

# The Proposal

## 1. The social picture of the play The Proposal.

Literature is no doubtly a media to know the activities of a society. Anton Chekhov's contribution The Proposal is such a media through which we have become witness of the social picture of Russian society. The playwright has very skillfully drawn the picture of socio-economic condition of Russia in 19th century. In that feudal society landless peasants were under the owners like Chubukov, Lomov and Natalya. Property and wealth where the most important conditions for marriage. People would marry only to maintain social status and to heighten the economic condition. There was no importance of love, emotions and feelings. Father considered his daughter as a liability. Upper classes would have entertainment in hunting, drinking, wine, racing dogs going toball, etc. They never hesitated to exploit the lower classes. Though the then people were gentle , they never hesitated to quarrel over a trifle thing of property and even dogs.

## 2. Describe the character of Lomov

Ivan vassilievitch Lomov is a young unmarried land owner of thirty five. He is introduced as large and hearty but suspicious. He comes with a proposal of marriage to Natalya. There is a hidden purpose behind the marriage proposal. Lomov calculates that He has already reached a critical age . Natalya is good in housekeeping and is not bad looking The marriage will serve an economic purpose by expanding his land ownership. He suffers from palpitations . He is very selfish and argumentative. He comes to propose to Natalya but starts quarrelling with her over trifle causes like Oxen Meadows and pet dogs. Stress of these arguments causes his palpitations, numbness in the leg and eventual collapse. At last despite a major panic attack, he manages to propose and with some help from Chubukov the proposal is accepted.

## 3. Describe the character of Chubukov

In the play The Proposal Stephen Stepanovitch Chubukov is a sensible but cunning land lord. He always tries to protect his property and aristocracy. He has a 25 years old daughter Natalya. She is a beautiful and well educated housekeeper. Like a responsible father, he tries for his daughter's marriage. He likes lomov as his son-in-law because he is a wealthy groom. He becomes pleased when Lomov expresses his wish to marry Natalya. In no way he wants to lose Lomov though he takes his daughter side in the argument over the Oxen Meadows and pet dogs. He feels relieved from the economic and social responsibility of a grown up daughter when he puts Lomov's hand into his daughter's hand.

#### **4. Sketch the character of Natalya in the play The Proposal.**

Ans: In the play The Proposal the great Russian playwright Anton Chekhov has very carefully characterized the character of Natalya. This twenty five year old woman, the daughter of Chubukov was a good housekeeper and educated. She was also not bad looking. These were the reasons for that Lomov wanted to marry her. She was very inquisitive about Lomov's formal evening dress. She was also greedy and weak at prediction. Natalya was really a touchy and short tempered woman. She was also fond of gossip or argument even over ownership of Oxen Meadows and the superiority of dog. She was really a 'love sick cat'. She secretly loved Lomov. That is why when she came to know that Lomov came to propose her, she started weeping. She became very happy when her father announced her engagement with Lomov. Above all we may say that Natalya is an interesting character in the play The Proposal.