

## Characters

- Samson (the Great) (M/F) - A professional boxer. Has boxing gloves and wears boxing shorts beneath a colorful robe.
- Coach (M/F) - Samson's boxing coach. Wears workout clothes maybe with the name Samson on a jacket.
- Announcer (M/F) - an offstage voice.

## Scene 1 – Boxing Ring

**(The audience sees only one corner of a boxing ring. The actual ring is not necessary and can be implied. About one third of the distance to the backstage side is a simple chair that faces toward the downstage side corner. Next to the chair is a stool. Near the stool is a towel and bucket with a sponge, some colored tape, and gauze inside. The audience should get the impression that they are looking at one corner of a boxing ring. There is no actual fighting on stage. At rise, Samson stands in a colorful robe in the corner and throws practice punches to the air. Coach empties the bucket of the tape, the sponge, and the gauze then stands beside Sam. )**

**Coach:** How ya feelin' Sam? How ya feelin'?

**Sam:** Good, Coach, I'm feelin real good.

**Coach:** Good, good. Now I want you to remember what we talked about, OK? What we been practicin' on.

**Sam:** Yeah, Coach. I got it. Always use a fork to eat pasta.

**Coach:** No, not that. What we been workin' on at the gym. Remember? **(illustrates)** I want you to stay down low, keep your arms in tight. Punch short but hard. Stay light on your feet. You got it?

**Sam:** **(tries to copy Coach)** Stay low! Arms tight! Punch low! You want me to remember all that? I thought you wanted me to remember to win.

**Coach:** Well, *that* would be a new strategy, wouldn't it?

**Sam:** Don't you worry, Coach. Today is the day. I can feel it. **(punches in the air)** Bam! Boom! Bing! He'll be down and done before breakfast.

**Coach:** It's the afternoon, Sam.

**Sam:** Did I have breakfast?

**Coach:** Half a dozen eggs, a wheelbarrow full of bacon, enough pancakes to choke an elephant, and more biscuits than I care to count.

**Sam:** You're making me hungry.

**Announcer:** **(as if over a public address system)** Ladies and Gentleman, welcome to the Adonis Arena and this Eastern Slugging Association's Heavyweight Boxing

Match. You've been waiting for this event while you stuffed yourself with overpriced burgers and watered down beer but now the moment has come. It's showtime!

In this corner, from somewhere no one has ever heard of, with a record of five wins and thirty losses, the fighter with the heart of gold wearing white trunks - the Dancing Dimwit, Samson the Great!

**(SFX. audience sounds are heard and Sam bounces up and down with arms in the air)**

And in this corner, from beautiful downtown suburbia in a city whose name no one can remember, in a part of the world where the beautiful people dwell, seen here in the ring for the first time in a pair of sparkling gold shorts and flashing neon trim - the Battling Buffalo, Luscious Lyle.

**(Sam and Coach look offstage toward the hidden other corner of the ring.)**

**Sam:** Coach, who is this guy? I've never seen him before.

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**Coach:** Don't know. Some new guy.

**Sam:** Look at him. He looks ridiculous with his flashing shorts and sparkly robe.

**Coach:** And that hair! I haven't seen a hairdo like that since...

**Sam:** Since you had hair like that?

**Coach:** Yeah. He looks like a bad eighties rocker.

**Sam:** **(shouting toward offstage)** Disco is dead, man!

**Coach:** **(turns Sam to face him)** OK! Don't get cocky and remember what I taught you, you got it?

**Sam:** Yeah, Coach, I got it.

**(SFX. The bell for Round 1 rings)**

**Coach:** OK, Tiger! Go get him!

**(Coach heads to the stool outside the ring while Sam exits toward the center of the ring (backstage) punching in the air as he goes.)**

**Sam:** Disco is dead, man!

**Coach:** **(watches the fight and imitates as he talks)** That's it, Sam. Stay low, stay low... Keep your arms in tight... keep moving... look for the opening... that's it... good dodge... don't let your guard down... no, Sam, don't turn... stay in front... he's distracting you with his left jab, watch the right... no, the right, the right... keep your arms in tight... watch for the right... Ohhh! **(to himself)** That was a tough hit. **(to Sam)** Shake it off, Sam! Just shake it off.

**(SFX. The bell rings. Sam stumbles back toward Coach who helps him to his seat and rubs him down with the sponge and the towel.)**

**Sam:** I got hit, Coach.

**Coach:** Yeah, I noticed.

**Sam:** Coach, I can't see him. I can't see his face. It's all that hair. It's like trying to knockout a mop.

**Coach:** Then go for the midsection. Keep punchin' him right in the gut until he bends over in pain and his chin sticks out from under that mess of greasy hair then pop him with an uppercut with all you've got. He'll go sailing away like the Kitty Hawk.

