

DOVER · THRIFT · EDITIONS

**Anton Chekhov**  
**THE CHERRY**  
**ORCHARD**

UNABRIDGED



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# **The Cherry Orchard**

ANTON CHEKHOV



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# DOVER THRIFT EDITIONS

EDITOR: STANLEY APPELBAUM

## *Performance*

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## Note

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EVER SINCE ITS CREATION in January of 1904 by the fledgling Moscow Art Theatre (with the playwright's wife, Olga Knipper, as Madame Ranevsky and with Stanislavsky as Gayef), Anton Pavlovich Chekhov's last play (born in 1860, he died six months after the premiere) has been acclaimed as one of the great theatrical experiences. A triumph of natural action and dialogue, it is at the same time a brilliantly constructed mechanism.

On the interpersonal plane, *The Cherry Orchard* offers razor-sharp characterizations of real human beings who, for all their personal attractiveness, are capable of smothering genuine cries of anguish with their own selfish tics and trivialities. On the social plane, the play is the danse macabre of a culture in violent transition: among the masters and the servants alike, and among the various age groups, lovable but fuzzy-minded and weak-willed traditionalists are preyed upon by efficient but vulgar and heartless upstarts. Characteristically for Chekhov, the words of sanity and healing are uttered by a powerless, spurned observer, the "perpetual student" Trophimof.

# Characters

*(in order of speaking)*

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Yermolai Alexeyitch LOPAKHIN, a wealthy neighbor

DUNYASHA (Avdotya Fyodorovna Kozoyedov), a maid-servant

Simeon Panteleyitch EPHIKHODOF, a clerk

FIRS Nikolayevitch, an old servant

ANYA, younger daughter of Madame Ranevsky

MADAME Lyubof (Lyuba) Andreyevna RANEVSKY, joint owner of the estate, sister of Gayef

BARBARA (Varvara Mikhailovna), elderly daughter of Madame Ranevsky

Leonid (Lenya) Andreyitch GAYEF, joint owner of the estate, brother of Madame Ranevsky

CHARLOTTE Ivanovna, Anya's governess

Simeonof-PISHTCHIK, a neighboring landowner

YASHA, a manservant

Peter TROPHIMOF, a tutor

STATIONMASTER

POSTMASTER (silent role)

# **The Cherry Orchard**

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## Act I

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*A room which is still called the nursery. One door leads to ANYA'S room. Dawn, the sun will soon rise. It is already May, the cherry trees are in blossom, but it is cold in the garden and there is a morning frost. The windows are closed.*

*Enter DUNYASHA with a candle, and LOPAKHIN with a book in his hand.*

LOPAKHIN. Here's the train, thank heaven. What is the time?

DUNYASHA. Near two. [*Putting the candle out.*] It is light already.

LOPAKHIN. How late is the train? Two hours at least. [*Yawning and stretching.*] A fine mess I have made of it. I came to meet them at the station and then I went and fell asleep, as I sat in my chair. What trouble! Why did you not rouse me?

DUNYASHA. I thought that you had gone. [*She listens.*] I think they are coming.

LOPAKHIN [*listening*]. No; they have got to get the baggage and the rest. [*A pause.*] Madame Ranévsky has been five years abroad. I wonder what she is like now. What a fine character she is! So easy and simple. I remember when I was only fifteen my old father (he used to keep a shop here in the village then) struck me in the face with his fist and my nose bled. We were out in the courtyard, and he had been drinking. Madame Ranévsky, I remember it like yesterday, still a slender young girl, brought me to the wash-hand stand, here, in this very room, in the nursery. 'Don't cry, little peasant,' she said, 'it'll be all right for your wedding.' [*A pause.*] 'Little peasant!' . . . My father, it is true, was a peasant, and here am I in a white waistcoat and brown boots; a silk purse out of a sow's ear; just turned rich, with plenty of money, but still a peasant of the peasants. [*Turning over the pages of the book.*] Here's this book that I was reading without any attention and fell asleep.



DUNYASHA. The dogs never slept all night, they knew that their master and mistress were coming.

LOPAKHIN. What's the matter with you, Dunyásha? You're all . . .

