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In thy most need to go by thy side.

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POETRY & THE DRAMA

PLAYS AND STORIES

BY ANTON TCHEKHOV · TRANSLATED

BY S. S. KOTELIANSKY

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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TCHEKHOV'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY¹

I, ANTON TCHEKHOV, was born on 17th January 1860, in Taganrog. I studied first at the Greek school of King Constantine's Church, then at the Taganrog Grammar School. In 1879 I entered the Moscow University, in the faculty of medicine. I had then but a vague idea about the faculties generally, and I do not remember for what reason I chose the medical one; but I did not regret my choice afterwards. While still in my first year I began to publish in the weeklies and dailies, and these pursuits early in the eighties assumed a permanent, professional character. In 1888 I was awarded the Pushkin prize. In 1890 I went to Saghalien in order to write a book on our convict settlement there. Not counting law reports, reviews, feuilletons, notices, and everything that I wrote from day to day for the papers, which it would now be difficult to find and collect, during the twenty years of my literary work I have written and published over three hundred printed folios, including stories and novels. I have also written plays for the theatre.

I have no doubt that the study of the medical sciences has had an important influence on my literary work: they have considerably widened the range of my observation, and enriched me with knowledge, the true value of which to me, as a writer, can be understood only by one who is himself a doctor. They also have had a directing influence, and, thanks probably to my knowledge of medicine, I have managed to avoid many mistakes. My acquaintance with the natural sciences and with the scientific method has always kept me on my guard, and I have tried wherever possible to take the scientific data into consideration; and where this was impossible I have preferred not to write at all. I will note in passing that the conditions of

¹ Taken from Tchekhov's letter of 11th October 1899 to Dr. G. I. Rossolimo, the Treasurer of the Mutual Aid Society of Doctors who took their degree in 1884, among whom was A. Tchekhov. In that letter he says: 'You want my autobiography? I suffer from a disease called autobiophobia. To read any particulars about myself and, worse still, to write them down for publication is a real torment to me. On a separate sheet I send you a few facts, very bald ones, and I can do no more.' From *The Life and Letters of Anton Tchekhov* (1925), by kind permission of the publishers, Messrs. Cassell & Co.

artistic creation do not always admit of complete agreement with scientific data: it is impossible, for instance, to represent on the stage a death from poisoning as it occurs in reality. But agreement with the facts of science should be felt even in that convention, that is, it must be clear to the reader or spectator that it is only a convention, and that he has to deal with a writer who is well informed. I do not belong to those fiction writers who take a negative attitude towards science; nor would I belong to the order of those who arrive at everything by their own wits.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE OF THE LIFE AND WORKS OF ANTON TCHEKHOV

The following table is intended to show the chief events of Tchekhov's life and the dates of publication of his principal works.

<i>Date</i>	<i>Life</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Works</i>
	<p>Anton Tchekhov's pedigree is purely peasant. His grandfather, Yegor Tchekhov, was a serf in the Voronezh province, Central Russia. By persevering labour he managed to save 3,500 roubles, and with that sum in 1841, some twenty years before the abolition of serfdom in Russia, he bought the freedom of his family of eight, at the rate of 500 roubles per head, his daughter Alexandra being thrown into the gain. From the Voronezh province the family moved to the south.</p> <p>Anton Tchekhov's father, Pavel Yegorovich, became a clerk in the city of Taganrog, and after his marriage to Eugenia Morozov, the daughter of a local cloth merchant, he opened his own grocery shop. The Tchekhov family consisted of five sons and one daughter: Alexander, Nicolay, <i>Anton</i>, Marie, Ivan, and Michael. (The only survivors at present are Marie and Michael Tchekhov.)</p>		

<i>Date</i>	<i>Life</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Works</i>
1860 Jan. 17.	Anton born at Taganrog. Here is the copy of his birth certificate taken from the register of the Cathedral Church of the Assumption: 'January 17, 1860, born and January 27, baptized, boy Antonius. His parents: the Taganrog merchant of the third guild Pavel Yegorovich Tchekhov and his lawful wife Eugenia Yakovlevna, both of the Orthodox faith. Sponsors: Spiridon Fiodorov Titov, brother of a Taganrog merchant, and the spouse of Dmitri Kirikov Safianopoulo, Taganrog merchant of the third guild.'		
1867	Anton sent by his father to the Greek parish school of King Constantine's Church.		
1869	Anton enters first form of the Taganrog Grammar School.		
1876	Anton's father's business having completely failed, the family moves to Moscow and lives in poor circumstances. Anton remains at Taganrog to complete his studies at the Grammar School; and for three years has to support himself by teaching pupils.		
1879 July 15 Aug.	Anton passes his matriculation examination. Anton joins his family in Moscow, and enters the medical faculty of the Moscow University. Compelled to support his family and himself		

