

HOW TO SURVIVE ACTING IN A BAD PLAY WITHOUT BEING TRAUMATIZED FOR LIFE

By Bradley Walton

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CHARACTERS

(12 Roles – 1 Female, 1 Male, 10 Either)

With doubling, the play can be performed with 11 actors: 1 Female, 1 Male, 9 Either.

FIREMAN or FIREFIGHTER (M or F)	A teenager playing a firefighter in the play “Life is Happy”
PILGRIM (M or F)	A teenager playing a Thanksgiving pilgrim in the play “Life is Happy”
PRINCESS (F)	A teenager playing a princess in the play “Life is Happy”
CLOWN (M or F)	A teenager playing a clown in the play “Life is Happy”
COWBOY or COWGIRL (M or F)	A teenager playing a cowboy or cowgirl in the play “Life is Happy”
BUNNY (M or F)	A teenager playing a bunny in the play “Life is Happy”
PROMETHEUS (M)	A teenager playing “Prometheus” (who, in Greek mythology, stole fire from Zeus) in the play “Life is Happy”
FIRE (M or F)	A teenager playing the fire stolen by Prometheus in the play “Life is Happy”
UNICORN 1 (M or F)	A teenager playing a unicorn in the play “Life is Happy”
UNICORN 2 (M or F)	A teenager playing another unicorn in the play “Life is Happy”
GUIDANCE COUNSELOR (M or F)	A teenager playing a guidance counselor in the play “Life is Happy”

STAGE CREW MEMBER (M or F) A member of the stage crew for the play “Life is Happy”

DOUBLING

The GUIDANCE COUNSELOR can double as the CREW MEMBER.

STAGING

How to Survive Acting in a Bad Play Without Being Traumatized For Life takes place during the performance of a bad fictitious play called “Life is Happy.” The “Life is Happy” set consists simply of a background flat painted with rainbows, balloons, and butterflies. The flat needs to be able to fall over. The stage can otherwise be bare, but feel free to add platforms, ramps, levels, etc.

PROPERTIES

Cell phone – CREW MEMBER

COSTUMES

Everyone dresses in a costume that matches his or her character... cowboy, princess, clown, unicorn, etc.

AUTHOR NOTES

It was February when I came up with the basic idea for this play and wrote the first two pages. In April, I resumed work on the script and finished it off. Except it wasn't April of the same year. It was the *following* year... almost 14 months later. There was no particular reason for the time lapse. Two pages were all I had in me when I started and when I came back to them, it was over a year later. It really was that simple. But the time the script spent in hard drive storage turned out to be good thing. I won't go into details, but trust me...the play is better thanks to something I experienced in between.

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AT RISE: FIREMAN, PILGRIM, CLOWN and PRINCESS on a dark stage about to begin a performance of the fictitious play “Life is Happy.” There is a background flat painted with rainbows, balloons, and butterflies. The flat will be visible to the audience when the lights come up.

FIREMAN: In the beginning, there was darkness.

PILGRIM: Darkness.

CLOWN: Darkness.

PRINCESS: Darkness.

(The lights slowly begin to come up.)

FIREMAN: It was a bleak time.

PILGRIM: A dreary time.

CLOWN: A weary time.

PRINCESS: But then there was light.

(Lights come up full.)

FIREMAN: And...

PILGRIM: Now...

CLOWN: There...

PRINCESS: Are...

FIREMAN: Rainbows!

PILGRIM: Sunshine!

CLOWN: Butterflies!

PRINCESS: Kittens!

FIREMAN: And they're all in...

PILGRIM: Me!

CLOWN: And me!

PRINCESS: And me!

FIREMAN: Whenever I feel sad...

PILGRIM: Or bad...

CLOWN: Or mad...

PRINCESS: I think happy thoughts!

FIREMAN: I think about flowers!

PILGRIM: And lollipops!

CLOWN: And pizza!

PRINCESS: And gum!

FIREMAN: Everybody's loved by somebody!

