

THE PIZZA TREE

or

“Give Pizza A Chance”

by Alan Holman

(c) 2008 - Banana Chan Books
All rights reserved.

THE SET: The **GATOR PIT** involves the areas in front of and beside the stage; that's where Gator and Snake crawl around on the floor... and play chess. The stage includes all other sets.

We open with **GATOR** crawling in the pit down beside stage left, and **SNAKE** slithering in the pit down beside stage right. Meanwhile, the stage includes the front of a little house, and its front yard. The front yard includes a bush, a sandbox (complete with toy cars), and a walkway from the front door, to the front of the stage.

NARRATOR

Once upon a time in Australia, two Kangaroos...

BOOMER and **FLYER** enter the sandbox, from opposite sides of the stage, eating the final crumbs from their bags of chips.

NARRATOR

-- Boomer --

BOOMER

(waving)

Hi!

NARRATOR

-- and Flyer --

FLYER

(waving)

Hello!

NARRATOR

... ran out of tasty food.

They turn their bags upside-down -- empty.

BOOMER

I'm hungry.

BOOMER crumples his bag, and throws it in the sandbox.
FLYER waves his index finger at **BOOMER**, then **FLYER** puts both bags in his pouch.

NARRATOR

Then along came Koala...

The **NARRATOR** (an adult) enters, holding hands with **KOALA** (a child).

KOALA

How's everything?

BOOMER

Fine, I guess. Who are you?

KOALA

I'm a koala! And when I heard that you two furry pals ran out of tasty food, I decided to lead you pair of crazy critters to a place where we can share a whole lotta' pizza!

BOOMER

Wait just a minute sec. [MY-NUTE SEC] We've never met you before, so whoever told you that we ran out of tasty food?

KOALA

The narrator!

NARRATOR

It's true! I've got a big mouth!

BOOMER

My mother told me that I shouldn't go anywhere with a stranger.

NARRATOR

Play nice, kids!

BOOMER

Okay, Koala. Can you really bring us to where we can stuff our faces with pizza?

KOALA

Yes!

FLYER

Where is it?

KOALA

The Secret City!

NARRATOR

And off they went!

NARRATOR exits.

They stand still.

NARRATOR

I said -- Off they went!

They walk to stage-left.

NARRATOR

We now re-join our heroes, with their journey already in progress, as they run away from predators...

**BOOMER, FLYER, AND KOALA
PREDATORS!?!**

GATOR leaps onto stage left. **SNAKE** leaps onto stage right. **GATOR** chases "the good guys" to **SNAKE** at stage right. Afraid of the big kangaroos, **SNAKE** jumps to the side. And just before the edge, the "good guys" hop to the side, causing **GATOR** to collide into Snake, and both of the "bad guys" fall off the stage, back into the **GATOR PIT**, where they crawl on the floor with their heads bent down in defeat, as the "good guys" begin their long trek back and forth, and side to side, in the front yard which is on the stage.

KOALA

We need a rest.

They sit down.

BOOMER

I want my mommy.

FLYER

Yeah. I also want mommy.

KOALA

Are you brothers?

FLYER

Nah, just pals! Boomer and I come from different mobs.

KOALA

Mob? -- as in ... what's a mob?

FLYER

A kangaroo mob.

KOALA

Like a kangaroo court?

FLYER

No. Boomer, you explain it!

BOOMER

Sure. You see, koala -- Kangaroos don't live in mobs; we live in Kingdoms!

FLYER

(shakes his head)

No we don't! We live in mobs!

BOOMER

You say mob, I say kingdom. Let's call the whole thing off.

KOALA

Is it both? Could a Kangaroo Mob perhaps be a Constitutional Monarchy?

FLYER

Sure, why not?

BOOMER

Our leader is The King.

FLYER

And our leader is Capo-Kangaroo!

KOALA

How did you two meet each-other?

FLYER

Through our moms; they play the same online video-game.

KOALA

Where are your mothers now?

BOOMER

Still on-line. That's why we're all alone and out of pizza.

KOALA

Aw, that's sad.

FLYER

Regardless, our moms are our heroes, because they taught kangaroo mobs and kangaroo kingdoms how to settle their differences without violence, in an on-line game called AussieQuest.

BOOMER's stomach growls.

BOOMER

It must be either breakfast time, brunch time, lunch time, desert time, mid-afternoon snack time, supper time, midnight snack time, or time to go on a diet, because I sure am hungry!

From their pit, **SNAKE** and **GATOR** leap in front of **BOOMER**, **FLYER**, and **KOALA**!

GATOR

(threatening)

DID SOMEONE SAY DAY-DREAM!?!

BOOMER

Nope. I accidentally interrupted before that line. Sorry.

GATOR

I'M YOUR WORST ... NIGHT DREAM!

KOALA, BOOMER, and FLYER, are calm.

KOALA

Oh, hi Gator! Did you bring the chips?

GATOR

No, we brought a can of ... ATTACK!

BOOMER

We can't play now. It's almost our bed time.

SNAKE

Why would you tell us that?

FLYER

Because it's true.

SNAKE

(to **GATOR**)

Do you believe them?

GATOR

No. They're tricky. They must have a plan.

SNAKE

I'm scared. Let's go!

GATOR

I'll get you next time -- NEXT TIME!

SNAKE and **GATOR** retreat down to their pit beside the stage, where they'll busy themselves with a game of chess during the action on the stage, where after a brief pause,

BOOMER says...

BOOMER

I remember now!

KOALA

What do you remember?

BOOMER

Kangaroos of different ages have different colored fur!

KOALA

Interesting.

BOOMER

Yeah, it is.

As **BOOMER**, **FLYER**, and **KOALA**, play with toy cars in the sandbox on the stage, **GATOR** and **SNAKE** meet in their pit, in front of the stage, and plot.

GATOR

Snake, I stayed awake past bed time, and formed the perfect strategy against those pesky kangaroos and their koala friend!

