

The Pond

"Frank Goes Swimming"

Written
by
Andy Wallace

Final Draft
June 4, 2007

Copyright © 2007 Andy Wallace
All right reserved.

Cast List

Good Guys:

1. Frank-frog
2. Ollie-dragonfly (1 line)
3. Goldie-veil tail goldfish
4. Bob-mutant frog
5. Felicia-female frog

Bad Guys:

6. Mortimer-praying mantis
7. Al-alligator

Supporting Cast (in order of appearance):

pond critters in lecture hall (1 line)
 pond guard fly by
 plastic alligator
 Shelia-frogess with bad eyesight (1 line)
 Edwena-frogess after money (2 lines)
 Old Possum
 Glow-Bug
 ugly frogess
 Ginger-frogess with "frog" in her throat (3 lines)
 tiny frog
 younger pond critters from outer bank (laughing)
 Moe-Frank's Dad (1 line)
 Old alligator
 various glow bugs
 female balloon dragonfly
 pond critters on path to sacred grotto (laughing)
 koi guard
 Anient Ones (Old Koi)
 Clair-field mouse
 Human
 Herons
 Captain of the Pond Guard-blue/green dragonfly (2 lines)
 pond critters of all ages at festival (2 lines)

"Frank Goes Swimming"

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

WIDE ANGLE AERIAL VIEW

POND-5 YEARS AGO-DAY

The pond with a central island; shaded by the overhanging foliage of a Weeping Willow. PUSH IN on a rather large lily pad at the edge of the island and CUT TO...

FRANK'S LILY PAD-5 YEARS AGO-DAY

FRANK, a simple green and black spotted college pond frog, wearing sunglasses and a t-shirt that says "I break for Bugs!"; is holding a string in his right hand attached to OLLIE, a purple and yellow dragonfly and a spray bottle of water that he mists himself with as needed in his left hand.

FRANK

Circle...Figure-8...Diamond cutback...

Ollie performs the various flight patterns as Frank calls them out. (Note: Ollie is on string and must not get tangled; patterns are performed on horizontal plane.)

WIDER ANGLE

GOLDIE, a beautiful orange and white veil tailed goldfish, is watching from the water. Ollie completes the patterns and hovers in place breathing harder and sweating.

GOLDIE (V.O.)

Excellent form & speed! Great job, Ollie!
You have trained him well, Frank.

Ollie smiles and shakes off the sweat, a few drops hit Frank in the process. Frank eyeballs the drops and is reminded to mist himself with the spray bottle.

FRANK

Goldie is right, Ollie, you are doing really well. I bet you will make the best Pond Guard flyer yet!

Ollie beams with pride and does a quick Diamond cutback.

CAMERA PANS UP to the nearby overhanging branches of the Weeping Willow.

PUSH IN to reveal the camouflaged MORTIMER, a green and brown praying mantis that is hanging upside down in attack formation.

ANGLE CAMERA to Mortimer's POV watching Ollie intently.

FRANK

Wait till you see his latest dive maneuver; We call it: "the Roll-Over". Go ahead Ollie, show her.

CUT TO Ollie nodding in agreement and starting the maneuver. Ollie starts with a horizontal circling motion.

WIDER TO INCLUDE FRANK & GOLDIE watching intently.

Ollie progressively circles higher, CUT TO...

Mortimer's eyes circling along with Ollie, CUT TO...

Ollie is eye level with Mortimer, realizing what he is looking at, his eyes bulge. CUT TO...

Frank and Goldie are watching Ollie. CUT TO...

CLOSE UP movement is seen from Weeping Willow. Mortimer is discovered.

GOLDIE

Watch out!

CLOSE IN on Frank jumping away from the overhanging branches dragging Ollie with him. Frank jumps twice and then O.S... CUT TO...

CLOSE IN on Ollie's face.

OLLIE

(screaming)

CUT TO...Mortimer is extended with attack arms outstretched and empty except for a small fragment. CUT TO...

Goldie squirts water in a stream toward Mortimer. CUT TO...

Mortimer's POV. Stream of water is heading his way.
DISSOLVE TO...

WIDER TO INCLUDE ALL

Mortimer is dripping water from the top of his head and his outstretched arms. Frank is holding Ollie close and calming him.

GOLDIE

Praying on the lesser challenges again,
Mortimer? No wonder you are so skinny!
Leave Ollie alone and go pick on someone
your own size, now Shoo!

Goldie hits the surface of the pond with one of her fins sending water in Mortimer's general direction. CUT TO...

CLOSE IN on Mortimer's dripping scowling face.

WIDER as Mortimer pulls in his arms and slinks upward into the tree. The small fragment drifts down to the floor of the Lily pad like a feather. CUT TO...

CLOSE IN as Goldie frowns.

GOLDIE

How's Ollie?

CUT TO Frank examining Ollie's damaged wing. A tear rolls down his face as he describes the damage.

FRANK

He'll never be able to join the Pond Guard.

PUSH IN to Ollie closing his eyes and FADE TO...

FRANK'S LILY PAD-PRESENT-MORNING

WIDE ANGLE

Frank is standing in front of a podium lecturing to VARIOUS POND CRITTERS (other pond frogs, tree frogs, golden apple snail, mice, lizards, moles, turtles, possums, hummingbirds, and salamanders) that are seated or perched in the overhanging branches that make up the lecture hall half of his lily pad. Behind Frank is a blackboard with drawings of the life stages of a Dragonfly. Frank is wearing a tie and reading glasses and looks very much like the Professor of Entomology the placard in front of the podium proclaims him to be.

