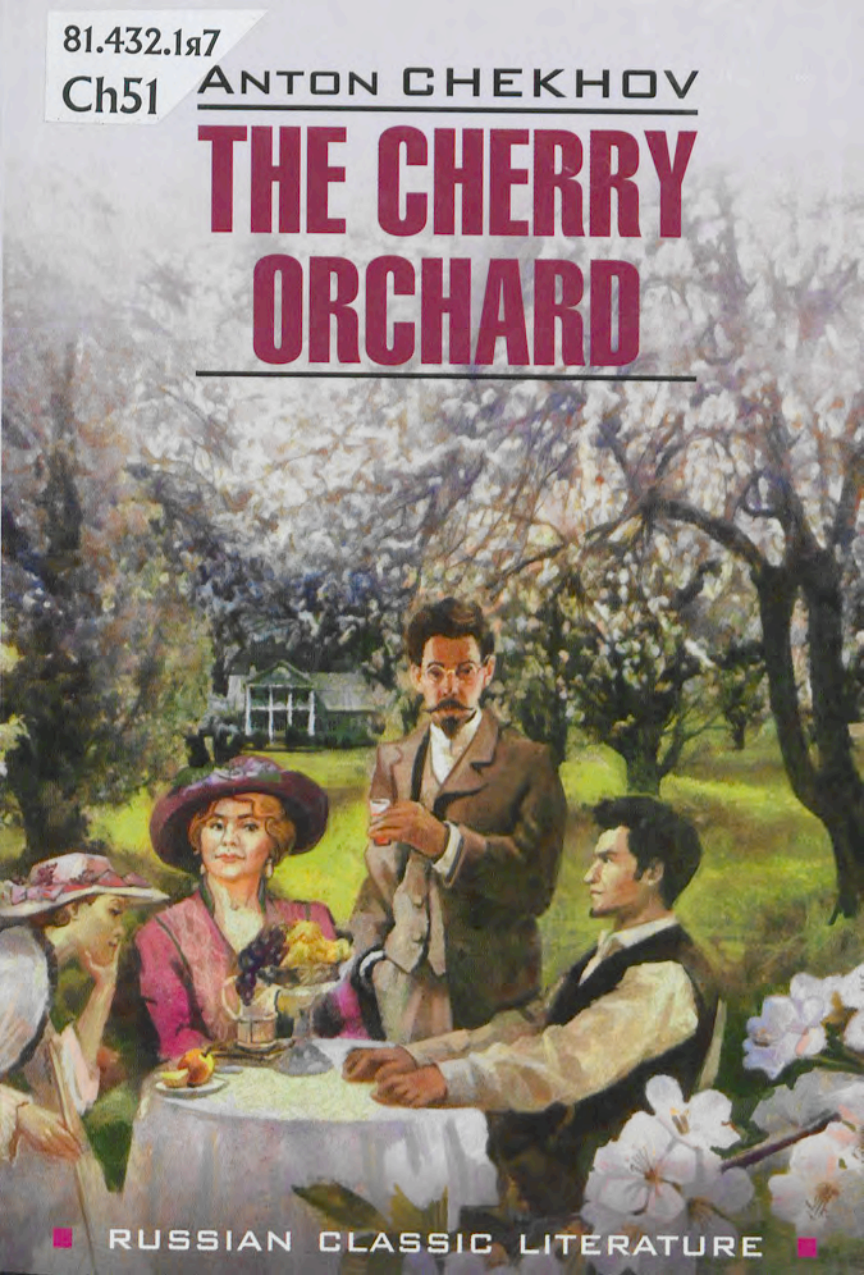


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ANTON CHEKHOV

THE CHERRY ORCHARD



■ RUSSIAN CLASSIC LITERATURE ■

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ANTON CHEKHOV

**THE CHERRY
ORCHARD**

Translated by Julius West

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КАРО
Санкт-Петербург

The Cherry Orchard

A Play in Four Acts

CHARACTERS

Lubov Andreyevna Ranevsky (Mme. Ranevsky),
a landowner

Anya, *her daughter, aged seventeen*

Varya (Barbara), *her adopted daughter, aged
twenty-seven*

Leonid Andreyevitch Gaev, *Mme. Ranevsky's brother*

Ermolai Alexeyevitch Lopakhin, *a merchant*

Peter Sergeyevitch Trofimov, *a student*

Boris Borisovitch Simeonov-Pischin, *a landowner*

Charlotta Ivanovna, *a governess*

Simeon Panteleyevitch Epikhodov, *a clerk*

Dunyasha (Avdotya Fedorovna), *a maidservant*

Fiers, *an old footman, aged eighty-seven*

Yasha, *a young footman*

A Tramp

A station-master

Post-office clerk

Guests

A servant

The action takes place on Mme. Ranevsky's estate

ACT I

A room which is still called the nursery. One of the doors leads into Anya's room. It is close on sunrise. It is May. The cherry-trees are in flower but it is chilly in the garden. There is an early frost. The windows of the room are shut. Dunyasha comes in with a candle, and Lopakhin with a book in his hand.

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

Dunyasha. It will soon be two. [*Blows out candle*] It is light already.

Lopakhin. How much was the train late? Two hours at least. [*Yawns and stretches himself*] I have made a rotten mess of it! I came here on purpose to meet them at the station, and then overslept myself... in my chair. It's a pity. I wish you'd wakened me.

Dunyasha. I thought you'd gone away. [*Listening*] I think I hear them coming.

Lopakhin. [*Listens*] No... They've got to collect their luggage and so on... [*Pause*] Lubov Andreyevna has been living abroad for five years; I don't know what she'll be like now... She's a good sort — an easy, simple person. I remember

