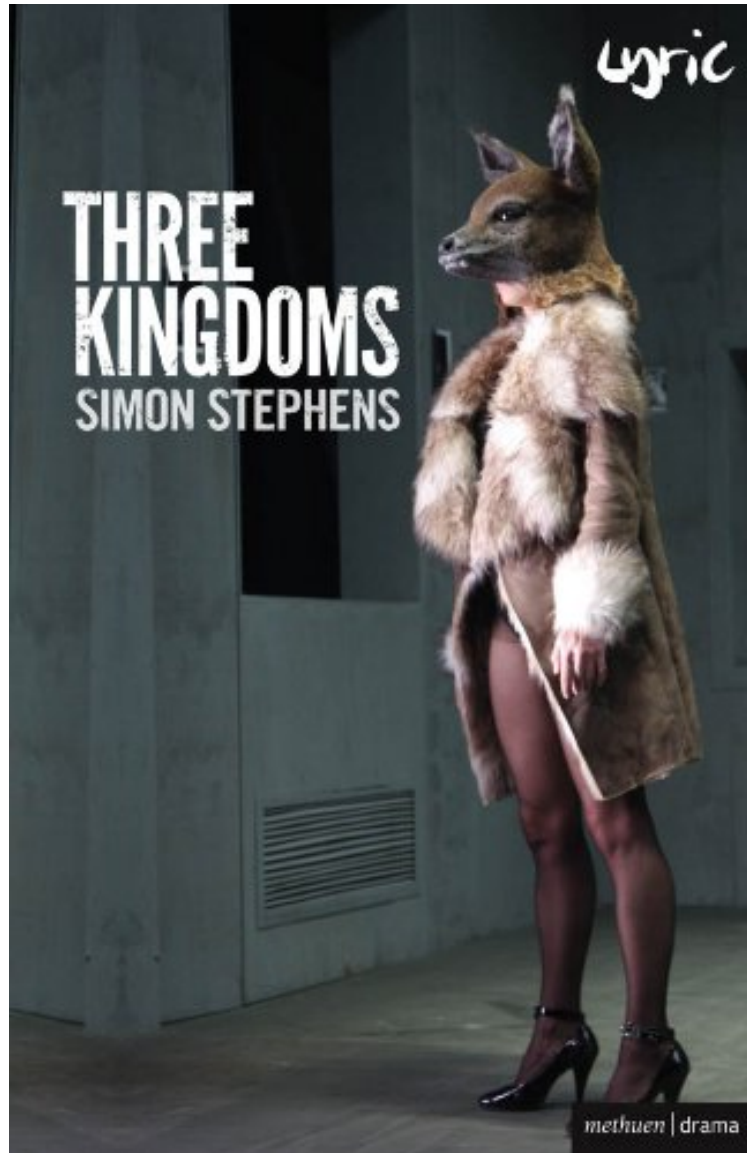


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## Three Kingdoms (Modern Plays)

*Simon Stephens*

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**Simon Stephens : Three Kingdoms (Modern Plays)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Three Kingdoms (Modern Plays):

Three Kingdoms is a blackly entertaining and unsettling detective story cum parable about the devil in us all, international human trafficking and the changing state of Europe. As the severed human head of an Estonian woman is found in a river in Hammersmith, two British detectives set off in search of her origins in Europe and how she came to

be found dead. Accompanied by a mephistophelian German detective acting as their guide, they gradually sink deeper and deeper into the world of prostitution and international human trafficking. Fighting to cross international borders and language barriers, they enter a nightmarish world that will change one of them forever. *Three Kingdoms* tells the stories of trafficked women, the gangs and the police forces across Europe that attempt to control them. This dark new thriller by Simon Stephens, set across three countries, explores an international business where the goods are not products, but people. Questioning and undermining not just tenets about the nature of Europe with its old and new borders, *Three Kingdoms* also explodes moral certainties. With good and evil presented not as polarised forces but as disturbingly shifting, overlapping and contradictory, the play provocatively unbalances convictions of truth, ethical codes, violence and justice. This edition also includes a preface with contributions from playwright Simon Stephens, German director Sebastian Nuebling and Estonian dramaturg Eero Epner, discussing this uniquely collaborative and tri-lingual project.

About the Author Simon Stephens has been the recipient of both the Pearson Award for Best New Play 2001-2 for his play *Port*, and the Olivier Award for Best New Play 2005 for *On the Shore of the Wide World*. His recent plays include *Harper Regan* (National Theatre), *Punk Rock* (Lyric Hammersmith/Royal Exchange, Manchester), *Pornography* (Traverse and Birmingham Rep), *Wastwater* (Royal Court and Wiener Festwochen) and *The Trial of Ubu* (Hampstead Theatre).