PUSH IN on Frank discussing why dragonflies are important to the safety of the pond.

FRANK

The Pond Guard is constantly searching the pond for signs of danger, they are our first defense against predators; If danger is spotted it is the responsibility of the fastest dragonfly to alert the Koi Warrior Guard.

Ending his last statement; Frank motions toward the sky. The pond critters look in the direction of his indication and CUT TO...

A group of 12 dragonflies approach overhead. The pond critters marvel at the grace and precision of the POND GUARD as they perform a Diamond Back flight pattern in unison.

VARIOUS POND CRITTERS

Oooh!, Aahh! (and applause)

CUT TO...Ollie entering the lecture hall wearing a pouch and holding a message in his hand, he is staring at the Pond Guard as he advances toward Frank. His eyes follow their circuitous route of the Figure-8 flight pattern they are performing and he runs into Frank in the process. Letters from his mail pouch fly out and get scattered across the podium area. Sighing with fatherly patience, Frank dismisses class while pulling the spray bottle out of his mouth and misting himself ...

FRANK

Class Dismissed.

Frank puts the spray bottle back in his mouth and starts helping to pick up the scattered messages. CUT TO...

Ollie is stuffing the last of the messages in his pouch; his broken wing can be seen clearly now that he is stationary and not flying.

PUSH IN on pouch to note that it says "Pond Post" and has several buttons of Evinrude pinned to it.

WIDER as Ollie singles out one message in particular and hands it to Frank who proceeds to read it. CUT TO...

Frank is writing a reply to the message; he folds it up and hands it back to Ollie. Ollie notes that the message address now reads: Uncle Bob and nods. DISSOLVE TO...

PATHWAY TO UNCLE BOB'S HOUSE-CONTINUOUS

Ollie is flying in a darting motion that mimics the Diamond Back maneuver over a pathway that cuts through tall green foliage. He passes an aged wooden arrow sign that has "BOB and four eyeballs" scratched into it. Up ahead on the path something sparkles with a blue light and attracts Ollie's attention. Instead of zooming right toward the sparkles, Ollie clutches his mail pouch and searches the surrounding foliage for anything out of the ordinary. His eyes pass over a leaf with a large dark spot that takes on the form of Mortimer in hiding. Ollie nods, picks up a rock and proceeds to zoom forward after the sparkling blue object, stopping just short of the kill zone; he tosses the rock toward the object. Mortimer attacks! but finds his arms are empty and from his POV, that he is staring at an upside down Ollie who sticks out his tongue,...

OLLIE

(sticking out tongue noises)

quickly grabs the blue object and continues on his upside down way.

Mortimer fumes with steam wrapping around his head and flowing off his chin. DISSOLVE TO...

FRANK'S LILY PAD-SUNSET

Frank and BOB, a slightly larger dark green and yellow-green spotted pond frog with 4 eyes, are sitting on the outward edge of the lily pad, silhouette by the setting sun.

PUSH IN on Bob, smoking a pipe and blowing smoke rings of various geometric shapes; his eyes are moving independently and following the smoke rings in different directions. Frank is watching the water and nervously misting himself, he accidentally over sprays and gets water on one of the roving eyeballs. This eyeball blinks several times and gives Frank a dirty look. Frank plays it off looking toward the sky and whistling.

FRANK

(whistling)

BOB

May-Pole is approaching.

FRANK

I know...

Bob blows several heart shaped smoke rings into the air, Frank focuses on the hearts drifting toward the horizon...

BOB (V.O.)

You're not getting any younger and Ollie has been on his own for some time now, you need to think about starting a real family.

FRANK

I know...

BOB

Ever thought about that quick dating thing... The 60 second date? They have one going on tomorrow if your interested. It might give you an idea of who is available.

FRANK (V.O.)

(sighing) All right...I'll check it out.

Frank watches the last heart shaped smoke ring near the horizon. PUSH IN to reveal the heart framing the silhouette of an alligator, eyes glinting red in the setting sun. WIDEN TO Frank jumping back away from the edge of the lily pad, fear on his face. FADE TO..

SHADED HOLLOW NEAR BASE OF WILLOW TREE-MID-MORNING

The shaded hollow has dappled light filtering through the overhanging willow branches. Mushroom tables are set around the hollow in restaurant fashion with a very large overly decorated, rotating face, "love" clock standing in the center.

Frank, with Ollie hovering close-by for moral support, is sitting at a table near the back of the hollow. PUSH IN on Frank misting himself and adjusting his tie with Ollie's guidance as SHELIA, a very skinny yellow-green frogess sits down across from him. Frank eyes the overly large glasses that make Shelia's eyes appear as big as Ollie's and looks toward Ollie with a quizzical look. Ollie shrugs in response.

Shelia's POV. Blurry shapes are seen in the likeness of Frank and Ollie. Ollie's eyes stand out and Shelia focuses her attention in that direction, introducing herself to Ollie with an out-stretched hand.

SHELIA

Hi, I'm Shelia.

Ollie looks at Frank with a quizzical look and Frank shrugs in response. Ollie nods and shakes Shelia's hand. Shelia continues speaking to Ollie as he nods in response to various statements.

SHELIA (V.O.)

...I'm a vegetarian...like to practice
synchronized swimming...dragonflies scare
me...damn Pond Guard and their "fly-bys"...

