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Rothschild's Fiddle

Anton Chekhov (1860 -1904) Translated by Constance Garnett

Read by: D. S. Harvey
 Length: 26 minutes
 Genre(s): Fiction, Short Fiction

Language: English
 Style: Solo

Format	Package	SKU	EAN/UPC	MSLP
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Yakov Ivanov is an elderly coffin-maker in a small village with a population that doesn't generate enough deaths for him to make any real money. He is also a fiddler who sometimes sits in with a Jewish klezmer orchestra in spite of his dislike of Jews and of the flutist, Rothschild, in particular. Marfa, his long-suffering and unloved wife, becomes mortally ill with a contagious illness. He struggles to recall their shared past as he builds her coffin and soon he, too, succumbs to mortal illness, provoking a self-searching meditation and a change of heart.

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.