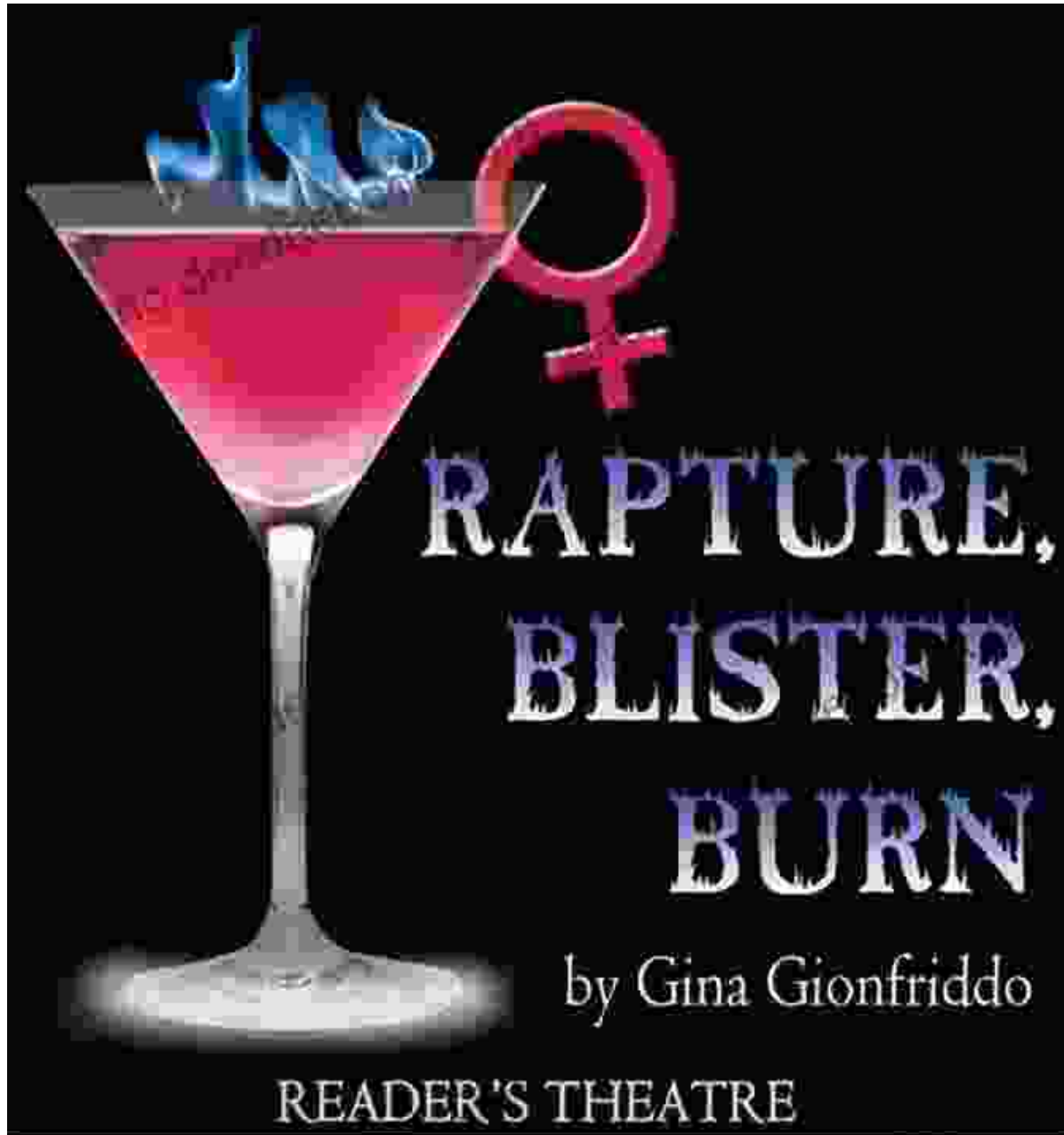


Rapture, Blister, Burn: Modern Plays That Explore the Devastating Impact of Extremism



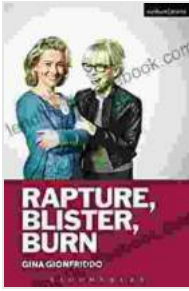
Rapture, Blister, Burn (Modern Plays) by Gina Gionfriddo

★★★★★ 4.3 out of 5

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Extremism, in its various forms, poses a grave threat to our societies, tearing apart individuals and communities, and leaving a trail of devastation in its wake. In a world grappling with rising polarization and the erosion of trust, the stage emerges as a powerful medium to explore the complex dynamics and profound consequences of extremism.

