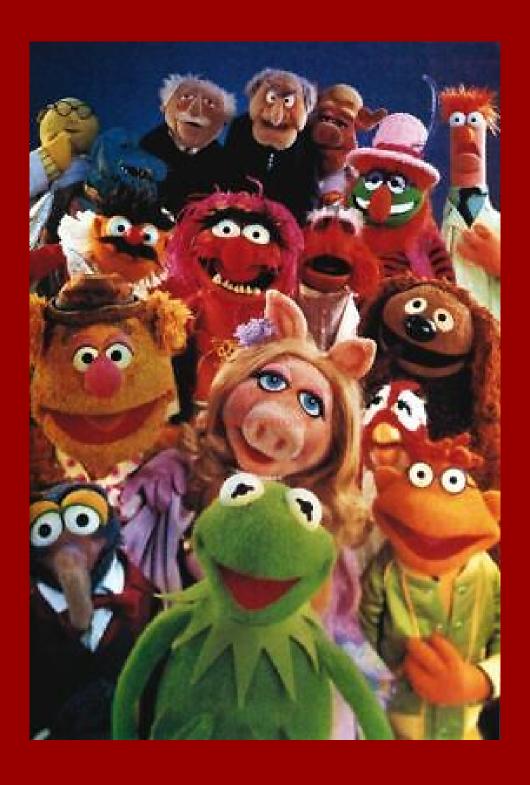
# **Meltdown in the Muppets Studio**

**ENMUNC V, March 21st-23rd, 2025** 



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#### **Letter from the Crisis Director:**

Dear Delegates,

Welcome to ENMUNC! My name is Kian Sheridan, and I am looking forward to being the Crisis Director for the Muppets Meltdown: Muppets in Crisis committee. As a fan of the show, its various spin-offs, and puppets in general, I'm excited to see what actions you all will take to bring this committee forward.

I am a sophomore chemistry major on the pre-med track. I have done Model UN since my freshman year of high school and am in my fourth semester of MUN at Emory. One of my favorite things about MUN is the fast-paced, ever-shifting nature of the debate; you can never predict the direction the committee will take, but adapt nonetheless.

As a lover of the kooky, random nature of the Muppets, I hope for this committee to maintain this energy. This committee should be fast-paced and challenging, yet fun. My goal is to see innovative, creative solutions to the problems that you all will face. Do not be afraid to get into the zany and ridiculous, feel free to explore whatever whimsical solutions which emerge in committee, so long as they appropriately address the problems presented.

In terms of advice for what I'm looking for in your written submissions: for your frontroom directives, I would like to see actions that help the entire committee address individual issues, as these are written by and debated on by everyone in the committee, while in your backroom crisis notes, I want more selfish goals to serve your character's ambitions rather than that of the committee, as these are written and submitted individually. Try to have a few ideas going into the committee about what self-centered goal for advancement your character might have, and make sure to make these goals clear in your notes so that backroom staffers can understand what your overall scheme will be. See the Guide to Crisis Committee section below for more information.

Feel free to send an email if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Kian Sheridan kian.sheridan@emory.edu

#### **Guide on Crisis Committee**

Crisis committees are divided into two parts-frontroom and backroom. Some general guidelines on both:

#### Front room:

The main goal of the front room part of the committee is to give speeches and write directives. Directives are committee-wide actions in crisis committees that are voted on by a simple majority throughout the conference, similar to General Assembly resolutions but more frequent and with a different structure. Unlike the comprehensive resolutions in a General Assembly, directives are concise and focus on specific aspects of the crisis at hand, reflecting the dynamic and fast-paced nature of the committee. Directives will typically advance the goals of the entire committee rather than individuals.

Effective directives are straightforward, concise, and appropriate to the issue at hand. They should clearly outline what the committee seeks to accomplish and how, avoiding unnecessary language that could obscure their intent. Make sure to avoid excessive detail in your directives, as time is a major factor, but still include the necessary detail needed to address the problem. Crisis staff will respond to these directives, evaluating their successes or failures based on their feasibility within the constraints of the committee. By crafting targeted and actionable directives, delegates can better address the evolving challenges of the committee and maximize the impact of their decisions.

