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Creating Haley's World

by Brian Guehring

a twisted teen comedy for 7 females, 2 males, 1 either, and chorus

Cast of Characters

HALEY	a slightly insecure ninth grader
TARA	her whiny, younger sister
MOM	her child psychologist mother
CAITLIN	Haley's loyal friend
AMBER	the funky new girl
TORI	the most popular girl in 9th grade
JACKIE	the 2nd most popular girl in 9th grade
BRANDON	a shy boy with a crush on Caitlin
SPENCER	an athletic 11th grader & family friend of Haley
Ms. (or Mr.) GRANT	the gruff school English teacher
	and a chorus of fellow suburban Earthlings
	(including PROTESTOR, SALESCLERK, SECURITY, DOCTOR, RUNNER, SOCCER PLAYERS, NURSE, STUDENT, and MALL RAT)

Scene

The Matthews' home, the local park, the high school, the big mall, and the hospital in a suburban city in the Midwest

Time

Early fall

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pre-show:
the matthew's home

(As the audience enters, MOM enters the realistic house set. She starts working in the kitchen, putting final touches on a snack tray as she listens to Neil Sedaka. TARA enters, listens to her discman, and reads a book. HALEY enters and slams the door. She goes to her room without talking to her Mom. HALEY jumps on line. TARA sneaks to HALEY's room, listens, then goes back to the living room and jumps on that computer. The characters continue to realistically pantomime activities even as the ushers seat the audience. The audience seems to be watching a rather sedate slice of real life.

scene 1:
the matthew's home
(When house lights go down, MOM enters living room)

MOM

Is Haley home?

TARA

She got back a few minutes ago. She's in her room.

(MOM walks to Haley's door and knocks)

MOM

Haley, how was your orientation?

HALEY (*still on computer*)

Fine.

MOM

Did you meet some of your teachers?

HALEY

Yes.

MOM

I made you some snacks.

HALEY

I'm not hungry, Mom.

MOM

Haley, then will you at least come into the living room and talk to me. I'd like to hear how your high school orientation went.

(HALEY logs off and enters living room.)

MOM

Would you like a snack?

HALEY

They look gross.

MOM

Its a new recipe. Its got spinach and feta cheese. You'll like it.

HALEY

I'll pass.

MOM

OK, then tell me about the orientation. Did they give you a tour of the school? That building is so big. I'm sure you'll get lost.

HALEY

It wasn't a big deal, Mom. We met our homeroom teacher and the principal. Yes we got a tour of the building.

MOM

Did you meet any new friends?

HALEY

No. I just stayed close to Caitlin the entire time.

MOM

A new school is a great time to branch out and expand your circle of friends.

HALEY

I know Mom.

MOM

Did you meet the school counselor, Ms. Prouty? I hear she's really good.

HALEY

She talked to all the freshmen who were there.

MOM

That's good. In a school that big, you need to know where to get help. Issues are bound to come up.

HALEY

I'll be fine, Mom. Besides I have you giving me lots of counseling every day at home.

MOM

Mothers are supposed to be protective, just not too protective. I just worry about you. High school is a big change. Are you worried?

HALEY

No, I'm fine, Mom.

TARA

No she's not. She's been having nightmares. She dreamed that she went to school and everyone called her a nerd.

HALEY

You read my diary!

TARA

I did not! You talked in your sleep. You were so loud you woke me up.

MOM

Haley, you are a well-rounded young lady. Anyone who would call you a nerd is just jealous of your good grades.

HALEY

Nobody called me a nerd, Mom.

TARA

She also was intimidated by some of the girls she met at the orientation today.

HALEY

What?

TARA

You thought they looked at you strange and were whispering about you. Everyone else on line agreed that high school girls can be so judgemental.

HALEY

You were in spying in my chat room! You brat!

(HALEY starts chasing TARA)

TARA

Can I help it if we both just happened to end up in the same teen chat room?

HALEY

You're not even a teenager. You were searching until you found me.

TARA (*running to the safety of Mom*)

Mom!

HALEY

Tell Tara to stop spying on me.

MOM

Tara could really read what you were typing from down here.

HALEY

If she lucked out and found my chat room. Do something, Mom.

TARA

I didn't do it on purpose, Mom. Don't you believe me.

MOM

Tara, Haley needs her privacy. We need to respect that.

TARA

OK.

MOM

If you end up in the same chat room, you need to leave.

TARA

OK. You're right, Mom. I'm sorry.

MOM

Thank you.

(MOM gets up to clear snacks)

HALEY

That's it?

