



The Lady with the Little Dog

Anton Chekhov

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The Lady with the Dog is a short story by Anton Chekhov first published in 1899. It tells the story of an adulterous affair between a Russian banker and a young lady he meets while vacationing in Yalta. The story comprises four parts: (I) describes the initial meeting in Yalta, (II) the consummation of the affair and the remaining time in Yalta, (III) Gurov's return to Moscow and his visit to Anna's town, and (IV) Anna's visits to Moscow. Vladimir Nabokov declared that it was one of the greatest short stories ever written.

The Lady with the Little Dog Details

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F-Read says

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Issa Deerbany says

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Praveen says

"Experience often repeated, truly bitter experience, had taught him long ago that—every intimacy, which at first so agreeably diversifies life and appears a light and charming adventure, inevitably grows into a regular problem of extreme intricacy, and in the long run the situation becomes unbearable. But at every fresh meeting with an interesting woman this experience seemed to slip out of his memory, and he was eager for life, and everything seemed simple and amusing."

If you like Chekhov's realistic stories, you will find this a good one as in this story, those intricacies of an out of marriage relationship between a man and a lady (with the dog) are depicted in a very alluring manner.

Even Nabokov, who criticized Chekhov many times, had declared this as one of the greatest stories ever written on such a complicated theme.

This story shows how useless pursuits and conversations about the same things all the time absorb the better part of one's time and the better part of one's strength, and in the end there is left a life grovelling and curtailed, worthless and trivial, and there is no escaping or getting away from it—just as though one were in a madhouse.

A beautifully written story with a beginning But without an end !

La scrittura di Tchov ha una bellezza quieta, lenta nell'arrivare. Scivola pacatamente, pensosamente, senza procurar troppo fastidio. Se fosse un passo, sarebbe ovattato. Se fosse una tinta, un colore pastello, un rosa antico.

Riconoscere una bellezza quieta è missione difficile. Tanto più che siamo bombardati da bellezze roboanti, bellezze perle e lustrini, paillette, rombo di clacson. Una bellezza quieta necessita silenzio, discernimento, occhi buoni. Necessita un dito gentile che indichi: "è qui la bellezza... e qui... e qui".

Una bellezza quieta, infine, ha bisogno di un'esposizione prolungata, di una certa stagionatura nelle cantine della memoria e dell'immaginazione.

Proprio per questo ho colto la bellezza quieta del Giardino dei Ciliegi solo attraverso il velo della messa in scena strehleriana. E ho colto la bellezza quieta di questi racconti attraverso l'amore per essi di Nabokov. Nabokov... Uno così... cos'ha da spartire lui con la bellezza quieta? Lui, il più roboante, il più barocco, il più decorativo degli scrittori russi? Che dire di questo suo amore per Tchov, che condensa in un aforisma di rara gentilezza, « ... Tchov vivrà fin quando ci saranno le betulle e i tramonti e la voglia di scrivere »?

È attraverso l'indice gentile di Nabokov che ho cominciato a guardare le tinte pastello di Tchov con la dovuta attenzione. La bellezza è qui... e qui... e qui. In questo dettaglio, in questo sorriso che si spegne, in questo riflesso sull'acqua, in questo cocomero, in questo omuncolo stinto, comune.

E ho capito una cosa un po' triste, un po' crudele. Che la bellezza di Tchov è solo fintamente quieta. La bellezza di Tchov è una bocca premurosa che si trattiene dall'urlare, una gola muta, un braccio che ricade lungo il fianco. Vivono di questa bellezza quieta, di questa inerzia paralizzante molti dei suoi personaggi, creature patetiche, piccole, grigiastre, intrappolate. « Erano come due uccelli migratori, maschio e femmina, che fossero stati catturati e costretti a vivere in due gabbie separate ».

I personaggi di Tchov sono animali mansueti perché rassegnati al proprio destino, mai artefici di esso. Le loro fughe sono rare, comunque imperfette e sempre più immaginate che reali, quasi sogni a occhi aperti. Ma se tendi l'orecchio riesci a sentire il cigolio della catena, lo stridio delle unghiette contro le sbarre della gabbia. Se aguzzi la vista nei loro occhi vedi il niente, il mare, l'orlo fumoso di un'avventura che esiste soltanto nel ricordo, nel rimpianto, in un futuro indeterminato, felice ma lontano.