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Date	Life	Date	Works
1879 Aug.	in the pursuit of his medical studies, Anton begins writing for humorous papers.	1880	<p>Tchekhov's first story, <i>A Letter from a Don Squire Stepan Vladimirovich N. to his Learned Neighbour Doctor Friedrich</i>, was published in the humorous paper <i>Strekoza</i> [Dragon-fly].</p> <p>During the first seven years of his literary activity Tchekhov contributed over four hundred stories, novels, sketches, feuilletons, pastiches, law reports to the following periodicals:</p> <p><i>Strekoza</i>, <i>Budilnik</i>, <i>Zritel</i>, <i>Mirskoy Tolk</i>, <i>Sviet i Tieni</i>, <i>Moskva</i>, <i>Satirichesky Listok</i>, <i>Oskolki</i>, <i>Spuinik</i>, <i>Razvlechenie</i>, <i>Sverchok</i>, <i>Novosti Dnia</i>, and others. His contributions during that period appeared over the following pseudonyms: <i>A. Ch-te</i>, <i>Anche</i>, <i>A. Tchekkhonté</i>, <i>Antosha Tchekkhonté</i>, <i>Antonson</i>, <i>Baldastov</i>, <i>My Brother's Brother</i>, <i>A Doctor without Patients</i>, <i>A Quick-tempered Man</i>, <i>A Man without a Spleen</i>, <i>Rover</i>, and <i>Ulysses</i>.</p>
1884	<p>Takes his degree of Doctor of Medicine.</p> <p>In the summer works as doctor in the Zemstvo Hospital at Voskresensk.</p> <p>In the winter, in Moscow, occurs his first haemorrhage.</p>	1884	<p><i>Tales of Melpomene</i>, a collection of humorous stories, by Antosha Tchekkhonté, published by the humorous paper <i>Oskolki</i>, Moscow.</p>

<i>Date</i>	<i>Life</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Works</i>
1885	Spends his summer holidays in Babkino, and becomes acquainted with military life. Makes the acquaintance of Souvorin, the editor of the influential Petersburg daily, the <i>Novoye Vremya</i> , and afterwards the intimate correspondent to whom Tchekhov wrote his most interesting letters. (The Russian edition of Tchekhov's letters occupies six volumes. A selection from the letters was published by Cassell, in 1925.)	1885	<i>Motley Stories</i> , a collection of stories by Antosha Tchekhov, Moscow.
1886	Invited to contribute to the <i>Novoye Vremya</i> , and thus enabled to begin more serious work.	1886	<i>The Swan Song</i> , a play in one act.
April	Has second attack of haemorrhage. Spends the summer in Babkino.		
1887	Makes a journey to the south of Russia, the impressions of which are described in <i>The Steppe</i> .	1887	<i>At Twilight</i> , a volume of collected stories, published by Souvorin, Petersburg. <i>Ivanov</i> , a play in four acts, produced by Korsh's Theatre in Moscow, and also in Petersburg (<i>Ivanov</i> was published only in 1889.)
1888	Spends the summer at Luka, in the Ukraine, with the Lintvariovs. Establishes friendship with Souvorin, Plescheyev, and Grigorovich. On his trip to the Crimea to meet Souvorin nearly drowned owing to the collision between his steamer <i>Dir</i> and another steamer.	1888	<i>The Steppe</i> , the story of a journey. <i>Lights</i> <i>The Birthday Party</i> <i>The Belles</i> <i>The Fit</i> <i>The Bear</i> , a farce in one act. } Stories.

