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BUMPER SNICKERS

Comedy by

SUSAN OSTERBERG

and

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Dramatic Publishing Company

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(BUMPER SNICKERS)

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ABOUT THE PLAY

This play, under the title “Things That Stick to Bumpers,” was first produced by the Alley Merry-Go-Round at the Alley Theatre in Houston, Texas, May 19, 1975. It was a creatively developed production originated by Susan Snider Osterberg.

CAST

This play is so flexible that it would be misleading to list a Cast of Characters. It can be performed by as few as 5 or as many as 50 (or even more) males and /or females – children or adults. Most of the roles can be played by either men or women, boys or girls. There are many characters in the play – mostly drivers of automobiles – but each performer is expected to play several roles.

The play is also flexible in that scenes may be rearranged, and any may be omitted. BUMPER SNICKERS is a series of unrelated skits using the bumper sticker as its common thread. The content of the play was chosen from a selection of commercially made bumper stickers which were seen on cars, vans, and pick-up trucks. However, in this play, not all the bumper stickers are on cars. People wear them – and so does an occasional animal and plant.

BUMPER SNICKERS is designed to entertain children of all ages, from toddlers to high schoolers. It is full of the kinds of action and sound that the smallest children enjoy, and of the kinds of characters and episodes that older children find fascinating. It is a deceptively simple play. While appearing to be little more than sheer entertainment (which is what children like), it presents subtle messages of social and psychological significance in a manner that impresses young people and helps shape their personality and character.

Audience participation is possible by inviting children in the audience to be “drivers” of some of the cars.

Another flexible characteristic of BUMPER SNICKERS is the manner of staging. It can be mounted very inexpensively, with no scenery and, except in a few instances, with costumes that the performers can provide from their own wardrobe. Or it can be an elaborate production with creatively designed sets, costumes, props, and lighting effects.

SCENERY

The play takes place at a city street corner, beginning with the Morning Rush Hour and ending with the Afternoon Rush Hour. The original production was on an arena stage with no scenery. It can be placed on a proscenium or thrust stage just as easily. Street markers may indicate the intersection of two city streets, or profile scenery depicting buildings and store fronts may be used. Laid in your city, the play offers the opportunity to reconstruct your own busiest intersection on stage, if you desire.

MUSIC

Musical interludes may connect the scenes, using music that reflects the tone of the episode. A blackout may end each scene; however, no blackout should last more than three seconds – just enough time to get performers off and on the stage. Sound effects can be created backstage with a variety of percussion instruments and car horns. Onstage, actors may create their own sound effects with their bodies and voices, plus any automobile horns they may carry.

THE CARS

Since bumper stickers are usually on the rear bumpers of cars, the original production used cars made of two pieces of tag board fastened at the top with straps and worn like sandwich boards hooked over the actors' shoulders. The front was painted to look like the hood and grille of a car, and the rear like the back of a car with an enlarged bumper and oversized bumper sticker lettering which could be easily read by all members of the audience. Other types of cars are possible, the simplest being an arrangement whereby the "Driver" holds a steering wheel in his hands and carries the bumper sticker on a board hanging down his back. For producers with extensive technical facilities and skills, the possibilities are limited only by the imagination of the designer. As far as possible, the cars should be in keeping with the tone of the scene (e.g., expensive cars for wealthy drivers, jalopies for teenagers, etc.). In a few cases, specific types of cars are suggested in the script.

For the benefit of little children who can't read – or any audience member who can't see the bumper stickers easily – each sticker should be read aloud . . . as provided in the text.

