



## **Plays and Pinot: Arrivals and Departures**

### **Synopsis**

*A poignant, timely comedy of two strangers meeting in the midst of an increasingly farcical anti-terrorist operation.*

A terrorist code-named Cerastes is on the loose, and an undercover anti-terrorist squad have planned a sting to capture him as he steps off a train at a London station. The operation, led by the buffoonish Acting Major Quentin Sexton, has drawn in two outsiders - Ez and Barry. Perfect strangers as the play begins, their time waiting for the trap to be sprung gives them the chance to get to know each other, and try to make sense of the chaos unfolding around them.

### **About the Playwright**

Alan Ayckbourn, in full Sir Alan Ayckbourn, (born April 12, 1939, London, England), is a successful and prolific British playwright, whose works—mostly farces and comedies—deal with marital and class conflicts and point out the fears and weaknesses of the English lower-middle class. He wrote more than 80 plays and other entertainments, most of which were first staged at the Stephen Joseph Theatre in Scarborough, Yorkshire, England. At age 15 Ayckbourn acted in school productions of William Shakespeare, and he began his professional acting career with the Stephen Joseph Company in Scarborough. When Ayckbourn wanted better roles to play, Joseph told him to write a part for himself in a play that the company would mount if it had merit. Ayckbourn produced his earliest plays in 1959–61 under the pseudonym Roland Allen. His plays—many of which were performed years before they were published—included *Relatively Speaking* (1968), *Mixed Doubles: An Entertainment on Marriage* (1970), *How the Other Half Loves* (1971), the trilogy *The Norman Conquests* (1973), *Absurd Person Singular* (1974), *Intimate Exchanges* (1985), *Mr. A's Amazing Maze Plays* (1989), *Body Language* (1990), *Invisible Friends* (1991), *Communicating Doors* (1995), *Comic Potential* (1999), *The Boy Who Fell into a Book* (2000), and the trilogy *Damsels in Distress* (2002). In 2002 he published a work of advice and instruction for aspiring playwrights and directors, *The Crafty Art of Playmaking*. After suffering a stroke in 2006, Ayckbourn limited his activities, though he soon resumed writing. In 2009 he stepped down as artistic director of the Stephen Joseph Theatre, a post he had held since 1972. He later directed (2014) a musical version of *The Boy Who Fell into a Book*. His numerous honours include Laurence Olivier (2009) and Tony (2010) awards for lifetime achievement. Ayckbourn was knighted in 1997.

### **Characters**

**Ez (Esmé) Swain (A soldier, 23)**

**Barry (A traffic warden, 50s)**

**Captain Quentin Sexton (O/C SSDO, late 40s)**

**Shane Hughes**



Caz Walters

Don Simkins

Ro Merrivale

David Scullion

Rita Gilroy

Greta Teasdale

Tommy Wisby

The Suspect

Cerastes

Nadine Swain (Ez's mother, 27 - 37)

Esmé Swain (10 - 12)

Esmé Swain (15 - 28)

Freddie Swain (Her father, 28)

Sherwin Cooper (Nadine's boyfriend, 32 - 35)

Rob Stagmore (Esmé's boyfriend, 23 - 24)

Charles Stagmore (Rob's father, 60s)

Hilary Stagmore (Rob's mother, 60s)

An Army Chaplin

Young Barry (27 - 43)

Debs (Debra) (nee Fox) (His wife, 20 - 35)

Young Daisy (His daughter, 7)

Daisy Hawkins (14)

Daisy Hawkins (26)

Jess Fox (His father-in-law, 55)

Pauline Fox (His mother-in-law, 50 - 65)

Clive Ward (His childhood friend, 30)

Lily Gill (Fox's accountant, 20 - 41)

Norman Scullion (An auditor, 50s)

*References: Britannica.com*