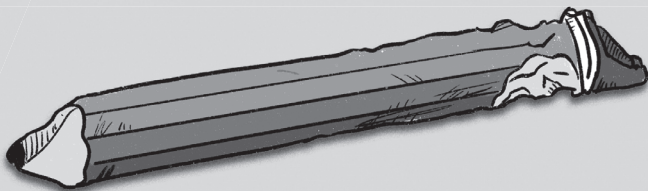


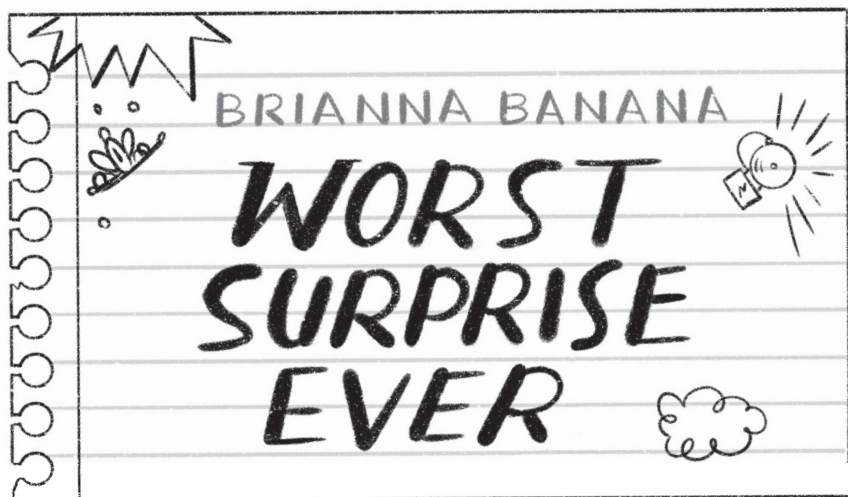
BRIANNA BANANA

WORST SURPRISE EVER



CHAPTER SAMPLER





LANA BUTTON

ILLUSTRATED BY
SUHARU OGAWA



ORCA BOOK PUBLISHERS

—CHAPTER SAMPLER—

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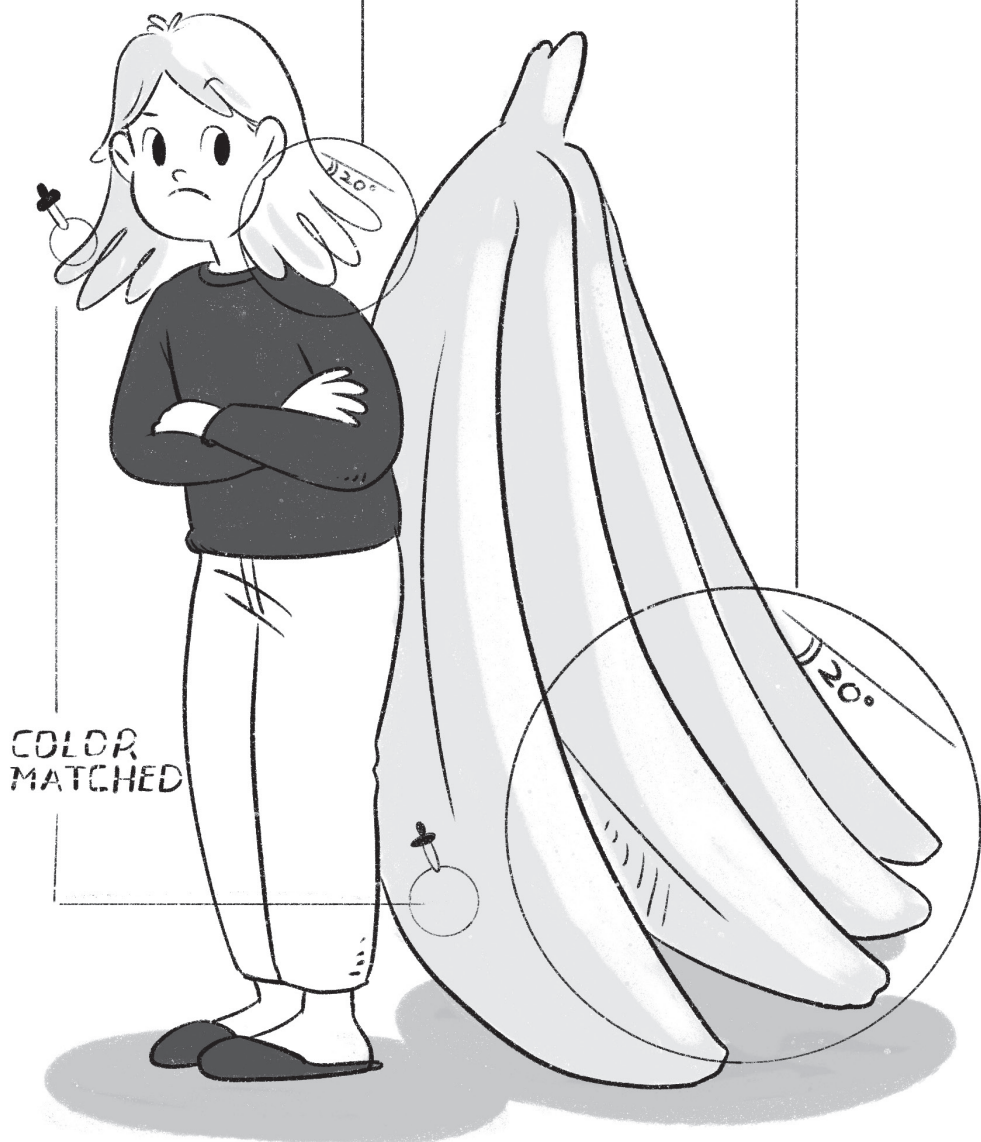
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For Miss Button's grade 3 class
at St. Gabriel Elementary

