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Dramatic Publishing

SOUP DU JOUR

A Musical Screwball Comedy

Book by
TODD MUELLER and HANK BOLAND

Music and lyrics by
GREGG OPELKA



Dramatic Publishing

Woodstock, Illinois • England • Australia • New Zealand

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Book by TODD MUELLER and HANK BOLAND
Music and lyrics by GREGG OPELKA

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“*Soup du Jour* is the recipe for old-fashioned gaiety! It’s all about laughing, about toe-tapping tunes and witty lyrics.” www.chicagocritic.com

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IMPORTANT BILLING AND CREDIT REQUIREMENTS

All producers of SOUP DU JOUR *must* give credit to the Authors and Composer of the Musical in all programs distributed in connection with performances of the Musical and in all instances in which the title of the Musical appears for purposes of advertising, publicizing or otherwise exploiting the Musical and/or a production. The name of the Authors and Composer *must* also appear on a separate line, on which no other name appears, immediately following the title, and *must* appear in size of type not less than fifty percent the size of the title type. Biographical information on the Authors and Composer, if included in the playbook, may be used in all programs. *In all programs this notice must appear:*

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Soup du Jour was first presented as a reading at Theater Building Chicago in March 1997, with the following cast:

Stewart Bailey PAUL SLADE SMITH
Katharine Hawks TAMMY MADER
Franklin O'Shea PAUL AMANDES
Tiffany Vandervanden KELLY ANNE CLARK
Shelly DeCoco LEISA MATHER
J.P. Thompson MARK KAPLAN

Soup du Jour premiered in Del Rio, Texas, in July 1998 in a production by Upstagers with the following cast:

Stewart Bailey ROBERT WADE
Katharine Hawks TERRA WADE
Franklin O'Shea DAVID GRAF
Tiffany Vandervanden CANDY GRAF
Shelly DeCoco LORI LATHAM SCHIFANI
J.P. Thompson HARRY WILLIAMS

Director FRED BROCKWELL
Stage Manager GLORIA CULPEPPER
Set Design DAVID GRAF

SOUP DU JOUR

A Musical in Two Acts
For 3 Men and 3 Women

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

J.P. THOMPSON, editor of the *New York Herald-Tribune*

KATHARINE HAWKS, his ace reporter

SHELLY DECOCO, the *Herald-Tribune's* food critic with
a secret

STEWART BAILEY, owner of Bailey's restaurant, also
with a secret

TIFFANY VANDERVANDEN, Stewart's high-society
fiancée, the girl with almost everything

FRANKLIN O'SHEA, Stewart's faithful bartender and the
best man at his upcoming wedding

* * * *

SETTING: New York City in the spring of 1939. The story
takes place in three locations.

The first location is the office of Katharine Hawks.

The second location is Bailey's restaurant.

The third location is Charlie Knickerbocker's, a New
York bar.

MUSICAL NUMBERS

ACT I

Overture

Katharine Hawks, the Foreign Correspondent Kate
The Scoop on the Soup Kate, J.P.
Where? Stewart
Mr. Chaplin, Wait Your Turn Stewart, Franklin, Kate
The Nothin'-to-Complain-About Blues Tiffany
Soup Montage All except J.P.
The Wedding Toast Franklin
Write the Story Kate
In Love with Kate Stewart

ACT II

Entracte

A Lovely Scandal Makes a Lovely Day J.P., Shelly
Look Behind the Face Franklin
Write the Story (reprise) Kate
What Women Get Ya Franklin, Stewart
What Women Get Ya (encore) Franklin, Stewart
So Sorry, Tiffany/Soup Montage (reprise)
Stewart, Franklin, Kate
Finale: The Wedding Toast (reprise) Stewart, Kate
Bows: reprise of dance section of Mr. Chaplin
Curtain call: reprise of end section of Overture

ACT I

MUSIC CUE #1: "OVERTURE"

SCENE 1

(Spring 1939. We are in the office of Katharine Hawks, ace reporter for the New York Herald-Tribune. A suitcase and hatbox sit next to the desk. The occasional clatter of typists is heard coming from the Herald's copy room. KATHARINE HAWKS sits at the desk, typing away. She wears a party hat and chomps on a cigar.)

