

Resource 2.5: The Land of Smilealot (1 of 4)

By Abigail Barragry

Characters

King Laughaloud

The traveller

Old man farmer

Sandwich girl

Guest house owner

Soldiers

Other hotel guest/s

Inhabitants of Smilealot

Props

Hat and bag for the traveller

Crown for the king

Hat for the farmer

Apron for the sandwich girl

Tie for the guest-house owner

Soldiers could have items to mark their character ie. wrist bands, ribbons, plastic shields, hats. Let them be fanciful and creative.

Once upon a time, there was a land where everyone was always happy. They used to smile all day long, laugh all week long and be friendly all year long.

The King of Smilealot, King Laughaloud, made sure that all was fair and equal in the land. Everything was shared between the people and they all made sure that their neighbours always had enough. If one farmer's crops weren't growing, the farmer down the road would bring him some of his, so no one was ever hungry or sad in Smilealot.

One day, a traveller arrived from a place far away. This traveller had had a long journey and came from a place quite different to Smilealot. Where he was from, it was always dark and no one shared anything. Nobody smiled, and nobody had any friends because they just cared about themselves. And so the traveller was mean and unhappy, and always had a frown on his face.

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The people of Smilealot had never seen a face like his. His smile was... upside down! And his shoulders were hunched as if he was in pain.

‘Hello friend!’ shouted an old man, as the traveller passed by his farm.

‘Humph,’ grunted the traveller, without returning the farmer’s wave or smile.

The old farmer had never heard this ‘humph’ sound before, and wondered if the traveller was sick.

‘Would you like some water?’ asked the farmer kindly.

‘Go away!’ replied the traveller.

The old man was startled and began to feel something he’d never felt before. His insides felt like he’d been hit in the stomach, and his mouth started to turn down! He touched his face, but his smile went all the way upside-down, just like the traveller’s. The farmer felt... not happy anymore.

The traveller arrived in the town centre and went into the bakery to buy something to eat.

‘Good day!’ said the cheerful young girl who worked there.

‘Is it?’ asked the traveller. ‘Gimme a ham sandwich, and make it quick.’ He grimaced.

The girl had only ever been greeted with smiles and please and thank-yous. She froze, not sure what to do.

‘I said make it quick, you silly girl!’ barked the traveller

The girl turned to the sandwich counter quick-smart, and felt something funny in her chest. It felt like a knot, moving higher and higher up to her neck and into her throat. As she placed the ham onto the bread, she felt something wet on her cheek. She was crying! She had never cried out of sadness before, and this knot in her throat was hurting.

She handed the traveller the sandwich.

‘£3 please, sir,’ she said.

Without as much as a thank-you, the traveller slammed the money down, took the sandwich and left. The girl felt very... not happy anymore!

Finally, the traveller arrived at a guest house. There was a young man at the desk, laughing and chatting with some of the other hotel guests.

‘Oi!’ said the traveller. ‘Can you stop chatting? I want a room!’

The man behind the desk and the guests all fell silent and turned to look where the loud, angry voice had come from. They saw a hunched-over man with an upside down smile and squinty eyes. They’d never seen anyone like him before.

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‘Can I help you, sir?’ said the receptionist.

‘Are you deaf?’ replied the traveller. ‘I said I want a room!’ He glared at the man in front of him.

The receptionist saw the traveller’s face. It felt like butterflies were dancing in his stomach, but not in the good way like when he was excited about going to a party. This was a bad feeling.

He handed over the key to Room number 4 and said ‘I hope the room’s OK for you. Can I help you with your bags?’

But the traveller didn’t answer, he just picked up his bags and rudely turned his back on the kind receptionist.

Now, since the traveller had arrived, changes were happening in Smilealot. The farmer, the sandwich girl and the receptionist all went home with upside down smiles. And you know what happened? Anyone who saw them also caught the upside down smile until, by evening, half of Smilealot were frowning and feeling very unhappy. In fact, they were feeling....sad.

Finally, King Laughalot heard what was going on. He had seen this happen before, many years ago, and knew just what to do. He sent for his army of smiling soldiers.

‘Soldiers,’ he instructed, ‘the only way to turn the frowns back the other way is by giving many, many smiles! It could take three, four, or even five smiles to make someone happy again, but you must not give up! Go and find all the upside down mouths and shower them with smiles and joy!’

The soldiers marched from house to house, spreading smiles. And by the time they left, each person was feeling happy again! The plan was working.

The last place they came to was the guest house, where the traveller was staying. They knocked on the door to his room. The traveller opened the door, frowning more than ever.

‘What do you want?’ The traveller shouted.

‘We’ve come to bring you smiles, from the King himself!’ called the smiling soldiers.

The traveller screwed up his face. ‘I don’t need smiles. Smiles are for fools!’

‘But you’ve spread sadness throughout the kingdom,’ the soldier replied.

‘How can I do that? I’m just one man!’ he said.

‘Mr Traveller, it takes just one frown to pass round a whole town of people. We want to help you to smile again.’

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When the traveller heard those words, he stopped. They wanted to help him? No one had ever wanted to help him before. He felt something shift in his chest, like a weight being lifted.

'You want to help me?' He whispered.

'Of course!' replied the soldiers. 'You are our fellow man, and our friend!'

At that, more of the weight shifted. He had never been anyone's friend before.

Suddenly the traveller felt tears come into his eyes. But these tears were not like his usual tears of sadness, they were tears of... joy! All at once, his mouth turned upwards and the frown turned into a great big smile!

'Hooray!' Shouted the soldiers as they came together to give the traveller a big hug.

'I feel... happy!' said the traveller. 'Oh, thank you soldiers! It's so much nicer with my face in a smile!'

And the traveller decided to stay in Smilealot and make it his home. There he spent the rest of his days, sharing and spreading smiles. And you know what? He lived *happily* ever after.

The end.