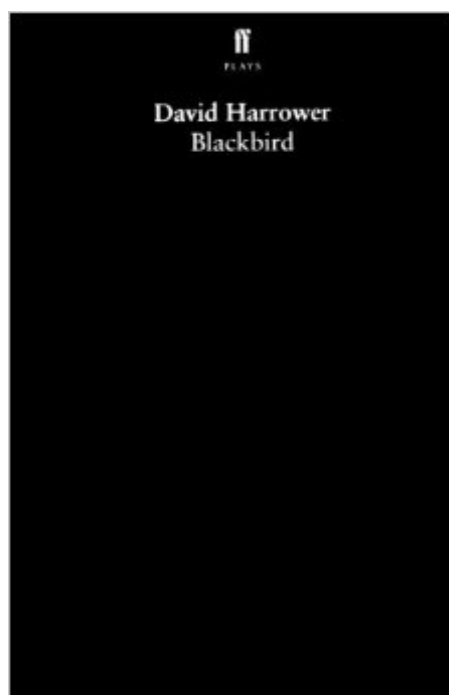


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Blackbird: A Play (Faber And Faber Plays)



Synopsis

Fifteen years ago, Una and Ray had a relationship. They haven't set eyes on each other since. Now she's found him again. *Blackbird* was commissioned by the Edinburgh International Festival and premiered at the King's Theatre, Edinburgh, in August 2005. The production transferred to the Albery Theatre, London, in February 2006, and went on to open at the Manhattan Theater Club, New York City, in April 2007.

Book Information

Series: Faber and Faber Plays

Paperback: 96 pages

Publisher: Farrar, Straus and Giroux; 1st edition (May 15, 2007)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0571233198

ISBN-13: 978-0571233199

Product Dimensions: 5.1 x 0.3 x 7.8 inches

Shipping Weight: 3.5 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (21 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #265,393 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #158 in [Books > Literature & Fiction > History & Criticism > Genres & Styles > Drama](#) #456 in [Books > Literature & Fiction > British & Irish > Dramas & Plays](#) #609 in [Books > Literature & Fiction > Dramas & Plays > Regional & Cultural > European](#)

Customer Reviews

As a study of paedophilia, the play isn't entirely satisfying. Viewing it in these terms turns it into just a modern spin on *Lolita*. Like *Oleanna*, the play it most resembles, critics have misinterpreted it as an example of "hell hath no fury like a woman scorned", from which men are powerless to escape. How should it be viewed then? Well, the paedophilia aspect is not simply tacked on, and the play does raise interesting questions about children on the cusp of puberty, but really this is an incisive study of relationships. Fifty-six year old Ray was once obsessed with 27-year-old Una, sixteen years ago, but after a six-year jail sentence, he has rebuilt his life and is now manager of a pharmaceutical company. Una however has never really moved on from the events and confronts Ray in his office to raise unanswered questions. The dialogue is very *Oleanna*-ish, full of interruptions and lost trains of thought. It's actually set out as verse but all the while it remains very readable and is convincing when read out loud. It has a degree of honesty to it that is rare in a lot of

plays, even supposedly naturalistic ones. Neither Ray or Una can ever fully communicate their feelings because they are confused as to what those feelings are. The only sure feeling is that their relationship was intensely loving. It may be perverse love but there were deep feelings that went beyond calculated seduction. The loneliness of Ray and Una- both then and now- is palpable, and is perhaps what draws them to each other. The more lonely Una feels, the more she wants to reach out to Ray, who is technically not lonely but will always have an experience that will isolate him from having a normal honest life. The degree to which Una plans her actions is unclear.

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