



play
with
your
food!



play with your food! ~ season one

written by Danny Brooks & Josh Nathan, illustrated by Emily Jan



About this book

You lookin' at me? I said you lookin' at me?

I'm the only artichoke standing here, so you must be lookin' at me. What, am I some kind of decorative centerpiece to you? So I bloom! So what! A lot of guys I know bloom. It doesn't mean nothin'.

Hey, at least I'm not some sandy leek. Ya know you can't trust leeks, right? They're shifty. And don't get me started on sunchokes. SunCHOKES? Yeah, right. These clowns don't even got a choke! No thistles! And I'm soft 'cause I bloom? Least I'm not some grubby tuber!

(continued on back flap)

about Play With Your Food!

PLAY WITH YOUR FOOD!© is a show about food and everything it teaches us.

Our mission is to encourage children, ages three to nine, to learn about the world and express themselves through the global language of food.

In the footsteps of Sesame Street®, and Pee Wee's Playhouse®, PLAY WITH YOUR FOOD!© teaches and entertains. The show is smart, a bit eccentric, and never takes itself too seriously.

In every episode we playfully explore culture, language, history, ecology and science through a theme ingredient. Through puppets, music and animation, PLAY WITH YOUR FOOD!© gets kids excited about beautiful food and eating well.

Episode One: "It's My Party and I'll Cry If I Want To"

Featured Food: The Strawberry

Recipe: Strawberry Smoothies

Kitchen Tool: Blender

Food Themes: Naturally sweet treats vs refined sugar, why onions make you cry, strawberries in culture and history

Story Themes: Falling in love, friendship

Puppets: PASTAFARIAN:
a Rastafarian pasta musician

FRANCIE FRUITCAKE:
an insecure holiday dessert

SIMONE SMOOTHIES:
a seductive French strawberry

CHEF DANNY helps plan a birthday party for ONION. As they plan what to eat, ONION meets the beautiful SIMONE SMOOTHIES and falls in love. ONION decides he wants to make strawberry smoothies for his birthday party.

All of the friends enjoy a smoothie birthday party and review all they've learned.



Episode Two: "No Fruit is an Island"

Featured Food: Pineapple

Recipe: Pineapple Popsicles

Kitchen Tool: Freezer

Food Themes: Native vs non-native plants

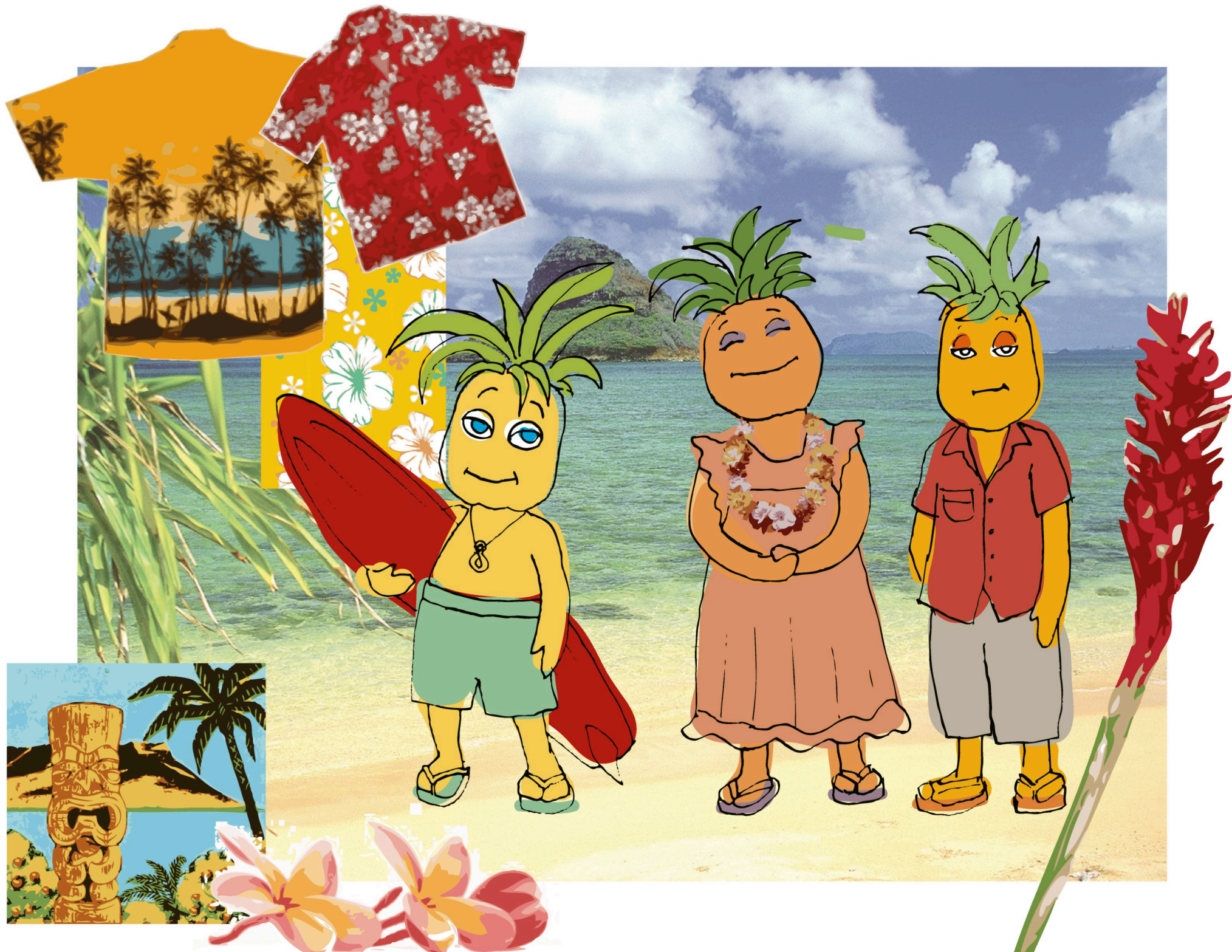
Story Themes: Hometown pride, moving

Puppets: PIÑA - a young Hawaiian surfing pineapple

Onion and Chef Danny take a vacation to Hawaii. They visit the sugar cane and pineapple fields. Onion meets PIÑA, a Hawaiian Pineapple whose family is leaving the islands for California. PIÑA is terrified and sad about his move to the mainland.

