

Green Kids Inc.

---

FOREST IS AS FOREST DOES

FINAL DRAFT

---

February 20, 2002  
Confidential



short simple intro (More effective than lecture)

I

*Joey in a baseball shirt and Jen in her regular outfit.*

JEN: Is this going to take all day?

JOEY: Are you going to help me practice or not? He winds up and he lets it fly. They can feel the wind in the stands and... strike. The batter is out of there. Bases loaded and not one of 'em coming home.

JEN: Are you going to practice or pose?

*Joey tosses the baseball, Jen catches, vice versa.*

JOEY: Remember how I struck that guy out with that wicked curve ball last game?

JEN: Okay. So you're a good pitcher .

JOEY: Practice makes perfect ball players. The big game's just around the corner! You don't have any idea what it's like having a baseball star brother.

JEN: Sure I do, he's the one always flexing his baseball biceps in front of the mirror, telling himself how good he looks.

JOEY: Play ball! *Throws a fast one, it goes past her.*

JEN: Oo, good one! I'm sure Britney Spears would be impressed.

JOEY: Sure she would. I'm the best pitcher on the team.

JEN: You think, breathe and eat baseball.

*Joey pretends to take a bite out of the baseball.*

JOEY: *(chewing)* Mmmmm...

JEN: Very funny!

*Phone rings. Joey runs to get it.*

JOEY: That'll be for me!

JEN: Maybe it's Britney.

JOEY: 'Lo! Hi Billy! Did you get the number? Great!,, Hang on. Jen, I need some paper and pencil.

*She digs her notebook and pencil out of her back pocket and opens it to the back page before handing it to him. Joey writes ten digits.*

JOEY: ...got it. You're sure that's it? Okay, if he says so. Thanks.  
*He disconnects, rips out the page, then punches in the numbers he's written down. Jen takes back her notebook and pencil.*

JOEY: Hi, Britney?... Sally?.. I wanted to talk to Britney... No, that's okay.  
Wrong number... Yeah, bye. *Disconnects, crumples the paper and tosses it to the side.*

JEN: Look at this. One phone number written on a blank piece of paper and you toss it. It can totally be used again. You could have put it in a recycling box instead of littering.  
*Jennifer places the paper in a box marked recycling.*

JOEY: It's just one piece of paper. As if it matters.

JEN: Maybe you should think about Planet Earth instead of Planet Joey.

JOEY: Jennifer, play ball!  
*Fires one at her. She catches it and sends it back. They continue to play.*

JEN: You left the blinds open again, didn't you?

JOEY: So?

JEN: It lets the sunlight in and it gets hot, then you turn on the air conditioner just 'cause you won't wear shorts and let your knobby knees be seen.

JOEY: My knees aren't knobby.

JEN: But of course, in winter, when you finally get out of bed in the morning, and you're too sleepy to care about your knobby knees you turn up the furnace and instead of putting on an extra sweater you walk around in your maple leaf boxers... ..

JOEY: Hey... I am Canadian!

JEN: ...with no slippers on your feet and say, "Brrr. Could somebody crank the heat?"

JOEY: That's why we have a furnace.

JEN: Instead of wasting energy, could somebody dress like he's living in the middle of Canada in winter?

JOEY: Is this your personal mission, to educate your big brother?  
*He grabs the notebook out of her pocket and opens it. He reads mockingly.*  
I love the Earth, the trees, the flowers, the bees,  
I'd like everyone to take care of them if you please.

JEN: Give it back!

JOEY: Come and get it! *Tears out page.* Oops, I've littered.

JEN: Stop it! *She tries to get book back but he keeps it away from her.*

JOEY: What's this one? *Reads.*  
There is garbage everywhere.  
Doesn't any body care?  
Leaving messes here and there...  
This is garbage! *Rips out the page.* Oops, I've littered again!  
*Jen succeeds in grabbing the book. She snatches up the papers and runs off.*

JEN: You stink, Joey!

JOEY: So does your poetry! *[BEAT]* Only kidding! Great. There goes my practice. *EXIT.*

## II

*Jennifer enters, looking about her. She spots the tree trunk and gives a gasp. She hears a noise and whirls. ALEX pops up from behind the trunk.*

ALEX: Hello!

JEN: I thought you were a bear

ALEX: Maybe I am.

JEN: Huh?

ALEX: I'm Alex.

JEN: And I'm Jen.

[PAUSE]

ALEX: How did you find this spot? I thought I was the only one who knew it.

JEN: I don't know. I was just running.

ALEX: Running away?

JEN: I don't want to talk about it. This is a neat spot.

ALEX: I love this forest. And this part of it more than any other place.