DUNYASHA. My hands are trembling, I feel quite faint.

LOPAKHIN. You are too refined, Dunyásha, that's what it is. You dress yourself like a young lady, and look at your hair! You ought not to do it; you ought to remember your place.

[*Enter EPHIKHODOF with a nosegay. He is dressed in a short jacket and brightly polished boots which squeak noisily. As he comes in he drops the nosegay.*]

EPHIKHODOF [*picking it up*]. The gardener has sent this; he says it is to go in the dining-room. [*Handing it to DUNYASHA.*]

LOPAKHIN. And bring me some quass.

DUNYASHA. Yes, sir.

[*Exit DUNYASHA.*]

EPHIKHODOF. There's a frost this morning, three degrees, and the cherry trees all in blossom. I can't say I think much of our climate; [*sighing*] that is impossible. Our climate is not adapted to contribute; and I should like to add, with your permission, that only two days ago I bought myself a new pair of boots, and I venture to assure you they do squeak beyond all bearing. What am I to grease them with?

LOPAKHIN. Get out; I'm tired of you.

EPHIKHODOF. Every day some misfortune happens to me; but do I grumble? No; I am used to it; I can afford to smile. [*Enter DUNYASHA, and hands a glass of quass to LOPAKHIN.*] I must be going. [*He knocks against a chair, which falls to the ground.*] There you are! [*In a voice of triumph.*] You see, if I may venture on the expression, the sort of incidents *inter alia*. It really is astonishing!

[*Exit EPHIKHODOF.*]

DUNYASHA. To tell you the truth, Yermolái Alexéyitch, Ephikhódof has made me a proposal.

LOPAKHIN. Hmph!

DUNYASHA. I hardly know what to do. He is such a well-behaved young man, only so often when he talks one doesn't know what he means. It is all so nice and full of good feeling, but you can't make out what it means. I fancy I am rather fond of him. He adores me passionately. He is a most unfortunate man; every day something seems to happen to him. They call him "Twenty-two misfortunes," that's his nickname.

LOPAKHIN [*listening*]. There, surely that is them coming!



DUNYASHA. They're coming! Oh, what is the matter with me? I am all turning cold.

LOPAKHIN. Yes, there they are, and no mistake. Let's go and meet them.

Will she know me again, I wonder? It is five years since we met.

DUNYASHA. I am going to faint! . . . I am going to faint!

*[Two carriages are heard driving up to the house. LOPAKHIN and DUNYASHA exeunt quickly. The stage remains empty. A hubbub begins in the neighbouring rooms. FIRS walks hastily across the stage, leaning on a walking-stick. He has been to meet them at the station. He is wearing an old-fashioned livery and a tall hat; he mumbles something to himself but not a word is audible. The noise behind the scenes grows louder and louder. A voice says: 'Let's go this way.'*

*[Enter MADAME RANEVSKY, ANYA, CHARLOTTE, leading a little dog on a chain, all dressed in travelling dresses; BARBARA in greatcoat with a kerchief over her head, GAYEF, SIMEONOF-PISHTCHIK, LOPAKHIN, DUNYASHA, carrying parcel and umbrella, servants with luggage, all cross the stage.]*

ANYA. Come through this way. Do you remember what room this is, mamma?

MADAME RANEVSKY *[joyfully through her tears]*. The nursery.

BARBARA. How cold it is. My hands are simply frozen. *[To MADAME RANEVSKY.]* Your two rooms, the white room and the violet room, are just the same as they were, mamma.

MADAME RANEVSKY. My nursery, my dear, beautiful nursery! This is where I used to sleep when I was a little girl. *[Crying.]* I am like a little girl still. *[Kissing GAYEF and BARBARA and then GAYEF again.]* Barbara has not altered a bit, she is just like a nun, and I knew Dunyásha at once. *[Kissing DUNYASHA.]*

GAYEF. Your train was two hours late. What do you think of that? There's punctuality for you!

CHARLOTTE *[to SIMEONOF-PISHTCHIK]*. My little dog eats nuts.

PISHTCHIK *[astonished]*. You don't say so! Well, I never!

*[Exeunt all but ANYA and DUNYASHA.]*

DUNYASHA. At last you've come!

