

**THE ODD AND USUAL DAY OF MR. RIBBITZ**

Farce

by  
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CHARACTER NAME	BRIEF DESCRIPTION	AGE	GENDER
<b>MR. RIBBITZ</b>	Star of the show	30's	Male
<b>STEVE/MR. GAY-GAY-GATOR</b>	Producer	30's	Male
<b>AGATHA</b>	Wife of the Head of the Network and the love interest of Mr Ribbitz	30's	Female

OFFSTAGE VOICE: ALL OFFSTAGE VOICES ARE NEVER SEEN AND CAN BE PRE-RECORDED VOICE OVERS.

ANNOUNCER		N/A	Male
TABBY		20'S	Female
CONTROL		N/A	N/A

SETTING: There is a children's television set of a swamp, with a tree in the middle as a center piece. There are various holes for puppets to come out of. Also there are several round doors for props to be kept in. There is a swamp backdrop behind the set and traditional theater curtains that frames the front of the stage.

AT RISE: The set is lit so people can work but isn't at the on the air show level yet.

MR. RIBBITZ and his producer STEVE enter. Ribbitz is wearing a frog costume, his face appears where the mouth of the frog should be.

RIBBITZ

(Agitated)

I feel like an idiot.

STEVE

Nonsense, look at yourself. You've never looked better.

RIBBITZ

I can't believe I didn't see this coming.

STEVE

There's nothing coming, so how could you have seen it?

RIBBITZ

The head of the network hates me.

STEVE

Well, you did sleep with his wife.

RIBBITZ

Yes, but he doesn't know that.

STEVE

That you know of.

RIBBITZ

Well, it was only the one time.

STEVE

Sometimes that's all it takes.

RIBBITZ

In all fairness, I didn't know she was married.

STEVE

The ring should have been a dead give away.

RIBBITZ

Who notices things like that?

STEVE

Usually, most people.

RIBBITZ

Ha, but I'm not like most people.

STEVE

That's right, you're a star.

RIBBITZ

Until he cancels the show.

STEVE

He's not going to cancel the show. You're number one in your time slot. He won't touch you as long as you're number one, after that, who knows. Oh, before I forget, he's sent us a new sponsor.

RIBBITZ

Oh really, who?

Steve shows him a picture. The picture is only seen by Steve and Mr. Ribbitz and not seen by the audience.

RIBBITZ

No, no, no, this is a Children's show, is he insane?

STEVE

Actually, I think it's pretty tasteful, you know, considering where they placed the apple.

RIBBITZ

This is what I was talking about, he's just messing with me now.

STEVE

He's not messing with you. He's trying to make money. You know, like most business men.

RIBBITZ

Remind me, is messing with me a profitable business?

STEVE

It is if you agree to this sponsor.

RIBBITZ

Forget it, I still have my dignity. By the way, when are those new frog feet coming in. These are just not working for me anymore.

STEVE

I don't know, I'll have to ask the Department of Standards and High Ideals.

Mr. Ribbitz just looks at Steve with a death stare.

STEVE

I'll ask wardrobe.

RIBBITZ

Thank you. I swear it's like the whole world is out to get me today. Is it too much to ask for just one day of normalcy.

AGATHA VAN HORNE enters and approaches Mr. Ribbitz.

AGATHA

I'm pregnant.

STEVE

Obviously yes, yes it is.

Both Ribbitz and Agatha give Steve  
a death stare.

STEVE

And obviously I'm needed elsewhere.

Steve exits.

RIBBITZ

What do you mean by pregnant?

AGATHA

You know, I have a bun in the oven, bat in the cave,  
I'm now in the pudding club, the family way.

RIBBITZ

Okay, okay....

AGATHA

The tin roof is rusted, the rabbit died, knocked up,  
you know...

(Holds her belly and shakes  
it.)

PREGNANT!

RIBBITZ

Okay, I get it.

AGATHA

Are you sure, because I could pull out a few more  
colloquialisms if you're still fuzzy.

RIBBITZ

That's quite alright, I get it, you're pregnant.

AGATHA

Yes.

RIBBITZ

Why?

AGATHA

I don't know, I guess I thought it was a slow week.

RIBBITZ

And you're sure it's mine?

Agatha punches Ribbitz in the stomach.

RIBBITZ

I'll take that as a yes.

AGATHA

You know we have to get married now.

RIBBITZ

But you're already married to the head of the network.

AGATHA

I know, my mother is going to be so confused.

Steve enters.

STEVE

Okay, we're about to go live, are you ready? Oh, by the way congratulations.

RIBBITZ

How did you know?

STEVE

You left your mic on, everyone in the studio knows.

Steve pulls Agatha off stage.

STEVE

And we're going live in 5, 4, 3 and...

(To Agatha)

Have you thought of a name yet?

Music starts.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

And it's that time of the day again, for all the good boys and girls to visit their favorite frog in the Mystical Swamp. That's right it's time for Mr. Ribbitz!

Lights come to full, revealing a confused Mr. Ribbitz. Mr. Ribbitz reluctantly starts singing the song.

Lyrics to be sung to the music of "Buffalo Gals, Won't you come out and Tonight?"

RIBBITZ

(Sings)

Hello kids, won't you come out and play, come out and play? Come out to play? Hello kids, won't you come out and play, and have some fun today?

(Music continues as Mr.

Ribbitz addresses the camera and the audience.)

Welcome boys and girls to Mr. Ribbitz Mystical Swamp. I of course am Mr. Ribbitz, your guide to today's wonderful and mystical adventure. And to help us out today, let me bring in everybody's favorite little explorers, Tabby the Tadpole and the Mystical Dancers.

Steve walks onto stage with a white shirt with "I'm a Tadpole" written on it with a black marker.

RIBBITZ

(Confused and Annoyed)

My Tabby, you've grown, and where are the Mystical Dancers?

Steve pulls out a Paper People Chain he obviously just made from the script and shows it to the camera and audience.



RIBBITZ

Yes very creative.

(Under his breath to Steve)

Where the hell is Tabby and the Dancers?

STEVE

(Under his breath)

She locked herself in her dressing room after learning about your upcoming marriage.

RIBBITZ

And the dancers?

STEVE

Consoling her.

RIBBITZ

Of course...

(To the Camera and Audience)

Tabby and Mr. Ribbitz will be right back after this short break.

STEVE

Today's Mystical Swamp is being brought to you by...

Steve attempts to take out the new sponsorship graphic from earlier but it's slapped out of his hands by Mr. Ribbitz.

RIBBITZ

On second thought how about a cartoon with...

(Not sure what the cartoon is.)

Some cute things that will teach you something valuable and stuff.

Mr. Ribbitz walks just off stage.

STEVE

And lets roll the cartoon.

Lights change indicating they stopped shooting live.

Steve exits.

Mr. Ribbitz is knocking at a door on the side of the stage. The door is just on the other side of the curtain and is unseen by the audience.

RIBBITZ

Tabby baby, come on and open the door.

TABBY (OFF STAGE)

Go away!

RIBBITZ

Come on, don't be that way. You know how Mr. Ribbitz feels about you.

TABBY (OFF STAGE)

Then how could you; she's pregnant?

RIBBITZ

I guess.

TABBY (OFF STAGE)

Which means you...

RIBBITZ

Yes, but in all fairness, Mr. Ribbitz was really drunk that night.

TABBY (OFF STAGE)

Excuse me?

Agatha enters.

AGATHA

Yes, excuse me?

RIBBITZ

Oh please, you were completely blitzed yourself.

TABBY (OFF STAGE)

Is that your whore?

RIBBITZ

There's no need for that young lady.

AGATHA

Young, how young? Is the father of my child a cradle robber?

TABBY (OFF STAGE)

I'll have you know I'm 22 and all woman, you old crone.

AGATHA

Hey, I'm only 36 I'll have you know.

TABBY (OFF STAGE)

Yeah, tell that to your sagging tits, baby mamma.

AGATHA

Why you little...

Steve enters and grabs Agatha and Mr. Ribbitz. He leaves Mr. Ribbitz at the center of the stage and continues dragging Agatha off stage opposite of where Tabby's dressing room is.

STEVE

And we're back, in 5, 4, 3 and...

Lights come to full indicating that they are Live on camera again.

RIBBITZ

Hi boys and girls. Wasn't that great?

(Nervous laughter)

What a great show this has been so far. Everything is just great...

(Can't remember what he's supposed to do next.

Asks anyone in general.)  
...so what's next?

STEVE (OFF STAGE)  
(In a Loud Whisper)

Sing!

RIBBITZ  
(Nervous, Slightly  
Hysterical Laugh)  
Really? Another flipping song? Well, isn't that just,  
well great.

(Collects himself.)  
Sure, why not. And will Tabby be joining us for this  
musical number?

TABBY (OFF STAGE)  
Go to hell!

RIBBITZ  
I'll take that as a no. Well, Mystical Maestro, if you  
don't mind.

Music starts.

RIBBITZ  
(Again addressing off  
camera.)  
What are we singing about.

STEVE (OFF STAGE)  
(In a Loud Whisper)  
Hygiene!

