

Frog and Toad (Forever) ♥
 by Y York
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original story using the characters from Arnold Lobel's FROG AND TOAD books by the forever Arnold Lobel
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commissioned by Seattle Children's Theatre (206)443-0807

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for the forever ♥ Linda Hartzell

**IMPORTANT NOTE: THIS IS A WRITING MODEL.
 THIS PLAY MAY NOT BE PERFORMED.**

Characters:

Frog: An articulate, tidy creature. Precise, expansive, and cheerful; carries a monocle on a chain.

Toad: Confident in its sloppiness. A bit of a grump.

Squirrel: A conniving creature. A bit hyperactive.

Snail: Still growing. Speaks in single-word sentences.

Snake: A big snake. Played by the actor who plays Snail.

NOTES: 1. There are no gender-specific pronouns in this script; don't add any.
 2. Don't end non-questions with upward inflections.

Places: Toad's messy bedroom and yard, which includes a tree, a stream or pond, and a back door.

(Act I. Toad's house. Toad in bed under a heap of messy coverings. The epitome of messy. An extremely tall heap of clothing on the floor. Frog at door.)

FROG Toad!

TOAD (moans the word) No.

FROG (entering) Toad, it's me. (Frog nudges and pushes and irritates.)

Toad crawls deeper into the covers.)

TOAD Away, away.

FROG Up, Toad. Out of bed, Toad.

TOAD Later, call me later, Frog.

FROG (happy) It is later.

TOAD It doesn't feel later.

FROG But it looks later.

TOAD Not to me.

FROG You have to open your eyes.

TOAD Not 'til later.

FROG (idea) If you stay under the covers, you're going to miss it, Toad.

TOAD I don't care.

FROG Yes. If you don't get up you'll miss the whole thing.

TOAD Leave me alone.

FROG Every eensy eensy bit of it.

TOAD Every eensy eensy...bit of what?

FROG You'll be completely left out.

TOAD What am I missing?

FROG You'll be the only one.

TOAD I'll be the only one?

FROG The only one who doesn't know.

TOAD Not the only one who doesn't know.

FROG The only only one.

TOAD Tell it to me, Frog.

FROG It won't be the same in the telling of it. You have to see it.

TOAD Yes. I must see it. I must know it! I must be there!

FROG I'll help you dress.

TOAD Hurry! We don't want to miss it. (gets up; it's freezing)
Whoa!

FROG Where are your slippers?

(Frog searches in the humongous heap.)

TOAD Slippers!?! I need mugwhumps and hugwhumps and warm-me-toes and freeze-me-nots.

FROG (indignant) I can't find anything recognizable among your items.

TOAD My whatums?

FROG Your items. Your pile of whatsits here.

TOAD Forget "my items," Frog. We're going to miss it. (Toad wraps self in a blanket, including feet, all the while mumbling "my items.") Alright! Where is it?

FROG Toad, you can't even walk.

TOAD I'm fine, Frog. Produce my "it."

FROG All you can do is hop.

TOAD I'm a toad, Frog. Well? Where is it?

FROG Where's what?

TOAD "It!" The "it" that I must not miss. Produce this "it" at once.

FROG (happy, proud, gesturing through window) There. Take a look out there, Toad. Spring.

TOAD (happy) Where?!

FROG There.

TOAD There's nothing there. (beat) Frog. You have taken me out of my slumber, given me a premature awakening, a too-too early up.

FROG But, for sunshine, for daffodils, for spring.

TOAD There is no spring. For a spring there must be mud -- a soggy, wet-wet. Not this frozen wasteland, this chilly horizon, this chirpless vista. (very disappointed) There is no spring in sight.

FROG It's hiding. We'll have to look for it.

TOAD Where will we look?

FROG Spring is just around the corner.

TOAD (slightly into it) Which corner?

FROG I don't know. We'll have to check them all.

TOAD (into it) All?

FROG Every one.

TOAD What a good good time.

FROG Yes. (Frog and Toad have an affectionate bump.) Squirrel is already looking.

TOAD Well, that's it, I'm grumpy.

FROG (admonishing) Now, Toad--

TOAD Just that name, and I'm grumpy, Frog.

FROG Snail is looking, too.

TOAD (sarcastic) Sure, looking for Squirrel.

FROG Snail is having a good good time.

TOAD No.

FROG Truly. And so will we be.

TOAD So will we be?

FROG If you get dressed.

TOAD Alright, Frog, for my good good time, Frog. (Toad dives into the heap of clothes and disappears beneath them.)

FROG (picks up loose clothes from top of heap) This method you have of organizing your clothing items is not at all the way I organize my clothing items.

TOAD (mumbles from under pile)

FROG Yes, I can safely say that this method of organizing is not organized at all.

TOAD (mumbles)

FROG Where are the compartments? There is nothing resembling a compartment. How can you possibly start your day without taking socks from the sock compartment, and T-shirts from the t-shirt compartment, and underpants from the underpants compartment--

TOAD (desperate, mumbles, thumps floor)

FROG (over) And the pants from their hanger in the closet, and the shirts all ironed in a row, and the handkerchiefs all hanging on their hooks--

TOAD Help meeeee!!

(Frog tosses clothes looking for Toad.)

FROG Toad! My goodness, my stars, Toad, what's wrong? What's happening in there? Toad, my dear Toad!

(Toad emerges, wearing clothing items wrong)

FROG What happened?

TOAD (pulls sock from mouth) I got socked.

FROG (discomfort, which increases) ...What's that you're wearing on your head?

TOAD A hat.

FROG Noooo. I don't think it's a hat.

TOAD Well, what do you think it is?

FROG I think it's underpants.

TOAD Well it might have been underpants before, in some previous day, but now it's a hat.

FROG (trying to be calm) It can't in some previous day, be an underpant, and then today because "you say so," be a hat.

TOAD And why not?

FROG (exploding) Because it isn't, it can't, it just isn't!

TOAD But what is a hat, anyway? A piece of cloth, a swatch of fabric, a bit of trimming, that we all agree to call a hat. A hat is merely an agreed-upon state-of-affairs for a piece of cotton.

FROG I can't agree, I won't, I don't.

TOAD If I agree to look for a spring that is just around some unknown, possibly far-away corner, the least you can do is agree to call my hat a hat.

(Frog rummages in the pile.)

TOAD Out of my items.

FROG There must be a hat.

TOAD I'm wearing a hat.

FROG (Frog points out the window) Look there, Toad.

TOAD (looks) What, what is it? I don't see it.

(Frog grabs underpants and jams them in pocket.)

TOAD Where, Frog?

FROG Oh, it's gone.

TOAD What did it look like?

FROG Couldn't tell. Couldn't quite see. Maybe a bunny.

TOAD A bunny? What kind of bunny?

FROG Just a bunny bunny.

TOAD A funny bunny?

FROG What's a funny bunny?

TOAD (with hands demonstrates one straight ear, one floppy) One ear like this, one ear like this. (reverses them) Or one ear like this, one ear like this. Funny bunny.

FROG Yes. Funny.

TOAD Let's find it!

