



## ROOT BEER AND BANANA

By Sarah Sullivan

**READER'S THEATER** Illustrations by Greg Shed

Candlewick Press

### CAST OF CHARACTERS

Narrator 1

Narrator 2

Molly/Squirt

Granddaddy

Miracle

Mr. Mac

Shep (optional-no lines)

Additional students may be selected to read the setting and scene changes and stage directions (in parentheses).

### SETTING

A small town on a hot summer day

**Scene 1** – *Squirt and Granddaddy are walking down the path from the fishing spot to Mister Mac's.*

NARRATOR 1: It's summer on the river, when the air's as thick as soup,

NARRATOR 2: and you can smell tar melting on the roof.

NARRATOR 1: Here comes that girl Molly with her granddaddy.

NARRATOR 2: Folks around here call her Squirt.

NARRATOR 1: Looks like they've been fishing again.

NARRATOR 2: Wonder where they're headed now.

GRANDDADDY: Sure is hot out today, Squirt. How'd you like to get an ice pop?

SQUIRT: Really?

GRANDDADDY: *(He nods at her and smiles.)* I thought we'd stop by Mister Mac's.

SQUIRT: He always has the best flavors.

GRANDDADDY: Last time we were there, you couldn't decide which flavor you wanted.

SQUIRT: That's because I like root beer AND banana.

GRANDDADDY: Sometimes you have to choose.

SQUIRT: I know, but it's hard.

GRANDDADDY: *(laughs)* Well, come on. Let's see how Mister Mac and Shep are getting along.

**Scene 2** – Mister Mac's Store.

*Granddaddy holds the door open for Squirt to walk inside. She stops to pat Mister Mac's bird dog Shep on the head before she crosses the threshold.*

GRANDDADDY: Looks like old Shep's having himself a nap.

SQUIRT: He must be hot with all that dog hair.

*Squirt and Granddaddy step inside the store. Mister Mac waves from the counter.*

MISTER MAC: Hey there, Jack. I see you've got your granddaughter with you.

GRANDDADDY: She's teaching me how to fish.

MISTER MAC: *(laughs, as he steps out from behind the counter)* Must be pretty hot out there on the river today.

GRANDDADDY: It's a scorcher all right. We thought an ice pop might hit the spot.

MISTER MAC: *(gesturing toward the freezer)* You all help yourselves.

SQUIRT: Thank you, Mister Mac.

MISTER MAC: You're welcome.

*(Squirt walks over to the ice cream freezer while Mister Mac and Granddaddy continue talking. While they talk, she looks at the treats in the freezer, searching for ice pops.)*

GRANDDADDY: How's the world treating you, Mac?

MISTER MAC: Can't complain. My wife's niece got married. They moved to Richmond last week.

GRANDDADDY: Is that a fact? Heard your daughter's expecting a baby.

MISTER MAC: Any day now. My sister thinks it's a boy.

*(When she spots the ice pops, Squirt slides the freezer door open and starts rummaging through the frozen treats, looking for her favorite flavors.)*

GRANDDADDY: Better hurry up and decide, Squirt. Which flavor do you want?

SQUIRT: *(softly, to herself)* Hmmmm. Not cherry. Not grape. Not orange.

MISTER MAC: *(smiling as he speaks to Granddaddy)* Now, there's a young lady who's not going to be talked into buying something she doesn't want.

SQUIRT: Banana or root beer? Root beer or Banana? Which one should I choose?

GRANDDADDY: Why don't you go outside and think it over? We'll be right here. We've still got some catching up to do.

SQUIRT: Okay. I just need a few minutes.

*(Mister Mac and Granddaddy look at each other and smile. Then, Squirt pushes open the screen door and leans over to pat Shep on the head again.)*

SQUIRT: Watch out, Shep. I'm coming through.

*(Shep lifts his head and wags his tail.)*

**Scene 3** – Outside Mister Mac's store.

*(Miracle waves from the shade of an old willow tree)*

MIRACLE: Hey there!