JEN: You come here a lot? Aren't you afraid of bears?

ALEX: Not since I had a dream here once. I fell asleep when I was lying on my back looking up through the trees. In my dream I dove into the river down there. It was really deep and I thought I'd see fish or beaver, but I saw this great big bear swimming below me. Then I knew I had the strength of a bear to get as many people as I could to hear how they can help to keep my... our forests healthy.

JEN: Maybe I should call you Bear.

ALEX: Cool, I'd like that. C'mon, I'll show you round.

*They go off. Joey enters. He reacts to the tree trunk. Then he sits.*

JOEY: Oh man, she is such a major pain. It's bad enough when she barges into my room, like c'mon it's my space, private, eh?, I don't want to have listen to her poems and songs. Like I care about them. She has this crazy idea that she can somehow save the planet by doing these little things that don't really matter...

*Jen and ALEX enter unseen by him.*

JEN: Oh, really?

JOEY: Hey...Jen!

JEN: What are you doing here?

JOEY: Mom sent me to look for you. She said it was my fault that you ran...

JEN: Well, you found me, so bye.

JOEY: Hey, don't you go to my school? Alex, right?

ALEX: Yeah, right. Are you Jen's brother?

JOEY: Yeah, and I've got to get here home. C'mon, this place gives me the creeps.

ALEX: What do you mean?

JOEY: That dead tree, like long fingers reaching out for my throat.

ALEX: You couldn't be more right.

JOEY: Huh?

ALEX: When this tree was alive, it took carbon dioxide out of the air and turned it into oxygen so you could breath.

JOEY: YOU sound like my sister.

ALEX: Would you cut down a healthy tree just to get a bit of wood for a

fire?

JOEY: A whole tree? Well, no.

JEN: Now it's useless.

ALEX: That's not quite true. Even though it isn't producing oxygen anymore, it's not useless. Now it's putting nutrients back in the soil, providing food for beetles and other bugs, and giving a home to small animals.

JOEY: So it's not a waste, eh?

ALEX: Except we need oxygen to breathe.

JOEY: We do?

JEN: Joey, don't you know anything?

ALEX: That's why the forest is like a part of us. Like a lung.

JOEY: Oh sure, so you're part tree!

ALEX: Look at it like this; the trees produce oxygen for me to breathe, which in a way makes me sort of part tree.

JOEY: Oh yah. Nice leaf cut. I mean nice hair cut.

JEN: Forest is as forest does.

ALEX: Pardon?

JEN: We do live a better happier life when the environment that we live in is balanced and healthy.

JOEY: Well, if we want to stay healthy we'd better get back before supper or Mom will do something unhealthy to us. C'mon, Jen.  
*They start off, but then realise they don't have a clue as to how to find their way back.*

ALEX: Want me to show you the way?

JEN: Thanks, Bear.

JOEY: Alex, you mean.

JEN: No.

JOEY: Eh?

ALEX: It's a long story. Come on, this way.

JOEY: You really know these woods, eh?  
*They follow ALEX off.*

### III.

*Enter JOEY as the Mayor.*

MYR: Ladies and gentleman, as Mayor of your town and Chair of the council it is with great pleasure I am announcing a marvelous opportunity for our little community. A lumber mill has proposed setting up an operation just south of our lovely town to harvest trees from our forest. This means we'll have more jobs and the mill will also bring new people to our town. That will help support local businesses: our shops, our services and trades, our schools. And the company has promised to help construct a sports complex with a brand new swimming pool, a gym, and a ball park - and a curling rink!

*Jennifer and Alex are seated in the audience, she is now Ms. Popodopoulos.*

POP: Mister Mayor, does this mean we will be losing our forest?

MYR: It's a give and take situation.

POP: Sure, we give and they take.

MYR: Now, Mrs. Popodopolous, we have to look at the big picture. Our little forest can make a huge difference to the economic health of the town.

ALEX: What happens when we have no trees left?

MYR: I'm sure the company's thought of that. *Trees grow back*

POP: They may have thought about it, but will they actually do anything about it?

MYR: The company reassures me....

ALEX: Without the trees what happens to our fresh air? *I thought the trees will help keep the air nice clean*

MYR: You're free to write the company a letter expressing your concerns. Thank you for coming out to this meeting, it's nice to see democracy at work. And I hope to see you all at the little league tournament this weekend. Let's show the kids we care. *EXIT*

POP: He cares alright. About getting re-elected! *EXIT*

ALEX: I don't believe it! I bet the mayor has never even been in the forest.