FROG Bunnies hate to be found.

TOAD Not the funny ones.

FROG (changes subject) Tomorrow when I come, I'm bringing you hangers, Toad.

TOAD I'm going to find the bunny. (Exits to the yard)

FROG Yes, my own personal, each identical to the other wire coat hangers. You shall organize and compartmentalize all of the items in this heap. Toad?

(Frog notices Toad is gone, follows. Outside, the bed and heap recede out of the way. Toad looks for a bunny.)

TOAD Here bunny. Here bunny.

FROG Listen up, Toad. That ...bunny must be looking for something to nibble, some spring-time thing to nibble. If we find spring, we'll find the bunny.

TOAD Well then, get on with it, Frog. Find that corner that spring is around.

FROG Look, there's a corner now! (they dash)

TOAD (disappointed) Oh, no spring.

FROG But there is a baby tree sprouting.

TOAD Harumph.

FROG There's a corner. (they dash)

TOAD Oh, no spring.

FROG But there is a worm worming its way.

TOAD We're not looking for a worm, Frog.

FROG There's another corner! (they dash)

TOAD (disappointed) Oh, no spring.

FROG But there is a nest full of robin's eggs.

TOAD We will never find spring around all these wrong corners.

FROG Well then, you think up some way to find spring.

TOAD Yes. I will think it up. I will think up some sure way. It will be known as Toad's way. I will think it up now. (Daffodils poke up.) Look there. Just look at that.

FROG Toad's way works, Toad.

TOAD Yes, and I didn't even think it up yet. (A happy moment. Toad and Frog have an affectionate bump. Toad uses two daffodils as a telephone.) Hello, hello. Is anybody there?

FROG (into a phone) Yes, I'm right here. Daffodil phones make me remember you.

TOAD You don't have to remember me. I'm right here.

FROG (clarifying) Remember you the first time I saw you. You were a wee tiny Toad, trying to reach a long distance operator.

TOAD (amused) A "long distance" operator?! No.

FROG Yes. You didn't know that daffodils are only used for local calls.

TOAD Calls to the immediate vicinity.

FROG Daffodil phones don't work at all if the party to whom you are speaking isn't standing right next to you.

TOAD Frog, why do we call a person a party?

FROG We only call a person a party on the phone. Otherwise a person is a person.

TOAD Whereas a party is balloons and cake and music and folderol.

FROG Toad! The daffodils are blooming! What does that mean?

TOAD (brilliant) It means the daffodils are blooming.

FROG No.

TOAD It means...the daffodils are blooming.

FROG No.

TOAD (to self, misery) The daffodils are blooming doesn't mean the daffodils are blooming blooming blooming....

FROG Toad. The day after the day after the first daffodils is our party. The Frog-and-Toad-Forever party.

TOAD Ah ha! Our party. And our presents.

FROG Yes, we always have presents.

TOAD I love the presents.

FROG But you love our agreement announcement more than the presents.

TOAD Our agreement announcement is dull.

FROG It's exciting.

TOAD The same thing every year?

FROG It's the tension. Everyone waiting, holding their breath to hear if we agree to be friends for another year.

TOAD We always agree.

FROG But we might not.

TOAD (beat) Of course we'll agree.

FROG But we don't have to.

TOAD We have to.

FROG No some year, you, or even I, could say, "I disagree to be friends," and that's why it's so exciting.

TOAD (worried) But Frog? Frog and Toad Forever. Everybody knows that.

FROG Of course, it's world famous.

TOAD Forever is forever. You have to agree to be my friend for another year--

FROG Oh, of course, I will, Toad.

TOAD --because a year is just a year's worth of forever.

FROG But I don't have to. Neither do you. Isn't that exciting?

TOAD No. I don't feel excited at all. I feel...troubled.

FROG Oh, don't be troubled, Toad. Look around us. Daffodils, a party, a friendship-agreement-announcement! Aren't you glad to be awake?

TOAD No. Awake is a missing bunny and this distressing news that we don't have to agree to be friends at our announcement. Sleep was my cozy mattress, my fluffy blanket, and the best dreaming of my career.

FROG (disturbed) You'd rather be awake.

TOAD I'd rather be asleep.

FROG Awake.

TOAD I was dreaming a pie, a pie, Frog.

FROG Awake is better than dreaming.

TOAD Hot pecan with melting vanilla.

FROG Awake is better.

TOAD Dreaming is better. And dreaming a pecan pie is simply the best there is.

FROG I wouldn't know.

TOAD Why? What kind of pie do you dream? (silence) Frog? (silence) Come on, Frog, what kind of pie? (silence) I shared my dream pie, you share yours.

FROG I won't share.

TOAD (shock) Won't share?

FROG No.

TOAD Won't share with your Toad?

FROG No.

TOAD Lemon meringue? Dutch apple? Strawberry? (beat) Chocolate?! Chocolate pudding dream pie?! (deep determination) Give me that chocolate pudding dream pie!

FROG I dream an avalanche!

TOAD That's not pie.

FROG I dream a lightning storm.

TOAD Definitely not pie.

FROG I dream a snake. (Hisses terribly)

TOAD No wonder you're in such a rush to wake up every spring. Next winter, dream a pie.

FROG I'll try.

TOAD Oh no oh dear oh no. Frog, you don't suppose that bunny you couldn't quite see was actually a snake you couldn't quite see.
(Toad spins around in a slow circle.)

FROG What are you doing, Toad?

TOAD I'm on the lookout for a snake.

FROG You're going to get dizzy.

TOAD I like getting dizzy.

FROG You'll fall down.

TOAD There's no help for it. I need to see all around us.

FROG Find another way.

TOAD (dizzy, laughing) Here I go, yes, I'm going down, yes, goodbye, yes...

(Frog catches Toad, rests Toad on ground.)

FROG I told you, Toad.

TOAD Round and round and round I go.

FROG Why are you laughing?

TOAD I'm dizzy. So I forgot about the snake. (jumps) Oh no.

FROG What is it?

TOAD I said snake. (spins again)

FROG You're going to fall down again.

TOAD What's gotten into you, Frog? (rhetorical) Fall down, not fall down? What if there is a snake here while I am facing here? Or a snake here when my attention is here?

(They are inadvertently scaring themselves.)

FROG Or there while you're there.

TOAD Or here while I'm here.

FROG Or there or there or there! Hurry up, Toad, get back to it. Spin and spin!

TOAD You have a turn, Frog.

FROG Me turn?

TOAD Yes, you turn.

FROG I can't.

TOAD Why? Not organized enough for you?

FROG It's simply--, it's just--

TOAD Tell me.

(Frog shakes head.)

TOAD Secrets? Secrets now? We have no secrets, Frog.

FROG Oh, alright, I'll spin. (Frog does a pitiful spin, and is immediately sick.) Toad, Toad...oh misery. Woe woe woe is me.

TOAD (over) You've barely begun, Frog.

FROG Toad...I'm sick to my tummy!

TOAD Sick--? Throw-up sick?

FROG (nods, holds a hand over mouth)

TOAD Put your head between your knees and breathe deeply.

