

A Readers' Theater Adaptation of Katie Speck's *Maybelle in the Soup*

By Nicki Stohr

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Characters:

Narrator 1
Narrator 2
Narrator 3
Narrator 4
Narrator 5.
Mrs. Myrtle Peabody
Maybelle
Henry the Flea

Narrator 3: This script comes from the novel, *Maybelle in the Soup* by Katie Speck.

Narrator 2: Maybelle was a lovely plumb cockroach.

Narrator 1: She lived with Myrtle and Herbert Peabody at Number 10 Grand Street, in her own cozy little home under the refrigerator.

Narrator 4: The Peabody's liked everything to be JUST SO.

Mrs. Peabody: No dust, no mess, and absolutely, positively NO BUGS!

Narrator 5: Mrs. Peabody was fond of saying.

Narrator 2: Maybelle was not welcome, but she was a sensible cockroach.

Narrator 1: She obeyed The Rules: *When it's light, stay out of sight: if you're spied, better hide;* and most importantly of all, *never meet with human feet.*

Narrator 3: The Peabody's didn't know they shared their kitchen with a bug.

Narrator 5: Maybelle was sensible, but she loved food.

Narrator 4: And she wanted the good stuff.

Maybelle: I'm tired of crumbs and spills. I want tasty leftovers on a plate.

Henry the Flea: Don't even think about it, kiddo.

Narrator 2: Henry lived and dined on the Peabodys' cat, Ramona.

Henry the Flea: If the Peabodys see you, they'll call the Bug man. Then you'll be in a pickle.

Maybelle: I might like a pickle, perhaps a pickle relish or pickled pigs' feet or –

Henry the Flea: We can't have exactly what we want, he said. The Peabodys think dogs are messy, so I have to settle for a cat. Ramona bathes all day, I'm always wet. We've got the make the best of what we have, Maybelle.

Narrator 1: Maybelle didn't think that making the best of what she had sounded very interesting.

Narrator 4: Just once she wanted to taste food before it hit the floor.

Narrator 3: And that is how this story begins.

Narrator 5: Because a cockroach may not get exactly what a cockroach wants, but you can't blame her for trying.

Narrator 2: On Saturday, the Peabodys got ready for Very Important Guest. Mr. and Mrs. H. William Snodgrass were coming to dine.

Narrator 4: Everything had to be JUST SO.

Narrator 1: Mr. Peabody set the dining room table with the best silver and china.

Narrator 3: Mrs. Peabody worked all day on a Very Special Dinner.

Narrator 5: The kitchen was full of wonderful smells.

Narrator 2: Maybelle and Henry watched from under the refrigerator as Mrs. Peabody's dreadful big feet moved around the kitchen.

Maybelle: Have you ever tasted a foot, Henry?

Narrator 4: Maybelle thought about this sort of thing a lot.

Henry the Flea: No way! Humans may not notice a flea on their pets, but if a flea bites a foot, the Bug Man comes. I'll stick to my cat.

Maybelle: I could sneak out for a little dinner before the guests arrive. I'd be very careful, Henry. I only want a teensy taste of the soup I smell. Mock turtle, Mrs. Peabody calls it.

Henry the Flea: Mind your business, Maybelle. Stick to crumbs and spills.

Narrator 1: Just then, Roman's four furry feet appeared beside Mrs. Peabody's two big ones.

Henry the Flea: [cheerfully] Well, there's my dinner.

Narrator 3: And off he hopped.

Narrator 2: Maybelle sat by herself under the refrigerator and wondered –

Narrator 4: *What would it be like to eat mock turtle soup right out of a bowl?*

Narrator 5: Maybelle and Henry's comic adventure continues at the fancy dinner and night at a hotel.

Narrator 2: To hear more the adventure read *Maybelle in the Soup* by Katie Speck.