



Extract of FINCHOSAURUS c. 2018 by Gail Donovan used by permission of the author

Scripted for Readers Theatre by Lucy Rioux

Reader One...Narrator 1 (N1)

Reader Two...Mom, Mrs. Adler, Grammy Mary (M, MA or GM)

Reader Three...Sam, Others (S or O1)

Reader Four...Finch (F)

Reader Five...Dad, Others (D or O2)

Reader Six...Narrator 2 (N2)

		<u>F</u>		
<u>N1</u>	M	S	D	<u>N2</u>
	O	O	O	

F: *Finchosaurus*

ALL: by Gail Donovan

(Readers go to their assigned locations...)

N1 & N2: Chapter One...Atticus Finch Martin

ALL: Deeper.

N1: If he could dig deeper, he could find something good.

F: Not just a worm.

N1: He'd dug up plenty of worms.

F: Not just a turd,

N1: which he'd also dug up,

N2: which he was pretty sure was the cat's,

F: but who cared?

N1: He didn't want worms.

N2: And he didn't want turds.

F: Unless it was a fossilized turd.

N1 & N2: Because that's what he wanted:

F: a fossil.

N2: If a bulldozer driver like Edward McCarthy could uncover the fossilized tracks of a dinosaur

F: only a few miles away,

N1: then he,

F: Finch Martin

N1: could find a piece of dinosaur,

N1, N2 & F: right?

F: "Thank you. Thank you,"

N1: he said to an imaginary audience.

F: “Thank you so much. I’m honored to have the dinosaur I discovered named after me...”

N1: That was where Finch got stuck.

N1 & N2: Which name should he use?

N1: His first name

F: was Atticus.

N2: His middle name

F: was Finch.

N1 & N2: And his last name

F: was Martin.

N2: The Martin part came from his dad.

N1: The Atticus Finch part

F: came from a book.

N1: His mom was so crazy for books that she

F: a)

N1: was a librarian at his school,

F: and b)

N2: actually named him for a character in a book,
 N1: which Finch thought
 F: was pretty weird
 N1: until he got to kindergarten,
 F: where there were three kids named Atticus.
 N1: So he started going by Finch,
 N2: which he liked because a finch was a bird,
 F: and birds were related to dinosaurs.
 N1 & N2: But he still had to decide:
 F: *Atticusaurus?*
 F & N1: *Finchosaurus?*
 F, N1 & N2: Or *Martinosaurus?*
 (*S fta...*)
 F: “The *Finchosaurus* was an amazing dinosaur— ”
 S: “*Finchosaurus?*”
 N2: That was Sam, his brother,
 S: interrupting Finch’s famous paleontologist speech.
 F: “Maybe *Finchoraptor*,”

N1: said Finch.

F: “I haven’t decided. It depends on what I find. Like if it’s a plant-eater or a meat-eater.”

N2: Sam shook his head. He had carrot-orange hair,

S: just like Finch.

N1 & N2: But orange hair was the only thing about them

F & S: that was the same.

N2: Sam

S: was a bookworm,

N2: like their mom.

N1: Finch didn’t like books,

F: unless they had plenty of pictures.

N1 & F: And facts.

F: Facts about dinosaurs.

S: “Mom says bedtime,”

N2: said Sam.

F: “In a sec,”

N1: he said.

N2: Finch's brother was thirteen

S: and in the eighth grade.

N2: At school, he and his friends roamed the playground like they were the biggest,

S: baddest,

N2 & S: meat-eating predators around.

N1: But even if Finch was just ten going on eleven,

F: and in fifth grade,

N1: Sam wasn't the boss of him.

N1 & N2: Besides, how could it be time for bed?

F: The sky was still blue.

N2: The air was still warm and smelled sweet

N1: because he was digging underneath the lilac tree.

F: Honeybees were still nuzzling the purple flowers. They weren't going to bed,

N1 & N2: and neither was he.

