

**THE KREUTZER
SONATA. A PLAY
IN FOUR ACTS**

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The Kreutzer Sonata. A play in four acts by Jacob Gordin & Langdon Mitchell

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JACOB GORDIN & LANGDON MITCHELL

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Adapted from the Yiddish
of JACOB GORDIN by
LANGDON MITCHELL



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KREUTZER SONATA

A PLAY IN FOUR ACTS

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OF

JACOB GORDIN

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HARRISON GREY FISKE
NEW YORK
1907

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PERSONS OF THE DRAMA

Raphael Friedlander, *A Wealthy Contractor*

Rebecca Friedlander, *His Wife.*

Miriam Friedlander, }
Celia Friedlander, } *Their Daughters.*

Samuel Friedlander, *Their Son.*

David, *Miriam's Child.*

Ephroym Randar, *A Musician.*

Beila Randar, *His Wife.*

Gregor Randar, *Their Son.*

Natasha, *Servant of the Friedlanders.*

John, *Man of all Work.*

Katia, *A Servant.*

THE KREUTZER SONATA

ACT I. Raphael Friedlander's House, Kremenchug, Russia.

(Seven years elapse.)

ACT II. Gregor Randar's Flat, New York.

(Seven months elapse.)

ACT III. Friedlander's Farm-House, Connecticut.

(Eleven months elapse.)

ACT IV. Ephroym's Conservatory of Music, Houston Street, New York.

NOTE.—In the Fourth Act (Page 73) occurs a brief interval which indicates the passage of three hours of time—from eight to eleven o'clock in the evening. Through the open window are heard street sounds typical of the crowded Jewish quarter of New York City. These sounds and the lights fade away, and an intermezzo, based on the andante movement of Beethoven's "Kreutzer Sonata," is played by the orchestra.

ACT I.

SCENE: *Drawing-room in Raphael Friedlander's house; Kremenschug, Russia. Noon of a day in May. Doors, R. 2 E., Back L. C., and L. 2 E. Wide window back R. C., through which the city is seen. Curtain rises on Celia, practicing a difficult etude. She sits on revolving piano stool, down L. After the curtain is up she continues, trying the same passage over and over again. As she begins the passage the third time enter Natasha, R. Natasha has a work basket, knitting material, etc. She glances at Celia, who continues practicing and does not see Natasha. Natasha places her things on table, down R., and sits at table; begins knitting or sewing, glances at Celia, sighs and looks up, as if wishing Celia would stop. Celia begins the passage all over again, and Natasha can't stand it.*

Natasha. Oh! (*Celia starts slightly; stops playing; sees Natasha*)

Celia. Good gracious, nania, how you made me jump!

Natasha. Jump? The stones in the street will jump if you play that any more. Why do you go *over* it, and *over* it, and—

Celia. (*Natasha continues sewing*) To acquire a brilliant technique on the piano one must practice a great deal.

Natasha. You've practised for nine years, barushnia Celia.

Celia. Oh, oh!

Natasha. Nine years. You were nine years old when that fat old German professor taught you your scales. (*Celia bus. of denying this*) Nine years old, barushnia—and you'll be eighteen to-morrow.

Celia. Seventeen.

Natasha (*Tranquilly*) Eighteen. (*Celia rises and goes to C.*)

Celia. Natasha, can you count eighteen? (*Natasha gives her a tranquil look*) You can only count to eleven! Aha! (*Celia, C., curtsies mockingly to Natasha, and then makes a turn around the room*) Eleven, and I am seventeen!

Natasha. (Does not look at Celia at all, but goes on sewing; speaks in same tranquil tone, but now a little sadly) Oh, I remember the day you were born. I've not brought you all up for nothing, barushnia. You and your brother, and your sister—poor dear, she was not eighteen months when you came along! (Chirrup) How she did cry to be taken to her mother! (Celia, with her back to Natasha, looks out of the open window, back. She clasps her hands behind her head) I had to sit and sing, and rock and fuss—dear, dear, poor little Miriam! (Sighs) I can see her now, in her little crib—such a good, reasonable, quiet baby! Three children—but only Miriam is a blessing to her parents. (Celia turns) And see what she suffers now! Ah, boze moj! (Natasha looks up toward door, back. Celia movement of impatience)

Celia. Who suffers? Miriam?

Natasha. Yes, yes—Miriam! There she lies on her bed, half dressed and crying her eyes out.

Celia. Oh, you make me so cross with you, Natasha! Good Heavens! Other people have troubles, too. Miriam's not the only girl who has had an unlucky love affair. It's her first; she'll get over it.

Natasha. (Shakes her head) Ah, my dear!

Celia. Of course, she feels ashamed. Oh, well, Natasha, she must. She behaves like a fool, for she falls in love with an officer. A Russian, a Christian, a count—hah! Where did she expect it to end? Did she dream he'd marry her? He couldn't—and yet, she must have, or she wouldn't have gone to the Bishop, and said she wanted to be converted and baptized. She must have thought Captain Beliusoff was a fool.

Natasha. Fool?

Celia. He would have been to marry her—to marry Miriam, lose his estate and his spending money. Have his own mother cut him on the street, and be kicked out of the army—oh, well, out of the officers' mess, and that's worse. Of course, he couldn't marry her. But why on earth he shot himself—that's beyond me! (Piano. Natasha bus.)

Natasha. (Sadly) Had he known all I know he would never have shot himself.