



**R. Eugene Jackson**

A wacky adaptation of the classic fairy tale "The Frog Prince"

**BIG DOG PUBLISHING**

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**BIG DOG PUBLISHING**

**P.O. Box 1400**

**TALLEVAST, FL 34270**

“He can’t win.  
I mean, that’s Marcus Baloopus.  
He never wins.  
Never.”

—Boston

## The Froggie Princess

**COMEDY.** This humorous adaptation of the classic fairy tale “The Frog Prince” is easy to stage and features a host of adorable puppets including a frog, a rose, and a turtle. Nervous around girls, Marcus Baloopus, selects a frog to accompany him to his school’s Fire Ant Festival, and by doing so, breaks a magical spell, which transforms the frog back into a beautiful princess and gives Marcus the confidence needed to become the school’s Fire Ant King.

**Performance Time:** Approximately 60-75 minutes.

## Characters

(5 M, 7 F, 1 flexible, extras)

**MARCUS BALOOPUS (bah-LOOP-us):** Nice, smart student who is an outcast.

**BOSTON "BOSS":** Tough, bossy student; female.

**SAIGE MACDOOGLED OG:** Bright student who carries several electronic gadgets.

**KELANA KEWANALANAWANA (Keh-WAH-nah-LAH-nah-WAH-nah):** Rich, dimwitted student.

**MITCHEM:** Shy student

**TATE:** Student who is younger than Marcus.

**MR./MRS. MOLLYCODDLE:** Teacher; flexible. ("Mrs. M" or "Mr. M" for short.)

**OLESSA (oh-LESS-ah):** Beautiful princess; elegantly dressed and wears a tiara; voice for Froggie.

**FROGGIE:** Frog puppet with long eyelashes, red lips, and a tiara on top of her head; female.

**TURTLE SWOOP:** Grouchy turtle puppet; wears a brightly colored bowtie; male.

**ROSE PETAL:** Rose puppet with a long thorny stem; female.

**BROWN COW:** Skinny brown cow who carries a milk bucket in his mouth; wears a cow costume; can be played by one or two actors; flexible.

**SHEEP:** Wears a sheep costume; can be played by one or two actors; flexible.

**JACOB MANLY:** Kelana's date; handsome, well-dressed, but clumsy.

**EXTRAS (Optional):** As other Students.

**NOTE:** Character names may be changed to reflect the ethnic makeup of the cast, except for the names of the puppets, cow and sheep.

## Setting

A schoolyard or park during the Red Ant Festival.

**NOTE:** If desired, "Red Ant Festival" may be changed to "May Festival," "Fall Festival," "Spring Festival," or any other off-beat special occasion at a school. If changed, all lines referring to fire ants should be altered as well.

## Set

The schoolyard or park features a large clump of bushes up center. Trees are scattered about. A festive banner that reads "Red Ant Festival" hangs between two trees or posts. At left center there is a bench, stump, boulder and/or picnic table. At right center there is a small pond with weeds, reeds, flowers, and a sign that reads "Beware of the Turtle." To the right of the pond, there is a log large enough for puppeteers to hide behind.

## Props

Milk pail	Dollar bill
Volleyball	Torn clothes, for Marcus
Several electronic gadgets	Tiara, for Olessa similar to the one worn by Froggie.
Earphones	2 Fire ant crowns in the shape of a helmet, rusty red in color and with antennae to resemble the head of a fire ant.
2 Watches	Fake, ugly black beard and mustache
Clipboard	2 Scepters
Pencil	Parade float, optional. Anything on wheels (wagon, cart, etc.) that will carry Marcus and Olessa as they parade around the stage. It can be decorated with streamers and perhaps a drawing of a fire ant.
Election box	
30 Slips of paper	
Bag	
Pancake	
Sheet of paper	
Cowbell	
Cell phone	
Algae (A bundle of dark green yarn)	
Sign that reads, "Fire Ant Festival," with a picture or drawing of a fire ant wearing a crown.	
Sign that reads, "Beware of the Turtle"	

## Special Effects

Croaking	Wind blowing
Buzzing	Cowbell with higher pitch
Slurping	approaching
Swallowing	Explosion
Cowbell	Puff of smoke
Hooves approaching	Martial music
Birds chirping	Froggie's tongue (See note
Cow mooing	below.)
Sheep baaing	

**NOTE:** To create Froggie's tongue, a puppeteer's arm can be covered with a long red sock, which can jut out of Froggie's mouth to simulate catching a buzzing insect and then retract back into Froggie's mouth. Or, instead of using the puppeteer's arm, a rod or dowel covered with a long red sock could work as well.

## The Froggie Princess

(AT RISE: A schoolyard or park during the Red Ant Festival. Turtle, wearing a brightly colored bow tie, and Frog, wearing a tiara on the top of her head, are sitting on a log. Rose, situated on a long, thorny stem, grows at the edge of the pond. Froggie croaks, looks around, croaks again, and repeats the action. A buzzing noise is heard. Froggie follows the sound with her head. Then – zing! – a very long red tongue zips out of her mouth, catches the bug, and returns to her mouth [see Special Effects]. Froggie gives a long slurping sound and swallows loudly. Turtle, a grouchy sort, is awakened by the noise.)

TURTLE: Froggie, do you have to be so noisy?

FROGGIE: I wasn't noisy, Turtle. That was the bug.

TURTLE: The bug was just buzzing. You were slurping.

FROGGIE: I wasn't slurping.

TURTLE: You were slurping. You were slurping loudly enough to wake the sheep in the meadow and the cows in the corn.

FROGGIE: No, I wasn't.

COW: (Offstage, from a distance.) Mooooooo!

SHEEP: (Offstage, from a distance.) Baaaaaa!

