

## **Appendix 2**

### **Summary of *God Sees the Truth but Waits* (Tolstoy, 2020)**

In Russia during the nineteenth century, a young, attractive businessman named Ivan Dmitrich Aksionov lived with his wife and children. Although he had been a bit wild in his youth, he had now settled down and lived a responsible productive life. One day, he decided to make a trip to a fair where he could sell some of his merchandise. Although his wife had a bad dream about this trip, Aksionov decided to proceed. On the way, he stopped at an inn where he met another merchant, a person he knew. They decided to stay at the inn in rooms next to one another. The next morning, he proceeded on his way. After traveling twenty-five miles, however, he was stopped by a local police officer who questioned him closely about the time he had spent at the inn. It turned out that the other merchant had been found with his throat slit open, and Aksionov seemed a likely suspect since he knew the man and since their rooms had been adjacent. Aksionov vehemently denied any involvement in the murder. However, when his bags were checked, a bloody knife was found.

Although Aksionov protested his innocence, he was arrested and charged with the murder. Even his wife wondered if he might have been involved since the circumstantial evidence was so striking. A petition to the Czar for mercy was turned down. Aksionov bade his wife and young children farewell, reflecting that only God can know the truth, and that only God can provide true clemency. Aksionov continued to petition the Czar, but eventually he despaired of any earthly mercy, focusing his thoughts instead on God. After being severely flogged, he was sent to work in the mines in Siberia. During his twenty-six years of imprisonment there, his hair turned white, his happy-go-lucky personality disappeared, and his body began to weaken; he never showed any signs of happiness and frequently prayed to God. While imprisoned he became a boot-maker, thus earning enough money to buy a book called *The Lives of the Saints*.

Aksionov spent 26 years in prison which made him god-fearing and well-grounded. He was called "Grandpa" by other prisoners. Then came a new prisoner named Makar Semyonich.

After months of knowing each other, Aksionov discovered that Makar was the one who killed the merchant whom he was told he murdered. He was furious with what he found out but did not speak or utter a word about it.

Until one night, Aksionov heard some earth rolling under where the prisoners were sleeping. He went out and saw Makar. Makar told him not to tell a word about what he had witnessed or else he will kill him. When they were led out to work, a soldier noticed a prisoner took of some earth off his boots. The soldier searched for escaping plans and found the tunnel. Then they asked each of them who knew about this but they denied for they knew that if officers would know it was Makar, they would surely flog him to death. Night fell when Makar went to Ivan. He thanked him and felt sorry for what he had done to him a long time ago that made Ivan suffer for all these years

He sobbed as well as Ivan and said that the Lord would forgive him. Makar said he would confess to the governor so that Ivan would be freed and could get back home. Ivan did not anymore want to go out of the prison for he had no family and home to go back to. He only waited for his hour to come. In spite of his refusal for Makar's plan, Makar still confessed his guilt. But when the order for Ivan Dmitritch Aksionov release came, he was already dead.