*[She takes off ANYA's overcoat and hat.]*

ANYA. I have not slept for four nights on the journey. I am frozen to death.

DUNYASHA. It was Lent when you went away. There was snow on the ground, it was freezing; but now! Oh, my dear! *[Laughing and kissing]*



*her.*] How I have waited for you, my joy, my light! Oh, I must tell you something at once, I cannot wait another minute.

ANYA [*without interest*]. What, again?

DUNYASHA. Ephikhódof, the clerk, proposed to me in Easter week.

ANYA. Same old story. . . . [*Putting her hair straight.*] All my hairpins have dropped out. [*She is very tired, staggering with fatigue.*]

DUNYASHA. I hardly know what to think of it. He loves me! oh, how he loves me!

ANYA [*looking into her bedroom, affectionately*]. My room, my windows, just as if I had never gone away! I am at home again! When I wake up in the morning I shall run out into the garden. . . . Oh, if only I could get to sleep! I have not slept the whole journey from Paris, I was so nervous and anxious.

DUNYASHA. Monsieur Trophímof arrived the day before yesterday.

ANYA [*joyfully*]. Peter?

DUNYASHA. He is sleeping outside in the bath-house; he is living there. He was afraid he might be in the way. [*Looking at her watch.*] I'd like to go and wake him, only Mamzelle Barbara told me not to. 'Mind you don't wake him,' she said.

[*Enter BARBARA with bunch of keys hanging from her girdle.*]

BARBARA. Dunyásha, go and get some coffee, quick. Mamma wants some coffee.

DUNYASHA. In a minute.

[*Exit DUNYASHA.*]

BARBARA. Well, thank heaven, you have come. Here you are at home again. [*Caressing her.*] My little darling is back! My pretty one is back!

ANYA. What I've had to go through!

BARBARA. I can believe you.

ANYA. I left here in Holy Week. How cold it was! Charlotte would talk the whole way and keep doing conjuring tricks. What on earth made you tie Charlotte round my neck?

BARBARA. Well, you couldn't travel alone, my pet. At seventeen!

ANYA. When we got to Paris, it was so cold! there was snow on the ground. I can't talk French a bit. Mamma was on the fifth floor of a big house. When I arrived there were a lot of Frenchmen with her, and ladies, and an old Catholic priest with a book, and it was very uncomfortable and full of tobacco smoke. I suddenly felt so sorry for mamma, oh, so sorry! I took her head in my arms and squeezed it and could not let it go, and then mamma kept kissing me and crying.

BARBARA [*crying*]. Don't go on, don't go on!



ANYA. She's sold her villa near Mentone already. She's nothing left, absolutely nothing; and I hadn't a farthing either. We only just managed to get home. And mamma won't understand! We get out at a station to have some dinner, and she asks for all the most expensive things and gives the waiters a florin each for a tip; and Charlotte does the same. And Yásha wanted his portion too. It was too awful! Yásha is mamma's new man-servant. We have brought him back with us.

BARBARA. I've seen the rascal.

ANYA. Come, tell me all about everything! Has the interest on the mortgage been paid?

BARBARA. How could it be?

ANYA. Oh dear! Oh dear!

BARBARA. The property will be sold in August.

ANYA. Oh dear! Oh dear!

LOPAKHIN [*looking in at the door and mooing like a cow*]. Moo-o.

[*He goes away again.*]

BARBARA [*laughing through her tears and shaking her fist at the door*].

Oh, I should like to give him one!

ANYA [*embracing BARBARA softly*]. Barbara, has he proposed to you? [*BARBARA shakes her head.*] And yet I am sure he loves you. Why don't you come to an understanding? What are you waiting for?

BARBARA. I don't think anything will come of it. He has so much to do; he can't be bothered with me; he hardly takes any notice. Confound the man, I can't bear to see him! Everyone talks about our marriage; everyone congratulates me, but, as a matter of fact, there is nothing in it; it's all a dream. [*Changing her tone.*] You've got on a brooch like a bee.

ANYA [*sadly*]. Mamma bought it for me. [*Going into her room, talking gaily, like a child.*] When I was in Paris, I went up in a balloon!

