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Family Plays



**Book by
Sandra Redmond**

**Music by
Donald Adkins**

Ready Steady Go

Premier productions with Cameo Productions
at Flare Square Theatre, Calgary Stampede
and the Third Stage Theatre in Stratford, Ontario.

Musical. Book by Sandra Redmond. Music by Donald Adkins. Cast: 6m., 6w. In this charming old-fashioned tale with a contemporary message, three trader rats invade an attic where a long-forgotten colony of dolls resides. McClot, McClutter and McClump offer the dolls exactly what each wants, asking very little in return—half a teapot. Vanilla, Sasparilla and Marie enthusiastically agree. Miss Mumbles and Scrumptious the Bear are compelled to accept the terms, despite anxieties. Only Ready Steady and his sarcastic horse, Ramona, recognize how dangerous the newcomers are. As rats are not easy to defeat, all must unite. Courage, brilliance and unalloyed fun ensue. Derek, a high-flying spider, not only spins the tale but sings such terrible songs he helps drive the rats away. *Set: one int. set of an attic. Costumes: dolls and toy animals. Approximate running time: 85 minutes. Code: R92.*



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Ready Steady Go

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By

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Author's Notes

Ready Steady Go has been performed by numerous groups over the years. The author wishes to thank the many talented directors and teachers who have taken the trouble to send pictures, children's drawings and publicity materials. The author in particular wishes to thank the following:

Louis Hobson, whose talented staging, and **Peter Walker**, whose musical score, contributed much to the original production, and to the development of the play;

Fred Chapman, Drama Department, University of Idaho, Moscow, Idaho, and **John Rapsey**, Drama Department, Niagara College, Welland, Ontario, who were both particularly helpful in their productions;

Bronwyn Hopton, whose amateur theatre group staged the American premiere in 1975 in Worthington, Ohio, and whose group reunited seven years later in order to do the show together all over again;

Playwrights Canada for their original publication of the play in 1975;

Don Adkins for his beautiful score;

And all the **Ready Steadys**, **Miss Mumbles**, **Scrumptiouses**, **Ladies and Rats** who have brought the magic world of the attic to life;

The Dereks who have always had the compassion not to sing his songs all the way through; and. . .and. ...

Oh yes. . .and **Ramona**.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

MISS MUMBLES	An unhappy, self-preoccupied doll with a cracked china head
READY STEADY	A kind-hearted but shy Mourtie who dreams of being a hero
RAMONA	An intelligent horse with a gift for sarcasm
SCRUMPTIOUS	A foolish, noisy, completely lovable bear
<u>The Ladies</u>	
VANILLA	Who is much concerned with manners and etiquette
SASPARILLA	Who loves to eat and gossip
LAEVINIA	Who considers herself an adorable flirt
MARIE	Who leans toward dictatorship
<u>The Packrats</u>	
McCLOT	The brains of the trio
McCLUTTER	The nasty one
McCLUMP	The dumb one
	and
DEREK	A song-writing spider

READY STEADY GO was first produced by Cameo Productions at Flare Square Theatre, Calgary Stampede in July 1973 with the following cast:

READY STEADY	Michael James
MISS MUMBLES	Gloria Ablonczy
RAMONA	Tish Carnat
SCRUMPTIOUS	Alec Tebbutt
VANILLA	Carol Ann Bosch
SASPARILLA	Marion Robertson
LAEVINIA	Sharon Braun
MARIE	Vi Powlan
McCLOT	Richard Jobb
McCLUTTER	Ken Freeman
McCLUMP	Gary Willis
DEREK	Dave Paulsen

Directed and staged by Louis B. Hobson
Choreography by Judith Adams
Musical Score by Peter Walker

READY STEADY GO was subsequently performed at the 3rd Stage, Stratford, Ontario in 1974 with the following cast:

