

DUSTY, THE ORIGINAL POP DIVA



By

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SCRIPT

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SYNOPSIS

In the 1950s a star-struck, plain and dumpy London schoolgirl imagines she could become a glamorous movie idol. Her parents tell her that her fantasies will never come true and not to dream the impossible dream. But nothing deters her, and blessed with an amazing voice and talent, she sets out to become a singer and star. Soon, plain Mary O'Brien has transformed herself into the blonde pop icon, Dusty Springfield. But while Dusty, the gorgeous blonde star, is the image the world sees, it is an illusion behind which little Mary O'Brien still lives; the alter ego from which Dusty can never escape and who remains with her throughout her life.

In the 1960s Dusty Springfield takes the entertainment world by storm with a score of hits, a top TV show and a legion of fans. She was the most influential British female artist of the 60's. Known as the White Lady of Soul, she was responsible for bringing the Motown sound to the UK. But the success she wanted is hollow and real happiness eludes her. Driven by her sense of perfection, Dusty takes on the world even as she discovers a desperate need to be loved in a way that could cause her career to crash. At the pinnacle of international success, with triumphs in Britain and America, Dusty finds the pressure unbearable. Unable to be what other people expect, and finding the spotlight's heat can burn, she retreats from the world into a dark place.

Finding strength in adversity, Dusty returns to soar to the top. With the world applauding again, she has one more battle to fight.

INSTRUMENTATION

Keyboard 1 (Acoustic Piano and Electric Piano.)
Keyboard 2 (2 keyboards required for the one player)
Guitar (Acoustic and Electric)
Bass (Electric)
Drums (Kit and a Mark Tree)
Trumpet (Trumpet and Flugel)
Alto Sax (Alto and Flute)
Tenor Sax (Tenor and Clarinet)
Trombone (Trombone)

CHARACTERS/VOCAL RANGES

DUSTY:

An emotional role. The character will develop as the story progresses. Strong acting ability will be required to carry her extremely complex personality. Requires an excellent pop voice that can handle the Dusty Springfield range and style. Very demanding vocally. Sings almost every song in the show. All the songs are in Dusty's original keys. MD should become very familiar with Dusty's original recordings. Her range is very deceptive.

Range: G below middle C to strong chest C above middle C.

Age Range: 20-40 years. General movement.

RENO:

Reno is the lead singer of a black female trio "The Nevadas". The role is written for a black pop/soul singer, however is not paramount to casting the role. She has a close relationship with Dusty. Strong contemporary soul voice.

Range: A below Middle C to C above Middle C

Age Range: 20 – 40 years. Typical Motown style movement.

MARY O'BRIEN:

Mary is the young, gawky, bespectacled Dusty and is portrayed in the show as a juvenile school girl who takes the journey through Dusty's formative experiences. This character takes on a narrative role and is continually on stage.

Strong pop ballad voice.

Age Range: 18-25 years. Strong acting and vocal ability with good movement.

RODNEY:

Hairdresser, who is one of Dusty's long time confidantes. Theatrically 'camp' and extremely loyal to Dusty through her career. Good at harmonies.

Vocal Range: High pop baritone to D.

Age Range: 20 – 40 years. Good mover.

PEG:

Theatrical Dresser – another of Dusty's closest friends. Good pop voice.

Range: A below Middle C to C above Middle C

Age Range: 20 – 40 years. Good mover (Double Up).

KAY O'BRIEN (MOTHER) AND MR O'BRIEN (FATHER):

Typical Irish working class parents. Both with sense of humour. Actors with comedic style.

Vocal Range: Kay - Mature ballad voice. Solo song.

Mr O'Brien - Basically a non singing role. Some harmony work.
Baritone C to C.

Age Range: 30 – 50 years. Both these roles will double up in other parts.

TOM:

Mary/Dusty's Brother. He helps arrange early songs and performs as part of her original backing group. Strong vocals.

Vocal Range: Tenor up to G

Age Range: 20 – 35 years. Good movement (Double Up).

BACKING VOCALISTS: NEVADAS, LANA SISTERS, SPRINGFIELDS, DRAG QUEENS:

Typical 60's style backing vocalists. Good contemporary singers. Must be excellent at harmonies and blending

Vocal Ranges: Nevadas – 2 girl singers. B below Middle C to C above Middle C.

Lana Sisters – 2 girl singers . A below Middle C to D above

Middle C. Springfields – 2 boy singers. Pop baritone up to D.

Drag Queens

Strong Movement.

COMPANY/ENSEMBLE: School girls/Young Tom/Al Saxon/TV

Announcer/Radio Announcer/ Go Go Dancers/ Starlets etc.

