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Norman Maine Publishing

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To Niko and Hayley

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COMEDY COLLECTION. The characters in this short play collection find themselves hopelessly stuck in wildly absurd situations. In "Squatters' Rights" a teenager tries to rid herself of two annoying ghosts who refuse to move out of her bedroom and think it's hilarious for real ghosts to wear sheets. In "Bessie Brooks and Tommy Snooks" two nursery rhyme characters decide to update their boring nursery rhyme by going off-script. In "Mumford E. Squirrel in 'How to Ask a Girl Out,'" a boy who has difficulty talking to girls calls upon his guardian squirrel to help him woo a girl. And in "Tied Up," a woman who is about to be run over by a train tries to convince a passerby to untie her before it is too late.

Performance Time: Approximately 30-45 minutes.

SQUATTERS' RIGHTS

(3 F)

MEREDITH: Teenage girl with unwanted ghosts for roommates; female.

ABIGAIL: Annoying teenage ghost who likes to wear a sheet; female.

LIZA: Abigail's sister, also a ghost; female.

BESSIE BROOKS AND TOMMY SNOOKS

(1 M, 2 F)

BESSIE BROOKS: 12, nursery rhyme character; can be played by an adult dressed as a child; female.

TOMMY SNOOKS: 12, nursery rhyme character; can be played by an adult dressed as a child; male.

KATIE: Middle school student with a fondness for reality TV; can be played by an adult dressed as a child; female.

MUMFORD E. SQUIRREL IN "HOW TO ASK A GIRL OUT"

(2 M, 2 F, 1 flexible)

(With doubling: 1 M, 2 F)

KYLE: Teenager who has a crush on Sally but has a difficult time talking to her; male.

MUMFORD E. SQUIRREL: Kyle's British guardian squirrel; male; wears a squirrel costume. Note: A stuffed squirrel and an offstage voice can be used instead.

SALLY: Teenager who likes Kyle but finds him slightly odd; female.

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MAGGIE: Teenager who has a crush on Kyle and has a guardian squirrel; female.

SQUIRREL: Maggie's guardian squirrel; nonspeaking; wears a squirrel costume; flexible. Note: A stuffed squirrel and an offstage voice can be used instead.

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(2 F)

BECCA: Tied to a chair that's been placed on train tracks; female.

ZOE: On her way to the Conference For People Who Often Find Themselves Alone In A Room Full Of People While Wearing Nametags; female.

SETS

SQUATTERS' RIGHTS: A typical teenage girl's room.

BESSIE BROOKS AND TOMMY SNOOKS: A park with a bench.

MUMFORD E. SQUIRREL IN "HOW TO ASK A GIRL OUT": A park with a bench and some foliage.

TIED UP!: A chair with train tracks on the floor.

PROPS

SQUITTERS' RIGHTS: Book bag, school books, brush, two white sheets, "How to Banish Ghosts for Dummies" book, picture of Abigail and Liza, iPad or something similar.

BESSIE BROOKS AND TOMMY SNOOKS: A magazine.

MUMFORD E. SQUIRREL IN "HOW TO ASK A GIRL OUT": Acorn, 2 stuffed squirrels (opt.).

TIED UP!: Rope and a giant nametag that reads, "Zoe."

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SPECIAL EFFECTS

SQUATTERS' RIGHTS: Sad music, upbeat music to play during the montage (see production note on montage).

TIED UP!: Train whistle.

MONTAGE FOR "SQUATTERS' RIGHTS"

The video montage is meant to show that Meredith, Abigail, and Liza had good times together. The memories should be over the top with all characters having big, cheesy smiles. When the play was first performed, the following quick bits were used, but feel free to create your own.

- 1.) Meredith draws a picture of Abigail and Liza, who are posing. Meredith's picture has them looking like traditional sheet-wearing ghosts even though they aren't wearing sheets at the time. They all laugh.
- 2.) Liza is combing Meredith's hair and she combs it into her face. Abigail and Liza look at her and Meredith peaks out from behind her hair and they all laugh again.
- 3.) They are giving Abigail a taste test. Meredith secretly gives her cat food, which Abigail thinks tastes great. When she's sees what it is, they all laugh again.
- 4.) They have their arms around each other singing like they are best friends.

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**"I'VE KNOWN
MANY GHOSTS
AND NONE OF THEM
HAVE LOOKED LIKE A SHEET."**

-LIZB

SQUATTERS' RIGHTS

(AT RISE: A typical teenage girl's room. Abigail, a ghost, is standing with a sheet over her head. Liza, another ghost, is watching her.)

ABIGAIL: This is going to be hilarious.

LIZA: (*Unsure.*) Yeah.

(*Abigail takes the sheet off and looks at Liza.*)

ABIGAIL: Trust me, Liza. Meredith will freak when she comes in. Then she'll start laughing.

LIZA: I don't think so, Abigail. I think we should do the decapitated head thing again.

ABIGAIL: No. That brings back bad memories. We're doing the sheets.

LIZA: I just don't know if she sees the humor in this gag like you do.

ABIGAIL: Do you?

LIZA: I don't get it either.

ABIGAIL: Well, you both will this time.

LIZA: We haven't any other time.

ABIGAIL: That was in the past.

LIZA: That was yesterday.

ABIGAIL: Still the past. Now put your sheet back on. I hear footsteps.

LIZA: Fine.

(*Liza puts her sheet on. Meredith enters.*)

ABIGAIL/LIZA: (*To Meredith.*) Boo!