Ollie's complacent nods turn to wide-eyed amazement and he looks over at Frank and shakes his head "NO!" Frank sighs and stares at the ticking second hand of the "love" clock as the 60 second bell rings. CUT TO..

EDWENA, a very clean looking greenish-white frogess, sits down and tells Ollie to bring her a drink and shoos him away.

EDWENA

Get me a dry martini with three flies
and make sure they're fresh, I want to
see them wiggling...what are you waiting
for? I haven't got all day!...

Ollie backs away from the table giving Frank the "who does she think she is?" motion as he flies over an elderly POSSUM who is sticking his dentures in a glass of water. Edwena introduces herself to Frank but doesn't give him time to join the conversation. Frank's initial smile turns into a frown as Edwena gets into her monologue.

EDWENA

It is so hard to get good service
nowadays. I am Edwena Victoria Ewing,
thrice divorced and twice widowed...You
are? Oh, never mind, it doesn't really
matter, what matters is how much money
do you make a year? A girl has to look
her best, you know? Now, where is
that waiter?

Frank glances around for Ollie and finds him peeking out from behind the "love" clock flashing a glow bug at him in warning and violently shaking his head "NO!" The bell rings and Edwena looks around for her waiter...and spies Ollie near the "love" clock.

EDWENA

Where is my drink?

Ollie quickly drops the glow bug which flies away and sticks his nose up in the air in defiance, as he flies to Frank's side he veers over the old possum's table again. Frank dismisses Edwena using the fakest smile possible (with teeth)...

FRANK

Good-by... I hope you find a waiter...

Edwena narrows her eyebrows, frowns, and storms off.

FRANK AND OLLIE

(laughter)

Ollie sticks his tongue out at her back and Frank pulls out the dentures, handing them off to Ollie who flies off. Frank slumps down into his chair in relief. He pulls out his spray bottle and his misting himself with his eyes closed not noticing the THIRD FROGESS is already seated across from him (her back is toward the viewer and she is silhouetted with lots of warts). She has been waiting quietly. Frank opens his eyes and quickly shuts them again in disgust as Ollie returns, sees her, loses his color and faints. The bell rings and CUT TO...

Frank opens his eyes again and this time GINGER, a beautiful lime green frogess sits down and looks lovingly into Frank's eyes. Frank rubs his eyes for clarity, smiles, and nudges Ollie into consciousness. Ollie comes to and proceeds to bulge his eyes, drop his jaw and drool. Frank closes his jaw and wipes the drool away, Ollie smiles as they both look toward the beautiful frog. Frank introduces himself and Ollie.

FRANK

I am Ollie and this is Frank...no, I mean
I am Frank and this is Ollie.

Ginger nods in acknowledgement and smiles. Frank mists himself again; he over sprays and is getting Ollie wet. Ollie doesn't even notice that he is slowly sinking toward Frank due to the wet wing. Ginger then introduces herself in a deep manly voice.

GINGER

My name is Ginger.

Frank and Ollie both drop their jaws, quickly close them, stare at each other, and then stare toward the exit. Ginger follows their direction and looks toward the exit.

GINGER

Is something ...? (clears her throat)

Ginger coughs up something into the palm of her hand and places a very cute but TINY FROG on the table in front of her.

GINGER

Is something wrong? (very sweet feminine voice)

She looks back to find only dust clouds where Frank and Ollie were sitting.

GINGER

I thought this professor would be different...

She shrugs, pets the tiny frog and waits for the bell.
DISSOLVE TO...

FRANK'S LILY PAD-MID AFTERNOON

Frank is at the podium shuffling his notes trying to make some order out of them and mask his frustration with the whole dating thing.

FRANK (V.O.)

"My name is Ginger"...

Frank shakes his head, finally getting his notes in order and looks up. Frank is surprised to see all new faces, YOUNG POND CRITTERS and not his usual students. As he pans his view of the students, his gaze stopping on the only adult among them; FELICIA, a very beautiful light green with yellow-green spots frogess and she is heading right for him. As Felicia approaches the podium, she introduces herself and explains why they (her and the students) are there.

FELICIA (V.O.)

I am so sorry for the surprise, I thought you knew. A frog named Bob told me about your lectures and said it wouldn't be a problem, that you enjoyed working with children. I hope it is still ok? Oh, I forgot...my name is Felicia and these are my students.

Frank's POV. Frank does not hear a word Felicia is saying because he is lost in a dreamy haze just looking at her. An awkward silence follows as Frank the haze from his head and realizes Felicia and the students are staring at him, waiting for him to do something. Frank plays this off with the introduction to his lecture.

FRANK

OK, well, the life cycle of the dragonfly is one of metamorphosis, there are steps in this evolution that can take years to... wait do you youngsters know what metamorphosis means?

The young pond critters shake their heads "NO" in unison.

FRANK

OH, well in that case let me back up a bit..

Felicia sits down in the branches with her students and watches Frank with rapt attention and a smile. FADE OUT..

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FRANK'S LILY PAD-CONTINUOUS

The lecture is over, Frank is sitting next to Felicia and they are staring into each others eyes. In the background, the students are having a recess and are using the branched seating area as a jungle gym. The scene is romantically hazy as bits of their conversation are heard above the din.

YOUNG POND CRITTERS (V.O.)
(laughing, screaming, school yard noises)

FRANK
... what is your favorite color?...

FELICIA
... blue, no red...

FRANK
... favorite food?...

FELICIA
... fried flies ...

FRANK
... where do you live?...

FELICIA
... the outer bank...