when I was a boy of fifteen, my father, who is dead — he used to keep a shop in the village here — hit me on the face with his fist, and my nose bled... We had gone into the yard together for something or other, and he was a little drunk. Lubov Andreyevna, as I remember her now, was still young, and very thin, and she took me to the washstand here in this very room, the nursery. She said, "Don't cry, little man, it'll be all right in time for your wedding." [*Pause*] "Little man"... My father was a peasant, it's true, but here I am in a white waistcoat and yellow shoes... a pearl out of an oyster. I'm rich now, with lots of money, but just think about it and examine me, and you'll find I'm still a peasant down to the marrow of my bones. [*Turns over the pages of his book*] Here I've been reading this book, but I understood nothing. I read and fell asleep.

Pause.

Dunyasha. The dogs didn't sleep all night; they know that they're coming.

Lopakhin. What's up with you, Dunyasha?..

Dunyasha. My hands are shaking. I shall faint.

Lopakhin. You're too sensitive, Dunyasha. You dress just like a lady, and you do your hair like one too. You oughtn't. You should know your place.

Epikhodov. [*Enters with a bouquet. He wears a short jacket and brilliantly polished boots which squeak audibly. He drops the bouquet as he enters, then picks it up*] The gardener sent these; says they're to go into the dining-room. [*Gives the bouquet to* **Dunyasha.**]

Lopakhin. And you'll bring me some kvass.

Dunyasha. Very well. [*Exit.*]

Epikhodov. There's a frost this morning — three degrees, and the cherry-trees are all in flower. I can't approve of our climate. [*Sighs*] I can't. Our climate is indisposed to favour us even this once. And, Ermolai Alexeyevitch, allow me to say to you, in addition, that I bought myself some boots two days ago, and I beg to assure you that they squeak in a perfectly unbearable manner. What shall I put on them?

Lopakhin. Go away. You bore me.

Epikhodov. Some misfortune happens to me every day. But I don't complain; I'm used to it, and I can smile. [**Dunyasha** comes in and brings **Lopakhin** some kvass] I shall go. [*Knocks over a chair*] There... [*Triumphantly*] There, you see, if I may use the word, what circumstances I am in, so to speak. It is even simply marvellous. [*Exit.*]

Dunyasha. I may confess to you, Ermolai Alexeyevitch, that Epikhodov has proposed to me.

Lopakhin. Ah!