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<i>Date</i>	<i>Life</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Works</i>
1888	Awarded the Pushkin prize (500 roubles) by the Imperial Academy of Sciences, Petersburg.	1888	<i>Stories</i> , a volume of collected stories, published by Souvorin, Petersburg.
1889	Elected member of the Society of Lovers of Russian Literature.	1889	<i>The Wood Demon</i> , a comedy in four acts, produced by Solovzov's Theatre in Moscow. <i>A Tedious Story</i> ; from an Old Man's Journal. <i>The Proposal</i> . A farce in one act.
1890	Makes a journey across Siberia to Saghalien Island.		<i>A Tragedian against his Will</i> . A farce in one act.
July	Arrives at Saghalien. Personally carries out a census of the convict settlement.		<i>Demons</i> (a story). <i>Across Siberia</i> (impressions).
1890	Returns home, via Singapore, India, Ceylon, Suez Canal.		<i>Goussev</i> (a story).
Dec. 23	'I cough, palpitations of the heart; I can't make out what it all means.'		
1891	Makes a journey to western Europe (Vienna, Venice, Florence, Rome, Naples, Paris, Nice, etc.).	1891	<i>Runaways in Saghalien</i> (impressions). <i>The Duel</i> (a long story). <i>Women</i> (a story).
1892	Goes to the Novgorod province to help the famine-stricken population; establishes an organization for supplying the impoverished peasants with horses and cattle Buys a farm at Melikhovo village, in the Serpukhov district (for 13,000 roubles) and moves from Moscow to the country with all his family.	1892	<i>Ward No. 6</i> <i>The Grasshopper</i> <i>The Wife</i> <i>In Exile</i> <i>Neighbours</i> } Stories

<i>Date</i>	<i>Life</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Works</i>
1892	Appointed honorary medical superintendent of his district in the fight against the cholera epidemic. ('I'm visiting all the villages and giving lectures . . .')		
1893 Oct.	'I cough, palpitations of the heart, indigestion, and headaches . . .'	1893	<i>The Chorus Girl</i> (a story). <i>The Story of an Unknown Man</i> (a story). <i>Saghalien Island</i> . Notes from a journey. First published in the October, November, and December numbers of the monthly review <i>Ruskaya Mysl</i> ; and continued in the February, March, May, June, and July numbers of the same review in 1894.
1894 Feb.	'My cough worries me, especially at dawn. There is nothing serious as yet.'	1894	<i>The Black Monk</i> <i>Women's Kingdom</i> <i>The Story of the Head Gardener</i> } Stories
March	Advised by the doctors to live in the Crimea for sake of his health. Advised by the doctors to go to the south of France.		
		1895 Mar.	<i>The House with the Mexicanine</i> ('I once had a sweetheart. Her name was Misiyús. It is of this that I am writing.')
		Oct., Nov.	<i>The Seagull</i> ('I've finished the play; it is called <i>The Seagull</i> .') <i>Three Years</i> (long story). <i>Murder</i> <i>Ariadne</i> <i>The Wife</i> } Stories.
1896	Attacked by hæmorrhage of the lungs.	1896	<i>The Seagull</i> produced by the Alexandrinsky Theatre in Petersburg.

Date	Life	Date	Works
		1896	<p>Complete failure. ('I shall never forget last evening. Never again will I write plays or have them produced.') <i>The Seagull</i>. A comedy in four acts. Published in the December number of <i>Russkaya Mysl</i>.</p>
1897	<p>Works hard, in the Serpukhov district, on the general census of the population. Builds several schools, mostly at his own expense, in the villages of Melikhovo, Talezh, and Novosiolki.</p> <p>Attacked by a sudden violent haemorrhage of the lungs during a dinner with Souvorin at a Moscow restaurant. Removed to hospital. 'The doctors diagnose consumption and order a complete change of life.' Goes to the south of France for the winter.</p>	1897	<p><i>My Life</i> (a long story). <i>Peasants</i> <i>In a Native Spot</i> <i>In the Cart</i> } Stories.</p>
1898 Jan.	<p>Manifests intense interest in the Dreyfus affair, and is disgusted by the anti-Dreyfus campaign carried on in the <i>Novoye Vremya</i>; hence a break with Souvorin.</p> <p>His father dies, and owing to the insistence of his doctors Tchekhov decides to settle in the Crimea with his family. Buys a plot of land and builds a house near Yalta.</p>	1898	<p><i>The Seagull</i> produced by the Moscow Art Theatre with tremendous success.</p> <p>'<i>My Uncle Vanya</i> is being produced in the provinces and is a great success.'</p> <p><i>A Man in a Case</i> <i>Yonych</i> <i>The Lodger</i> <i>The Husband</i> <i>The Darling</i> } Stories.</p>