Se tendo l'orecchio, se aguzzo la vista, mi trovo riflessa in questa bellezza quieta. E mi viene da urlare.

Ivana Books Are Magic says

I would have to agree with Nabokov in that this is one of the greatest short stories ever written. The Lady With the Dog breaks all the rules of short story form, but breaks them wonderfully. There is no plot in this story, is there? No resolution at the end. A simple narrative of two characters falling in love despite the best of their efforts. In many ways, The Lady with the Dog feels like a novel. The principal characters are as beautifully complex as the most successfully portrayed protagonists of best classical novels. Well, at least in my view, they are.

At the start of the story, Dmitri Gurov is a rather poor excuse for a human being, isn't he? A womanizer who despises woman, can there be a worse men? Casanova was a pathological womanizer, but at least he was capable of sincere friendship with women and didn't speak of them badly. Dmitri is married with children, and hates his wife whom he had only married out of convenience. Dmitri thinks of women as infinitely inferior to man, a lower race, yet he cannot live without them. Dmitri is a cynic and even worse a hypocrite. You know, I think that cynics are often sensitive people, the kind of people who have the capacity to love, but give it all up because of our human weakness- the fear of getting hurt. If I'm indifferent, I can't get hurt, we think in our human silliness. How wrong we are. To be indifferent is to be in a coma, in a state of spiritual paralysis. There is no happiness without sorrow. Without a combination of lightness and darkness,

there is only the void. But back to the subject. Dmitri, despite all his flaws, or many because of them, manages to catch and retain the reader's interest from start to finish.

Anna, on the other hand, is principally seen through Dmitri's eyes. This doesn't mean that we don't warm up to her. Quite on the contrary. While we watch and observe the psychological transformation of a horrible cynic Dmitri in a person capable of love, we see Anna's growth in maturity as well. Anna is the force that made that transformation possible. Anna is a married woman, who allows herself to fall in love, who despite her young years, has the courage to admit that her life is devoid of meaning and that her marriage is unhappy. As the title indicates, *The Lady with the Little Dog* is the true heroine of this story. Anna is not stupid, nor does she enter the affair out of a caprice or boredom. She is aware of the danger, yet she quite bravely chooses to love. Anna sees Dmitri both as what he is and what he can be, and chooses to forgive him his past. Dmitri does the same. Both of them are transformed by love. If the characterization was any less subtle, the story would be banal. If the dialogues were any less natural, the story would lack strength. Fortunately, the writing is quite brilliant.

Neither of our protagonists is perfect, but together they are pretty close to perfection. Perfect in the sense they are willing to face their human weakness and surpass it. The psychological portray of these two was masterfully done. I found it very comforting to see that people can find love even in worst of times. Here we basically have a highly believable story about two individuals transformed by love. If that is not writing magic, I don't know what is. This is definitely one of the best love stories I have ever read, perhaps even the best one.

Despite its short form, *The Lady with the Dog* is a deeply touching story. I'm not even sure how many times I have read it. I think the last time I reread it was in February. I own a few vintage Chekhov short story collections, and I often reread this one. Sometimes I listen to audio versions of this story in different languages. It always sounds amazing, in every language. If I had to choose my favourite story by Chekhov, it would be a tie between this one and *Ward No.6*. It might seem an odd choice as *Ward No.6* is a rather depressive story, but if you look closely so is *The Lady With the Little Dog*. We get a feeling that love is such a rare thing, it is almost non existent. We get a feeling that most people leave bleak and hopeless lives. Is that a romantic view of life? Certainly no. But then again, one can't accuse Russian writers of shying away from dark sides of human nature. They typically just dig in, don't they? Moreover, is there a happy ending for these two? Not exactly. We don't know what happens next with them. All we can see is something frozen on page- an example of real love. Will it last? That my dear readers, is completely uncertain. Perhaps the true tragedy of the principal character (the doctor) of *Ward no. 6* is that he has never found love. Perhaps love does redeem us, even while it torments us. With love, there is always hope. Even if it is always uncertain. Even if it might go away tomorrow. That doesn't make it any less real.