PILGRIM: Everybody has worth!

CLOWN: Everybody has value!

PRINCESS: Everybody has something worthwhile to share!

FIREMAN: Let's share!

PILGRIM: I love to share!

CLOWN: Who will share?

PRINCESS: I know! Let's give someone else the chance to share!

(FIREMAN, PILGRIM, CLOWN, and PRINCESS look offstage L expectantly. COWBOY and BUNNY skip onstage from L. Once onstage, COWBOY looks out at the audience and freezes up.)

BUNNY: Hi, everybody. I'm feeling kind of sad today.

(Pauses as if waiting for COWBOY to reply. When no reply comes, BUNNY plows on ahead.)

Do you want to know why I'm feeling sad today?

(Pauses as if waiting for a reply from COWBOY. Again, there is none.)

The cereal my mom gave me for breakfast this morning was low in fiber and now I'm scared she doesn't love me.

(Pauses as if waiting for a reply from COWBOY, and again, there is none.)

Do you know what it feels like to wonder if no one loves you? I'll bet you do. Remember the time that really mean boy taped the sign on your back that said "kick me" and everyone did, including me? That was mean. And I feel really sorry about it now. Because I bet it made you feel bad. Right?

(Pauses as if waiting for a reply from COWBOY that still isn't coming.)

You felt like no one loved you. You felt like a mole rat in a room full of puppies. You felt like steamed cabbage on an ice cream buffet. You felt like a teacher who gave homework over Christmas break. You felt like scum. Worse than scum. Like this was scum up here *(holds hand, palm down, up in the air)* and this was you down here *(holds hand, palm down, at knee level)*. And you probably thought that a science teacher was going to mistake you for a some kind of new bacteria specimen and stick you in a test tube for the rest of your life, but you were wrong, because if you put a bacteria specimen on this stage it would give more of a performance than what you're giving right now. Will you please snap out of it?

(EVERYONE on the stage glares at COWBOY with frustration.)

COWBOY: (to BUNNY) That's not in the script! You can't say that! You're going to ruin the play!

BUNNY: No, you're the one who's ruining the play. Come on, get it together, will you? You're supposed to be a cowboy, not a mime.

COWBOY: I'm sorry. There's an audience out there. There are people watching me and I'm dressed like a cowboy and I'm supposed to talk about you being sad because your mom doesn't give you enough fiber and... and... this is such a bad play and it's so embarrassing.

BUNNY: You're absolutely right. The name of this show may be "Life is Happy" but it might as well be called "Life is Sappy." Compared to some of us, though, you don't have a lot of room to complain. You're dressed like a cowboy. I'm dressed like a *bunny*. I promise you, (gestures to his costume) this is not what I had in mind when I decided to audition for the school (or other type of performing group) play. Do you think it made me feel good to go home and tell my dad—who wanted me to try out for a sport—that I was going to be dressing up as bunny rabbit? Furthermore, my character is the one who's sad because he didn't get high fiber cereal. He's practically admitting to the world that he's irregular, plus he's a neurotic half-wit who thinks maternal love is somehow related to his cereal's fiber content. I have way more reason to be embarrassed than you. But you know what? I'm not embarrassed at all.

COWBOY: How are you not embarrassed?

BUNNY: I'm not thrilled with the situation, but I still have my pride. When the show is over, I'll be able to walk out of this theater with my head held high no matter how bad the show is or what goes wrong. And so far, I'd say we've got a really bad show with plenty going wrong.

COWBOY: You're seriously not embarrassed?

BUNNY: Not in the least.

COWBOY: You're not embarrassed by being in a bad play that's gone from bad to worse?

BUNNY: Nope.

COWBOY: Could you maybe enlighten me as to how you achieve that frame of mind? Because I'm on the brink of being traumatized for life.

BUNNY: You think this is bad now?

COWBOY: Yeah.

BUNNY: You ain't seen nothing yet.