The music to "Here We Go Around The  
Mulberry Bush" starts playing. Mr.  
Ribbitz is less than enthusiastic  
about doing the song.

During the song there is obvious choreography where Mr. Ribbitz should be dancing with Tabby and the other dancers, but since they are not there Mr. Ribbitz has to improvise dancing with himself.

RIBBITZ

(Puts his head down and sighs.)

I hate my life.

(Takes a breath and addresses the Audience/Camera, and then sings.)

This is the way we wash our face, wash our face, wash our face. This is the way we wash our face. And clean ourselves in the morning.

This is the way we brush our teeth. Brush our teeth, brush our teeth. This is the way we brush our teeth. And clean ourselves in the morning.

This is the way we put on clean clothes, put on clean clothes, put on clean clothes.

This is the way we put on clean clothes. And clean ourselves in the morning.

(Song ends and Mr. Ribbitz poses and address the camera.)

So lets start the day off right and stay clean everybody!

(Mr. Ribbitz looks like he's about to lose it. )

That was great everyone. I don't know about you but Mr. Ribbitz could really use a break. Why don't we hear from one of Mr. Ribbitz special friends; who helps bring Mr. Ribbitz and his Mystical Swamp to you?

Steve enters and again attempts to show the proposed new sponsors graphic to the audience. Mr. Ribbitz snaps his fingers and points Steve back to offstage.

Steve turns back around and heads offstage looking defeated.

STEVE

(To the offstage crew)

And we're out.

Agatha enters.

AGATHA

I was thinking Thaddeus if it's a boy. Your thoughts?

RIBBITZ

No.

AGATHA

No to Thaddeus or just no to thoughts. It's always so hard to tell with you.

RIBBITZ

Just, no.

Mr. Ribbitz walks away from Agatha and is approached by Steve holding a phone. Agatha exits annoyed.

STEVE

How are you holding up buddy?

RIBBITZ

Is marijuana still illegal?

STEVE

Who knows anymore, but you don't have time for that.

RIBBITZ

What? Why?

STEVE

Because the head of the network Jacob Van Horne is on the phone for you.

Steve hands Mr. Ribbitz the phone before he knows what's going on.

STEVE

(Whispering to Mr. Ribbitz)

Don't worry, act natural and you'll be fine.

Steve exits.

RIBBITZ

Hello?

(Listens)

No, no problem at all. Always great to hear from you Mr. Van Horne.

Agatha enters, see's that Mr. Ribbitz is on the phone, and waits behind him impatiently.

RIBBITZ

Well, you know how it goes on these shows. A million things always happening at once.

Agatha gets a concerned look on her face. She looks around and grabs a trash can and throws up in it.

AGATHA

Nothing to worry about, just some morning sickness.

Disturbed Mr Ribbitz walks away from Agatha.

RIBBITZ

Well, right now there's a lot going on, maybe I could call back?

(Listens)

That would be wonderful.

(Listens)

What's that? Your wife's around today. No, I have not seen her, but will make sure to say hi if I do.

(Listens)

Great, talk to you later.

Mr. Ribbitz hangs up the phone and Agatha approaches him.

AGATHA

I like Ethel if it's a girl. My grandmother's name was Ethel.

RIBBITZ

Was she a truck driver?

AGATHA

Excuse me?

RIBBITZ

Sorry, listen Agatha, I do care...

TABBY (OFF STAGE)

Oh my god!

RIBBITZ

What the hell?

Steve enters.

STEVE

You're mic is still on. Everyone can still hear you.

RIBBITZ

Well then, can you turn this stupid thing off.

STEVE

No.

RIBBITZ

No?

STEVE

Yes no.

RIBBITZ

Why not?

Steve grabs Agatha and backs off the stage.



STEVE

Because we are back on the air and 5, 4, 3 and...

(To Agatha)

I actually love the name Ethel.

Lights on the stage change  
indicating that Mr. Ribbitz is back  
on the air.

RIBBITZ

Well hello again boys and girls and welcome back to Mr.  
Ribbitz Mystical Swamp.

(Under his breath.)

Otherwise known as my personal hell.

(Back to the audience.)

What other fun adventures and surprises are waiting for  
Mr. Ribbitz? Hopefully something fun and not too  
surprising that could possibly send Mr. Ribbitz over  
the edge. Because boys and girls, Mr. Ribbitz is about  
to...

From behind him something falls  
from the ceiling and a loud crash  
is heard.

Mr. Ribbitz just stands there for a  
second in shock and disbelief.

RIBBITZ

(In a low and unnaturally  
calm voice.)

How about we go to another cartoon so Mr. Ribbitz can  
change into a clean frog suit?

Mr. Ribbitz just stands there  
looking at the camera with a  
psychotic smile on his face.

Lights change to indicate they are  
not live anymore.

Steve enters.

STEVE

(To the Studio)

And we are rolling with that cartoon.

(to Mr. Ribbitz)

Jeez-louise, are you alright?

Mr. Ribbitz just stands there with the same psychotic smile, not moving.

STEVE

Buddy are you okay?

Mr. Ribbitz just stands there and doesn't move.

STEVE

Buddy you're starting to scare me, are you hurt?

Mr. Ribbitz does nothing.

STEVE

Buddy...

Agatha enters.

AGATHA

Okay, how about Joseph?

RIBBITZ

I flipping love it! Even if it's a girl, lets call it that!

AGATHA

What got into you?

RIBBITZ

I was nearly crushed by something!

STEVE

A very expensive stage light I'll have you know.

Mr. Ribbitz just stares at Steve in disbelief.

STEVE

Talking out loud was the wrong choice, I realize that now.

Agatha notices something about the light and investigates.

RIBBITZ

I always knew this show would take my life. Don't ask me how but somehow I just knew it was fated to be.

AGATHA

Maybe not.

STEVE

Why do you say that?

AGATHA

The cables on this instrument have been cut.

RIBBITZ

What's that?

AGATHA

I think this was intentional.

RIBBITZ

You mean?

STEVE

She thinks someone is trying to kill you.

(Steve hears something on his headset.)

Oh, and we're back in 5, 4...

RIBBITZ

Go to a commercial!

STEVE

And we're going to a commercial.

Steve exits.

RIBBITZ

Be the star of a children's show my agent said. It will be fun he said. Easy money, low stress he said.

AGATHA

Did he say anything about knocking up your bosses wife?

RIBBITZ

No, but knowing my agent I'm pretty sure it was implied at some point.

AGATHA

Class act all the way Ribbitz.

Agatha gets a concerned look on her face and then leans over and throws up into the trash can again.

RIBBITZ

Spoken from someone who knows.

(Brief pause)

Are you okay?

AGATHA

You did this to me!

RIBBITZ

I'll take that as a yes.

Mr. Ribbitz moves to the side of the stage looking up in the air concerned.

Steve enters.

STEVE

So buddy...

RIBBITZ

(Scared)

Ahhh...

STEVE

Gees, jumpy little frog, aren't you?

RIBBITZ

Cute. I'm glad you can find humor in my forthcoming demise.

STEVE

Yeah, I was thinking about that. Should we keep going or just dump the rest of the show?

RIBBITZ

No, no, no, we can't dump the show.

STEVE

Why do you say that?

RIBBITZ

Because, people will start asking questions.

STEVE

Well, buddy, they usually do when someone is trying to kill another person.

RIBBITZ

But then certain facts will come out that will be rather awkward to answer.

STEVE

Like what?

Agatha lifts her head back up.

AGATHA

Don't mind me, just puking for two over here.

STEVE

Oh, well, you can't really keep that a secret.

RIBBITZ

Can't we though?

STEVE

Seriously?

RIBBITZ

Well, didn't everyone have to sign a non-disclosure thingy?

STEVE

Have you met this cast. You're lucky the gossip columnist haven't already started calling for quotes.

AGATHA

What's this? Are you embarrassed of me and our child?

Steve feeling the awkwardness exits.

RIBBITZ

Eh?

AGATHA

Unbelievable. I should kill you myself.

RIBBITZ

Don't say that, listen embarrassed is not exactly the word I would put to this.

AGATHA

What would be the word?

RIBBITZ

Terrified.

AGATHA

Excuse me?

RIBBITZ

Listen, someone is trying to kill me and you're married to the head of the network. As far as I know, he's the one that's trying to do the, you know, killing.

AGATHA

Nonsense, he doesn't have the stomach for something like that. As far as you know it could be your little baby of a girlfriend.

RIBBITZ

(Yells offstage)

Tabby, are you trying to kill me?

TABBY (OFF STAGE)

I haven't decided yet!

RIBBITZ

(To Agatha)

Point taken, we'll put her down as a maybe.

Steve enters.

STEVE

Buddy.

RIBBITZ

(Frightened)

Ahh! Son-of-a... Would you put a bell on or something!

STEVE

Sorry? But we're back in...

RIBBITZ

I swear to god I will smack you so hard you'll see Jesus. Wait a minutes, that won't work, you're jewish aren't you?

STEVE

No, Presbyterian.

RIBBITZ

Regardless, I'll smack you so hard you'll see whatever deity you worship.

STEVE

Well, we can't keep running commercials.

RIBBITZ

Why not, think of the profits.

