

# THE SWAN SONG

BY

*ANTON PAVLOVICH CHEKHOV*

# ABOUT THE AUTHOR

- A famous Russian short story writer and dramatist.
- Keen observer of ordinary day to day life.
- A great realist who depicts poverty ,drunkenness and miseries of poor people.
- Notable works : The Cherry Orchard, Uncle Vanya , Three Sisters , Ward Number Six, The Bear and Peasants.



ANTON PAVLOVICH  
CHEKHOV (1860-1904)

# OUTLINE STORY OF THE PLAY

- This is a one-act play with only two characters: Vasili Svietlovidoff , a sixty eight years old comic actor and Nikitalvantich , an old man , a prompter.
- The title signifies an ancient belief that swan sings a beautiful song just before it dies . This play is about the last performance of a sixty eight years old actor.
- In the opening of the play Svietlovidoff is found in drunken condition after the last performance of his career . It was a great performance .He fell asleep in the dressing room under the effect of wine . When he wakes up,he laments at his loneliness , homelessness and old age. He says ,“I am old and helpless and I feel it is time for me to die”.

- He further says , “ No ,nobody needs me ,nobody loves me.I have no wife no children”.
- The old actor recollects with sadness his past glory,his love for a charming young girl and feels miserable at the present condition.
- He speaks powerful lines from Shakespeare's plays , King Lear and Othello.
- In the entire action of the play the prompter consoles the old actor and tries to remove his sadness.
- The play ends with the lines :  
“Away ! The moor is dark beneath the moon,  
Rapid clouds have drunk the last pale beam of even  
Away! The gathering winds will call the darkness soon ,  
And profoundest midnight shroud the serene lights of  
heaven”

# THEMES OF THE PLAY

- LONELINESS
- MISERIES OF OLD AGE
- IRONICAL LIFE OF AN ACTOR
- MENTAL TORMENT



# THANKS

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