FROG (does, falls) Oh no!

TOAD I've got you. Lean against me, Frog.

(Toad supports Frog. They are back-to-back.)

TOAD Take deep breaths, in and out, in and out.

FROG (breathes, then) Listen up, Toad, when we are standing back-to-back, I can see all there and there and there.

TOAD So what? I can see all there and there and there.

FROG Well, there and there and there, and there and there and there is all there is.

TOAD What's your point, Frog?

FROG If we stand back to back, we can both be on the lookout.

TOAD As long as we stay back-to-back we're perfectly safe

TOAD And nobody has to spin.

(They unknowingly walk away from one another.)

TOAD We can walk all the way to the lake.

FROG We can walk all the way to the meadow. And no one has to get throw up sick to the tummy.

(Enter Squirrel between Frog and Toad, unseen.)

TOAD And no one gets eaten by a lake snake.

FROG And no one gets eaten by a great snake.

TOAD (plays along) And no one gets eaten by a rake snake.

FROG (happy) Or a bake snake!

TOAD (happier) Or a cake snake!

FROG (happiest) Or a mistake snake!!

SQUIRREL S. S. S. S. S. S. S. S.

FROG/TOAD Eeeeeeeeeeeek. (They run together.)

SQUIRREL S. S. S. S. S. S. S...

TOAD Squirrel!

SQUIRREL Hello, Toad. I see you found some spring.

TOAD Why did you hiss?

SQUIRREL I didn't hiss. I "S"-ed.

FROG What is "S"-ing?

SQUIRREL Saying the letter S. I am an S-animal.

FROG What's an S-animal?

SQUIRREL Squirrel, slug, salamander--

FROG I see.

TOAD I don't.

SQUIRREL Swan, sloth, squirrel, squirrel, and Squirrel!!

TOAD I don't get it.

FROG Animals that start with the letter S.

SQUIRREL Splendid animals, all.

TOAD (sarcastic) Oh yeah. Like a snake.

SQUIRREL A snake would never hurt me.

TOAD Ha. Lunch.

SQUIRREL For a snake is an S-animal, and I am an S-animal. S-animals love me.

TOAD Only Snail.

SQUIRREL No, I sussed it out. (Squirrel takes out a piece of paper, reads) Snail loves Squirrel. Snail is an S- animal. Squirrel is an S-animal. Therefore, all S- animals love Squirrel.

TOAD What is that you're reading?

SQUIRREL This is my list. I made it up myself. Let me read a portion. "No S-animal will harm another S-animal." So you need not worry about a snake, Toad.

TOAD I'm not an S-animal. I'm Toad.

FROG A tee-rrific animal.

SQUIRREL S-animal!

TOAD T-animal!

SQUIRREL S. S. S. S.

TOAD Oh, piffle. Come Frog, (getting back-to-back again) we have more important things to do.

SQUIRREL (re back-to-back) This doesn't look important at all.

TOAD Ha. Just on the lookout for a snake.

FROG So we can see all around us. All there and there and there.

TOAD And there and there and there.

SQUIRREL You'll have to stay in one spot.

TOAD Then we will.

SQUIRREL Forever?

FROG We'll stay exactly here.

SQUIRREL Until you starve.

TOAD Starve?

SQUIRREL Or die of boredom.

TOAD Starve?

FROG We may be bored, but we won't be lunch.

TOAD But we mustn't starve, Frog.

FROG We won't starve, Toad.

TOAD I believe I'm starting to starve.

FROG You're fine, Toad.

TOAD No, I'm starting to starve. Yes, I believe I hear my stomach starving now. I'm starving, Frog.

FROG We must stay back-to-back.

(Toad links arms through Frog's.)

TOAD Look at this, Frog. We can link up. Then when I go get something to eat, there you are right behind me. (drags Frog along backwards.) We can go places, we can travel, we can get something to eat. We won't starve!

FROG But Toad!

TOAD This is excellent good.

FROG I say, Toad--

TOAD I am a brilliant Toad.

FROG Friend, Toad--

TOAD We can move all about.

FROG Just a--

TOAD I've saved us.

FROG Stop stop stop right now.

TOAD What's the matter, Frog?

FROG (Frog un-links.) You're dragging me like a big sack.

SQUIRREL A sack? An S-item? You are no S-item, Frog. You are not an S-anything.

FROG Thoughtlessly dragging your Frog from here to there.

TOAD Thoughtless?

SQUIRREL Insults. (writes on list) Frog insults Toad.

FROG I simply must demonstrate.

(Frog links arms with Toad and drags.)

FROG There, now there! What do you think of this?

TOAD I think misery. Free me, Frog, free me now.

SQUIRREL Don't put up with it.

TOAD I won't.

SQUIRREL Don't put up with dragging.

TOAD No dragging!

SQUIRREL Don't put up with insults.

TOAD No insults!

SQUIRREL Disagree to be friends!

TOAD ...What?

SQUIRREL Disagree to be friends for another year.

FROG You can't.

TOAD I won't.

SQUIRREL You must. A fine S-animal like you. Discard this phooey Frog. Come with me and be my S-pal.

TOAD I am no S-pal. I am no S-anything.

SQUIRREL Of course you are. You are a slob.

TOAD A sss...sssssss... (can't say it) ...sssslll... (l sound caught in throat)

FROG (helping) Slob, Toad.

TOAD What?!

SQUIRREL I love you, you S-animal, you.

(Squirrel snuggles Toad.)

TOAD Off off off at once.

SQUIRREL Squirrel and Slob Forever.

FROG That's Frog and Toad Forever, friend.

TOAD I am no slob. Frog, tell this S-thing that I am no slob.

FROG (cheeks puff up)

TOAD Frog? Tell Squirrel, tell Squirrel now.

SQUIRREL Yes, Frog, speak up.

TOAD Frog, do you or do you not think I am a slob?

SQUIRREL Yes, Frog, what do you think, Frog? Out with the truth, Frog, say it Frog!

FROG ... (cheeks puff up)

SQUIRREL Disagree, disagree, disagree-

(Enter Snake.)

SNAKE: Hissss.

(Frog and Toad scatter. Snake chases Frog.)

SQUIRREL Oh, bother.

FROG Run, run. Run for your life, Toad.

TOAD I'm running, Frog.

SQUIRREL We don't have to run, Toad.

TOAD Run.

SQUIRREL No need, friend Slob. We need never fear a snake.

(Frog escapes. Snake chases Toad.)

TOAD Help me. Help meeee.

SQUIRREL Look here, friend Snake. Don't chase Toad. Toad is an S-animal like ourselves. Hello, hello! S! S! S!

(Snake chases Squirrel.)

SQUIRREL Wha--? What are you--? Hey, leave me alone. Help, help me!

TOAD Run, Squirrel!

SNAKE: (to Squirrel, scary) Hisssss.

SQUIRREL Hey, whacha doin'? I'm an S-animal!

(Snake chases Squirrel. Frog grabs Snake's tail and ties it to a tree.)

FROG Hold on, Squirrel. (attracts Snake) Hey, hey, you snake, I say, snake. Lunch!

