

TRICK ROSES

Written by

Nick Biddle & Vice Boberski

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nbiddle@chapman.edu
boberski@chapman.edu

Synopsis:

BONZO (27), a clown, introduces CLAIRE (27), a mime, to his parents BONZO, SR. (67), and POPPY (67), both clowns. Poppy is dismayed that her son couldn't have married within the clown community and that she has no idea how to communicate with her soon-to-be daughter-in-law but comes to find that she prefers Claire's peace and quiet to Bonzo, Sr.'s incessant joking and reminiscing.

Cast Breakdown:

BONZO: 27, patient, cares deeply about Claire.

CLAIRE: 27, silent, insecure.

BONZO, SR.: 67, lighthearted, nostalgic, talks too much.

POPPY: 67, crotchety, resistant to change.

Page Count: 7

Genre: Comedy/Drama

Location Breakdown:

INT. LIVING ROOM – DAY

INT. DINING ROOM – NIGHT

INT. BEDROOM – NIGHT

Budget: \$2,500

INT. DINING ROOM - EVENING

A cozy room. On the table, a vase of roses. POPPY and BONZO SR. (both 65), in full clown makeup, set out plates and silverware. When they walk, their huge shoes SQUEAK like little horns.

POPPY

I just don't understand why he
couldn't find himself a nice clown
girl.

BONZO SR.

He's 27! He's looked! There are no
nice clown girls.

Poppy shoots a look at Bonzo Sr. as he laughs and HONKS a bicycle horn. Poppy tends to the flowers in the vase. They squirt water when she squeezes them, which is totally normal.

BONZO SR. (CONT'D)

Come on, just try to keep an open
mime -- sorry, mind!

He HONKS his horn again.

POPPY

Do you see me laughing?

Bonzo Sr. covers his eyes.

BONZO SR.

No.

He uncovers them. Poppy is staring at him, not amused.

BONZO SR. (CONT'D)

Come on, Poppy...

Poppy shoots him a look. *He shouldn't push this.*

The doorbell RINGS. Then, it FARTS. Then, the sound of GLASS SHATTERING and a CAT YELPING. Poppy and Bonzo Sr. move towards the sound.

BONZO SR. (CONT'D)

That must be them!

INT. ENTRANCE HALL - EVENING

Poppy and Bonzo Sr. open the door, revealing BONZO (27) and CLAIRE (26). Bonzo is in full clown attire, matching his parents.

Claire's face is painted black-and-white. She's a mime and never speaks, only communicates in exaggerated gestures.

BONZO SR.

Bonzo! Give this old clown a hug!

They hug.

BONZO SR. (CONT'D)

Claire!

She gives a big wave and mimes hugging him. Bonzo pulls out a packet of gum.

BONZO SR. (CONT'D)

Gum, my dear?

Claire reaches in to take a piece, but it SHOCKS her.

BONZO SR. (CONT'D)

Shocking!

Everybody laughs but Poppy, who looks on in dismay.

BONZO

We brought you guys something.

Claire attempts to pull something from behind her back, but it gets 'stuck.' She tugs hard, eventually pulling out a bouquet of roses. She smiles.

Bonzo Sr. guffaws. Claire hands the flowers to Poppy, who takes them with hesitation. Bonzo Sr. leads everyone down the hall, but Poppy remains. She squeezes the flowers, but no water comes out.

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Everyone sits around the table. In front of them are cream pies. A jazzy rendition of "Entrance of the Gladiators" PLAYS.

BONZO SR.

Okay, okay, so there I stood.

Bonzo Sr. has a fork in his hand. On top of it is a red ball, balanced neatly.

BONZO SR. (CONT'D)

And I start cycling. I'm doing my act -- juggling -- you know.

BONZO
How many balls?

BONZO SR.
Ten. More than the average clown
ever sees.

Bonzo Sr. HONKS his horn. Poppy rolls her eyes.

POPPY
I can't stand your father much
longer. He won't stop talking about
rings gone by.

BONZO SR.
What can I say? Our boy's got big
shoes to fill!

Bonzo Sr. raises his large-shoed feet above the table and
HONKS his horn. Poppy turns to Claire.

POPPY
Is the food all right?

Claire nods and rubs her stomach exaggeratedly.

POPPY (CONT'D)
I can't tell if she's being
sarcastic.

BONZO
Ma.

POPPY
What? I can't tell these things.