STEVE

I thought the whole point of not dumping the show was so people wouldn't ask questions.

RIBBITZ

Oh, how about this? Let's dump into a segment of an old show, like it's part of this show.

AGATHA

Can you do that?

STEVE

Sure we can do it. I just don't know if we should.

RIBBITZ

Why not?

STEVE

Well, it's a little dishonest.

RIBBITZ

Really, dishonest. Like that time I told the network you were with me instead of...

STEVE

(Into the mic on his headset.)

Okay, let's come out of the commercial and go straight into a rerun of a previous segment.

(Listens)

I don't care just run anything you have available.

(Listens)

Great, and we're back in 5, 4, 3 and...

(Listens)

...roll it.

Steve goes over and turns on the intercom.

RIBBITZ (V.O.)

Hello kids, this is Mr. Ribbitz here at the Thanksgiving day Parade in what appears to be the coldest day on record.

Steve turns the intercom off.



RIBBITZ

I think we might get away with it.

AGATHA

Only if people don't realize it's June.

Mr. Ribbitz looks at Steve.

STEVE

I'll go see what I can do.

Steve exits.

AGATHA

Speaking of June, if we rush through some of the unpleasantries we could probably still have a lovely June wedding.

RIBBITZ

What unpleasantries are you talking about? The one where you're still married, or the one where someone is trying to kill me?

AGATHA

Hey, I didn't say it would be easy, but with careful planning and determination, anything is possible.

RIBBITZ

You are unbelievable.

AGATHA

Why thank you.

RIBBITZ

That wasn't a... never mind.

AGATHA

Hey, I'm starting to feel a lot of neglect for me and our child here.

RIBBITZ

Okay, I can only handle one piece of insanity at a time. Right now someone is trying to kill me so I'm sorry if that's taking away from... whatever this is.

AGATHA

You know what, you can only use this murder plot excuse so many times to avoid your commitments. I mean, what are we talking about? One light nearly hitting you?

Something falls behind them from the ceiling and a loud crash is heard.

AGATHA

Okay fine, two lights nearly hitting you? I think I'm going to faint.

Steve enters.

STEVE

Whoa, what happened?

RIBBITZ

You know, the usual.

STEVE

Is anyone hurt?

AGATHA

I'm fine, but I think I'm going to faint.

Mr. Ribbitz sits down.

RIBBITZ

Physically I'm okay, but inside I'm bleeding my friend, bleeding.

STEVE

Do I need to get the first aid kit for that?

RIBBITZ

I haven't decided yet.

AGATHA

I think I'm... would someone come over here and catch me I think I'm about to faint.

STEVE

Oh...

Steve goes over and Agatha throws up on Steve.

AGATHA

Sorry, I read that wrong.

STEVE

No problem.

Steve goes over to investigate the light.

Agatha walks over and sits next to Mr. Ribbitz.

AGATHA

Oh my, this day is killing me.

Mr. Ribbitz looks at Agatha in disbelief.

AGATHA

Sorry, poor choice of words.

STEVE

Same as last time, the cables have been cut. This is really going to hurt our budget.

Both Mr. Ribbitz and Agatha stare at him.

STEVE

What, these instruments aren't cheap you know.

Steve walks off the stage while talking to someone on his headset.

STEVE

Can we get someone to secure the catwalk before someone gets killed, or this puts us into the poor house?

(To Mr. Ribbitz)

Don't worry, I'm on the case buddy.

Steve exits.

RIBBITZ

And strangely enough, I'm not relieved.

AGATHA

So about the wedding.

RIBBITZ

Really, now, you want to discuss this now? When someone, possibly your husband is trying to kill me?

AGATHA

Well, yes actually, you're a busy man and I respect that about you. Between doing your show and people trying to kill you, I can see time for me and our child will be at a premium, so I would like to use this lull in the chaos that is your life to get a firm plan in place. You know, to put us on the right track for success.

RIBBITZ

I find your insane logic truly astounding. Sure, so say your husband doesn't kill me, how would you like to proceed?

AGATHA

Your sarcasm is not appreciated, and I've already told you, my husband like so many other things, doesn't have the stomach for something like murder. If anything he would just delegate it out for someone else to do.

RIBBITZ

What's that?

AGATHA

Oh yes, he's really big on delegation. Like when he sent his assistant to have a romantic dinner with me on our anniversary. Fun night, but still wrong on so many levels.

RIBBITZ

So anyone here could have been hired...

AGATHA

Delegated, technically the people here are already hired.

RIBBITZ

Whatever, anyone here could be a killer.

AGATHA

Possibly.

Steve enters.

STEVE

Hey buddy.

RIBBITZ

Ahhhh...

STEVE

Ahhhh...

RIBBITZ

Ahhhh...

STEVE

Ahhhh... Stop doing that!

RIBBITZ

No, you stop doing that!

STEVE

I will if you will.

RIBBITZ

Okay.

STEVE

Fine.

RIBBITZ

Thank you.

STEVE

No problem.

Both Mr. Ribbitz and Steve breathe a big sigh of relief and relax for a second.

AGATHA

So this is the secret language of show business. It's amazing that anything gets done.

STEVE

I know right?

RIBBITZ

Steve, be honest with me. Are you trying to kill me?

STEVE

Not at this moment, but if we lose anymore equipment I may have to hit you with something so we can collect the insurance.

RIBBITZ

Fair enough. I'm almost afraid to ask but what are people watching right now?

STEVE

We switched it over to last years telethon.

AGATHA

You're kidding me?

STEVE

No, so far we raised two grand for Parents Against Enfranchised Children.

RIBBITZ

Not bad.

(Mr. Ribbitz gets up and starts to leave)

Well, obviously I'm not needed. Okay people, I'm out like... well, something that needs to get the hell out of here really fast.

Anyone needs me, I'll be at the bar across the street.

(Grabs his mic on his  
costume and speaks into  
it.)

First round is on me.

STEVE

No, no...

(Looks around the studio and  
then leans in and speaks  
into Mr. Ribbitz Mic.)

Anyone that heard that, just no. No one is leaving  
until we get this figured out.

RIBBITZ

Oh man.

STEVE

Listen, we're running old segments so we can freely  
investigate. We've got people in the catwalks looking  
around. So we're, you know, as they say, tightening the  
noose.

RIBBITZ

Around who?

STEVE

Okay, maybe that wasn't the most appropriate analogy,  
but the point is we got things under control.

Sound of equipment breaking down.

STEVE

(Into his headset)

What's that? What broke? Oh, that's not good. Okay, I'm  
on it.

Steve grabs Agatha and backs off  
the stage.

RIBBITZ

What, what's going on?

STEVE

Oh, the playback machines have all failed and we have to go live in 5, 4, 3 and... Good luck buddy.

The lights change indicating they are live on television.

RIBBITZ

Well, hello there again. My what an interesting show this has been so far at the thanksgiving da... I mean annual tele... I mean... you know what, lets just forget all that nonsense, why don't we? Tabula Rasa boys and girls. The show is now a blank slate where anything is possible. And to start us off right, why don't we visit Mr. Ssssss in the mystic Hollow.

Mr. Ribbitz approaches a small door in the tree of the Mystical Swamp set and knocks on the door.

RIBBITZ

It's very important to knock boys and girls and not just enter someones home. That would be rude of us, now wouldn't it?

Mr. Ribbitz opens the door, sees something alarming and slams it shut very quickly.

RIBBITZ

Well, it appear that Mr. Ssssss has his friend, Mr. Live Rattlesnake over right now. Let's just leave them alone to reminisce why don't we?

Mr. Ribbitz goes to the other side of the tree, reaches into a hidden pocket of the set and pulls out a bottle.

RIBBITZ

Excuse me a moment boys and girls while Mr. Ribbitz takes a drink of Mr. Key Grips special juice that he hides all around the set.



Mr. Key Grip didn't know that Mr. Ribbitz knew about his special juice he likes to consume on an hourly basis, but this being a particularly special show, Mr. Ribbitz is just going to let the whole thing go.

Mr. Ribbitz drinks the entire bottle, and then breathes out heavily.

RIBBITZ

Wow, Mr. Key Grip likes the rot-gut doesn't he?

(Brief pause.)

Boys and Girls, Mr. Ribbitz is just going to sit here awhile as he thinks about his life decisions. Why don't you all do the same, during which hopefully a commercial will be running.

Mr. Ribbitz just sits there with a blank look on his face.

The lights change indicating they are no longer on the air.

Steve comes running on stage.

STEVE

And we're out.

(In his headset)

Try to keep that backup machine running while we sort this all out.

Steve goes over and opens the Mystical Hollow, and then slams it back shut.

STEVE

Urgh, well at least it wasn't another light. Has anyone seen Mr. Ssssss?

Agatha enters.

AGATHA

Yes, they found him backstage tied up.

RIBBITZ

Lucky bastard.

AGATHA

Are you okay?

RIBBITZ

You know, I've been asked that so many times today, I'm not really sure how to answer anymore. Am I okay, compared to someone on death row? Eh, who's to say at this point?

STEVE

Buddy, I hate to do this to you, but we only had time to get one commercial ready, so we're about to go live again.