Dunyasha. I don't know what to do about it. He's a nice young man, but every now and again, when he begins talking, you can't understand a word he's saying. I think I like him. He's madly in love with me. He's an unlucky man; every day something happens. We tease him about it. They call him "Two-and-twenty troubles."

Lopakhin. [*Listens*] There they come, I think.

Dunyasha. They're coming! What's the matter with me? I'm cold all over.

Lopakhin. There they are, right enough. Let's go and meet them. Will she know me? We haven't seen each other for five years.

Dunyasha. [*Excited*] I shall faint in a minute... Oh, I'm fainting!

Two carriages are heard driving up to the house.

Lopakhin and Dunyasha quickly go out. The stage is empty. A noise begins in the next room. **Fiers**, leaning on a stick, walks quickly across the stage; he has just been to meet **Lubov Andreyevna**. He wears an old-fashioned livery and a tall hat. He is saying something to himself, but not a word of it can be made out. The

noise behind the stage gets louder and louder. A voice is heard: "Let's go in there." Enter **Lubov Andreyevna**, **Anya**, and **Charlotta Ivanovna** with a little dog on a chain, and all dressed in travelling clothes, **Varya** in a long coat and with a kerchief on her head. **Gaev**, **Simeonov-Pischin**, **Lopakhin**, **Dunyasha** with a parcel and an umbrella, and a servant with luggage — all cross the room.

Anya. Let's come through here. Do you remember what this room is, mother?

Lubov. [*Joyfully, through her tears*] The nursery!

Varya. How cold it is! My hands are quite numb.
[*To Lubov Andreyevna*] Your rooms, the white one and the violet one, are just as they used to be, mother.

Lubov. My dear nursery, oh, you beautiful room...
I used to sleep here when I was a baby. [*Weeps*]
And here I am like a little girl again. [*Kisses her brother, Varya, then her brother again*] And Varya is just as she used to be, just like a nun. And I knew Dunyasha. [*Kisses her.*]

Gaev. The train was two hours late. There now; how's that for punctuality?

Charlotta. [*To Pischin*] My dog eats nuts too.

Pischin. [*Astonished*] To think of that, now!

All go out except Anya and Dunyasha.

Dunyasha. We did have to wait for you!

Takes off Anya's cloak and hat.

Anya. I didn't get any sleep for four nights on the journey... I'm awfully cold.

Dunyasha. You went away during Lent, when it was snowing and frosty, but now? Darling! [*Laughs and kisses her*] We did have to wait for you, my joy, my pet... I must tell you at once, I can't bear to wait a minute.

Anya. [*Tired*] Something else now?..

Dunyasha. The clerk, Epikhodov, proposed to me after Easter.

Anya. Always the same... [*Puts her hair straight*] I've lost all my hairpins...

She is very tired, and even staggers as she walks.

Dunyasha. I don't know what to think about it. He loves me, he loves me so much!

Anya. [*Looks into her room; in a gentle voice*] My room, my windows, as if I'd never gone away. I'm at home! Tomorrow morning I'll get up and have a run in the garden...Oh, if I could only get to

sleep! I didn't sleep the whole journey, I was so bothered.

Dunyasha. Peter Sergeyeitch came two days ago.

Anya. [*Joyfully*] Peter!

Dunyasha. He sleeps in the bath-house, he lives there.

He said he was afraid he'd be in the way. [*Looks at her pocket-watch*] I ought to wake him, but Barbara Mihailovna told me not to. "Don't wake him," she said.

Enter Varya, a bunch of keys on her belt.

Varya. Dunyasha, some coffee, quick. Mother wants some.

Dunyasha. This minute. [*Exit.*]

Varya. Well, you've come, glory be to God. Home again. [*Caressing her*] My darling is back again! My pretty one is back again!

Anya. I did have an awful time, I tell you.

Varya. I can just imagine it!

Anya. I went away in Holy Week; it was very cold then. Charlotta talked the whole way and would go on performing her tricks. Why did you tie Charlotta on to me?

Varya. You couldn't go alone, darling, at seventeen!

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