

# *FOREVER PLAID*

## *Character Descriptions*

FRANCIS: The leader and caretaker of the group. He has the most confidence. He takes care of his fellow PLAIDS and makes sure that everyone knows where they're supposed to be and what is supposed to happen next. He is also the connection between the audience and the guys. He has asthma which acts up whenever numbers are too fast or the choreography too energetic. He has a great deal of compassion for the music and the group. He is always saving the guys from embarrassment. He feels obliged to keep the show moving and is always apologizing to the audience when it's not going as he hopes. When he does his speech at the end he must not preach or pause during it. FRANCIS must be as humble as they come, or else there is a danger that he will seem like a "lounge lizard" and the audience will tire of him. Despite his humility, he is "Romantic Crooner". In "Chain Gang" he sings his heart out like a great spiritual singer.

(Second tenor-Lyric Baritone)

SPARKY: The clown — the imp — the scamp. The "cut-up" of the group. He is always looking for ways to crack jokes. He is very sharp and loves singing his tailor-made solos. He wears a retainer and has a slight speech impediment or lisp. Even though he is energetic and clever, he cares for his step-brother. He sings with a joyous bravura and loves to perform. He loves to tell stories and relishes every word. He is the comic engine of the show. He often speaks so fast that he repeats himself. ("It's time for Crazy 'Bout You", It's time for "Crazy 'Bout You". I love this number. I just love it.") He has his moment of tenderness during THE PERRY COMO section. He has to admit to Mr. "C" what he did was wrong. Since he starts out with great verve and showmanship, his arc has to soften. The class clown is shown to have a heart.

(Baritone)

JINX: The shy one. He is terrified. He doesn't always remember what song comes next or what the next move is. He is Sparky's step-brother and there is a little step-sibling rivalry going on between them. He occasionally gets a nose bleed when he sings above an A. He lives his life terrified. He was abused and beaten. He is only in the group because he sings great and high. The others are very protective of him. He transforms during "Cry" and sheds his fears to be the star we always thought he could be. After "Cry" he has metamorphosed from being a timid boy to a more confident man.

(Tenor)

SMUDGE: The worrier. He worries about the props, about the running order and always assumes that the audience won't like him. He has a chronic nervous stomach. He is very reluctant to perform. He is also dyslexic when it comes to telling his left foot from his right. His name is Smudge because he is left-handed and he would smudge the page every time he wrote. Smudge never enjoyed or appreciated what he had. He always worried about what was coming up and regretted what had passed. He was stuck in the "would've, should've, could've" syndrome. At "Rags to Riches" he lets go of this and just "is." — He bowls us over with sheer stage presence and musical prowess. His glasses are accidentally thrown off and he is gorgeous. At the top of the play he wanted to skip the whole event and leave. At the end he's the last one to want to leave. SMUDGE wears glasses which hide his good looks and sex appeal.

(Bass)

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Although there is a great deal of humor in *FOREVER PLAID*, the show must be performed "straight." The characters should never be aware of the humor, except where noted. These are each individual characters, who in life, were not successes, but they had a deep passion for music. They are not sure of themselves as performers, yet when they sing, they sound MAGNIFICENT.

The audience must believe that if the circumstances and society were different, they would have become recording stars. The PLAIDS always remain humble, modest, serious and grateful, even Sparky.