

*The Happets
in the Kingdom of the Sun*

(SCRIPT)

Author: **LOLA BECCARIA**

SCENE 1.

Outdoors. Daytime. Happets' Park.

The Happets are playing basketball in the park, while Mumu is on a swing. There are two teams: Rita & Milo, vs Olga & Alfred, and Talalo plays the referee, with a whistle in his beak. Talalo blows the whistle at Rita, who keeps ignoring the rules of the game. The first scene shows them playing, and the first close-up shows Talalo lifting his wing and blowing the whistle at Rita, while scolding her with many a tweet.

Milo serves a pass to Rita.

_____ Take (1.) _____

RITA (00.01 a 00.22)

Mine! Here, here! Wow, what a pass! There goes! I'm the best!

MILO

Pass it to me! Hey! That's good! Yeah, yeah! Here, here Rita!

ALFRED

Mine, mine, mine! Come on, Olga, grab it!

OLGA

I'm here! Here, Alfred, here! Quick, come on!

RITA:

Rita approaches up the right-hand side and draws close to the basket...

MILO:

Pass it to me, Rita..

TALALO

Tweet, tweet, tweet!

Rita keeps on dribbling as she approaches the basket.

MILO:

Come on Rita, don't be a ball-hog, pass it to me...

RITA:

Rita prepares to make a shot to go down in history...

Rita takes a shot and the ball gets stuck between the board and the basket.

ALFRED:

No doubt she's made history.

MILO:

See that, Rita! You should have passed me the ball. This happens when you don't take the team into account.

OLGA:

So what do we do now?

TALALO:

tweet tweet tweet.

RITA:
Thanks, Talalo.

Talalo flies to the basket, tries to free the ball by hitting it with his beak, but the ball's stuck and won't budge.

TALALO:
Tweet tweet tweet.

RITA:
Not to worry, Talalo, you've tried. Come over..

The move over to the swings, following Rita, they look at one another inquisitively.
Rita climbs on a saddle on the swing and addresses the others.

RITA:
Alfred, Milo, when Talalo counts to three, jump together onto the other saddle. You'll propel me to the basket so I can rescue the ball.

They stare at her in wonder.

ALFRED:
Hmm.. Sorry to be sceptical about this plan. If you don't mind, I'd rather step aside.

MILO:
Well I don't think it's a bad idea. If Olga jumps with me, we can try!

OLGA:
Let's go then, Milo.

RITA:
Start counting, Talalo.

TALALO:
Tweet... tweet... Tweet!

RITA:
(Gesticulating)
Here we go!

Milo and Olga jump together onto the saddle and propel Rita to the basket, she cannot avoid falling through it and crashes on the ground.

RITA:
Ooh! Ouch!

Olga and Milo, having gained momentum, cannot stop and land into a puddle behind the see-saw, splashing Mumu who was minding her own business.

ALFRED:
Great score! Three points.

MILO (1.55)

Ouch... Oi!

OLGA

Ooh...!

MUMU (01.57)

Ah!

RITA (02)

Aagh!

MUMU:
Can't you be more careful? One can't even enjoy a quiet swing in this park...

They all stand up and assemble. Rita rubs her backside, hurt, and the others shake off the mud.

MILO (2.10) (Gesticulates)

OLGA (Gesticulates)

RITA (2.10) (Gesticulates)

OLGA:
So what do we do now?

ALFRED:
I'll have to put my brain to think.

The others look at one another sceptically.

ALFRED:
Wait a minute, I'll be right back.

Alfred leaves and the others wait for him. Alfred is soon back and he carries something in his mouth.

MILO:
What's that, Alfred?

ALFRED:
It's called a "boomerang". It's a magic thing, because you throw it far and it comes back to where you are.

MILO
What a strange thing...

RITA
Oh my! I'd never seen such a thing in my life.

OLGA
How can it be? It looks just like any other stick...

ALFRED:
Look!

Alfred throws the boomerang perfectly. It swings back to him and he catches it.

OLGA
Awesome!
MILO
Amazing!

RITA:
Ooh! How did you do that?

ALFRED:
The trick's in its shape. It's a curved-shaped piece of wood, and if you throw it with a spin, it comes back to the starting point.

OLGA
Far out!

MILO
Incredible!

RITA
Yeah! I love it!

ALFRED:
Now you'll see how easy it is to get the ball back.

Alfred throws the boomerang to the basket, it nearly hits the heads of the Happets who all duck just in time.

RITA
Everybody on the floor! Get down, now!

MILO
Wow!

OLGA
Ooh!

Milo tries to chase the boomerang but it hits a tree.

Milo:
(panting)

(panting) Ooh... ooh... ooh. It's mine! I'm nearly there! Wee! (against the tree)

Milo goes after the boomerang but it now chases him. Milo bumps into the others and shoots out into the air.

Milo:
Aaaaaaaah! (panting) Aah... aah... aah... Weee! (03.27)

Milo falls on top of them all.

ALFRED(03.35)
Ah!

RITA (03.36)
Ooh!

MUMU (03.37)
Ouch! Hmm...

The boomerang sails past, brushing Mumu's head, she watches it come in horror, barely dodges it and falls off the swing landing with a thud. The boomerang swings out of control towards Mumu, passes near her and the sound of glass and vases, etc. breaking can be heard.

ALFRED(3.40)
Hmm

RITA
Ah...

MILO
(3.40) Oh...

OLGA (3.40)
Ooh!

TALALO
Tweetytweet... Twiddledeetweet!

ALFRED:
Hey! There's been a slight error in the shot. The throw was perfect, but I'm sure the wind blew it off course...

They're all in the park, not knowing what to do, muddy, beaten, as they see Mumu approach them with an angry look on her face.

MUMU:
What do you think you're doing? You almost had my head off. You are useless, and look at yourselves, what a sore sight! What friends I have!

They look at her bewildered, without knowing what to say. Mumu has a bump on her head, between the horns.

MUMU:
I'm off.

Alfred

Oh!

RITA
Hmm?

MUMU
I'm going somewhere quiet to read.

She walks towards the meadow.

SEC. 2.OUTDOORS.MEADOW -- DAYTIME

Mumu is sitting on a hill, angry at her friends. Then a train arrives and stops by a meadow close to the Happets' park. A flock of sheep get off the train and start grazing. They are all impeccably white, as if manufactured. Mumu approaches them fascinated and full of admiration.

MUMU
Hi!

None of the sheep reply. They mind their own business. Grazing, filing their hooves, etc.

MUMU
Who are you? What are you doing here?

One of the sheep looks up for a moment and ignores her. The others are whispering behind her back.

SHEEP Blue
Did you see her? Who is she? I don't like the pattern she wears. It's obviously last season's.

SHEEP Green
Too true, chequers are so very much out of fashion.

SHEEP Pink
Yeas, she looks like a picnic cloth. How very common!

SHEEP GREEN
Baby, you're out!

Mumu is wondering but she gets a little closer.

MUMU
Hi, my name's Mumu. And you?

SHEEP BLUE
Hi? I suppose you mean "helloo"..

The two that were whispering come up front and approach Mumu.

SHEEP GREEN
So you don't know who we are?

MUMU
No, I'm sorry. Who are you?

SHEEP GREEN
We're stars.

MUMU
Stars?

SHEEP GREEN
Darling, stars as in S-T-A-R-S..

MUMU
Stars? But the stars are in the sky and they shine at night...

SHEEP 2
(showing off)
Those are normal ones... We're special and we shine during the day...

MUMU
Well then I want to be a star just like you!

SHEEP PINK
(throwing up her legs in amazement)
Oh, my God!

SHEEP lilac
(giving Mumu the once over)
You, a star? I'm afraid not, my dear.

MUMU
And why not?

SHEEP lilac
Look at yourself and then look at us... Can't you see the difference?

SHEEP GREEN
Come back to reality.

SHEEP BLUE
You lack glamour.

MUMU
Ah! And what do I have to do to be a star?

SHEEP BLUE
(mysteriously)
(OFF) What a question! (ON) Us stars shine whenever it is needed... in the right place.

SHEEP PINK
Shining... Shining is drawing attention. Making others look at you all the time

SHEEP Lila
...and admire you. Darling, to shine is maximus!.

PINK
Hmm, hmm!

GREEN
Yes! (laughs)

LILA
Ah! It's so divine! Uh-uh-uh-uh..!

*Mumu is absolutely dazzled by the sheep and their comments. She is thoughtful, digesting what they have just told her.
And she looks at the train.*

MUMU
(she starts off imitating the snooty, stuck-up accent of the sheep)
And what kind of things do stars do? (imitating snooty accent)

SHEEP BLUE
We are famous actresses. We star in many films and we also perform live.

SHEEP PINK

Yes, we play all sorts of characters.

