



Wade Bradford

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"MY SPLIT PERSONALITIES
ONLY COME OUT
DURING SITUATIONS
THAT MAKE ME
HIGHLY NERVOUS..."

—BRADLEY

BANANA NUT SPLIT

FARCE. As Mona, a restaurant owner, nervously awaits the arrival of a famous food critic, she discovers that all of her waiters have called in sick, and the only employee she has on hand is Lisa, the janitor. And if that isn't bad enough, Lisa has gone temporarily blind from viewing a solar eclipse. Then when a young man, Bradley, arrives at the restaurant, Mona mistakes him for the food critic and tries to impress him by masquerading as an Italian waiter and a French violinist/kazoo player. Bradley, on the other hand, is there to propose to his girlfriend, Susan, and to confess to her that he has multiple personalities that include a cowboy, Elvis, a British detective, and a bank-robbing psychotic animal-rights activist—all of which tend to come out when he is under stress. As the evening progresses, Bradley gets more and more nervous at the thought of marriage and his split personalities begin to emerge one by one!

Performance Time: Approximately 30 minutes.

CHARACTERS

(1 m, 3 f) or (1 m, 1 f, 2 flex)

MONA: Owner of Mama Cavalini's restaurant. (If played as a male character, change the name to Mario.)

LISA: Janitor at Mama Cavalini's; older, dopey, but a good-natured person; stares off into space while she talks due to her temporary blindness. (If played as a male character, change the name to Luigi.)

BRADLEY STUMBLE: Nerdy and a bit timid; wears glasses and a bright green bowtie.

SUSAN: Pretty, eager to get engaged.

SETTING

The setting is Mama Cavolini's, a simple Italian restaurant with a few tables. There is a book of reservations on a podium at the entrance to the restaurant. Upstage there are swinging doors that lead to the kitchen.

PROPS

Cell phone

2 Menus

Mop

Fake mustache

Pitcher of water

2 Water glasses

Beret

Fake goatee

Violin

Kazoo

Notepad

Pen

Elvis-style sunglasses

SOUND EFFECT

Sound of pans crashing to the floor

BANANA NUT SPLIT

(AT RISE: *Mama Cavalini's, a simple Italian restaurant. Mona, the owner of the restaurant, wipes off a table in desperation. She looks around and then calls back upstage toward the entrance of the kitchen.*)

MONA: Lisa! Lisa, where is Preston?! He's an hour late!

LISA: (*Offstage, calling from the kitchen.*) He broke his ankle last night.

MONA: Why didn't he call in to tell me?

(*Lisa pokes her head out from the kitchen entrance.*)

LISA: The phone's broken.

MONA: What?! Why is the phone broken?

LISA: The cord was pulled out of the wall.

MONA: And just who did that?

PRESTON: Preston tripped over it when he broke his ankle.

MONA: Just tell me...how many waiters are we missing total?

LISA: I think that makes nine. Yes, nine!

MONA: Nine?! That is our entire wait staff, except for you and me. Arthur and all the other waiters have the flu. The cooks all have food poisoning. Wait! What about Tommy, that chubby little busboy?

LISA: He said he had the flu, too.

MONA: Lisa, if the phone is dead, how do you know all of this?

LISA: They all stopped by to tell me.

MONA: What? I didn't see anyone!

LISA: They all came through the back alley entrance.

MONA: All of them? Together?

LISA: All in a big party van, from the sounds of it. I guess they were all on their way to see the doctor together.

MONA: Did they give the name of this "doctor"?

LISA: I think it was Lester something...or Les...Les...Les Vegas.

MONA: Las Vegas?! Those jerks! They're getting back at me because I made them work during New Year's Eve. Darn them! Darn them to heck! Tonight is the night that big shot restaurant critic is supposed to come! Lisa, what are we going to do?! If he shows up, my reputation will be more rotten than 3-day-old eggplant lasagna!

LISA: Why don't you just close the place?

MONA: You just stay back there and keep mopping the floor. I pay you to clean, not think! Close the place! Ha! What about all of the reservations? All of our devoted patrons? You're just a foolish janitor. What do you know? Close down Mama Cavalini's!

