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## Cast of Characters

### *The Cast of the show:*

SNAPPY THE HAPPY CLOWN, a happy, fanciful clown.

MR. CONDUCTOR MAN, a train conductor.

HENRI THE MIME, a French mime.

WALLY THE RABBIT, a person in a giant rabbit costume.

RUFFLES THE DOG, a person in a dog outfit who also serves as the corporate spokesman for a certain brand of potato chips.

BOO-BA, a bizarre purple creature.

SPENCER, the supernaturally happy child star of the program.

JOSIE, another supernaturally happy child, somewhat younger than Spencer.

SELENA, a Hispanic child.

### *The Techies:*

TANK, the gaffer, a Harley rider, (forced to play the parts of Wally the Rabbit and Henri the Mime).

DREW, the key grip, a megalomaniac (plays Mr. Conductor Man).

RACHEL, the boom operator, depressed (forced to play Snappy the Happy Clown).

KATIE, lighting technician, scared out of her mind (forced to play Boo-Ba).

GLADYS, the camerawoman, has been doing this since black and white movies.

### *Other People:*

LUKA, the hard-edged producer of the show.

TRACY, the frazzled director.

TYREE, the assistant to the director, just out of college.

MAZIE, a disturbed child pulled from the street.

## Setting

The set of the endangered children's show, *Snappy the Clown's Happy Half-Hour*. The present.

## Production Notes

I have chosen genders for each of the characters of this play, but all of the characters could be cast as either male or female depending on the production's needs. Simply change the necessary pronouns and change the character names as follows:

Henri the Mime .....	Hélenne the Mime <i>(pronounced A-Lenne)</i>
Mr. Conductor Man .....	Mrs. Conductor Woman
Spencer .....	Daisy
Josie .....	Tommy
Selena .....	Esteban
Luka .....	Luke
Gladys .....	Wilbur
Drew .....	Dru
Rachel .....	Steve
Katie .....	Derrick
Mazie .....	Cody
Wally the Rabbit .....	Hoppy the Rabbit

All other character names should remain the same.

*Note on rabbit costumes:* For the sake of comedic impact, it is suggested that you use foam rabbit heads to portray the rabbits instead of makeup. (Makeup would be preferable for Rufles the Dog and Boo-Ba.) Most costume shops carry Easter Bunny costumes which are fairly inexpensive and a lot of fun to use.

## Acknowledgments

*Snappy's Happy Half-Hour* was originally produced at North Oaks Middle School in Haltom City, Texas, on February 17-18, 2006. The original cast was as follows:

SNAPPY THE	
HAPPY CLOWN .....	Brittany Guthery
BOO-BA .....	Arielle Mobley
MRS. CONDUCTOR	
WOMAN .....	Morgan Walker
HENRI THE MIME.....	Ryan Ahrend
SPENCER .....	Dusty Tawater
JOSIE .....	Bailey Lamar
SELENA.....	Daisy Avila
TRACY.....	Amber Thomas
TYREE.....	Ashley Bowers
LUKA .....	Glyn Bowman
GLADYS .....	Sierra Moore
MAZIE .....	Ashton O'Reilly
DREW .....	Sean Loomer
TANK.....	Dalton Maclin
RACHEL.....	Jasmine Zaro
KATIE .....	Janet Mason
RUFFLES THE DOG.....	Paige Hanstead
WALLY THE RABBIT .....	Ryan Ahrend

# SNAPPY'S HAPPY HALF-HOUR

by Don Zolidis

*(On stage is the set of the children's television show, Snappy the Clown's Happy Half-Hour. The set is cartoonish and unrelentingly cheerful. A smiling yellow sun hangs from the rafters, and a grove of "happy trees" stands upstage. Everything should be brightly colored but poorly constructed, and the atmosphere should be one of almost oppressive joy.)*

*(We are in the final moments of a dress rehearsal. SNAPPY THE HAPPY CLOWN, HENRI THE MIME, BOO-BA, and MR. CONDUCTOR MAN are on stage. Sitting on the ground near them are the child stars SPENCER, JOSIE, and SELENA. Of the three, SPENCER is the most happy, maintaining a brilliant open-mouthed smile through every moment of the show. His cheerfulness is obviously fake.*

*(An ancient camerawoman, GLADYS, is positioned off the end of the stage.)*

**SNAPPY THE HAPPY CLOWN.** Well kids, it's about that time.

**SPENCER.** Oh no!

**SNAPPY THE HAPPY CLOWN.** I'm afraid so. It's time to go.

**MR. CONDUCTOR.** But remember kids, you can always find us if you use...

**EVERYONE.** *(Except BOO-BA and HENRI:)* Your IMAGINATION!

*(They laugh.)*

**BOO-BA.** *(A high-pitched gurgle:)* Boo-Ba!

**SNAPPY THE HAPPY CLOWN.** *(Chuckling:)* That's right Boo-Ba!

**JOSIE.** Snappy, can we sing one last song?

**SNAPPY THE HAPPY CLOWN.** Well...

**ALL KIDS.** Pleeeeeese?

**SNAPPY THE HAPPY CLOWN.** What do you think, Mr. Conductor Man?

**MR. CONDUCTOR MAN.** I say let's do it!

**SPENCER.** Oh no, Henri the Mime is caught in a box again!

*(HENRI THE MIME is indeed, trapped in a mime box that seems to be shrinking.)*

**BOO-BA.** Boo-Ba!

*(BOO-BA waves its arms and pulls HENRI out of the mime box. HENRI smiles and bows to BOO-BA.)*