**Sam:** Which one?

**Coach:** Huh?

**Sam:** Will he sail away like a kitty or a hawk?

**Coach:** Never mind.

**(SFX. The bell for Round 2 rings.)**

**Coach:** Alright. You know what to do.

**Sam:** **(walking and punching toward the offstage corner)** Got it! I'm gonna make him fly like a cat with wings. **(exits)**

**Coach:** **(watching the fight)** OK, Sam... stay light on your feet... stay focused... that's it... dodge... and dodge... and duck... keep on your target... arms tight... Yes! A punch to the gut... stay on him... take the shot... Bam! Good one! The rock star is stumbling... don't let him get a swing in... good block now take the opening... Another good hit... that's it, he's leaning forward... look for it... look for it... look for it... and wham!.. Oh, he's going down... finish him... finish...

**(SFX. The bell rings. Sam returns to his corner punching the air then sits. Coach works him again.)**

**Sam:** Did you see that, Coach? Did you see that?

**Coach:** Yeah, I saw it.

**Sam:** I did just like you said.

**Coach:** You done good, Sam. Only, this time he's gonna know you're coming. He'll be guarding in tight so I want you to pound him in the middle then fake with a left like you was trying to do the same thing as before but then snap around and take him out with your right. You got that?

**Sam:** Yeah, yeah. I think so, pound middle, fake left, pop right.

**Coach:** That's it. You got it. This is your fight, slugger. We're going to be celebratin' tonight.

**(SFX. The bell for Round 3 rings.)**

**Sam:** **(gets up and heads toward the other corner)** That's right baby! Open the Spam cause here comes Sam! **(whispers)** pound left, fake right... or was it pop up and pound right... or, pound cake and fake pop... whatever! **(exits)**

**Coach:** **(watching the fight)** Ok, now Sam, stay in control... you got this... keep him in front of you... don't let him get around you... he's stalling... he's afraid of you... Stay in control... focus on the target... stay in tight... Sam, don't drop your guard... keep your hands up... Sam, pay attention... what's wrong with you?.. What's that guy saying to you?.. He's distracting you... Sam... Sam... It's a trick... Sam, watch out for the... **(Sam is hit)** Oh!.. right in the kisser... Sam, you're disoriented, focus!.. Sam, look at your opponent... What's he doing?.. Parting his hair?.. Sam... take him out... Sam! What are you doing?.. Get off the ropes...

**(SFX. The bell rings. Sam limps toward his corner holding his face and wincing. He sits and tightly closes his eyes.)**

**Sam:** (pleading) Coach, cut me, cut me! I can't see. I'm bleeding!

**Coach:** You're not bleeding.

**Sam:** But my eyes! I can't see!

**Coach:** You can't see because you have your eyes closed. Open your eyes and stop fooling around. The only thing that's cut is your glove. Now hold still while I fix it.

(Coach puts a strip of colored tape on Sam's glove.)

**Sam:** I ain't fooling around. He hit me. He hit me real good.

**Coach:** And then you just stood there because you wanted to watch the little birdies fly around your head, right?

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**Sam:** (opens eyes) I can't go back in there. I can't. Don't send me back in there. I quit. I wanna go home.

**Coach:** What is the matter with you? You can't just quit now. You had him until he decided he needed to fix his hair-do.

**Sam:** (looks down) No, Coach, I can't do it.

**Coach:** (takes Sam by the shoulders) Get a hold of yourself. Alright now. What did you see?

**Sam:** (looks up slowly) I saw his face, Coach. I saw it.

**Coach:** So what? You seen a thousand ugly mugs in this ring. What's one face?

**Sam:** I know who he is. I know him. He's... he's... (whispering) Baffo the Clown!

**Coach:** Who did you say?

**Sam:** (looks about) He's Baffo the Clown.

**Coach:** Wait, what? That guy over there with the locks and the flashing underwear was once Baffo the Clown? The same skinny little Baffo the Clown who had his own kids' show? The same little guy who used to sing that song...

**Sam:** **(singing)** Here by the rainbow, we say hello, and have a laugh-o, with Baffo the Clown.

**Coach:** Yeah, that's it. But that guy can't be him. He's too big.

**Sam:** He left the show and started working out.

**Coach:** OK, so what? He used to be an ugly clown who couldn't sing. What's he to you? You afraid of clowns?

**Sam:** I'm afraid of *that* clown!

**Coach:** Why?

**Sam:** Because I uh... I uh... I was, uh, on that show too.

**Coach:** Oh you were one of those kids on the show?

**Sam:** No. I, uh... Well, you, uh, ever heard of Sammy the Squirrel?

**Coach:** Oh , yeah I remember him. He was some little guy dressed up in a little squirrel outfit. He was so funny. He used to come out and steal acorns from Baffo and then go running off. Yeah, he was... **(stares at Sam)** Sammy the Squirrel? You? You were Sammy the Squirrel?