SHEEP PINK

We sing and we dance. We play any role they give us.

MUMU

I'd love to see a performance of yours...

SHEEP X

(flattered, addressing the other sheep)

Darlings, we could rehearse our latest show.

PASTEL

Yes, let's! Wonderful! I bet she'll be astonished!

CLARITA

Of course, it's always good to rehearse!

PINK

Fantastic! We have to keep fit!

PINK

Aah!

Some of the sheep put on a show for Mumu.

SHEEP

Bravo! Great, girls! You are wonderful! Yes, divine! The superstars! Incomparable, there is no one like you!(7.24)TRACK 2 (Varied gesticulation and laughter)

MUMU:

Wow! That's nice!

SHEEP Lila

Well, what you've just seen is our job.

SHEEP : GREEN

We're so popular that we get asked to go many places. We're always on the road..

MUMU:

So where are you going to now?

SHEEP : Lila

We're off to show our talent in the Kingdom of the Sun.

SHEEP 2:

We've been hired to perform for the King of that country himself .
Well, we must leave you now because our train departs in ten minutes, and with so much small talk we haven't had the chance to grab a bite.

SHEEP BLUE

Babes, it's time for brunch.

SHEEP PINK

I adore *crudités*.

SHEEP: BLUE

Hmm, you're such a gourmet!

They leave Mumu and join the rest of the flock. They start grazing.

Mumu is left alone, thinking to herself out loud:

MUMU:

Maybe the sheep are right... I thought I was special, now I know I'm not. I'm just normal, and I lead a dull, boring life without any shine to it... with friends who are even less interesting than myself. . I'm feeling jealous... so bad... I want to be a star! But here, I'm never going to make it.

SCENE 3.
Outdoors. Daytime. Terrace at the Happets' home.

Mumu walks home, head bowed. She arrives to see her friends all messed up, cleaning out and playing with a hose.

She walks to them, oblivious. All she thinks of is what has just happened to her.

(NEW ACTION JUMPING AND LAUGHING)

RITA:
Anyone thirsty?

OLGA:
I am! Can I have some water?

Rita wets Olga's mouth with the hose

OLGA
Ah.. Hmm So good, nice and cool!

MILO:
Me now, Rita!

Rita turns the hose on Milo, and he refreshes his face and head

RITA:
Alfred, it's your turn

ALFRED:
No, Rita, I. gulp, gulp... don't want any. Gulp gulp.

Rita wets Alfred and now turns the hose to Talalo, but he gets away

TALALO:
Tweet, tweet, tweet!

RITA:
Sorry, Talalo, I won't wet you again.

Rita wets them all again and tries to wet Talalo too.

ALFRED
(barking)

TALALO:
Tweet tweet tweet...

RITA:
Sorry, I didn't mean to. It won't happen again...

Mumu interrupts the scene.

MUMU:
Do you know what a star is?

ALFRED:
Of course we do!
It's one of the heavenly bodies that shine at night, excepting the moon and the planets.

MUMU (sounding self-sufficient):
I know that! I don't mean those, but the other ones. The ones that shine in the day, and they're on Earth.

RITA:
Yes, of course. The stars on Earth... yeah, yeah... (pretending not to know).

OLGA
Those on Earth, yeah!

MUMU:
I have met real stars. They're unique and very special.

RITA:
Oh yeah? And who are they?

MUMU:
Well, precisely the sheep grazing in the meadow. The ones that got off the train. Haven't you seen them?

RITA (sarcastically):
Sheep?

MILO:
Since when sheep are stars?

OLGA:
Why! They only think of eating grass.
And rolling on the meadow...

ALFRED:
As far as I know, those ruminants have never made history for any remarkable feat.

MUMU:
And you? What kind of feats have you accomplished?

They look at each other, speechless.

MUMU:
All you can do is break windows and fall into the mud... and none of you are even dressed in the latest fashion!
Neither am I. Look at us: we don't follow any model, we are not even matching.

TALALO
(takes a mirror from under his wing, takes a vain look into it, then tweets angrily at Mumu)
Tweet tweet tweet!

MILO:
Yeah, I think yours are not pyjama stripes. Talalo, don't worry.

ALFRED:
Well, I copied my clothes from an English lord who served the Queen of England herself.

TALALO:
Tweet tweet tweet.

ALFRED:
You're very kind, Talalo. As you do, I think it gives me a distinguished, elegant air.

OLGA:
Don't you like my flower pattern any longer? But you helped me choose it!

RITA:
I never thought you would be taken in by appearances, Mumu. What lies under the clothes is what is important..

MUMU:
Yeah, but looks count too, and we are as far-removed from becoming stars as the planet Mars is from our home. And
I want to become a star!

They stare at her, speechless. She goes into the house, takes the first-aid kit, sticks cotton wool on to herself and
walks out dressed up like a sheep.

MUMU
(emphasising the final "atishoo", to make it sound like she's sneezed):
Don't you think I'm cool and super.... atishoo?

ALFRED
Bless you!

Mumu starts gesticulating, spinning, overacting, flaunting her cotton wool fancy costume.

RITA:
Well... I don't find it funny, now you are a copy of many others... I liked you better with your chequers.

MUMU:
chequers are no longer trendy. They're last season's.

RITA
What do you mean? They're so super-original... And white polka dots on yellow even more so...

MUMU
(with a snooty accent):
You don't understand a thing. You have to come back to reality. We lack any *grammour*. We look like the *humless*.
For your information, stars are *groom-mates*, they eat *crunch*, and always dress in ultrasound.

The others are speechless.

MILO
Hmm?

RITA
Hmm?

MILO
Hmm?

OLGA
Hmm?

MUMU:
I'm out of here!. I'm going to be a star too! I'm off to the Kingdom of the Sun!

Mumu leaves and the others talk among themselves about the situation.

MILO:
What's the matter with Mumu? What language is she speaking?

ALFRED:
I don't know, surely it's concussion. Or maybe even more serious, she may have fractured her skull...

OLGA:
So what do we do now?

RITA:
Ignore her. That's what we should do. You all know her. It's probably one of her fits. This, too, will pass.

MILO:
You're right.

SCENE 4.

Outdoors. Daytime. Train.

Mumu, dressed up as a sheep, gets on to the last carriage.

MUMU:
Wait, wait, don't go without me!

MUMU:
Don't leave me alone here, wait for me, please!

SHEEP 8 (Conductor): WHITE
Run, little sheep, run...! Hold on to me!

MUMU:
(anxious)
I'm coming! I won't make it!

SHEEP . WHITE SHEEP
Stretch a little more! I've almost got you!

Mumu crashes against the logs

MUMU:
Oooouch, ouch! Ouch!

Mumu lands on a log that rolls behind the train.

MUMU:
Help!

SHEEP . WHITE SHEEP
Come on, you're nearly there! Almost!
Be careful!

MUMU
Aagh, aagh, aagh, ...

SHEEP . WHITE SHEEP
Come on! You'll make it! Run, run!

MUMU:
I'm almost there, yeah!

The log is wedged and the sheep is shot towards Mumu.

MUMU:
Oooouch!

SHEEP WHITE SHEEP
Easy now, I'll get you!

MUMU:
What a thump! Ouch, it hurts!

MUMU:
Hey, you've lost your head...!

SHEEP : WHITE SHEEP
I haven't lost anything! I'm down here...

MUMU:
What a fright!

SHEEP : WHITE SHEEP
Come one... We have to get inside the train quickly, before we get to the tunnel.

MUMU:
Why? What's the matter with the tunnel?

SHEEP : WHITE SHEEP
You'll see, you're **going** to love it

SHEEP : WHITE SHEEP

We have to climb on to the roof, there's a trapdoor on the second carriage that we can climb into. Come, follow me!

They climb on to the roof of the train.

SHEEP : WHITE SHEEP

Come on! Hurry up!

They approach the tunnel and sit down.

SHEEP : WHITE SHEEP

Watch out! Get down!

Inside the tunnel, the train slopes down and the two reach a handrail that they hold on to tight in anticipation of the Roller Coaster.

When they are secure, we see the roller coaster inside a large cave where the train travels. They look at one another and smile.

MUMU and WHITE SHEEP

Wow! A roller coaster! Fantastic!

MUMU

What a thrill! Ooh! Wow!

WHITE SHEEP

This is fun! Yoo-hoo!

Once out of the tunnel, they relax inside the carriage.

The sheep falls into the toilet and Mumu lands right beside her.

It stinks, so Mumu runs out of there.

MUMU

(showing surprise and disgust) This stinks! Yuck! I've got to get out of here whatever it takes. (17.26 a 17.33) (showing disgust, attentiveness and climbing up the crates)

WHITE SHEEP

(17.19) Hello! (giggling) Ha! (OFF) Well, I don't smell anything. I'll sit here for a while.