BUMPER SNICKERS

ACT I

Scene 1

[A street corner in a city, just before the Morning Rush Hour. A uniformed POLICEMAN (or POLICEWOMAN) saunters in casually looking about and whistling or humming to himself. He carries a rolled-up newspaper and a police whistle. He looks at his watch and yawns]

POLICEMAN. Six fifty-five A. M. There's plenty of time before it starts. *[He yawns and stretches. He opens the paper and begins reading. Uncomfortably, he shifts from leg to leg. When he turns the pages, they go awry. Finally, he settles down. There are a few moments of silence broken only by his humming. Then it happens: The Morning Rush Hour! Suddenly, cars appear from every direction in a din of honking, screeching, squealing, and screaming. They speed past the POLICEMAN, who, caught off guard, whirls around, loses his paper, and is nearly run down. He tries to regain control by waving to the drivers to slow down, but to no avail. They keep coming. They speed past him, they circle him, they ignore him. He blows his whistle. Still they come and go. Exasperated, he exits and returns immediately with a huge radar gun clearly labeled. It is shaped somewhat like a megaphone with a handle on it] Radar!* *[Suddenly, the cars slow to a crawl, the drivers smiling sheepishly at the Policeman. After a few seconds, a SPEEDER arrives. The POLICEMAN stops him. Other cars gather round]* Sorry, fella, I'm going to have to write you up. Speeding is dangerous, especially in the morning rush hour. I'll need your license plate number. *[Goes to back of the car]* All right, all right, what is this? Your license plate is covered over by a . . . by a . . .

[The cars, now all in a line, turn one-by-one so that together their Bumper Snickers spell "BUMPER SNICKERS" (it is not necessary to have one car for each letter; divide the letters among the cars available)]

POLICEMAN. Bumper stickers?

DRIVERS. No. Bumper SNICKERS.

POLICEMAN. Junk.

DRIVERS. Junk?

POLICEMAN. *[To the Speeder]* Here's your ticket. And here's

something else for you. [*Hands Speeder a large Bumper Snicker which reads:*] “SLOW DOWN AND LIVE.”

SPEEDER. Anything you say.

[In unison, the cars rev up their engines and take off quickly, scattering in all directions. The suddenness of the noise throws the POLICEMAN off balance. He falls to the street. Then there is silence. He uncovers his head and looks about. Nothing]

POLICEMAN. [*To audience*] They really should slow down. That way, all of us could read their Bumper Snickers. [*He starts to rise. A speeding car whizzes by. He ducks and covers his head. He looks up. The road is safe. As he cautiously crawls off:*] I think I'll put in for a transfer to the Homicide Division. It's gotta be safer than this!

Interlude

[A WHITE CAR enters and drives to the intersection, where its motor stalls]

WHITE CAR DRIVER. Oh, no, not again! This darn car. Every time I get it out of the garage, it stalls on me. I can't get anywhere on time. Oh, well, there's only one thing to do, I guess. Push. [*He gets out and pushes. To audience as he exits*] You know what this is, don't you? [*Points to his Bumper Snicker:*] “MANPOWER!”

Scene 2

[A small child dressed like a POLICEMAN or POLICEWOMAN enters and stands at the street corner. (If desired, the policeman may be a cardboard cutout carried on and placed in position by a stagehand. The Important thing is that the policeman must be light enough to be easily lifted by the Person.) A very thin, undernourished PERSON enters and stands beside the policeman. The PERSON flexes his arm and leg muscles, does knee bends and other calisthenics; then assumes several Mr. America poses to show off his (non-existent) muscles. Finally, the preparations are over; he moves behind the policeman, grasping it around the waist, and – just like a weightlifter pressing a 500-pound barbell, lifts the policeman to his chest and over his head. Finally, he sets the policeman on his shoulders. Two cars enter, one on each side of the PERSON. The DRIVERS look at the person and scratch their heads in dismay, then turn their Bumper Snickers to face the audience. One Snicker reads: “SUPPORT”; the other, “YOUR LOCAL POLICE.” All look at the audience and smile proudly, the Drivers honking their horns merrily]

Interlude

[A very plain, thin, undernourished PERSON (perhaps the same one who just supported the policeman) enters driving a sporty car. ANOTHER PERSON enters behind him, walking. The SPORTY CAR turns, revealing its Bumper Snicker: "GREAT SHAPE"]

ANOTHER PERSON. *[Speaking to the audience but pointing to the plain Person]* That car's in "GREAT SHAPE." It's the driver that needs some body work! *[They exit]*

