

# Crime and Punishment

## Fyodor Dostoyevsky

The two years before he wrote Crime and Punishment (1866) had been bad ones for Dostoyevsky.

His wife and brother had died; the magazine he and his brother had started, **Epoch**, collapsed under its load of debt; and he was threatened with debtor's prison.

With an advance that he managed to wrangle for an unwritten novel, he fled to Wiesbaden (western Germany), hoping to win enough at the roulette table to get himself out of debt.

Instead, he lost all his money; he had to pawn his clothes and beg friends for loans to pay his hotel bill and get back to Russia.

One of his begging letters went to a magazine editor, asking for an advance on yet another unwritten novel — which he described as Crime and Punishment and it did payoff!

One of the masterpieces of literature, Crime and Punishment catapulted Dostoyevsky to the forefront of Russian writers and into the ranks of the world's greatest novelists.

Drawing upon experiences from his own prison days, the author recounts in feverish, compelling tones the story of Raskolnikov, an impoverished student tormented by his own nihilism, and the struggle between good and evil.

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Most commonly, nihilism is presented in the form of existential nihilism, which argues **that life is without objective meaning, purpose, or intrinsic value.**

Moral nihilists assert that there is no inherent morality, and that accepted moral values are abstractly contrived.

The term is sometimes used to explain the general mood of despair at a perceived pointlessness of existence that one may develop upon realising there are no necessary norms, rules, or laws. ***How does this affect lawlessness?***

Nihilism has also been described as conspicuous in or constitutive of certain historical periods. ***Russia 90% sadness - 10% tears.***