SNAKE

But don't you remember what happened last time, with their mysterious plan?

GATOR

(with an evil cackle)

Quit thinking about the past, Snake. They continued walking, while we've stayed here; therefore, they won't expect us to cut them off at the pass!

SNAKE

But Gator -- there is a great distance between them and us.
How will we bridge that gap?

GATOR

By suspending disbelief!

SNAKE

Neat!

Meanwhile, on the stage, **BOOMER**, **FLYER**, and **KOALA**, continue playing with toy cars in the sandbox.

KOALA

Boomer -- how old are you?

BOOMER

Well, baby kangaroos have pink fur, kids are bluish-gray, young adults are red. My grandma was blue. But I don't like uniforms, so I don't remember.

(aside)

Hey Kids! Pick a number! That number will be my age!

Pause.

BOOMER

(aside cont'd)

Okay, kids! I'm those numbers, plus one, times two, divided by four, and rabbits multiply.

FLYER looks startled.

KOALA

Now I'm also hungry.

BOOMER

That makes two of us.

SNAKE and **GATOR** leap onto the stage, in front of **BOOMER**, **FLYER**, and **KOALA**!

GATOR

(threatening)

PLUS ONE!

After a short, awkward pause, **SNAKE**, **KOALA**, **BOOMER**, and **FLYER**, fall over laughing hysterically.

GATOR

What's so funny?

BOOMER

You!

GATOR and **SNAKE** look at each-other, and shrug.

GATOR

(gushing)

Really? I'm funny? No one's ever called me funny before, not even Snake, and he's my best-friend! Look, I've misjudged you two koo koo kangaroos, and your little koala friend. I'm sorry for trying to fight against you. Can we all be friends?

(aside)

I hope they fall for my lie!

FLYER

I heard that.

GATOR

Curses! Foiled again! But we'll be right back next time, for an all new adventure!

GATOR and **SNAKE** leap back into their pit around the stage.

BOOMER, **FLYER**, and **KOALA**, walk across the stage, back and forth, and side to side.

KOALA

I think you'll both enjoy The Secret City so much that you'll call it home. I know I will.

BOOMER

If the Pizza in The Secret City is really as good as you say it is, then I'll be glad to call it "Home Sweet Home!"

KOALA

And what about you, Flyer?

FLYER

As for me, I'm at home when I'm with my friends. And you two are my friends.

GATOR and **SNAKE** hop onto the stage, in front of **BOOMER**, **FLYER**, and **KOALA**.

GATOR

We're back!

BOOMER

(sarcastic)

Oh no! It's Gator and Snake!

FLYER

Gator. If I've told you once, I've told you a thousand times --

WE'RE TOO HUNGRY TO PLAY!

GATOR

Well I'm hungry too. HUNGRY FOR ALL THREE OF YOU!

KOALA makes a fearful squeak

GATOR

First, snake will tackle you with tickles. Then, somehow my invisible hover-bike will ... something ...

(in a threatening tone)

Koala -- aren't you nocturnal?

KOALA

(frightened)

Well...uhh...

BOOMER

Koala, what's nocturnal mean?

KOALA

(frightened)

Err...

GATOR

(cackling evilly)

Koala. Aren't you going to tell your friends your little secret?

KOALA

(nervous)

Wh...what ever are you talking about, Gator?

FLYER

Koala, what's he talking about? What does nocturnal mean?

KOALA

(nervous)

You're my friends, Boomer and Flyer, so I'll be honest with you about something I should have explained when we first met.

GATOR

KOALA! You can tell them your secret **AFTER** I eat **YOU!!!**

KOALA

NO, YOU REPTILIAN EVIL-DOER!!! PLEASE DON'T EAT ME!!!

BOOMER screams...

BOOMER

DON'T EAT MY FRIEND! MAYBE DO SOMETHING ELSE! BECOME A POLITICIAN! NO, ON SECOND THOUGHT, DON'T BECOME A POLITICIAN! THERE ARE ALREADY MORE THAN ENOUGH COLD BLOODED REPTILES WHO ARE POLITICIANS!

GATOR

(arrogant)

You can't stop me.

BOOMER

RUN!!!

BOOMER, FLYER, and KOALA, run.

GATOR

Where do you think they're going?

SNAKE

I don't know, boss. But I don't want to stick around to find out.

GATOR and **SNAKE** hop back down into their pit.

KOALA walks around the sandbox, at a medium pace.

BOOMER and **FLYER** hop up and down that path which starts at the front door, and ends at the front of the stage, at a medium pace.

KOALA

Did you know that an acre is four thousand eight hundred and forty square yards?

FLYER

No. What's a yard?

KOALA

This place. Anyway, I wonder how many acres we've walked.

BOOMER

Me too. What's a barbecue?

KOALA

It's a noun.

BOOMER

A pyromaniac noun.

KOALA

Nouns are harmless.

FLYER

I'll tell you what's not harmless: that nasty alligator. Now that he wants to eat us, his "threat-to-us level" has escalated from harmless, to mostly harmless!

KOALA

Don't panic!

BOOMER

That's easy for you to say ... or difficult. Hey Koala, did you actually feel threatened by Gator?

KOALA

Yes. He knows my biggest secret, and because knowledge is power, he plans to use my own power against me.

FLYER

What? I don't understand. However, Koala, no matter what your secret is, Boomer and I will always be your friends.

KOALA

Really?

BOOMER

That's right, Koala. We've just met and barely established anything; therefore, your secret won't change our friendship,

so what's your secret?

KOALA

Okay. I'll tell you. This is my secret: I'm not a normal koala bear. I'm the Chosen Koala.

FLYER

What's a The Chosen Koala?

KOALA

I'm a special koala who can stay awake during daytime, and eat more than just eucalyptus leaves.

BOOMER

I ... what?