Scene 3

[A SALESMAN drives in pulling three HORSES tied to the back of his car. (The horses may be toys or papier-mache horses on wheels, or actors in horse costume and/or make-up. Stick horses may be used instead, with the Salesman carrying them under his arm.) He is smiling brightly and singing to himself, obviously very happy. He steps out of his car and points to his Bumper Snicker: "HAPPINESS IS OWNING A HORSE." A SOUR LADY enters and looks at him scornfully]

SALESMAN. "Happiness is owning a horse." Yes, sir, truer words were never spoken. Why, look at me. Happiness personified. Yes, sir, folks, HAPPINESS IS OWNING A HORSE. Step right up and put in your bids for these wonderful, pure-bred nags, uh, horses, and take one home with you. You won't be sorry. All sales are final. No returns, no refunds, no deposits, and no alterations. Buy them as is. HAPPINESS IS OWNING A HORSE. Who'll buy this fine-looking little mule, uh, filly? This second-hand horse was previously owned by a little old lady who was afraid to ride. The mileage is low, and it gets twenty miles to a bucket of oats. Newly equipped with retread shoes. Who'll open the bidding?

SOUR LADY. A buck ninety-eight.

SALESMAN. Madam, you're insulting this beautiful horse.

SOUR LADY. All right. A buck ninety-nine.

SALESMAN. That's more like it. Sold to the sour-looking old dowager in the Halloween mask.

SOUR LADY. That's not a Halloween mask. That's my face.

SALESMAN. That's not your face. That face was stolen from the Creature from Outer Space.

SOUR LADY. Nobody talks to me like that, you . . . you . . .

SALESMAN. Temper, temper. *[Hands her the reins]*

SOUR LADY. *[When she takes the reins, her scowl immediately changes to a happy smile]* . . . you . . . kind young man. Thank you,

thank you for this lovely little horsey. Come along, horsey. Let's go. Maybe we can stop by the Dairy Queen on the way home. *[They exit]*

SALESMAN. What did I tell you, ladies and gentlemen? Isn't that proof that HAPPINESS IS OWNING A HORSE? Now, who will bid on my second horse? This award-winning horse has more blue ribbons than McDonald's has hamburgers. It's famous the world over for its strong legs, firm back, and purple tail. I know a purple tail may seem a little unusual, but it only makes this horse more famous than ever. Now, who would like to buy this beautiful horse? *[During his spiel, HUSBAND and WIFE enter and listen. They are obviously very wealthy]*

HUSBAND. I say, would you let him go for a hundred thousand dollars?

SALESMAN. A hundred *[gulp]* thousand dollars?

HUSBAND. All right, then, two hundred thousand.

WIFE. Rodney, don't you dare. What will our ritzy neighbors say if we return to our mansion in Beverly Hills with something as common as a horse?

HUSBAND. But, dahling, don't you see? Everyone else has a dog — like a poodle or a Siberian Husky. How delightful it would be for us to be different. Instead of a watchdog, we would have the only watch-horse in the neighborhood.

WIFE. Rodney, I simply do not wish to hear another word about it. I do not want to be different. I want to be "in fashion."

HUSBAND. It would be great sport to bound across the estate each morning at sunup.

WIFE. *[Petulantly]* Rodney, I have never arisen to see a sunup, and I do not intend to start now. I will not have a horse in my mansion.

HUSBAND. We could build him his own little mansion in the back yard.

WIFE. A barn in my yard? No. No barn and no horse. That is my last word.

HUSBAND. I want that horse, love.

WIFE. I do not want that horse, love.

HUSBAND. I must have that horse, lovey.

WIFE. It's the horse or me, lovey. You can't have both.

HUSBAND. Well, uh . . .

WIFE. Rodney, how dare you? Are you actually considering taking the horse and leaving me?

HUSBAND. Well, I could build you a lovely little mansion in the back yard.

