

The Double: A Petersburg Poem (Annotated with a Biography about the Life and Times of Fyodor Dostoyevsky)

By Fyodor Dostoyevsky

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The Double: A Petersburg Poem is a novella written by Fyodor Dostoevsky. The novella was first published in 1846. The Double deals with the internal psychological struggle of its main character, Yakov Petrovich Golyadkin.

The Double is the most Gogolesque of Dostoevsky's works; its subtitle "A Petersburg Poem" echoes that of Gogol's Dead Souls. Vladimir Nabokov called it a parody of "The Overcoat". The story is told in great detail with a style intensely saturated by phonetic and rhythmical expressiveness. The novella centers on a government clerk who goes mad, obsessed by the idea that a fellow clerk has usurped his identity. D.S. Mirsky characterized the story as a "painful, almost intolerable reading".

With a biography about the life and times of Fyodor Dostoyevsky.

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Editorial Review

Review

"The novels of Dostoevsky are seething whirlpools, gyrating sandstorms, waterspouts which hiss and boil and suck us in. They are composed purely and wholly of the stuff of the soul. Against our wills we are drawn in, whirled round, blinded, suffocated, and at the same time filled with a giddy rapture. Out of Shakespeare there is no more exciting reading"
-- *Virginia Woolf, The Russian Point of View*

About the Author
Fyodor Dostoyevsky was a Russian novelist, short story writer and essayist whose literary works explored human psychology in the troubled political, social, and spiritual context of nineteenth-century Russia. A student of the Nikolayev Military Engineering Institute, Dostoyevsky initially worked as an engineer, but began translating books to earn extra money. The publication of his first novel, Poor Folk, allowed him to join St. Petersburg s literary circles. A prolific writer, Dostoyevsky is best known for work from the latter part of his career, including the classic novels Crime and Punishment, The Idiot and The Brothers Karamazov. Dostoyevsky s influence extends to authors as diverse as Anton Chekhov, James Joyce, Ernest Hemingway, and Jean-Paul Sartre, among many others. He died in 1881.

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