KOALA

You see, most koalas sleep during the day, and move at night time. And most koalas can only eat leaves from the eucalyptus tree. But I'm different.

FLYER

Our differences make us unique.

KOALA

I'm a koala on a secret mission!

FLYER

Wow! A mission! What is it?

KOALA

I don't know.

BOOMER and **FLYER** fall over.

KOALA

My grandpa's gonna tell me my mission upon my arrival at The Secret City.

BOOMER and **FLYER** sit up.

BOOMER

I was thinking -- Gator tried to eat us, because that's what Gators do. It's all part of nature. The food chain -- a beautiful, natural, wonderful, scary thing ... I'm scared.

KOALA

Phooey to the food chain! In The Secret City, all animals live in peace, without a food chain!

BOOMER

How?

KOALA

Because at The Secret City, pizza grows on trees! Nap time!

The good guys lay in the sandbox, while **GATOR** and **SNAKE** sit in front of the stage, plotting during a game of chess.

GATOR

Every time I seek revenge against those inferior kangaroos, and their harmless koala friend, their unpredictable and silly behavior puts a damper on my bad intentioned plots!

SNAKE

You need a hobby.

GATOR

Hmm...we must perform our diabolical duty as villains by forming a dirty, rotten, lousy, devious, and selfish plot, which will stop those kangaroos, and their koala friend, once and for all!

SNAKE

Why?

GATOR

Well, you see my friend, the carefully worked out selfish indulgences of villains must reverse-deflect disaster, reflect bad sportsmanship, and advocate lunacy.

SNAKE

Okay, but how will we stop them?

GATOR

Exactly!

SNAKE

(confused)

What?

The "bad guys" continue their game of chess as the "good guys" wake up and walk ... until **GATOR** raises a **STOP SIGN** from the pit. (The **STOP** sign is facing the audience.)

BOOMER

A stop sign?

KOALA

We must always obey stop signs.

KOALA and **BOOMER** nod in agreement. So they stop and wait.

FLYER

This journey would be faster if we had a car.

KOALA

Yeah, but walking is good exercise.

BOOMER

Exercise is always good.

FLYER

Tiring.

Pause.

SNAKE

What's on the other side.

GATOR

I don't know.

Gator turns the sign around, revealing that its other side says "GO"

BOOMER and **FLYER** hop. **KOALA** rides in **BOOMER's** pouch.

GATOR

Curses!

KOALA

Gator and Snake could be lurking around any corner, just waiting to strike! So when I clap my hands, everybody scream, "GO AWAY, GATOR!"

BOOMER

Okay.

FLYER

Sure!

GATOR and **SNAKE** hop up from their pit.

FLYER

(afraid)

HE'S RIGHT IN FRONT OF US!!!

FLYER, **BOOMER**, and **KOALA**, scream in terror!

GATOR

YIKES! That's really loud! Ouch! Please quit screaming!

FLYER, BOOMER, and **KOALA**, continue screaming.

GATOR

Oww! Please stop! I woke up on the wrong side of the Gator Pit, and I'm very sensitive to conflict right now, so if you tell me to leave, I'll have no choice but to find food elsewhere ... until next time.

BOOMER, FLYER, and **KOALA**, look at our audience, and clap their hands.

A very short pause, then **GATOR** and **SNAKE** jumps back down into their pit in front of the stage.

As "the good guys" celebrate their victory on the stage, the bad guys wallow in defeat down in their pit in front of the stage, while continuing their game of chess.

GATOR

Those troublesome kangaroos, and their koala friend, always deride my attempts to wallop them!

SNAKE

Wallop?

GATOR

Okay. We'll wallop them! We'll form brave new plots to wallop those bludgering kangaroos, and that laxidazical koala!

SNAKE

Go get 'em, Tiger!

GATOR

TIGER!?! I'm afraid of tigers! AAAHHH!!!

GATOR runs away.

SNAKE

(laughing)

That trick never fails!

SNAKE turns the chess board around, as **GATOR** returns; they continue their chess game off stage, as the "good guys" walk swiftly, back and forth, on stage.

BOOMER gets a chocolate bar from his pouch, and begins eating it.

BOOMER

The Secret City is so close that I can taste it!

KOALA

(screaming)

THAT'S BECAUSE YOU'RE EATING THE MAP, YOU
KOO KOO KANGAROO!

BOOMER gives a piece of the chocolate bar to **FLYER**, and another piece to **KOALA**; they share it. When they finish, **BOOMER** puts the wrapper in his pouch.

BOOMER

Oops, sorry.

GATOR and **SNAKE** jump onto the stage, and hide behind the bush, as **BOOMER**, **FLYER**, and **KOALA**, approach.

BOOMER

I'm sure glad Gator and Snake aren't here.

GATOR and **SNAKE** jump out from behind the bush, and scream...

GATOR AND SNAKE

BOOGA BOOGA BOOGA!!!

BOOMER, **FLYER**, and **KOALA**, fall down laughing.

KOALA, BOOMER, AND FLYER

(laughing)

That's the funniest thing we've ever heard!

SNAKE starts laughing.

KOALA

Gator -- your friendship is important to me?

GATOR

(confused)

What?

KOALA puts his hand on **GATOR**'s face.

GATOR

What are you doing to me?

KOALA

It's called a Chosen Koala Mind Meld. Now you know about The Secret City.

GATOR

Wow. It's amazing. I'm sorry for being so mean and rude to you all the time.

BOOMER

I'm curious to see the city. Can you do a Chosen Koala Mind Meld on me?

KOALA

Why yes, Boomer, I can!

KOALA puts his hand on **BOOMER**'s face.

BOOMER

Wow! I can see The Secret City! It's beautiful, and I like it a lot!

FLYER

Now I'd like to see The Secret City! Koala, can you please perform a Chosen Koala Mind Meld on me?

KOALA

Why yes, Flyer, I can!

