

THE PROPOSAL by ANTON CHEKHOV

**Answers to questions received from Students and unanswered on TV.
06/03/2022.**

Fahim Hossain Khan

Bhangar High School (H.S.)

South 24 parganas

English . The Proposal

- 1) **“Go,there is a merchant come for his goods”-Who is the merchant?
What is referred to as “goods”? In what way does it bring out the
attitude of the person and the society at that time?**

Chubukov said this to Natalya Stepanovna.

Here ‘the merchant’ is Ivan Vassilevitch Lomov.

Natalya Stepanovna, the daughter of Stepan Stepanovitch Chubukov is referred to as ‘goods’.

Natalya is a twenty-five years old unmarried young girl. She is a burden to her father because, at that time, a girl in her twenties was supposed to get married. She is considered as ‘goods’ as she is unmarried and Lomov is considered as a ‘merchant’ because he will take her away with him after marriage just like a merchant takes away goods. From the above mentioned remark, we come to know that people married for personal gain rather than love as women needed financial security and men needed a perfect homemaker. So a mutual understanding was needed rather than true love for a relationship of convenience.

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2) "Why are you so formal in your get up"-What led the speaker to make this comment?

Ans. In Anton Chekhov's 'The Proposal', Chubukov, a landowner is the speaker.

Lomov, a neighbour of Chubukov, is being spoken to.

Chubukov was surprised at Lomov's attire. He wore a dress-jacket, gloves and looked as if he was going to celebrate a party. Lomov was a neighbour of Chubukov. Usually, a neighbour does not visit another neighbour's house in such gorgeous clothes without any particular occasion. That's the reason why Chubukov exclaimed these words in great amazement.

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3) "If you like,I'll make you a present of them"-Who is the speaker?Who is the person spoken to?What would the speaker make a present of?Why did the speaker say so?

Ivan Vassilevitch Lomov is the speaker.

Natalya Stepanovna is the person spoken to.

The speaker Lomov would make a present of the Oxen Meadows to Natalya.

Lomov and Natalya had a quarrel over the ownership of Oxen Meadows. According to Lomov, the peasants of Natalya's father's grandfather used to bake bricks for his aunt's grandmother. Therefore the Oxen Meadows which Natalya claimed to be her property actually belonged to the Lomovs. A long argument could not solve matters. So Lomov said that though the meadows were theirs, he could make a present of them to her as marriage would make her his property as well.

School Name- Athpur Balika Vidyalaya (H.S.)

Student name – Srijita Banerjee

Class – xii. Roll-01

4) Sketch the character of Stephan stephaniovitch chubukhov.

Chubukov is one of the three main characters in the one act play “ The Proposal “ by Anton Chekhov. He is a very caring father to Natalya and very sensible about his business. Like all other business deals he looks upon the lucrative aspects of his daughter Natalya's marriage too. Her emotions are of little importance to him. He is ready to offer her daughter's hand to Lomov just for the property and money he owns and not for the person he is. That is why even in spite of all his ill disposures Lomov is an acceptable candidate for marriage and Chubukov does not want any delay that may break the deal. All differences are compromised and Chubukov throughout the play is very motivated to make the marriage happen. He could not overlook the monetary benefits of this marriage. But as a humanitarian father he fails miserably as his daughter evidently is a burden to him.

Name: Sneha Ari

Class: Twelve.

School: Binodini Girls' High School.

District: Kolkata.

I like to place the following questions from The proposal.

5) What are Oxen Meadows?

What is the measure of the land?

How does LOMOV try to prove that Oxen Meadows belong to them?

How do Chubukov and Nataliya try to prove that Oxen Meadows are theirs?

Oxen Meadows are the meadows that are wedged in between birchwoods and the Burnt Marsh.

The land is of five dessiatins or 13.5 acres.

The controversy is whether the Lomovs or the Chubukovs or the peasants own the Oxen Meadows. Regarding this, an argument starts between Lomov and Natalya. According to Lomov, the land was once the subject of dispute. His aunt's grandmother gave the free use of the land to the peasants of Natalya's father's grandfather and so they had used it for forty years.

Natalya disagrees, saying that their land extends to Burnt Marsh and includes the Oxen Meadows too and it has been this way since 300 years.

Name: Sneha Ari

Class: Twelve.

School: Binodini Girls' High School.

District: Kolkata.

6) " Oh, what a burden ,Lord , to be the father of a grown up daughter "

Who said this to whom?

What is the context?

What does the speaker mean to say?

In the one-act play The Proposal by Anton Chekhov, Chubukov makes the remark.

Here the grown-up daughter is Natalya.

A grown-up daughter has to be married off to a good bridegroom and every father has that responsibility. Until his daughter's marriage is done, he suffers from a guilt and feels his grown-up girl to be a burden to him. This is merely a societal stress that make parents feel so. Here Chubukov is not an exception at all. He is very much desperate to perform the matter of his daughter's marriage. Lomov comes to propose Natalya for marriage. But twice Lomov and Natalya gets involved in an argument before Lomov finally marriage to her. Even Chubukov argues with Lomov severely, forgetting the marriage proposal. So it seems difficult to arrange Natalya's marriage. So, Chubukov considers his daughter Natalya as a burden whenever the marriage seems to fall out due to the quarrels