Up to 12 in total. This is an exciting dance and ensemble singing show with lots of intricate choreography in the 60's style. Must be able to carry the vocal demands of the show. The ensemble will also play a variety of small speaking/vocal roles and take on some key backing vocal parts. Some boys will need to wear drag for the Drag Queen and company scene.

Vocal Range: All must be excellent at harmonies and blending.

Age Range: 16+ years (Double Up)..

MUSICAL NUMBERS

ACT 1

1. Overture
2. I Only Want To Be With You
3. Yesterday When I Was Young
4. When The Midnight Choo Choo Leaves For Alabam'
5. Dusty Springfield/Mama's Little Girl
6. Little By Little
7. Seven Little Girls Sitting In The Back Seat/Little By Little
8. Springfields Medley (Island Of Dreams/Silver Threads and Golden Needles)
9. Little By Little
10. Stay Awhile
11. Stay Awhile (instrumental)
12. Nothing Has Been Proved
13. Dancing In The Street
14. Dancing In The Street Reprise
15. Wishin' and Hopin'
16. My Generation
17. The Look Of Love
18. Stay A While Reprise
19. The Look Of Love Reprise
20. Who Can I Turn To?

ACT 2

21. In The Middle Of Nowhere
22. In The Middle of Nowhere Playoff
23. I Just Don't Know What To Do With Myself
24. The Windmills Of Your Mind
25. Son Of A Preacher Man
26. I Close My Eyes And Count To Ten
27. America's A Place Underscore
28. That's The Kind of Love I've Got For You (pre recorded track plays)
29. Soft Core
30. Scene Change (to parent's phone call)
31. My Colouring Book
32. I Think It's Going To Rain Today
33. Quiet Please There Is A Lady On Stage
34. What Have I Done To Deserve This
35. Scene Change (after Doctor's office)
36. Heart And Soul
37. I Close My Eyes Reprise
38. All I See Is You
39. Funeral Scene
40. You Don't Have To Say You Love Me
41. Bows
42. Megamix – Heart And Soul, Son Of A Preacher Man, My Generation, I Only Want To Be With You, In The Middle of Nowhere, Stay Awhile, Dancing In The Street.

DUSTY
The Original Pop Diva

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PRE-SHOW ANNOUNCE

TERRY WOGAN (V.O.)

This is Terry Wogan from BBC Radio 2. And I've got an important announcement. I want you to remember that this show starts in 1979 when there were NO MOBILE PHONES. So, if you've got one: TURN THE BLOODY THING OFF!

And while you're at it, remember that all cameras and recording devices are strictly prohibited. Have I made m'self clear, now? Good. So now sit back and enjoy the story of a lovely lass, my good mate, Miss Dusty Springfield!

OVERTURE

The house curtain is a collage of Dusty Springfield record covers and tabloid headlines and show posters, tickets and memorabilia.

These titles and images prepare the audience for Dusty's emotional journey by encapsulating Dusty's life up to the opening scene.

ACT ONE

SCENE #1 ONSTAGE ALBERT HALL - *Only Want To Be With You*

RUSSELL HARTY (V.O.)

Your Royal Highness, the Princess Margaret, Countess of Snowdon, my lords, ladies and gentlemen, welcome to the Albert Hall for the Royal Command Charity Concert, 1979. Please welcome popular music's first lady of song, Miss Dusty Springfield.

DUSTY enters. An SFX applause combined with gay FANS rushing down the aisles.

FANS

Dusty! We love you, Dusty! etc

They try to get Dusty's attention, and throwing flowers to stage.

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SONG 1 I ONLY WANT TO BE WITH YOU

(Ivor Raymonde / Mike Hawker)

DUSTY

**I don't know what it is that makes me love you so
I only know I never want to let you go**

**'Cos you've started something
Oh, can't you see?
That ever since we met
You've had a hold on me
It happens to be true
I only want to be with you**

**It doesn't matter where you go or what you do
I want to spend each moment of the day with you
Oh, look what has happened with just one kiss
I never knew that I could be in love like this
It's crazy but it's true
I only want to be with you**

**You stopped and smiled at me
Asked if I care to dance
I fell into your open arms
I didn't stand a chance
Now listen honey**

**I just want to be beside you everywhere
As long as we're together, honey, I don't care
'Cos you've started something
Oh, can't you see?
That ever since we met
You've had a hold on me
No matter what you do,
I only want to be with you.**

DUSTY *(laughing with the fans)*

Hello, girls! Hello, fellas! I'd forgotten how much fun you all were!
I know you had to camp to get tickets... I didn't know you had to be camp!
I'm glad to see that queens aren't confined to the box. Sorry, Your Royal
Highness.