KOALA puts his hand on **FLYER**'s face.

FLYER

Wow! Amazing! The Secret City is a fantastic place! Wow!

KOALA

Snake, it's your turn to see The Secret City!

SNAKE

Forget about it! Your Star Wars mind-tricks won't work on me!

KOALA

It's not a Star Wars mind trick. It's a Star Trek mind trick. Big difference. Star Trek is the better one! It's a Chosen Koala mind meld!

SNAKE

I can't believe Gator fell for it! There's no such thing as a Chosen Koala Mind Meld!

KOALA

Yes there is! Let me show you!

SNAKE

No!

GATOR

It really does work, Snake. You've gotta believe him.

SNAKE

I refuse to believe him. I refuse to believe in The Secret City

until I see it with the two eyes ON my head!

KOALA

That's okay. We'll be there soon anyway.

SNAKE

If we're not there soon, I will become evil again.

Pause.

BOOMER

We would have already been there had I not accidentally eaten the map.

GATOR AND SNAKE

YOU WHAT!?!?

FLYER

He ate the map. It's no big deal.

GATOR AND SNAKE

WHAT DO YOU MEAN NO BIG DEAL!?!?

FLYER

I mean that It's no big deal, because Koala assured us that he memorized the map. Right, Koala?

KOALA

(nervous)

Yes. I think so.

KOALA'S GRANDFATHER exits the front door of the house, holding paper and crayons.

GRANDFATHER

Are you kids having fun?

BOOMER, FLYER, KOALA, GATOR, AND SNAKE

Yes.

GRANDFATHER

Here you go.

KOALA'S GRANDFATHER puts the paper and crayons in the sandbox.

BOOMER, FLYER, KOALA, GATOR, AND SNAKE

Thank you.

KOALA'S GRANDFATHER smiles and then enters the front door of the house.

GATOR picks up one of the papers, and writes on it.

SNAKE picks up one of the papers, and writes on it. **GATOR** runs to a side of the stage, and holds up his paper which says: "Continue along the trail if your destination is The Secret City." **SNAKE** runs to a side of the stage, and holds up his paper which says: "If your destination is The Secret City, turn around now."

BOOMER

Look, two signs!

KOALA

One says, "Continue along the trail if your destination is The Secret City." The other says, "If your destination is The Secret City, turn around now."

GATOR

What should we do?

KOALA

The map mentioned these signs. We're supposed to continue along the trail. Signs never lie.

GATOR and **SNAKE** put down the signs, and re-join their friends. **BOOMER** puts the signs in his pouch.

They continue walking back and forth, and side to side, along the stage.

SNAKE

Boomer, Flyer, and Koala -- Are you scared of me?

BOOMER nods.

BOOMER

Please don't become my enemy again!

SNAKE

I never stopped being your enemy.

GATOR

Give it a rest, Snake. I trust them, because when I saw The Secret City, I saw a place where all animals live in peace!

SNAKE

It was a trick, Gator, so keep your guard up.

Pause.

KOALA

Friendship is fantastic!

SNAKE

I'll extinguish my evil desires when I actually see the so-called Secret City with my own two eyes.

GATOR

Hey, Snake! Just chill out, okay?

SNAKE

I don't need to chill out! I'm cold-blooded!

KOALA

That's interesting! I didn't know that! Hey, that gives me a great idea! Maybe we should all get to know each-other better by playing a "get to know each-other better"-type of game!

SNAKE

Whatever.

KOALA

Okay. Now we all must sit in a circle.

They sit in a circle (clockwise order = Gator, Boomer, Koala, Snake, Flyer).

KOALA

We'll go around the circle clockwise. I'll go first: My name is Koala. I like to climb trees. My favorite audience member is [chooses an audience member, and gives a handful of candy to that kid]. I was very shy and quiet until I met Boomer and Flyer, but now I'm outgoing. Mona Lisa is my favorite painting by Leonardo. Leonardo is also my favorite Ninja Turtle. Turtles are reptiles, and ...

SNAKE

(interrupting)

... so am I. Is it my turn yet?

KOALA

Sure!

SNAKE

My name is Snake. I don't like any of you, yet I'm intrigued by your constant displays of generosity and friendship. I'm done. Who's next?

FLYER

My turn! Yo, I'm Flyer, which is a cool name for me, because I want to be a rescue pilot who rescues animals from dangerous situations, and brings them to safety!

KOALA

That's an awesome goal, Flyer!

SNAKE

A kangaroo pilot!?! That idea is absurd!

KOALA

Setting lofty goals is a very smart thing to do! Anyway, Snake, you should be nicer to people.

SNAKE

You should stop nagging!

KOALA

Okay. Who's next?

GATOR

It's my turn. Hi, I'm Gator. I'm a literary character in a good-intentioned and subversive dramatic masterpiece that will be the subject of scrutiny by future scholars because of its many metaphors and multiple deep layers of allegory. I love cats. I used to eat small animals; however, I'll change that when we arrive at The Secret City. Because when the mind meld showed me The Secret City, I saw the magic tree which grows such nutritious Pizza that all animals can ignore the food chain, and live in peace. And the best part is, the tree makes the pizza magically, and likes to share, and laughs

because it tickles when we take its pizza! That's why it's so generous!

BOOMER

Hooray, it's my turn! I'm Boomer! I enjoy...

SNAKE

You enjoy being stupid!

BOOMER

Hey, Snake! Why are you so rude to everyone?

SNAKE

Why not?

BOOMER

Because it's not nice. You should only do nice things.

SNAKE

Why?

BOOMER

Because nice things don't start fights. And fights are bad.

KOALA

No one fights in The Secret City.

SNAKE

I don't believe you, so PROVE IT! I bet that The Secret City isn't real. I bet that The Secret City is make-believe. I bet that you can't prove that no one fights in The Secret City!

