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STAGS AND HENS – THE REMIX

A Comedy

by Willy Russell

SAMUEL FRENCH

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ISBN 978-0-573-01609-7

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Willy Russell's career spans more than four decades; born in Liverpool in 1947, he left school at fifteen, became a women's hairdresser, part-time singer/songwriter before returning to education and becoming a teacher.

Russell's breakthrough work, commissioned by Liverpool Everyman, *John Paul George Ringo...and Bert* transferred to the West End winning Best Musical - Evening Standard and London Theatre Critics Awards.

Two of Willy's best-known plays have female protagonists, *Educating Rita* (Olivier Award for Best Comedy and *Shirley Valentine* (Olivier Award – Best New Comedy & Best New Actress, Tony Awards, Broadway – Best Actress). Both became successful films – Julie Walters and Pauline Collins who played the roles on stage received Oscar nominations as did Willy Russell for the screenplay of *Educating Rita*.

Blood Brothers, (Laurence Olivier Award, Best New Musical, 1983), played for twenty-four years becoming the third longest running West End musical. Major foreign productions include a two-year run on Broadway, with recent productions in South Africa and Korea and current productions in Australia and Japan. The UK tour is still playing to packed houses.

Our Day Out, originally written for TV, about a school outing, has been adapted for the stage as *Our Day Out – The Musical*. Premiered at Liverpool's Royal Court in 2010 to rave reviews it was revived a year later for another sell-out season.

The critically acclaimed novel, *The Wrong Boy* was published in 2000 and translated worldwide.

For further information please visit willyrussell.com

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STAGS AND HENS – THE REMIX

Opened on 1st February 2008 at the Royal Court Theatre, Liverpool, with the following cast:

LINDA	Rachel Rae
CAROL	Suzanne Collins
FRANCES	Laura Dos Santos
BERNADETTE	Gillian Hardy
MAUREEN	Keddy Sutton
PETER	Stephen Fletcher
ROBBIE	Kevin Harvey
KAV	Danny O'Brien
EDDY	James Spofforth
BILLY	Lenny Wood
DAVE	Kris Mochrie
ROADIE	Shaun Mason

The play was directed by Bob Eaton
Designed by Mark Walter

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CHARACTERS

LINDA
MAUREEN
BERNADETTE
CAROL
FRANCES
DAVE
ROBBIE
BILLY
KAV
EDDY
PETER
ROADIE

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

The action of the play takes place in the Ladies and Gents toilets in a Liverpool dance hall

Time: the present
ACT I Evening
ACT II Immediately after

ACT I

A Liverpool club, 1977.

As the curtain rises, house lights fade, Stevie Wonder's "Superstition" in all its glory is playing.

At the top of a staircase is a set of doors, which lead to the club's entrance and exit, and, centrally, a set of double doors through which we can hear music and see something of the dance floor lights seeping through from beyond. The carpeted staircase leads down to a ground floor area and the Ladies and Gents toilets – the interiors of which are plainly visible.

Through the entrance and exit doors we see a group of girls emerge, all of them dressed in various hen night garb. They enter loudly – but beautifully – clearly enjoying themselves as they move and dance down the steps, blowing party whistles, moving and singing along to the Stevie Wonder track. At one point they naturally and effortlessly go into a unison dance sequence.

Screaming with laughter they enter the Ladies, the laughter continuing as the track fades and segues to a track seeping through from the dance floor.

Throughout the following the girls prepare themselves for the night ahead. **LINDA** *removes her L-plates and bride-to-be attire.*

BERNADETTE Did y' hear him – did y' fuckin' hear him?

Laughter.

CAROL I *saw* him – that was enough!

Laughter.

FRANCES "How can they be so bleedin' cheesy!" he said—

BERNADETTE —He said, "If I was a raindrop – I'd send you a shower."

Laughter.

I said, "You can fuck off with your shower – I've got a fully fitted bathroom already!"

Laughter.

LINDA *moves to one of the cubicles and closes the door behind her.*

Agh! Agh! Aren't we all havin' another great time eh? Aren't we? Aren't we, Lind'?

