

# **Squids Will Be Squids: Fresh Morals, Beastly Fables**

by P. McGuire

adapted from the book of the same name by  
Jon Scieszka & Lane Smith

## **CAST**

STORYTELLER	MATCHES
AESOP	LITTLE WALRUS
GRASSHOPPER	TERMITE
GRASSHOPPER'S MOTHER	ANT
FROG	ECHIDNA
DEER	HORSESHOE CRAB
MOUSE	BLOWFISH
SQUID	MOTHER
ELEPHANT	PIECE OF TOAST
MOSQUITO	FROOT LOOPS
FLEA	DAUGHTER, SON, DAD
RHINOCEROS	SLUG
GNAT	WORM
MRS. ELEPHANT	SNAIL
SKUNK	HAND
MUSK OX	FOOT
CABBAGE	TONGUE
ROCK	BEEFSNAKSTIK
PAPER	DUCKBILLED PLATYPUS
SCISSORS	SHARK
PIGEON	WASP
SABER-TOOTH TIGER	BACTERIA
STRAW	

*(Storyteller enters carrying a book)*

Storyteller: *(addressing the audience)* Fables. Do you know what a fable is? Yes? No? You know, little stories about cute wittle animals that are used to demonstrate a moral like in the "Tortoise and the Hare." Ah, you know that, do you? And do you know what a moral is? A moral is a little lesson about what is right and what is wrong.

In the story of the "Tortoise and Hare" the hare challenges the tortoise to a race and, knowing that he was way faster than a tortoise, he took a nap halfway through the race. Well, lo' and behold, when he woke up, there was the tortoise, crossing the finish line.

Of course, the moral here is, "Never race a tortoise because they hide rockets in their shells and are actually really, really fast!"

Aesop: *(poking his head out)* Psst. No. Just...no. That's not even close.

Storyteller: Yes it is. Rocket shells. That's a thing.

Aesop: No. It most certainly is not a thing.

Storyteller: Uh, yeah. It is. Maybe American tortoises don't have rockets, but they TOTALLY have them in Europe.

Aesop: There are no rocket powered tortoises.

Storyteller: There totally are.

Aesop: There totally aren't.

Storyteller: Well that's your opinion.

Aesop: No. It's science.

Storyteller: Well, *comme ci comme ça*.

Aesop: *(big sigh)* Do you even know what that means?

Storyteller: *Ça ne fait rien?*

Aesop: You can't just say random things in French and hope you'll win the argument.

Storyteller: Crème brule? Chaise lounge, bon appetit, tater tot?

Aesop: Tater--? That's not even French. You just sound ridic--

Storyteller: *(pushes Aesop, by the face, off stage)* Soooo, anyway. Fables. Fables have been around for thousands of years. And it's no wonder. Because even thousands of years ago people were bright enough to figure out that you could gossip about anybody--as long as you changed their name to something like "Lion" or "Mouse" or "Donkey" first. You know. Like old smarty pants Ratface back there.

Aesop: Hey! Rude!

Storyteller: What? I wasn't talking about *you*. I said "Ratface". Rat. That's an *an-i-mal*... *(turning back to the audience)* pffft...Touch-y.

Aesop: Right. *(exits)*

Storyteller: Riiiiight. That was Aesop. Aesop is the guy most famous for telling fables. Though he wasn't the first...or the best looking. Most descriptions we have of Aesop

call him “funny shaped” or “ugly” or worse. But you didn’t hear that from me. I think Aesop was one heck of a swell guy. This play, *Squids Will Be Squids*, is a collection of fables that Aesop might have told if he were alive today--

Aesop: (O.S.) --I AM ALIVE--

Storyteller: NO-YOU'RE-NOT-YOU'RE-JUST-AN-ACTOR!! As I was saying, fables that Aesop might have told IF he were alive today. Though, if he were alive today, he’d probably be sitting in the back of class daydreaming and goofing around instead of paying attention and correcting his homework like he was supposed to, because his dog ate it and he didn’t have time to run out and buy new paper and do it over again before his bus came to pick him up in the morning. These are beastly fables with fresh morals about all kinds of bossy, sneaky, funny, annoying, dim-bulb people.