KOALA

Yes, I can! Well, this is my front yard in the secret city, and we're not fighting, so I've proved it!

SNAKE

I can't believe that The Secret City is real! I can't believe that The Secret City isn't make believe! I can't believe that everything you've told me is true: No one fights in The Secret City, because there's no food chain here! Every animal is equal! No rivalries! No anger or suspicion! And it's all thanks to that tree -- the pizza tree. A tree whose fruit is both animal and vegetable!

SNAKE points towards one of the tables where the audience just ate their pizza, and says...

KOALA

My grandfather told me in a dream that he's in a coma, and he needs the meatiest of that tree's fruit: All-Dressed Pizza!

FLYER

What's a coma?

KOALA

A deep sleep.

FLYER

Where's your grandfather?

KOALA

(points at the house)

In that house.

(points at the walkway that leads to the front door)

At the end of that trail. Who will join me?

SNAKE

I'll help you, Koala! It's the least I can do to make up for not believing you about The Secret City!

KOALA

Gee, thanks!

SNAKE

I was very rude to you earlier, and I'm very sorry.

KOALA

It's okay! It's in the past. You can forget about it!

SNAKE

Nonsense. I feel obligated to help.

KOALA

Gee, thanks!

GATOR

Snake! I'm proud of you!

SNAKE

Can it, pal.

GATOR

Well, I guess it'll take a while for a complete transformation from bad to good, but you've made a good start! My transformation from bad to good was faster, so if it were a race, I'd be the winner, because bad people are always losers.

Everyone else plays with toy cars in the sandbox, while **KOALA** and **SNAKE** quest upon the winding trail. **SNAKE** quickly gets a pizza-box from somewhere in the theater, then re-joins **KOALA** on the walkway which leads to the front door.

SNAKE

Are we there yet? This pizza is heavy. Must I deliver this all the way to your Grandfather's house?

KOALA

No. We can share the hard work!

SNAKE

I'm not accustomed to sharing.

KOALA

Then don't!

SNAKE

I don't intend on sharing anything, so thanks!

KOALA

You're very welcome, my friend!

KOALA smiles the biggest smile our audience has ever seen!

SNAKE

Are we there yet?

KOALA

No. We're not there. We're here.

SNAKE

I can't stand it anymore!

KOALA

I know. That pizza smells good.

SNAKE

Exactly.

Meanwhile, **GATOR**, **BOOMER**, and **FLYER**, continue playing with toy cars in the sandbox.

GATOR

In an instant, we've become friends, all thanks to a mystical tree which non-violently caters to the diverse tastes of carnivores, herbivores, and omnivores.

BOOMER

Yo, Gator: What's a carnivore? What's an herbivore? What's an omnivore?

GATOR

(interrupting)

A carnivore eats meat. An herbivore eats plants. An omnivore eats anything that grows or moves.

BOOMER

Thanks for answering my questions!

GATOR

You're welcome!

They continue playing with toy cars in the sandbox, as **KOALA** and **SNAKE** continue carrying the pizza box up the walkway towards the house.

KOALA

Our great friendship today makes it hard to believe that we were enemies just yesterday!

SNAKE

It just goes to show that if a snake can be friends with a koala, anyone can be friends with anyone else!

KOALA

We're almost there!

SNAKE

Where?

KOALA

We're almost at my Grandfather's house!

SNAKE

What will we do when we get there?

KOALA

Don't you know?

SNAKE

No. My head is so small that I'm forgetful.

KOALA

Really?

SNAKE

Yes, so please tell me why we're going to your grandfather's house.

KOALA

Well, my Grandfather has fallen ill -- that means he's sick.

SNAKE

Oh no!

KOALA

But it'll be alright, because you're going to save him.

SNAKE

Really? How will I save him?

KOALA

You're pulling the cure!

SNAKE

The cure! Is that what I'm pulling?

KOALA

Yes!

SNAKE

Great! I think I may have always wanted to be a hero. How long until we get there?

KOALA

Just a little while.

KOALA and **SNAKE** continue "pretend walking" toward the door, as **GATOR**, **BOOMER**, and **FLYER**, relax in the sandbox.

GATOR

It's beautiful when natural enemies become eccentric friends.

FLYER

What's an eccentric?

GATOR

You are.

FLYER

Why?

GATOR

Because you're full of eccentricities!

FLYER

What are eccentricities?

GATOR

Oddly charming differences.

FLYER

Gee, thanks! -- I think. By the way, Gator, I was wondering how you met Snake.

GATOR

Well, I became Snake's friend because I liked the part of his personality which prevented him from biting me.

FLYER

What do you mean?

GATOR makes a very big smile, and says...

GATOR

I'm an alligator! I scared him into becoming my friend!

FLYER

(somewhat frightened)

Alligator teeth would scare ANYONE.

GATOR

(laughing)

That's true.

Pause.

FLYER

I hope that Snake is getting along with Koala.

GATOR

Me too.

BOOMER

When Koala and Snake give the Pizza to Koala's grandfather, Koala's grandfather will wake up from his deep sleep, and then they'll all return here to The Secret City, and we'll all live happily ever after!

GATOR

How can you be so sure?

BOOMER

Because that's the way it's gotta happen. Besides, we've made it this far, didn't we? After a long quest, we finally made it to The Secret City, and became friends along the way.

GATOR

That's true. I wasn't always your friend.

FLYER

Exactly. A few times, you came very close to eating us, but then, when you learned of the happiness, and joy, and friendships that awaited us all, here in The Secret City, you stopped being our enemy. You became our friend.

GATOR

And Snake also became your friend.

FLYER

Exactly.

GATOR

Don't count your chickens before they're hatched, my friends.

BOOMER

Huh? What does that mean, Gator?

GATOR

It means: there's one thing you should know about our little friend Snake.

FLYER

And what's that? What's the one thing we should know about Snake?

GATOR

He's very forgetful.

BOOMER

Really? How's that a problem?

