

Short Stories by Anton Chekhov Bk. 2 Talent and Other Stories

ISBN 9780956116550

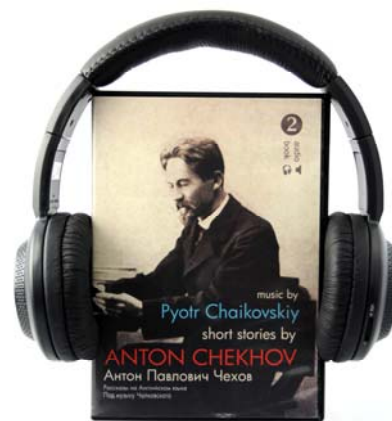
- **Title:** Short Stories by Anton Chekhov Bk.2
- **Subtitle:** Talent and Other Stories
- **ISBN:** 9780956116550
- **Category:** Classic Fiction, Short Stories, Comedy, Drama
- **Format:** Audio CD, Audio Book
- **Language:** English (Unabridged)
- **Author:** Anton Chekhov
- **Translator:** Constance Garnett
- **Composer:** Pyotr Tchaikovsky
- **Narrator:** Max Bollinger
- **Imprint:** Sovereign
- **Running Time:** 65 min
- **Dimensions:** 190 x 135 (mm), Spine 15 (mm)
- **On Sale:** 2010
- **RRP:** £16.45 (UK)

Brief Description

The second audio book in the series of Chekhov's Short Stories featuring 5 new stories: Talent, Anyuta, The Helpmate, Ivan Matveyitch, Polinka. Read by Max Bollinger in English (unabridged). Several stories in this new 65-min CD are accompanied by occasional piano music based on original compositions by Pyotr Tchaikovsky, a distinguished Russian composer of Romantic era. Europe's Age of Enlightenment is presented here through both literary and musical treasures of 19th century. [more>](#)

Stories in Audiobook 2

- 01 Talent
- 02 Anyuta
- 03 The Helpmate
- 04 Ivan Matveyitch
- 05 Polinka



Extended Description

“Short Stories by Anton Chekhov Bk.2: Talent and Other Stories”, narrated by Russian-born actor Max Bollinger, follows the success of first audio book **“A Tragic Actor and Other Stories”** which was released in November 2009 to five star **reviews**: “These six unabridged stories in the faithful Constance Garnett translation are presented with fine flourish by the Russian-born narrator. The poignant, everyday dramas of Imperial Russia are here, from jolting carriages across boundless taiga, to a tragic actor and a French tutor insulted by his boastful employer,” wrote Rachel Redford of The Observer.

The second audio book features the dramatic stories Anyuta; The Helpmate; Ivan Matveyitch; Polinka; and Talent. Accompanied by music from Pyotr Tchaikovsky, the stories are based on the original translations by Constance Clara Garnett, a 19th century expert of Russian literature, and are produced by Interactive Media.

Actor Max Bollinger, who is fluent in both Russian and English and an aficionado of the dramatist's works, believes the short stories by the acclaimed 19th century dramatist are as relevant today as when they were first written. Chekhov, who pioneered the “stream of consciousness” style of writing, wrote about credit crunch and financial problems in Russia 100 years ago that echo the current banking crisis, explained Max.

"I rediscovered Chekhov in England after having read his short stories in English. It felt like Chekhov's texts started to speak to me. I found his words agile, relevant, and enigmatic. It was like some magic book written in code suddenly opening up and transforming into beautiful gleaming stream of light. Chekhov's writing is full of enlightenment, wisdom and humour that I made it a personal goal to bring these stories to anyone seeking light and truth." [read more >](#)

About The Author

Anton Pavlovich Chekhov (Антон Павлович Чехов) 1860 – 1904, one of Russia's most cherished storyteller, playwright and one of the greatest dramatists of all time. Chekhov himself described his plays as comic satire: "All I wanted was to say honestly to people: 'Have a look at yourselves and see how bad and dreary your lives are!' The important thing is that people should realize that, for when they do, they will most certainly create another and better life for themselves. I will not live to see it, but I know that it will be quite different, quite unlike our present life."



About The Composer

Pyotr Ilyich Chaikovskiy (Пётр Ильич Чайковский) 1840 – 1893, Russian composer of the Romantic era. Chaikovskiy achieved worldwide recognition during his lifetime, was awarded an honorary doctorate at Cambridge University. In 1891 the Carnegie Hall program booklet proclaimed him to be one of the greatest living musicians. Music critics praised him as "a modern music lord". In Russia Chaikovskiy was considered a national treasure, and his music admired and adored by all. He wrote some of the most popular concert and theatrical music in the current classical repertoire, including the ballets Swan Lake, The Sleeping Beauty and The Nutcracker, the 1812 Overture, his Piano Concertos, his Symphonies, and the opera Eugene Onegin.

