
Henrik Ibsen - An Enemy Of The People, A Play In Five Acts

Translated by R. Farquharson Sharp

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An Enemy Of The People

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DRAMATIS PERSONAE

Dr. Thomas Stockmann, Medical Officer of the Municipal Baths.

Mrs. Stockmann, his wife.

Petra (their daughter) a teacher.

Ejlif & Morten (their sons, aged 13 and 10 respectively).

Peter Stockmann (the Doctor's An Enemy of the People (1882) (Plays Of Henrik Ibsen) elder brother),

Mayor An Enemy of the People (1882) (Plays Of Henrik Ibsen) of the Town and Chief Constable, Chairman of the An Enemy of the People (1882) (Plays Of Henrik Ibsen) Baths' Committee, etc.

Morten Kiil, a tanner (Mrs. Stockmann's adoptive father).

Hovstad, editor of the "People's Messenger."

Billing, sub-editor.

Captain Horster.

Aslaksen, a An Enemy of the People (1882) (Plays Of Henrik Ibsen) printer.

Men of various conditions and occupations, a few women, and a troop of schoolboys, the

audience

at a public meeting.

The action takes place in a coastal town in southern Norway,

AN ENEMY OF THE PEOPLE

ACT I

(SCENE. DR. STOCKMANN'S sitting-room. It is evening. The room is plainly but neatly appointed

and furnished. In the right-hand wall are two doors; the farther leads out to the hall, the nearer to the

doctor's study. In the left-hand wall, opposite the door leading to the hall, is a door leading to the other rooms occupied by the family. In *An Enemy of the People* (1882) (Plays Of Henrik Ibsen) the middle of the same wall stands the stove, and, further forward, a

couch with a looking-glass hanging over it and an oval *An Enemy of the People* (1882) (Plays Of Henrik Ibsen) table in front of it. On the table, a lighted lamp,

with a lampshade. At the back of the room, an open door leads to the dining-room. BILLING is seen

sitting at the dining table, on which a lamp is burning. He has a napkin tucked under his chin, and

MRS. STOCKMANN is standing by the table handing him a large plate-full of roast beef. The other

places at the table are empty, and the table somewhat in disorder, evidently a meal having recently

been *An Enemy of the People* (1882) (Plays Of Henrik Ibsen) finished.)

Mrs. Stockmann. You see, if you come an hour late, *An Enemy of the People* (1882) (Plays Of Henrik Ibsen) Mr. Billing, you have to put up with cold meat.

Billing (as he eats). It is uncommonly good, thank you, remarkably good.

Mrs. Stockmann. My husband makes such a point *An Enemy of the People* (1882) (Plays Of Henrik Ibsen) of having his meals punctually, you know.

Billing. That doesn't affect me a bit. Indeed, I almost think I enjoy a meal all the better when I

can sit

down and eat all by myself, and undisturbed.

Mrs. Stockmann. Oh well, as long as you are enjoying it. (Turns to the hall door, listening.) I expect

that is Mr. Hovstad coming too.

Billing. Very likely.

(PETER STOCKMANN comes in. He wears an overcoat and his official hat, and carries a stick.)

Peter Stockmann. Good evening, Katherine.

Mrs. Stockmann (coming forward into the sitting-room). Ah, good evening, is it you? How An Enemy of the People (1882) (Plays Of Henrik Ibsen) good of you

to come up and see us!

Peter Stockmann. I happened to be passing, and so (looks into the dining-room). But you have company with you, I see.

Mrs. Stockmann (a little embarrassed). Oh, no, it was quite by chance he came in. (Hurriedly.) Won't

you come in and have something, too?

Peter Stockmann. !! No, thank you. Good gracious, hot meat at night! Not with my digestion.

Mrs. Stockmann. Oh, but just once in a way

Peter Stockmann. No, no, my dear lady; I stick to my tea and bread and butter. It is much more wholesome in the long run and a little more economical, too.

Mrs. Stockmann (smiling). Now you mustn't think that Thomas and I are spendthrifts.

Peter Stockmann. Not you, my dear; I would never think that of you. (Points An Enemy of the People (1882) (Plays Of Henrik Ibsen) to the Doctor's study.) Is

he not at home?

Mrs. Stockmann. No, he An Enemy of the People (1882) (Plays Of Henrik Ibsen) went out for a

little turn after supper, he and the boys.

Peter Stockmann. I doubt if that is a wise thing to do. (Listens.) I fancy I hear him coming now.

Mrs. Stockmann. No, I don't think it is he. (A knock is heard at the door.) Come in! (HOVSTAD comes

in from the hall.) Oh, it is you, Mr. Hovstad!

Hovstad. Yes, I hope you will forgive me, but I was delayed at the printers. Good evening, Mr. Mayor.

Peter Stockmann (bowing a little distantly). Good evening. You have come on business, no doubt.

Hovstad. Partly. It's about an article for the paper.

Peter Stockmann. So I imagined. I hear my brother has become a prolific contributor to the "People's

Messenger."

Hovstad. Yes, he is good enough to write in the "People's Messenger" when he has any home truths to tell.

Mrs. Stockmann (to HOVSTAD). But won't you? (Points to the dining-room.)

Peter Stockmann. Quite so, quite so. I don't An Enemy of the People (1882) (Plays Of Henrik Ibsen) blame him in the least, as a writer, for addressing himself

to the quarters where he will find the readiest sympathy. And, besides that, I personally have no reason

to bear any ill will to your paper, Mr. Hovstad.