You will give speeches before and after writing these directives. Typically, each directive cycle will start with a crisis update, which will provide necessary details and new information based on the results of past committee actions, such as the impact of a previous resolution or crisis note. Then, speeches will be made outlining the solutions delegates have toward the problems highlighted in the crisis update. Sometimes, these speeches will be given over the course of a round-robin, where every delegate present will give a speech on their perspective on the current state of events and what solutions they suggest the committee adopt. After this, the writing process will begin, with delegates splitting into groups to work on directives in groups. Then, delegates will submit and

debate their directives, typically with a set number of speeches for and against their directives. Finally, delegates will vote on which directives to pass, and those which are approved by the committee will go to crisis staff to guide future committee direction. As all this occurs, delegates will also have to work on their backroom crisis notes.

Another aspect of writing done by delegates in the front room are communiques and press releases. A communique is made by the committee to an individual or group, while a press release communicates to the public at large. The purpose of communiques and press releases are to further a goal by directly communicating with an entity rather than indirectly through directives, and will have an impact on the backroom aspects of the committee. For instance, if you are in a committee consisting of the board of a company and a strike has recently erupted, threatening the profits of the company, the committee might write a communique to the leaders of the worker's union to try to address the strike.

For a more detailed description of front room procedure and tips for success, go to this link: https://www.allamericanmun.com/crisis-front-room-in-model-un-guide/

#### **Backroom:**

The main goal of the backroom part of the committee is to advance a personal goal or aim, known as your crisis arc. These can work in parallel to or (even better) against the goals of the overall committee. The way crisis arcs are accomplished are through crisis notes, letters written to characters outside of committee meant to build resources or accomplish individual actions as stepping stones toward your larger goal. For instance, if you are in a committee set in the modern era, and your crisis arc is to become the President, then you might write a crisis note to a random billionaire to ask for funds for your campaign (ideally this committee would be dealing with a political topic so that your crisis arc would then make sense).

Crisis arcs are the personal storylines delegates develop for their characters in Model UN crisis committees, centering on a major end goal and the steps to achieve it. They are typically kept hidden from other delegates, as they may be self-serving and go against the goals of other committee members. A strong crisis arc considers the committee's topics, time period, and the character's persona. These arcs should have a noticeable impact on the committee, often creating

conflict rather than benefiting the group as a whole, and taking shape gradually over the course of the committee rather than all at once. Fluidity is key to a successful arc, as crisis staff may block actions to test adaptability. Delegates must remain flexible, leveraging crisis updates to enhance their arcs and adjusting plans in response to the committee's evolving direction.

Again, many delegates organize their arcs into "missions"—smaller, actionable steps toward the larger objective. This structure allows for alternative paths if one mission fails, ensuring flexibility and resilience. Protection and money are critical elements that often get overlooked. A strong arc, whether executed secretly or with public disruption, reflects strategic planning, adaptability, and creativity.

Crisis arcs are enacted through crisis notes, which are written throughout the committee to carry out actions "behind the scenes." Unlike formal directives or resolutions, crisis notes are written as letters to fictional or real characters imagined within the committee's universe, such as an assistant, colleague, celebrity, etc. These notes build relationships with out-of-committee characters (not a character represented in committee) and serve as the primary means of executing your arc. Often referred to as "writing to the backroom," the content of these notes are typically secret due to their self-serving elements, adding an element of intrigue to the process.

Crisis notes must clearly outline the who, what, where, when, why, and how of your planned actions. Clarity is crucial to avoid misinterpretation by crisis staff and to ensure successful implementation of your plans. Understanding your chair and crisis director's tone early on is also beneficial—serious notes may be more fitting for strict staff, while humorous notes can help build rapport with more relaxed staff and make you stand out. Working collaboratively with the backroom is essential, as staffers will confirm or deny actions and provide feedback. If a particular action is repeatedly denied, it's a sign that it doesn't align with the committee's direction, and you should adjust your strategy accordingly.