About The Translator

Constance Clara Garnett 1861 — 1946, English translator of nineteenth century Russian Literature. Following her visit to Russia in 1893 where she met Leo Tolstoy, Constance started translating Russian literature, which became her life's passion and resulted in English language versions of dozens of volumes by Tolstoy, Pushkin, Turgenev, Chekhov and other prominent Russian writers. Russian anarchist Sergei Stepniak assisted in preparation of her early works.

Reviews [more reviews>](#)

Anton Chekhov was one of the early masters of the short story as well as a great playwright. As is typical of Chekhov's stories, the five tracks here are carefully constructed slices of life, rich in portrait and moral ambiguity rather than dramatic experiences. Some listeners will find them a less familiar side of the author of UNCLE VANYA and THE CHERRY ORCHARD. Max Bollinger brings the authentic voice and soul of Russia to these classic Constance Garnett translations. While many of the issues in these stories are timeless, listeners will also get to visit, for a while, the old Russia of the czars.

D.M.H. AudioFile Magazine, Portland (USA)

"I listened to these short stories in the car while driving to and from errands and to work. The stories were short, but poignant, and I was worried at first that the narrator's accent might distract me, but after a few sentences, it was not an issue.

At the conclusion of each short story, I was anxious to start the next, but also felt compelled to think about the one I had just completed- and then to contemplate my own past, my own choices, my own story.

I love when literature sticks with me like this audio recording did. I am looking forward to listening to it again very soon."

Meg Downing (MA, USA) ★★★★★

"This is an audio book, and the narrator has a light Russian accent that lends creditability to the stories. Each of the stories -there are 5 on this second disc of "Short Stories by Anton Chekhov" is a picture for me. In fact, I liken each of them to a Monet painting in which you can see the individual strokes of the brush if you stand too close, but stepping back you see the whole picture at once and not the bits that created the whole. Masterpieces!"

Frayda Glass (MA, USA) ★★★★★

"All the faults concerning my interaction with this work, are mine. I have trained myself to sit and read a book: it is an activity which absorbs one's main sensory organs, the eyes; and so, the World is closed out. With an audio book, such as this, one needs to block out all extraneous input and drink in the delightful atmosphere as the stories are beautifully read to one.

The tracks are superbly interspersed with snatches of music by Tchaikovsky, which set the mood perfectly. It would be exceedingly simple to overdo the 'Russian-ness' of this disc but, the editor has judged the mood perfectly. I have now listened to it a few times and will certainly do so again (hopefully, many times).

Enough about the style of the disc, what about the content? My youth coincided with the cold war and so, Russia has always seemed to be a mysterious place where the people are somehow different. These tales of nineteenth century Russia should therefore be totally alien. They are not, of course: Chekhov describes the human condition, it is inherently the same in Russia as in England, or where, and when, ever one happens to live. I suspect that if we do, eventually, find sentient life upon another planet, then they too would read, or listen to, these fables and nod their understanding."

Ken Petersen (UK) ★★★★★

"This was my first experience with an audio book, at least for many years. I found the stories themselves captivating and now wish to read them in "regular" form. And only 5 stories is just a sample of Anton Chekhov's works. But I would listen to another collection of his stories again. His stories are about people, with real problems. There are no trite solutions for their problems, sometimes just an understanding of the characters' flaws. Each story offers a portrait of a person, a situation, and through simple dialogue we learn more about them than they know themselves. It is a wonderful experience to hear these stories."

Joseph Belliveau (Canada) ★★★★★

"This was an enjoyable experience for me. Its not often that I listen to audiobooks. The readers lightly accented voice wasn't too fast, too slow or too annoying (which can happen with audiobooks and ruins them.) The little vignettes themselves were great. My favorite was the one about the 'little foot'. Hilarious."

Renee (MI, USA) ★★★★★

"This very solid instalment in Max Bollinger's series includes Chekhov's 'Talent', 'Anyunta', 'The Helpmate', 'Ivan Matveyitch', and 'Polinka'. The stories are each in the range of ten minutes in length (some a bit longer as in the postlude of Tchaikovsky's piano music at the end of 'The Talent'), but the variety of tales and the variations in the voices Bollinger uses makes the just over an hour of a CD pass like a breeze. It would be difficult to imagine a more verismo atmosphere to these great stories than that Max Bollinger offers the listener. This is echt Russian and a brilliant homage to Chekhov's artistry. Highly Recommended."

