

Frankly, **I NEVER WANTED  
TO KISS ANYBODY!**

The Story of **THE  
FROG PRINCE**

as Told by  
**THE FROG**

by Nancy Loewen

Illustrated by Denis Alonso

"You have to kiss a lot of frogs to find your prince."

I bet you've heard that one before. And I bet you're thinking—

# EEEWWWWW!

Kissing a frog would be gross!

Well, I just happen to be the former frog who inspired that saying. My name is Prince Puckett. And let me tell you, that kiss was no picnic for me either! Here's the REAL story.



I was playing baseball the day  
Hank's mom turned me into a  
frog. One moment I was about to  
catch Hank's pop fly—which would  
give my team the championship—



and the next moment I was flopping around on the ground with more legs than I knew what to do with.

**"Sorry, kid,"** Hank's mom called as she was led out of the ballpark. "To break the spell, just get a princess to kiss you. But she can't know you're a prince!"



Well, whether I was a prince or a frog, I wasn't about to kiss any girl. And I soon found that being a frog had its perks.

I could see almost all the way around my head.



I could swim and dive like nobody's business.



And boy, could I jump!





One day I was playing kick-the-mushroom with my frog buddies when I heard the unmistakable sound of a ball smacking into a glove.

"That's the princess," Mickey told me.  
"She's always coming out here to practice."





I listened to the **smack ... smack ... smack.**  
And I wished that I could be just a regular  
baseball-playing prince again.



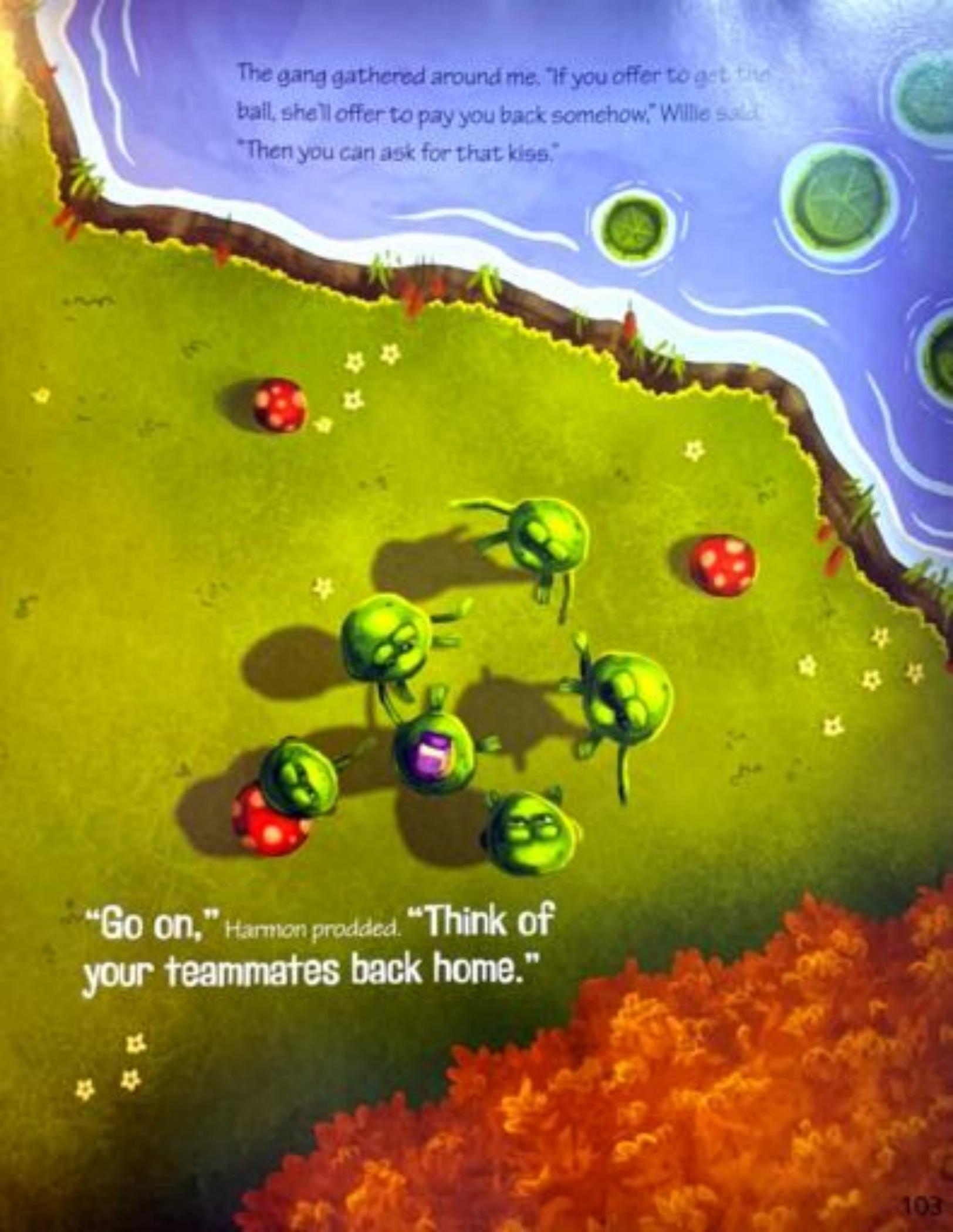
Then it happened.

**Smack ... smack ... PLUNK!**

The ball landed in the well.

"That was my lucky ball!" the princess cried.





The gang gathered around me. "If you offer to get the ball, she'll offer to pay you back somehow," Willie said. "Then you can ask for that kiss."

**"Go on,"** Harmon prodded. **"Think of your teammates back home."**

I worked up my courage and jumped beside her.

