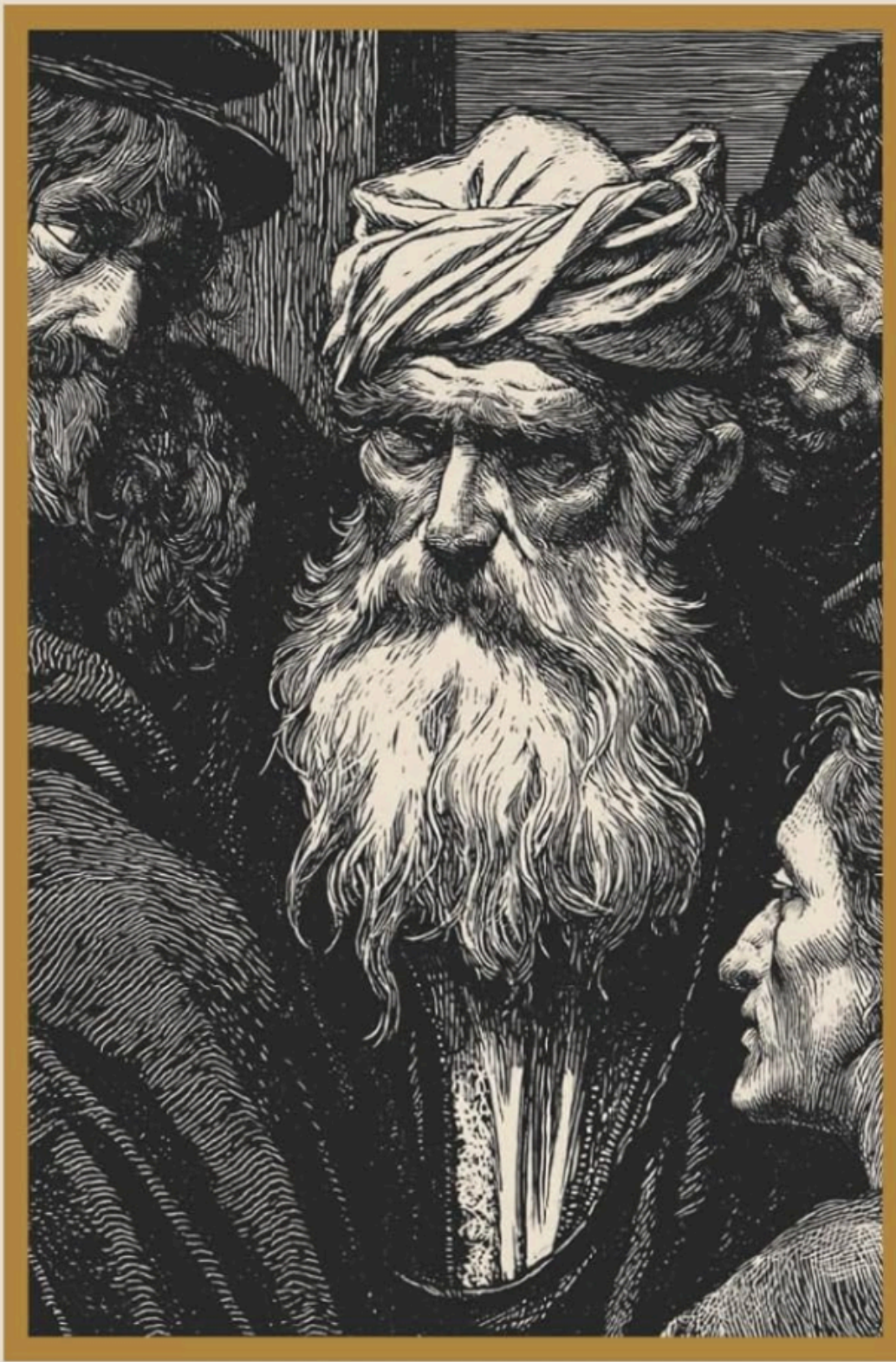


What Men Live By

A Modern Critical Edition with
Afterword by Shaun Plurabelova

First published by Tolstoy's
own press, *The Mediator*
(Посредник), Moscow

Imperial Press
The Complete Works of Tolstoy



Leo Tolstoy

Лев Николаевич Толстой

Book Key Takeaways

Kaan Demiryurek



Main Idea

**The story explores answers
to three questions:**

- **What lives in man**
- **What is not given to man**
- **What men live by**



Love Lives in Man

At the core of human life is love. It moves people toward one another and connects them. Without love, human life does not hold.



We do not know our needs

We plan and act as if we understand what we need for the future. We do not.

This gap between assumption and reality is real and constant.



Man does not live by himself

**Human life is not sustained
by individual effort alone.**

**It continues because others
care, and we care for others.**



Life is given

We cannot fully secure life through effort. Life is given, moment by moment.

This is why control always feels incomplete.



Control has limits

Planning matters.

**But it cannot secure life fully
in the way we think.**

**There is a limit to what we
can control, and what
control can do.**



Perception can change

We often reduce people to their utility: what they can do for us or how they threaten us. Seeing them more fully (acknowledging their humanity beyond their output) changes everything, and that shift matters.



Love holds life together

**What keeps human life going
is **love**, not strength,
intelligence, or planning.
It is love expressed in action.**



So What

**Tolstoy beautifully moves
life's center of gravity from
independence to
interdependence. From
control to humility. From
self-focus to care for others.**