LISA: Okay, we can stay open and I'll cook for you!

MONA: We'll close the place. Now! Right now before anyone is scheduled to be here! Yes, we'll just skip on out of here before our critical friend gets here. Can't give us a bad review if you can't get in the door! Now where are my keys? *(She searches for her keys and is just about to lock the door.)*

LISA: What's the guy's name anyway?

MONA: The critic? Oh, I'm sure you've heard of him...he wears a bright green bowtie everywhere he goes.

LISA: I've heard of him.

MONA: Yes, I've never seen him before, but I hear he is brutal.

LISA: You better close up.

MONA: Yes, the last thing I want to—

(Bradley Stumble pops in through the door before Mona has a chance to lock up.)

BRADLEY: Hello there! I'm here!

MONA: The green tie!

BRADLEY: Oh, you like it...

MONA: You're...you're...

BRADLEY: Bradley Stumble. I have a reservation for six o'clock.

(Lisa hides in the kitchen.)

MONA: Yes...yes of course. Welcome, sir, to Mama Cavalini's, the finest restaurant in town. As owner and hostess, I'm very sad to inform you that—

BRADLEY: Pardon me, where's your restroom?

MONA: Down the hallway there, but sir—

BRADLEY: I'll just be a moment. And, oh, I'm going to be joined by my girlfriend... *(Snickers.)* ...let her know I'm here. You can't miss her. She's the most beautiful woman in the world. *(Obviously in love, Bradley flits across the stage and exits.)*

MONA: Ugh, this is not good! Lisa! Lisa, get out here! We're in trouble! *(From the kitchen there is the sound of pans crashing onto the floor. Then Lisa emerges from the kitchen, her hands searching about. She bumps into a table.)* What's wrong with you? Can't you see?

LISA: Sorry ma'am. I'm blind.

MONA: How?

LISA: Did you see the solar eclipse this morning?

MONA: No.

LISA: Well, I did. I watched it for a whole hour. It was very beautiful. And surprisingly painful. My vision should come back sometime tomorrow.

MONA: That does me little good now, you moron! Now look—

LISA: I can't; I'm blind.

MONA: Then just listen! We have something serious going on! The food critic is here, and he's bringing along a girlfriend. We can't turn him away, and if he writes a bad review, I'm out of business—

LISA: Which means I'm out of a job.

MONA: Exactly, so we've got to pull this off. I can be the waiter.

LISA: You can't be the waiter...you just introduced yourself as the hostess.

MONA: You're right. I'll have to think of something. Now, you said you could cook...have you ever worked with a chef before?

LISA: Chef Boyardee, does that count?

(Mona grabs Lisa and pulls her toward the kitchen.)

MONA: Come on, follow me...maybe we'll get lucky and they'll just order macaroni and cheese.

LISA: I can make that! As long as the microwave works.

(Mona and Lisa exit upstage into the kitchen. Bradley enters, talking on a cell phone.)

BRADLEY: Hey, Frank, this is Bradley! How-zit-goin'! Ha, ha, ha, ha! Hey, I wanted you to be the first to know...tonight, I'm asking Susan the big question. That's right, I got the ring and everything. I'm standing in a fancy restaurant, and it's going to be perfect. *(Pause.)* Yeah, of course I'm sure. I love her, man. *(Pause.)* Uh-huh. *(Pause.)* What? Have I told her my problem? You mean the... *(Pause.)* ...uh-huh, well it's not a big deal anymore. Really! My split personalities only come out during situations that make me highly nervous. Well, yeah, of course I'm going to tell her, but really it's a very minor issue. *(Susan enters the restaurant. She sees Bradley and sneaks up from behind, a mischievous smirk on her face.)* But it's only when I get nervous. As long as I stay calm and cool, everything will be—

SUSAN: Surprise!

(Susan tickles Bradley playfully. This greatly startles him.)

BRADLEY: Eeeek!

(Bradley quickly changes his personality into that of a cowboy.)

