



The Clothes They Stood Up In

By Alan Bennett

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The Clothes They Stood Up In is Alan Bennett's first story. Like Charles Dickens' novels which were first published in magazines, it originally appeared in the London Review of Books - which the author says 'seems to me (and not just because I occasionally contribute to it) the liveliest, most serious and also the most radical literary periodical we have'.

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The Clothes They Stood Up In By Alan Bennett Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

When life is pared down to the bare essentials, one can grow spiritually or shrink into one's basic instincts. Though profound statements as such are not to be found in British playwright Bennett's charmingly subversive and very amusing cautionary tale, his characters illustrate the principle in surprising ways. Mr. and Mrs. Ransome return to their London flat after a performance of *Così fan tutte* (Mozart's comic opera about changing identities) to find the place totally stripped. Even the casserole left warming in the oven is gone, along with the oven, all other appliances and every stitch of clothing. Mr. Ransome, a stodgy, misanthropic solicitor who is fussy about correct diction, is mainly concerned about the loss of his CD player and the earphones with which he has always insulated himself from his wife. Formerly cowed and repressed, Mrs. Ransome is surprised at her pleasure in replacing their lost possessions with a few inexpensive items. The burglary liberates her personality, allowing her to inch cautiously toward new interpersonal connections. First with an Asian grocer, then with the man who, the Ransomes eventually discover, has been living with their furniture and clothing in a storage facility, then with another man who holds the key to the bizarre thievery. Her social awakening occurs in counterpoint with her husband's more selfish gratifications, until a funny and fitting denouement permanently turns the tables between them. Bennett carries off his terse, surreal comedy with witty aplomb, adding to risibility with apt comments about the foibles of contemporary society and the consumer economy. (Feb. 8) Forecast: English readers familiar with Bennett's plays (*The Madness of George III*, etc.) snatched up this novella to the tune of 140,000 copies. The premise of being left without any possessions is provocative enough to entice readers on these shores, and the small size of the volume (4x 6) reinforces the idea that simplicity can be liberating.

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From Library Journal

British playwright Bennett here proves himself to be a master of fiction as well. Rosemary and Maurice, long-married but childless, return from a night at the opera to find that they have been divested of all their possessions. Right down to the toilet paper holder. Months later, they find that their habitat had been meticulously re-created in a storage facility. Ostensibly, the story involves finding out the who and the why of such an extraordinary chain of events, but it also exposes the abrasions and contusions, the fabrications and evasions that are common to many marriages. Rosemary is an immediately lovable character. Her innocence and her responses are sometimes laugh-out-loud funny, but her attempts to improve her marriage are also very poignant. This charming novel deserves a place in all fiction collections; one can only hope that Americans will receive it as warmly as their counterparts did.

-D. Judith Kicinski, *Sarah Lawrence Coll. Lib., Bronxville, NY*

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Review

"Few write sharper dialogue or probe more tellingly into the frailties and occasional strengths of the human psyche than Alan Bennett. None knows more about getting each scene just right or is as consistently witty."

—William Trevor

"Full of jolly, broad, and very English humour...a charm-filled holiday read."

—Alain de Botton, author of **On Love** and **How Proust Can Change Your Life**

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Christina Love:

The book *The Clothes They Stood Up In* give you a sense of feeling enjoy for your spare time. You need to use to make your capable a lot more increase. Book can to become your best friend when you getting pressure or having big problem along with your subject. If you can make reading a book *The Clothes They Stood Up In* to be your habit, you can get far more advantages, like add your current capable, increase your knowledge about some or all subjects. You can know everything if you like available and read a book *The Clothes They Stood Up In*. Kinds of book are several. It means that, science e-book or encyclopedia or other folks. So , how do you think about this reserve?

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Amy Smith:

In this period globalization it is important to someone to receive information. The information will make a professional understand the condition of the world. The fitness of the world makes the information much easier to share. You can find a lot of recommendations to get information example: internet, classifieds, book, and soon. You will see that now, a lot of publisher that print many kinds of book. The book that recommended to you personally is *The Clothes They Stood Up In* this publication consist a lot of the information with the condition of this world now. This specific book was represented how can the world has grown up. The vocabulary styles that writer use for explain it is easy to understand. Often the writer made some exploration when he makes this book. That's why this book suited all of you.

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