Chef Danny encourages PIÑA by showing him pictures of the beautiful beaches and surf in California. Onion learns to be proud of his "home field" and PIÑA gets excited about the move.

The episode ends back on the mainland at the surf-themed housewarming party for PIÑA and his family. Chef Danny brings pineapple popsicles and Onion brings them a native Californian artichoke plant.



Episode Three: "Where There's Chokes, There's Fire"

Featured Food: The Artichoke

Recipe: Steamed artichoke with dipping sauce

Kitchen Tool: Steamer

Food Themes: Botany of edible flowers,
adventurous eating

Story Themes: Seeing past a rough exterior,
making new friends

Puppets: CHOFA - insecure and lonely artichoke.
He hides his fear with the mask of the
mean-spirited bully

VEGGIES in the Farmer's Market
stand – the ensemble characters
dressed differently for multiple uses &
episodes

Chef Danny and Onion visit the farmer's market. Onion and the VEGGIES chat when CHOFA, the artichoke bully, appears and threatens Onion with his thistle spines.

Meanwhile, Chef Danny finds a farmer friend who is preparing steamed artichoke for his customers. Chef Danny's friend is a bit of a bully himself but Chef Danny is patient and eventually the farmer comes out of his shell.

Back at the vegetable stand, Onion stands up for the other VEGGIES. Eventually CHOFA's father, a beautiful purple, flowering artichoke appears, and scolds his son. CHOFA is mortified.

CHOFA admits that he's been made fun of for being a flower. He acknowledges that he is insecure and that his tough exterior hides his soft heart inside. CHOFA apologizes to Onion and the rest of the stand. Onion and Chef Danny walk home and share the day's adventures.



Episode Four: "The Color of Bunny"

Featured Food: Lettuce

Recipe: Mixed green salad

Kitchen Tool: Salad spinner

Food Themes: The health benefits of raw foods,
local organic farming

Story Themes: Obeying the rules and being respectful

Puppets: CHEVALIER D'ALBUNNY (CHEVY) - a mischievous, teen-aged bunny who breaks into the MCGROWER'S garden even though his mother has warned him not to. Inside he's a baby bunny who still needs his mommy

Chef Danny takes Onion to lunch at The MCGROWERS. Their hosts show off their beautiful, organic garden and tell Onion to be on the lookout for a bunny that has been stealing their vegetables. Chef Danny and their hosts go inside for lunch with a basket of fresh lettuce for a salad.

Onion explores the garden and meets CHEVALIER D'ALBUNNY (CHEVY) whose namesake, Chevalier D'Albignac, popularized raw salads. Onion encourages CHEVY to stop stealing but CHEVY refuses. Suddenly, MOLLY MCGROWER snatches CHEVY. CHEVY tearfully explains that his mother forbade him to enter the garden, and that he was supposed to be picking blackberries with his sisters.

The MCGROWERS decide to forgive CHEVY if he agrees to fetch some wild blackberries, which Chef Danny uses to make a wild blackberry vinaigrette.

CHEVY promises to never steal again and THE MCGROWERS offer him the opportunity to help maintain the garden in exchange for weekly vegetables.



Episode Five: "Send in the Crowns"

Featured Food: Broccoli

Recipe: Broccoli pizza

Kitchen Tool: Pizza stone

Food Themes: Trying new foods, understanding food family trees

Story Themes: Being proud of who you are

Puppets: BRIAN BROCCOLI - a quiet, reserved head of broccoli. He has no confidence in himself and fears his abrasive family

THE BROCCOLI FAMILY – Broccolis, Cabbages, Broccolinis, Cauliflowers and other edible flowers of different cultures and different socio-economic status

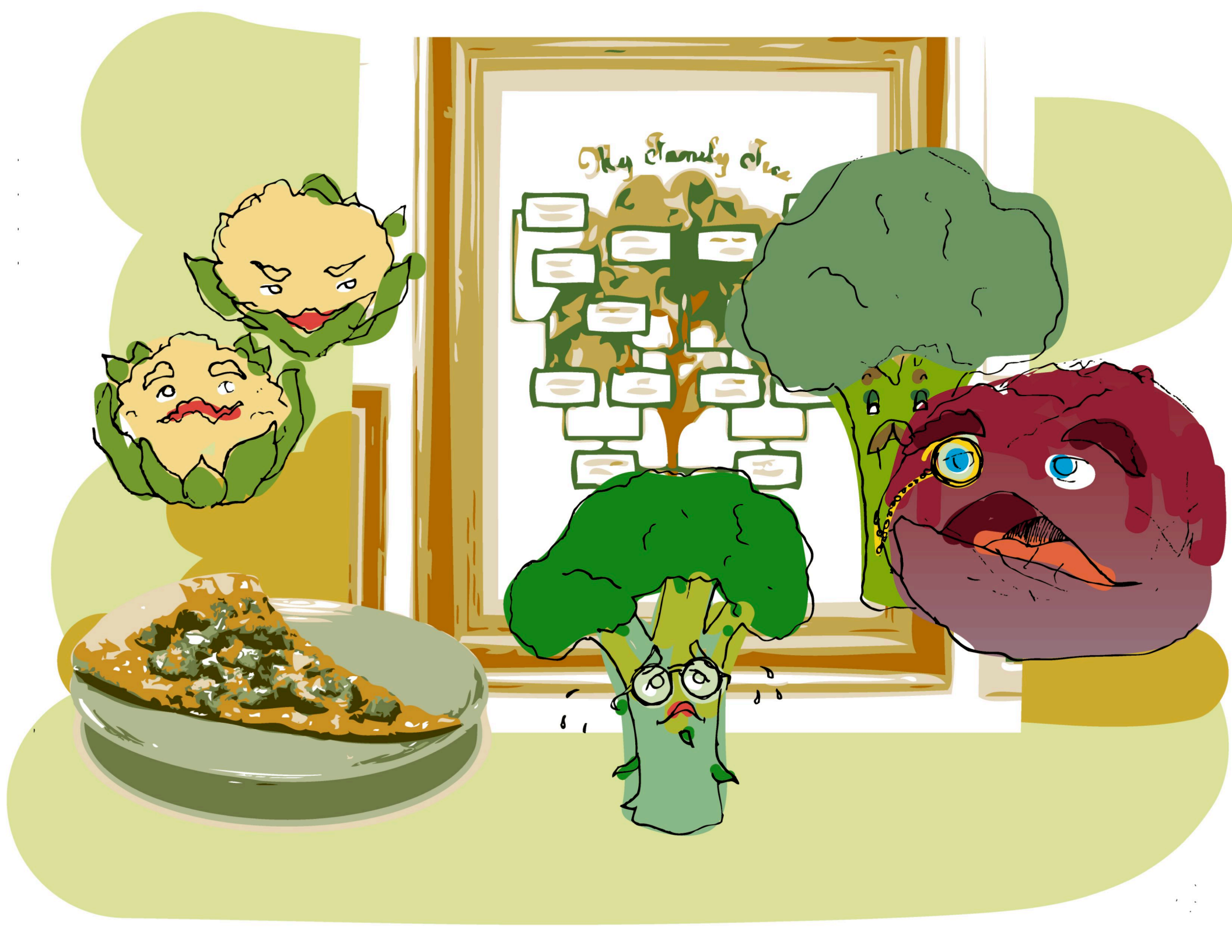
Onion's friend, BRIAN BROCCOLI, shares his fear about an approaching family reunion potluck.