—CHAPTER SAMPLER—

ANGLE MATCHED





Hurry Up, Lily!



Bang, bang, bang!

“Lily! Hurry up!” I yell at the door of Grade 8 Lily’s house. “Get your keister to school!”

My fist stings from all this banging. So I stop and practice my surprise face. I make my eyes big and shocked! “Huuuuaa?” I make my mouth pop open like I can hardly even believe it. “Huaaaaaaa!”

Then the reason for my surprise face makes my tummy do an excited swirl! I have the best secret in the history of grade 3 secrets!

“Lily!” I go back to banging and yelling.

The door makes a click. “It’s about time,” I say when the door starts to open.

“Surprise!” I say to Lily, very cheery.

But it is not Grade 8 Lily. This is a giant man with drippy hair. He is Lily’s dad, probably.

“Hello?” he says to me like it is a question.

“Lily is a paid employee of my nanny,” I tell him. “She walks me to school.” And I watch a water droplet slip from his hair. It slides down his nose.

“Oh...you must be Brianna Banana.”

Yeah, so here's the thing. I am just Brianna. NOT Brianna Banana, like everyone in town calls me. I give that wet dad the stink eye.

My mom says Brianna Banana is just a fun thing to say. But it sounds mean to me. Because my hair is a banana shade. And I am a tall banana shape. And I think my mom should have thought that through before calling me Brianna (way too rhyme-y with *banana*). When I am a grown-up, I will make everyone call me Grace. Because there isn't a fruit out there that rhymes with Grace.

"I think Lily is still getting dressed," the wet dad says.

"I bet she's putting a bunch of eyeliner on, isn't she." I roll my eyes at that dad, like I know all about teenagers.

“It is a little *early* to go to school, don’t you think?” He looks down Princess Street. It’s empty. And it’s still a bit darkish.

That is the exact thing my nanny said to me this morning. You can see Nanny’s house just three doors down. Now Nanny’s house is my house too. Mom and I live at Nanny’s now because of two sad things:

1. My grampie died. And everyone is really sad. But he was Nanny’s only husband, and so she is the saddest.
2. My dad moved away. He got a new job way out west. He is my only dad, so I am the saddest about that.

When my mom and dad and I lived in the trailer, out in Upper Mills, I took the bus to school. But now that Mom and I live at Nanny's, Lily walks me to school.

I remember why I am early this morning. A fun smile peeks out of my lips. "Well, you know, Lily's Dad, my nanny says the early bird gets the worm!"

He does a steamy breath from his nose.

"Plus," I go on, "I love going to school! It is my favorite place to be!"

