



BETRAYAL

BY HAROLD PINTER



DRAMATISTS
PLAY SERVICE
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BETRAYAL
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TO SIMON GRAY

CHARACTERS

JERRY

EMMA

ROBERT

A WAITER

In 1977 Emma is 38, Jerry and Robert are 40.

BETRAYAL was first presented by the National Theatre, London, on 15th November 1978 with the following cast:

EMMA Penelope Wilton
JERRY..... Michael Gambon
ROBERT Daniel Massey

Designed by John Bury
Directed by Peter Hall

BETRAYAL was presented by Roger L. Stevens, Robert Whitehead and James M. Nederlander at the Trafalgar Theatre, in New York City, on January 5, 1980. It was directed by Peter Hall, and designed by John Bury. The cast was as follows:

JERRY..... Raul Julia
EMMA Blythe Danner
ROBERT Roy Scheider

The Barman and Waiter were played by Ian Thomson and Ernesto Gasco, respectively.

ACT ONE

Scene 1: Pub. 1977. Spring.

Scene 2: Later. Jerry's house. Study. 1977. Spring.

Scene 3: Flat. 1975. Winter.

Scene 4: Robert and Emma's house. Living room. 1974. Autumn.

ACT TWO

Scene 5: Hotel room. Venice. 1973. Summer.

Scene 6: Later. Flat. 1973. Summer.

Scene 7: Later. Restaurant. 1973. Summer.

Scene 8: Flat. 1971. Summer.

Scene 9: Robert and Emma's house. Bedroom. 1968. Winter.

BETRAYAL can be performed without an interval, or with an interval after Scene 4.

H.P.

BETRAYAL

ACT ONE

Scene 1

Pub. 1977. Spring. Noon. Emma is sitting at a corner table. Jerry approaches with drinks, a pint of bitter for him, a glass of wine for her. He sits. They smile, toast each other silently, drink. He sits back and looks at her.

JERRY. Well ...

EMMA. How are you?

JERRY. All right.

EMMA. You look well.

JERRY. Well, I'm not all that well, really.

EMMA. Why? What's the matter?

JERRY. Hangover. *(He raises his glass.)* Cheers. *(He drinks.)* How are you?

EMMA. I'm fine. *(She looks round the bar, back at him.)* Just like old times.

JERRY. Mmn. It's been a long time.

EMMA. Yes. *(Pause.)* I thought of you the other day.

JERRY. Good God. Why? *(She laughs.)* Why?

EMMA. Well, it's nice, sometimes, to think back. Isn't it?

JERRY. Absolutely. *(Pause.)* How's everything?

EMMA. Oh, not too bad. *(Pause.)* Do you know how long it is since we met?

JERRY. Well I came to that exhibition, when was it—?

EMMA. No, I don't mean that.

JERRY. Oh you mean alone?

EMMA. Yes.

JERRY. Uuh ...

EMMA. Two years.

JERRY. Yes, I thought it must be. Mmnn. (*Pause.*)

EMMA. Long time.

JERRY. Yes. It is. (*Pause.*) How's it going? The Gallery?

EMMA. How do you think it's going?

JERRY. Well. Very well, I would say.

EMMA. I'm glad you think so. Well, it is, actually. I enjoy it.

JERRY. Funny lot, painters, aren't they?

EMMA. They're not at all funny.

JERRY. Aren't they? What a pity. (*Pause.*) How's Robert?

EMMA. When did you last see him?

JERRY. I haven't seen him for months. Don't know why. Why?

EMMA. Why what?

JERRY. Why did you ask when I last saw him?

EMMA. I just wondered. How's Sam?

JERRY. You mean Judith.

EMMA. Do I?

JERRY. You remember the form. I ask about your husband, you ask about my wife.

EMMA. Yes, of course. How is your wife?

JERRY. All right. (*Pause.*)

EMMA. Sam must be ... tall.