SUSAN: Oh, I'm sorry, Bradley, sweetie, I didn't mean to scare you.

BRADLEY: *(Moseying around like a cowboy.)* Scared? Me? Ha! You got yerself quite a sense of humor there, little lady. I ain't never been scared in my whole life, except the time when me and my horse got swept up by a tornada an' I was only a little bit scared.

SUSAN: You're so funny, Bradley. I didn't know you did impressions.

BRADLEY: Bradley?! Why does everyone go around calling by that name? I mosey down the street, someone calls out, "Hey, Bradley." I'm watching some "Hee-Haw" reruns and the phone rings; I pick it up, and they're asking for Bradley. I'm trying to rope a cow in the privacy of my own backyard, and some neighbor fella peeps over the fence and calls me Bradley! I plumb don't get it.

SUSAN: Bradley, are you feeling okay?

BRADLEY: There you go again with that Bradley jargon. My name's Buck! I gotta real name and nobody calls me by it! And it makes me so gosh darn angry that I could punch a hole in this here — *(He punches the podium. It hurts his hand badly, and as he reacts to the pain, he transforms back into his rather nerdy, timid self.)* Ooh, ow, my hand. Darn, ooh that hurts. Oh, Susan, when did you get here?

SUSAN: Um, what was that cowboy thing you just did?

BRADLEY: Cowboy thing? Oh, nothing. Just a little joke, that's all.

SUSAN: You're always full of surprises.

BRADLEY: Aren't I?

(Mona enters. As she speaks to them, she locks the front door and shuts the blind.)

MONA: *(To Bradley.)* Excellent, I see your lady friend has arrived. Shall I seat you now?

SUSAN: That would be great, thanks.

MONA: Right this way.

(Bradley and Susan follow Mona to the table and sit down.)

BRADLEY: Not very busy this evening.

MONA: No, tonight you are our special guests. This evening, it is just you two.

SUSAN: Wow, how romantic!

BRADLEY: That's very nice of you, but it isn't necessary.

MONA: Of course it is...you see, sir, not many people wear that wonderful green tie you are so famous for...we are honored to have you at our restaurant. *(There is a pounding at the door.)* Excuse me.

SUSAN: *(Discreetly, behind the wine menu.)* What's she talking about? A famous tie?

BRADLEY: I don't know. I bought it today.

MONA: *(Upstage, shouts into the kitchen.)* Lisa, make yourself useful! Tell those people at the door to go away and stop bothering us. *(Mona returns her attention to her guests. Upstage, Lisa wanders blindly out, feeling her way to the main entrance. To Bradley and Susan.)* May I tell you about our wine list?

BRADLEY: Certainly...

(The pounding on the door continues.)

LISA: I'm coming! I'm coming!

MONA: *(To Bradley and Susan.)* You will find that our house wine is delightful, subtle in its fragrance with a hint of blackberry and oak. Now, if you look here...

(Mona ad-libs the details of the wine list as Lisa opens the door.)

LISA: *(To an unseen customer, yells.)* Go away! We don't want your business! *(She slams the door. The pounding begins again. Lisa opens the door and sticks her head out the door. Shouts.)* I already told you! Oh yeah— *(To Mona.)* Hey, Mona, this guy says he's an important big shot.

MONA: *(Halting her wine list recitation.)* Lisa, no one is as important as our fine guests sitting right here.

LISA: So what do I do?

MONA: Just make him go away—whatever it takes. *(Lisa fumbles her way back into the kitchen. To Bradley and Susan.)* As I was saying...

(Mona ad-libs the wine list. Lisa comes back out of the kitchen with her trusty mop. The pounding on the door continues.)

LISA: *(Shouts.)* Okay, big shot, get ready to taste some mop! *(She goes to the door and exits, ready for battle. Mona calmly continues to describe the wine list as Lisa shouts various karate-style battle cries. She comes back in and triumphantly holds up a hairpiece and a green bowtie.)* Hey, Mona, I think he got the message!

(Mona still has her back to Lisa, trying to ignore her.)

MONA: That's fine, Lisa, back to the kitchen, if you please. *(To Bradley, Susan.)* Now, as to the wine list, what would you like this evening?