(SOUND EFFECT)
scratched record

Frank's POV. All activity (Felicia and students) freezes. Frank's vision dims as Felicia's last words echo through his brain.

FELICIA (echoic)
...the outer bank..., ...the outer bank...
Is something wrong? Are you ok? Frank?

YOUNG POND CRITTERS
(V.O. continues as background noise)
(laughing, screaming, school yard noises)

Time speeds back up as Felicia's words become clear. Frank recovers from his shock and says he is fine.

FRANK

OH! I'm OK, but I owe you an explanation...

Frank pulls out his spray bottle and mist himself, he sighs and proceeds to tell Felicia the truth. Felicia looks at the spray bottle with a raised eyebrow and leans back to listen. DISSOLVE TO FLASHBACK...

(black and white sepia toned footage) Frank and his dad, MOE, swimming laps together in between the lily pads. Suddenly Moe stops swimming and yells for Frank to get out of the water.

MOE (echoic)

Frank! Get out of the water!

Frank jumps for the nearest lily pad and turns around to witness alligator jaws surrounding and swallowing his father. Tears roll down his young face. DISSOLVE TO PRESENT...

A tear is rolling down Frank's face and he quickly mists himself to hide it. Felicia reaches out and holds his hand in sympathy for his loss as she looks into his eyes lovingly. Frank accepts her gesture and loses himself in her eyes. Staring at each other's eyes they soon realize that there is a strange silence surrounding them. Looking down they see that they are holding hands and quickly revert to a more professional stance; dropping hands and looking away as many giggles break the silence.

YOUNG POND CRITTERS

(giggles)

Frank and Felicia immediately blush causing even more giggles.

YOUNG POND CRITTERS

(louder and more giggles)

Felicia recovers first and starts directing her students toward the exit.

FELICIA

All right, everybody line up. Make sure you are holding your buddy's hands.

YOUNG POND CRITTERS

(giggles)

Students are lined up in pairs holding hands and making googly-eyes at each other. They are muffling their giggles with their free hands as they proceed through the exit.

FELICIA

OK, enough is enough; let's go.

Felicia is the last to leave and she turns and waves good-bye to Frank, telling him to keep in touch.

FELICIA

Write to me.

Frank nods his smiling head and waves as he watches her leave. DISSOLVE TO...

FRANK'S LILY PAD-SUNSET

Frank is looking out over the water toward the outer bank. He is inflating his mouth pouch and making frog noises.

FRANK

(croak, rib-bit, frog noises)

His mouth pouch turns pink as it expands and when it first collapses, the outline of the water bottle can be seen. As the sun dips below the horizon the glow bugs dot the landscape illuminating the approaching night. Frank sighs in contentment, pulls out a piece of paper and co-hearses a near-by glow bug to hang around for some spot illumination. He starts writing. "Dear Felicia..." can be seen over his shoulder on the parchment below. CUT TO...

Frank's hand is placing an envelope addressed to Felicia in the mail basket near the edge of the lily pad. The mail basket is small, but big enough to hold letters and is made from woven blades of grass; Pond Post is marked on the side with a crude drawing of a dragonfly. DISSOLVE TO...

-TWO DAYS LATER-MORNING

There is a letter in the mail basket. Frank does not recognize the handwriting and excitedly rips open the letter, breathes in a deep whiff of what must be Felicia's perfume and smiles. Over his shoulder can be read " My dearest Frank...Thinking of you, Felicia". CUT TO...

Frank putting a letter in the mail basket addressed to Felicia. DISSOLVE TO...

-TWO DAYS LATER-MORNING

The mail basket is empty. Frank sighs and looks around for any sign of Ollie. Disappointed, he sighs again. DISSOLVE TO...

-TWO DAYS LATER-MORNING

There is a letter in the mail basket. Frank's frown turns upside down and he joyfully opens the letter. It reads: "Dear Frank...Later, Felicia". CUT TO...

Frank putting a letter in the mail basket addressed to Felicia. DISSOLVE TO...

-EIGHT DAYS LATER-MORNING

The mail basket is empty. Frank is sitting next to it in a makeshift rock-branch-chair thingy, looking pretty rough. He has not shaved; his eyes are blood-shot and have dark circles underneath them. There is sleep drool all down his chin and food remains cover his wrinkled tie (small fly wings and legs). His skin looks dry and the empty water bottle is seen lying amongst glasses and plates littering the floor nearby. Looking at the empty basket, Frank lets out a big sigh; drops his shoulder in despair and slumps back in his chair frowning.

Frank hears Ollie approaching and straightens up, knocking some of the dried food off his tie in an effort to look presentable.

Ollie surveys the scene in amazement, shaking his head as he pulls out a letter from his pouch.

Frank is watching Ollie intently and is trembling over seeing the letter with Felicia's handwriting on it. Frank is so excited that he breaks his chair and stumbles trying to stand up. Ollie waits for him to regain his footing and hands him the letter.

Frank quickly rips the letter open and smells the paper; he doesn't smell anything and turns the paper over, still no scent. He lowers his eyes and his disappointment, trying to hide them from Ollie behind the letter.

Ollie shakes his head and watches patiently as Frank starts reading the letter; Frank's smile quickly turns south and he rolls over in a faint losing control of the letter. PUSH IN on the letter floating down beside Frank, landing next to the empty water bottle; it reads: "Dear Fred..."
FADE TO...

