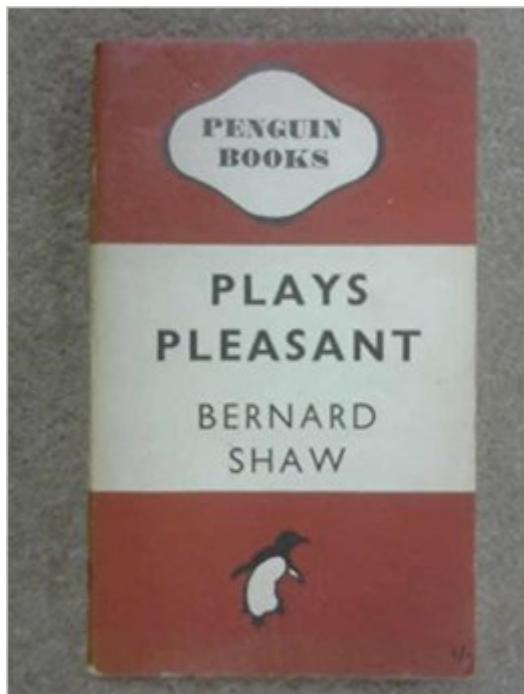


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Plays Pleasant: Arms And The Man Candida The Man Of Destiny You Never Can Tell (Penguin Plays & Screenplays)



Synopsis

One of Bernard Shaw's most glittering comedies, *Arms and the Man* is a burlesque of Victorian attitudes to heroism, war and empire. In the contrast between Bluntschli, the mercenary soldier, and the brave leader, Sergius, the true nature of valour is revealed. Shaw mocks deluded idealism in *Candida*, when a young poet becomes infatuated with the wife of a Socialist preacher. The *Man of Destiny* is a witty war of words between Napoleon and a "strange lady", while in the exuberant farce *You Never Can Tell* a divided family is reunited by chance. Although Shaw intended *Plays Pleasant* to be gentler comedies than those in their companion volume, *Plays Unpleasant*, their prophetic satire is sharp and provocative. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Any serious fan of the theater should be fully aware of, if not in love with, George Bernard Shaw. This volume contains *Candida*, *The Man of Destiny*, *You Never Can Tell*, and, one of the all-time greats, *Arms and the Man*. *Arms and the Man* deals with the subjects of love and war. It takes place in 1885-86 in the backdrop of the very end and aftermath of the Bulgarian-Serbian war. Bluntschli is an incredibly wonderful creation of Shaw's. I'll leave the quips on love alone, but there are some wonderful lines about war that must be laid out here. Sergius: Soldiering, my dear madam, is the coward's art of attacking mercilessly when you are strong, and keeping out of harm's way when you are weak. That is the whole secret of successful fighting. Get your enemy at a disadvantage; and

never, on any account, fight him on equal terms. (46)Sergius: I refuse to fight you. Do you know why?Bluntschli: No; but it doesn't matter. I didn't ask the reason when you cried on; and I don't ask the reason now that you cry off. I'm a professional soldier: I fight when I have to, and am very glad to get out of it when I haven't to. (78)

The beauty of GBS is the flow and the pictures he is able to draw in your mind. He is one of my favorite playwrights. Arms and the Man was my first play. Didn't stop until I read them all. This particular book is perfect for a trans-continental flight - two plays on the way out, two on the return leg.

I don't find George Bernard Shaw as entertaining as I'm supposed to. I have no doubt that his work was very forward-thinking and funny at the time, and I know that he is an important playwright. I'm also sure that in the hands of the right director any of these plays would be fantastic. However, I felt like all of the stories in this collection contained the same gimmicks. You could tell where the play was going in the first couple scenes. I guess my favorite of them all was Candida. It had the most unexpected plotline, and I felt like it wasn't trying to be anything.

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