Mumu climbs on to a crate and opens a small door to the sheep's dressing room. Mumu lands into the next carriage, takes a magazine and sits down pretending nothing has happened.

SHEEP : GREEN

Oh, my God, it's so hot, I'm desperate! And all this travelling makes my skin go dry...

SHEEP : PASTEL

Dear, your looks are worrying.
I think you have built up too much stress.

SHEEP : PINK

The secret for smooth, hydrated wool is relax.

SHEEP : LILA

But it's pointless if your udders are fallen...

SHEEP : PINK

Now that you mention it, I have just had udder augmentation...

SHEEP LILA

(giving her the once-over):
Just as I thought!

SHEEP PINK

(changing the subject):

You should take a weekend off and go to the "Hidrowool Paradise" spa. I can book you with my Russian masseur, Sasha.

SHEEP :GREEN
Sa-sha? Gives me a good feeling...

SHEEP :PINK
Sa-sha is so wonderfully good. You all ought to try him out.

SHEEP :GREEN
Thank you, darling. I'll follow your advice. You are so very nice.

SHEEP : DESI
Have you seen my new hairstyle? It's by Louie Woollock.

MUMU
(acting as a sheep, imitating the posh, snooty accent of the others):
Yeah, parking is a look beautiful...

DESI
I beg your pardon?

The sheep look at one another in disbelief while Mumu carries on with the conversation, making do.

MUMU:
It must have cost you a fortune.

SHEEP : GREEN
(addressing Mumu, placing a leg over her as if they were best friends):
More than that, my dear... it cost me a yarn of my best Cashmere.

Then she gives Mumu the once-over, with a mixture of disdain and admiration.

SHEEP DESI
Hey, who's doing your hair? I never saw such a thing... How amazing!

MUMU (stalling):
Oh, well, yes ... you see... I don't know if I should tell you...

SHEEP: BLUE
There should be no secrets between us... I swear I won't tell anyone, but I just have to know who your stylist is...

Mumu looks at the leather seats with the name "Rodolfo" and she improvises.

MUMU
Hmm...Hmm

MUMU:
All right... I'll tell you his name : he is Rudolph... that is... Rudolph Mops.

Sheep (Blue) with a shocked face. Fade in.

SCENE 12. (Changed place after EDIT)

Outdoors. Evening. Happets' home.

The Happets are sad.

OLGA (sad):
And what do we do now? Mumu is gone forever.

RITA:
Don't exaggerate, Olga!. It's no big deal. She's gone, but you know what she's like : she gets crazy ideas into her head and she has to try them out somehow.

OLGA (still sad):
But this time she said she didn't want to be with us. She made fun of our looks. She said we weren't, what was it? Oh, yeah, "mulching".

ALFRED (laughing):
Matching, Olga! That means that Mumu would like us all to dress the same, like the sheep.

TALALO:
Tweet tweet tweet!.

ALFRED:
Yes, Talalo. I also like to dress my own way. We're not all going to dress the same. We wouldn't be able to distinguish our unique personalities.

RITA:
Hmm. (Burps)

TALALO
Tweet tweet tweet..

ALFRED:
Well now, how uncivil, Rita.

RITA
It's true, I also felt hurt by her words. But I'd rather think she said them without meaning to, without realising what she was doing.

MILO:
I agree with Rita. I think Mumu didn't even know what she was saying.

OLGA:
Yeah, I'm sure you're right. I couldn't understand a thing. She called us "hum-less"

ALFRED:
You ought to bear in mind that our friend likes novelty.
Now and then, she likes to escape from routine.

MILO:
But it's getting dark and she isn't back yet. I find it strange in her.

OLGA (anxious):
What if this time she finds a place she likes better, and new friends? What if she stays with them and never comes back?

ALFRED:
(OFF)That's true! (ON) In my humble opinion, we should go and find her right now..

RITA
If she's made new friends, she might not want us to go find her.

ALFRED:
I once heard about the Kingdom of the Sun.
I'd have to look it up in the Atlas, but I think it's very far away, after the forest and beyond the river.

OLGA (anxious):
If we walk it'll take us ages to get there.

ALFRED:
Elementary, my dear Olga.

OLGA:
And Mumu may need our help in the meantime... Maybe she's depressed by the time we get there...

RITA
What's depressed?

MILO
Depressed is like being sad, but all the time.

RITA
(determined):

We have to find the quickest way to get to the Kingdom of the Sun

OLGA:
Yeah... but how?

MILO (mysteriously):
I've got an idea...

SCENE 13.

Outdoors. Evening. A road. A fire engine.

They follow the road and Milo takes them to a parked bicycle.

MILO:
This is going to be our transport.

RITA:
What a good idea!

MILO
On board, everybody!

OLGA:
But.. Where are we going to?

TALALO:
Tweet, tweet, tweet!

RITA:
Are you ready? Well off we go!

MILO:
Ouch! My foot is burning!

ALFRED:
Hey, I'm falling off!

RITA:
I can't see a thing!

ALL:
Aagh!!!

MILO:
Ouch, I hit myself!

MILO:
This one is going to be our transport.
Everybody, push!

RITA
Ouch... ooh...oi...

ALFRED
Ooh...wow...wow

MILO:
I've lost control!

TALALO
Tweet, tweet! Tweet!

OLGA:
Talalo!

MILO:
Are you all right?

RITA:
I am...

ALFRED:
I could be a lot better...

TALALO:
Tweet tweet tweet...

OLGA
Friends! When the going gets tough, the tough get going! Look!

ALL
Ooh!!!

OLGA
All on board, come on!

They get on to the fire engine, Milo drives for a few hours parallel to the railway. They cross the forest and in a clearing they see the sign to the "Kingdom of the Sun".

While they ride the fire engine, successive close-ups of each one thinking of Mumu.

ALFRED
I recommend we follow the railway line. It's the only clue we have for now. Mumu went away on a train.

RITA:
It would be awful to lose Mumu. We must get her back.

OLGA:
Yeah. I hope we find her, and that she still likes us.

ALFRED:
We must be strong and stick together. Mumu needs us.

MILO:
Hold on, Mumu! If you are in danger, we'll help you out.

TALALO:
Tweet tweet, tweet

RITA
(with her head sticking out of the window):
Look! We're on the right track! That sign says "to the Kingdom of the Sun"

(she swallows a few mosquitoes)

RITA
(coughs and spits)

OLGA:
Oh well, what Mumu said was true! That country exists!

ALFRED (proudly):
I told you so... I'm a fount of wisdom...

RITA:
Sound the siren, Milo. So Mumu knows we're coming.

MILO:
Team to the rescue!

SCENE 5.

Outdoors. Daytime. Train station. Kingdom of the Sun.

The train arrives at the palace. The sheep, Mumu included, get off the train.

SHEEP : PINK
We're here!

Mumu looks at the sky, bright blue, and is amazed.

MUMU: (gaping)
The Kingdom of the Sun!

SCENE 6.

Indoors. Daytime. Palace. Throne room.

We see the King, a bull. His skin is printed as if it were ermine, white mottled in black. He wears a blue cape. He carries a sceptre and wears a crown, on both sides of which are the horns.

KING: (Overacting)
To go out or not to go out... in the end, it's all a bore... nothing ever happens at court to entertain me. The sky is blue, but my soul feels grey.

(standing, reciting and pacing across the throne room, with a tormented, dramatic air).

A servant interrupts the King's monologue.

SQUIRREL 1:
Your Majesty, your guest of the day has arrived.

KING (listlessly):
Will that, perchance, be of any use? (pause) Show him in.

The King sits on the throne and the servants usher in an octopus, who enters the room with a briefcase. Two of the squirrels stand on each side of the throne, while others stand to attention, acting as the royal guard.

SQUIRREL3
Your Majesty, this is the Great Octopony, straight from the coast of Italy, to liven up your day.

PULPONI (offended):
Scusi, my name is Octopini, Oct-o-pi-ni!

KING
Hmm

PULPONI
Ah!

Octopini opens the briefcase, brings out a dozen eggs and starts juggling them, at first very skilfully. The King watches him and yawns. The sketch doesn't end there, to make it even more difficult, the octopus cracks one egg after another in the air using a hammer in one of its tentacles, then throws then into a pan with hot oil that it holds in another tentacle. The sketch is so tricky that Octopini ends up by scrambling the tentacles and the hammer shoots out of a window while the omelette flies past the Kings head parting his hair, landing smack on the face of one of the squirrels.

Outdoors. Daytime. Main entrance to the Palace.

Squirrel Guard 1 has Octopini's hammer on its head. It fell there from out of the window.

SQUIRREL 3
Darn! They've hammered my skull!