#### IV.

*JEN and JOEY re-enter as themselves.*

JOEY: Alright! A new ball park! Finally, there'll be enough bleachers to hold all my fans.

JEN: Joey, didn't you hear what he said?

JOEY: Yeah, and a swimming pool too.

JEN: It all sounds good, but...

ALEX: Our forest is going to be destroyed.

JEN: Maybe they won't take all of it.

JOEY: Hey, maybe Dad can get a job at the new mill. Instead of that long drive everyday he'd be around more - he could help me practice. He knows how to throw a ball.

JEN: Joey! Don't you ever think of anything else?

JOEY: Well... he won't be pumping out so much exhaust if he doesn't have to make those long drives. That'll help the air!

JEN: Wow, Joey, that actually made sense.

ALEX: It still won't help the air as much as the forest does.

JEN: Oh my gosh!

JOEY: What is it?

JEN: What about the animals? , \*

JOEY: What about the animals?

JEN: They live in the forest.

JOEY: So?

ALEX: How would you like it if somebody chopped your home down?

JOEY: Well, they can move.

ALEX: To where?

JOEY: Another forest?

JEN: And where would that be?

ALEX: They'll have nowhere to go, they need the forest for the homes and their food. They'll die without those.

JOEY: ... Didn't think of that.

[BEAT]

JEN: What can we do?

JOEY: Say goodbye to the forest.

ALEX: I don't want to say goodbye.

JEN: Me neither. But if we're not going to have it much longer I'd like to spend as much time in it as possible.

JOEY: Maybe we could have a farewell picnic.

JEN: Now you're thinking, Joey.

JOEY: Cool. We can bring marshmallows, chips, chocolate bars, cookies, doughnuts, soda pop, jelly beans, popcorn...

JEN: Joey, that's a lot of junk!

JOEY: What can I say, I'm a growing boy (girl)?

JEN: That depends on which direction you want to grow. We could bring some fresh tomatoes from the garden.

ALEX: I know a great spot for berries. We just have to make sure we don't pick them when the bears are picking.

JOEY: Berry picking bears! Sweet!

ALEX: This may be my last chance to show you my favourite places.

JEN: Yeah, maybe.

*ALEX and JOEY leave. JEN performs her beat poem*

JEN: It's not too cool  
But here's the goods:  
A creature called Progress  
Is eating up our woods.

It's a giant mouth  
Going to chew us all up  
And we've got no way  
To make it stop.

EXIT

Alex asks the kids; "How many of you have been in the forest? Well that's where we're going next."

V.

Alex enters in the lead, Joey follows. Both have backpacks. Joey is peeling a wrapper from a bar. He drops the wrapper on the ground.

JOEY: ... sort of animal. So, if you're a bear, what kind of animal am I?

ALEX: You tell me.

JOEY: I don't know. My mum calls me a pig.

ALEX: It comes from inside yourself. What do you think is inside you?

JOEY: Not a pig! Sometimes I pretend I'm a T. Rex. Gnrrr! Eat everything in sight!

*Enter JEN with her hands full of junk. She picks up Joey's wrapper to add to her collection.*

JEN: Joey, you pig!

JOEY: Hey, Jen, I should have noticed you weren't behind me. I was beginning to enjoy the peacefulness of nature.

ALEX: You mean you weren't keeping up with us?

JOEY: Didn't you notice how quiet it was?

JEN: I spotted a fox down by the river, but I couldn't let you know without scaring it. I tried to follow it, but it was too quick and it disappeared into the bushes.

ALEX: You shouldn't go off on your own in the woods. You can get lost really easily.

JEN: It wasn't a problem, I just followed Joey's trail of garbage.  
*HANDS IT TO HIM*

JOEY: What am I supposed to do with this?

JEN: Shove it... in your backpack until we get home! Then we can recycle it.

ALEX: Joey! The forest is in enough trouble, the animals don't need your litter.

JOEY: Hey, there's that creepy tree!

ALEX: I thought we could have our picnic here.

JOEY: Good, I'm starved.

JEN: Joey, you pig, you've already eaten everything!

JOEY: Those were just the snacks. I'm ready for the real food now.

ALEX: Well, if you don't want to eat your hot dogs raw you'd better go gather some wood for the fire.

JEN: I thought we aren't supposed to use the trees.

ALEX: Just pick up the deadwood, there's plenty around here.

JEN: We can start the fire with some of Joey's garbage.

ALEX: If you burn that stuff you'll just put toxic fumes into the air.

JOEY: What? Am I eating toxic stuff?

ALEX: There's lots of plastic and chemicals in packaging. Just don't eat it or burn it and you won't get poisoned.

JOEY: Weird, eh? Wrapping food in poisonous stuff.

