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## CREATING HALEY'S WORLD

an interactive tween science fiction comedy for 11 females, 2 males, 1 either, and chorus  
Draft 9.05 large cast middle school play

Haley Matthews is a typical slightly insecure young tween. Her seemingly normal world includes two obnoxious little twin sisters, an overprotective mother, and the fears of starting a new middle school. Unbeknownst to Haley, however, everybody in her world is actually an alien in disguise as a human. Haley was actually born in an alien zoo and Betelguesian scientists are now trying to release her back to their planet. Today's audience of intergalactic scientists have come to study this rare human being as the scientists try to teach Haley her next survival technique: to put less emphasis on outer appearances.

### Cast of Characters

HALEY	a slightly insecure sixth grader
TARA and KARA	her whiny, younger twin sisters
MOM	her child psychologist mother
CAITLIN	Haley's loyal 6th grade friend
AMBER	the funky new girl
TORI	the most popular girl in 6th grade
JACKIE	the 2nd most popular girl in 6th grade
MACKENZIE	the 3rd most popular girl in 6th grade
BRANDON	a shy boy with a crush on Caitlin
BETH	a mumbling girl who is Brandon's sister
SPENCER	an athletic 8th grader & family friend of Haley
MR (or MRS) GRANT	the gruff English teacher
chorus includes PROTESTOR, SECURITY, DOCTOR, NURSE, PENNY and JENNY (Spencer's Sisters) and MALL RAT	

### Scene

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

### Time

Early fall

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# CREATING HALEY'S WORLD

an original science fiction teen comedy by Brian Guehring

*Creating Haley's World* was originally produced in the spring of 1997 as a student laboratory theater production of the Department of Theatre and Dance at the University of Texas at Austin.

The production team and cast were as follows:

Director: Topher Olsen                      Stage Manager: Jessica Haley  
Choreographer: Sally Taylor              Light Designer: Kelly Abramczyk  
New Play Dramaturgy: Professors Suzan L. Zeder and James Still

HALEY: Andrea Burghart      DAD: Fursey Gotuaco  
MOM: Deb Alexander          DAVE: Greg Michniak  
AMBER: Jeanne Caruso        BISHOP: Chris Moreland  
ASHLEY: Bina Chauhan       BRIDGET: Sally Taylor  
JUDGE: Allison Downey       BAILIFF: Laura Maxwell

*Creating Haley's World* was subsequently rewritten and produced by the Teenagers Who Desperately Love Theater program at the Omaha Theater Company for Young People in the spring of 1999. The production team and cast were as follows:

DIRECTORS: Mary Theresa Green and Brian Guehring  
LIGHT DESIGN: Melody Dworak          SOUND DESIGN: Kathryn Aagesen  
PUBLICITY: Anne Cigleris                NEW PLAY DRAMATURGY: Michael E Miller

HALEY: Reo Jones              TARA: Sarah Houston  
MOM: Laura Quest              CAITLIN: Megan Thornton  
AMBER: Beth Herzinger       TORI: Lena Cigleris  
JACKIE: Elise Emmanuel      BRANDON: James Kinkade  
Ms GRANT: Kat Ekstrand

CHORUS: Ken Porter, Sarah Barnsley, Kristin Jones, Kathryn Aagesen, Kristen Brown, Nicki Ulmer, Stephanie McSherry, Joy Marshall, Mitch Raftery, Jenny Hendrix

*Creating Haley's World* was subsequently developed in May 2003 with Rachel Prouty, Stacy Ardelean and the 6th graders at St. Joseph's School in Atherton, California through a Playwrights In Our Schools grant awarded by the Alliance for Theater and Education and the Children's Theater Foundation of America.

*Creating Haley's World* was produced as a summer youth camp production by Greasepaint Phoenix Theater in Phoenix, Arizona during the summer of 2008.

*Creating Haley's World* was subsequently rewritten for a large cast of middle school and elementary school student cast in the summer of 2010. Haley was rewritten as a 6th grader starting middle school and trying to join the show choir.

scene 1:  
the matthew's home

*(As the audience enters, MOM is working in the kitchen, putting final touches on a snack tray. TARA and KARA are reading a book. HALEY enters and slams the door. TARA and KARA put book down quickly and run out of Haley's room to living room. HALEY goes to her room without talking to her Mom. TARA and KARA sneak to HALEY's room, listens at the door, then sneak back to the living room. The audience seems to be watching a rather sedate slice of real life. As 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 *(texting)*

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 middle school orientation went.

