

THE EXTRAORDINARY LEAGUE OF HORRIBLE MONSTERS

By Christopher Burruto

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**THE EXTRAORDINARY LEAGUE
OF HORRIBLE MONSTERS**

By Christopher Burruto

SYNOPSIS: *The Extraordinary League of Horrible Monsters* is a work of fiction. Really. We all know monsters don't exist. Right? But maybe... just maybe... when the lights go out, and the storm rages, and you forget to look under your bed, or check the closet... there might be something lurking or shuffling or shambling toward you.... Any resemblance to persons or monsters you may know are merely coincidental. Promise.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(6 females, 2 males, 9-11 either, extras)

- ZOG (f/m)..... Judge for the Extraordinary League of Horrible Monsters. Like Simon Cowell. Only meaner. *(43 lines)*
- SINISTERIA (f/m)..... Judge for the Extraordinary League of Horrible Monsters. Like Simon Cowell. Only meaner. *(41 lines)*
- PENNY (f)..... A human girl adopted by the monsters. She grows up believing she is a monster and wants one day to audition for the Extraordinary League of Horrible Monsters. *(42 lines)*

FAMILY OF MONSTERS:

- TASHA (f)..... A 900-year-old vampiress, and leader of the monsters. She has a secret past. *(63 lines)*
- HUMPHREY (f/m)..... His hump keeps moving around. Sometimes it's lost for good. *(24 lines)*

- INVISIBLE (f/m)..... Wears glow-in-the-dark clothes.
Lit up like a Christmas tree.
(21 lines)
- VERONICA ZOMBIE (f)..... Cute vegan. She develops a
crush on Howie. (46 lines)
- WOLF GIRL (f)..... More Hello Kitty than fierce
werewolf. A human edition of
an Anime character. (34 lines)
- MURRAY THE GHOST (f/m)..... Scaredy ghost. (30 lines)
- MUMMY (f/m)..... Very clumsy, wrapped in Ace
bandages. (40 lines)
- THING (f/m)..... Wears a bag over his head.
What is it? No one really
knows. (19 lines)
- FRANKIE (f/m)..... Reanimated corpse—
Frankenstein like. Relieves his
stress by sucking his thumb or
using an oversized binky.
Speaks in telegram-style, third
person. Suffers from stage
fright. (26 lines)
- ABOMINABLE (f/m)..... An abominable snow monster.
Timid and shy. Loves to mime.
(32 lines)
- TEENS:**
- STU (m)..... The dumbest teenage boy who
ever lived. (89 lines)
- HOWIE (m)..... The second dumbest teenage
boy who ever lived. (96 lines)
- MOLLY (f)..... Dry, sarcastic sense of humor.
(87 lines)
- SHERRY (f)..... Second only to Molly in
sarcasm, see above. (71 lines)
- AUDITIONING MONSTERS:**
- VAMPIRE (f/m)..... Auditioning monster. (2 lines)
- LACTOSE (f/m)..... Auditioning monster. (3 lines)

THE EXTRAORDINARY LEAGUE
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EXTRAS:

MONSTERS (m/f).....(*Non-speaking*)

STUDENT (m/f)..... Optional. (*Non-speaking*)

Note: The Voice Over in Act One, Scene 1 has one line and could be pre-recorded or read live by any one of the teens or extras.

DURATION: 90 minutes

TIME: Right now.

SETTING: When the lights go out, and the storm rages, and you forget to look under your bed, check the closet or charge your phone... there might be something lurking, shuffling or shambling toward you... you are here!

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

ACT ONE

SCENE 1: Auditions

SCENE 2: Monster Mansion

SCENE 3: Monster Mansion (sixteen years later)

SCENE 4: Bench at School

SCENE 5: Monster Mansion

SCENE 6: Car

SCENE 7: Monster Mansion

SCENE 8: The Moors, Monster Mansion Front Door

INTERMISSION

ACT TWO

SCENE 1: Monster Mansion

SCENE 2: Dungeon

SCENE 3: Monster Mansion

SCENE 4: Penny's Room

SCENE 5: Dungeon

SCENE 6: Monster Mansion

SCENE 7: Car

SCENE 8: Auditions

SETTING

For the audition scenes, two chairs upon which the judges sit would work. The monster mansion includes a couch, chairs, a coffee table and a fake fireplace. All of the furniture in the monster mansion should be old, worn, and spider webby. The car scene is created with a series of benches one in front of the other. The steering wheel is simply a circle with appropriate cut-outs. Penny's room could be suggested by a side table, bean bag chair and/or desk. There should be a framed photo in her room. The dungeon could be a dark, bare stage. With the right lighting, the dungeon can be implied rather than explicit.

CAST NOTE

The roles of VAMPIRE and LACTOSE could be cut if necessary. If you decide to cut these roles, open Act Two, Scene 8 with the line: **SINISTERIA: Next!** Or, you could have some fun with these two roles and cast two teachers or local celebrities into the roles. Another option is to have two of the teenagers double as VAMPIRE and LACTOSE as long as their alien costumes are not too intricate.

COSTUMES

WOLF GIRL is dressed like a human version of Hello Kitty.

ZOMBIE wears tattered hippy clothes.

MURRAY THE GHOST wears billowing sheets.

INVISIBLE is lit up like a Christmas tree, perhaps wearing sequins, and light up Christmas tree lights.

In Act One, Scene 3, PENNY wears a black cape.

MUMMY is wrapped in Ace bandages.

SHERRY and MOLLY should wear watches.

In ACT ONE, SCENE 6, the TEENAGERS wear various alien costumes. They wear them again in ACT TWO, SCENE 8.