JEN: Not as weird as the guy who leaves it lying around.

ALEX: You know if you bought your snacks in bulk you wouldn't need all this packaging.

JOEY: All that stuff loose in my knapsack would just make a mess.

JEN: We have bags and containers at home, Joey!

ALEX: Okay! You guys get the wood, I'll make the fire pit. We wouldn't want to burn down the forest,

JOEY: Well, they're going to chop it down anyway.

JEN: I can't imagine what it would be like without the forest here.

ALEX: Actually there was a time when there was no forest

JEN: There was?

ALEX: It's a story we were told by an elder who came to talk to our class last year. Okay, here goes: The wind blew around on bare Earth.

*Jennifer and Joey blow the sound of the wind.*

It was hot without the shade of the trees. Although there was some grass on the Earth's surface, it was short and often brown. Trees could not be found anywhere on Earth. They had been stolen by Moon who kept them in Skyland for his own pleasure.

*JOEY pulls out some sort of bag from his backpack which he blows up to represent the moon.*

Moon was the chief of Skyland, so he did whatever he felt like.

MOON: I do whatever I feel like. *(Somewhat evil laugh)* Today I would like to get down to Earth below and see if there's anything else I want..

ALEX: So Moon spoke to Spider.

*JEN plays the Spider. Possibly she can use a glove and some of Joey's garbage trail material.*

MOON: Make me a rope that will reach down to the top of those mountains.

SPIDER: I'll weave a rope to stretch from the clouds down to the mountains below.

*Spider moves as if weaving.*

Just a little bit more... *(Spider makes huffing sounds, working hard.*

*From her backpack JEN pulls a string.*

There.

*JOEY takes the string in one hand and runs the moon down it.*

MOON: Not much here. Maybe it'll be better tomorrow.

*Runs back up string.*

I'd better close the clouds at the top so that no one else can use that rope to get up into Skyland. Don't want anyone peeking in when

I'm bathing in moonlight.

*Moon disappears.*

ALEX: Blue Jay was always looking for food and with the trees gone it was hard to find any.

JAY: And I hate sleeping on the ground.

ALEX: But Blue Jay had a sharp mind and sharp eyes.

*Joey impersonates Blue Jay. Points at head*

JAY: Sharp. *(Pointing at eyes.)* Pointy.

ALEX: He spotted that rope leading down from the sky just as a hungry Beaver came by.

*Jennifer assumes the role of BEAVER.*

JAY: Hey, Beaver! You see that rope hanging down from the sky?

BVR: Where? Can you eat it?

JAY: No, I tried. It's right there... *(Squinting)* Make your eyes pointier. Want to see what's at the other end?

BVR: Yeah. Let's wait until a night when there's no Moon, and then we can go up that rope without being seen.

ALEX: So they did. They climbed up to the bottom of the sky.

*Jennifer and Joey mime climbing the rope.*

BVR: We have made it to the clouds, now use your strong beak to peck a hole in the clouds.

JAY: *(pecking)* Hai ya!

ALEX: ...and the two of them entered the land in the Sky

BVR: Look! There are all our trees.

JAY: Somebody must have stolen them. I'm going to fly to the tallest tree...*Joey flies.*

BVR: I'm going to look around.  
Cool. So many pine, fir, spruce, cedar, birch, and...  
Oh they look yummy! I'm going to nibble on them...

ALEX: No! Not quite right.

BVR: Oh.

ALEX: Beaver decided to return the trees to Earth.

BVR: I'll reach down deep into my spirit to find the strength to pull up many trees. Now with my magic I'll make them small and carry them under my arm. Hey, Blue Jay, come and help me.  
*As Jennifer mimes doing this.*  
*Moon is slowly appearing.*

ALEX: Just then Moon woke up.

MOON: Where have my trees gone?

BVR: Oh no. What are we going to do?

ALEX: Climb down to the mountains below!

BVR: With my sharp Beaver's teeth I'll chew on the rope as I go to make it weaker.  
*Jennifer mimes doing this.*  
Whew. Exhausting. *(Aside)* This is an awful lot like Jack and the...

ALEX: Never mind.

*Beaver turns back to watch - and sees that Moon is not far behind.*

MOON: Aha! Footprints! Leading to a hole in the clouds. *He follows the footprints and comes to the hole.*

The Below People have tricked me! Come back with my trees!  
*Moon begins to climb down the rope, but before he gets far, his weight is too much for the weakened rope to hold. It breaks. Moon falls.*

MOON: Agh! The rope's too weak to hold me! Aaaaagh!

ALEX: Some people say he turned into a mountain.

