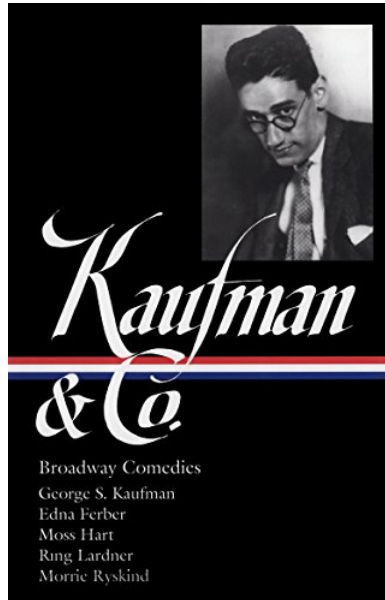


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If Eugene O'Neill represents the tragic mask of American drama, then George S. Kaufman can easily lay claim to its smiling counterpart. No other comic dramatist in America has enjoyed more popular success and perennial influence or been more fortunate in his choice of collaborators, who included George and Ira Gershwin, Moss Hart, Irving Berlin, and the Marx Brothers. Here, in the most comprehensive collection of his plays ever assembled, are nine classics: his uproarious "backstage" play *The Royal Family* (1927, written with Edna Ferber); the Marx Brothers-inspired mayhem of *Animal Crackers* (1928, with Morrie Ryskind), in a version discovered in Groucho Marx's papers and published here for the first time; *June Moon* (1929, with Ring Lardner), a hilarious look at a young composer trying to make it big on Tin Pan Alley; *Once in a Lifetime* (1930, with Moss Hart), one of the first and best satires of

Hollywood; Pulitzer Prize winners *Of Thee I Sing* (1931, with Morrie Ryskind and Ira Gershwin) and *You Can't Take It with You* (1936, with Moss Hart); *Dinner at Eight* (1932, with Edna Ferber), a tart ensemble piece that mixes comedy and melodrama; *Stage Door* (1936, with Edna Ferber), his much-loved story about young actresses trying to make it big in New York City; and *The Man Who Came to Dinner* (1939, with Moss Hart), an unforgettable burlesque of America's cult of celebrity. Bursting with vernacular wit, farcical ingenuity, and theatrical panache, these plays have remained beloved favorites and exuberant reminders of Broadway in its glory days. LIBRARY OF AMERICA is an independent nonprofit cultural organization founded in 1979 to preserve our nation's literary heritage by publishing, and keeping permanently in print, America's best and most significant writing. The Library of America series includes more than 300 volumes to date, authoritative editions that average 1,000 pages in length, feature cloth covers, sewn bindings, and ribbon markers, and are printed on premium acid-free paper that will last for centuries.

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