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о. Соловки
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A Wreath for Country Estates
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The first signs of agony appeared in 1917. That year brought with it a clear premonition of the fate of the Russian country estates and all that went with them. The mansions stood void, their white columns had crumbled. Grass began to push through the garden walks; ten years later it would stand tall, fit for mowing. History had closed one of its books to open the next. The finishing touch alone had to be provided: an epilogue to mourn that which had inspired poets and writers; that which musicians had gleaned from nocturnal sounds and rustles; that which artists had glimpsed in the delicate pastel hues of spring and in the heavy crimson of autumnal sunsets. The home of the Larins had run to seed; the lions on the gates have shed their plaster and crumpled... "The nest of the Gentry" has been laid waste for all time. Trigorskoye has been destroyed by fire, the Boratynsky and Vyazemsky manors and Turgenev's "Spasskoye" home lie in ruins... everything has fallen into decay... And the sites which have by pure chance survived are nearing their doom. It took ten years to create this colossal necropolis, harbouring the culture of two centuries. Buried here lie art treasures, mementos of bygone days, the ideas and images that nourished Russian poetry, literature and music, and stimulated the development of social thinking. The vast ravaged site is overgrown with weeds and nettles. Soon these will hide from view the last heaps of clipped and broken brick... There is no gravestone to mark this necropolis...

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