**SELENA.** Good job, Boo-Ba!

**BOO-BA.** Boo-Ba!

*(SNAPPY smiles and launches into a carefully choreographed song.)*

**SNAPPY THE HAPPY CLOWN.** *(Singing:)* Where would we be without friends?

**MR. CONDUCTOR MAN.** I don't know!

**SNAPPY THE HAPPY CLOWN.** *(Singing:)* Where would we be without friends?

*(HENRI THE MIME shakes his head. The kids begin to march in a circle.)*

**SPENCER.** *(Singing:)* Hey you, you're my friend

**JOSIE** *(Singing:)* Hey you, you're my friend

**SELENA.** Buenos Noches, everyone!

*(Everyone waves at the audience.)*

*(TRACY, the director emerges from off-stage.)*

**TRACY.** And...cut!

*(Everyone breaks character instantly and looks dejected. BOO-BA pulls off its head and tosses it to the ground. SNAPPY looks utterly disgusted at HENRI. SPENCER sits immediately. SELENA takes out a cell phone and dials.)*

**HENRI THE MIME.** What? Like that was my fault?

**SNAPPY THE HAPPY CLOWN.** Where were you on the hugs song, huh?!

**HENRI THE MIME.** Aw give me a break, you don't need me on the hugs song!

**SNAPPY THE HAPPY CLOWN.** It's in the script you moron!

**BOO-BA.** You know what, I'm a professional, all right? I come to work, I do my job, I know my lines.

**HENRI THE MIME.** All you say is Boo-Ba! How hard is that?!

**BOO-BA.** I'm a little sick of your attitude—I bring a lot to the table here—

**TRACY.** Guys guys guys! Enough!

*(Everyone is quiet, except for SELENA, who is still talking on her phone in Spanish.)*

**SELENA.** *(In Spanish:)* Yeah, that's what I'm saying. This show sucks.

**TRACY.** Selena?

*(SELENA holds up her hand.)*

**SELENA.** Adios.

*(She hangs up.)*

**TRACY.** Now listen—that was just a dress rehearsal, we've had bad dress rehearsals before—

**GLADYS.** That was the worst show I've ever seen!

**TRACY.** Gladys. Not helping, okay?

**GLADYS.** I've seen a lot of shows!

**TRACY.** We know, Gladys.

**GLADYS.** That was the worst one!

**HENRI THE MIME.** You wanna come up here and do it?

**GLADYS.** I'd mime the pants off you, you chump!

**TRACY.** Gladys. Please.

**GLADYS.** You're lucky I'm a lady.

**TRACY.** All right, we've got half an hour before the live broadcast, we can fix the problems—I have to tell you something...the producers were here watching today—

**MR. CONDUCTOR MAN.** WHAT?

**SELENA.** I'm calling my agent—

**SNAPPY THE HAPPY CLOWN.** They're not changing the show, are they?

**HENRI THE MIME.** The show's perfect!

**BOO-BA.** We could use a new mime.

**GLADYS.** You all stink!

**TRACY.** Gladys.

**GLADYS.** I could throw garbage on the stage, it'd be a better show!

**SELENA.** You know what lady, I don't need those comments.

**GLADYS.** Yeah you do, cause you stink! You kids think you're cute?! I've got mold in my refrigerator that's cuter than you!

**SELENA.** Quiet you old hag!

**GLADYS.** You're lucky I'm a lady kid! And you're lucky you're nine years old, cause otherwise I'd take you back behind the garbage bins and I'd knock all those ugly teeth outta your mouth!

**SELENA.** At least I've got teeth!

**HENRI THE MIME.** Why do we have this woman?

*(Tracy's assistant, TYREE, darts onto the stage and whispers in her ear.)*

**TRACY.** What?

*(LUKA, the producer [who resembles a mob boss if mob bosses went into children's television] bursts on to the stage.)*

**LUKA.** Everyone sit! *(Everyone sits.)* Kid, what's your name?

**SPENCER.** Spencer?

**LUKA.** Come here.

*(SPENCER gets up.)*

**LUKA.** Let me tell you what I thought when I was watching this show. I thought, that kid, that kid over there, that's not a smile. That kid's not happy.

**SPENCER.** I was smiling—

**LUKA.** Shut up. Let me give you a little advice: you wanna get fired, say something again. All right?

*(SPENCER doesn't say anything.)*

**LUKA.** Good. Now listen. When you are on stage, you are never to stop smiling, you got it? All times, I don't care if someone hammers a nail into your foot, I want to see a smile on your face. Okay? Tell you what—you stop smiling, I'm gonna go find your Grandma, you got a Grandma?

*(SPENCER nods, frightened.)*

**LUKA.** Okay, I'm gonna go up to your Grandma, and I'm gonna say hi, my name's Luka, I'm the producer of this TV show your grandson is on, and she's gonna say, oh that's sweet, and then I'm gonna say, yeah it was sweet, but he didn't smile enough, so you know what, I'm gonna shoot you in the head. Blam! Dead Grandma!

*(SPENCER is horribly traumatized.)*

**LUKA.** You got it? Stop smiling. Dead Grandma. Let's see the smile.

*(SPENCER smiles as big as he can possibly smile.)*

**LUKA.** Good. Sit down.

*(SPENCER sits.)*

**LUKA.** All right. What's your name? Henry?

**HENRI THE MIME.** It is pronounced On-Ree.

**LUKA.** I don't care. Get up here.

*(HENRI approaches LUKA.)*

**LUKA.** Okay, cast, we need a new mime because this guy is the worst mime I've ever seen in my life. When I see you do mime, it's like someone is grabbing my intestines and pulling them out my mouth. Okay? You're fired.

**HENRI THE MIME.** You think you can find a better mime than me? Check this out! Check out the miming action! *(He gets trapped in a box.)* You think you can handle this!? Aw! Oh look it's a ladder! *(He starts climbing a ladder.)* Aw! You been served! You can't handle the miming action!

**LUKA.** Shut up, mime.

**HENRI THE MIME.** Oh look a rope! Oh I'm gonna pull the rope! *(HENRI mimes pulling a rope:)* Oh oh oh! Sucker! I'm outta here! But I'm goin' down stairs as I go!

