



## *LAST MAN STANDING*

By Jude Cole

### AUDITION PACK

*Last Man Standing* by Jude Cole is a play set around the historical background of World War I and more specifically the first day of the Battle of the Somme in France. At the heart of the play are timeless issues involving friendship, enmity, courage, cowardice, guilt, innocence, love and hate. The play catches the spirit of those men who were brought together, served together, and suffered together.

PODS in presenting *Last Man Standing* in 2018, the last year of the 100 years Anniversary of World War I, wishes to commemorate and honour the men who fought, and those who gave their lives, for our country.

This is an unusual play for PODS and everyone involved in its production is very excited about its uniqueness, and potential to touch the hearts of audiences with its war theme and the devastation it has on the lives of ordinary people.

### THE STORYLINE

Edmund Carrington, the Squire's younger son, and Tom Dawson, a worker on the Squire's country estate are both in love with a village girl, pretty Jenny Wilson. Joe Andrews, a bit of a young rebel, and Stan Watkins, a young lad with learning difficulties, are best friends with Tom, who is also the group leader. At the annual cricket match – the squire's team versus the village team – the antagonism between Tom and Edmund is obvious. It is made worse, when caught up in the excitement of Tom bowling out Edmund, Tom catches Jenny in his arms and kisses her.

Edmund, has accidentally shot dead his popular and successful elder brother, Charles, and the squire intends to send him to join his old regiment in disgrace over the scandal. When Stan, encouraged by the Recruiting Officer, takes the 'King's Shilling' unwittingly enlisting into the army, the rest of the group decide that they can't let vulnerable Stan go to war without them, promising his sister, Peggy Watkins, they would take care of him. Peggy is Joe's girlfriend. As was the case in World War, I village lads would all be recruited into the same regiment, and so we find them altogether in the trenches on the first day of the Somme.

Before leaving their village for war, Jenny, in love with Edmund, has become pregnant but is demeaned and rejected by him, only for Tom then offering to marry her, which she accepts. In the trenches Edmund is the Lieutenant and officer-in-charge, and as might be expected this situation between the two men causes tension and hatred.



In readiness for the main attack, Edmund orders Joe and Stan to go with him on a mission to cut the barbed-wire in no-man's land, when Stan, in bravely saving Edmund, is then killed through Edmund's cowardice in leaving him entangled in the barbed-wire. Edmund twists the report of Stan's death to their commanding officer, Captain Neame, while Joe tells Tom the true story. Upon going 'over the top' to do battle, Joe becomes seriously injured and Tom insists on carrying him to safety, although given an order by Edmund to leave him, which Tom ignores. Joe, ultimately dies, but the incident results in Tom being brought before a Court Martial when the sentence, if found guilty, is to be shot at dawn. The ending is dramatic and emotional.

## **LIST OF CHARACTERS**

### **Tom Dawson**

19 yrs, Strong-willed, loyal, perhaps a touch arrogant. The leader of the group. Can be quick-tempered. Works in the Squire's stables.

### **Peggy Watkins**

20 yrs, 'Salt of the Earth', practical, sensible. Has ambitions to be a nurse but works in the Big House as a kitchen maid. Takes on responsibility for all the others in the group, but especially for her brother Stan. Likes a gossip.

### **Joe Andrews**

19 yrs, A bit of a rebel – gets into trouble a lot. Likes a bit of poaching. Fancies Peggy and gets frustrated with Stan always being in their way. Works with Tom in the stables.

### **Stanley Watkins**

16 yrs, Peggy younger brother. Has some learning difficulties and is very childlike. Is fascinated by soldiers. Is mothered by Peggy, slightly intimidated by Joe, who can be rough with him and hero-worships Tom.

### **Jenny Wilson**

18 yrs, Pretty, spoiled – but has a kind heart. Unaware of Tom's feelings towards her. Leans on others for support.

### **Edmund Carrington**

19 yrs, The younger son of the Squire. Awkward, self-conscious and often discontented. Feels he cannot compete with his elder brother, who is all the things Edmund is not – popular, successful and confident.

### **The Squire**

50 yrs, Former Military man. Impatient, demanding and un-sympathetic towards Edmund.

### **Captain Neame**

26 yrs, A good officer, aware of the tension between Edmund and Tom, but is unable to prevent a tragedy occurring.



## **Recruiting Officer**

Filling up his quota of recruits (This is a very small part which will be combined with Cpt. Neame)

You will see that the age range for the main characters are 16yrs – 20 yrs, but I feel sure that slightly older performers would look younger on stage, so please bear this in mind when deciding whether to audition for a part. The same reasoning could apply to Cpt. Neame whose age is listed as 26yrs. This is an emotional, moving and dramatic play, and even though the main characters are young, good acting skills will be necessary.

The structure of the play is unusual, 23 short scenes, which will make it fast moving, and actors will have to be alert and ready for the constant flash-backs between the trenches and home. The fastness and emotional aspects of the play will be helped and emphasized by the lighting plot. Any inhibitions about kissing on stage needs to be considered for the parts of Edmund and Jenny.

## **PERFORMANCES**

Venue – The Paget Rooms, Penarth  
Monday, 26<sup>th</sup> Feb. - Technical Rehearsal  
Tuesday, 27<sup>th</sup> Feb. - Dress Rehearsal  
Wednesday, 28<sup>th</sup> to Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> March – 4 Performances

## **REHEARSALS**

Rehearsals nights will initially be held on Monday and Wednesday at 7.30 p.m., and I intend to make a start in November, rest through December and the Christmas period, and pick up again in January, with Sunday afternoons 2.30p.m – 5.30p.m starting in February. Full commitment during the rehearsal period will be required with punctual attendance expected, so please take time to consider your availability to this drama project.

## **AUDITIONS**

These will be held at the Conservative Club, Stanwell Road, Penarth on Sunday, 29<sup>th</sup> October 2017 between 1.30 p.m. – 6.00 p.m., with auditions being held mostly in pairs or in small groups **of players. If you are interested in auditioning, please e-mail [chairman@pods-penarth.org](mailto:chairman@pods-penarth.org) and let me, i.e. Mary Gardner, know which parts you are interested in and I will arrange to send the relevant audition pieces to you and give you a time slot. If you would rather speak to me about more information on any part please ring me on 029 2071 2260. Please bring your completed audition form with you.**

## **MEMBERSHIP**

If you are a present member of P.O.D.S. your annual subscription will need to have been paid before taking part in any auditions. If you are not already a member you will need to become one, and the required annual subscription and stage fee paid, if you are offered a part in this production.

We hope your interest is aroused in *Last Man Standing* and look forward to seeing you!



## AUDITION FORM for *LAST MAN STANDING*

Please write clearly and don't forget to bring this form to your audition!

NAME .....

ADDRESS .....

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POSTCODE .....

E-MAIL ADDRESS .....

TEL. NO (Home) .....

(Mobile) .....

Please state any and all commitments (family / work / holidays / other shows, etc) that may conflict with the rehearsal period.

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What is the particular role in which you are interested?

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If not cast in that role, would you prepared to join the cast in another role? YES/NO

To book your audition time please contact me, Mary Gardner, at  
e-mail: [chairman@pods-penarth.org](mailto:chairman@pods-penarth.org)