*(Aesop enters and crosses in front.)*

But nobody I know personally.

Aesop: Mmmm hmmm.

Storyteller: Really. Moral—Sometimes the names are changed to protect the not-so-innocent. And now, our first fable, Grasshopper Logic.

*(Grasshopper and Grasshopper Mother enter.)*

Aesop: One bright and sunny day, Grasshopper came home from school, dropped his backpack, and was just about to run outside to meet his friends.

Mom: Where are you going?

Grasshopper: Out to meet some friends.

Mom: Do you have any homework due tomorrow?

Grasshopper: Just one small thing for History. I did the rest in class.

Mom: Okay. Be back at six for dinner.

Storyteller: Grasshopper hung out with his friends, came home promptly at six, and ate his dinner.

Mom: Ok, let’s look at this homework. *(slowly freaking out)* “Rewrite twelve Greek myths as Broadway musicals. Write music for songs. Design and build all sets. Sew original costumes for each production.” How long have you known about this assignment??

Grasshopper: I dunno.

Aesop: *(leaps in between Mom and Grasshopper so Mom doesn’t squish him)* MORAL—There are plenty of things to say to calm a hopping mad Grasshopper mom but “I dunno” is not one of them.

*(Storyteller reenters)*

Storyteller: Whaddya think? Pretty great, huh? And since we called him “Grasshopper” you’d never know we were talking about this kid in the front row. Ha! Oh. Oops, sorry. *(beat)* Welp, moving on!

*(Frog enters and, during the following, gets more and more excited as the Storyteller describes what happens on TV.)*

Storyteller: Here’s Frog. And here’s the story of his new shoes. Frog was watching TV one afternoon when he saw this great commercial for new skateboard shoes. The guy in the commercial puts on the new shoes, then 360 kickflips a curb, fakie ollies a trashcan, and rides a nosegrind into the sunset. Obviously, Frog ran right out and bought those shoes. When he got home, he put them right on and. Well...

*(Frog proceeds to jump on his board. He tries the 360 kickflip and wiped out. He tries the fakie ollie and smashes into a trashcan. He tries the nosegrind and spreads himself on the pavement.)*

*(Aesop enters wearing cat ears.)*

Storyteller: Cat walked over and helped him up.

Aesop: Hey. Nice shoes.

Frog: Thanks. *(Frog exits)*

Aesop: *(removing ears)* MORAL--Everyone knows frogs can’t skateboard, but it’s kind of sad that they believe everything they see on TV. *(picks up board and exits)*

Storyteller: And now for the tale of Deer, Mouse, Rabbit, and Squid. One day, Deer, Mouse, Rabbit, and Squid--

*(Deer, Mouse, and Squid sit on a bench with an empty space for Rabbit. Throughout the following, Squid is generally disinterested in the entire proceeding.)*

Storyteller: Deer, Mouse, RABBIT, and Squid. *(silence)* Guys. Where’s Rabbit?

Mouse: Uh. Well. Do you remember that Tortoise and the Hare story from the beginning of the play?

Storyteller: Yes.

Deer: Well, the Hare in that story is Rabbit’s cousin.

Mouse: Yeah, and it turns out Hare’s still trying to grow his fur back from when the rockets in that tortoise’s shell burned it all off of him.

Deer: Now Rabbit’s on the phone with his therapist crying.

Storyteller: Oh. That’s awful. *(shouting in a general backstage direction)* HA! I TOLD YOU ROCKET TORTOISES WERE A THING!!

Aesop: *(O.S.)* I STILL DON’T BELIEVE YOU!

Storyteller: EIFEL-TOWER-CHICKEN-CORDON-BLEU!!

Aesop: *(O.S.)* THAT DOESN’T EVEN MAKE SENSE!

Storyteller: Ha. Bam. French. I showed him.

Deer: Uh, so we going to do this or not?