OFFSTAGE VOICES *(tipsily sung)*. ...for she's a jolly good fe-e-llow...which nobody can deny! *(Hoots and cheers follow.)*

J.P. *(entering with what appears to be a liquor bottle in a paper bag)*. You've got to admit it, Katie; I'm throwing you one hell of a going-away party.

KATHARINE *(not looking up from the typewriter)*. No doubt about it, J.P., it's a real smash.

J.P. Good, good, I'm glad you like it. So, we're square now, right?

KATHARINE. Sorry, J.P. Even a smash doesn't make up for the party you *didn't* throw for me when I won the Pulitzer.

J.P. *(for the umpteenth time)*. But you said you didn't want a party.

KATHARINE. For a smart man, you know very little about women.

J.P. Can't we consider this a party for both?

KATHARINE. Very, very little.

J.P. (*setting the bag on her desk*). Well then, you probably don't want this.

KATHARINE. Single or double malt?

J.P. Neither.

KATHARINE. Then you're probably right. (*She picks up the bag and it's surprisingly light. She reaches in and pulls out a piece of rolled-up fabric. It unfurls into a less-than-fashionable scarf. KATHARINE is speechless.*)

J.P. It's a scarf. I wasn't sure which color was in fashion so I picked one with a little bit of everything. (*Pause.*) If you don't like it you can exchange it.

KATHARINE. J.P. Thompson, you old softie. I wouldn't exchange this for anything in the whole world.

J.P. So I picked a good one?

KATHARINE. As scarves go, I would say this one is the perfect...length.

J.P. I knew it! It gets pretty cold in London and my gut told me to go with lots of fabric. Something you can really wrap yourself up in.

KATHARINE. Thank you, J.P.

J.P. You're welcome. So, now are we square?

KATHARINE. No. But you're getting closer. And here's a little something for you. (*KATHARINE rips the paper from the typewriter and hands it to J.P.*)

J.P. "LaGuardia's Right-Hand Man Caught Red-Handed." When did you...? How did you...?

KATHARINE. Got a call about ten minutes ago from that sweet, sweet janitor down at city hall. You're not the only one with last minute farewell gifts.

J.P. What time is it? Son of a—! I gotta get this down to typesetting. (*J.P. quickly exits and KATHARINE moves to the open door.*)

OFFSTAGE VOICES. Speech! Speech!

KATHARINE (*to the offstage voices*). Thank you, boys. I can honestly say I've never met a nicer pack of wolves. Now take this party down to O'Malley's before I start to cry.

OFFSTAGE VOICES (*sounds of disappointment*).

KATHARINE. The first round is on J.P.

OFFSTAGE VOICES (*cheers are heard*).

KATHARINE. And remember, you're not losing the best journalist in New York, you're gaining the best journalist in London.

**MUSIC CUE #2: "KATHARINE HAWKS, THE
FOREIGN CORRESPONDENT"**

KATHARINE.

**A BRAND NEW START,
A BRAND NEW CITY,
A BRAND NEW OFFICE WITH A BRAND NEW
CHAIR.
A NEW ASSIGNMENT IN A PLACE SO RARE.**

**I'M MOVING TO LONDON
TO BE THE *HERALD'S* CORRESPONDENT
THERE.**

**KATHARINE HAWKS, THE FOREIGN
CORRESPONDENT,
KATHARINE HAWKS, FROM THE LONDON
DESK.
IT HAS A LOVELY RING TO IT.
IF I COULD SING, I'D SING TO IT.
IF I COULD DANCE, I'D DANCE AN ARABESQUE.**

**KATHARINE HAWKS, THE FOREIGN
CORRESPONDENT,
GIRL FROM THE WRONG SIDE OF THE POND
MAKES GOOD.**

**AND IF LONDON BRIDGE IS FALLING DOWN,
JACK THE RIPPER'S BACK IN TOWN,
IF SOME BLACKGUARD HARMS THE CROWN,
WHO WILL GET THE NAMES AND DATES
BACK TO THESE UNITED STATES?**

**KATHARINE HAWKS, THE FOREIGN
CORRESPONDENT.
JOURNALIST JOURNEYS TO A FAR-OFF SHORE.**

**A BRAND NEW START, A BRAND NEW CITY,
WITH BRAVE NEW STORIES IN STORE.**

**OFF TO THAT PROMISED LAND I GO.
PULITZER PRIZE IN HAND I GO.
MERRY OLD ENGLAND, WATCH THIS LION
ROAR.**

**SO PRINT IT UP BIG FOR ALL TO READ.
MAKE IT THE HEADLINE, LET IT LEAD.
KATHARINE HAWKS WALKS THROUGH THAT
DOOR!**

(KATHARINE exits with her bags but is backed back into the office by J.P. who is reading the headlines from a stack of papers.)