COWBOY: I know. I know what happens in the rest of the play. We've been rehearsing it together for weeks, remember?

BUNNY: No. You only think you know. The thing about plays is, stuff feels completely different when you perform it in front of an actual audience. So even if you've rehearsed it twenty times in an empty theater, you're going to be experiencing a whole new set of feelings when you get bodies in those seats out there.

COWBOY: Yeah... I'm kind of experiencing those feelings already, so if you could just—

BUNNY: I think we need to press on with the show some more so you can fully appreciate the acute psychological agony that being in a bad play can potentially inflict on the mind of a young actor.

COWBOY: No, that's okay.

BUNNY: Let me see, where were we? Right... my mother's love and low-fiber cereal. If we go back to that, do you think there's any chance of you being able to say your lines?

COWBOY: No.

BUNNY: All right. Forget that part.

COWBOY: Thank you.

BUNNY: We'll skip ahead to where Prometheus takes fire from the heavens and gives it to the unicorns so they can start a chocolate factory.

COWBOY: Could we skip that part, too?

BUNNY: No.

COWBOY: Bummer.

BUNNY: Fireman! Your line!

FIREMAN: Right. In the beginning, there was darkness.

PILGRIM: Darkness

CLOWN: Darkness.

PRINCESS: Darkness.

FIREMAN: But then there was light.

PILGRIM: And the light was fire.

CLOWN: But fire only belonged to the heavens.

PRINCESS: Mankind existed in a state of darkness.

FIREMAN: So Prometheus took fire from the heavens.

CLOWN: And gave it to the unicorns.

PILGRIM: So they could make chocolate!

(PROMETHEUS and FIRE enter from R. UNICORNS 1 and 2 enter from L.)

UNICORN 1: Mankind exists in a state of darkness.

UNICORN 2: Poor mankind. They are so unfortunate.

PROMETHEUS: I can help with that. I have fire. I took it from the heavens.

FIRE: Hi.

UNICORN 1: Cool. Give fire to us and we'll see to it that mankind benefits.

PROMETHEUS: But you're not representatives of the human race. You're unicorns.

UNICORN 2: That's a very astute observation.

PROMETHEUS: I need to give fire to actual humans so they can use it as a tool to grow as a species and find their way out of the darkness, both literal and metaphorical.

UNICORN 1: If you give fire to us, we'll use it to make chocolate.

UNICORN 2: And we'll share the chocolate with the humans.

UNICORN 1: And it will make them happy.

PROMETHEUS: That sounds a lot nicer than what I had in mind. Here. You take fire.

UNICORN 2: Thanks so much.

PROMETHEUS: Goodbye, fire.

FIRE: Goodbye, Prometheus. I'll miss you.

UNICORN 1: Come on, fire. Let's go to your new home.

FIRE: Oh boy, I get to live with unicorns!

FIREMAN: I've got my eye on you, fire. Just telling you.

FIRE: I'll be good, I promise.

CLOWN: So the unicorns took fire and made chocolate in their new factory,
then gave the chocolate to mankind, and mankind was happy.

PRINCESS: This is the true story of the creation of chocolate. Mostly.

*(PROMETHEUS, FIRE, and the UNICORNS strike a triumphant pose.
Pause. EVERYONE stares expectantly at COWBOY.)*

BUNNY: That's your cue.

COWBOY: I...

BUNNY: You have a line here. It's a really easy one. Just three words.

COWBOY: I... I...

BUNNY: Do you need help?

COWBOY: I...

BUNNY: "I" is the first word. Very good. Do you need the second word?

COWBOY: I...

BUNNY: Why am I not surprised? The second word is "love."

COWBOY: L-love.

BUNNY: Good. Do you know the third word?

*(COWBOY looks out at the audience and then tries to run off the stage, but
the UNICORNS grab and restrain him.)*

BUNNY: "Chocolate."

COWBOY: Choc-chocolate.

BUNNY: Right. Now, can you put it all together for everyone in the
audience to hear?