SQUIRREL 4:

Is the King redecorating his chambers again? I never thought that DIY would be so dangerous.

Interior. Daytime. Palace. Throne room.

Inside the throne room, the squirrels cannot repress their laughter at Octopini's scene. The King, however, starts to cry.

SQUIRREL 5

(laughing, though a little less):

If the King didn't laugh at this one then his illness has no cure.

SQUIRREL 5

Poor soul... never feeling like laughing... Such a misfortune!

SQUIRREL 5:

However much we try to amuse him, the truth is we never manage to.

A squirrel approaches the King with a neatly stacked pile of tissues. The King takes one and blows his nose loudly, and keeps on crying grief-stricken.

Finally, another squirrel enters the room and addresses the King.

SQUIRREL 1:

Your majesty, the sheep are here..

KING:

Ah, very well. Then... get them ready.

SCENE 7.

Outdoors. Daytime. Meadow by the palace. Casting area.

The sheep are queuing. Zoom on to a part of the queue far from its start.

Mumu:

Why are we queueing?

SHEEP : PASTEL

Queueing? Babe, don't get it wrong. Us stars never queue. Our fans queue to see us.

Mumu:

So then what is this?

SHEEP :PASTEL

Well it's a casting. To be selected, to be chosen one out of a million.

SHEEP : GREEN

Only the best actresses shall stay at the King's court.

Zoom now to the start of the queue, where the sheep are being screened and they take it for a role casting. The King's servants, a group of squirrels, select them and especially approve their soft wool, and the sheep are happy to be chosen.

SQUIRREL M (stroking a sheep's wool):

First class wool! We'll keep it!

The sheep is placed with the chosen. A new sheep appears and is inspected by the squirrels.

SQUIRREL M:

So white! Soft like cotton! Perfect!

She too is moved to the selected group.

Finally, it's Mumu's turn, she was queuing dressed up as a sheep. Her costume is in bad shape after the train ride, and patches of the underlying chequered fabric show up. Part of the cotton wool has fallen off, and she is a bit shabby.

SQUIRREL D

(stroking Mumu's fake wool):

This sheep has bald spots, and is not totally white.

SQUIRREL E

(coming close to Mumu to take a look):

Looks like she's had a shock, and that's why she's chequered all over.

SQUIRREL 1:

Rejected! Doesn't meet our standards. Off to the rubbish dump!

Mumu looks bewildered, vexed, and cannot believe what's happening. But the squirrels ignore her and two of them take her to the rubbish dump and throw her in.

She sinks into it and then her head emerges with a fish bone. The dump is a metal container and she sees her reflection, she looks awful, dirty and ugly, just like her friends a while ago in the park. Mumu goes away, dragging herself, sad, feeling rejected, worthless, she did not meet the standard.

MUMU (whining):

What a disaster! What a mess I've made of myself! The sheep were right...I'm worthless!

She looks towards the sheep and enters the next scene where she watches.

SHEEP

How elegant! What poise! Quite frankly, she is the one and only on the catwalk...! This is a gift, you can't learn it! See how she moves that body so gracefully!

SCENE 8.

Outdoors. Daytime. Meadow by the palace. Dressing-room area.

A regiment of squirrels (stylists, hairdressers, etc.) is seeing to and preparing the sheep in a makeshift, open-air dressing room. There are several flashes of the different parts of the dressing room.

Zoom on to a sheep under a typical egg-shaped hair dryer, holding a magazine.

SHEEP : CLARITA

We're going to look divine!

Beside her, a squirrel is putting curlers professionally on to another sheep.

SHEEP : GREEN

Beautiful!

A third sheep is being dried with a hand-held hair dryer. The air blows her hair on end in a funny way.

SHEEP : LILA

Pretty!

The hair of a fourth sheep is being done with a device that reminds us of a tunnel car wash, with a pair of rollers on the sides that brush the wool back.

SHEEP : PINK

Perfect!

A sheep lying on a reclining seat has her hooves polished and varnished by four squirrels.

SHEEP : LOLA

With this hoof cure we're going to dazzle our fans.

SHEEP : PASTEL

We're ready to be catapulted to Stardom.

STYLIST 1

(to Squirrel 2, giggling derisively):

Ha, ha, ha... Straight to the stars on a catapult, yeah.

Squirrel 2 laughs maliciously.

SCENE 9.

Outdoors. Daytime. Meadow by the palace. Catapult area.

Two squirrels are herding the sheep. They are in the open air, close to the palace.

LAUNCHER 1 (to squirrel 2):
Put a little more glue on this one, she's quite chubby and it may not hold!

CHUBBY
(red from anger):
Who, me? Are you calling me fat?

LAUNCHER 2 (to squirrel 1):
Why, yes... Can you imagine her falling on top of the King's head?

Both squirrels laugh while squirrel 1 brushes some extra glue on to the sheep.

LAUNCHER 1:
You can launch her now.

SHEEP (surprised): CHUBBY
What? Launch? Where to?

And before she can finish her sentence, she's on the catapult and shot to the sky.

LAUNCHER 2:
There she goes!

CHUBBY:
Argggggghhhhhhh! Heeeeeeeeeeeelp!

And so, one after the other, the squirrels place the sheep on the catapult after spreading glue over them, and the launch them to the sky where they end up stuck.

LAUNCHER 1:
Such a lovely day... I still don't understand why the King wants us to fill it up with clouds...

LAUNCHER 2:
He doesn't want to see a blue sky when his heart is grey.
It reminds him of how happy he could be and how sad he is.

LAUNCHER 1:
And while he's at it, the entire court cannot sunbathe.

LAUNCHER 2:
Yeah. We're all over the place to cure his Sadness, and he is all bent on us having bad weather.

LAUNCHER 1:
And we even have to make it for him.
Do you remember when he was into hailstorms?

LAUNCHER 2:
And when it was fog... my rheumatism got worse.

LAUNCHER 1:
And I got arthrosis..

LAUNCHER 2:

Put, put... This new weather he's thought about is not that bad.

The squirrels keep on chatting as they launch sheep to the sky.

SHEEP c2:
Agggghhhhhh!

SCENE 10.

Outdoors. Daytime. Meadow by the palace. Dressing-room area.

Mumu, hiding behind a bush, has been watching how the sheep were readied and then catapulted to the sky.

MUMU:
Well well! That is how stars are born! They are launched to the sky... Well I want to go too! (looking resolute, as if she had a plan of sorts)

The “dressing-room” area is now empty. Mumu takes the opportunity to pick up, unnoticed, bits of real wool from the sheep that were groomed in the make-up area. She uses the squirrels' glue to stick them onto herself (she takes the glue while the squirrels are resting from launching), and she shows up to the casting again.

SQUIRREL 1:
Hey, look... There's a sheep left (looking surprised) hadn't they all been through?

SQUIRREL 2 (feeling Mumu's new “wool”):
And she's got soft wool! Yes, she's acceptable.

SQUIRREL 1 (feeling the wool too):
We can keep her.

SQUIRREL 2:
Hmm! Let's get her ready!

The squirrels take her to the dressing room area, Mumu is now under a large hair dryer, smiling, delighted.

SQUIRREL 2: STYLIST 1
She's ready! Take her to be launched.

MUMU:
I'm going to be special I'm really going to shine! I'm going to be a star!

LAUNCHER 2
Whatever you say.

She is taken to the catapult, spread with glue, and launched.

MUMU:
Yoo-hoo! Yeah!

She flies to the sky, spinning and prancing in the air, extremely happy.

Finally she gets stuck to the sky like the others, a short distance away from several sheep whom she may talk to.

(NEW SEQUENCE)

The Happets are on the fire engine on their way to the palace.

TALALO
Tweet tweet tweet!

RITA:
Much more to go, Talalo?

MILO:
We don't know, Rita. And get down from up there lest you fall off.

A few seconds go by.

RITA:
I'm coming down! Much more to go now?

MILO:
Rita, I said I don't know.

RITA:
OK, don't get worked up. (pause) But what do you think, much more to go?

We see the fire engine drive away.

MILO:
Ritaaaaaa!

SCENE 11.

Outdoors. Daytime. The sky.

Mumu spends hours in the sky, stuck up there doing nothing, very bored, together with the other sheep, all of which are delighted and posing exaggeratedly, as if for a photographer; they all do the same, the same gestures. Mumu starts to imitate them, but is soon tired and cannot keep quiet. She starts talking to the sheep next to her.

MUMU
(enthusiastic yet impatient):
So what do have to do?

SHEEP : CLARITA
Do the same the others do.

All they do is pose and make faces.

MUMU:
Is this what stars do, stand still and smile?

SHEEP : BLUE
Baby, we've been put up here so all the world can see us and admire us.

MUMU:
Is that all we're going to do?