J.P. *(reading the newspaper headlines)*. “George and Gracie’s Radio Romance”— *(He throws one paper down on the floor and looks at the next.)* “New York’s Hot Spots for the Hot to Trot”— *(Same.)* “In Step with Fred and Ginger.” *(Same.)*

KATHARINE. This is a strange farewell custom.

J.P. They’re clobbering us with this trash!

KATHARINE. Ah, let me guess, you got the circulation numbers.

J.P. The *Star* is outselling us two to one!

KATHARINE. So double our price and call it even.

J.P. I’m serious, Katie. The *Herald* is in trouble.

KATHARINE. The day you stop seeing trouble with this paper is the day we are in trouble.

J.P. I’ll take that as a compliment.

KATHARINE *(putting down her bags with a sigh)*. We’ve been through this a thousand times, J.P. The *Star* sells fluff. Fluff comes and goes. Besides, the *Herald* has fluff. We’ve got Shelly DeCoco, the queen of fluff.

J.P. She may be the queen, but we’ve only got one of her.

KATHARINE. There’s a blessing worth counting twice. *(Flipping through the Herald.)* Where do we hide her column?

J.P. On the front page.

KATHARINE. What?! Since when?

J.P. Since this morning; don’t you read the newspaper?

KATHARINE. I’m too busy writing it. *(She flips back to the front page.)* Two full columns?

J.P. Out of guilt. Thanks to you.

KATHARINE. Me? Isn't it bad enough you're giving her my office? You don't owe her anything on account of me.

J.P. You're the one responsible for her "little problem."

KATHARINE. I didn't force her to get up on the bar at the Christmas party and do the jitterbug.

J.P. You bet her fifty bucks she wouldn't.

KATHARINE. But two whole columns? On the front page? On any page?

J.P. The name DeCoco sells newspapers.

KATHARINE. Is that so? And what exactly are we selling today? *(She reads.)* "Soup Celeb Weds Deb! Stewart Bailey of Bailey's restaurant set to wed society notable Tiffany Vandervanden. The reception promises to be doubly exciting as Mr. Bailey will once again start serving his father's world-famous *soup du jour*." And you say we don't have fluff.

J.P. Quality fluff! We don't have quality fluff.

KATHARINE. "This will bring to a close three soupless weeks of mourning for Stewart's recently departed father. It's sure to be a bittersweet treat for the invited elite." Always with the rhymes.

J.P. That's her style, Katie. And like it or not, she has a journalism degree.

KATHARINE. Where did she study, Mother Goose U?

J.P. There's nothing wrong with that announcement. It's exactly what the readers want. Only the *Star* ran it a week ago...with a guest list.

KATHARINE. A waste of paper. *(She throws down the paper.)* That should come with its own bird and a two-column cage.

J.P. With my luck the *Star* will run tomorrow's edition with the Bailey reception menu.

KATHARINE. Those are the headlines you want? "What the Bride and Groom Will Consume!," "The *Herald's* Your Source for a Course by Course," "Bailey's Lure Is Soup du Jour."

J.P. What did you just say?

KATHARINE. The *Herald* is a newspaper, J.P. We print news, not gossip and secondhand secrets.

J.P. Secrets, that's it! You're brilliant, Katie! (*Yelling out the door.*) Ramona, have the boys hold the presses.

KATHARINE. What are you doing, J.P.?

J.P. Did I tell you you were brilliant, Katie?

KATHARINE. Oh, no, J.P.

J.P. It's exactly what we need.

KATHARINE. My bags are packed.

J.P. You said it yourself. It's the best-kept secret in New York.

KATHARINE. I never said that.

J.P. Every newspaper in town has tried to get that recipe.

KATHARINE. You need DeCoco.

J.P. No, no. I need someone who can sneak in. A real reporter. A journalist. I need the best. I need you.

(The background typing comes to a sudden stop punctuated by the bell of a carriage return. There is a slight pause and the typing begins again. A rhythm develops.)

MUSIC CUE #3: "THE SCOOP ON THE SOUP"

J.P.