JERRY. He is tall. Quite tall. Does a lot of running. He's a long distance runner. He wants to be a zoologist.

EMMA. No, really? Good. And Sarah?

JERRY. She's ten.

EMMA. God. I suppose she must be.

JERRY. Yes, she must be. (*Pause.*) Ned's five, isn't he?

EMMA. You remember.

JERRY. Well, I would remember that. (*Pause.*)

EMMA. Yes. (*Pause.*) You're all right, though?

JERRY. Oh ... yes, sure. (*Pause.*)

EMMA. Ever think of me?

JERRY. I don't need to think of you.

EMMA. Oh?

JERRY. I don't need to *think* of you. (*Pause.*) Anyway I'm all right. How are you?

EMMA. Fine, really. All right.

JERRY. You're looking very pretty.

EMMA. Really? Thank you. I'm glad to see you.

JERRY. So am I. I mean to see you.

EMMA. You think of me sometimes?

JERRY. I think of you sometimes. *(Pause.)* I saw Charlotte the other day.

EMMA. No? Where? She didn't mention it.

JERRY. She didn't see me. In the street.

EMMA. But you haven't seen her for years.

JERRY. I recognised her.

EMMA. How could you? How could you know?

JERRY. I did.

EMMA. What did she look like?

JERRY. You.

EMMA. No, what did you think of her, really?

JERRY. I thought she was lovely.

EMMA. Yes. She's very ... she's smashing. She's thirteen. *(Pause.)*

Do you remember that time ... oh god it was ... when you picked her up and threw her up and caught her?

JERRY. She was very light.

EMMA. She remembers that, you know.

JERRY. Really?

EMMA. Mmnn. Being thrown up.

JERRY. What a memory. *(Pause.)* She doesn't know ... about us, does she?

EMMA. Of course not. She just remembers you, as an old friend.

JERRY. That's right. *(Pause.)* Yes, everyone was there that day, standing around, your husband, my wife, all the kids, I remember.

EMMA. What day?

JERRY. When I threw her up. It was in your kitchen.

EMMA. It was in your kitchen. *(Silence.)*

JERRY. Darling.

EMMA. Don't say that. *(Pause.)* It all ...

JERRY. Seems such a long time ago.

EMMA. Does it?

JERRY. Same again? *(He takes the glasses, goes to the bar. She sits still. He returns, with the drinks, sits.)*

EMMA. I thought of you the other day. *(Pause.)* I was driving through Kilburn. Suddenly I saw where I was. I just stopped, and then I turned down Kinsale Drive and drove into Wessex Grove. I

drove past the house and then stopped about fifty yards further on, like we used to do, do you remember?

JERRY. Yes.

EMMA. People were coming out of the house. They walked up the road.

JERRY. What sort of people?

EMMA. Oh ... young people. Then I got out of the car and went up the steps. I looked at the bells, you know, the names on the bells. I looked for our name. *(Pause.)*

JERRY. Green. *(Pause.)* Couldn't see it, eh?

EMMA. No.

JERRY. That's because we're not there anymore. We haven't been there for years.

EMMA. No. We haven't. *(Pause.)*

JERRY. I hear you're seeing a bit of Casey.

EMMA. What?

JERRY. Casey. I just heard you were ... seeing a bit of him.

EMMA. Where did you hear that?

JERRY. Oh ... people ... talking.

EMMA. Christ.

JERRY. The funny thing was that the only thing I really felt was irritation, I mean irritation that nobody gossiped about us like that, in the old days. I nearly said, now look, she may be having the occasional drink with Casey, who cares, but she and I had an affair for seven years and none of you bastards had the faintest idea it was happening. *(Pause.)*

EMMA. I wonder. I wonder if everyone knew, all the time.

JERRY. Don't be silly. We were brilliant. Nobody knew. Who ever went to Kilburn in those days? Just you and me. *(Pause.)* Anyway, what's all this about you and Casey?

EMMA. What do you mean?

JERRY. What's going on?

