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James Joyce

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James Joyce : Exiles (First Edition) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Exiles (First Edition):

2 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Ibsen in IrelandBy GioHuh... I like this play a lot more than I expected to, and a star's worth more than the previous three reviewers. I understand that there's infinitesimally little chance that I'll ever see it staged, alas, and that even Ibsen is out of theatrical fashion these days, and yet if I were a theater manager, I'd give it a whirl. It's quite obviously modeled on Ibsen, but it doesn't suffer from that! In fact, it's damned good "Ibsen" -- and since English was Joyce's tongue, it reads more naturally than most of the translations of Ibsen from Norwegian. The dialogue is supple, the characterizations quite subtle, and the "social themes" are well and slyly embedded in the drama. The language reminds me of the delicacy of Joyce's short stories in Dubliners. "Exiles" isn't a melodrama, it isn't preachy or verbose like GB Shaw, and it doesn't belabor itself like Eugene O'Neill. And it doesn't "end" with all questions answered. What's not to like???I'm not going to reveal the plot or the themes. This is a dirt cheap edition. If you enjoy reading plays and/or if you respect the early work of James Joyce, you'd be foolish not to order it.Did you know, by the way, that Joyce was a singer? Supposedly a gorgeous tenor voice, with which he supported himself meagerly while still living in Dublin? And that his circle of friends in Paris included some of the pioneers of the "Early Music" revival? You've got to love him for that! If only I had the stamina and erudition to read Finnegans Wake...5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Insights into Joyce's life through his only dramatic workBy John L MurphyWorth a few hours perusal, as it's doubtful you'll see it on stage. Often relegated to the back of the Joycean shelf for its protagonist who resembles a nearly identical profile to his maker, nonetheless the

play has its appeal as a portrait of the artist post-Stephen Dedalus. Written ten years after *Bloomsday* and the flight into exile by him and Nora, Joyce presents an update on his earlier portrayal of the young Irishman determined to turn his back on his mother, his homeland, and his faith. The more you know about Joyce and Nora, when he returned to Ireland in 1909 to be consumed with jealousy by rumors that she had been unfaithful to him with Joyce's old friend Vincent Cosgrave, and then in 1911-12 when Joyce confronted Roberto Prezioso in Trieste, accusing him of trying to seduce Nora, the more you may find this three-act play, written in 1914, intriguing. Certainly it's in the style of Ibsen, and generally as a minor work has been regarded of interest more for its insights into the mentally tortured artist, Richard (or "Dick") Rowan, but the play moves along efficiently, if a bit melodramatically and wordily. The action takes place over two days, and compresses as you'd expect much about the roles of artists, exiles, and lovers as the new century's own franker treatment of infidelity and its aftermath generate, beneath the dramaturgical machinations that do creak about, surprisingly moving moments of truth. Doubt and betrayal, the challenge of defying the bonds of sexual monogamy, aesthetic truth vs. job security, the benefits and the costs of an "open relationship"-- all contribute contemporary themes that for this era had begun to enter Irish theatre as they already had influenced (back to Ibsen) many contemporary Continental and British plays. One wonders about the hometown reaction if Yeats had not rejected it (it wasn't an Irish folk drama) for the Abbey in August 1917! Reading the play, observers today, informed as we are by the life of the writer and his own tensions in love and vocation, can see how Joyce in the guise of Richard controls other characters, like it or not. Joyce's own guilty conscience in his alter ego of Richard dominates. Robert, Bertha, and especially Beatrice all revolve around the approval of Richard. Bertha Robert make an appealing pair, in my opinion; their earthiness makes them more down-to-earth for our tastes, while Richard, unless acted well, may not escape priggishness beneath the attitude of a liberated modern freethinker. He, despite his hesitancy, rules this domestic roost. (Not much is even thinly disguised when it comes to this figure and his unmarried companion-- they have returned to Dublin after nine years in Rome.) Even if Richard is more of a stand-in for his creator, the "authorial fallacy" aside, the drama does enrich your understanding of Joyce in his own separation from not only Ireland but conventional moral standards and familial support. It's rarely performed. Earlier versions, "A Brilliant Career" "Dream Stuff," no longer exist. Joyce told Ezra Pound that he doubted it could work in the theatre. But the set-up, however schematic, between Richard, Bertha, his companion (and mother of their child, Archie), her wooer Robert Hand, and in turn his first cousin and thwarted amour, Beatrice-- who neatly longs for Richard-- does have its moments of tenderness, insight, and even a line proclaiming the need for Ireland to turn towards not only Europe but to coffee for inspiration! 2 of 4 people found the following review helpful. His greatness is not revealed here. By Shalom Freedman. One of Joyce's great heroes was Ibsen who he corresponded with. But drama was not to be the form that Joyce excelled in. It is possible to argue that the 'Nighttown dialogue' of *Ulysses* is one of its weakest chapters. In his play 'Exiles' which is a kind of love triangle drama built around Joyce's imaginings of a wife's betrayal of her husband the drama does not come to life. And so the work has interest primarily because it is another work of the great genius Joyce.

New York: B. W. Huebsch, 1918; First American edition. 8vo. 154 pp. Quarter green buckram with cream/buff paper covered boards, blind-stamped with title and author, gilt spine imprinting. From The Mechanic's Mercantile Library of the Mechanics' Institute in San Francisco, with the 1855 seal of that affixed to the cover of the book, their bookplate at front pastedown, and a perforate seal on the title page. Some scuffing to boards, some fading of spine gilt, and a few pages show foxing. Tight copy, strong hinges ; Good Plus/About Very Good. See scans. The extraordinarily scarce first American edition of Joyce's dramatic exploration of a "Great Question": that of the nature of human freedom and dignity, as expressed through intrapersonal relationships. Joyce was influenced in this direction, in his drama, by Henrik Ibsen, whose purposeful and passionate treatment of great questions - themes larger than those apparent in the immediate action of a play - in what Joyce called Ibsen's "naked drama" is legend. Rare. L29