SHEEP : PINK
Well yes, that's the part the King has given us at his court.

MUMU:
I always thought that actresses lived all those exciting adventures of the characters they played, and yet, we're up here doing nothing else but smiling
I'm no flower pot, to sit around for decoration. I like to move, play, run, do things for fun... My style and my way.

SHEEP : DESI
The nicest thing is for us all to do the same at the same time.

MUMU:
What a nuisance!

SHEEP: GREEN
Well if you don't like it, Darling, go home. Nobody's forcing you to stay.

MUMU:
And how am I to go? It's impossible to get down from here. We're trapped. Don't you understand?

The sheep look at each other in silence, as if realising that Mumu is right.

SCENE 14.

Interior. Daytime. Stately rooms. Royal Palace.

We see the King in his chambers, alone before a mirror. He tries to smile several times in different ways, to no avail. His smiles are forced and unnatural. Finally he moves away from the mirror, depressed, and looks melancholically out of the window where he sees the noisy arrival of the fire engine with the Happets sounding the siren.

KING:

Who are these visitors? I don't recall having requested company for the afternoon!
Surely they must be important people, I'd never seen such a sophisticated and extravagant carriage!

The King claps his hands to call his servants. Two squirrels enter the room.

KING:

See to these guests with the greatest ceremony: they are people of a high rank. I shall see them in the throne room.

The squirrels bow and exit the room.

SCENE 15.

Outdoors. Daytime. Main entrance to the Palace.

The Happets get off the fire engine they have just parked in front of the Palace.

RITA

Wee! Wow!

A squirrel dressed as a traffic warden approaches them with a severe look and a whistle in his mouth, blowing it all the time, scolding them with the whistle blows.

SQUIRREL TRAFFIC WARDEN (ATRAFICO)

Clear this area! No parking here! Didn't you see the signs?

(zoom on to no parking sign with symbols of a donkey, an elephant, a camel, etc.. The warden continues to blow the whistle.)

RITA

(to Olga, whispering):

How **nasty!**

OLGA:

B-but...

SQUIRREL TRAFFIC WARDEN: : (ATRAFICO)

And cut the complaints, this is the Royal Palace!

ALFRED:

Though I can't understand why, I suspect this reception is for us.

RITA (excited):

For us? We're famous! The King knows us?

OLGA:

Well we don't know him..

The King comes out of the Palace through the main entrance, with open arms, at the same time with a dramatic air and a voice part solemn, part grieving.

KING:

Welcome to my kingdom! My name is Tristan the 1st.

SQUIRREL 1

Ahhhh!

As he greets them he sheds a sad tear, and a squirrel wipes it with a tissue, as if it were an automatic reaction.

KING:
(whimpering)

RITA
(to Olga, whispering):
The name suits him well. Such a sad face...

OLGA
(also whispering):
Yeah, he looks like he's been chopping onions.

OLGA
Yuck!

RITA:
Maybe he has no friends...

MILO:
Hello, thank you for this reception! We are Rita, Olga, Alfred, Talalo and Milo

As Milo names each one of the Happets, they greet the King their own way.

KING:
It is a pleasure, ladies and gentlemen. I am delighted to make your acquaintance. From this moment consider yourself to be my guests. Come into my palace and take a rest from your hard journey.

(He starts whimpering again).

RITA
(to Olga, for her to hear only):
Take a rest? I want to go see what's around... Who wants to rest when we're in a real palace?

The king hears her too and changes the plan.

KING:
If you prefer, my servants can show you the palace and then you can come and have tea with me.

ALFRED (excited):
Ooh, I am finally going to have some tea with a real royal!

SCENE 16.

Outdoors. Afternoon. Palace garden.

ALFRED:
Oh, this tea tastes so nice, your Majesty! Not even in Great Britain do they brew it so well...

KING (crying):
Yes, this is exquisite tea, brought straight from Tibet where the monks grow it with their own hands.

ALFRED:
Such a well-kept garden, such a clouded sky, such an extraordinary tea, the delicious ginger and sarsaparilla cake... it all reminds me of my grandmother Gilberta's home in Oxford.
(Alfred burps)

SQUIRRELS:
(Laughing)

RITA:
I don't see what's so funny.

ALFRED:
(makes noises with his mouth, ashamed)

RITA:
Yeah, I'd even say this place looks more like Great Britain than the Kingdom of the Sun!

OLGA
(realising for the first time):
Oh well, that's true. The sky is full of clouds... and this, in theory is the Kingdom of the Sun. Your Majesty, why is the sky overcast?

KING:
The sky is overcast, in fact. It is clouded over... like my heart. That's why I like to see it so, with such lovely clouds, so white, so springy and orderly...

The Happets look up to the sky and admire the clouds.

RITA:
Yes, it's true. Such harmony!

The King rises, intending to leave the meeting.

KING:
You must excuse me, it has been a hard day... I shall retire now. Make yourselves at home.
(he whimpers at the end)

Once the king has departed, Alfred, who was looking to the sky with curiosity, takes his binoculars to get a better look.

ALFRED
(intrigued and then surprised, as if talking to himself):
Hmm, how strange... do my eyes deceive me, or... those clouds have legs!

RITA:
Clouds with legs?

MILO
(pulling his leg):
Yeah, and these cups have arms... and the plates have eyes... and the chairs have hands...

OLGA
Alfred, are you OK?
(looking at the others)
Did the tea upset his stomach? Is it the heat?
(she uses a napkin to fan Alfred).

TALALO:
Tweet tweet tweet.

MILO:
You're right, Talalo. We have to focus on what brought us here: finding Mumu.

ALFRED
(without paying attention to their words, still concentrated on his binoculars):
Friends, I bet those... are not clouds... they're sheep!

MILO:
Sheep? Alfred, I think there's something wrong with you: either your sight is failing, or your head...

Alfred hands over the binoculars to Milo without a word. Milo takes them, looks through them towards the sky and makes a surprised face.

MILO:
But they are sheep! That's incredible!

OLGA:

Alfred must be contagious...

MILO:
They're sheep, Olga! Alfred was **telling** the truth.

RITA:
And what are sheep doing hanging in the sky?

ALFRED:
Hmm... This kingdom is full of quaint stuff... Despite its wealth and abundance, the King is sad and he likes to see grey clouds in the blue sky...
(and then he adds)
Of course! That's what the sheep are for! Don't you see? He is clouding the sky on purpose.

OLGA:
Do you think he puts them up there?

MILO:
Of course. He can do anything he likes: he's the boss around here.

RITA:
Well I think the sheep look nice up there...

MILO:
Now, now, stop the frippery. Let's get back to what concerns us. Could those be the sheep Mumu left with?

ALFRED:
I don't know, but I think it would be interesting to try and talk to them. They may know where our friend is..

SCENE 17.

Outdoors. Afternoon. Sky.

Mumu is still unhappy, and she argues with the sheep.

MUMU:
(OFF) Boo-hoo! This is a nuisance, a bore... (ON) I'm fed up... I'm so bored.

SHEEP : PINK
How tiresome! And she's been at it all day long! I think I'd better take a nap.
The sheep looks to the other side.

SHEEP : PASTEL
Poor thing, you can really tell she doesn't like it here...

MUMU:
I'd like to go back home to my friends...

SHEEP : BLUE
But honey, what was so special in your life before you came here?

MUMU
(her face livens up, she's happy, enthusiastic, recalling her life with her friends):
Well, now that you mention it... everything!

SHEEP BLUE
(up to now quiet, she pitches in, curious):
What do you mean by "everything"? Do explain yourself, please.

MUMU:
Well, to start with, each day we do something different. We play, we meet people and sometimes we even help them.
We propose games and we take part, each one of us bringing new ideas. Because we are all so different...

Having said so, Mumu remains pensive, as if realising something.

SHEEP : PINK

And what's so special about your friends, **sweetie**?

Mumu is quiet for a while, as if she didn't know the answer to that question.

MUMU:

What makes them special is that precisely each one of them is special...

SHEEP : DESI

I bet they're not that special, if you don't know what makes them special...

MUMU

(slightly upset but realising that she has to make the effort the sheep ask her to):

Hmm... What I mean is that each one of my friends is unique and one-of-a-kind. For instance: Alfred is like an encyclopaedia, whenever we need to know something, he explains it to us. Rita is great fun and knows how to cheer us all up ... Olga... Olga is always thinking about the others and how to help... Milo has very good ideas and Talalo...

Talalo....

TALALO:

Tweet tweet tweet...tweet!

Talalo suddenly appears in the scene and Mumu is surprised. She can't believe her eyes.

MUMU:

Talalo? Talalo!

Talalo looks at her without recognising her at first, when he does he starts pulling the wool off her with his beak revealing her chequered attire.

Talalo is astounded, and the sheep more so.

