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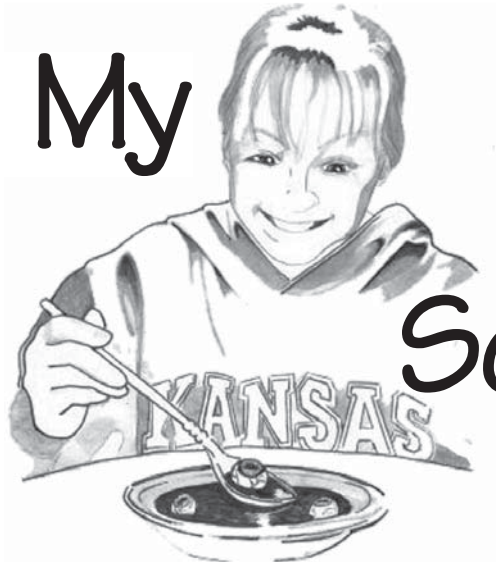
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Dramatic Publishing

There's an Eyeball

in My



Soup

Comedy/Drama

by

Ric Averill

There's an Eyeball in My Soup



Comedy/Drama. By Ric Averill. Cast: 4m., 3w. Roxxi loves gross foods. She loves them so much that she wants to start a restaurant of things no one else would eat. She'd really like to win a Wrigley's Believe It or Else record for cooking and eating the most gross things. Roxxi enlists the aid of her reluctant best friend, Marie Rose, science-nerd neighbor Eugene, and dog Jack. Unexpected help also comes from Roxxi's cousin, Karl, a recently returned veteran of the war in Iraq. Challenged by Alice, a rather privileged girl from their school, the quartet decides that their restaurant might even beat Alice's Sweet Shop in a competition to see who makes the most creative and productive use of their summer. The competition is intense, the food is gross and the stakes get higher and higher. Threatened by the success of La Cabeza de Cabra (Goat Head) Restaurant, Alice stoops to calling Mr. Herman, the city health inspector, to pay Roxxi a visit which ultimately results in a serious confrontation between Herman and Karl. When the smoke clears, Roxxi understands more about the game of life than she ever expected to learn during her 11th summer. Single set. Approximate running time: 55 minutes. Code: TP8.

Cover art by Pat Boyle
Cover design: Jeanette Alig-Sergel

ISBN-10 1-58342-740-6
ISBN-13 978-1-58342-740-8



Dramatic Publishing

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Woodstock, IL 60098
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Printed on recycled paper

www.dramaticpublishing.com

There's an Eyeball in My Soup

A Play in One Act

By

RIC AVERILL

with

SIERRA CYDRUS



Dramatic Publishing

Woodstock, Illinois • Australia • New Zealand • South Africa

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(THERE'S AN EYEBALL IN MY SOUP)

ISBN: 978-1-58342-740-8

For every kid whoever accepted
“I dare you to eat that!”

IMPORTANT BILLING AND CREDIT REQUIREMENTS

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There's an Eyeball in My Soup was developed through a residency and presented as a staged reading at Park City High School in Park City, Utah, directed by Nicole Madison. The residency was part of the 2009 Playwrights in our Schools project, administered by the Playwriting Network of the American Alliance for Theatre & Education and sponsored by Broadway Across America: Utah's Education Foundation.

There's an Eyeball in My Soup was also given a staged reading by the Purple Crayon Players at Northwestern University in Chicago. The fifth-grade class of Pat Domann read the play twice and provided excellent feedback.