*(HENRI mimes going down stairs as he exits.)*

**BOO-BA.** Thank you, I hated that guy.

**LUKA.** Shut up. Hey where's the big rabbit?

**TRACY.** He's on his lunch break.

**LUKA.** You're telling me the rabbit's on a lunch break. In his costume.

**TRACY.** He likes to walk around in the costume—

**LUKA.** Doesn't matter. Now listen, I've seen the ratings for this show in our target demographic, three to five year olds. The ratings stink.

**GLADYS.** I coulda told you that.

**LUKA.** And if I know one thing, it's how to approach kids. I got a magic touch with the little creeps. I just grab 'em you know and I'm like, watch our show or I'm gonna... I'm gonna, I don't even know what I'm gonna do. Something horrible, you know, and you should

just watch the joy on their faces as those kids tune into the Snappy the Crappy Clown Show—

**SNAPPY THE HAPPY CLOWN.** It's Snappy the Happy Clown—

**LUKA.** Shut up. I make the decisions around here. Now, as I was saying, you guys are terrible. So I've made some changes to the show, and I've decided to bring in some corporate sponsorship. So meet your newest play-buddy: Ruffles the Dog.

*(RUFFLES THE DOG enters. MR. CONDUCTOR MAN is about to say hello.)*

**LUKA.** Don't say nothing! Ruffles talks to no one. Got it? He's gonna live in this stupid dog house in the back. Where's the dog house!?

*(TANK and DREW enter, carrying a large, fake dog house that says "Ruffles" on it. They set it upstage. TANK leaves, but DREW remains, watching.)*

**LUKA.** Thank you. Ruffles lives in his house and he's better than all of you morons put together. Now...we got a theme with Ruffles, right? He loves potato chips. Every show we got a different flavor of potato chip that we're selling. Today it's gonna be sour cream and onion, got it?

*(SNAPPY THE HAPPY CLOWN stands up.)*

**SNAPPY THE HAPPY CLOWN.** You know I—

**LUKA.** Did I tell you to stand up?

**SNAPPY THE HAPPY CLOWN.** I just don't think we ought to be a big ad for potato chips.

**LUKA.** Who are you?

**SNAPPY THE HAPPY CLOWN.** I'm Snappy the Happy Clown.

**LUKA.** See, that doesn't sound like producer to me.

**MR. CONDUCTOR MAN.** I agree with him, I don't like this at all.

**LUKA.** You know what I don't like: you.

**SNAPPY THE HAPPY CLOWN.** You know what, I'm tired of being treated this way.

**TRACY.** Now, maybe, we could introduce Ruffles slowly—

**LUKA.** He comes on now! All of you idiots better shut up and do what I say or you're all fired. All right? I can find six bums off the street who can do a better job than you.

**SNAPPY THE HAPPY CLOWN.** Do it then! I quit.

**LUKA.** Too late! You're fired!

**SNAPPY THE HAPPY CLOWN.** I just quit!

**LUKA.** I fired you like five minutes ago.

**MR. CONDUCTOR MAN.** This is ridiculous, I quit too.

**BOO-BA.** Boo-Ba! I mean, I played Hamlet in college. I don't need this.

*(They walk off.)*

**LUKA.** *(Calling after them:)* I don't need you! Go rot! And...and...you weren't very good as Hamlet. I saw that show! You were predictable! And you got a funny nose!

*(TRACY taps LUKA on the shoulder.)*

**TRACY.** Um...Luka? We have a live show in like fifteen minutes.

**LUKA.** So?

**TRACY.** We can't really do a show without the actors.

**LUKA.** Sure you can. You got people all over the place. You got the kids, right?

**SELENA.** Um...I just talked to my agent and she thinks I can get a deal on Sesame Street. So... peace out.

*(SELENA walks off.)*

**LUKA.** All right fine. What about you, Spencer?

**SPENCER.** I love my Granny!

**LUKA.** Good. Tracy...I have to say I'm a little disappointed in how you've been running things out here.

**TRACY.** What?

**LUKA.** It seems like people aren't very happy with you.

**TRACY.** What?

**LUKA.** So, unless you wanna get fired along with everyone else, you're gonna make this show work. All right? Good.

**TRACY.** But—

**LUKA.** Bye.

*(LUKA leaves. TRACY is left on stage with SPENCER and JOSIE. SPENCER is still smiling. DREW is still upstage.)*

**GLADYS.** That guy's a jerk. Guess we'll have to cancel the show.

**TRACY.** No. Um...

**DREW.** I could play a part.

**TRACY.** What?

**DREW.** I watch the show every day. I could be...I could be Snappy the Happy Clown.

**TRACY.** Who are you?

**DREW.** My name's Drew. I'm the Key Grip.

**TRACY.** What does a Key Grip do, anyway?

**DREW.** I'm in charge of the other grips. Seriously, though, I'll do the whole show. I mean, I'm like, I've always wanted to be an actor. I mean, I'm really good in the shower. I can do monologues in the shower, and it's like, tears are streaming down my face, you know? Like I'm just sort of amazed at how good I am.

**GLADYS.** Are you sure that's not water from the shower?

**TRACY.** Tyree, can you get all the techies out here please?

**TYREE.** Sure. *(TYREE shouts:)* Techies get out here!

*(From various corners of the stage, the TECHIES appear. TANK and DREW are upstage. RACHEL emerges from stage left, and KATIE arrives from stage right.)*

**RACHEL.** What?

**KATIE.** Did I do something wrong?

**TANK.** This better be good.

**TRACY.** Okay, now I know that you guys love this show—

**RACHEL.** No I don't.

**TRACY.** You have an opportunity today to save it. Because the show is in danger guys. We're gonna go live in about five minutes... and we don't have any actors.

