



Chekhov: Shorts (NHB Classic Plays)

Anton Chekhov

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This collection features Chekhov's best-known short plays in brand new translations: three farces, two comic duologues and a monologue, all of them referred to by Chekhov as 'vaudevilles' and all written in the late 1880s before any of his great full-length plays. 'I don't much care for theatre,' he wrote at the time, 'but I do enjoy vaudevilles.'

The Bear, *The Proposal* and *The Wedding* are all farces on the preposterous business of courtship and marriage. *A Tragic Figure* and *Swansong* are comic duologues: one about a civil servant sweltering in Moscow coping with the incessant demands of his family from their summer dacha, the other about a melancholy old actor perked up by memories of past glories. *On the Evils of Tobacco* is a bittersweet monologue in which a scientific lecture is hijacked by thoughts of domestic misery.

These accurate and actable translations by Chekhov expert Stephen Mulrine reveal a dramatist revelling in the broad comedy of human behaviour, a comedy which was refined in his later masterpieces.

Highly entertaining, these comic shorts offer a fascinating insight into Chekhov's development as a dramatist, and will provide actors at any level – student, amateur or professional – with an ideal showcase.

This edition also includes an introduction, a chronology of key dates, and a pronunciation guide.

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