Storyteller: OH! Right! Um...a Rabbit, huh? *(looks into audience to his 'Grasshopper' from earlier in the show)* Hey, you. Grasshopper kid. Get up here, we need a Rabbit. *(Storyteller ushers the kid onstage. Squid puts a set of Rabbit ears on the audience member as disinterestedly as possible.)*

*\*\*Note: While the Storyteller introduces the story again, the actor playing Mouse should instruct the audience member to say "Great." right after him/her. If they are frozen in fear or otherwise not getting it, feel free to improvise by throwing your voice or using them as a puppet.*

Storyteller: Alright, now we've got a story! And, once again, here is the story of Deer, Mouse, Rabbit, and Squid. Deer, Mouse, Rabbit, and Squid sat on the steps trying to decide what to do.

Deer: Let's go see a movie.

Mouse: Great!

Rabbit: Great!

Squid: There's nothing good out...

Deer: Let's play Frisbee in the park.

Mouse: Great!

Rabbit: Great!

Squid: My tentacles are too tired.

Deer: Okaaay. Let's go shopping.

Mouse: Great!

Rabbit: Great!

Squid: *(big sigh)* That's so boring. I'm just going to go home." *(she gets up and slowly oozes offstage).*

*(Deer, Mouse, and hopefully Rabbit share a look)*

Deer and Mouse: Great!!

*(They grab Rabbit by the hands and exit.)*

Storyteller: And the moral is Squids will be Squids.

*(Aesop enters with the audience member, sans ears)*

Aesop: Uh, hey, I found this wandering around backstage.

Storyteller: Oh, right! Here ya go, kid. *(helps him/her to seat.)*

*(to Aesop)* Hey, since you're here, will you hold this? *(shoves book at Aesop)*

Aesop: Sure. *(Storyteller begins to exit)* Wait. Where are you going?

Storyteller: It's my break. I'm going to grab a bite.

Aesop: What?! We're in the middle of a show.

Storyteller: Oh, yeah. Yeah, I know. Bummer. Welp, see ya later. *(exits).*

Aesop: But-- Ok. *(turns to audience. Silence. Very awkward.)* Sooooo... How ya doin'? *(more silence. He begins frantically flipping through book)* Well! Ok...ha ha...um...where were we? Where were we?...AH! Yes! Elephant and Mosquito!

*(Elephant and Mosquito enter)*

Aesop: (*reading*) Elephant and Mosquito stayed out late one night and completely lost track of time.

Elephant: (*checking his watch*) Oh no! I was supposed to be home twenty minutes ago. My parents are going to kill me. I'd better call home now.

Mosquito: Meh. Why bother? You'll be home in five minutes. What's the big deal??

Elephant: Yeah, I guess. (*They exit*).

Aesop: So, Elephant didn't call. And when he got home, his parents grounded him for a week because he didn't call to say he was going to be late. And the moral of this story is "Don't ever listen to a talking bug." Don't ever listen to a talking bug? How is that relevant? I mean, really. When is that ever going to come up? Who wrote this? (*flips over book*) Alright. What's next?

(*Skunk, Musk Ox, and Cabbage enter and are seated*)

Aesop: This is the story of Skunk, Musk Ox, and Cabbage. Cabbage? That's not even an animal.

Cabbage: Yeah? And? I'm a cruciferous vegetable and am very good for you. You're just a talking bag of meat with bad hair.

Aesop: Wow. Ok. Ok. I'm sorry. So. Skunk, Musk Ox, and Cabbage were sitting around the front porch at Skunk's house when, slowly but surely, the porch filled with a terrible smell. (*all react to the smell a la 13-year-old boys.*)

Skunk: Whoa! Is that you, Musk Ox?

Musk Ox: No way, Skunk. That's Cabbage.

Cabbage: Uh uh, it's not me!

(*Musk Ox and Cabbage look back at Skunk, who suddenly becomes very interested in tying his shoe.*)

Aesop: And the moral? He who smelt it, dealt it. Well. Yeah. I guess that makes sense.

(*The storyteller enters swigging a Big Gulp.*)

Aesop: Big Gulp, huh?

Storyteller: Yup.

Aesop: (*sarcastically*) You feeling better? Did you have a good break?