**SPENCER.** I'm still here.

**TRACY.** Well we got Spencer.

**JOSIE.** I'm here too!

**TRACY.** And the other one. But I need you guys...to be in the show.

**RACHEL.** I don't think so.

**TANK.** Not gonna happen.

**DREW.** You don't have to do anything, okay? You just stand there, and I'll do your parts too, okay? You just mouth the words, and I'm like a ventriloquist, and I'll just throw my voice.

**TRACY.** No no, everybody has to play one part.

**DREW.** Seriously, listen: "Boo-Ba!" and then, "I'm Snappy the Happy Clown!" "You sure are!" "Boo-Ba!"

**TANK.** Can someone stop this guy from talking, please?

**TRACY.** Okay, okay, Drew, everyone is going to speak here.

**DREW.** But I'm amazing at this.

**RACHEL.** No you're not.

**TANK.** Am I gonna get paid more for this?

**TRACY.** Well um...no...but...if the show gets cancelled, then you won't get paid at all cause we'll all be out of a job.

**TANK.** I'll do it.

**DREW.** You can count on me.

**TRACY.** I know that.

**DREW.** I'm there right with you.

**RACHEL.** All right fine, I'll do it.

**DREW.** Did you ever see that movie with Sean Penn in it? He learned that from me.

**TRACY.** Katie?

**KATIE.** Well...

**TRACY.** You can be Boo-Ba.

**KATIE.** What do I say?

**TRACY.** Boo-Ba. That's it. Boo-Ba.

**DREW.** *(Saying it wrong:)* It's like this: Boo-Ba.

**TRACY.** *(Saying it as a high-pitched gurgle:)* No, no, more like Boo-Ba.

**KATIE.** *(Saying it wrong:)* Boo-Ba?

**TRACY.** *(Gurgling:)* Boo-Ba.

**DREW.** *(Overlapping, wrong:)* Boo-Ba.

**KATIE.** *(Wrong:)* Boo-Ba?

**TANK.** *(Overlapping, somewhat better at it than DREW:)* Boo-Ba.

**DREW.** *(Overlapping:)* Boo-Ba!

**TRACY.** Boo-Ba!

**DREW.** It's like in the back of your throat: Boo-Ba!

**TRACY.** *(Overlapping:)* Boo-Ba!

**TANK.** *(Overlapping:)* Boo-Ba!

**KATIE.** *(Overlapping:)* Boo-Ba?

**RACHEL.** SHUT UP!

*(Pause.)*

**KATIE.** Yeah, I think I can do that.

**TRACY.** So that leaves...the part of Henri the Mime.

*(TRACY looks at TANK.)*

**TANK.** I'm not playing a mime.

**DREW.** I can do the mime part.

**TANK.** There's no way I'm playing a mime. You can shove sharp sticks into my eyes, I'm still not doing it.

**TRACY.** Tank, we need you.

**TANK.** I hate mimes.

**TRACY.** Everyone hates mimes! But someone's still gotta do it.

**TANK.** Why?

**TRACY.** Because it's what keeps us together as a country. I mean, you see a mime on the street and you spit at them, and that's what makes you feel like an American, you know?

**TANK.** Fine, I'll do it for my country.

**TRACY.** And you gotta be Wally the Rabbit too.

**TANK.** What?

**TRACY.** Okay, this is what's gonna happen: You're just gonna read the lines off these cue cards, and you guys just do the show, all right? You've seen it happen, you kind of know what to do—

**GLADYS.** You can't be any worse than the other people.

**TRACY.** Right, and if something goes wrong—

**GLADYS.** They were terrible.

**TRACY.** Just fake it. Okay? And I want happy happy happy all the time.

**GLADYS.** I've had bunions that acted better than them.

**TYREE.** Um, Tracy?

**TRACY.** What?

**TYREE.** We're still short one kid.

**TRACY.** There's kids all over the place, go find one. Just grab one off the street or something.

**TYREE.** All right.

*(TYREE exits.)*

**TRACY.** Okay—happy happy happy energy energy energy, got it?

**DREW.** Yeah!

**TRACY.** You got two minutes to get in costumes and then we're rolling!

*(TRACY exits.)*

**DREW.** Okay everyone, huddle up!

*(No one does so.)*

**DREW.** I've got faith in you. Okay? And when we're out there, let's give it all we got, like a hundred and ten, a hundred and fifteen percent—

*(Everyone begins to leave to get in costume. DREW doesn't notice.)*

**DREW.** and just know, you know, that there's these kids watching us who don't have anything better to do with their time. And we're like molding their minds, you know? It's amazing when you think about it. Our power, our responsibility—so we gotta give them a show—just put your HEART and SOUL into this!

*(DREW looks up and realizes he's alone on stage except for GLADYS. Pause.)*

**GLADYS.** I woulda left too, except I'm old and my knees don't work so well. But if it makes you feel any better: I hated your speech.

