

**CHALKZONE**  
**It's all about Rudy...**  
**(Revised 7/29/99)**

**Rudy Tabootie** is a 10 year old boy who lives with his parents in a small Midwestern suburb called Plainsville.

When Rudy was eight years old he discovered a magic piece of chalk that allowed him to enter an amazing world —"ChalkZone", a place where everything that has ever been drawn in chalk, and then erased, reappears and remains forever —and ever since he's been living a dual existence, one in the Real World, the other in ChalkZone:

**RUDY IN THE REAL WORLD**

**In the Real World Rudy is a Frustrated Adventurer.** He longs to go to exciting places and do exciting things. But there is no adventure in Plainsville. It is as plain as its name suggests—an ordinary town with ordinary, unimaginative people. And Rudy isn't old enough or bold enough to go adventuring on his own. So he's stuck. When he isn't going to ChalkZone, Rudy's only ticket out of his stifling, humdrum home town is...**art**.

**In the Real World Rudy is an Artist.** He's one of those people who draws all the time, on every surface available. He uses every medium available (although he's especially partial to chalk.) He's a comic book artist, which means he creates characters and makes up stories and adventures for them to experience—the type of adventures Rudy wishes he could be experiencing.

**In the Real World Rudy is a Dreamer.** He uses art to escape into fantasy. He has a vivid imagination, dreaming up amazing places and fantastic characters. (This talent serves him well when he enters ChalkZone.) He sometimes drifts into his fantasy world completely. This can result in a kind of "tunnel vision", in which Rudy gets so focused on the art that he loses sight of the big picture (like the time he created that elaborate hamster maze—but forgot the hamster.)

**In the Real World Rudy is a Loner.** Rudy has difficulty making friends, partially out of shyness and partially because—apart from the brainy **Penny Sanchez**—there is nobody in his little world who is on Rudy's "wavelength" (More on this later.)

**RUDY IN CHALKZONE**

**In ChalkZone Rudy is an Adventurer.** In the fantastic world of ChalkZone Rudy finds adventure at every turn. That's what draws him there. This doesn't mean that Rudy turns into a swashbuckler the minute he steps through a ChalkZone portal. He brings all the fears and foibles of a 10-year-old boy with him. But with the help of the magic chalk, and his friends Penny and Snap, Rudy rises to the challenges he meets in ChalkZone and emerges victorious. And some of that newfound confidence comes back with him into the real world. (In this way ChalkZone helps Rudy grow—but gradually. It will take five years—or 110 episodes—for Rudy's ChalkZone growth process to be complete.)

**In ChalkZone Rudy is not preoccupied with drawing.** Back home Rudy uses art to create imaginary adventures. In ChalkZone Rudy uses the magic chalk and his artistic talent to have an effect on real adventures. Rudy's magic chalk empowers him in ChalkZone. He uses it to solve problems, to defeat monsters, to impress his friends, to escape danger. He has no reason to create art for art's sake in ChalkZone. He uses art in the Real World to find adventure. ChalkZone is adventure.

**In ChalkZone Rudy is a Do-er.** Back home Rudy chooses the safety of fantasy over the frustration, danger and possible humiliation of doing things (i.e. going out for sports, joining the school play, getting in a fight, etc.) In ChalkZone the opposite is true. Here Rudy is a boy of action. He fights that dragon, he takes that river rafting journey, he confronts that cyclops, he outwits that bully. The chalk gives him a confidence which he lacks in the real world, and empowers him to act.

**In ChalkZone Rudy has Friends.** One of the great things about ChalkZone for Rudy is that this is where his character **Snap** lives. Back home Rudy has been drawing Snap for years as the hero in his comic book adventures. Snap is not so much Rudy's alter ego as he is the ideal best friend Rudy created for himself. (More on this later.) In ChalkZone Rudy and Snap can actually interact. They are bosom buddies. Rudy also has Penny, who joins Rudy and Snap on many of their ChalkZone adventures. And the chalk inhabitants of ChalkZone look up to Rudy as a creator. He's a celebrity in ChalkZone, with all the adulation, envy, and special treatment that that entails. (More on this later.)

### **What Does Rudy Want?**

- Adventure and fun
- Friendship
- Appreciation for his talents
- Artistic self expression
- Fairness

### **Why can't Rudy find what he wants in the Real World?**

### **RUDY FEELS ISOLATED**

Other Kids think Rudy is a nerd.