GATOR

Snake's forgetfulness is a VERY BIG problem, because he might forget that Koala is his friend. He might lose control and bite both Koala, and Koala's grandfather!

BOOMER

Oh no! We've gotta go find them, and save Koala, and Koala's grandfather!

FLYER

Why didn't you tell us this earlier, Gator?

GATOR

Because I forgot about it until just now. Regardless, we can't catch up to them; they're too far; besides, it's a school night.

BOOMER

Oh no! What will we do!?!

FLYER

I've got an idea. Boomer, perform a Chosen Koala Mind Meld on me!

BOOMER

Huh? But I can't. I'm not The Chosen Koala. I'm a kangaroo!

FLYER

And I choose you, so you're chosen, so do a chosen Kangaroo mind meld on me!

BOOMER

Okay!

BOOMER puts his hand on **FLYER**'s forehead as **KOALA'S GRANDFATHER** approaches the sandbox from the front door (passing **SNAKE** and **KOALA** on the way, perhaps ruffling **KOALA**'s hair a bit.).

GRANDFATHER

Flyer! What a pleasant surprise! I didn't expect to see you today!

FLYER

Before I tell you why I'm here, may I ask you a question?

GRANDFATHER

Anything you wish, friend!

FLYER

If you're not in The Secret City, then why are you dreaming about being in The Secret City?

GRANDFATHER

Dreaming?

GATOR

Coma.

GRANDFATHER

Oh, well ... because I like The Secret City a lot. Sometimes I wish that I didn't retire to this house, because this house is so far away from The Secret City.

FLYER

Well I have good news for you.

GRANDFATHER

Really?

FLYER

Yes. It turns out that Koala is going to your house now, and bringing you the cure for your illness.

GRANDFATHER

Illness?

FLYER

Yes. And after he uses the cure to wake you up, he's going to bring you back to The Secret City where we'll all have a little party, and then we'll all live happily ever after!

GRANDFATHER

That sounds wonderful!

FLYER

I also have bad news.

GRANDFATHER

Oh no! What's the bad news?

FLYER

There's a small chance that Koala's traveling companion might revert back to his evil ways. That means that Snake might forget about The Secret City, and start biting people again! He might bite both Koala and yourself!

GRANDFATHER

Don't worry about it.

FLYER

Huh?

GRANDFATHER

Pizza is brain food!

FLYER

What do you mean?

GRANDFATHER

I mean that, if Snake eats some of the food which himself and Koala are bringing to me, Snake's memory problem will go away. He'll remember why he should be friendly, and everyone will live happily ever after!

FLYER

That's great, but how will...?

GRANDFATHER

It's a miracle! I'm waking up!

GRANDFATHER exits from the front yard, into the house.

FLYER

He disappeared!

BOOMER, FLYER, and GATOR, laugh while continuing to play with their toy cars in the sandbox. Meanwhile, **GRANDFATHER** enters the stage from the front door of the house; he's carrying a pitcher of iced-tea and some cups. He sits on the doorstep with **KOALA** and **SNAKE**.

GRANDFATHER

Do my old eyes deceive me?

KOALA

No, they don't, Grandfather! We actually made it here safely!

GRANDFATHER

Snake, did you eat any of the pizza?

SNAKE

I ... well, yes. Some of it went down my throat as I chewed it up for you?

GRANDFATHER

What do you mean "chewed it up?"

KOALA

Snake is a real friend! Grandfather, you were sleeping so deeply that you wouldn't swallow any of the food, so Snake was nice enough to chew on it until it became a liquid, and then ...

GRANDFATHER

You could have just used the blender, you know.

KOALA

Uhh...what?

SNAKE

What do you mean?

GRANDFATHER

Never mind. What matters is that you're both here, and you're both good.

SNAKE

That's right. Shortly after I chewed on that food, I remembered why I should be good. I'll be a good snake from now on.

GRANDFATHER

That's great news!

KOALA

It truly is!

SNAKE

Maybe we should go home now. Home to The Secret City, where Gators, Snakes, Koalas, Kangaroos, and every other creature in the world, can live in peace. Maybe we should go there now, and have that party, and live happily ever after!

KOALA

That sounds like a great idea!

GRANDFATHER

Yes it does. How will we get there?

KOALA

Well, Grandfather, do you mind walking?

GRANDFATHER

No, I don't mind walking. Walking sounds like a brilliant idea! I could use the exercise! I guess I should call a mover to bring my possessions to The Secret City during our walk. I guess I should lock my car before I go.

KOALA

Why don't we just...?

GRANDFATHER

(interrupting)

No time for talking now! We've got some walking to do!

SNAKE

Except for me. I don't walk. I slither.

GRANDFATHER

Hmm...you know what: You two just got here. Why don't we all have more iced-tea before our journey?

SNAKE

That sounds like a pleasantly absurd idea!

GRANDFATHER re-fills their cups of iced-tea from the pitcher in his hand.

GRANDFATHER

I'm very proud. It's praiseworthy that you two have overcome your differences, and become friends.

SNAKE

Shucks.

KOALA

Thanks, Grandfather!

GRANDFATHER

You're welcome!

(to the sandbox)

Would any of you fellows like some iced-tea?

GATOR, BOOMER, AND FLYER

Yes, please.

GRANDFATHER dispenses iced-tea to the kids in the sandbox, then returns to **KOALA** and **SNAKE** at the

doorstep.

SNAKE

Thanks for your hospitality.

GRANDFATHER

You're very welcome, Snake. A decent fellow, such as yourself, deserves hospitality!

SNAKE

Days ago, I'd bite a person who called me decent. But now, the words decency and politeness are music to my ears! In other words, thank you very much for calling me decent!

GRANDFATHER

Well, you're very welcome, Snake! You deserve many thanks for assisting my Grandson.

KOALA

It's true, Snake. I probably couldn't have pulled that cooler without you.

