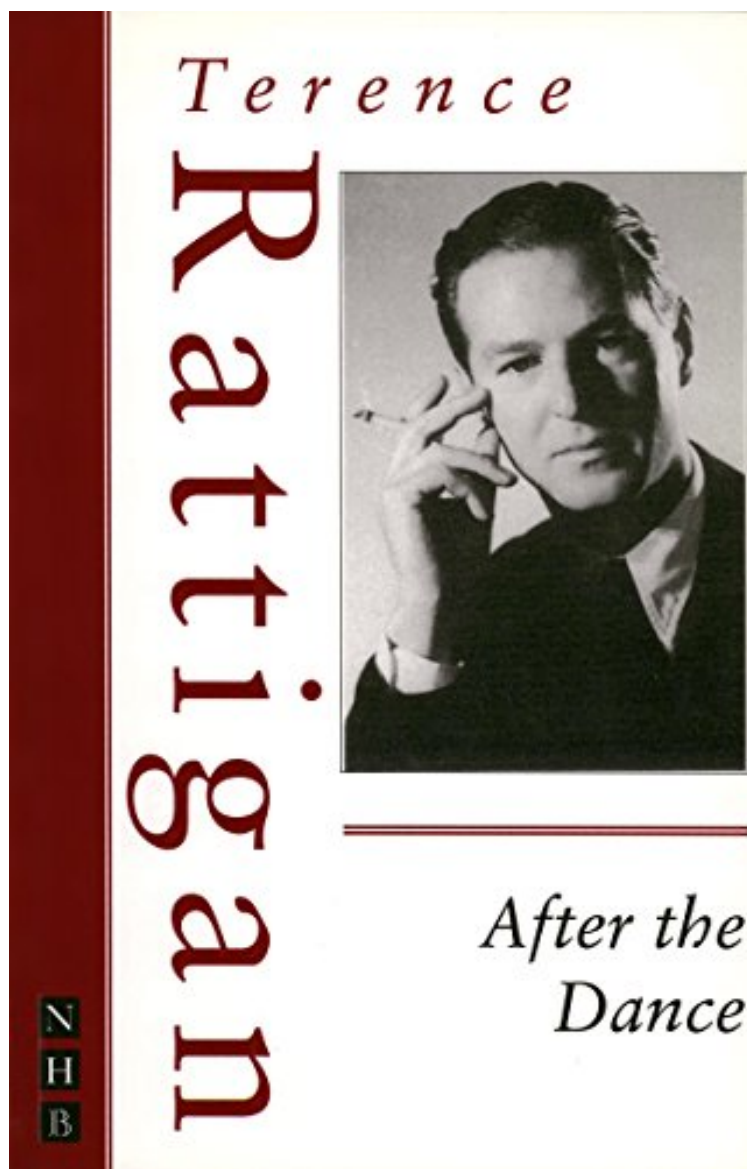


After the Dance (The Rattigan Collection)

Terence Rattigan

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Terence Rattigan : After the Dance (The Rattigan Collection) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised After the Dance (The Rattigan Collection):

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Recovery of a Forgotten Pre-War Drama By Kevin Killian Just when you think there are no more surprises, those wily Brits have uncovered a forgotten play by one of their own, the late Sir Terence Rattigan. Rattigan knew the highs and lows of show business, with giant successes and terrible flops, and his style of "well-made play" took a beating in the late 50s and 60s at the hands of the so-called Angry Young Men. Part of it was his own fault, his insistence that his plays were fit for his Aunt Edna was just asking for a punk riposte,

but part of the attack on Rattigan (and simultaneously on Noel Coward his contemporary) was clearly rooted in an evangelistic rightwing desire to sweep homosexuality out of the theaters. Yeah like that was going to happen! Even while he was alive, there were signs of a Rattigan comeback, with important remountings of his earlier *Separate Tables*, *The Browning Version*, *The Deep Blue Sea* and others, and perhaps a critical reassessment that now could see his theater of cruelty, abandonment, and hysteria as predictive of postmodern tendencies. In any case it was only a matter of time till someone dared put on a new production of "After the Dance," a play so badly received in 1939 that Rattigan himself omitted it from his multi-volume *Collected Plays*. As the front matter notes here, several recent revivals have drawn admiring reviews; it is sort of like the "Heartbreak House" of another era, a play in which international tensions and misalliances play themselves out on the crackling domestic front. There are two generations in the play, one an older bohemian circle of "bright young things" no longer young or bright in the dirty 30s. A second generation, more earnest, less fun, chides their elders for not being serious enough. Both groups frequent the penthouse apartment of David and Joan Scott-Fowler, dashing figures of madcap hilarity for whom the cocktail party has never ended. When David has an awakening, provoked by the young Helen Banner, he asks Joan for a divorce, an action that develops into tragic complications. I liked the play very much, but no wonder it did so badly. Its unrelieved bad cheer and continual unmaskings of everyone concerned and their most venal and most banal desires, leaves a bad taste in your mouth, rather like absinthe. It unfolds in surprises, and a great great part for, oh I don't know, Stockard Channing--even Carol Channing----even Channing Tatum--and I recommend it heartily.

Rattigan's attack on the moral vacuity of the 'bright young things' of the twenties and thirties, written between *French Without Tears* and *The Deep Blue Sea*. David is a high-living, hard-drinking, successful writer involved with two women: his wife Joan and an earnest-minded younger woman, Helen. When Joan commits suicide David considers following her but instead returns to a life of parties and drinking. This edition includes an authoritative introduction, biographical sketch and chronology. 'one of the supreme dramatists of the 20th century' - *Guardian* 'a harrowing critique of a period of heedless frivolity and a dazzling reminder of the strengths of Rattigan's writing' - *Evening Standard* 'a great and wonderful revelation... combines superb social comedy with shafts of powerful emotion' - *Telegraph*

"Few dramatists have written with more understanding of the human heart than Terence Rattigan" *The Guardian* About the Author Terence Rattigan (1911-1977) hit the jackpot at the age of 25 with *French Without Tears* and followed this success with, among others, *After The Dance*, *The Browning Version*, *The Deep Blue Sea*, *Separate Tables* and *The Winslow Boy*. Most of Rattigan's plays are currently published in handsome uniform editions by Nick Hern Books