Another method to enact one's backroom goals is through joint personal directives, or JPDs. JPDs are effectively joint crisis notes written and sent by two or more delegates, similar to directives, but are sent directly to backroom staffers rather than voted on by a committee. They are typically written to pool resources with another delegate, and are a good way to demonstrate collaboration with other committee members. Additionally, their private nature allows for more

direct steps toward accomplishing your crisis arc, as only those you collaborate with will see what steps you take, though this also means you should be careful not to reveal too much to those you work with.

For a more detailed description of the backroom procedure and tips for success, go to this link: https://www.allamericanmun.com/guide-to-the-back-room-in-model-un-crisis-committees/

# What is *The Muppets Show*:

The Muppets Show was a groundbreaking television series that first aired in 1976, and quickly became one of the most beloved and influential TV programs in history. The show took the form of a variety show, with a seemingly endless array of celebrity guests, musical numbers, and comedic sketches, all hosted by the ever-earnest and perpetually stressed Kermit the Frog. The format was a mockery of the classic variety shows of the era, but with an anarchic twist—brought to life by the zany and unpredictable Muppets.

Muppets are a distinctive variety of puppet invented by Jim Henson in 1955, and have been used in a variety of media throughout *The Muppets* franchise since. Muppets are characterized by their distinctive design and absurdist, slapstick comedy style. They achieved international recognition when *The Muppets Show* aired from 1976 to 1981.

At its core, *The Muppets Show* was about the chaos of running a variety show in the least professional way possible. Kermit, the ever-patient host, was tasked with managing the chaos of the Muppet cast, a dysfunctional group of characters who were more interested in causing mayhem than performing smoothly. Each episode followed a familiar routine: Kermit would introduce the show and guest star, and the Muppets would take turns delivering comedic sketches, musical numbers, and slapstick routines. While Kermit tried his best to maintain order, things often went awry, much to his



frustration and the amusement of the audience. Miss Piggy would often have a diva moment, demanding the immediate attention of her "Kermie." Fozzie Bear and Gonzo would try to tell Kermit about a brand new act they were trying out, which Kermit would inattentively rubber-stamp to disastrous results. Guest stars would interact with the Muppets backstage amidst the chaos and perform various sketches with the cast, often facing heckling from Statler and Waldorf, the theater's resident grouches. A musical number or two from the Muppets' band, Dr. Teeth and the Electric Mayhem, could always be expected, typically with Animal stealing the show with a crazed drum solo. The show would typically end with the performances falling into complete pandemonium, with Kermit hastily bringing the show to an end with his signature farewell, "That's it for this week, we'll see you next time on *The Muppet Show!*"

One of the distinguishing features of *The Muppets Show* was its diverse ensemble of characters, each bringing their own unique personality, quirks, and humor to the stage. This variety of characters was central to the show's success, as it allowed for an endless combination of interactions, comedic styles, and surprises. There was a fresh antic in each skit, from slapstick humor to witty wordplay, nonsensical gags to musical performances.

However, the real magic of *The Muppets Show* lay in its unpredictable nature. Each episode delivered a mix of musical numbers, guest appearances, and physical comedy. Guests ranged from famous actors like John Cleese and Steve Martin to musicians like Elton John and David Bowie, all of whom were game to be part of the Muppets' chaotic world.

Despite decades having passed since its last original airing, *The Muppets Show* remains a pop culture icon. Since the success of the television series, the Muppets have expanded into a full franchise, with numerous movies and TV shows being produced from the original premise. Delegates should seek ways to further integrate *The Muppets Show* in a way to appeal to modern audiences beyond various spinoffs, taking the original concept to new lengths while maintaining the uniqueness central to the Muppets Brand.

# **Current Situation of Muppets:**

Note: In the continuity of this committee, *The Muppets Show* has been airing since 1976.

