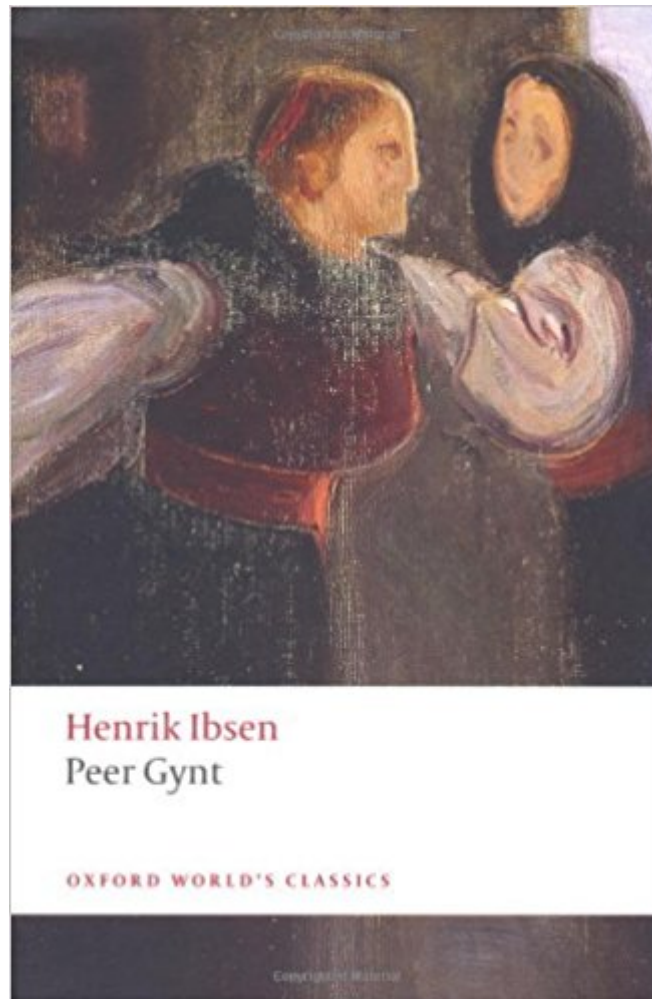


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# Peer Gynt: A Dramatic Poem (Oxford World's Classics)



## Synopsis

This translation is based upon the Norwegian text in the Centenary Edition of Ibsen's collected works. It provides a close account of the quality of Ibsen's play by reproducing as nearly as possible not only the meaning in the literal sense but the verse forms that constitute so much of the substance and dramatic structure of the original. It makes an important contribution to those studying *Peer Gynt* in English, as until now little of the dramatic quality of the play has found its way into English translations.

About the Series: For over 100 years Oxford World's Classics has made available the broadest spectrum of literature from around the globe. Each affordable volume reflects Oxford's commitment to scholarship, providing the most accurate text plus a wealth of other valuable features, including expert introductions by leading authorities, voluminous notes to clarify the text, up-to-date bibliographies for further study, and much more.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

A genuinely wonderful comedy, not a bit dated, & a wiser way into Ibsen than any of the later & generally rated greater problem plays. *Peer* is immensely charming, if reckless & stupid from time to time. He learns, some, with special assistance from Mom & a perhaps incredibly grand sweetheart. Christopher Fry's translation (Oxford) seems particularly nice.

Few works of literature have inspired classical music that has broke into the popular press. One of

these is Ibsen's Peer Gynt. Written in the late 19th century, Edvard Grieg wrote two Suites of music for the stageplay version of this Scandinavian classic a decade later. This poem / stageplay is actually a short novel, and tells the story of Peer Gynt, the ultimate ingrate of a son. Growing up raised by a single mother, he is the terror of his village, bullying younger ones and annoying older ones. Eventually he leaves his village and encounters a series of creatures and adventures bound to rattle anyone's cage. One memorable moment is when he finds himself in the Hall of the Mountain King, who happens to be a troll. This is the scene whose song of the same name by Grieg is a classic TV commercial tune. Life soon turns the young Peer into an older Peer. Near the end he reflects on his life with some characters he encounters. At this he realizes the waste his life has been. The moral of the story: don't waste your youth or any other moment of your life causing trouble for yourself or anyone else, for in the end you only isolate yourself and make life miserable for both you and those around you.

I wanted to read this book to get some background for Grieg's incidental music for the play. It didn't help. The story itself is okay for what it is and an interesting study in this form of dramatic poetry, but it's not a "page turner." Also, since it focuses on segments of the main character's life from youth to old age, skipping from one significant adventure to another, it seems a bit disjointed; it is somewhat difficult to maintain interest in it. Then again, to describe one's whole life in dramatic poetry would be a daunting task. The story apparently accomplished Ibsen's purpose for writing it, but it did not fulfill my purpose for reading it. I finally know what Peer Gynt is all about, but my life was improved by the reading only in that I now have another example of how not to live.

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