<i>Date</i>	<i>Life</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Works</i>
1899	Sells his Melikhovo farm, and moves with his family to the Crimea. Sells the copyright of his past and future work to the Petersburg publisher Marx for 75,000 roubles.	1899	<i>The Lady with a Toy Dog</i> <i>The New Bun-galow</i> } Stories <i>Uncle Vanya</i> , produced by the Moscow Art Theatre. <i>In the Ravine</i> (a story).
1900	Elected member of the Academy of Sciences, Petersburg.	1900	<i>The Three Sisters</i> begun.
March	His state of health gets worse.		
1901 May 25	Marries Olga Knipper, an actress of the Moscow Art Theatre.	1901	<i>The Three Sisters</i> produced by the Moscow Art Theatre. <i>Women</i> (a story).
1902	As a protest against the cancellation by the authorities of Maxim Gorky's election to the Academy of Sciences, Tchekhov resigns his membership.	1902	<i>The Bishop</i> (a story).
1903 Sept. Oct.	'I cough . . . feel rather weak.' Elected temporary president of the Society of Russian Literature.	1903	<i>The Cherry Orchard</i> . A comedy in four acts. <i>The Bride</i> (a story).
1904 May 27	'I've been ill since May 2nd; I have not been out of bed.'	1904 Jan. 17	<i>The Cherry Orchard</i> produced by the Moscow Art Theatre.
June 3	Goes to Badenweiler, a German health resort, accompanied by his wife.		
July 2	Dies at Badenweiler. Buried in the cemetery of the Novodevichiy Monastery in Moscow.		

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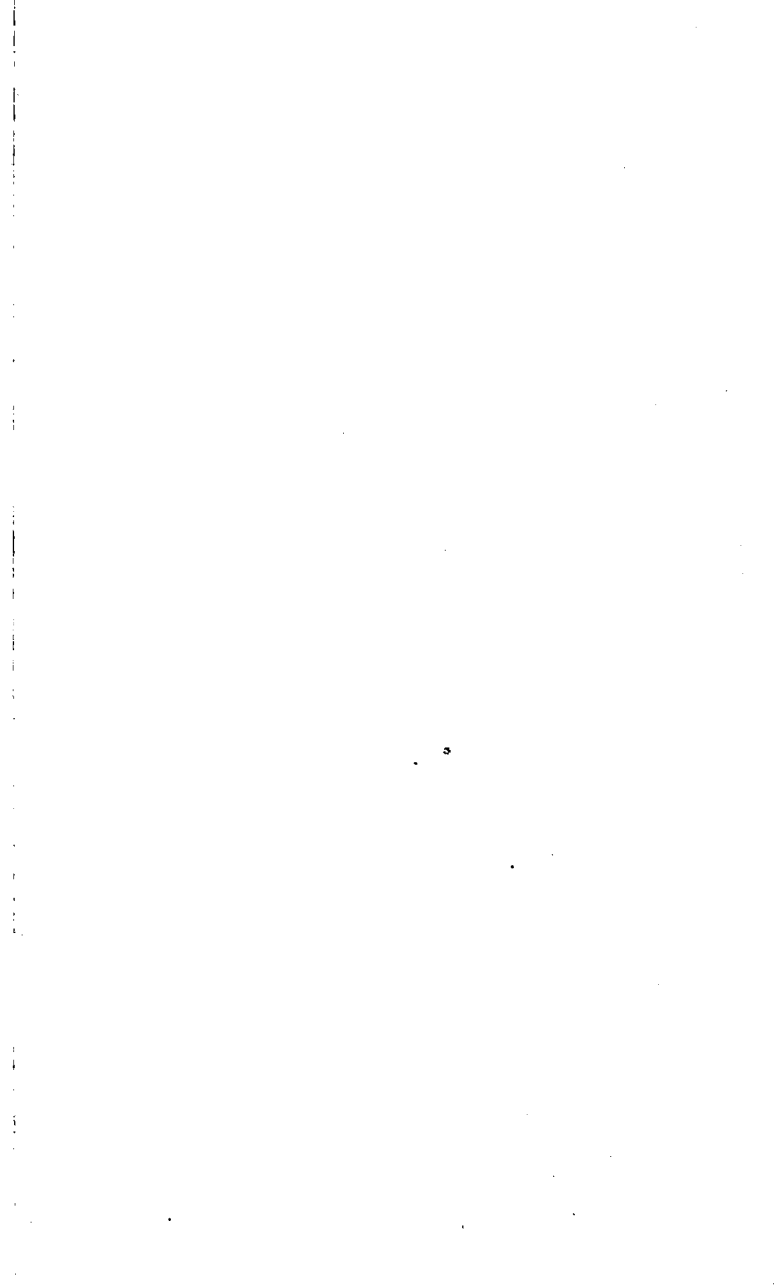
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PLAYS