Storyteller: Yup. While I was in the bathroom, I read this really great article about--

Aesop: Wow, cool story, bro. (*pushes book at Storyteller*) Your turn. (*exits*)

Storyteller: Alright! I'm back guys! How ya doin' down there, Grasshopper? Seat ok?

Can you hear everyone? Good. Good. (*flips to page in book*) Ok, and now for the story of our good friends Rock, Paper, Scissors

(*they enter*)

Storyteller (*as teacher*): Now. Rock, Paper, and Scissors. You were assigned to be partners for the big end of the year Science project. (*holds up a rather ratty packet of stapled papers*) Can you tell me how you divided up the work?

Rock: Well, I thought up the idea.

Paper: I drew all of the charts and graphs and illustrations.

Scissors: I did all the research and the presentation.

Storyteller: And do you think it was a very good project.

Rock: Yes?

Paper: Yes?

Scissor: ...no...

Storyteller: And did you work very hard on it?

Rock: Yes?

Paper: Yes?

Scissor: *(Looks at Rock and Paper)* ...no...

Storyteller: Right. Well. Then it should be no surprise that you've received a C. *(crosses out of scene)*.

Rock: *(as he hits scissors)* You should have done more research!

Scissors: *(as he "cuts" Paper)* You should have drawn more illustrations!

Paper: *(as he covers Rock)* Well, you should have thought of a better idea!

Storyteller: And the moral is— *(giggles)* The moral is— *(more giggling)* And the moral is

RockPaperScissors say, "Shoot, it wasn't my fault!" *(doubles over laughing)* Get it?! GET IT?! Whooooaaa, man. That's good stuff.

*(Pigeon enters with art supplies and a canvas)*

Pigeon: Oh, hello.

Storyteller: *(regaining his composure)* Oh, hi.

Pigeon: Do you mind if I set up here?

Storyteller: No. Go right ahead.

*(Pigeon sets up her canvas and supplies. She stares at the painting, adds a bit, and stares again. The Storyteller stands behind her shoulder looking at the painting as well.)*

Pigeon: I've just finished it.

Storyteller: This is Pigeon.

Pigeon: I mean, I think I've finished it.

Storyteller: Pigeon is a very good artist.

Pigeon: What do you think?

Storyteller: But she has one very annoying habit. Each time she finished a painting, she shows it to someone and says,

Pigeon: Oh, it's not very good.

Storyteller: Just so someone would say *(to Pigeon)* "Oh no, Pigeon. That's very good."

Pigeon: Oh, do you really think so? *(Self-satisfied, she moves to a new location.)*

Storyteller: One day, after she had chased everyone else away with her annoying habit, along came Saber-Tooth Tiger.

*(Saber-Tooth Tiger enters)*

Pigeon: Oh, look at my painting.

Saber-Tooth: (*stands behind Pigeon*) Mmmm hmmm.

Pigeon: It's not very good.

Saber-Tooth: (*licking his chops and putting on a bib*) Oh no, Pigeon. That's very good. I'm sure it will be perfect roasted or fried or even baked in a pie.

Pigeon: (*picks up the painting and examines it.*) Oh. But. But this is a painting of a sad-eyed clown. How could you--? (*she turns and notices the bib*) Oh. Oh my! (*she flees, Saber-Tooth pursues.*)

Storyteller: But it was too late and— (*checks the book and becomes quite ill/horrified*) well, the end of this fable is too messy to even tell. And the moral is--Whatever looks like a pigeon and acts like a pigeon usually makes good...pigeon...pie.

Aesop: (*enters picking teeth with a toothpick*) Hey, there's a big cat backstage sharing a pie he made if you want some.

Storyteller: A pie? Oh. Oh no. I'm going to be sick! (*runs off and hands off book to Aesop*).

Aesop: Whoa. What's his deal? Alright, where are we? Ah, of course. Why not? Here is the story of Straw and Matches. Man. They're not even trying to use animals anymore...

(*Straw enters*)

Aesop: It was the end of summer vacation. Straw had done everything he could think of but now he was just bored. So, he decided to go play with someone that he had been warned time and again to stay away from. (*enter Matches*)

Straw: Hi. Do you want to play checkers?

