

Fathers and sons –
the quarrel – chapter
10 essay sample



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Chapter ten begins with Arkady and Bazarov discussing Nikolai and his 'outdatedness', Nikolai consulting his brother Pavel about the same issue follows this. These two events barely fit into the same chapter as the quarrel that occurs next. Bazarov and Pavel have not gotten along since they met and share different views on basically everything. Pavel loathes Bazarov's nihilist attitude and Bazarov, being a nihilist doesn't care much for Pavel's aristocratic nature either.

They have both been burning to have an argument, especially Pavel who was just waiting for a spark to start a flame. When the conversation drifted to one of the neighboring landowners Pavel noticed his chance and uses this as a catalyst to start the conversation about nihilism and their different viewpoints. As the two men begin dueling it is noticeable how both seem to be trained advocates. Their questions are brief and their answers to the point and don't give away too much.

Bazarov seems to not care less about what is happening whereas Pavel seems to be dripping with enthusiasm. Pavel acts as more of an interrogator than Bazarov and begins the argument by stating his opposing viewpoint of aristocratism which Bazarov mocks so plainly. Both men have their dignity at this point and although Pavel seems pressured not much tension is in the atmosphere. "I do not share the same opinion", said Pavel igniting the debate. Bazarov then asks Pavel what can be proved about the supposed superiority of the aristocrats.

Though Pavel does answer the challenge I feel Bazarov is trying to change the subject when he chooses to personalize the argument and begins to talk

about what the point of all of Pavel's trouble is. He implies that Pavel doesn't achieve anything in his life and so his aristocratic way of life has been a useless one with no progress. Although this is clearly personal to Pavel I don't feel as if Bazarov was purposely trying to attack Pavel's life and ridicule it. Unsurprisingly Pavel is offended and retorts, losing some of his dignity.

He makes another personal statement towards Bazarov saying that only ignorant or stupid people would live without the principals that aristocrats preach; he is directly implying that Bazarov is ignorant and stupid. This argument I feel was more of a personal statement made towards Bazarov rather than a good argument to debate over, however Bazarov retains his dignity and moves to another topic, naming a few words used in aristocracy and labeling them as utter nonsense.

At this point I think Bazarov is winning the argument, as Pavel seems confused and temporarily overwhelmed by Bazarov's questions. But Pavel does do the right thing next by asking Bazarov what he feels should be done about the situation, but again Pavel adds another personal statement at the end of his argument saying that if Bazarov's views were put into effect the Russian people " shall find ourselves beyond the pale of humanity, outside human laws". Next more of Pavel's dignity is stolen as they describe to him exactly what a nihilist does and does not do.

Turgenev clearly states that Pavel is overwhelmed by the definition of nihilism and what plans they have for Russia. In his view it is as if Pavel underestimated their ignorance. Bazarov says that at present time the most

useful thing that can be done by the Russian people is to deny. To deny authority, principals, art, everything. I fail to understand how much can be gained by this, Bazarov's theory is that all that has been built must be destroyed in order to construct a new life which the people want.

Although I feel Bazarov is running a better argument I don't agree with his philosophy and feel that instead of denying everything an attempt can be made at just trying to change what has been built instead of destroying it and reconstructing it from scratch. Pavel continues to lose his temper and his arguments get worse as he loses his dignity and begins acting childlike. To reply to Bazarov and Arkady's description of the Russian people he says " No, no! I can't believe that you young men really know the Russian people, that you represent their needs and aspirations!

No, the Russian people are not what you imagine them to be. They hold tradition sacred, they are a patriarchal people, they cannot live without faith . . . " This sentence with its abundance of ' no's' sounds very childlike and most of it seems as if Pavel is trying to tell himself rather than the others that what they say is not true. Bazarov still contains full dignity and as adultly as possible agrees to ease Pavel, but he still refuses to admit if he is wrong.

Then he states that although Pavel may be right it still proves nothing. His next argument is basic, but effective, Pavel says that in that case Bazarov must be going against his own people and Bazarov replies with an analogy that implies that according to Pavel if the majority of the people do something utterly stupid he must do so as well. Pavel ignores the last

argument made by Bazarov and instead chooses to retaliate by attacking Bazarov by saying he is not part of the Russian people after he opposes them in so many ways.

Bazarov handles this argument simply by referring to the most Russian people he knows, the peasants, who have knowledge of the past peasants who have risen and become of higher status now. Bazarov, as we have seen earlier in the book, talks to the peasants and doesn't mind answering their questions and talking to them. Although he may look down on them and not think much of them he still treats them like people and so they will obviously support him on this one so Pavel made bad move by challenging how Russian Bazarov is as he has more to show for it than Pavel.

But again I do feel that comparing Pavel to himself was unnecessary and just made the argument more personal again. There is a short break in the chapter as Nikolai stands up and tries to cool the two down asking them not to make this personal. He is a bit late. With Nikolai's interference Pavel has a chance to compose himself and regain some of the dignity he had had before. They start to discuss nihilism once again with a cooler and less tense atmosphere. Bazarov gives another definition for nihilism, this time focusing more on their actions as a group.

They then begin to talk about the strength of the nihilists, which Pavel is proved to have underestimated. I agree with Bazarov's view here that a large number is not needed, but rather a stronger faith or force in what they are doing as the truth to be stronger than a large number. Although slightly irrelevant Bazarov's analogy to a single candle burning down the whole of

Moscow, I feel was a strong argument. Pavel seems to lose his dignity along with the argument as he again starts acting restless and angered.

Pavel then loses all dignity when he starts to be sarcastic saying “ Bravo, bravo! ” and trying to make what Bazarov is saying foolish by pretending to acknowledge it. His loss of dignity is made clear with Bazarov’s statement “ You have departed from your praiseworthy sense of personal dignity” and with this Bazarov chooses to close the argument, but not without his closing sentence in which he asks Pavel to think of institutions where the aristocracy has had an outcome of no problems. Pavel attempts to name a few but is proven wrong by Bazarov for his attempts.

Bazarov once again asks Pavel to take his time and think about it; with this he takes his leave and the discussion comes to an end. Bazarov is clearly a powerful advocate who can maintain his dignity even when he is criticized and although many people oppose his views he has managed to keep his views alive. Pavel, although a good attempt would make a weaker advocate, his weaknesses lie in his quick temper. Maintaining your cool is very important and Bazarov proved that, he left the argument with all his dignity and my vote as the winner whereas Pavel was left tongue-tied and labeled as the loser.