I giggle at myself. Because this is called an "inside joke." Most days, school is not my favorite place to be—because grade 3 is hard and third graders are mean. But today I have a fun secret! And, like magic, I want to go to school.

This secret is going to burst out. My nanny says if you want to keep a secret, you've got to keep your trap shut. So I trap my lips with my teeth. And, finally, here comes Lily.

"Hi, Lily! Nice eyeliner!" I give Lily a thumbs-up. Then I roll my eyes at that dad again.

"Sorry, Dad," she says.

Lily looks at me. "Brianna Banana, why are you so early?"

"Well, like my nanny says, you gotta make hay while the sun shines."

"Okay..." Lily's eyeliner eyes are frowning at me. "And you look so...um... so...dressed up today."

"What, this old thing?" I pretend I am shy. But that sneaky smile comes out again. This morning my nanny told me

I look *ridiculous*. I think I look especially sparkly!

I unzip my coat to show my whole getup. I have:

1. A shiny bodysuit with a sticking-out skirt (from when Mom did tap at Susan's School of Dance back in the old days).
2. My fluffy Christmas tights with the gold stars.
3. My fancy Easter shoes that are almost high heels.
4. My princess crown from last year's Halloween.

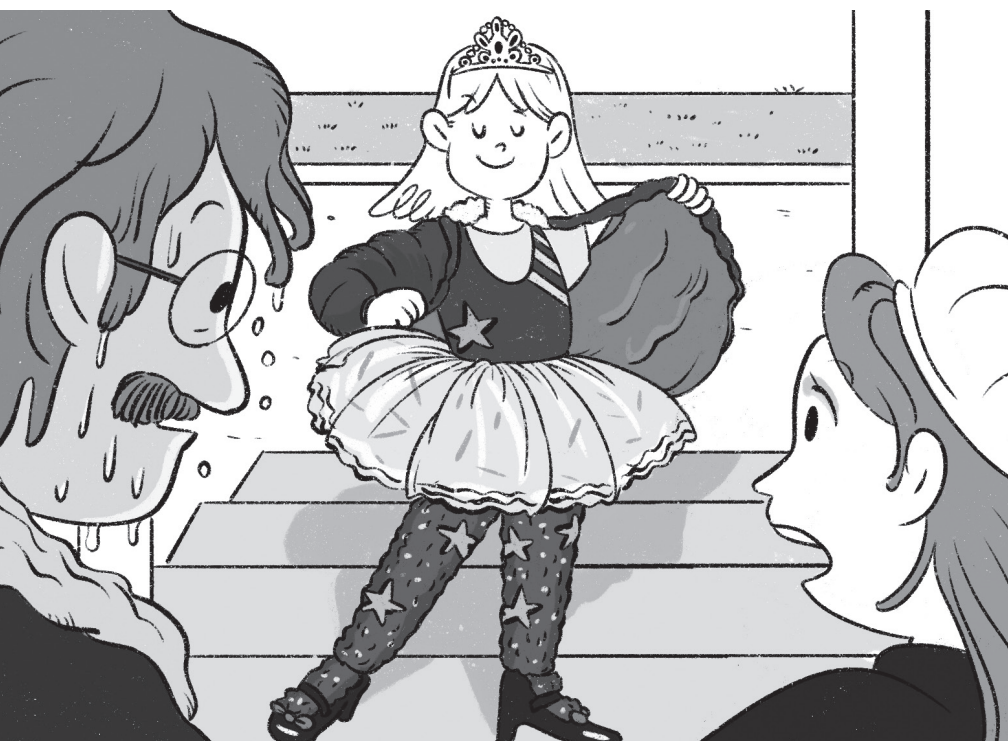
“Um...okay,” says Lily. “I just need to grab my bag and we’ll go.”

I usually walk slow and glum up Princess Street. And I make wishes about having a fun day at school. But today Lily has to keep up with me!

“What’s the matter?” Lily looks worried at me.

“I am practicing my surprise face,” I say.

“A surprise face?” she says. “Why?”



“Because—” But I trap my lips again. “You never know when you might need to be surprised,” I tell her. “My nanny says surprises happen right out of the blue!” My sneaky smile comes out again. “And you don’t even know what hit you!” I tuck my smile back in. And I walk even faster to school.



Secrets with Leslie



“Leslie!” I yell. “Get your keister off that bus!”

