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The Skriker



Synopsis

Premiered at the Royal National Theatre, this extraordinary play by one of Britain's leading playwrights combines English folk tales with modern urban life. In terms of its language alone, it is as exciting and challenging on the page as on the stage. The play follows the Skriker, a shapeshifter and death portent, ancient and damaged, in its search for love and revenge as it pursues two young women to London, changing its shape at every new encounter. Along with the Skriker come Rawhead and Bloody Bones, the Kelpie, the Green Lady, Black Dog and more, till the whole country is swarming with enticing and angry creatures that have burst from the underworld. Caryl Churchill has been hailed as a "dramatist who must surely be amongst the best half-dozen now writing" - The Times. She is the author of some twenty plays including CLOUD NINE, TOP GIRLS, SERIOUS MONEY and MAD FOREST, all seen and admired all over the world.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"The Skriker" is a wondrous piece of drama. Melding English folklore with a contemporary environment, Churchill has managed to create a terrifying dramatic "fairy tale." The story revolves around two teenage girls, their pregnancies, and the Skriker, a shapeshifter and evil spirit who plays a unique Rumpelstiltskinian role. Bristling with dramatic possibilities, due in no small part to the countless creatures with names like Rawhead and Bloody Bones and Black Annis that roam the play, this important work commands a unique theatrical excitement. A full five-star ranking is reserved for Churchill's "Cloud Nine," a play of truly remarkable ingenuity in its handling of the sexual revolution and its consequences. Yet the Skriker stands tall at four and a half stars, basking in its fierce,

modern intelligence.

I believe *The Skriker* is Churchill's finest play, and I've read them all and seen a number of them. She has woven many of her recurring themes and motifs in this play to dazzling effect: magic and myth, time and timelessness, gender and womanhood, mothering, and the power of the theatre to transform. The play is witty and somber, reassuring and threatening, and brilliantly unpredictable throughout.

I had the great pleasure of seeing this play put on and saw the skriker's wonderfulsome discombobbleheaded speech patterns. the music and full fol derol lol lolling of her/his/its words was a sight to behold. the creeping realization that josie had killed her baby thinking it was a changeling was slow, but when it got to you just blew me away. the skriker does get a little shrill and obnoxious at times, but it is there to be loathed, so I suppose I can't complain. the scene with the couch when seen live will scare you shitless every time.

I got to work on the production of this play at the NYSF/Public Theatre many years ago, and it was one of the best plays I'd ever worked on. When I read the text, I can still hear the actors' voices saying the lines. Fantastic. I wish I had a video of it, although it would not be able to capture the bizarrrity and wonderfulness of the production.

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