TURTLE: Then what is that?

FROGGIE: Uh, the sheep in the meadow and the cows in the corn?

TURTLE: Exactly.

FROGGIE: Sorry. I won't do it again.

TURTLE: Thank you. Then I can return to my morning nap.  
(He settles himself in, gives a big sigh, and closes his eyes.)  
Ahhhhhh!

(Turtle snores loudly. Rose opens her petals.)

ROSE: (Shouts.) Turtle!

TURTLE: (*Awakens.*) Huh? What? What happened? What is it?

ROSE: Do you have to snore so loudly?

TURTLE: What?

FROGGIE: You were snoring loudly enough to wake the sheep in the meadow and the cows in the corn.

TURTLE: No, I wasn't.

COW: (*Offstage, from a distance.*) Moooooo!

SHEEP: (*Offstage, from a distance.*) Baaaaaa!

ROSE: Then what is that?

TURTLE: The sheep in the meadow and the cows in the corn. But I didn't wake them.

ROSE: No, you didn't. Your snoring did.

TURTLE: No, Rose. Froggie woke them up with her slurping.

FROGGIE: I did not wake them up.

TURTLE: No, but you woke *me* up! And I'm trying to get some sleep here.

FROGGIE: All you ever do is sleep.

TURTLE: That's right.

FROGGIE: All day you sit there on that log and sleep.

TURTLE: And I love every minute of it. (*He sighs.*) And what do you do?

FROGGIE: I sit here and wait for food to come buzzing by. (*Buzzing is heard. Froggie quickly follows the sound with her head.*) And when it does, I zap it! (*She zaps a fly in mid-air with her long tongue. She makes a slurping sound and then swallows it.*)

TURTLE: And then you slurp it. Slurping and smacking, slurping and smacking. You would think a frog would have more to do than slurping and smacking, slurping and smacking.

FROGGIE: I do.

TURTLE: Like what?

FROGGIE: Like leaping and singing. (*Demonstrates.*) Wheeee! Leaping and singing. (*Demonstrates.*) Wheeee! Leaping and singing—

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TURTLE: Oh, stop, stop. Please stop. You're making me tired just watching you.

FROGGIE: But mostly I sit and wonder.

TURTLE: Wonder about what?

FROGGIE: About how I can break this magic spell I'm under.

TURTLE: Not that story again, Froggie.

FROGGIE: That's *Princess* Froggie.

TURTLE: (*Begrudgingly.*) *Princess* Froggie.

FROGGIE: Yes. Before I was a frog, I was a princess. A human princess.

TURTLE: (*Sarcastically.*) Right. And I was a fire-breathing dragon.

FROGGIE: It's true.

TURTLE: That I was a fire-breathing dragon?!

FROGGIE: No. That I was a human princess. And look at me now.

TURTLE: Don't want to. I might throw up. Frogs are not pretty creatures.

FROGGIE: And turtles are?

TURTLE: (*Proud.*) Turtles are handsome. I often look at my reflection in the pond and admire myself.

FROGGIE: Well, it's good that you do because no one else would.

TURTLE: What?!

ROSE: (*Bragging.*) Roses don't have to admire ourselves because everybody else does it for us.

TURTLE: Yes, and when they do, you stick them with your prickly thorns.

ROSE: That's because I like to hear people scream.

(*Rose giggles. They hear a cowbell and the clomping of hooves nearing them.*)

FROGGIE: What's that noise?

TURTLE: It's that stupid cow again.

FROGGIE: Didn't she come by here yesterday?

TURTLE: Yesterday, and the day before that, and every day before that.

FROGGIE: But why?

*(A skinny brown Cow enters carrying a pail of milk in her mouth or hand.)*

COW: Moooooo. *(Sees Froggie and Turtle.)* Milk, anyone?

TURTLE: *(To Froggie.)* That's why.

COW: Milk for sale.

ROSE: Don't want any.

COW: Oh. *(Slight pause.)* It's cheap.

TURTLE: Don't want any.

COW: Oh. *(Slight pause.)* It's good for you.

TURTLE: Still don't want any.

COW: What about you, Froggie? It's very tasty.

FROGGIE: Sorry. Frogs don't drink milk.

COW: Oh. *(Thinks.)* Why not?

FROGGIE: Well, for one thing, it's got too much fat in it.

COW: Oh. *(Slight pause.)* My milk doesn't have any fat.

FROGGIE: How do you know?

COW: Because I'm skinny. How can a skinny cow give fat milk?

FROGGIE: No, Cow, that's not right. All milk has some fat in it. But most of the time, that's good.

COW: *(Brightens.)* Oh! Well, here...you can have some of my "good" milk...cheap.

FROGGIE: Frogs only drink water.

COW: That's funny because cows only drink water, too. So what am I doing with all this milk?

TURTLE: What does your mother say?

COW: She doesn't drink milk, either. *(Pause.)* So you don't want to buy any of my milk?

TURTLE: No!

COW: Oh. Well, maybe I can sell it to the sheep. *(She turns and exits.)* Moooooo.

TURTLE: *(Calls after her.)* Sheep don't drink milk, either! *(To Froggie.)* Crazy cow!

FROGGIE: People drink milk.

TURTLE: What?

FROGGIE: The reason cows make milk is for their babies and for people. People drink milk.

TURTLE: They do? No wonder they're so ugly!

FROGGIE: I used to be a person.

TURTLE: Don't start that again. I need to take a nap. Will you be quiet long enough for me to take a nap?

FROGGIE: I'll try.

TURTLE: *(Sarcastically.)* Thank you. *(He yawns, settles in, sighs, and closes his eyes. A few seconds later, he is awakened by the giggling and other playful noises of young students off SL. He is startled awake.)* What? Huh? What? *(To Froggie.)* You said you would be quiet.

