

Catch of the Day

BRAIN FREEZE

The first revolution was in seventy-six
But another battle brewed that's part of our mix
Some dudes took a palace and booted the queen
Locked her away and treated her mean
Just use Myron's shirts to find the queen's palace
And then take a picture using cam'ra digitalis.

Written by Bob Rouse
Illustrated by Frank Yates

Brain Freeze, a 10-chapter serial story, is part of a statewide literacy project sponsored by the Hoosier State Press Association Foundation and the Indiana State Reading Association.

The story so far: Faced with losing their school, a team of students tries to win a cross-country scavenger hunt and a new school. But someone wants them to fail.

"Really! Myron has a plan, Ms. R. We can fix our bad-luck problem," Latisha said. "I e-mailed FreeZee, and he's going to help."

"Don't make us go home," Nathan pleaded.

The students were in Ms. Roosevelt's room at the Juneau Grand Resort.

"I simply can't take chances with your safety, guys. I'll call FreeZee myself," the teacher said. "I'll meet you in the lobby in 30 minutes."

A half-hour later, Ms. Roosevelt and the students sat in massive leather furniture beside a large fireplace in the lobby. A roaring fire brought welcome warmth to the group.

"Well, FreeZee is sold on your plan," the teacher said. "Perhaps you could share it with me."

Myron spoke quietly to Ms. Roosevelt for several minutes. When he finished, the teacher smiled. "I must say, your plan is well thought out and beautifully presented. 'A-minus,' Myron."

"Why the minus?" Myron asked. "Because you didn't tell me sooner!" the teacher said with a laugh.

Just then, Sluppy D shuffled in with the two bodyguards.

"All righty, then, we're all here and hungry," Ms. Roosevelt said. "Shall we eat?" As the group started toward the restaurant, the teacher stopped suddenly. "Oh! Help me remember the airline tickets!" she said, looking at Nathan and Amber. "The hotel's printer is down, but when it's fixed tonight, it will print our tickets for tomorrow's flight. We must get those tickets at the front desk when we wake up, or we won't be able to fly out on time."

Sluppy D put his hand on the teacher's shoulder. "Early bird gets the worm - you know what I'm sayin'?"

"I do know, Mr. D," Ms. Roosevelt said.

Late that night Sluppy D visited the front desk, slipped the clerk a \$50 bill, and walked away with several sheets of paper. He slipped quietly to the fireplace and sailed the papers into the fire, grinning as they burned.

From behind a huge couch, Ms. Roosevelt and her students stepped out. "I'm afraid you've burned yourself, Mr. D," Ms. Roosevelt said.

The startled DJ recovered quickly. "Just a few faxes - addressed to me," he said.

"Uh-uh. We got you on video,"

Nathan said. "And audio."
"Well, you're gonna have to turn it over to me," Sluppy D said, and then snapped his fingers. "Boys?"

At that, the two muscular bodyguards came from a hallway to join Sluppy D.

"We have friends, too, Slup," Amber said, and from every corner of the room came groups of Tlingit Indians. The Native Alaskans, dressed in traditional clothes and carrying traditional weapons, looked deadly serious.

Sluppy D snarled. "OK, you little brats. You win." He spat out the words. "Y'all got no right to FreeZee's mansion, though. That house should be mine! And if I coulda made you lose this game, FreeZee woulda given it to me!"

The stunned silence was broken by the ring of Latisha's cell phone. She listened, then turned on the speaker. "Slup, you got it all wrong," FreeZee's voice rang out. "That house was never going to you."

"Jesse?" FreeZee continued, and the largest of the Native Alaskans stepped forward. "Thanks for helping. You really are my biggest fan in Alaska! Now if you would, keep Slup and his goons on ice until the kids have left the city."

"Will do, FreeZee," Jesse replied. Myron stepped forward. "And Sluppy, I did stop sneezing. Thanks for asking."

"How about that?" Nathan said with a grin as the Tlingits led the troublemakers away. "All our bad luck came from Sluppy. We can't lose now!"

Amber leaned in. "Don't look now, Happy Boy, but it's 2 a.m., and we don't know where to go for the next answer. We've got 19 hours!"

"Yeah, let's look at that clue again," Myron said. "I don't know how my shirt can help. It was made in Bangladesh!"

As the students puzzled over the clue about a queen, they considered Queen City, Queensland, and

Queen Latifa. And Latisha looked for the shape of a state in the floral pattern of Myron's shirt.

"Dudes, we've got brain freeze. Right here in Alaska," Nathan said, looking at the snow falling in the lights outside. "Nathan, how can you wear a Hawaiian shirt when it's freezing outside?"

Amber's eye's lit up. "That's it! How could we be so dumb?"

"Oh, it's pretty easy," Nathan said.

"We've been trying to connect the American Revolution to Myron's shirt, but there's a state that had kings and queens before it was a state - and it matches Myron's Hawaiian shirt!"

The Goldenrod group took a taxi from the Oahu airport to Iolani Palace, where kings and queens ruled Hawaii before it became a U.S. territory. On the plane trip from Alaska, they had read about Queen Liliuokalani, the last queen, who had tried to keep non-natives from taking over her island nation.

"Cool palace. Sad about Liliuokalani, though," Amber said as she sent the photo to FreeZee by camera phone.

Within minutes, FreeZee sent a text message: OK! TAKE XTRA DAY 4 R&R. 4 CLU C HSB. CUL8R. FZ.

"Cool! We get an extra day here!" said Amber. "What's the name of the local newspaper?"

Each week, a rap clue for the story's scavenger hunt will appear in the Classified section of the Carroll County Comet.

Bob Rouse is a writer in Midway. Frank Yates, who died Jan. 22, 2005, was an artist for the Lexington Herald-Leader. For classroom activities to use with this story, go to carrollcountycomet.com for online activities web site.

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Comet staff report

Kathy Dunbar, 42, of Delphi, was injured in a two-vehicle crash near Americus on SR 25 Sunday afternoon.

The accident occurred when Dunbar's 1999 Cadillac Seville was struck by a 1991 Jeep driven by Timothy Daly, 19, of West Lafayette.

Tippecanoe County Sheriff's Deputy Andrew Warren reported Daly was

southbound when he swerved to miss hitting a deer that ran onto the roadway. He then veered off the road, lost control, and skidded across the center line, where he collided with Dunbar's northbound vehicle.

Both drivers were transported to St. Elizabeth Hospital for treatment. Dunbar was later transported to Methodist Hospital in Indianapolis. Her condition was not available.

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