BRIAN'S family is overwhelming and he feels he can't be himself around them. Furthermore, BRIAN is ashamed of broccoli's bad reputation with kids.

Chef Danny asks THE KIDS to help BRIAN create a broccoli dish. THE KIDS respond with a cliché, "Yuck!" Chef Danny helps the KIDS see they are judging BRIAN based on prejudice, not on experience.

THE KIDS help BRIAN prepare Broccoli Pizza. THE KIDS are impressed and decide broccoli is their new favorite! They spread their love of broccoli and BRIAN becomes more popular than he'd ever thought possible.

Onion, Chef Danny and THE KIDS attend the reunion with a newly confident BRIAN. They have a great time. BRIAN'S family is impressed with the pizza and his new popularity.



Episode Six: "LOST!"

Featured Food: Rice

Recipe: Fried rice

Kitchen Tool: Rice maker and wok

Food Themes: The role of rice in the development of human history

Story Themes: Being independent and respecting differences, staying calm in scary situations

Puppets: CHOWDY – A young frightened cup of clam chowder

SOYU – An old, wise bottle of soy sauce. He is monk-like, calm, focused, and understanding

RICE – A large sack of rice

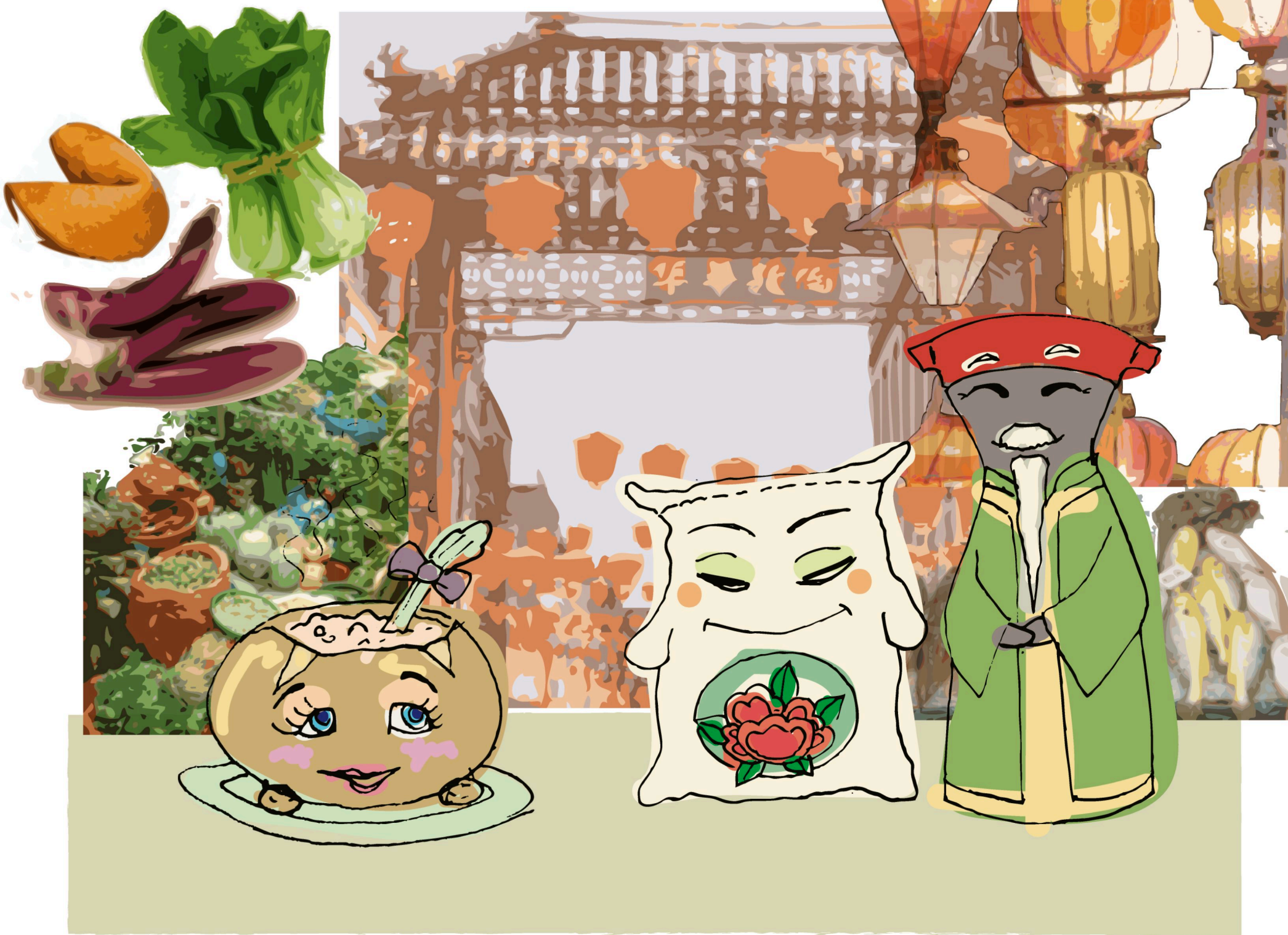
Chef Danny takes Onion to Chinatown to pick up some special ingredients.

