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# KISS THE BRIDE



COMEDY  
BY  
JOHN J. WOOTEN

"What the world needs now is laughs, sweet laughs,  
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the full-bloom American farce  
Laughs begin almost immediately...

a comedy gem."

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## KISS THE BRIDE

***Comedy. By John J. Wooten.***

*Cast: 4m., 4w. Kiss the Bride* is a madcap comedy which takes place in the lobby of a wedding reception hall. A scheming groom is out to murder his (frequently married and very wealthy) bride on their wedding night! Sight unseen, he's hired a couple of bumbling bad guys to do the job for him, but our nervous groom mistakes an introverted wedding guest for his hired killer, sending the wrong man upstairs with his wife. Soon thereafter, the real hit man (and wife) arrive having kidnapped an utterly outraged and flabbergasted bride from the wrong wedding reception. The kidnapped bride soon escapes from the trunk of their car and with the help of crazed couples and uninvited guests, she sends the confused newlyweds fleeing—and the audience rolling down the aisle with laughter! *Unit set.*

*Code: K26*

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# **KISS THE BRIDE**

**A Madcap Comedy in Two Acts**

**by**

**JOHN J. WOOTEN**



**Dramatic Publishing**

**Woodstock, Illinois • London, England • Melbourne, Australia**

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*KISS THE BRIDE* officially opened on May 5, 1995 at the Forum Theatre, a professional Equity theatre in Metuchen, N.J. The production was directed by Peter J. Loewy and included the following artists:

Stan .....	PAUL WHELIHAN
Katie .....	MICHELE TAUBER
Bride .....	AMELIA PRENTICE
Lou .....	CARL WALLNAU
Satch .....	RUTH FOST
Luby .....	VICKI TRIPODO
Mitch .....	GEOFFREY F. MORRIS
Detective .....	RAY MOGENIS
Sarah .....	NICOLE CERRITO

#### PRODUCTION STAFF

Scenic and Costume Design .....	BRUCE GOODRICH
Lighting Design .....	JOE DiNARDO
Production Stage Manager .....	JUDI SILVER

# KISS THE BRIDE

A Play in Two Acts  
For 4 Women and 4 Men

## CHARACTERS

KATIE  
STAN  
ALICE  
LOU  
MITCH  
LUBY  
DETECTIVE  
SARAH

PLACE: The lobby of a wedding reception hall.

TIME: The present.

CASTING NOTE: ALICE and SARAH should have the same hair color.

OPTIONAL SCRIPT CHANGES: See pages 77-79.

## SCRIPT CHANGES

Below are changes to the published script that were implemented at a 1999 production of *Kiss the Bride* at Theatre-Fest. Although these changes are optional, they make for a tighter, smoother production, and may be used if so desired.

<u>Page #</u>	<u>Change/Cut/Add</u>
7	Stan's 2nd speech, change to: "Other people are leaving."
9	Katie's 6th speech, cut the last line. Stan's last speech, change "do humpty-dumpty." to "play barnyard daddy."
12	Alice's 7th speech: cut the 2nd and 3rd sentences.
14	Lou's 5th speech, cut 2nd sentence.
17	Lou's 1st speech, 9th line down, change to "We'll meet at midnight behind the dumpster and I'll slip you the package." Then carry on with "I don't feel..."
18	Starting with Luby's 5th speech, cut it down through Mitch's "So?" Then cut Luby's 1st sentence of her next speech.

- 19           The last 8 speeches, reverse order to Luby,  
Mitch to end of page. Instead of Mitch, Luby  
as it is now.
- 20           Cut Mitch's first speech.
- 21           Cut Luby's 2nd speech.  
Cut Mitch's 3rd speech.  
Luby's next speech, cut "Yeah. But if this is  
Lou." Continue speech with "Why is he so..."
- 21-22       Cut Luby's last speech on page down through  
Mitch's "Yeah" speech. Resuming with  
"Luby saying "What about our money? etc."
- 23           Cut "Luby. Don't yell at me" and the next  
four+ speeches, resuming with the stage  
direction (*He starts toward stairs.*)
- 24           In Alice's 1st speech, cut "Goddamnit it,"  
Alice's next speech, cut "Oh, God," and two  
lines down cut "God,"
- 26           Cut Katie's 4th speech and Lou's speech  
after it.
- 29           Cut Mitch's last speech on the page.