**DREW.** Right.

*(TYREE returns dragging MAZIE, a child he has plucked off the street.)*

**MAZIE.** Is my Mommy in here?

**TYREE.** Yeah, yeah...she's...she's in the audience, watching.

**MAZIE.** Really? Hi Mommy!

**TYREE.** And you're out here, and you're gonna be on TV, okay?

**MAZIE.** I don't wanna be on TV.

**TYREE.** Yes you do.

*(TRACY returns.)*

**TRACY.** This our kid?

**TYREE.** Yep, this is little... what's your name, little girl?

**MAZIE.** I don't talk to strangers.

**TYREE.** Ha ha. She's cute. What's your name?

**MAZIE.** I wanna go home. Where's my mommy?

**TRACY.** Did you ask her if she wanted to be on the show?

*(Pause.)*

**TYREE.** Oh, yeah. She loves the show. She's a big fan.

*(MAZIE is about to start crying.)*

**TYREE.** Okay, um...sit over there little girl. And um...happy happy happy.

*(MAZIE sits, crying.)*

**TRACY.** Okay! Places!

**TYREE.** Places!

*(SPENCER and JOSIE return, sitting down near MAZIE.)*

**TRACY.** Cue the music! And remember everyone, whatever you do, STAY HAPPY!

**TYREE.** Music go!

---

*(A quirky children's song begins to play. TRACY and TYREE dart off the stage.)*

**TRACY.** And...Five...Four...Three...Two...

*(She points. Lights come up brightly on the set. SPENCER smiles madly.)*

**SPENCER.** Well everyone, it sure is a beautiful day out!

**JOSIE.** It sure is!

**SPENCER.** You know what I love to do on a beautiful day?

**JOSIE.** What, Spencer?

**SPENCER.** I love to use my IMAGINATION!

**JOSIE.** Wow, me too!

**MAZIE.** I wanna go home!

**SPENCER.** Your IMAGINATION can take you anywhere!

*(MAZIE begins to take off her shoes.)*

**JOSIE.** I know! Let's go to the happy happy forest!

**SPENCER.** That's a great idea, Josie! Come along, Selena!

*(SPENCER motions to MAZIE, who is now smelling her feet.)*

**JOSIE.** Selena loves the happy happy forest! How do you say love in Spanish?

*(MAZIE looks at them strangely. SPENCER darts forward and reads the cue card meant for SELENA.)*

**SPENCER.** I bet it's te amo!

*(JOSIE grabs MAZIE's arm and tries to pull her to her feet.)*

**MAZIE.** Stop it!

*(SPENCER and JOSIE don't know what to do. TRACY starts wildly gesticulating at them from the side to keep the show moving.)*

**SPENCER.** Well, Selena, why don't you stay here and...sit on the ground? Let's go, Josie!

*(They skip into the forest, then come out the other side.)*

**JOSIE.** Wow, it's a whole new world!

**SPENCER.** And we got here using our IMAGINATION!

**MAZIE.** You didn't go anywhere!

*(They try to ignore her.)*

**SPENCER.** I bet we can meet our best friend, Snappy the Happy Clown!

*(Pause. Nothing happens. Apparently, this is the spot where SNAPPY THE HAPPY CLOWN enters. Pause. SPENCER keeps smiling. He begins to look around nervously.)*

**SPENCER.** I bet we can meet our best friend, Snappy the Happy Clown!

*(Pause. JOSIE, still smiling, darts off-stage, leaving SPENCER alone. He continues to smile.)*

*(And he waits. And he waits some more. Until it is painful to watch. SPENCER keeps smiling. Finally, JOSIE returns, practically pushing RACHEL on to the stage. RACHEL is now wearing the clown outfit, although it clearly does not fit her well. She is not enjoying this.)*

**JOSIE.** Look who I found!

**SPENCER.** *(Saved:)* Snappy!

*(RACHEL pauses and peers at the cue cards.)*

**RACHEL.** Snap once in the air.

*(She realizes this is the stage direction and not her line and snaps in the air.)*

**RACHEL.** Hey kids it's me...Snappy the Happy Clown.

*(She stops and reads something again, then snaps in the air.)*

**SPENCER.** Hi Snappy!

**MAZIE.** You're not Snappy!

**JOSIE.** Snappy I really loved how you changed your appearance!

**RACHEL.** Yes. Yes I did. So um...I'm here for a happy time kids. Do you wanna get happy?

**SPENCER.** I love being happy!

**RACHEL.** *(Not reading from the cue cards anymore:)* I bet you do, kid.

**MAZIE.** Where's the real Snappy?!

**RACHEL.** I am the real Snappy.

**MAZIE.** You don't seem happy to me.

**RACHEL.** *(A threat:)* I am happy. And everyone here is gonna be happy, all right?

*(MAZIE whimpers.)*

**SPENCER.** Let's sing a song!

**JOSIE.** Can we sing a counting song?

**RACHEL.** *(Reading the cue cards again:)* Yeah, but I need help from my friends—

*(DREW dashes on to the stage.)*

**DREW.** Mr. Conductor Man! And Boo-Ba! *(Not following the script, the kids are lost.)* Oh it's great to use our imagination, isn't it children? An imagination sure comes in handy. Have any of you children ever heard of Desert Storm? You see kids, back in 1991 the United States went to war with Iraq, and ol' Mr. Conductor Man was there—

*(KATIE enters, dressed up as BOO-BA.)*

**DREW.** And there was a bad man named Saddam Hussein, and he set all these oil wells on fire—So Mr. Conductor Man used his IMAGINATION to imagine a place that didn't have burning smoke and fumes pouring into his lungs making him sick—

**KATIE.** *(Terrified:)* Boo-Ba!

**RACHEL.** *(Reading the stage directions again:)* Singing a song. Oh—

**SPENCER.** Let's start the song! *(Singing:)* One—one there was one ladybug at the ladybug picnic

**JOSIE.** *(Singing:)* And then one friend came by...

**RACHEL.** *(Singing unhappily:)* So there were two, two ladybugs at the ladybug picnic

**JOSIE.** *(Singing:)* And then one friend came by...

**DREW.** *(Singing in an almost operatic tone:)* So there were three, three-e-e-e ladybugs at the ladybug picnic—the la-a-a-a-a-dybug pic-niiiiiiiiiiiiic!