WIFE. I've never been so insulted. I thought you loved me. *[She begins to cry]*

HUSBAND. Don't cry, my dear. I do love you – really.

WIFE. I'll cry if I want to cry, you beast! [*She cries harder*]

HUSBAND. [*Becoming upset*] If you don't stop that crying, I will be forced to . . . to . . .

SALESMAN. [*Puts the horse's reins into the Husband's hands*] Happiness is owning a horse.

HUSBAND. [*Suddenly happy*] . . . to . . . love you all the more, my one and only dahling. [*Puts one rein in her hand*]

WIFE. Oh, Rodney, I am sorry I ranted at you. You are a wonderful person, and I would love having a horse – just so you don't let him on the bed with us.

HUSBAND. Never, my love. Nothing shall ever come between us.

WIFE. Dahling!

HUSBAND. Dahling! [*They exit with the horse after paying*]

SALESMAN. Seeing is believing, ladies and gentlemen, and you have seen it. HAPPINESS IS OWNING A HORSE. Now, I have one left, one left. Who will bid for the last remaining one? Any bids? Anyone want a nice horse fresh off the assembly line? Environmentally safe, equipped with the latest seat belts for safety, and no extra charge for the AM-FM radio and special wheel covers. What is the first bid on this fine specimen? Who is bidding? Any bids? Ten dollars? Five? Two? Fifty cents? Anybody want to trade any baseball cards for it? [*A bruised and ragged MAN enters, obviously in great despair*]

MAN. I've had it, I've had it. Everything is over, my life is at an end, the world is against me. This is it – my final hour. [*Looks at his watch*] Make that my final two minutes. Oh, woe is me! I'm going to kill myself. It's the only way out. Yes, that's it – kill myself. [*He aims a gun at his own head*] If you have any last words, [*enter actor's real name here*], say them now. It's your last chance.

SALESMAN. [*Takes the gun from him*] You can't shoot yourself.

MAN. All right. I'll stab myself. [*Holds a knife above his chest*]

SALESMAN. [*Takes the knife*] You can't do that either. What's the matter with you?

MAN. No weapons? What can I do? Strangle myself. That's it. Choke myself to death. [*He grasps his throat and squeezes*]

SALESMAN. Stop that. Will you stop that? [*Pulls his hands away*]

MAN. [*Breaks down sobbing*] I can't even kill myself successfully.

SALESMAN. What is it? What's wrong?

MAN. What does it matter? Everybody's against me. I'm no good. I'm better off dead. Can't you understand that? I just want to die. Can't you just let me die?

SALESMAN. Maybe if we talked about it.

MAN. I can't talk about it.

SALESMAN. Well, if you don't want to . . .

MAN. All right, I'll talk about it.

SALESMAN. Yes?

MAN. I put Bumper Snickers all over my car — signs that said things like "HUG ME; I'M LONELY." My wife got angry.

SALESMAN. Why?

MAN. Because beautiful women were hugging me. I had another one that read "YOU HAVE TO KISS A LOT OF FROGS BEFORE YOU FIND A PRINCE." My wife got angry.

SALESMAN. Why?

MAN. She didn't like to see me kissing frogs. She was afraid I would get warty lips. I had another one that said "I WISH EVERY DAY WAS SATURDAY." My wife got angry.

SALESMAN. Now, how could she possibly have gotten angry over a Bumper Snicker that said that?

MAN. It wasn't what it said. It was where I put it.

SALESMAN. Where did you put it?

MAN. Over her mouth. I got tired of her being angry all the time. The final blow came when my kitty cat disappeared. I can't find her anywhere. Oh, please, let me murder myself.

SALESMAN. I can't do that.

MAN. Why not?

SALESMAN. Don't you know murder is illegal?

MAN. Oh, yeah?

SALESMAN. If I let you murder yourself, they'd send you to prison for life.

MAN. I didn't think about that.

SALESMAN. How about a horse? They make good pets.

MAN. Do they make good wives?

SALESMAN. No, but there's no charge.