SNAKE (to Frog, scary) Hisss.

(Frog distracts Snake's attention from Squirrel and leads Snake in a circle around the tree so that Snake becomes wrapped around tree. Toad and Squirrel hide. Frog is dizzy sick around the stage.)

TOAD We're saved! Oh, brave Frog.

FROG (sick) Oh misery. Oh me, oh no.

TOAD Oh, no. Help me steady our Frog, Squirrel.

(Toad catches Frog.)

SQUIRREL Bother.

TOAD Frog saved us.

FROG (sick) Oh.

SQUIRREL This snake had no intention of eating me. Did you?

SNAKE (vicious) Hissss.

SQUIRREL (showing list) Don't you know the code of S?

FROG Sick...

TOAD Squirrel. Frog went round and round and round.

FROG (deep breath) Oh.

TOAD Turning and turning and turning.

FROG Stop talking.

TOAD I'll never stop talking about brave Frog. To turn and turn, to risk throw-up sick, going round and round and round, turning and turning-

FROG Toad! Stop saying all those sick-making words.

SQUIRREL (tries to get their attention) Look--some S-activity--

TOAD The bravest truest Frog-

SQUIRREL Will you please--!

FROG/TOAD What?

SQUIRREL It's doing something! It's doing something big.

(Snake writhes. Frog, Toad, and Squirrel hide as Snake sheds its skin. Snake crawls out of its skin and slithers away, leaving the external skin behind.)

SNAKE Hissss.

(Snake slithers off. The others come out of hiding. Frog approaches the skin.)

FROG It shed its skin. (holds up snake skin, admires) Just look at this, Toad.

TOAD Talk about a slob. I never leave my skin lying around in somebody else's yard.

FROG But the colors, the texture--

TOAD It's disgusting. It's sick-making. I don't want it in my yard!

FROG I'll take it. I'll put it on my wall. It will be art.

TOAD No wonder I hate art.

FROG You don't hate art.

TOAD I hate that.

SQUIRREL (writes on list) Artistic differences.

FROG Well, this isn't art yet. It will be art when I put it in a frame.

SQUIRREL No. I get to get it.

TOAD Why?

SQUIRREL Because it's skin. And what is skin? But an S-item. And to whom does an S-item go, but to an S-animal!

(Squirrel un-winds the snake skin from the tree.)

TOAD Frog should get something. Some reward.

FROG No need, no need.

TOAD Frog, you were brave. To trap a Snake, to run in circles. Brave brave Frog.

SQUIRREL Phooey.

TOAD I wish I could be brave.

FROG Oh, you are brave.

TOAD When am I?

FROG Sometime.

SQUIRREL (jumps on it) Yes, when is Toad brave, Frog?

FROG I...can't think of when now.

SQUIRREL Can't think of when now. (writes) Slob is not brave.

TOAD Don't call me slob.

SQUIRREL You don't have to be brave for me. Squirrel and Slob--

TOAD Never never never.

(Enter Snail. Slowly.)

SNAILL (in love) Squirrel!

FROG Oh, it's Snail.

SQUIRREL Oh, bother.

FROG Hello, Snail.

SNAILL 'lo.

TOAD Hello, little Snail.

SNAILL (protests) Big!

SQUIRREL Oh, simply huge.

TOAD Hello, big Snail.

SNAILL Big.

FROG What's that trailing behind you, Snail?

SNAIL (proudly) Slime!

FROG Slime. You are a big Snail.

TOAD Slime something for us, Snail.

(Snail slimes an "S" on the ground.)

SQUIRREL Bother, bother, bother.

TOAD Look at it, Squirrel.

FROG I think it's about you, Squirrel.

TOAD Definitely an S-word. An S-something.

FROG The letter S. And what's that around it?

TOAD I think...yes, it's a valentine.

SNAIL Heart.

FROG Somebody certainly loves somebody.

SNAIL (love) Squirrel.

SQUIRREL Bother.

FROG Snail is an S-animal, Squirrel.

SQUIRREL Yes, all S-animals love me.

FROG No. Just Snail.

TOAD For reasons that nobody can figure.

FROG (don't be rude) Toad.

SNAIL S.

FROG Snail is a true S-animal, Squirrel.

SQUIRREL An S-animal that's slow.

SNAIL (hurt) Oh.

SQUIRREL An S-animal that isn't famous.

SNAIL (hurt) Oh.

SQUIRREL I need a famous S-animal for my famous friendship--my friendship known 'round the world. I need Slob.

TOAD Never.

SNAIL Oh.

FROG (to distract) Slime something else, Snail.

SNAIL (still hurt) Oh.

FROG Slime a beautiful something. Come on, come on, you can do it.

SNAIL Slime?

FROG Yes, slime us a beautiful something.

SNAIL (happy) What?

TOAD Snail? Can you slime party invitations?

FROG Oh, good idea, Toad.

TOAD Well, sometimes I have a good idea, Frog.

SNAIL Party?

FROG Yes, Snail. Our Frog-and-Toad-Forever party. On the day after the day after the first daffodils.

TOAD The day after tomorrow.

SNAIL (into it) Party!

SQUIRREL And only S-animals are invited.

SNAIL (starts sliming the word "party") Party.

FROG To which everybody is invited.

TOAD A big celebration.

SNAILL Big.

FROG A fancy dress-up party.

(Everybody straightens clothes. Toad buttons jacket.)

TOAD Oh, piffle.

FROG What is it, Toad?

TOAD I am a slob. I've lost another button. I shall have to throw this jacket away.

FROG No, Toad. We'll find the button and sew it.

TOAD I don't sew.

FROG Then we'll find it and I'll sew.

TOAD The world is a huge place in which to find a tiny button.

FROG I have my eyeglass. (shows monocle)

TOAD It won't help. We'll never find it.

(As Frog searches with monocle, Toad follows, Squirrel follows Toad, Snail follows Squirrel.)

FROG Here it is.

TOAD No!

FROG Truly, Toad. I've found the button.

TOAD (takes it) This button is square. The button I'm looking for is round.

FROG Oh. Sorry.

TOAD The world keeps forever hidden the round button I seek.

FROG Ah, here is your round button.

TOAD (takes it) This round button is black. The round button I'm looking for is a brown round button.

FROG Silly me. Let me try again.

TOAD The world spits out the useless black round button but keeps my beautiful brown round button.

FROG Here's a brown round button.

TOAD (takes it) This brown round button has two holes. The brown round button I seek has four holes.

FROG (looking again) I should have noticed. Sorry, Toad.

TOAD Hopeless hopeless hopeless. The merciless world will never dislodge my four-holed brown round button from the depths of its clutches.

FROG Here is a brown round button with four holes.

TOAD (takes it) This brown round button with four holes is small. The brown round button with four holes I'm looking for is big.

FROG How thoughtless of me. Let me look again.

TOAD We need an army of searchers each with an eye glass to wrestle my four-holed brown round button that's big away from the world.

FROG Here we go. A brown round button with four holes that's big.

