

1. A Matter of Husbands

By Ferenc Molnár

About the author

Widely regarded as Hungary's most celebrated and controversial playwright, Ferenc Molnár's (1878-1952) primary aim was to entertain people by transforming his personal experiences into literary works of art. Out of his many plays, *The Devil* (1907), *Lilium* (1909), *The Guardsman* (1910), *The Swan* (1920), and *The Play's the Thing* (1926) endure as classics. He immigrated to the United States to escape persecution of Hungarian Jews during World War II and later adopted American citizenship. Molnár's plays continue to be relevant and are performed all over the world.

Published in 1923, *A Matter of Husband* sheds light on the basic function of actors: to make the audience believe in illusion.

Summary of A Matter of Husbands

'A Matter of Husbands' is a one act play written by Ferenc Molnar. He is widely regarded as Hungary's most celebrated and controversial playwright. There are three main characters in the play. They are Earnest Young Woman (Alfred's wife), Sara (Famous Actress) and Alfred (Lawyer, husband of Earnest Young Woman). It is a very twisted one act play which depicts the story of Earnest Young Woman. She is married to a lawyer who knows Famous Woman.

This play sheds the light on the roles of actors on the stage and in real life and how much they are capable of keeping us in an illusion. In the beginning of the play, the Earnest Young Woman is shown on the stage impatiently waiting for the famous actress. The Famous Actress is called 'Sara'. As Sara enters the stage through the curtain, Earnest Young Woman rushes to her and angrily asks her to return her husband. The Famous Actress boldly denies that she has stolen her husband. She says she knows him because once the contract for

a case has been given to him. She asks Earnest Young Woman that what makes her believe that Alfred is in love with her. Earnest Young Woman tells her that her husband sends her flowers and writes love letter.

After hearing this, the actress blushes and continues to deny receiving any flowers or notes from him. In order to make Earnest Young Woman believe that she and her husband have a misunderstanding, she now claims that something strange happened. Famous Woman convinces Earnest Young Woman that her husband is playing with her in an attempt to make her jealous and gain her attention and love back. Then, the innocent young lady realizes her mistake and apologizes. Famous Actress calls Alfred from her personal bedroom after the eager young lady exits the stage. In this way, the play ends.