#### **Dwindling Viewership and Looming Threat of Closure:**

The once-popular live television series *The Muppets Show* has seen its audience steadily dwindle over the past few years. Modern entertainment options, particularly digital streaming platforms, and high-budget productions, have drawn younger viewers away, favoring more contemporary and sophisticated formats. In contrast, the familiar antics of Kermit the Frog, Miss Piggy, and the rest of the Muppets now seem outdated to many of today's tech-savvy generation, who demand faster-paced, edgier, and more immersive content.

As viewership drops, the financial situation of the Muppet Theater has grown increasingly dire. Kermit the Frog, the theater's long-suffering host, has struggled to secure the funding needed to keep the show running. With dwindling ticket sales, a lack of corporate sponsorships, and the loss of key funding from past investors, Kermit finds the show on the verge of bankruptcy.

Even worse, celebrities are now refusing to come on *The Muppets Show*, not wanting to associate themselves with the show's failing brand. All of Kermit's efforts to reach out to celebrities, from Gordon Ramsey to Lady Gaga to Tom Cruise to Oprah, have been ignored or laughed off. This marks a significant departure from only a few years ago, when cultural icons would fight tooth and nail for coveted appearances. This lack of celebrity interest could prove most disastrous of all to the show, as its entire premise hinges on having a famous guest host to interact with the Muppets cast.

Due to these factors, the Muppet Theater, once a vibrant center of creativity and laughter, is now facing closure. Without a significant revival, the gang faces the grim reality that their stage may soon be reduced to nothing more than a fond memory.

#### **Crumbling Infrastructure**

To make matters worse, the Muppet Theater itself is in desperate need of repairs. Years of chaotic performances, unhinged stunts, and general mayhem have taken their toll on the aging

infrastructure. The stage lights flicker erratically, the backstage areas are in disarray, and the once-impressive set pieces have begun to deteriorate. The Muppets, who have spent decades putting on one unforgettable show after another, now face the daunting task of addressing these physical issues with a tight budget and even tighter timelines.

The number one concern is the very foundation of the theater, which has begun to form cracks, which presents a threat to its structural integrity. Constant wear and tear over the decades, from explosions to elephant performances, have chipped away at the cement foundation of the Muppets. Repairs are urgently needed, as without them the Muppets Theater itself could collapse, leaving the Muppets without a stage.

Furthermore, the lighting and sound systems are in dire need of replacement, with equipment randomly failing mid-performance and occasionally spontaneously combusting. Kermit recently realized upon investigation that the entire light and sound budget was siphoned off by Rizzo the Rat towards his exotic cheese collection, and that the equipment have not been updated or repaired once in fifty years.

Additionally, the backstage areas are simply a mess, having descended into chaos ages ago. From the rotting byproducts of the Swedish Chef's culinary disasters left all over the backstage area, to the sweaty gym equipment and spilled protein powder left behind by Link Hogthrob over the course of his wild exercises, to the toxic waste piled up from Bunsen and Beaker's experiments, the backstage area of the Muppets Theater has grown absolutely filthy. Beauregard, the stage janitor, has dubbed the backstage "No Man's Land," refusing to take one step backstage, much less clean it. Miss Piggy, the most fussy of all the Muppets, has grown fed-up by the filth, insisting that her dressing room be moved away from the backstage area. This has presented a great conundrum to Kermit, as there are no dressing rooms that are not backstage. Right now, he has Miss Piggy in a converted janitor's closet that he told her was the most luxurious, private dressing room in the entire studio. However, this ruse can only last so long before Miss Piggy notices the lemony scent pervading the air of her new dressing room and realizes the truth. The backstage area must be cleaned immediately and Miss Piggy moved back to her old dressing room before she discovers Kermit's deception and seeks revenge.

As if this all wasn't enough, the once magnificent set pieces which would adorn the stage of the Muppets Theater have become damaged with their frequent use. These set pieces are essential to creating the backgrounds of the numerous sketches and musical numbers performed by the Muppets and their guests during shows. Between Crazy Harry's explosions and Gonzo's wild stunts, most background pieces have either crater or Gonzo-shaped holes in them, not to mention the impact of decades of wear and tear. As a result of this, most of the Muppets' set pieces and props have become too worn and faded to use, and must either be extensively repaired or simply replaced.