TOAD (takes it) This brown round button with four holes that's big is thick. The brown round button with four holes that's big I'm looking for is thin.

FROG Let me try again.

TOAD Try and try and try. It's no use, Frog. However can a mere toad uncover a thin big brown round button with four holes from a world that won't give it up?

FROG Here.

TOAD (takes it) This thin big brown round button with four holes is dull. The thin big brown round button with four holes I'm looking

for is shiny. Useless. Try as I may, I will never secure this lost button from the deep deep bowels of the pitiless world.

FROG (sad) I suppose you're right Toad, you will never find a button out here. The world is simply too big. (exits.)

TOAD And too deep and too pitiless.

(Squirrel is overcome with laughter.)

TOAD What are you laughing about?

SQUIRREL I gotta write this down. "Slob pulls a fast one."

TOAD What fast?

SNAIL (happy) Fast.

SQUIRREL When did you put all these buttons out here?

SNAIL Put!

TOAD I never put.

SQUIRREL Then where did all these buttons come from, Toad?

SNAIL From!

TOAD These are buttons off of previous jackets.

SNAIL Off!

SQUIRREL Why didn't you sew them on?

SNAIL On!

SQUIRREL Will you please be quiet!

SNAIL Shhh.

TOAD I poke my fingers a thousand times just threading the needle.

SQUIRREL Well, your trick worked. Frog is gone. Gone gone gone.

TOAD Frog will be back.

SQUIRREL If Frog comes back, we'll be ready. You and me. Squirrel

and Slob Forever--famous, mythic, songs. You and me.

TOAD What about Frog?

SQUIRREL Frog and Toad For NEVER.

TOAD For Never?

SQUIRREL Like you didn't know. (sees button, laughs) Look, Toad, look!

TOAD What?

SQUIRREL Look on your jacket.

TOAD I don't see anything.

SQUIRREL There--dangling--your thin big shiny four-holed brown round button. It was there all the time.

TOAD Nooooo.

SQUIRREL Yes. You've done it, Toad. This Frog will flee.

TOAD Because of a button?

SQUIRREL A button--a thread--a something. It's all on my list.

TOAD It is?

SQUIRREL (reads) Frog is of good cheer, while Toad is crabby--

TOAD Crabby?

SQUIRREL Frog is tidy, while Toad is a slob--

TOAD Slob.

SQUIRREL Frog is brave--

TOAD --and Slob is scaredy.

SQUIRREL Frog can keep a button tied to a jacket--

TOAD What?! What's your point, Squirrel?

SQUIRREL Just as you are, I take you just as you are.

TOAD Just as I am?

SQUIRREL No need to change for me, Toad.

TOAD (horrified) Change?!

SQUIRREL No need. Not for me. I am your friend just as you are. Slobby, cowardly, buttonless Toad. I'd never leave you.

SNAIL (to Squirrel) Never.

TOAD Who is going to leave me?

SQUIRREL Well, who isn't here?

TOAD (looking around) Frog? ...Where are you, Frog?

SQUIRREL Frog is gone, but I am here. Forever.

SNAIL Squirrel.

TOAD Frog is gone.

SNAIL Squirrel.

SQUIRREL Get off me.

SNAIL Ever.

SQUIRREL Oh, bother. You're getting--You're leaking!

(As Squirrel struggles with Snail)

TOAD My Frog is gone. My Frog thinks I'm a crabby slobby scaredy ...What shall I do? Whatever shall I do?

(INTERMISSION. ABOUT FIFTEEN MINUTES.)

(Act II, Toad's yard, the next morning. Squirrel waits. Frog approaches with wire coat hangers.)

FROG Hello, Squirrel.

SQUIRREL Hello, Frog. What are you doing with all those hangers?

(Frog tries to get past Squirrel to get into Toad's house. Squirrel blocks the way each time.)

FROG These hangers are my own personal hangers. Each one identical to the one before and the one after.

SQUIRREL Why are your personal hangers so far from your personal closet?

FROG They are for managing Toad's heap. Toad doesn't know the first thing about heap management. Whereas I, I know alphabetizing of items, numbering of drawers and separation of socks. I am good at heap management. I think I can say with all humbleness that I am a heap-management artist. Artiste.

SQUIRREL I'm not at all surprised to hear you say that.

FROG Listen up, Squirrel.

SQUIRREL Yes, Frog?

FROG I'm finding it remarkably difficult to get past you.

SQUIRREL Why do you need to get past me?

FROG To get inside. To wake up Toad. It's my every morning job from spring 'til hibernation.

SQUIRREL Toad's up.

FROG Toad's asleep.

SQUIRREL Up.

FROG Toad sleeps until I call.

SQUIRREL Not today.

FROG Not possible.

SQUIRREL Up. Out of bed. Awake.

FROG I must see.

SQUIRREL Frog, dear old Frog. I'm trying to spare your feelings.

FROG My--? What do you mean?

SQUIRREL (kindly) Go home and forget about Toad.

FROG Out of my way.

(Squirrel lets Frog pass. Frog reads note on door.)

FROG "Go away! This means you." What is this?

SQUIRREL A note from Toad.

FROG (brief pause) Oh. Well. It doesn't mean me.

SQUIRREL "Go away, this means you." (poking) You. You. You. Not anybody else but you. It was bound to happen.

FROG What was?

SQUIRREL Toad has locked you out.

FROG Not possible.

SQUIRREL No? Maybe something about your suit.

FROG My suit?

SQUIRREL Ironed, fresh, clean, fashionable. Or your shoes?

FROG My shoes.

SQUIRREL Polished, shiny, act-like-a-mirror shoes. Or your hat?

FROG My hat?

SQUIRREL Shapely, always-at-the-same-jaunty-angle hat. Toad simply can't compete with your organization.

FROG Compete?

SQUIRREL Toad is having second thoughts.

FROG Second thoughts?

SQUIRREL And third and fourth ones as well.

FROG Third and fourth?

SQUIRREL I think Toad is ready to make a surprise announcement at the Frog-and-Toad-Forever party.

FROG (horrified) No surprise. It's always the same.

SQUIRREL Don't wait for Toad to do it, Frog.

FROG Do what?

SQUIRREL You do it first.

FROG Do what, do what!

SQUIRREL Disagree to be friends.

(A brief pause, then Frog pounds on the door.)

FROG Toad, listen up, Toad. It's me. Let me in.

TOAD (pokes head out) Hello, Frog. What do you want?

FROG I don't have to want something. I just arrive. Every day. For play. To wake you up.

TOAD Sorry, Frog. I'm busy.

FROG You're never busy. What are you doing?

TOAD Um. Just busy. Too too busy.

FROG (shock) Secrets?

TOAD I simply must get back to it.

FROG But, Toad--

TOAD No. It's almost the day after the day after!

(Toad shuts door.)

FROG (despondent) Secrets. Toad has secrets from me.

SQUIRREL A very bad sign.

FROG Of what? What is the sign?

SQUIRREL Of Frog and Toad...for never.

FROG What shall I do; what can I do?

SQUIRREL Disagree first.

FROG Me?

