**The Seagull**

*by Anton Chekhov (1860-1904)*

Opening on an early summer evening in a park on the estate of Peter Sorin, brother of Irina Arkadina, a celebrated actress, a lake serves as natural scenery behind the stage.

Masha, the daughter of the estate manager, Shamraye, is pursued by Medvedenko, a poor schoolteacher. But she openly acknowledges that she knows he loves her but explains that she cannot love him back.

Treplev is nervous and busy getting things ready for the first performance of his play. He longs to be accepted by her peers as a great dramatist. He knows his mother Arkadina does not love him and doesn’t support him for his love for theater. He is in love with Nina, who arrives and shares her thought with Treplev on her becoming a famous actress. Treplev tells her he loves her, but Nina does not return his affectionate talk.

Treplev's play begins and is abstract and symbolic. The play is rudely interrupted by Arkadina several times, who clearly shows her disliking for her son's play. At on stage, she makes such a fuss that Treplev ends the play and closes the curtain and runs off. Here, Nina meets Trigorin for the first time and is laughed at by Arkadina for her awe of him as a creator. Treplev desperately wants Nina but when he returns, she has already left.

Nina shows her surprise that Arkadina and Trigorin act like normal people even though they are famous. At that point, Treplev enters with a dead seagull in his hands and puts the bird at Nina's feet. Telling her that he shot the bird in her honor, Nina accuses him of talking in symbols. They have a fight over their relationship. Treplev concludes that she doesn’t love him because his play was a failure. He exits bitterly on seeing Nina's growing fondness for Trigorin.

Trigorin announces that he and Arkadina are to go back to town. He looks at the seagull that Treplev shot and conveys to Nina that she has inspired him to start a new story about a girl who is ruined by a man just like the seagull. Arkadina interrupts announcing that she has been convinced to stay on the estate.
Getting on with the Seagull summary, later on in the play, Trigorin is shown having lunch in Sorin's dining room. Masha is confessing to him about her plan to marry Medvedenko. Nina gives Trigorin a parting gift. Arkadina is arguing with her brother, Sorin about his joining them into town. Sorin falls seriously ill for a few moments and Arkadina screams for help.

Arkadina and Nina are shown sharing some loving moments of tenderness but their conversation soon disintegrates into insults, and competitiveness. Treplev ends up crying because he knows he cannot get Nina's affection. Trigorin enters and asks Arkadina if they can stay on the estate. He is then challenged by Arkadina about his interest in Nina. Fearing that she will lose the man she loves, Arkadina pleads and begs on her hands and knees for Trigorin to leave with her. Trigorin gets convinced to leave. But before he leaves, he shares a few private moments with Nina. Two years later, Medvedenko and Masha are discussing Sorin's request to see Treplev as his health keeps declining. Masha tells her mother that they are moving away in a month as Medvedenko has been offered a teaching job in another district.

Treplev recalls about Nina having an affair with Trigorin and becoming pregnant, but, the baby had died. Trigorin then left her for Arkadina and was cheating on them both. Nina played starring roles in summer theater plays. He used to visit her but Nina refused to see him. Eventually, he gave up on following her around. Meanwhile, emotions are shown to grow apart between Trigorin and Arkadina. Arkadina calls everyone to dinner and is shown asking Treplev to stop writing.

Treplev, left alone in his study, is shown comparing his writing to Trigorin's with envy. Nina is shown entering the house, feeling nervous and in complete fear. They admit to each other that they have sought each other. Nina acknowledges that her life is difficult and thinks nostalgically about their youthful love. Treplev admits his love to Nina and that she was not present with him to enjoy his success, which is meaningless to him without her. Nina hugs Treplev and then runs out of the door. Treplev starts tearing up his writings and throws them under his desk. Arkadina and the rest of the household are shown coming back from dinner and they start another game of lotto. Suddenly a shot goes off in a loud bang, offstage. Arkadina becomes frightened and is calmed by Dorn. He goes to check on the sound and finds that Treplev has shot himself.