

THE HEN NIGHT

A One-Act Play

by

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Setting

SHARON IS PREPARING THINGS FOR THE GIRLS' ARRIVAL - BOTTLES, GLASSES, NIBBLES ETC. SHE IS A SNAPPY DRESSER AND IS KNOCKING BACK A G & T BETWEEN SINGING SOMETHING MODERN, DRAWING ON A FAG, THE SMOKE FROM WHICH SHE WAFTS AWAY PERIODICALLY.

DEBS, THE BRIDE-TO-BE IS THE FIRST TO ARRIVE - DRESSED CAREFULLY AND UNFLAMBOYANTLY AND IS CARRYING A BOX OF CAKES.

DEBS; Hello, Sharon - it's me .. oh, am I the first? look, I know you said for me not to bring anything but I was doing some baking anyway and I thought these cakes (*She is cut off mid-stream by Sharon*)

SHARON; Oh God, there you are - I was wondering where the hell everyone had got to - at this rate I'm going to be pissed before you all get here (*grabbing the box*); never mind, grab yourself a drink no, on second thoughts I'll get it or you'll be overdosing on orange juice or pouring yourself enough wine to wash a gnat's *arse!* (*pouring a triple and adding the bits*). Here - might as well get used to drowning your sorrows now

DEBS; Er ..yes - thanks Sharon; er .. cheers!

SHARON; No cold feet yet then? (*without waiting for a reply but Debs does try to answer "no, not a bit"*) that's the thing tho isn't it you only get cold feet after the novelty's worn off! Sods' law! Still, life's a sod isn't it; might as well enjoy ourselves while we can the kids are at his mum's tonight .. I just thought - to hell - he's out without a care in the world - no sense doing things by halves - Time do you think they'll all get through with your thingummys stag party? hope they don't come back early and spoil our fun .. just like the selfish sods!

DEBS; Er.. no.. I don't think ... Robbie told me he wasn't ... you know ... going to get involved in anything stupid .. so er..

SHARON: (*butting in again*) Men always get involved in something stupid - it's their nature. If we teach you anything tonight Debs, it's that we have to keep them under the

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thumb, in a manner of speaking, ... you know, by the short and curlies, (*sees her puzzled expression*) By the goolies for God's sake!

(there is loud knocking and some raucous laughter which prompts Sharon to go to the door.

Debs meanwhile tries to dilute her drink with lemonade)

(sounds of welcome from off-stage and Sharon returns with Chell and Claire. Chell always speaks loudly and in a broad accent).

CHELL; I told her Sharon - that I'd call in for her; I bloody knew she'd get the night wrong (*laughing loudly*) eeh, just as well you've got all of us to keep you right; Well -She wasn't ready .. I had to wait .. not that I minded that .. her geezer invited me in ... a bit of alright he is .. I didn't mind .. (*speaking posh*) "Would you like an aperitif?" he says. I wasn't sure what I'd let myself in for so I asked for white wine - thought it would be that fizzy stuff ... you know that lambrusco.. tastes like lemonade .. but it tasted like crap .. most likely some expensive booze ... anyway, made me puke my guts up coming along Wordsworth Avenue (*says the latter in a posh accent*) .

CLAIRE; It was Moet, actually .. but not to everyone's taste! (*passing Sharon her coat*)

(Sharon in the meantime has been ushering them in whilst listening and reacting, Debs assumes a quietly shocked expression.)

SHARON: Hugo's a real looker - if you like that sort of thing; bit of a tight arse tho, needs to let himself go .. could sort him out with a bit of time ... not my type tho .. all horses and round table and committees .. no wonder she's a bit doolally (*indicating Claire*). right - what's everyone having to drink? (*eyeing Debs drink scornfully*).

CHELL: I might have a beer Sharon , something long - a big one'll keep me going all night .. (*giggling at the double entendre*).

(Sharon nudges her in appreciation of the joke - the other two look away)

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CLAIRE: G and T please Sharon .. I take it we are going to eat something later .. dash .. I could have brought the canapés that were left .. some nice cheeses that I ordered from one of our suppliers .. they were excellent .. great for the wine and cheeses dos one has.

(Chell mutters something to Debs about Ones and Dos)

SHARON: Oh to hell with all that .. I've got a heap of sausage rolls and pizzas there .. something filling .. sod the canapés *(this slightly mis-pronounced)*- you need some packing after a few drinks. *(getting everyone's drinks)*.

(Claire looks suitably disgusted)

Anyone know what time Fran's coming ... or if she's coming? I hope Pete isn't being funny about her coming out. After all, that's why we are having it here and not in the pub. We could have had it down at The Hogs Head - it's a bloody good laugh on a Friday night.

CHELL; yes, - they sometimes get good turns - strippers and stuff - hey, we could have got someone here - you know *(Here she does an imitation strip singing the strip music spilling her drink at the same time)*. Did you ever see that Randy Richard - they got him for Linda's hen night - all tattoos and body piercing- God, he was wicked; what he could do with those muscles and ...

SHARON: *(Interrupting)* I remember him; didn't they get him for Nicola Simmonds hen party... ooh, and didn't they find him on the flat roof when her mum came home?

CLAIRE: It's a bit juvenile Chell ; surely we can entertain ourselves without recourse to vulgarity! *(she sniffily scans the "buffet" and with a "no lemon for the g&t then" pours another drink)*

SHARON: Oh, lighten up a bit "Clarty Claire".

DEBS I know what she means though; I hope you haven't organised anything like that for

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tonight. I thought we might talk about our schooldays - when we all met at secondary school and where we've come since those days.

CHELL: Oh jeez! it's gonna be a fun night!

SHARON: *(who has been helping herself to several more drinks in the meantime and signals that she has heard the front door) (going out)*

That's probably Fran now - just in the nick of time- don't know that I could cope with the chat about what went on behind the books in the school library or which boys tried to see the girls' knickers on the hockey field!

DEBS: It's funny tho' isn't it - you know the nicknames we all had - just hearing Sharon call Claire "Clarty Claire". you were really arty weren't you Claire - suppose that's how you got that nickname .. and Chell .. you were .. was it something to do with BO? suppose you were quite fat at the time ... it was funny tho wasn't it?

CHELL: *(sarcastically)* Hilarious!

(Sounds of Fran's voice explaining to Sharon as they enter)

FRAN: So he said it was ok for me to come for a while but to be back early.

CHELL; God, it just gets better!

SHARON; Have a bloody drink then and forget about him for a while. *(looking around)*
Everyone else got another?

CHELL: I've just changed my mind about just having the one. *(helps herself to more)* I've got a feeling I might need a few.

FRAN: Perhaps an orange juice please Chell. My stomach's playing up again.

CHELL: Give her a brandy then! That's good for the stomach - with