*(HALEY enters living room.)*

MOM

Would you like a snack?

HALEY

They look gross.

MOM

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

HALEY

I'll pass.

KARA

We think they look great!

*(TARA and KARA eat snacks)*

MOM

OK, then put down your cell phone and tell me about the orientation.

*(HALEY puts down the cell phone)*

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.

*(TARA and KARA steal cell phone and look at her texts)*

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 new students 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. Middle school is a big change. Are you worried?

HALEY

No, I'm fine, Mom.

KARA

No she's not. She's been having nightmares.

TARA

She dreamed that she went to school and everyone called her a nerd.

HALEY

What are you talking about?

KARA

That was your status on Facebook.

HALEY

I'm not friends with you two!

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.

KARA

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

HALEY

What?

*(HALEY looks for her cell phone)*

TARA

You thought they looked at you strange and were whispering about you.

HALEY

You are reading my texts! You brats!

*(HALEY starts chasing TARA and KARA)*

TARA

We thought it was our cell phone.

HALEY

You don't have a cell phone!

KARA and TARA *(running to the safety of Mom)*

Mom!

HALEY

Tell Tara and Kara to stop spying on me.

MOM

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

KARA

OK. We were just worried about Haley. She's going through a big transition.

MOM

Thank you for your concern.

TARA

But you're right, Mom. We're sorry.

MOM

Thank you.

*(MOM gets up to clear snacks)*

HALEY

That's it?

MOM

I think Tara and Kara understand that you were upset and they will try to avoid a similar situation in the future.

TARA

We 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 heads while you're sleeping.

KARA(*truly scared*)

Ok, ok. We got it.

TARA

We're 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 they got here.

*(HALEY opens door and CAITLIN enters)*

CAITLIN

Hey, Haley. Good afternoon, Ms. Matthews.

MOM

It's 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 four 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.

KARA

It will be a good challenge for her.

*(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. KARA and TARA rolls up her sleeve revealing her scaly reptile skin and releases a strange tube-like appendage originating from their stomachs.*)

MOM (*rubbing her temples*)

It always feels good to stretch these things out again.

KARA

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 and KARA quickly pulls up newspaper covering themselves as MOM ducks below table*)

HALEY

It'll just take a second.

(*noticing MOM*)

HALEY

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 two start reading the paper?

TARA

Maybe we're interested in current events.

HALEY

Whatever. *(to CAITLIN)* My family is so weird.

*(MOM pops up with no antennae)*

MOM

It's 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

We tried to warn you.

MOM

It worked. You saved us.

*(TARA examines her Ipod)*

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.

KARA (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.

KARA (to audience)

Welcome to our laboratory, fellow intergalactic scientists.

(BRANDON, SPENCER, TORI and JACKIE enter as Alien selves getting out charts and easel to help teach observers about this world. Diagram #1: species identification of the homo sapien)

BRANDON

We're excited you all have completed most of your scientific study on this endangered species: *the homo sapien*.

SPENCER

I think the observership is an exciting portion of the training and very important.

(TORI gets out a diagram for the audience: HOMO SAPIEN)

TORI

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

JACKIE

As you know, Betelguesian adventurers had been abducting Earthlings for many, many years....

(Diagram #2: "Abduction")

SPENCER

And mostly placing them in captivity for our enjoyment and profit.

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

TARA

As you all know, recently the InterGalactic Space Conservation Group received a grant to see if we could properly develop a young homo sapien, release her back into the wild, and see if she can lead their species away from its self-destructive path.

*(Diagram #4: InterGalactic Space Conservation Group logo)*

KARA

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 must provide a strong foundation for our specimen before we subject her to that culture.

MOM

The young specimen we are working with "Haley" was abducted when she was two years old. Our job is to train her to be the leader who will save the human race.

BRANDON

Right now she is obviously in an environment of all aliens. But we will eventually introducing her to a mixed environment of aliens scientists and other humans subjects we are also training.

SPENCER

"College."

JACKIE

Eventually reaching an environment of all humans.

TORI

"The real world"

KARA

So before you join our team of scientists creating Haley's world, we wanted you to observe the process first.

MOM

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.

BRANDON

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

*(Diagram #7: Rule 2)*

KARA

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

JACKIE

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

*(Diagram #8: Rule3)*

SPENCER

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.

TORI

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

MOM

But that is healthy.

*(Buzzer goes off)*

TARA

If you'll excuse me....

KARA

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)

MOM

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.

SPENCER

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 tween to ignore the way people look. It's an intrinsic fault of their genetic make-up. 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.

