

# 🔗 Chapter 9: The Proposal

🖋️ By Anton Chekhov

🎭 **Type:** One-act play | **Genre:** Farce / Satirical comedy

## 📖 Introduction to the Play

This is a one-act **comedy of manners** that mocks the obsession of wealthy families with **land ownership**, **social status**, and **materialism**. The central situation — a **marriage proposal** — becomes completely overshadowed by **silly quarrels**. Chekhov uses exaggerated characters and petty arguments to show how people often forget what truly matters in life.

## 👥 Main Characters

### 1. 🧑 Ivan Vassilevitch Lomov

☀️ Character Traits:

- 😞 **Hypochondriac** – Always worried about imaginary illnesses
- 🏡 **Well-off Landowner** – Owns property near Chubukov's estate
- 🙏 **Respectful (at first)** – Tries to propose politely
- 😡 **Argumentative & Stubborn** – Easily loses temper
- 😂 **Comically Nervous** – Faints and shouts dramatically

📈 Character Arc:

Stage	Description
Beginning	Comes to propose marriage to Natalya
Middle	Gets into heated arguments over trivial topics
End	Ends up engaged but continues bickering

### 2. 🧑 Natalya Stepanovna

☀️ Character Traits:

- 🗣️ **Talkative** – Speaks her mind freely
- 😡 **Proud & Argumentative** – Defends her family and dog fiercely
- 🧒 **Young and Desiring Marriage** – Secretly wants to marry Lomov
- 😭 **Dramatic** – Bursts into tears when Lomov leaves
- ❤️ **Romantic but Egoistic** – Wants love but won't compromise

#### 📈 Character Arc:

Stage	Description
Beginning	Clueless about Lomov's real purpose
Middle	Quarrels with him over land and dogs
End	Agrees to marry him but resumes fighting

### 3. 😊 **Stepan Stepanovich Chubukov** (Natalya's Father)

#### ☀️ Character Traits:

- 😊 **Friendly at First** – Welcomes Lomov kindly
- 😡 **Easily Provoked** – Joins in the silly fights
- 🧐 **Materialistic** – Wants the marriage for property gain
- 🙇 **Hypocritical** – One moment he's angry, next moment he pleads

#### 📈 Character Arc:

Stage	Description
Beginning	Supports Lomov's proposal plan
Middle	Gets into insult-filled arguments
End	Forces Lomov and Natalya to get engaged

## Summary: What Happens in the Play

### 1 The Visit



- Lomov visits Chubukov's house in formal dress to propose marriage to Natalya.
- Chubukov is happy, thinking it's a formal visit.

### 2 Argument #1 – Oxen Meadows (Land Dispute)

- Lomov brings up a land area called **Oxen Meadows**.
- Natalya says it belongs to **her family**, while Lomov insists it's **his**.
- Both shout, get emotional, and refuse to back down.

### 3 Argument #2 – The Dogs (Squeezer vs Guess)



- As the first fight cools down, they fight again — now over **whose dog is better**.
- Lomov says **Guess** (his dog) is strong; Natalya says **Squeezer** is better.
- Chubukov joins the argument and insults Lomov's family.

#### 4 The Fainting Drama

- Lomov is **so stressed** he collapses. Everyone thinks he's dead.
- Natalya panics — cries out that she **actually wants to marry him**.

#### 5 The Engagement

- Lomov wakes up. The engagement is quickly arranged.
- BUT... they **start fighting again** — this time about whose dog is better again!

### 😂 Comedy in the Play

- **Silly, exaggerated arguments** over land and dogs
- **Dramatic reactions**: Lomov faints, Natalya cries, Chubukov screams
- **Mood swings**: Happy to angry to romantic to angry again
- **Mockery of upper-class pride** and obsession with property

### 💡 Message / Theme of the Play

- 💰 **Marriage is treated like a deal**, not love
- 🧠 **Human pride causes unnecessary conflict**
- 😂 **People forget the real goal in pointless ego battles**
- 🏠 **Even well-educated people act irrationally over small issues**

### 📝 Exam-Focused Questions

Q1. *Why did Lomov come to Chubukov's house?*

👉 To propose marriage to Natalya Stepanovna.

Q2. *Why did Lomov and Natalya fight?*

👉 First over **Oxen Meadows (land)**, then over **whose dog is better**.

Q3. *What is the irony in the title "The Proposal"?*

👉 The proposal turns into a series of **arguments**, with no romance or peace.

Q4. *How does Chubukov behave during the proposal?*

👉 Supports Lomov at first, then **abuses him during the fights**, and later **begs him to marry his daughter**.

## Important Vocabulary

Word	Meaning
Hypochondriac	A person overly worried about illness
Quarrel	Argument or dispute
Faint	To pass out (lose consciousness)
Farce	Ridiculous, exaggerated comedy
Satire	Using humour to show human foolishness