DUSTY curtsies to the Royal Box

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**You stopped and smiled at me
Asked if I care to dance
I fell into your open arms
I didn't stand a chance
Now listen honey**

**I just want to be beside you everywhere
As long as we're together, honey, I don't care
'Cos you've started something
Oh, can't you see?
That ever since we met
You've had a hold on me
No matter what you do,
I only want to be with you.
I said, no matter, no matter what you do,
I only want to be with you.**

DUSTY

Thank you. Thank you. It's great to be back after all these years. *(music)*
Hollywood sounds glamorous...but there's no place like home. You know, it's
hard to believe that twenty five years ago, I was little Mary Isabel Catherine
Bernadette O'Brien in Ealing and now I'm here at The Royal Albert Hall. I wonder
what became of that little girl?

The lights fade to a pin spot on DUSTY.

SCENE #2. O'BRIEN HOUSE *Going Back*

SONG 2 GOING BACK DUSTY (Gerry Goffin & Carole King)

DUSTY:

**I think I'm goin' back
To the things
I learned so well
In my youth**

**I think I'm returning to
Those days
When I was young enough
To know the truth**

**Now there are no games
To only pass the time
No more colouring books
No Christmas bells to chime**

But thinking young

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**And growing older
Is no sin
And I can play
The game of life to win**

**I can recall the time
When I wasn't ashamed
To reach out to a friend
And now I think I got
A lot more than
A skipping rope to lend**

**Now there's more to do
Than watch my sailboat glide
And everyday can be
My magic carpet ride
And I can play hide and seek with my fears
And live my days instead of counting my years**

As instrumental for 'Going Back' begins, a truck comes downstage. It is 1954. MARY O'BRIEN (the young, plump, gawky, bespectacled Dusty) in a school uniform, and KAY (her mother) enter. They remove their coats and hats. KAY is carrying a string bag of fish and chips.

TOM is playing the piano, and O'B (DUSTY's father) is smiling proudly and turning the pages.

As MARY takes her school satchel into her bedroom and hangs up her blazer, DUSTY observes the ghosts of her memories.

**DUSTY:
Let everyone debate the true reality
I'd rather see the world the way it used to be
A little bit of freedom's
All we lack
So catch me if you can
I'm goin' back**

DUSTY disappears

O'B
Well, mother, what's on the menu tonight?

KAY
It's Friday. *(singing in Goon voice)* Fish'n'chips, Jim!

TOM
Why is it always fish and chips on Friday?

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KAY

God says so.

TOM

Where?

KAY

It's in the Bible.

TOM

Where in the Bible?

KAY

I don't know. It just is.

O'B

Why are you so late?

KAY

Oh, we saw a lovely film at the Odeon. *Calamity Jane* with Doris Day.

MARY

I'm going to be like Doris Day.

TOM

With those legs?

O'B

And that face?

KAY laughs.

KAY

There's no need to make fun of our Mary just because she's plain.

O'B (*in Goon voice*)

Aah...spotty Minnie Bannister.

MARY

Well, I can sing twice as well as Doris Day!

FAMILY (*singing manically*)

Ying tong, ying tong, ying tong, ying tong, ying tong iddle aye po!

MARY

I know I can. There's something special about my voice.

O'B (*Goon voice*)

Really, Neddy, and what's that?

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MARY

I don't know. I've just got to find out what it is.

KAY

Mary, love. Who's going to pay one and thruppence to see a half-blind, carrot-headed, tubby, little tomboy?

O'B

True. Even Sister Bonaventure calls you 'Dusty'.

TOM (*Goon voice*)

Dusty Ha ha, Jim! Lusty, Busty, Dusty O'Brien!

KAY

Tom!

MARY

Well anyway, I've got news for you. One day I'm going to be a star.

PARENTS laugh

O'B

Oh, Mary, you're funnier than all the Goons put together!

DUSTY

No, I have got a voice. We've been in the garage practising a song, haven't we Tom?

TOM

Yes.

DUSTY

And I'm good, aren't I?

TOM

Yeah. Not bad.

O'B

Oh, well, a little musical appetizer might be appropriate. (*Goon voice*) Moriarty, crack another bottle!