It's clear that something must be done soon—before the iconic venue becomes a husk of its former self, unable to accommodate any performances at all.

#### **Last Chance to Make a Mark**

The fate of the Muppets, and the theater that made them famous, now rests in the hands of the team that built the legacy in the first place. However, the Muppets refuse to give up without a fight, rallying together to enact their most spectacular, unforgettable performances yet—hoping to reignite the magic that captivated audiences decades ago. But time is running out, and with only a few shows left before the final curtain falls, they face an uphill battle.

The pressure is mounting: Can the Muppets adapt to the modern era while preserving the charm and humor that made them so beloved in the first place? Will the audience return to the theater for one last hurrah, or will they continue to flock to newer, trendier forms of entertainment?

The gang must find a way to bring the energy and excitement that made *The Muppets Show* a household name to a generation that has moved on. Whether they lean into their classic antics or attempt to modernize their act, they will have to do it together. The Muppets have always thrived on the strength of their teamwork, their diversity, and their irreverent spirit, and it is this same spirit that will have to carry them through these uncertain times.

#### **Fight for Survival**

The Muppets are no strangers to adversity. Over the years, they've faced numerous challenges, from internal conflicts to external obstacles. But this time, the stakes are higher than

ever. If they cannot regain their relevance, the Muppets may face a future where their performances are relegated to the past, and their beloved characters fade into obscurity.

But the Muppets have always been known for their resilience. Their ability to make audiences laugh, cry, and think—often all at the same time—has remained unchanged, even as the world around them has evolved. As they band together to save the theater, the Muppets are not just fighting for their jobs or their stage—they're fighting for their legacy.

Will they rise to the occasion and deliver a show-stopping performance that revives their fortunes? Or will the final curtain fall on *The Muppets Show*, marking the end of an era? Only time will tell, but one thing is certain: The Muppets aren't ready to give up just yet. With their heart, humor, and determination, they will continue to give it their all, hoping that their unique brand of comedy and chaos can win back the hearts of modern audiences—and save their theater from the brink of closure.

#### **Questions to Consider:**

- 1. What strategies can the Muppets employ to shake things up and appeal to modern audiences?
- 2. How can the Muppets convince celebrities to come on the show as guest stars when the show is at an all-time low in its ratings?
- 3. What can the Muppets do to fix the crumbling infrastructure of the Muppets theater, especially considering their current paucity of funds?
- 4. If *The Muppets Show* falls, what comes next for its cast?

### **Character Dossier:**

- 1. Kermit the Frog: Kermit is the showrunner of The Muppets Show and the undisputed chief of the Muppets. His leadership has seen the Muppets through their worst moments, and he will continue to work tirelessly toward their continued success. A simple frog from humble beginnings, Kermit's reign has been characterized by his steadfast, earnest efforts toward developing The Muppets Show and his kindness and compassion towards others. After five decades of wearing the crown, however, part of him hopes for something new.
- 2. Miss Piggy: Miss Piggy sees herself as the main source of talent in The Muppets Show, bound for fame and fortune. Miss Piggy has gained a good portion of internet fandom for her overdramatic antics, becoming the subject of several memes celebrating her diva-like personality and persistent need to be the center of attention. Overwhelmingly ambitious, she stops at nothing to advance her stardom. She probably would have left to embark on her own act long ago if not for her on-again, off-again relationship with Kermit, whom she desperately (and perhaps a bit excessively) longs for.
- 3. Fozzie Bear: A friendly but extremely insecure comedian, Fozzie is terrible at what he does, rarely ever making his audience laugh at one of his jokes. His catchphrase, "Wocka, Wocka!" often caps off yet another failed delivery. Despite his repeated shortcomings onstage, he maintains an optimistic outlook, keeping a sunny disposition even in the face of heckling and insults (often from Statler and Waldorf). He has been a loyal friend to Kermit for decades, and has remained part of the Muppets crew throughout.
- 4. Gonzo (the Great): A thrill-seeking daredevil, Gonzo is always looking for his next big stunt, undergoing various extreme and oftentimes absurd stunts with gusto. Little is known of Gonzo's past, even by Gonzo himself. He doesn't even know his own species, leading to him having a sense of isolation at times. However, he takes this individuality in stride, never