PROPS

- Paper bag
- Cell phones
- Baby carriage with baby doll
- Pink blanket
- Note
- Crosses and garlic
- Cake
- Suitcase
- Note/Pen
- Lantern
- School timer-type bell or bell

SOUND EFFECTS

- Big, clanging, booming knock
- Faint baby cry
- Baby cooing
- Burp
- Thunder
- Thud
- Wolves and monsters
- Loud, creaky door
- Door opening
- Creaking door

MUSIC

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ACT ONE, SCENE 1
AUDITIONS

AT START: *Stage is dark. INVISIBLE, ZOMBIE, WOLF GIRL, GHOST, THING, FRANKIE and ABOMINABLE stand in a row. They are arranged across the entire stage. When they are called, they take a step forward to “audition.” ZOG and SINISTERIA sit at stage left or right.*

VOICE OVER:

The full moon gives off a ghastly light,
A beacon for the creatures of the night.
From their crypts dark and deep,
The Extraordinary League of Horrible Monsters creep,
Arise dark forces!
Disembodied voices!
And spectral corpses!
'Tis now the season,
For scares beyond REASON!

Welcome all ghouls, zombies and ghosts to the semi bi-annual auditions for the Extraordinary League of Horrible Monsters!

MONSTERS onstage applaud. Lights rise.

ZOG: Welcome monsters, one and all! I am Zog the Horrific!

SINISTERIA: And I am Sinisteria.

ZOG: And together, we welcome you to audition for the Extraordinary League of Horrible Monsters. We know you're excited—

MONSTERS look at one another, excitement on their faces.

SINISTERIA: —but, don't be nervous! We're sure you'll all be simply
(Pause.) Horrible! OK, let's get started!

MONSTERS cheer. WOLF GIRL steps forward.

ZOG: And you are?

WOLF GIRL: Hello! I'm a lycanthrope humanus.

SINISTERIA: *(Confused.)* I'm not familiar with that term...

WOLF GIRL: Sorry. A werewolf. I'm a super duper scary werewolf!

ZOG: *(Pause.)* How old are you wolf girl?

WOLF GIRL: Three hundred twenty-nine. *(Forced laugh.)* That's dog years! Not people years. *(Makes a funny, snorty laugh. She goes on a little too long.)*

ZOG: Whenever you're ready.

WOLF GIRL scratches herself like a dog and then prepares herself for a howl.

WOLF GIRL: *(Rears back, pitiful.)* Meow. Meow. Meowwwwww!

ZOG: *(Pause. Disappointed.)* Oh. *(Looks at SINISTERIA.)* That was a surprise...

WOLF GIRL: Too scary? I can bring it down a notch if you'd like.

SINISTERIA: *(Annoyed and disappointed. A little mean.)* Too much Hello Kitty... not enough wolf. Next!

WOLF GIRL scurries back to the line yowling like a puppy or kitty. INVISIBLE steps forward.

SINISTERIA: And you are?

INVISIBLE: My friends call me See-Through-Me-Oh 'cause I'm just almost-nearly-mostly invisible! Get it? See-Through-Me-Oh... "These are not the droids you're looking for..." *(Short laugh.)*

SINISTERIA: That's not funny.

ZOG: Just sad and pathetic!

SINISTERIA: *(Pause.)* You are not the monster we're looking for...

Pause.

INVISIBLE: *(Weeping.)* You know what's visible now? My shame and humiliation! *(Returns to line up weeping.)*

SINISTERIA: Next!

ZOMBIE: *(Steps forward.)* Zombie! In. The. House! Whoop-whoop! Do I hear a hey!

SINISTERIA: Ah! A reanimated corpse with a hunger for human flesh and love for hip hop?! Now we're talking!

ZOMBIE: Um... about the human flesh thing. I'm a practicing vegan.

ZOG and SINISTERIA: A what?

ZOMBIE: No brains. No flesh. The occasional squirrel. *(Pause.)* For those special occasions.

WOLF GIRL pops head in and out.

WOLF GIRL: Somebody say squirrel?

ZOG: You're a... "vegetarian"?

ZOMBIE: *(Holds up hand to explain.)* Vegan. *(Pause.)* There seems to be a lot of confusion around the two terms... you see, we vegans don't—

ZOG: *(Cutting her off, irritated.)* Enough! We want zombies who chase people.

SINISTERIA: Fast.

ZOG: Catch them.

SINISTERIA: Quick.

ZOG: Then eat them!

SINISTERIA: Raw.

ZOG: Easy-peasy-bloody squeegee.

SINISTERIA: That's what zombies do! Next!

ZOMBIE quickly returns to line. GHOST steps forward, sheets billowing.

GHOST: *(Arms wide/haunting.)* My name is Murray. Six hundred years deceased... *(Turns, emits a ghostly "Oooohhh" because he's scared.)* Member of the Order of the Undead, Poltergeist, Fourth Class — *(Turns, frightened.)* Spectre of the Year eight years in a row. *(Gulps—terrified.)* I'm versed in hauntings, spookings, mischief, phantasms—*(Freezes. Scared. Sputters.)* D-d-d-did you—did you hear that?

SINISTERIA: Hear what?

GHOST: *(Scared.)* There it is again. Wait... *(Really frightened, looks down.)* I wet my pants... *(Shrieks and runs off stage.)*

FRANKIE is next, timid and scared, he is pushed forward by the other monsters. FRANKIE stands unmoving, like a deer frozen in headlights. He breathes into a paper bag because he's so nervous.

ZOG: Next!

WOLF GIRL: Frankie, go ahead.

FRANKIE: Frankie can't.

WOLF GIRL: You can! You've got to! We're all counting on you!

THING gently pets FRANKIE'S head.

ZOMBIE: You'll be fine buddy. Find your happy place. Your happy place!

THING gently pushes FRANKIE to the line.

SINISTERIA: *(Eager.)* Reanimated corpse. Classic!

ZOG: Name?

There is a pause. FRANKIE has serious stage fright.

FRANKIE: Uhh... uh... um...

INVISIBLE: *(Encouraging.)* Frankie! Your name is Frankie!

