



Shirley Valentine

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Shirley Valentine is a one-character play by Willy Russell. Taking the form of a monologue by a middle-aged, working class Liverpool housewife, it focuses on her life before and after a transforming holiday abroad.

Shirley Valentine Details

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From Reader Review Shirley Valentine for online ebook

Brenda says

Well, I'm not sure if I've read the same play as the other reviewers talk about.

I was so bored while reading this. I did not laugh. I did not even smile. Is there anything wrong with me?

Ok, let's get serious.

So, Shirley Valentine (~~omg that name is just too awful~~) lives an unhappy life. She feels that she is just a mother, a wife, that she has lost at some point her own identity. She feels that her husband does not love her. So she decides to go all reckless and accepts one of her friend's invitation: to go to a trip to Greece. This is the first step in Shirley's life that shows she wants to be happy.

That seems to be inspiring, isn't it? Well, no. No. NO.

(view spoiler)

You don't have to do those things in order to be a free, independent and strong person. There are so many ways to regain your identity, to live again.

The ONLY thing I liked about this play (and that made me add one more star to the review, because it made me think a lot of things) is this quote:

I've lived such a little life. An' even that'll be over pretty soon. I'd allowed myself to live this little life - when inside me there was so much more. An' it's all gone unused. An' now it never will be. Well. Why do we get all thus life if we don't ever use it? Why do we all get these... feelings and dreams and hopes - if we don't ever use them?

That's where Shirley Valentine disappeared to. She got lost - in all this unused life.

This is just another non-life changing book for me.

Susan Franzen says

Inspired by a woman who did what she wanted, lived life on her terms! Greece is a magical place. Maybe it's time to go back.

Dew says

DAMN was this such a delightful read. I think I ended up liking this play more than the other one I had read in the past from this author, Educating Rita (both for a class).

So heartwarming and charming and fun, as well as very witty. I'm sure there were some moments where the punch line went straight off my head because I'm not English native, but the ones I did get were great.

If I have to read more of this author in the future for more classes, I'll be excited to get my hands on the next

play.

Melissa Hedges- Rankin says

Enjoyed the humor and deep ideas/themes that ran throughout this screenplay. I felt I got more out of the author's writing by reading the screenplay. Also by reading the SP felt a deeper appreciation for the movie afterwards. The chapter on Willy Russell, as well as the 'Intro' chapter was an excellent addition.

Rachael Eyre says

The film of Shirley Valentine has long been one of my favourites, but I'd never actually given the original play a look. Faced with the usual bank holiday weather, I came across a bundle of Willy Russell plays and thought, "Why not?"

The majority of this review will be about Shirley Valentine - while One For The Road was a nice enough read, I remember very little about it only a few days later, and suspect that would be the case if I'd seen it performed. But Shirley ... Shirley remains as funny, relevant and heart rending as ever.

As a former high school rebel who's now an unfulfilled housewife, Shirley should be a cliché but Russell makes her a warm, well rounded, utterly sympathetic woman. Stuck in a loveless marriage to Joe (or "him"), a man so petty and unimaginative he has to have a certain dinner on a certain night of the week; the mother of a pair of whiny, sulky kids who still expect her to pick up after them - how can you not shudder in recognition? Never mind Hedda Gabler; this is life as lived by millions of women, as recognisable then as when it first appeared.

Although her holiday fling with Costas (played by a naffly moustachioed Tom Conti in the film), is very important thematically, my favourite part has to be her run in with Marjorie Majors, the pretty posh girl she used to envy, and the gulf between Shirley's expectations and what Marjorie actually does for a living. It's such a touching, wonderful moment, and is probably the real catalyst of the play. Educating Rita may be regarded as Russell's masterpiece, but Shirley has a sincerity and universal truth it lacks.

Bobby Sullivan says

Wow, what a pleasant surprise. I did not expect to love this play as much as I did.

Jamie Klingler says

What a wonderful play. It has also aged so well. Empowering, funny, poignant. Highly recommend.

Daniel Schechtel says

"Because we don't do what we want to do. We do what we have to do. And pretend it's what we want to do"

Marvellous piece of writing

J.A. McNeil says

Fun narrative that was enlightening for women in the 80's with some hilarious lines. "All men are potential rapists. Even the Pope."

Comedy at its best without saturated profanity, female objectification, and mindless storylines.

Kayly says

Kewt

Sam Wilkinson says

I love this story. Especially when Gillian brings the silk wrap, and tells Shirley she thinks she's marvellous, it's such a tiny thing, with almost no information, no backstory, no actual detail, but so much emotion and longing.

Simon Fletcher says

Shirley Valentine is a rare thing, a play that is as funny in print as it is on the stage and in film. Russel is for me a truly great writer who understands what it means to be trapped by the situations we find ourselves in through no fault of our own. This and the companion piece, 'One For the Road' show what it is to be able to break free from that trap and to remain forever trapped by it.

nicole v says

she's a great one.

Evelyn Alba says

i want a greek romance too!!!! haha it was funny!!! I actually laughed. =)

Laura says

From BBC Radio 4 - Saturday Drama:

Written by acclaimed writer Willy Russell.

Shirley Valentine is a middle-aged Liverpool housewife, who reveals her innermost thoughts and fears in a manner that is both insouciant and poignant. Once an incorrigible anti-establishment rebel, Shirley now chafes under the plodding insensitivity of her husband, Joe and the stultifying pace of her suburban routine. Her life enters a new and exciting phase when, after her best friend, Jane, wins an all-expenses-paid vacation to Greece, Shirley is given the opportunity to travel to faraway places without her husband; she begins to see the world, and herself, in a different light.

Starring Meera Syal, after a much lauded run at the Menier Chocolate Factory the play transferred to The Trafalgar studio to continued success. Finishing in theatre on October 30th Meera walked straight into the studio to record the one woman play for Radio 4. Based on the original Menier Theatre production directed by Glen Walford.

Producer: Clive Brill

A Pacificus production for BBC Radio 4.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b00wmwx3>
