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My Life: The Story of a Provincial

By Anton Chekhov (1860 -1904) Translated by Constance Garnett

Read by:	David Wales	Language:	English
Length:	3 hours 46 minutes	Style:	Solo
Genre(s):	Fiction, Novellas, Short Fiction		

Format	Package	SKU	EAN/UPC	MSLP
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"My Life: The Story of a Provincial" (1896) is a novella that tells the story of Misail Poloznev, a rebellious young gentleman who decides to forego the usual comfortable occupations of his class and instead make his living doing manual labor. His father, the architect of a small town in southern Russia much like Chekhov's birthplace of Taganrog, is appalled and enlists the local governor to warn him of the social peril of his choice. Nevertheless, when Misail persists, his father disowns him. Through Dr. Blagovo, a friend who believes, like many of his group, that Russian culture is hopelessly mired in the Middle Ages, he meets and falls for the idealistic Masha Dolzhikov. They marry, buy a farm in the country, and try to start a school, but the peasants cheat the farmer and sabotage the schoolteacher. Masha loses heart, moves to St. Petersburg and asks for a divorce. Meanwhile Misail's sister Cleopatra has fallen for Dr. Blagovo and gotten pregnant. The good doctor skips out and brother and sister

move in together. After Cleopatra dies from tuberculosis, Misail carries on with his life as a working man and custodian of his niece. The story is often overlooked, perhaps because of the title, which Chekhov never much liked, but is considered one of Chekhov's best. It shows him at the height of his power, with a challenging theme, vivid characters, revealing details, and acute psychological insight.

Anton Chekov (January 29, 1860 – July 15, 1904) was a Russian physician, playwright and author of short stories. He is considered one of the finest writers of short fiction in history and, along with Ibsen and Strindberg, one of the founders of modernism in the theatre. He was born the third of six children in the port town of Taganrog on the north shore of the Sea of Azov in southern Russia. His father, a grocer, declared bankruptcy in 1876 and moved the family to Moscow, leaving Anton behind to liquidate the property and complete his schooling. Anton joined his family and entered medical school in 1879, supporting the family by writing short vignettes and humorous sketches for the newspapers and gaining both popular and literary attention. He became a doctor in 1884 but practiced little. At about the same time he contracted tuberculosis. Noted author Dmitry Grigorovich helped him win the Pushkin prize in 1888 for his short story collection *At Dusk*. He settled in a small country estate in 1892, where he wrote his first major play, *The Seagull*, in 1894, and then built a villa in Yalta after his tuberculosis worsened. He married actress Olga Knipper in 1901. *The Cherry Orchard*, his last major play, received accolades when it was produced a few months before his death in 1904 and established his reputation a great Russian writer, second only to Tolstoy, which stands to this day.