MAN. I don't want any ugly old horse that will . . . [*The SALESMAN places the reins in his hands*]

SALESMAN. Happiness is owning a horse.

MAN. [*Suddenly happy*] A horse? Why, sure. Why didn't I think of that? I'd rather have a horse than a wife — uh, I mean, a kitty—any day. Oh, what a beautiful horse. What a beautiful man you are. Thank you, thank you. How can I ever thank you?

SALESMAN. [*His smile beginning to fade*] Well, you could . . .

MAN. [*Smiling more and more*] Thank you, thank you, thank you. I feel so . . . so happy! I may even take that Bumper Snicker off my wife's mouth. Come on, horse. I feel great! I've never felt so good! [*Exits with horse*]

SALESMAN. *[With still a bit of a smile, but it gradually turns into a frown as he speaks]* Well, I finally got those flea-bitten horses off my hands. Good riddance, I say. Imagine people actually falling for that “happiness is owning a horse” routine! Ridiculous. Now that I’m rid of them, I feel just . . . I feel . . . I feel awful! Yuch! I feel terrible! No horses? *[It dawns on him]* Wait a minute, mister! I’ve got to have my horse back. Mister! *[Gets in his car]* Please, please, give me back my horse! Wait for me! Wait for me! *[Speeds off after his horse]*

Interlude

[Three to five GIRLS enter and form a chorus line. Can-can music begins and GIRLS do a short can-can routine which ends with a series of high and synchronized kicks. These kicks are done with each girl’s arms on her partner’s shoulders. The chorus line turns to exit, one girl behind the other, and they continue their kicking as they exit. As they turn to form the exit line, a male DRIVER in a snappy little Volkswagen enters, moving at an energetic pace, honking the small toy-like horn happily and confidently. The Bumper Snicker reads: “I’M PROUD TO BE A KICKER.” The VW circles the outer perimeter of the acting area, stopping at strategic points to show audience the Bumper Snicker. The VW moves Center Stage where the DRIVER does three high can-can kicks and exits doing the same kicks]

Scene 4

[The POLICEMAN directs traffic. A RIDER on a horse enters (perhaps the last man to buy the Salesman’s horse in Scene 3). The POLICEMAN waves him to a stop]

POLICEMAN. Hold it right there, mister. Horses are not allowed on public streets.

RIDER. Horse? What horse?

POLICEMAN. That horse. The one you’re riding.

RIDER. Oh, sir, this isn’t a horse.

POLICEMAN. Isn’t a horse?

RIDER. No, sir. You must mean someone else.

POLICEMAN. I mean you, and don’t tell me that is not a horse.

RIDER. This is not a horse.

POLICEMAN. I told you not to say that. I know a horse when I see one.

RIDER. Really? Describe a horse.

POLICEMAN. What?

RIDER. Describe a horse.

POLICEMAN. *[To audience]* Maybe I had better humor him (her). *[To the rider]* They look very much like that . . . thing . . . you're riding.

RIDER. No kidding?

POLICEMAN. They have a head with two big ears.

RIDER. Have you ever noticed how big your ears are?

POLICEMAN. My ears? What have my ears got to do with this?

RIDER. You were describing a horse.

POLICEMAN. Huh? Oh, yeah. Well, it has four legs and a long tail — just like that . . . thing . . . you're riding.

RIDER. What color are they?

POLICEMAN. Well, let me see. They come in several colors — brown, white What am I doing wasting my time describing a horse when you're sitting on one?

RIDER. This is not a horse.

POLICEMAN. If that is not a horse, then what is it?

RIDER. I'll tell you. It's an . . . *[turns so the audience can read the Bumper Snicker:]*

BOTH. "OATSMOBILE!"

RIDER. Come on, Betsy. Let's go. *[Exit]*

POLICEMAN. *[Slow burn]* Well, I . . . *[Exits shaking his head]*
Oatsmobile! I wish they'd transfer me to something easy like the S.W.A.T. squadron.

