

Screaming for Science**By Mindy Thomas**

<<Scene opens with Mindy trying out different screams in the bathroom mirror>>

Mindy. Okay...let's try this out. Uh, what's the first emotion on the list, Reg?

Reggie. Coo

Mindy. Pain...okay...uh...ahhhhhhhh!

Reggie. Coo

Mindy. How's that?

Reggie. Coo

Mindy. Okay, gimme another one.

Reggie. Coo

Mindy. Anger? Alright...uh....aaaaaaaaaaaaahhhh!

Reggie. Coo

Mindy. Ooh, I think I'm pretty good at this! What's next Reg? Fear?

<<Scene switches to outside of Mindy's house>>

Mindy. <<From inside>> ahhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh!!!!

Guy Raz. <<To self>> What? What in the? Is that Mindy?!

Mindy. Aaaaaaaaaaaaaahhhh!

Guy Raz. <<Calling out to Mindy>> Mindy!!!

Dennis. Hi Guy!

Guy Raz. Oh Dennis! What's going on inside Mindy's gingerbread mansion?

Mindy. Aaaaaaaaaaaaaahhhh!!

Dennis. I don't know

Mindy. Aaaaaaaaaaaaaahhhh!!

Guy Raz. Dennis, what if she's in trouble in there? What if she needs our help!?

Mindy. Aahhhhhh!!!

Dennis. I mean, she sounds fine...

Mindy. Aahhhhhh!!!

Guy Raz. That's it...I'm going in.

Dennis. Well, you're gonna have to kick down the door. I saw her eat the handle for breakfast.

Guy Raz. Heeeeeeee-ya! <<Door crumbles>>

Dennis. Oh wow

Guy Raz. I'll save you Mindy! Here I come! Run run run run run run run....

Mindy. Aaaaaaaaaaaaaaaah!!! <<Screaming is getting closer>>

Reggie. Coo

Guy Raz. <<Out of breath>> Reggie! Where's Mindy!?

Reggie. Coo

Mindy. Aaaaaaaaaaaaaahhhh!!

Guy Raz. Is she okay? <<Out of breath>> Mindy?!?!

Mindy. Aaaaaaaaooooohhhh Hey Guy Raz!

Guy Raz. <<Out of breath>> Mindy! Wait...are you okay?

Mindy. Oh! Yeah...never been better. Why, what's up??

Guy Raz. Well, well, I just...it's just that I heard you screaming from inside my micro house from next door, so

Mindy. Oh yeah! I was just practicing!

<<Pause>>

Guy Raz. <<About to run out of patience>> practicing? By screaming in front of your bathroom mirror?!

Mindy. Yeah! Practicing my screams!

Guy Raz. So...you're *not* hurt?

Mindy. Nope!

Guy Raz. And you're not in trouble?

Mindy. Guy Raz, do I look like the type of person who would get herself into trouble?!

Guy Raz. Yes!

Mindy. Well, I'm not. I'm just practicing my screams for Scream Con.

Guy Raz. Scream Con? That screaming festival down at the convention center??

Mindy. Yup! That's the one and the theme this year is "outside voices!"

Guy Raz. Oh, that sounds obvious.

Mindy. Yeah and the thing everyone's going to be screaming about this year is this new research study on screams that just came out in the scientific journal plos biology!

Guy Raz. Wait... Screaming...for science?? Tell me more.

Mindy. Well I could tell you, but I'd rather show you. Why don't you come with us to Scream Con Guy Raz!?

Guy Raz. Ugh...

<<Scene change>>

<<Screamin' green peels to a stop>>

Mindy. Here we are! Anyone need a barf bag?

Guy Raz. Uh...well it wouldn't hurt to keep one close by just in case.

Reggie. Coo

Mindy. <<Still outside>> wow...look at this place! A whole convention center dedicated to nothing but screaming for an entire weekend! Makes me feel right at home. Come on, let's go in! walk, walk, walk

Guy Raz. So Mindy, you mentioned that the big excitement this year had something to do with a scientific study on...screaming?

Mindy. Oh yeah! So this new study out of the University of Zurich in Switzerland, involved a team of researchers who set out to um, you know categorize all of the different types of screams.

Guy Raz. Ah sort of like how I categorize my different types of heirloom beans!

Mindy. Uh..yeah! Only a little different. Oh look we're at the entrance!

Ticket taker. <<Yelling>> welcome to Scream Con! Please have your passes ready!!