BARBARA. How glad I am you are back, my little pet! my pretty one! [*DUNYASHA has already returned with a coffee-pot and begins to prepare the coffee.*] [*Standing by the door.*] I trudge about all day looking after things, and I think and think. What are we to do? If only we could marry you to some rich man it would be a load off my mind. I would go into a retreat, and then to Kief, to Moscow; I would tramp about from one holy place to another, always tramping and tramping. What bliss!

ANYA. The birds are singing in the garden. What time is it now?

BARBARA. It must be past two. It is time to go to bed, my darling. [*Following ANYA into her room.*] What bliss!

[*Enter YASHA with a shawl and a travelling bag.*]



YASHA [*crossing the stage, delicately*]. May I pass this way, mademoiselle?

DUNYASHA. One would hardly know you, Yásha. How you've changed abroad!

YASHA. Ahem! and who may you be?

DUNYASHA. When you left here I was a little thing like that. [*Indicating with her hand.*] My name is Dunyásha, Theodore Kozoyédof's daughter. Don't you remember me?

YASHA. Ahem! You little cucumber!

[*He looks round cautiously, then embraces her. She screams and drops a saucer. Exit YASHA, hastily.*]

BARBARA [*in the doorway, crossly*]. What's all this?

DUNYASHA [*crying*]. I've broken a saucer.

BARBARA. Well, it brings luck.

[*Enter ANYA from her room.*]

ANYA. We must tell mamma that Peter's here.

BARBARA. I've told them not to wake him.

ANYA [*thoughtfully*]. It's just six years since papa died. And only a month afterwards poor little Grisha was drowned in the river; my pretty little brother, only seven years old! It was too much for mamma; she ran away, ran away without looking back. [*Shuddering.*] How well I can understand her, if only she knew! [*A pause.*] Peter Trophímof was Grisha's tutor; he might remind her.

[*Enter FIRS in long coat and white waistcoat.*]

FIRS [*going over to the coffee-pot, anxiously*]. My mistress is going to take coffee here. [*Putting on white gloves.*] Is the coffee ready? [*Sternly, to DUNYASHA.*] Here, girl, where's the cream?

DUNYASHA. Oh, dear! Oh dear!

[*Exit DUNYASHA, hastily.*]

FIRS [*bustling about the coffee-pot*]. Ah, you . . . job-lot! [*Mumbling to himself.*] She's come back from Paris. The master went to Paris once in a post-chaise. [*Laughing.*]

BARBARA. What is it, Firs?

FIRS. I beg your pardon? [*Joyfully.*] My mistress has come home; at last I've seen her. Now I'm ready to die.

[*He cries with joy. Enter MADAME RANEVSKY, LOPAKHIN, GAYEF and PISHTCHIK; PISHTCHIK in Russian breeches and coat of fine cloth. GAYEF as he enters makes gestures as if playing billiards.*]



MADAME RANEVSKY. What was the expression? Let me see. 'I'll put the red in the corner pocket; double into the middle——'

GAYEF. I'll chip the red in the right-hand top. Once upon a time. Lyuba, when we were children, we used to sleep here side by side in two little cots, and now I'm fifty-one, and can't bring myself to believe it.

LOPAKHIN. Yes; time flies.

GAYEF. Who's that?

LOPAKHIN. Time flies. I say.

GAYEF. There's a smell of patchouli!

ANYA. I am going to bed. Good-night, mamma. [*Kissing her mother.*]

MADAME RANEVSKY. My beloved little girl! [*Kissing her hands.*] Are you glad you're home again? I can't come to my right senses.

ANYA. Good-night, uncle.

GAYEF [*kissing her face and hands*]. God bless you, little Anya. How like your mother you are! [*To MADAME RANEVSKY.*] You were just such another girl at her age, Lyuba.

[*ANYA shakes hands with LOPAKHIN and SIMEONOF-PISHTCHIK and exit, shutting her bedroom door behind her.*]

MADAME RANEVSKY. She's very, very tired.

PISHTCHIK. It must have been a long journey.

BARBARA [*to LOPAKHIN and PISHTCHIK*]. Well, gentlemen, it's past two; time you were off.