(*Meredith just looks at them with no reaction and then puts her school books down. Abigail and Liza take off their sheets and Abigail starts laughing.*) [END OF FREEVIEW]

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**"IT HAS TO BE
THE WORST NURSERY RHYME
I'VE EVER HEARD..."**

-KATIE

BESSIE BROOKS AND TOMMY SNOOKS

Based on a little-known nursery rhyme by Mother Goose

(AT RISE: A park with a bench. Katie, a middle school student, enters, reading a magazine as Bessie Brooks and Tommy Snooks are exiting. Bessie Brooks and Tommy Snooks re-enter. Katie, reading her magazine, watches them.)

TOMMY: "Bessie Brooks, I must say what a delight to be walking with you on this Sunday."

BESSIE: "Oh, Tommy Snooks, there's no other place that I would rather be."

TOMMY: "If I may, I would like to tell you one more thing."

BESSIE: "Of course."

TOMMY: "Tomorrow will be Monday." (They stop, pause, and then exit. They re-enter.) "Bessie Brooks, I must say what a delight to be walking with you on this Sunday."

BESSIE: "Oh, Tommy Snooks, there's no other place that I would rather be."

TOMMY: "If I may, I would like to tell you one more thing."

BESSIE: "Of course."

TOMMY: "Tomorrow will be Monday." (They stop, pause, and exit. They re-enter. Katie continues watching them.) "Bessie Brooks, I must say what a delight to be walking with you on this Sunday."

BESSIE: "Oh, Tommy Snooks, there's—"

(Katie can no longer take it.)

KATIE: (Shouts.) Wait, hold on! Stop this! (Approaches Tommy and Bessie.) What's going on? Are you two crazy? (Tommy and Bessie freeze and stare at her but say nothing.) I know you can hear me, and I know you can speak. So tell me, why do you keep doing the same thing?

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(Pause, no answer.)

TOMMY: *(Covertly speaking out of the corner of his mouth.)* We
can't have this...conversation with you.

KATIE: Why?

BESSIE: Because we're a nursery rhyme.

[END OF FREEVIEW]

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**"HEY, IS THERE AN OPT OUT
FOR THIS GUARDIAN SQUIRREL
THING..."**

-KYLE

MUMFORD E. SQUIRREL IN "HOW TO ASK A GIRL OUT"

(AT RISE: A park with a bench and some foliage. Kyle enters, looking nervous. He paces around and then sits on a bench. He does not notice Mumford, who is sitting on the bench. Note: A stuffed squirrel and offstage voice can be used instead, if desired.)

MUMFORD: (To Kyle.) Hello, friend.

(Surprised, Kyle jumps up.)

KYLE: Who said that?

MUMFORD: I did, of course. (Kyle looks around. Hinting.) On the bench. (Kyle looks down and sees Mumford.) Your directional hearing is deficient.

KYLE: You're a squirrel.

MUMFORD: Mumford E. Squirrel to be exact. And you...are Kyle.

KYLE: (Surprised.) How did you know my name?

MUMFORD: I'm your guardian squirrel, silly.

KYLE: Guardian squirrel?

MUMFORD: Yes. Yours. (Patting the bench.) Come, sit beside me.

(Kyle reluctantly sits down. Mumford smiles at him. Kyle looks uncomfortable. Awkward pause.)

KYLE: So...I have a guardian squirrel?

MUMFORD: You sound disappointed.

KYLE: Well, most people have guardian *angels*.

MUMFORD: Well, would a guardian angel give you a present? (Kyle looks confused.) Look beside you.

(Kyle looks beside him and sees an acorn.)

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KYLE: An acorn?

MUMFORD: (*Proudly.*) From my personal collection.

KYLE: Um...thanks.

MUMFORD: You are very welcome, Kyle.

KYLE: So why are you here...now?

MUMFORD: To help you, of course.

KYLE: Help me do what?

MUMFORD: Ask Sally out.

KYLE: (*Surprised.*) What? You know about Sally?

MUMFORD: Of course, and I also know that every time Sally comes around, you say the most ridiculous things, if anything at all.

KYLE: That's not true.

MUMFORD: The last time you tried to talk to her, what did you tell her about? Hmmm?

[END OF FREEVIEW]

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**"A STORY OF
A LITTLE GIRL'S FAILURE..."**

-ZOE

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(AT RISE: Becca is tied to a chair that has been placed on train tracks. Wearing a rather large name tag, Zoe hurriedly enters.)

ZOE: Excuse me. Do you have the time?

BECCA: I'm a bit tied up at the moment.

ZOE: I'm sorry I bothered you, but I believe I'm late for the Conference For People Who Often Find Themselves Alone In A Room Full Of People While Wearing Nametags. Or "C-F-P-W-O-F-T-A-I-A-R-F-O-P-W-W-N" for short. *(Becca nods.)* It's meeting on the corner of Sixth and Elm. *(Turns to exit.)*

BECCA: It wouldn't be a bother if I weren't tied up.

(Zoe turns back to Becca.)

ZOE: I completely understand.

BECCA: No, I don't think you do. I'm tied up...here...to this chair...while sitting on a train track.

(Zoe approaches and finally understands. She gasps slightly.)

ZOE: But why? *(Puts her hand on Becca's shoulder.)* Did you do this to yourself?

BECCA: What? No. Someone did this to me.

ZOE: Who would do such a thing?

BECCA: Someone who thinks I know too much.

ZOE: Do you? *(Becca looks at her quizzically.)* Know too much?

BECCA: Apparently.

ZOE: Oh. *(Pause.)* Would you like me to untie you?

BECCA: Would you?

ZOE: Of course. *(Goes behind the chair and kneels down. She suddenly stands up, walks away, and looks off.)* I'm sorry. I...I can't.

BECCA: Why? Is it because you don't want to get involved?

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ZOE: (*Still looking away.*) No. That's not it.

BECCA: Is it because you have a crippling phobia of train tracks and the people tied to them?

[END OF FREEVIEW]