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HAROLD  
PINTER

Mountain  
Language



First published in 1988  
by Faber and Faber Limited  
3 Queen Square London WC1N 3AU  
Reprinted 1990

Printed in Great Britain by  
Richard Clay Ltd, Bungay, Suffolk

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## MOUNTAIN LANGUAGE



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Harold Pinter



*faber and faber*

LONDON · BOSTON

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**To Antonia**





# MOUNTAIN LANGUAGE

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*Mountain Language*  
was first performed  
at the National Theatre  
on 20 October 1988.

The cast was as follows:

Miranda Richardson

Eileen Atkins

Michael Gambon

Julian Wadham

George Harris

Tony Haygarth

Alex Hardy

Douglas McFerran

*Designed by Michael Taylor*  
*Directed by Harold Pinter*

# CHARACTERS

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YOUNG WOMAN

ELDERLY WOMAN

SERGEANT

OFFICER

GUARD

PRISONER

HOODED MAN

SECOND GUARD



# I

## A PRISON WALL

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*A line of women. An ELDERLY WOMAN, cradling her hand. A basket at her feet. A YOUNG WOMAN with her arm around the WOMAN's shoulders.*

*A SERGEANT enters, followed by an OFFICER. The SERGEANT points to the YOUNG WOMAN.*

SERGEANT

Name?

YOUNG WOMAN

We've given our names.

SERGEANT

Name?

YOUNG WOMAN

We've given our names.



SERGEANT

Name?

OFFICER (*To SERGEANT*)

Stop this shit. (*To YOUNG WOMAN*) Any complaints?

YOUNG WOMAN

She's been bitten.

OFFICER

Who?

*Pause.*

Who? Who's been bitten?

YOUNG WOMAN

She has. She has a torn hand. Look. Her hand has been bitten. This is blood.

SERGEANT (*To YOUNG WOMAN*)

What is your name?

OFFICER

Shut up.

*He walks over to ELDERLY WOMAN.*

What's happened to your hand? Has someone bitten your hand?





*The WOMAN slowly lifts her hand. He peers at it.*

Who did this? Who bit you?

YOUNG WOMAN

A Dobermann pinscher.

OFFICER

Which one?

*Pause.*

Which one?

*Pause.*

Sergeant!

SERGEANT *steps forward.*

SERGEANT

Sir!

OFFICER

Look at this woman's hand. I think the thumb is going to come off. (To ELDERLY WOMAN) Who did this?

*She stares at him.*