READY STEADY	Robert Thomson
MISS MUMBLES	Susan Hogan
RAMONA	Diane D'Aquila
SCRUMPTIOUS	Hardee T. Lineham
VANILLA	Luba Goy
SASPARILLA	Rosemary Dunsmore
LAEVINIA	Patricia Collins
MARIE	Jean Bergmann
McCLOT	John Bayliss
McCLUTTER	Terry Judd
McCLUMP	J. Kenneth Campbell
DEREK	Jonathan Welsh

Directed by Arif Hasnain
Designed by Grant Guy
Lighting by Michael J. Whitfield
Musical Score by Berthold Carriere
Orchestra: **Piano, Berthold Carriere,**
Percussion, Bob Comber,
Double Bass, Mary Rannie

The DOLLS are in frozen tableau on stage as the audience enters. The LIGHTS dim, the MUSIC plays softly, and the DOLLS slowly come to life. When the mood of the MUSIC changes, the DOLLS begin to sing.

SONG: IN A CORNER OF AN ATTIC

ALL: In a corner of an attic in Alberta long ago
Lived a colony of dollies quite forgotten, not on show.
Safely hidden in the darkness, how happy they were
there:
Little ladies and a Mountie and a horsie and a
bear

RAMONA: *(Spoken) (With great indignation)* Horsie! Horsie! !

ALL: Miss Vanilla, Sasparilla, Miss Laevinia and Marie,
Dear old Scrumptious and Miss Mumbles, and our brave
Ready Steady.

READY STEADY: *(Spoken) (With great modesty)* That's me.

ALL: In a corner of an attic in Alberta long ago
Lived a colony of dollies quite forgotten, not on show.

Then a day came, a black day came, when some villains
brought great strife
Tried to tempt the dear old dollies, tried to change their
happy life.
But Vanilla, Sasparilla, Miss Laevinia and Marie,
Ready Steady, and Miss Mumbles, and the bear found
victory.

RAMONA: *(Spoken) (Still indignant)* And Ramona. Ramona! !

ALL: *(Spoken)* And Ramona! !

In a corner of an attic in Alberta long ago
Lived a colony of dollies not forgotten, now on show.

(At conclusion LIGHTS dim. Spot on DEREK the spider)

DEREK: Nice quiet place this attic. Lots of dust. And no wind. Don't like wind. Don't like it at all. You see . . . we house spiders are delicate. We're sensitive, artistic souls. And all of us were happy here until one day . . . I'll never forget that day. I call it: the Day of the Wind. Because it was just as though a big wind came through here, a wind that tore everything to pieces, stirred everybody up.

Oh I still don't like women, don't like 'em at all. Ever since my wife tried to turn me into dinner I've been nervous around 'em. I know, I know, you're going to say it's biological, that we're all part of nature's plan. Still if you ask me, the ladies are a silly, useless bunch. Yes. That was never more clear than on the Day of the Wind. Started out so ordinary too; a day like any other day

(LIGHTS out on DEREK. Spot on READY STEADY in an alert pose.)

MISS MUMBLES: OOOOOOOOOO *(Pause)* Ohhh, Ohhh, Ohhh, Ohh

READY STEADY: Who's that?

(MISS MUMBLES rushes on and looks into her mirror.)

MISS MUMBLES: Oh no no no no no!

READY STEADY: Miss Mumbles? Is that you Miss Mumbles?

MISS MUMBLES: Will this never end?

READY STEADY: I'll get the glue.

MISS MUMBLES: My poor poor cracked face. How can anyone bear to look at it anymore.

(READY STEADY comes up to MISS MUMBLES who is still seated in front of the mirror. He chats amiably as he applies glue to her face. MISS MUMBLES relaxes slightly as he does so.)

MISS MUMBLES: Thank you Constable Steady.

READY STEADY: Good thing I was still here. Today's Wednesday. Inspection day. I have considerable walking to do. Inspection seems kind of silly in this attic I know. But regulations are regulations. Off I go every week. *(Looks at watch.)* I'm late. Do you need more glue Miss Mumbles, before I put it away?

MISS MUMBLES: *(Annoyed)* Oh what's the use Constable Steady. I'm falling to pieces.