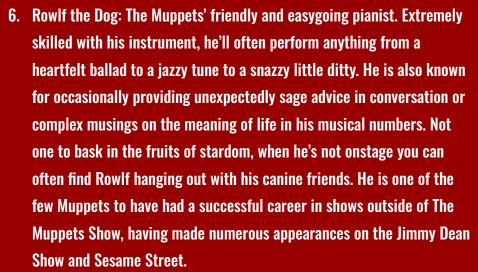








- shying away from developing a novel, unique performance to showcase his talents. He is also in a long-term relationship with his girlfriend, Camilla the Chicken.
- 5. Scooter: Scooter is Kermit's ambitious second-in-command and stage manager of The Muppets Show. The nephew of the Muppets Theater owner J. P. Grosse, Scooter does not shy away from using nepotism to make demands to further his position within the production. Unlike his peers, Scooter has a more quiet and reserved outward personality, which hides his deep-seated desire to earn the love of everyone around him due to his loveless upbringing. Scooter's main responsibility is to ensure order among his fellow Muppets, and as a result has to be intelligent and quick-thinking to address any last-minute backstage shenanigans that often arise during a performance.



7. Swedish Chef: The unintelligible, gibberish-speaking chef of The Muppets Show who runs his own cooking segment. Cooking is his passion; as long as he has a kitchen to cook in and a camera to film it, he is happy as a clam (which he might also cook). His various culinary exploits are known for their unexpected pathways, featuring musical numbers (also unintelligible), live animals escaping before they can be cooked, and numerous kitchen disasters. He has developed a bitter rivalry with the Muppet chickens, as he often seeks to use them

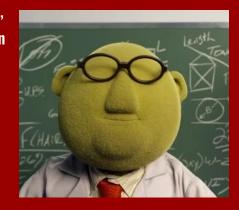






involuntarily as part of his recipes, though he has yet to cook one successfully.

- 8. Bunsen Honeydew: The whimsical head researcher for Muppet Labs, Dr. Bunsen Honeydew is always cooking up one fantastical invention or another, though they often seem to backfire on his lab assistant, Beaker. In spite of his lack of success, he maintains an optimistic zeal for inventing, always putting his all into crafting his next bizarre and equally hazardous invention. A former NASA scientist, with the looming failure of The Muppets Show, Bunsen is considering seeking opportunities outside of Muppets Labs.
- 9. Beaker: The hapless, long-suffering assistant to Dr. Bunsen Honeydew, Beaker has been electrocuted, blown-up, stabbed, and otherwise maimed countless times as a result of one experimental disaster for another. Decades of trauma have rendered Beaker only able to make one sound, a nervous "Meep." Perhaps he is tired of all the endless pain he suffers as a lab assistant in the Muppet Labs.
- 10. Statler: Along with his friend, Waldorf, Statler is a mainstay of the Muppets Theater, attending every night just to heckle the actors. Cranky, irascible, and a general grump, Statler is the perfect encapsulation of the stereotypical grumpy old man. Despite his distaste for The Muppets Show, over the decades he has formed a begrudged bond with the show, which drives him to return every night. Without the Muppets to heckle at, Statler is at a loss as to what he and Waldorf will do with all their time.
- 11. Waldorf: Waldorf, like Statler, is one of the Muppets most loyal, and yet cantankerous customers, having devoted literally thousands of nights just to boo and hiss at the actors onstage. Considering the dwindling attendance rates of Muppet Show performances, his and Statler's patronage might be the only current source of income for the Muppets. With the possibility of





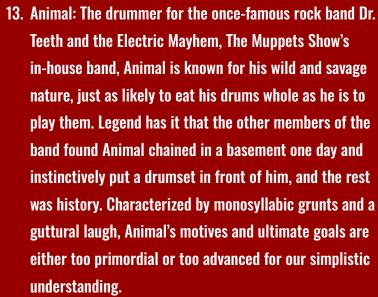




the end of The Muppets Show looming overhead, Waldorf has been left to wonder what might come next.

