

# **GO FISH!**

**A Comedy**

**By Jeff Johnston**

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**PUBLISHED BY  
ELDRIDGE PUBLISHING COMPANY  
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### **DEDICATION**

*To Bonnie, for supporting all my efforts and inspiring me to go beyond the ordinary.*

### **STORY OF THE PLAY**

It's the first day of school and Jenny is excited to be reunited with her friends Dee-Ray and Robert after a long summer. But there's trouble. Ms. Fishfac, the new science teacher, is coming down hard on the class, handing out outrageous assignments that only a nerd, like Max Pine, would love. Jenny decides to fight back, from organizing the "Glee Club," where the class makes weird sounds and other disruptions, to convincing Mrs. Fishfac to stage a challenge between Max and Robert. Jenny suspects Robert is hiding something and when he pulls off a surprise win he admits using his hidden gift, a photographic memory. Their triumph is short-lived. Max is humiliated and vows revenge.

A mysterious "voice" appears and starts disrupting the class. Dee-Ray, who is a little spacey, thinks it's ghosts. Then Ms. Fishfac suffers a fall and is replaced by a series of strange substitute teachers. One sub is a military drill sergeant; another is scared of students; and another falls asleep in the middle of conversations. The voice drives them all away and the students may have to take science all over again. Jenny goes to complain to Principal Undafire and overhears that Ms. Fishfac has only five or six days left. Did Jenny cause her demise? Everything is going wrong. Suddenly Ms. Fishfac returns. Her demise was actually sick leave. Jenny, Dee-Ray and Robert work with her to find the source of the voice and make amends. Max is revealed as the culprit. Then it turns out that Richard Formsby and Denny Morganson exist and are the guilty parties. But only in Dee-Ray's imagination.

Taking Max to face the music, Principal Undafire is discovered to be the real voice. Her husband wants to teach science and she was driving away all the competition. In between the story, the lunch ladies provide comic relief with every gag you've heard or thought about school lunches. It's high school like you've always exaggerated to your friends and family.

### **CAST OF CHARACTERS**

*Flexible, approx. 7 m, 9 w, extras*

IMA UNDAFIRE: Principal of Lowdown High.

MR. UNDAFIRE: Husband of the principal.

JENNY LAKE: Self-absorbed leader of the class. Dresses as a preppy.

DEE-RAY WILSON: Somewhat spacey and gullible student. Also dresses as a preppy.

ROBERT JONES: Shy student with a special gift.

MS. SHIRLEY FISHFAC: Straight-laced, no-nonsense science teacher.

MAX "THE BRAIN" PINE: Nerdy, but arrogant student. Dresses as a typical nerd.

1st LUNCH LADY: Crusty elderly lady. Typical lunch lady attire with hair nets, gloves, aprons, etc.)

2nd LUNCH LADY: Elderly lady who misunderstands everything. Typical lunch lady attire.

3rd LUNCH LADY: Elderly lady who repeats everything. Typical lunch lady attire.

MRS. SHOCKLEY: Very nervous substitute teacher.

MR. ROCK: Drill sergeant substitute teacher.

MR. TOSE: Sleepy substitute teacher.

MS. WURK: School secretary.

RICHARD FORMSBY: Lost student.

DENNY MORGANSON: Lost student.

EXTRAS: Additional students in class and the cafeteria.

**CASTING NOTE:** Several roles can be played by either male or female. Mr. Undafire can be a voice offstage. There can be one or more lunch ladies or substitute teachers can play dual roles as regular students depending on cast requirements.

**PLACE:** Lowdown High.

**TIME:** The present.

**SETS:** Principal's bedroom, science classroom, cafeteria, boiler room, and principal's office.

**PERFORMANCE TIME:** 90 minutes.

**PROPS**

Radio	House coat
Suit coat	Papers
Chalk	Notebooks
Files	Long-handled serving spoons
Hanky	Lunch trays
Pens	Box of quizzes
Fingernail polish	Phone
Pot and bowls	Crutches
Rubber frog/lizard	Microphone

**STYLE OF PRODUCTION**

The play is a caricature of school with exaggerated situations, so the laughs will take care of themselves. The lunch ladies, principal, and substitute teachers have peculiarities that are overplayed. The science teacher is a no-nonsense character who is only concerned about teaching facts. The students play their parts seriously. The “them against us” aspect is played with energy and gusto. The comedy aspect of this play can be expanded to fit the humorous aspects of your local schools or community.

**SOUND**

Dramatic music and spooky music, class bell, groans, chain rattling, scream of pain, tool hitting floor, metal clanking, door rattles, and frantic pounding.

**Scene 1**

*(AT RISE: Action takes place in front of curtain. Undafire's bedroom. Rock music plays in the background. UNDAFIRE ENTERS USR playing air guitar and mouthing words to the music.)*

IMA'S HUSBAND: *(Loudly, from OS.)* Ima! Ima!