EMMA. We have the occasional drink.

JERRY. I thought you didn't admire his work.

EMMA. I've changed. Or his work has changed. Are you jealous?

JERRY. Of what? *(Pause.)* I couldn't be jealous of Casey. I'm his agent. I advised him about his divorce. I read all his first drafts. I persuaded your husband to publish his first novel. I escort him to Oxford to speak at the Union. He's my ... he's my boy. I discovered him when he was a poet, and that's a bloody long time ago now.

(Pause.) He's even taken me down to Southampton to meet his Mum and Dad. I couldn't be jealous of Casey. Anyway it's not as if we're having an affair now, is it? We haven't seen each other for years. Really, I'm very happy if you're happy. (Pause.) What about Robert? (Pause.)

EMMA. Well ... I think we're going to separate.

JERRY. Oh?

EMMA. We had a long talk ... last night.

JERRY. Last night?

EMMA. You know what I found out ... last night? He's betrayed me for years. He's had ... other women for years.

JERRY. No. Good Lord. (Pause.) But we betrayed him for years.

EMMA. And he betrayed me for years.

JERRY. Well I never knew that.

EMMA. Nor did I. (Pause.)

JERRY. Does Casey know about this?

EMMA. I wish you wouldn't keep calling him Casey. His name is Roger.

JERRY. Yes. Roger.

EMMA. I phoned *you*. I don't know why.

JERRY. What a funny thing. We were such close friends, weren't we? Robert and me, even though I haven't seen him for a few months, but through all those years, all the drinks, all the lunches ... we had together, I never even gleaned ... I never suspected ... that there was anyone else ... in his life but you. Never. For example, when you're with a fellow in a pub, or a restaurant, for example, from time to time he pops out for a piss, you see, who doesn't, but what I mean is, if he's making a crafty telephone call, you can sort of sense it. Well, I never did that with Robert. He never made any crafty telephone calls in any pub I was ever with him in. The funny thing is that it was me who made the calls — to you, when I left him boozing at the bar. That's the funny thing. (Pause.) When did he tell you all this?

EMMA. Last night. I think we were up all night. (Pause.)

JERRY. You talked all night?

EMMA. Yes. Oh yes. (Pause.)

JERRY. I didn't come into it, did I?

EMMA. What?

JERRY. I just —

EMMA. I just phoned you this morning, you know, that's all,

BETRAYAL

by Harold Pinter

WINNER OF THE NEW YORK DRAMA CRITICS' CIRCLE AWARD FOR BEST FOREIGN PLAY,
AND OF THE LAWRENCE OLIVIER AWARD FOR BEST PLAY

2M, 1W

The play begins in the present, with the meeting of Emma and Jerry, whose adulterous affair of seven years ended two years earlier. Emma's marriage to Robert, Jerry's best friend, is now breaking up, and she needs someone to talk to. Their reminiscences reveal that Robert knew of their affair all along and, to Jerry's dismay, regarded it with total nonchalance. Thereafter, in a series of contiguous scenes, the play moves backward in time, from the end of the Emma-Jerry affair to its beginning, throwing into relief the little lies and oblique remarks that, in this time-reverse, reveal more than direct statements, or overt actions, ever could.

"... marvelous scenes, packed with suppressed tension, torn loyalties, and confused, unspoken feelings ..." —**The New York Times**

"BETRAYAL is an exquisite play, brilliantly simple in form and courageous in its search for a poetry that turns banality into melancholy beauty." —**Newsweek**

"... a powerful expression of the chasm between recollection and reality, of the gaps between people who need to be intimate with each other." —**The Village Voice**

"The construction of the play is brilliant ... every scene seems to contradict what we've learned in the preceding scene, raising questions about who is betraying whom in these sexual power games." —**Variety**

"BETRAYAL is ... one of Pinter's best plays: a blistering comment on an age of selfishness from an artist at the peak of his imaginative powers." —**New York Magazine**

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