RIBBITZ

I can't wait.

AGATHA

This is ridiculous, just cancel the show, and tell the network what's going on.

RIBBITZ

Nonsense, I'm a professional. I'm not going to let something silly like attempted murder stop me from completing my duties.

Mr. Ribbitz gets up and stands centerstage very dramatically.

AGATHA

Are you sure.

RIBBITZ

Absolutely; Steve, lets kick this pig.

STEVE

Okay, we'll get something longer ready to play when...

Agatha smacks Steve.

STEVE

If.

(Nervous laughter.)

I meant if something happens, because, all of us here are all over this.

AGATHA

Could this get anymore awkward?

Steve takes Agatha and exits the stage.

STEVE

Yes it could...possibly in 5, 4, 3 and...

Lights change indicating the show is live again.

RIBBITZ

Oh hi, it's you again. Millions of you, just mindlessly staring into your television set and into my soul. Oh how I envy you little ankle biters, really I do. Not a care in the world, well, unless you're in one of those war torn countries, or Texas. Then everyday is a fight for survival now isn't it? For you little muff monkeys, trust Mr. Ribbitz when he tells you, he feels you, really he does. Now you might be asking yourself; self, why is Mr. Ribbitz referring to himself as if in the third person? Well, Mr. Ribbitz minored in psychology and this is what us semi-professionals might say is Mr. Ribbitz developing a Dissociative Identity Disorder.

STEVE (OFF STAGE)

Hey Mr. Ribbitz, why don't you do another song?

Mr. Ribbitz picks a prop up and throws it offstage hitting Steve.

STEVE (OFF STAGE)

Ouch!

Goes to the side of the stage and pulls out a rolling white board with markers.

RIBBITZ

Now for all you crib lizards who don't know what a Dissociative Identity Disorder is, let Mr Ribbitz explain it to you.

(Draws a stick figure on the White Board.)

Lets say that this hansom fellow here is Mr. Ribbitz. Now lets say that something really bad happens to Mr. Ribbitz, like say, two lights nearing dropping on him or someone putting a live rattlesnake in his Mystic Hollow. Now that would make Mr. Ribbitz really sad.

(Draws a sad face on the stick figure.)

So sad that Mr. Ribbitz would just want all the sadness to go away. When that happens sometime the mind makes up another personality to handle all that sadness.

(Draws another stick figure.)

And all that sadness would make that new personality not a very nice person, now would it?

(Draws an angry face on the stick figure.)

There's no telling what this Mr. Ribbitz might be capable of. What Mr. Ribbitz is telling all you lovely fetal parasites and anyone else that might be listening. Is if anything else happens to Mr. Ribbitz.

(Draws a sword in one hand of the stick figure and a severed head in the other hand of the stick figure.)

Well, then Mr. Ribbitz is going to find out who has been making Mr. Ribbitz sad, and Mr. Ribbitz is going to pay that person a visit, and it most likely won't be the happy, friendly Mr. Ribbitz that you crotch crickets have come to love, but the sad, angry and most likely well armed Mr. Ribbitz that you see here before you.

Music is heard letting everyone know they are going into a commercial.

RIBBITZ

Oh my, it sounds like Mr. Producer wants all you sperm vermin to hear a word from our sponsors so he can have a word with Mr. Ribbitz. Hopefully I'll see you when it's over, because this is an interesting development in Mr. Ribbitz life, and Mr. Ribbitz can't wait to see what happens next.

Lights change indicating they are no longer live.

Steve and Agatha slowly enter keeping a safe distance from Mr. Ribbitz.

STEVE

And we're out.

(Into his Microphone)

Do we still have that tranquilizer gun from when Mister Moew-moew the Cheetah was on the show?

(Listens)

Good, have it ready to go.

AGATHA

Hey Sweetie, are you okay?

STEVE

Yeah buddy, how ya feeling?

RIBBITZ

Fantastic, never better.

STEVE

Okay then, what the hel...

AGATHA

Maybe, a calmer approach would be more advisable? Considering he seems to be, well, you know.

Agatha mimes lost his mind.

STEVE

Right, you're absolutely right, let me rephrase that.

(To Mr. Ribbitz.)

Are you retarded? You've got someone trying to kill you and you practically dared them to finish the job. You must be out of your damn mind.

(Steve hears something over his headset.)

What's that? Okay, I'm on it.

(To Mr. Ribbitz)

I've got to check this out. Try not to do anything to antagonize the killer any further while I'm gone.

(Mumbles to himself as he leaves.)

I swear you must be out of your damn mind.

Steve exits.

RIBBITZ

(To Agatha)

Actually I'm seeing things very clearly right now, or it's a panic high. Regardless, if the potential killer thinks they're dealing with a raving lunatic, then they might be afraid to go through with anymore, well, you know, acts of murder.

AGATHA

Why does this sound familiar?

RIBBITZ

I got the idea from that movie, with that guy, in the place, with the thing.

AGATHA

Oh yeah.

RIBBITZ

You understood that?

AGATHA

I think.

RIBBITZ

That's scary.

AGATHA

(Impressed)

It is, isn't it? It's like we're becoming of the same mind.

There is a brief moment where Mr. Ribbitz and Agatha are making a connection. Then it's broken by Tabby shouting from her dressing room.

TABBY (OFF STAGE)

Oh, why don't you two just get a room!

RIBBITZ

(Confused)

What the...

AGATHA

Microphone.

RIBBITZ

(Into Microphone)

Oh, just get off it Tabby!

AGATHA

(In Mr. Ribbitz Microphone)

Yeah, he's mine now, so get over it!

Both Mr. Ribbitz and Agatha look at each other lustfully.

RIBBITZ

Oh my God, I'm so hot for you right now.

AGATHA

Then do something about it, you bastard!

Mr Ribbitz grabs Agatha and kisses her passionately.

Without their lips loosing contact,  
Agatha drags Mr. Ribbitz down to  
the floor and they start making  
out.

Steve enters.

STEVE

Okay, so this is happening.

(Someone talks to him over  
his headset.)

Yeah, got that.

(To Ribbitz)

Buddy, we're about to come out of a commercial.

RIBBITZ

Great, don't let us stop you.

AGATHA

Yes, let the world witness our love.

STEVE

(Into his headset)

Yeah, lets go to a cartoon.

(Listens)

Yes I'm sure, you pervert!

Steve's cell phone rings, and he  
answers it.

STEVE

What?

(Concerned)

I mean, hello Mr Van Horne. I think I know why you're  
calling and yes, while the show has had a few hiccups,  
it's nothing we haven't been able to handle.

(Stops and listens.)

You're not worried about the show. Really? I mean, of  
course not, why would you?

(Confused)

Then, how can I help you?

(Listens.)

Your wife?



(Listens.)

Have I seen her? Yes once or twice, very lovely woman, with a...

(Stops and listens.)

Have I seen her today?

(Looks down at the floor where Agatha and Mr. Ribbitz are still making out.)

Well, to be honest he's hard.. I mean it's hard to say, with people rolling on top... I mean rolling in and out of her... I mean here.

(Listens.)

What's that, I sound distracted? No, not at all. I'm just trying to steer this show back into port, before anyone dies.

(Listens.)

What's that? Died? No, no one's died. I said died. I did? I'm sure I was speaking metaphorically.

(Listens.)

No, you are correct, I don't seem to be sure about many things today. If I see your wife though, I'll let her know you're looking for her.

(Listens.)

No problem, and... and you've already hung up.

Goes over to where Mr. Ribbitz and Agatha are still making out.

STEVE

That was your husband.

AGATHA

Did you tell him about the good news of me and this guys love for each other and expected birth of our first child?

STEVE

Uh no, it didn't come up, sorry about that.

AGATHA

Too bad, that would have been a real time saver.

STEVE

I'm sure.

(To Mr. Ribbitz)

Buddy, when the cartoon ends, we're really going to need you to go back on the air.

RIBBITZ

Fantastic, can't wait. Now if you don't mind, things are about to get funky.

STEVE

You do remember that this is a children's show?

RIBBITZ

And they're about to learn about biology; what's the problem?

STEVE

Only about a dozen or so FCC Indecency Standards violations.

Mr. Ribbitz stops making out with Agatha.

RIBBITZ

Okay fine.

AGATHA

(Disappointed)

Awww.

Mr Ribbitz picks Agatha up off the floor and straightens his costume.

RIBBITZ

It's okay my dear. Daddy's got a chest full of love and a pocket full of bad intensions, waiting for you after the show.

(To Steve)

Okay, I'm revived with a new found love for life and this show.

Steve takes the new sponsorship graphic out.

STEVE

Great, maybe we can fit in this new sponsor?

Mr. Ribbitz slaps Steve.

Steve puts the graphic away again.

STEVE

Or maybe not.

RIBBITZ

I'm feeling good buddy, so let's make some art.

Steve grabs Agatha and begins to leave the stage.

STEVE

Okay, good, because we're back in 5, 4...

Mr. Ribbitz takes a few steps forward.

RIBBITZ

Bring it on world!

Lights change to indicate the show is live as part of the tree of the Mystical Swamp set falls forward nearly crushing Mr. Ribbitz.

