

ROGERS AND HAMMERSTEIN'S
"SOUTH DAKOTA!"

A radio/stage play

By

Eric Coble

SOUTH DAKOTA!

RUDMAN

FINALLY TONIGHT, WE HAVE UNEARTHED A HUGE DISCOVERY. IN A TRUNK IN AN ATTIC IN TEANECK, NEW JERSEY, A WOMAN RECENTLY DISCOVERED WHAT HAS NOW BEEN VERIFIED AS A LOST MANUSCRIPT BY NONE OTHER THAN ROGERS AND HAMMERSTEIN. IT WAS APPARENTLY THEIR EARLIEST COLLABORATION, AND WITHIN IT WE FIND A STARTLING NUMBER OF THEMES AND CHARACTERS THAT WOULD LATER COME TO FRUITION IN OTHER MUSICALS. WHILE THIS DISCOVERY HAS BEEN IGNORED BY THE REST OF THE MUSICAL THEATRE COMMUNITY, SOME WOULD SAY WITH GOOD REASON, TONIGHT WE ARE PROUD TO BRING YOU THE WORLD PREMIERE OF THE "NEW" ROGERS AND HAMMERSTEIN MUSICAL -- "SOUTH DAKOTA!"

ANGEL

MR. BIGELOW? BILLY BIGELOW?

BILLY

HEY, HANDS OFF, YA WINGED PALOOK. YOU WANTA MOUTHFULL OF KNUCKLES??

ANGEL

WE DON'T STRIKE PEOPLE IN THE FACE HERE IN THE AFTERLIFE, MR. BIGELOW.

BILLY

YEAH, WELL, THINGS ARE GONNA BE A LITTLE DIFFERENT NOW I'M HERE, SEE?

ANGEL

WHAT'S BOTHERING YOU, BILLY?

BILLY

WHO SAID SOMETHIN'S BOTHERIN' ME??

ANGEL

(CHOKING)

MR. BIGELOW... PLEASE... LET GO OF MY HALO... I CAN'T...

BILLY

AH, CAN THIS, YA HARP-STRUMMIN' PANSY. I'M JUST SQUIRRELY 'CAUSE I MISS MY LITTLE GIRL.

ANGEL

(CHOKING)

IS SHE STILL DOWN ON EARTH?

BILLY

YEAH. RIGHT THERE. SEE? THAT HUGE FLAT CHUNK OF LAND IN THE MIDDLE OF GODFORSAKEN NOWHERE.

ANGEL

(CHOKING)

THAT'S SOUTH DAKOTA, MR. BIGELOW. CAN'T YOU HEAR THEM SINGING?

CHORUS

(IN THE DISTANCE, SINGING TO

"OKLAHOMA!")

"SOUUUUTH DAKOTA! WHERE THERE JUST AIN'T NOTHIN' TO BE SEEN--"

BILLY

WHAT I'D GIVE TO HAVE ONE MORE VISIT WITH HER.

ANGEL

(CHOKING)

I THINK I CAN ARRANGE THAT... IF YOU JUST LET ME GO!!

BILLY

WOULD YA? AW, BOY, THAT'D BE JUST ABOUT THE SWELLEST PUNCH IN THE GUT A FELLA COULD MUSTER!

ANGEL

WHAT'S HER NAME?

BILLY

MARIA. THAT'S HER IN THE NUN GET-UP WITH ALL THE KIDS.

ANGEL

LET'S GO TO HER NOW!

(BLING!)

(KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK)

KING

WHAT DO YOU WANT?

MARIA

AH! HELLO, YOUR MAJESTY! YOU MUST BE THE MAN OF THE HOUSE!

KING

YES, I AM! I AM KING VON TRAPP OF SOUTH DAKOTA! RULER OF HUGE FLAT NOWHERE, IMPERIAL LORD OF ROCK AND GRAVEL, ETC, ETC, ETC.

MARIA

I'M SISTER MARIA. I'M HERE AS GOVERNESS OF YOUR CHILDREN.

KING

WHY DO YOU CARRY STRANGE BLACK SUITCASE?

MARIA

THAT'S MY GUITAR, YOUR MAJESTY. GOES WITH ME EVERYWHERE I GO. I THOUGHT I'D SING A LITTLE TUNE OF INTRODUCTION-

(SINGING)

"RAINDROPS ON ROSES AND WHISKERS ON KITTENS, BRIGHT COPPER KETTLES AND WARM--"

KING

STOP SINGING. YOU MEET CHILDREN NOW. THERE ARE 67 OF THEM. CHILDREN!

