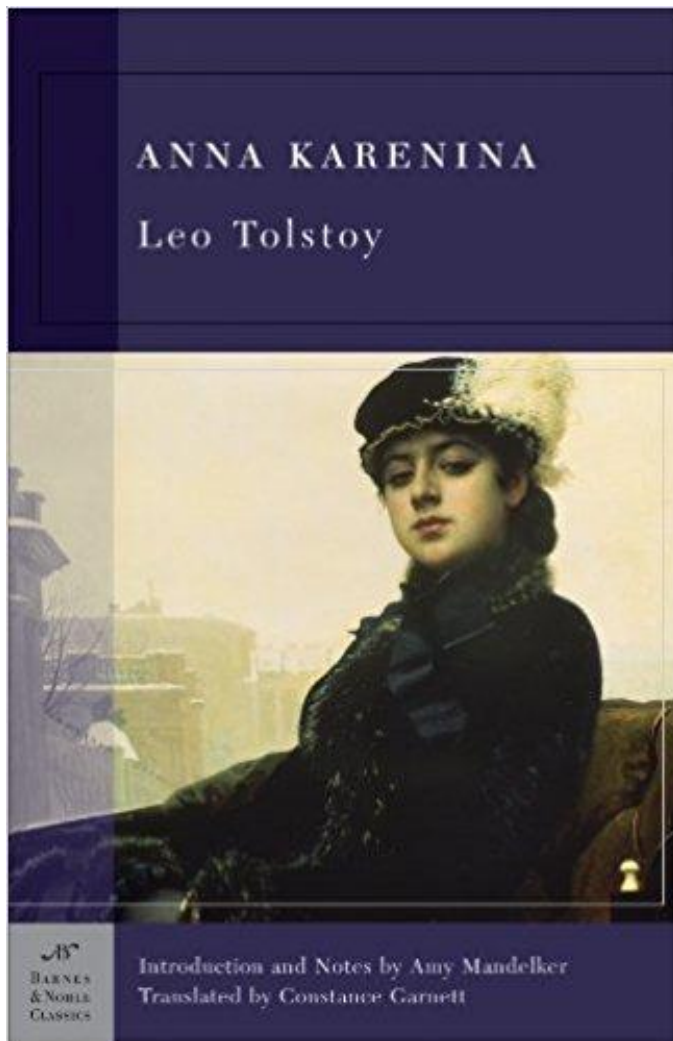


Anna Karenina Summary



Anna Karenina.

We all know her as the woman who did something unacceptable in her time and threw her life on the railroad tracks.

But what made her give up? What did she think? What went wrong?

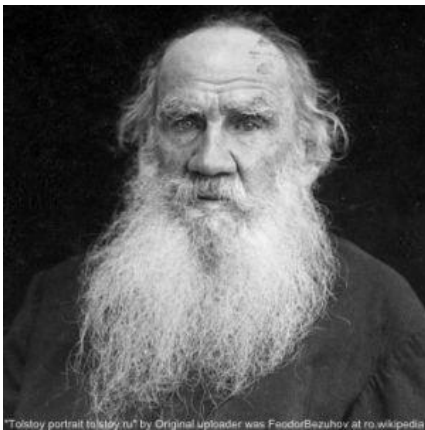
Who Should Read “Anna Karenina”? And Why?

From the master of realism, we get yet another story that is as much about the personal turmoils of the characters, as it is about the social changes that shake Russia in the nineteenth century.

[“Anna Karenina”](#) is a story about self-discovery and adultery, as well as about the importance of family and the perplexing emotions and hardships that people experience when trying to comprehend and realize their wishes.

We recommend it to all lovers of classics, readers that love well-rounded characters, and those that do not mind reading long works of fiction.

Leo Tolstoy Biography



[Leo Tolstoy](#) (Lev Nikolayevich Tolstoy) was a Russian aristocrat, who is considered as one of the most [prominent and significant authors of realism](#) (and overall) of all times.

Plot

The story starts with the introduction of the heroine of the novel, Anna Karenina, who travels to Moscow to mediate in the marriage of her brother Stiva and Dolly, that is torn apart because of his adultery.

The introduction of the adultery theme from the very beginning foreshadows the events of the heroine's story, and the novel's main premise.

In the meantime, the readers are introduced to the main character of the subplot of the novel: Kitty. Kitty is Dolly's sister, who at the moment has two suitors into consideration: Konstantin Levin and Alexei Vronsky.

Kitty does not want to accept Levin's hand in marriage, and so

he returns to his house in the country. However, soon she is left without the other option, since Vronsky, the handsome military man, falls in love with Anna instead.

The problem is that Anna is married.

Yet, this does not stop him from courting her.

On her return to her home in St. Petersburg, he follows her and continues trying to charm her. He loves her, as he tells her.