SQUIRREL Toad is not equal to you, Frog. When you look at Toad you see a lesser being.

FROG ...Toad feels lesser?

SQUIRREL Toad is lesser. When a person looks at a best friend, that person should get to see an equal creature mirrored back. You, you Frog, deserve someone neat, tidy, and cheerful.

FROG My Toad feels lesser.

SQUIRREL Is, is. You need an equal. Someone ironed, and matched, wearing a hat at a precise and jaunty angle.

FROG Mirrored back--?

SQUIRREL At the very least.

FROG (looks at self from bottom to top) I see, yes, I see. Shoes, socks, cuffs, pants, shirt, jacket, matched jacket! Hat at a jaunty angle!

SQUIRREL You are an organized wonder, Frog.

FROG I will undo it all!!

SQUIRREL What--? No--

FROG (undoing neatness) What is this neatness when compared to Toad's friendship? Would I keep neatness, but lose my Toad? Go, you neatness, Away! (drags shoetops across the ground) Go you polished shoes in which I can see my reflection. No more this shine. I defile the never-before scratched sides of my shoes. Why should laces be tied?! Because they are THERE?! I open, I unlace, I defy order. Off with this shoe, off with a sock. Disorder. Disarray. (to pants) Creases?! Away with creases--be gone. (to shirt) Tucked? I say, are you tucked? No! Not on me, not tucked on me, not buttoned with precision, each button in its matching opposite hole. (to tie) A Tie?! No, never a tie. Hang a tie! (to hat) You top of the ensemble, perfect accessory! No more accessorizing. (to jacket) Jacket? You matched jacket?! Stand between me and my best friend, will you?! Never. Death to all matching jackets. (kills jacket) Death death death.

SQUIRREL No no no no.

FROG A new day. A new look. A new Frog.

(Frog exits.)

SQUIRREL You could simply disagree--Oh, bother. (checks list) A new Frog. What am I going to do about a new Frog?

(Snail enters on a big roller skate, very out of control. Snail chases Squirrel.)

SQUIRREL Leave me alone.

SNAIL Squirrel!

SQUIRREL What are you doing?

SNAIL Fast.

SQUIRREL Stop following me.

SNAIL Ever.

(Snail crashes off stage.)

SNAIL Ow.

SQUIRREL Oh, bother.

SNAIL Squirrel.

(Snail reenters, flies off other side, crashes)

SNAIL (off) Ow.

SQUIRREL No, now don't, don't, don't...Snail don't get back on--

(Snail enters, again rolling out of control. Squirrel stops Snail.)

SNAIL Wheeee.

SQUIRREL (rhetorical) What are you thinking of, Snail?

SNAIL Fast.

SQUIRREL Fast and clumsy!

SNAIL Fast.

SQUIRREL Out of control.

SNAIL S!

SQUIRREL Snail. Stop following me.

SNAIL Follow.

SQUIRREL Aren't you supposed to be somewhere else? Don't you have some important assignment?

SNAIL 'vitations.

SQUIRREL Yes, invitations. Very important. You better get right to it. Slime them invites.

SNAIL (gets off skate, slimes) Party.

SQUIRREL Party, yes, go slime "party." (watches as Snail slimes, gets an idea) Hmm. Is that all the invitations say?

SNAIL Say.

SQUIRREL No other words at all?

SNAIL All.

SQUIRREL Nothing about the day after the day after?

SNAIL Party!

SQUIRREL No, no, you're right. Why clutter up a perfectly good word like "party" with other useless words. You're doing a great job, Snail.

SNAIL Great?

SQUIRREL You bet you are. Go back and Spread the word, the word "party" throughout the forest.

(Toad comes out of house with a badly wrapped present. Fingers bandaged)

TOAD Ta daaaa!

SNAIL Daaaaa!

SQUIRREL Snail was just leaving. The invitations, you know.

TOAD Oh, yes, Snail. Do do the invitations.

SNAIL Party. (exiting, leaves skate)

TOAD (looks about) Frog? Where did my Frog go?

SQUIRREL Frog couldn't wait. I waited.

TOAD Why are you even here? (points to note) Go away. This means you.

SQUIRREL I'm here...to give you Frog's message.

TOAD I have a present for Frog. Took two hours.

SQUIRREL Your ungrateful Frog isn't even here.

TOAD But I've spent the whole morning sewing my present! Where is my Frog?

SQUIRREL Didn't say, didn't say. (checks list) Ah yes. "artistic differences!" (beat) Frog left you these. (hangers)

TOAD Why?

SQUIRREL ...Frog mentioned something about art.

TOAD (worried) Art?

SQUIRREL Yes, art. They're for art.

TOAD What am I supposed to do with them?

SQUIRREL Frog expects you to make art with them. Yes! That's the message.

TOAD Make art? (aghast) I'm supposed to make art?

SQUIRREL Frog is an artist. Artiste.

TOAD I don't know how to make art.

SQUIRREL I'd never ask you to make art, Toad. If we were friends, I'd never ask you to make anything but a mess.

TOAD If Frog wants art, I'll make art.

SQUIRREL Wha--? Uh...you'll have to work all night.

TOAD All night?

SQUIRREL You won't get the littlest, tiniest bit of sleep.

TOAD (horrified) No sleep?

SQUIRREL Art takes all night.

TOAD (sad) No sleep.

SQUIRREL I'd never ask you to lose sleep.

TOAD I will do it.

SQUIRREL No!

TOAD Not asleep making art for Frog. (begins to make art)

SQUIRREL No no no... Bother bother bother. (rhetorical) Now what am I supposed to do? Disagree disagree! I should be romping through the forest, everyone watching, everyone singing -- the famous song of squirrel and Slob Forever. The adventures, the exploits, the s-capades, famous, fabled, historical, mythic Squirrel and Slob Forever. Noodley noodley noodley. What will cause a rip, a rupture, a separation into which I can wedge myself, my squirrelness, my me! and grab my slob! (checks list) Am I even close? Toad is currently ruining Frog's personal identical hangers--Frog is killing matching

jackets--maybe, maybe. But if Toad's art and Frog's mess fail, desperate measures will be called for! Let me dream on it.

(Turns into night, Squirrel dreams, Toad works, then morning light reveals exhausted Toad placing the finishing touches on the sculpture. Frog enters, untidy, wearing underpants on head, carrying a present. Frog hides the present. Toad completes the sculpture. Frog stands next to Toad. Each has something to show.)

FROG Toad.

TOAD Frog.

FROG/TOAD Ta daaaaaa!

SQUIRREL (awakening) Noodley noodley! What?

FROG Look at this, Toad. (Frog's personal mess)

TOAD Look at this, Frog. (the art)

FROG I've made a mess.

TOAD I've made art.

(Brief pause as Frog studies the art.)

SQUIRREL Ah yes, yes.

FROG Why, Toad...What have you done with all of my personal identical wire coat hangers?

TOAD Art.

FROG (destroyed) Personal. Identical.

TOAD You like art.

FROG Of course, I like art. In its place. In its own compartment.

TOAD I don't know anything about art compartments.