COWBOY: This is really, really embarrassing!

BUNNY: And it's going to get worse, because you need to put those three
words together and say your line.

COWBOY: No.

BUNNY: Yes.

COWBOY: No!

BUNNY: Say it!

COWBOY: *(flatly and quickly)* I love chocolate.

BUNNY: Say it right.

COWBOY: *(slightly more intelligible)* I love chocolate.

BUNNY: Now say it like you mean it. *(Demonstrates.)* "I love chocolate!"

Like it makes you happy! Like it's the most important thing in the world
that could have come from the harnessing of fire! Say it! SAY IT!

COWBOY: *(with exaggerated, forced, and over-the-top enthusiasm)* I love
chocolate!

BUNNY: Good!

COWBOY: Oh, I feel so... so...

BUNNY: Dirty? Defiled? Debased?

COWBOY: Yes. And dumb.

BUNNY: There's that, too. Welcome to the club.

COWBOY: It's so smarmy and cheesy.

UNICORN 1: Trust us, we know.

(UNICORNS 1 and 2 release COWBOY.)

COWBOY: Whoever wrote this needs to be slapped.

UNICORN 2: Yup.

COWBOY: Why did the director choose this play?

PROMETHEUS: Because it's positive and uplifting.

COWBOY: But it sucks. It's such a bad play.

FIRE: But it's a positive and uplifting bad play.

COWBOY: Part of what makes it bad is that it tries too hard to be positive and uplifting.

BUNNY: There are adults who feel that young people have fragile egos and need their self-esteem boosted at every possible opportunity. And that if we understood how horrible the world really is, we'd wither and die. Generally these adults have fragile egos and no self-esteem of their own, they can't read a newspaper without coming close to a nervous breakdown, and they don't want us to grow up to be like them.

COWBOY: And our director is one of those people?

BUNNY: Our director is watching this performance and even though the show has completely jumped the rails already, I'm still not going to touch that one with a ten-foot pole.

COWBOY: But being in a bad play that tries to boost my self-esteem and give me a sugar-coated view of the world is psychologically traumatizing because I know how lousy and contrived it is. If the play wasn't trying to boost my self-esteem and was, y'know, more realistic, the overall experience would be so much healthier.

BUNNY: Maybe. It depends.

COWBOY: On what?

BUNNY: Oh, a lot of things. Tell you what... this show has a semi-realistic scene, although since the play is called "Life is Happy," of course it turns out to just be a dream the fireman is having. But why don't we perform that part completely out of context?

COWBOY: Um... okay.

BUNNY: Fireman, take it away.

FIREMAN: I can't handle it anymore. The stress from my life, my job, my family... it's just too much. I don't know what I'm going to do.

PRINCESS: I understand what you mean. Being a princess isn't all it's cracked up to be. I'm constantly under scrutiny by the media.

Everything I wear is analyzed and picked apart by fashion critics. I can't even step out of the castle in the morning to get the newspaper without

having my picture taken by the paparazzi. I have no privacy. No “me” time. I thought being a princess would be glamorous, but it’s not.

CLOWN: I became a clown because I wanted to laugh. I wanted to be happy. I wanted to escape from the pit of sadness that was my life. I’ve been a clown for years, now. And you know what I’ve found out? The smiles on clowns’ faces are painted. Clowns don’t laugh. Clowns make *other people* laugh. And they have to work at it. It’s a job. And if you’re a clown and you can’t make other people laugh, then you’ve failed at your job. And when that happens, you’re not just an unhappy person, you’re an unhappy failure. And nobody wants that. So there’s this constant pressure not to be an unhappy failure. It’s hard to be a clown.

FIREMAN: It’s hard just to exist. The existential burden of being is crushing, you know?

PRINCESS: Totally.

CLOWN: I’m thinking about running away from the circus to join an accounting firm.

FIREMAN: We could abandon our lives and run away together. We’d lose our families and our self-respect, but at least we’d have each other.