FROGGIE: I *am* quiet. That noise is coming from those kids over there.

TURTLE: Kids? Oh, no. When kids see me, they fall in love with me and want to play with me. I can't get a moment's rest. I'm leaving. *(He slowly turns.)*

FROGGIE: Can't you move any faster than that?

TURTLE: Nope. *(Boston, a brute of a girl, enters screaming and runs right at the pond. Sees her coming.)* Yeiiiiiii!

*(Turtle quickly takes a huge leap off the log and out of sight toward SR. Froggie hunkers down behind the log with just her head showing. Boston reaches the pond and stops.)*

BOSTON: Wow! *(She addresses someone off SL.)* Did you see that big turtle jump? I made it jump. I scared it.

*(Boston laughs, jumps up and down, and then runs back off SL. Froggie moves back onto the log and looks at Turtle off SR.)*

FROGGIE: *(To Turtle.)* Well, I guess you can move fast when you want to.

TURTLE: *(He peeps back in.)* In an emergency, I'm a rocket!  
*(He exits.)*

FROGGIE: *(To herself.)* I think it's time for me to make a hasty retreat, too. *(She leaps off SR.)*

ROSE: As for me, I simply close my petals and stay put.

*(Rose closes her petals. In a dark mood, Marcus wanders on from SL.)*

MARCUS: Some Fire Ant Festival! I can't get anyone to play with me. *(Pleasant forest sounds are heard – birds chirping, frogs croaking, a cow's mooing in the distance, a sheep's baaing, the wind's blowing through the trees. [Note: These sounds can be made by backstage actors or you can use sound effects.])* I wish I could be as happy as all you animals. *(The Birds chirp in solo.)* Good morning, birds. *(The Frogs and Toads croak.)* Hi, frogs and toads. *(The Cow moos in the distance.)* Hello, cow, wherever you are. *(Pause.)* And hello to everybody else... *(All the animal sounds are heard again, this time simultaneously. The sounds are interrupted by the laughter and cheering of Students off SL.)* ...except my classmates.

*(Marcus moves to SR and watches as Kelana, Saige, Boston, and Mitchem enter. They carry volleyballs and Saige also carries several electronic gadgets with her, including one with earphones plugged into her ears.)*

BOSTON: Dodge ball! It's dodge ball, everybody.

MITCHEM: I don't want to play dodge ball.

BOSTON: Of course you do, Mitchem. You just don't know it yet.

*(Boston throws the ball, hits Mitchem, and knocks him down. Another Student retrieves the ball and returns it to Boston.)*

MITCHEM: Owwww! Boston, that hurt.

BOSTON: Circle. Everybody in a circle. *(They form a semicircle so the audience can see inside the "circle.")* Circle, Mitchem!

MITCHEM: Circle. Right.

*(Mitchem jumps up and starts to get into the circle. Boston hits him with the ball again.)*

BOSTON: Too late. You're out.

MITCHEM: What?

BOSTON: Go stand behind that tree.

*(With his head hanging low, Mitchem pauses, then exits SL. Boston, Saige, and Kelana laugh.)*

SAIGE: Way to go, Boston.

KELANA: Atta girl, Boss!

BOSTON: Okay, half in the middle. Come on. Get in the middle. *(No one steps into the middle.)* You heard me. *(She pushes several into the middle of the circle. A few resist, but relent.)* Come on. Get in there. Get in there. We need a few more victims.

SAIGE: You mean "volunteers."

BOSTON: "Volunteers," "victims" – what's the difference?  
*(She laughs.)*

SAIGE: Well, a volunteer agrees to be a victim. *(She laughs.)*

KELANA: How can you volunteer to be a victim?

SAIGE: When you let others take advantage of you.

TATE: I don't let anybody take advantage of me.

BOSTON: Shut up, Tate, and get in the middle.

TATE: But, but, but –

BOSTON: *(Growls at him.)* Grrrrrr!

*(Tate jumps into the middle.)*

SAIGE: *(To Kelana.)* You see? A victim.

BOSTON: *(To other Students.)* All right. That settles it.  
*Everybody in the middle. Fast! Now! In the middle! Go, go, go!*

*(All but Boston, Saige, Kelana, and Marcus are shoved into the middle.)*

SAIGE: *(To Kelana.)* See? Everybody's a victim.

KELANA: Except us.

BOSTON: *(To Kelana and Saige.)* Okay, hit 'em!

*(Boston, Saige, and Kelana taunt the screaming Students as they hurl their volleyballs at them. They retrieve their volleyballs each time, and toss them at others until all those in the middle have been hit and have stepped aside SL. Kelana, Saige, and Boston end up with their volleyballs.)*

SAIGE: *(Laughing.)* Well, we got them all.

KELANA: That didn't take long.

TATE: You throw the ball too hard. I think I'm gonna have a noogie on my leg.

*(Boston crosses to him.)*

BOSTON: Want me to kiss it and make it better? *(She laughs.)*

TATE: No! Stay away from me.

KELANA: Looks like we're out of volunteers.

SAIGE: But there is one more...victim.

KELANA: Who's that?

*(Boston turns toward Marcus. Then everyone turns in unison toward him. Marcus feels their stares and slowly turns toward them.)*

MARCUS: Uh-uh. No. I don't want to play. You're too rough.

BOSTON: Naw. We're not too rough. You're too weak.

SAIGE: And stupid.

KELANA: And poor.

MARCUS: That's no reason to pick on me.

BOSTON: Who's picking on you?

KELANA: We just want you to join in the fun.

MARCUS: Don't want to.