FRANKIE: *(Scared.)* Ahhhghghghg... *(Turns around, shy.)*

SINISTERIA: *(Turning to ZOG.)* He's a bit monosyllabic isn't he. *(Like to a child.)* Why. Are. You. Here?

FRANKIE: *(Scared.)* Why anyone here? Universe big. HUUUUUGE. *(Pause.)* Cold. Impersonal. *(Puts his thumb in his mouth and begins to suck it and rock back and forth.)*

ZOG: He's a thumb sucker?!

SINISTERIA: We don't take thumb-sucking monsters!

WOLF GIRL gathers FRANKIE and crosses back to the line. ABOMINABLE steps forward.

ABOMINABLE: *(Confident.)* Awesome to see you, my most excellent judges! I am the Abominable! In my free time, I like to juggle, write poetry, and... mime. This is called: Monster in a Box! *(Begins to mime.)*

SINISTERIA: Mimes. Aren't. Scary.

ZOG: *(Mocking.)* They're just— *(Pause.)* like totally annoying.

ABOMINABLE hangs his head in disappointment and shame.

ZOG: *(Pause.)* Anyone else? *(Pause.)* No? I think... we've made a decision. Will all monsters present themselves?

INVISIBLE, ZOMBIE, WOLF GIRL, GHOST, and FRANKIE gather center stage with ABOMINABLE, their arms around one another. They're hopeful, like actors before an audition.

ZOG: Gotta be honest, we're not looking for mimes—

SINISTERIA: —or thumb-suckers—

ZOG: *(Sighing.)* We're looking for monsters who are "Retail Ready." Ready to scare on day one!

SINISTERIA: *(Pause.)* Unfortunately, your applications to the Extraordinary League of Horrible Monsters have been... denied!

An audible sigh of disappointment comes from the group.

WOLF GIRL: *(Pleading.)* But... but we've been waiting for... for such a long time!

ZOMBIE: Every year it's the same story—we try. Then denied.

ABOMINABLE: We've been so patient and nice—

ZOG: See, that's your problem! Monsters aren't supposed to be nice!

Auditioning MONSTERS murmur variations of the following: "Not supposed to be nice?" "What's he talking about...?" "Write that down!" "Take notes: Not supposed to be nice!"

SINISTERIA: Monsters are scary. And horrible!! News flash: none of you is slightly scary! Not one of you!

Pause. Auditioning MONSTERS begin to cry. Slowly at first, then full-bore sobbing.

ZOG: Really? We're doing this?!

SINISTERIA: Monsters don't cry! There's no crying in the Extraordinary League of Horrible Monsters! You stop that!

ZOG: Leave! Get out!

SINISTERIA: And don't come back!

The last line elicits a greater bout of crying. Auditioning MONSTERS nod. They stifle their cries, only to let out an even bigger one. Auditioning MONSTERS, as a group, still crying, shuffle slowly offstage together, as lights fade down.

ACT ONE, SCENE 2
MONSTER MANSION

AT START: *Lights up slowly. The auditioning MONSTERS sit dejectedly on couch and chairs, they sigh collectively as one: a heavy, sad sigh of dejection and humiliation. TASHA and HUMPHREY enter.*

TASHA: *(Sensing disappointment.)* How'd it go?

THING: Denied.

ABOMINABLE: Denied! Then cried!

TASHA: *(Sighs. Sympathetic.)* You cried?

HUMPHREY: In front of the judges?

GHOST: We always cry in front of the judges.

ZOMBIE: *(Depressed.)* Another failed audition for the Extraordinary League of Horrible Monsters!

WOLF GIRL: Next time, Frankie—and this is just a suggestion—don't suck your thumb. It's for amateurs.

MUMMY: Little known fact: Thumb suckers are not scary...

FRANKIE: *(Still a little upset.)* Frankie had to! Binky was M.I.A.!

ABOMINABLE: We couldn't even scare a baby!

GHOST: *(Screams in fright.)* Where? *(Crosses himself.)*

TASHA: Murray, please stop doing that. That *(Crosses herself.)* gives all of us vampires heartburn.

GHOST: Sorry, Tasha.

MUMMY: We might as well face it: we're just a group of terribly nice monsters!

HUMPHREY: We're horrible, horrible monsters.

ZOMBIE: We suck at scary.

FRANKIE: Horrible. Misfit. Monsters. Frankie sad. Dead inside.

ALL dispiritedly sigh.

MUMMY: And this monster—I don't mind tellin' ya—has a super bad wedgie right now... *(Pulls on wedgie.)*

GHOST: We'll never get into the Extraordinary League of Horrible Monsters!

ABOMINABLE: Maybe it's time we gave up!

HUMPHREY: Give up? Nonsense! Nobody's giving up. We just need to try harder, that's all.

TASHA: *(Pause.)* Your time will come. Don't lose hope! Did Frankie give up when he lost his leg last year? And we had to sew it back on? No... he didn't.

FRANKIE: Frankie no like stitches.

TASHA: How about when Humphrey kept losing his hump? Did we give up before we found it?

HUMPHREY: Right, Tasha! Did Washington give up? Before he crossed the mighty Mississippi? Huh?

ALL MONSTERS: *(Except HUMPHREY. Confused.)* Huh?

WOLF GIRL: Yeah...! Did Jonas Salk give up before he discovered the vaccine for Botox!

ABOMINABLE: Did Al Gore give up? Before he invented a little thing called Global Warming?

All MONSTERS ad-lib "No!"

MUMMY: So we're not giving up either!

ALL MONSTERS: Right!

GHOST: And we're never going to be afraid to be who we are! We'll never be afraid again!

SFX: Big clanging, booming knock at the door.

ALL MONSTERS: *(Startled. Ominously.)* The door!

HUMPHREY: No one's knocked on the door for 1000 years!

ZOMBIE: Wait! What about last year?

MONSTERS draw their breath in fright.

TASHA: Zombie, best not bring it up!

HUMPHREY: Who came to the door?