SUSAN: I think I'll just have water.

BRADLEY: Me too.

MONA: Oh. Very well. I'll give you a chance to look at the menus. Do you have any questions?

SUSAN: Is it just the two of you working tonight?

MONA: Um...

SUSAN: Oh, I don't mind. I had just thought that this restaurant was famous for its service. You know, a dozen waiters waiting on us hand and foot...

MONA: Of course we do...you don't think that it's just Lisa and myself, do you? There is a very fine, distinguished waiter coming momentarily...

SUSAN: Great...

MONA: He may look a little like me...he is my cousin...

(Mona hurries away, exiting through the kitchen entrance.)

SUSAN: So, how was work today?

BRADLEY: Boring, as usual.

SUSAN: Mine was just as dull.

BRADLEY: I don't know, I need something exciting in my life.

I'm getting tired of the same thing each day. I'm too fun of a guy to be an accountant. I need a career with a lot more life in it, you know. Something breathtakingly different.

SUSAN: Like what?

BRADLEY: Like...like...a bank manager!

SUSAN: That doesn't sound very exciting.

BRADLEY: It doesn't?

SUSAN: Although, there have been a lot of robberies lately.

Have you heard about that one bank robber who's been stealing the money and donating it all to animal rights groups?

BRADLEY: Really? Boy, they ought to lock those weirdoes up and toss away the key.

SUSAN: I guess the authorities have no idea who it could be.

Then, out of the blue, this super-detective guy—I was reading all of this in the newspaper—storms in from England and vows to track down the criminal mastermind by the end of the week.

BRADLEY: We sure live in a crazy city.

SUSAN: There's certainly a lot of ups and downs, but this is certainly one of the perks to life downtown. *(She's looking around at the restaurant).* I've heard this is one of the most expensive restaurants in town. Are you sure you can afford this?

BRADLEY: No problem at all. When the menu gets here, order whatever your heart desires. Anything and everything.

SUSAN: What are you having?

(Bradley glances at the menu. He is displeased with the prices.)

BRADLEY: Just some breadsticks.

SUSAN: *(Curious, flirtatious.)* So...is there a special occasion for tonight?

BRADLEY: *(Growing very nervous.)* Oh, there's none, really...just sort of to say...that I...uh, that I love you...

SUSAN: You're so sweet. I love you too, Bradley. Was that the only reason? You didn't, you know, have anything to ask me?

BRADLEY: *(Becoming very shaky and nervous.)* Well...I was thinking of asking you something...

(Bradley gets down on one knee. But just as he does, Mona, wearing a large fake mustache, enters and interrupts them with a pitcher of water. Mona speaks in a fake Italian accent.)

MONA: Good evening, I am your waiter! Here is your water!

SUSAN: Wait, wait, Bradley, what were you going to ask me?

BRADLEY: Uh, nothing, I'm just bending down on one knee to tie my shoes...but since I'm wearing loafers, I guess I can sit back down. *(Looks at Mona.)* Hey! You look just like the owner of this restaurant.

MONA: Yes, I am her twin.

SUSAN: Mona said you were her cousin.

MONA: Yes, her twin cousin.

SUSAN: Oh.

MONA: Have you had a chance to examine the menu?

SUSAN: It all looks so wonderful. What do you suppose the chef would suggest?

(Lisa pokes her out of the kitchen entrance.)

LISA: Grilled cheese sandwiches!

MONA: Ha, ha, she's quite a character.

BRADLEY: Well, you choose, Susan...something exotic and exciting...

SUSAN: Hmm, can we have a few more minutes to decide?

MONA: Of course, of course!

(Mona heads back to the kitchen. Lisa pokes her head out again.)

LISA: Do they want the grilled cheese?

MONA: No they don't, you fool! Get back in there!

(Mona exits into the kitchen, pushing Lisa back inside.)

SUSAN: Now, Bradley, you look awful nervous. What's wrong? Aren't you feeling well?

BRADLEY: No, I'm fine...though, I do admit, I am a bit jumpy.

