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SF PERUSALS

'ALLO 'ALLO

A Play

by Jeremy Lloyd and David Croft

SAMUEL FRENCH

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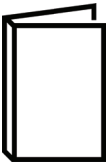

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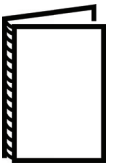

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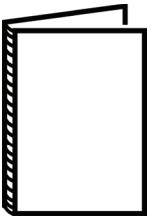

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'ALLO 'ALLO

A David Croft production, presented by Mark Furness, by arrangement with Louis Benjamin, for Stoll Moss Theatres Ltd at The London Palladium, with the following cast of characters:

The French

RENÉ	Gorden Kaye
EDITH	Carmen Silvera
YVETTE	Janet Edis
LECLERC	Jack Haig
MICHELLE	Kirsten Cooke
MIMI	Sue Hodge
THE PIANO PLAYER	John Steed
PEASANT GIRL	Suzanne Bonetti
PEASANT MAN	Clive Hopkins

The Germans/Italians

COLONEL KURT VON STROHM	Richard Marner
CAPT. BERTORELLI	Gavin Richards
HERR OTTO FLICK	Peter McCulloch
HELGA	Kim Hartman
LIEUT. GRUBER	Guy Siner
GENERAL VON SCHMELLING	Howard Leader

The British

CRABTREE	Arthur Bostrom
1ST AIRMAN	Tony Parkin
2ND AIRMAN	Hugh Burns

Directed by Peter Farago
Designed by Bill Pinner
Lighting by Chris Boyle

CHARACTERS

RENÉ
EDITH
YVETTE
MICHELLE
MIMI
COLONEL
HELGA
ALBERTO
FLICK
CRABTREE
LECLERC
GRUBER
SCHMELLING
SOLDIERS, PEASANTS, TWO AIRMEN

The action of the play takes place in and around the Café René in occupied France, 2nd World War.

PRODUCTION NOTES

When first staged, a revolve was used to indicate the various settings in René's café and elsewhere. However, these settings can be suggested more simply with lighting and minimum properties.

The "knockwurst sausage" referred to by René on page 2 of the text is not actually the one containing the original priceless portrait. This original is to be found in the sausage in the cellar whilst the one hanging in the kitchen is Flick's sausage containing the forgery.

For details of the music featured in *'Allo 'Allo*, please contact Samuel French Ltd.

ACT I

Scene One

RENÉ'*s café in France during the German Occupation of the Second World War.*

The set is a composite one comprising mainly the café but also the larder, a side room, the **COLONEL**'*s room,* **FLICK**'*s quarters,* **RENÉ**'*s and* **EDITH**'*s bedroom, and a small cinema. In the original production a revolve was used, but the various settings may be indicated more simply with parts of the stage being lit individually and dressed with a simple indication of the setting.*

The play opens in the café. The bar is downstage left. Upstage from left to right are the door to the kitchen, the staircase to the attic, the recess and rostrum on which is the piano. Near the piano hang **RENÉ**'*s hat and coat. The entrance to the café is upstage right. There are tables and chairs.*

RENÉ *comes down the stairs. He is in his apron and working clothes.*

He crosses to the door and changes the sign from "shut" to "open". He comes downstage.

RENÉ Those of you who have been paying attention will know that this is my café. It is as you see now open. How peaceful it all looks. But shortly it will be full of Germans who I have to be nice to and my wife who I have to be nice to, and my serving girls Mimi and Yvette who I enjoy being nice to when my wife isn't about. Upstairs is my wife's mother

who nobody enjoys being nice to. A fairly normal café in wartime France you might say. Do not be deceived. In my cellar I am hiding two British airmen.

A clock face on the back wall opens.

FIRST AIRMAN*'s face appears.*

FIRST AIRMAN Hallo.

SECOND AIRMAN *appears in place of the first.*

SECOND AIRMAN Hallo.

The clock strikes.

Ooh!

The clock face closes.

RENÉ If the Germans find them I will be shot. In my kitchen is hanging a decaying knockwurst sausage which contains the priceless portrait of the Fallen Madonna with the big boobies by that master knocker painter Van Klomp. I am hiding it for the Germans. If the Resistance finds out I will be shot. If my wife finds out that I am having an affair with Mimi I will be shot. If Mimi finds out that I am having an affair with Yvette she will shoot me, as will Yvette if she finds out about Mimi. My life expectancy is about the same as an over-ripe Camembert.