12. Sam Eagle: Pompous and arrogant, Sam Eagle sees himself as an elite among the other "low-brow" members of the Muppets cast. He is also extremely patriotic, and thinks the show should change its focus to be more conservative to appeal to more nostalgic sensibilities.

Outside of The Muppets Show, Sam is involved in numerous moderate right-wing political activism groups, which has caused some controversy due to the Muppets nonpartisan framework as a comedy show. Outside of this, Sam has long considered using his platform on The Muppets Show to launch a political campaign.



14. Janice: The lead-guitarist and backup vocalist for Dr. Teeth and the Electric Mayhem, some could say that Janice is the underappreciated glue to the group. Her valley-girl background has also served her well as the group's lead social media advertiser, allowing her to market the band to all twelve of their followers. With a flower child-esque demeanor, Janice has been with the group through thick and thin, though the Muppets'







dwindling stardom has also negatively affected the band, and she has been left to wonder what her next move should be.

- 15. Dr. Teeth: The lead singer and keyboardist of Dr. Teeth and the Electric Mayhem, Dr. Teeth has long operated as the leader of the band with a relaxed, quiet mien. Despite his easygoing demeanor, he is loyal to his band at all costs, Dr. Teeth has been left to wonder if it's time to abandon the sinking ship that is The Muppets Show. He's also a real doctor, having worked as a dentist in his family's practice before pursuing his true passion in music.
- 16. Rizzo the Rat: A rat with street-smarts and a New Jersey Accent, Rizzo comes from a long-line of pizza makers, and decided to break the mold by entering show-business. Rizzo does not hesitate to use his streetwise abilities to con people into getting what he wants, often tricking his friends into giving him their money or property. Despite this self-centered opportunism, he is well-liked among the Muppets cast due to his laid-back and approachable nature.

Even considering his tendency for scheming, Rizzo is still loyal and caring to his friends.

- 17. Camilla the Chicken: Camilla the Chicken is Gonzo's longtime love interest and girlfriend, the subject of his obsession and undying devotion. Little is known of her own feelings on the matter, as she has a tendency for aloof, stoic silence. She is also the chosen representative of the Muppets Chickens, which serve as the cast's reliable backup dancers, singers, and musicians, as they all wonder what fate might await them should the Muppets Theater close its doors.
- 18. Beauregard: The devoted janitor and occasional stagehand of the Muppets theater, Beauregard's simpleminded but earnest attempts to help backstage have ended in numerous disasters.

  Despite this, he continues forward with the same naive yet caring







- determination. He possesses incredible strength, able to lift an anvil with one hand.

  Beauregard has long lived in the shadow of the more famous members of the Muppets, and perhaps wishes to enter the limelight, showcasing the myriad talents he has yet to share with the world.
- 19. Crazy Harry: Perhaps the most insane Muppet known to man, Crazy Harry has one and only one love: blowing things up. It is this passion which has led him to great success as The Muppets Show's pyrotechnics expert. With a manic laugh and a mischievously unpredictable persona, one never knows what might explode next when Crazy Harry is around. He never stops to consider the aftermath of his actions, only the thrill of the explosion. As one who has gazed into the abyss and made the abyss blink first, Crazy Harry is a true agent of anarchy.
- 20. Link Hogthrob: As handsome as he is dim-witted, Link Hogthrob is full of manly bravado. A former astronaut before turning to show business, Link gained his niche in The Muppets Show as the captain of their recurring *Pigs in Space* segment. As the self-appointed champion of the Muppets, Link is ready to lead his peers back into the success they deserve, though it remains to be seen how fruitful or appreciated his efforts will be, especially considering his grandiose personality and self-absorption.





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