SNAKE

That's right. You probably couldn't!

GRANDFATHER

You see, Snake: you're a valuable friend! I was sick, and you delivered my medicine! If it weren't for your help, I wouldn't be cured. I wouldn't be awake. We wouldn't be enjoying this chat over tea. I can't thank you enough, Snake.

KOALA

And neither can I. You're a valuable friend, Snake. And we're glad that you became our friend.

SNAKE

(blushing)

Goodness makes me feel nice! I respect you.

GRANDFATHER

You respect me?

SNAKE

Yes. I respect you a lot.

GRANDFATHER

Thank you, Snake!

SNAKE

You're very welcome! I respect you because you've shown a lot of respect to me, even though I'm a cold-blooded snake.

GRANDFATHER

That is because everyone deserves respect.

SNAKE

Really?

GRANDFATHER

It's true. No matter where you've been, or what you've seen, you deserve respect.

SNAKE

That makes a lot of sense. I'll never be bad again.

Pause.

GRANDFATHER

Anyway, it's time for myself, yourself, and Snake's self, to take our walk to The Secret City!

KOALA

Oh boy!

SNAKE

Oh boy! Oh boy! Oh boy! I can't wait until we get home to The Secret City!

SNAKE, KOALA, and GRANDFATHER, stand up and do some stretches.

Meanwhile, still playing with toy cars in the sandbox are **GATOR, BOOMER, and FLYER.**

GATOR

This Secret City is very pleasant; it has many perks and amenities which we're fortunate to receive.

FLYER

Yeah, I'm happy here. What does the word "amenity" mean?

GATOR

I forgot. Get a dictionary. Wow, this place is nice.

FLYER

Yes. However, I can't stay here forever.

GATOR

Why not?

FLYER

Because, when I grow up, I want to be a person who helps sad people to become happy. There aren't any sad people in The Secret City, so I'll have to leave The Secret City in order

to make people happy.

GATOR

Okay. If you gotta go, you'll go. However, I gotta stay. This place is so relaxing!

BOOMER

Don't relax too much, or you'll get...large!

FLYER

I love hopping around, playing tag, jumping up and down, dancing, playing, pretending to run around in imaginary worlds, and being athletic by playing all sorts of sports!

GATOR

I'm getting tired just thinking about it!

They all laugh.

GATOR

This has potential.

FLYER

What kind of potential are you talking about, Gator?

GATOR

I'm suggesting that the very idea of such a Secret City, and the very fact that such a place could exist -- well, such an idea, and such a fact, suggest potential for a greater peace.

BOOMER

A greater peace?

GATOR

A greater peace throughout the world. Imagine if every animal, and every person, lived together in peace and perfect harmony, just like the way things are in The Secret City. I was bad. But I learned to be good. Do you know what that means? It means that the bad can learn to be good. And the good can learn to be even more good. Together, the good, and the "even more good," can live in peace.

Pause.

GATOR

I'm home. Home, sweet home! I don't miss the old Gator Pit at all. That place truly was "the pits".

They all laugh.

Meanwhile, **KOALA**, **SNAKE**, and **GRANDFATHER**, quest back and forth upon the walk-way in front of the house.

SNAKE

I was an extraordinary scourge. I was guaranteed to scare everyone who crossed my path. I was reckless and bad-tempered. But now I'm better, because I'm a nice person.

GRANDFATHER

It's an unusual, special occasion, when a bad person becomes a good person.

Pause.

SNAKE

It's such a beautiful day!

KOALA

That it is, my friend. That it is.

SNAKE

Nothing to worry about. Not a problem in our world. Just a beautiful day!

GATOR, BOOMER, and FLYER, continue playing in the sandbox.

GATOR

We had such a nice day! I'm so happy!

FLYER

At school, we learned subtraction! It was fun!

BOOMER

I can't wait until I'm old enough to go to school.

FLYER

You ARE old enough.

BOOMER

Oh.

GATOR bares his teeth, and says...

GATOR

You'd better go to school, for your own good, my friend!

BOOMER

Good point.

KOALA, SNAKE, and GRANDFATHER, enter the sandbox.

GATOR

YAY! They're back!

BOOMER

Now we're all together, and happy, here in The Secret City!

For about fifteen seconds, they all jump up and down, and do happy dances!!!

Then they all laugh, and unfold a big banner that reads:
"PARTY!"

GRANDFATHER

Congratulations, Koala, Boomer, Flyer, Gator, and Snake.
You have all shown plenty of courage.

FLYER

Oh, it was nothing.

GRANDFATHER

On the contrary, Flyer. Your exhausting journey to this Secret City took a lot of courage. You all deserve to be very proud of yourselves after such an important accomplishment.

FLYER

Really?

GRANDFATHER

Yes. You have achieved a lot...Your most important achievement was befriending your natural enemies: Gator and Snake.

GATOR

Boomer, Flyer, and Koala, were so nice and completely friendly that we couldn't bring ourselves to pester the innocuous trio any more!

SNAKE

Ditto.

BOOMER

Gator and Snake had a lot of fight in them, until we showed them that it's not nice to fight!

GATOR

That's true.

SNAKE

Ditto.

GRANDFATHER

I'm sure you all learned a lot of very important lessons on your quest.

GATOR

I learned ten lessons: It's not good to stay up past your bed time. Revenge plots backfire. Think before you speak. Hard work is satisfying. Every crime has a punishment. Pride can be rude. The limits of your abilities are your strengths. Friendship is golden. Imagination is limitless. Trust is a virtue.

BOOMER

Wow! That's a lot of lessons! Now can you explain them to me?

GATOR

Boomer, you don't need me to explain those rules to you, because you're so nice and polite that your mind doesn't need to spend time learning the words to rules which your heart already knows to follow.

BOOMER

In other words, I know the rules already, whether I know it or not?