THE CHERRY ORCHARD

A COMEDY IN FOUR ACTS

(Written in 1903 and first performed in Moscow on
17th January 1904.)

CHARACTERS

MME RANEVSKY, LYUBOV ANDREYEVNA, the owner of the cherry orchard.

ANYA, her daughter, aged seventeen.

VARYA, her adopted daughter, aged twenty-two.

GAYEV, LEONID ANDREYEVITCH, brother of MME RANEVSKY.

LOPAKHIN, YERMOLAY ALEXEYEVITCH, a business man.

TROFIMOV, PIOTR SERGUEYEVITCH, university student.

SIMEONOV-PISCHIK, BORIS BORISOVITCH, a landowner.

CHARLOTTA IVANOVNA, a governess.

YEPIKHODOV, SEMYON PANTELEYEVITCH, a bailiff.

DOUNYASHA, a maid.

FEERS, a man-servant, aged eighty-seven.

YASHA, a young man-servant.

A Stranger.

The Station-master.

A Post Office Clerk.

Visitors; Servants.

The action takes place on the estate of Mme Ranevsky.

ACT I

A room which is still called the nursery. One of the doors leads into Anya's room. It is dawn; the sun will rise soon. It is the month of May, the cherry trees are in blossom, but it is cold in the garden, and there is a morning-frost. The windows in the room are closed. Enter Dounyasha with a candle, and Lopakhin with a book in his hand.

Lopakhin. The train has come, thank God. What's the time?

Dounyasha. Nearly two o'clock. *[Blowing out the candle.]* It's daylight already.

Lopakhin. How many hours late was the train? A couple of

hours, at least. [*Yawning and stretching himself.*] I am a nice one; what a stupid thing to do. I purposely came here in order to go to meet them at the station, and then overslept . . . fell asleep sitting in the chair. . . . How annoying. . . . You should have woken me up.

Dounyasha. I thought you had gone. [*Listening.*] Now they're coming, I think.

Lopakhin. [*Listening.*] No. . . . They have to get the luggage out, and one thing and another. . . . [*Pause.*] Lyubov Andreyevna has been abroad five years, and I wonder what she's like now. She's a fine woman. Easy to get on with, simple. I remember when I was a boy about fifteen, my father—he used to keep a shop in the village here—punched my nose, and it began to bleed. . . . The two of us had come into the courtyard here on some errand, and he had a drop too much. Lyubov Andreyevna, I remember as if it were yesterday, she was so young and so slim, she took me to the washstand, in this very room, in the nursery. 'Don't cry, little mouzhik, it'll be quite well in time for your wedding,' she said. . . . [*Pause.*] My father was a mouzhik, sure enough; and here am I, in a white waistcoat and brown shoes. . . . A silk purse out of a sow's ear. . . . With this difference, that I am rich, have plenty of money; but if you really think of it, I am just a mere mouzhik. . . . [*Turning the pages of the book.*] I was reading this book, and could not make anything of it. . . . I was reading, and dropped off to sleep. [*Pause.*]

Dounyasha. The dogs did not sleep all night long, they know their masters are coming.

Lopakhin. Dounyasha, why are you so——?

Dounyasha. My hands are trembling. I know I'm going to faint.

Lopakhin. You're much too sensitive, Dounyasha. You dress like a lady, and your hair is done in the fashion. It isn't right. One should not forget who one is.

Enter Yepikhodov with a bunch of flowers; he wears a jacket and brightly polished top-boots that squeak noisily; as he comes in he drops the flowers.

Yepikhodov. [*Picking up the flowers.*] The gardener has sent these; he says you are to put them in the dining-room.

[*Handing the flowers to Dounyasha.*]

Lopakhin. And fetch me some cider.

Dounyasha. Certainly.

[*Goes out.*]