Onion asks a bag of RICE questions about Chinese culture and, when he looks up, Chef Danny is gone. Onion wanders Chinatown trying to find Chef Danny. Eventually, he meets CHOWDY, a young cup of clam chowder who has wandered away from the Wharf and is also lost.

Meanwhile, Chef Danny realizes Onion is missing and asks merchants if they've seen a purple Onion.

CHOWDY and Onion meet a Mr. Myagi-like bottle of Soy Sauce, SOYU, who teaches them about the culture and importance of rice. SOYU teaches them to be calm and focused. Onion learns to relax and trust himself. Within minutes, he finds his way back to the market and finds Chef Danny.

SOYU and the bag of RICE teach Chef Danny a traditional rice preparation. Finally Chef Danny and Onion return CHOWDY to his family on the Wharf.



Episode Seven: "Love Is an Onion Field"

Featured Food: The Eggplant

Recipe: Baba ganoush

Kitchen Tool: Hand blender

Food Themes: Cultural and botanical history of the eggplant, the science of using salt to remove moisture

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Story Themes: Ignoring gossip and not jumping to conclusions

Puppets: DR. BATHINJAN – a Saudi Arabian eggplant therapist; a mixture of Freud and Deepak Chopra

Chef Danny finds Onion wailing uncontrollably. Onion claims Simone Smoothies doesn't love him anymore. Onion says Pastafarian heard that Francie heard some leek saying Simone didn't want to be Onion's friend. Chef Danny tells Onion that relationships end even when people still love each other.

Chef Danny suggests Middle Eastern food is comforting and offers to make Baba Ganoush. Onion agrees eggplant has helped him in the past and goes to see DR. BATHINJAN.

Onion shares his feelings on the doctor's couch. DR. BATHINJAN convinces Onion that people often jump to fearful conclusions before they understand the situation.

Meanwhile, Simone and Francie turn up at Chef Danny's kitchen. Simone explains that she's been stuck in the field taking care of her sister's babies. When Onion returns he and Simone immediately clear up the confusion.

They all enjoy the Baba Ganoush together.



Episode Eight: "Love Bites"

Featured Food: Bread

Recipe: Panini sandwich

Kitchen Tool: Sandwich press

Food Themes: Bread as a universal staple food

Story Themes: Doing nice things for people you love,
being clean and respecting public
spaces