PRINCESS: I can’t abandon my responsibilities. I just can’t. Tiaras don’t wear themselves!

CLOWN: Even if I became an accountant, would it make me happy? Or is it just an empty shell of a dream that I use to delude myself so I can make it through another unbearable day? I’m so afraid the image in my head won’t match reality when I get there.

FIREMAN: You know what I think? I think we need professional help. I think we need a guidance counselor.

PRINCESS: Where do we find a guidance counselor?

CLOWN: (*looking around*) There should be one around here somewhere.

FIREMAN: (*looking around, concerned*) He’s not here.

BUNNY: He’s throwing up in the dressing room.

PRINCESS: He’s what?

BUNNY: He’s sick.

CLOWN: Since when?

BUNNY: Since about two minutes before the show started.

FIREMAN: Why didn’t somebody tell us?

BUNNY: You’d already taken your places onstage. And even if you’d known, what could you have done about it? Nothing except worry about what would happen when it was time for the guidance counselor to make his entrance.

PRINCESS: But now it *is* time for the guidance counselor to make his entrance and he’s not here.

BUNNY: Actually, it’s not time for the guidance counselor to make his entrance. That scene normally comes later in the show. He’s not technically due onstage for another ten minutes.

COWBOY: If you knew he was sick and backstage and that he wouldn’t even try to be out here for another ten minutes, why did you have them do the serious scene?

BUNNY: To demonstrate how serious drama can go bad.

PROMETHEUS: Okay, well. I guess we've done that. Now what?

BUNNY: We go ahead with the rest of the scene and make it worse.

FIRE: How?

BUNNY: Somebody needs to fill in for the guidance counselor.

UNICORN 1: But nobody knows his lines.

BUNNY: Bingo.

UNICORN 2: Then how...

BUNNY: We've all been at the rehearsals. We all know the gist of how it's supposed to go. One of us can do it.

COWBOY: Who?

BUNNY: How about our pilgrim?

PILGRIM: What?

PROMETHEUS: Yeah!

PILGRIM: No!

FIRE: Great idea!

PILGRIM: I can't!

UNICORN 1: We believe in you!

PILGRIM: I wasn't paying attention to anybody else's parts!

BUNNY: Just do the best you can.

PRINCESS: Help me, guidance counselor, you're my only hope.

FIREMAN: And mine!

CLOWN: And mine!

PILGRIM: Um. Take two aspirin and call me in the morning.

FIREMAN: I can't relate to my family and friends anymore.

PILGRIM: Um... well... I'm very sorry to hear that.

FIREMAN: What should I do?

PILGRIM: Try harder. To relate to them. I'm supposed to say something about a vacation here, right?

FIREMAN: I just know that the cue for my next line is "the weather is great there this time of year."

PILGRIM: You should take a vacation. The weather is great there this time of year.

FIREMAN: I don't have money to take my family on a trip.

PILGRIM: Um... um...

PRINCESS: Something about a bank.

PILGRIM: Bank. Right. You should go to the bank. And um... rob it.

FIREMAN: But my credit's not very good. I made some poor decisions when I was younger, and I'm suffering for it now.

PILGRIM: Uh...

CLOWN: Something about family, I think.

PILGRIM: Do you have any family you could steal the money from?

FIREMAN: My extended family has all disowned me. Except for my brother, and he's homeless.

PILGRIM: So steal the money from him.

PRINCESS: No! You're supposed to say something about friends!

PILGRIM: Do you have any friends you could steal the money from?

CLOWN: Now you're supposed to tell him to raise the money, not steal it!

PILGRIM: Really?

PRINCESS: Yes!

PILGRIM: Sorry. I always zoned out during this part in rehearsals. It was really boring.

FIREMAN: It's scaring me a little that we're talking about ways for my character to get money and since you don't know the lines, the first thing that jumps into your head is that I should steal it.

