of the novel reveal about Rudin's character?
- 11.) Turgenev returned to Russia following his mother's death in 1850 just as all hell broke loose in Europe, revolution in the air. Of particular significance was the violent "June Days" uprising in Paris in 1848, resulting in thousands of deaths and deportations, but soon paving the way for the democratic election of Louis-Napoleon Bonaparte as President (who three years later staged a coup that extended his 4-year term to 10 years and established the Second French Empire). In turn, Turgenev was motivated to add an Epilogue to *Rudin*: What marriages occur? Under what circumstances does Lezhnyov return into Rudin's life to lend a hand? What is the fate of Rudin?
- 12.) What's your opinion of the original ending to the novel? Is the Epilogue an improvement?