Puppets: PANINI – a mustached, romantic, Italian
Panini machine

THE JERSEY ANTS – a group of Jersey
ants out to raid picnics

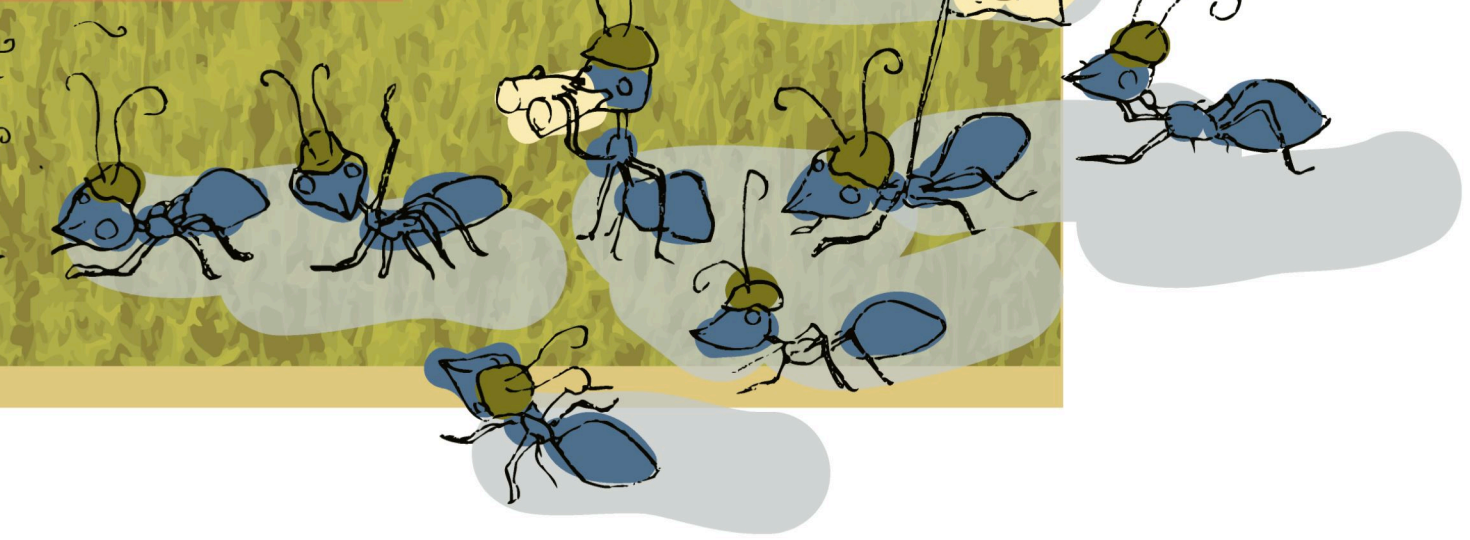
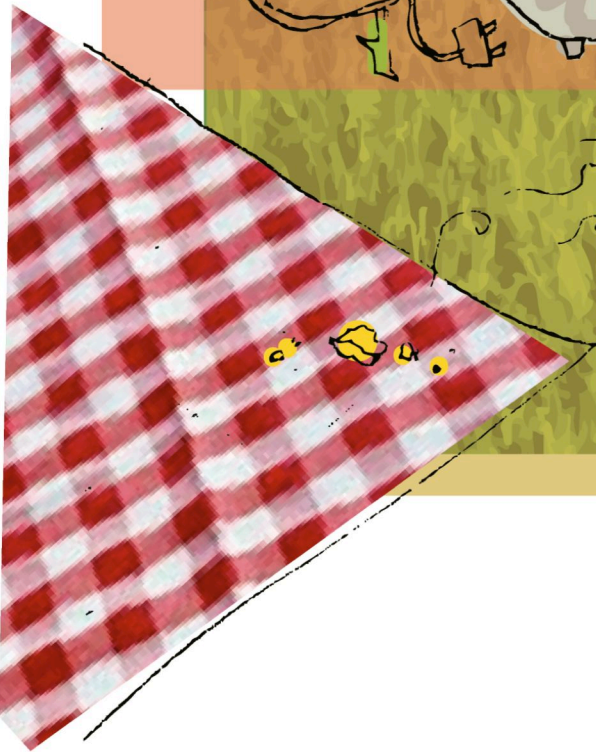
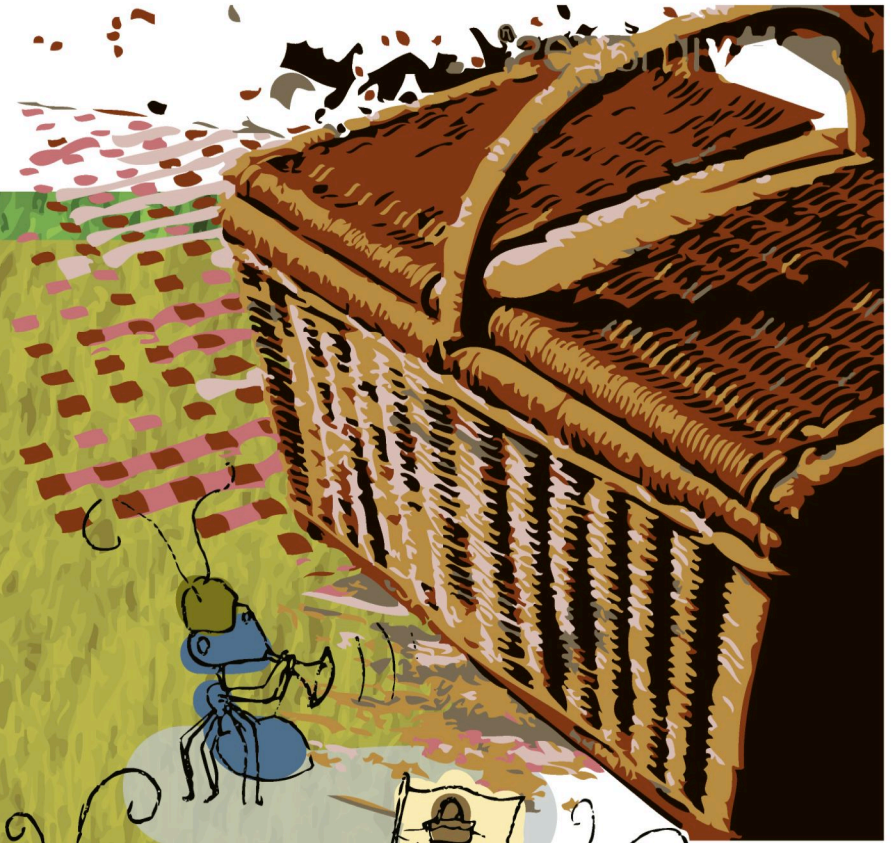
Onion wants to do something romantic for Simone and Chef Danny suggests a picnic in the park.

Chef Danny takes Onion on a trip in their imagination to 18th century England where they meet JOHN MONTAGU, The Earl of Sandwich. Onion is surprised by the pedigree of something as seemingly mundane as the sandwich.

Chef Danny and Onion explore the possibilities for portable, delicious food. They talk about bread, its historical importance, and its enormous variety. PANINI helps prepare the perfect sandwich for Onion's date.

PANINI teaches Onion about browning and how much more romantic a sandwich is when you go the extra mile. Onion takes Simone on a picnic where they meet the JERSEY ANTS.

The JERSEY ANTS teach them that cleanliness is always important but especially outside. Onion and Simone keep their food off the ground, pick up their trash, show respect for the public park and have a beautiful, romantic picnic.



Episode Nine: "Peeling Back the Curtain"

Featured Food: The Banana

Recipe: Banana bread

Kitchen Tool: Bread maker

Food Themes: Health benefits of bananas, bread machine vs. traditional baking

Story Themes: Respecting the elderly

Puppets: MARTY B. NANA – an old, Borsht-Belt, Vaudevillian. Marty is a stooped, browning banana who looks like he should be retiring in Florida. He's a renaissance performer with a quick, droll sense of humor

THE PERFORMERS – The VEGGIES dressed as performers in a variety show. They are 19th century, poorly funded, theatrically costumed fruits and vegetables

Onion and Chef Danny meet MARTY B. NANA while walking on the boardwalk. He tells them all about his Vaudeville show. Marty says they can come to a rehearsal if they bring a healthy, filling snack for the cast. Chef Danny suggests banana bread and MARTY is thrilled.

Chef Danny and Onion watch the various acts rehearse as they prepare the snack. All of the acts are themed around bananas, their botanical history, their agricultural development, their role in diverse culture and their appearance in pop culture. All performers are bananas.