BVR: He deserved it.

JOEY: But there's still a moon in the sky today.

ALEX: Over time a much friendlier chief Moon appeared. Beaver and Blue Jay planted those trees and even took seeds from the trees and planted forests all around Earth. The grass became greener, the air was cleaner and the winds couldn't blow up so much dust

JOEY: I bet the birds were much safer with their nests up high.

ALEX: Squirrels and chipmunks appeared on Earth as well. Some say they fell from Skyland, others say they were branches of the trees themselves transformed by moonlight ~~late at night~~

JOEY: So, it was Beaver and Blue Jay who brought the trees to Earth?

ALEX: And, I'm afraid, if we don't start taking care of the forests, we might be stuck with that dusty, windy, dry Earth again.

JEN: We've got to do something.

ALEX: You're right! We can't just give up and let it happen.

JOEY: So what can we do?

ALEX: We've got to let people know what they're going to lose.

JOEY: A newsletter!

JEN: But that would be using up lots of paper!

JOEY: So?

JEN: Paper is made from trees. In fact, that's one of the reasons they cut down these trees! To make paper.

ALEX: I'll use tree-free paper, made from wheat instead. I can write about the forest and how important it is to keep it.

JOEY: Some people would rather have a swimming pool than the forest.

JEN: Or a ball park.

JOEY: Well, maybe I should find out who's for it and who's against. That would tell us who we have to give your newsletter to. I'll do a survey. What are you going to do, Jen?

JEN: Well, the Mayor said we could write to the company.

*Pulls out notebook and pencil.*

Okay, what do I say?

*BLANK PAUSE. Then ALEX & JOEY speak simultaneously.*

ALEX: Tell them...

JOEY: They can't...

*They trail off. Another PAUSE.*

JEN: Yes? *Silence.*

Okay, let me start.

*Writes as she speaks. She gathers momentum as she goes.*

It has come to our attention, Sirs,  
 You want to log our spruce and firs.  
 If you plan to follow through  
 What will all the animals do?  
 We're afraid if this occurs

There will be nowhere  
For them to go, and so...

JOEY: You can't send them one of your stupid poems!

ALEX: I hate to say it, but he's right. They won't pay attention to poetry.

JEN: But that's what I write.

JOEY: They probably won't pay attention to a letter either.

JEN: Then I guess I'll have to go in person.

ALEX: Let's get moving.

JOEY: Hey, what about the picnic, I'm starving?

*ALEX & JEN have gone.*

JOEY: Hey, wait up, you guys!

*HE RUNS OFF AFTER THEM*

## VI

*JEN enters. Straightens herself out. Checks out notebook.  
ALEX enters as the P.R. person, obviously a bit flustered.*

PR: ... and Miriam, make sure that he gets back to me. While you're at it,  
can you brew up another pot of coffee? *Sees JEN* Hello, *who are you?*  
sweetheart, where's your Mom? *Jen: I'm pregnant!*

JEN: At home.

PR: Well, if you just see my secretary, she can help you. Did you see a  
lady in here?

JEN: No.

PR: That's funny, my secretary just told me that my appointment was here.

JEN: That's me.

PR: You? You are Jennifer Worth?

JEN: You bet! I came to talk to you about our forest. The Mayor said you guys were going to chop it down.

PR: Well now, that sounds like... what Mayor?

JEN: The Mayor of Barkhaven.

PR: Oh, that mayor! I really don't think your mayor would say that.

JEN: He didn't say it like that, but that what it means, isn't it?

PR: Well now, at present that operation is merely a proposal.

JEN: So you're only proposing to chop down our forest?

PR: It's not that simple. We are, naturally, looking to find a suitable resource base into which we can expand our operation. The quality of lumber around Barkhaven is most appropriate to the demands of the current market. So, we have made a proposal to the town, to which your mayor and council appear favourably disposed.

JEN: What about the animals who live there?

PR: Nothing will happen until there is considerable public consultation on the matter.

JEN: You're going to ask the animals what they think of it?

PR: No. The people of your community. There are all sorts of procedures which should be followed before embarking on the project. An environmental impact study will be undertaken to properly gauge the most viable method of harvesting the resource.

JEN: What does that mean?

PR: It's a study to figure out what will happen to the environment when

we harvest the forest.

JEN: Don't you mean "if" you harvest the forest?

PR: I'm sure we will.

JEN: Why are you so sure?

PR: You sound like you could use some information so that you understand how our industry operates. In addition to those working to cut down or harvest the trees there are researchers who help us improve our forest practices so that we will be able to benefit from our forests for years to come.

JEN: If you're doing that then why do you need our forest?