Nawal says

With Chekhov forget about the complex plots and the outward excitement and **CONCENTRATE** on the apparent trivialities of the daily life of ordinary Russian people, just like you and me.

Probing below the surface, Chekhov lays bare the character's inner structure and their secret motives. Fair enough that he compensates the lack of action with an internal drama!

The story overshadows an adulterous affair between Dmitri Gurov (a creature of contradictions) An attractive man, near forty from the upper class, who has been trapped for years in a loveless arranged

marriage, leaving him bitter, unfaithful and cynical, and Anna Sergeyevna, the lady with the little dog (that is for the most part, only given to us through Gurov) a young married lady, who is also trapped in a suffocating marriage.

As the narrative develops, Chekhov allows the protagonist Gurov to change as subtly and credibly, undergoing a winding course of emotional and moral growth, Gurov realizes that he has fallen in love with Anna— he has fallen in love for the first time in his life, a life where arranged marriages are the norm and couples live loveless lives and in which he hasn't been able to shed his masks and express his real emotions.

---Don't you just love this dynamic psychology of the characters---

And as the end is riddled with ambiguity, Gurov also recognizes that he is living two separate lives and acknowledges that there will be a long way to go before they can be both freed from their "intolerable bonds" to live together openly.

"Yes. It's time to go home" and reality seems to prevail, despite of Gurov's efforts to avoid it. And love, the only sane and satisfactory answer to Gurov existence fails to transcend boundaries of societal standards of morality due to the complicated reality.

And on this matter, I would recall Chekhov himself and say: "you live badly, ladies and gentlemen"

To someone who adores the Russian literature, I did like this play overall but still It was not as compelling as the Russian literature would be.

These words, so ordinary, for some reason moved Gurov to indignation, and struck him as degrading and unclean. What savage manners, what people! What senseless nights, what uninteresting, uneventful days! The rage for card-playing, the gluttony, the drunkenness, the continual talk always about the same thing. Useless pursuits and conversations always about the same things absorb the better part of one's time, the better part of one's strength, and in the end there is left a life grovelling and curtailed, worthless and trivial, and there is no escaping or getting away from it -- just as though one were in a madhouse or a prison.

He had two lives: one, open, seen and known by all who cared to know, full of relative truth and of relative falsehood, exactly like the lives of his friends and acquaintances; and another life running its course in secret. And through some strange, perhaps accidental, conjunction of circumstances, everything that was essential, of interest and of value to him, everything in which he was sincere and did not deceive himself, everything that made the kernel of his life, was hidden from other people; and all that was false in him, the sheath in which he hid himself to conceal the truth -- such, for instance, as his work in the bank, his discussions at the club, his "lower race," his presence with his wife at anniversary festivities -- all that was open. And he judged of others by himself, not believing in what he saw, and always believing that every man had his real, most interesting life under the cover of secrecy and under the cover of night. All personal life rested on secrecy, and possibly it was partly on that account that civilized man was so nervously anxious that personal privacy should be respected.

Chari says

Ni en papel ni en eBook, en audiobook.

?Aya says

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Sandy says

Such a beautiful, sensitively-written story. It touches my heart.

Petra X says

Same old. Same old. A well-off man twice the age of a pretty blonde young woman, fancies her and playing on her loneliness as she is far from home without any companion but her dog, he becomes her friend until he can get her into bed. Both of them are married.

She worries that he doesn't respect her. She's right, he doesn't. He doesn't respect women at all but the company of men bores him. She lies to her husband so she can travel to meet him. He probably gives some excuse or other to his wife and they meet in hotel rooms.

"He had two lives: one, open, seen and known by all who cared to know, full of relative truth and of relative falsehood, exactly like the lives of his friends and acquaintances; and another life, running its course in secret."

So what's new?