From **Reggie Bulnerd**, who takes advantage of Rudy's lack of physical strength, to **Michelle Norwegiano**, who thinks Rudy's drawings are weird, Rudy fails to connect with the other kids of Plainsville.

Rudy is not physically strong, not athletically adept, not quick-witted verbally, not particularly good looking. He has been "marked" by the classroom bully and by the adult authority figure (the teacher) as being a loser, and so the other kids tend to shun him.

Rudy isn't happy about this situation and makes attempts to rectify it, but they always fall flat. Rudy's jokes don't fly. His basketballs don't hit the basket. His artwork is misunderstood. If only his classmates could see Rudy in action in ChalkZone!

Rudy's teacher doesn't "get" him

Not being "smart" in the academic sense, Rudy is perceived as a slacker by his teacher, **Mr. Wilter**. Rudy daydreams during Wilter's boring lectures and doodles on his test papers. This insults Wilter, who thinks Rudy's cartoons are "rude drawings" and punishes Rudy for them. Mr. Wilter thinks cartoons are low brow and a waste of time. He is something of a snob who prefers the finer things in life.

Rudy's parents are oblivious to him

**Mildred and Joe Tabootie** are not neglectful, but they are both preoccupied with their careers and this tends to make them oblivious to their son.

Rudy's father, Joe Tabootie, loves his son but doesn't really understand his preoccupation with drawing. Joe is a straight forward, no-nonsense, meat-and-potatoes kind of guy. He wishes Rudy would buckle down and learn the family business—butchering.

Rudy's somewhat theatrical vegetarian mother, Mildred Tabootie, hasn't got time to pay much attention to Rudy. She has hurled herself into making her "humdrum" life an artform unto itself—with a Martha Stewart-like advice column in the local paper called "Mildred Knows Best."

There is one bright spot in Rudy's Real World Life: **Penny Sanchez.**

Penny is the one person in Rudy's world who is as passionate and obsessive about something as he is. And Rudy is the one person in Penny's world who notices that she's doing extraordinary things with her scientific explorations. Rudy doesn't understand Penny's formulas and theorems, but he's capable of recognizing the spirit of "art" wherever he finds it, from the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel to Michael Jordan's final shot, to Einstein's Theory of Relativity. Rudy understands the spirit of art, and Rudy knows Penny's got it. He sees her as a kindred spirit. And he has a bit of a crush on her.

Penny lives almost entirely in her left brain. She is fastidious, precise, analytical. Like many such people she wishes she could be more spontaneous and whimsical. She never saw that kind of spontaneity in Rudy Tabootie until the day he pulled her into ChalkZone to recover her lost formula. Since then they have had a special friendship. It is based partly on their shared secret of ChalkZone. But it also carries over into the Real World Rudy is the only one who appreciates Penny's scientific acumen. And Penny has had her horizons broadened by Rudy. Now in the Real World she "gets" Rudy's artwork—even if she thinks some of it is a little bizarre. Rudy and Penny are the perfect complement to each other. Penny can focus on the problem at hand and bring Rudy out of his "tunnel vision". Rudy can introduce Penny to an amazing wide worlds that she would be unlikely to discover on her own.

**And then there's Snap**

Snap is the little blue superhero that Rudy draws everywhere. Snap had appeared in countless doodles and four panel comic strip adventures in Rudy's notebooks before Rudy (unwittingly) brought him to life by drawing him on the chalkboard kicking Bullynerd's butt. Now Snap lives in ChalkZone and has adventures with Rudy and "that *girl*" Penny.

Snap is Rudy's ideal best friend. He's the cool kid Rudy would like to hang out with. Snap embodies Rudy's dormant traits, some of which he'd like to bring out more in himself. Snap is funny, fun, assertive, fearless, in your face, quick with the witty repartee. Snap is well liked. Snap makes friends easily. (He also makes enemies easily, but that sort of goes with the territory.) Rudy doesn't wish to be just like Snap. Snap is often rude. Rudy is always polite. Snap frequently screws things up. Rudy usually gets things right. Rudy doesn't want to be *like* Snap. He just loves to be *with* Snap.

### **The Team**

Together, Rudy, Penny and Snap make a solid team that can handle any adventure. Penny is the brains, Snap is the muscle and mayhem, and Rudy is the heart and soul. The only problem with the team is that Penny and Snap don't get along. This is partially due to their competition over Rudy. But it's deeper than that. Snap can't stand Penny's know-it-all attitude—especially because she's so often right. Penny can't stand Snap brash, rude, in-your-face manner—especially because in some hidden part of herself she's attracted to it. If Snap were a real kid Penny would loathe him as a conceited loud-mouth show off. But she'd blush if he paid attention to her.