BOSTON: We wanna bounce some ideas off you. And some balls! *(She laughs.)* Tell him, Kelana, Saige.

KELANA: Come on, Marcus, be a sport.

SAIGE: Yeah. It's the Fire Ant Festival, Marcus. Everybody plays on Fire Ant Festival Day.

KELANA: Except the fire ants. They like to sting.

BOSTON: *(To other Students.)* Come on, everybody! Let him know we want him to get beaten to a pulp!

SAIGE: You mean, let him know we want him to play with us.

BOSTON: Yeah. That's what I meant. *(She encourages the other Students. They reluctantly urge Marcus to step into the middle and play the game.)* Come on, Marcus. You heard me! *(She takes him by the arm and forces him into the center.)* Back in a circle, everybody! Let's go, let's go! *(The other Students form a semicircle, but Marcus is the only one in the center.)* Okay, go!

*(Boston, Saige, and Kelana throw their volleyballs at Marcus.)*

MARCUS: Ouch! Oww! Ohh! Stop it. *(They retrieve the balls and do it again. He groans in pain. Then, during a pause, he speaks.)* Okay, all right. You got me. I'm out of here.

BOSTON: Oh, didn't I tell you? It's two out of three. Hit him, girls!

*(Again, they clobber him with the volleyballs as they laugh and giggle. Pause.)*

MARCUS: *(It some pain.)* Is that it? Can I go now?

BOSTON: Oh, just for fun, let's make it three out of four. Go!

*(Students knock Marcus down with the volleyballs and keep throwing the balls at him.)*

TATE: *(As he looks off left, shouts.)* Look out! Here comes Mrs. Mollycoddle!

*(All the Students except Tate and Marcus scatter in various directions. Kelana, Boston, and Saige carry their volleyballs offstage. Mrs. Mollycoddle enters from SL carrying a clipboard and a pencil in her hair or over her ear.)*

MRS. M: *(To Tate and Marcus.)* What's going on here? I heard a lot of screaming and yelling.

TATE: Nothing, Mrs. Mollycoddle. We were just having a little...fun...I guess.

MRS. M: Marcus?

MARCUS: *(Still on the ground.)* Yeah. A little fun.

MRS. M: Well, all right. *(She glances at her watch.)* Tell the other students that we'll have the drawing in a few minutes...as soon as I can find the box with all the names in it. Somebody took it off my desk. *(She exits SL.)*

TATE: Okay. *(To Marcus.)* Are you okay?

MARCUS: No.

TATE: Well, good. Because I would feel bad if you felt bad. *(Pause.)* Oh, wait. You said no. You're not okay? Do you have any broken bones or bloody places?

MARCUS: No.

TATE: Well, then, you must be okay. Okay?

MARCUS: There are more ways to hurt a person than that.

TATE: There are? I mean, of course there are. Sure. *(Pause.)* Like what?

*(They hear Boston, Saige, and Kelana offstage SL.)*

MARCUS: It's them again. Come on. Let's hide.

*(Tate and Marcus move SR and behind some bushes or a tree.)*

TATE: But, but, but...

*(As soon as they are out of sight, Boston, Saige, and Kelana enter SL. Boston carries a box with 30 slips of paper with names written on them. Saige carries a bag of identical slips of paper.)*

BOSTON: Stealing this box off Mrs. M's desk wasn't easy, Saige.

SAIGE: You didn't steal it, Boston. You borrowed it.

BOSTON: Mrs. Mollycoddle might not look at it that way.

SAIGE: Don't worry. I've got you covered.

MARCUS: *(From his hiding place. To Tate.)* They stole the lottery box? Why would they do that?

TATE: If you don't have any broken bones or bloody places, how could you be hurt? You didn't explain that.

MARCUS: Later.

BOSTON: *(To Saige.)* This had better be a good plan, Saige.

SAIGE: Have I ever had a bad plan, Boss? No. This plan is perfect. One of my best.

KELANA: Let me see if I understand this...the box Boston stole—this box right here—has 30 slips of paper with the names of all the students in our class written on them, right? Thirty names.

SAIGE: That's right, Kelana. You're not as dumb as you look.

KELANA: *(She smiles.)* Oh, well, thanks.

SAIGE: And you look real dumb.

KELANA: What?

*(Saige holds up the bag she is carrying.)*

SAIGE: And this bag also has 30 slips of paper. *(Pause for effect.)* But only three names.

KELANA: Three names?

SAIGE: *(To Kelana.)* Yours, Boston's, and mine.

KELANA: Okay. So what now?

BOSTON: Oh, I get it. We dump these names... *(She dumps the box of names behind a tree.)*

SAIGE: And we replace them with our names. *(She dumps her sack of names into the box.)* And guess what? When Mrs. Mollycoddle draws the three winners, they will be us! Because ours are the only names in the box. Can't miss. We win. We become the three finalists for Queen of the Fire Ant Festival.

MARCUS: *(From his hiding place. To Tate.)* I can't believe this. They're actually going to cheat.

TATE: They always cheat, especially Saige. She knows every way to cheat there is. In school, she majors in cheating.

*(Mrs. Mollycoddle enters SL.)*

MRS. M: Boston, there you are.

*(Boston, Saige, and Kelana are shocked to be discovered by their teacher.)*

BOSTON: Oh! Uh, yeah, sure, Mrs. Mollycoddle. Here I am. I'm here. Right here.

MRS. M: And Saige.

SAIGE: Uh, yes, ma'am.

MRS. M: And Kelana.

KELANA: Present.

MRS. M: What are you doing with the raffle box?

BOSTON: *(Nervously.)* Oh, uhhh...I brought it out here to, uh...to, uh...

SAIGE: She brought it out here for your convenience, Mrs. Mollycoddle, so you wouldn't have to carry the heavy thing.