Not long after, Anna starts [romantically thinking](#) about Vronsky as well.

We already summarized one other book with a similar premise: [Madame Bovary](#). However, in Anna Karenina, Karenin, the husband of the heroine, is not naïve and senses her interest in Vronsky.

Anna is bold: she admits that she loves him and that she is having an affair.

The events of the main plot are interrupted when we take a look at the subplot about Kitty and Levin, who after some time has passed, fall in love and get married.

Meanwhile, Karenin, although is aware of the affair of his wife, would instead that they keep the image of a happily married couple in front of the public, and thus he refuses her request for a divorce.

This does not stop her from keeping to see Vronsky, but their relationship changes when she reveals to him that she is expecting a baby.

One day, Karenin faces Vronsky in his home, and he finally cannot bear it anymore and agrees to a divorce. However, this time, Anna does not want to divorce him and begs for his forgiveness.

He grants it, but she is again not satisfied. Instead, she hates him for his niceness and generosity.

Instead of asking for a divorce, or becoming a dutiful wife, she just moves to Italy with Vronsky where she leads what readers would consider an aimless life.

When she returns to Russia, she and Vronsky are judged by [Russia's society](#), who consider their affair and Anna's adultery disgraceful.

However, Vronsky is not in as a bad position as she is. She has a son and a husband whom she has left, and therefore she can no longer participate in society.

So she becomes jealous of her lover, which further complicates her psychological and emotional state.

Kitty and Levin's life, in the meanwhile, is also not without complications.

Levin feels perplexed about the changes he faces, like for example his [lack of freedom](#).

Even more, surprises come when he and Kitty move to the city to await the birth of their baby and face the expenses of the city lifestyle. When the baby is born, Levin is also confused about the feelings he has towards his child.

However, their issues are nowhere near as big as Anna's.

She constantly drinks sedatives to sleep and grows paranoid starting to doubt Vronsky's love. Whenever he goes somewhere, she cannot bear her doubts.

This growing paranoia finally overburdens her and makes her do the desperate act of throwing herself under a train to kill herself.

Anna Karenina Epilogue

After Anna's death, Tolstoy gives us a resolution to the lives of the other characters as well.

Vronsky goes to Serbia to help Slavic people to free themselves from the Turkish influence.

Levin starts questioning life and its meaning, and finally finds the transformation he seeks for through faith. He realizes that he loves his son when he is in danger, and his wife Kitty seems pleased.

It looks like the future of the characters is bright.

This kind of ending proves Tolstoy's idea about the bliss of family life – and puts a satisfactory ending that answers to the opening sentence of the novel.

However, although he was emphasizing the importance of family, he did not avoid mentioning the hardships in it as well, which makes the story real and balanced.

Like this summary? We'd Like to invite you to download our free [12 min app](#), for more amazing summaries and audiobooks.

“Anna Karenina PDF Quotes”

[All happy families are alike; each unhappy family is unhappy in its own way. Click To Tweet](#)

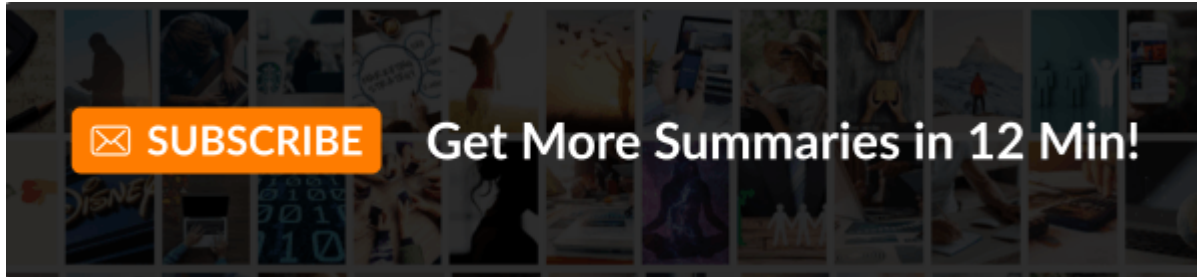
[If you look for perfection, you'll never be content. Click To Tweet](#)

[He stepped down, trying not to look long at her, as if she were the sun, yet he saw her, like the sun, even without looking. Click To Tweet](#)

[Respect was invented to cover the empty place where love](#)

[should be. Click To Tweet](#)

[Is it really possible to tell someone else what one feels?
Click To Tweet](#)



Our Critical Review

“Anna Karenina” is one of the best books I have read. However, I started it many times, and only now I read it until the very end.

Do not get me wrong, it is not that the book is not interesting, but it is painfully long for modern-day readers that are used to thinner books and faster reads.

In any case, one must read it at some point in his or her life, so I recommend that once you feel that you have the time – you put it on your reading shelf.