ZOMBIE: Girl Scouts...

MONSTERS become frightened.

WOLF GIRL: Selling... cookies!

INVISIBLE: They were green!

TASHA: The cookies?

ZOMBIE: The uniforms!

MUMMY: They bullied and pestered us... until... no, no, I can't...

HUMPHREY: Until what?

WOLF GIRL: Until we bought all the cookies!

FRANKIE: Nine thousand.

HUMPHREY: Nine thousand cookies?!

GHOST: Nine thousand boxes!

INVISIBLE: And then... we ate them!

HUMPHREY: *(Astonished.)* You ate the Girl Scouts?!!

FRANKIE: *(A little ashamed.)* Cookies!

MUMMY: In one sitting...

WOLF GIRL: Well... those cookies weren't going to eat themselves!

GHOST: *(Wistful.)* The Thin Mints. Were to die for!

ALL MONSTERS: *(Sighing in happy remembrance.)* Thin Mints!

SFX: Another big clanging, booming knock at the door.

ABOMINABLE: There it is again!

TASHA: We'll go together. All of us!

ALL MONSTERS gather in a tight group and shuffle off stage. If utilizing a curtain, the curtain closes. Lights down. After curtain is closed, the lights go up and there is an old-fashioned baby carriage center stage. Optional front door of the mansion is behind the baby carriage. MONSTERS enter and shuffle tightly over to it. They examine the carriage; they don't notice the baby inside. ALL MONSTERS ad-lib: "What is it?" "Is it a car?" "A giraffe?" "It's so strange!" SFX: Faint baby cry. ALL MONSTERS look at one another.

GHOST: What was that?

ALL MONSTERS ad-lib: "Yeah, what was that?". SFX: Baby cry. ALL MONSTERS back away and fall over one another, terrified. SFX: More baby cries. ALL MONSTERS slowly approach to look down into the carriage. This time, MONSTERS look down. MUMMY lifts out a pink blanket.

ALL MONSTERS: Woah...

HUMPHREY: What is it?

ABOMINABLE: It's the ugliest blanket I've ever seen!

INVISIBLE: Look! A note.

ZOMBIE: *(Holding note and reading aloud.)* Ix Na Bobble Q Horsen Feffer Ix Nop. This makes no sense at all!

MUMMY turns letter right-side up.

ZOMBIE: Thanks... it says, "Please take good care of baby Penny."

ABOMINABLE: They're making baby pennies? What a waste!

WOLF GIRL: Yeah! Like, where can you spend baby pennies?

ALL MONSTERS (except TASHA) in tacit agreement.

TASHA: *(Flatly.)* Penny is the human's name...

ALL MONSTERS: *(Except TASHA.)* Ohhhhhh...

ABOMINABLE: What do we do with it?

HUMPHREY: *(Brightly.)* If we each take a small nibble, there should be enough—

ZOMBIE: Ewwwww. I don't eat human.

GHOST: Right, Vegetarian.

ZOMBIE: Vegan!

FRANKIE: *(Pause.)* Baby... cute...

ALL MONSTERS respond, ad-lib, reluctantly. "Yeah..." "Kind of..." "Sort of..." "If you say so..."

GHOST: *(Looking intently.)* Cute in a revolting, Winston Churchill kind of way.

SFX: BABY cooing.

ALL MONSTERS: *(Melting in cuteness.)* Awww...

FRANKIE: We. Keep. Baby? Tasha?

ALL MONSTERS (except TASHA.) ad-lib. "Huh? Keep it?" (Like little kids.) "Can we? Can we? Are we allowed? Please?"

TASHA: *(Clearing throat.)* Everybody? *(Pause.)* You understand that it's against Monster Bylaws to harbor, hide, or fraternize with all humans...

ALL MONSTERS (except TASHA.) ad-lib. both surprise and ignorance. "Really? I didn't know that..."

TASHA: And, if we're discovered... by the Extraordinary League of Horrible Monsters... we'll be exiled. Forever...

There's a pause. MONSTERS register their disappointment.

ALL MONSTERS: *(Except TASHA.)* Ohhhhh...

TASHA: Which is why *(Pause.)* we're going to keep it a secret!

ALL MONSTERS (except TASHA.) ad-lib. "A secret? Yeah..." "Yeah, that's a good idea..."

FRANKIE: Baby. Penny. *(Looking down.)*

TASHA: You're going to like living with us!

SFX: We hear the baby burp loudly.

WOLF GIRL: Did you hear that? That was soooo AWESOME!

ALL MONSTERS ad-lib until lights down. SFX: Thunder

TASHA: Come on, let's get her inside, there's a storm brewing...

Lights out.

ACT ONE, SCENE 3
MONSTER MANSION

AT START: *Sixteen years have passed. PENNY, dressed as a VAMPIRE, practices her scares. This is fun and light. The MONSTER FAMILY is on stage: some seated, some standing.*

TASHA: OK Penny! Hood up! Cloak out! And let me hear it! Loud and proud!

PENNY: *(Tentative.)* I want to suck your blood!

FRANKIE: *(Shaking head.)* Penny. Not. In. Character.

WOLF GIRL: *(Laughing.)* Like you mean it, Penny!

HUMPHREY: Like you're super. Hangry!

ZOMBIE: Cause you haven't eaten iron-rich spinach in centuries.

ALL MONSTERS stop and glare at ZOMBIE.

ALL MONSTERS: *(Except ZOMBIE.)* Spinach?

ZOMBIE: *(Pointing to self.)* Vegan. Remember?

PENNY: *(More assertive, but having fun.)* OK. Here goes: I want to suck your blood!

MONSTERS who are watching, nudge one another and smile.

MUMMY: Ooo. That gave me chills!

TASHA: Now, Penny, what do you do if someone gives you counter spells? (To *MONSTERS*.) Everyone! Garlic and crosses at the ready! And... (Points to *PENNY*.) go!