MUMU:

Talalo, can't you see it's me, Mumu? Don't you recognise me? It's me, Mumu, your friend!

TALALO:

Tweet!!!

MUMU:

What a surprise to see you here! Where are the others? Did they all come?

TALALO:

Tweet tweet tweet.

MUMU:

Do I want to get out of there? I'm dying to! But I can't get down. I'm trapped, like the others. We're glued to the sky and we can't break free.

TALALO:

Tweet tweet tweet.

MUMU:

Thanks, Talalo!

Talalo leaves and the sheep strike a conversation with Mumu.

SHEEP 1: DESI

But... who are you?

SHEEP 6: BLUE

You're no sheep!

MUMU:

No, I'm a cow... But not just any cow.

SHEEP (singing): PINK

Dong dong....

SHEEP : PASTEL
And who was that bird?

SHEEP : PINK
First a bird and then a cow... This looks like a costume party!

MUMU:
The bird is wearing no costume. He's my friend Talalo. Doesn't say much, but he's full of surprises!

SHEEP : DESI
I see. As full of surprises as your friends, who came all the way here to find you. They must love you a lot.

MUMU (getting sentimental):
We're a close bunch. We're inseparable...

SHEEP : PASTEL
So then why did you decide to leave them and come with us?

MUMU:
Because I was looking for something new. I love adventures...

DESI:
Yes! Adventures!

SEVERAL SHEEP PINK
(at the same time, looking at each other):
So do we.

SHEEP PASTEL
Yes, of course...

MUMU:
In this case the adventure of being a star. When I heard you talk, I **thought** it was an extraordinary plan. But now I'm slightly disappointed.

SHEEP PINK
It's true, she's right! I don't know if we're doing the right thing being here.

MUMU:
What we know is that we can't be stars up here. We have to break free, and to do so, we must get back down.

BLUE
You're right there.

PINK
Of course! Yes! Yes!

PASTEL
Yes! It's true!

BLUE
It's true, certainly!

SCENE 18.

Outdoors. Afternoon. Palace garden.

Talalo is back from the sky with news that Mumu is trapped up there with the other sheep, and they have to rescue her somehow.

TALALO:
Tweet tweet tweet tweet...

RITA:
What's that? Mumu is dressed up as a sheep hanging in the sky?

TALALO
(nodding):
Tweet tweet.

OLGA:
Why, Mumu has beaten her own record!

ALFRED:
That's true, Olga. It's the most extraordinary thing she's ever done.

OLGA
(proud and admiring):
Super... Mumu!

MILO:
Yeah, but despite her feats, she's now trapped in the sky and we have to rescue her.

RITA (a little sarcastically):
Yeah, now we get to play the hero part...

MILO:
We have to find a way...

NEW SCENE
The King sleepwalking

KING:
(talking in his sleep)
Mummy... mummy... sucksucksuck mommy mommy squirrels in and out... mmmmmh...

SCENE 19.

Indoors. Night-time. Happets' room at the Palace.

The Happets meet in one of the Palace rooms. It's a large, ornate room where five beds have been laid out for them to be together.

OLGA:
So what do we do now?

RITA:
Either we start growing wings or I don't know.

OLGA:
Mumu has no wings and she made it to the sky. I wonder how she did it?

ALFRED
(smiling mysteriously):
You don't need wings to fly.

MILO
It's true. Our attempt to recover the ball proves that we can also fly...

OLGA
But we have to improve the landing bit!! My backside still hurts....

MILO
In order to reach the sky we may not have to fly... if we had a giant butterfly net, we could catch Mumu and bring her down.

RITA
Yeah! Yeah! But where are we going to get a giant butterfly net?

MILO

You're right, it's very difficult. We have to think about something else...

OLGA

Rita is the tallest, the one closest to the sky...

RITA:

But my neck doesn't stretch like chewing-gum.

Except for Alfred, they all start talking at the same time, making a lot of noise, proposing other wild idea. Bits of conversation can be heard:

TALALO:

Tweet tweet, tweet

OLGA:

...a giant slingshot, with a very long rubber that we could stretch...

MILO:

...Yeah! Glued with resin to the trunk of the tallest pine tree...

RITA:

... roller skates with propellers, an ostrich galloping uphill...

NEW SCENE – THE KING SLEEPWALKING

KING

Yum-yum-yum-yum...

OLGA

Ah! Yeah!

TALALO

Tweet tweet tweet

RITA

Yeah!

MILO

(CP)Take a leap from the tallest tree...

OLGA

Or gain thrust using the see-saw...

ALFRED:

There is a solution, technically possible, as invented by the Montgolfier brothers in 1782, consisting of...

They all shut up suddenly and look at him, waiting for the information.

RITA:

Alfred, in extreme situations brevity is highly appreciated.

MILO:

Yeah, Alfred, go straight to the point.

ALFRED

(sighing, with an air of feeling misunderstood):

All right, I'll go straight to the point... We could go up in a balloon.

OLGA:

Are you talking about a birthday party balloon?

RITA:

One of those couldn't even bear the weight of an ant.

ALFRED

(interrupting impatiently).

It's not one of those. I'm speaking of what is called an aero-static balloon, much larger and stronger. A balloon is a bag that holds gas that is lighter than air, and that's what makes it go up. In the beginning, balloons were made with a paper bag, under which a flame was set because they worked on the principle that hot air is lighter than cold air. Later on they started to use gas.

MILO:

Alfred, stop fantasizing. We have none of that. How are we to build a balloon?

ALFRED:

I'm the theoretician. It's up to you to put my idea into practice.

MILO:

I bet we'll find all we need in the palace.

RITA:

Let's assign ourselves tasks. I'll make the bag for the balloon...

TALALO:

Tweet tweet tweet.

MILO:

As you like it, Talalo, you be in charge of that. I'm off to find some sacks.

OLGA:

So I'm off for ropes.

ALFRED:

All right... although I'm the scientist, I can give you a hand. I'll get the flame for heat.

SCENE 20.

Indoors. Night-time. Happets' room at the Palace.

Talalo goes out the windows and vanishes. Milo and Olga exit the room through the door. Rita gets up decidedly.

RITA:

I have an idea!

SCENE 21.

Indoors. Night-time. Happets' room at the Palace.

Alfred is in the library.

ALFRED:

Excuse me...

SQUIRREL 1:

Yes?

ALFRED:

Could you provide me with an oil lamp and some matches? I'm trying to read the Encyclopaedia Britannica and there's not enough light in my room. You see, I can't fall asleep unless I read a chapter before tucking in.

SQUIRREL 1:

I'll bring them straight away, don't you worry..

RITA:

Let's get to work!

SCENE 22.

Outdoors. Night-time. Palace garden.

Talalo is fluttering around picking up sticks that he then uses to build a basket for the balloon as if it were a giant bird's nest.

SCENE 23.

Indoors. Night-time. Palace Corridors. Kitchens. Pantry.

(NEW SCENE)

The King is sleepwalking along the corridors and nearly bumps into everything.

KING:
(Mumbling)

SEQUENCE. SQUIRRELS COOKING

Milo is rambling along the palace corridors. He sees a sign with a chef's hat.

SQUIRREL COOK
I won't give up until you learn! We take the flour... we put it into the bowl...

SQUIRREL 2 ASSISTANT 1
Atishoo!

He goes down to the pantry and takes a few bags at random containing nuts, flour and other supplies. He goes back up to the room with a great burden.

SQUIRREL 1 COOK
We carry on without stopping and we add milk little by little...

singing

SQUIRREL 1 COOK
It's almost ready! We put down the fork, we top it with a cherry and ... hey presto!

KING
Smells delicious! I wonder how it tastes?

MILO: (voice off)
What a mess the squirrels are making! I bet there are sacks in there...

SCENE 24.

Indoors and Outdoors. Night-time. Hall and entrance to the Palace.

We see Olga wandering about the palace, looking at everything. Finally, she reaches the entrance, opens the door and exits.

Since it is dark, she fails to see a pole in her way and bumps into it. It's the palace flagpole, when she bumps into it, the rope and flag break loose and fall on top of her. She struggles under the flag until she finally emerges. She is horrified at the mess she's made.

SQUIRREL TRUMPETERS:
(Unintelligible mumbling)

OLGA:
There goes!
What a mess... Well... here are the ropes, I've got them! Good! We have to get rid of the evidence, so I'm taking the flag too.

She quickly gathers the ropes and the flag, rolls them up and goes inside the palace. At the foot of the stairs there are two squirrels on guard.

SQUIRREL 3

Hey, did you hear something?

SQUIRREL 4

It might be the King, on one of his night rounds.... you know he's a sleepwalker...

SQUIRREL 3

Yeah, you're probably right.