SQUIRREL Come on, Frog. What do you think of Toad's art?

FROG I think it's--I think it's--

SQUIRREL Whadayathink, whadayathink?

FROG (Puffs up cheeks.)

TOAD Say what you think, Frog.

SQUIRREL Say it, say it.

FROG Mere words can't express what I think of Toad's art.

TOAD Really?

FROG Words are not adequate!

TOAD Not adequate?

FROG Bigger than vocabulary!

TOAD Than vocabulary--thank you, Frog. But do you love it, Frog?

SQUIRREL Yes, Frog. Speak up. Do you love it?

FROG (loses the struggle) My hangers my hangers my hangers!

SQUIRREL (score) Yes!

TOAD But I made art.

FROG You made a mess!

TOAD I got no sleep!

(Enter Snail, wearing a bow tie.)

SNAIL Party!

SQUIRREL Party!

TOAD I don't feel like a party.

SNAIL (but I'm wearing a) Bow!

SQUIRREL Announce, announce.

FROG (still angry) Where is everybody?

TOAD Everybody's late.

SQUIRREL Nobody's coming.

FROG Of course they're coming.

SQUIRREL No. Nobody believes in Frog and Toad Forever. (to Toad) A new day, a new friendship.

FROG Listen up, Snail. Did you slime lots of invitations?

SNAIL Lots.

FROG Did you put them every place?

SQUIRREL Snail put them every place.

SNAIL Place!

FROG What do the invitations say?

SQUIRREL They say enough.

FROG Snail, what do the invitations say?

SNAIL Party.

FROG What else?

SNAIL Party.

FROG What about whowhenwhere, time, location, who's giving the party, why they're having the party, Frog-and-Toad-Forever, that sort of thing?

SNAIL (pause, beat, wail) Ooooooh.

TOAD All they say is "party?"

SNAIL (sob) Party.

FROG (to Squirrel) That's why there is no other guest.

SQUIRREL Well, you don't need another guest to make an announcement.

TOAD I don't feel like making an announcement.

SQUIRREL What better time for an announcement than now?

FROG Why?

SQUIRREL (to Frog) Personal, identical. (to Toad) No sleep, no sleep.

FROG Toad's right. This is a very bad time for an announcement.

SQUIRREL Announce announce!

(Frog and Toad look sternly at one another and cross their arms stubbornly across their chests.)

TOAD No announcement.

SQUIRREL Bother. Bother bother bother. (checks list) What's left on this list? Ah ha! "Slob is not brave."

TOAD Stop saying that.

SQUIRREL Listen you two, the day is young, plenty of chances for an announcement, one I'm sure you want to make. I'll just go- Um. ROUND UP ANOTHER GUEST. Yes. I will round up a guest. You wait right here. I will find an invitation guest in front of whom you can both make a splendid announcement! Wait right here. Toad, think how tired you are from making art. Frog, think about your ruined personal identical wire coat hangers. Personal, identical. (to Toad) No Sleep! I'll be back with the guest. (exiting) Disagree disagree.

(Frog and Toad are still fuming. Toad sneaks a glance at Frog and grabs the underpants from Frog's head.)

TOAD Frog, give me those underpants.

FROG Give me my hat!

TOAD No. This is most un-Frog-like.

(Toad runs with underpants; Frog follows. Toad looks for a place to put them, places them on the sculpture. Frog doesn't see.)

FROG Give me my hat.

TOAD It isn't a hat.

(Snail has found Frog's present for Toad)

SNAIL Present!

FROG Put that back, Snail.

TOAD What is it?

FROG Nothing, it's a nothing.

TOAD Well, I have a nothing for you, too.

SNAIL (Insisting) Bow!

FROG (takes present, gives to Toad) Oh, alright. Here, Toad.

TOAD Here, Frog.

(Frog and Toad grudgingly exchange presents, open them.)

TOAD This is a hat.

FROG A hat that was a hat yesterday and will be a hat tomorrow.

TOAD Harumph.

FROG And this is a (sees it) ...jacket?

TOAD With all the buttons you found in my yard.

FROG Yes. I see all the buttons. But I don't see any button holes. Yes, here is a button, but no button hole opposite.

TOAD Those buttons are decorations.

FROG Buttons that don't button but decorate...(to change subject)
Listen up, Toad, however did you sew all these...decorative buttons without turning your fingers into pin cushions?

TOAD (shows bandages) I didn't!

FROG (relents) Oh, Toad. (puts on jacket) I shall wear this jacket ... all day long.

TOAD (one upping) Well, I shall wear this hat all day and all night.

FROG (one upping) I shall wear this jacket all day all night and all tomorrow.

TOAD (a threat) I shall wear this hat until the clock stops!

FROG Which clock?

TOAD All of them.

TOAD jams on the too-big hat.

FROG Oh, it's too big. Give it to me, Toad.

TOAD Not until the clock stops.

FROG I can fix it, Toad--

TOAD Tick tock tick tock. (crashes into something)

FROG But, Toad, you can't see.

TOAD I don't need to see.

FROG (new tactic) Alright, Toad.

TOAD I'm not taking off my hat!

FROG No no. You don't have to take it off. But perhaps if you close your eyes.

TOAD Close my eyes?

FROG Yes, and think, very very big thoughts.

TOAD Big thoughts?

FROG Thoughts so big, they make your head swell.

TOAD And the hat will fit me!

FROG Good, Toad.

(Frog lifts the hat from Toad's head. Frog will shrink the hat; wet it and then dry it with monocle, blow on it, too.)

TOAD I am thinking a big sky. I am thinking a big pond. I am thinking a big tree. I am thinking a big lily pad. (sits on Snail's skate.) I am sitting down on a big lily pad, in a big pond, near a big tree, under a big sky.

FROG That's it, Toad. Big.

TOAD I am seeing a big pie.

SNAIL Pie.

FROG Good, Toad.

TOAD I am holding a big spoon.

SNAIL Spoon.

FROG Excellent.

TOAD I am seeing a big vat of vanilla.

SNAIL Vanilla.

FROG Go, Toad.

TOAD I am scooping a big slice of the big pie into my big bowl. I turn my attention to the big vat of vanilla, and scoop a big scoop onto my big spoon and plop it on top of my big pie. I fill the big bowl-- (Snail shakes skate to get Toad off of it.) --but the big lily pad on which I'm sitting is feeling the stress of the big bowl filled with the big slice and the big scoops, not to mention the big me, and it's starting to shake and quake and shimmy. My big lily pad is sinking in the big pond, oh no, oh no!

FROG (puts shrunken hat on Toad's head) That's it, Toad!

TOAD I'm drowninnngggg.

(Toad stands to flee the sinking lily pad, Snail retrieves the skate)

FROG Open your eyes, Toad.

TOAD (opens eyes) Oh my. Just in the nick of time, Frog. I almost drowned in my big thought.

FROG I think you've done it, Toad.

TOAD What have I done?

FROG Your hat is fitting now.

TOAD Ah yes. I can see you quite clearly, Frog.

FROG Your hat looks very good.

TOAD So does your jacket.