MADAME RANEVSKY [*laughing*]. You haven't changed a bit, Barbara! [*Drawing her to herself and kissing her.*] I'll just finish my coffee, then we'll all go. [*FIRS puts a footstool under her feet.*] Thank you, friend. I'm used to my coffee. I drink it day and night. Thank you, you dear old man. [*Kissing FIRS.*]

BARBARA. I'll go and see if they've got all the luggage. [*Exit BARBARA.*]

MADAME RANEVSKY. Can it be me that's sitting here? [*Laughing.*] I want to jump and wave my arms about. [*Pausing and covering her face.*] Surely I must be dreaming! God knows I love my country. I love it tenderly. I couldn't see out of the window from the train, I was crying so. [*Crying.*] However, I must drink my coffee. Thank you, Firs; thank you, dear old man. I'm so glad to find you still alive.

FIRS. The day before yesterday.

GAYEF. He's hard of hearing.

LOPAKHIN. I've got to be off for Kharkof by the five o'clock train. Such a nuisance! I wanted to stay and look at you and talk to you. You're as splendid as you always were.

PISHTCHIK [*sighing heavily*]. Handsomer than ever and dressed like a Parisian . . . perish my waggon and all its wheels!



LOPAKHIN. Your brother, Leoníd Andréyitch, says I'm a snob, a money-grubber. He can say what he likes. I don't care a hang. Only I want you to believe in me as you used to; I want your wonderful, touching eyes to look at me as they used to. Merciful God in heaven! My father was your father's serf, and your grandfather's serf before him; but you, you did so much for me in the old days that I've forgotten everything, and I love you like a sister—more than a sister.

MADAME RANEVSKY. I can't sit still! I can't do it! [*Jumping up and walking about in great agitation.*] This happiness is more than I can bear. Laugh at me! I am a fool! [*Kissing a cupboard.*] My darling old cupboard! [*Caressing a table.*] My dear little table!

GAYEF. Nurse is dead since you went away.

MADAME RANEVSKY [*sitting down and drinking coffee*]. Yes, Heaven rest her soul. They wrote and told me.

GAYEF. And Anastási is dead. Squint-eyed Peter has left us and works in the town at the Police Inspector's now.

[*GAYEF takes out a box of sugar candy from his pocket, and begins to eat it.*]

PISHTCHIK. My daughter Dáshenka sent her compliments.

LOPAKHIN. I long to say something charming and delightful to you. [*Looking at his watch.*] I'm just off; there's no time to talk. Well, yes, I'll put it in two or three words. You know that your cherry orchard is going to be sold to pay the mortgage: the sale is fixed for the twenty-second of August; but don't you be uneasy, my dear lady; sleep peacefully; there's a way out of it. This is my plan. Listen to me carefully. Your property is only fifteen miles from the town; the railway runs close beside it; and if only you will cut up the cherry orchard and the land along the river into building lots and let it off on lease for villas, you will get at least two thousand five hundred pounds a year out of it.

GAYEF. Come, come! What rubbish you're talking!

MADAME RANEVSKY. I don't quite understand what you mean, Yermolái Alexéyitch.

LOPAKHIN. You will get a pound a year at least for every acre from the tenants, and if you advertise the thing at once, I am ready to bet whatever you like, by the autumn you won't have a clod of that earth left on your hands. It'll all be snapped up. In two words, I congratulate you; you are saved. It's a first-class site, with a good deep river. Only of course you will have to put it in order and clear the ground; you will have to pull down all the old buildings—this house, for instance, which is no longer fit for anything; you'll have to cut down the cherry orchard. . . .



MADAME RANEVSKY. Cut down the cherry orchard! Excuse me, but you don't know what you're talking about. If there is one thing that's interesting, remarkable in fact, in the whole province, it's our cherry orchard.

LOPAKHIN. There's nothing remarkable about the orchard except that it's a very big one. It only bears once every two years, and then you don't know what to do with the fruit. Nobody wants to buy it.

GAYEF. Our cherry orchard is mentioned in Andréyevsky's Encyclopaedia.