LINDA *(from behind door)* Don't we always, Maureen?

MAUREEN Agh! Yeah.

CAROL What about that one who came over to you, Fran, just as we were finishin' the meal?

BERNADETTE Oh him! Fuckin' Englebert Hump-Me-Dick!

Laughter.

FRANCES Oh wasn't he disgustin'? He said to me, "I think you must be an engineer because every time I look at you, my nuts tighten up."

Groans and laughter.

If it was up to me he wouldn't have his nuts *tightened* up – they'd be fuckin' chopped up!

Laughter.

LINDA *(from cubicle)* D' y' know what – that's one thing I definitely won't miss once I'm married – havin' to put up with all that kind of shite that men come out with when they're tryin' to cop with y'.

BERNADETTE Don't be so sure of y'self Linda? Y' think men stop bein' gobshites just 'cos you've got a weddin' ring on? If you're out an' they see you're married they think they're on – they think you're only out cos you're desperate. *(Beat)* I'm not desperate. *(Beat)* Not till it gets to about half ten!

Laughter.

MAUREEN Agh! Aren't we all havin' another great time eh? I love it when we're all together – me, an' you, Bernie an' Carol an' Fran...

CAROL *(sensing where this will lead)* Maureen!

MAUREEN *(tears beginning)* ...an' Linda, I love Linda an' when we're all havin' another great time...

BERNADETTE Oh for fuck's sake – come on Mo don't start again...

MAUREEN ...an' after tomorrow we'll never be able to all have another great time again because Linda's leavin' us, isn't she?

BERNADETTE *(mothering* **MAUREEN***)* Come on Mo! What have we told y'? Cryin'? Y' can't cry on a night like this.

FRANCES It's bad luck y' know Mo, cryin' on a hen night?

CAROL It is, y' know Maureen.

MAUREEN Is it?

CAROL Yeah, if you cry on a bride's hen night it means you'll never become a bride yourself.

MAUREEN *(stifling her tears)* I wasn't – I wasn't really cryin' y' know Carol.

BERNADETTE Ah we know you weren't love, were y'? Because you are gonna make a lovely bride...one day, aren't y'? A lovely lovely bride.

MAUREEN D' you really think so Berni?

BERNADETTE Of course! Won't she girls? Won't our Mo find herself that perfect feller one of these days?

CAROL *(in the mirror)* Course she will. All y' need is patience, Maureen. Some men aren't too concerned about looks.

MAUREEN *(beat)* What?

BERNADETTE *(QUICKLY DIVERTING; SINGING AND BANGING ON CUBICLE DOOR)* ***SHE'S GETTIN' MARRIED IN THE MORNING.***

OTHERS *(joining in)*

DING DONG HIS BALLS ARE GONNA SHINE
PULL OUT HIS CHOPPER
OOH WHAT A WHOPPER
GET ME TO THE CHURCH ON TIME.

MAUREEN *(calling to cubicle)* Agh Lind', we're all so happy for y' – aren't we?

CAROL *(calling)* This time tomorrow Lind' you'll be a married woman – with your own flat, your own front door...

MAUREEN ...your own telly, your own hoover, your own fitted bedroom...y' own husband. Agh! An' Linda's been dead lucky with Dave hasn't she.

FRANCES ...ah he's great.

CAROL ...Dave's gorgeous.

MAUREEN He's really caring, isn't he, Dave?

BERNADETTE An' he's a laugh – not like the morbid bastard I married! He come in the bedroom tonight as I was getting ready – he said, "I don't know why you wear a bra, you've got nothing to put in it?" *(Beat)* I said, "Well, that's never stopped you wearin' fuckin' underpants, has it?" *(Beat)* An' I knew what he'd come upstairs for – Mr Romance – he said, "So d' y' fancy a quickie?" I said, "How would I know the difference?"

FRANCES Agh! Go way Bernie – you love him really.

CAROL Oh I think he's really nice, your husband.

BERNADETTE Nice? You wanna try livin' with him – even the kids can't stick him. "The Laxative" they call him – he irritates the shit out of them!