SUSAN: About what? Was there something you wanted to ask me?

BRADLEY: Well, as a matter of fact, I, uh, did want to ask you...

SUSAN: *(With great anticipation.)* Yes? Yes?!

BRADLEY: *(Growing extremely nervous.)* I was wondering if...maybe you'd...possibly consider...uh...I wanted to know if...uh...uh!

(Bradley flops down on the ground. Unseen by the audience and Susan, he puts on a pair of Elvis-style sunglasses.)

SUSAN: Bradley?! Yoo-hoo, sweetie...

(Bradley bounces back up and shows her a whiplash smile. He has become Elvis.)

BRADLEY: The name's Elvis. Elvis Presley.

SUSAN: That's cute, Bradley, but let's quit clowning. Come on, what did you want to tell me?

BRADLEY: Oh, let me be...your teddy bear. Cuz...I ain't nothing but a hound dog!

SUSAN: Bradley?

BRADLEY: *(Trying to sing seductively.)* "Wise men say...only fools rush in..." *(Starts to rock out.)* "But ever since my baby left me! I've found a new place to dwell!"

(Bradley continues to dance about and sing snippets of Elvis tunes. Mona sticks her head out to see what's going on. Susan tries to snap Bradley out of his rock n' roll delirium.)

SUSAN: Bradley, what's wrong with you! Stop it! Snap out of it!

(Bradley continues to sing, so Susan splashes a glass of water in his face. [Note: Don't use very much water, or, if you prefer, the water can be pantomimed.] Bradley instantly returns to himself. He flops back down on his seat.)

BRADLEY: Will someone turn down that rock music? *(Fiddles with his ears.)*

SUSAN: Sorry I had to do that, but why were you acting that way?

BRADLEY: What way? I don't know what you mean. And why am I all wet?

(Mona approaches them. She is still wearing the fake mustache and speaking with an Italian accent.)

MONA: *(Pouring some more water.)* Are you all right, sir?

BRADLEY: Of course! I'm fine! Why is everyone suddenly concerned about my health?

MONA: We wouldn't want you to get sick when you write that fine article of yours.

BRADLEY: Article?

SUSAN: *(To Mona.)* I think we're ready to order now. I'll have the Caesar salad. Hold the onions and hold the tomatoes.

BRADLEY: I'll have the same. Hold the tomatoes, but hold the hold on the onions.

MONA: Of course. I shall be back shortly with your salads.

BRADLEY: Oh, and some breadsticks.

MONA: Magnificent. *(She begins to exit.)*

SUSAN: Now, what are you so stressed about, Brady-kins? We need something to calm you down. Oh! I know! *(To Mona.)* Waiter!

(Mona quickly scurries back to the table.)

MONA: Yes?

SUSAN: Didn't I read an ad that said you had that famous French violinist who plays at people's tables?

MONA: Ah, Monsieur Samuel. Well, yes, however, I must—

SUSAN: Can you send him out, please? *(To Bradley.)* He's sure to calm your nerves, darling.

MONA: I...I will see what I can do.

(Mona turns calmly, then frantically runs back into the kitchen.)

SUSAN: Now, what were you trying to ask me?

BRADLEY: Well, maybe I should tell you something about me first. We've known each other for a long time now. I know that sometimes you've seen me act weird and...this is hard to say...but... *(Mona enters, wearing a beret and a goatee, and carrying a violin and a kazoo. She tiptoes up to them and prepares to play, unbeknownst to Bradley.)* I...well, you see, it sort of all started when I was about— *(Mona plays a harsh note from the violin and a awkward blast from the kazoo. Mona is trying to play*

a love song – something like “Moon River.” All of a sudden, Bradley, shocked by the so-called music, transforms into another personality – a psychotic animal rights activist. To Mona, shouts.) What do you think you are doing, you pee-brained, worthless piece of slug flesh unworthy of your lofty brand name of a so-called human being?!

MONA: *(Cheesy French accent.)* I, uh, nothing! I was just trying to play you a love ballad with this violin and my very romantic kazoo.

[End of Freeview]