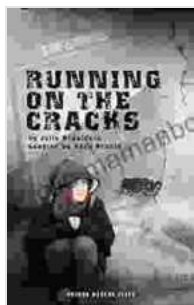


Delving into the Cracks: An Analysis of 'Running On The Cracks' by Bryony Lavery, a Modern Classic



Running on the Cracks (Oberon Modern Plays)

by Julia Donaldson

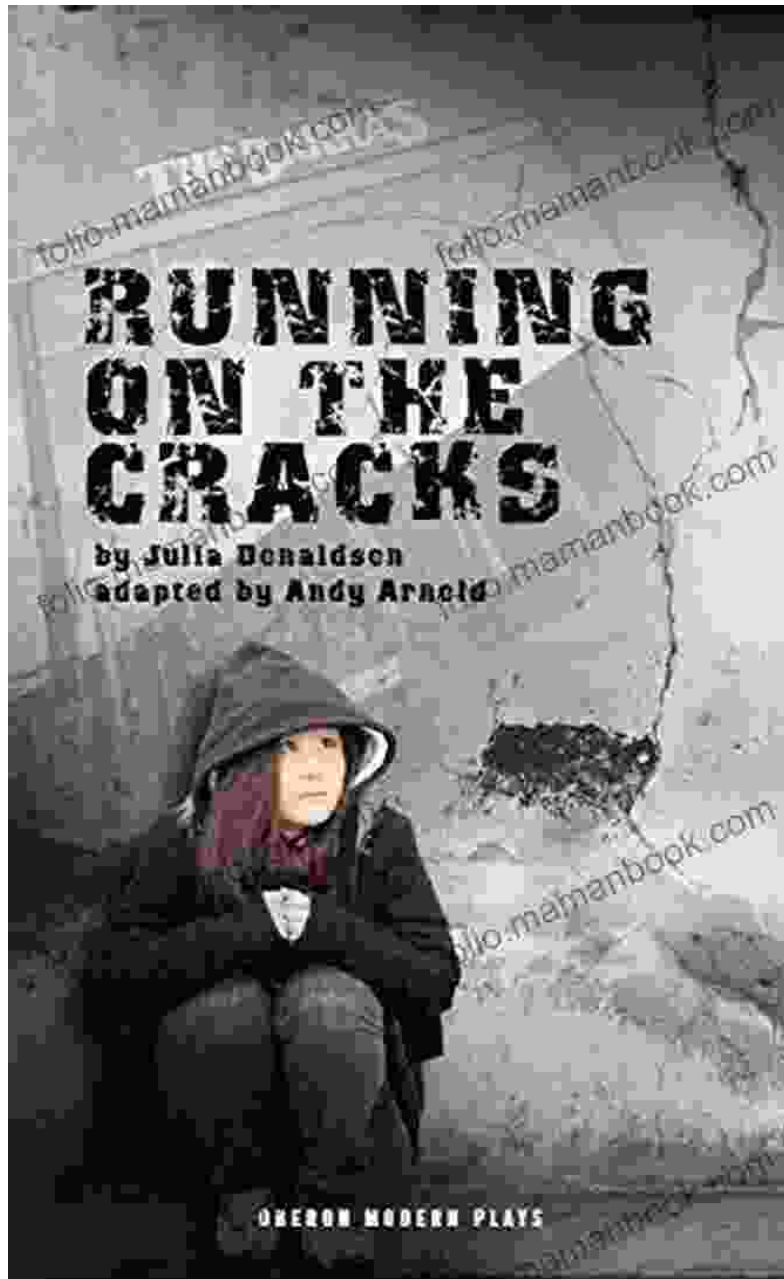
★★★★☆ 4.5 out of 5

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Bryony Lavery's 'Running On The Cracks' is a thought-provoking and emotionally charged play that delves into the complexities of mental illness. Through its compelling characters and immersive storytelling, the play sheds light on the often-hidden struggles faced by those living with mental health conditions.

Premiering in 2006 and winning the prestigious Olivier Award for Best New Play, 'Running On The Cracks' has garnered widespread acclaim for its raw and unflinching portrayal of mental health. Lavery's compassionate and nuanced writing invites audiences to confront their own preconceptions and biases, fostering a deeper understanding of the challenges surrounding mental illness.

Exploring the Play's Structure and Themes

'Running On The Cracks' unfolds through a series of non-linear, fragmented scenes that mirror the protagonist's fractured mental state. This innovative structure allows the audience to piece together the protagonist's journey through her interactions with others and her own inner thoughts.

The play explores a range of profound themes, including:

- The stigma surrounding mental illness
- The importance of seeking help and support
- The power of human connection
- The resilience of the human spirit

Meet the Characters

The play revolves around a central character known only as 'She' and the individuals who intersect with her life.

- **She**

The unnamed protagonist, a young woman struggling with an undisclosed mental illness. She navigates the challenges of daily life

while grappling with the complexities of her condition.

- **Mother**

A concerned and well-intentioned parent who worries about her daughter's well-being. She tries to support her daughter but often struggles to understand her struggles.

- **Father**

A distant and emotionally unavailable father who is unable to provide the support that his daughter needs. His absence casts a shadow over her life.

- **Dave**

A kind and supportive friend who cares deeply for She. He tries to help her through her struggles but is often met with resistance.

- **Doctor**

A compassionate and understanding medical professional who tries to help She manage her mental illness. He provides her with medication and counseling but acknowledges the limitations of traditional treatment.

The Concept of Mental Illness in 'Running On The Cracks'

'Running On The Cracks' presents a nuanced and realistic portrayal of mental illness, avoiding the sensationalization and stereotypes often found in media representations.

The play highlights the subjective and often misunderstood nature of mental health conditions. She's struggles are not easily definable; she experiences hallucinations, paranoia, and a sense of isolation that is both deeply personal and universal.

Lavery's writing captures the complexities of living with a mental illness, challenging audiences to question their assumptions and biases.

"I think we all run on the cracks. Some of us just do it more obviously than others." - Bryony Lavery, 'Running On The Cracks'

The Importance of Human Connection

Despite the challenges posed by mental illness, 'Running On The Cracks' emphasizes the power of human connection. The relationships between She and the other characters provide a lifeline for her, even during her darkest moments.

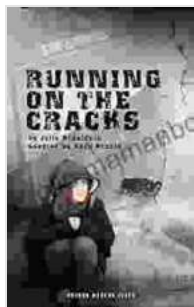
Dave's unwavering support and the Doctor's empathy offer a glimmer of hope in an often bleak landscape. The play suggests that even in the face of mental illness, human connection can provide a sense of purpose and meaning.

'Running On The Cracks' is a powerful and moving exploration of mental illness that invites audiences to confront their own preconceptions and biases. Through its complex characters and immersive storytelling, the play sheds light on the often-hidden struggles faced by those living with mental health conditions.

Bryony Lavery's compassionate and nuanced writing fosters a deeper understanding of the complexities of mental illness, reminding us of the

importance of seeking help, supporting others, and embracing the resilience of the human spirit.

Whether experienced on stage or through the written word, 'Running On The Cracks' is a transformative work that continues to resonate with audiences around the world.



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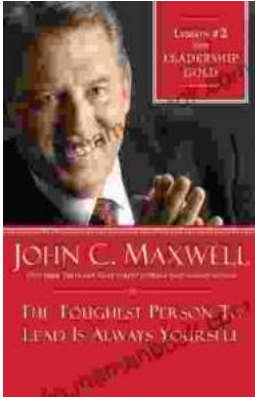
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