"Would you like me to get your ball?" I asked.

"You?" she asked. "Well, I guess it wouldn't hurt to try."





I hopped into the well and kicked the ball out.

"How can I ever repay you?" the princess asked.

"Just ask and it's yours!"

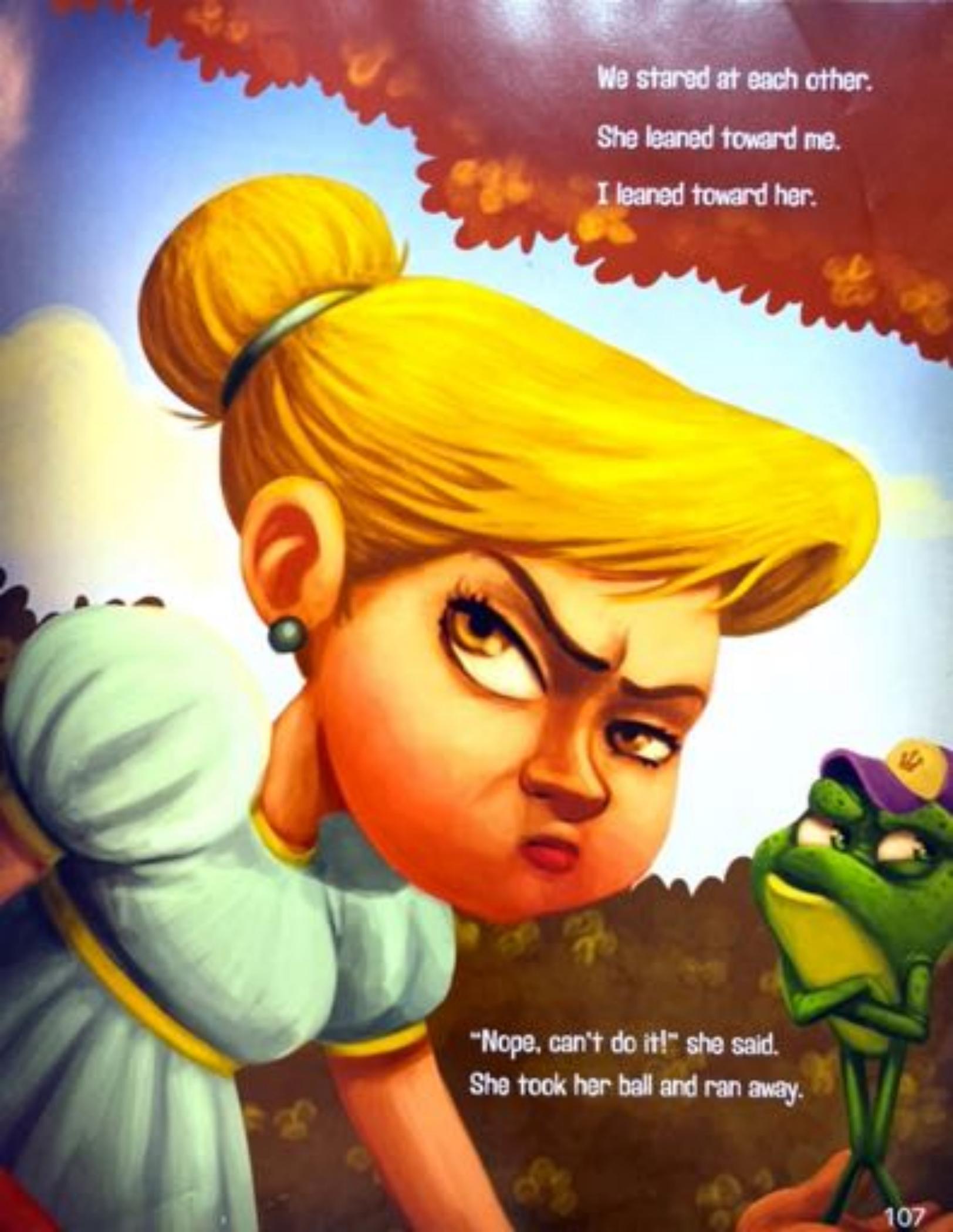
"You can ... I mean ... I'd like a ...," I stammered.

Finally I blurted out,

**"A kiss! I want you to kiss me!"**

**"Bleh!"** the princess said.





We stared at each other.

She leaned toward me.

I leaned toward her.

"Nope, can't do it!" she said.  
She took her ball and ran away.

Well, that made me a little mad. A deal's a deal, right?

It took me awhile, but jump by jump I followed her back to her castle.

The princess wouldn't open the door, but I stood there croaking loudly until her father, the king himself, let me in. I told him about our agreement.



"My daughter must keep her word,"  
the king assured me in a booming voice.



Then he plopped me down on the dinner table, right next to her.  
The princess looked the other way. "I'll kiss you after we eat,"  
she said. "Promise."



But as soon as she'd swallowed her last bite of lemon tart, she dashed up the stairs.

I hopped right after her.

"I'll kiss you right before I go to sleep," she said. But she pulled the covers over her head and quickly began to fake snore.



I spotted her lucky ball in the corner. "Well, I guess I'll be going now," I said. "Since you won't kiss me, I'll just be taking this."

The princess flung off the covers. "No! Wait! I'll do it!"

She picked me up and held me to her face.

She closed her eyes.

I closed my eyes.

Then—her lips  
touched mine.

**"UGH!"** we  
both shrieked.



I felt myself being hurled into the air. And suddenly  
I was stumbling around with two legs and two arms  
that I didn't know what to do with.

**“You’re a prince!” she said.**



**“What an arm!” I said.**

Did we fall in love, get married, and live happily ever after?

**NO WAY.** But my team got a great new starting pitcher!