FRANK'S LILY PAD-CONTINUOUS

FRANK'S POV. Darkness turns to fuzzy light as Frank opens his eyes to a dousing of water; blinking, his vision clears and he sees Ollie spraying him down with water. Raising his hands to block the water, Frank calls for Ollie to stop.

FRANK

..Ollie...Ollie...I'm awake.

Hearing Frank's calls, Ollie wipes his brow in relief and sets down the water bottle.

Standing up, Frank surveys the mess he has made and assures Ollie he is fine.

FRANK

Thanks for looking after me...and the bath, I feel much better now.

Frank then asks Ollie to go to the Sacred Grotto and summon the Oracle.

FRANK

Could you go to the grotto for me and summon the Oracle.

Ollie nods and assured by Frank's smile, flies o.s.

Calmly, Frank picks up the letter and the water bottle. Putting both items in his mouth, he views his reflection in the water and takes off his dirty tie. CUT TO...

PATHWAY TO SACRED GROTTTO-CONTINUOUS

Ollie is flying straight over a pathway that cuts through tall green foliage. He passes a carved stone with a flower growing up through the center that has a fish etched into it, the head pointing in the forward direction; an attractive looking FEMALE DRAGONFLY is hovering near the stone. Just passed the stone, Ollie realizes that he really did see an attractive female dragonfly and he throws on the breaks. Turning around and actually seeing the female dragonfly, Ollie drops his jaw at the metallic red beauty. Her wings are such a rich smoke black that they look opaque, her large doe-eyes are a vivid emerald green. Transfixed, Ollie whistles and floats toward her.

OLLIE

(wolf whistle)

Approaching the female dragonfly, Ollie realizes that he is only hearing one set of wings. He stops and looks closer, noting that the metallic beauty is swaying back and forth but the wings are not moving: a balloon. Ollie instantly darts forward using his mail pouch to shove the balloon aside, narrowly escaping Mortimer's attack and freeing the balloon of its mooring.

The balloon whizzes about losing air contents, while Mortimer is left staring at his empty arms. Hearing laughter near-by, he looks through his arms at several pond critters that have been coming down the path, witness to the whole affair.

POND CRITTERS

(laughter)

Mortimer scowls and looks around for signs of Ollie as the deflated remains of the balloon float gently down upon his head.

POND CRITTERS

(more louder, snorting, laughter)

Watching from a safe distance, Ollie smiles and flies o.s.

Turning red, and steaming, Mortimer is furious at his failure to capture Ollie and vows his revenge.

MORTIMER

I'll get you yet, you...you...disfigured
reject!

Swiping the balloon from his head, Mortimer throws it to the ground, opens his wings and flies off; the balloon caught on his leg, trailing after.

POND CRITTERS

(more laughter)

DISSOLVE TO...

SACRED GROTTO-CONTINUOUS

Goldie and Ollie are waiting patiently near the Alter of the Oracle as Frank enters the Sacred Grotto. Frank is carrying a flower seed and carefully makes his way along the small path that cuts through the abundant flowers and circles round the pool to the Alter of the Oracle. Placing the seed on the dais amongst the other offerings, Frank speaks the words of truth.

FRANK

All are One.

GOLDIE

All are One, my friend. How can I
help you?

FRANK

How can I win back Felicia's heart?

GOLDIE

You must meet with her and tell her
how you feel.

FRANK

But she lives on the outer bank.

GOLDIE

Then you must go to her.

FRANK (softer)

(gulping first) Thank you for your
guidance. All are One.

Frank drops his shoulder and turns to leave the Sacred Grotto.

GOLDIE

Stop!

Frank turns back around to find Ollie and Goldie staring at him, and smiling.

GOLDIE

We're not gonna let you have all
the fun; we're gonna help ya get there.

Frank looks to Ollie, who nods. Smiling, Frank looks back to Goldie who chucks his flower seed back at him.

GOLDIE

Silly frog...

Frank catches the seed and DISSOLVE TO...

SWAMP BEYOND THE OUTER BANK-MEANWHILE

Trying to undo the knots of string from around his leg, Mortimer is sulking on the above ground roots of an old cypress tree and letting out an occasional curse on Ollie.

MORTIMER

...damn dragonfly...

The balloon dangles in the air below. Untying the last knot, Mortimer grabs the balloon and tosses it to the wind which throws it right back in his face.

AL

(laughter)

Grabbing the balloon from his face, Mortimer searches for the source of the laughter and freezes immediately on

locating the source: AL, an alligator about 3 feet long. The balloon dangling in his hand becomes the only movement.

AL

(deeper laughter), Relax...You're not worth it, Toothpick.

Relaxing his pose, Mortimer takes a deep breath and loosing his grip, lets the balloon drift down into the mud below. Looking over at Al, Mortimer explains the balloon.

MORTIMER

Don't ask, and don't call me "Toothpick".

Shrugging as only an alligator can, Al tries to find out more about Mortimer.

AL

Like my pa used to always say: If the shoe fits, wear it. You're not from 'round here are ya, Toothpick?

Rolling his eyes, Mortimer describes the pond.

MORTIMER

No, I grew up toward the south of here where the big pond lies, you know the one with the island in the middle, that has a big weeping willow tree growing out of it?

AL

Never heard of it, is there any food in this there pond?

Mortimer starts to say "No", but then remembers about his revenge. Rubbing his hands together in a scheming motion and grinning, he tells Al about the food.

MORTIMER

N...Oh yeah! There are dumb fat frogs and great big lazy goldfish; more than enough to fill your belly and easy to catch to boot. Let me draw you a map.