EDITH *(offstage)* René. René!

RENÉ Here comes the wife. Do not laugh.

EDITH *enters, coming down stairs. Her hair is wrapped round small bridge rolls.*

Why are you wearing on your hair bread rolls?

EDITH Because they were hot out of the oven and it seemed a shame to waste them.

RENÉ Are you going to put them on the table?

EDITH For the Germans—yes.

RENÉ I hope you will soon be set. We are open.

We hear banging noises from upstairs.

EDITH That is my mother. It is time for her supper.

RENÉ Your mother—she eats more than the chickens. *(He calls up the stairs)* Shut up, you old bat.

EDITH Do not talk to my mother like that. One day, you and I will be old and up in the bedroom banging.

RENÉ Not if you are wearing those curlers.

EDITH René, why can it not be between us like it used to be between us?

RENÉ What are you trying to say?

EDITH When we first met, you were so in love with me. You said that you could not even think straight.

RENÉ I could not. This is why I married you.

EDITH You were not able to take your eyes off me.

RENÉ Nothing has changed.

EDITH Now there is coldness between us. I lie awake at night, thinking you might touch me.

RENÉ I too lie awake at night thinking the same thing.

EDITH And René, why do you have all these headaches?

RENÉ It is worry, my love. Hiding the airmen for the Resistance and the paintings for the Germans, it preys on my mind. I am not like you, Edith. I look at you, your firm face, framed with bridge rolls, and I realize that I am not half the man that you are. I am a coward. If I am tortured, I will crack.

EDITH I know this, my poor, weak, feeble husband, but I have the answer. *(She starts to put a cloth on a table)* So that you will have one less worry on your frail drooping shoulders, I have moved the real painting of the Fallen Madonna with

the big boobies from the cellar to a safe place known only to me. After the war, we can sell it.

RENÉ What if the Colonel and the Captain want it back?

EDITH They cannot have it.

RENÉ What if they torture me?

EDITH You do not know where it is, so you cannot tell them.

RENÉ What if they torture you?

EDITH I will tell them that you know.

RENÉ And this is supposed to put my mind at rest. And what about the forged painting in the sausage in the kitchen?

EDITH We cannot be shot for having a forged painting. You just leave the worrying to me, René, and maybe tonight, when we are lying in bed, a thought will come into your mind.

RENÉ If it does, it will be about the Fallen Madonna with the big boobies.

EDITH The rest of these tables must be prepared. *(She calls)* Yvette, you are neglecting your duties. Attend to the tables.

There is more banging from upstairs.

Coming, Mama.

EDITH *goes.*

RENÉ *(to the audience)* As you see, just an everyday story of war-torn France. Well, there is only one way that a Frenchman can get rid of his worries. *(He goes to the kitchen door and raps on it)* The coast is clear.

YVETTE *enters.*

YVETTE René.

RENÉ Yvette.

They embrace.

YVETTE Oh René, kiss me, hold me, do all those things to me that drive me wild with desire.

RENÉ Yvette, we are open. I do not have time to do all those things.

YVETTE Well, just do some of those things.

RENÉ Oh Yvette, my little lettuce.

YVETTE René, my big gherkin.

RENÉ My little cauliflower.

YVETTE My big carrot.

RENÉ My little cabbage.

YVETTE My enormous cucumber.

RENÉ That is all we have time for, but I will remember where we left off.

YVETTE René, when are you going to tell your wife about us?

RENÉ When the war is over and then by telephone from South America. Hurry up, set the tables.

YVETTE *crosses to the bar to get items for the tables.*

And remember only one pat of butter, we are running short.

MICHELLE *enters through the front door.*

MICHELLE Psst.

RENÉ Michelle.

MICHELLE *crosses to the bar to search.* **RENÉ** *looks behind the curtains and under the table etc. They all search the room. They all come centre together.*

MICHELLE Are we alone?

RENÉ If not, we have just wasted thirty seconds.

MICHELLE Listen very carefully, I shall say this only once. The Germans have been intercepting the signals that you have been sending to London from the café.