When the bread is finished they all enjoy it together. Marty offers Chef Danny and Onion tickets to the evening show. Chef Danny and Onion arrive at the theater and find their seats. The curtains open and the BANANA PLAYERS perform their Banana Variety Show to a sold out crowd.



Episode Ten: "A Mother's Yolk is Never Done!"

Featured Food: The Egg

Recipe: Growler's egg mush

Kitchen Tool: Sauté pan

Food Themes: The health benefits of the egg,
meal times in different cultures

Story Themes: Loving your mother, nostalgia, memory
and the olfactory sense

Puppets: FLORINDA ONION – Onion's mom, a
purple onion in her mid forties. She
speaks with a Minnesota dialect.

EGG LADIES – A carton of eggs. The
egg ladies are kind, maternal and loving.
They think Onion is sweet as can be and
clearly have the hots for Chef Danny.

Onion's mom comes to visit and Onion wants to
impress her with how much he's learned working with
Chef Danny. Chef Danny calls his mother to join them all
for brunch. Chef Danny and Onion discuss breakfast,
brunch, lunch, supper and dinner and how they mean
different things all over the world.

Onion meets the EGG LADIES, who offer to help Onion
impress his mom. The EGG LADIES suggest that Onion
make something special from his childhood in lieu of
something complicated and fancy. They lead Onion and
Chef Danny on an adventure through their memories.

Onion decides to make "Growler's Egg Mush" which is
his childhood favorite!

Both mothers arrive and enjoy a wonderful brunch with
their sons.



Episode Eleven: "Dark Side of the Spoon"

Featured Food: Cheese

Recipe: Cheese fondue

Kitchen Tool: Fondue pot

Food Themes: Cooking with a portable heat source, the role of microbes in healthy foods

Story Themes: Over-dependence on technology, making a scary situation into a fun adventure

Puppets: BLOCKS OF CHEESE - a block of SWISS and GRUYERE who know a lot about cheese and the culture of cheese making

Onion and Chef Danny are home for movie night when the power goes out.

Chef Danny lights some candles because Onion is terrified. They talk about fear of the dark and the unknown. Chef Danny explains it can be fun to spend a night without power and they explore the world before it was on the grid.

BLOCKS OF CHEESE help explore the world of cheese. They explain that many foods are a result of people cooking with limits. Chef Danny reveals that cheese, one of Onion's favorite foods, is produced from bacteria (cultures).

Chef Danny makes fondue with sterno. Just as the fondue is ready to eat, the power returns. Disappointed, Onion turns it all off again. The friends spend the rest of the night off the grid.



Episode Twelve: "Imaginary Heroes"

Featured Food: The Tomato

Recipe: Pan con tomate

Kitchen Tool: Toaster oven

Food Themes: Simple, fresh foods are easy to prepare

Story Themes: Bravery and responsibility

Puppets: TOMATE! – a bullfighting tomato from Barcelona who is confident and brave but knows his limits

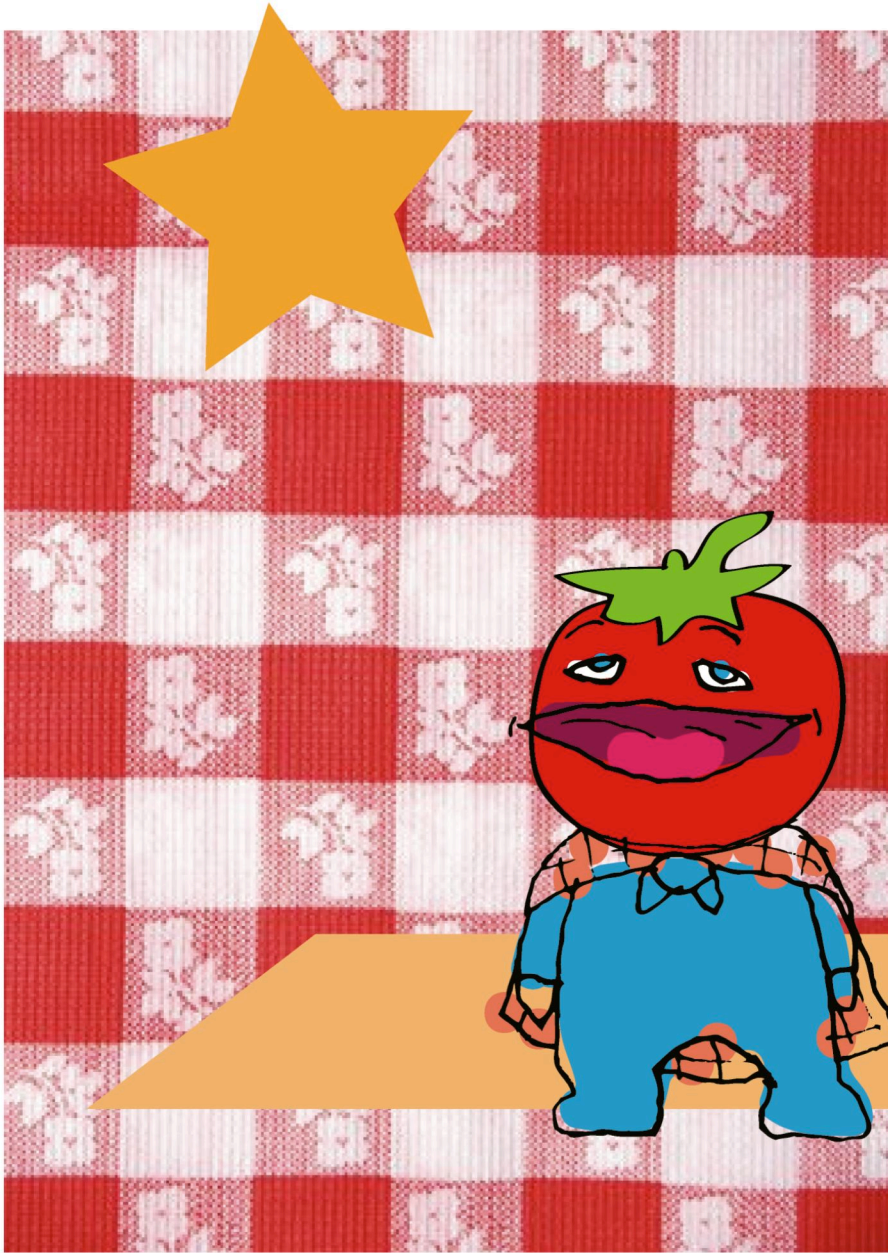
TOMATITO – a brassy, Italian cherry tomato

Chef Danny cooks for a wedding and leaves Onion home alone. Onion is nervous about being left alone and Chef Danny is nervous about cooking for the wedding of a good friend. Calming himself, Onion begins to make a lunch he knows he can make on his own. Fumbling with a tomato, Onion falls to the kitchen floor and hits his head.