PR: It's simply a question of supply and demand. Society depends on companies like ours to supply its everyday needs.

JEN: What kind of needs?

PR: Just look around. These chairs. The desk. Your house. Matches. Newspapers. Napkins. Paper towels. Toilet paper. That notebook of yours. And your pencil!

JEN: My notebook is made from recycled paper.

PR: But what about your pencil? And where did the paper come from to recycle? Society needs wood, and the forest is there to provide it.

JEN: But what happens when the forests run out?

PR: That's why trees are called a renewable resource. After they are cut down the forests grow back again.

JEN: But trees take along time to grow, don't they?

PR: We are currently exploring that issue. Now, honey, I have important business to attend to. If you'll excuse me... How are you getting home?

JEN: On the bus. I just have one last question...

PR: I'm sorry, I really must go. I am extremely busy. I'm sure it will all work out. You can put any further inquiries into a letter. And, if you watch for it, we will be conducting ~~more~~ public consultations, I am sure you can raise your concerns in that more appropriate setting. Thank you for coming.  
Goodbye. *He steers her out.*

JEN: But... *She's off.*

PR: Miriam, in future please check the age of my appointments in advance. *please bring your own...*

*EXIT*

## VII

*Reporter enters, carrying a television screen frame. As each person speaks they get the frame.*

BROOK: This is Brook Babblin reporting from Barkhaven. This quiet town, situated at the edge of the Forest, has been caught up in a rising controversy over a proposed lumber mill. The company plans to log the nearby forest and citizen groups are responding.

POP: As Head of the Compost Collective and Clear Water For Clear Minds Club, I want to know more about this Public Consultation. Nobody's asked the opinions of the people here. They're going to clear out our forest and pollute our water with their chemical waste.

BRK: The mayor of Barkhaven does not agree.

MYR: I do not agree. The company has reassured us that all proper precautions will be taken. The whole environmental issue has been raised by a small group of reactionary children who cannot possibly grasp the big picture.

POP: It's absolutely wonderful that a few youngsters have managed to open our eyes to the dangers this mill could cause.

BRK: So, who are these children and how have they managed to create such

a stir?

JOEY: I'm Joey. *Waves to camera* Hi Mom! *Back to question.* When I first heard about the mill I was excited because they were gonna build new baseball park, and like I love baseball - *JEN nudges him* But I've learned a lot about the forest from my friend Alex and I'd be kinda sad if it wasn't there anymore. We kinda need it, eh?

BRK: And this prompted you to take action?

JOEY: I did a survey, eh? And I found out that half the town didn't even know what was going on.

*JEN barges into the screen area.*

JEN: Alex put out a newsletter, since the company wasn't giving us any answers.

JOEY: This is my sister.

BRK: You've contacted the company?

JEN: I went there myself, but the person seemed very busy and kept using words I didn't understand.

BRK: So we asked the company.

P.R.: My hands were full at the time.

*A coffee and a doughnut are put into his hands.*

Thank you. Miriam. Unfortunately, I was up to my ears in the bureaucratic process, and I'm not accustomed to dealing with children.

JEN: What's a bureaucratic process?

BRK: As young Joey noted, not all the townspeople are in agreement.

#1: The Mayor's been promising us jobs for over ten years, maybe this

time he'll actually come through.

BRK: What about the forest?

#1: It's about time we made use of it.

#2: What bothers me is all the access roads they build between the forest and the mill. When they're done there'll be no use for them and since nothing can grow on them they'll be left like a slash across the land.

BRK: So where does all this lead?

JEN: Come to the rally in front of city hall tomorrow.

BRK: There you have it. Where does the future lie for this town? Our coverage will continue as things develop.

*In the background Jen and Joey have signs and are singing:*

"All we are saying  
Is give trees a chance!"

### VIII

*Singing continues. Audience encouraged to sing along. If the audience was cued at the start of the show to respond to Jen's signals they can play the crowd at the rally. ALEX takes the sign from JOEY, who becomes the Mayor.*

JEN: Thanks for coming everybody. We want everyone to know that we could lose our lovely forest, which gives us our clean air in Barkhaven, and a place to visit and enjoy nature. We have been waiting to hear about ...

*MAYOR interrupts her.*

MYR: Now friends ...

ALEX: Hey look, the Mayor's come to the rally!

MYR: Do you have a permit for this?

ALEX: Yes. You said we could...

MYR: I did? Oh yes, I did. Of course. As Mayor of your town and chairman of the Town Council, I know that you have concerns and...

ALEX: We want to know what you are doing to our forest.

MYR: Well now, the forest really belongs to all of us and..