When she finally realises that the man she loves isn't really all that, or he is but she knows he doesn't think she is, she says,

"I am a bad, low woman; I despise myself and don't attempt to justify myself. It's not my husband but myself I have deceived. And not only just now; I have been deceiving myself for a long time."

So nothing new there. How many books, films, tv series are about the older man who fancies the young blonde and convinces her that their fervid afternoons in a hotel room are real love? This man who had never really had much emotion for any woman now thinks he really loves her. But we know that in part two (which is not written in the story but we've read this story a million times before), when push comes to shove he will go back to his wife and next year, or the year after, there will be another pretty young blonde to distract him.

One thing with classic stories like these, back in the days when contraception wasn't reliable, of adultery is that they rarely include the woman getting pregnant. I always wonder about that. Perhaps it is the male authors just don't want to complicate their musings about love and lust with real life.

Some of the writing of this story was exquisite but in common with a lot of Russian literature it did go on so. Chekov was a very prolific writer. Nothing in this story has made me fall in love with him myself, but should I do so, it will have the makings of a very long and involved affair.

Ij says

The Lady with the Pet Dog

Written by: Anton Chekhov

Translated By: Avrahm Yarmolinsky

The story is often translated "The Lady with the Little Dog."

The Lady with the Pet Dog

Characters:

Dmitry Dmitrich Gurov
Anna Segeyevna (Lady)

Gurov is almost forty (40) years old and from Moscow. He is married and works for a bank in his native city. He studied languages and literature at his university, years ago. Gurov is visiting Yalta, a resort city on the Black Sea. He normally takes in the sights of the promenade while sitting in a confectionery shop, in the afternoons. Today he spots a woman, Anna Segeyevna, walking a small white Pomeranian.

Gurov was immediately attracted to Anna a fair haired woman of medium height. He notices that she is alone, except for her dog and decides that he wants to get to know her. Gurov has had many affairs during his marriage. He considers his wife and women, in general, an inferior race. However, Gurov can not live without the company of women, other than his wife. He is bored with the company of men.

Gurov asks around and nobody knows this woman. He sees her and her dog again, this time dining in a public garden. He sits at the table next to her attracts dog and offers him a bone. He strikes up a conversation with Anna and their relationship begins.

He finds out that she too is married and in Yalta without her husband. She seems to welcome his attention. Anna is only about twenty years old. This is a new experience for Anna, being alone and talking to a stranger away from home.

Gurov can't stop thinking about Anna, and continues to seek her company, since her husband is not expected to join her anytime soon. They meet daily and enjoy each others company. Gurov was well aware of his intentions; however, I believe Anna was lonesome and just seeking company, at first. Later, Anna knows what is happening, but is involved at this time and is concerned about whether Gurov really respects her.

There has been some kissing and touching, but, it is not clear whether their relationship has gone any further, at this time. At some point, Anna's husband decides that he is not coming to Yalta, and asks her to come home.

Both Dmitry and Anna return to their homes respectively. Dmitry decides that he can not get along without her and leaves home to see her. He finds out where she lives and lurks around her house to try to see her. She does not appear at home. He thinks maybe he might see her at the theater after seeing a playbill. He goes to the theater and he sees her. She is upset but agrees to meet him later.

Anna decides that she would go to Moscow every couple of months, telling her husband that she was going to see a doctor about a "woman's ailment." Gurov would meet her in her hotel room. They continued this affair not wanting to leave one another.

Noting the difference in age and experience Gurov took advantage of Anna. Of course, she could have chosen not entered into the relationship, but I believe she was vulnerable due to being alone and young in age.

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?????? Ταμετο?ρο Αμ says

Μια απλ? ερωτικ? περιπ?τεια ξεκιν?ει κατα τη δι?ρκεια των διακοπ?ν σε ?να παραθαλ?σσιο θ?ρετρο της Γι?λτας,αν?μεσα σε δυο εντελ?ς διαφορετικο?ς ανθρ?πους μα και τ?σο ?διους.

Ο Γκο?ροφ ε?ναι ?νας ευπαρουσ?ατος,ευκατ?στατος και κοινωνικ? καταξιωμ?νος ?νδρας γ?ρω στα σαρ?ντα.

