



Copenhagen

By Michael Frayn

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Copenhagen By Michael Frayn

The Tony Award—winning play that soars at the intersection of science and art, **Copenhagen** is an explosive re-imagining of the mysterious wartime meeting between two Nobel laureates to discuss the atomic bomb.

In 1941 the German physicist Werner Heisenberg made a clandestine trip to Copenhagen to see his Danish counterpart and friend Niels Bohr. Their work together on quantum mechanics and the uncertainty principle had revolutionized atomic physics. But now the world had changed and the two men were on opposite sides in a world war. Why Heisenberg went to Copenhagen and what he wanted to say to Bohr are questions that have vexed historians ever since. In Michael Frayn's ambitious, fiercely intelligent, and daring new play Heisenberg and Bohr meet once again to discuss the intricacies of physics and to ponder the metaphysical—the very essence of human motivation.

From the Trade Paperback edition.

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Copenhagen By Michael Frayn Bibliography

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

For most people, the principles of nuclear physics are not only incomprehensible but inhuman. The popular image of the men who made the bomb is of dispassionate intellects who number-crunched their way towards a weapon whose devastating power they could not even imagine. But in his Tony Award-winning play *Copenhagen*, Michael Frayn shows us that these men were passionate, philosophical, and all too human, even though one of the three historical figures in his drama, Werner Heisenberg, was the head of the Nazis' effort to develop a nuclear weapon. The play's other two characters, the Danish physicist Niels Bohr and his wife, Margrethe, are involved with Heisenberg in an after-death analysis of an actual meeting that has long puzzled historians. In 1941, the German scientist visited Bohr, his old mentor and long-time friend, in Copenhagen. After a brief discussion in the Bohrs' home, the two men went for a short walk. What they discussed on that walk, and its implications for both scientists, have long been a mystery, even though both scientists gave (conflicting) accounts in later years.

Frayn's cunning conceit is to use the scientific underpinnings of atomic physics, from Schrödinger's famous cat to the Heisenberg uncertainty principle, to explore how an individual's point of view renders attempts to discover the ultimate truth of any human interaction fundamentally impossible. To Margrethe, Heisenberg was always an untrustworthy student, eager to steal from her husband's knowledge. To Bohr, Heisenberg was a brilliant if irresponsible foster son, whose lack of moral compass was part of his genius. As for Heisenberg, the man who could have built the bomb but somehow failed to, his dilemma is at the heart of the play's conflict. Frayn's clever dramatic structure, which returns repeatedly to particular scenes from different points of view, allows several possible theories as to what his motives could have been. This isn't the first play to successfully merge the worlds of science and theater (one is inevitably reminded of Tom Stoppard's *Arcadia* and *Hapgood*), but it's certainly one of the most dramatically successful. --John Longenbaugh

Review

**** - Copenhagen is stunning on CD. -- *Martin F. Kohn, Detroit Free Press, 4/15/01*

Frayn's dense, elegant play is a logical and excellent choice... And Copenhagen works perfectly on disc. -- *Ken Mandelbaum, Broadway.com, 11/13/00*

Frayn's dense, elegant play is a logical and excellent choice... And Copenhagen works perfectly on disc. -- *Ken Mandelbaum, Broadway.com, 11/13/00*

Review

"Endlessly fascinating.... The most invigorating and ingenious play of ideas in many a year.... An electrifying work of art."--Ben Brantley, *The New York Times*

"Superbly dramatized.... [Frayn] has an elegant, almost algebraic way with the structure of a play.... **Copenhagen** offers a particular kind of brain-teasing pleasure."--John Lahr, *The New Yorker*

"Scintillating.... A dazzling fugue."--*San Francisco Examiner*

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Berneice Ritzman:

Book is to be different for each and every grade. Book for children until finally adult are different content. As you may know that book is very important for people. The book Copenhagen had been making you to know about other expertise and of course you can take more information. It is extremely advantages for you. The reserve Copenhagen is not only giving you a lot more new information but also to be your friend when you feel bored. You can spend your current spend time to read your reserve. Try to make relationship together with the book Copenhagen. You never sense lose out for everything when you read some books.

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