(CLAP CLAP)

THIS IS YOUR NEW SINGING GOVERNESS. MRS. SISTER MARIA, THESE ARE THE ROYAL PRINCES AND PRINCESSES, LEISEL, FREDERIK, CHING SOW, BRIGETTA, WO DUK FAN, GRETTEL, MARTA, LOO TSU FU-

MARIA

GOOD AFTERNOON, CHILDREN!

(SINGING)

"RAINDROPS ON ROSES AND WHISKERS ON KITTENS--"

KING

STOP SINGING! 56 CHILDREN TO GO! LOUISA, HUN TSO-

MARIA

PERHAPS I'D BETTER SIT DOWN.

BILLY

MARIA. MARIA, BABY, IT'S ME, YOUR OLD MAN. DON'T GET MIXED UP WITH THIS BUNCH, YOU'LL NEVER LEARN ALL THEIR NAMES!

ANGEL

SHE CAN'T HEAR YOU, MR. BIGELOW.

KING

-KURT, HO SOO LING-

(ANNA ENTERS)

ANNA

GOOD AFTERNOON, YOUR MAJESTY. I APOLOGIZE FOR MY TARDINESS!

KING AND MARIA

WHO ARE YOU?

ANNA

I'M ANNA. THE TUTOR FROM BRITAIN. I NEVER DREAMED IT'D BE SUCH A HORRIBLY LONG DISTANCE FROM LONDON TO SOUIX FALLS! BUT THESE MUST BE YOUR 67 LOVELY CHILDREN!

MARIA

THEY ARE. AND I'M THEIR GOVERNESS. PLEASED TO MEET YOU, ANNA. WHERE'S YOUR GUITAR?

ANNA

OH, HEAVENS. A LADY DOESN'T CARRY SUCH A PREPOSTEROUS INSTRUMENT. I HAVE MY CHALK AND TEXTBOOKS. SHALL WE BEGIN, CHILDREN?

(SINGING)

"GETTING TO KNOOW YOU, GETTING TO KNOW ALL ABOUT--"

MARIA

(SINGING)

"RAINDROPS ON ROSES AND WHISKERS ON KITTENS--"

ANNA

(SINGING)

"GETTING TO LIKE YOU! GETTING TO HOPE YOU LIKE--"

MARIA

(SINGING)

"BROWN PAPER PACKAGES TIED UP WITH STRING--"

KING

STOP! STOP! OUT OF ALL NANNIES IN WORLD, I FIND TWO SINGING WINGBATS!

MARIA

CLEARLY THE CHILDREN ARE HAPPY WITH ME, KING VON TRAPP!

ANNA

CLEARLY THE CHILDREN DO NOT NEED A GUITAR-WIELDING FAILED NUN RUNNING LOOSE, YOUR MAJESTY!

KING

IS A PUZZLEMENT!

BILLY

SAY, THIS ANNA DAME IS HORNIN' IN ON MY MARIA'S JOB OPPORTUNITY! SOMEONE OUGHTA DECK HER!

ANGEL

DON'T DO IT, MR. BIGELOW!

BILLY

THEN SOME OF THE KIDS -- LET ME POP ONE OF THE KIDS!

ANGEL

MR. BIGELOW!

(KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK)

KING

JUST WHAT WE NEED, MORE NANNIES!

(CURLY ENTERS)

CURLY

SORRY TO DISAPPOINT, BUT I AIN'T NO NANNY, KING VON TRAPP.
IT'S JUST ME, CURLY-

KING

AH, RANCH HAND MAN! EXCELLENT! HOW IS ROYAL HERD COMING?

CURLY

I RECKON FINE, YOUR IMMENSENESS. BUT THAT AIN'T WHAT I'M
HERE FOR. I WAS JUST WONDERIN' IF MISS MARIA HERE HAS AN
ESCORT TO THE BOX SOCIAL AND CLAM BAKE OUT ON BALI HAI ISLAND
TONIGHT?

MARIA

OH MY.

KING

AS MATTER OF FACT, SHE DOES. I AM ESCORTING SINGING
GOVERNESS TO BOX SOCIAL/CLAM BAKE ON BALI HAI ISLAND.

ANNA AND MARIA

WHAT?