JEN: That's why we're here. The company person said we'd be consulted and we haven't heard...

MYR: ...as your elected officials we of council represent all of you. We speak on your behalf. That is why we have come to speak to you today.

POP: Just don't tell us the same old thing again!

MYR: Better yet, I won't tell you anything.

POP: Nothing new in that.

MYR: Instead, I will bring forward a representative of the company to let you know what is in their plans.

*MAYOR applauds, solo.*

PR: Thank you, thank you, Mr. Mayor. On behalf of the Haft Hefters Sylvaniaian company I would like to release the results of the recently completed Environmental Impact Study.

POP: Who did the study? The company?

PR: We have consulted with the various levels of regulating bodies..

JOEY: I thought you were going to ask us what we thought.

PR: Well, in order to promote "sustainable development" in your region we have constructed a strategy to...

POP: Speak plainly!

PR: Oh dear, yes. I'll try to put it in layman's terms. We know that our industry has made mistakes in the past...

POP: I'll say!

PR: ...but we are trying to change our ways.

JOEY: How?

PR: We have a number of options we are looking into. For some years in certain forests we have been doing what we call selective logging. Which means we don't ~~cut huge areas or~~ big blocks of trees all at once.

POP: What about the ones where you've cut everything down clear to the ground?

TP2: You can't replace them once you've cut them!

*Banners and chant*

PR: We like to say "We plant two trees for every one we cut down."

POP: Saying it is one thing, doing it is another.

PR: We do want them to grow back.

POP: Right, so you can cut them down again?

*Banners wave, chant.*

PR: Like everyone else we have come to realize that such resources are limited, and need to be maintained. So we either replant, or, in the right conditions let them grow back naturally. That's called...

JOEY: Natural regeneration?

POP: Boy, you've learned a lot lately, Joey!

JOEY: Naturally

PR: I mean, it's obvious.

POP: Funny how you guys missed it for close to a hundred years.

PR: Those days are over.

POP: Because people like us began to catch on.

PR: We all learn together.

POP: And the Government says you have to.

PR: Of course we follow government regulations.

POP: Then maybe we should get the government to improve its standards.

PR: We're satisfied with them.

JEN: What about the animals?

PR: Well, of course, some will be displaced.

JEN: Have their homes chopped down, you mean?

PR: Well, we have to balance the needs of people against those of the animals. People are our concern.

POP: I thought profit was your concern!

PR: Well, we are in business, and our stock price is important to us. We have to make a profit each month for our shareholders.

POP: Animals don't make a profit, how will they survive?

*JOEY chants. He and JEN wave banners.*

PR: We can have a protected area of the forest where no logging at all will take place. Enough of the forest would be included to maintain a variety of natural habitats. Such a reserve would help the animals. Of

course, we can't do that on our own, we'd like to get government help.

POP: Sure, leave it to the taxpayers!

JOEY: And pollution?

POP: Right! What's going to happen to our water?

PR: We want to make sure we don't affect the water, so we'll build a self contained system to keep it separate.

JOEY: Huh?

PR: Keep it out of the natural water sources - until it is properly cleaned.

POP: So, you're telling us that we'll still be able to drink our water?

PR: Yes, and bathe in it too.

JEN: Hear that, Joey? Bathe.

PR: After all, the people employed by the company will live here as well as work here. And I am sure quite a few townsfolk will have jobs thanks to the company.

JEN: Does this mean you're not going to clear cut?

PR: It all depends on the ecosystem. Some forests regenerate faster if we do clear cut. For others that's not the case. Every forest is different and needs to be harvested differently; especially as we have to consider the future. But, in the long run it's up to you; the products you want are the ones industry make. It's all part of supply and demand.

POP: Yeah, you demand and we supply.

PR: Madam, we supply what people want.

POP: So, maybe people shouldn't want so much.

PR: It's up to the people, we only give people what they ask for.

JOEY: I guess we're going to have to learn to change what we want.

PR: We're all learning. Our business will only thrive as long as the forest thrives, so we want to keep the forest healthy too. Lets work together on this and see if we can fit to each others needs. Then we'll all benefit. Now, on behalf of the company I'd like to thank you all for coming today. This kind of public consultation is most helpful.

JOEY: Hey, you didn't call this meeting. We did.

PR: And, we're grateful to you for doing so.

POP: So are we, or we might not have had any "public consultation" at all.

PR: Madam, why don't you trust us?

POP: Because of the way you've done things in the past.

PR: We can change. We're trying to.

POP: Good. We can help, by watching that you do.

*PR produces microphone and transforms to BROOK.*

BRK: There you have it, viewers. Will the town and company find a way to make this work? We'll just have to watch and see. This is Brook Babblin reporting from Barkhaven by the forest.

