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| **The Shadow of a Gunman**  **By Sean O’Casey**  (1923) | ICC / McClelland Library Book Group  Sept. 25, 2021  10:30 AM – 12:30 PM  The meeting in September will be on Zoom. Check the website for the link. |

Study Guide:

Reminder: This guide is provided for advisory purposes only. The only requirement is reading the play before the discussion. Ignore the guide if you wish.

1. The first act introduces us to the three principal characters, Seumas Shields, Donal Davoren, and Minnie Powell. Sketch these characters and distringuish them.
2. Explain the title of the play. Who is the “shadow” of a gunman?
3. What is O’Casey’s message to his audience?
4. React to the following comments by Kiberd:
   1. O’Casey is more interested in the pangs of the poor than in the deeds of the heroes, according to Declan Kiberd (*Inventing Ireland*, 218).

b.Seamus Shield’s speech about “gunman claiming about dying for the people when it’s the people dying for the gunman” is closer to O’Casey’s attitude” (*Inventing Ireland*, 221).

1. The Shadow of a Gunman is “a tragedy in two acts.” What makes it a tragedy? Despite the designation, do you find humor in it? Give some examples.
2. All three of O’Casey’s famous plays are set in boarding houses or tenements. Does this locale carry certain clues for the audience or readers?
3. Choose one of the following characters to analyze: Tommy Owens, Mr. Maguire, Mrs. Henderson, Mr. Gallogher. What is the purpose of the character in the play?

Further suggestions: If you put the title of the play in the search engine, you will find opportunities to see clips and the film.

►►►Looking Ahead: Dracula, by Bram Stoker, will be the focus for our meeting on October 30.