PILGRIM: Well, it's a play, isn't it? There's supposed to be action and dramatic tension. If you borrow money, that's boring. If you steal the money, then we have moral compromise and stuff. So from a dramatic standpoint, I thought it made the most sense if I told you to steal it.

FIREMAN: You just said this part of the play was boring. If the guidance counselor was telling me to steal, then it wouldn't be boring.

PILGRIM: Oh, yeah. I guess you're right.

FIREMAN: Plus, it would be totally out of place with the tone of the play.

The play is called "Life is Happy."

PILGRIM: But this is the serious part.

FIREMAN: That turns out to be a dream.

PILGRIM: Right. If it's a dream, then I should be able to tell you to steal the money.

FIREMAN: No!

PILGRIM: Come on! There's a princess right next to you. Princesses are loaded. Kill the princess, steal her money, and you're good to go on your vacation. You can pay off the clown to hide the body while you're gone.

PRINCESS: What kind of a guidance counselor are you?

PILGRIM: Probably not a very good one.

CLOWN: Nobody gets murdered in happy plays!

PILGRIM: That depends on who you're trying to make happy. If we were performing this at a crime fiction convention, it would make the audience happy.

PRINCESS: We're performing this for general audiences!

PILGRIM: As bad as the play is, I think a murder might make the audience happier than what they'd be getting if we followed the script.

PRINCESS: We can't change the script!

PILGRIM: We can't?

PRINCESS: It's illegal. It's a violation of copyright.

PILGRIM: But the school's (or "theatre's" or the name of the performing group) paying for us to use the play. We should be able to do whatever we want with it.

PRINCESS: Didn't you read the fine print at the front of the script?

PILGRIM: Don't tell me that you actually did.

PRINCESS: It's a violation of copyright law for us to change the script without the author's permission. If you tell the fireman to steal or to murder, we could go to jail.

PILGRIM: For copyright infringement?

PRINCESS: Exactly.

PILGRIM: Bummer. So I have to tell him to raise the money?

PRINCESS: Yes.

PILGRIM: But that sucks.

PRINCESS: It doesn't matter.

PILGRIM: I hate this play.

CLOWN: Welcome to the club.

PILGRIM: Sorry dude, you have to raise the money somehow.

FIREMAN: How should I do that?

PILGRIM: Try writing plays. You're bound to be better at it than *some* people.

FIREMAN: Do you have any other advice?

PILGRIM: You could just make do with what you have, accept your sorry life, abandon all your dreams, and suck up and cope.

(The GUIDANCE COUNSELOR enters.)

GUIDANCE COUNSELOR: I would have suggested putting on a show to raise money.

PILGRIM: Oh, yeah. That's right.

FIREMAN: It's the guidance counselor! We're so glad you're here.

GUIDANCE COUNSELOR: You seem to have things under control, so if it's okay with you all, I think I'm gonna go barf some more.

PILGRIM: No, wait!

(GUIDANCE COUNSELOR exits.)

Aaarggh!

BUNNY: *(to COWBOY)* Aren't you glad you aren't part of this scene?

COWBOY: I'd be totally traumatized.

FIREMAN: Hey, everybody! Let's put on a show!

PRINCESS: Yeah!

CLOWN: That's a great idea!

FIREMAN: *(singing)* I can sing!

PRINCESS: *(singing)* I can dance!

CLOWN: *(singing)* I'm a clown!

UNICORNS: *(singing in unison)* And you've got unicorns!

FIRE: *(singing)* And fire!

(FIREMAN, PRINCESS, CLOWN, FIRE and UNICORNS begin dancing. PROMETHEUS, BUNNY and COWBOY watch.)

FIREMAN, PRINCESS, CLOWN, FIRE and UNICORNS: *(singing)* We can sing! We can dance!

FIREMAN and CLOWN: *(singing)* Hope we don't catch fire to our pants!

BUNNY: *(to COWBOY)* I think you should join them.

COWBOY: But I'm not in this part of the play.

BUNNY: It's okay. You can be a backup singer and dancer.