Matches: Sure. But I get to be the red ones and move first and I get two moves and you get one.

Straw: I...hmm. Forget it. Let's play Ping Pong instead.

Matches: Okay! I get the good paddle, though. You have to stand way over there. I get to serve first and you have to close one eye.

Straw: Nevermind. Maybe we should just watch TV.

Matches: Okay, you sit over there on the floor. I'll sit on the couch and I get the remote and we have to watch my favorite shows.

Straw: Ummm...(pretends to hear something) What's that mom? Ok! (*to Matches*) I think I hear my mom calling. I'd better go.

Aesop: Moral--Don't play with matches. Hm. Ok. Seems logical.

(*Little Walrus enters*)

Little Walrus: 'Scuse me.

Aesop: Of course, Little Walrus. (*to audience*) That's Little Walrus.

(*Little Walrus waves*)



Aesop: Little Walrus's mom told her to always tell the truth. Isn't that right, Little Walrus.

Little Walrus: That's right, pigeon breath.

Aesop: Pigeon--? (*smells breath*)

(*a phone rings*)

Little Walrus: (*Answering the phone*) Hello? Walrus residence.

Aesop (*as a caller*): Hello, Little Walrus. Is your mom home?

Little Walrus: No. She's out having the hair taken off her lip.

Aesop: The moral here is you should always tell the truth. But, if your mom is out having the hair taken off her lip, you might want to forget a few of the details.

(*Elephant enters with Flea*)

Aesop: Ah, look. It's Elephant, again. And with Flea this time. Fortunately, as Elephant grew older, he also grew wiser and more responsible.

Flea: Hey, you want to see a movie?

Elephant: Sure! What time is it? Do you think we have time? I have to meet Rhinoceros later.

Flea: Of course we do! You'll be fine.

Aesop: They watched the movie and they liked it so much that they watched it a second time.

Elephant: Oh no! I was supposed to meet Rhinoceros ten minutes ago. She is going to be furious. Do you have a quarter so I can call?

Flea: (*checking his pockets*) Nope. Spent all my money on popcorn.

Aesop: When Elephant finally showed up at Rhinoceros's house, he was twenty minutes late, and she was furious.

Rhinoceros: You could at least have called!

Aesop: And the moral is, Elephants never forget. Well, except sometimes.

(*Storyteller enters*)

Elephant: (*looking for the exit*) Excuse me, where's the exit.

Storyteller: Uh, right there. Where you came in.

Elephant: Oh, of course. Silly me.

Aesop: (*to Storyteller*) All better now?

Storyteller: Much. Where are we?

Aesop: Who knows. Something ridiculous, I'm sure. The story of the monkey, a roll of pennies, and a ball of dryer lint?

Storyteller: (*taking the book*) Do you have any idea how ridiculous you sound? (*reading*)

Ah, yes. The story of Termite, Ant, and Echidna.

(*Termite and Ant enter and sit.*)

Storyteller: Termite and Ant had known each other since they were little and were the very best of friends. They hung out and played and ate lunch together every day. Until one day...

*(Echidna enters)*

Echidna: Hi guys!

Ant and Termite: Hi!

Echidna: My name's Echidna. Can I sit here?

Ant: Sure! I'm Ant and this is Termite.

Termite: Hi.

Ant: So, where are you from?

Echidna: I come from Australia.

Ant: *(completely enamoured)* Oooooo, how exotic.

Echidna: My family name is Tachyglossidae.

Ant: Echidna Tachyglossidae? Whoa. Let's be best friends.

Echidna: Ok!

*(Echidna and Ant frolick off while Termite walks off sadly. They sit elsewhere and begin to eat lunch.)*

Ant: *(pulling items from her lunch, she notices that Echidna doesn't have one.)* What are you eating for lunch?

Echidna: *Echidna extends her long sticky tongue and slurped up a wiggling string of ants. (or, perhaps, she takes out a few skewers of ants.)*

Ant: Gulp.

Termite: MORAL—If you are an ant and are going to dump your best friend for a new one, you should know that Echidna is another name for Spiny Anteater.

*(Aesop enters.)*

Storyteller: *(visibly nauseated.)* Why? *(gulp)* Why are they all eating each other?!

