

Crime and Punishment Character

Writer: Fyodor Dostoevsky | Generated: Jan 26, 2026

Major Characters

- **Rodion Romanovich Raskolnikov (Raskolnikov):** The central hero of the novel. A poor former law student living in St. Petersburg. He believes that "Extraordinary men" can break moral laws. To prove this theory, he murders an old pawnbroker. But he suffers from guilt, inner torment, and conflict. In the end, he confesses and seeks redemption through punishment. Raskolnikov symbolizes moral crisis, guilt, and the search for redemption.
- **Sofya Semyonovna Marmeladov (Sofya):** Nicknamed Sonia by her family and others. The daughter of a poor family was forced into prostitution to support them. For Raskolnikov, she is a symbol of compassion, love, and faith in God. Her sympathy and sacrifice inspire him to surrender.
- **Avdotya Romanovna Raskolnikova (Dunya):** Raskolnikov's sister. She is usually called Dunya in the novel. A strong, dignified woman with self-respect. She takes on family responsibilities and makes sacrifices when needed, yet values her independence. Her character embodies women's struggle, self-respect, and determination.
- **Arkady Ivanovich Svidrigailov (Svidrigailov):** Dunya's former employer, a wealthy man who tries to seduce her. A complex character, hedonistic and sinful on one hand, yet capable of pity on the other. In the end, he commits suicide. He symbolizes the duality of human nature and moral ambiguity.
- **Dmitri Prokofych Razumikhin (Razumikhin):** Raskolnikov's friend. An honest, lively, and kind-hearted young man. He loves Dunya and eventually marries her. He symbolizes humanity, friendship, and positive strength.

Minor Characters

- **Porfiry Petrovich:** The intelligent investigator in charge of the murder case. Instead of relying solely on evidence, he tries to uncover the truth through psychological analysis. He symbolizes justice, law, and psychology.
- **Pulcheria Alexandrovna:** Raskolnikov's mother. A loving and emotional woman, worried about her son's future. She symbolizes a mother's sacrifice and trust.

- **Katerina Ivanovna Marmeladova:** Sonia's stepmother. Ill, proud, and full of suffering. Even in poverty, she tries to maintain dignity. Eventually, she collapses from illness and poverty.
- **Semyon Zakharovich Marmeladov (Marmeladov):** Sonia's father. A drunken former government clerk. Poverty and weakness have destroyed him. He symbolizes human weakness, failure, and tragic reality.
- **Pyotr Petrovich Luzhin (Luzhin):** A selfish lawyer who wants to marry Dunya only to dominate her. He symbolizes hypocrisy, selfishness, and the greedy side of society.
- **Andrei Semyonovich Lebezyatnikov (Lebezyatnikov):** Luzhin's tenant and a so-called social reformer. His character reveals the superficial and ridiculous aspects of progressive thought in 19th-century Russia.

Families and Relationships

- **Raskolnikov Family:** Raskolnikov, Dunya, and their mother, Pulcheria, form the emotional core of the story. Their tensions, sacrifices, and hopes for the future drive the narrative forward.
- **Marmeladov Family:** Sonia, her father Marmeladov, stepmother Katerina, and younger siblings symbolize poverty and suffering. Their lives become the source of Raskolnikov's guilt and ultimately his inspiration to confess.