MRS. M: It weighs less than a pound, Saige.

SAIGE: And that's much too heavy for you.

BOSTON: *(To Mrs. M.)* Do you believe that?

MRS. M: I guess so.

BOSTON: *(Relieved.)* Oh, good!

MRS. M: Well, all right, okay. Let's summon our class. *(She turns right and starts to call offstage but is interrupted by Boston.)*

BOSTON: *(Loudly.)* All right, students! Gather around for the big drawing. *(Pause. Silence. Louder.)* Now! You weaklings and losers!

MRS. M: Losers?!

BOSTON: Just a figure of speech. *(In a flurry of noise and movement, all the Students gather around. Even Marcus and Tate come out from their hiding place. Shouts.)* Quiet!

*(Total silence.)*

MRS. M: Uh, thank you, Boston. Now, students, as you know, today is the big day when we choose the king or queen of our Fire Ant Festival. And here are the rules. We will pull three names from the lottery box here. Those three will compete against each other, and the winner will be the, uh, winner. Are we ready?

*(Students cheer.)*

MARCUS: Mrs. Mollycoddle?

MRS. M: Not now, Marcus, we're getting ready for the drawing.

MARCUS: But this is about the drawing. And Saige and—

MRS. M: Later, Marcus. First, the drawing.

MARCUS: But, Mrs. Mollycoddle—

TATE: Drop it, Marcus. Let it go.

MRS. M: *(Impatiently.)* Yes, Marcus? What is it?

*(Marcus looks at Tate and then back at Mrs. M.)*

MARCUS: Uh, nothing. Nothing important.

MRS. M: You interrupted us for nothing? Well, anyway, let's see...who shall we get to draw the names? *(Some of the Students raise their hands and shout, "Me, me, me!" Mrs. M may choose a Student or a small child from the audience.)* You. You can draw our names. Shake the box, Boston. *(Boston shakes the box.)* Shake it a lot. A little more.

*(Boston shakes the box some more.)*

SAIGE: *(Smiles. To Kelana.)* As if it will do any good.

MRS. M: *(To Student volunteer.)* All right, put your hand in there and pull out a name. Don't look at it. Draw a name. Okay. Let me have it. All right, let's see whose name we have here. *(Reads it.)* "Saige Macdoogledog!"

SAIGE: *(To Kelana, sarcastically and with a giggle.)* What a surprise. *(Aloud.)* Thank you, thank you, thank you, fellow students!

*(Saige raises her fists in a winner's salute. The other Students politely applaud her.)*

MRS. M: Good. *(To Student Volunteer.)* Go ahead. Draw the second one. *(Name is drawn.)* All right. *(She takes the paper.)* Who is our second winner? *(Reads.)* "Kelana Kewanawanawana!"

KELANA: That's Kelana KewanaLANAwana.

MRS. M: Sorry.

KELANA: That's okay. Even my mom has trouble pronouncing it.

*(Students politely applaud her.)*

SAIGE: *(To Boston.)* Okay, you're next.

BOSTON: *(Anxiously.)* I know.

MRS. M: And now for our third and last semi-finalist. *(To Student Volunteer.)* Draw, please. *(Name is drawn.)* And

here's the name. It's...well, it's... *(Reads.)* ..."Kelana Kelanawanahoolawana."

KELANA: That's Kelana Kewana —

*(In anticipation of her own name being called, Boston interrupts.)*

BOSTON: All right, folks. Give it up for the Boss! Give it up for me! I'm the third winner. Yeah!

MRS. M: Not you, Boston. It was Kelana. Again.

BOSTON: What? But that's impossible.

MRS. M: You're right. *(To Kelana.)* How could your name be in here twice?

KELANA: Uh, maybe because I'm twice as rich as anybody else here?

BOSTON: *(She growls at Saige.)* Or maybe we should ask Saige.

MRS. M: Saige? Why ask Saige?

SAIGE: I can't imagine how that happened.

MRS. M: Okay. We'll draw again. Go ahead. And here we have our third winner! *(She looks at the slip of paper. Reads.)* "Kelana Kewanalanalanana!"

KELANA: No, that's Kelana Kewa —

*(Students interrupt with "boos.")*

SAIGE: Oops!

MRS. M: Something's wrong here. I'll do the next drawing. *(She draws a slip and reads it.)* "Saige Macdoogledog."

KELANA: Thank goodness it's not me.

MRS. M: I've already called this name once. Saige, can you explain this?

SAIGE: Oh, well, uh, no, Mrs. Mollycoddle. Why don't you just keep drawing until you find Boston's name?

MRS. M: Boston's name?

SAIGE: I mean, a name that isn't mine and isn't Kelana's.

MRS. M: This is very troubling, but I'll go ahead. (*She draws three names and reads them aloud.*) Saige, Saige, and—. Oh. Well, here's our third winner. At last.

BOSTON: (*Anticipating her name being called.*) All right, everybody! Boss is the third winner! Give me a few cheers!

(*Students boo her.*)

MRS. M: Boston, it's not your name.

BOSTON: Of course it is.

MRS. M: It's not.

BOSTON: It's not? Not my name? What do you mean it's not my name? It has to be my name. Doesn't it...Saige?

SAIGE: Uh, don't look at me.

KELANA: Who is it then?

BOSTON: Yeah. Who?

MRS. M: Marcus.

(*Students mumble amongst themselves.*)

SAIGE: Marcus who? We don't know any Marcus. Does anyone know anybody named Marcus?

(*Students point to Marcus.*)

MRS. M: (*Reading from the slip of paper.*) "Marcus Baloopus."

BOSTON: No! Marcus Baloopus? Marcus? That Marcus Baloopus standing over there? Can't be.