Meanwhile, inside the Palace, on the stairs that go down to the hall, we see the King's silhouette in the half-light, he walks down the stairs, asleep, stealthily, with his arms outstretched, wearing a silken night robe and a matching scarf. Olga, carrying the huge flag wrap, can hardly see where she's going and she rushes to the stairs and crashes into the King, they both fall and roll down the steps. They end up in a bundle of legs, ropes, and flag at the bottom of the stairs. Zoom onto Olga's puzzled face, she has a slipper on her head. She reacts quickly, recovers the flag and ropes, and shoots up the stairs before the King wakes up and realises what's happened.

KING

Guards!

The two squirrels enter the Palace. Squirrel guard 1 has its head bandaged after being hit by Octopini's hammer..

KING

I have just been attacked by a ghost wrapped in a carpet!

The squirrels look at each other bewildered, as if the King were mad.

SQUIRREL 3

Your Majesty, go back to your chambers. We'll take care of arresting the carpet ghost.

The King finally goes back to his chambers.

SQUIRREL 3

We're in for a night! Looks like nobody wants to sleep.

SQUIRREL 4

(yawning):

Except for us. I can barely stand on my feet...

SCENE 25.

Indoors. Dawn. Happets' room.

MILO:

Get it all out through the window, quietly. Carry the sacks on your shoulders.

Dawn breaks shyly through the window in the Happets' room. They all get up quickly and throw everything out of the window: ropes, the sack for the balloon enveloping the oil lamp, to cushion the fall. Then they leave the room.

Outdoors. Dawn. Palace entrance.

They walk past the guards at the entrance. Milo, Olga and Rita carry each a pair of sacks.

SQUIRREL GUARD 1:

Good morning. Early risers! And carrying a heavy load!

ALFRED:

Yes, each morning, before sunrise, we do our gymnastics. We have to keep fit!

MILO

One, two; one, two, one, two....

As soon as they're out of the guards' sight, they quit the gymnastics and start running to the back of the palace

MILO:

Great! Here we can set up the balloon unnoticed!

They start the set-up.

ALFRED

(20.09)Wow! (Gesticulating)

MILO

(20.12) Ah!

RITA

(20.14)Yeah!

TALALO

Tweet tweet tweet .

Once they're done, Talalo arrives bringing the sticks, Alfred makes a cross with them and sets the lamp on top. He lights it and the canvas starts inflating into a balloon shape. Now we see for the first time the outcome of Rita's work all night long: a very funny patchwork, made up of underwear (white with red hearts), scarves, a hat, and whatnot.

Once the balloon is inflated, Alfred gives the order.

SQUIRREL SERVANT:

Good morning! Breakfast! Where are they?

ALFRED:

Crew ready! Off to the skies!

Milo lets go of a couple of sacks. The balloon lifts slowly.

SQUIRREL COOK:

I don't understand a thing! Ten sacks of nuts I had to make the Sunday cakes are missing. Have you seen them go by?

SQUIRREL 3

But, do you think sacks have legs?

SQUIRREL COOK:

They might not have legs, but I tell you they're missing.

SQUIRREL 4

(giggling):

This is probably the doing of the carpet ghost, the same one that attacked the king last night.

SQUIRREL 3

(thoughtful, trying to remember, without paying heed to the other squirrel's joke):
Sacks...? Sacks? Why does it ring a bell...? Didn't we see some sacks this morning?

SQUIRREL 4

Ah, now I know. I recall having seen sacks on the move, I just can't give you any more details...

SQUIRREL 3

One, two, one, two... Hmm

SQUIRREL COOK

(with an angry look):

You know what? I'm quitting this job. It's too stressful.

He leaves.

SCENE 26.

Outdoors. Dawn. The sky. Balloon rising.

The Happets sail up to Mumu in the balloon.

OLGA:
We're flying! What an adventure!

RITA
(stretching her arms out of the basket):
I never thought we would make it so high up, almost touching the clouds!!

Then one of the clouds (which is really a sheep) touches her shoulder.

SHEEP : GOSSIP
Hello! What are you doing up here?

MILO:
We're looking for a cow dressed in blue chequers. Her name's Mumu.

SHEEP : GOSSIP
A cow? How strange! I wouldn't know, but there's a bit of a **fuss** over there...

The sheep points to a spot in the sky where there is a commotion of clouds, shouting and noisy voices.

RITA:
I bet Mumu's smack in the middle of it.

MILO:
Yeah, just like her...

Alfred directs the balloon over there and as they are approaching, they recognise Mumu, who is talking to the sheep and waving her arms wildly.

SHEEP (01.52 a 01.55)
Yes, of course!... Well, the truth is I don't know... We have to do it, girls! Wow! I think it's going to be dangerous!... I don't feel like upsetting my hairdo either... I'm tired of being up here... It's so boring! I'm fed up, I want to get down from here!... Of course, it's easy to say so, but...

OLGA
(moved, crying from joy, blowing her nose with a flowery handkerchief):
Mumu, Mumu, at last! It's us!

Mumu hears Olga's and the others' cries and sees the balloon, and she is flabbergasted.

MUMU:
Why... it's my friends... and they're flying over! Alfred! Olga! Rita! Milo! Talalo! Super, how lucky I am! Hail to my friends! Yoohoo!

She is also moved, and crying from joy.

The balloon approaches Mumu and she stretches out her arms towards them. Rita and Milo grab hold of her and pull until they free her from the sky and she lands inside the basket. They all hug one another, Mumu cries from joy and Olga lends her her handkerchief.

MUMU:
Wow, I thought I'd never see you again...

RITA:
We also thought we'd lost you.

MILO:
That's why we came to fetch you.

OLGA:
We can't live without you.

MUMU:
You're are wonderful and admirable. You've come to fetch me despite all the horrible things I said to you... I behaved awfully and yet you're here to rescue me.
I'm not worthy of you.

RITA:
What you said you did without thinking. Don't you see that we know you?

ALFRED:
You have to love your friends as they are.

MUMU:
You're wonderful. Please forgive me.

OLGA:
You're more than forgiven.

They hug.

MILO:

Cut the sentimentalism. We'll have time for that later. We have to get down from here before they find us out.

MUMU:
Yeah Milo, you're right. But there's an added problem...

MUMU:
We have to rescue all the sheep too.

The other Happets look shocked.

RITA:
What? But don't you see they're thousands of them? How are we going to get them into the balloon?

OLGA:
What do we do now?

MUMU:
Wool is strong and flexible... and it's used to knit. I've got it!

She addresses the sheep.

MUMU:
Can you knit wool?

SEVERAL SHEEP (all together):
Of course.

MUMU:
You're going to use your own wool to knit a parachute to help you get back down to earth.

SHEEP (in unison):
Smashing idea!

BLUE/GREEN/PINK
(3.35)Did you hear that?... We have to knit a parachute... Wow, I hadn't used my needles for ages... Come on, if we want to get down from here we must hurry up... My granny was great at knitting, with well precise knots...I'll do anything to get down from here, I'm up to my ears of hanging up here... I remember once I knitted a beautiful scarf, it made heads turn whenever I wore it... I had a lovely beret, so soft and warm.. Well, here's a few inches now....

Fast, we haven't got all the time in the world. Wow, this is looking real good!

(Dubbing take to be divided among several sheep)

SCENE 27.

Outdoors. Dawn. The sky.

The sun is getting stronger and they have little time to lose. The sheep are agitated, they won't keep quiet, and they draw attention from down below.

Outdoors. Dawn. Palace entrance.

SQUIRREL 1:

What's all this noise? Can't you hear it?

SQUIRREL 2:

Well, now that you mention it, looks like the noise comes from the sky.

They both look up and see the sheep moving, as well as the balloon up there.

SQUIRREL 5:

The Sheep are rioting.

SQUIRREL 6

And what is that strange device doing up there?

SQUIRREL 6

Get the spyglass.

Squirrel guard 1 takes a spyglass and focuses it to the sky. Through it a circle can be seen closing up on a sack.

SQUIRREL 5

Bad news! Our sacks of nuts have been stolen! No cakes this Sunday!

SQUIRRELS 7/8/9 SAD LOOKS

SQUIRREL 8

The best part of this job and it's sneaks out from under our very noses!

Then it focuses on the balloon and its occupants.

SQUIRREL 5:

Why, it's the King's guests! How strange! We have to warn his majesty. Come on! Come on! Come on!

Squirrel 5 goes inside the palace.

SCENE 28.

Outdoors. Daytime. The sky.

In the meantime, the sheep keep on knitting in the sky, cheered by the Happets.

SCENE 29.

Outdoors. Daytime. King's balcony. Palace.

The King comes to the window and looks at the scene, gaping and dumbfounded.

Outdoors. Daytime. Meadow by the Palace. Catapult area.

