



**ARNOLD  
BENNETT**

***JUDITH, A PLAY IN THREE  
ACTS; FOUNDED  
ON THE APOCRYPHAL BOOK  
OF JUDITH***

## **Arnold Bennett**

# **Judith, a Play in Three Acts; Founded on the Apocryphal Book of Judith**

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# JUDITH

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A PLAY IN THREE ACTS

Founded on the apocryphal book of "Judith"

BY

ARNOLD BENNETT

LONDON

1919

First published April 30, 1919

NOTE

This play was presented for the first time at the Devonshire Park Theatre, Eastbourne, on Monday, April 7th, 1919, with the following cast:

Judith	LILLAH MCCARTHY
Haggith	ESMÉ HUBBARD
Rahel	MADGE MURRAY
Ozias	CAMPBELL GULLAN
Holofernes	CLAUDE KING
Bagoas	ERNEST THESIGER
Achior	GEOFFREY DOUGLAS
Chabris	E.H. PATERSON
Charmis	FEWLASS LLEWELLYN

Ingur                      FREDERICK VOLPE

Messenger              FELIX AYLMER

Soldier                    CLIFFORD MOLLISON

Attendant                EDWIN OXLEE

The play was produced by WILFRED EATON

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## CHARACTERS

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Hebrews

JUDITH

HAGGITH, her waiting-woman

RAHEL

OZIAS, Governor of Bethulia

CHABRIS, an elder

CHARMIS, an elder

A SOLDIER

A MESSENGER

Assyrians

HOLOFERNES, General of the Assyrian armies

BAGOAS, his chief eunuch

ACHIOR, a captain

INGUR, a soldier

AN ATTENDANT ON BAGOAS

[ACT I](#)



*A street in the city of Bethulia.*

## ACT II

**SCENE I.** *The valley near the Assyrian camp. Time, morning; two days later.*

**SCENE II.** *The tent of Holofernes. Time, later, the same morning.*

**SCENE III.** *The same. Time, the same night.*

## ACT III

**SCENE I.** *Same as Act I. Time, later, the same night.*

**SCENE II.** *The same. Time, the next day.*

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# ACT I

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*A street in the city of Bethulia in Judea. Bethulia is in the hill country, overlooking the great plain of Jezreel to the south-west. Back, the gates of the city, hiding the view of the plain. Right, Judith's house, with a tent on the roof. Left, houses. The street turns abruptly, back left, along the wall of the city. Left centre, a built-up vantage-point, from which the plain can be seen over the gates.*

TIME: *Fifth century B.C.*

*Towards evening.*

*Ozias is standing alone in the street, drinking from a leathern bottle. Enter Chabris, back left.*

OZIAS (*quickly, but with perfect calmness, hiding the bottle in his garments*). Old man! It is years since I saw you. How came you past the guard, old man?

CHABRIS. Old? Old? I am not yet a hundred. Who are you?

OZIAS. Ozias.

CHABRIS. Ah! So this is Ozias, the son of Ezbon. Before your father could walk I have nursed him on my knee; and he was filled like the full moon—with naughtiness.

OZIAS. What has brought you at last out of your house? Are you come to prophesy once more?

CHABRIS. I have given up prophesying.

OZIAS. A profession full of risks.

CHABRIS. I pass my endless days in meditation and solitude.

OZIAS. That sounds much safer. How comely is the wisdom of old men!

CHABRIS. And what do you do, sprig?

OZIAS. Has none told you?

CHABRIS. I see nobody but my daughter's granddaughter, and her I forbid to speak to me, because being a woman she has the tongue of a woman, and a woman's tongue is unfavourable to meditation. How should I be told?

OZIAS. I am the governor of this great city of Bethulia.

CHABRIS. You are responsible for this city?