

# I WON A GIANT INFLATABLE BANANA AT THE STATE FAIR...NOW WHAT?

By Bradley Walton

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# **I WON A GIANT INFLATABLE BANANA AT THE STATE FAIR...NOW WHAT?**

**By Bradley Walton**

**SYNOPSIS:** You visit the state fair. You see people who have won giant inflatable prizes shaped like food. You become jealous and overcome with the urge to prove to the world that you too are a superior being worthy of acquiring and wielding giant inflatable food. After many games and trips to the ATM, you are successful. Now it is time to experience the rest of the fair...carrying around a giant inflatable banana that is almost as big as you.

## **CAST OF CHARACTERS** *(1 EITHER)*

**DURATION:** 10 minutes

**SET:** Bare stage

## **AUTHOR NOTES**

My family and I went to the state fair with some friends. We saw people, including an old woman in a wheelchair, roaming around with giant inflatable food objects. The inflatable food appeared incredibly...impractical. This made me wonder...why would anyone try to win a giant inflatable food object in the first place, and how would it impact the rest of their experience at the fair?

**AT RISE:** *The NARRATOR, dressed for the state fair, on a bare stage.*

The orange balloon thought it could mock me, wriggling in the breeze as it evaded the darts that I threw at it. But even in the face of one humiliating failure after another and three trips to the ATM, I never wavered in my determination. I popped the orange balloon. And the red one next to it. And a green one two rows down. In the end, I popped ten balloons. They fell like the balance in my bank account as I purchased more and more darts to hurl at them. In the end, I was triumphant. In the end, I claimed my trophy—a giant inflatable banana that would proclaim to the world not just that I went to the state fair, but that I was a *winner*.

When I first arrived at the fair, I had no intention of playing games. A ride or two, some popcorn and cotton candy, and a few leisurely hours to be spent staring at cows were the only things on my agenda. But shortly after I entered the fair and sat contentedly at a picnic table munching on kettle corn, it all changed. That was when I saw the old woman. She was sitting in a wheelchair, pushed along by a young man in a camouflage t-shirt and a little league baseball cap. The old woman wore a bright pink blouse, a beige skirt, and a brown sweater so ugly that only one who knows they are already at death's door would be brave enough to put it on. She was squinting through thick glasses with a strangely ambiguous smile upon her lips. On her lap was a giant inflatable pickle. Four feet long. The message which that pickle sent out to the world was unmistakable: I may be old, but at least I have a giant inflatable pickle... AND YOU DON'T. I may have the world's ugliest sweater on my shoulders, but the fact remains that I have a giant inflatable pickle... AND YOU DON'T. I am better than you. Do you know why? Let me give you a hint: It's bright green and four feet long and sitting right here on my lap. It's a pickle. A huge freaking pickle. Filled with air. I have a giant inflatable pickle... AND YOU DON'T. So bite me.

This was the message of the pickle

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And I just couldn't have that.

I needed a giant inflatable oblong food object of my own so that I too could prove my superiority over the rest of the human race. So I got one.

You may wonder why I have a banana and not a pickle. The answer is simple.

The banana is better. It's yellow. Yellow is a happier color than green. Green is the color of vegetables and sickness. Yellow is the color of baby chicks and rubber duckies. Bananas taste better than pickles. Bananas *are* better than pickles. And also, someone else won the last giant inflatable pickle a few minutes ahead of me.

Now I strut theatrically around the midway, a four-foot long, air-filled banana nestled proudly in my arms.

It is an awesome thing to be me. And with my awesomeness comes newfound responsibility. One does not handle a giant inflatable banana carelessly.

I try not to bump people with it, but this proves difficult. The fair is crowded and the banana is large. You would think that people would give a few extra inches of berth to someone holding a giant banana, but people are stupid.

Despite my best efforts, the banana accumulates smears of condiments from other people's food. Ketchup, mustard, mayo, and sauerkraut, as well as some ice cream and cotton candy. This proves useful, as it saves me the trouble of buying cotton candy of my own.

After about half an hour of showing off my giant banana to everyone around me, I decide the time has come to resume my original plan of riding rides, eating fair food, and looking at cows. By this time I am full up on cotton candy, so rides are my next priority. The Himalaya looks enticing, as does the roller coaster. But I can't take my giant inflatable banana onto either ride with me. In fact, I can't take the banana onto any of the rides, with the possible exception of the carousel, but that is out of the question because carousels are beneath me.

Leaving the banana by itself while I ride a ride is not an option, because someone might steal it. I would not blame someone for stealing it, because it is a magnificent thing. I know that I would not be parted from my banana for long, because I would immediately hunt the thief down and kill him. The problem lies in the fact that I might go to jail for the killing part, and in so doing be separated from my banana again, during which time someone else might steal it and, by the time I got out of prison, be so long gone that I would be unable to hunt the second thief down and kill him as well. And even if I did, I would be setting myself up for an endless loop of thefts, killings, and jail time during which, at best, I would only see my banana during visiting hours on days when it happened not to be stolen.

It saddens me to realize that rides are a pleasure I must sacrifice in order to wield my giant inflatable banana at the fair. I sigh deeply, take one last look at the roller coaster, and move on.

Rides may be out of the question, but there are still cows to be seen.

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On my way to see the cows, I stop to purchase a drink to wash down my cotton candy. It is difficult to pull the money out of my wallet without putting down the banana, but I manage. Tearing open a straw while holding both the drink and the banana is significantly more difficult, and I spill my drink. Fortunately, some of it splashes onto the banana and I am able to lick it off, so my beverage is not completely wasted. I tell myself I am no longer thirsty, and I press on.

As I enter the livestock area, the sights, sounds, and smell of cows envelop me. A feeling of contentment fills my soul. Cows are gentle, tasty creatures. I am at peace. It is a peace which is abruptly shattered when I notice a brown heifer eyeing my giant inflatable banana with unusual curiosity. The cow averts its gaze, but it is too late. I am on to her game. I glance around. None of the cows are looking in my direction. Do they believe their feigned innocence will enable them to take me unaware? They think to trample me in a stampede and steal my banana when my guard is down. I back slowly away from the cows, my eyes unblinking. Even when I slip and fall, I do not blink. I do not look down to see what I slipped in. My eyes remain on the cows. My banana shall not be violated.

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