Rapture, Blister, Burn, a collection of modern plays, serves as a poignant and thought-provoking examination of this pressing issue. These plays, written by a diverse group of playwrights, provide a multifaceted perspective on the lure and perils of extremism, shedding light on the factors that drive individuals towards radical ideologies and the devastating toll it takes on their lives and the lives of those around them.

The Lure of Extremism

Extremism often finds its roots in a potent combination of personal and societal factors. *Rapture, Blister, Burn* delves into these vulnerabilities, exploring the ways in which individuals may be drawn into extremist groups.

In Nina Raine's *Tribes*, we encounter Billy, a deaf man who finds himself drawn to the allure of a far-right group. Billy's longing for a sense of belonging and his desire to find meaning in a world that often marginalizes him make him susceptible to the hateful rhetoric and false promises of the group.

Lucas Hnath's *The Christians* examines the corrosive effects of religious extremism within a small-town church. As the pastor, Paul, becomes increasingly radicalized, his congregation is torn apart by the clash between their faith and the intolerance that Paul preaches.

These plays highlight the insidious nature of extremism, demonstrating how it can exploit vulnerabilities and prey on the marginalized, offering a false sense of belonging and purpose.

The Devastating Consequences of Extremism

The consequences of extremism are far-reaching and devastating, both for individuals and for society as a whole. *Rapture, Blister, Burn* unflinchingly depicts the trauma, violence, and shattered lives that result from extremist ideologies.

In Lucy Kirkwood's *Chimerica*, we follow the story of Zhang Lin, a Chinese artist whose life is shattered by the Tiananmen Square massacre. Seeking solace, he travels to the United States, where he encounters the horrors of Islamophobia and the rise of white supremacy.

Roy Williams' *Sing Yer Heart Out for the Lads* tells the story of a group of working-class young men who are drawn into a neo-Nazi gang. The play

exposes the bitter cycle of violence and hatred that can result from extremist ideologies, leaving a trail of broken lives in its wake.

These plays offer a searing indictment of extremism, revealing the devastating human toll it exacts, leaving wounds that may never fully heal.

Healing and Reconciliation

Despite the profound challenges posed by extremism, *Rapture*, *Blister*, *Burn* also offers glimmers of hope and resilience. Some of the plays explore the possibility of healing and reconciliation, even in the face of unspeakable trauma.

In Yaël Farber's *Nirbhaya*, we witness the horrific gang rape of a young woman in Delhi, India. The play follows the aftermath of the crime, as the victim and her family struggle to cope with the trauma and seek justice. Despite the overwhelming pain and anger, the play also highlights the power of resilience and the importance of standing against violence.

Mike Bartlett's *Cock* explores the complexities of love and identity in the context of extremism. The play follows the story of John, a gay man who is torn between his desire for a conventional relationship and his attraction to a far-right activist. The play examines the ways in which extremism can poison relationships and divide families, but it also leaves open the possibility of redemption and forgiveness.

These plays remind us that even in the darkest of times, there is hope for healing and reconciliation. They challenge us to confront the roots of extremism and to work towards a more just and equitable society.

Rapture, Blister, Burn is a powerful and essential collection of modern plays that sheds light on the devastating impact of extremism. These plays provide a multifaceted perspective on the lure and perils of extremist ideologies, exploring the personal and societal factors that drive individuals towards radicalization and the profound consequences it has on their lives and the lives of those around them.

The plays also offer glimmers of hope and resilience, highlighting the power of healing and reconciliation, even in the face of unspeakable trauma. By confronting the harsh realities of extremism, *Rapture, Blister, Burn* challenges us to confront our own biases and to work towards a more just and equitable society.



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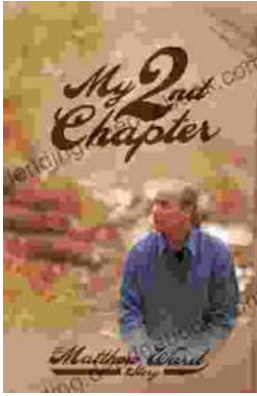
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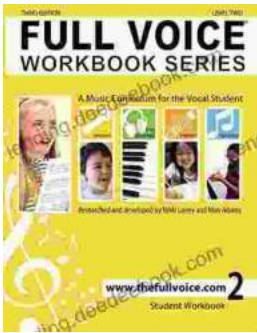
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