MOM

I think Tara understands that you were upset and she will try to avoid a similar situation in the future.

TARA

I sure will, Mom. Thanks for the snacks.

MOM

You're welcome.

(MOM leaves with tray)

HALEY

Just because Mom lets you get away with everything, doesn't mean I will. If I catch you eavesdropping again, I'll shave your head while you're sleeping.

TARA(*truly scared*)

Ok, ok. I got it. I'm sorry.

(MOM enters living room again)

MOM

Now, Haley, it is perfectly normal to be worried about going to a new school. Let's sit down and talk about it.

HALEY

I'm ok.

MOM

Holding it inside will make the problem go away. You know the rule in our house.

TARA

There's nothing we can't talk about.

MOM

Right, now sit down and let's discuss the issue.

(the doorbell rings.)

MOM

Who could that be?

HALEY

That must be Caitlin. We're going to the library.

MOM

Were you going to ask me for permission?

HALEY

Yeah, as soon as Caitlin got here.

(HALEY opens door and CAITLIN enters)

CAITLIN

Hey, Haley. Good afternoon, Ms. Matthews.

MOM

Its nice to see you again, Caitlin. What are you going to do at the library?

CAITLIN

The library?

HALEY

Yea, Mom, we thought we might check out some of the first books we're reading in English. You know try and read ahead.

MOM

Oh, that's intelligent. Very proactive. That will take some of the academic stress away from the beginning of school while you deal with all the interpersonal stress of new friends and a new environment.....

HALEY

Got it. I can go to the library. Right, Mom?

MOM

Yes, dear. Thanks for asking.

HALEY

Let me run and get my purse.

(HALEY leaves and the other three talk conspiratorily)

TARA (very seriously)

I think she's feeling insecure again.

MOM

Do you think she's ready?

CAITLIN

It's impossible to predict.

TARA

It will be a good challenge for her. A wonderful growth opportunity.

(HALEY returns)

CAITLIN

Ready?

HALEY

Sure. We're going.

CAITLIN

Bye.

MOM (*holding door for them*)
Have a good afternoon.

(HALEY and CAITLIN leave. MOM waves to them and then turns around)

MOM (in a lower, harsher voice)
Finally.

TARA (in a deep calm voice)
I glad she left so soon.

(MOM extends her two antennae out from under her hair and pulls out her long springy tail. TARA rolls up her sleeve revealing her scaly reptile skin and releases a strange tube-like appendage originating from his chest.)

MOM (rubbing her temples)
It always feels good to stretch these things out again.

TARA
My skin gets so dry and itchy under this.

CAITLIN (from off-stage)
Don't worry about it, Haley. We won't be gone that long.

(HALEY and CAITLIN walk back in. TARA quickly pulls up newspaper covering herself as MOM ducks below table)

HALEY
It'll just take a second.
(noticing MOM)
What are you doing, Mom?

MOM (in nurturing voice)
I just lost a contact dear. I'll find it. Back from the library already?

HALEY
We haven't started. I left my keys here. (*noticing Tara*) When did you start reading the paper?

TARA
Maybe I'm interested in current events.

HALEY
Whatever. (to CAITLIN) My family is so weird.
(MOM pops up with no antennae)

MOM
Its normal to be embarrassed by your own family. I'm sure Caitlin feels the same way about her parents.

CAITLIN
Sure.

HALEY
I'm getting my keys.
(HALEY runs to her room)

CAITLIN
I tried to warn you.

MOM
It worked. You saved us.
(TARA examines her discman)

TARA
We have got to get our early monitor system checked out.
(HALEY returns with keys)

HALEY
Got it.

MOM
When will you be back, dear?

HALEY
In a couple of hours, I guess.

MOM
Have fun.
(HALEY and CAITLIN leave. MOM goes to the window to wave good-bye and closely watches them leave.)

MOM(*in alien voice*)
They're gone. Oh, look at my smothered tail.

TARA(*in alien voice*)
That was too close.
(TARA examines the headphones)

MOM (to audience)

Sorry about that. Although it is a nice reminder about the importance of being careful at all times. Remember the damage one slip-up could do.

TARA

I'll be with you all in a moment.....(*talking into headphones*) Hello, this is Dr. Tarinsky. Haley is coming your way. Make sure the library is prepared and ready to go. Estimated arrival time is 10 minutes.

MOM (to audience)

Welcome to "Earth", fellow intergalactic scientists.