LOPAKHIN [*looking at his watch*]. If we don't make up our minds or think of any way, on the twenty-second of August the cherry orchard and the whole property will be sold by auction. Come, make up your mind! There's no other way out of it, I swear—absolutely none.

FIRS. In the old days, forty or fifty years ago, they used to dry the cherries and soak 'em and pickle 'em, and make jam of 'em; and the dried cherries . . .

GAYEF. Shut up, Firs.

FIRS. The dried cherries used to be sent in waggons to Moscow and Kharkof. A heap of money! The dried cherries were soft and juicy and sweet and sweet-smelling then. They knew some way in those days.

MADAME RANEVSKY. And why don't they do it now?

FIRS. They've forgotten. Nobody remembers how to do it.

PISHTCHIK [*to MADAME RANEVSKY*]. What about Paris? How did you get on? Did you eat frogs?

MADAME RANEVSKY. Crocodiles.

PISHTCHIK. You don't say so! Well, I never!

LOPAKHIN. Until a little while ago there was nothing but gentry and peasants in the villages; but now villa residents have made their appearance. All the towns, even the little ones, are surrounded by villas now. In another twenty years the villa resident will have multiplied like anything. At present he only sits and drinks tea on his verandah, but it is quite likely that he will soon take to cultivating his three acres of land, and then your old cherry orchard will become fruitful, rich and happy. . . .

GAYEF [*angry*]. What gibberish!

[*Enter BARBARA and YASHA.*]

BARBARA [*taking out a key and noisily unlocking an old-fashioned cupboard*]. There are two telegrams for you, mamma. Here they are.

MADAME RANEVSKY [*tearing them up without reading them*]. They're from Paris. I've done with Paris.

GAYEF. Do you know how old this cupboard is, Lyuba? A week ago I



pulled out the bottom drawer and saw a date burnt in it. That cupboard was made exactly a hundred years ago. What do you think of that, eh? We might celebrate its jubilee. It's only an inanimate thing, but for all that it's a historic cupboard.

PISHTCHIK [*astonished*]. A hundred years? Well, I never!

GAYEF [*touching the cupboard*]. Yes, it's a wonderful thing. . . . Beloved and venerable cupboard; honour and glory to your existence, which for more than a hundred years has been directed to the noble ideals of justice and virtue. Your silent summons to profitable labour has never weakened in all these hundred years. [*Crying.*] You have upheld the courage of succeeding generations of our human kind; you have upheld faith in a better future and cherished in us ideals of goodness and social consciousness. [*A pause.*]

LOPAKHIN. Yes. . . .

MADAME RANEVSKY. You haven't changed, Leoníd.

GAYEF [*embarrassed*]. Off the white in the corner, chip the red in the middle pocket!

LOPAKHIN [*looking at his watch*]. Well, I must be off.

YASHA [*handing a box to MADAME RANEVSKY*]. Perhaps you'll take your pills now.

PISHTCHIK. You oughtn't to take medicine, dear lady. It does you neither good nor harm. Give them here, my friend. [*He empties all the pills into the palm of his hand, blows on them, puts them in his mouth and swallows them down with a draught of quass.*] There!

MADAME RANEVSKY [*alarmed*]. Have you gone off your head?

PISHTCHIK. I've taken all the pills.

LOPAKHIN. Greedy fellow! [*Everyone laughs.*]

FIRS [*mumbling*]. They were here in Easter week and finished off a gallon of pickled gherkins.

MADAME RANEVSKY. What's he talking about?

BARBARA. He's been mumbling like that these three years. We've got used to it.

YASHA. Advancing age.

[*CHARLOTTE crosses in a white frock, very thin, tightly laced, with a lorgnette at her waist.*]

LOPAKHIN. Excuse me, Charlotte Ivánovna, I've not paid my respects to you yet. [*He prepares to kiss her hand.*]

CHARLOTTE [*drawing her hand away*]. If one allows you to kiss one's hand, you will want to kiss one's elbow next, and then one's shoulder.

LOPAKHIN. I'm having no luck today. [*All laugh.*] Charlotte Ivánovna, do us a conjuring trick.

MADAME RANEVSKY. Charlotte, do do us a conjuring trick.