RIBBITZ

That is not what I meant!

Steve and Agatha come back on the stage.

STEVE

And lets go to a commercial.

Lights change back indicating that the show is no longer live.

STEVE

Buddy, are you...

RIBBITZ

Don't... Just don't. I mean, what in the french toast is going on?

STEVE

Dude, we're off the air, you can cuss if you want to.

RIBBITZ

I would love to, but because of this show I don't flipping know how to anymore poopie head.

STEVE

You're kidding

RIBBITZ

Do I look like I'm kidding Mother Trucker?

Ribbitz goes off-stage and gets something.

AGATHA

You are going to be such a wonderful role model for our child.

RIBBITZ

Thank you. I appreciate that.

Mr. Ribbitz comes back onstage holding a gun.

RIBBITZ

But I tell you what, if one more thing happens on this flocking show. Some Son-of-a-biscuit is getting a cap in their poopie shoot.

STEVE

Whoa...

(Notices the gun more closely.)

Wait a minute, that's a clowns pistol.

RIBBITZ

Yes, but at close range this thing could be potentially deadly.

STEVE

Yes, deadly to you. Hand it over before you poke your eye out.

RIBBITZ

Oh, I don't think so fudgesicle. Everyone here is a suspect now.

Agatha attempts to approach Mr. Ribbitz.

AGATHA

Sweetie...

Points the clown pistol at Agatha.

RIBBITZ

I said everyone!

Agatha backs away.

AGATHA

Okay.

RIBBITZ

Your husband wants me dead and someone here has been hired...

AGATHA

Delegated.

RIBBITZ

Whatever, the point is it could be anyone of you.

STEVE

Isn't that a little paranoid.

RIBBITZ

Only if I'm wrong, and let's face it. The evidence would seem to be on my side.

STEVE

Fair enough.

Agatha attempts to approach Mr. Ribbitz.

AGATHA

Sweetie.

Mr. Ribbitz waves her back with the gun.

RIBBITZ

Get back! Potential assassin, slash mother of my unborn child, slash future wife and potential soul mate. I trust no one!

Steve is whispering something in his microphone.

RIBBITZ

What's that?

STEVE

What's what?

RIBBITZ

What you were just doing there?

STEVE

Nothing.

RIBBITZ

Nothing huh, well, you're not fooling anyone. You're trying to get a leg up on me, aren't you?

STEVE

What? No.

RIBBITZ

Good, because no one gets a leg up on Mr. Ribbitz. No one I tell you!

(Starts laughing maniacally.)

STEVE

Oh crap, we're back in 5, 4, 3 and...

Lights change indicating that they are on the air.

Shocked, Mr. Ribbitz hides the gun behind his back.

RIBBITZ

Hi boys and girls.

STEVE

(To Agatha)

Get him!

Steve jumps on Mr. Ribbitz, dragging him to the ground. Agatha follows after him and starts to wrestle the clown's pistol away from Mr. Ribbitz.

RIBBITZ

Ahhhhh, we are on the air. Where's your professionalism?

STEVE

No we're not, I just made like we were so I could distract you.

Steve signals to the booth and the lights change back indicating they aren't on the air.

RIBBITZ

You did get a leg up on me you son-of-a-bassinet. How could you? I thought we were friends.

Agatha pries the clown pistol away from Mr. Ribbitz.

AGATHA

Ah-ha, got it.

RIBBITZ

Fine, just do me in, and quit playing with me. You two were in it together all along? Just admit it.

STEVE

For pete sakes, no one is trying to kill you.

AGATHA

Well, someone is trying to kill him.

STEVE

Right, sorry, I got confused. Someone is indeed trying to kill you.

Agatha points the gun at Mr. Ribbitz.

AGATHA

But it isn't us, we're the ones that are on your side. We just don't want you to get hurt.

Both Mr. Ribbitz and Steve are looking at the gun that Agatha is pointing at Mr. Ribbitz. She hands it to Steve.

AGATHA

Sorry.

STEVE

That's perfectly alright, but like I said, it's a clowns pistol.

(Steve fires the gun and a flag pops out that says, "Bang".)

There are no bullets.

Steve puts the flag back in the barrel and puts the pistol in his pocket.

AGATHA

Really?



RIBBITZ

Well this is awkward.

STEVE

Buddy, we have a show to finish, so you need to pull yourself together. Now I know things are tough right now, but remember when Timmy the pissed-off vertically challenged news correspondent was on the show?

RIBBITZ

(Remembering)

Oh yes...

(Disgusted at the memory)

Oh yes.

STEVE

Oh-yes-indeed. We got through that dark time though, and we'll get through this too.

(Picks Mr. Ribbitz up off of the Floor.)

Now, I'm going to put you back on the air, and you're going to finish this show in a professional and non-lethal manner. Afterwards, we will figure out whose been trying to kill you.

RIBBITZ

You're right.

(Gives Steve a hug.)

Sorry man, you're absolutely right.

STEVE

Oh course I am.

(Addresses the entire studio.)

And that goes for everyone here in the studio. We're all professionals here so lets act like it.

(To Tabby.)

So Tabby are you ready to get over yourself, come out and do the best show you've ever done?

Tabby doesn't respond.

STEVE

Tabby?

Tabby still doesn't respond.

STEVE

Fine, the hell with you. I'll go get Charlie ready for his segment then.

Steve exits.

AGATHA

(To Steve as he exits.)

I'm loving your assertiveness. It's really putting me at ease.

(After Steve's out of sight,  
she addresses Mr. Ribbitz.)

Oh my god, you're going to die. I can't be a widow.

RIBBITZ

You won't be.

AGATHA

I know because we're not married yet. By definition I can't be a widow. I'm in matrimonial no-mans-land here. You'll die, Jacob will find out that I'm pregnant, divorce me, and then I'll be on my own. I don't have a back-up plan Ribbitz. You can't marry a dead man. I looked it up after your third brush with death. The courts in this country just won't let you do it.

RIBBITZ

Wow.

AGATHA

So let's get out of here before...

Steve enters.

STEVE

Okay we're ready.

Steve grabs Agatha and they both exit the stage.

STEVE

In 5, 4, 3...

AGATHA

(Whispers to Ribbitz)

No mans land Ribbitz, no mans land.

STEVE

And...

Both Steve and Agatha exit.

Lights change to indicate they are on the air.

RIBBITZ

Wow, we are back, aren't we? Trust me boys and girls, no one is more surprised than me, but what the heck? Let's get this thing started and see what happens.

Music cue.

RIBBITZ

Well, hopefully we know what that sound means. A friend has just dropped by our mystical swamp for a visit. Let's go see who it is.

(Ribbitz carefully approaches the center of the swamp set.)

Okay, Mystical Hollow, who have you brought me now?

Mr. Gay-Gay Gator, a puppet pops up from the Mystical Hollow.

GAY-GAY GATOR

Hi there Mr. Ribbitz.

RIBBITZ

Why it's Mr. Gay-Gay Gator. I'm so happy to see you. You know, instead of an actual alligator.

Not saying that could have happened, but you know, it's just been that kind of day.

GAY-GAY GATOR

Well, I'm happy to see you too Mr. Ribbitz. It's better this way. It makes what I'm about to do more intimate. There's a better chance for closure.

RIBBITZ

What are you talking about Mr. Gay-Gay gator?

GAY-GAY GATOR

I'm talking about your demise mother...

RIBBITZ

Whoa, we're on the air here. Let's watch your language Mr. Gay-Gay Gator.

Mr. Gay-Gay Gator pulls out a gun.

GAY-GAY GATOR

Oh, would you just die already.

Fires the gun but misses Mr. Ribbitz.

GAY-GAY GATOR

Did I get you? Did I get you?

RIBBITZ

No you didn't.

Slaps the gun away from Mr. Gay-Gay Gator.

GAY-GAY GATOR

Son-of-a...

Mr. Ribbitz punches Mr. Gay-Gay Gator.

RIBBITZ

Take that.

GAY-GAY GATOR

Oh, looks like someone brought fisticuffs, to...

(Mr. Gay-Gay Gator pulls out  
a switch blade.)

...a knife fight.

Agatha enters, grabs the gun and  
points it at Mr. Gay-Gay Gator.

AGATHA

Freeze Mr. Gay-Gay Gator.

(To Ribbitz.)

That's really his name?

RIBBITZ

Name the character write in contest. My hands were  
tied.

AGATHA

Interesting choice.

(To Gay-Gay Gator.)

Regardless, don't make a move or I'll blow the stuffing  
out of you.

GAY-GAY GATOR

Oh my, whatever will I do. Oh yes, maybe something like  
this. Clap off suckers!

Mr. Gay-Gay Gator claps his hands  
and there is a blackout.

A few moments later the lights come  
back on and Mr. Gay-Gay Gator is  
gone.

Lights have changed indicating they  
are no longer on the air.

Steve enters.

STEVE

(Into his headset.)

Go to a cartoon, go to a cartoon, go to a cartoon.

RIBBITZ

What in the mother-of-squirrels was that?

STEVE

Apparently Mr. Gay-Gay Gator rigged a clapper to the lighting console.

AGATHA

Seriously?

