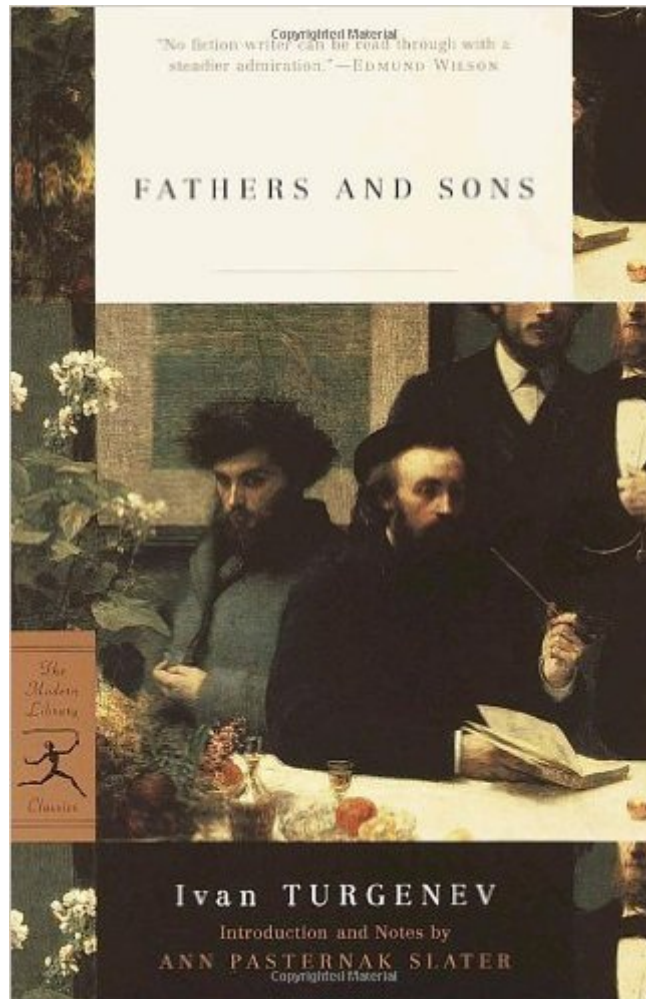


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Fathers And Sons (Modern Library Classics)



Synopsis

When *Fathers and Sons* was first published in Russia, in 1862, it was met with a blaze of controversy about where Turgenev stood in relation to his account of generational misunderstanding. Was he criticizing the worldview of the conservative aesthete, Pavel Kirsanov, and the older generation, or that of the radical, cerebral medical student, Evgenii Bazarov, representing the younger one? The critic Dmitrii Pisarev wrote at the time that the novel "stirs the mind . . . because everything is permeated with the most complete and most touching sincerity." N. N. Strakhov, a close friend of Tolstoy and Dostoevsky, praised its "profound vitality." It is this profound vitality in Turgenev's characters that carry his novel of ideas to its rightful place as a work of art and as one of the classics of Russian Literature.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is such a wonderful novel about two young men returning home from University - Arkady Kirsanov and his friend, Yevgeny who is known mostly as Basarov. Firstly they stop at Arkady's father's poor farm - but he is a landowner. Arkady's father's name is Nikolai and living with him is his brother Pavel. What contrasts we immediately meet - Nikolai whose wife has died (Arkady's mother) but who is living with one of the local peasant women (Fenitchka) and has a son by her, and Pavel whose playboy life collapsed when the princess he hoped to marry rejected him. So here we have two young men with all the potential of their living beings contrasted with Nikolai and Pavel and their strange life outcomes. What complicates the matter is that Basarov is a nihilist - someone called him

the first 'angry young man'. He is cynical and argumentative - prepared to accept Nikolai's simple innocence and honesty in living, unprepared to tolerate Pavel's Anglophile airs and graces. The young men move on to Basarov's parent's place (simple folk living a traditional old age) but on the way meet Madame Odintsova - quickly called Odintsov (presumably because she is widowed). They spend some time with Odintsov and we learn her name is Anna Sergeyevna. Anna lives with her younger sister Katya and an older aunt. The contrasts are once again evident. Anna has no feeling for Arkady at all and quickly Arkady and Katya become friends as Anna and Basarov fascinate each other. But Basarov is appalled at his romantic feelings - not what he expects a nihilist should experience! And when Odintsov's flirting causes him to express that love he has to flee to his parent's place horrified by what he has felt.

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