### **Rudy in ChalkZone**

#### **What do the inhabitants of ChalkZone think of Rudy?**

In Plainsville Rudy is a misunderstood misfit. In ChalkZone Rudy is a celebrity. He's the three-dimensional kid who can draw things in thin air! This definitely gets noticed by the chalk inhabitants. And they have a variety of different reactions to him.

-Most of them think he's great. He's a hero who does wonderful things, like saving them from rampaging dragons. They are happy (and a little excited) to have him around. This is similar to the way emotionally healthy people react to the movie stars they see around Los Angeles. They know Rudy, they love Rudy, they're respectful of his privacy and leave him alone. Rudy likes this. He's getting the appreciation he craves.

-Some ChalkZone citizens are in awe of Rudy. They treat him with adulation, want to be near him, get his autograph, and would gladly open their homes to him and give him anything he wanted. Rudy is a little overwhelmed by this, the way most new stars are.

-There are a few Chalkzone inhabitants who resent Rudy. Bathtub Granny, for instance, wishes Rudy had given her a more pleasant life than her eternally waterlogged existence in that bathtub. And some of the disgruntled rebels in UnFinlandia blame Rudy for their situation (even though he is not directly responsible for their unfinished lot in life.)

-There may be some ChalkZone inhabitants who wish they could go to the Real World and envy Rudy his Real World existence.

These various reactions give us opportunities for various stories and jokes.

### **Some general thoughts about things and creatures in ChalkZone.**

ChalkZone is a place. It is a place created by the imaginations of chalk artists (mostly children) around the world. It therefore contains anything that anyone could possibly draw in chalk and then erase. This means that it contains all the layers of existence found in the Real World, PLUS the fantastic, outlandish, strange, frightening, funny, delightful, and whimsical stuff that comes from the imagination.

As in the Real World, there are unconscious and conscious entities in ChalkZone. The unconscious elements of ChalkZone include natural things such as rocks, trees, oceans, mountains and skies. It also includes manufactured things such as streets, buildings, mailboxes, cars and planes. These things are unconscious because they were drawn that way. If a child draws a street on a chalkboard, with a house, a telephone pole and a mailbox, and then erases the drawing, it becomes a street in ChalkZone with a house, a telephone pole and a mailbox. That house, telephone pole, mailbox and street will never move, or dance, or speak, because the child who drew them didn't intend them to. If the child drew fire hydrants on the street playing a game of kickball, those fire hydrants would be able to move in ChalkZone, because the child intended them to move. That's what the child imagined, and the child no doubt drew the fire hydrants with "movement lines", or in positions that suggest movement (such as being two feet off the ground, having just kicked a ball, which is flying away from the kicking fire hydrant.)

There are two categories of conscious entities in ChalkZone. Animal-like conscious entities who behave according to their instincts, and human-like conscious entities who can think and reason and have opinions. The Wiggies, for instance, are animal-like. They have no "opinion" about Rudy Tabootie or anything else. They are like frogs who eat hair. When they find an especially good source of hair they go for it. There are many such animal-like creatures in ChalkZone.

Human-like conscious ChalkZone inhabitants have the personality that their creator intended for them. If a kid draws a "mean man" and then erases him, the chalk version of that man will be mean and grouchy. If an artist draws a happy dancing mermaid, the chalk version of it will be a happy creature who leaps and cavorts in the water and on land.

ChalkZone inhabitants, therefore, run the gamut of emotions and personalities. Most would be well adjusted and find ways to be happy. A few are bitter, cynical, angry, mean.

There is not a general desire among ChalkZone inhabitants to leave ChalkZone and go to the Real World, the same way there is not a general desire to leave earth and go to Jupiter (even if such a thing were possible), or, to leave America and go to Thailand. There are some Chalk creatures who might find the Real World appealing. But since the Real World, which is 75% water, is a hostile environment for creatures made of chalk, there won't be a lot of Chalk inhabitants clamoring to climb through Rudy's portals

### What limitations are there to Rudy's power in ChalkZone?

Rudy's magic chalk gives him huge power in ChalkZone. But he is not completely invulnerable. There are three ways Rudy's power can be limited—Imagination, Time and Access:

**Imagination:** Rudy must use his imagination to come up with the *right* solution to the problem. After all, the chalk doesn't think. It's just a tool. It's up to Rudy to have the idea that will save the day. This doesn't always happen immediately.