SQUIRT: Oh, hi.

MIRACLE: It's hot out today, isn't it?

SQUIRT: Yes.

MIRACLE: Are you here by yourself?

SQUIRT: No. I came with my granddaddy.

MIRACLE: Oh. What's your name?

SQUIRT: Molly. But, my granddaddy calls me Squirt.

*(Miracle walks over to the porch steps where Squirt is sitting beside Shep.)*

MIRACLE: My name's Miracle.

SQUIRT: Miracle?

MIRACLE: Yeah. On account of the doctor said my mama couldn't have any more after my brothers, but I came anyway.

SQUIRT: Miracle's a nice name. I like it.

MIRACLE: Thank you. I like your name too.

SQUIRT: Thanks. I like Squirt better than Molly though.

MIRACLE: Yeah. So do I. *(She reaches in her pocket and holds something up in her fist.)* I got some money. Wanna see?

SQUIRT: *(nodding)* Sure.

MIRACLE: *(spreading open her fist and displaying the nickel on her open palm.)* I'm gonna buy something with it.

SQUIRT: What are you gonna buy?

MIRACLE: One of those ice pops.

NARRATOR 1: Ice pops cost ten cents.

NARRATOR 2: But, Squirt doesn't say anything.

MIRACLE: Come on. I'll show you where they are.

SQUIRT: Okay. (*She follows Miracle inside.*)

**Scene 4** Inside Mister Mac's store.

*(Miracle leads Squirt to the freezer and reaches inside.)*

MIRACLE: I want root beer. Which one's that?

*(Squirt reaches in and pulls out the ice pops with the brown wrapper, then hands it to Miracle.)*

SQUIRT: Here it is.

MIRACLE: Thanks.

*(Granddaddy walks over to the freezer to join them.)*

GRANDDADDY: What's it going to be, Squirt.

SQUIRT: *(glances sideways at Miracle first, then looks at Granddaddy.)* Banana AND root beer.

GRANDDADDY: I think you need to choose one or the other.

SQUIRT: But, Miracle needs one too.

GRANDDADDY: Miracle?

SQUIRT: She's my new friend.

GRANDDADDY: *(extends a hand to Miracle. They shake hands.)* Pleased to meet you, little lady.

MIRACLE: It's nice to meet you too. I live on Tucker's Creek. Do you know where that is?

GRANDDADDY: I sure do.

MIRACLE: *(pulling nickel back out of her pocket.)* I'm gonna buy my ice pop with this. I found it lying on the road.

GRANDDADDY: Well now, which flavor's for you?

MIRACLE: Root beer.

SQUIRT: And banana for me, please.

GRANDDADDY: (nodding at them) Sounds good.

MIRACLE: (*holds out her nickel again.*) Where's the man we need to pay for the ice pops?

GRANDDADDY: That's okay. This one's on me.

MIRACLE: Thanks, Mister. (*She tucks her money away.*)

(*Granddaddy nods and smiles while Squirt gives his hand a big squeeze*)

**Scene 5** - *Miracle leads Squirt outside Mister Mac's. As they pass through the screen door, Shep raises his head, spots the ice pop and begs for a taste.*

SQUIRT and MIRACLE (*in unison*): Ice pops aren't for dogs!

*SQUIRT and MIRACLE and Shep walk over to the willow tree and sit down on the grass.*

SQUIRT: Would you like to trade halves? You can have half of my banana and I'll have half of your root beer.

MIRACLE: That's a good idea. That way we get a taste of both.

NARRATOR 1: And so, Squirt helps Miracle break her ice pop in half.

NARRATOR 2: And Miracle helps Squirt break her ice pop in half.

NARRATOR 1: And they sit together

NARRATOR 2: under the shade of the old willow tree,

NARRATOR 1: eating root beer and banana,

NARRATOR 2: banana and root beer,

NARRATOR 1: and swapping secrets,

NARRATORS 1 AND 2 and everyone in unison: the way old friends do.

THE END