Εργ?ζεται σε τρ?πεζα και ?χει μια σ?ζυγο την οπο?α απεχθ?νεται,φοβ?ται και απατ? κατ' εξακολο?θηση με το "κατ?τερο ε?δος". ?τσι, χαρακτηρ?ζει συλλ?βδην το γυναικε?ο φ?λο. ?χει τρ?α παιδι? στα οπο?α προσφ?ρει τα π?ντα μαζ? με την πλ?ρη αδιαφορ?α του.

Ο Γκο?ροφ, στεγν?ς και κεν?ς συναισθηματικ?,προσπαθε? μ?ταια μ?σα απο διασκεδ?σεις και κραιπ?λες να νι?σει λαχτ?ρα και ελπ?δα για τη ζω? του.

Η ?ννα Σεργκ?γεβνα ε?ναι μια ν?α κι ?μορφη γυνα?κα παγιδευμ?νη μ?σα σε ενα γ?μο που βρ?θει απο ?στερη δυστυχ?α και αμοιβ?α ανοχ?.

Ο Γκο?ροφ και η ?ννα γνωρ?ζονται κατ? τη διαρκε?α των διακοπ?ν τους και ανταλ?σσουν π?θη και π?θους με μια εναλλαγ? συναισθημ?των αν?μεσα στον λυρισμ? και τον κυνισμ?.

Για εκε?νον ?ταν μια ακ?μη περιπ?τεια με το "κατ?τερο ε?δος", για εκε?νη,μια πρωτ?γνωρη εμπειρ?α.

Ήταν επιστρέφουν στην οικογενειακή τους ρουτίνα επανέρχονται και οι σκληρές τυπικές περιφροξίες των συμβιβασμών τους.
Ένας ανήλικος έρωτας τους σιγολιγνεί, παρά με τις αναμνήσεις και την ηθονική νοσταλγία αναβίβνει μνήμες και στιγμές που δεν γίνεται να ξεπεραστούν και να ξεχαστούν.

Μοιράζα θα ξανασυναντηθούν, τυλιγμένοι από τη θλίψη μιας αγάπης ανάμεσα σε ανθρώπους που είναι δεσμευμένοι με άλλους....

Κατανοούν πως δεν μπορούν να χωριστούν, επειδή ο χωρισμός απλώς δραματοποιεί περισσότερο την αγάπη τους.
Έτσι συνεχίζουν να βιώνουν μια περιθωριακή ευτυχία.
Η κατάληξη της ιστορίας είναι η επιτυχία της αποτυχίας ή αντίστροφα.

Η αναποτελεσματικότητα του τάλους, η επιτηδευμένη ανικανότητα του Τσέχοφ να μας δείξει αν μπορούν να βρουν την ευτυχία κάτω από αυτές τις συνθήκες ή όχι, κάνει αυτή την κοινή ερωτική ιστορία απίστευτα αριστουργηματική.
Οι ερμηνείες πολλές και τα συμπεράσματα καθαρά υποκειμενικά.

" Και του φάνηκε πως λίγο έλειπε ακόμα...
και θα βρισκόταν η λύση και τότε θ' αρχίζε μια καινούργια, μια μορφή ζωής...
κι ήταν ξεκάρθωρο και στους δύο πως το τέλος ήταν μακριά ακόμα, και πως το πιο περίπλοκο και δύσκολο κομμάτι μάλιστα αρχίζε".

Καλή ανήγνωση.
Πολλοί ασπασμοί.

Bg says

I'm not a huge fan of short stories, especially short classic stories about selfish pricks. Gurov is a nearly forty something year old man with children and an apparently bad marriage with a woman he can't stand. But on a two week vacation of some kind he meets "The Lady with the Dog" and become acquainted with her resulting in an affair that seems only for his entertainment because of how bored he is of his life. I couldn't believe how completely selfish and greedy this guy was, it was sickening. He had children for goodness sake and proceeded to have an affair with this immature naive woman who was also married. And then was beginning to believe that he was truly in love.

Overall this story was well written and a times funny but overall Gorov was a jerk.