Interlude

[A very pretty GIRL drives in. A BOY waves at her and she stops]

GIRL. *[As she points to her Bumper Snicker]* I'm his because "HE APPRECIATES MY BRAINS."

BOY. *[Winks at audience]* Su-u-u-ure I do. *[They drive off]*

Scene 5

[The WHITE CAR (same as first Interlude) enters and stalls at the intersection]

WHITE CAR DRIVER. Not again! Always breaking down when I'm in a hurry. The gasoline gauge reads empty. Out of gas. Now what? I sure don't feel like pushing again.

BLACK CAR DRIVER. *[Enters and pulls up behind the White Car. This Driver is "real cool"]* Hey, man, what's happenin'? You got the blues?

WHITE CAR DRIVER. Out of gas.

BLACK CAR DRIVER. Too dry in the can, eh, man? Well, lucky you, I got enough for both of us. I'll give you a gentle nudge with my Black Beauty here.

WHITE CAR DRIVER. Thanks, I needed that.

BLACK CAR DRIVER. Easy does it, man. Here we go. [*To audience as he pushes White Car off*] You know what this is, don't you, man? [*Shows his Bumper Snicker:*] "BLACK POWER," baby! [*Alternate:* "A LITTLE HELP FROM MY FRIENDS"]

Interlude

[*A CAR drives across the stage in slow motion with another behind it angrily honking for him to speed up*]

SLOW DRIVER. Honking will get you nowhere.

HONKER. Well, speed up, will you?

SLOW DRIVER. No way. I have a new motto. [*Points to his Bumper Snicker:*] "CONSERVE ENERGY. MOVE SLOW!" [*They finally exit*]

Scene 6

[*A CAR crosses the stage from Right to Left with a Bumper Snicker that reads "SMILE." The DRIVER wears a yellow smiling face decal covering his total face*]

SMILER ONE. Smile!

SMILER TWO. [*Crossing Left to Right with the same face decal and Bumper Snicker*] Smile!

OFFSTAGE VOICES. SMI-I-I-I-ILE! [*The OFFSTAGE VOICES continue to yell "SMILE!" in varying volumes, pitches, and vocal qualities. They sound like a machine gun firing*]

SMILER THREE. [*Enters, grinning broadly. He reads his Bumper Snicker as he points to it:*] "WHEN YOU SMILE, THE WHOLE WORLD SMILES!" [*He holds up a globe of the world with the yellow happy face on it. He exits*]

SMILER FOUR. [*Drives in exhausted and depressed*] Oh, what a day! What a day! Everything went wrong. My alarm didn't go off, but I woke up anyway. That was bad enough. On my way down the elevator, I got my nose stuck in the door. I accidentally threw out my lunch and ate the garbage. I tried to whistle a happy tune, but my pucker got stuck. I did my homework for science class for the first time this year only to discover that we didn't have any homework this time. I accidentally bumped my behind on the principal's paddle this morning. And I had to stay after school to clean up the mess I made

when I fell down the stairs trying to make off with Gloria's lunch tray. Bad day. Bad, bad day.

SMILER ONE. *[Enters. To Smiler Four]* Hi, *[enter Smiler Four's name here]*. How's it going?

SMILER FOUR. *[Groans]* Ohhhh!

SMILER ONE. Sorry I asked. *[Drives off]*

SMILER TWO. *[Enters]* 'Lo, *[his name]*. What's up?

SMILER FOUR. *[Groans]* Ohhhh!

SMILER TWO. Too bad, pal. *[Exit]*

SMILER THREE. *[Enters]* Afternoon, *[his name]*. Are you . . .?

SMILER FOUR. Don't ask. *[Shows his Bumper Snicker to the audience:]* "SMILE AT ME – I'VE HAD A HARD DAY."

SMILER THREE. Oh. *[Forces a weak smile and drives off]*

SMILER FOUR. Well, that helped – a little. *[Drives off slowly]*

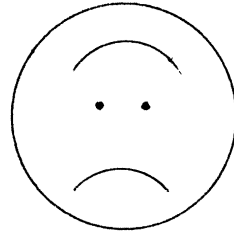
[SMILER ONE drives in carrying a paper-drawn frown]

SMILER TWO. *[Drives by with a sullen look on his face]* What a rotten day!

