

Maxim Gorky

The Lower Depths

Summary

The Lower Depths, also translated as *A Night's Lodging* and *At the Bottom*, drama in four acts by Maksim Gorky, performed in 1902 and published in the same year as *Na dne*.

The play is set in the late 19th century in a dilapidated flophouse and examines society's outcasts. The denizens of the rooming house are unexpectedly – and, as it turns out, briefly – uplifted by a new boarder, the tramp Luka, who listens to their stories, advises them, and spins illusions, thus offering them hope.

In the end he wanders off, never to be seen again. Bleak reality sets in: a resident thief kills the landlord and is taken to jail; an alcoholic actor hangs himself.¹

¹ "The Lower Depths: Play by Gorky", **Encyclopedia Britannica**,
www.britannica.com/topic/The-Lower-Depths-play-by-Gorky