When Onion awakes he meets TOMATE who takes charge of the situation, and helps Onion with challenges faced by being left home alone (a stranger at the door, loneliness, fire safety). Simultaneously, Chef Danny deals with his own challenges. He meets TOMATITO, who helps Chef Danny use ingredients economically and overcome his insecurity.

With the help of their new friends, Chef Danny and Onion overcome their challenging situations. Chef Danny invites TOMATITO home to meet Onion as Onion excitedly prepares TOMATE to meet his best friend.

When Chef Danny arrives home they hurry to introduce their new friends only to find that they each hold non-puppet tomatoes. Chef Danny and Onion realize the bravery, the confidence and the knowledge had been inside them all along.



Episode Thirteen: "And the Winter Is..."

Featured Food: The Apple

Recipe: Baked apple

Kitchen Tool: Oven

Food Themes: Seasonal treats associated with winter festivals

Story Themes: Appreciating multiculturalism

Puppets: THE VEGGIES portray differing cultures celebrating winter solstice-like events

SNOWY – a little snowman who lives in CHEF DANNY's freezer is a cute, old-man-winter-type who knows all about winter celebrations around the globe

Chef Danny gets his house ready for Hanukkah and Onion asks why he has no Christmas tree. Chef Danny explains that Christmas is just one way of celebrating winter. Onion feels bad that Chef Danny doesn't have Christmas.

Chef Danny introduces Onion to SNOWY who explains that many of Onion's closest friends do not celebrate Christmas. SNOWY takes them on a journey to explore different winter celebrations, tastes and traditions.

Onion and Chef Danny throw a winter solstice party and serve roasted apples for all of their new friends.



Episode Fourteen: "Leek Preview"

Featured Food: The Leek

Recipe: Leek soup

Kitchen Tool: Pressure cooker

Food Themes: The science of cooking with heat and pressure, preparing veggies that grow in dirt and sand – cleaning them thoroughly

Story Themes: Turning off the TV

Puppets: LARRY THE LEEK – an adolescent cousin of Onion's. He is a bit lazy and apathetic and really likes television and video games

OLD MAN PRESSURE – a Welsh pressure cooker with a short fuse

Onion's cousin LARRY THE LEEK comes over. It's stormy so the boys are stuck inside. LARRY wants to watch television and play computer games but Onion prefers creative alternatives.

LARRY reluctantly participates in an art project and moans about being bored and hungry. Chef Danny suggests they make a warm, delicious lunch.

Chef Danny introduces OLD MAN PRESSURE, who teaches them about braising and pressure. LARRY rolls his eyes – this is so boring! OLD MAN PRESSURE launches into a tirade about how LARRY should be proud of his heritage. He explains that leeks are the national symbol of Wales.

He takes the boys on an exciting journey through some of Wales's famous battles. LARRY is thrilled by the excitement of these stories – they are just like a video game! LARRY forgets about the TV and being bored.

When the soup is finished Chef Danny suggests they eat in front of the TV. LARRY insists they sit at the table and talk.



Episode Fifteen: "Putting Your Carbon Footprint in Your Mouth"

Featured Food: Tofu

Recipe: BBQ tofu

Kitchen Tool: Barbeque

Food Themes: Unexpected ingredients, green alternatives and sustainability

Story Themes: Not being a know-it-all

Puppets: TOFU – a patchouli wearing, yoga practicing, neo-hippie block of firm tofu.

Chef Danny needs a vacation. When Onion reveals he's never been camping, they set out to spend a night in the woods.

The two are interrupted by TOFU claiming to be an experienced camper. TOFU, who litters, wears leather shoes, and checks his always-plugged-in laptop, won't shut up about living green, reducing your carbon footprint, and sustainability.

TOFU insists on joining Onion and Chef Danny on their trip. At dinner, TOFU insists on a vegan meal. Chef Danny barbeques some tofu over the campfire.

They sing about the role of soybeans in diets and economies of people around the world. After dinner, Onion wants s'mores but TOFU insists chocolate and marshmallows are not vegan.

Chef Danny breaks and explains it's important to "do", not just "talk". He explains ways in which he uses sustainable food sources but, admits he could do more.

TOFU is humbled by Chef Danny honesty. The three friends make s'mores together. TOFU goes back for seconds.



Episode Sixteen: "Done Love!"

Featured Food: Pasta, noodles

Recipe: Pasta with tomato sauce

Kitchen Tool: Sauce pot and colander

Food Themes: The history and role of noodles in world culture, pasta varieties

Story Themes: Understanding that we are more alike than we are different

Puppets: THE STRAINERS – PASTAFARIAN's band. Four members of different pasta varieties

Pastafarian's band is in town and they need healthy catering. Chef Danny and Onion create an I-Tal pasta sauce. I-Tal food is part of the organic Rastafarian diet.