The servants are trying to sabotage the rescue, throwing pineapples with the catapult, first to the balloon and then to the sheep or to anything that moves in the sky. They aim the catapult at their targets.

SQUIRREL R

That blue chequered material is the perfect target.
Ready... Aim! fire!

Finally a pineapple brushes past Mumu's head, and up in the balloon they realise what's happening.

MUMU:

Look! We're under attack!

ALFRED

Well, well!

OLGA

What?

RITA

How come?

MILO:

It's a pineapple bombardment!

RITA:

There after you, Mumu. Get down!

They all get down inside the basket.

SHEEP: BULOSA

They're under attack!

SQUIRREL R

Fire!

SCENE 30.

Outdoors. Daytime. The sky. Balloon.

One of the pineapples hits the balloon, perforating it slightly and it starts to deflate and fall dangerously.

MILO

Oh!

OLGA

Ah!

ALFRED

Wee!

ALFRED:

We've been hit! The balloon is torn! We're going to fall!

OLGA (horrified):

What do we do now?

TALALO:

Tweet tweet.

Talalo flies away from the basket and up to the top of the balloon, sticking his beak into the hole to stop the fall.

ALFRED:

Great idea, Talalo! You, let off ballast. We have to get rid of weight to slow down our fall.

Milo starts to let go of the sacks. The balloon's fall is slowed but not stopped.

Out of coincidence a sack hits on of the catapult's operators on the head and squashes him.

Olga, Rita and Mumu, watching the movements down below from the top edge of the basket, see the effect of the

fallen sack.

RITA:
Good shot!

OLGA:
Good shot! Milo, you're my hero.

MUMU:
Good one, Milo! One good knock-out! Now aim again and go for the rest of them.

MILO:
Well help me then.

SCENE 31.

Outdoors. Daytime. The sky.

The sheep have finished knitting: they are now thin, with hardly any wool left as they spent it all to make their parachute. They are seen as if they were in their underwear, with a sort of woollen bikini. They feel ashamed and they cross their legs in modesty. Finally, they break free from the sky and jump with the parachute all in one go, feeling modesty and happiness at the same time.

SHEEP: HAPPY
Getting back down to reality! On the road to freedom!
The Happets take the sacks and start aiming at the target.
Down below, the squirrels find out about this maneuver.

SQUIRREL R
Careful! It's raining sacks! Get under cover!

SQUIRRELS
(7.40)Under cover! Run! Come on!

Zoom onto one of the squirrels, who's been knocked out by a sack that burst on its head, covered in nuts and seeing cakes instead of stars spinning around its head because of the thump.

And so, by throwing the sacks the Happets neutralise the catapult, despite the continuous shower of pineapples and the fact that the balloon keeps falling, and a crash seems inevitable.

SHEEP XICA (7.24)(Facing camera-Track)
Baa!
SHEEP YULA (Facing camera-Track)
Ooh!
SHEEP ZALA (Facing camera-Track)
Wow!

One of the sheep's parachute is hit by a pineapple while still airborne, and the sheep plunges on top of the balloon, knocking off Talalo who lets go of the hole he was plugging with his beak, and the balloon plummets.

YULA(Screams while slipping)/(Gesticulates falling)
Waah!

TALALO:
Tweet tweet, Tweet

ALFRED:
Am I dreaming or did I hear Talalo tweet?

The sheep cannot grab a hold and slips down the side of the balloon.

RITA
(craning her neck and realising what's going on):
Aah! Sheep coming!

SHEEP : YULA
Help! I'm going to die!

MUMU:
Milo, to starboard!

Milo leans over, stretches his arms and catches the falling sheep just in time. They struggle dangerously on the edge of the basket. With Mumu's help they finally get her in.

SCENE 32.

Outdoors. Daytime. Palace entrance.

Squirrel Guard 1 keeps looking through the spyglass and realises that several squirrels at the catapult have been knocked out.

SQUIRREL 5
Comrades, come!
Everyone to arms! Get ready to fight. Our **country** is in danger. Charge!

Many squirrels come to the call.

SCENE 33.

Outdoors. Daytime. The sky. Balloon.

The balloon keeps deflating in free fall.

OLGA:
We're going to crash!

MUMU:
Yeah, instead of being stars we'll see the stars.

They all hold hands and cry together:
Agggggghhhh...

The balloon finally crashes in the Palace gardens and they are all projected out of the basket, landing with a slight thump, funnier than painful.

The troupe of squirrels approaches them menacingly.

ALFRED:
Oh... my... God!

MUMU:
Well, Alfred, I see you've caught it too!

ALFRED:
Which means: There they are and they're after us!

OLGA:
What do we do now?

RITA:
Help!

MILO:
We're lost!

MUMU:
There's no **escape!** There are thousands of them!

The squirrels, led by the Squirrel Guards, rush towards the Happets.

SQUIRREL R
(angrily):
Squirrels' rights are sacred!

The squirrels pass by the Happets, ignoring them.

ALFRED:
But... they're not even looking at us!

Zoom onto the squirrels, reaching their goal: the area where the sacks have landed.

SQUIRREL GUARD 2:
Get back whatever you can!

SQUIRREL GUARD 1:
Do not lose a single nut. On my honour that we'll be having cakes on Sunday!

SCENE 34.

Outdoors. Daytime. Balcony at King's chambers. Palace.

The king is standing on the balcony.

KING:
Bring them all to me immediately.

Outdoors. Daytime. Palace gardens.

A regiment of squirrels fetches the Happets and all the sheep. They are taken to the King. The Happets are crestfallen and somewhat fearful. The sheep are not at ease either. Finally, they all meet the King.

The King suddenly starts to laugh his heart out and applauds delighted at everyone. His servants cannot believe their eyes seeing him laugh for the first time.

KING:
Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha... This is the best I've ever seen in my life!
What fun, what imagination, what talent, what ingenuity of yours!

Hearing the King laugh, they all relax and smile. The danger is over. The squirrels, stunned at first, end up by laughing with the King all in unison.

SQUIRREL 1:
The king is cured!

SQUIRREL 2:
Yes, it's a miracle!

SQUIRREL 3:
The miracle is not having lost a single nut

Everyone starts talking at the same time: the sheep are chit-chatting, excited for what has happened, and so do the Happets and the servants. A hullabaloo breaks out until the King orders silence.

PASTEL//(Laughter)/(11.10)(Gesticulation)
How lucky! How good!

CLARITA//(OFF)(Laughter)/(11.10)(Gesticulation)
Wonderful! Yeah!

KING:
Order! One at a time.

Then Mumu emerges from the crowd. She takes off what cotton was left on her clothes. Thus her true identity of a cow shows. The King sees her and is perplexed:

KING
(speaking softly to himself):
It's a cow! She's good looking!

The Kings eyes show he's falling for Mumu and on his pupils her blue chequered pattern starts to show.

KING
(out loud):
What's your name?
(more solemn now)

MUMU:
My name is Mumu.

The Kings thoughts are spelled out in a cartoon-type speech bubble, portraying calves with a mixed pattern of blue chequers and ermine, as if being his and Mumu's offspring.

KING:
Speak then, Mumu.

MUMU:
Thank you, your Majesty! I left home and my friends seeking adventure: to become a star. I arrived at your court with the sheep and we were put up in the sky just for decoration.
I found out that was no adventure, but just a nuisance. That's why I rebelled and escaped from there.

KING:
Aha... Carry on.

MUMU:
I may have not achieved to become a star, but I have learnt that the important thing is to be oneself at all times and stay loyal to your friends. And, above all, I have learnt that appearances are not important, but what one has inside.

SHEEP : ZALA
You are a true star, Mumu!

BLUE
Yes, yes, a star! Yes, Mumu!

XICA
The shiniest one! Yes, yes!

SHEEP YULA
Of course you are, Mumu, or don't you remember the definition of a star that we gave you?

SHEEP: XICA/YULA/ZALA

Stars are stars because they shine when the right time comes” (they carry on) “It's a streak of genius, an extraordinary spark... in the right place”.

BLUE
And we shall always look up to you and admire you...

They surround her, hoist her and carry her on their shoulders cheer her.

CLARITA/XICA/YULA/ZALA:
Mumu, Mumu, Mumu!

Finally they put her down in front of the King.

KING:
Do you have anything else to say?

MUMU:
Up there none shone with her own light, as stars are supposed to. Your Majesty, give them the chance to show how inventive and original they can be.

KING:
So be it, then.

MUMU
Are you willing to show your talent for once and for all?

SHEEP- XICA, YULA, ZALA:
Yes, yes, yes!

SCENE 35.

Outdoors. Daytime. Palace garden

Dance

THE END.

Epilogue:

After the end, we see a close-up of Olga's face, smiling, winking and saying:

What do we do now?