MRS. M: But it is.

SAIGE: That's impossible.

MRS. M: Why is it impossible, Saige?

SAIGE: What? Well, I mean, not impossible necessarily. Just very, very...*very* unlikely.

MRS. M: Marcus, come here. I need to talk to the three of you.

BOSTON: What about me?

MRS. M: I only need to talk to the finalists.

BOSTON: But I should have won. That was the plan.

MRS. M: Go stand over there with the others, Boston. Move it.

*(Boston angrily moves to join the other Students. Marcus approaches Mrs. M.)*

MARCUS: Are you sure it said "Marcus Baloopus"? I mean, I never win anything, especially when Saige plans it.

MRS. M: When Saige plans what?

*(Marcus glances at Boston, who raises her fist and visually threatens him.)*

MARCUS: Uh, nothing. I'm just surprised, that's all.

SAIGE: You're not the only one.

MRS. M: Well, now comes the fun part—the big hunt!

MARCUS: What do you mean?

MRS. M: I will assign you three a mission. You will have one hour to complete that mission, and whoever completes it correctly, wins.

BOSTON: I would have won that, you know. I'm the best hunter in school.

MRS. M: Quiet, Boston. You're not involved here.

KELANA: *(Secretly to Saige.)* How did his name get in the box?

SAIGE: I don't know...unless it got stuck inside the box when we tried to empty it.

MRS. M: All right, contestants. Are you ready?

SAIGE: Absolutely.

KELANA: Ready for what?

MRS. M: Marcus?

MARCUS: Uh, I guess so.

KELANA: Can we get help? I sometimes need help. *(Pause.)*  
Well, okay, I *always* need help.

MRS. M: Yes, you can get any help you want as long as you don't leave the area. You can use the library, ask your friends—

SAIGE: Check online with my mini-computer.

MRS. M: Yes, check online. But, in the end, you have to make the final selection, bring us a sample, and stand by it.

BOSTON: Will you just tell us what it is?

MRS. M: Boston, hush. *(To Students.)* Okay. In one hour, come back here with...

BOSTON: With what? What?

*(Slight pause.)*

MRS. M: ...a sample of the most nutritious food on earth.

BOSTON: What?! That's stupid!

MRS. M: *(Ignoring Boston.)* The healthiest, most nourishing food. Is that clear? Do you understand what you are to do?

KELANA: I'll ask my personal maid. No, wait. I'll ask Mom's chef. She knows everything about food.

SAIGE: Well, I don't need my computers to know the answer to that. That's simple.

MRS. M: Marcus?

MARCUS: Yes, ma'am. I understand the question. I just don't understand how I became a finalist.

BOSTON: Neither do I.

MRS. M: Okay. Ready? *(She looks at her watch.)* Go! *(She turns to the other Students.)* The rest of you can continue with the festival activities. Go on now. Have a good time.

*(All except Marcus and Tate exit in various directions. Tate starts to exit but turns and sees Marcus.)*

TATE: Marcus, you'd better move. You only have an hour.

MARCUS: Ahh, what's the use, Tate? Kelana's chef knows the answer, and Saige and Boston will cheat. So they'll win and I'll lose. I mean, I lose everything.

TATE: How so?

MARCUS: Well, yesterday I lost the eraser off my pencil.

TATE: So?

MARCUS: Today I lost the pencil.

TATE: That's tough, man.

MARCUS: Yeah.

TATE: Earlier you said you didn't have to be hit to be hurt.

What did you mean by that?

MARCUS: I don't want to talk about it.

TATE: I want to know.

MARCUS: (*Angrily.*) Okay. You can also be hurt by people who ignore you.

TATE: Am I ignoring you?

MARCUS: No. No, *you're* not.

TATE: Is it possible people ignore you because you ignore them?

MARCUS: What? I said I don't want to talk about it.

TATE: Okay, skip it.

MARCUS: Okay, I will.

TATE: With that attitude, you'll lose for sure.

MARCUS: Big deal.

TATE: Well, if that's what you want. (*He exits.*)

MARCUS: (*Calls to Tate.*) It's not what I want. It's just...what will be. (*To himself.*) Uhh, maybe I should give it a try. Okay. What's the most nutritious food on earth? The most nutritious food. Ummm, popcorn. No, probably not. (*He brightens.*) I know...pickles. (*He shakes his head.*) No. They're probably not nutritious. Uhhh, strawberry shortcake. Yeah, with tons of whipped cream on top. (*Pause.*) Noooo, can't be good for you. It tastes too good. (*He crosses far right.*) Okay. This doesn't look promising. This doesn't look promising at all. (*He hears Boston and Saige off SL.*) Wait. It's Boston and Saige.

(*Marcus hides. Boston and Saige enter SL. They don't see Marcus.*)

SAIGE: *(To Boston.)* I'm telling you, I already know the most nutritious food.

BOSTON: No, you don't.

SAIGE: I do. I looked it up on my mini-computer.

BOSTON: But don't you see, Saige? It's a trick question.

SAIGE: What? What's a trick question?

BOSTON: It's not just the most nutritious food. It's the most nutritious food *on earth!* See? It's probably some rare meat found only in the deep jungles of...of Jungleland. Or in the deep deserts of...of Desertland. So you can't possibly know the answer.

SAIGE: Oh, I see. It's a trick question.

BOSTON: That's what I've been trying to tell you.

SAIGE: So what's the answer?

BOSTON: I don't know, but I can find out.

SAIGE: For how much?

BOSTON: If it were about money, I'd help Kelana. She's rich.

SAIGE: I'm not.

BOSTON: I know. When you win, all I want is part of the big prize.

SAIGE: Which part?