Here are three of the many examples that have appeared in our cartoons and stories of Rudy being kept in jeopardy until he found the right solution:

- When Rudy first uses the magic chalk in Episode I, he draws a horseshoe which drops on the head of the rampaging Bullynerd monster. It has little or no effect.

- Later he draws a cage around the beast, but forgets to put a floor on it. Bullynerd easily escapes.

- In the "Amazin River" episode, Rudy battles Cy Clops, first drawing a cannon, and then a lion. Cy easily does away with these paltry threats. It is only when Snap temporarily blinds Cy and Rudy draws a winch to hoist Cy into the air that his imagination provides him with the answer that will defeat his opponent.

**Time:** Rudy can draw very fast but it does take *time* to complete a drawing, and during that time he is vulnerable to attack.

- In "Snap out of Water" Rudy is swimming for the surface of the Wait n Sea when he is grabbed by the tentacle of a Sumo Octopus. Rudy doesn't have time to get to the chalk before he is squashed beneath the Octopus.

- In "Rudy's Date" Butch Biceps attacks our heroes on his motorcycle. This takes Rudy and Penny by surprise. Rudy doesn't have time to think of a way to stop Butch until after Butch has run over Snap.

**Access:** Rudy doesn't always have access to the magic chalk.

- Sometimes Rudy has the chalk but he can't get to it. This happened on the Amazin' River when he and Snap were being squeezed in the coils of the Mumbo Jumbo snake. In that situation, Rudy couldn't get to the chalk. Luckily, the snake was hit on the head by a paint can from the polluted city sewage pipe and Rudy and Snap got away.

- Other times Rudy loses the chalk and has to get it back, as in "Birdhouse Blues", when Rudy drops the chalk as he's being carried away by the giant canary, and Snap has to return it to him.

- And sometimes Rudy runs out of chalk from using it too much. This happens on the Amazin River when he draws a rudder to get past the mountain men, a plug to plug up the sewage pipe, and a motor to get away from the angry city people. The magic chalk crumbles into dust. Luckily Rudy and Snap find the Magic Chalk Mine and Rudy gets a lifetime supply of chalk. But he doesn't always carry all his chalk with him. So he can, and will, get into adventures where he uses the chalk too much and doesn't have access to any more.

### **What danger is there for chalk characters in the Real World?**

We learned in "Snap Out of Water" and "The Wiggies" that chalk characters in the Real World are invulnerable to pretty much anything except erasure. If they are erased—by water, or an eraser—they will cease to exist. So there is genuine mortal danger to chalk characters in the real world.

### **What danger is there for Real World characters in ChalkZone?**

There are two categories of jeopardy for humans in ChalkZone:

#### **1) Pain and injury.**

*ChalkZone* is a Cartoon Comedy/Adventure series. That means that we will play jeopardy (falling off a cliff, being eaten by a monster, etc.) as real jeopardy—Rudy and Penny will be appropriately frightened when faced with danger, and do anything to avoid it.

But since ChalkZone is a "cartoon universe" we will relax the laws of physics inside ChalkZone to allow for funny cartoon gags and stories to happen. For example: When Rudy jumps off a cliff in ChalkZone he can save himself by landing in a bathtub. In the Real World he would be subject to the actual laws of physics and bash his head on the bottom of the bathtub. In ChalkZone he will just get a mouth full of bath water. If he misses the bathtub he will crash into the ChalkZone ground and be injured.

There is a second, more significant danger to Rudy (and any Real World creature) in ChalkZone...

#### **2) The danger of turning to chalk.**

In a story yet to be developed, Rudy will learn that if he stays in ChalkZone beyond a certain amount of time (TBD) he will begin to turn to chalk. This phenomenon will happen gradually. It will be reminiscent of the way Marty McFly began to disappear in *Back To The Future* when he was unsuccessful in getting his parents together. It will be reversible only by getting back into the Real World before the transformation is complete. Failure to do this will mean that the human in question will turn into a chalk character and remain a chalk character forever. He will become an ordinary chalk citizen. This new jeopardy will serve as ChalkZone's "kryptonite", its "ticking clock". It will be the reason why Rudy doesn't stay in ChalkZone. It will be a danger not just to Rudy but to all Real World characters who venture into ChalkZone. This jeopardy will be the focus of a number of stories and will always lurk in the background of every story, providing an element of suspense and genuine danger.