Grady Harp (CA, USA) ★★★★★

"I really enjoyed this short story collection, read by Max Bollinger with music by Chaikovskiy. I loved hearing the stories read with the Russian accent and the music really pulled the whole cd together. The stories are all about ten minutes long and the whole listening experience is

calming and enjoyable. As always, Chekov's stories are interesting and provide a great listening experience."

Elena Garabis (VA, USA) ★★★★★

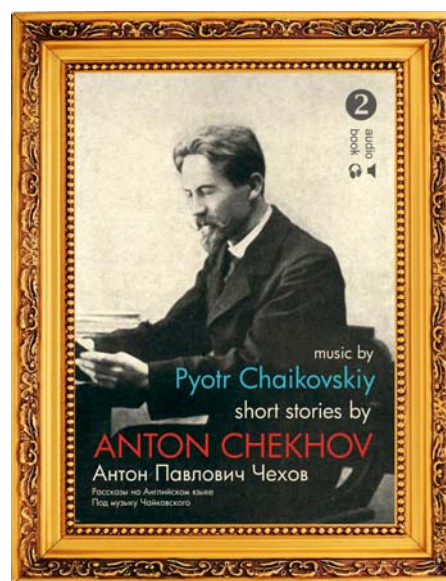
"I usually do not enjoy audio books, as I feel that they do not always represent the works with full justice. However, the way this audio book intermingled short pieces of Tchaikovsky's with a great selection of Chekov's short stories, was really intriguing. I listened to the disc while driving, and it complements a long trip very well.

The narrator's tone and speed are spot-on, making the stories easy to comprehend, even when driving. He does a great job representing the many voices of the dialogue, without ever adopting a ridiculous, phony voice. Though accented, his voice is consistently clear and understandable. The music also adds to the atmosphere while driving, so that you are not just sitting in silence listening to someone speak.

I have been a fan of Chekhov for some time, and this selection of stories includes some of his best. This disk would offer a great introduction to the author for someone who has never experienced him before, but would also be new and refreshing for long-time Chekhovian readers. These stories also provide an insightful look into the daily lives of Russians of Chekhov's time, and would be a great historical learning experience for those unfamiliar with Russian history. The stories that are included in this collection do a great job in illustrating the Russian human experience while approaching the subject with interspersed humour to keep the stories from being too depressing."

Kristine Kowalski (New Jersey, USA) ★★★★★

Talent is the opening piece of this book on DVD, and for anyone who listens to it, I suggest you pay attention - this is the work Anton Chekhov, after all, and he is gonna be subtle. And he ain't gonna to comment directly, though he has a lot to say. Not much happens in Talent; there are no big moments, no cataclysmic scenes, and the story ends without climactic denouement. There are, however, ideas threaded throughout, and Chekov evinces these in a coupl'o' masterful ways. The images are wonderful, which is good because this is a story of a painter. But said images aren't merely pretty, they tell, they contain little gems of information, little bits of Chekhovian thought. Anton isn't simply going to come out and tell you what he thinks, he wants you to work for it, to chip some gold from the surrounding stone. Mostly, yer gonna hafta catch the parallels yerself - this is the main method Chekhov employs to display his colors. We have a painter. We have the painter's painter friends. We have the painter's neglected girlfriend whose neglected, neglectful mother is also the painter's landlord. And we have a backdrop of workers, cobwebs, dust, and lots of dreaming about the future without a lot of effort put in to achieve it. And the connections between all of these provide an interesting commentary on art, work, class, and duty. An excellent story.



The second story is Anyuta: A medical student; an artist; a body. (The body of the Anyuta as it turns out - alas, she is alive - to the listener at least.) Chekhov employs the aforementioned strategies. Again, they are very effective. (What is the leap one must make to be a doctor or an artist? Listen, it's quite good.)

Number 3. The Helpmate. Even if one does not care for some of Chekhov's attitudes here, (and that assumes he is speaking universally, and is not merely describing a unique individual), it's still a fine piece with some nice twists and wonderful irony. Be careful with your choices in this life!

Four: Ivan Matveyitch. Mildly Amusing. (But the relationship in this bit reverberates somehow.)

Lastly (5), Polinka. And in this story, all of Chekhov's greatness is distilled. Tight as a whalebone corset.

Lance Caabrese (CA, USA) ★★★★★½

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