Jumping from his perch on the root down to a rock in the mud, Mortimer grabs a stick and starts drawing a map in the

mud. His grin gets bigger with each line drawn. DISSOLVE TO...

FRANK'S LILY PAD-MID-DAY

Small grey clouds are reflecting in the surface of the pond, Frank stares at them from the edge of the lily pad as a light breeze ripples the water making the cloud reflections appear abstract and broken. Setting his water bottle down behind him and putting on his goggles, Frank looks to Ollie who nods. Frank then looks to Goldie who nods. Frank pulls out his water bottle and sets it down on the lily pad; he swallows hard and makes one last adjustment to his goggles before diving in. CUT TO...

UNDERWATER-CONTINUOUS

Swimming awkwardly at first, Frank quickly remembers how to swim and getting into a good stride, he glances back toward the lily pad to see Goldie waving him on.

GOLDIE

(underwater garbled) Good luck Frank,
we'll be watching out for you!

CUT TO...

OPEN WATER-CONTINUOUS

Frank is reaching the middle of the pond ("middle of nowhere" buoy, the word POND scrawled into a rotating arrow sign) and can no longer see land in any direction. The water is getting rougher, the grey clouds are getting bigger, and the light breeze is getting stronger.

Through the waves Frank glimpses a brownish shape on the horizon. Keeping an eye on this shape he starts to swim faster, but he notices the shape is getting bigger and closer.

Taking a leap into the air, Frank can see that the brown shape is indeed AN ALLIGATOR and it is getting much closer.

Back in the water, the alligator is so close that Frank can see the brown and green coloring on its scales. Leaping for his life, Frank soars high in the air as the alligator attacks his former position. Time has slowed down for Frank, who is looking down on the alligator as it rushes up to meet him. He lands on the head of the alligator, right between the eyes with a hollow resounding, thud.

AN ALLIGATOR

thud.

FRANK

thud?

With a confused look on his face he smacks his foot against the alligator and gets the same hollow sound.

AN ALLIGATOR

thud.

Hopping over towards the eye,

AN ALLIGATOR

thud, thud, thud.

Frank peers into the empty glass ball seeing only his reflection. Dumbfounded, he jumps back to the top of head

AN ALLIGATOR

thud, thud.

and does a 360, checking out the alligator from its plastic head to its plastic toe. Shrugging and making a quick check on the horizon, Frank sees that the storm is really starting to build and he doesn't have much time. He sees that there is nothing else in the water and that he is closer to the outer bank than he thought. Frank readjusts his goggles, makes a note to speak to Goldie about the plastic alligator

FRANK

Goldie has some explaining to do...

and dives back in. CUT TO..

CLASSROOM ON THE OUTER BANK-AFTERNOON

Felicia is stacking a bunch of puff balls in the shape of a cloud on her podium and teaching her students about thunderstorms in a small depression set back in the bank under a tree root. Her students are making their own puff ball clouds, listening intently and keeping an eye on the gathering clouds.

FELICIA

...and as the clouds build, what do you think makes thunder?

Frank's head rises out of the water, sees Felicia, and in one smooth jumping motion lands at the edge of the classroom. The students and Felicia jump (literally) in surprise, puff balls fly. Recognizing Frank, Felicia smiles to see him.

Frank walks over to Felicia, and asks her to marry him.

FRANK

Felicia, I love you. Will you marry me?

The students are staring, mouths open in disbelief as Felicia accepts.

FELICIA

Yes, Frank, I love you too.

Felicia proceeds to give Frank a big kiss that makes him blush bright pink. The students remark and throw their puff balls at the couple as they giggle.

YOUNG POND CRITTERS

Oooh! (with giggles)

Brushing stray puff balls from Frank's head, Felicia tells Frank she will meet him on May-Pole night and that he should hurry back across the pond to stay ahead of the approaching storm.

FELICIA

I need some time to get things packed and moved; I will meet you on May-Pole night so we can be married during the festival. Be careful heading back across the pond, the storm is heating up.

Kissing him once more and sending him on his way, Felicia waves good-by to Frank. The students also wave good-by and let loose with a few stray puff balls in Frank's general direction.

YOUNG POND CRITTERS

(giggles)

Frank heads back toward the water with a big goofy smile on his face and a tiny puff ball hat on his head. Four eyes follow him into the water, blink (one eye lags in the blink), and disappear under water. DISSOLVE TO...

OUTER BANK ON OPPOSITE SIDE FROM FRANK-MEANWHILE

Al has found the pond; a flash of lighting reveals him slipping into the water, a malicious toothy grin on his face. FADE TO...

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

OPEN WATER-CONTINUOUS

Frank is swimming along keeping a steady pace and still wearing a goofy grin. He has already passed the half-way point ("middle of nowhere" buoy) towards the island and is keeping an eye on the storm. He can see the plastic alligator bobbing along the choppy waters, but he pays it no mind and keeps swimming. Frank notices that he can barely make out the island when a very loud crack of thunder explodes over head causing him to leap into the air in fright. From the height of his jump a flash of lightning illuminates the pond and reveals that there are now two alligators, the larger one heading his way. A look of horror crosses Frank's face and CUT TO..

FRANK'S LILY PAD-MEANWHILE

Ollie and Goldie are still on lookout duty, they are patiently waiting for Frank to return. Thunder cracks as Goldie starts tracking the storm.

GOLDIE

One, one thousand, Two, one thous..