SONG 3

WHEN THAT MIDNIGHT CHOO CHOO LEAVES FOR ALABAM

(Irving Berlin)

MARY and TOM

MARY AND TOM

When the midnight choo-choo leaves for Alabam'

I'll be right there

I've got my fare

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**When I see that rusty-haired conductor-man
I'll grab him by the collar
And I'll holler
"Alabam'! Alabam'!"
That's where you stop your train
That brings me back again
Down home where I'll remain
Where my honey-lamb am
I will be right there with bells
When that old conductor yells
"All aboard! All aboard!
All aboard for Alabam'"**

Playout

KAY

Oh, that was wonderful!

O'B

I must say, as a trained pianist, I am impressed. Your vocals, your musicianship, your presentation – brilliant, Tom.

KAY

And those harmonies! Did you work those out yourself?

TOM

Well, Mary helped out.

O'B

Now, Tom, you're too modest.

KAY

Our boy's a genius.

Despondent, MARY moves to her bedroom.

O'B

I liked the way you started in C and modulated to G.

TOM (*demonstrating as piano truck slides off*)

It's easy. You just go 'All aboard...'

KAY and O'B (*joining in*)

All aboard!

All aboard!

All aboard for Alabam!

MARY moves sadly to her bedroom and throws herself on the bed.

SCENE #3 MARY'S BEDROOM

There are hockey sticks and pictures of blonde female film stars (Doris Day, June Haver, Betty Grable, Marilyn Monroe, Diana Dors, Peggy Lee). MARY looks at the pictures of film stars on her wall.

MARY

It isn't, fair, Marilyn. I worked on those harmonies just as much as Tom. The whole song was my idea, and suddenly he's the genius. I bet your mum and dad didn't do that to you, Doris (*music*) The only time I feel I can share anything with Mum is when I'm sitting next to her at the pictures watching you. One day, they'll all be sitting there, watching me. And I'll be blonde and I'll be beautiful just like you..... Dusty O'Brien!... Dusty... (*she ponders*)

At the end of the first song, she has conjured up her fantasy creation whom we recognise to be Dusty Springfield.

SONG 4 DUSTY SPRINGFIELD MARY
(Blossom Dearie / Norma Tanega)

MARY:

**Dusty Springfield, that's a pretty name
It even sounds like a game
In a green field, hobby-horses play the dusty game when it's May**

**Pink and paisley skies shining in green eyes
A magic pin wheel
London flowers fair, blooming in her hair
Dusty Springfield**

**Silver starshine over crystal waters
Petals fall from her glance
Flowers sparkle
With a dew of morning, feathers float from her dance**

**Suddenly the song's the thing
Fill your cup, come to the spring**

**And you'll stand so still
And you'll feel the thrill
Dusty Springfield, that's a pretty name
Pretty as a pearl
What a pretty girl**

DUSTY walks through the mirror.

SONG 5 MAMA'S LITTLE GIRL DUSTY
(Dennis Lambert / Brian Potter)

DUSTY:

I took the ribbon from my hair
And I'm letting it all hang down
So, if you're lookin' for the same old me
Gotta tell you that she's left town
Don't try to call my number, baby
You're gonna get no reply

MARY:

'Cause suddenly I'm changin'
I'm finally rearrangin'

DUSTY:

In this day of liberation
I'm lookin' to find my share

MARY:

What's the use of being patient?

DUSTY:

You ain't goin' nowhere

MARY:

I got my own two-step together
And I want the first slow dance with you.

DUSTY:

I just saw Venus risin'.

MARY:

Guess I'm realisin'

DUSTY & MARY:

I ain't mama's little girl no more

DUSTY:

And baby, you're the first to know it

DUSTY & MARY:

I ain't mama's little girl no more

DUSTY:

I took a little time to grow

MARY

**It's gonna be worth the waiting
The anticipating**

DUSTY & MARY:

I'm not mama's little baby no more

KAY (*coming through door*)

Forget about this show business. (*picking up a copy of The Stage*) The Stage!
Huh! Just concentrate on your schoolwork. As Sister Bonaventure says, you
spend too much time horsing around with the other girls.

MARY

What's wrong with that?

KAY

From what I read in the Daily Mirror, these entertainers live tortured lives.
They're all depraved dope fiends. Just do your homework. First the School
Certificate, then the Marriage Certificate. The natural order of things. There's a
good girl.

MARY:

No more colouring books, or skipping ropes.

DUSTY:

They only pass the time.

MARY:

No Christmas bells or sailing boats.

DUSTY:

Take a magic carpet ride.

MARY:

I feel I'm changin' deep inside.

DUSTY:

Growin' older is no sin.

MARY:

I'm ready to play the game of life.

DUSTY:

And you gotta play the game to win.

MARY:

I ain't mama's little girl no more, no more, no more.