CURLY

NOW, YOUR BALDNESS, JUST 'CAUSE YOU'RE THE KING OF ALL
FIELDS, ROCKS, PRAIRIES-

KING AND CURLY

-ETC, ETC, ETC.-

CURLY

-DON'T MEAN YOU GET TO JUST LAY DOWN THE LAW 'BOUT THE WOMEN
FOLK!

BILLY

YOU TELL HIM, COWBOY!

KING

I DO LAY DOWN LAW! AND I SAY I GO TO BOX SOCIAL AND YOU GO
FINISH TURNING GRASS FIELD INTO LANDING STRIP FOR BOMBERS.
MUST FINISH IN TWO WEEKS IF G.I.'S ARE TO BEAT JAPS!

CURLY

WE'RE IN THE MIDDLE OF SOUTH DAKOTA, YOUR VASTNESS! THERE
AIN'T NO BOMBERS TO BE FOUND 'TWINX HERE AND CHEYENNE!

KING

ORDERS ARE ORDERS, SOLDIER! NOW BUILD LANDING STRIP WHILE
TUTOR AND I DANCE WALTZ. OUT OF WAY, CHILDREN!!

ANNA

IT WOULD BE MY PLEASURE, YOUR MAJESTY-
 (SINGING)
 "SHAAALL WEEEE..."

MARIA

I'M THE TUTOR HERE! IF ANYONE'S FALLING IN LOVE WITH THE
 LONELY, STODGEY-BUT-TENDER-HEARTED MAN OF THE HOUSE, IT'LL BE
 ME!

KING

PUT DOWN GUITAR AND MAYBE WE'LL TALK.

CURLY

MARIA! WHAT ABOUT ME??

MARIA

OH, CURLY. I DO HAVE FEELINGS FOR YOU-

CURLY

YOU WAIT AND SEE, MARIA! YOU JUST SEE WHO BUYS YOUR HAMPER!

KING

AFTER YOU FINISH AIR-STRIP!

(CURLY STORMS OUT)

ANNA

COME, YOUR MAJESTY, I HAVE A WONDERFUL IDEA FOR A FULLY-
 STAGED KABUKI VERSION OF "UNCLE TOM'S CABIN" WE CAN TEACH THE
 CHILDREN!

(KING AND ANNA LEAVE)

MARIA

OH, WHAT AM I GOING TO DO? ...I THINK I'LL SING!
 "EEDELWEIISSS-"

BILLY

DON'T, MARIA, HONEY. DADDY'S HERE.

ANGEL

SHE CAN'T HEAR-

BILLY

I KNOW THAT, YA WHITE-ROBED BEAN COUNTER! I'M JUST TRYIN' TO
 COMFORT HER!

MARIA

OH! HERE'S SOMEONE WHO CAN COMFORT ME! AUNT BLOODY ELLER
 MARY!

(AUNT BLOODY ELLER MARY ENTERS)

MARIA (CONT'D)

OH, MARY, IF EVER I NEEDED SOME OF YOUR HOMESPUN EARTHY WISDOM, IT'S NOW. I LOVE CURLY AND THE KING! WHAT SHOULD I DO?

AUNT BLOODY ELLER MARY

YOU LIKE COWBOY BOOTS? FOUR DOLLA!

MARIA

IT'S JUST THE KING -- HE'S A LOVELY MAN, AND I LOVE ALL 67 OF HIS LOVELY CHILDREN, AND I LOVE THE WAY HIS LOVELY BALD HEAD GLISTENS IN THE CANDLELIGHT... BUT... BUT I THINK HE'S 1/16 CHEROKEE. THE WAY HE TALKS AND HUNTS BUFFALO. I CAN'T MARRY A MAN WHO'S 1/16 CHEROKEE!

AUNT BLOODY ELLER MARY

HE DAMN SEXY MAN.

MARIA

AND CURLY. THE WAY HE SWINGS A LASSO AND SINGS ABOUT HOW TALL THE CORN IS -- BUT HE'S SO FULL OF HIMSELF!

AUNT BLOODY ELLER MARY

HE DAMN SEXY MAN.

MARIA

WHAT SHOULD I DO, AUNT BLOODY ELLER MARY?

AUNT BLOODY ELLER MARY

YOU LIKE COWBOY HAT? TWO DOLLA!

MARIA

OH, MARY. I KNEW YOU'D KNOW JUST THE RIGHT THING TO SAY! I THINK I'LL SING!

(SINGING)

"THE HILLS ARE ALIIIIIVE--"

AUNT BLOODY ELLER MARY

YOU SING, YOU PAY ME FIVE DOLLA.

