

Reader's Theatre: A Note from Book-It Arts Education

Book-It grants permission for *The Catch of the Century* by Andrew Lee Creech to be used by readers, teachers, and librarians in classrooms or educational settings. If you would like to use this script outside of these settings, please contact Book-It Repertory Theatre at education@book-it.org.

The Catch of the Century has roles for four readers. Characters are written with she, he, or singular they for specific characters to maintain clarity, but **pronouns can be adjusted as needed to match the pronouns of the readers in your class**. Please do not change the names of the characters.

When you read the script, try different ways of speaking as your character. Your **character voice** can sound however you want it to but start with your own voice. Imagine the world of the play, listen to the lines of the other readers, take a deep breath, and speak as if the character is really you.

Lines written (*like this*), in parentheses and italicized, are **stage directions**. They give you information about how a character is feeling or what is happening at that moment in the script. (You can read them out loud, if you want to.) **Use these guidelines to incorporate action, tableaux, or scenic art into your reading.**

This script uses **line numbering**. Use these numbers to help find your spot or to work on a certain part of the script. You can also use a highlighter to highlight your lines or responsibilities.

Happy reading!

THE CATCH OF THE CENTURY

by Andrew Lee Creech

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CHARACTERS

AMARI: (they/them) a self-sufficient young human, smart, but stubborn know-it-all

KENNA: (she/her) a Nature Scout, determined to prove herself

JACE: (they/them) a playful, energetic human, a city-dweller

CATFISH: (he/him) the biggest fish in the entire river, a cranky legend

1 *(AMARI, KENNA, and JACE are huddled around a campsite.*

2 *AMARI is rubbing sticks together, trying to start a fire.)*

3 **JACE:** *(singing whatever notes and rhythm comes to their heart)*

4 Ohhh we're camping, camping, camping! Camping on the river! Camping,

5 camping, camping—

6 **AMARI:** Hush! I can't focus with all that *noise*.

7 **JACE:** Is it *noise* or is it a beautiful aria?

8 **KENNA & AMARI:** *(looking at each other)* It's noise.

9 **JACE:** Haters gonna hate.

10 **KENNA:** My turn with the fire.

11 **AMARI:** Well, if Pavarotti would pipe down, I'd have it already.

12 **KENNA:** I'll have it going in ten minutes.

13 **AMARI:** You just wanna show off.

14 **KENNA:** Of the three of us, who's actually *in* the Nature Scouts? Jace, do
15 you want to try?

16 **JACE:** Are you kidding? I don't even wanna be out here. Did you know
17 oxygen makes you age? And there is *so much of it* out here.

18 **AMARI:** Whatever. You don't need me, I don't need you.

19 **KENNA:** Fine!

20 **AMARI:** Fine!

21 **JACE:** Yeah, fine!

22 *(AMARI grabs their fishing pole and wanders to a high ledge*
23 *overlooking the river.)*

24 **KENNA:** Alright, wrassle us up some tinder and kindling.

25 **JACE:** My mom says I can't.

26 **KENNA:** Why?

27 **JACE:** Cuz...splinters.

28 **KENNA:** You're scared of the woods, aren't you?

29 **JACE:** Of course not.

30 **KENNA:** Do you need me to come with you?

31 **JACE:** I don't need anybody. I can do it.

32 *(AMARI casts out into the water.)*

33 **AMARI:** A fresh, live worm. That'll get us a big ole cat. I'll be the hero then.

34 **KENNA:** UGHHH! Why won't these sticks stay up??

35 **JACE:** Can I help?

36 **KENNA:** I've gotta be able to do this on my own to get my fire building
37 badge.

38 **JACE:** But I'm really good at stacking.

39 **KENNA:** No!

40 **JACE:** Jeez...

41 *(reaching a hand out in quiet longing, whispered)*

42 Amaaari, come baaack.

43 *(A giant CATFISH wanders in, singing the same tune JACE*
44 *was, but different lyrics.)*

45 **CATFISH:** Ohh I'm swimming, swimming, swimming! Swimming in the
46 river! Swimming—

47 *(The CATFISH notices the worm on the hook.)*

48 **CATFISH:** Ohh hold up now.

49 *(tasting the worm)*

50 Mm this slaps! Woooo!

51 *(The CATFISH slams the rod with all its might, almost pulling*
52 *AMARI into the river.)*

53 **AMARI:** Hey! I've got one hooked! Big one, too! The catch of the century!

54 **CATFISH:** *(thrashing and leaping about)* Get off me!

55 **JACE:** Lift him up or something!

56 **AMARI:** He's too big, the line'll snap!

57 **KENNA:** Walk him to the bank!

58 *(AMARI holds their pole above their head and slowly walks the*
59 *fish down to the bank)*

60 **KENNA:** Pull him in!

61 **AMARI:** I can't, my line's caught in the rocks.

62 **KENNA:** Let me help!

63 **AMARI:** I don't need your help!

64 **KENNA:** Please?

65 *(handing their pole to KENNA)*

66 **AMARI:** I'm going in!

67 *(AMARI jumps into the river and almost gets swept away.)*

68 **KENNA:** Grab my arm!

69 *(AMARI does. KENNA stumbles and shrieks as the current*
70 *almost takes both of them. JACE grabs KENNA's arm.)*

71 **JACE:** I've gotchu, Kenna!

72 **KENNA and JACE:** Reach, Amari! Get him!

73 **AMARI:** *(reaching deeply)* Allmost got him.

74 *(The CATFISH dances and evades AMARI.)*

75 **CATFISH:** Ahhh! Not today! Ahh!

76 *(AMARI makes a big grab for the fish. The CATFISH gives one*
77 *final leap, shaking its head. It throws the hook out, leaving*

78 *AMARI, KENNA, and JACE to tumble backwards into an*
79 *indistinguishable pile of limbs on the bank.)*

80 **CATFISH:** So long, losers!!

81 *(The CATFISH cackles wildly as it swims off. The trio stands,*
82 *brushing themselves off.)*

83 **AMARI:** How's that fire coming?

84 **KENNA:** Can't get the sticks to stand up.

85 **AMARI:** Jace?

86 **JACE:** I'm on it. You comin'?

87 **AMARI:** You know I gotchu.

88 **KENNA:** I'll get the s'more stuff ready. Tonight, we feast!

89 **JACE:** *(singing)* Cuuuz we're camping, camping, camping! Camping on the
90 river!

91 **JACE, AMARI, & KENNA:** Camping, camping, camping! Camping on the
92 river!

93 **—THE END—**