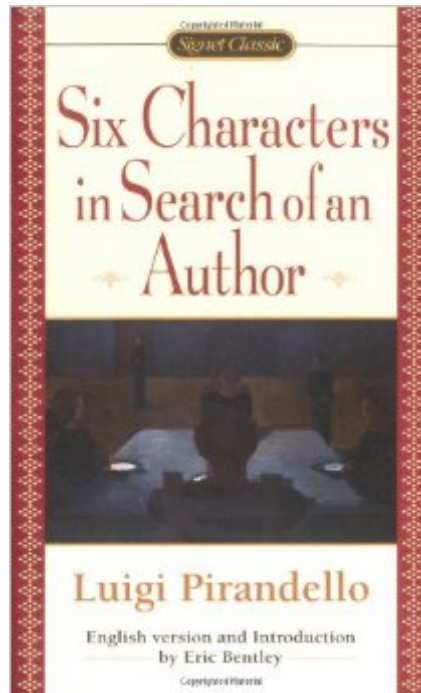


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Six Characters In Search Of An Author (Signet Classics)



Synopsis

Luigi Pirandello's masterpiece, "Six Characters in Search of an Author", presents the playwright's views about the isolation of the individual from society and from himself. This play within a play chronicles six characters as they ask an author to tell their story, and to present their real lives on stage. But do their realities make better tales than fiction?

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Luigi Pirandello's "Six Characters in Search of an Author" premiered in Rome in 1921 to audience shouts of "Maricomio!" ("Madhouse!"). Perhaps few of the theatregoers realized that the "madhouse" they had witnessed was a watershed in the history of drama. While many of the innovations of "Six Characters" may now seem commonplace, Pirandello's innovative, iconoclastic masterpiece marked a break from traditional dramatic structures and stage settings, a break which enabled twentieth century drama to develop along self-reflective imaginative lines much different than its predecessors. As Eric Bentley, the play's translator, notes in his introduction to this edition, "this was the first play ever written in which the boards of the theatre did not symbolize and represent some other place, some other reality." "Six Characters" is set in a theatre where a director, his stage manager and a group of actors are about to rehearse another of Pirandello's plays, "The Rules of the Game". The curtain is up, the stage is empty of props and background, and the lights illuminate the bare wall at the back of the stage. It is an austere setting, a kind of theatrical analogue to the blank sheet of paper an author faces each day he sits down to write. Suddenly, this austerity,

this mundane theatrical rehearsal, is interrupted by the unexpected arrival of six characters--a father, a mother, a son, a stepdaughter, a boy, and a little girl. They are six characters who have lives, who have stories to tell, but whose dramatic text has not been written. They need an author.

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