UNDAFIRE: *(Agitated.)* Oh man! He never lets me have any fun.

IMA'S HUSBAND: *(ENTERS DS in front of curtain.)* Turn off the music and get ready for school, honey!

UNDAFIRE: *(Mimics male voice and pantomimes turning down radio.)* I'm not going today.

IMA'S HUSBAND: And why not?

UNDAFIRE: I'm sick. Really, really sick. *(Coughs loudly. Switches to sad pathetic voice.)* I just don't feel well. Really. *(Coughs again.)*

IMA'S HUSBAND: *(Suspicious.)* You were fine at breakfast.

UNDAFIRE: Maybe the eggs were bad. Ya know, rotten.

IMA'S HUSBAND: *(Not buying it.)* You had sugar-frosted chocolate bombs and a cola.

UNDAFIRE: Oh, yeah. Maybe it was the milk.

IMA'S HUSBAND: *(Agitated.)* You didn't have any milk. You poured your cola in the bowl with your cereal!

UNDAFIRE: *(Getting frustrated.)* Oh, well maybe it was bad cola.

IMA'S HUSBAND: *(Impatiently.)* Quit playing around, young lady, and get ready for school.

UNDAFIRE: *(Pouting pose.)* I'm not going. You can't make me. I hate school. *(Starts sucking on thumb.)*

IMA'S HUSBAND: Don't make me come up there, Imogene Undafire!

UNDAFIRE: Oh, man! *(Stomps foot.)* Just give me one good reason.

IMA'S HUSBAND: You're the principal remember? *(EXITS USL.)*

UNDAFIRE: *(Suddenly remembers.)* Oh yeah. *(Takes off housecoat and dons suit coat or jacket.)* Okay! I guess I have to go. Boy, I really hate the first day.

*(UNDAFIRE exits offstage. Curtain opens to science classroom. The classroom is empty. STUDENTS wander in DSR and sit on tables/chairs in a random fashion. JENNY ENTERS DSR and moves to front desk, perching on the end of it inspecting her nails. DEE-RAY ENTERS DSR. As they see one another, both run to each other and jump up and down excitedly.)*

JENNY: *(Squealing in delight.)* Dee-Ray! When did you make it back?

DEE-RAY: *(Squealing in reply.)* Jenny! I am so glad to see you. If I had to go through this year alone, I would die! I would just die! I mean, I would just ... ah ....

JENNY: Die?

DEE-RAY: *(Astonished look.)* Wow! You too! Are we one with the cosmic forces or what?

JENNY: *(Rolls eyes.)* It is scary, girlfriend. Do you remember our friendship pledge?

JENNY/DEE-RAY: *(Chant with some type of secret handshake or hand slapping routine such as alternating pinkies for each line.)*

Best friends for-ever  
In all kinds of wea-ther  
In satin or in lea-ther  
We'll always be to-geth-er!

*(Squeals followed by hugs. Other STUDENT'S watch, roll eyes skyward, and then return to their conversations. Both GIRLS move to front desk.)*

DEE-RAY: *(Forearm on head in dramatic pose.)* This has got to be the longest summer yet. I was dragged from one relative's house to another by my parents.

JENNY: Inhuman! Meet any cute-looking guys?

*Go Fish!*

- 7 -

DEE-RAY: Not even. We went to such small towns that I must have been related to everyone there. After looking at some of my family, I just know that I'm adopted! I just have to be!

JENNY: Tell me about it. Except in my case, I know my younger brother Jed is adopted. Probably from a family of wolves.

DEE-RAY: Let's compare our schedules to see what classes we share.

JENNY: Good idea. *(BOTH pull out papers and start comparing courses.)*

*(ROBERT ENTERS DSR. Joins the two GIRLS at the front desk.)*

ROBERT: Morning, ladies!

JENNY/DEE-RAY: *(Together.)* Robert! *(Hugs.)*

ROBERT: Looks like the three amigos are back together again. *(ALL THREE sit down in front and compare schedules.)*

*(SFX: BELL RINGS.)*

*(MS FISHFAC ENTERS DSR. She's dressed conservatively, wears glasses and her hair is severely pulled back into a bun. She makes pointing gestures for students to take their seats.)*

FISHFAC: Seats! Class is about to start! Let's go, people! *(Claps hands while STUDENTS mimic the word "people" behind HER back. She heads towards the front of the class and appears to be writing on a chalkboard.)* My name is Ms. Fishfac.

DEE-RAY: *(Aside to JENNY while FISHFAC is taking attendance.)* Did she say Fish-face?

JENNY: *(Aside to DEE-RAY.)* Fish-fac. But I think Fish-face fits her better.

### **End of Freeview**

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