TORI

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

KARA

(*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.

scene 2  
the mall

*(Lights up on JACKIE, TORI, MACKENZIE  
and ALIEN CHORUS creating the department  
store.)*

BRANDON

OK, you heard the boss. Haley is on her way as we speak. Let's set it up.

MACKENZIE

Set crew, we gotta change these clothes. Haley was last here 6 weeks ago. They would have changed the displays by now. Let's think. Let's get the winter clothes on these displays...

TORI

But, its only August, why would they put the winter clothes out so early?

MACKENZIE

No idea. Look, I don't know why the humans do such odd things, but they do. Our duty is to recreate, not question why.

TORI

Sorry.

*(ALIENS bustle about following orders)*

SPENCER

Salespeople put on your cheesy smiles and perky attitudes....All of you extras act like mall rats. Look around, make a mess, and never buy anything...

JACKIE

She's in the mall.

*(ALIENS immediately move and act like humans. Hats, coats, sunglasses, backpacks, etc are put on to cover their alien abnormalities as TARA leaves. Some freeze as mannequins. Moments later HALEY and CAITLIN walk into the mall. )*

CAITLIN

Why are we at the mall?

HALEY

I've got to get some new clothes for school.

CAITLIN

Why? You've never really cared about your clothes before.

HALEY

That was elementary school. Did you see the way those girls at the orientation were looking at me?

CAITLIN

No. What girls?

HALEY

The cool ones. The girls who were laughing and giggling and had lots of friends around them.

CAITLIN

Oh, those girls.

HALEY

They were staring at me. I felt like a dork.

*(HALEY starts looking at clothes)*

CAITLIN

Actually, I don't think they noticed you.

HALEY

That's not any better.

CAITLIN

Who cares?

HALEY

I do. Don't you worry about making friends and fitting in at our new school?

CAITLIN

A little. But that's why I'm glad we're going together. No matter what I'll have my best friend with me.

HALEY

Those girls were so happy and confident and looked so great. I bet they'd be great friends.

CAITLIN

You didn't even talk to them.



HALEY

I was too embarrassed. I know I'm being a dork. My mom's always saying, "always get started on the right foot." I want to make sure I start middle school on the right foot.

CAITLIN

Ok, we'll get you a new outfit.

**Brian Guehring** is the Playwright in Residence of the Omaha Theater Company, one of the nation's largest professional theaters for young people. Brian has adapted the world premiere scripts of the Newberry Award winning novel **Julie of the Wolves** (directed by Everett Quinton), **Miss Bindergarten**, **If You Give a Cat a Cupcake**, **The Misfits**, **Holiday Time Around the World** and **Sacagawea: Discovering History**. Brian's scripts have won several national and regional awards. His adaptations of **Where the Red Fern Grows** and **Old Yeller** and his original Theater in Education play **The Super Adventures of Pyramid Man and Dr. Nutrition** won AATE (American Alliance for Theater and Education) Unpublished Play Project Awards. His script **The Bully Show** was selected for the 2002 New Visions/New Voices new play development workshop at the Kennedy Center. Brian received a playwriting fellowship from the Nebraska Arts Council in 2002. His new adaptation of the Newberry Award winning novel **The Giver** was honored as one of the best theater productions of 2008 in Omaha by the Omaha World Herald. His original script **King Chemo** won the Southwest Theater Association's 1997 Best New Play for Children, and his original play **Creating Haley's World** was selected in 2003 for development in the inaugural Playwrights in Our Schools program. His plays have been produced by Imagination Stage in Washington, D.C., Lexington Children's Theater, Walnut Street Theater in Philadelphia, Barter Theater of Virginia, South Carolina Children's Theater, A. D. Players in Houston, Apple Tree Theater for Young Audiences in Chicago, Town Hall Theater in Dayton, and other schools and theaters. **King Chemo** and **The Bully Show** are published by Dramatic Publishing Company. He also contributed to Dramatic Publishing's **The Bully Plays**, an anthology of 10 minute plays about bullying for teen performers.

Brian is also the Education Director of the Omaha Theater Company which does drama and dance education outreach for every single child in over 80 local schools each year. His teen theater troupe **Pride Players** (which uses improvisation to explore issues facing gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered, and straight allied teens) won a Human and Civil Rights Award from the National Education Association in 2006. In 2010, Brian was elected to the Board of Theater For Young Audiences/USA. Brian earned his MFA in Children's Theater and Creative Drama from the University of Texas at Austin.