STEVE

I know, diabolical bastard, isn't he? I'll take that if you don't mind.

Steve motions to the gun.

AGATHA

Of course, sorry.

Steve takes the gun from Agatha and puts it in his pocket.

STEVE

(To Mr. Ribbitz)

Silver lining though, we now know who's trying to kill you.

(Steve goes behind the tree  
of the swamp set.)

Charlie, I don't know what your beef with Mr. Ribbitz is, but we know it's you.

Steve trips and falls behind the set.

AGATHA

Steve?

RIBBITZ

Are you okay?

Steve reappears running back from behind the set.

STEVE

It's not Charlie, it's not Charlie, it's not Charlie.

RIBBITZ

What, it's not Charlie back there?

STEVE

No, it's Charlie.

AGATHA

But you just said it wasn't him.

STEVE

Well yeah, it's him but it isn't him.

RIBBITZ

I see.

AGATHA

Really, so I'm the only person that's confused right now?

RIBBITZ

Of course... No, I'm confused too.

AGATHA

But you just said.

RIBBITZ

Yeah, I was just trying to sound cool.

STEVE

People, we're getting off topic here.

AGATHA

Right, we were talking about Charlie.

RIBBITZ

Who's back there right now.

STEVE

Yes.

AGATHA

But, it isn't him.

STEVE

Yes, thank you!

RIBBITZ

Okay, I quit, would someone please come get this frog suit off of me.

STEVE

Listen to me; Charlie is back there dead, so...

RIBBITZ

Charlie couldn't have been the killer?

STEVE

Bingo, we have a winner.

AGATHA

So who was Mr. Gay-Gay Gator?

STEVE

Obviously not Charlie.

RIBBITZ

Are you sure?

STEVE

Really?!

RIBBITZ

Sorry, I'm just trying to make sure we're all on the same page here.

STEVE

Then yes, I'm sure it wasn't Charlie's dead body that tried to kill you.

AGATHA

Unless he's not really dead.

RIBBITZ

You mean he could be faking it?



STEVE

Guys, he's definitely dead.

AGATHA

Are you sure? Did you check his pulse?

STEVE

Well no, but...

(Thinks about it.)

...crap.

RIBBITZ

(Confused)

So, it could be Charlie?

STEVE

Yes.

RIBBITZ

Are you sure?

STEVE

Would you quit asking that!

RIBBITZ

So, you should probably go check.

STEVE

Why me?

AGATHA

I'm pregnant.

RIBBITZ

I'm the star.

STEVE

Well I'm...

(Can't think of anything.)

Crap.

(To Ribbitz.)

You know, back in the day I was suppose to be the star of the show too, not the producer.

RIBBITZ

Well, I can't help it that you're more organized than me. Now go be a good producer and go find a dead body.

Steve goes to the back of the set piece again.

STEVE

Keep up that attitude and Charlie's not going to be the only body...

Steve trips over the dead body again.

AGATHA

Steve!

STEVE

Found him.

RIBBITZ

Is he dead? Should we run and get help?

Steve appears from behind the set piece.

STEVE

Thanks for the brave offer, but he's dead.

RIBBITZ

Are you sur...

STEVE

I swear if you complete that question, Charlie won't be the only dead body here.

(To Agatha before she can question him.)

And no, I haven't checked his pulse, because unless he can survive without breathing with a silver letter opener sticking in his back? Then I'm pretty sure he's dead.

AGATHA

Silver letter opener, did someone think he was a werewolf?

RIBBITZ

Well, there were rumors. Wait a minute, is there an engraving on that letter opener?

Steve moves back on stage from the back of the set piece.

STEVE

I didn't get that good of a look; why?

RIBBITZ

Because I gave Tabby a silver letter opener as a gift.

AGATHA

Well isn't that just precious.

RIBBITZ

Listen Mrs. Jealousy, if I had known she was going to turn out to be a psychotic killer. I would have bought her something a little less lethal.

STEVE

Next time try a box of chocolates.

AGATHA

(To Mr. Ribbitz)

Next time?

RIBBITZ

I didn't say it.

Both look at Steve.

STEVE

I was speaking metaphorically, or figuratively, or... You know what, leave me out of...what ever the hell this is between you two.

RIBBITZ

Nice save.

STEVE

Would you just shut up. Now I have a master key to all the doors in the building so if we time it right we can catch Tabby off guard in her dressing room. The element of surprise is on our side.

(Someone talks to Steve over his headset.)

What's that? You're kidding? Your not kidding. Well, that's unfortunate.

AGATHA

What?

STEVE

We forgot about his microphone. Everyone in the studio heard ever word of that.

AGATHA

Well..

STEVE

Son of a...

AGATHA

Mother...

RIBBITZ

Fragrant!

Both Agatha and Steve look at Mr. Ribbitz.

RIBBITZ

What?

AGATHA

So we don't have the element of surprise.

STEVE

Apparently not, so who should go in there first?

AGATHA

I'm pregnant.

RIBBITZ

I'm the star.

STEVE

(To Mr. Ribbitz)

And I didn't create this problem, Casanova.

RIBBITZ

Well I... I...

(Defeated.)

Fine. You know, you used to be more of a go getter when you had that drinking problem.

AGATHA

You had a drinking problem?

STEVE

I never had a drinking problem.

RIBBITZ

You drank Jolt Cola like it was water, and you don't think that isn't a problem?

AGATHA

Jolt Cola?

RIBBITZ

I know, where does someone even get that?

STEVE

Eh, I knew a guy. Now, quit stalling.

Reluctantly, Mr. Ribbitz walks to the side of the stage where Tabby's dressing room is located. Steve and Agatha follow just behind him.

Mr. Ribbitz carefully knocks on the door.

RIBBITZ

Sweetie?

STEVE

What are you doing?

AGATHA

Yeah, what's this sweetie crap?

RIBBITZ

(Yells at Steve and Agatha)

Listen, she's obviously in an emotional state right now, and I'm trying to be a calming influence! Now, if you two would quit throwing fuel on the fire, I would like to get back to it!

(Back to Tabby's Dressing room. Talks in a calm manner.)

Hey baby, why don't we all just sit down over a nice calming tea and talks this out? You know Mr. Ribbitz cares about you.

Agatha mimes "What the hell?", and Mr. Ribbitz mimes "What?" right back at her.

Agatha turns her back to Mr. Ribbitz and pouts.

Mr. Ribbitz looks at Steve, who waves his hands back and forth signaling to leave him out of it.

Mr. Ribbitz shakes his head in disbelief and goes back to Tabby.

RIBBITZ

Tabby, you're being strangely quiet in there. You wouldn't be plotting any more acts of murder would you? If you are, maybe you could put a pin in that for a moment so we could talk this out. How does that sound?

(Waits for a moment but there's no answer.)

Tabby?

(Looks at Steve, who just shrugs and then urges him to open the door.)

Okay, so Tabby, I'm going to open the door on three, so don't do anything we'll all regret.

(Gets the keys from Steve and slowly unlocks the door.)

Okay, so here we go, THREE!

Mr. Ribbitz opens the door and runs in. Steve and Agatha don't follow him.

STEVE

How's it look, buddy?

Mr. Ribbitz walks out annoyed, holding a walkie talkie.

RIBBITZ

Looks to me like you're both a bunch of cockimany-poo-poo-heads. That's the way it looks to me, buddy.

STEVE

I meant in the dressing room.

RIBBITZ

Oh you mean the empty dressing room.

AGATHA

What do you mean empty.

RIBBITZ

Empty as in there is no one in there.

STEVE

But we heard her in there earlier.

RIBBITZ

Probably this.

Shows both Steve and Agatha the walkie talkie.

STEVE

Well color me surprised.

RIBBITZ

I know, who knew she had it in her?

(Talks into the walkie talkie.)

Just in case your listening Tabby. We're over!

AGATHA

You think?

RIBBITZ

Hey, I'm just going for closure here.

Steve takes the walkie talkie away from Mr. Ribbitz.

STEVE

Well, you'll be going for death if your not careful. Try not to antagonize her any further than you obviously have.

RIBBITZ

Wait a minute, how am I the bad guy here?

STEVE

Well, you were still dating her when...

(Motions to Agatha.)

...this happened.

(To Agatha.)

No offense.

AGATHA

None taken.

RIBBITZ

Well, dating is kind of a strong word.



AGATHA

Oh really, what would be a better one?

The control room talks to Steve  
over his headset.

STEVE

What's that? Crap. Okay, I'm on it.

(To Mr. Ribbitz.)

Buddy, I need for you to go back on the air.

RIBBITZ

Oh, thank heavens.

AGATHA

Wait a minute, this isn't over.

RIBBITZ

Would love to talk further about this, but I'm back in  
5, 4, 3, and...

Lights change to indicate they are  
on the air.

Steve and Agatha are still standing  
on stage.

Steve with a surprised look grabs  
Agatha and rushes off stage.

RIBBITZ

So that's what that feels like?

(Looks at the audience.)

Oh hi boys and girls. That's right, I'm still here. I  
know, hard to believe, but here I am. Mucho appreciato  
to the big man upstairs for that. Now boys and girls,  
mucho appreciato is Spanish for... Actually, I don't  
think those are actual words, but it doesn't matter  
because I'm feeling it; mucho appreciato. Nonsensical  
and fun to say. Wow, I really need to start going back  
to church.