*(Pause. They all look at the cue cards, then look at KATIE. KATIE is frozen solid. JOSIE approaches her and nudges her.)*

**KATIE.** Boo-Ba!

*(Everyone laughs in a false manner.)*

**MAZIE.** *(Sad:)* What happened to the ladybugs?

**RACHEL.** They um... pesticides.

**DREW.** Children, I think it's time for Mr. Conductor Man to tell you a story.

**RACHEL.** No wait, no... it's mime time!

**SPENCER.** Yay! Mime Time! I love mime time!

**RACHEL.** Is there something you don't love?

**JOSIE.** Boy, I sure would love to see some mime!

**DREW.** You know, Mr. Conductor Man learned a lot about mime during the war.

**RACHEL.** Stop it. I think it's time for Henri the Mime.

*(Pause.)*

*(TANK enters, with white face makeup half-applied. He absolutely hates this.)*

**SPENCER.** Wow, it's our French friend, Henri the Mime!

**JOSIE.** Bonjour Henri! Watch out for that wall, Henri!

*(TANK walks through an imaginary wall.)*

**RACHEL.** Oh no, Henri's trapped in a box.

*(TANK is clearly not trapped in a box. From the audience, TRACY is trying to show HENRI the mime technique of being trapped in a box. TANK stares at TRACY. TANK shrugs his shoulders.)*

**SPENCER.** Boy Henri you sure are acting funny!

*(TANK stares threateningly at SPENCER. SPENCER tries to maintain a smile while hiding behind KATIE.)*

*(Pause. TANK stands there, daring any of them to say anything about the fact that he is clearly not trapped in a box.)*

**DREW.** Oh no, I'm trapped in a box too!

*(DREW starts pantomiming being trapped in a box. TANK stares at him, then lunges for DREW—DREW dashes out of the way.)*

**DREW.** Oh wait, no I'm out!

*(Angrily, TANK puts his hands up to simulate being in a box.)*

**TANK.** I'm in a box.

**SPENCER.** Mimes can't talk!

*(TANK stares at him.)*

**SPENCER.** Yes they can!

**TANK.** How'm I gonna get outta this box? I know, I'll use a shotgun. *(He mimes cocking a shotgun and shooting in the general direction of everyone.)* Oh look, I'm free. *(He walks off. Pause.)*

**KATIE.** Boo-Ba?

**RACHEL.** I hate the French.

**TANK.** *(Off-stage:)* The French hate you!

**RACHEL.** *(Reading the cue cards again:)* You know, Spencer, Josie, and Selena, there's a new friend in our world of the IMAGINATION. His name is Ruffles. And he enjoys quality snack products, such as Ruffles Potato Chips. And every day we have a secret flavor—can you guess what today's flavor is?

**JOSIE.** I have no idea!

**MAZIE.** Sour Cream and Onion.

*(Everyone stares at MAZIE.)*

**RACHEL.** No, that's not it. You'll have to watch the clues to find out...but right now...it's time for some important messages. Don't go away out there.

**TRACY.** And we're in commercial!

**TYREE.** Two minutes till we're on again!

**SPENCER.** My face hurts.

**KATIE.** I'm sorry guys.

**TRACY.** You're doing fine—you're doing fine—okay—um everyone come here for one second.

**RACHEL.** I don't understand why we gotta sell potato chips. What do potato chips have to do with anything?

**TRACY.** Where is Ruffles by the way?

**RACHEL.** I don't know, he's still in his hole.

**TRACY.** It's a doghouse.

**RACHEL.** Whatever.

**DREW.** I thought that went great guys. I really do. Nice job following my lead.

**TRACY.** Tyree can you make sure Tank switches into the Wally the Rabbit costume?

**TYREE.** *(Shouting:)* Tank switch into the Wally The Rabbit costume!

**TANK.** *(Off-stage:)* Come here and make me!

**TYREE.** Okay, he's doing it.

**DREW.** Okay, for the second part: I'm gonna start adding a few things—just some ideas that have been going around in my head—it's gonna be great—

**TRACY.** Stick to the cue cards guys!

**DREW.** Like for the “everyone needs a hug” song—just go with me, all right?

**RACHEL.** No, I’m not going with you.

**SPENCER.** Does anyone have a phone so I can call my grandmother?

**TRACY.** After the show, Spencer.

**TYREE.** Thirty seconds till we’re on!

*(TRACY races over to MAZIE.)*

**TRACY.** Okay, um...little girl...we’re playing make believe, okay? And in this game—

**TYREE.** Places!

*(RACHEL, KATIE, and DREW find their marks on the stage. SPENCER and JOSIE hover nearby.)*

**TRACY.** Okay...just...have fun! *(TRACY runs off.)* Remember happy happy happy energy energy energy!

**TYREE.** And five...

*(KATIE begins to feel sick.)*

**TYREE.** Four... Three... Two...

*(Music plays. TYREE points.)*

**RACHEL.** *(Reading from the card:)* Well I hope you learned about products that you want to force your parents to buy.

**SPENCER.** I want Big Boy pants!

**JOSIE.** I’m going to ask my doctor about prescription drugs like Lunesta! I don’t even know what it does but that moth makes me feel happy!

**MAZIE.** I take that! *(MAZIE looks at her pills.)* I also take... *(Pronouncing the words with difficulty in a cute fashion:)* Anti-psychotics.

**RACHEL.** Okay...um...

**DREW.** You know, I think it's a time for a teaching moment about the dangers of abusing prescription medication.

**RACHEL.** No it's not.

**DREW.** You see kids, you might think it's a good idea to take three or four times the recommended dosage of something in order to silence the demons that live under your bed. But that only makes the demons hide...inside your brain—where they tell you to do bad things.