PENNY: I want to suck your blood!

TASHA: And... present.

MONSTERS show crosses and garlic. *PENNY* goes into pretend convulsions.

PENNY: I'm melting... melting... melting!

PENNY laughs all the way to the ground. *ALL* laugh. They LOVE *PENNY*, and she loves them.

TASHA: Everyone! Places! Time for scares! Abominable?

MONSTERS cheer, then line up (including *PENNY*), ready to practice scares. *ABOMINABLE* leads them.

ABOMINABLE: Let's begin with some monster basics, shall we? Let's start with G and G! The grimace and growl! On three! One, two—

INVISIBLE: Wait, wait, wait. Is it on three or after two?

ABOMINABLE: On three! Ready one, two aaaaand grimace!

MONSTERS grimace and growl.

ABOMINABLE: And growl!

They all growl menacingly.

TASHA: Oooh! Amazing... good work, people. I mean monsters!

ABOMINABLE: Alright... let's work on menacing!

MONSTERS ready themselves.

ABOMINABLE: And go!

MONSTERS squinch up their noses, look menacing, and growl.

ABOMINABLE: Great! And now, let's moan!

MONSTERS let out plaintive ghost-like wails...

ABOMINABLE: Let's finish with a howl! (*Pause.*) One, two and howl!

ALL howl.

ABOMINABLE: Excellent! Now for the speed part!

When TASHA calls out the following prompts, the MONSTERS instantly obey.

TASHA: Howl! Moan! Menace! Grimace! Howl! Excellent! Great job everyone...

PENNY: Hey Wolf Girl! I hear there's a full moon tonight!

WOLF GIRL: (*Excited.*) Really?

PENNY skips to WOLF GIRL and they both howl and scratch themselves. MONSTERS join in. ALL laugh.

TASHA: (*Pause. Kind, but stern, like a teacher clearing throat.*) Uh, I hate to break up this little party, but (*Meaning PENNY.*) doesn't a certain somebody have some homework to finish?

PENNY: Aww. We were having so much fun! Weren't we?

MONSTERS agree, disappointed.

TASHA: Everyone, you can practice your scares after you finish your homework. (*Looks around.*) Right? Everyone?

MONSTERS mumble unenthusiastically.

PENNY: (*A little disappointed.*) OK... (*Begins to exit.*)

HUMPHREY: Wait! Wait! Uh, Tasha, don't we have that (*Pause.*) thing?

THING: Thing? I'm right here! I'm not invisible...

INVISIBLE: That's me!

WOLF GIRL: The other thing!

MONSTERS (except WOLF GIRL) ad-lib. "Oh yeah!". FRANKIE exits.

GHOST: (*Shyly.*) Penny, we've—um—got a little surprise for you!

FRANKIE enters with a cake.

MUMMY: Everyone! Just like we practiced!

MUMMY blows a tuning whistle. WOLF GIRL conducts. They sing "Happy Birthday" very, very badly. It is so tone deaf and a-tonal that even the audience will grimace. But PENNY is touched and moved by their effort.

PENNY: (*Tearing up.*) Everyone... that was... that was (*Pause.*) amazing!

PENNY wipes tears from her eyes.

ALL MONSTERS: (*Ad-lib.*) Happy Birthday Penny!

PENNY: Oh... thank you all so much! (*Sighs with happiness.*) I'm... I'm the luckiest monster in the whole world!

ALL MONSTERS: Awww.

TASHA: (*Aside.*) If you only knew...

PENNY: (*Kindly.*) Huh? Knew what?

TASHA: (*Covering.*) How lucky we are to have you in our family!

PENNY: Aunt Tasha, everyone... now that I've come of age... I want to audition for the Extraordinary League of Horrible Monsters! I want to be the best, scariest monster who ever lived! (*Looks lovingly at the monsters.*) Just like all of you!

MONSTERS all look at one another; they know PENNY is human.

TASHA: Penny... *(Pause. Looks around, serious now.)* Now might be the time to talk about some things—

FRANKIE: Ack! *(Puts thumb in mouth and then puts in the other.)*

THING: Here we go, it's the end of the world.

TASHA: *(Puts her hand on PENNY'S head affectionately.)* I'm sure that with just a little more practice, you'll be a perfectly gruesome monster! *(Avoiding the subject.)* Who wants blood orange cake?

PENNY is satisfied with this answer. TASHA joins the rest of the MONSTERS in making a fuss over PENNY.

ACT ONE, SCENE 4
BENCH AT SCHOOL

AT START: *Could be played in front of curtain. MOLLY and SHERRY sit or stand around benches. STUDENT EXTRAS walk by. HOWIE enters, looking for the girls.*

HOWIE: Molly! Sherry! You guys seen Stu? I can't believe he's late!

MOLLY: Howie. You should know better: Stu is always late.

SHERRY: Or lost. And most likely—

MOLLY and SHERRY: *(Annoyed.)* Both.

STU enters walking slowly, but his attention is glued to his cell phone.

STU: *(Stopping. In a reverie.)* Finally! Finally! It's here! It's really here!

STU stops and kisses his phone. HOWIE, SHERRY and MOLLY gather around him.

HOWIE: Stu. Buddy. Everything OK?

SHERRY: Molly, you think that's *(The phone.)* Stu's new girlfriend?

MOLLY: Well, she's exactly Stu's type! Shallow. With a pixel-thin personality.

STU: *(Ignoring her taunts.)* Guys! Look! *(Points to phone.)*

HOWIE: *(Flatly.)* Chance of rain twenty-five percent.

SHERRY: *(Pointing.)* Two-for-one special at our favorite restaurant, the Flaming Bagel? [Or other local eatery.]

MOLLY: *(Sarcastically. Flatly.)* Oh. Wow. Great. A convention for paperclip enthusiasts. *(Pause.)* I bought my ticket months ago.

HOWIE: *(Sarcastically. Flatly.)* That's worth making out with a dirty phone screen for.