*BROOK exit.*

JOEY: Wow, Mrs. Popodopolous, you sure don't trust the lumber company .

POP: Ah, Joey, when it comes to profit you've always got to watch out for the greedy, 'cause they'll take everything and leave you nothing. And there have always been some greedy folk, and always will be.

*EXIT singing. "All we are saying is give trees a chance."*

*JOEY goes with her.*

**IX**

*ALEX does the scene change to "The Tree" and goes behind the trunk.  
Joey and Jen enter with backpacks.*

JEN: I can't believe it, Joey. You actually know the way!

JOEY: Alex - I mean, Bear taught me. Landmarks: creeks, groves, certain trees, trails, all sorts of things.

JEN: You must spend as much time in the forest as you do at baseball.

JOEY: Al... Bear teaches me "the woods". See the woodsman as he picks his way surely through the tangle of trees. What's this? His destination? Isn't this where he was going? His instincts have done it again!

*ALEX pops up from behind the log.*

ALEX: And Joey teaches me his curveball.

*JEN & JOEY are startled, then they all laugh.*

JEN: Saves me practicing with him.

JOEY: It gives her more time for poetry. Blllgh!  
" All the animals now can smile  
The woodcutter's gone an extra mile  
So we can preserve this chunk of forest  
As a place for them to rest."

ALEX: I like it.

JOEY: You do?

ALEX: Well, it's true. This part of the forest is in the Preserve.

JEN: So, this part of the forest doesn't get cut.

ALEX: But it's not enough.

JEN: As long as the company does what it said it would do the forest should be alright.

JOEY: Mrs. Popodopolous and the Compost Club says they are going to make sure they stick to Government regulations.

ALEX: But she said that government regulations don't go far enough.

JEN: Maybe we should organize another rally to get the government to improve their regulations.

ALEX: And when the government wants to be elected again we should make sure people know what the issues are and how they stand on each of them.

JOEY: I thought we've got what we wanted.

ALEX: The Mayor did. He figures to get re-elected for sure. Especially now that the new complex is being built.

JOEY: With a ball park!

JEN: And a curling rink!

ALEX: Mrs. Popodopolous said we don't know what we did.

JOEY: What did we do?

ALEX: We got the company to come talk to the people of the town!

JOEY: Yeah, but it sounds like the company was going to do things properly all along.

ALEX: Could be. We'll never know.

JEN: It doesn't hurt to stand up for something so important.

ALEX: You're right, Jen. If people don't draw attention to the problems we've made for ourselves, we'll keep on making the same mistakes.

JOEY: Yeah. I'd hate to lose this forest.

JEN: And at least thanks to preserving this part of the forest this isn't a last

picnic!

ALEX: It's a search party!

JOEY: Somebody's lost?

JEN: Joey! Today's the day we search for our inner creature.

JOEY: Like "Bear"?

ALEX: Yeah.

JOEY: I told you, I'm a T. Rex. Ngggrrrgh!

ALEX: Let's start with you, Jen.

*JOEY goes and sits on the log. Drops his back pack behind it.*

JEN: What do I do?

ALEX: Close your eyes. Can you hear around you? Listen carefully.

JEN: It's quiet.

ALEX: You only think so because your ears are used to the town.

*JOEY slides off behind the log.*

You must hear the woods first.

JEN: I can hear a bird.

ALEX: Only one?

JEN: No. There's more..More birds..And ground sound..Rustle... Another one!.. Phew! Must be lots of little critters zipping about in there.

ALEX: Any bigger ones, do you think?

JEN: I don't think so... I'm not sure.

*Suddenly a BIG BLUE DINOSAUR jumps up from behind the log with a roar. ALEX & JEN react and run off with the dinosaur in pursuit. They all run back with the Dinosaur being pursued by Jen and Alex. Finally, ALEX &*

*JEN run across from opposite sides and disappear. Dinosaur tiptoes out, sees JEN coming, runs the opposite way only to run into ALEX coming from the other side. He is trapped. Face the audience, and bow.*

*In the discussion after the show, the following is explained;*

- 1) Envirosaurus Rex- the environment friendly dinosaur
- 2) The website – [www.greenkids.com](http://www.greenkids.com)
- 3) The teachers kit available on our website
- 4) Feedback forms for students and teachers in teachers kit
- 5) A-channel – save the environment contest (in Manitoba only)
- 6) Book us again for next year – topic – efficient energy use and alternative forms of energies – early booking discount to June 30/02
- 7) Question & Answer period
- 8) Autographs etc..