- 30            Cut Luby's 1st speech.  
             Mitch's speech following it, cut "Yeah."  
             Cut Luby's long speech in middle of page  
             and Mitch's speech following it.
- 33            After stage direction mid-page, cut Katie's  
             2nd speech and Stan's speech following it.
- 36            Lou's 1st speech should simply read: "What  
             was that?"
- 52            Mitch's 5th speech, cut the word "Shit!"  
             Luby's last speech on page, cut "Shit,"
- 56            Cut the words "Shut up!" at the beginning of  
             three of Sarah's speeches.
- 67            Alice's 1st speech, cut the last sentence.
- 76            Stage direction should end with "Stan slowly  
             looks at dollar in glass." Then end play with  
             two speeches:
- KATIE (*yells*). Stanley! Stanley! I was only  
             kidding about the money...we can play  
             barnyard daddy.
- STAN (*yells back*). Shut up! (*Blackout.*)

## ACT ONE

SCENE: *The front lobby of a good-sized reception hall. A large rack of coats and two bathroom doors are along the back wall. Leading up the back wall is a long stairway. The sound of the reception spills out into the room.*

AT RISE: *STAN is standing in the lobby. He is dressed in an oddly matched sports coat, slacks, and tie. He appears to be very uncomfortable as he taps an empty drink glass. KATIE approaches.*

KATIE. What are you doing?

STAN. I want to leave.

KATIE. You can't leave. You just got here.

STAN. Everyone else is leaving.

KATIE. Other people got here on time. Other people followed the wedding party. Other people didn't have some macho urge to take a shortcut. Other people weren't three hours late.

STAN. Other people know the bride and groom.

KATIE. I know the bride and groom.

STAN. Well, you should have come by yourself then.

KATIE. Next time I will.

STAN. I wanted to go to a movie.

KATIE. You are so selfish. Lou is a friend of mine.

STAN. Oh, please. He hardly knows you.

KATIE. That's not true.

STAN. Your friend Lou thought I was the hat-check boy.

KATIE. If you stand out by the cloakroom, people are going to think you're a hat-check boy.

STAN. He tipped me.

KATIE. Come back in with me. You're drawing attention to yourself.

STAN. He also winked at me.

KATIE. What?

STAN. He winked at me.

KATIE. He did not.

STAN. Yes, he did. A couple of times. Then he admitted he was winking at me. He said "I'm winking, I'm winking." I said, "Okay, okay." Then he looked at me like I was some kind of weirdo and walked off.

KATIE. You're imagining things.

STAN. No, I'm not.

KATIE. Come back in with me and mingle. You'll feel better.

STAN. No, I want to go home.

KATIE. Stan, please. Don't make me angry.

STAN. I can't believe you brought me here. You know how much I hate social gatherings. I get nervous and I sweat. Look at me, Katie, I'm sweating. I hate sweating.

KATIE. You're sweating because you're wearing a tweed sports coat in July. It has nothing to do with my friends.

STAN. That's not true.

KATIE. I don't know why you had to wear that. You look silly.

STAN. It's the only coat I had that matches these pants.

KATIE. So. You have other pants, Stan. Summer pants.

STAN. They don't look right with this tie.

KATIE. You're impossible.

STAN. And you're unsympathetic. You know how uncomfortable I am and yet you make it worse by mocking how I'm dressed. You don't see me making fun of the way you're dressed.

KATIE. I'm sorry, you look wonderful. I love the tie. Now come back inside, I want you to meet Lou before the reception ends.

STAN. What if he makes another pass at me?

KATIE. Come on, Stan.

STAN. No. I'll wait out here for you. (*Holds out glass.*) Bring me a Coke, will you? With ice.

KATIE. Come back in with me!

STAN. Shh! Someone's coming. (*They stand quietly.*)

KATIE. Hi. How are you? Hi. (*They stand quietly, nodding and smiling as the couple put on their coats and begin to exit.*) Good night, now. Drive safe. Good night.

STAN. I hate your friends. Let's go home.

KATIE. How can you hate my friends when you've never even met them? Come on, Stan, give it a chance.

STAN. Did you see the bride? She's looped.

KATIE. It's her wedding. She's enjoying herself.

STAN. She was kissing all the guests. Why was she kissing all the guests?

KATIE. I don't know, Stan. (*Pulling at him.*) Come on, she won't kiss you.

STAN. What's that supposed to mean?

KATIE. Are you coming in or not?

STAN. Let's go home. Please!... (*In a whisper.*) We can do humpty-dumpty.

KATIE. Don't try and bribe me with sex anymore. Its been too long.

STAN. Fine. Forget I said it.

KATIE. Come in with me. RIGHT NOW!

STAN. Shh. Someone might hear you.

KATIE. You got us lost on purpose, didn't you? You had no intention of taking me here.

STAN. You're very perceptive.

KATIE. I knew it. You son of a bitch.

STAN. Katie, calm down. You're starting to jiggle.

KATIE. That's it. Give me the car keys.

STAN. Why?

KATIE. So I can leave.

STAN. I'll drive.

KATIE. You're not coming.

STAN. What do you mean? Of course I'm coming. Why would I stay?

KATIE. Because I'm leaving you here.