BILLY

MARIA, LISTEN TO ME, IT'S YOUR OLD MAN. DON'T LET THESE LUGNUTS MESS YA AROUND! YOU'RE WORTH MORE THAN THAT! DONTCHA UNDERSTAND? LISTEN TO ME, MARIA! LISTEN TO ME!

(SLAP!)

MARIA

AH!

ANGEL

NOW YOU'VE DONE IT, MR. BIGELOW.

BILLY

I THOUGHT SHE COULDN'T KNOW I WAS HERE! HOW COME SHE ONLY FEELS ME WHEN I SLAP HER? WHAT KIND OF CHEAP SET-UP RACKET IS THAT??

MARIA

AUNT BLOODY ELLER MARY, I... I JUST FELT SOMETHING. BUT IT DIDN'T HURT. IT WAS LIKE A TOUCH. DO YOU THINK IT'S POSSIBLE... IF YOU LOVE SOMEONE ENOUGH, EVEN IF THEY HIT YOU IT DOESN'T HURT?

AUNT BLOODY ELLER MARY

IF YOU LOVE SOMEONE ENOUGH, THEY CAN HIT YOU WITH 2X4 AND IT FEEL LIKE KISS.

MARIA

YES.

AUNT BLOODY ELLER MARY

THEY DROP TREE BRANCH ON YOUR HEAD AND BACK CAR OVER YOU AND THROW YOU INTO WOLVERINE PIT AND IF YOU LOVE THEM ENOUGH... IT FEEL LIKE KISS.

MARIA

YES, AUNT BLOODY ELLER MARY! YES!

BILLY

GOSH. I GUESS MAYBE SHE DID LEARN A LESSON.

ANGEL

WHAT IN GOD'S NAME KIND OF LESSON IS THAT??

BILLY

LOVE CONQUERS ALL!

(ENOCH AND ADO ANNIE ENTER)

ENOCH AND ADO ANNIE

-AND FARMERS AND COWBOYS SHOULD BE FRIENDS!

MARIA

WHO ARE YOU?

ENOCH

I'M ENOCH. AND THIS IS ADO ANNIE. WE'RE THE COMICAL SECONDARY ROMANTIC COUPLE!

ADO ANNIE

ARE WE LATE?

MARIA

A LITTLE. I THINK WE'VE REACHED THE CLIMAX.

ENOCH

THEN WE'LL STICK AROUND AND SING THE ROUSING FINALE, IF YOU DON'T MIND!

(KING AND ANNA ENTER)

KING

AH! OTHER TUTOR, MRS. SISTER MARIA! AND COMICAL SECONDARY ROMANTIC COUPLE! JUST IN TIME FOR TRIP TO BOX SOCIAL/CLAM BAKE ON BALI HAI ISLAND!

MARIA

LET'S GO, YOUR MAJESTY!

ANNA

YES, DO LET'S, YOUR MAJESTY!

MARIA

OF COURSE, WE'LL HAVE TO SLIP BY THE GUARDS OUT THE BACK AND SNEAK ALL OF YOUR CHILDREN TO SAFETY OVER THE ON THE ISLAND BEFORE THE NAZIS AND JAPANESE NOTICE!

KING

OF COURSE.

ANNA

BUT WITH LOVE-

MARIA

-AND A GUITAR-

(CURLY ENTERS)

CURLY

-AND MY LASSO!

MARIA

CURLY!

ANNA AND KING

WE CAN DO ANYTHING!

BILLY, ADO ANNIE, KING, ANNA

(SINGING)

"WHEN YOU WALK THROUGH A STORM, HOLD YOUR HEAD UP HIGH--"

MARIA, CURLY, AUNT BLOODY
ELLER, ENOCH

(SINGING)

"CLIMB EV'RY MOUNTAIN! SEARCH HIGH AND LOW--"

BILLY, ADO ANNIE, KING, ANNA
(SINGING)
"WALK ON, WALK ON, WITH HOPE IN YOUR HEART--"

MARIA, CURLY, AUNT BLOODY
ELLER, ENOCH
(SINGING)
"FOLLOW EVERY RAINBOW 'TILL YOU FIND YOUR DREAM!"

BILLY, ADO ANNIE, KING, ANNA
(SINGING)
"AND YOU'LL NEVER WALK ALOOOONE!"

ALL
LET'S ALL GO TO THE DREAM BALLET!

(MUSIC AND APPLAUSE)