*(SPENCER is still valiantly trying to smile.)*

**MAZIE.** They talk to you too?!

*(Pause.)*

**SPENCER.** I need a hug!

*(JOSIE hugs him.)*

**JOSIE.** Here you go, Spencer.

**SPENCER.** Thanks, Josie!

**RACHEL.** *(Reading from the cue card again:)* Well what do you think, Boo-Ba?

*(KATIE, who is still frozen in fear, has been getting worse and worse. Everyone turns to look at her. She begins to shake, then faints. Pause.)*

**JOSIE.** Boo-Ba's taking a nap!

**SPENCER.** She sure is! But I think it's time for a song!

*(RACHEL reads something from the cue card and does a few half-hearted snaps into the air. JOSIE and SPENCER, the only ones who know the choreography, march into position. DREW and RACHEL try their best to keep up.)*

**RACHEL.** *(Singing:)* Oh... A hug is something very special that we all can give—

**JOSIE.** *(Singing:)* It's something deep inside of us that only wants to live—

**EVERYONE.** *(Singing a chorus:)* Hugs! They're made for you and me!

*(DREW and RACHEL hug.)*

**EVERYONE.** Hugs! Something you get for free!

*(JOSIE and SPENCER hug.)*

**EVERYONE.** Hugs! They're made for you and me!

*(TYREE sneaks on to the stage and drags KATIE's unconscious body off-stage. MAZIE suddenly begins to march in with the rest of the actors.)*

**MAZIE.** Hugs! Something you get for free!

*(She hugs SPENCER and doesn't let go. SPENCER tries to keep smiling.)*

**DREW.** *(Launching into an operatic solo:)* When you're living alone...and you've got no home...and your friends all suffer from post-traumatic stress syndrome...you need a HUG...to keep you alive...a HUG to give you that drive... a HUG to remind you that someone out there loves-you-even-though-your-girlfriend-dumped-you-and-said-you-were-a-loser-and-said-you-needed-psychiatric-treatment-but-you-didn't-you-were-just-going-through-a-dark phase— *(Screaming out the last line:)* HUUUUUUG!

*(DREW falls to his knees, sobbing. Pause. MAZIE lets go of SPENCER. She walks up to DREW and hugs him.)*

**RACHEL.** Well, it's a happy time here.

*(She does a few half-hearted snaps.)*

**MAZIE.** Snappy, is Mr. 'ductor Man going to be okay?

**RACHEL.** I don't think so.

*(DREW gets up.)*

**DREW.** It's all right. I'm okay. Mr. Conductor Man is just working through some issues. It's good, though, I think I learned a few things about myself.

**RACHEL.** Well...if Boo-Ba were here, I'm sure she'd say Boo-Ba!

**SPENCER.** What's that, Boo-Ba? It's time for another clue for our potato chip flavor of the day?

**RACHEL.** No it's not.

**JOSIE.** When you cut me with a knife, I make you cry.

**SPENCER.** Boy, I wonder what that could mean.

**MAZIE.** Sour Cream and Onion!

**JOSIE.** How did you know that?

**MAZIE.** The voices in my head told me!

**JOSIE.** Oh.

*(JOSIE backs away from MAZIE a little bit. KATIE stumbles back on to the stage.)*

**RACHEL.** Hey look it's Boo-Ba! Did you have a good nap?

**KATIE.** What? I mean...Boo-Ba.

**RACHEL.** Wow.

**MAZIE.** *(Talking to the voices in her head:)* What's that? Soon? Okay? No, I won't tell them. It's our secret.

**SPENCER.** You're really using your IMAGINATION.

**MAZIE.** Yes. Imagination.

*(She smiles evilly.)*

**RACHEL.** *(Reading from the cue cards:)* Let's go and meet the newest member of our happy happy land. His house is just beyond the happy happy trees, underneath the happy happy sun.

**SPENCER.** Who is it?

**JOSIE.** I'm excited!

**DREW.** Well, let's take the IMAGINATION train. All aboard!

*(SPENCER, RACHEL, and JOSIE get in the "imagination train." MAZIE and KATIE are left outside. SPENCER tries to take MAZIE's hand.)*

**SPENCER.** Come along, Selena. What's the Spanish word for train?

**MAZIE.** Don't touch me.

**SPENCER.** Okay!

*(KATIE sits in the back of the train. Everyone turns to look at her. She realizes it's her line, then looks at the cards.)*

**KATIE.** Boo-Ba!

**JOSIE.** It's okay Boo-Ba, trains are really safe. Especially imaginary trains!

**JOSIE & SPENCER.** Chugga Chugga Chugga Chugga Chugga Chugga Chugga Chugga Chugga!

*(They move like a train.)*

**DREW.** Woo woo!

*(They stop at the doghouse.)*

**RACHEL.** Let's see if our new friend is home.

*(She knocks on the top of the doghouse and RUFFLES bursts out of it.)*

**RUFFLES.** Hey kids! My name's Ruffles the Dog! And you know what I love! Ruffles Potato Chips! Did you bring me any Potato Chips!

**RACHEL.** You can have imaginary chips.

**RUFFLES.** And you must be Snappy the Happy Clown!

*(RACHEL snaps.)*

**RUFFLES.** Do you have Ruffles Potato Chips for me?

**RACHEL.** No I don't. I've got Baked Lays.

*(RUFFLES is confused. This is clearly not what SNAPPY was supposed to say.)*

**RACHEL.** In fact, I don't even like Ruffles.

**RUFFLES.** But they've got ridges!

**RACHEL.** I don't care.

**RUFFLES.** Boy you aren't very happy at all.

**MAZIE.** Don't talk to Snappy that way!

**RUFFLES.** What's your name, little girl?

*(RUFFLES reaches out to her, but MAZIE backs away and hisses.)*

**MAZIE.** I hate you! *(She hears something inside her head.)* Now? Okay. Secret.

**RUFFLES.** *(Breaking character:)* Um...wait a minute. Are we live?

**KATIE.** Boo-Ba!

**SPENCER.** Boy, Ruffles that sure is a funny way to say things!

**RUFFLES.** Who are you people?

**RACHEL.** You know what kids, if we all use our imagination, we can make Ruffles go away.

**RUFFLES.** What?

**RACHEL.** Everybody concentrate really hard!

*(They all concentrate. MAZIE approaches RUFFLES.)*

**MAZIE.** The voices don't like you.

*(RUFFLES backs away and addresses the audience.)*

**RUFFLES.** So kids out there remember to tell your parents about Ruffles Potato Chips! They've got Ridges!

*(MAZIE chases RUFFLES off-stage.)*

**RACHEL.** We'll be right back. After these important messages.

**TYREE.** Two minutes!

*(RUFFLES comes storming back on stage.)*

**RUFFLES.** What kind of stunt was that? I'm here as a professional—you guys are crazy! I'm going straight to Luka and she's gonna have your job for this! All right? You got it?