STAN. All right, fine. We'll stay for a few more minutes.

KATIE. Give me the car keys or I'll scream.

STAN. You're trying to give me another anxiety attack, aren't you?

KATIE. Give me the keys!

STAN. I will not!

KATIE. Help! Help! The hat boy is accosting me!

STAN. Stop it, Katie!

KATIE. Give me the keys, you little shit. *(Moving in on him.)*

STAN. Fine... Here. *(He hands her the keys. KATIE grabs her coat.)* You can start the car up, dear.

KATIE *(starts out)*. Ha!

STAN. How am I supposed to get home?

KATIE. Use your tips to call a cab. *(She exits. STAN starts out after her but stops as someone approaches. It is another nice couple. STAN stands quietly.)*

STAN. Hi. How are you? Hi.

*(A beat. The couple puts a dollar in STAN's empty glass as he helplessly stands there nodding and smiling. He watches them out. The bride, ALICE, enters and staggers over to STAN. ALICE is obviously drunk. She is in a wedding gown but shoeless. She taps on his shoulder. STAN jumps.)*

ALICE. Have you seen my husband? *(STAN shakes his head that he has not.)* We're married three hours and already he deserts me. Think he'll come back? *(STAN nods. ALICE laughs.)* Yeah. He's Mr. Reliable. The type of man you know you can trust, you know what I'm saying? I finally got it right this time. *(STAN attempts a smile.)* Cigarette? *(STAN shakes his head. ALICE lights up. Pause. She takes a deep puff of her cigarette.)* So what if my friends hate him. I got sick of everyone telling me money was meant to marry money. I've tried that enough times to know it doesn't work. The more money they got, the less goods they got. *(Leans in to STAN.)* Tell you a secret. Every night since we've been together, Lou hasn't had a flat tire once. You can't buy that kind of reliability. There's other things out there that are just as fun to blow as money.

STAN. Just how many husbands have you had?

ALICE. Six. Well, seven counting Lou. Champagne?

STAN. No... Thanks. *(ALICE pours herself a drink.)*

ALICE. They're no fronts with Lou. He does and says what he feels. And he gives me my freedom, that's the way it should be. Don't you agree?

STAN. I wouldn't know.

ALICE. How do you know Lou?

STAN. I don't.

ALICE. I'm sorry, do I know you?

STAN. No.

ALICE. Oh... Well, you can't be one of Mother's invited guests. Not dressed like that.

STAN. No, actually, I'm here...was here...with my wife. She's an old friend of Lou's.

ALICE. You're married?

STAN. Yes.

ALICE. Isn't marriage a lovely thing? Of course Mother hates me now. Wouldn't come. And she owns this place. Invited fifty people but didn't show herself. Go figure.

STAN. She doesn't like your husband, I take it.

ALICE. Hates him. Calls him lard build-up. She even threatened to kill him. But he still loves her.

STAN. That's good.

ALICE. She thinks he's just out for my money. So to set her straight, he insisted on signing a prenuptial agreement as a peace offering. He can't get anything once I divorce him. I'd have to get a rare disease and die or something... (*She leans in to him.*) ...and I'm very healthy. (*STAN looks at the front door.*) So, where is she?

STAN. Who?

ALICE. Your wife.

STAN. Oh, uh...she left.

ALICE. She left? (*STAN nods.*) Without you? (*STAN nods.*)

*ALICE bursts out laughing.*

STAN. I don't think it is particularly funny.

ALICE. And you decided to stay anyway. Good for you.

STAN. Actually, I...

ALICE. Sure you won't have a drink?

STAN. No, really. Thank you.

ALICE. So give me a kiss.

STAN. Pardon me.

ALICE. A kiss. It's tradition for all friends of the groom to give the bride a kiss.

STAN. I'm not a friend of the groom.

ALICE. Come on.

STAN. I don't think my wife would approve.

ALICE. Your wife left. Remember?

STAN. Oh, all right. If you insist. (*He leans in to give her a polite kiss. She wraps around him and gives him a long, deep kiss. He breaks loose.*) Excuse me!

ALICE. What's your name?

STAN. Stanley.

ALICE. Take off your coat, Stan. You're sweating.

STAN. Can I use your phone?

ALICE. This isn't my house.

STAN. Can you direct me to a phone?

ALICE. I think there may be one upstairs. Shall we look?

STAN. Are you coming on to me?

ALICE. What do you think?

STAN. You just got married.

ALICE. So?

STAN. So. I don't think Lou would appreciate it if I went upstairs with you.

ALICE. Oh, please. Lou won't care. I told you, he understands me.

*(LOU enters.)*

LOU. I understand what?

STAN. Oh, God.

ALICE. Hello, dear.

LOU. Well, there you are. I thought I lost you.

