



The Hostage

Brendan Behan

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An essential text in the development of modern British drama

First staged by Joan Littlewood's Theatre Workshop company at the Theatre Royal, Stratford East, London, in 1958, *The Hostage* is a play about a Cockney soldier held as a hostage in a Dublin lodging house in exchange for an IRA man who is to be hanged in Belfast. Civic Guards accidentally shoot him in a raid on the house. It is a witty and often profound comment on Anglo-Irish relationships and on the Irish themselves. This is Behan's best-known and most popular play and a classic of the modern stage. A magnificent entertainment which "crowds in tragedy and comedy, bitterness and love, caricature and portrayal, ribaldry and eloquence, patriotism and cynicism..." (Harold Hobson, *The Times*)

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