**TRACY.** Okay, that was pretty good guys.

**RUFFLES.** Are you insane? I've got a contract here that I'm supposed to have two minutes of air time every show—that was like thirty seconds!

**TRACY.** We're still working out some of the kinks.

**SPENCER.** I didn't do it.

**RUFFLES.** Where's the real clown?! You know what, I'm getting two minutes all right? I'm coming back on this show for the last minute and a half to talk about my product—

**RACHEL.** No you're not—

**RUFFLES.** Yes I am. You try and stop me I go straight to Luka.

**TRACY.** Okay, um...can we do this later?

**RUFFLES.** Fine!

*(RUFFLES storms off.)*

**TRACY.** All right, so there are a few bumps. But we're gonna nail the end, okay? Tyree, can you make sure Tank is ready to come out as Wally the Rabbit?

**TYREE.** *(Shouting:)* Tank are you ready to come out as Wally!

**TANK.** *(Off:)* After the show is over I'm going to kill you!

**TYREE.** Yeah, he's ready.

**DREW.** How did you think that hug song went?

**TRACY.** Well, um...

**DREW.** Cause I was thinking that might be a great direction for the show, you know? Have some real soul searching on it.

**TYREE.** Thirty seconds!

**TRACY.** We'll talk later, okay?

**RACHEL.** Drew, come here.

**DREW.** Yeah?

**RACHEL.** I'm gonna say this cause I'm your friend: No one likes you. You don't have any friends. Not even me. Okay?

**TYREE.** Places!

*(RACHEL, KATIE, and DREW get in position. SPENCER and JOSIE sit down nearby. MAZIE is nowhere to be seen.)*

**TRACY.** And Five...Four...Three...Two...

*(Music again. RACHEL reads from the cue card.)*

**RACHEL.** Well we sure have had an adventure today!

**KATIE.** Boo-Ba!

*(They all laugh.)*

**DREW.** That's right, Boo-Ba!

**RACHEL.** Yeah, that Ruffles the dog was a real pain in the rear!

**JOSIE.** You know who I'd love to see, though?

**SPENCER.** Who, Josie?

**JOSIE.** Wally the Rabbit.

**KATIE.** Boo-Ba.

**RACHEL.** Well, all we have to do is use our IMAGINATION.

**SPENCER.** I'm using my IMAGINATION right now!

*(SPENCER concentrates. TANK enters upstage left. He stops and realizes he isn't wearing the Wally the Rabbit head. TRACY tries to wave him off-stage to get the head.)*

**RACHEL.** Keep imagining, Spencer!

*(TANK runs off.)*

**DREW.** Well, while we're waiting, kids, I think—

*(He stops as another WALLY THE RABBIT [the real one] hops on from upstage right.)*

**WALLY THE RABBIT.** Well hello kids! It's Wally Time!

**SPENCER & JOSIE.** Yay, Wally time!

*(TANK returns, having put on a Wally the Rabbit head which is identical to the one the real WALLY is wearing. They stare at each other.)*

**TANK.** What the heck is this?

**WALLY THE RABBIT.** Oh look it's my twin brother, Bobby the Rabbit!

**TANK.** I'm Wally the Rabbit!

**WALLY THE RABBIT.** I'm Wally the Rabbit!

**TANK.** I'm not going back to being the mime, I can tell you that much.

**WALLY THE RABBIT.** Who wants to go hop hop hopping with me through my carrot field?

**TANK.** No, go hop hop hopping off stage, all right? This is my show.

**WALLY THE RABBIT.** Bobby got up on the wrong side of the nest this morning!

**TANK.** Is that supposed to be funny? Are you a comedian? Are you making a joke at my expense?

**WALLY THE RABBIT.** He's a cranky rabbit!

**TANK.** What's that supposed to mean?

**RACHEL.** Okay, well—

**TANK.** Shut up.

**RACHEL.** Okay.

**KATIE.** Boo-Ba!

*(TANK gets very close to WALLY THE RABBIT. Their giant rabbit heads touch.)*

**TANK.** You think you're pretty funny, don't ya? I think it would be funny if I dug a grave and put your little rabbit corpse in it. You think that's funny.

(WALLY THE RABBIT *is desperately trying to get away from TANK.*)

**WALLY THE RABBIT.** Whoah! I'm just a rabbit! Hop hop hop!

(TANK *pushes WALLY. WALLY falls backward a little bit.*)

**WALLY THE RABBIT.** Hey!

(TANK *pushes WALLY again.*)

**WALLY THE RABBIT.** That's enough!

(TANK *pushes WALLY again.*)

**WALLY THE RABBIT.** That's the way you want it, huh?

(WALLY *pushes TANK.*)

**RACHEL.** Um guys...?

**DREW.** This reminds me of the army.

(TANK *punches WALLY right in his giant rabbit head. They begin fighting in earnest now—WALLY lunges at TANK—the two giant rabbits careen around the stage, punching and smashing at each other. Finally, WALLY pulls down the happy happy sun and breaks it over TANK's head.*)

**JOSIE.** (*Horribly traumatized:*) Aaaah!

(TANK *starts going through the happy happy trees. He picks one up and wields it like a baseball bat.*)

**JOSIE.** Not the happy happy trees!

**SPENCER.** (*Still trying to smile:*) I love you Granny!

**KATIE.** Boo-Ba!

(TANK *proceeds to beat WALLY to a pulp with the happy happy trees, discarding them when they are broken and useless. He knocks WALLY to the ground and keeps pounding on him until WALLY stops moving. Finally, he grabs WALLY's giant head and rips it off, holding it aloft like a severed head. He lets out a primal scream just as MAZIE runs back on stage. The real WALLY is unconscious on the ground.*)

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