



## The Quare Fellow: A Comedy-Drama

*Brendan Behan*

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## **The Quare Fellow: A Comedy-Drama Details**

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Author : Brendan Behan

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## From Reader Review The Quare Fellow: A Comedy-Drama for online ebook

### Michael says

The quare fellow, a condemned murderer who butchered his brother like a pig, is due to be hanged in the morning. Does he deserve the death penalty? Behan doesn't bring him on stage, so we aren't required to vilify or sympathise with him directly. What we are shown is the brutalising effect of capital punishment on those most closely involved in carrying out the sentence. Behan shows (not without humour) how we are all degraded by state murder.

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### Cecilia says

What I've learned from the book so far about Irish Prison Slang:

- Quare - strange or remarkable, also seems to have something to do with being a lifer
- Mot - Woman (I think hot and young)
- Squealer - Baby
- Screw - Prison Guard
- Dog End - Cigarette Butt

Well, this play takes place the day before and the morning of a hanging at an Irish Prison. I believe the moral of this play is hanging is a terrible way to die and the state killing people is awful and that compared to those things, Irish prison ain't half bad. It's about surviving the system as well.

It's about how once you're in the prison culture, you're in and even when you leave everyone knows you're coming back.

I liked this play, though it's not what you'd call an upper.

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### Ms Tlaskal says

My friend raved about this play as he'd read it at school. I didn't finish it as I didn't have the same connection to it. You find out a lot about Irish prison life and the voices of the characters that surround the 'Quare fellow' (who never speaks) are full of life but I was not sufficiently inspired to finish it. One to see on stage I'm sure.

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### Kenneth McMahon says

Having left Dublin almost 15 years ago, this was a great reminder of slang I haven't heard in years!

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## **Finbarr says**

The language in this play is a joy. The characters use singsong colloquialisms, many of which I've not heard for many years. A beautiful read.

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## **Heather says**

Brendan Behan's most popular play is evocative from start to finish. The musical quality of life in the gaol adds to the sensitivity of the whole treatment. Top class.

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## **Joe Phoenix says**

A fascinating topic by an enigmatic writer.

The Quare Fellow depicts the 24 hours preceding an execution at an unnamed prison in Ireland. It accounts the way this execution affects the inmates and guards, yet importantly, not the 'quare fellow' himself.

It is a humorous depiction of a bleak subject, and a great little read which provokes thoughts of capital punishment and the way people perceived it. Behan clearly evokes the idea of being against capital punishment, this not only being as cruel way to take a life, but the adverse affects it had upon those around it.

It also conveys the attitudes within the prison system at that time, such things as "laggings" suggesting that once a prisoner fell in to the system, they struggled to crawl out.

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## **Daniel says**

**Writer's Block.** A visual:

*[Scene 1]*

Among the rhododendrons, walking with artificial stride in memory of **Hamlet**, I, the lover of all honest science, inwardly hark back to a time when the prayers and the bells made complete sense.

*[Scene 2]*

Marshall D., the resident troll, somewhat understated in role, opines the following: *The apple doesn't fall far from the tree.*

*[Scene 3]*

Still amongst rhododendrons, now inwardly viewing benediction with an innocent child's conviction, I intone: *A burnt child loves the fire.*

*[Scene 4]*

In the background **John Cougar Mellencamp** lies dead.

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### **Shanna says**

Musical and sometimes humorous statement against capital punishment.

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### **Daisy Leather says**

I must say, I think I preferred this to Waiting for Godot - which I surprisingly enjoyed quite a bit. Not entirely sure I grasped the entire meaning of the play or anything though, so now I'm entering into the world of speculation and google!

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### **Karl Holton says**

I first read this play in about 1982 when I was sixteen. I loved it immediately because coming from Irish parents the dialogue made me laugh continuously and I knew the famous song well. I could hear the Dublin accents bouncing off the prison cell walls.

I think if you don't have the benefit of that 'ear' it will be quite hard to penetrate this writing and really feel what Behan was doing. You might just read it and wonder 'what the hell is this' and have the sense that this is something that only worked in the 1950s. However, if you do, it's a joy.

Behan was without doubt a truly gifted playwright and in this short play he really shows how he could balance wit and bleak to create a subtle analysis. You do need to consider when it was written but it is a brilliant study of human behaviour, prison, capital punishment, sexuality, politics and religion.

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### **Stephen says**

Set mostly inside (and near?) Mountjoy Prison, across from the Mater Hospital, Dublin, near the North Circular Road.

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