WE'RE IN A SITUATION

KATHARINE.
WE'RE IN A SITUATION?

J.P.
WE'RE IN A SITUATION
AND WE'VE LOST OUR GRIP,
GOT DECLINING CIRCULATION
IN THE READERSHIP.
WE GOTTA REFORM,
WE GOTTA REGROUP.
WE GOTTA GET THE SCOOP
ON THE SECRET SOUP.

KATHARINE.
THE SOUP?

J.P.
THE SOUP!
THAT BROTH THEY POUR.
WE GOTTA KNOW THE SCORE
ON THE SOUP DU JOUR.
GET THE SCOOP ON THE SOUP,
WHAT'S THE SCAM ON THE CLAM?
WHAT'S THE POWDER IN THE CHOWDER,
WHAT'S THE BEAN IN THE TUREEN?
'CUZ WE'RE IN A SITUATION
WHERE THE *HERALD* IS IMPERILED
GOT DECLINING CIRCULATION.
WE'VE BEEN PUSHED A LITTLE FAR
BY THAT DOUBLE-DEALIN', STORY-STEALIN'
TANTALIZIN', TRAUMATIZIN',
VICTIMIZIN', VILIFYIN',
GLORIFYIN', HORRIFYIN',
VANDALIZIN', SCANDALIZIN',

**MISDEMEANIN', INTERVENIN',
ILL-BEGOTTEN,
DIRTY, ROTTEN RAG:
BY THE *STAR!*
BY THE *STAR!*
BY THE *STAR!***

**THE RESTAURANT WITH THE SOUP I WANT
HAS IT UNDER LOCK AND KEY.
AND I WANT YOU TO BURROW THROUGH
AND GET THAT RECIPE.
WE'RE IN A SITUATION.
WE CAN'T AFFORD TO WAIT.
I NEED THE CONFISCATION OF A SECRET
CONCENTRATE.
THE MAITRE D' HAS THE RECIPE,
BUT THE CONTENTS HE WON'T SAY.
SO I'VE A PLAN TO GET THAT MAN
TO SPILL THAT CONSOMMÉ!
YOU'LL NEED FINESSE, YOU'LL NEED
PANACHE.
YOU'LL NEED CHUTZPAH, BUT BY GOSH,
DON'T BRING ME BACK AN EMPTY PLATE.
GET THE SOUP AND I WILL KISS YOU, KATE.**

KATHARINE (*spoken*). I can't do it, J.P. I leave for London in two hours!

J.P. You have to, Katie. Think of the *Herald*. Think of me.

KATHARINE. I'm thinking of London.

J.P. I can't keep you in London if we aren't selling papers in New York.

KATHARINE (*reluctantly*). And you think this soup recipe will sell papers?

J.P. Loads of papers.

KATHARINE. Enough papers to get me to London on tomorrow's flight?

J.P. Absolutely.

KATHARINE. Now let me get this straight... *(Sings.)*

**THE RESTAURANT WITH THE SOUP YOU WANT
GIVES THE FORMULA TO FEW.
AND YOU WANT KATE TO INFILTRATE
AND FIND WHAT'S IN THAT BREW.**

BOTH.

**WE'RE IN A SITUATION. A JOURNALISTIC
SPOT.
WE NEED THE REVELATION OF WHATEVER'S
IN THAT POT.**

KATHARINE.

WHAT IS IT THAT THEY GOT

BOTH.

THAT MAKES THEM SO DARN HOT?

KATHARINE.

**THE MAITRE D' KNOWS THE RECIPE
BUT HE'S TIGHTLIPPED AS A DRUM.
AND I'M THE FOX TO BREAK THE LOCKS
AND MAKE THAT BIRDIE HUM.
I'LL USE MY WITS, I'LL MAKE MY BREAKS.
I'LL USE WHATEVER RUSE IT TAKES.
BY TWELVE TONIGHT YOU'LL HAVE YOUR
SCOOP.
I'LL BE BACK AND I'LL BE CARRYING SOUP.**

Act I

SOUP DU JOUR

17

J.P.

**THE MAITRE D' KNOWS THE RECIPE
BUT HE'S ACTIN' DUMB OR HE'S KEEPIN' MUM**

BOTH.

**SO WE NEED AN ACE TO INVADE THE PLACE
AND TO GET THE SCOOP ON THE SOUP.**

KATHARINE.

RIGHT!