There's an Eyeball in My Soup gave its first full production at the Lawrence Arts Center, Lawrence, Kansas, in April 2009, with the following:

CAST

ROXXI GALLAGHER	Chelsey Haden
MARIE ROSE	Karen McCain
EUGENE	Tristan Delnevo
KARL	Travis Berkely
JACK	Jerry Mitchell*
ALICE	Kelli Sturm
MR. HERMAN	David Sturm
UNDERSTUDIES . . .	Genevieve Prescher, Calder Hollond, Ian Pepin

PRODUCTION TEAM

Director Ric Averill
Set Design & Build, Light Design Danny Rogovein
Costume Design & Build Jennifer Glenn
Light Operator Mia Haden
Sound Design Ric Averill

**Professional actor*

There's an Eyeball in My Soup

CHARACTERS

- ROXXI an imaginative, tough girl of 11 years
- MARIE ROSE her girly-girl best friend
- JACK Roxxi's St. Bernard, who talks,
though no one really understands him
- EUGENE their science-loving neighbor
- KARL Roxxi's older cousin, an Iraq War vet,
mid- to late 20s
- ALICE a privileged and somewhat stuck-up girl
from Roxxi's school
- MR. HERMAN the city health inspector, Karl's age

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS

This is a one-set play. The setting needs to have a large doghouse, a back door and a toolshed, which includes a burner for cooking, a microwave, a small fridge and other things that will allow it to become a "sort of" restaurant. There is some cooking onstage.

There's an Eyeball in My Soup

Scene One: Saturday morning

(There is a large doghouse R. UC is the back door to ROXXI's house. L is a larger garage/toolshed "cut-away" that is shared by her older cousin KARL. Neighbor EUGENE's house is off L as well. ROXXI GALLAGHER, in her customary braids, is dressed for serious play—the kind of play that forces serious bathing. MARIE ROSE is practically dressed for school even though it's a languid Saturday in June. They are playing Life, the board game. Brief music, then silence until the sound of the board game's spinning device is heard in the blackout.)

ROXXI. Seven. *(She moves her game piece as lights come up.)* Payday. \$40,000.

MARIE ROSE. You should have gone to college. *(Spins the game spinner.)*

ROXXI. No way—I don't want to pay back all those loans. You got a four, I get \$10,000. I'd rather be a chef or something.

MARIE ROSE *(lands on a space)*. Ew, I have to get married.

ROXXI. Have to marry a girl. I'm out of the blue thingies. *(Spins, moves.)*

MARIE ROSE. 'Cause you made your twins both boys.

Ha, you lose a turn. (*Spins, moves.*)

ROXXI. I can read. I'm too young for twins.

MARIE ROSE (*moves and reads*). You win Nobel Prize, collect \$250,000.

ROXXI. You suck at Life.

MARIE ROSE. You only say that when I win.

ROXXI. You don't win...unless you cheat.

MARIE ROSE. I never cheat.

(From under a pile of blankets, JACK, a part St. Bernard, part less than saint, stirs up and yawns. He looks at the girls.)

JACK. Bicker, bicker and welcome to my summer. Bicker, bicker, bicker. Roof! Sometimes I'd rather have fleas.

ROXXI. Don't whine, Jack. (*She scratches behind his ears.*)

JACK. Food? Food?

ROXXI (*whispers to JACK as if he could understand her*).

I'll get you a treat if you knock the game over so Marie doesn't win.

(MARIE shoots daggers at ROXXI. ROXXI scratches JACK, gives him a swat and his paws scramble the game board.)

JACK. I love her, love her, love her.

MARIE ROSE. Jack, you messed up the game. (*She pushes JACK off the game board.*) Stupid dog. (*JACK sticks out his tongue and pants at her.*) Eww, don't slurp at me. I hate it when he licks.

ROXXI. Good boy. *(She reaches into her backpack and gets out an old, half-blackened banana.)* Here, Jack.

MARIE ROSE. Dogs don't eat bananas. Monkeys—

(ROXXI peels banana, JACK snuggles up and snarfs it.)

ROXXI. Good boy, good boy.

JACK. Good banana, murphle plooeey—

MARIE ROSE. Jack's part monkey.

ROXXI *(holds up gnarled peel)*. There's a little left, Marie Rose.

MARIE ROSE. You are so gross, Roxxi. Gross, gross. I mean, really. Gross.