### **ChalkZone Geography**

*"The world is so full of a number of things, you'd think we should all be as happy as kings."* Robert Louis Stevenson

ChalkZone is a hodgepodge, a patchwork quilt of different drawing styles. Any creature might interact with any other. Any terrain might abut any other. This is the show's original concept and a major part of its charm. In terms of flora, fauna, and geography, anything can happen in ChalkZone—including the possibility that some ChalkZone creatures might organize themselves into separated neighborhoods, regions, or countries.

This shouldn't be difficult to understand since it is only a slight exaggeration of the way our own world is organized. Physically, any person or creature can go anywhere on the planet earth. In some places (Times Square, the beach, the subway, a baseball game) all races, classes, genders and ages intermingle. In other places (Korea Town, Beverly Hills, The Elephant's Burial Ground, China) you find only Koreans, or rich people, or elephants, or Chinese. The same is true in ChalkZone except that the places and things inhabiting it are more fantastical because they are imaginative drawings that have been erased. And the different geographical terrains are only inches, instead of miles, apart.

To clarify any lingering confusion about ChalkZone Geography as it stands in the summer of 1999, we have created a map that lays out ChalkZone as we currently know it. This map will specify the locations of such landmarks as The Portal at Rudy's Classroom, The Portal at Rudy's Bedroom, The Amazin River, The Candy Cane Forest, etc. We have intentionally not overloaded the map with locations, so as not to overwhelm our audience with a constantly changing world. We will stick to this map, setting our stories, for at least the first season, only in locations that have already been established by the map.

### **ChalkZone Repertory**

To avoid constantly meeting and servicing different characters in ChalkZone we will begin to develop a ChalkZone Repertory, doing stories that use chalk characters we have already met and are familiar with. (e.g. Bathtub Granny, Rapsheeba, Blocky, the Polar Bear.)

### **SOME ADDITIONAL RULES OF *CHALKZONE* (THE SERIES) AND *CHALKZONE* (THE PLACE)**

Here are some things we now know for sure:

- Rudy has the only supply of magic chalk that exists in the “real” world. It is a lifetime supply that he and Snap got from the magic chalk cave in the “Amazin’ River” episode. As the series unfolds it is possible that some other “creators” might get their hands on magic chalk and show up in ChalkZone. But for now, Rudy is the one human with access to magic chalk.
- A portal into or out of ChalkZone may only be drawn on a place where chalk is used. So, all chalkboards are potential portals. A hopscotch grid could become a portal. A sidewalk or street where someone has done a chalk drawing could become a portal, as well as a wall where someone has written or drawn something in chalk. All other locations cannot be used as portals.



- A portal needs to be erased after it has been used, to preserve the secret nature of ChalkZone. It must be erased from the side it was drawn on. (That's where the chalk markings are, after all.) So, if Rudy draws a portal on the classroom blackboard and goes into ChalkZone, he must reach back into the real world to erase it.
- When Rudy creates something in ChalkZone with the magic chalk, he first draws the outline of the object. When the outline is completed the color pops on and the object is ready for use.
- Erasing is not a danger inside ChalkZone. To allow it there would be to cheapen the action and introduce the concept of death, which we don't want to do. All ChalkZone conflicts must therefore be solved creatively, not destructively.

BUT, if a ChalkZone character ventures into the real world, as Snap does in "Snap Out Of Water", erasing becomes a genuine danger.

- When a ChalkZone character enters the real world, he or she can be two-dimensional. It is possible for Snap to press himself against a wall and impersonate an inanimate drawing. Inside ChalkZone, chalk characters are three-dimensional, but they tend to look "flat" in comparison to Rudy, Penny and other humans.
- Only Rudy wields the magic chalk. Not Penny. Not Snap. Not any ChalkZone character. Rudy is the artist. If the time ever comes when he yields the magic chalk to another artist, it will be a big, big deal.
- "Night" is a section of ChalkZone called "NightZone". The sun doesn't rise and set in ChalkZone causing an area that was light to become dark. Pictures that are drawn as nighttime scenes in the real world and then erased become part of NightZone. ChalkZone inhabitants go into NightZone to sleep or to go to a nightclub.
- Chalk food tastes good to ChalkZone inhabitants, and tastes like chalk to humans.
- ChalkZone has a symbiotic eco-system similar to that of the real world in that flora and fauna live off each other. Example: Bendy Straw Worms live off the water that drops from the Water Balloon Weeping Willow.
- A sidewalk chalk drawing in the real world that is washed away by rain shows up in ChalkZone as a downpour of ChalkRain, and then reforms into what ever the human artist drew.