(to Agatha offstage.)

Babe, what religion are we going to be?

AGATHA (OFF STAGE)

Greek orthodox.

RIBBITZ

Really, that's a thing? Whatever, we're going to do it baby, because let's face it. If there was ever a doubt of a higher power, than me still standing here should wipe those doubts right out of your head. On a related note boys and girls, because of this new direction, Freethinking Thoughts from Atheist Andy won't be on the show anymore. Sorry about that Andy, but lets be honest. Your devotion to that segment was severely lacking, and Mr. Ribbitz was in a dark place when he thought it up, so best to just make a clean break. I love you man, but to everything there must come an end. Speaking of which, a call out to Tabby the Tadpole. Tabby, I'm sorry for the way I treated you. Obviously there's more to you than meets the eye, but this murderous mastermind thing has gotten out of hand. I mean, I unexpectedly ended up with another woman and you tried to kill me a half a dozen times. Can't we just call it even at this point? I mean, I'm not even sure what you've done with the Mystical Dancers. Are they even still alive? Just remember they all have families, so don't do anything rash. I mean, what can I do to bring this to a happy conclusion?

The lights start to flash on and off, and the Announcer is heard.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

Die!

Lights go back to normal.

RIBBITZ

Well, that was morbidly specific. Boys and girls, morbid means... Oh, you get the idea. Why don't we go to another cartoon and with anymore luck from the big man, I'll be here when you get back.

Lights change to indicate the show is no longer on the air.

Agatha enters. Agatha heads  
straight to Mr. Ribbitz

AGATHA

So, what would be the word you would use instead of  
dating?

RIBBITZ

Wow, you just have laser focus, don't you? Can you just  
hold onto that unfounded anger for a little bit longer  
while I find out what the Announcer has against me?

Steve enters.

STEVE

Nothing, all the Announcer segments are pre-recorded.  
An outside agency provides them for us. Obviously Tabby  
made herself sound like the announcer and put her voice  
into the audio system.

RIBBITZ

You're kidding.

STEVE

I know, puts a whole new meaning to God mic.

AGATHA

Wow, you really know how to pick them sweetie.

RIBBITZ

I know, I can't imagine what you'll do.

(Catches himself.)

Which is nothing, because you and I will be forever.  
I've learned my lesson. I'm a one woman frog from now  
on. Give me a big wet one baby.

Mr. Ribbitz moves in for a kiss but  
Agatha puts her hand up to block  
his lips.

AGATHA

Oh no, I don't think so. I'm starting to have doubts if  
we have a future.

RIBBITZ

Too late for those sweet cheeks.

(Points to her stomach,  
reminding her of the baby.)

You and me baby makes three. Be-boop

(To Steve.)

Now, how does someone like Tabby the Tadpole break into our system.

STEVE

Buddy, we're not the CIA here. This whole place is set-up so people can communicate more efficiently. We've got intercoms all over this studio that could be re-routed into the main P.A.

RIBBITZ

So, she can wreak havoc from anywhere?

STEVE

Yeah, you've got to love the efficiency of it.

(Realizes this is probably  
not a good thing.)

Which in this circumstance is kind of bad, but otherwise, you've got to admit, it's kind of cool.

(Sees Mr Ribbitz and Agatha  
staring at him in  
disbelief.)

But yeah, in this case it's bad, it's very, very bad.

RIBBITZ

Why doesn't someone just shoot me?

STEVE

Gay-Gay Gator tried that already and missed.

Mr. Ribbitz just looks at Steve  
with disgust.

STEVE

Sorry, that was rhetorical, wasn't it? And is a very negative attitude mister. What about the big man upstairs looking out for you?

RIBBITZ

Ah, I was in the moment, I'm not sure if any of that's true.

(Talks into his body  
microphone.)

Andy, if you're listening? Depending how this show ends, you may still have a job.

(Sighs.)

Mamma said there would be days like this.

AGATHA

Really?

RIBBITZ

No. So, what's next.

There is an awkward silence.

RIBBITZ

That's not me praying, I'm generally asking, what should we do next?

AGATHA

Me?

STEVE

Me?

RIBBITZ

Anyone! I would like to get ahead of, whatever all this is for once. Instead of always being at the surprised end of it; so what do we know?

AGATHA

Your ex-baby-of-a-girlfriend wants you dead.

RIBBITZ

Excellent; what else?

STEVE

That's pretty much it.

RIBBITZ

Fart knockers. Well, how do we stop her?

STEVE

No clue.

RIBBITZ

Shuzzbucket.

AGATHA

That's starting to get annoying.

RIBBITZ

Well then, I'll stop.

AGATHA

Really?

RIBBITZ

No. Come on people, work with me here. Most of us here are reasonably intelligent, so Agatha, how would you handle this.

STEVE

Hey!

RIBBITZ

Sorry, but you had your chance. Now it's time to shake things up. Plus, she's got another person living inside of her, so she's got the mind power of two people.

STEVE

I'm not sure that's how it works.

RIBBITZ

Ahhhhhh, don't argue with me, I'm on a roll. So sweetie pie; what should we do?

AGATHA

Wow, no pressure at all.

RIBBITZ

Excellent, so this shouldn't be any problem.

AGATHA

Well, what do we know about Tabby?

Both Steve and Agatha look at Mr. Ribbitz.

RIBBITZ

Why are you both looking at me?

AGATHA

Really?

RIBBITZ

Well, we didn't really do a lot of talking if you know what I mean?

(Seeing that this is not going well for him. )

I mean, you know, we were keeping it "caszh," as she liked to say. On the down-low; nothing we needed to throw in her boyfriends face.

(Seeing he's making the situation look worse.)

Which I always wrestled with ethically, but she was practically a grown woman, so I wanted to respect her wishes.

AGATHA

Maybe you should stop?

RIBBITZ

Yes please.

AGATHA

So Tabby had a boyfriend?

RIBBITZ

Sure, I mean Tabby's sort of a free-spirit, so boyfriend is sort of a strong word, if you know what I mean?

(Sees that he's still digging a hole for himself.)

So yeah, boyfriend, great guy, works at the sub shop across the street.

STEVE

Are you talking about Ed, the fat guy with the mustache? The one that sounds like...

(Does an imitation of Ed.)

Hey, nice choice of bread halves. What kind of meat can I slip between it for ya?

RIBBITZ

(Giggling)

Yeah, that's him alright.

(to Agatha, about Steve.)

This guy does the best imitations.

(To Steve.)

And you nail him buddy.

(Back to Agatha.)

I guess he saw himself as a little bit of a ladies man. He and Tabby had an open relationship. Which I think was more for her benefit than his, if you know what I mean?

(Realizes he's digging himself in deeper.)

So yeah, boyfriend, maybe we should give him a serious look, for, you know, trying to kill me, the father of your unborn child, and the love of your life.

AGATHA

Please shut up.

RIBBITZ

Absolutely, love to.

STEVE

So Ed could be the culprit?

AGATHA

Problem is how does an employee of a sandwich shop get the technical knowledge to cause everything that's happened today?



STEVE

So Tabby is still are prime suspect?

RIBBITZ

(About Agatha.)

Or her husband. Lets not forget his wife is pregnant with my child.

STEVE

It's amazing you've lived this long.

RIBBITZ

It is kind of amazing, isn't it. The big guy up stairs must really love me?

STEVE

Gods perfect idiot.

RIBBITZ

Exactly; wait a minute.

AGATHA

I keep telling you that my husband doesn't care enough about me to try and kill you.

(To Ribbitz.)

You really think I would be in this situation with you, if he and I were in a loving marriage?

RIBBITZ

(Not sure about his answer.)

No?

AGATHA

Exactly, so why would he arrange all of this? When it would probably be easier just to fire you and end your career in show business. Which he might do, but lets cross one bridge at a time here sweetie. Back to Tabby.

STEVE

Yeah Tabby, you really know how to pick them buddy.

AGATHA

I don't think it's her

RIBBITZ

Absolutely...what?

STEVE

Yeah, excuse me?

AGATHA

If all the Nancy Drew books I read growing up have taught me one thing is that the most obvious suspect is usually not the person that did it.

STEVE

You're basing this all on a children's book?

AGATHA

Young adults book thank you very much, and one can never go wrong applying classical literature to real life and death situations. So if we use Nancy Drewian logic here, and follow the trail of clues. Why would Tabby do any of this?

STEVE

Well, because she was jealous of you and Ribbitz.

RIBBITZ

Yeah, you heard her. She sounded really pretty p'd off about the whole thing.

AGATHA

Yes, but why? You yourself said she didn't take the relationship serious. Matter of fact with you being fifteen to twenty years her senior, she probably would have welcomed the news as a perfect pretext to move on to someone more her speed.

RIBBITZ

Well I don't know about that, I mean age is just a number, and...

(See's he should clearly  
shut up.)

...yes, of course, that seemed odd to be too, please continue.

STEVE

But she sounded really worked up in that dressing room.