Aesop: *(handing him one of the lunch bags)* Man, you really have a weak stomach, don't you?

Storyteller: It's just so...*(dry heave)* ...awful. Are your stories like this?!

Aesop: Nope. Bears, foxes, rabbits, squirrels. You know, your run of the mill forest creatures learning lessons and living long, happy lives. Why don't you go sit down. I'll take care of things out here.

Storyteller: *(sick and weeping)* Thank--thank you. *(exits)*

*(Horseshoe Crab and Blowfish enter arguing and calling each other colorful names).*

Aesop: Whoa! Horseshoe Crab! Blowfish! Are you guys still arguing?

Horseshoe Crab: He started it!

Blowfish: Your face started it!

Aesop: *(to audience)* These guys have been arguing since I got here. *(to Horseshoe Crab and Blowfish)* Can you guys take this offstage? We're kind of in the middle of something here.

Horseshoe Crab: Yeah. Fine. *(begins to exit and bumps Blowfish)*

Blowfish: Watch where you're going, fossil face!

Horseshoe Crab: Who are you calling a fossil face, puff brain. *(begins to exit)*

Blowfish: You're a real helmet head! *(exit)*

Horseshoe Crab: You're a real balloon butt. *(exit)*

Aesop: Alright. Sorry about that, everyone.

*(Mother enters and begins making breakfast preparations including ushering Piece of Toast and Froot Loops into place.)*

Aesop: Annnnd, who are you? Ma'am? *(she ignores him)*. Okay. *(checking the book)*

Alright, stories with ladies? Ummm, mothery people? Making...food? Breakfast? Ah, of course. *(sarcastically)* Here we are. The age old tale of Piece of Toast and Froot Loops.

Piece of Toast: Of course everyone loves toast the most. I'm half of 'eggs and toast' and all the toast in French toast. I am the toast with the most. Who could not love me?

Froot Loops: *(looking around the kitchen)* We'll soon find out! Because I am a good source of 11 essential vitamins and minerals containing 20% of the minimum daily requirement of Vitamin C, Iron, Thiamin, Riboflavin, Niacin, Vitamin B6, Folate, Vitamin B12, and Zinc (based on a 2000 calorie / day diet and a 1 cup serving size not including the milk). I also have 1 gram of dietary fiber per serving and 12 grams of sugar, yellow dye #6, blue #1 and #2, and red #40. BHT has been added to preserve freshness—

Mom: Breakfast!

*(Froot Loops is cut off by Dad, Son, and Daughter who rush through on their way out the door).*

Dad: *(grabbing coffee)* Have a good day!

Son: *(grabs a doughnut)* See ya!

Daughter: I'll just grab a bagel on the way to school, mom.

*(Piece of Toast and Froot Loops look around at the now empty kitchen and sadly exit.)*

Aesop: And the moral is "Breakfast is the most important meal of the day." Or something. I don't know. I... I just don't know. *(sigh)* And now *(looking at the book)* for our next tale, "Slug's—"

Storyteller: *(bursting in and grabbing the book)* Annnnd, I'm back!

Aesop: "—big moment." Better?

Storyteller: Yup, right as rain.

Aesop: Good. Here's your book. Call me when it's time for bows.

*(begins to exit as Horseshoe Crab and Blowfish enter)*

Blowfish: Doofus!

Horseshoe Crab: Ding-dong!

Blowfish: Bozo!

Horseshoe Crab: Dodo!

Aesop: Again?!

Storyteller: Well, hello Gentlemen. What seems to be the problem?

Horseshoe Crab: It's this...this...this spanking head!

Blowfish: Spanking head? What's a spanking head?

Horseshoe Crab: I don't know, but so's your old lady! (*exits*)

Blowfish: (*following Horseshoe Crab off*) I know you are but what am I?

Storyteller: And the moral here, of course is, "It takes one to know one."

Aesop: (*incredulous*) Of course it is... (*exits*)

(*Slug enters staring at herself in a mirror*)

Storyteller: Slug's Big Moment. Slug was interested in only one thing.

Slug: Huh?