SMILER ONE. You need a smile.

SMILER TWO. *[Looks at the paper frown]* That isn't a smile. That's a frown. *[SMILER ONE turns the paper upside down; the frown becomes a smile]* Say, it is a smile! I feel better – much better. Thanks. Thanks a lot.

SMILER ONE. *[Shows Bumper Snicker:]* "A SMILE ISN'T A SMILE UNTIL YOU GIVE IT TO SOMEONE."



[A WOMAN enters weeping and carrying a huge handkerchief from which she wrings water from time to time. She cries bigger and bigger until she is howling. POLICEMAN enters and sees her. He speaks into the two-way radio he is carrying]

POLICEMAN. Headquarters, this is Adam-thirteen. We've got a crying woman on the freeway. Will you send an Emergency Smile Vehicle to this location immediately!

RADIO. *[Or someone backstage with hands cupped over mouth]* Roger, Adam-thirteen. Emergency Smile Vehicle on its way.

[There is a siren as the Vehicle enters. It has a Bumper Snicker which reads: "IF YOU SEE SOMEONE WITHOUT A SMILE, GIVE HIM ONE OF YOURS"]

SMILE MAN. *[Emerging from Vehicle]* Pardon me, miss. I'm a Smile-a-medic. Perhaps I can help. *[She cries]* Hmmmm. This calls for

some special Smile-a-medic magic. [*He mumbles some magic words and pulls a paper smile from mid-air*] Hold this, miss. [*She blows her nose and cries louder*] Oh. Perhaps a different type of smile. [*He produces another smile*] Here we have a more fashionable smile. It goes well with your dress. [*She screams louder*] This has gone from serious to critical. This may be my last chance to save her life. [*More magic. A bigger smile*] How about this? [*No reply*] I've got to work fast. She can't control her own functions now. [*Quickly he puts some tape on the smile and tapes it to her face. Initially, she screams, but gradually her screams give way to sobs, then to heavy breathing*] Better. Much better. I believe I've stopped the crying. This smile transfusion is helping. She seems stable. [*She begins to giggle*] Now she's coming out of it. [*She laughs*] Better. Much better. [*She howls with laughter*] Thank goodness. She's saved.

WOMAN. Oh, thank you, sir, thank you. Thank you, thank you, thank you.

SMILE MAN. That's quite all right. It was in the line of duty. Our motto is . . . [*pointing to his Bumper Snicker:*] "IF YOU SEE SOME - ONE WITHOUT A SMILE, GIVE HIM ONE OF YOURS."

WOMAN. But I feel so obligated to you. I must thank you a million times.

SMILE MAN. It's not necessary — really.

WOMAN. It IS necessary — really. A million thanks. Thank you . . .

SMILE MAN. [*Getting into his Vehicle*] I've got to be going. Others may need my services. [*He drives off*]

WOMAN. [*Running after him*] Thank you, thank you . . . [*counting on her fingers*] How many is a million? [*We hear her calling "Thank you, thank you, thank you . . ." as she exits and disappears in the distance*]

SMILER THREE. [*Drives in looking for Driver Four, who has just entered from the opposite direction*] Oh, [*Smiler Four's name*], I'm glad I found you. I have a present for you. [*Hands him a gift-wrapped package*]

SMILER FOUR. A present? What a surprise. What is it? I can't wait to find out. If I can just get it open. You did a good wrapping job.

SMILER THREE. Yeah, I guess I did.

SMILER FOUR. [*Gets present open*] Oh, [*Smiler Five's name*], how can I ever thank you? It's just what I've always wanted. [*Holds up a paper smile*] A smile. It's lovely. But tell me, why did you get it for me? This isn't my birthday or anything, is it?

SMILER THREE. No. I saw a Bumper Snicker.

SMILER FOUR. What did it say?