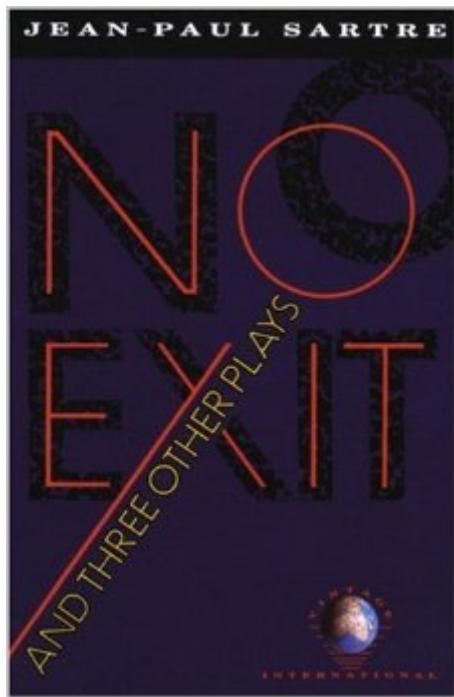


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No Exit And Three Other Plays



Synopsis

4 plays about an existential portrayal of Hell, the reworking of the Electra-Orestes story, the conflict of a young intellectual torn between theory and conflict and an arresting attack on American racism.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

No Exit (Huis Clos), is a one-act, four-character play written by Jean-Paul Sartre, French philosopher, writer, literary critic, social and political activist and leader (with Albert Camus) of the existential movement based in Paris. No Exit, first produced one month before D-Day in 1944, was the second of Sartre's many plays. Translated literally, Huis Clos, means "closed doors." This play represents a tight conflict of characters who need one another and, at the same time, desperately want to get away from one another, yet cannot leave. There is no other modern play that offers such a profound metaphor for the human condition. One would have to go back to Doctor Faustus or The Bacchae to encounter such a metaphor, and in the present day, only Kesey's One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest can rival No Exit in its existential metaphor of the human condition. In No Exit, three characters are doomed to spend eternity together in a Second Empire drawing room; Sartre's metaphorical hell. This room is devoid of mirrors, windows and books. There is no means of extinguishing the lights and the characters have even lost their eyelids. They have nothing left but one another and the hell (or heaven) they choose to create. The three characters who come to inhabit the room are Joseph Garcin, a war defector and wife abuser; Inez Serrano, a working-class Spanish woman, who is slowly revealed to be a lesbian; and Estelle Rigault, a member of the French upper class. Sartre brilliantly gives the characters dual reasons for their eternal damnation:

first, each committed abominable acts while alive, and second, and perhaps more importantly, each failed to live his or her life in an authentic manner.

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