Chekhov’s “Lady With the Pet Dog”

Journal Response Questions

Please respond to two of the following questions. Use details, specifics, examples and quotes from the story to help develop your response. Please word-process, use your codename, and follow the general guideline of ½ page single-spaced for each response.

“As we read these little stories about nothing at all, the horizon widens; the soul gains an astonishing sense of freedom.” — Virginia Woolf

1. There are two widely separated scenes in which Gurov sits beside Anna while she suffers. Compare his reactions in the two scenes and account for the differences.

2. Identify and describe the point-of-view. Please be specific. How does this point-of-view affect the story’s meaning/themes? Why not first person with Gurov as the narrator? Why not first person with Anna as the narrator? How would these choices change the story?

3. Which are conventionally assumed to be more real, the feelings we have on holiday or those in our everyday lives? How is this convention related to our expectations about the outcome of the story? To the meaning of the story?

Questions for Consideration as you re-read:

1. Why is it significant that the setting of this story is a resort town? How does the vacation atmosphere affect the action?

2. What does Gurov’s view of women reveal about him? Why does he regard them as an inferior race?

3. What do we learn about Gurov’s wife and Anna’s husband? Why do you think Chekhov includes this exposition? How does it affect our view of the lovers?

4. When and why do Gurov’s feelings about Anna begin to change? Is he really in love with her?

5. Who or what is the antagonist in this story? What is the nature of the conflict?

6. What is the effect of Gurov’s being the central consciousness? How would the story be different if it were told from Anna’s perspective?