STU: *(Pointing.)* This. This is the mac daddy! The big kahuna! The sci-fi-fan-o-com!

HOWIE, MOLLY, and SHERRY are confused.

STU: The sci-fi-fan-o-com! The science fiction-horror-fantasy fan COM! The monster of all conventions. It's going to be huge. Huuuuuge!

MOLLY: Stop that. Stop that forever.

SHERRY: Is it a big deal or something?

STU: A big deal? Yes! *(Exasperated.)* It's just the greatest fan convention on the entire planet! Monsters! Aliens! Superheroes plus... it's only held every four years.

MOLLY: So... it's like the Olympics. But just for nerds.

STU: Exactly! It's perfect!

SHERRY: *(Reading.)* Go as your favorite fictional character!

STU: *(Pointing.)* Look! Contests! And... monetary prizes! You know how you guys are always looking for ways to make money! Here it is!

HOWIE: Did somebody say money? Now we're talking!

STU: Remember how we won last year's Halloween Contest? As aliens?

MOLLY: *(Teasing him, they know full well.)* Yeah, right! What was that TV show called?

SHERRY: *(Playing along.)* I don't seem to remember...

STU: *(Unbelieving.)* Hmph. We were aliens from—

HOWIE: The greatest science fiction TV show of all time! *(To STU.)* It's a proven scientific fact!

STU and HOWIE: To the stars! Today! Tomorrow! Always!

STU and HOWIE do a complicated hand shake.

MOLLY: You can stop that forever, too!

SHERRY: *(To STU. Curious.)* You think we could actually... win? Money?

STU: We won last year... Why not? *(Pointing to phone.)* Cash. Prize!

SHERRY, MOLLY and HOWIE: *(Astonished. Coming around to his way of thinking.)* Cash!

SHERRY: *(Wistful.)* If I had more money... I could quit my stupid job and then have time to meet some cute guys. *(Rolls her eyes at the guys. Stares off into space.)*

STU and HOWIE: *(Pause. They look at one another and process the insult.)* Thanks.

SHERRY: I mean—

STU: *(Insulted.)* We know what you mean...

HOWIE: Yeah. *(Wistful. Eyes get wide.)* Oh, oh... but you know... if I had money, I could buy an entire lifetime supply...

SHERRY, MOLLY and STU: *(Pause.)* Of what?

HOWIE: *(Pause.)* Of *(Breathless.)* Kukimonga Ranch-Flavored Tator Tot Minis.

SHERRY: I think that's a yes...

HOWIE: Big money! *(TEENS put their hands in together.)* One, two, three!

SHERRY, HOWIE, MOLLY, and STU: Big money! *(Turn to audience.)* To the stars! Today! Tomorrow! Always!

SHERRY, HOWIE, MOLLY, and STU ad-lib, "I still have my costume," etc. ALL exit; STU and MOLLY linger behind.

STU: You know what I'm going to do when we win all that money?

MOLLY: *(Dryly with sarcasm.)* I'm dying to know. Really. Tell me before I literally die. Please. Hurry. Before I die and it's too late to tell me. Cause I'm dead.

STU: I'm going to spread the money on the floor, and roll all over it, and let it tickle every pore of my body! You know what I mean. Nudge, nudge, wink, wink.

MOLLY stops STU and she places her hand on his shoulder, which stops STU in his tracks.

MOLLY: Stu?

STU: Yes, Molly?

MOLLY: You never fail to surprise me.

STU: *(Stuttering.)* Uh, uh... Thank you Molly—

MOLLY: *(Flatly.)* With your absolute. And total. Idiocy.

MOLLY heads toward exit.

STU: *(Pause.)* I'm really not sure how to take that...

MOLLY: *(Stops. Fake kindness.)* Why don't you take it exactly as I intended? *(Pats STU'S shoulder, then exits.)*

STU: *(Brightening.)* OK then! Thanks! *(Exits.)*

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ACT ONE, SCENE 5
MONSTER MANSION

AT START: *MONSTERS* surround *ZOMBIE* who sits in a chair telling a story. *MONSTERS* are rapt.

ZOMBIE: And so... the waters rose higher and higher, until everything was covered. Streets. Stores. Apartment buildings. Cemeteries...

ALL MONSTERS: *(Except ZOMBIE.)* Ooohhh.

ZOMBIE: The water crept up, up, up past hills and finally... it covered even the mountains.... Until nothing... nothing... remained...

MONSTERS gasp. Some say "No." Some cover their ears and eyes.

ZOMBIE: *(Darkly.)* And that's the story... *(Brightly.)* of global warming!

TASHA enters.

ALL MONSTERS: *(Except TASHA and ZOMBIE.)* Woah...

TASHA: Everybody... a couple things before we get started. Tonight's Bingo game unfortunately had to be cancelled.

MONSTERS ad-lib response: "What?" "Why?"

TASHA: Someone—I'm not mentioning names—ate all the letters. Specifically, the vowels. *(Clears throat.)* Anyone care to own up to—

FRANKIE, MUMMY and *THING* raise their hands.

FRANKIE: Me. No. Like. Vowels. Sour.

TASHA: And... the cable is out.

MONSTERS ad-lib response: "What?" "That's not fair!"

GHOST: How am I supposed to watch “Real Housewives of Azkaban”? The finale is tonight!

TASHA: We had a repairman out here. But... someone chased him, then bit him in the pants...

Pause. MONSTERS slowly turn to WOLF GIRL

WOLF GIRL: What? It's the uniform... I couldn't help myself. Sometimes it's all about instinct.

FRANKIE: Cable. Man. Deserve. Bite. On. Butt.

Pause.

MUMMY: Now I can't watch MY favorite show!

INVISIBLE: What's it about?

MUMMY: It's about this human family. And it's super scary...None of them works ever. And they're mean to each other. And their mother? She's the real monster!

ZOMBIE: What kind?