READY STEADY: I don't notice your cracks Miss Mumbles, even up close like this. *(Moves closer.)*

MISS MUMBLES: Go away Constable Steady. You don't know what it's like to have cracks. But there was a time when I was so pretty. *(Dreamily)*

READY STEADY: Yes, I know. *(Also dreamily)*

MISS MUMBLES: There, you see, even you think I'm ugly, ugly.

READY STEADY: I don't think you're ugly Miss Mumbles.

MISS MUMBLES: Don't make fun of me Constable Steady.

READY STEADY: I'm not

MISS MUMBLES: The ladies talk about my face.

READY STEADY: *(Drawing himself up to attention)* Miss Mumbles, I've wanted to tell you something for a long time

MISS MUMBLES: They think I'm ugly.

READY STEADY: Something about the way I feel. You must know you mean a great deal to

MISS MUMBLES: Ramona doesn't talk to me.

READY STEADY: You mean something to . . .

MISS MUMBLES: *(Still interrupting)* Nobody needs me.

READY STEADY: to . . . to . . .

MISS MUMBLES: I'm all alone.

READY STEADY: to *(Giving up)* to all of us.

MISS MUMBLES: And you you're late. Remember being late is against those regulations of yours.

READY STEADY: Yes, yes I must go . . . But Miss Mumbles . . .

MISS MUMBLES: Oh do leave me alone, Constable Steady.

(READY STEADY exits. MISS MUMBLES sings.)

SONG: CRACKS CAN BE BEAUTIFUL

If only someone had eyes to see
How really lovely cracks might be
If only someone had voice to say
How nice to see your cracks today
If only someone had hands to touch
Those cracks they'd learn to love so much
If only someone had such joy of soul
To see behind the cracks what's whole.

Cracks can be beautiful
Like freckles or fat
Cracks can be distinguished -
I'd like to think that,
I'd like to think that.

Cracks can be remarkable
Like courage and strength
Cracks can be unusual -
Mine go to great length,
They go to great length.

Cracks can be sensational
Belong in the news
Cracks bring on results -
Mine bring me the blues,
They bring me the blues.

If only someone had eyes to see
How really lovely cracks might be
If only someone had voice to say
How nice to see your cracks today
If only someone had hands to touch
Those cracks they'd learn to love so much
If only someone had such joy of soul
To see behind the cracks what's whole.

*(BLACKOUT. LIGHTS up on RAMONA who lies
asleep.)*

READY STEADY: *(Offstage)* Ramona. Ramona.

(RAMONA stirs. Enter READY STEADY.)

Ramona, we're late. Today's inspection.

RAMONA: *(Yawning.)* Phoey on inspection.

READY STEADY: The Book of Regulations says there shall be a thorough inspection of all premises each Wednesday of the month except during leap year.

RAMONA: A bunch of dusty corners. Big deal. *(Yawns.)* I was having the best dream.

READY STEADY: *(Ignoring her, he consults his book.)* Let's see, double time to the bird cage. That means only five minutes late for the inspection of the spider colony. *(Looks up at RAMONA.)* Are you ready to go Ramona?

RAMONA: That dream had a message for me.

READY STEADY: A message? What message?

RAMONA: Today's my birthday!

READY STEADY: Birthday!

RAMONA: There was this big haystack shaped like a cake

READY STEADY: Ramona

RAMONA: . . .With a big bunch of carrots stuck on top

READY STEADY: Ramona!

RAMONA: . . . All lit up and voices were singing . . . "Happy Birthday to you, Happy Birthday to y"

READY STEADY: *(Very firmly)* Ramona. Horses do not have birthday parties.

RAMONA: *(Determinedly oblivious to him)* I was probably just coming to the part where I open the presents. Maybe if I go right back to sleep

(She returns to her bed but READY STEADY reacts strongly.)

READY STEADY: *(Sternly)* Attention!!!!!!!!!!!!

(RAMONA stiffens and stands to attention. READY STEADY walks past her as if on military inspection. He holds his book and a checklist, and talks to himself.)