COWBOY: I can't sing or dance.

BUNNY: I remember. I saw your audition.

COWBOY: Then why—

BUNNY: Because nobody here sings or dances particularly well, because this part of the script is so pointless it could be cut without the audience being able to tell it was missing, and you still haven't been traumatized enough to appreciate what trauma really is!

(BUNNY pushes COWBOY in front of the dancing group. COWBOY looks at what the OTHERS are doing and tries to imitate it—badly.)

COWBOY: *(singing flatly)* La la la.

(FIREMAN, PRINCESS, CLOWN, FIRE, and UNICORNS stop dancing and EVERYONE stares at COWBOY with a mixture of pity and disgust.)

PROMETHEUS: Wow, you really suck at that.

COWBOY: I wasn't prepared!

BUNNY: Actors always have to be prepared.

COWBOY: But I wasn't supposed to be in this part of the play!

PILGRIM: If it happened to me, it can happen to you.

BUNNY: When you're onstage, performing live in front of an audience, anything can happen.

UNICORN 1: The set could fall down.

(The background flat falls over. An embarrassed STAGE CREW MEMBER sits or stands behind it, texting on a cell phone.)

CREW MEMBER: Sorry.

UNICORN 2: We should probably set that back up.

UNICORN 1: Definitely.

CREW MEMBER: Thank you.

(The CAST helps the CREW MEMBER set the flat back up. The CREW MEMBER exits behind the flat.)

COWBOY: It's a good thing nobody got hurt.

PROMETHEUS: They still could. *(Stomps on COWBOY's foot.)*

COWBOY: Ow! What'd you do that for?

PROMETHEUS: Hey, I got chained to a rock and had my liver eaten by an eagle over and over again. You need to toughen up.

COWBOY: Your character is imaginary! My foot is real!

PROMETHEUS: The set is real. What if that flat had fallen on your foot?

COWBOY: It didn't.

PROMETHEUS: It could have. And what if it had fallen on your head? Would you be able to keep going?

COWBOY: No! I can't keep going with this play even when things are right!
What are you picking on me for?

PROMETHEUS: Because the whole show has crashed and burned. (*to FIRE*) No offense.

FIRE: None taken.

PROMETHEUS: (*to COWBOY*) And the longer I stand on this stage, the more I think that the best way to cope is to blame somebody else. So for obvious reasons, I'm blaming you.

UNICORN 1: Yeah!

UNICORN 2: It's all your fault!

COWBOY: But... but...

BUNNY: (*insert name of actor playing PROMETHEUS*) is right. He's being overly blunt, but he's right. One way to deal with the trauma of being in a bad play is to blame one or more of your cast mates.

PROMETHEUS: How else would you do it?

BUNNY: Easy. Just look at it like this: The play is not you and you are not the play.

COWBOY: What?

BUNNY: If the script is lame or if the play is lame... that doesn't mean you're lame. If things are going wrong all around you, that doesn't mean you're doing something wrong. And if you do freeze up or forget your lines or have to fill in for somebody without knowing what you're doing, or even if you just do a really lousy job in general, you have to remember... this is just a play. I know that whatever goes wrong on this stage... even the fact that I'm wearing this stupid bunny costume... none of it is my fault. And if I do something that is my fault, in the cosmic scheme of things, it really doesn't matter.

COWBOY: I guess that's okay, up to a point, but... looking at it like that... it seems like you might as well not care.

BUNNY: Sure I care. I just absolve myself of any responsibility for what happens on this stage, and all of you should do the same thing.

COWBOY: That still sounds an awful lot like not caring, and it doesn't seem like a very positive attitude.

PROMETHEUS: It totally doesn't work for me. I can't twist my brain around to that kind of thinking. The blame thing definitely does a better job of making this more bearable.

COWBOY: But it's so negative. That kind of thinking leads to resentment. It would make it hard to work together on other plays later.

PROMETHEUS: I never want to be in another play with you for as long as I live.

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