Hovstad. I An Enemy of the People (1882) (Plays Of Henrik Ibsen) quite agree with you.

Peter Stockmann. Taking one thing with another, there is an excellent spirit of toleration in the town,

an admirable municipal spirit. And it all springs from the fact of our having a great common interest

to unite us, an interest that is in an equally high degree the concern of every right-minded citizen.

Hovstad. The Baths, yes.

Peter Stockmann. Exactly, our fine, new, handsome Baths. Mark my words, Mr. Hovstad the Baths will

become the focus of our municipal life! Not a doubt of it!

Mrs. Stockmann. That is just what Thomas says.

Peter Stockmann. Think how extraordinarily the place has developed within the last year or two!

Money has been flowing in, and there is some life and some business doing in the town. Houses and

landed property are rising in value every day.

Hovstad. And unemployment is diminishing,

Peter Stockmann. Yes, that is another thing. The burden on the poor rates has been lightened, to the

great relief of the propertied classes; and that relief will be even greater if only we get a really good

summer this year, and lots of visitors, An Enemy of the People (1882) (Plays Of Henrik Ibsen) plenty of invalids, who will make the Baths talked about.

Hovstad. And there is a good prospect of that, I hear.

Peter Stockmann. It looks An Enemy of the People (1882) (Plays Of Henrik Ibsen) very promising. Inquiries about apartments and that sort of thing are

reaching us, every day.

Hovstad. Well, the doctor's article An Enemy of the People (1882) (Plays Of Henrik Ibsen) will come in very suitably.

Peter Stockmann. Has he been writing something just lately?

Hovstad. This is something he wrote in the winter; a recommendation of the Baths, an account of the

excellent sanitary conditions here. But I held the article over, temporarily.

Peter Stockmann. Ah, some little difficulty about it, I suppose?

Hovstad. No, not at all; I thought it would be better to wait until the spring, because it is just at this

time that people begin to think seriously about their summer quarters.

Peter Stockmann. Quite right; you were perfectly right, Mr. Hovstad.

Hovstad. Yes, An Enemy of the People (1882) (Plays Of Henrik Ibsen) An Enemy of the People (1882) (Plays Of Henrik Ibsen) Thomas is really indefatigable when it is a question of the Baths.

Peter Stockmann. An Enemy of the People (1882) (Plays Of Henrik Ibsen) Well remember, he is the Medical Officer to the Baths.

Hovstad. Yes, and what is more, they owe their existence to him.

Peter Stockmann. To him? Indeed! It is true I have heard from time to time that some people are of

that opinion. At the same time I must say I imagined that I took a modest part in the enterprise.

Mrs. Stockmann. Yes, that is what Thomas is always saying.

Hovstad. But who denies it, Mr. Stockmann? You set the thing going and made a practical concern of

it; we all know that. I only meant that the idea of it came first from the doctor.

Peter Stockmann. Oh, ideas yes! My brother has had plenty of them in his time unfortunately. But An Enemy of the People (1882) (Plays Of Henrik Ibsen)

when it is a question of putting an idea into practical shape, you have to apply to a man of different

mettle. Mr. Hovstad. And I certainly should have thought that in this house at least. .

Mrs. Stockmann. My dear Peter

Hovstad. How can you think that?

Mrs. Stockmann. Won't you go in and have something, Mr. Hovstad? My husband is sure to be back

directly.

Hovstad. Thank you, perhaps just a morsel. (Goes into the dining-room.)

Peter Stockmann (lowering his voice a little). It is a curious thing that these farmers' sons never seem

to lose their want of tact.

Mrs. Stockmann. Surely it is not worth bothering about! Cannot you and Thomas share the credit as

brothers?

Peter Stockmann. I should have thought so; but apparently some people are not satisfied with a share.

Mrs. Stockmann. What nonsense! You and Thomas get on so capitally together. (Listens.) There he is

at last, I think. (Goes out and opens the door leading to the hall.)

Dr. Stockmann (laughing and talking outside). Look here, here is another guest for you, Katherine.

Isn't that jolly! Come in, Captain An Enemy of the People (1882) (Plays Of Henrik Ibsen) Horster; hang your coat up on this peg. Ah, you don't wear an

overcoat. Just think, Katherine; I met him in the street and could hardly persuade him to come up!

(CAPTAIN HORSTER comes into the room and greets MRS. STOCKMANN. He An Enemy of the People (1882) (Plays Of Henrik Ibsen) is followed by DR.

STOCKMANN.) Come along in, boys. They are ravenously hungry again, An Enemy of the People (1882) (Plays Of Henrik Ibsen) you know. Come along,

Captain An Enemy of the People (1882) (Plays Of Henrik Ibsen) Horster; you must have a slice of beef. (Pushes HORSTER into the dining-room. EYLIF and

MORTEN go in after them.)

Mrs. Stockmann. But, Thomas, don't you see?

Dr. Stockmann (turning in the doorway). Oh, is it you, Peter? (Shakes hands with him.) Now that is

very delightful.

Peter Stockmann. Unfortunately I must go in a moment

An Enemy Of The People 1882 An Enemy of the People (1882) (Plays Of Henrik Ibsen) Plays Of An Enemy of the People (1882) (Plays Of Henrik Ibsen) Henrik Ibsen

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