N2: Sam

S: loped off (*bta...*)

N1: and Finch kept digging,

F: shoveling up scoop after scoop of dirt.

N1: He stopped to watch their cat,

N1 & N2: Whoopie Pie,

N2: stalk a moth,

F: her black tail switching back and forth,

(S & D fta...)

N1: and then he went back to his digging.

D: “Finch. Time for bed.”

N2: That was his dad.

S: “I told you he was digging,”

N2: said Sam, and made a told-you-so face at Finch.

D: “You must have been a woodchuck in another life,”

N2: said Finch’s dad.

F: “I’m not a woodchuck,”

N1: said Finch.

F: “I’m a paleontologist.”

D: “Well, woodchuck or paleontologist, it’s time to stop digging.”

F: “Five more minutes,”

N1: said Finch.

F: “Please?”

D: “I like the *please*,”

N2: said his dad.

D: “But no. Besides, how can you even see what you’re doing?”

N1: Finch looked around.

F: When had the sky gone from bright blue

N1: to inky blue?

F: “I can see,”

N1: he insisted.

F: “And this is for school. It’s homework.”

N1: Technically, it wasn’t a must-do homework assignment.

F: It was a choice.

N2: Tomorrow they were kicking off their new unit—

ALL: ‘Digging Deep’ –

N2: and Mrs. Adler had said anyone who wanted to

F: could bring in something to share.

N1 & N2: And Finch wanted to!

N2: Finch's dad crossed his arms over his chest.

D: "Less arguing, Finch. More cooperation. Now."

N2: Finch's dad was named

D: Lester Martin.

N2: Everybody called him

D: Les,

F: which was a little funny because it sounded like *less*,

N2: which was pretty much what he was always telling Finch to do.

D: Less bouncing

N1 & N2: (inside the house).

D: Less digging

N1 & N2: (outside the house).

F: Less asking why.

D: Less arguing.

F: "But I need something for tomorrow! Why can't I stay up?"

D: "Bedtime,"

N2: said Finch's dad.

N1: It wasn't fair that Finch wasn't allowed

F: to *not* answer a question from a grown-up,
N1: when grown-ups didn't answer his questions all the time.
N2: Or they just answered with a command.
D: Stop digging.
D & N2: Go to bed.
D: "Come on, Finch,"
N2: said his dad.
D: "You too, Sam. Let's go."
S: "No way,"
N2: said Sam.
S: "I'm older—I'm not going to bed when he goes!"
F: "You're not that much older,"
N1: argued Finch.
S: "Thirteen minus ten is three,"
N2: said Sam, holding up three fingers.
S: "Or can't you subtract?"
F: "I know how to subtract,"
N1: said Finch.

- F: "But I'm practically eleven."
- N1: His birthday was next month, in June.
- N2: Sam made a huffy, offended noise.
- S: "Yeah, and then it's my birthday and I'm fourteen. Plus, I'm in eighth and you're in fifth."
- F: "So what?"
- N1: asked Finch.
- D: "Boys,"
- N2: said their dad.
- D: "Enough."
- (M fta...)*
- M: "What's going on out there?"
- N1: That was Finch's mom, coming across the grass.
- M: "Wow,"
- N1: she said.
- M: "This is quite a picture."
- N1: Finch could picture it, too, just like in a book.
- F: Stars twinkling in the blue-black sky.

- N1: Him digging underneath the lilac tree.
- N1 & F: And the caption would say:
- F: *On a warm spring night, a young Finch Martin dug up a fossil of the largest dinosaur ever to roam the earth, the Finchosaurus.*
- N1: But apparently Finch’s mom saw a different picture.
- M: “I see a kid up way past his bedtime.”
- F: “Mom, I need something for tomorrow,”
- N1: cried Finch.
- F: “Mrs. Adler said!”
- M: “I’m sorry,”
- N1: said his mom.
- M: “But if Mrs. Adler has a consequence for you not getting your homework done, you’ll have to pay it.”
- F: “Just one more shovel!”
- M: “Now I see a kid who is digging himself into a whole lot of trouble,”
- N1: said his mom.
- M: “Because he is arguing with his parents. Les, would you give Finch a hand?”

