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SF PERUSALS

Shindig

A Play

Arthur Aldrich

A Samuel French Acting Edition

SAMUEL FRENCH
FOUNDED 1830

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SHINDIG

First performed at the Phoenix Arts Centre, Leicester by Oadby Drama Society on 10th June 1990 with the following cast of characters:

Kate Barton	Ivy Berry
Roz Harding	Carol James
Liz Spicer	Jackie Rossa
Julia Roberts	Sally Massey
Barbara Ash	Shan Hughes

Directed by John Dexter

SETTING

The action takes place in the inner sanctum of the typing pool attached to the Sales Office of Harrison Hosiery Ltd.

There are two doors, one UR opening into a corridor, and one DL leading into the main typing pool. A window C, overlooks the factory yard.

There are four desks, complete with typists' chairs and typewriters. Kate's desk is DR; the three arranged in a line L belong to Roz, Barbara and Liz.

There are coat pegs on the wall next to the door R and a filing cabinet upstage between the door and Kate's desk.

The office is festively decorated — streamers, a Christmas tree and cards on every available surface.

Time — the present. Thursday and Friday immediately before Christmas

Also by Arthur Aldrich published
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The Road To Northborough

SHINDIG

SCENE 1

It is 8.50 on the Thursday morning before Christmas

Kate Barton, mature and formidable, is seated at her desk UR, *opening the morning's mail with a knife. She removes the letters from the envelopes and sorts them into three piles*

The door R *opens and Roz Harding, mature but not formidable, enters*

Roz 'Morning, Kate. (*She removes her coat and hangs it up beside the door*)
Kate Welcome! I was just beginning to feel very lonely.
Roz Where would they be without us old troopers?
Kate Up the creek without a paddle and serve them bloody right.
Roz (*crossing to her desk* L *and sitting*) What's the news?
Kate Lesley's husband just rang. She's got it now.
Roz Not surprised. She was showing all the signs.
Kate Which means I've got to look after next door as well as this place. Same every Christmas. Always a flu epidemic. How I long for something original, like German Measles. Still, ties in nicely with their last minute shopping. (*She holds out a letter*) One for you!
Roz (*crossing to collect it*) Who can that be?
Kate I wonder if Barbara'll be in today? She didn't look too good yesterday.

Roz (*opening the envelope*) She was sick in the ladies.
Kate Really?
Roz Said it must be something she ate. (*She reads the Christmas card*) It's from Deirdre. You remember Deirdre. Left ... oh about eighteen months ago to have a baby.
Kate Has she had it yet?

The door R *opens and Liz Spicer, sexy and glamorous, enters*

Roz I think so. Yes, yes ... she must have, silly.
Kate 'Morning, Liz! Welcome back!
Liz Thanks a bundle. (*She hangs up her coat*) 'Morning, Roz.
Roz Better are we?
Liz (*crossing to her desk* L) Was when I got out of bed. Not so bloody sure after thirty minutes on a corporation bus.
Kate You'll be pleased to know you weren't alone. There were six away yesterday.
Liz Doesn't please me at all. I wouldn't wish what I had on my worst enemy.

Julia Roberts, young and bright, enters R *in a rush. She hangs up her coat*

Julia 'Morning.

Julia rushes out again

Liz 'Morn—— What's the matter with her?
Roz Perhaps she needs the loo.
Kate Forgotten to collect the sales invoices more like.
Liz Poor kid always looks scared out of her wits.
Roz A bit of fear never did a junior any harm.

Barbara Ash, quiet and attractive, enters R

Barbara (*taking off her coat and hanging it up*) G'morning, Kate. G'morning, Roz.
Roz How are you today?
Barbara Fine thanks. (*To Liz who is staring at her*) 'Morning.
Roz Of course you two've never met, have you?
Liz No. (*She holds out her hand*) I'm Liz.

They shake hands

Barbara Barbara. I've heard a lot about you.
Liz And I thought it was the flu making my ears burn.
Roz I keep thinking I'm about to go down with it.
Kate Not you, Roz! You've done your shopping.
Liz One day, Kate, one day ...
Kate What?
Liz We all know how fit and healthy you are.
Kate Mind over matter.
Liz I could almost wish you a dose of flu, just to dent your complacency. (*She searches in the filing tray on her desk*) Now, just as a matter of interest, did anyone finish my letters for Andy Peters?
Kate What letters?
Liz A couple of letters he gave me before I went to do my Christmas shopping.
Kate Fat chance!
Liz That's nice.
Kate There isn't anyone in the pool can read your shorthand for a start.
Roz Don't worry, Liz, Andrew went down with the flu same time as you.
Liz (*smiling*) Really? In that case — (*she picks up her shorthand*

notebook) — I think I'll go and see if he's better. (*She moves to the door* R)

Kate Don't be long! There's still plenty to do.

Liz Just re-establish my credentials.

As Liz opens the door

Julia returns at speed with a filing tray containing papers

She and Liz almost collide

Ay up, kid!

Julia Sorry! Sorry!

Liz Slow down! It's only work.

Liz exits R

Julia crosses to Kate's desk

Roz Poison!

Kate Pardon?

Roz The new perfume. Liz is wearing it. It's called ——

Kate (*interrupting*) Poison! Very appropriate.

Julia Sales invoices, Miss Barton.

Kate (*taking the tray*) Is this all?

Julia Mr Gardiner said ——

Kate (*interrupting*) I know ... (*Deep voice*) The bottom's fallen out of sales, Miss Roberts.

Julia Yes, that's right.

Kate (*deep voice*) I blame Christmas.

Julia Very good!

Kate (*normal voice*) Years of practice, girl. All right, leave 'em with me. You'd better start on the filing.

WAIT, THERE'S MORE!

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