BOSTON: The part where I ride on the parade float with you so I can wave to all my friends.

SAIGE: You don't have any friends.

BOSTON: Okay. So I can wave to all my enemies.

SAIGE: How about this...when I'm crowned queen of the festival, you can be my page.

BOSTON: What does that mean?

SAIGE: It means you get to *wait* on me and do everything I say.

BOSTON: Wait on you? Why? Are you going to be late?

SAIGE: No. It means you carry my [iPod] and my [BlackBerry]. And you do all my dirty work. *[Or insert the names of other popular electronic gadgets.]*

BOSTON: Dirty work? I like that part. And I get to ride on the float in the parade with you?

SAIGE: Deal.

BOSTON: Okay. Deal.

SAIGE: But how will you find out the answer to the question?

BOSTON: Like I always do. I'll sneak into Mrs. M's classroom  
and steal the answer.

SAIGE: I love it!

BOSTON: Yeah. Me, too.

*(Saige and Boston do an extended secret handshake.)*

SAIGE/BOSTON: Yeah!

*(Saige and Boston exit SL. Marcus crosses to CS.)*

MARCUS: I knew it, I knew it. They're going to cheat. How  
can anyone else win when they do that?

*(Froggie leaps up onto the log.)*

FROGGIE: *(To Marcus.)* Anyone else can play fair and come  
up with the right answer on his own.

MARCUS: I know that, but—? *(He turns around and sees no  
one.)* Who said that?

FROGGIE: Well, since I'm the only other one here, it must  
have been I. *(She croaks.)*

MARCUS: Oh. Well, I wondered. *(He sees her.)* What? *(He  
looks at the Froggie and is shocked.)* Oh, wow! *(Bigger.)* Oh,  
wow! Oh, wa, oh, wa, oh, wow! It's a toad with red lips!

FROGGIE: *(In a lovely female voice.)* I'm a frog.

MARCUS: Frog. I'm sorry. I—. What?!

FROGGIE: Don't you know the difference between a toad and  
a frog?

MARCUS: *(To himself.)* And it's...it's talking.

FROGGIE: Well?

MARCUS: Of course, I know the difference between a toad and a frog. Toads don't talk! *(Pause. Scoots away. Nervously.)* But neither do frogs.

FROGGIE: Really?

MARCUS: Stop talking. You can't talk. Don't you know that? You can croak, but you can't talk. So stop talking.

FROGGIE: Okay. I'll just croak then. *(She croaks.)*

MARCUS: There. That's better. Thanks.

FROGGIE: You're welcome.

MARCUS: Stop that!

*(Turtle crawls onto another part of the log.)*

TURTLE: What's all the croaking about?

MARCUS: A croaking turtle! *(He backs further away.)*

TURTLE: I'm not croaking. What are you talking about? Only frogs croak. I'm talking.

MARCUS: No. You...you're playing a trick on me. Real turtles can't speak.

TURTLE: Oh. Well, then I guess I'm a fake turtle, or a mock turtle because I'm speaking, all right.

MARCUS: A fake turtle? You can't be a fake turtle...because I see you.

TURTLE: Oh, good. You had me worried there for a minute.

MARCUS: You're a real turtle, but you're a fake talker because you can't talk.

TURTLE: *(To Froggie.)* Is this guy for real?

MARCUS: What? Are you calling me a fake person?

FROGGIE: He's confused, that's all.

MARCUS: *I'm* confused?! You're the one who's confused because you're supposed to be a croaking frog. Not a talking frog. *(To Turtle.)* And you're supposed to be a...a non-croaking, non-noise-making, non-speaking turtle. You're just animals. Animals don't talk human talk.

*(Rose opens her petals.)*

ROSE: Next, he'll be saying that roses can't talk, either.  
MARCUS: That's right. They can't. *(He scampers away from the pond.)* Aeeiii! What's happening? Now I'm seeing plants conversing with animals! I'm seeing strange things here.  
ROSE: That's what your eyes are for.  
MARCUS: And hearing even stranger things.  
TURTLE: That's what your ears are for.  
MARCUS: But I'm seeing and hearing things that can't be happening.  
FROGGIE: May I speak now? *(Pause.)* Please? Pretty please?  
MARCUS: I...I guess so since you're doing it anyway.  
FROGGIE: These are my friends. *(Introduces.)* Turtle Swoop.  
MARCUS: Turtle Soup?  
TURTLE: No, not Turtle Soup. Turtle Swoop. Swoop. Because when I walk, I don't just walk, I swoop.  
MARCUS: You're kidding, right? Turtles don't swoop. They...they waddle.  
TURTLE: *(Insulted.)* Waddle?  
MARCUS: Very slowly.  
TURTLE: *(To Froggie.)* I think I've been insulted.  
MARCUS: And they sit on logs all day.  
TURTLE: Well, what else is there to do?  
MARCUS: And they... *(He sees the sign, "Beware of the Turtle.")* What does this sign mean, "Beware of the Turtle?" *(He puts his finger on the sign. Turtle bites it.)* Owwww!  
TURTLE: Did I mention that I'm a snapping turtle?  
MARCUS: No!  
TURTLE: Beware!  
FROGGIE: *(Ignoring Turtle. Introduces.)* And this is Rose Petal.  
ROSE: *(To Marcus.)* Try smelling my sweet fragrance.

*(Marcus reaches toward her with his hand.)*

FROGGIE: Careful. She may look pretty, but she has thorns.

MARCUS: *(He pulls back.)* Oh.

TURTLE: When I see Rose, I swoop in the opposite direction.

FROGGIE: *(To Marcus.)* And I'm Froggie.

MARCUS: Well, I'm, uh, uh...

FROGGIE: Have you forgotten your name?