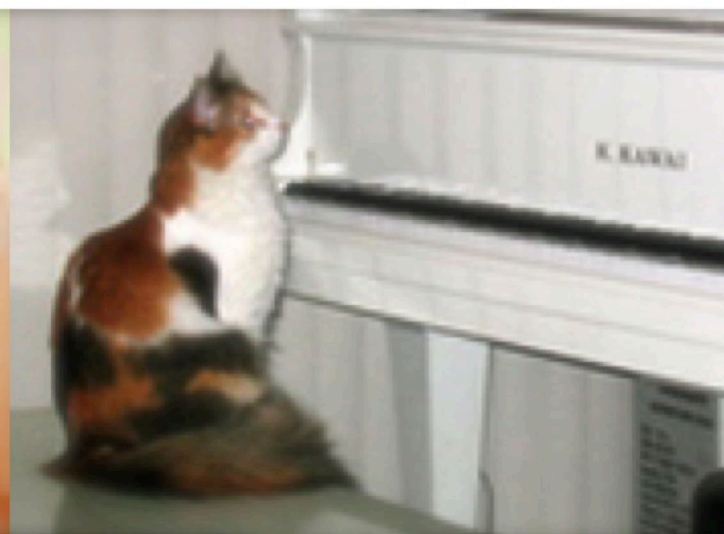
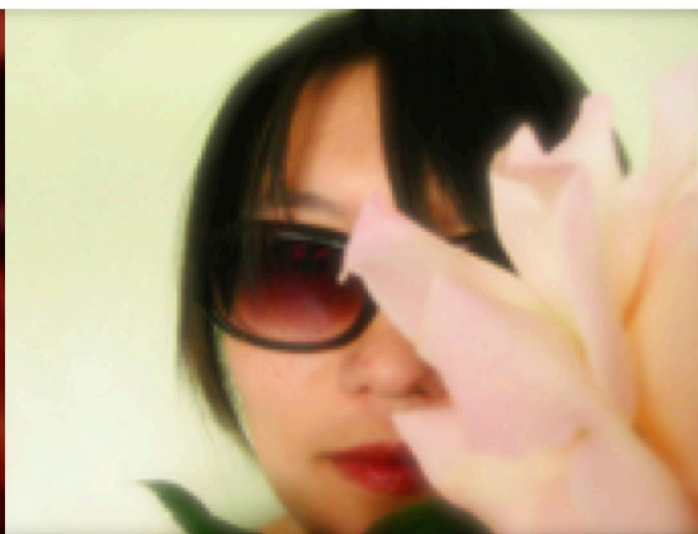
In a Spinal Tap-like mock-umentary, each pasta-shaped band member talks about the vast history of pasta and noodles in the development of human culture.

As Chef Danny and Onion work on the pasta sauce, they remember the lessons they have learned (culinary, emotional, agricultural, cultural) throughout the season. Onion notices the parallels between an I-Tal diet and the Vegan diet of Tofu; the artistic ideals Pastafarian and the STRAINERS share with the vaudevillians; and other common themes.

They all enjoy a healthy meal of pasta and I-Tal sauce before the show. While on stage, Pastafarian professes that all of them, "people, pasta, vegetables and fruit, we are more alike than we are different. Jah!"

Chef Danny, Onion and all of their friends from throughout the season enjoy the STRAINERS version of "Done Love" a song about love for all things food.





danny brooks – creator

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emily jan – art director

|

kevin mckeever – composer



josh nathan – writer

| brendan rahe – director

| vidlit – animators

DANNY BROOKS

Chef Danny Brooks is the creator, co-writer and chef instructor for PLAY WITH YOUR FOOD!©. He has worked at some of the world's best restaurants, attended one of the world's best universities and grows one of the world's best beards.

Chef Danny has also always loved food. Ever since he was six years old, all Danny wanted to do was cook and eat. Now that he's an "adult", all Chef Danny wants to do is be six years old. And cook and eat. Or at least just eat. His favorite food is ice. Seriously.

EMILY JAN

Emily Jan makes things. Like puppets, theatre scenery, transparent taxidermy sculptures, knit graffiti, websites, and the odd article of clothing. She's often on the road with a camera and a sketchbook and takes her tea like the Brits. She also teaches art and design in the Bay Area and in Oaxaca, Mexico. And she bakes a mean loaf of ciabatta.

Emily has two degrees in making – one from the Ivy League and one from a mostly respectable art school. She loves to eat biltong and cherimoyas. Just not simultaneously.

KEVIN MCKEEVER

A musician since age 6, Kevin plays a multitude of instruments and has worked in pretty much every entertainment genre imaginable since arriving in Los Angeles in 1999. He has contributed to Emmy nominated TV soundtracks, Oscar nominated film soundtracks, toured the globe with Grammy winning artists. Kevin is known as "the guy who makes stuff work" to the many people who keep him on their speed dial.

He currently lives with his 2 cats, Arthur and Trillian. Their favorite food is sliced turkey breast.

JOSH NATHAN

Josh Nathan is a writer for PLAY WITH YOUR FOOD! ©. He's also the voice of Onion. He is a faculty member at one of the world's most mediocre universities and grows a respectable, modest beard.

He also teaches acting for kids and likes to pretend a good deal himself. His favorite role is that of Daddy for his daughter Josie and his son Elliott. His favorite food is sea urchin because it tastes like a beach.

BRENDAN RAHER

Brendan Raher is the director and cinematographer for PLAY WITH YOUR FOOD!©. He was born with a camera in his hands, but when he was seven, it was surgically removed.

After spending the last eight years producing commercials and short films, Brendan will direct his first feature film to be released in 2011. His favorite food is a hot fudge sundae, preferably on a Tuesday.

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VID LIT

Who is VidLit?

We are storytellers. We invent new ways to help tell your stories by bringing together brilliant writers, illustrators, musicians, sound designers, filmmakers, animators and technologists. We play with our food and our technology.

Our favorite foods include steak, sushi and pudding.





(con't)

Anyway, if you're gonna read this season of **PLAY WITH YOUR FOOD**, do it with respect. This isn't some hack sitcom written by some piece of gritty arugula, who waits tables. This is tasty stuff.

My friends Onion and Chef Danny can teach you anything you need to know about food, cookin', culture, language, botany, science or just growin' up.

So you go ahead and make fun of my bloom. Like Chef Danny says, food is supposed to be made fun!



play with your food! ~ season one

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