Storyteller: Herself. She was so busy thinking about herself and looking at herself that she never learned anything. Not in History class.

Worm: Psst. What two countries were in the Spanish-American War?

Slug: Huh?

Storyteller: And not in science class.

Snail: What color is the great blue whale?

Slug: Huh?

Storyteller: One day, someone saw a chance to help Slug change her ways.

Storyteller: Uh, Slug? What is that big thing behind you that looks like a steamroller?

Slug didn't even look up from the friendship bracelet she was making for herself. And the last thing she said was--

Slug: Huh?

Storyteller: Moral—Slugs are not unlike squids. Man. I'm glad it was a steamroller. I mean, I'm not *glad* she was squashed by a steamroller, per se, but at least she wasn't eaten. Can you imagine how awful that would have been for *me*? I just don't my stomach could take it.

(*Hand, Foot, & Tongue enter.*)

Storyteller: This job is hard enough without dealing with all your disgusting co-workers eating each other constantly...

Foot: Pfft. You think your job is hard.

Storyteller: Oh, hello Foot. Hand. Tongue.

Hand: Yeah, you think your job is hard? Try being a hand--I have the toughest job.

Every day I work from sunup to sundown. I button shirts. I tie shoes. I hold the spoon and fork to feed all of us. I have to be strong enough to punch with a fist, and gentle enough to pat a baby. I definitely have the toughest job.

Foot: No you don't, I'm a foot! Every day I have to carry all of you. And I'm not complaining or anything, but I usually have to do it in the dark—stuck in a smelly sock and laced in a shoe. I have the toughest job.

Tongue: Um, actually, fellas. I believe I have the toughest job. I am a fleshy muscular organ attached to the floor of the mouth. I help in both speech and taste. I start the process of digestion by moving food into position to get ripped and mashed and crushed and smashed to little bits by the teeth. Then I cover the little food bits with saliva and shape them into slimy blobs of guck that I push down the throat and-

Hand: Dude, that's sick!

Foot: Disgusting!

Storyteller: Meh, I've seen worse. The moral here, however, is that there are some things we don't talk about at the dinner table.

*(Beefsnakstik enters. He's a very stereotypical 80s movie jock.)*

Beefsnakstik: Heh, lame. Those guys are lame.

Storyteller: I'm sorry? And you are?

Beefsnakstik: I'm BEEFSNAKSTIK *(sotto voce)* Registered Trademark. I'm *(poses)* BEEFY!!

Storyteller: I see.

*(Duckbilled Platypus enters. He is very much an 80s movie stereotypical nerd.)*

Duckbilled Platypus: Um, excuse me. I'm looking for a friend of mine. His name is Echidna. Echidna Tachyglossidae.

Beefsnakstik: *(his back is turned away from Duckbilled Platypus while he poses for himself.)* Lame. He sound lame. Tacky-Glossy-Whatsit?. Pfft. What kind of name— *(turning)* BAH! HA! Look at you! What are YOU?!

Duckbilled Platypus: I am a Duckbilled Platypus.

BeefSnakStik: Yeah? Think that makes you special?

Duckbilled Platypus: Well, I do have a bill like a duck and a tail like a beaver.

BeefSnakStik: So what? I have beef, soy protein concentrate, and dextrose.

Duckbilled Platypus: I also have webbed feet and fur.

BeefSnakStik: Who cares? *(he probably does some impressive posing here to emphasize his "accomplishments")* I also have smoke flavoring, sodium erythorbate, and sodium nitrite.

Duckbilled Platypus: Well, I am one of only two mammals in the world that lay eggs.

BeefSnakStik: Big Deal. I have beef lips. *(he exits, shoulder checking Duckbilled Platypus on the way out.)*

*(Duckbilled Platypus exits opposite.)*

Storyteller: Moral—Just because you have a lot of stuff, don't think you're so special.

*(Elephant, who is now quite old, comes on stage with Gnat.)*

Storyteller: Ah, Elephant and Gnat. As you can see, in his later years, Old Elephant became a wise and gentle creature. One night he and Gnat stayed out late and completely lost track of time.

