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Quartermaine's Terms

By Simon Gray

Faber & Faber. Paperback. Book Condition: new. BRAND NEW, Quartermaine's Terms, Simon Gray, 'A masterly portrayal of an innocent.' Harold Pinter, from 'Directing Simon Gray's Plays', "Simon Gray Plays 1". "Superficially, it is a light comedy about a group of educated, often eccentric English characters in an academic backwater in the early sixties. But though the jokes are excellent, the piece cuts deep. There are Strindberg-like glimpses of wretchedly unhappy marriages and, as in Ibsen, a sense of chickens coming home to roost. But the primary impression here is of an English Chekhov. As in the plays of the Russian master, the characters talk a lot, but they rarely listen, still less understand, so they are often at cross-purposes. And like "The Seagull", the long time scheme in "Quartermaine's Terms" - it spans several years - creates a poignant sense of transience and mortality". ("Daily Telegraph"). "Gray's selection of details and exchanges is immaculate: he achieves drama and mystery in mundane lives; the comedy is beautifully stated and even personal tragedies are underlined with running gags that ring with truthfulness. No false hothouse effect is necessary to make bare the bewilderment of spirit of his central figure, the grinning, forgetful...



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Reviews

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