(MOM gets out charts and easel to help teach observers about this world.
Diagram #1: species identification of the *homo sapien*)

TARA

We're excited you all have completed most of your scientific study on this endangered species: *the homo sapien*. I think the observership is an exciting portion of the training and very important.

MOM

Our job is to make sure the humans are properly developed before we release them back in the wild.

TARA

Out of our control environment of all aliens, and eventually into a community of only her own species.

MOM

It also gives us an incredible scientific opportunity to study this mystifying species: relatively advanced, considering the age of this solar system, and yet so self-destructive.

(Diagram #2: "The Incident")

TARA

As you know, the misguided Betelguese Gamma-Sanitation Expulsion project had the rather unfortunate....

MOM

And unintended.

TARA

...Side effect of causing the implosion of the entire *homo sapien* species on April 22, 1980.

MOM

Every human being. Oops. Small miscalculation.

TARA

Ironically falling on the tenth Earth Day celebration.

(Diagram #3: Betelguese zoo brochure advertising abducted humans)

MOM

Luckily the humans we had previously abducted and placed in our zoos throughout the Betelguese system were still safe and sound.

(Diagram #4: InterGalactic Space Council logo)

TARA

Right. So soon after “the Incident” the InterGalactic Space Council Conservation Group was formed for the purpose of reintroducing this species into their own world.

MOM

And save this species from total extinction.

TARA

Which brings us to your job here. As per the Evansmeyer theorem you covered in your 4th trimester (*walking up to audience member*) You do remember the Evansmeyer theorem, don't you? (*audience member response*) Well to refresh all of our memories the Evansmeyer theorem clearly shows that we can't just repopulate the planet with the abducted specimens.

MOM

So we take a human infant and help personally develop them in this controlled environment.

TARA

Right, so hopefully Haley will be more able to handle herself when we start introducing her to some of the other human specimens we are working with in other laboratories.

MOM

“College.”

TARA

Eventually reaching an environment of all humans.

MOM

“The real world”

TARA

So before you all go to help create your human's world....

(Diagram #5: New Born Baby)

MOM

And this group will be working with a young boy named Stephen. “Born” in our embryo laboratories two days ago.

TARA

We want you to observe one of our most advanced world.

MOM¹

We’ve been working with Haley for almost 15 Earth years now.

(Diagram #6: Rule 1)

TARA

Now of course, there are three iron-clad rules you must adhere to here:

1. Never let Haley know you are an alien.

MOM

Yes, if she suspects she were the only human here, we’d have to start the whole process over. Luckily, humans are quite gullible and have a innate tendency to make conclusions based on outer appearance.

(Diagram #7: Rule 2)

TARA

Rule number two is: Let Haley make her own choices.

MOM

She must learn from her own actions or she will never survive in a population of all humans.

(Diagram #8: Rule3)

TARA

And finally rule number 3: do all you can to help Haley be healthy: physically, emotionally, spiritually, and mentally.

MOM

She is very well treated here.

TARA

It isn’t always easy for her and often times things go wrong for her.

MOM

But that is healthy.

(Diagram #8: Rule 3)

TARA

And finally, #3: Never let Haley know you are an alien.

¹ go back and make Mom’s voice more wide eyed

MOM

Yes, if she suspects she were the only human here, we'd have to start the whole process over.

(Buzzer goes off)

TARA

If you'll excuse me....

MOM

Once again welcome to our Earth laboratory. I look forward to working with you soon.

(TARA speaks into her communication system)

TARA

Is all going smoothly with the library?What? They're finishing up? They were supposed to be there two hours. Oh, the mall. Figures. Should have thought of that. OK, I got it. Delay them a little bit, though. Have the librarian search their bags. *(to chorus)* OK, let's do it. She's headed for the mall. ETA as early as 3 minutes.

(ALIEN CHORUS strikes house set)

TARA

Which brings us to the current development of our human. In order for Haley to survive an environment of all humans, she will have to learn to make judgements based on internal issues, not just how people look.

MOM

But if she gets too good at looking beyond outer appearances, she'd realize we're aliens. That'd destroy everything...

TARA

Don't worry, it'd take decades to teach a human teenager to ignore the way people look. No, no, we must be realistic with our development goals of this simple species. We're just trying to get Haley to make some decisions based on inner qualities.

MOM

Feel free to take notes. I found it very helpful.

TARA

(walking up to audience member) Actually, with your academic record, I would STRONGLY suggest you take notes.

TARA(into communication system)

What's that? ETA 90 seconds? Thank you. Lets go pseudo people. We have to finish the mall.