ALICE. You'll never lose me, dear. *(Staggers to her feet.)*

LOU. Are you feeling okay, honey?

ALICE. Wonderful. Lou, this is Stanley.

LOU. Oh, of course. I remember Stan. How are you?

STAN. You do?

ALICE. Lou, honey, when are we leaving? I'm getting bored.

LOU. In a little while, puddin'. I just want to say goodbye to the guys. Why don't you go lie down upstairs for a while. I'll come up in a few minutes.

ALICE. All right.

LOU. Have the hat-check boy help you up the steps.

ALICE. Hat-check boy?

LOU. Yeah, Stan the man here.

STAN. Well, actually, I was just standing over there. I'm not actually ...

LOU. He'll be happy to take care of you. Won't you, Stan?  
*(Out of ALICE's view LOU winks twice at STAN and gives him "okay" signal. STAN is petrified.)*

ALICE *(with a smile offers her arm)*. Well, if you insist, dear.

STAN. Wait a minute. (*Pointing to room.*) Is this the bathroom? I have to go to the bathroom. Excuse me. (*He practically runs through the bathroom door.*)

LOU. Nervous little guy, isn't he?

ALICE. I like him.

LOU. What did he say to you?

ALICE. About what?

LOU. I don't know. Where's he from? How long has he worked here? Stuff like that.

ALICE. He came with his wife.

LOU. Good.

ALICE. Do you know her?

LOU. No, of course not. He's the hat-check boy, honey.

ALICE. Then why did you say "good"?

LOU. I'm happy he isn't alone. It's a wedding, a place for couples.

ALICE. He said his wife knows you.

LOU. Really?

ALICE. Are you sure he's a hat-check boy?

LOU. Of course. I hired him myself.

ALICE. You hired him?

LOU. Yes, dear. He comes highly recommended.

ALICE (*staggers*). Whoa ... I think I may throw up.

LOU. Good idea.

ALICE (*stares at him, pause*). I love you.

(*She exits into women's room. STAN enters quickly from bathroom and heads towards door.*)

LOU (*chasing after him*). Hey ... What the hell are you doing?

STAN. I'm leaving.

LOU. No you're not! You're not losing your nerve now.  
I'm paying you a lot of money for this.

STAN. Look...here's your dollar back. I'm not the hat-check boy.

LOU. Oh, no shit. You don't play one very well either. She was starting to wonder. Why the hell did you tell her about your wife?

STAN. Because she asked.

LOU. Well, if she asked you if you were here to murder her, would you tell her that too?

STAN. I'm sorry. I was just trying to make conversation with her.

LOU. All right, all right. She seems comfortable with you, that will help.

STAN. Listen, I'm married...

LOU. Hey, quit worrying. I'll take care of you and your wife.

STAN. I beg your pardon.

LOU. Hey, nice touch, telling her your name was Stan.

STAN. It's Stanley to you!

LOU. Oh, Stanley, I get it. Well, Stanley, where's your wife? Hiding?

STAN. No. She left.

LOU. She left? Why?

STAN. None of your business. Look, can you tell me where a phone is?

LOU. Forget the phone. Look, are you going to be able to do this without your wife's help? I don't want to get involved. At least not with the initial act.

STAN. Look, Lou, I really don't want to go upstairs with your wife.

LOU. Fine. Do it wherever you want. But do it quick and somewhere out of the way. And, for God's sake, make sure no one sees you. (*Takes small bottle out.*) Here, take this. Take it! (*STAN does.*) It's a bottle of grain alcohol. The more booze the better. And make sure she swallows it all, the whole shebang. Hold nothing back. I don't want her to walk out of here when you're done, you understand? Afterwards, sneak out quietly and wait for me at the 7-Eleven. I'll meet you at midnight behind the dumpster and we'll take care of business. I don't feel comfortable doing it here; it's not safe. Keep the name Stanley, I like it. I'll be... Smiley. Don't bring your wife. If she's not involved in the act, she loses out... Now listen, I'm going to get rid of the caterer and the cleaning lady. Alice should be right out. (*STAN stares at LOU in shock.*) You look calm, good. And, Stanley, I'm only going through with this because I have to, so please, try and do it quickly and don't let her suffer too much. And don't leave any marks! ... Good luck.

*(LOU shakes STAN's lifeless hand, takes a deep breath and exits into reception room. STAN remains motionless for a moment and then looks at grain bottle. He takes a long drink. He looks around, rushes to the door but sees someone coming. He runs back into room, looks around, and hides in the closet. ALICE enters. She looks around for a moment and then staggers up the stairs. LOU enters and carefully watches her exit.)*

LOU (*in a loud whisper*). Stan? Stanley? (*He looks around frantically but does not see STAN.*)

ALICE (*from upstairs*). Lou, I'm waiting!