GATOR

Yes. You see, Boomer: you're already more nice and polite than I am. Therefore, it's not me who should explain things to

you. It's you who should explain things to me.

BOOMER

Wow! What sort of things should I explain to you?

GATOR

Just tell me what you think everyone should know.

BOOMER

Okay. This is what I think everyone should know: If every person, and every animal, in all of existence, on every possible world, work hard to achieve the lofty goals of being nice, good, polite, decent and generous, by obeying laws, forgiving, believing in peace and hospitality, and respecting each-other's rights by never hurting anyone, our lives would be perfect, because evil and fear would be conquered, and we'd thrive together as a team of trusting friends, without prejudice, in civilized, non-violent harmony, and things wouldn't be so koo koo!

GATOR

Boomer. Because you've just said the smartest thing I've ever heard, I hereby nominate you KING KANGAROO!

BOOMER

Me, the King?

SNAKE

Aye aye, captain kangaroo!

BOOMER

Cool! I've always wanted to be a King!

KOALA

Boomer -- you have spoken the words of a truly wonderful individual. And those words have taught me a lot. That's why you are our new King, your Royal Highness!

BOOMER

Yay!

KOALA

It is midnight. Marsupial Awareness Day begins!

They unfold the rest of the "PARTY" banner until it says:
"MARSUPIAL AWARENESS DAY PARTY!"

Everyone does a happy dance for about ten seconds, then sits down, laughing.

GATOR

I am now more aware of Marsupials.

SNAKE

Yup. Me too.

GATOR

I'm aware that Marsupials are animals with pouches, and the only continent where they can be found in the wild is Australia.

SNAKE

Happy Marsupial Awareness Day, kids!

GATOR

I'm happy that we all care for each-other. We're all together, because we're all the same here, with no fighting or blame here. From this point on, we are together and safe, sheltered from being alone.

SNAKE

Sitting here, and waiting for our happy future together, isolated from the evils of the world, is selfish. Pardon me for saying this, but perhaps we all should be ashamed of our selfishness.

BOOMER

What do you mean, Sir Snake?

SNAKE

Well Your Majesty, it dawns on me now, my liege, that today is our day for being happy, but many people in the world are sad. Only now do I realize that we should feel sad that other people in the world are sad. I don't believe that anybody deserves to be sad, and so we should try to do whatever we can do in order to maybe make the whole world as happy as we are here today.

BOOMER

That's true.

SNAKE

I know.

GRANDFATHER

How do you suppose we should go about making other people happy?

FLYER

I know how! We can make people happy by rescuing them from trouble!

GRANDFATHER

That's a very good idea, Flyer!

BOOMER

We'll save people by growing up to become honest hard workers! We'll work at jobs which make people happy! We'll be important people such as: doctors, firefighters, poets, police officers, bus drivers, fry cooks, mayors, screenwriters, telemarketers, actors, waiters, and delivery people!

GRANDFATHER

That sounds great, Boomer!

GATOR

If you ask me, it sounds a little Koo Koo, but it's pretty good for his first day as King Kangaroo! I think he deserves a round of applause!

Everyone claps their hands, while cheering things such as: "Congrats, Boomer!", and "Way to go, Boomer!", and "Hail King Boomer Forever", and "Boomer Kicks Butt", and "Whee!"

BOOMER

(blushing)

Thanks!

GRANDFATHER

Speaking of thanks, we should all give thanks for being here, with each-other, in this wonderful place. What else do we all have to be thankful for?

GATOR

I'm thankful for learning that it's good to be good.

SNAKE

Me too. I'm thankful that I met nice friends who taught me how to be nice.

BOOMER

I'm thankful for happy times without conflict.

FLYER

Yeah. Complete lack of conflict is a very interesting thing! I love it! Actually, to tell you the truth, I'm bored of it already.

GATOR

I'm glad somebody said it, because conflicts keep things interesting. However, a conflict is not necessarily a fight; instead, a conflict is any task you tackle, any goal you set. Fighting to achieve a goal is a good thing, because that kind of fight is not against another person, and thus it doesn't hurt anyone; instead, it's against a challenge, which can be anything from learning to spell, to rescuing someone from a

burning building.

GRANDFATHER

Good point. The world is full of goals achieved by rewarding tasks. Living in the world is a rewarding challenge, a conflict which everyone must tackle. Life is a fight best won with a simple smile.

BOOMER

Hey kids! Smile at us! Your smiles will make everyone happy!

After a short pause, everyone smiles, and chants: "We're all winners! We're all winners! We're all winners!"

Then everyone laughs.

BOOMER

Thank you, kids! Thank you for supporting us on our quest to The Secret City!

FLYER

That's right, kids! Without your help along the way, we would never have made it to this wonderful party!

GATOR

Likewise.

SNAKE

Ditto.

GRANDFATHER

I have some things which I'd like to say to the kids.

BOOMER

Okay.

GRANDFATHER

Hey kids! Hold your head up high, and be happy! Smile every day! Help people who ask for help!

SNAKE

Tell the truth!

FLYER

Cleanliness is godliness, but being just a little messy isn't so bad; it can actually be good for your immune system in the long run. Just don't be too messy. And until you get married and move out of your parents' place, your parents get to determine how messy is too messy.

GATOR

Play every day, but also help out around the house.

GRANDFATHER

If you want to get good at something, practice every day without neglect.

GATOR

And a wise philosopher named Plato once said, “We ought to esteem it of the greatest importance that the fictions which children first hear should be adapted in the most perfect manner to the promotion of virtue.”

KOALA

This is getting too preachy. Let's pig-out on pizza from The Pizza Tree!

Everyone stuffs their faces with pizza, for about fifteen seconds, then laughs.

KOALA

Now let's burn off this energy, and develop muscles, by running around and playing fun and happy games!

Everyone runs around, jumping, skipping, dancing, and playing, as the lights slowly FADE OUT.

THE END