MARCUS: No. I think I'm dreaming.

FROGGIE: No. I think you're Marcus.

MARCUS: Marcus. Yes. That's what I meant.

FROGGIE: You seem so sad, Marcus. And we want to help.

TURTLE: Actually, Froggie wants to help. I just want to sit here and get a suntan.

MARCUS: A turtle wants a suntan?

ROSE: And I just want to grow tall and have lots of little buds.

FROGGIE: *(To Marcus.)* But they'll help anyway. What can we do for you?

MARCUS: Oh, nothing. Thanks.

FROGGIE: All right. Well, bye.

*(Froggie turns to leave, and Marcus goes to stop her.)*

MARCUS: Oh, wait, wait. I guess I could use a little help. I mean, just a little. Mrs. M said we could ask for help.

FROGGIE: What is it?

MARCUS: I need to discover the most nutritious food in the world.

FROGGIE: Well, that's simple. It's bugs.

MARCUS: No. It's not bugs.

FROGGIE: But they're delicious.

MARCUS: Whatever it is, I have to have a pound of it...or maybe just an ounce.

TURTLE: Why? Are you sick? As a matter of fact, you do look sick. Very sick.

MARCUS: I'm not sick!

TURTLE: Well, excuuuuuuuse me!

MARCUS: Sorry. I didn't mean to get upset.

FROGGIE: *(To Turtle.)* It's for the contest. It's the answer to the question that could make him king of the Fire Ant Festival.

MARCUS: How do you know all that?

FROGGIE: Well, Marcus, I have ears.

MARCUS: I don't see any ears.

FROGGIE: Well, they're small. But they're there. And I listen.

MARCUS: Why do you listen?

FROGGIE: I was once human, you know.

TURTLE: Not that lie again.

FROGGIE: It's not a lie.

MARCUS: Can you help me?

FROGGIE: Yes.

MARCUS: You can? *(He hears the sound of students off SL.)*  
Well, do it fast. My time is almost up.

FROGGIE: No problem. Turtle, may I borrow your cell phone?

MARCUS: Cell phone? You have a cell phone?

TURTLE: *(To Froggie.)* Why don't you get your own phone?

FROGGIE: This is to help Marcus.

TURTLE: Oh, all right. *(He turns and starts to exit SL.)* Meet me at my place. *(He exits SR.)*

FROGGIE: Don't worry, Marcus.

MARCUS: Don't worry?

FROGGIE: I'll get the answer for you.

MARCUS: I'm worried.

*(Marcus looks at Rose.)*

ROSE: Don't mind me. I'll just stand here and look pretty.

*(Mrs. Mollycoddle enters SL. Students follow mumbling excitedly. Boston enters with Saige. Kelana enters.)*

MRS. M: All right, students. Come on. Gather around.

FROGGIE: Time for me to split.

MARCUS: No. Wait a minute. Wait a sec! You can't go now.

*(Froggie exits. Rose closes her petals and remains still and quiet.)*

MRS. M: The hour is up, and it's time to see who will become the festival king or queen.

MARCUS: *(To Froggie, who has disappeared.)* I thought you were going to help me. You can't help me if you're gone. Where are you? Where did you go?

MRS. M: Who are you talking to, Marcus?

MARCUS: What? Oh, uh...

BOSTON: Probably talking to the tadpoles in the pond. *(She laughs.)*

MARCUS: No. I was talking to a full-grown frog.

MRS. M: A frog? You were talking to a frog?

MARCUS: No. I mean, well, sort of. Well, no. Not at all. Why would I be talking to a frog, right?

MRS. M: Right. Okay. So...let's see how our three contestants did. Kelana? What food did you bring us that you think is the most nourishing of all foods?

KELANA: Well, I called our family chef and she said...

MRS. M: Yes?

KELANA: She said she was too busy to talk to me.

MRS. M: Oh.

KELANA: And she hung up on me.

MRS. M: Too bad.

KELANA: *(She smiles broadly.)* No, Mrs. M, it's not bad at all. Since the answer is so easy, I didn't need her help thankfully.

MRS. M: Then you know what it is?

KELANA: Of course.

MRS. M: And you brought some to show us?

KELANA: Yes, ma'am. And here it is. *(With two fingers, she holds up a single pancake.)* The pancake! *(The Students mumble. Some Students like the answer, while others think it is wrong.)* Is this it? It is, isn't it? The pancake. I mean, I eat

them every day for lunch. And dinner. And a midnight snack. And look how healthy I am! That proves it. Pancakes are the best food in the world.

MRS. M: And what vitamins and minerals do pancakes give us, Kelana?

KELANA: Uhhh, vitamins and minerals? Do they have to have vitamins and minerals in them?

MRS. M: If they're a healthy food, they do.

KELANA: Well, I guess they have vitamin A...vitamin B...and, uh, vitamins X, Y, and Z.

MRS. M: No, they don't.

KELANA: They don't?

MRS. M: And there's no such thing as vitamins X, Y, and Z.

KELANA: Oh. *(Pause.)* Does that mean I lose?

MRS. M: Well, let's see what the others discovered. Saige?

*(Saige smiles and steps forward.)*

SAIGE: Yes, ma'am.

MRS. M: Which food did you select?

SAIGE: Well, Mrs. M, I have it written down right here. Boston?

*(Boston hands Saige a sheet of paper with something written on it.)*

BOSTON: *(To Saige, stage whisper.)* Here it is, Saige. I stole it from her desk.

MRS. M: *(To Saige.)* All right. What is it?

SAIGE: Okay. It says right here that the answer is...24.

MRS. M: Twenty-four what?

SAIGE: What?

MRS. M: Twenty-four is not a food. Twenty-four what?

**[END OF FREEVIEW]**