RENÉ I see. Goodbye, Yvette. Goodbye, Michelle. Say farewell to my wife. *(He goes to get his hat and coat hanging near the piano)*

MICHELLE Where are you going?

RENÉ I think I will try for the Spanish border. It is only six hundred miles. If I run all night and crawl all day, I should be there by Christmas.

MICHELLE They have only intercepted the messages. They do not know they come from here. We have to change the frequency. You will be given another radio.

RENÉ I do not think this is a very good idea, Michelle. Could you not send messages from your place?

MICHELLE The Germans watch my windows day and night with binoculars.

RENÉ I will buy you some curtains.

MICHELLE No, the arrangement has already been made. Monsieur Leclerc will deliver the new radio to you. He will be disguised as a parrot salesman.

RENÉ I see. That should make him merge into the background all right. How many parrot salesmen do you see strolling around France in wartime?

MICHELLE Very few, that is why you will recognize him. He will be here very soon. He can then make contact with London to arrange the departure of the airmen that you are hiding. I will now disappear through the front door, like a phantom into the night.

YVETTE The Germans are in the street.

MICHELLE In that case, I shall disappear through the back door like a phantom into the night.

MICHELLE *exits.*

RENÉ *(calling)* If there are any Germans out there, you can disappear through the trap door in the cellar like a phantom into the night. Yvette, hurry with the tables. I must go to the larder to see if the brie is young and firm. *(He moves downstage centre)*

The lights go down on the café but remain downstage centre.

This is of course, a white lie. I am not interested in the brie. I am going to feel if Mimi is young and firm.

RENÉ *exits.*

The lights fade to blackout.

Scene Two

The lights come up on the larder set.

MIMI, *who is very petite, is there with a fly swatter, trying to swat a fly. She swats one on to a ham.*

RENÉ *opens the door and enters.*

RENÉ Mimi. How many times must I tell you, you must not swat flies on the ham, swat them on the currant cake, they do not show up.

MIMI Oh René.

RENÉ Do not start until you have got on the stool.

She climbs on a one foot high stool.

Now.

MIMI Oh René.

RENÉ Oh Mimi. To feel your firm, young vibrant body through your thin blouse against my stiff apron.

MIMI Oh René. My cucumber. My carrot. My button mushroom…

RENÉ It must be colder in the larder than I thought.

MIMI René, does it upset you that men pay me for my favours?

RENÉ It is war, Mimi, and you must have quite a bit put aside by now.

MIMI I put the money in my stocking under the bed. It is nearly full.

RENÉ If you had longer legs, think how rich we would be. You have a special booking tonight with the Colonel.

MIMI Not the flying helmet.

RENÉ I am afraid so.

MIMI And the wet celery.

RENÉ No. Rhubarb.

MIMI Rhubarb? Not raw rhubarb?

RENÉ Stewed, and do not forget the egg whisk.

MIMI I shall lie back and think of France.

RENÉ Very big France. By the way, what does the Colonel do with the egg whisk?

MIMI I do not even know what he does with the celery. I wear the flying helmet back to front.

RENÉ Oh Mimi, such a sensitive child. Be nice to him. See if you can wheedle from him a little extra butter, paraffin and cigarettes, cork-tipped, the others are making me cough.

The lights fade on the larder.

Scene Three

The lights come up on the **COLONEL***'s set.*

The **COLONEL** *is sitting with a newspaper over his head having a snooze. There is a knock on the door. He takes the paper off suddenly.*

COLONEL Who is that?

HELGA It is I—Helga.

COLONEL Come in, Helga.

HELGA *enters.*

I was having a little nap. Is my hair in place?

HELGA Which one are you referring to?

COLONEL Do not be cheeky, Helga. I am a colonel. You are a private. Now did you go to the chemist?

HELGA Yes, Colonel. I have what you ordered. *(She hands him a package)*

COLONEL *(looking at the package)* Reichstag 2000. Restores natural colour to your hair. Well done, Helga. *(He starts to put it on his hair with a small brush which is included in the package)*

HELGA That is right, Colonel, the sooner you start, the sooner you will look youthful and lovely again.

The **COLONEL** *continues.*

It is quite remarkable. You are looking younger already, especially around your right ear.

COLONEL Once I get the colour back in the side bits, I can use this... *(He takes a toupee out of the drawer)*

HELGA What is that—a wig?

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