

# Leo Tolstoy

# The Kreutzer Sonata

Read by **Jonathan Oliver**

*It is hardly possible to find anything of equal importance in conception and beauty of execution. Apart from its artistic merits which are in places amazing, we should be grateful for the story alone, for it stimulates thought extremely* ~ **Anton Chekhov**

Chekhov was understating the case – no other work in Russia inspired such outrage as Tolstoy's novella of desire and disgust, music and murder.

Marriage is a hellish trap, lust the hideous bait, and music an aphrodisiac which rouses passions that are best left undisturbed. So says Pozdnyshev as he relates the story of his wife's affair to his fellow train passengers.

Radical in its dissection of conventional hypocrisies, and intense in its discussion of Tolstoy's fundamentalist views, *The Kreutzer Sonata* was banned in Russia before its publication, and is startling even now.



**Jonathan Oliver's** theatre credits include playing Claudius or Polonius in *Hamlet* and the Brother in *The Seagull* for the acclaimed Factory Theatre. His recordings for Naxos AudioBooks include *Ivanhoe* and *Descartes: an Introduction*.

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Leo Tolstoy

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