

APPENDIX I (PLAYS REVIEW)

The Bear

“The Bear” is a classic one-act play written in 1888. It is one of the great works of Anton Chekhov, about a man with unexpected feeling towards a widowed woman. “The Bear” can be regarded as a comedy since it is to give the audience entertainment and amusement. This comedy reveals the fine line between anger and passion. The theme is about a strange beginning of love between Smirnov and Popova. It demonstrated that love changes all things it touches. Dialogue of the characters, the action of the characters, and the characters themselves shape the theme. Unbelievable actions and change in mood on the part of the characters show that love can sometimes come from an odd turn of events.

Chekhov’s classic play “The Bear” revolves around two protagonists, Grigory Stepanovich Smirnov and Mrs. Popova. Smirnov is a landowner, who lends money to Mr. Nikolai Popov before he died and he demands the debts be paid at once because his creditors after him. Mrs. Popova is a widow who is still mourning her husband’s death seven months ago. She decides to isolate herself from the outside world and mourn until the day she dies. In order to take back his money, Smirnov refuses to leave her house. Smirnov and Popova angrily fight with one another. At this point Smirnov realizes that he has fallen in love with Popova. At the end of the play, they end up in love and kiss each other.

The Bear is a drama that has a message that love can sometimes come from an odd turn of events. Chekhov achieved success as a playwright through a set of plays that describe the nature of powerful emotions. Chekhov conducts “The Bear”

from a human nature into this short, comical, strange, and successful act. Chekhov demonstrates how close is the relationship between anger and passion, and how strange and wonderful is the human condition from hate to love.

The Proposal

“A Marriage Proposal”, which sometimes is translated as simply “the Proposal”, is a one-act farce by Anton Chekhov that written about 1888-1889 and performed for the first time in 1890. The same as “The bear”, “The Proposal” is a fast-paced play of dialogue-based action situational humor. The farce explores the process of getting married and could be read as a satire on the upper middle class and courtship.

The play points out the struggle to balance the economic necessities of marriage with what the characters themselves actually want. It shows the characters' desperation for marriage as comical. In Chekhov's Russia, marriage was a means of economic stability for most people. They married to gain wealth and possessions or to satisfy social pressure. The satire is conveyed successfully by emphasizing the couple's foolish arguments over small things. The main arguments in the play revolve around The Oxen Meadows and two dogs called Guess and Squeezer.

The story is about Ivan Vassiliyitch Lomov, a long-time neighbor of Stepan Stepanovitch Chubukov, has come to propose marriage to Chubukov's 25-year-old daughter, Natalia. After he has asked and received joyful permission to marry Natalya, she is invited into the room, and he tries to convey to her the proposal. Lomov is a hypochondriac, and, while trying to make clear his reasons for being there,

he gets into an argument with Natalia about The Oxen Meadows, a disputed piece of land between their respective properties, which results in him having “palpitations” and numbness in his leg. After her father notices they are arguing, he joins in, and then sends Ivan out of the house. While Stepan rants about Lomov, he expresses his shock that "this fool dares to make you (Natalya) a proposal of marriage!" She immediately starts into hysterics, begging for her father to bring him back. He does, and Natalia and Ivan get into a second big argument, this time about the superiority of their respective hunting dogs, Guess and Squeezer. Ivan collapses from his exhaustion over arguing, and father and daughter fear he's dead. However, after a few minutes he regains consciousness, and Chubukov all but forces him and his daughter to accept the proposal with a kiss. Immediately following the kiss, the couple gets into another argument.

A Tragedian in Spite of Himself

“A Tragedian in Spite of Himself” is also known as “a Reluctant Tragic Hero”, which is a one-act play, written in 1899 by Anton Chekhov. In the play, Ivan Ivanovitch Tolkachov asks to borrow a revolver from his friend, Alexey Alexeyevitch Murashkin. Murashkin inquires to the reason, and Tolkachov complains bitterly about the bad events in his life. Murashkin expresses his sympathy, and then asks Tolkachov to take a sewing machine and a caged canary to Olga Pavlovna, a mutual acquaintance. On hearing Murashkin’s request, Tolkachov snaps and begins chasing Murashkin around the room, screaming that he wants blood.

APPENDIX II (AUTHOR REVIEW)

Anton Pavlovich Chekhov

Anton Chekhov is Russian writer, a master of the modern short story and a leading playwright of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Anton Chekhov was born on January 29, 1860, in Taganrog, Russia. Through stories such as “The Steppe” and “The Lady with the Dog,” and plays such as *The Seagull* and *Uncle Vanya*, the prolific writer emphasized the depths of human nature, the hidden significance of everyday events and the fine line between comedy and tragedy. Chekhov died of tuberculosis on July 15, 1904, in Badenweiler, Germany.

Chekhov remained in Taganrog until he finished his studies while his family moved to Moscow to look for other work. Chekhov finally joined his family in Moscow in 1879 and enrolled at medical school. With his father still struggling financially, Chekhov supported the family with his freelance writing, producing hundreds of short comic pieces under a pen name for local magazines.

During the mid-1880s, Chekhov practiced as a physician and began to publish serious works of fiction under his own name. His pieces appeared in the newspaper *New Times* and then as part of collections such as *Motley Stories* (1886). His story “The Steppe” was an important success, earning its author the Pushkin Prize in 1888. Like most of Chekhov’s early work, it showed the influence of the major Russian realists of the 19th century, such as Leo Tolstoy and Fyodor Dostoyevsky.

Chekhov also wrote works for the theater during this period. His earliest plays were short farces; however, he soon developed his signature style, which was

a unique mix of comedy and tragedy. Plays such as *Ivanov* (1887) and *The Wood Demon* (1889) told stories about educated men of the upper classes coping with debt, disease and inevitable disappointment in life.

Chekhov wrote many of his greatest works from the 1890s through the last few years of his life. In his short stories of that period, including “Ward No. 6” and “The Lady with the Dog,” he revealed a profound understanding of human nature and the ways in which ordinary events can carry deeper meaning.

In his plays of these years, Chekhov concentrated primarily on mood and characters, showing that they could be more important than the plots. Not much seems to happen to his lonely, often desperate characters, but their inner conflicts take on great significance. Their stories are very specific, painting a picture of pre-revolutionary Russian society, yet timeless.

From the late 1890s onward, Chekhov collaborated with Constantin Stanislavski and the Moscow Art Theater on productions of his plays, including his masterpieces *The Seagull* (1895), *Uncle Vanya* (1897), *The Three Sisters* (1901) and *The Cherry Orchard* (1904).

In 1901, Chekhov married Olga Knipper, an actress from the Moscow Art Theatre. However, by this point his health was in decline due to the tuberculosis that had affected him since his youth. While staying at a health resort in Badenweiler, Germany, he died in the early hours of July 15, 1904, at the age of 44.

Chekhov is considered one of the major literary figures of his time. His plays are still staged worldwide, and his overall body of work influenced important

writers of an array of genres, including James Joyce, Ernest Hemingway, Tennessee Williams and Henry Miller.