ROXXI. I thank you and Jack thanks you.

MARIE ROSE. You want to play again?

ROXXI. Life?

MARIE ROSE. Yeah.

ROXXI. Nah. Let's play "catch the spy."

MARIE ROSE. "Catch the spy"?

(ROXXI nods with her head toward the shed. MARIE ROSE nods like a conspirator. ROXXI stands and starts toward the shed, JACK at her heels.)

MARIE ROSE *(cont'd)*. Gosh, Roxxi, I don't remember the rules to "catch the spy." Refresh me, please?

ROXXI *(as she walks toward shed)*. Oh, it's pretty easy. Especially if the spy hides where he always does! Ta-da!

(She flips up the window shade at the back of the shed to reveal EUGENE, who shares a birthday and much more with Albert Einstein. EUGENE is startled.)

ROXXI (*cont'd*). Hello, Eugene.

EUGENE. Uh, I was taking out the trash, and, uh...

ROXXI. You were so spying on us.

MARIE ROSE. He *loves* you, Roxxi.

ROXXI. That would be like...kissing a textbook!

EUGENE. I don't love anyone. Well, my mom.

ROXXI. That's so juvenile.

EUGENE. I brought you something.

ROXXI. Give it to Marie Rose.

(MARIE ROSE cleans up the Life game.)

EUGENE. It's edible.

ROXXI. Then give it to me.

EUGENE. It's kinda gross.

ROXXI. Like I care?

EUGENE. It's a bug.

ROXXI. Awesome.

EUGENE. From South America. People eat them—fried.

ROXXI. Come on, give it up.

EUGENE. I know you like gross foods.

ROXXI. Doesn't everyone?

MARIE ROSE (*holding up her hand*). That would be "no" from the sane people in the studio audience?

JACK (*moving between MARIE and ROXXI*). Uh, yeah, yeah, if it ever moved, I'll eat it. Eat it!

ROXXI (*nudging JACK out of the way*). Not yours, Jack, mine. Gimme.

EUGENE. OK. (*He hands her a little box. She peers into it.*)

ROXXI. Is it dead?

EUGENE. Will be when you eat it. I bet my dad five dollars you'd eat it.

ROXXI. Do I get to fry it first?

EUGENE. I'm not gonna do it.

ROXXI. I get the five dollars if I eat it.

EUGENE. No way. What do I get?

ROXXI. You get to live even though you were spying on us.

EUGENE. I'll give you half.

ROXXI (*sighs an exasperated sigh*). Don't you have someone else to annoy.

EUGENE. Okay, four dollars, if you eat it—and Marie Rose takes a picture for proof.

MARIE ROSE. I think I'm gonna throw up.

EUGENE. Go ahead, Roxxi will probably eat it.

ROXXI. Shut the front door, Einstein.

EUGENE. Eugene. (*She shoots him a glance.*) I just share his birthday, not his name.

ROXXI. Right, Einstein. Turn on the burner.

(They go to the shed, which has a small burner and fridge and cook-stove area. EUGENE follows ROXXI and she turns on the burner, gets out a small fry pan. She puts some oil in the fry pan and heats it. MARIE ROSE moves over with her cell phone, takes a picture.)

MARIE ROSE. Roxxi's kitchen.

EUGENE. You're really going to do it?

ROXXI (*opens the box and drops the bug in*). Look, Marie, it's jumping.

MARIE ROSE. Ewwwwww.

ROXXI. Don't want to overcook.

EUGENE. Are you sure you don't take the gastrointestinal tract out first?

ROXXI. It's too small. You eat insects, guts and all—they just eat grass and flowers and other bugs and stuff—it's not gross.

MARIE ROSE. It's gross. (*Sound of frying.*) I wonder if I can take a picture and not look at the same time. (*Holds her cell phone out and clicks. ROXXI finishes stir-frying the bug.*)

EUGENE. You gonna make it into a sandwich?