**Sam:** Yeah. I've been workin' out since then too.

**Coach:** 'll say! But, I still don't get it.

**Sam:** **(whimpers)** He was mean, Coach. He was mean to those little kids. He used to tape up their faces and say he was making clowns out of them. When the camera was off he would call them bad names. After the show he would pick on me too. He once put a spider in my lunchbox. Now I'm afraid of spiders... and clowns! I can't face him again.

**Coach:** *Now* I understand what's going on. Listen, Sam, you gotta go back in there. He's the reason you haven't been able to win any fights. You've been running away from that kids' show ever since. That guy over there is the reason. If you're ever going to be something, *someone*, you've got to defeat this guy. You can't keep

running away. You've got to face your fear and take it head on. This is your one chance. Don't run away from it now.

**Sam:** Coach, you always been so good to me and you always tell me good advice but I don't think I can do it.

**Coach:** Listen, Sam. I want you to take a deep breath and then I want you to think. Think back on your days in the show. There must be something that Baffo the clown feared.

**Sam:** No, no.

**Coach:** OK, then. What was the most important thing to him?

**Sam:** That's easy. It was always how he looked. He was always messing with the hair, polishin' the shoes, touchin' up the clown make-up.

**Coach:** That's it, then. You get in there and get him a little dirty. Mess him up a little. Make him look like a fool and he'll crumble like a stale cookie. You can do that, can't ya?

**Sam:** Yeah, OK, Coach. I'll do my best.

**(SFX. The bell for Round 4 rings.)**

**Sam:** **(sort of singing as he moves into the ring)** Here by the rainbow, I say goodbye, now have a good cry, with Baffo the Clown. **(exits)**

**Coach:** Ok, Sam. Stay focused... You can do this... That's good... Stay on your feet... Stay light... Look for an opening... Block... Keep up your guard... And... **(punch)** Oh... That's OK, Sam... It's nothing... That stupid little clown can't hurt you... Stay in there... **(to himself)** He's looking scared... **(to Sam)** Sam, you remember the spider in the lunchbox, huh? Remember that?.. Didn't that make you mad? I bet it did. I bet it made you real mad!.. Think back on how mad that made you... That's it! I see it. You got that anger in you... Now go for the... **(punch)** Oh! You got a good one in that time, Sammy. Now, go for the K.O. Take him down! Wait! What are you doing? You're supposed to be boxing! **(to himself)** What the heck is he doing?.. He's got the clown pinned against the ropes! The ref is going nuts! **(to Sam)** No, Sam! Don't take off your gloves. You could be disqualified. **(to himself)** What's he doing now?.. He's taking that clown's long hair and... braiding it! Now he's taking the tape from the corner and taping him up like... like a clown! **(heads toward Sam and offstage)** No, no, no. I didn't mean like that. Stop! This is a fighting ring not a beauty parlor.



**(SFX. The bell rings madly. A punching sound is heard. Coach reappears on stage and heads slowly toward his corner while holding his face in pain. Sam enters a moment afterward.)**

**Sam:** Coach, Coach, I'm sorry. I'm really sorry.

**Coach:** What did you do that for?

**Sam:** You was goin' to make me fight and I don't want to fight anymore.

**(Sam helps Coach to the corner, sits him down in the chair, then rubs him down with the sponge and the towel.)**

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**Sam:** You was right, Coach. He was what I've been fighting against all these years and now I've defeated him. Look at him now. **(points to the other corner)** He's a wreck. I made him look silly and now he's getting a taste of his own medicine.

**Coach:** He does look pretty funny with that tape all over him and the audience is having a good chuckle too.

**Sam:** I'm done fighting, Coach.

**Coach:** OK, OK, but what are you going to do now?

**Sam:** I don't know. Maybe I could have my own show. I could be something like a... a singing purple dinosaur or something. **(starts singing a barney song)**

**Coach:** Who would want to see that? C'mon. Let's get out of here.

**(Sam helps Coach walk offstage away from the ring.)**

**Coach:** **(as they walk away)** Why don't you just be Sammy the Squirrel again? All you would need is a moose to round out the pair.

**Sam:** A squirrel and a moose? What an odd pair. Who would want to see that? Hey Coach! You could be the moose, What do you say?

**Coach:** No thanks, Sam.

**(They exit.)**

**Curtain**