SNAIL (hopeful) Pie?

TOAD Oh. No. That was just a big thought.

SNAIL (wail) Pie!

FROG We don't have pie, Snail.

SNAIL Pie!

TOAD There's no pie.

SNAIL Pie!

TOAD Think of something, Frog.

SNAIL Pieee.

FROG (over) How about a...maybe a...I can't think...some game, we'll have a game...a game while we're waiting for another guest.

SNAIL Game?

TOAD Let's have a race.

SNAIL Race?

FROG We can't race a Snail, Toad.

TOAD Why not?

FROG (whispers) It simply isn't fair, Toad.

SNAIL (climbing on skate, gleefully) Race!

FROG Oh, I see. Then let's do it. (lining up) On your mark, get set-
-

(Snail starts without them.)

SNAIL Race!

(Frog and Toad shrug. Snail crashes off.)

SNAIL Ow.

TOAD I'll get the bandaids.

(Toad runs into house. Frog retrieves Snail.)

FROG Here I come, Snail. Oh my, what have we here?

SNAIL Ow.

FROG There there, little Snail. Why do you even have this silly skate?

SNAIL Fast.

FROG Why do you want to be fast?

SNAIL Squirrel.

FROG Oh, Snail. Poor Snail.

(Snail kicks the skate.)

SNAIL Ouch.

TOAD (entering, with bandaids) Where should I bandaid?

SNAIL (Happy, points) Here. Here. Here. Here. Here.

(A snake enters with a big hiss.)

TOAD Run!

(They scatter, trying to flee. The snake chases Frog.)

TOAD Look out, Frog.

(Frog escapes. The snake chases Toad.)

FROG It's coming, Toad.

TOAD Run, Snail.

SNAIL Run?

(The snake chase, which ends when Toad somehow, accidentally, foils the snake. The point is that Toad's act is an accident.)

FROG Oh no.

TOAD Help help help help. (etc.)

FROG Here I come, Toad.

TOAD Help me, help me, help me. (etc.)

FROG Toad! You saved Snail.

SNAIL Saved.

FROG You were so brave.

TOAD (great pleasure and surprise) Brave? Was I?

FROG You were. You were very brave.

TOAD Brave.

SQUIRREL (from inside Snake skin) Nooooooooooooo!

FROG (puts an ear to snake skin) Wait a minute. Just a minute here.

(Frog jams an arm inside the snake. Toad and Snail gasp. Frog pulls out Squirrel, who has been wearing the old shed snake skin. It is not Snake at all.)

SQUIRREL Hissss?

SNAIL (shocked) Squirrel!

TOAD (to the heavens) Oh, bad bad bad.

SNAIL (disappointed) Squirrel.

FROG What have you done, Squirrel?

SQUIRREL Disagree disagree disagree to be friends!

FROG No.

SQUIRREL Toad can't be brave for you!

FROG Nonsense. Toad is...adequately brave for me.

SQUIRREL (to Toad) You didn't sleep all night for this Frog!

TOAD And I'd do it again, too.

SQUIRREL (to Frog) This Toad ruined your personal identical wire coat

hangers.

TOAD I had to make art!

FROG (sees underpants on art) Oh, Oh my.

TOAD What is it, Frog?

FROG (adjusting the underpants) I see new possibilities for your art.

TOAD What?!

FROG You can use the art for your mess.

TOAD My mess?

FROG Yes, all of your heap items can be artfully draped and organized. It will be a thing of beauty.

TOAD Thank you, Frog.

FROG You're welcome, Toad.

(Frog and Toad have an affectionate bump.)

SQUIRREL No no no. What about me? Squirrel and Slob Forever.

TOAD Piffle.

SQUIRREL A friendship of famous proportions. A lyric song, noodley noodley.

FROG Can't you just have a regular friendship?

SQUIRREL Famous or nothing.

TOAD Nothing, nothing. It's nothing.

SQUIRREL What will I do? How can I live?

SNAIL Stop!

(The three stare at the forcefulness of Snail, Snail struggles with a concept.)

SNAIL Squirrel...and...Snail...For...Ever. (pants from exhaustion)

TOAD Snail, you said four whole words.

SNAIL Five!

FROG Snail is an S-animal, Squirrel.

SQUIRREL Not famous!

FROG (brief pause) Squirrel and Snail Forever. It has a great ring to it, don't you think, Toad?

TOAD Oh. Yes. People singing it throughout their lives.

FROG Mythic.

TOAD Famous.

FROG The mighty Squirrel and wee Snail travelling the forest, having adventures, seeing the world.

TOAD The wee snail and the wee-snail protector--Squirrel!

SQUIRREL Pro.tec.tor?!

FROG Mythic.

TOAD Famous.

SQUIRREL (tries it) Squirrel and Snail--

SNAIL Noodley!

SQUIRREL The huge and gigantic Squirrel, taking care of the wee tiny Snail.

SNAIL (agreeing) Wee.

SQUIRREL Squirrel's speed and fastness, looking after the slow slow Snail.

SNAIL (nodding) Slow.

SQUIRREL Famous, mythic, PROTECTOR.

FROG I can hear it now.

SQUIRREL Yes, everyone listening, everyone watching--

FROG Everyone singing-

SQUIRREL To the glory of Squirrel the PROTECTOR travelling the nooks and crannies and roads--

TOAD And highways and byways and side ways.

SQUIRREL Protecting the wee friend Snail.

SNAIL (Ta) Da!

SQUIRREL Come Snail, let's begin our adventure.

(Squirrel exits. Snail slowly follows.)

SNAIL 'venture!

SQUIRREL (off) And our story.

SNAIL Story!

(Squirrel reenters. Watches Snail's slow progress.)

SQUIRREL Hop on your skate, Snail.

SNAIL (gets on skate) Hop.

SQUIRREL Your Squirrel will pull you.

SNAIL Squirrel.

SQUIRREL Squirrel and Snail Forever. Away!

(They exit. Frog and Toad wave.)

TOAD (dancing with joy) That's the last we'll see of them.

FROG No. They'll be back.

TOAD Oh, no.

FROG Yes, we'll have to hear about their famous adventure.

(Side-by-side, they appraise one another)

TOAD You are a mess, Frog.

FROG For you, Toad.

TOAD You don't have to ever be a mess for me.

FROG You don't have to ever make art for me. (realizes) Oh, Toad, we never got to make our announcement.

TOAD We can't have an announcement with nobody around to hear it.

FROG I suppose.

TOAD We'll do it next year.

FROG The day after the day after the first daffodils.

(They run to the daffodils.)

TOAD Hello? I say, Hello?

FROG (answers) Yes. Frog here.

TOAD Hello, Frog, it's Toad.

FROG Hello, Toad.

TOAD Happy Frog-and-Toad-Forever Day.

FROG And happy Frog-and-Toad-Forever Day to you, too.

TOAD (not on the phone) Sorry we didn't get to make our announcement.

FROG With or without an announcement, I will be your friend for another year, Toad.

TOAD I will be your friend forever, Frog.

(An affectionate bump, end.)