Guy Raz. <<Loud whisper>> Mindy...do you have our passes?

Mindy. Oh yeah! I sure do...<<yelling>>....here are our passes! I love it here.

Ticket taker. <<Yelling>> thank you! Enjoy your time at Scream Con!

Mindy. Come on! Let's go inside!

<<Loud atmosphere with screams and yells>>

Mindy. Whooooaaaa!! Look at this place, Guy Raz! What a scream!

Guy Raz. What is even happening in here!?

Ticket taker. Hi! Me again!

Guy Raz. Blagh!!

Ticket taker. Sorry! Just wanted to give you a brief tour of the convention hall. See, we've organized the floor by the 6 different types of human screams.

Guy Raz. Six different types of human screams!?

Mindy. Oooh!! Just like the ones that those researchers from the University of Zurich were trying to categorize for their study!

Reggie. Coo

Mindy. Sorry

Ticket taker. Yes. To the left, you'll find all of the classic alarm screams...

Guy Raz. Oh yeah, pain, fear, and...anger?

Ticket taker. Yes! How did you know that?!

Guy Raz. There's just giant signs hanging from the ceiling that say pain, fear, and anger.

Ticket taker. Oh right.

Mindy. And what about the non-alarm screams!? You know...the happy ones!

Ticket taker. Those exhibits are to the right.

Guy Raz. Maybe we should start there, Mindy? In the non-alarm wing?

Ticket taker. Actually, you may want to start at the main stage located in the center of the convention hall. A screaming game show is about to begin!

Mindy. Ooooh! I love game shows! You know...my buddy Guy Raz here and I actually host a....

Ticket taker. Oh look at the time, I gotta run and take the tickets...bye

Mindy. <<Shouting>> it's called two whats and a wow!!! You should check it out sometime!

Ticket taker. Sorry, can't hear you!

Mindy. Uhhh...

Guy Raz. So there are six different types of screams Mindy? Alarm screams? Non-alarm screams? It's amazing, I always just assumed a scream is a scream is a scream!

Mindy. Well as I was saying earlier Guy Raz, those researchers from the University of Zurich began their study by trying to categorize the different types of screams. You know...to show that there's a lot more to a person's scream than meets the ear! It all started with a cognitive neuroscientist named Sacha Fruholz.

Guy Raz. Aha, and a cognitive neuroscientist is a scientist who studies how the different parts of our brains help to create our thoughts and emotions and behaviors.

Mindy. Exactoritos! So one day, this particular cognitive neuroscientist, Dr Fruholz was watching a video of a Beatles concert from 1960 during the height of beatlemania. And he couldn't help but notice that the fans were going bonkerballs screaming with delight!

Guy Raz. As opposed to screaming in fear or anger or pain?

Mindy. Yes! Their extreme joy was so overwhelming that these Beatles fans had no other way to release it, other than to scream their everlovin' brains out!

Guy Raz. Almost like there was no other way to express their joy and pleasure and excitement!

Mindy. Yeah...so if humans scream when we're really really scared or hurt....but we also scream when we're really, really happy or excited, then what else are we screaming about? And is there any difference between all these screams?

Host. If you're happy and you know it, make some noise!

Everyone. <<Wooooooooohhh!!>>

Host. Welcome everyone to Scream Con! Our game show today is based on a new scream study out of the University of Zurich.

Everyone. <<Goes wild>>

Mindy. Guy Raz, this must be the study that I mentioned earlier! I told you everyone here was going to be screaming about it!

Host. Now to get us started, I'm going to need a volunteer contestant.

Mindy. Oooh! Oooh! Oohhh! Pick me! Pick me! I'll be a contestant. Pick me!

Host. You there...the one with the t-shirt that says "Scream into a colander, strain your voice," come on up to the stage!

Guy Raz. That's you Mindy!!! Go, goooo!

Mindy. Walk, walk, walk, walk, walk

Host. Everyone, give it up for today's contestant!

Mindy. <<On the stage mic>> hi, umm...wow...I'm really nervous up here.

Host. And what's your name?

Mindy. My name is Mindy...

Host. Ok, that's terrific. Let's jump right in to the first question...can you name the six different categories of screaming?

Mindy. Okay there are the alarm screams....uh...pain...fear....and anger

Guy Raz. Go Mindy!! Three more!

Mindy. Okay and then there are the non-alarm screams, uh...pleasure...sadness and...uh....uhhhhh....