Now then, I want to avoid stopping at that damp spot near the window. Last time it took hours to dry out my uniform. Don't like being out of uniform. Then we should be on time for

RAMONA: Sir - request permission to peruse the orders of the day - Sir.

READY STEADY: Permission granted. *(Hands over checklist.)*

RAMONA: Thank you - Sir. Let's see now Birdcage:

READY STEADY: Check.

RAMONA: Spider colony.

READY STEADY: Check.

RAMONA: Table.

READY STEADY: Check.

RAMONA: Window.

READY STEADY: Check.

RAMONA: Birthday.

READY STEADY: Check.

RAMONA: Happy Birthday to me, Happy Birthday to me!

READY STEADY: Forward march! Hup two hup two.

(He angles right: she marches forward. He looks at her reprimandingly.)

RAMONA: You said forward. *(He is not amused. She follows him singing.)* Happy Birthday to me, Happy Birthday to me

READY STEADY: Ramona. What have I just told you?

RAMONA: Why not?

(RAMONA sings.)

SONG: WHY CAN'T HORSES HAVE BIRTHDAY PARTIES?

Why can't horses have birthday parties?
It doesn't really seem fair.
We have feelings too you know;
We ought to have our share.

Birthdays are important;
They're a person's special day.
I'd have carrot candles
And a cake made out of hay.

Party cups of sugar lumps
Would really be quite grand
And what about some music from
A horse and buggy band?

Why can't horses have birthday parties?
It doesn't really seem fair.
We have feelings too you know;
We ought to have our share.

I'd ask the cows and billy goats
And Ready Steady too;
And with my other special friends
I might ask all of you.

We'd play a game of horseshoes
And thrilling games like that
And you could bring me presents -
Here's a hint - I'd like a hat.

Why can't horses have birthday parties?
It doesn't really seem fair
We have feelings too you know;
We ought to have our share.

(Ramona tries to draw Ready Steady into dancing with her. At first he is aloof but gradually he succumbs and begins to dance. At the end of the song, there are sounds of crashing and shouting offstage. On come Scrumptious who is deeply involved in an imaginary battle.)

SCRUMPTIOUS: All right you guys, got you now. This is it, see?
Yellow-livered cowards. Thought you could outsmart me
did you? Me, the roughest, toughest Mountie in the
world. Nobody - but Nobody can outsmart me, see? I'm
tough see? And rough.

(SCRUMPTIOUS trips and falls. On seeing READY STEADY he gives a highly dramatic salute - and falls again.)

Brought 'em in for questioning sir.

RAMONA: Oh brother.

READY STEADY: We haven't time to talk right now Scrumptious.

SCRUMPTIOUS: I bet the ladies would make me a uniform like yours
Ready Steady, and I could mash down my hat like this,
mash it down a little and I would look just like a Mountie.

RAMONA: Too bad nobody ever mashes you down.

READY STEADY: We're late for inspection Scrumptious. We were just leaving.

RAMONA: Now that you're here.

SCRUMPTIOUS: Take me, Ready Steady, please please.

RAMONA: Nothing personal of course.

SCRUMPTIOUS: There ought to be two on patrol. You know, side by side through the snow and the sleet and the rain and the heat and the wind

RAMONA: Bad guys. They're all over the attic waiting for us . . . with fangs and horrible eyes. They look like this
(Makes a face.)

READY STEADY: Ramona goes with me. That's enough.

SCRUMPTIOUS: But she's just a horse.

RAMONA: Just a horse!

SCRUMPTIOUS: Please Ready Steady, I mean Constable Steady, sir.

(SCRUMPTIOUS salutes - and falls. RAMONA goes at him. READY STEADY holds her back.)

RAMONA: Just a horse! What are you . . . King Kong?

SCRUMPTIOUS: I need a chance to prove I can be a Mountie.

READY STEADY: I've already told you Scrumptious, I don't know if a bear can be a member of the R.C.M.P. Book of Regulations doesn't say.

RAMONA: They can't bear bears. Hahahahahaha. They can't bear bears. *(No reaction.)* He doesn't get it.