I have been waiting against the wall of this school for a million years! If getting to school early was a contest, Lily and I would have won first place. But now the school has kids in the playground, and it looks like it’s open for business.

And good thing the bus is finally here, because this secret won’t stay trapped for one more second. I need to tell someone.

And my someone is the little second-grade boy Leslie. Last year we sat together on the bus. We made a good pair. He is quiet. And lousy at yelling when kids tease him. So I yelled for both of us.

I rush right up to him.

“Hi, Brianna,” says Leslie.

“Guess what? You will never guess what?!!” I say, super excited.

“What?” says Leslie.

I whisper-yell in Leslie’s ear, “Today I am Helper of the Day!”

“You say that every day,” Leslie says. He is not even impressed.

“I DO NOT SAY THAT EVERY DAY, LESLIE!” I yell. “I say *PROBABLY* I am going to be Helper of the Day! And I *WISH* that!” I give him some shoulder shakes, so the news sinks in.



“But I am not saying *PROBABLY*, Leslie! I am saying *FOR SURE*! I AM HELPER OF THE DAY BECAUSE **I SAW IT ON THE BOARD!!**”

I clamp my hands over my mouth. I look to make sure kids are minding their own beeswax. And then I get excited all over again. “I am finally Helper of the Day!”

“Oh,” Leslie says quietly. “Yay for you.”

“I know, yay for me!” I scoot Leslie to the side of the school. And I tell my whole secret story.

“Yesterday I forgot my agenda. So I snuck back to my locker. And I peeked in our classroom. Because what the heck does my teacher, Mrs. Newberry, even do when she finally gets a little peace and quiet from us kids? I saw her at the whiteboard! Right at the spot

where she writes the Helper of the Day's name. And she was, for real life, writing B-R-I-A-N-N-A!"

That happy memory makes me dance Leslie in a circle. But then I stop.

"Only now I want the surprise!" I say. "It's supposed to be a surprise. You walk into room 109 and *surprise!* There's your name! And everyone cheers! I have been waiting my whole grade 3 life for that moment," I say.

"Oh," says Leslie.

"I have been practicing." I show him my surprise face. "What do you think?" I ask.

"Super surprised," Leslie says quietly. "You will have a fun day."

"I will!" I say. And I get my fingers ready to count out all the best reasons.



“It is finally my turn to...one. Sit in that helper’s chair. Two. Hold Mrs. Newberry’s fantastic donut-shaped pointer stick. Three. Be boss of passing out papers. Four. Be line leader. And...” I pause to let Leslie answer.

“Five. Library,” he says.

“Yes, library!” I say triumphantly. “I will take the books to the library. And I will pick a friend to go with me.”

“Fun,” says Leslie.

“Everyone will be sooooooooo nice and play with me *aaall* day. Just so I pick them! But ha! They will just have to suffer and wait to see who I pick.”

“Who will you pick?” Leslie asks.

“This is who I will not pick!” I get my fingers ready to count at him:

“One. Markus Poopy Potato—because he always calls me names. Two. Andrew Apple Pants—just because he is a smarty-pants. And that is annoying. Three. None of the Cheese Girls—because they won’t let me join that group. And most of all,” I say, “I will never in the history of Helper of the Day, **EVER** pick my biggest elbow enemy at my table—Kinsley!”

“Who will you pick?” Leslie asks again, like I’ve forgotten the question.

“My bestie,” I say.

Rumi is my brand-new bestie. She is new because:

1. She is new to our school.
2. She is new to our whole country.

And she is my *bestie* because:

1. She is my only friend in that class of meanies.

She is still my bestie, even when I got her in a teeny bit of trouble. Because, by accident, I plowed us into our tall principal, Mr. Tilly. And he fell on his keister. And that was the first time Rumi ever got in trouble, probably. Getting in trouble is a regular thing for me.

Usually I blow my top a few times a day. That's what my nanny calls it when I get mad. Mr. Tilly and I are getting good at doing belly breaths and calming down. But I won't even need one of those belly breaths today.

The bell rings, and I march right to my line. *Bring on my surprise!*

I will be the best Helper of the Day in the history of room 109!

"You kids better get ready to like me!" I mumble under my breath. "And you better just watch your step," I mumble in my best boss voice. "Today I am the helper! And today it is ILLEGAL to call me Brianna Banana!"