ROXXI. Nope. (*She takes a toothpick and spears the bug, pulls it out of the frying pan.*) Here goes—Wrigley's Believe It or Else, eat your heart out!

EUGENE. Yeah, maybe we'll get on the same page with the World's Smallest Shrunken Head...or the Boa That Swallowed a Whole Cow!

ROXXI (*pops the bug into her mouth and chews*). Hmmmm. Crunchy.

EUGENE. Wow.

MARIE ROSE. I really *am* gonna barf!

ROXXI. Get a picture of it in my mouth. (*Opens wide.*)

MARIE ROSE. I can't!

EUGENE. I'll take it—gotta show it to Dad anyway.

MARIE ROSE. Here.

(Hands him cell phone. ROXXI opens her mouth wide. EUGENE takes the picture.)

ROXXI. Ahhhhh... (*He flashes another pic of her open mouth. She chews and does a little "Fergie" dance.*) Bugalicious. I'm bugalicious. It's nutritious, so delicious! I'm bugalicious!

EUGENE (*tries a dance move*). You are so cool. Like, extreme cool. (*But it doesn't work. She stops, stares at him, he stops.*) I mean, you really ate it?

ROXXI. Gastrointestinal tract and all, Eugene.

JACK. Me, me, you save any for me?

EUGENE. Down, boy! (*Brushes JACK away, then returns cell phone to MARIE ROSE.*) Send me the jpeg, Marie. I gotta show it to my dad and get the five bucks.

ROXXI. Four of which are...

EUGENE. Yours. I know. (*He runs off. ROXXI looks at MARIE.*)

ROXXI. Hungry?

JACK. I am. I am.

(A dark shadow emerges from the side of the shed, dressed in black T-shirt and camo pants, The often-brooding KARL, looks at the two girls, doesn't speak.)

MARIE ROSE. Roxxi. (*She nods toward KARL.*)

ROXXI (*turns and sees KARL*). Sneak up, why don't you, Karl?

KARL (*shrugs*). Gotta work. (*He stares at the girls. ROXXI stares back for a minute, then she turns off the burner and moves to help MARIE.*)

ROXXI. We're done in here, anyway.

KARL. Cooking?

ROXXI. I ate a bug.

(KARL "snorts"—an almost amused sound. He walks to the shelf and pulls down some fishing things, starts to make some lures. MARIE whispers to get ROXXI away.)

MARIE ROSE. Roxxi?

(ROXXI helps MARIE but shouts over her shoulder to KARL.)

ROXXI. I'd rather use live bait.

(KARL shrugs, keeps working. JACK goes to them, watching ROXXI closely.)

ROXXI *(cont'd)*. Did you know that after it rains you can find worms right up on the sidewalk? Wiggling around.

Bass love to eat them, and crappie.

MARIE ROSE. And probably you...love to eat them.

JACK. Worms. Hmmm. Not so much. Worms.

ROXXI. Depends on how they're prepared.

KARL. When'd you ever go bass fishing?

ROXXI. With my dad...Mary's Lake. On that "free-don't-need-a-license day."

KARL. Crappie fishing, Roxxi—it's a kid's lake.

ROXXI. So, I was a kid.

KARL. Bass'll eat a worm, but it's lure like this that'll get their attention.

ROXXI. So when are we going?

KARL *(sarcastically)*. Next time your dad's in town.

ROXXI *(hurt but biting back)*. Like that's going to happen.

(MARIE stands ready to leave the tension. JACK nuzzles up to ROXXI.)

MARIE ROSE. I gotta go home, Roxxi. See ya, later. *(She takes her game and leaves.)*

ROXXI. Marie Rose, come back after, lunch, OK? (*She looks at KARL.*) You comin' in...for lunch? I'll make you grilled sneeze.

KARL. Naw. I'll just grab something in town.

(ROXXI goes inside as KARL continues to work.)