Guy Raz. Come on Mindy! You've got this!!!

Mindy. Uhhhhhhh, I can't remember! Can I phone a friend??

Host. You know what, let's get your spectacled friend up here to help you out! C'mon up here fella!

Mindy. Guy Raz! Guy Raz! Guy Raz! Guy Raz!

Host. Guy, we asked your friend Mindy here to name the six different screams that were identified in this study...and so far, she's named five out of six...

Guy Raz. Oh! Oh! I remember the sixth Mindy! Remember the kind of screams that Dr Fruholz discovered when he was watching the fans at that Beatles concert!? Those were screams of..<<gets cut off>

Host. Hold on there, not so fast!

Guy Raz. What?!

Host. In order to help Mindy find the answer, you're gonna need to play-- *Guess the Scream!*

Host. We're going to give you a few different scream scenarios...and if Mindy correctly identifies all of the screams, you both win!

Guy Raz. Win what?!

Mindy. Guy Raz!! This is exactly what Dr Fruholz did in the study!

Guy Raz. He roped unwilling participants into a game show?

Mindy. No! He got a group of twelve willing participants to scream the way they would in different situations. Then, he roped in 23 more participants to listen to the screams while Dr Fruholz and his teams monitored their brains! Oooh are you going to monitor my brains?!

Host. Ok, Guy Raz, scream scenario number one...you're the recipient of one of gramma g-force's power hugs.

Guy Raz. You know Gramma G-Force?

Host. Uh, yeah dude, I mean, she's like, super famous. Now! Let's hear your scream.

Guy Raz. Okay...uh...<<scream in pain>>

Host. Ok, now Mindy...it's time for you to Guess...That...Scream!

Mindy. Ooh...uh...yeah, I'M having a really hard time identifying the emotion behind that scream.

<<Buzzer>>

Host. Ooo, I'm sorry, Mindy, that was a scream in pain!

Mindy. Ah, yeah I guess that makes sense since Gramma G-Force does break all of your backbones when she tries to hug you.

Host. Okay, Guy...scream number two. Your friend Mindy says she has just hatched an idea, and it's going to involve costumes...

Guy Raz. Uh okay uh....<<scream in fear>>

Host. Ok, Mindy...what do you think?

Mindy. Uhhh....it sounds like another alarm scream...maybe? Or is that a happy scream? I dunno!

<<Buzzer>>

Host. Ooo, sorry! Time is up. That..was a scream of fear!

Mindy. But you love costumes, Guy Raz!

Guy Raz. Actually...

Host. Alright, scream number three...the friendly neighborhood snoop has just launched a neighborhood blog chronicling all of your personal business.

Guy Raz. Dennnnnisssssss <<scream in anger>>

Mindy. That sounds like a scream in surprise?!

<<Buzzer>>

Host. Awwwe, I'm sorry, but that was a scream of anger.

Mindy. <<Frustrated>>

Host. Let's go to scream number 4...Guy Raz, your favorite band has just released a new album of original elevator music. They are performing that album live in a nearby elevator...and you've got the only ticket to the show...

Guy Raz. Elevator music?!? Front row seat?! Elevators!? <<Scream with joy for a couple of seconds too long>>

<<Hush falls over the audience>>

Host. Ok Mindy....can you, Guess that Scream?

Mindy. Mister announcer man, I would know that scream if it hit me right between the ears which it has. That...was a scream ofjoy!!!!

<<<<Ding ding ding!>>

Guy Raz. <<Screaming in joy>>

Host. Corrrrrrect!!

<<Audience goes wild>>

Mindy. The sixth and final scream is the scream of joy!!! Pain, fear, anger, pleasure, sadness, and joy!!!

Host. Let's hear you scream one more time for our contestants...Mindy and Guuuuuy Raz!!!

Mindy. Yeah, yeah, yeah

<<Off the stage>>

Guy Raz. You know Mindy...it was pretty amazing that out of all my screams...joy was the one that you recognized right away!

Mindy. Well, it's not so surprising Guy Raz...see...that's exactly what Dr Fruholz and his researchers found when they did their study as well!

Mindy. They found that out of all of the different categories of screams, it was screams of joy that the listening group of participants recognized the quickest and the clearest!

Guy Raz. But...why?!

Mindy. Well, the answer to that question is going to require a lot more screaming experiments. But one idea is that positive or joyful screams have become just as important as alarm screams.

Mindy. Screaming! It's not just for danger anymore!