MUMMY: She's an emotional vampire... it's called... The Kardashians! [Or insert similar popular TV show.]

MONSTERS are horrified. PENNY raises her hand.

TASHA: Penny? Do you have something to share?

PENNY: *(Standing.)* Everyone... as you know, I've grown up monster, and I've decided to try out for the Extraordinary League of Horrible Monsters!! Isn't that exciting?

MONSTERS look at one another understandingly.

PENNY: Don't everyone congratulate me at once...

MONSTERS look at the ground, uncomfortable.

TASHA: Penny... there's something we need to talk about... something you need to know...

GHOST: *(Scared.)* Oh boy!

FRANKIE puts a bag over his face and breathes. Lights down.

ACT ONE, SCENE 6

CAR

AT START: *In front of the curtain. SFX: Thunder and rain. TEENAGERS are in alien costumes. MOLLY “drives” the car; SHERRY sits in front with a phone. HOWIE and STU are in back. They are lost. MOLLY peers nervously through the windshield. Note: ABOMINABLE is lying next to or behind the “car.” Appropriate lighting can make him appear invisible.*

HOWIE: We're lost, aren't we?!

STU: We should have taken a left turn at that bridge.

MOLLY: We're not lost, we just don't know where we are.

HOWIE: So we're lost.

STU: *(To SHERRY.)* What does your phone say?

SHERRY: *(Checking phone, disappointed.)* It says HQ starts in eight minutes. *(Feel free to update with a relevant pop culture game, tweet or notice.)*

HOWIE: Let me see that. *(Grabs phone from SHERRY.)* You're useless. *(Looks at phone.)* OK. It says that I can save ten percent on my car insurance... or—

MOLLY, SHERRY and STU (Ad-lib.) "Are you kidding?" "What's wrong with you?" SHERRY grabs her phone back.

HOWIE: OK, we're lost.

Pause.

SHERRY: Wait! I just got a signal! Yes!

ALL are hopeful.

SHERRY: Wait. No. No. No!

MOLLY, STU and HOWIE pause then ad-lib. "Please." "Don't say it died."

SHERRY: It's dead! Gone. Pushing up daisies. It's nothing more than a silver, metallic pop tart. Oh my precious. Mommy loves you... Mommy loves you...

HOWIE: Mine's dead, too.

SHERRY: Same here!

STU: Maybe... maybe we're all dead. And this is how they tell us!

MOLLY: Who tells you what noodle brain?

STU: The people whose job it is to tell you that you're—you know—dead.

SHERRY: The only dead thing here is your brain. Like brain dead...

SFX: Thud. MOLLY, STU, SHERRY, and HOWIE ad-lib. "What was that?" MOLLY acts like she's slowing down and putting the car in park. MOLLY begins to exit the car.

HOWIE: Where're you going?

MOLLY: To see what happened! It's probably a flat tire.

HOWIE and STU: No! Stay in here! It's dark outside! And scary!

MOLLY: Don't be such weenies. Get out and help me. Or you're walking home!

HOWIE, MOLLY, STU, and SHERRY exit the car.

HOWIE: Why don't we just call Triple A?

STU: Total Genius! Call Triple A!

MOLLY: *(Pause. Sarcastically.)* Call? Triple A? Say, genius, how do we call Triple A when we're lost and we don't know where we are! And we don't have a phone? Or have you not been paying attention?

STU: *(Insulted.)* I HAVE been paying attention. Mostly

HOWIE: And I don't particularly care for your judg-y tone of voice...

SHERRY notices something on the other side of the car, off to the side that draws her attention. She walks over.

SHERRY: Guys?

MOLLY, STU and HOWIE: What?

SHERRY: Remember that thud we heard? I... I think I know what it was.

MOLLY, STU and HOWIE: What?

SHERRY: We ran something over.

HOWIE: What makes you say that?

SHERRY: Because, because there's a big furry arm coming out from under the car.

MOLLY: A big, furry...

STU: Is that big, furry arm attached to anything?

SHERRY: It looks like it's attached to a... Bear!

MOLLY: What kind? Grizzly? Brown?

STU: Or Pooh? Is it a Pooh Bear? Sweet gentle Pooh Bear!

SHERRY: *(Pause.)* More like... polar bear.

MOLLY, STU, and HOWIE: Polar bear?

HOWIE: What's a polar bear doing all the way out here?

STU: *(Authoritatively.)* I'll tell you what it's doing here! One word! Global. Warming. OK two words. Picture this, and weep: A gaggle of polar bears. Or a pride. A pride of little polar bears paddling on their tiny ice floes *(He paddles.)* all the way through the Great Lakes. Just to eat some fresh sardines...

MOLLY examines STU'S head.

MOLLY: Come here for a second.

STU: What? Why? What are you—

MOLLY: Did you hit your head?

STU: *(Touching his own head.)* Don't think so. Why?

MOLLY: *(Touching his head.)* Because it's missing a brain.

MOLLY, STU, HOWIE, and SHERRY huddle around ABOMINABLE.

HOWIE: Poor little polar bear...

MOLLY, STU, and SHERRY: Awww...

ABOMINABLE groans. ALL TEENS scream!

STU: It's alive!

HOWIE: It's going to eat us!

STU: It's angry that Molly ran it over.

HOWIE: And it's hungry! It's angry and hungry! It's all your fault Molly!

MOLLY: I didn't run it over on purpose, you nitwit! I couldn't see anything! With all the rain shwooshing...

STU: I've heard windshield wipers are a thing.

MOLLY: It was smack dab in the middle of the road!

HOWIE: How do you not see that in the middle of the road? *(Aghast.)*
What kind of bad driver are you?

MOLLY: I. Don't. Know. But next time you drive, you little troll!

ABOMINABLE wakes up, stands, and looks at TEENS.

SHERRY: *(Stunned.)* I don't think that's a polar bear!

MOLLY: *(Stunned.)* Not a polar bear.