Elephant: *(checking his watch)* Oh no! I was supposed to be home an hour ago. I'd better call home now.

Gnat: Why bother? Mrs. Elephant is surely sleeping, and you'll just wake her up if you call.

Elephant: I suppose, I just— I feel like I've done this before.

Gnat: Nah, it's fine. *(they exit)*

Storyteller: Old Elephant didn't call and when he got home—

Mrs. Elephant (O.S.) Where on earth have you been?! I've been worried sick! You could have been turned into an umbrella stand by some poacher for all I knew.

Storyteller: And the moral here? Don't forget the other moral about bugs, and always, always, always call home.

Aesop: *(ushing Shark, Wasp, and Bacteria onstage)* Out! Out! Gross!

Storyteller: It's not time for bows, yet.

Aesop: I know, I know, but I can't take these three. They're grossing me out. *(Shark, Wasp, and Bacteria, used to this kind of thing, set up their lunch on stage)*

Storyteller: Well, that's convenient because these three just happen to be the focus of our final fable.

Aesop: I'm really starting to think you have no real idea what a fable is.

Storyteller: Mon aéroglisseur est plein d'anguilles.

Aesop: *(glaring)* I hate you. *(exits)*

Storyteller: *(to his back)* You love me. Now Shark, Wasp, Bacteria. Tell me, what seems to be the problem?

Shark: No one else ever sits with us at lunch. *(he violently attacks his sandwich with his whole body, ripping into it with his huge, razor sharp teeth. Or, lacking that, smashing it with the whole upper half of his body. Go for gold, here.)* What's their problem?

Wasp: We're just misunderstood. *(using his giant stinger, he proceeds to stab his lunch with his butt. Many times.)*

Bacteria: It's just not fair. *(Bacteria begins to ooze slime from his hands and maybe face all over his food.)* Why won't anyone give us a chance?

Aesop: *(enters with a paper bag again and walks to Storyteller catching him just before he vomits.)* Think about it.

Storyteller: *(coming too and handing the vomit bag back to Aesop).* Alright. I think I'm good. In today's presentation of fables, you have seen all kinds of bossy, sneaky, funny, annoying, kinda disgusting, dim-bulb people ... I mean *animals*.

Aesop: A BeefSnakStik is not an animal.

Storyteller: Beef is an animal.

Aesop: *(sighs and starts to exit)*

Storyteller: "What fun," you are thinking. "I should write some of those myself," you are thinking. But before you get started, it just occurred to me that you might want to know one more little thing about Aesop.

Aesop: What "little thing" about Aesop??

*(the cast begins to enter behind the Storyteller and Aesop)*

Storyteller: Well, Aesop used to tell this one fable about a real bossy jerk "Lion" who ruled a city.

Aesop: Oh, yeah. That one was great.

Storyteller: Well, when the real bossy jerk guy who ruled Aesop's city heard this fable, he didn't like it.

Aesop: Uh oh.

Storyteller: So he had Aesop thrown off a cliff.

Aesop: He WHAT?!

*(the cast lifts Aesop and carries him off stage while Aesop shouts)*

Aesop: Hey! Leave me alone! What are you doing?! Put me dooooooown!!!!

Storyteller: And our final moral this evening is, if you are planning to write fables, don't forget to change the people into animals AND, most importantly, avoid places with high cliffs.

Thank you and goodnight.

## END OF SHOW

*A note on the Storyteller's terrible French.*

He really has no idea what he's talking about but thinks that French makes him sound smart. It's not as important that he pronounces the words correctly as long as his accent is outrageous. Below are some approximate pronunciations of the phrases along with their meanings.

Comme ci comme ça (kom-see, kom-sah)=*like this-like that or, so-so*

Ça ne fait rien (sah new fay reeyahn)=*It doesn't matter.*

Crème brule (krem broolay) *A type of delicious custard.*

Chaise lounge (shayz lounge) *A long chair that you can lounge on*

Bon appetit (bone ap-eh-teet) *Enjoy your meal*

Mon aéroglisseur est plein d'anguilles! (mon airo glee-sur ay-play dongeeuh) *My hovercraft is full of eels!*