N1: Finch threw down his shovel and pawed through the dirt.

F: “I’m done!”

N1: he said.

F: “I got it.”

N1: Finch held up what he had found.

N2: Wriggling around in the palm of his cupped hands,

M, D & S: like it was just as unhappy about this as Finch,

F: was a long, brown worm.

(Slight pause for change of characters...MA, O1 & O2)

N2: Maybe the worm was even more unhappy than he was,

N1: thought Finch the next morning. He was just bummed because he had brought in a worm for sharing

F: instead of a dinosaur fossil.

N2: But the worm had gotten dug out of its home.

F: Then, because nobody could find a see-through container with a lid,

N2: the worm had gotten put in a plastic bag of dirt.

F: The bag was the kind with the zipper at the top,

N1: which Finch decided he’s better open,

F: because what if the worm couldn't breathe?

N1 & N2: He only unzipped the bag a little.

N1: And he was only bouncing a little on his chair

N2: (which was actually a giant bouncy ball that Mrs. Davison,

N1, N2 & F: the occupational therapist,

N1: gave him because he had so much trouble

F: sitting still on a regular chair).

N1: But somehow he bounced the worm—

N1 & N2: and all the dirt—

N1, N2 & F: right out of the bag!

F: “Mrs. Adler,”

N1: he called.

F: “Mrs. Adler—I dropped my worm!”

N2: Kids scrambled for a look,

O1 & O2: laughing and shouting and crowding in.

MA: “Broccoli!”

N1: said Mrs. Adler.

F: Broccoli was Mrs. Adler's special code word.

O1: It meant everybody was supposed to stop doing whatever it was they were doing.

O2: Then back off.

O1, O2 & F: Step away.

N2: Kids began backing away from Finch

O1 & O2: and the worm,

N1: while Mrs. Adler padded slowly

MA: across the room,

F: like she was a *Giganotosaurus*

N2: and the kids were just some

O1 & O2: *Microceratops*,

ALL: too small to worry about.

N1: Mrs. Adler was actually pretty tall.

N2: She wasn't *old-old*,

F: like some of the teachers,

O1 & O2: with gray hair.

N2: She was just regular grown-up old,

O1 & O2: with brown hair

N2: she wore clipped up into a messy bun.

N1: Mrs. Adler looked down

MA: at Finch.

N1: She looked

MA: at the worm.

N1: She looked at the dirt

MA: spread all over the floor.

N1: She shook her head, as if she had known all along

MA: the bouncy ball was a bad idea,

N2: and now she had proof.

N1: Then she told Finch that she would call the janitor

MA: to clean up the dirt,

N1: and that he should go outside

MA: and put the worm in the class garden.

N2: She asked Grammy Mary,

ALL: their class volunteer,

N2: to go with him.

ALL: Five minutes later, *(O1 & O2 bta...MA now GM)*

N1: Finch was outside.

N1 & N2: All by himself.

GM: *(Clearing throat...)*

N1 & N2: Well, by himself,

F: with Grammy Mary.

N2: The playground was empty

GM: because nobody was at recess.

F: The sky was an empty, no-cloud blue.

N1: He didn't want to leave the worm

F: on top of the ground,

N1: so he set down the bag

F: and started digging.

N1: Then he saw something white in the brown dirt.

ALL: What was it?

F: A tiny piece of paper.

N1 & N2: Not a scrap,

F: but a big piece,

N2: folded and folded until it was as small as his thumb.

N1: Finch unfolded

N1 & F: and unfolded,

F: until it was flat,

N1: and he could read what was written on it.

F: A single word.

ALL: *Help.*

.....

F: Finch is determined to come to the aid of the mystery
notewriter. But when the quest turns out to be harder than
expected, Finch risks losing two things really important to
him...to discover what these are, you will need to buy the book
and keep reading!