Ollie is practicing the Roll-Over flight pattern. He is in the middle of the high upside down flip when a flash of lightning illuminates the pond.

GOLDIE

It's getting closer.

Ollie sees movement over the water and his eyes go wide when he realizes that he is seeing Frank falling toward the surface of the pond and two alligators, one of which is heading toward Frank. He quickly informs Goldie of the second alligator using hand signals of two jaws clamping together and holding up two fingers while he zips back in forth in a Diamond-Back pattern repeating the hand signals.

GOLDIE

What? Slow down, stop zigzagging..
two alligators?!!!

Ollie nods and hold up two fingers again. Goldie's eyes go big.

GOLDIE
QUICK! Go sound the alarm!

Ollie flies o.s, while Goldie dives underwater and CUT TO...

OPEN WATER-CONTINUOUS

Frank is treading water in a state of panic, his eyes are large as he watches Al approach through the first drops of rain. He is mumbling repeatedly and shaking his head.

FRANK
...two alligators...Felicia...two alligators...
dad...belly of gator...waist of my time...
waste of my life!

Frank has replaced his panic with resolve, time has slowed down. Lightning flashes to reveal open jaws heading his way, he closes his eyes and exhales.

FRANK (V.O.)
(exhaling)

CUT TO...

UNDERWATER-MEANWHILE

Lightning silhouette Frank and Al in attacking form; Goldie swims with all her might and comes up under Frank, propelling him through the air in front of her. The sound of teeth snapping together

AL
(clanging of teeth clamping together)

causes Frank to open his eyes and realize he is flying through the air.

FRANK
Aaahhh!

Looking around Frank sees Goldie behind him with a look of pain on her face and behind her the tail end of the Al plunging below the surface of the pond. Thunder cracks as they fall toward the water, rain can be seen dotting the surface. Goldie yells for Frank to take a deep breath and grab hold of her dorsal fin.

GOLDIE

Prepare to dive and grab hold tight!

They cut through the surface of the water as Frank grabs hold of Goldie's dorsal fin, Al can be seen coming up from the depths below. Goldie immediately banks away from Al; and passing a stone marker(a large "1" shaped stone with flowering, petite Anubias plants dotting the surface and a fish carving point the way)head toward the entrance of the Sacred Grotto. Lightning illuminates their path in and out of various plants, tree roots, and human garbage. Al follows closely behind creating a wake of destruction behind him. Frank watches him narrow the gap and tugs harder on Goldie's fin to let her know of the impending doom. Goldie looks behind her to judge Al's distance, looks ahead to the hole in the rock face with a fish carved above it and yells to Frank...

GOLDIE

(underwater garbled)Hold on!

She makes a final push for the entrance to the Sacred Grotto and they slip safely inside. Al slams into the surrounding rock as lightning and thunder echo his attack. Al continues to attack the entrance way in a futile attempt to capture his prey, he does not see the very large KOI that have begun to surround him. CUT TO...

SACRED GROTTTO-CONTINUOUS

Frank and Goldie clear the surface of the pool; Frank takes a deep breath of fresh air and jumps toward the dais. He lands awkwardly and scatters all the flower seeds. The rain is falling steadily making the surrounding flowers droop. Goldie swims over to the dais and rests her head against it. She asks Frank if he is ok.

GOLDIE

Are you OK?

Frank replies that he is ok...

FRANK

I am fine...

and kicking a near-by flower seed, adds...

FRANK

Thanks for helping me escape the
"real" alligator.

Frank looks directly at Goldie who acknowledges his
accusation with a nod.

GOLDIE

I understand you are upset, but I could
not tell you.

DISSOLVE TO...

SACRED GROTTO IN THE PAST-SUNSET

GOLDIE (V.O.)

I took an oath as Oracle
in Training to never reveal the truth
about the plastic alligator.

Goldie is facing the ANCIENT ONES, two very old looking
KOI, floating in the water in front of the Alter of the
Oracle. CLAIR, a small field mouse, sits near the dais
holding a small goblet. Goldie places her right fin over
her heart and...

DISSOLVE BACK TO...

SACRED GROTTO-CURRENT DAY/TIME

GOLDIE

Can you forgive me?

Frank looks down at his feet and up again meeting Goldie's
eyes; an apologetic smile on his face.

FRANK

I guess so, but why is it in the pond
in the first place?

Goldie laughs and explains about the humans. DISSOLVE TO..

VIEW OF POND AND ISLAND IN PAST- DAY

GOLDIE (V.O.)

The HUMANS noticed that the HERON kept
eating all the Koi from the pond..

Silhouette of human, watching Heron scoop up Koi in their
beaks.

GOLDIE (V.O.)

...but that they stopped when an ALLIGATOR
came into the pond.

Hérons are standing on the edge of the pond, squawking and
flapping their wings as an alligator swims toward them.

GOLDIE (V.O.)

So they removed the real alligator and
replaced it with a plastic one.

A silhouette alligator struggles in a net held by a human
and cut to..

Human placing plastic alligator in pond, pushing it under
and watching it pop back up on the surface and cut to..

GOLDIE (V.O.)

The plastic one worked just as well at
keeping the Herons away but was also
safer to all the pond critters.

Heron stand on the edge of the pond; squawking and flying
away at the sight of the plastic alligator.

DISSOLVE BACK TO..

SACRED GROTTO-CURRENT DAY/TIME

Frank hops over to Goldie and gives her a big hug, thanking her for the explanation..

