



The Last Days of a Reluctant Tyrant (Modern Plays)

Tom Murphy

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An epic family drama, shot through with dark humour, *The Last Days of a Reluctant Tyrant* tells the tragic story of a family disintegrating, having lost its moral values.

Arina is an ambitious woman. As a servant girl she marries into the degenerative family she works for; her ruthless energy saves it from bankruptcy and she expands the family estate into an 'empire'. As matriarch she rules with an iron hand, her avarice insatiable, until she questions what it is all for. She slackens her hold and loses her power to the hypocrisy and relentless grasping of her 'chosen son'.

Inspired by *The Golovlyov Family* by Mikhail Saltykov-Shchedrin, *The Last Days of a Reluctant Tyrant* is a haunting new work from leading Irish dramatist Tom Murphy, who has worked closely with the Abbey Theatre throughout his career.

The play premiered at the Abbey Theatre, Ireland, on 3 June 2009.

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