FRANCES Oh come on Berni you've been married to him for bleedin' years – he can't be all that bad.

CAROL *(to* **BERNADETTE***)* An' you! You'd be moanin' about not getting' enough even if you were married to someone like – Rod Stewart!

BERNADETTE Oogh, what! Rod – The Throbbing Rod – give me half the chance he could Dyno Rod my drains any day!

Laughter.

MAUREEN Agh 'ey. We're all havin' another brilliant time aren't we – aren't we eh?

CAROL Well some of us are! *(Banging on the closed cubicle door)* Come on Lind' – get a move on.

FRANCES What the hell y' doin' in there Linda?

LINDA I'm thinkin'!

CAROL
BERNADETTE } *(together)* What?

LINDA I'm havin' a think!

CAROL Oh Linda don't start bein' stupid.

BERNADETTE 'Ey, 'ey, come here. *(Whispering)* Leave her, come on leave her alone – she's probably just havin' a little minute to herself.

MAUREEN Agh. With her thoughts. *(Beat)* In the lavvy.

FRANCES It's a big night, isn't it – the night before y' weddin'?

BERNADETTE She's probably havin' a little weep – sheddin' that last little tear while she's still a single girl.

CAROL I can't wait to see her in church tomorrow.

FRANCES Have you seen her dress, Mo?

MAUREEN Oh, it's the new length, isn't it?

FRANCES An' what about the back?

CAROL O the back's brilliant, isn't it – it hasn't got no back? Just one big plunge!

BERNADETTE Y' makin' it sound like somethin' y' unblock the fuckin' sink with!

FRANCES Oh no, it's fantastic, Berni – you wait.

CAROL She's gonna look so stunnin'.

MAUREEN But listen – d' y' know what she said to me eh, last night? She said, "I don't even know why I'm bothering – I'd rather just get married in a pair of jeans!"

CAROL Oh when she starts all that kind of stuff y' just take no notice of her. She can be like that Linda but y' just ignore her. She doesn't mean half the stuff she comes out with.

BERNADETTE Oh y' mean like that, "What are y' havin' to drink Linda?" "Oh, I'll have a pint of bitter." "You will not! Not when y' out with me!"

CAROL Linda just does that to be like – awkward.

FRANCES Yeah but she was always like – *independent,* wasn't she?

BERNADETTE What's independent about wantin' to drink beer from a pint glass?

MAUREEN I'm stickin' on the brandy an' Babycham tonight – an' maybe a few vodka chasers. I wanna save myself for tomorrow.

CAROL Why bother? None of the bloody fellers'll be takin' it easy, will they?

BERNADETTE Y'can bet they'll be pourin' it down them like there's been a drought!

MAUREEN Where are they havin' the stag night?

FRANCES Dave wouldn't tell Linda where him an' his mates were goin'.

CAROL I'll bet they've gone to one of those clubs, watchin' blue movies.

BERNADETTE Oogh! An' here's us – just come out dancin'!

CAROL Get lost Berni. Y' don't wanna be watchin' pornographic films.

BERNADETTE 'Ey, speak for yourself.

MAUREEN What are they like, Carol?

CAROL Horrible. Just like lookin' in the butcher's window!

BERNADETTE What!

MAUREEN Full of chops?

CAROL Blue films they're just – just – *sex*!

BERNADETTE Yeeees!

CAROL Not sex like – like sex *should* be. When y' see a film where sex is done properly – like...like in *Emmanuelle* – well it can be lovely; soft, an' slow, in colour an' with the right music – romantic. That's how sex should be.

BERNADETTE That's how it *should* be Carol. But it never is love.

CAROL It can be. With the right man it can. I'm not interested in fellers who want to make sex. I want a feller who makes love, not a feller who makes sex.

MAUREEN I just want a feller.

Beat.

BERNADETTE Y' know when me an' my feller were still young?

FRANCES *Young*? Christ Berni, you're hardly an OAP.

BERNADETTE I know but I mean – when we still looked ahead of ourselves instead of back over our shoulders – we thought