

Dear Tom,

Thank you very much for your letter. It's really important for me to keep in touch with you because our dialogue makes me get a new angle on usual and familiar things. I hope that we'll continue writing to each other and sharing ideas and opinions.

In your last letter you told me about your favourite English writers and poets. Your words were full of passion and love, so I decided to study their compositions and poems more carefully than I did at school. You can't imagine how delightful I am now! I've always admired Jane Austen, sisters Brontë, Oscar Wilde, Charles Dickens and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, but thanks to you some new names were added to the list - Thomas Hardy, Bram Stoker, Terry Pratchett and John Folwes impressed me with their immortal talent too. Their books changed some thoughts of mine and as I'm really grateful to you for a piece of advice to read them, I want to offer you to get acquainted with Russian writers, hoping that you will learn something new and understand my love towards Russian literature.

Some time ago I was looking for a couple of interesting facts about Alexander Pushkin for my school project. Do you know that in the «British Encyclopedia» of 1961 his verse novel «Eugene Onegin» was called «the first novel in Russian literature»? Before Pushkin started writing, the Russian language had been thought to be useless for fiction. I was thinking a lot about it and now I'm ready to give you the reason for that opinion – the beauty of the Russian language is in its simplicity and Alexander Pushkin was the first person to discover it. There had been a huge number of writers and poets before him, but I think they interpreted literature only as a hobby for the nobles and it doomed their compositions for the oblivion. They used sophisticated words and phrases, they created obscure plots and pasteboard characters. Real Russian language is different! It may have difficult grammatics and complicated vocabulary, but it's vivid and flexible. I can compare it with a flowing river because of its endless striving for developing and rebornng. You go down the street and you want to dance all the time, because it sounds like a song. You go to the market and feel frozen, because it's moving around you like a hurricane. Sharp and soft, cold and hot Russian language inspires, gives hope and reasons to create something brand new! Alexander Pushkin got it and wrote something as nimble as the Russian language, something that could be understood by every person whenever and wherever he lived. He was working on «Eugene Onegin» years ago, but many writers and poets saw the beauty in its easiness and I guess this is the reason Russian literature became so close to reality and people. I think, that this lightness is important equally with the sense of books itself and it would be great if everybody could learn Russian writers' original syllable.

As for me, I really want you to read something by Anton Chehov, Maxim Gorkii, Lev Tolstoi, Ivan Bunin, Fedor Dostoevskii, Alexander Kuprin and others and others... I'm trying to concentrate and make a list of my favourite Russian writers, but I actually can't chose between all those great men who made me the person I am with their compositions. Read anybody you want, I'm sure you won't be disappointed anyway!

What do you think about American literature? Who are your favourite American writers? Do you often read contemporary books?

Write to me soon. I'm looking forward to hearing from you.

Yours,

Lera