**Little Red Hoodie**

(a 20 minute dark comedy by Claire Booker)

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**Characters**

Aisha: A victim of the Taliban.

Gran: Been-there-seen-it-all grandmother.

Hoodie: Teenager with attitude.

**Set and Props**

An open set represents the vast inside of The Wolf’s belly. There is one stool centre stage on which Aisha sits. She wears a large square yoke around her neck, over which a black cloth is draped so that only her neck and head can be seen. Her head appears to be resting on a platter. Props include: a chair, a mobile phone, a basket of biscuits, a bag and sewing kit, a picture book, mobile phone, a burqa-clad body.

*Out of the darkness comes the sound of a wolf howling. Spotlight snaps onto Aisha’s disembodied head on a platter, centre stage.*

Aisha What have I done? Where is this? (*tries to look around*) Can that be the moon, with her pregnant belly? At least they haven’t bundled her under a burqa. (*pause*) I’m lucky. I could have been stoned. Think how long that would have taken, rock by rock, each one hand-picked for size. Instead, a simple chop, chung to the verterbrae and my head, suddenly like the moon, floating in dark space. (*she looks around*) It’s not how I imagined. Where are the angels?

Gran (*enters wearing a pair of old-fashioned bloomers and a frilly hat. She investigates her surroundings with a torch*) Ugh, what a pong. Sausages, liver, kidneys everywhere – it’s a regular kebab house in here.

Aisha Hello?

Gran Good Jesus wept! (*crosses herself when she spots Aisha*) What the . . . ? How? How are you doing that?

Aisha Are you an angel?

Gran Me? (*laughs*) It’s years since anyone called me that, love. Not since the Woodcutter was young and virile and . . . well, enough said.

Aisha But . . . if you’re not an angel, what are you?

Gran I’m an hors d’oevre. A snack. (*shakes her fist upwards*) Greedy monster! So many decapitated heads back there it’s like treading on ball bearings. (*bemused*) How are you managing to . . . where’s the rest of you?

Aisha I don’t know.

Gran (*Gran sits*) My feet are killing me. (*pause)* I never thought it would come to this.

Aisha Where are we?

Gran All the stink, the methane, the noxious gasses? Have a guess.

Aisha Hell?

Gran (*crosses herself*) Don’t say the word!

Aisha I don’t understand. I love Allah, I pray always five times each day. If they let me, I would go on Haj.

Gran (*the wolf howls*) Wily old lupine. Well, on the plus side, we’re still in his small intestine. (*shines her torch around*) Duodenum, by the looks of it. That gives us about an hour. Once you’ve hit the colon there’s jack shit left of you, if you pardon my French.

Aisha I must go home. Who will feed my brothers and sisters, now my mother is dead?

Gran One step at a time, love.

Aisha What have I done?

Gran Where did you last see your body?

Aisha (*remembering*) My hands. In front of me. Tied with rope. Trembling.

Gran That’s not much of an ID – but, we’re in a fairy tale, so let’s not give up hope.

Aisha In the Koran it says – place your trust in Allah, the merciful.

Gran Well, each to their own, but I’m placing my trust in the Woodcutter.

Aisha The Woodcutter? Is that an angel?

Gran No, no. Very much a man. Lives in the next hovel. Tall, not many fingers left - but handy with the ones he’s got. Of course some people claim he’s not a man, but a phallic denouement. Two helpless females rescued from the hairy paunch of brutish masculinity by a blade-wielding hero, representing civilised, paternalistic society. We often chat about it, the Woodcutter and me, on cold winter nights. I know the story like the back of my hand.

Aisha But how will he know we’re here?

Gran It goes like this. I have a granddaughter. (*whips out a photo and shows it*) Chip off the old block, eh? Oops, sorry. She’s on her way to my little hovel right now with a basket of jammy dodgers. Now, Hoodie’s very savvy for a girl of her age, so when she notices a transvestite and/or transgender Wolf dressed in my winceyette nightie, she’ll smell a rat, call the Woodcutter, he’ll dash over with his, you know, his . . . big thrusting contrivance and slit the Wolf’s belly open. We all jump out, good as new.

Hoodie (*there is a loud belly rumble. A basket full of biscuits is flung on stage, followed by Hoodie, who is dressed in a red cape*) Noooooo! (*picks herself up and shouts sarcastically upwards*) Like- Thanks. Douche!

Gran It’s not. It can’t be!

Hoodie Gran?

Gran Hoodie. My little Hoodie. (*angrily upwards*) Is there no end to your greed? (*to Hoodie)* Oh, I could box your ears. We’ve been over this how many times? If I’m looking a bit hairy of chin and sharp in tooth, don’t kiss me.

Hoodie Yes, right. Think about it, Gran. What do you call this . . . weirdy beardie? (*tweaks Gran’s hairy chin*). You should pluck! I haven’t got time to work out if you’re a wolf or not. I’ve got things to do. (*checks mobile phone*)

Gran Things? Don’t talk to me about things!

Hoodie Blah di blah di blah di blah di blah.

Gran You were supposed to go and fetch the woodcutter.

Hoodie That old tonk.

Gran Herr Goddo is not a tonk. He’s a denouement.

Hoodie What?

Gran He’ll get us out of here.

Hoodie Boom! No need to fetch him then. *(she starts taking shots of herself*)

Gran Don’t play the clever clogs with me.

Hoodie (*views image of herself, then feels her own face in panic*) I’m going to pluck every inch of my body.

Gran What in God’s name for?

Hoodie Pluck, pluck, pluck, pluck, pluck. (*in a strop*) Hair is so shit. Face, shit. Life, shit. Shit . . . shit. Nothing ever happens to me.

Hoodie (*she notices Aisha, who continues to pray quietly*) What is that?

Gran Didn’t you notice her before? Poor little mite. Offer her a biscuit. Go on. (*to Aisha*) They’re jammy dodgers. (*Aisha shakes her head politely and continues praying quietly*)

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