Bonzo Sr. lets the fork fall, the ball bouncing across the
table. He pulls out a slide whistle and PLAYS it sadly. The
table gets quiet. Forks SCRAPE pie tin. Bonzo Sr clears his
throat.

BONZO SR.
So, um, Claire, Bonzo told me you
were doing work all the way in
Paris!

Claire smiles. She nods, and makes a tower with her hands.
She walks her fingers around the tower until they meet with
another set of fingers, miming out the act of miming.

Poppy shakes her head. Bonzo Sr studies her movements,
clearly confused.

BONZO
 She just finished a month in Paris
 doing gig work. It went really
 well.

Claire nods.

POPPY
 How can you figure this stuff out?

BONZO
 Ma, she can hear you!

POPPY
 I'm just asking! Can't I ask?
 Nobody listens to me.

BONZO SR.
 Do you get much work in the US?

Claire pantomimes a salute before marching and pretending to cry. She then acts like she's trapped in a box and begins beaming again.

BONZO
 She performed at a military base
 across town the other day--

Poppy stands harshly. She picks up her untouched pie and leaves. Claire's mime motions slow to a stop.

BONZO SR.
 Ahem! You know, I heard the army's
 always looking for land mimes.

He HONKS his horn, but no one laughs. After a moment, he awkwardly stands up and follows Poppy, SQUEAKING as he walks.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Bonzo walks Claire into a guest room.

BONZO
 This is you.

Claire smiles, and holds her hand to her chest. *Thank you.*
 She sets a her bags down.

BONZO (CONT'D)
 I'm down the hall. My mom will be
 in with sheets, I'm gonna unpack.

Claire nods, and they hug. Bonzo leaves the room. Claire walks around the room, studying photos.

Muffled voices start to rise from another room.

POPPY (O.S.)
Not under this big top!

BONZO SR. (O.S.)
I'm a professional. I've been doing
this since I was born! So, if you
could please--

POPPY (O.S.)
Put it down, old man!

Claire looks towards the conversation with concern.

BONZO SR. (O.S.)
Poppy, hey!

POPPY (O.S.)
Some things you can't do anymore!
It happens! You're old. You -- no,
I do not want gum; are you
listening to me?

BONZO SR. (O.S.)
Shocking!

POPPY (O.S.)
You're impossible. You know what?
Do what you want, but do it
outside, so I can't hear you
yelling for help.

BONZO SR. (O.S.)
Hey, Poppy, wait--

Poppy walks into the room, arms full of sheets. She jumps.

POPPY
Ayy!

Claire looks at her, concerned.

POPPY (CONT'D)
I didn't know you were in here.

She moves past Claire and sets down the sheets. Silence.

POPPY (CONT'D)
Did you hear all that?

Claire nods. Poppy sighs. She begins to make the bed.

POPPY (CONT'D)

Senior keeps trying to take the unicycle for a spin. I've been telling him he's going to break a hip. Does he listen to me? No. No one listens to Poppy.

Poppy looks to Claire, who has been watching her the whole time, listening intently. Poppy sighs.

POPPY (CONT'D)

He just never takes anything seriously. It's impossible to have a straight conversation with him.

She smiles slightly.

POPPY (CONT'D)

Clowns, huh?

Claire smiles. Poppy finishes making the bed and stands in silence.

POPPY (CONT'D)

You know... My uncle was a mime. He left for Paris when we were young -- without a word.

Claire rests a hand on her shoulder. From outside the room a slide whistle SOUNDS, followed by a loud CRASH. Poppy sighs.

POPPY (CONT'D)

Do you mind if I just sit here for a minute?

Claire nods her head. Poppy sits on the bed, closing her eyes.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Bonzo walks into the room.

BONZO

Hey Claire-

Claire is sitting in a chair in the corner of the room, reading. On the bed, Poppy lies peacefully. Claire smiles at Bonzo.

BONZO (CONT'D)

Hey... Ma.

Poppy opens her eyes and smiles at Bonzo. She checks her watch.

POPPY

Oh! I should check on your father.
He's been out for over an hour.

She stands quickly.

BONZO

I just saw him. He had a big red
bump on his head, nothing too bad.

Poppy rolls her eyes.

POPPY

I'll find his mallet to hammer it
down.

She walks to the door but pauses.

After a moment, she turns to Claire, smiles, and holds her hand to her chest. *Thank you.*

Bonzo stares after her as she leaves.

BONZO

I haven't seen her that calm in
years...

He turns to Claire.

BONZO (CONT'D)

What did you do?

Claire just smiles, sits back, and opens her book.

THE END