AGATHA

But she was never in the dressing room. We were only meant to think she was. A clever diversion made possible with the use of a common walkie talkie.

STEVE

So, she was clearly roaming the studios.

AGATHA

Funny, that no one has spotted her at all though.

RIBBITZ

(Chuckles)

Yes hilarious.

(Looks around and realizes  
he misunderstood.)

You didn't mean literally funny did you? Okay zipping the old mouth shut.

AGATHA

Also while I never did meet her. Tabby didn't sound like a technical person.

STEVE

Now that's just rude.

RIBBITZ

But lets face it, true. Nice girl, but not the brightest bunny.

STEVE

So you're saying we should be looking at the people in the control room?

The intercom is heard turning on.

CONTROL (OFF STAGE)

Uh, just to throw in our two cents; it wasn't us. Union guidelines clearly state we can't commit murder when contract negotiations aren't going on. Plus, we really don't care who Mr. Ribbitz diddles.

RIBBITZ

You guys are the bestest.

(Sees Agatha looking at him  
non-approvingly.)

But that's neither here-nor-there.

AGATHA

No, there really is only one person that had the technical knowledge to pull all this off and the hidden skills of a mimmic to make people think they were hearing someone else. Possibly skills of a once aspiring children show host. A person that goes by the name of, Steve.

RIBBITZ

Exactly...what?

Steve slow claps

STEVE

Bravo my love; well done.

RIBBITZ

My love?

AGATHA

I don't know what he's talking about?

STEVE

Oh don't you?

AGATHA

No, I don't.

STEVE

Oh, but I think you do.

RIBBITZ

What's going on here?

STEVE

What's going on here you mental midget, is you taking away the only thing I've ever wanted for myself.

RIBBITZ

The last danish?

STEVE

No.

(Pauses and thinks.)

Well, yes the danish too, but I'm talking about, her.

RIBBITZ

Her?

AGATHA

Me?

RIBBITZ

You?

AGATHA

No.

STEVE

Yes.

AGATHA

No.

STEVE

Yes.

AGATHA

No.

STEVE

Yessssss!

AGATHA

Nooooooo!

RIBBITZ

What the fuck is going on here?

(Mr. Ribbitz covers his  
mouth in shock realizing he  
cussed.)

Hey, that felt kind of good.

Mr. Ribbitz starts to mouth the  
word again but is stop by Agatha.

AGATHA

Let's not make a habit of it, okay? Lets think about  
the baby.

STEVE

Oh yes, the...

(To Mr. Ribbitz.)

...how did you put it earlier? Sperm vermin growing  
inside of her.

(To Agatha.)

The fetal cancer to our love.

RIBBITZ

(To Agatha)

Did you and he...

AGATHA

Noooooooo, ooooo, ooo, o; we did not.

STEVE

Hey, you don't have to say it like that. I have  
feelings you know.

AGATHA

But we didn't...

STEVE

As a matter of fact, no.

AGATHA

Thank god, I thought for a second Jose Cuervo struck  
again.

RIBBITZ

So just to be clear, you two never...

AGATHA

No.

RIBBITZ

No?

AGATHA

No.

STEVE

No, but from afar I've loved you a thousand times over.

RIBBITZ

Okay. Maybe you need some time off buddy, because I think the crazy train has just pulled into the station.

Steve pulls out the gun that Mr. Gay-gay Gator had and he retrieved from Agatha.

STEVE

Oh, I don't think so buddy. You took this show away from me. I'm not going to let you take her too.

AGATHA

The her has a name you know, and he didn't take anything. It was just one of those things that happened. It was fated to be.

STEVE

You mean like most things in his clueless life, it just dropped into his lap. Well not this time missy, fate chose wrong, and Stevie boy is going to get everything that's coming to him. If not, then the end of this show is going to be a lesson in ballistic trauma.

RIBBITZ

See, this is why you couldn't be on the air, you always insisted on using those big words.

Not to mention that is a very violent subject to be teaching children in the first place.

STEVE

Shut up!

RIBBITZ

Oh, so we can't give notes now? You're new show is off to a really bad start Steve.

AGATHA

Yes, I wouldn't let our child watch something like that at all?

STEVE

Because you people lack vision!

Steve puts the gun down to his side and starts ranting.

STEVE

You want to spoon-feed knowledge to children. How many times do I have to tell you. You don't talk down to children. You talk to them. How else are they going to learn to survive in this cruel and unkind world that lets idiots win the day. While the rest of us have to fight for everything we have in this life.

(To Mr. Ribbitz)

And you, living proof that god does love children and complete idiots.

RIBBITZ

(To Agatha)

Did he just call me a child?

AGATHA

No, but it's okay; Momma loves you just the way you are.

STEVE

Oh my god, why?! Why him?! What in the name of all that is holy, makes you want to be with him?



AGATHA

He makes me laugh.

STEVE

I could make you laugh.

AGATHA

Like your doing now? Holding a gun on us. Oh, I'm having a hard time keeping in all my amusement.

Steve pockets the gun.

STEVE

See, look it's gone. Now how about you give me a smile baby?

Agatha punches him in the stomach.

RIBBITZ

Oh, that couldn't have felt good, and trust me I know.

AGATHA

Don't call me baby, and don't tell me what to do, you, you, dunderhead. Oh for the love of...

(To Mr. Ribbitz)

...now you have me doing it.

RIBBITZ

And I couldn't be prouder baby.

Agatha and Mr. Ribbitz kiss passionately.

While this is going on Steve gets back to his feet and takes out a gun from his pocket.

STEVE

He gets to say baby?

AGATHA

He's earned it.

STEVE

How? You know what, never mind, I don't care anymore. I'm just going to do what I should have done from the beginning. Just shoot you both.

RIBBITZ

That's not very imaginative, considering everything else you've done.

STEVE

Maybe not, but it gets the job done.

Steve aims the gun at Agatha, and Mr. Ribbitz gets in front of her to take the bullet.

Steve pulls the trigger and a flag that says "Bang" comes out of the barrel.

There is an awkward moment of silence as everyone figures out what just happened.

RIBBITZ

Well that was awkward.

STEVE

I must have grabbed the wrong gun. Excuse me a moment.

Steve drops the clown pistol and goes for the real gun in his pocket.

Mr. Ribbitz punches Steve in the stomach and Steve falls to the ground. Mr. Ribbitz takes the gun from his hand as he falls to the floor.

RIBBITZ

I don't think so.

AGATHA

Nice hit.

RIBBITZ

I learned from the best.

The Control Room is heard from the  
P.A. System.

CONTROL (OFF STAGE)

Guys, it's the end of the show and we've run out of  
things to play up here.

RIBBITZ

Then put us back on the air and lets slap a tail on  
this puppy.

CONTROL (OFF STAGE)

Oh, okay then, well then we're back in 5, 4, 3 and...

Lights change to indicate that they  
are live and on the air.

RIBBITZ

Hi boys and girls. Well, what an interesting show that  
was, am I right? I would like to thank Steve, our  
producer for making this one show that you won't soon  
forget. I know I won't. On a separate note, Steve's  
going to be leaving us for about 15 to life, depending  
oh how good of a legal team he can afford.

(To Steve.)

Any parting words Steve?

STEVE

(In pain)

I'm in extreme pain here. I think my abdominal aorta  
might have ruptured.

RIBBITZ

See, big words, no one is laughing Steve. Admit it, you  
would have been terrible on the air.

(Back to the audience.)

On an unrelated note, I would like to introduce the soon to be Mrs. Ribbitz. She and I have a little tadpole on the way, and as soon as we get through the legal entanglements of her current marriage, Mr. Ribbitz is going to make an honest woman of her.

AGATHA

Oh sweetie.

RIBBITZ

Oh baby.

STEVE

Oh lord.

Ribbitz kicks Steve whose still on the ground.

RIBBITZ

Quiet you.

STEVE

Ah, my aorta!

RIBBITZ

Still not funny Steve.

Music is heard indicating it's the end of the show.

RIBBITZ

Well, it looks like thats our show for today. So until we meet again, a big hug to all you boys and girls from all of us, that are still alive, here at the Mystical Swamp.

Mr. Ribbitz and Agatha sing the shows opening song that are sung to the music of "Buffalo Gals, Won't You Come Out And Play".

RIBBITZ AND AGATHA

Hello kids, will you come out and play, come out and play? Come out to play? Hello kids, will you come out and play, and have some fun tomorrow?

RIBBITZ

Bye Everyone.

As the lights dim, Mr. Ribbitz and Agatha pick Steve up off of the floor. They take awkward bows and exit the stage.

The music ends

CONTROL (OFF STAGE)

Okay, we're out everyone. Can someone tell Mrs. Van Horne her husband is on the phone for her. Anyone still down there? Anyone? Fine, we'll take a message.

Lights go out except for a single light lightly illuminating the stage.

The intercom is heard coming over the P.A. system.

TABBY (OFF STAGE)

Hello, can anyone hear me? It's Tabby. Me and the Mystical Dancers are being held hostage in the basement. I managed to get free from my bindings and made my way to the intercom, but the door is locked. Can some one come and get us. Hello? Hello?! Well son of a...

Intercom cuts out.

THE END