FRANK

Thanks Goldie, I understand now. You have helped me in more ways than one, but you know that don't you?

Goldie tries to smile in reply, but grimaces instead in pain. Frank looks through the water and can see blood coming from rips in her tail.

FRANK

Oh! Goldie you're hurt!

Frank quickly looks around the Sacred Grotto and finds it empty.

FRANK

Help! Somebody, anybody, Help! Help!

Goldie splashes water on Frank and tells him to stop yelling..

GOLDIE

Frank! Calm down! Stop yelling!

Frank looks at Goldie with a puzzled look on his face. Goldie answers his look with her reply that she will be fine and her tail will grow back...

GOLDIE

Frank, I am ok. It doesn't hurt that bad when I don't move. I promise you, everything will be fine and my tail will grow back.

Frank glances at her tail and sees that she is right, the bleeding has already stopped. He apologizes

FRANK

I'm sorry, I forgot.

and starts picking up the scattered seeds and placing them back in a pile on the dais. Goldie helps by chucking

floating seeds in the pool his way. The rain is letting up and sunshine is starting to break through the clouds. Frank has gotten most of the seeds back on the dais when Goldie breaks the silence and asks about Felicia.

GOLDIE

So, did you find Felicia?

At the sound of her name Frank jumps and scatters the seeds again. He turns to Goldie and smiles. FADE TO...
MAY-POLE FESTIVAL GROUNDS-NIGHT WITH FULL MOON

The festival grounds are alive with consenting glow-bug lanterns placed along wires strung in between poles; small clusters of glowing mushrooms provide the rock tables with illumination, and the full moon overhead completes the scene and bathes it in a magical bluish glow. Surrounding crowded dance floor in the center are several occupied rock tables and a small raised platform for where the band is performing a lively tune.

The band brings the song to an end as the CAPTAIN of the Pond Guard flies forward and waits as Ollie approaches the platform and stops just in front of the Captain, hovering at attention. The Captain thanks Ollie for his courage and stealth at raising the Koi guard in a time of need.

CAPTAIN

On behalf of the Pond Guard and the entire Pond, I thank you, Ollie Dragonfly for your courage and speed in the face of danger. Job, well done.

The watching crowd applauds and hoots.

CROWD OF POND CRITTER

(clapping)Whoo-Hoo! Yeah!

The Captain salutes Ollie and makes him a bona-fide member of the Pond Guard.

CAPTAIN (V.O.)

I would like to welcome you as an official soldier of the Pond Guard and present you with these stripes of color.

The Captain removes Ollie's mail pouch, placing it on the platform, and paints on the official Pond Guard Racing Stripes (pin striping with swirlies). The crowd cheers.

CROWD OF POND CRITTER
(clapping)Whoo-Hoo! Yeah!

Frank sheds a tear and nudges Bob with his elbow. Bob smiles and nods in agreement. DISSOLVE TO...

SWAMP BEYOND OUTER BANK-MEANWHILE

The reflection of the full moon shimmering on the surface of stagnant water is broken by the foot of Al stomping his way through the undergrowth. Large whelps that resemble the shape of fish tails cover his body. Small glowing dots catch his eye as calls for help sounds from that direction.

MORTIMER
Help! Is there anybody out there?

Al makes his way toward the voice and finds Mortimer caught in a spider's web, struggling to free himself.

AL
If it isn't Toothpick; caught in a web,
I see. Sweet irony.

Still struggling, Mortimer pleads with Al to help him. Al has taken this moment of rest to start picking fish scale out of his hide while he listens to Mortimer's pleas.

MORTIMER
Please Al, help me out of this mess.
I did help you to a good meal, did I not?

Al snorts at the "good meal" comment and flicks a fish scale into the night.

AL
Help, you call that help? I got my ass
kicked by a bunch of stinking fish! Can't
you see the whelps all over my body? You
set me up...You could have warned me about
the Koi.

Mortimer realizes that he may be worse off than he thought and struggles even harder as he pleads again to Al.

MORTIMER

Oh come on, ya got away just fine.
Help me out now and I'll let ya call
me "Toothpick" as much as ya like?

Al shakes his head and starts to walk away. Mortimer yells after him.

MORTIMER

Al? You gotta help me! Al!

Al turns his head and takes one last look at the struggling Mortimer.

AL

Help you?...Help your-self.

Al flicks a fish scale at Mortimer, and keeps walking. Mortimer catches the fish scale and DISSOLVE TO..

MAY-POLE FESTIVAL GROUNDS-NIGHT WITH FULL MOON

Goldie is watching the festival from the water's edge and admiring Ollie's new stripes.

GOLDIE

Wow! Those look really good on you,
kinda like you were born to wear them.
Congratulations!

Ollie beams with pride as he nods and shifts his body from side to side so Goldie can see both sides.

WIDEN to include festival grounds and platform, Goldie and Ollie become silhouettes as they look toward Felicia approaching the platform.

PUSH IN to show Bob watching from the side of the platform. Bob winks with all four eyes (one of which lags a bit) toward Goldie. Goldie nods and smiles as Bob mists his eyeballs with Frank's water bottle, the odd eyeball glares and looks toward the platform.

Frank and Felicia are holding hands and staring into each others eyes as they say their wedding vows.

FRANK & FELICIA (in unison)
I do.

Bob smiles really big and all four eyes shed a tear (one of them lagging behind).

PUSH IN as Frank kisses Felicia, Ollie places a heart shape flower chain around them and fireworks explode over head.

THE END