STU: It looks like a... Monster.

SHERRY, MOLLY, STU, and HOWIE: *(Pointing, stuttering.)*
Mmmm... monster. *(Beat. ALL run around, grouped in terror, and cling to one another in fear.)*

ABOMINABLE: *(Pointing.)* Aliens!

ALL scream together. ABOMINABLE runs off stage.

SHERRY: What just happened?

STU: We just experienced a close encounter of the furry kind!

MOLLY: We'd better get out of here before it comes back!

HOWIE: *(Pointing.)* Look. Up there! On the hill! A house.

STU: Let's go! Before that THING eats us!

MOLLY: Stu's right! To the house!

SHERRY, HOWIE, and MOLLY all run off stage. STU is last and stops before he exits...

STU: *(Stopping, to audience.)* Wait a second! Did I just hear Molly say, "Stu's right"? Well, what d'ya know! The Stu-mesiter's right!

Sweet! Score! (*Proudly places hands on his hips. Looks around.*)
And now I'm totally alone... (*Panicked.*) Guys? Guys? Wait for
me! (*Exits hastily.*)

ACT ONE, SCENE 7
MONSTER MANSION

AT START: *MONSTERS, except ABOMINABLE, are having a conversation with PENNY. They are randomly sitting and standing around PENNY.*

TASHA: Penny... there's something we need to talk about...
something... you need to know...

PENNY: Aunt Tasha! What? Tell me!

TASHA: You're... not who you think you are—

TASHA is interrupted by ABOMINABLE who comes rushing through the door. Startled, the MONSTERS ad-lib: "What's going on?" "What's happening?"

ABOMINABLE: Everyone!! They're here!

Pause.

ALL MONSTERS: (*Except ABOMINABLE and TASHA. Excited, cheering.*) They're here!

TASHA: Everyone. Calm down. Who's here?

ABOMINABLE: Aliens!

MONSTERS: Aliens?

MUMMY: What kind?

ABOMINABLE: The kind from outer space-kind of aliens. I SAW them! They ran me over with their alien space ship!

ALL MONSTERS: (*Except ABOMINABLE. Gasp. Ad lib.*) No! Tried to run you over?

ABOMINABLE: Then... I saw them as they emerged from their ship. (*Serious.*) They've got their spacey alien clothes, and these weird, ugly alien heads. Oh, they're here all right!

ZOMBIE: Why are they here?

WOLF GIRL: Maybe they're lost!

INVISIBLE: I know why they're here!

The MONSTERS quiet down.

MUMMY: Why?

INVISIBLE: (*Ominous.*) To harvest us.

ALL MONSTERS: (*Except INVISIBLE.*) Harvest?

INVISIBLE: For food!

MUMMY: Or... (*All the MONSTERS gather and listen.*) Maybe...
they're here... to probe us...

ALL MONSTERS: (*Deathly afraid.*) Probe?

WOLF GIRL: You mean like... Tickle? Right?

MUMMY: No! Examine us! With instruments!

GHOST: Like a clarinet or viola?

MUMMY: Sharp instruments in various... places...

*The MONSTERS cover their ears, eyes, stomachs, shoulders, etc.
MONSTERS react, "Ewww!"*

HUMPHREY: Why would they do that?

ABOMINABLE: To learn stuff... the secret ways of monsterhood.

INVISIBLE: They're not learning anything from me!

MONSTERS ad-lib: "No way," "Nuh, uh."

WOLF GIRL: What are we going to do?

TASHA: Everybody. This sounds like a Code Red Emergency
Protocol. You all know what to do—

MONSTERS: Uh, oh!

TASHA: Come on everybody, just like we've planned...

Lights down.

ACT ONE, SCENE 8*THE MOORS, MONSTER MANSION FRONT DOOR*

AT RISE: *In front of the curtain. The TEENS cross the stage as they converse.*

STU: *(Whiney.)* Guys. I'm soooooo tired. We've been walking for hours.

SHERRY: It's been like *(Checks her watch.)* five minutes...

STU: You know what they say...

MOLLY: *(Flatly.)* No. What do they say?

STU: Time flies when you're avoiding a polar bear!

MOLLY: Nobody says that Stu. Nobody.

HOWIE: Is it me? Or does that house on the hill seem like, it's getting further away?

MOLLY: A phone charger would be really great right about now—

STU: I'm going to rest here.

SHERRY: We've got to keep moving—that wild, saber-toothed polar bear is angry and going to eat us!

HOWIE: Because of global warming!

STU: How do you know it's going to eat us? What if it's a vegetarian?

HOWIE: Or vegan.

SHERRY: Same difference!

HOWIE: Actually, the two are often conflated...

MOLLY: That polar bear had that, you know, look, like, you idiot humans melted all my ice patches so now I'm going to eat you! Like THIS!

SHERRY: Yeah.

SHERRY and MOLLY give the look.

STU: Oh my god. When did you two become cannibals?

SHERRY: Could you, for once, pretend you're semi-normal?

STU: We don't need to pretend!

HOWIE: We are semi-normal! *(Pause.)* Wait! That didn't sound right.

TEENS approach the front door of monster mansion.

MOLLY: We made it!

HOWIE: And we're in one, uneaten piece.

SHERRY: Open the door!

STU: That's breaking and entering. Which—if you paid attention in [Insert teacher's name] class—you'd know is against the law!

MOLLY: I did pay attention in [Insert teacher's name] class, but I just don't care if it's against the law!

STU: (*Horrified.*) You... law breaker...

MOLLY: Fine. Ring the doorbell.

SFX: Wolves howling.

HOWIE: I have a funny feeling about this!

STU: Me too.

MOLLY: You'll have an even funnier feeling when you're in the stomach of that polar bear.

STU and HOWIE: Well said...

STU rings doorbell. SFX: A loud scream (which is the sound of the doorbell). ALL TEENS scream in response to the doorbell. Blackout.

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